

Winter in Hieron 28: What Life Looks Like

Transcriber: lu

AUSTIN: But give me an Heirloom, totally.

[SONG "The Boat" STARTS PLAYING]

ALI: [sigh] Boy, howdy... that's a ten.

AUSTIN: That's a *ten*! On a ten plus I give you good *details*! I think you've never gotten that!

[SONG "The Boat" STARTS PLAYING]

ALI: [laughing] It's the only time I've succeeded in this roll...

AUSTIN: [amused] They will give you insight relating to the current situation, and might ask you some questions in return. *Fuck*. [sigh] Uh, so here's what we get. Blade goes up. Like, Hadrians? Hadrian, you swing it down and hit, and then we get like a flash? And then, all of you are in a airy room that's... like a stone room in a castle, that's adjacent to a throne room? You're on like a stone balcony, looking out among a medieval town that is like bustling, and you can see smoke rising from the chimneys, and there's green hills off in the distance. Hella, this is the place that you've seen in the flashes of the sword, a number of times. And you're in a long table, out in this balcony, and you are watching a group of people playing a game on that table. Like- four person chess, basically, that goes- this *whole* long table. You don't recognize... I guess we, the- okay, one of them is the star you killed, one of them is one of the mages from Marielda? The notes of which I have to pull up to get a name? And then one of them is... Samothēs himself, dressed regally, in the sort of robes you wear to present yourself as an authority figure. This is the Samothēs of the statues you know, Hadrian.

ART: So no the Samothēs of the- the "I just met" Samothēs?

AUSTIN: Not that- that Samothēs, he looks like that Samothēs, but he has like a... there's no- when he smiles? It's a different smile. When he smiles it's a way of... disarming you? In the sense of "We're here together, and I'm laughing with you, *not laughing at you*. He's not grinning at you because you are small, and he is divine? He's grinning at you because you've done something- like, he's looking at his game players and the star makes one of those moves, he makes a move on this four-person chess game? And Samothēs grins at that because it was a good move. It's the grin that we saw in Marielda, when the cat leaps up on the lap of Samothēs. It's that grin, it's "[tsk] You fucking got me!". That grin.

ART: Aw...

AUSTIN: And you're there. You're in this room.

ART: All of us?

["The Boat" CONTINUES TILL THE END]

AUSTIN: Uh-huh

ART: This is very confusing, I- I've-

[ALI laughs]

AUSTIN: Uh... fair. The star is- the star that Hella killed, with the scar that shows it? So they have the full body bright light thing? Except there's a piece of black, it's like an absence in their chest where the blade went.

ALI: And we're floating...? Or are we...

AUSTIN: No, you're just standing on this balcony. And like, you can hear people shouting from the city below. And you can see Samoths talking with these people, and playing this game, and chattering about things.

AUSTIN (as Samoths): You've gotten better, Chapter!

AUSTIN: Says Samoths to the star, who like, laughs. With that like, weird multi-voice laugh that the stars do.

AUSTIN (as Chapter): [echoing voice] It's a strange game, but I understand why you need diversion.

ART: Is it apparent this is a different Samoths?

AUSTIN: I think it *has* to be. But I- no one would know that better than you, you tell me. Does Hadrian feel it?

ART: I mean... I have to answer that with a question. Has this Samoths ever communicated with me?

AUSTIN: *Absolutely*. Things are like- yes. This is like you solve for x here? You've heard so many voices, you've prayed so many times? There times where it was Samot, mainly times after he gave you the cloak, right?

ART: Sure.

AUSTIN: He gave you the cloak and that opened up a- a relationship with you that we could communicate with. There were times, many times, when it was this other Samoths, who used you to his ends, and- to his *divine* ends, there's no lack of divinity on that part of Samoths, the other Samoths. *Cool Ranch*, [laughs] was not like-

[ALI laughs]

ART: Don't make that canon...

AUSTIN: He was... [laughing] Maeloths- it was-

ALI: Wait-

AUSTIN: The Samoths that you have spoken to in your prayers often has been the Samoths you met, whose ends are mysterious and [struggling] require this weird blend of self-doubt and deep confidence? A sort of like- a defacement of the self? And then, every now and then, *especially* when you're near Hella... you get this other voice. And I can't imagine it's not recognizable. Like, this is that third Samoths.

ART: Okay. That's great! [ALI laughs] Someone try to stop me.

AUSTIN: I mean, you're all here...

ALI: [high-pitched, laughing] What are you doing?

AUSTIN: And I think like- that boat is here too, the boat is just on this balcony, you're in that boat? You're hammering away at this sword?

ART: I think I've stopped, I think I've paused? I think this is, uh...

AUSTIN: [amused] Okay.

ALI: I... just looked at my bonds?

AUSTIN: What are your bonds?

ALI: And Hella... [laughs] Hella looks at Lem! [laughing] to see what he makes of this situation...

JACK: Uh... I'm going to step into the room. Um... cautiously.

AUSTIN: [huffs] Uh-huh. What are you looking for? [JACK overlaps] Or what are you doing?

JACK: [overlapping] I am... looking to attract attention, without doing anything generally associated with attracting attention! [ALI laughs]

AUSTIN: Uh... no one seems to see you?

JACK: Oh, okay. I'm gonna call out?

AUSTIN: Nothing. This is an impression.

JACK: Huh.

AUSTIN: It's a *very* clear impression.

JACK: Okay, I'm gonna look back at Hella and kinda... [laughs] kind of shrug?

[ALI laughs]

AUSTIN: Um, from close-up you can hear what they're talking about, which is- they're playing this game, and talking about the game? But are also... [sigh] talking about how to keep people fed, and how Chapter the star has been acquainting themselves with the culture here, and... about how interesting it is. And everything- there's a bit where Samoths like... stops that game for a moment, and Smoulder, who is the mage, goes

AUSTIN (as Smoulder): Hey! We gotta keep playing!

AUSTIN: But sees the- a certain look in Samoths' eyes, and is like [murmuring] "Uh, I'm gonna give this guy some space" and Samoths looks across at Chapter, and says like

AUSTIN (as Samoths): You're unfinished, but I can... I can see his touch in your design. You're beautiful like he was.

AUSTIN: and Chapter kinda moves its orb-like head down to the board, and moves a piece into a different position.

AUSTIN (as Chapter): Checkmate.

AUSTIN: and Samoths like, does that grin and shakes his head.

AUSTIN (as Samoths): Well... we took a long lunch, but we should head back to work.

AUSTIN: And... stands up and walks right past you Lem, and then- like, we just get the shot of Samoths walking past Lem, and then walking past Hadrian in the boat with the blade... I think

he pauses there? For a *moment*, as if to sense something? And then keeps walking. And then walks right through Hella and Adaire, and into the throne room. And the impression begins to fade, and we are back at a man standing awkwardly in a boat, while a dog barks. And the island begins to drift further away.

ART: Okay, that was good enough for me, I'm gonna cast- I'm gonna cast Guidance?

[ALI laughing off-mic]

AUSTIN: Okay.

ART: Um... y'know- free XP, y'know? [JACK laughs]

AUSTIN: Yeah, gimme the roll. [ALI gasps] there's an eight! That's a success, right? That's a success?

ART: That's succes, I- I forgot what happens when you-

AUSTIN: [overlapping] Oh, and it's a spell! Yeah, its a spell, which means you have to lose a... what's the thing.

ART: "Draw unwanted attention, or put yourself in a spot (the GM will tell you how), your casting distances you from your deity, take minus one ongoing to cast a spell the next time you commune. After you cast the spell's revoked by your deity, you cannot cast the spell again until you comune and have it granted to you" Uh... let's- let's choose three.

AUSTIN: Which is, you lose the spell?

ART: Yeah.

AUSTIN: until you comune and *have it granted to you*? That's good.

ART: Is that the most interesting one?

ALI: [pained noises]

AUSTIN: Yeah, definitely, that's the one that literally requires you- alright! Wh- what's the- how does this appear? What's this appear as? It's a symbol, right?

ART: Yeah, uh... "Guidance: a symbol of your deity appears before you and gestures towards the direction or course of action your deity would have you take then disappears. The message is through gesture only, your communication through this spell is severely limited"

AUSTIN: You have- which hand is Benjamin's hand on?

ART: Uh, I believe that's the left hand.

AUSTIN: Which hand is holding which blade?

ART: Uh, the- the blade must be in the right?

AUSTIN: The one that you're hitting with.

ART: Yeah, the other blade I don't think I'm touching.

AUSTIN: Okay, right. Right, right, right. Um... an inverse of Benjamin's hand appears on Hella's blade? As if to be pointing up, as if to say stop. Do you know what I mean?

ART: Yeah

AUSTIN: Like, to cut it again would be to cut your son's hand.

ART: Yeah- okay, that's good enough for me.

[ALI laughs]

AUSTIN: Yeah. Okay. [pause] Lose that spell and... your connection to Samoths.

ART: Yeah. Um... okay! The real question is, do I take the sword back with me...?

AUSTIN: It's a good question.

ART: Like, both swords back with me.

AUSTIN: Uh-huh [sigh]

ART: Yeah, sure, why not! Yeah, I'll fucking...

AUSTIN: Okay, good.

ART: Should I take the dog? Would the dog come with me?

JANINE: What are you gonna do, dump it overboard?

ART: Well, I could just leave.

AUSTIN: That's a *cool dog*, I don't know... The dog has a cool name, the dog's name is Barbalo

JANINE: Yeah!

AUSTIN: Barbalo? Barbalo.

JANINE: Samol might like having like, a friend around...

ART: I mean- well, here's the thing. I can't carry that dog [ALI laughs] *and* two swords and swim to shore. That's just like-

JANINE: [overlapping] You could use the boat!

AUSTIN: [overlapping] You should just paddle this boat. This boat has paddles, you could paddle this boat.

ART: Okay then, yeah, I'll just paddle the-

JANINE: I can see them, under the dog [ALI chuckles]

AUSTIN: Yeah, I think it's- at this point, just... everyone paddles back to shore.

ART: [sigh] I think Hadrian gets off the boat, he... he gives the sword to Hella and he says, y'know...

ART (as Hadrian): I'm sorry. He told me to. I didn't know. [pause] I didn't know what to do

[pause]

ALI (as Hella): Yeah, I... it's fine. Um... Adaire is really hurt? We should just go inside. [sigh]

AUSTIN: As you like, turn back inside, the screen door opens and Samol comes out in like... [laughs] a bathrobe? Or in like a- y'know. Like a nightgown? Not a nightgown, but like a... what's the word I'm looking for?

JANINE: Housecoat?

AUSTIN: Yeah, housecoat I guess. [ALI chuckles] Like thick, good- um... and like- looks sicker. Like his face is gaunter than it was, even the last time you saw him.

AUSTIN (as Samol): What's all this noise?

JACK (as Lem): The house was attacked.

AUSTIN (as Samol): Huh?

JACK (as Lem): The house was attacked?

AUSTIN (as Samol): Come inside, I can't hear y'all.

[ALI laughs]

JANINE: Are there just seven anchor just standing right at [AUSTIN overlaps] his house in a semicircle?

AUSTIN: [overlapping] Yep. Yeah, as he like steps outside the fire dissipates.

JACK (as Lem): Let's go in...

AUSTIN: Um- you come in to the smell of coffee brewing? [laughs]

JANINE: I feel really bad bleeding on his floor, 'cause we saw him doing so much cleaning...
[ALI laughs]

AUSTIN: Uh-huh.

JACK (as Lem): Our friend is hurt.

JANINE: [laughing] Hella's also bad, but I'm... I'm also hurt, yes.

ALI: Yes... [AUSTIN overlaps] can I like, help Adaire in?

AUSTIN: [overlapping] He's like uh- yeah, totally.

JANINE: Aw...

AUSTIN: He like- he gestures past the living room and into the- you see there's a space before before all the bedrooms? Like there? He's like

AUSTIN (as Samo): We got some, uh... I've got some bandages and whatnot, in there.

ALI (as Hella): If- I don't want to be rude, but you can't just like- you can't just take care of this.

[JANINE chuckles]

AUSTIN: He like... there's deception happening here? And what he says is

AUSTIN (as Samol): I gotta take care of this coffee. [ALI laughs]

AUSTIN: And that is not what is true. He does, but like- that is not why he cannot do this

ALI: Okay...

AUSTIN: Uh, [JANINE overlaps] there's a dog?

JANINE: [overlapping] To be fair, Adaire is like not put out by that, like- [ALI laughs] yeah you gotta do your- she wasn't expecting him to do a thing.

AUSTIN: Uure.

ALI: Yeah, I guess- yeah, Hella sorta picks up that if he could he probably would've- I guess, I don't know. She's not gonna push it.

JANINE: Hm... Oh, do you know what I do?

AUSTIN: What do you do?

JANINE: I hand Hella the plate, like I- I should've, and I didn't... I brought it, but I didn't do anything with it...

AUSTIN: [laughing] Aw...

ALI: Ow...

JANINE (as Adaire): Here- here's your thing.

ALI (as Hella): Hh- thanks.

AUSTIN: Is anybody gonna- are y'all gonna... do anything about *bleeding to death*?

ALI: We should do some rolls, yeah.

JANINE: [overlapping] Yeah, we should get on that [laughs]

AUSTIN: Yeah... I think this is- we've done this before as like Defy Danger...intelligence, right? From like, knowing how to stitch someone up?

JANINE: Um... you mean for Red Jack?

AUSTIN: Yeah, what did you do for him?

JANINE: When that happened I think it was like... a weird- doing it specifically to locate materials

AUSTIN: [uncertain] Hmm...

JANINE: Wasn't that like- we had to be like, she's smart enough to know-

AUSTIN: Yes, you're totally right. Yeah, you're totally right. I think- uh....

JANINE: So it'd be a little different, in this case, [AUSTIN overlaps] 'cause he's told us there's stuff.

AUSTIN: [overlapping] I think that there is- yeah, you can use a bandage, which heals four damage. And there are bandages- in fact, I will even say that there are poultices and herbs here, which heal seven damage, and there's two uses. So two people can heal seven damage.

ALI: Does Hadrian try and realize he can't? or is that-

AUSTIN: That's a good question.

ART: Yeah! [ALI laughs] I think so.

JANINE: Oh, buddy...

AUSTIN: What's that look like?

ART: I mean, it's... it's- y'know, he tries to summon that energy right? He... he puts his hands on the wounds, and... nothing happens. He kinda like, mumbles an apology and moves aside.
[laughs]

AUSTIN: Um... do you do the bandaging yourself? Or do you step aside and just say fuck it? Let them do it.

ART: I mean, I don't think he knows anything about bandaging. I mean, I'll roll it I guess, if you're telling me...

AUSTIN: Uh, it's not- if you have the stuff, it's good. The way poultices and herbs and bandages work, it's kinda- given time, you can apply them safely.

ART: Oh, okay. Then yeah!

AUSTIN: Uh... okay, then what you have to do is give me a 1d8 for each of them. Because that'll be seven plus 1d8 each. Three, so that's ten and... twelve. You tell me where it goes.

ART: I imagine I did Adaire first, so she got the bad roll...

AUSTIN: [amused] Okay...

ALI: [laughing] Well, she has much less HP so that-

AUSTIN: Yeah, that's true. So Adaire take ten, and Hella take twelve.

ALI: Okay.

AUSTIN: Okay. So what's this like? Like, you do normally heal with divine- with a divine touch, what's it like to clean out a wound?

ART: Um... strange. I bet he's clumsy and bad at it.

AUSTIN: Yeah...

ART: I mean, it worked, so it works, but like...

AUSTIN: Right, but that doesn't mean it was like... an easy thing, or like uh- particularly professional. [laughs]

ART: Yeah, I bet it takes a long time, I bet that the two took the better part of an hour.

AUSTIN: Yeah... the coffee's ready, by the way. And you can smell like bacon frying? At some point he comes out with breakfast food, and the sun starts to rise. I think this is where we get Four Conversations, the Marielda episode, through the conclusion of Marielda. Which ends with Samol explaining that the stars will not save us, because he has seen them. And I think at this point you've probably seen the stars too, [laughs] so... yeah. Um- I think I should note that on the pathway you're at, like- as the island-ship thing continues to go through this whole underground area: one, you've passed through a lot of other places, on the way? You've gone through a part of the world- again, I've talked about the Velas canals part, and then the bit with, uh... the river kinda being glass-like and moving in snapshots- You're now into an open sea. It looks like you're in- the river has gotten very *very big*, or this is the ocean, and there are waves and stuff. And you can see a shoreline still? And as you go further and further down the shoreline, you can see that the shoreline is crashing in on itself like waves? In the way that waves do, in the way that the ocean does. Um... there is a huge tidal wave- or, not tidal wave- there's a huge swell off in the distance, that's just like a mountain, raising up a bunch of trees and buildings, and then crashing downward, and repeating. And nothing ever is like, damaged

forever, but that's what - the strata and lamina that you're in is where that is happening. So... y'know! Lots of stuff happening these days!

AUSTIN: Behind all of this conversation is, on the horizon, two things. One, the white huge arcs of the white wall, and the towers- the starlight towers? And two, you can see the black smoke of Ordennan ships on the horizon. But they're not closing, they're not able to keep up as far as you- not yet anyway? So... or maybe they haven't decided to close yet? But, at that point is when Samol finished the story of Marielda.

[silence]

AUSTIN (as Samol): And that's about that... [sigh] whatever you're looking for-

AUSTIN: He shakes his head

AUSTIN (as Samol): It's petty. It's small, it doesn't... promise Hieron's fate and- I don't think a couple artifacts... a couple counselors and Velas are poised to address-

AUSTIN: And he coughs a couple of times.

ALI (as Hella): I mean... neither are we, right? [laughs]

JACK (as Lem): I think I was sent here to do something?

AUSTIN (as Samol): Oh, yeah?

JACK (as Lem): The orcs back at the Archives, they've been working on something. Trying to get pieces in place?

AUSTIN (as Samol): That sounds like them.

JACK (as Lem): And... before they sent me here- and I don't think it was a mistake, y'know, I don't think I was supposed to end up somewhere else. Before they sent me here, they said that I was gonna do great things. And now I'm here.

AUSTIN: Samol like, indistinctly cracks his neck and like... stretches a little bit.

AUSTIN (as Samol): [groans] Yeah you will. Ain't trying to... be a critic but, you ain't done nothing good quite yet. That note you made... uh, don't worry about it. I'm headed towards the grave, anyway.

JACK (as Lem): Oh, god. Uh... was it bad?

AUSTIN (as Samol): [laughs bitterly] Like I said, don't worry about it.

JACK (as Lem): N- uhhh. no, you can't just say that, I was sent here to- to make something better. To put something back in place.

AUSTIN (as Samol): Hm. Like I said, [deep breath] it's easy to blame a broken instrument.

JACK (as Lem): they told me to put on the mask, right? Zhan Kurr, he's' like this- we call them Apparitive Semioticians, they... they make things look like other things? It's a whole deal. But he told me to put on the mask. Um... so I did. And I saw Samot. I don't know if this is important, I don't know if this is something that's happening to you all the time... it hasn't been happening to me. But I saw him, and he told me to give you a message? And then I- I don't know whether or not this was his message, or whether or not he was working up to it? Because after that things got.. Involved. But he leant back on his chair and said "this isn't real"? And that's all I got, so... I've passed the message on, and if this is the beginning of me trying to- y'know, make something better?

AUSTIN: Samol just looks down into his coffee cup. Imagine it's like, a lacquer to wood? It's like a lacquered wood, with a sun etched on it.

AUSTIN (as Samol): [sigh] That boy... it's very real, he just don't wanna believe it.

JACK (as Lem): Why would he tell me to give you that message?

AUSTIN (as Samol): I don't think that was a message, I think that was thing a desperate man said out loud.

JACK (as Lem): Well, then what was the message?

AUSTIN (as Samol): That like me, he's giving up. He's been... [sigh]. It's been ages now, he's been chasing a tail, he's been... he and the rest of them. Trying to keep things good as best they can. Putting out fires over here and then another one jumps up over there. Can't keep the whole thing together, but they do their best to- to... keep bits and pieces of me whole. But that ain't fair for people. It ain't fair that they get to live for a few hundred years before... things get all fucked up. But that's how it's been.

JACK (as Lem): What does him giving up mean for you?

AUSTIN (as Samol): Uh... y'know, it means I better call a funeral planner.

JACK (as Lem): No, that- you can't do that.

AUSTIN (as Samol): Yeah, they probably don't come near here, huh? [JACK laughs] Listen, I had a good run. In the face of nothing, what we've done is *incredible*. Beautiful. But it's a spec, it's a blip. It was always a mistake.

ALI (as Hella): But- but then what? Why even *tell us* this? What are we supposed to do with any of this?

AUSTIN (as Samol): Y'all just tried *really hard*. All of you- even you, Adaire. Don't give me that look. I don't know. Maybe there's hope, but... whatever comes next won't be like this. Them stars... if they do make something a little more permanent, uh... we'll have folks like me in it. Or you, frankly. I don't know what that world looks like

ALI (as Hella): But we just... saw him...?

AUSTIN (as Samol): You saw a- a reflection of a phantom of a ghost of a shadow. Wherever that boy is, is in that sword, and that's where he's gonna stay. And even if you were, then what?

JACK (as Lem): Okay, I'm just spitballing here. Hella, I'm just- this is just a question. What happens if we break it?

ART: Excellent question.

ALI (as Hella): [laughing] It's a- it's just a *sword*.

JACK (as Lem): Sometimes, when I was at the archives, people would come to us... and they'd have like a scythe? Or like a vase or something, and they'd say that it was cursed, or that it was- that there was something inside it that was- y'know. And we just *break* it. And then we give it back to them. And y'know, like... that worked. But I'm just spitballing, y'know?

ART: So- just so I'm clear, that was Maelgwyn I talked to in the- in the volcano?

AUSTIN: Y- it was- that was Samoths, it also used to be Maelgwyn. But that Samoths is the Samoths in the blade.

ART: Why did he want me to break the sword?

AUSTIN (as Samol): 'Cause whatever plan he got, that blade must get in the way. Samoths always, *a/ways* was very... careful, like that. Plan B, plan C, plan D, just- making sure to think about every scenario, every possibility.

JACK (as Lem): Speaking of every scenario and every possibility, um...

JACK: Something that- oh, I guess I don't know about Ephrim and the message given to Ephrim, do I?

AUSTIN: No, you do not.

JACK: But I know that- I have some information there, right? And I guess I convey this, which is that Ephrim and I- the hilt that I took from... underneath the theater, matches the blade that Ephrim carries. And I no longer have the hilt.

AUSTIN: [sigh] Ughhh.... Okay. Yeah.

JACK: So there's a third weapon in play, and I want everybody here to know that? [laughs]

AUSTIN (as Samol): ...There are a lotta weapons in play. And that one is... of particular interest in the near term. But it ain't gonna keep the Heat and the Dark at bay, y'know?

ART (as Hadrian): What can you tell me about this weapon?

AUSTIN: And... you show him what?

ART: The- the blade that Samoths gave me.

AUSTIN (as Samol): There's two weapons there.

ART (as Hadrian): Sorry?

AUSTIN: He like, nods at the tip and the part that's- the kinda like black and purple metal from the Heat and the Dark, and then again at the hilt.

AUSTIN (as Samol): You gotta do- yo gotta take that out back, you knock off that. Bad bit. You bring that to a blacksmith you have him reform you a normal sword, you go about your day [sigh] Samoths thinks he can work on the Heat and the Dark. Turn it into something positive. Like we ain't tried that before, please. That's the problem with him, he's Samoths alright but he... all he knows is from he was born forward. He doesn't remember the old days

AUSTIN: He- Samol like, stands up and kinda looks forward on the way that the river is going basically? Like, the way that the island is moving, as if to gesture further back in reconfigurations in history?

AUSTIN (as Samol): He doesn't remember before there was the sun. He don't remember that working in the Heat and the Dark is something that we... tried. Hell! Samot- Samot is that, right? Shit don't go good. Means well, but... [sigh]

ART (as Hadrian): You won't- you won't be able to tell me what I should do now, will you. [Samol chuckles] That's not what you do.

AUSTIN (as Samol): It's not what anybody should do. It's up to folks to figure out how to face whatever comes next.

ART (as Hadrian): I've- I've served for so long, I don't... I don't know what to do, he's- he's left me.

AUSTIN (as Samol): Yeah, he left you like a flu. Good thing as far as I can tell. [deep breath]

ART: I don't think we have that expression anymore? [ALI laughs]

AUSTIN: [amused] Nah, we lost that one. [laughing] We lost that one *like the flu!* [ART cackles]

AUSTIN (as Samol): There ain't nothing wrong with *choosing* to serve. Y'know, that's the whole thing- paladin, paladin... they don't get to decide. You choose to serve someone! Out of loyalty, or respect... admiration, friendship. Shit, nothing wrong with that. *I served.*

AUSTIN: And he like, points out the window in this dinning room.

AUSTIN (as Samol): About now is when Severeia and Samaantine threw their coup and for four, *five generations*- it was just them! [laughing] Me and Samot and Samoths doing *errands* for them! It was alright, frankly. It was alright. It's okay to serve. It's a different thing to say "I *have to* serve" or... "I *am* service". I don't have answers for you. You're talking to a dying man, who's getting worse.

ART (as Hadrian): I'm talking to a dying *god*.

AUSTIN (as Samol): [sigh] Got a lot of time alone here. A *lot*. And I've thought it through. And I still don't know why there should be something rather than nothing. Enjoy it while it lasts, make yourselves good lives... but I ain't gonna snap my fingers and get better. you ain't gonna find a magical fountain you can dip me into, and then I'll come back right as rain. We had that power, we lost it!

ART (as Hadrian): I could stay. I can make sure that you have what you need. That you're cared for.

AUSTIN (as Samol): You're just looking for another god, huh.

ART (as Hadrian): It's what I know.

AUSTIN (as Samol): Try being single for a little while, you'll do okay. I'm gonna take this island deep, far away, where Ordenna can't find me. I'm- I'm gonna anchor up on some shady cliff and live out the next... however many years. And then this?

AUSTIN: And he pulls back that robe to reveal like, a strange white mass, that is also glowing with that purple energy. It's- it looks like... [sigh] God, I don't wanna describe it and it being gross. It's basically a big visible tumor. Um... that also has shelled over with the white of the glowing star stuff? The weird arcs that I described at the beginning of the show? The beginning of the game? Lem, the ones that are- the towers that are holding back the Heat and the Dark.

AUSTIN (as Samol): Either the fucking stars are gonna kill me or the Heat and the Dark will. Or time, [deep breath] But... y'know, I'll fend off those Ordennans, don't you worry. They won't get me. And hell, you know what? Y'all being her now- I can- I can feel Adelaide now. I can feel her here- before y'all were here... the reach of Tristero was still in Nacre. I couldn't have died before, so thank y'all, for coming. Reconnecting me to my kin.

ALI (as Hella): What? Wait, what?

AUSTIN (as Samol): Like I said, it had been a while. This whole thing with- Samoths couldn't die all the way, y'know. 'Cause Tristero hadn't been there. Y'all stay a couple nights. When it's time for me to go, I can go, as long as I can convince Adelaide to let me. [ALI laughs] And I'm a smooth talker.

JACK (as Lem): What happens if she doesn't?

AUSTIN (as Samol): I ain't too worried about it.

JACK (as Lem): Right, but what happens if she doesn't?

ALI (as Hella): What if it isn't in her plan.

AUSTIN (as Samol): Then, uh...

JACK (as Lem): C'mon you've thought about this, right?

AUSTIN (as Samol): I've thought about a lot of things. I- I mean then what happens is the thing that's already happening, I... fall apart. And the thing that is left is the Heat and the Dark and then whatever the stars build? And I don't think Adelaide wants that either!

ALI (as Hella): [laughs] Do you want me to ask her?

AUSTIN (as Samol): I mean, shit- / could ask her [ALI laughs] Let me just have it, for now. It's nice to think about... nothing

JACK (as Lem): Wait, so- I might have this wrong, but our two options are: the island goes down to this shady grove, and you live how much time you have there, and then you die, and Adelaide lets you in, and then all of this ends. Like, the land ends, Hieron ends, you're gone. That's option A. And option B is Adelaide doesn't let you, and you fall apart, and then Hieron ends as well?

AUSTIN (as Samol): I mean, whatever'd be left would be left, there'd be something new? But it wouldn't be this. I- listen. I've thought about this for a long time, I don't know another way. I- I am not my sons. I ain't build a college, let alone go to one. [JACK laughs] Flip that- other way around. I ain't go to college, let alone build one.

[ALI laughs]

ART: Lots of people build colleges, never went to one, I think that's...

AUSTIN (as Samol): You want options, I can tell you the options. You convince Samoths down at the bottom of this whole damn tower that, maybe don't fuck with the Heat and the Dark no more! Or you... see if Samot has some great plan. He's a planner but- like I said, it's been a long time, and all he does is spin wheels. Samaantine and Severeas, they've been working with Samot, stitching me up, keeping me as good as can be, and then... when it's time, they switch places. My left side falls apart, my right side gets fixed up, my right side gets fixed up, my left side falls apart! Over, and over, and over

JACK (as Lem): What would happen- again, just... just ideas here- if we killed you with that sword?

JACK: And Lem points at Hella's sword.

AUSTIN (as Samol): I suppose I get to see one of my sons again... um, I- [laughs] and then I think all- y'all'd be coming with me, cause you're all in me [ALI laughs]

AUSTIN: [amused] He says nonchalantly.

AUSTIN (as Samol): And then the blade would be floating alone in the Heat and the Dark and it would be devoured, everyone would die.

JACK (as Lem): Okay.

AUSTIN (as Samol): Y'all could go in, though. Hm? [silence] Just a thought.

ALI (as Hella): No, I get it. Yeah, I- [laughs] Everything I've ever done is to survive, and then I did that in Nacre, and the snow started falling, so.... You end up with the life that you have, right?

AUSTIN (as Samol): You live long enough, you get a bunch of lives [ALI laughs. And then you think back on it, and the good news is... you mostly, if you're lucky, get to remember the good ones.

AUSTIN: There's a horn. Someone blows a horn outside. It's on the air, which is to say it's far away. But if you look out the window you can see the Ordennan ships get closer. There are two ships.

JACK (as Lem): What are they gonna do, when they get here?

AUSTIN (as Samol): I don't know- set fire to things again, and then try to kill us, and then... [sigh] I've seen people like this [laughs] a *thousand times*. Afraid of any goddamn thing they don't quite understand. [ALI chuckles] Too afraid to ask questions.

JACK: *Oh*, this is like paralyzingly frustrating for Lem? In that he feels he's been sent here to do something- there's two levels to it, right? Which is, he feels like he's been sent here to do something, to solve an equation. He has arrived and been told, *explicitly*, "What? No. not only can you not do that, but also I'm not interested in doing that"

AUSTIN: Right.

JACK: And the other thing that I think is more intimately frustrating is that, it sure is something to meet the god of everything, and be told that nothing really matters?

AUSTIN: Uh-huh... uh, to be true, it was Samol who in the- the close of Marielda, that is where he is at right now.

JACK: Yeah, it feels like- I don't think Lem communicates this, I don't know- it feels like such as *selfish* position.

AUSTIN: Oh, its *deeply* selfish. Yeah.

JACK: I mean- alright, okay, this is what he communicates.

JACK (as Lem): Alright, fine they're gonna come set fire to things, you see how well that went for Adaire last time? Or Hella?

AUSTIN (as Samol): Yeah, uh- [struggling]

JACK (as Lem): The last time they arrives, I made a man's ears and mouth and nose bleed, and then I hit you with it at the same time. [ALI overlaps] He died in a boat.

ALI (as Hella): [overlapping] He doesn't care, Lem. He *doesn't care*.

JACK (as Lem): No- alright, no- fine, I don't care, I care about you all, right? These boats are gonna arrive and they're gonna do something to us, but I don't care what they do to him.

ART (as Hadrian): Well, it does seem it's all meaningless, doesn't it?

JANINE (as Adaire): We have that rowboat, we could just fucking *go*. Kind of.

ART (as Hadrian): [laughs] You have any idea where the fuck we are?

AUSTIN (as Samol): I- I could get y'all close to a way back. If y'all wanna leave, that's totally fine by me.

ART (as Hadrian): You told us not to stay...

AUSTIN (as Samol): [sigh] I want y'all to live the rest of your lives... as good as can be.

JACK (as Lem): What does that look like to you?

AUSTIN (as Samol): I think it looks like the way life looks. You find a place far away from here. You maybe go down, Samot's way. Funny, that place never catches fire. And... you find a nice bakery you like, and you go there a couple times a week and get yourself some good bread, and... you have big dinners with all your friends and family.

JACK (as Lem): We don't get to do that- no, we don't *get to do that!*

JANINE (as Adaire): Yeah, that's- that's not how life looks for most people

JACK (as Lem): Yeah! Y'know what happened the last time I sat down and I had a big meal with my friends and family? We ran outside and we killed a *star*. [ALI laughs] And sure, you can say "alright, well fine. That's you lot, you've got someone who walks around with a sword that kills stars" Do you wanna see what that star did to the rest of Rosemerrow?

AUSTIN (as Samol): I've seen. It has been a bad couple of years. I don't have a fable for you, I don't have a unicorn you can go find, and if you bring me its horn, I'll be well again. I'm imma tell you a white lie, it's gonna be the one about the bread. 'Cause that one has a chance of being true! Hadrian, you wanna serve? Go find Samot, kneel before him, swear fidelity and guard his house. Lem, you wanna be a great musician? Go find an audience, and make people smile for a little while [JACK laughs bitterly]. It ain't *fake*.

JACK (as Lem): I broke my violin for you

AUSTIN (as Samol): You broke your violin and hurt me, so... Let's slow down with the "what you've done for me lately" shit.

JACK: Uh, fuck it. I'm gonna go to my room.

[pause]

AUSTIN: There's another horn on the air. Samol like, begins picking the plates, and cups and brings them into the kitchen, where he takes the- there's a bucket- not a bucket, there's like a pot of warm water that he pours into a sink or basin and starts to wash them with. The boats get clearer on the distance. There are two, and then you notice that one moves further ahead. Like, closer. Um, the other one- you can't tell if it's not able to keep up or... if it's purposely holding back, or what, but only one of them is moving forward at speed now. But it's moving faster, and it is now closing distance. What are you doing in your room, Lem?

JACK: Um... I think I'm just- I think what happens is, first Lem sits down on the bed, and kicks his heels and puts his head in his hands. And then after a while he gets up and starts opening cupboards in the room? [laughs] He knows that he can't go back out because that would look dumb. [AUSTIN cackles] But he's- he doesn't wanna sit down... y'know, it's a two options thing again, he can sit down and stew in the room with Samol, or he can sit down and stew in his room, and he's probably picked that option for now.

AUSTIN: Yeah. Everybody else, what's up?

ALI: Can I follow Lem?

AUSTIN: Yeah!

ALI: Um... yeah, I don't know, I think that she... kinda comes in and sits down, and looks at him, and doesn't really know what to say? But maybe after a little bit of silence she's like

ALI (as Hella): We- we can't prove him wrong

JACK (as Lem): Right, but like... [deep breath] Yeah. Yeah. They seemed so certain that something could be done. And like, y'know. I'm not expecting- y'know, he's right, stubborn as he is with the whole [mocking] "Yeah, you can't fix me! I can't tell you how to fix me!"

ALI (as Hella): [laughs] Sounds just like him.

JACK (as Lem): Yeah [AUSTIN laughs] but... the orcs was so- they were so certain that something could be done.

ALI (as Hella): Were you? When you came here?

JACK (as Lem): Hella, I didn't know what to think! I'll tell you how I got here one day, and like... I was not told *anything*. You remember Sunder Havelton?

ALI (as Hella): I think Throndir knows her?

JACK (as Lem): She's like a... she's like an archivist, resident archivist. And before they sent me, they sent her somewhere, to do something? Y'know, maybe she's having better luck.

ALI (as Hella): Lem, even if she is... doesn't this just feel bigger than us?

JACK (as Lem): Right, but like- y'know. What doesn't?

ALI (as Hella): [laughing] Less than you'd think

JACK (as Lem): [sigh] So say we say this is bigger than us. Then we go. Y'know, fuck what Samol is saying about having a good life. But let's say we go. Is that it? Did we try?

ALI (as Hella): I don't know that I came here to try anything. I came here because... it's what I was supposed to do. Before it all went wrong. I think I just want to say that I did it.

JACK (as Lem): Do you think that you've done it?

ALI (as Hella): [laughs] I'm here, right? [JACK laughs]

AUSTIN: There's another horn on the air. And outside you're back on a river, and on the coastline a horn goes up. You see... creatures you've never seen before? Like animal people? There's like an elk person, and then there's- like, the elk person has a big cerberus as a mount? And like, rides it away. There are big cat people here, but there are no recognizable- Hieron races that you recognize, it's a whole different grouping of types of people. And the ordennan ship is getting closer. And then a few moments after that? The sun is like, *plucked* from the sky here. It doesn't set, it's just like- I guess it's like an eclipse, as if the eclipse- this is like the sun gets like, eclipsed from all sides at once? Like, it closes inward. And then it is *dark*. And again, that's not connected to the horns as far as you can tell. Or the Ordennan ships. Then the Ordennan ship lights up torches and fires, and moves closer still. You can see the water under it begin to boil.

AUSTIN (as Samol): They move faster than I thought, they must've dropped weight. [sigh]

ART (as Hadrian): Uh... okay, I mean- we've fended off the last ones, I'll fucking...

AUSTIN: I think at this point everyone should be healed up all the way? You've gotten *days* of rest, and each time you do- you rest and consume rations, you get to heal half your health

back? So... that's been three or four days of that, which probably should be enough to get back up there.

AUSTIN (as Samol): Y'all wanna stay and fight, y'all can stay and fight. I'll cook you dinner after. Y'all wanna... leave? You let me know.

JACK (as Lem): Why fight them? That's like a serious question, I don't mean that like, existentially.

ART (as Hadrian): Because we're good at it.

ALI (as Hella): [laughs] Are we? Eh. Yeah, I guess we are.

ART (as Hadrian): Hella, you're the most dangerous person walking the earth.

[everyone laughs]

JACK (as Lem): I could stand to leave. I don't wanna, like, fight.

ART (as Hadrian): Alright. You'll be okay?

JACK (as Lem): [scoffs] I don't know that that is...

ART (as Hadrian): No, that was- I was asking... Samol. [laughs]

JACK (as Lem): No, I think the answer stands.

AUSTIN: [laughs] Yeah. He... finishes the- cleaning out the last of the plates and stuff, and puts them on a drying rack and straightens out a- a kind of dish rag underneath.

AUSTIN (as Samol): I'll be the way I am. Some things... some things don't get better, they don't get worse. Lem, before you go, you- you know how to play the guitar? Or you just a fiddle man?

JACK (as Lem): No, I can play the guitar.

AUSTIN: He like walks past you- like hustles past you a little bit? Like out the kitchen and down around into the study? The study is the room that has the map on the big table, it's where... Aubrey went to meet Samol in the dream world... it's that room. And Samol grabs his guitar from the corner, and like, plays it a couple of times. He plays a few notes and then like, retunes it. And hands it to you.

AUSTIN (as Samol): You want it, it's yours. Played my share.

JACK (as Lem): Thank you. I'm gonna take it far away from here.

AUSTIN (as Samol): That fair.

AUSTIN: There's a loud crash as the ship comes up to the beach. Let me move this ship here, and put it on the right layer. There we go!

JACK: Oh, that's a big fucking ship.

AUSTIN: Mh-hm... but! not that many people get off of it.. They did have to drop weight, as I mentioned. Um... god, what did even...

ART: Oh, did that *dog stay*? Did that dog-

AUSTIN: Um... yeah. The dog stayed

JACK: We killed his *guy*.

AUSTIN: The dog's around. Like, I don't think it came inside, ever. Y'know.

ALI: But we've been like, feeding it. Maybe it's- maybe.

AUSTIN: Yeah! Okay, I- that might be the case. I'm fine with it staying around. I like the image of it in this house, y'know? But I don't know if that's accurate, I don't know if I like that in a way that's unfair. Unearned. Um... [mumbling] that fucking works. It's a big fucking knight. That's not really what I want, but that's fine! So, that knight hops out of this. Oh, that's not a knight at all, that's wrong. I just realized it looks like a knight and that's why I said it was a knight, but it's not a knight.

AUSTIN: So! There is this ship that came up against the beach, and then a... a woman in black and gold armor, with the symbol of the Chief Justiciar on her chest, covered out, flanked by five, very strange looking anchor? That I'm having a hard time selecting, 'cause there's boats in the fucking way? Also 'cause I moved it into the wrong fucking thing. Okay. And they're are at the far end of this beach. The island like, slips from one- the river splits? And it goes from going straight, to going right? Which I think you can gather is Samol moving towards a place where maybe you could get back on track with your boat, to actually go somewhere? To get back? But there are these new anchor, and the new anchor and the chief justiciar- this is Quinta Quatróna, you've met her a couple of times at this point- and then her new anchor all look like... they have more of a face than most of the anchor do. Most of the anchor look like suits of armor, or like caricatures? These look like metal people, they look like the same metal person. And I don't think that any of you know her well enough to actually place her. The only two who've ever met her are Hella and Hadrian. Well, maybe you- maybe you remember her enough, she's Iduna Fel, the Justiciar who Quinta believed was too ambitious for her own good. And they move with a

sort of... they move *smoothly*? As if under their own volition, in a way that the other anchor did not. But they're at some distance from you. None of them, as far as you can tell, have- none of them have bows. What are y'all doing?

ALI: The old anchor are still there?

AUSTIN: Yeah, they didn't go anywhere.

ALI: Are they still like, deactive.

AUSTIN: Um... they'd been deactivated, they hadn't been doing anything. I think when she arrives and sees them, she's going to be able to activate them, though.

ART: God, what is Ordenna's fucking problem?

ALI: [laughing] Yeah, I...

AUSTIN: Look, ideology's a motherfucker, man...

ALI: Hm...

ART: Ain't that the truth...

ALI: Um... we decide we were fighting?

AUSTIN: Um- I don't know what you decided! [ALI laughs] I mean, it's hard to say.

JACK: I don't think I wanna fight...

ART: [overlapping] I mean- these numbers are *bad*. We can't- [JACK overlaps, unintelligible] she could activate those anchor it's... [counting from one] *thirteen to four*

ALI: [sigh] I mean I can-

AUSTIN: If they activate those anchor.

ALI: Right, uh... I could try to do that.

JACK: Would that kinda be an [AUSTIN overlaps] act of aggression, though. That would be.

AUSTIN: [overlapping] You should make a-

ALI: Yeah- I think that the question for me is that, if we stayed and fought, would Lem attempt the pattern thing? Or, if we will go, we might as well just go.

JACK: Attempt what pattern thing?

ALI: The- [laughing] the mission that you have...

JACK: I don't know what that is!

ALI: Yeah... okay

JACK: I have no idea... they've given me no guidance whatsoever

AUSTIN: They've given no guidance...

ALI: Okay...

AUSTIN: You know this man is sick, and hurt, and dying, but also doesn't seem to want any help? But also that's the problem real doctors deal with sometimes, so it's hard to say.

JACK: It's also a little more than that I think, in that this person is an *extremely powerful god*? And [laughs] I'm like an orc with a guitar?

AUSTIN: I guess. Yeah. [JACK overlaps, unintelligible] Wait a- I'm not waiting for you to be like "Oh, I made the roll, and now he's healed!"

JACK: Yeah.

AUSTIN: -I'm not saying that at all. But I'm also saying- the thing that I hope I'm portraying with him, is that he is a person, who happens to be incredibly powerful. Um... and who knows a lot but also is completely fallible, right? Like, is not...he's not even like- I hope it comes off like this, he's not even like really... Arrell, in that Arrell has been looking for a solution for a long time? Samol has been like, depressed and sick with cancer for a long time, and *alone*. And not looking for a solution anymore. And I think those are important- that's an important distinction. [pause] I mean, regardless of whether or not you wanna fight, these are all moments when what I should be doing is... I'm letting y'all think because this is heavy and difficult? But also, according to the rules, I should be making moves right now, 'cause no one is doing anything. So... [ALI laughs] and those moves will be bad.

JACK: [deep breath] Oh, god...

JANINE: Yeah, we need to like, commit or not- I also have like a... a thing I could do. Specially because I've been quiet about what Adaire would've been doing.

AUSTIN: Yeah, I'm really curious about what Adaire has been up to this whole time.

JANINE: So- [sigh] god, this might be another really fucking stupid idea... [AUSTIN chuckles]
Um... when I last leveled up, I got a power called Disguise?

AUSTIN: *Uh-huh*

JANINE: Um... which allows me to- “When I have time and materials, create a disguise that will fool anyone into thinking I'm another creature of about the same size and shape. Actions can give you away but your appearance won't.” And I feel like- if we wanna commit to fighting, we definitely had the clothing of those Ordennan corpses.

AUSTIN: Oh, definitely.

JANINE: And that's an option! Which would at least maybe like- [laughing] she'd probably see right through that! But also, I could maybe run up and get a good hit in...

AUSTIN: Oh, that's such an heroic thing to do! [ALI laughs]

JANINE: It's- it's the- again, it's the worst idea, but...

AUSTIN: I would let that- you have the time! You have the- like, you definitely have the time to set up that disguise over the last three days or whatever.

JANINE: [laughs] Would the dog help if I was wearing a- [laughing]

AUSTIN: Maybe? [amused] That's kinda good. That I'll say like- yeah, you get that once, y'know? Um.. [laughs]

ALI: I just, like- what are any of these people actually doing after this fight?

AUSTIN: Well, I- that's a good question. Uhh... [struggling] I mean, yeah, that's a good question, but that's a question you could answer after the fight, also. If there's a fight, right? There's also the option of just “Fuck it, I'm getting in this boat and I'm *out*”

ALI: Bu- yeah. I guess for me, is this like, a really sad scene 'cause we're seeing these people just go through the motions, 'cause this is all they do? Or is this them being like [AUSTIN overlaps] “Okay, let's not just leave and accept the-” yeah.

AUSTIN: [overlapping] Yeah. That's an important- that's an important distinction. It doesn't even have to be the same for each person.

ALI: Right.

AUSTIN: [JANINE overlaps] What is it for Hella?

JANINE: [overlapping] Yeah, that's the other thing is like- [sigh] what are we fighting for? [ALI laughs]

AUSTIN: Uh, you're fighting- I mean, let me fucking put it on the table. Like, Samol dying is *very bad* for everybody. It's not instantly the world is over? But like, Samol dying is the sort of thing that you don't get to undo. There will be permanent ramifications for that? That... for me, close off lots of possible endings to this game, three years from now.

JACK: Right, but at the s- *oh, god*, [AUSTIN overlaps] at the same time like-

AUSTIN: [overlapping] Which is fine! Which is fine. Like, I'm ready to go down that route, but I- [struggling] Him dying versus not dying here means *different* things, fundamentally. It closes off all sorts of possibilities.

JACK: What if we... no, this idea isn't where Lem is as a character right now. So, I don't know. I was gonna pitch what if we take him with us? But I don't think that's...

ART: I mean, I thought about that? But- but really what I think nihilism Hadrian wants to do right now is just fucking walk out there and yell at someone?

ALI: [overlapping, softly] I did too...

[ALI laughs]

ART: Like, just get out there and be like "what the fuck are you doing? Get back on your fucking boat!"

AUSTIN: Right.

ART: We have the fucking Queenkiller.

JACK: [overlapping, laughing] I mean, that's an option...

AUSTIN: [amused] Yeah.

ART: It's like I Am the Law, but without the power.

JACK: [laughing] We could also do that dressed as Ordennans.

[everyone laughs]

AUSTIN: [laughing] Let's- let's pick a direction and go, because-

ART: [overlapping] I thought only Adaire could look like an Ordennan.

AUSTIN: Does it say how many disguises you can make?

JANINE: Uh, it just says- it just refers to the-

AUSTIN: Oh, okay.

ALI: [overlapping] I'm already Ordennan...

AUSTIN: Uh.. True. True.

ART: Sure, Hella we can probably make look like an Ordennan.

AUSTIN: Eh... yeah.

JANINE: It says you can create a disguise that will fool anyone [AUSTIN overlaps], but then says "into thinking you're another creature" – it seems to imply you'd be the only one wearing the disguise? But- the emphasis is definitely not the disguise being the thing that fools people.

AUSTIN: [overlapping] Yeah, I think- I would let you have multiple... I would let you have multiple disguises, is like- this is the thing you've been doing for the last... three or four days. And then your... spare time knitting this disguise? We get like the blades in the dark style flashback? [JANINE laughs] of you going out at night on your little walk around the- the shore? And then taking their fucking armor off? [laughs] It's like the dirty work of what you do, y'know

JANINE: Uh-huh...

[pause, JACK sighs]

AUSTIN: But also there are more of you than there are Ordennans? So...

JANINE: I mean, Hella's already an ordennan, I guess, so that takes one down.

AUSTIN: Uh-huh

JACK: I would support Hella trying to use the paladin, Hadrian going out and yelling at them, and Adaire doing something with the disguise.

AUSTIN: That's- let's do it. Let's go and do it.

ALI: Yeah.

JACK: Yeah... I had something that I wanna try as well, so...

AUSTIN: Who does what first? Who does what thing?

ALI: I think trying to control the paladin, um... should start before we leave the house?

AUSTIN: Mh-hm. Uh, you have to be- they have to see you.

ALI: Okay.

AUSTIN: So you have to step outside for this.

ALI: [laughing] Okay. It's the same scene as last time with Hella just like... going to the edge of [JANINE laughs] the porch and being like "hey, what's up?"

AUSTIN: Okay. Give me that roll.

ALI: [laughs] What is that roll?

AUSTIN: I think that's defy danger... I think- hm. Do you remember what it was the last time? I wanna say it's- like, how does it work for them? I think it's charisma.

ALI: Okay.

AUSTIN: I think you're like, channeling your bloodline through the stone, and also kinda like... using your force of will here?

ALI: Okay, yeah. I think last time it was constitution 'cause of like, blood stuff? But I think charisma makes more sense.

AUSTIN: Ummm. Yeah, I could see that. Yeah, you could make a constitution, I think that's your- it's blood stuff. [ALI laughs] it's blood stuff! It's a body, it's not- it's not charm.

ALI: Well that's a fourteen!

AUSTIN: Yo!

ALI: Yooooo [laughs]

AUSTIN: Fourteen!

ALI: Uh-huh!

AUSTIN: Um...how did I do that thing I did before?

ALI: I would like to try to control all of them, but I think that's asking too much. [AUSTIN overlaps] But I also just rolled a fourteen.

AUSTIN: [overlapping] That's asking a lot. You did roll a fourteen, I'll let you control... three fourths of them. Are there seven? I'll let you control four of them.

ALI: Oh, I meant like, even hers.

AUSTIN: *Oh*, no.

ALI: [laughing] Then- [AUSTIN overlaps] okay, then I should be able to control all of them!

AUSTIN: [overlapping] Your thing does not work on them. Nuh-uh.

ALI: Then all of the deactivated ones I should get.

AUSTIN: You did get a fourteen, I'll give you the fourteen...

ALI: Thank you.

AUSTIN: Alright! You get all these, sure.

ALI: Cool.

AUSTIN: So these all do the thing where they turn red [ALI laughs]. Uh... and then they like, turn and come to stand in front of you. And then the remaining ones, the five that Quinta Quatróna have, step forward and you can see, again, that they have like- they just look like living- they look like Castille looked, basically, but metal. Like, they have clear defined humanoid features, and as they get closer in the dark, you can see that they also have literal fire in their eyes.

AUSTIN (as Quinta): Queenkiller! Stand down

ALI (as Hella): This has gone on too far. You're making a mistake, all you've been doing is making mistakes.

AUSTIN (as Qinta): I give you one last chance, stand down. Come back to your motherland. Rejoin us, and let us burn this heresy both.

ALI: I don't think Hella responds, I think that she has the paladin- or the anchor march forward.

AUSTIN: Okay. I think all the anchor smash into each other? And like, the thing that you see is, the new anchor? Are- they twist and bend in weird ways? Um... like they're not- they're humanoid in shape, but they're not restricted to the sorts of movements humans are. Their arms are not only bent at the elbow in one direction, their waists bend in strange different directions... and every now and then there's a flash of fire that comes from- they like, expel fire. They basically have flamethrowers, as far as you can tell. And this group is now fighting the other group. Uh... speaking of fire stuff! Qinta Quatróna's blade is this like, huge- it's like serpentine? It goes back and forth in curves? And it also has the red tinge of heat. What's everybody else doing? Everybody has things, I heard everybody has things?

[silence]

ART: I mean, Hella kinda took my yelling thing?

ALI: [laughing] Sorry!

AUSTIN: Uh-huh. I see. [JANINE chuckles]

ART: So I guess I take the- the sword from Samothēs and come stand with Hella, and I'm- I'm ready... I'm not running out or anything but I'm- I'm gonna fight with her

AUSTIN: Gotcha. Uh... Adaire and Lem?

JANINE: So... I have the disguise of hatchet guy.

AUSTIN: Uh-huh

JANINE: [laughs] And in the role of hatchet guy, I need to go find that dog, 'cause I want the dog to make me invisible

JACK: *Ohhh my god.*

AUSTIN: Okay, give me- the dog can be in here, give me a Defy Danger, charisma.

JANINE: I can do that

AUSTIN: [amused] You better.

JANINE: Please, god...

AUSTIN: I think we also get lots of-

JANINE: What the f-

ALI: [overlapping] Ohhh, okay...

AUSTIN: That's still a seven!

JANINE: Well, fuck- okay. [laughs]

AUSTIN: The... [laughs evilly] the dog makes you invisible. What do you do?

JANINE: Why did you laugh..?

AUSTIN: The dog makes you invisible, what's up?

JANINE: Uh. I mean, okay, now I'm really worried! [JACK and ALI laugh] I'm really, really worried!

AUSTIN: Uh-huh?

JANINE: Ohhh, boy. But I guess Adaire wouldn't know any different, 'cause like... she wanted to be made invisible, that's the plan. okay...

AUSTIN: Yeah, she gets- yeah, totally. Lem, you see her vanish.

JANINE: [laughing] Okay, let's carry on with the plan I guess...

AUSTIN: Uh-huh

JANINE: Uh... the thing I wanted to do while invisible was backstab Qinta.

AUSTIN: Okay, yeah, we'll move you back there and we'll resolve that in a second. Lem, what are you doing?

JACK: I'm gonna go back into the house, where Samol is?

AUSTIN: Uh-huh

JACK: And I'm going to... perform the rudimentary business of basic pattern making.

AUSTIN: Okay. How, what does that look like?

JACK: Opening drawers, and leaving them open? Pouring small handfuls of salt out onto the table? Lem doesn't know what he's doing, and he doesn't even know if it's doing anything? But it's the business that one would- y'know, it's like being told when you're like, miming writing, or miming talking. The thing you do isn't writing or talking? But it's easy to do, it's easy to make your hands or your mouth do.

AUSTIN: uh-huh. Give me a Discern Realities.

JACK: Sure.

AUSTIN: This is like- in a sense what I like about this is that it's almost like you're calibrating? One of the intros I've written for one of the- not the intros, the episode descriptions? Has been about Morbash realizing that a lot of basic patterns that he uses have started working wrong? There are like- um... y'know, he basically says- in one of those he's like "I used to be able to crack an egg on a stone and based on the way the yolk split, I would know which direction my quarry was in. And now it's not splitting at all, and that's weird. And I'm not like, a semiotician, but I know when my shit doesn't work" and I like that as a way of sorta- like, "alright, what's going on" let me Discern Realities here, in a sense.

JACK: Uh, I don't know that Lem thinks he's doing that necessarily though? I think what Lem [AUSTIN overlaps] thinks he's doing is the kinda bitter response to Hella saying [mocking] "are you gonna do the pattern?" [ALI laughs]

AUSTIN: [overlapping] No, totally! Totally. I don't think that's- neither did- [laughs] to be clear, neither was Morbash. Morbash was trying to find this quarry, and then was like "What the *fuck* is going on?", y'know.

JACK: [laughs] Yeah. Alright, rolling wisdom. [quietly] Come on...

AUSTIN: Go for it. We'll come back to it

JACK: [quietly] Give me a solid... It did not do me a solid....

AUSTIN: Oh... you got a six, friend. Uh- that's okay. Um, well come back to it. [amused] I like- I just like the notion of you now just pouring salts out and-

JACK: [laughs] Yeah.

AUSTIN: [laughing] Opening and closing cupboards, cracking eggs on stones- y'know, all of that. Adaire? As these pala-din and- anchor and everything fight, you tell me what this backstab looks like!

JANINE: Okay, so this is... I have- I'm still using the fancy rapier, because- I'm not gonna like, take it from the island, probably? Cause that's just stealing, but while we're here I might as well put it to use.

AUSTIN: Wait- [ALI laughs] okay! Hasn't stopped you before. But that's fine.

JANINE: I- y'know. It's this old man's, and I don't- it's different stealing from a person you've spent a week with, I think.

AUSTIN: Fair, I guess.

JANINE: So... I wanna just fucking stab her in the back with this rapier...?

AUSTIN: Sounds good! Roll a- "When you attack or surprise a defenseless enemy with melee weapons you can choose to deal your damage or roll Dex"

JANINE: I... wanna roll dex.

AUSTIN: Okay, when you roll dex we'll see what you do [laughs]

JANINE: [pained noises]

AUSTIN: That's a nine, that's not bad! So, on a 7-9 you get to choose one of the following things: you don't get into melee with them, you deal your damage plus 1d6, you create an advantage (plus one forward on you ally acting on it) or you reduce their armor by one until they repair it.

JANINE: Okay, so the thing I wanna do... I wanna do my damage plus 1d6, but also I think I have that plus two forward damage from Lem? Does that still count or has it been too long?

AUSTIN: [sigh] I'll let that count. So plus two on top of that. You know, he fucking broke- he's got like-

JANINE: I got some... dice math.

AUSTIN: Yeah. So it's 1d8, plus 1d6, plus two.

JANINE: I gotta make this shit count, y'know? [ALI laughs]

AUSTIN: Uh-huh... I do. That ain't bad, that's thirteen! Shit. she has three armor, so that's only ten, but that's still a very strong hit.

JANINE: I mean it's also a piercing weapon, so...remember it's a fancy one?

AUSTIN: Uh-huh! Yeah, its plus two piercing, so. Yeah, that hurts her very badly! Um... there is the thing though [JANINE laughs], which is Adaire... so you all see Adaire pop back into existence? And stab Qinta Quatróna in the back, with this rapier? And the dog happily barks, and Qinta Quatróna vanishes.

ALI: Wait.

AUSTIN: And then they're both gone!

JANINE: Ohhh...

AUSTIN: And it's just like "[barking] Ordenna! I'm on team Ordenna" [JANINE laughs]

ALI: That was gonna happen. Uh-huh

AUSTIN: Uh-huh!

ART: One of those *nationalist* dogs you hear so much about

[everyone laughs]

AUSTIN: Yep! Well- *very well* trained! What's everybody else doing?

ART: I mean, are we in this now? Is this happening?

AUSTIN: This is happening! So, Hella and Hadrian. Um- they, the new anchor, have taken out three of the old anchor.

ALI: No losses on their side?

AUSTIN: The old anchor- [laughing] no losses on their side. The stats were not great for the- yeah

ART: Y'know, old Hadrian thought he had some ways of countering invisibility, and new Hadrian *does not*

AUSTIN: Nooo.

ART: So I guess I'll just engage an anchor?

AUSTIN: What's that- paint me that picture.

ART: I think I find one that looks kinda occupied?

AUSTIN: Sure.

ART: Uh, I find one that looks occupied and I try to- I try to like, run it through, I'm really not sure what this weapon's gonna do... to an anchor?

AUSTIN: Give me a Hack and Slash, as you try to run it through with this blade made of nothing itself. Boom! That's a fucking fourteen!

ART: Alright!

AUSTIN: Do you... um- do you do avoid the attack, or do you choose to add the 1d6 to do extra damage but expose yourself to attack?

ART: This Hadrian is definitely doing 1d6.

AUSTIN: Alright so... what does that sword roll again? It is...

ART: Well, I don't get the 1d4 anymore, so it's a d10, plus 2d6?

AUSTIN: ...plus 2d6, and that d6 heals you if you're hurt

ART: I'm not hurt anymore...

AUSTIN: Okay.

ART: Seventeen.

AUSTIN: Boom! So, as you cut it through- or you impale it- it begins to glow? And like, drops its blade and charges at you to grab you. What do you do?

ART: Um... I try to just like- you know in football, when they try to tackle someone with their arms? And sometimes you just kinda like, run through it?

AUSTIN: Yeah

ART: I try to just kinda, burst through those arms.

AUSTIN: Nice. That sounds like Defy Danger strength to me.

ART: Yeah, that was the idea...

AUSTIN: *Oof*.

ART: Yeah, that time it didn't go well?

AUSTIN: No, that went *bad*.

ALI: [pained noises]

AUSTIN: Um. That didn't go good... take eleven damage.

ART: Ookay! oh, I should have done that thing, let me shrug it off.

AUSTIN: Oh, nice! What does that do, how does that work?

ART: "When you take damage you can grit your teeth and accept the blow, and instead of suffering damage I suffer a debility of my choice"?

AUSTIN: Good, so what will you take.

ART: I will take... scarred.

AUSTIN: Okay. What's that look like? Like, visibly. [pause] Oh, I can tell you what partially it looks like, but you can tell me what the rest is.

ART: Uh... I think it's- y'know... Hadrian realizes what he's trying to do doesn't work, he can't just bust through these metal arms like they're human arms. And... he just kinda like- he steels himself, right? It's just like "Y'know what. Fuck off, I'm not- I'm not here for this"

AUSTIN: Uh-huh

ART: I'm- y'know, he kinda leans into it. He tries to just kinda like, get through it.

AUSTIN: Yeah, so- it explodes. Like, the- you basically pierced its core? And it exploded and sent you flying back over this boat? And then- Hella, when Hadrian stands up, his eyes are that purple fire. That's also part of the scarring and why your charisma is down one.

ART: That seems fair...

AUSTIN: Hella. His eyes are purple? His eyes have the purple black mix of the Heat and the Dark.

ALI: Like the sword?

AUSTIN: Uh-huh! Like the sword he still has and is using for some reason.

ALI: Okay..

AUSTIN: Lem.

ART: It's the sword I have.

AUSTIN: It is the sword you, have that's true. [pause] Oh, *man*. You failed that roll, huh?

JACK: Uh-huh

AUSTIN: So does that mean nothing happens or does that mean something incredible happens? Huh. [pause] I think it's the latter, right? Where's- what room are you in, when you're doing this?

JACK: I think in the kitchen?

AUSTIN: Okay. Um... [laughs] you... you see the- you catch a reflection in one of the... I think just in the water basin. And it's those green hills from inside Hella's sword. And that's not what you were trying to do at all!

JACK: [laughs] Huh! okay

AUSTIN: And as you like- as the water moves around in there, it like spreads further into the water? It's almost like there's a film on top that's growing, and is that place.

JACK: *Huh*.

AUSTIN: Hella? What are you doing?

ALI: [long sigh] I don't know. I have to figure out where this invisible lady is? I have a move that I wanna do but I need to make eye contact for it? [laughs]

AUSTIN: Uh-huh. She is invisible!

ALI: Uh-huh!

AUSTIN: While Hella's trying to figure out what to do, one of the... Iduna Fell, one of the Fell anchor is what I have written down here- leaps over the four remaining regular anchor? And then like, sprints on all fours at you, then there's a handstand jump, it flips forward on its front

two arms as if they were pistoned legs? And then jumps up in the sky, and comes down you with their blade. What do you do?

ALI: I... don't think that it's fair that you did that when I was working through what I was gonna do, but okay. [laughs]

AUSTIN: It's the- yeah! If someone doesn't do stuff, I get to make moves.

ALI: I guess it's coming down towards me?

AUSTIN: Uh-huh.

ALI: Can I like, lift my sword up but also step back?

AUSTIN: Yeah, totally. As if like "fucking land on this thing"?

ALI: Right, yeah.

AUSTIN: *Yeah*, give me a Hack and Slash.

ALI: Okay... that's an eleven.

AUSTIN: That's an eleven! Do you do the extra damage, or do you do damage safely?

ALI: I think I do it safely.

AUSTIN: Okay.

ALI: Like, the move is more about getting out of the way than it is...

AUSTIN: Yeah...

ALI: Also I have tons of damage. And that's an eleven.

AUSTIN: 'Kay! And that pierces... also?

ALI: Yeah!

AUSTIN: That- nice. This one is on your sword, and it does the same thing that Hadrian's did. Or act- you know what, sorry. This one still has one HP left. [ALI laughs] but hey, it's on your fucking sword in front of you!

ALI: [sigh] Can I try to cut it in half from the middle of it? Like, to the outside, so its not- yeah.

AUSTIN: [struggling] Uh- yes, being in melee range with these things is going to continue to be very dangerous.

ALI: Okay.

AUSTIN: So go ahead and do another hack and slash.

ALI: Okay. That's a thirteen! Which means...

AUSTIN: Oh! That means you do your extra thing, right?

ALI: Yeah!

AUSTIN: What do you do?

ALI: Uhhh, I can... choose something physical on my target, which is I think this-

AUSTIN: Yeah

ALI: But it's just for this one, right?

AUSTIN: Yeah, yeah, yeah. But I think this means you can safely kill it without it exploding

ALI: Yeah

AUSTIN: Like, you're able to cut around the core, basically.

ALI: Right. Yeah, that's what I was trying to do anyways, so...

AUSTIN: Yeah, totally! That super worked, awesome. Adaire? The dog is like barking, and you can hear the barking, you can't see the dog, and you can't see Quinta Quatróna. What do you do?

JANINE: Cool...

AUSTIN: But nothing can see you either, so...

JANINE: Hm... so wait, we're- the three of us are invisible?

AUSTIN: Yeah.

JANINE: Okay. Um... I have- hm, okay. I should try- [laughs] I shouldn't get greedy here, I should probably... I wanna try and observe, to figure out where Qinta actually is?

AUSTIN: Totally.

JANINE: Because, if I stab her it will reveal where I am, but not where she is, and that's bad.

AUSTIN: Give me a- give me a Discern Realities.

[cheers]

AUSTIN: *Ooh!*

ALI: Thirteen!

AUSTIN: A thirteen! Alright, you get all those questions!

JANINE: Good, yeah!

[pause]

AUSTIN: You get three questions

JANINE: Okay, I want to know... what is about to happen?

AUSTIN: Um... you follow her footsteps and you can see that Qinta Quatróna is about to kill Hadrian.

JANINE: *Wowwww*

AUSTIN: She's up- she's like, on top of the boat, about to come down with her big weird... or like, you see her footsteps go to where the boat is? And you can see the boat tilt, as if to show her stepping onto it

JANINE: Okay, um...[pause] oh, some of these are *tough*. Okay. what should I be on the lookout for?

AUSTIN: Um... the anchor near you? This one right here- one of the ones that's near you? Is making a very strange low hum, and you can hear your daggers rattling? As if they were being pulled towards it

JANINE: Okay... [laughs]

AUSTIN: Third question. Remember you get to take one plus forward on anything that you learned here

JANINE: [amused] What here is useful or valuable to me?

AUSTIN: [softly] Fuck. Um... [sigh] I'm trying to use anything else here. Am I missing anything? I don't think there's anything special here that I haven't already- I think I've given you the information about this scene, unfortunately

JANINE: Oh. That sucks

AUSTIN: Like, you could stab her in the back again. That's useful and valuable, right? Like-

JANINE: Yeah... [laughing] that's true

ART: But [AUSTIN overlaps] Hella's sword is literally priceless.

AUSTIN: [overlapping] Hadrian's sword is really f- Hadrian's sword is terrifying? Y'know? Um... the- okay, I'll give you one little thing. Which is just like, you're scanning the scene. There is a liquid dripping out of Hella's sword still. It never stopped bleeding. But it's clear, its like water

JANINE: Okay, cool, that's good...

AUSTIN: Uh-huh! Do you capitalize all this information? Not the dripping sword. The worst of my fantasy novels [ALI and JANINE laugh]

JANINE: I would definitely like to stab the lady who's gonna kill Hadrian? Is the thing-

AUSTIN: [overlapping] Go for it.

JANINE: -that I would like to do.

AUSTIN: Yes, give me another backstab.

JANINE: I can do that. Uh, I'm gonna roll dex again, 'cause-

AUSTIN: So you're gonna take a plus one to this, but then I'm also gonna give you a minus one? She's still invisible, you just kind of know where she is.

JANINE: Yeah-

AUSTIN: Just roll as normal, yeah... hey, that's an eleven!

ALI: [overlapping] Oh my god...

JANINE: Did 'em right!

AUSTIN: Goddamn! Adaire goes all in! So then-

JANINE: She's had a bad day, she's leaning- yeah [ALI laughs]

AUSTIN: Plus six damage again? Or plus 1d6 damage again?

JANINE: Um... hang on I got an eleven... do I get two of those then?

AUSTIN: Oh, yeah, you get two of these, yes

JANINE: Okay... I would like to- yeah, I want to deal my damage plus 1d6 and also reduce her armor by one

AUSTIN: Sounds good, give me that damage.

JANINE: Okay. Do I- am I reducing her- I guess it doesn't matter

AUSTIN: It doesn't matter- yeah, yeah. It'll be after- uh! It like gets immediately. It also doesn't matter, 'cause now there's a blade sticking in the back of Qinta Quatróna, Living Blood of Fire, except she isn't living anymore. Qinta Quatróna falls to her knees, and then onto the ground

ART: And then turns visible?

AUSTIN: Oh, yeah

ART: Just tryna figure out what's going on there

AUSTIN: Barbelo barks a couple of times again. It like, wags its tail? And is very confused about this whole situation. The remaining Fell anchor do not stop, and they kill two more of the remaining anchor. The water in the bowl- in the basin? It's like there's a faucet on, Lem.

JACK: Huh.

AUSTIN: There's like more of it, it's filling up more and more?

JACK: Into the basin?

AUSTIN: [overlapping] Which again, was not the pattern you did! Yeah, so it's like- sorry, it's like there's a faucet on *inside* of the basin, under the water. Y'know what I mean?

JACK: Yeah

AUSTIN: [amused] Yeah, it's like that, and soon the water is spilling out into the kitchen

JACK: Is its reflection reflected on the kitchen surfaces as well?

AUSTIN: Oh, *yeah*.

JACK: Uhhhhh, where is Samol?

AUSTIN: You can hear him humming, out in the yard, in the back- in the little yarded area where you first met him. By the stump.

JACK: Uh, I'm going to go out and try to gently. But probably not as gently as I intend? Pull him into the kitchen

AUSTIN (as Samol): Alright, calm- oh, you making a mess! [ALI laughs]

JACK (as Lem): What is this?

AUSTIN (as Samol): I was gardening- you tell me, you're the pattern magician!

JACK (as Lem): I didn't-

AUSTIN (as Samol): *God!*

JACK (as Lem): I didn't do this!

AUSTIN (as Samol): What do you mean you didn't do this?? I didn't do this! There's salt everywhere- you have six of my cupboards open!

JACK (as Lem): I did that. I didn't-

AUSTIN (as Samol): [overlapping] Did you take my milk out? You took my *milk* out!

JACK (as Lem): Can you not see this?

AUSTIN (as Samol): Yeah, I can- I can see it. [sigh]

AUSTIN: Hadrian. How you doing?

ART: Uh- I think I'm great

AUSTIN: Good.

ART: Who could argue otherwise? [laughs]

AUSTIN: I- good question

ART: [quietly] Uh... what's the score here...?

AUSTIN: There's three of them left.

ART: Alright.

AUSTIN: And these remaining anchor- the red anchor of Hella- are basically just... holding everything together? Like, they're holding them back, but they haven't been able to actually do any damage

ART: Sure. But after seeing one explode, can I kinda like, grab one of Hella's anchor, put my sword under its arm? And kinda like, push forward in an attempt to use it as a shield?

AUSTIN: Yeah, give me... Hack and Slash. That's a good image, I like that image. Your sword is burning through them on the- like, you use them as a shield in that way? And it's like cutting into the sides of this- of both the red anchor and- the arm of the red anchor, you know what I mean?

ART: Sure

AUSTIN: Uh.. you did seven, so you both get to do damage.

ART: Alright, uh..

AUSTIN: Oh, Adaire is here now, right. Go ahead and do your damage.

ART: Ten!

AUSTIN: Nice work. [pause] two! Hey! You win that one [ALI laughs] that was pretty fucking good. This one is still not dead, but it is- it has caught fire with that purple fire.

ALI: [long sigh]

AUSTIN: [amused] So that's good

ART: That we all agree is normal, and not a cause of concern!

AUSTIN: Hey, everybody who's outside? If you're holding onto weapons- if you're not holding onto weapons, you lose your weapons! Anything metal on you gets taken in by this other anchor? Which jumps over the other two and is now by itself and between these trees? Um... if you are holding your weapons I'm gonna need a defy danger strength to hold onto it.

JANINE: Oh, crap.

ALI: Okay.

ART: What the fuck?? How do I keep doing this??

[ALI laughs]

AUSTIN: Oh, buddy... alright. So Adaire, I think you lose the throwing daggers? But not the- the rapier you have. Hadrian? Your blade cuts through the arm of the red anchor that you were using as a shield, and the entirety of the other one? Um... which causes it to start glowing in that way? And then- Hella, you have a choice to make.

ALI: [laughs] Yeah?

AUSTIN: You can hold on to the blade, but you can feel it being pulled- you can either hold onto it by the hilt, which will let you keep it for sure. But if you do that, it will continue to break. Its being pulled by the blade, where the blade has been cut into. [ALI sighs] In fact, you can immediately tell as soon as this starts happening, it starts *bleeding* more. The watery substance starts pouring out below you.

ALI: So I can either grab it by the blade-

AUSTIN: You can either- no, no, you can either hold onto it- and it will continue to break- or you can let go, and it will not break. But if you let go. But also this thing will have your sword

ALI: Oh, okay, I'll let go of it then.

AUSTIN: Okay. It catches your sword, with its hand.

ALI: [laughs] Yeah, this has all been happening while I've been wanting to say that I wanna make a beeline towards... Qinta? To get her plate?

AUSTIN: Sure, good call. You run to her- you run to her?

ALI: Yeah

AUSTIN: Okay. She doesn't have a plate.

ALI: [cries] Oh... cool.

AUSTIN: It's not how these work.

ALI: Thanks for saying "good call" [laughs]

AUSTIN: Uh-huh. But like, it's a surprise. You look through all her stuff, and it's not- it's nothing. Like, they seem to move on their own.

ALI: Does she have-

AUSTIN: Like they have a will of their own.

ALI: -a weapon?

AUSTIN: Yeah! Uh, no 'cause it would have gotten taken- zipped over to this thing, and it's like at a foot of... this anchor now. It attaches all of them as they come in and then drops them to the ground? But it holds on to your- onto to the blade in the dark. This one moves forward to your clump, and reaches out a hand? And the hand moves upwards, revealing an oily barrel, which begins to let out fire. What do you all do?

ALI: Can I tackle it?

AUSTIN: Totally. You will- I guess that's defy danger strength, is what i'd say? Or it can be hack and slash, but if it is a hack and slash everyone near you will be in danger. Like, you could- if you get a 7-9, everyone near you will take that hit, not just you.

ALI: But it would put me in like, the physical positioning to do damage, right?

AUSTIN: Yeah, totally

ALI: Okay... I guess- I think I'm trying to hurt it? This is like, a dangerous thing, and it's partially like- [laughing] oh, Hella's... you don't try to push it down in a way that's very careful. That's not how she fights, ever?

AUSTIN: Yeah.

ALI: That's an eleven.

AUSTIN: That's an eleven! Do you do your damage plus 1d6 or do you just do your regular damage?

ALI: Ummm, I...

AUSTIN: This is the one that Hadrian's already stabbed, right?

ALI: Oh, I thought this was the one with all the weapons.

AUSTIN: No, the one with all the weapons is this one right here.

ALI: *Oh*, okay. Alright.

AUSTIN: It's further back, this one is the one that has a flamethrower and is about to burn everybody.

ALI: Okay. Well, still, I- I thought I had my sword and I'd take it back, but it's fine. Um... [laughs]

AUSTIN: Yeah, you do not have your sword

ALI: I'm just gonna roll my damage then.

AUSTIN: Alright, go for it

ALI: It's a four...

AUSTIN: You're like- you have it down on the ground, and like- you're punching it, but nothing's going through its armor. Um... and you can see her face, it's very weird up-close like this? You have her pinned to the ground, you've tackled her? And you're punching her. And she's like, making *expressions*, in a way that the old anchor could not do.

AUSTIN (as Samol): What are you d- [sigh] this ain't right... you get my whole situation wet! This is [laughs]

JACK (as Lem): I tried to do something.

AUSTIN (as Samol): Okay, I'll be right b- yeah, okay, huh. I've heard that a *lot*. [ALI laughs]
Um... ugh

AUSTIN: He goes to the other room and starts putting his books onto higher shelves?

JACK (as Lem): You worry I'm gonna flood this place?

AUSTIN (as Samol): Are you gonna stop it??

JACK (as Lem): No.

AUSTIN (as Samol): I- uh!

JACK (as Lem): I don't know what you're hoping or here, I'm just doing what I was sent here to do

AUSTIN (as Samol): Don't give me lip, just- try to fix it!

JACK (as Lem): [laughing] What do you think I'm doing?

AUSTIN (as Samol): Standing in my kitchen, yelling at me!

JACK: Okay! [laughing] I'm gonna try to pour some more salt out onto the table, please. [ALI laughs]

AUSTIN: Are you- to what end?

JACK: [laughing] I guess continuing what I'm doing?

AUSTIN: [amused] Okay, that just... keeps happening then [ALI giggles]

JACK: Hastening it? I don't know!

AUSTIN: Yes, hastening it. That's the thing you're doing it is hastening it, for sure.

JACK: Yeah.

AUSTIN: [amused] I- this fucking sociopath streak in Lem is really good. It's really, fucking, a lot. [sigh] It's fucking a depressed man, *god*. Um... Hella has an anchor pinned, the other one- the other one with Hella's blade is walking towards her, and the third leaps over them both to kinda try to corner the three of you in. Water drips out of the front porch- or out of the front door, and onto the ground outside. And it's like, coming on a line? Towards the anchor that's holding Hella's blade. Like it's dripping in that direction.

JACK: And- to be clear- the vision, the reflections on this water, are still showing this place?

AUSTIN: Yeah, the chimney smoke, and the castle in the distance with a certain shot, and a beautiful sun.

ALI: How close am I to the anchor that has my blade?

AUSTIN: You have this one pinned down on the ground, and the one that has your blade is like, about to- it's coming towards you with your blade, as if to hit you while you have this one pinned down on the ground.

ART: Could I try to tackle that one?

[ALI laughs]

AUSTIN: Yeah, you like jump over Hella? Yeah.

ART: Yeah!

AUSTIN: Alright, then give me that- give me... are you trying to do damage, or are you trying to-

ART: I'm trying to do damage, I'm tryna...

AUSTIN: Hack and Slash!

ART: Yeah. But hack and slash with my body.

AUSTIN : Uh. Okay. you both get to do damage.

ART: Alright

AUSTIN: Take ten, and then you do.... Eight, but the second one is only one, which ignores armor but the rest gets- the rest of that gets through, so. The rest of it gets blocked- not the rest of it but- the regular hit does not pierce, right?

ART: There's no sword anymore, I'm just throwing my body at it

AUSTIN: Oh! You're not using your blade here

ART: I don't have it, its stuck to the- it got pulled out of my hand

AUSTIN: *Oh*, you lost your blade! I forgot that you lost your blade! Right, fuck! [ALI laughs] I forgot that you completely failed that roll. My bad, right. So this thing has both of those blades, and is like duel wielding them, of course, that's this terrible thing that we have going on!

ALI: Come on....

AUSTIN: What do you mean come on! [ALI laughs] Look, it only did one, but it did do one on Hadrian! [JACK and JANINE laugh] which is unblockable, so... [quietly] which means it also gets to heal a little bit, as you trade blows. So you tackle it, and it's like sawing in at you with

these blades. You're too close so it can't quite get good hits? It can't quite finish the job? But it does substantial damage to you. You just punching at it? What's the fighting look like? [unintelligible] their knees, or their elbows?

ART: I mean I hope the damage was mostly percussive? Like, just the force of pinning it to the ground that hard? But now that I'm down there, I'm trying to like... yeah, pound it a little bit, try to get up on top?

AUSTIN: Uh-huh. Adaire, there are people pinning robots to the ground [ALI giggles], what are you doing?

JANINE: I would like to stab the one that's already hurt, and it's also already pinned, cause that seems like an efficient use of invisible stabbing

AUSTIN: Uh-huh. Normally I wouldn't make you hack and slash, but Hella being so close makes this dangerous

JANINE: Yeah...

AUSTIN: So go- give me a Hack and Slash

JANINE: Oh... god, okay.

AUSTIN: That's a seven so you both get to do damage. Um... the- as you like, stab- so do your damage first, that way I get to know...

ALI: I could aid though, should i...

AUSTIN: Yeah, yeah, how do you aid?

ALI: [laughs] I'm holding it down?

AUSTIN: Yeah. Okay. you just kinda keep it in place, that's fine.

ALI: Yeah.

AUSTIN: Gimme the roll. To take it from a nine to a ten. Boom! It does!

JANINE: Nice...

AUSTIN: So go ahead and do your damage? [pause] That is *enough*! But it does immediately start to glow.

JANINE: That's bad.

AUSTIN: Uh-huh! [ALI laughs] what do y'all do? Hella, you have this thing pinned.

ALI: Ow...

AUSTIN: [amused] How do you try to get away? Or do you?

ALI: [groans] Yeah, could- ugh... what does absorbing that blow look like?

AUSTIN: Absorbing that means taking a bunch of damage right now, is what that would mean

ALI: [laughing] Would you like to tell me what that roll would be?

AUSTIN: Uh... yeah, cause I made it before, didn't i?

ALI: Yeah... I just can't find it.

AUSTIN: I believe it's- that's 2d8.

JANINE: Ugh...

ALI: [pained noises]

JANINE: What if we just get behind the boat, and tip the boat up on its side?

AUSTIN: That's a thing you could try to do, for sure!

ALI: Okay, [JANINE overlaps] but then what about Hadrian?

JANINE: [overlapping] We got two strong people here! Or I guess one. Well that- yeah, that's-hm...

ALI: [laughing] What about Hadrian? [JANINE laughs]

AUSTIN: Yeah, Hadrian's a little far from the boat for that to work.

ALI: Um... and also-

AUSTIN: [overlapping] But he's tough, he has a lot of HP!

ALI: He's really close to this thing though... would that- if I do this, would my armor help?

AUSTIN: If you do what?

ALI: If I stay on top of this thing

AUSTIN: Like, would you absorb it?

ALI: Yeah!

AUSTIN: Like- Adaire would still get hurt. The armor would help, but- it wouldn't cut through you, it doesn't have piercing.

ALI: Okay, I just mean- if I'm trying to block the damage from them, does my armor-

AUSTIN: You will not block the damage from them.

ALI: Okay

AUSTIN: It's too big for that. You're not gonna like- it's not just a grenade you're jumping on

ALI: Okay.

AUSTIN: It kinda does the Gundam noise of like [ALI laughs] "brrrrRRR" y'know what I mean? Like, it's a big bad explosion.

JANINE: We- we should probably get behind the boat?

ALI: [laughing] We can- you can do that.

JANINE: And you're just gonna lay there and get exploded?? [laughing] like, what's your plan??

ALI: 'Cause- I mean- I think that she would believe that this would work? And I know that you're telling me that it wouldn't?

AUSTIN: Oh, you could try that!

ALI: Yeah.

AUSTIN: Like, she can make that decision and do that and just take the blow. But also Hadrian will get hurt and Adaire- Here's what I'll do, I say that Adaire can just get behind the boat herself and- because you're not there also trying to also get behind the boat? It's easier for her to get to cover.

ALI: Okay.

AUSTIN: So she doesn't have to make a roll. So in that way you did help!

ALI: [laughing] Okay...

AUSTIN: Uh... wait. Oh, right. Hadrian- fuck, right! I was like- I almost said like "Oh, Hadrian, you shouldn't've gotten hurt before, 'cause you're invincible to that blade" but you're *not on that quest anymore*. [ALI laughs]

ART: Nope!

AUSTIN: Good.

ART: My plan is to try to... like, switch places with this guy? Get him on top and see if he can soak the blow for me?

AUSTIN: Okay.

ART: Yeah, I wanna switch so he will take the explosion.

AUSTIN: Gotcha, give me a roll- 2d6 strength, Defy Danger strength. [sigh] buddy, that's a six

ART: [overlapping] Haven't seen it yet. [ALI laughs]

AUSTIN: Well, its a six!

ART: [overlapping] Goddammit!

ALI: [whimper] Ow...

ART: I've got plus two, those sixes are all fours!

AUSTIN: [laughs] So... things happen in speed here. First the explosion. Take sever everybody.

ALI: Okay...

ART: I'm gonna- I'm gonna [AUSTIN overlaps] Aegis that.

AUSTIN: [overlapping] Not- not Adaire

JANINE: Okay...

AUSTIN: Alright, that sounds good-

ART: I take stunned. I think it's pretty obvious-

AUSTIN: Yeah, that's fair. Um... take ten, as this one also- oh, right, plus [sigh] 1d6 for the other sword... alright! Take sixteen from the blade and the dark and the other blade- the other sword, the Heat and the Dark?

ART: I'll... Aegis that too?

AUSTIN: Uh-huh! Uh, they're in you. It leaves the blades in you, and holds tight. And pushes you forward? Like, yeah, you're under it now! And also these blades are stuck in you, and slowly burning you up. As long as that blade is- as long as that blade stays in you, yeah, you're gonna take 1d6 until that blade is not in you anymore. Um... but hey, the one under Hella is gone! Lem. the whole of the kitchen and the dining room are now filled with water. [JACK laughs] and you notice it's drawing a line through the living room and outside

JACK. Okay. I'm gonna follow the line out. Through the dining room, and the living room, and onto the steps of the porch? Where I guess I just see like, carnage?

AUSTIN: Yeah, [laughing] there's explosions, there's one- there's one remaining anchor- there's two anchor. One of them is on top of Hadrian and has two swords in him, and there's one that's now moving with its blade towards Hella, who just absorbed an explosion as best she could. [JACK laughs] and it has a sword out also.

JACK: Where is the line of water going?

AUSTIN: Now it's going to Hadrian! 'Cause Hadrian has the blade in the dark inside of him [laughs]

JACK: [laughing] Oh, god. Um... sure! I'm gonna see what pattern magic does if I a. use a guitar and b. try to use it on an anchor?

AUSTIN: Okay, what are you trying to do?

JACK: Uh, I am going to try and... god. [laughs] I'm gonna try to use Metal Hurlant again, since that went so well last time?

AUSTIN: So well last time, yeah!

JACK: And this time I'm using it, y'know, with the guitar for the first time?

AUSTIN: Yeah! Use- use charisma instead of constitution for this roll.

JACK: Oh, okay!

AUSTIN: 'Cause you're using this guitar.

JACK: Sure. Uh... alright, I can do that.

AUSTIN: Adaire, you are still in the boat.

[JACK bursts out laughing]

AUSTIN: How did you roll a *four* on charisma?? [pause] you're the *bard!!*

JACK: [laughing] So- so, maybe what is revealed here is that when Lem said "yeah, I can play the guitar!" he- [AUSTIN laughs]

AUSTIN: [laughing] [cartoonish noises] It's like guitar hero? When you just go like [bad guitar noises]

JACK: Ohhh, no....

JANINE: "It's like playing a sideways violin! It will be fine!" [ALI laughs]

JACK: *God...*

AUSTIN: [overlapping] Jesus! Well, we're in it! Right? [JACK laughs] we're here! The blade snaps. Of course, right? [JACK overlaps] and it snaps when it's in Hadrian...

JACK: [overlapping, unintelligible]

AUSTIN: Right! It's the additional- well, it's not even that! You got a four, dog! [JACK laughs] You don't even get an additional target, IN- it's- *everyone* is deafened, as the blade like, snaps in place, and when the anchor pulls up on the hilt? It's like it pulled up on a bottle of water very quickly? And the water just all comes out of the blade. It's like, a mini waterfall from the hand of this anchor- of this fella anchor. And Hadrian is *covered* in this water. Like, head to toe baptism. [ALI laughs] and he's *gone*. And that water keeps coming, and he's gone. Um... the anchor catches- like, the anchor begins to do its low hum as the Metal Hurlant- which is again- that's the move where you cause damage by making sound, right?

JACK: Yeah

AUSTIN: It just echoes through this entire place, in the dark, there's no sun here either... and you can hear trees in the distance collapse? And the water continues to spill out, over this entire

island. One of the other anchor sees this? And there's this moment of recognition? And it *leaps* off of the fucking island into the boat! And like, that's not what anchor are supposed to do!

JACK: Huh. Like, entirely on its own volition

AUSTIN: Oh, yeah, totally. Again, they act as if they have will, right? Um... the boat? Falls into the water, as it spreads across the entire length of this island. Like, it falls inward, like it- as if there was a hole on the ground, and then it's *gone*. And then the body of Qinta Quatróna does... and it's chasing all of y'all.

JACK: [deep breath] I don't know if there's much point in attempting to run from this thing.

AUSTIN: One of the other anchor falls in... and that is it for the anchor.

ALI: Hadrian's gone?

AUSTIN: Oh, I shrunk this dog, whoops! I was like "what's this weird [ALI laughs] thing on the map?" and it was the dog! [everyone laughs] um, yeah, Hadrian's in the water, and the water is- the water is spreading, more and more.

ALI: What- I-

AUSTIN: Samol is like- comes out and like

AUSTIN (as Samol): What'd you do with my guitar?? [JACK laughs]

JACK (as Lem): Uh... uh.

JACK: I just gesture

AUSTIN (as Samol): [overlapping] If you didn't know how to play guitar, you just- ugh!

AUSTIN: And he like, shakes his hands at you, and there's a moment where you can see the young him. Like, literally, his face... gets younger. And he shakes his hands, and like, [snap] snaps his fingers and the guitar shrinks into a fiddle. [JACK laughs]

JACK: [sigh] Okay, now we're talking!

AUSTIN: The water is underneath you and Hella, Adaire, and-

ALI: Is the- is the water deep enough that I could put my head into it?

AUSTIN: *Sure*.

ALI: [laughing] And then what happens?

AUSTIN: Then you fall in. Hella's gone.

[pause]

ART: If we're all gone, he has to tell us where we are. [everyone laughs]

JACK: [laughing] Oh, god...

JANINE: I would like to call the dog to me.

AUSTIN: Aw...

JANINE: Largely 'cause I know that I don't wanna be invisible forever and I can maybe- I don't know, that's-

AUSTIN: Oh, yeah-

JANINE: It just seems like the thing to do!

AUSTIN: Uh-huh. It barks, and then lets you be less- less visible.

JANINE: I'm already less visible!

AUSTIN: Sorry, less invisible... [JANINE laughs] It makes you visible again.

JANINE: Hurray... [laughing] what the hell is happening?

AUSTIN: The water is spreading over this entire place.

[JACK sighs]

ALI: [quietly] Where's my friend...?

AUSTIN: I'll get to y'all, don't worry [ALI laughs]

JACK: I'm going to... look up at Samol, and say

JACK (as Lem): Look. I've done all I can.

JACK: And then I'm going to step off the porch into the water?

AUSTIN: [amused] Oh, when you say look up, look up is right because he's *climbing his house*.
[ALI and JACK laugh]

JANINE: Ohh my god...

JACK: With- with the air of an old man? Or with the air of something more sprightly?

AUSTIN: A little bit of A, a little bit of B. this was a surprise. Um... the dog picks up the hilt and runs it to him? And he's like

AUSTIN (as Samol): Get up here, boy!

AUSTIN: And the dog hops up tho the windowsill, and then up to the roof of the house, with the hill. Adaire, its you [laughs]

JANINE: Uh...

AUSTIN: You're visible! I think Samol looks at you, and says like- he says what Calhoun Cleanblade said to you a few episodes ago, which was like

AUSTIN (as Samol): They're always like this, huh?

JANINE (as Adaire). Ugh... yeah. Hey, I was gonna give this sword back, but I don't know how to right now? Um...

AUSTIN (as Samol): You keep it. You remind me of them.

JANINE (as Adaire): Uh, that's sweet?

AUSTIN (as Samol): [laughs] Your plans are just as ridiculous. And you move with exactly as much life.

JANINE (as Adaire): I'm still not sure if that's sweet or not, but thanks. Um...

JANINE: Adaire probably does a little like- not a wave, not a salute, but something in the middle- a court little like... "I gotta go, I guess" and then just kinda jumps in after everyone, 'cause- like, where else is she gonna go? [laughs]

AUSTIN: Uh-huh.... So. I think the first shot we get is of this like... dark island, lit by only a couple- like the candles inside of this guy's house. The water mixes with the water of the river? And the second Ordennan boat draws closer, finally. It's taken a while, but it gets there. And... the Ordennan boat pulls up straight to the house, directly? Which does not get all the way

underwater? It like- the roof continues to float on top, like the way you can imagine a flooded city having... the roofs sticking out of the water. And the captain of this second ship, Stornrass Glasseye, steps out.

AUSTIN (as Stornrass): [sigh] Old man, have you-

AUSTIN (as Samol): I think I better start from the top. [laughs]

AUSTIN: He says

AUSTIN (as Samol): When I was a young man, Hieron floated in the void, anchored to nothing...

AUSTIN: But the rest of you don't hear that, because you are... [SONG "Pleased, and Loyal, and Happy" STARTS PLAYING] in a very green place. There is a castle on a distant hill, all grey brick and white pumice, high pointed towers, with parapets holding banners of blue and silver. And a little city in front of that, built with the same material and some wood, with some brownish tiles in front of the buildings, with chimneys- chimneys that are billowing out warm smoke, filtering up into the sky, carrying smells of early evening suppers. The sounds of children, not yet ready to come home from playing. And there, on the castle's balcony, you can see him, Hadrian. You recognize him in presence alone, you don't need the detail of his face, it's- it's Samothos, looking out on his kingdom, on his subjects who are pleased, and loyal, and *happy*. And at ease in a way that I'm not sure you've *ever* seen, or felt anyone be at ease.

AUSTIN: And the rest of you are here, and so are the dead body of all the anchor, and the dead body of Qinta Quatróna. And Hella. I need you to do something before we wrap.

ALI: Okay...

[SONG SHIFTS TO "Adelaide"]

AUSTIN: 'Cause I think she sees you slipping away. As you fall through this place, into this place, you're like- you see all of- you see Adaire tumbling to the green, you see Lem tumble there, Hadrian was there first and is probably already on his feet? And you feel yourself held back by your hair? Someone is gripping your hair. And she's just holding you there, and you're like, trying to fall forward? And she's holding you. And... it's Adelaide. And the thing is- so she's holding you from her plane of death, and existence, and such. And most of her is not physically here. Like, most of her body is translucent, and you can't touch it, but the hand that's holding you... is physical. You can- it's not translucent, it's totally concrete. And- I mean, you killed her with this blade, after all. [ALI laughs] And even if she escaped a little bit, even if she made- most of her managed to get away... like, this blade is hungry. And it has this much of her here. So, you can either be pulled up by her if you want, or you can break away, it's up to you. And we'll have a lot of time to think about what either of those means.

[SONG FADES ON THE BACKGROUND]

ALI: Huh. Okay. um. [laughs] no, I- I came down here to follow Hadrian.

AUSTIN: Okay! How do you break away

ALI: [sigh] All the stuff that I would have on me I don't have, right?

AUSTIN: Oh yeah, just your hands.

ALI: Yeah

AUSTIN: We've talked about what your hands can do, so...

ALI: Right. Um... wh- but it doesn't have to- ugh. It's a weird thing where I- can I grab her wrists?

AUSTIN: Oh, yeah!

ALI: Yeah, but not like... I don't know, I feel like there's a way to communicate-

AUSTIN: She does not want to let you go.

ALI: Okay, um... [laughs] I mean, I ask you a question really quickly, can I pull her in?

AUSTIN: ...huh. You can make that roll! Is that- yeah, you could make that roll, I hadn't thought about *that!*

ALI: There's some kind of implications here that I think I'm too tired to understand? [laughs]

AUSTIN: No, me too! [ALI laughs] I- here's the things I'm gonna say on the record, if you bring her in- no, I can tell you what the implications are! One, undeath will stop in Hieron? People who die from now on will- their souls will go into the Heat and the Dark and be dead forever. People who are already undead will continue to be undead, but they won't become ghosts if they're undead.

ALI: Right

AUSTIN: Two? If she comes in here, she will not have command over life and death in here. This is not her place. But she will be here. So those are the things I'm willing to say on record right now, and stand by them.

ALI: [deep breath] Oh, boy... [laughs] um...

AUSTIN: And I won't leave this up to a roll, this is up to you.

ALI: Man... fuck it. I'm just [laughs] I might as well, right?

AUSTIN: *Yep!!* [ALI bursts out laughing] *We in it!*

ALI: [laughing] I just- I- If I put it on the table and they're just like "No, that's not a good idea" that would be great?

AUSTIN: Uh-huh!

ALI: So yeah, let's do that!

AUSTIN: Alright. You yank her forward, and she- like, the rest of her body becomes less- becomes, y'know, um... opaque, as you pull her in. And the Queen of Death herself takes physical form again, on this beautiful green plains. And uh... I guess- are there any lingering images here? Hadrian, what do you do, and see, and feel? You're definitely the first to your feet.

ART: I think he's going towards... Samothres, right? He wants to- he wants to see what that's about.

AUSTIN: Mh-hm. Oh god, everything else in that house fell in too. Ugh... Okay, I'll deal with all that next year. I think, Hadrian, as you walk forward towards Samothres, [SONG "The Warmth of Love" STARTS PLAYING] you pass through the city's gates and into the little town that surrounds the castle above it. That feeling in your chest of Samothres' presence, it grows even stronger. Not only because you're getting closer to him- and you can see him better now, there's even a sort of distant eye contact now- but also because you can *feel* him in the world around you. You sense his touch on the brickwork of the homes, in the thatching of their roofs. You recognize his brilliance in the laps that flicker on, as the sun slowly sets. You even hear his rhythm in the sound of the ocean waves that surround this island kingdom. But most of all, you feel the safety and stability that he offers. Then you see them, a young couple finishing their day, flashing eyes and smiles at each other in a nice bakery, and there is something in them that says "This is everyday for us, this is not an exception. *This is what life looks like* to most people here". And then you're even closer, still outside the castle proper, but close enough to look up and look your god in the eye; to see his robes, smooth and sober, to see his face, a few wrinkles, laugh lines. A sense of fulfillment. And in recognizing *that* in him, that you feel a second sort of connection. It- it's like... after praying for guidance for so long, now it's... he's knocking at *your* door. He's offering you his blessing, and your abilities- the abilities you lost- back. He's reaching out to you, he's asking you... if he has permission to speak.

ART: Of- of course

AUSTIN: He smiles, and says

AUSTIN (as Samothos): He sent you back to me.

ART (as Hadrian): W- Who?

AUSTIN: And you feel the warmth of love

AUSTIN (as Samothos): I can feel Samot on you.

ART (as Hadrian): Absolutely

AUSTIN (as Samothos): Come to town. I suspect we have lots to talk about, and... left to do.
Bring your friends! I will ready a feast. New citizens are always to be celebrated.

["The Warmth of Love" CONTINUES TILL THE END]