

## Spring in Hieron 15: The Breath of Hieron

Transcriber: Fesha (@oziads)

AUSTIN: Thrandir, Blue J. turns to look at you and does the wave, and then the explosion happens. And we are back here. You see the bridge collapse. You see Samot's entire retinue fall below into the water and the rocks of the river. What do you do?

DRE: I mean, I dive into this river.

AUSTIN AS CARLAY DE LA CARTA: We come to tell you that the time of gods is over. It is the time of mankind. We will make a continent of iron. And we invite all civilized people of Hieron to join us. People like you will do well in the future. Just a consideration.

JANINE AS ADAIRE (grimly amused): If you're calling me civilized, then you clearly don't know shit about me.

*[THEME MUSIC - "SOMETHING" - BEGINS]*

AUSTIN: I think Sunder is like:

AUSTIN AS SUNDER: We need time. [hesitates] Samot isn't like us. And anything we do could be... could be dangerous.

AUSTIN: And Uklan Tel is like:

AUSTIN AS UKLAN: I have some ideas! I've been working on things, for years—I have some ideas.

AUSTIN AS SAMOT (weakly): Hadrian...

ART AS HADRIAN: Yeah.

SAMOT: I thought you were gone.

HADRIAN: No, I was—I was in the—I was in the blade.

SAMOT: I know. I spoke with him.

HADRIAN: Yeah, Lem gave him the mask, that's right. Um... yeah, it was—

SAMOT (interrupting): I am *dying*.

HADRIAN: Don't say that, we can fix this.

SAMOT (vaguely amused): You are very strong.

HADRIAN: I'm not gonna lose—I'm not gonna lose you here, this is, this is gonna be fine. I'm gonna fix this.

SAMOT (weary): Life is loss, Hadrian.

AUSTIN: And he says:

UKLAN: Here's the thing. Because it is between the Heat and the Dark, the Nothing, and between the Starstuff, the furthest we can *leave* the Nothing behind, it is... [stammers] almost a perfect resemblance of us. Of, of everything, of matter, of material. It can take different shapes. It can be *anything*. I think we just—fill Samot up with this!

SYLVIA AS EPHRIM: [sighs] What would you need to test this without using the mortally-wounded god as a test subject?

UKLAN: Unfortunately, I think I would need a different mortally-wounded god as a test subject. You're right, there's no way to know. I mean... we could use it on you, and see. You're—

SYLVIA: [laughs] We thought of that at the same exact moment. I just winced when I realized we could do that. And I think Ephrim does too.

AUSTIN: Yeah.

SYLVIA: But yeah, no, we could—I think that's our only option to make sure that this doesn't kill him.

AUSTIN: So... I wonder if this works.

SYLVIA (laughing helplessly): I sure do too!

[THEME MUSIC - "SOMETHING - ENDS, RECAP ENDS"]

AUSTIN: Who... Ephrim, you're the one who's like, between things, you're like constantly moving between places—they cannot cut that fucking tree down, they're trying so hard, but regular axes aren't gonna do it. However much they cut, however many branches they break, more continue to grow.

EPHRIM: Alright. Um... [laughs] I'm gonna, like—after hearing the Ordennan news I think I was gonna come out there and reassign those guys to like, get back to their later units anyway.

AUSTIN: Yeah. So I think you do that, and then as soon as that happens that's when the roar happens. And a gigantic, green dragon appears in the night sky to the north. And like, it's—it's into the castle. [laughs] Like, you don't have *dragon-fighting* weapons! You don't have siege weapons, or whatever! You can't *arbalest* this fuckin' thing! And it lands on top of the highest spire. And like, coils around it and roars incredibly loudly. What do you do? And everyone hears it. This is a dragon.

SYLVIA: [laughs, makes sound of distress] I don't *know* what to do! Shit! Uh... I mean, I think I'm gonna hurry back to—like, where Samot is, and also where the rest of the people, like, my retainers are, so the tower and stuff—because like, one, I should probably check in with Corsica, but two, this happened right after the god showed up half-dead on our doorstep, so maybe...

AUSTIN (overlapping): Uh-huh.

SYLVIA: Maybe they're connected and I should keep an eye on that situation.

AUSTIN: Yeah. And the dragon is just up there for now. From what you can tell. Like... it hasn't—it's just wrapped around the top spire of this place. So that's cool. I think it's gonna stay there for the night. Um... [makes noise of reconsideration]—

SYLVIA: Is there a way up there? Like, is there a way I can climb up there—

AUSTIN (overlapping): You can climb—Blue J. and um, and Benjamin go up there a lot. There's like a secret—there's like a secret invisible roof above all of everything? That you can run around above the University? And they go up there and hang out sometimes. It was in one of the intros. Um, you can straight-up just run on the clouds up there. It's magic. But I don't know that you know about it.

SYLVIA: Yeah, I don't think I do.

AUSTIN: But you can climb up there, but like, also... yeah. I don't know.

SYLVIA: Is it...

AUSTIN: It's gonna stay up there—the dragon's gonna stay up there for—he's gonna be up there for like, an hour or two before he does anything else, is what I will say. You don't know that as Ephrim, obviously, but.

SYLVIA: Could I do like, a *Spout Lore* maybe, on just dragons, 'cause Ephrim, we've kind of established is well-read on this stuff.

AUSTIN: Totally. Give me a *Spout Lore*.

SYLVIA: Alright. That's *Intelligence*, right?

AUSTIN: That is *Intelligence*.

SYLVIA: Okay. I have a +2. And I rolled an 8!

AUSTIN: Okay. What's *Spout Lore* say? It says... um, I'll tell you something interesting, it's up to you to make it useful. I mean, I think even on a half success, or a mixed success, you know—there are dragons in the world, or there were theoretically dragons in the world, but like, most of them are—most of the dragons in the world are other supernatural beings taking a draconic form. And you never met him, so you probably don't know that this is Samol. But—I think you probably just think this is probably some other being of great power that is like, coming to... Uh, here's what I'll tell you: You know that dragons are able to fly, but that when they are especially and when they are dying, flying actually takes it out of them in a big way. Flying long distances. And so it is in a state of rest. And as soon as it's done resting it will be able to do whatever the next thing is—whether that's set this place on fire, or do something else, you don't know what. So that is probably the thing that Ephrim knows.

SYLVIA: Alright. Does anyone wanna come talk to the dragon with me? 'Cause I should do that.

ART (overlapping): Yeah! Uh-huh.

DRE: Yeah, me too.

JANINE: Yeah. That seems—

SYLVIA: Okay. Let's go talk to a dragon. We gotta climb up to this...

AUSTIN: Alright, everyone roll *Constitution* to climb these—no, I'm not gonna make you do that, but it's a long climb. [SYLVIA laughs]

ART: Can I find somebody to like, guard the Big R?

SYLVIA: Oh, I, um—how about I leave my um—what's the like, actual—loyal retainers, my retainers with them. My group of bodyguards can hang out and make sure Samot stays safe.

AUSTIN: Absolutely. That's—that is good, because if you had left no one with a name behind, that would've maybe not gone great, y'know? But your loyal retainers are good, strong people. So. So yeah. You climb this place. It's tall, like, it's *tall*. It's a big wizard tower. So it does take some doin'. But y'all are—you're heroes! So yeah, you climb up there. And maybe even by the time you get up there it's been probably 45 minutes? And there is, like... there is a room to a—there is a room that you keep locked because there is just a hole in the wall in the room, and that hole happens to open up out to where the dragon's face is. And the dragon—as soon as you open that door, you hear it like, snoring. [chuckles]

JANINE: Aw.

AUSTIN: [makes snoring dragon noises] And Kodiak's like—[dog foley] *Raugh! Raugh! Rrragon!*

JANINE (softly, overlapping): Kodiak, be nice.

DRE: What? What? Hold on—

JANINE: Did Kodiak say a word? Did Kodiak just say "*dragon*"? [DRE, JANINE, SYLVIA laughing]

ART (overlapping): Is Kodiak Scooby Doo now?

AUSTIN (laughing): Season three, baby! We gotta mix it up!

SYLVIA: Oh, no, is that fox Scrappy? Oh, shit. [AUSTIN laughs, JANINE makes noise of dismay]

ART: I dunno if I'd call him *scrappy*, he's a little fox.

AUSTIN (exasperated, amused): Yikes. Um. So yeah, there's a dragon here. And it's snoring. I think Kodiak's barks make it like, his mouth—the dragon's mouth opens a little bit, and like, [smacks lips] mouth sounds, big dragon mouth sounds, like a dragon burp. A loud, dragon burp.

ART: And those of us who have met Samol don't clock him?

AUSTIN: I don't think so, y'all never saw dragon Samol—Fero has seen dragon Samol.

JANINE: Did he tell us about the time he was a sea monster?

AUSTIN: Yeah. And you know that. But you also—you know what, actually, is anyone who was with Uklan Tel. Samol was the dragon Hieron. You knew that from when Uklan Tel told you the story of Samot being—killing Severeia, the wolf, and all that shit. So yeah, you know that there's a dragon form for Samol. Uh, Hadrian and Thrandir.

**[TIMESTAMP 0:10:07]**

ART: No, I wasn't there.

AUSTIN: You didn't hear the Uklan Tel story? No, no, no, no, from season 1, season 1.

ART: Oh! I thought you meant when Uklan Tel told the Marielda story—

AUSTIN: No, no, no, literally when you were at the Tower of Samot, the fallen tower. You got told a story about how samot was the wolf-killer, and that took place in the Valley of Hieron, Hieron the Dragon who you now know is Samol. Because Hieron is Samol. So it's like a little bit of a jumping game, and then Adaire, totally, you can definitely like "Sea monster, dragon—not the same thing, could this be, hm... son is hurt, maybe."

ART: You're giving Hadrian a lot of credit for someone who rolled a 4 on an *Intelligence* check today.

AUSTIN: That's true, you don't fucking know who this is. You think it's a big dragon.

DRE (quietly): Damn. Damn.

AUSTIN: Thrandir, you can get it though. [DRE laughs] You understand.

DRE: Okay, so how do we wake up a dragon?

JANINE: *Should we*, is the first part of that.

ART: Great question. *Great question*.

SYLVIA: Well, I—there's not many other options here, so if you guys wanna—if you're worried about it you can go back downstairs and I can, and we'll just see what happens. But at this point what other options do we have?

DRE: Good point.

SYLVIA AS EPHRIM: Excuse me?

AUSTIN AS SAMOL: [snoring dragon noises]

DRE: Alright, good start, good start.

SYLVIA: Great stuff.

ART: You're probably not loud enough, compared to... y'know, how loud would a mouse have to be to wake you up if you were sleeping.

DRE: Yeah. Yeah, that's uh...

ART: Your lungs compared to its ears are...

AUSTIN: That's the saying, right? My lungs to god's ears. [DRE and JANINE laugh]

SYLVIA: You sayin' I got baby lungs? What's goin' on here?

ART: That's why god can't hear you too, god's very big. You're very small.

DRE: Uh... where are we standing right now, Austin?

AUSTIN: You're in like, an emptied-out classroom, basically. That has one of the walls has been destroyed that's looking out to the west of the central tower. And the dragon Samol's head is right there, and so like, you can see out west. Also it's, it's—I think we're like, pushing into early morning. It's been one of those nights, do you know what I mean? It's like, 4 am. The first very, very, very earliest little bits of sun are starting to hit, and lighten things up *just* a little bit.

SYLVIA: Does anybody—Hadrian, you have a shield, right? Do you have it on you?

ART: No...

SYLVIA: Damn. I was gonna like, clang it.

ART: I can go back and get it, I should probably have all my stuff, honestly. This is irresponsible.

AUSTIN: I mean, you came to see this dragon, if wanted to get your stuff, you can have your stuff.

DRE: Do we...

ART (overlapping): Alright. I have a shield.

DRE: Is there like, a big bell in this university? I thought we were talkin' about this. Is there like, a big bell?

AUSTIN: Yeah, sure.

JANINE (overlapping): This all seems very rude.

SYLVIA: That's the thing, like the—

AUSTIN (overlapping): There is a big bell. You wanna shoot at the big bell? What do you wanna do?

DRE: I kind of do.

JANINE: *God*.

AUSTIN: Hell yeah. [DRE laughs, JANINE makes noise of unease]

SYLVIA: Y'know, you could probably just shoot in the air if it's loud enough.

JANINE: We could all just clap at the same time, sometimes that's loud. [AUSTIN, DRE laugh]

SYLVIA: I don't think we'd be very good at that. [JANINE laughs] That requires a *lot* of coordination.



ART: People *love* waking up to gunshots, that's what I've heard. [JANINE laughs]

SYLVIA: Yeah. Um...

DRE: Ah—Just looking through my inventory to see if there's anything that's loud.

AUSTIN (overlapping): That makes noises?

SYLVIA: Yeah, I am doing—I'm doin' the same thing.

ART: We could try the shield-banging plan, it's not a bad one.

DRE: I just want Kodiak to bark really loud, what does that do?

AUSTIN: Okay. Yeah. He—what's the command, what do you say to Kodiak?

DRE: Uh... [laughs] It's just—

DRE AS THRONDIR: Kodiak, I need you to be as loud as possible.

AUSTIN AS KODIAK (softly): Rrrr... Grrrrah...

DRE: Is he charging up? What is happening? [laughs]

JANINE (amused): He's holding down A.

KODIAK: [still growling louder and louder]

ART: He's warming up! You don't wanna just go for it! [DRE still laughing]

KODIAK: [louder growling sounds]

JANINE: He needs you to crank his tail like a handle—

DRE (laughing): Alright, Kodiak's in second gear now.

KODIAK: Rrrrrrrh.... Rrrrh... [DRE laughing in the distance]

AUSTIN (chuckling): Lightning strikes, Kodiak goes blond—[EVERYONE laughing]

SYLVIA: This is what it means to go *beyond* a good boy! [DRE cackles]

AUSTIN: And *this*, this is a form called *beyond* a good boy! [laughs] And this is what I like to call—

DRE: We just call it Good Boy 2!

AUSTIN (laughing): Good—yeah, exactly! God! [SYLVIA laughs distantly]

JANINE: What if he fused with the flower fox? That'd be cool as hell.

AUSTIN (overlapping): Oh my *god*. That'd be, that'd be really cool. Spoilers! Um—

AUSTIN AS KODIAK: [barks loudly]

[DRE, SYLVIA, JANINE laughing]

AUSTIN: And Samol's ears just go—*fschoo*—and Samol wakes the *fuck* up. And instantly like, the eyeball opens, the mouth of the dragon—which is almost beak-like, in my mind? Like, it's not literally a beak, but it comes to a point in that way, it's not like, flat—shoves its way into this room so that part of it is in here, and then the beak slowly transforms, like the rest of the dragon folds into the front where the beak is and becomes Samol. Um, and he is like:

AUSTIN AS SAMOL: That was loud as *hell*.

JANINE AS ADAIRE: I told them it was rude.

SAMOL: Take me to see my boy.

SYLVIA: I—yeah, I'm not—we're takin' him in. I'm not arguing.

JANINE: That seems like a good plan.

AUSTIN: Ephrim, you don't—do you know who this is?

SYLVIA: I have no idea what's going on, but this guy was a dragon a second ago—[JANINE laughs]

AUSTIN: Fair.

SYLVIA: —I'm starstruck, it, like—if he says he's Samot's dad, I believe him.

AUSTIN: Yeah. Yeah, fair.

ART AS HADRIAN: He's in bad shape.

SAMOL: Yeah, well, so am I. But I'm alive, and he's gonna be too, goddamnit.

AUSTIN: It is a slow walk down these stairs. He's using a cane, he... has—so this is the first time yall've seen him since you got back. Um. There are growths in him? They're like... tumors that you can see on his body? Like. There are some open wounds? There are bits of like, plant material coming in and out of him in places? And the orb that like, hovers around his, um... or like, the broken part of his flesh that hovers off to the side that is like, Ordenna, right? Is like, is smaller than it was when you last saw him. Because Ordenna is literally... I mean, you can, again, maybe you can make this judgement yourself or, you know, guess, or—you know what, maybe from all the way up here you can see the body of Ordenna... it's smaller than it was. The islands of Ordenna have been shrinking. Being consumed by the Heat and the Dark. Which maybe gives you some idea of why they're being so aggressive these days. Um... And so it's a slow walk down the stairs. And he says:

SAMOL: Tell me what the hell happened.

SYLVIA AS EPHRIM: There was an attack by... um, Ordennans, we believe. There was an explosion and we're trying to figure out how to fix what happened to him, it looks like it's—it looks like it's a weapon made of the Heat and the Dark.

SAMOL: Yeah, of course. [sighs] What've you tried so far?

HADRIAN: [ART laughs out of character] I did what a could, I tried to operate and remove the... the bits.

SAMOL: [pauses] Alright. Gotta start somewhere.

HADRIAN: He—he woke up. And he's pessimistic.

SAMOL: That's not like him. [softer] That's not like him.

AUSTIN: And I think he goes quiet. And like, he's walking ahead of you all, down the stairs, but slowly—but like, he's not letting anyone past him. And it's a long walk down. And you finally get there, and, y'know. I think Ephrim, one of your retainers tells you like,

AUSTIN AS A RETAINER: We definitely think someone was sniffing around, we don't know who they were or what they were up to, but once they saw us they left. They ran away.

AUSTIN: And they clear and let you all in. And Samol goes over to Samot's resting body and pulls over a stool. And like, he looks around the room and he's like:

SAMOL: This is all y'all have? To take of my boy.

JANINE AS ADAIRE: I'm workin' on it, but... shit.

SAMOL: Yeah, okay.

AUSTIN: And takes Samot's hand in his, and like, rests his forehead on Samot's hand. Squeezes it.

SAMOL: Give me some time. We can talk in a bit.

EPHRIM: Take as long as you need.

SYLVIA: Uh, as if he needs my permission. Um...

AUSTIN (amused): Yeah. And he shoots you that look, the like, "as if I need your permission" look.

SYLVIA: Yeah. Um. I'm just kinda trying to keep a straight face. Like.

AUSTIN: Yeah.

ADAIRE: Do you want like, an extra cot brought in or something?

SAMOL: I'll be fine. If I need anything I'll ask. I have no problem asking for things.

ADAIRE: Okay.

SYLVIA: Alright, uh—I'm gonna leave. I don't know if the others are gonna leave with me but—

JANINE (overlapping): Yeah. Adaire's leaving.

DRE (overlapping): Mm-hm. Yep! Yep, yep, yep.

ART: I think Hadrian like, slow-lingers, but like. Leaves—like Hadrian's like, "Oh, I just gotta make sure I have all my stuff..." [JANINE and AUSTIN laugh]

**[TIMESTAMP 0:20:00]**

AUSTIN: Uh. Yeah. I thought about having him say like, "thank you" but he's not, he's just not there yet.

ART: Yeah, I'm not fishin' for that, it's just—

AUSTIN: Nah, I know. I know.

ART: Hadrian doesn't wanna go.

AUSTIN: Mm-hm. [exhales] So you leave him there.

SYLVIA: At this point can I fill the rest of the group in on what Uklan Tel's stuff is?

AUSTIN: Sure.

SYLVIA: 'Cause I haven't done that yet, and I think the uh, being like, "Hey, look at my hand that like, has some normal parts again," is a bit deal, especially when it can help fix Samot. In theory. And I kinda just wanna explain like...

AUSTIN: Sure.

SYLVIA: Like, what that is, and—one, the main thing I wanna get across is "I don't trust this guy, so we need someone else in there who can learn how to do this and won't endanger us with it." So we're all on the page there. But yeah. Just so all the cards are on the table.

JANINE: I just had a terrible idea.

SYLVIA (amused): Yeah?

JANINE: Uh... Man. Do I have... Do I not have this move? Maybe I—I guess I don't have the move. There's like a move for Thief where you sit down and learn how to make a new poison, and then you can make this poison—

AUSTIN: Mmmmm...

JANINE: —and I know like, is that what this situation ends up being?

AUSTIN: Right.

JANINE: And that's a terrible idea? [laughs]

AUSTIN: Do you not have that move? That's not just part of the poison move?

JANINE: I thought it was, but I don't think it is. I think it's Brewmaster or something.

AUSTIN: It is Brewmaster, I think you're right. Um. "Poisonmaster, Brewer... *Alchemist*" is actually what I think it is... no, it's—

JANINE: I think Alchemist is a secondary—isn't that one of the level-up things...

AUSTIN: Yeah. Yeah, yeah, you're right. It's—I think it's Brewer, because it's any poison you've used before, which is—you could use it once and then learn how to use it basically. So. So... yeah. Um, so you can't use that here, unfortunately. But... but yeah. Any other thoughts on the Uklan Tel stuff? Are there any reactions across the board?

DRE AS THRONDIR (I think?): Uh... I mean... Is the issue Uklan is doing it? Because you're saying as long as we can get like, a person in there to do this it's okay. But I don't—

SYLVIA AS EPHRIM (I think): Well—

THRONDIR: This sounds *bad*.

EPHRIM: It's...

THRONDIR: First of all, Heat and the Dark in here, bad.

EPHRIM: Yeah, the first thing I wanna do is figure out if we can move this operation somewhere a little... less central in case things go bad. But the main issue is that Uklan Tel's the only one who knows how to do this right now, so we can't just replace him with somebody else.

ART AS HADRIAN: I'm—I mean I know that I have less experience than you all at this point, but I've only Uklan Tel to be... capable and efficient.

EPHRIM: I mean, if—we can go visit him right now, if you wanna challenge that perception. But the Uklan Tel that you know and the Uklan Tel I know are very different people. He's... The past decade or so's been... transformative for him. I'll—that's how I'll put it. We've all been through a lot. But I've got reason to believe that he's not... [exhales] It's not that he isn't focused, it's that he's so focused he's missing, uh—he's missing anything that isn't right in front of him. And that's what I'm worried about here. And also—I don't know if I know exactly what that thing he's focused on is, all I know is that he's obsessed with figuring out the Heat and the Dark; to what ends aside from this new material, I don't know. So there's a lot of reasons why I think we need to have eyes on him.

HADRIAN: You think he needs a constant minder, you think he needs supervision.

EPHRIM: Not constant, but... I would feel a lot safer if I knew that he had someone working alongside of him to make sure... that in his pursuit of knowledge he isn't causing harm as well. Does that make sense?

HADRIAN: Yeah. Uh-huh. I'm not qualified for that, but.

AUSTIN: Adaire, you definitely could do that job.

JANINE: Yeah.

AUSTIN: You understand what it is, like, you don't fuck around with the Heat and the Dark and Starstuff, but you know what it is to get dangerous materials, to collect stuff carefully and all that.

JANINE: Yeah.

AUSTIN: So.

JANINE: That would also set up, um... a level that then includes Brewmaster or whatever it is that I need to—

AUSTIN: Totally.

JANINE: —move in that direction if it's necessary at that point.

AUSTIN: Totally. Yeah. So. Can I abstract out a little bit here, and talk about what happens over the next couple of days?

SYLVIA: I don't have any objections, yeah.

AUSTIN: Okay. And if you wanna like, intercede here, that's also totally cool, but like. What happens is... there is a procession of... people who care about Samot. Um. And I think first and foremost is just like, a handful of people from Marielda who are out in the world have heard, and rush as quickly as they can. And so it's just like, y'know, merchants who are allowed to leave the city on trading routes, and, y'know, probably another diplomat or something shows up. Not characters who are particularly important in terms of healing him. Um. But there are three other people who arrive with options. Um. Who comes first.

AUSTIN (CONT): From the east, there is a ringing of the eastern alarm bell one day. I'm gonna say, Thrandir you're out there 'cause that's close to where the range is. So the next morning. And there are three figures clothed in—three glowing, bright white figures clothed in robes. That kind of dampen their brightness, approaching. And it is three stars. And it is one you've met before, uh, Ephrim and Hadrian have met. Obelus. And Obelus is joined by Verse and Script. And they would like to see their lord. The man who made them.

SYLVIA: I—don't think there's any reason to deny them that.

AUSTIN: People are very afraid of them as they walk through the halls. Or through like, the courtyard and stuff.

SYLVIA: I think... to help with that in whatever way I can, Ephrim's probably gonna have some guards and himself with them, just to be like, "I know this is strange and scary, but there's nothing to worry about."

AUSTIN: Yeah. Totally. So it's like, they have an armed escort, but part of it is to show the people of the University that like, "Hey..."

SYLVIA: Yeah.



AUSTIN: Y'know?

SYLVIA: It's very much the like, diplomatic thing of like, "Yeah, this is just security here just in case. But we're not like... We're not keeping you under armed guard, this is an escort *for* them as much as it is watching them for the citizens." Does that make sense?

AUSTIN: Yeah. Totally. Oh, I said three people—It's actually only two. There's a couple of options for you, and I wanna lay them out. They are... the stars. Obelus is who they were back in Rosemerrow when Ephrim and Hadrian you first met them. And they—again I'm gonna be abstract here so we can keep moving kind of—but like, they explain that though their master never completed them, and though the world was not made ready for their arrival, they are doing best by what his original intentions were. They have a citadel to the east where they are beginning to build the next world. And that it would be heartbreaking to not—for their master not to see their work one day. And they make an offer to fill in his wounds with pure Starstuff. Which they assure you will not hurt him. And there's no—I mean, I think what everyone involved here says is like, he needs to be at a more stable place for any of these things than he's at now. So. I don't even think that the option of just choosing one is there quite yet, because he needs to be able to be like—in every case he needs to be able to do what Ephrim was doing. Which was like, fighting along with it. You haven't gotten him there yet. We'll talk about how you can get him there when we get there.

AUSTIN (CONT): The second person who arrives is a noble from Velas. Named, uh—Representative Robel(sp?), was in the first holiday game. Um, he was, it was Robel's son... it doesn't matter. It doesn't fuckin' matter what the deal was. He's a throwaway councilor guy from Velas. And he arrives with, uh, a box. Um.

**[TIMESTAMP 0:30:01]**

AUSTIN (CONT): And a, uh... I think, probably, a letter, and requests to see, um, Ephrim. And explains to Ephrim that he brings a gift from Arrell, which is some sort of, uh—it's a small wooden box. Inside is like, a magical dust. That Arrell has made that he explains Arrell has used to repair similar harm that he's received over the years? [laughs]

SYLVIA: Wonder where he got that!

AUSTIN: Good question. Um. But also a letter that says, um... that Arrell requests an audience with Samot. Who is, Arrell insists, a dear friend of his. And that if you grant him this, he will forgive you for the disruption of a much-needed cargo transport that was last seen entering the University's area before it was disrupted and scattered away.

SYLVIA: Here's the funny thing. Ephrim used to be able to do this really dramatically with notes, but this time he had to find the fireplace to burn this one. [AUSTIN, JANINE laugh] He used to just be able to hold it and it was gone, but...

AUSTIN: Yeah.

SYLVIA: Fuck that guy.

THRONDIR: Can I spit on it before you burn it?

SYLVIA: [laughs] No, it'll make it harder to burn! [AUSTIN laughs]

DRE: [sighs] Good point.

AUSTIN: Vampire spit goes up in flames nice, it's a secret. [DRE chuckles] That's not true. [SYLVIA laughs] I think! I don't know.

SYLVIA: I'm gonna keep that dust he gave me like, on my person, though.

AUSTIN: Sure. Yeah, add "weird magic heal dust" to your... um. You don't know what the fuck it does. Like, you know. I wanna be clear. Arrell is a *lich* now. Like. Eugh. But it might work! I don't know! There's lots of ways to be alive. So I think those are the two additional—oh, oh, and then like, at that point, he nods and says like,

AUSTIN AS REP. ROBEL: Well, good luck to everyone.

AUSTIN: And then there's like a burst of smoke and flame, and Arrell transports him back to Velas. Which is scary? Because he just teleported a man out of your courtroom? Out of your meeting hall? Which should raise some questions!

JANINE: We also—We don't technically know that he teleported him, for all we know that Arrell is just like "He's done!"

AUSTIN (overlapping): Right. Uh—no, you do.

JANINE: (overlapping): Okay, do we?

AUSTIN: It's—it's the same way that you saw people get—the way that he teleports himself, which you saw him do in Rosemerrow—

JANINE: Oh, right, okay.

AUSTIN: —and then again in... the Archives. It's like, that effect is what you see. Which is like, flames and then a scouring on the ground. It's like, that exact effect. So yeah, you're right, I think other people might not know that who are nearby. But you know enough to be like "Olay, that's the weird Arrell teleportation shit." But it's weird that he has access to do that through the star-shield, like—if he's able to just cast magic from that far away, uh oh. And I think there is a third thing that happens here, before you make choices about stuff. Um. Which is... one day you... who sees it? Who is the highest up? Vertically.

ART: Hadrian's the tallest, I think.

AUSTIN: That's not what I meant. [DRE laughs] I meant who would have reason to be up high in a tower. Um, I guess it's maybe Adaire? Because, uh, one because you're the person I showed the barrel of the gun to. But two because you're working with Uklan Tel and watching Uklan Tel as he sets up the new laboratory in the central tower. Through one of the windows you see and hear ships in the river. And you hear that foghorn again. It's early in the morning one day. Through the fog you see the lights of lanterns on ship after ship after ship. Ordenna has a fleet. Take a look at the map really quick. [pause] So. You see this red X here?

ART: Yeah.

AUSTIN: That is where the Ordennan camp is. And so it—it's very hard to see it first until their ships get like, a little bit close—come out of the woods. So for people listening, there is a river. It's the river that, uh, Hella's boat went upstream. Against everything. They're going downstream. And the river crosses over the road once to the like, northwest of the Last University, it dips into the woods, which is why you can't kind of see into the tree cover. And then it pops back out and then it goes through where the second bridge is, the bridge where Samot was attacked on. Does someone wanna tell me where the river ends up?

DRE: Uh, that would be the City of First Light.

AUSTIN: It would. And I think Adaire, maybe it clicks into place at that point. With Samot in a deathbed... with his retinue dispersed... maybe they can make some magic happen with the City of First Light and find themselves an island that isn't sinking into the sea. Ordenna is invading the City of First Light. And you don't even know if this is the only fleet. They could go the long way around too, this could be a coordinated attack. But ship after ship rolls down. And they're smaller ships than like, their big sea ships. But they're still warships. And they are still treated with Ordennan steel in the base, which means they can pass through the strange magical lava water that surrounds the City of First Light. And I don't think you're gonna like, intercede at this moment necessarily—[EVERYONE laughs uneasily] but that's what happening.

JANINE: I can flip them off again, but I don't think they'll see.

AUSTIN: Yeah. Um. Yeah. So who finally gets the talk with Samol? I think Hadrian, you're the one who's in there the most at this point, right?

ART: Yeah, I think I'm certainly the most available.

AUSTIN: Yeah. Also, that tree keeps growing, Ephrim. By the way. I'm gonna make it bigger really quick, one second. Let me just, uh, grab all this—get all that tree, and then make it bigger! Boom. It's gigantic now? Um, it's like, it's as if there's another building—like, *oh*, it's gigantic. Its roots and branches are now poking down into the underground garden, it is taking over this farm.

SYLVIA: I was about to ask about the underground garden.

AUSTIN: Yeah. Uh-huh.

SYLVIA: Okay. I think I have an idea for that later, but we'll do the Samol stuff.

AUSTIN: Sounds good. Hadrian. Samol.

ART: Mm-hm.

AUSTIN: You're just in the, in the Big R. And I think finally Samol—I think Samol's asleep in there, like—like leaning back in a chair with a hat over his eyes. And you—actually, I think that's how you leave him to go get some food at some point, and when you come back he is like, singing a song to Samot. It's like, y'know, I don't know, it's a song he wrote for Samot, years ago. So it's probably like, y'know, like—"Run little wolf, run and howl, the trees are open, and the, the fields are yours" and like, y'know, it's like that sort of—almost a fairytale song about a little wolf-boy trying to like, grow up. And he's singing it low under his breath and like, washing the shaved head of his son. And his hair is already starting to grow back a little bit but like, Samot's breathing is poor. And I don't think Samot's been awake yet since Samol has been here. And I think he sees you come in, and he says:

AUSTIN AS SAMOL: You doin' a good enough job—

AUSTIN: Not "good enough," he says:

SAMOL: You doin' a good job, but. I don't know if it's a good enough job.

ART AS HADRIAN: I... It was really beyond my ability, obviously.

SAMOL: Nah, I know. I know. Bustin' your chops. [sighs] Hadrian. I feel like we gotta lot to catch up on.

HADRIAN: Less than you—I got less than you going on.

SAMOL: You'd be surprised. Lonely old man lives in a tower. Do some crafts, y'know.

HADRIAN: You've had twice as much time as I've had lately.

SAMOL: Yours has been denser. I imagine. Glad you made it out.

HADRIAN: Yeah. Um... [laughs] I was gonna like, tell you things like you don't know.

SAMOL: There are things I don't know. These days it's hard to know. Why do you think I showed up so late? It used to be—

HADRIAN (overlapping): You know what I was gonna tell you, you know about Samoths sealing off the blade.

SAMOL: He did what?

HADRIAN: Oh. Huh. Yeah, they're... he's gone. They're all gone.

**[TIMESTAMP 0:39:59]**

SAMOL: I felt him get quiet, but... I also thought, my senses bein' what they are... Y'know, it used to be, if a flea landed on my little toe I could tell. These days... I'll leave my hand on the stove, won't feel a thing until later.

HADRIAN: Hm. Yeah, I get that feeling.

SAMOL: [chuckles] How was he? Samoths.

HADRIAN: It's... He's, he's good. He seems good. I've... It's interesting—you feel like you know someone, and then you find out that you didn't really know 'em at all.

SAMOL: Huh.

HADRIAN: But I mean. It was. A transformative experience, I would never—I couldn't—it was better than I could've hoped for.

SAMOL: That's good. That's good.

HADRIAN: I missed so much, though. I missed so much.

SAMOL: Boy, you do not need to tell me about missin' things.

HADRIAN: [chuckles]

SAMOL: Hadrian. [exhales] There's a thing I need to do.

HADRIAN: Okay.

SAMOL: And I don't think if I tell anybody else they will understand. But you are a parent.

HADRIAN: Okay...

SAMOL: I've already buried one of my sons, twice. That is the sort of life I have had. I will not bury another.

HADRIAN: Absolutely. What do you wanna do?

SAMOL: Can I show you somethin' that no one else has noticed yet?

HADRIAN: Okay.

AUSTIN: And he stands up slowly and walks out the door, and leads you back up the stairs to, um, that open classroom. It's a slow walk up again. And I think on the way he's a little more chatty this time. And he's like, throwing out anecdotes to you. About things you wouldn't have known. I think actually you pass by Samot's room on the way up. And he like, stops, he's like:

SAMOL: Lemme just—lemme just peek in. He was so proud when, when they built this place together.

AUSTIN: And he's just like:

SAMOL: Yes, just as it was before!

AUSTIN: And is like, telling you stories about the two of them, and about Samot and his aunt Severeia's rivalry, and about how Samot felt weird when Galenica got made because Samot had been the newest god on the block for a long time, and then Galenica showed up and that was weird.

ART: Sure.

AUSTIN: Just like, little stories. Just trying to pass stuff onto you, in a way that goes from really tender to really scary.

ART: Mm.

AUSTIN: And he leads you up to that classroom, and he like, points out to the sky, and it's one of those early mornings where you can see the moons. You know what I'm talking about?

ART: Yeah, yeah.

AUSTIN: And he says:

SAMOL: Look at Del. Look at it close.

HADRIAN: Okay...

AUSTIN: It's one of the two moons.

ART: Sure.

AUSTIN: And you look at it, y'know, like, what am I seeing? Like, what are you—and it takes you a second, because what you recognize is that uh, Bri, the other moon, is moving like, clockwise through the sky. The way it does. And Del is moving *down*.

ART: Like, it's setting.

AUSTIN: No... like it's falling.

SAMOL: [exhales] So. The thing is, Hadrian, I already don't think I have much time left. Like, in general. And, uh. I don't know what them bird-folks did up there, but this old body of mine probably can't take another blow like that.

HADRIAN: Sure.

ART: Do—does Hadrian know that that's where...?

AUSTIN: He knows that that's where Fero and Hella and Lem went, and now the moon is falling.

ART: Y'know, I'm gonna keep that to myself. [ART, AUSTIN laughs]

AUSTIN: Things went weird up there, it's not their fault. It's not their fault. Well—mm. It's not their *fault*. The world moves, y'know? People take actions.

ART: Yeah. I've got that on a t-shirt somewhere.

AUSTIN: [chuckles] Clocks tick. Um...

SAMOL: There's this thing I've been workin' on for a long time. The Breath of Hieron, is what we called it in the old day. It was one of those things that... all of us came up with as a potential solution for if I ever died. But, um. It's, it's. It's—an excerpt of me, it's a little bit of me. A collection of energy and fire. And I've been workin' on it, and workin' on it. And it's not gettin' anywhere. Because I can't put enough of myself in there. The idea is you breathe out a lotta energy, get out all that fire, and that could be the beating heart of Hieron. In my absence. But the way you do it is, you cut a little of yourself off, you know, you give to it. And then hopefully you heal up. And then you can give a little more. It's like building anything. Blood and sweat and tears. That's not, that's not a metaphor. People give blood and sweat and tears, and it turns into houses. That was the first thing Samoths taught me. And so I've been workin' on it. But I give it any more of myself, there won't be any more of myself to give.

HADRIAN (uncertainly): Okay.

SAMOL: Anyway, I think if we took that and gave it to my boy, gave what else I have left, he might get a little of that old vim and vigor back, be strong enough to fight.

HADRIAN: Okay, great, where is it? Can I...?

SAMOL: It's in me, y'know.

HADRIAN: *Oh*. I thought it was like a separate thing—



SAMOL (overlapping): I mean it is, I could, I could—give me—

AUSTIN: And then he like focuses for a second, and is like—*fwooh!*—and outside the big hole in the wall there is now just a big glowy orb of light. Like, gigantic, big orb of fire? Hey, everyone in the Unviersity, suddenly there is a big orb of dragonfire! [laughs] Hovering outside one of the towers!

ART AS HADRIAN (shouting away from the mic): It's fine! Everything's fine!

AUSTIN: [laughs] Hadrian calls out. And then he like—[hisses through teeth]—and he sucks it back in.

ART: I just didn't understand a metaphor! [AUSTIN laughs]

SAMOL: But that's it, Hadrian. [pause]

HADRIAN: Yeah, I'll help you do that, if that's what you think... I mean, I understand this desire, I would—

SAMOL (overlapping): Give your life.

HADRIAN: I would sacrifice myself for Benjamin, you would sacrifice yourself... for Samot. It's... very relatable.

SAMOL: Alright. Let's head back down. And—you have any other questions, just start thinkin'.

HADRIAN: I mean, I have a thousand questions, but we, we don't have—what're we gonna do when you're gone? What—

SAMOL: I wish I knew.

HADRIAN: Wh—Do you wanna—I wish...

SAMOL: Yeah.

HADRIAN: I really wish that Benjamin got to talk to you.

SAMOL: Benjamin is your, uh... he's your little one, he's your son.

HADRIAN: Yeah.

SAMOL: Bring him through. I'll get some words. Shit. [chuckles]

HADRIAN (softly): Alright.

SAMOL: I got all sorts of shit he ain't heard yet.

HADRIAN: [laughs]

SAMOL: No offense to you.

HADRIAN: No, I—I agree.

SAMOL: You gotta guitar? Bring me a guitar. Find me a guitar.

HADRIAN: I'll get you a guitar.

SAMOL: Alright.

HADRIAN: I'll get you the nicest guitar we got.

SAMOL: Alright, let's—y'know what, I'll spend a day. Talk to some people. Tonight. We'll make it happen.

HADRIAN: Uh, is there anything else you want? Is there anything I can get for you, is there... anything you wanna do?

SAMOL: Nah. I—no. [exhales] I done a lot.

HADRIAN: For sure.

SAMOL: I have been the world. Ain't much else. You cook me somethin' nice. Lemme meet your boy. Lemme say "Hey" to the other folks. We'll make it happen.

HADRIAN: Do you think Ordenna is behaving—immorally? Are they doing their best, or are they, are they doing bad?

SAMOL: [exhales] As bad as anybody's been, I—you know. There are scales to these things. They're playing a short-term game, Hadrian. What're they gonna do, drive their boats down there and huddle up while the world catches fire? They'll burn too, eventually. They'll burn too. And they'll cause a lotta people pain between now and then, so. You know what? Yeah. They're doin' bad.

**[TIMESTAMP 0:50:05]**

SAMOL (CONT): They're scared, and. It is not the fault of, y'know, the third soldier in the seventh rank that their great-great-great-great-great-great-grandmother moved this island made of the Heat and the Dark. [laughs] That's now being destroyed. No doubt, blame is a wide thing. But, uh. When he raises a bow, notches an arrow, and fires it at some guard in the City of First Light's side—or not some guard, some civilian, is that worth chiding? Yes. Yeah. They are doing bad.

HADRIAN: Okay—

SAMOL: Y'all're doin' alright. Y'all gotta get your act together, but y'all doin' alright.

HADRIAN: Yeah, I—I've only been here for a minute, but.

SAMOL: Yeah. I should say Ephrim and Thrandir, I guess—and Corsica, Rosana, and everybody else. Y'know. I thought this place was doomed on day one, I'll be honest. I was in a bit of a negative streak at the moment, but. You know. Still. Let them know.

HADRIAN: I will.

SAMOL: I mean I'll tell 'em. I'll tell 'em. I'll tell 'em.

HADRIAN: Yeah, yeah, you—we'll get you around.

AUSTIN (overlapping): [coughs] ...It's as much me as him at this point. Um... and yeah. He heads down. And I think, spends the day—he's available to anyone who wants to have a little scene with him, you know. I think he wants to meet with everybody. He is not telling anyone what his plan is, except Hadrian. Does anyone wanna talk to him or do something else before we move on?

JANINE: I need to give him that letter.

AUSTIN: Oh, you *do* need to give him that letter. *Fuck*.

JANINE: Yep.

AUSTIN: Alright. Where do you find him? Where does he find you? Either way.

JANINE: Uh... I don't—I feel like Adaire would be looking for him.

AUSTIN: Yeah. Totally. I think you find him tuning a guitar, sitting on a bench out in the like, one of the courtyards. And he looks up at you and is like:

AUSTIN AS SAMOL: Adaire Ducarte. Haven't seen you in a minute. How're you doin'?

JANINE: I think Adaire points at the guitar and is like:

JANINE AS ADAIRE: Oh, you got a new one. [chuckles]

SAMOL: Yeah, around here somewhere, I don't know, they string 'em up. It doesn't have my tune, but it has a tune. Nothin' wrong with that.

ADAIRE: That's something.

SAMOL: So... What's what with you?

ADAIRE: Uh, I have a letter for you—I was gonna like, I was gonna like—I didn't know you'd be here so soon. I was gonna like, make a thing? 'Cause like—

SAMOL (amused): You were gonna make a thing.

ADAIRE: I feel like—I feel like when you—okay. So the letter's from Samothos, and I feel like when you give a letter to your parents you're supposed to like, give 'em like, a thing. And he didn't like, send a thing. So I was gonna make it. But I didn't really have time. Um.

SAMOL: What were you gonna make?

ADAIRE: I don't know, I don't make a lotta good things, to be honest with you.

SAMOL: Are we talkin' about a fruitcake, are we talkin' about a belt, like a hat—like, a tie—

ADAIRE (overlapping): No... [stammers] I don't—like, maybe embroider a little handkerchief or something.

SAMOL: A little handkerchief. What would it say? Like, "Samol".

ADAIRE: No, like with—like plants or something.

SAMOL: Oh, okay. Plants are cool.

ADAIRE: I don't embroider good text, it's always, it's kinda wonky and the fabric bunches up...

SAMOL: I'm still not sure we shoulda made text. Shit. Tell you what.

ADAIRE: [chuckles] I mean it helps sometimes. Letters, for instance.

SAMOL: Yeah. Yeah. Yeah.

AUSTIN: He puts the guitar down.

SAMOL: Can I see it?

ADAIRE: Yeah.

SAMOL: You still embroider that thing. You give it to someone else. Um. If I'm gone.

ADAIRE: No one else wants here wants a fuckin' handkerchief I put leaves on...

SAMOL (overlapping): Someone else here—there's a lotta people here! One of them, one of them gnolls, put a fancy handkerchief in their pocket. Look smart as hell. Shit. Anyway. Let me see.

AUSTIN: And he opens the envelope. He's like, gonna read this right now, right in front of you.

JANINE: I think she's fine with that.

AUSTIN: And he reads it, and he's reading through it, and, um.

JANINE: It's probably been very hard for her not to open it out of curiosity.

AUSTIN: Oh, yeah. Sure, good job.

JANINE (overlapping): But she has refrained.

AUSTIN: And it's like a three page letter. Maybe like, three pages both sides, you know? It's long. And he tears up as he reads it. Um. [exhales] He like, shakes his head.

SAMOL: Locked himself in there, huh? [under his breath] *Goddamn*. How was he? When you saw him. Y'all talk?

ADAIRE: Yeah...

SAMOL: You see me in him? A little bit?

ADAIRE: [laughs] A little bit. He—you know—[exhales] You know, the others, Hella—I don't think she thought a lot of him. I thought he was okay! I thought he'd be worse. Like. Y'know—he wasn't the person that I grew up hearing about.

SAMOL: I mean. The person you grew up hearing about was a mix of people, him and otherwise, and who did not exist.

ADAIRE: Yeah.

SAMOL: And. And the person he was when he *was* here was... beautiful, and brutal. And brilliant. And that is a strange and powerful mix. And so. I don't know that you were wrong to think what you did before you met him. Time changes you. It can. Hell, last time you and me talked I was ready to die for no reason at all. Right?

ADAIRE (skeptical): And now you're ready to die for a reason?

SAMOL: No. I—I mean. No.

ADAIRE: Okay... [chuckles nervously]

SAMOL: This means a lot to me. Thanks for giving it to me.

ADAIRE: I promised him I would. He gave me some cool knives, so.

SAMOL: [laughs] That sounds like him.

ADAIRE: That sounds like you! That's how I see him in you—

SAMOL (overlapping, amused): A gift-giver—

ADAIRE: I got cool knives outta both of you.

SAMOL: Yeah! Okay, fair. Fair, fair. I was gonna, I was gonna, y'know, poke some fun at him, but you're right. That's a me trait. Goddamn. Well. Adaire, I, uh. I hope you have a good day. I'm gonna keep tunin' this guitar.

ADAIRE: It was good to see you.

SAMOL: It was good to see you too. Walk right.

ADAIRE: You too.

AUSTIN: Who is next? And where do you find him?

SYLVIA: I don't know if I'd even know what to say to him, is the thing.

AUSTIN: Yeah. Yeah. I think he would find you, then.

SYLVIA: Yeah?

AUSTIN: Where does he find you?

SYLVIA: Uh, I think when he finds Ephrim, Ephrim's back at the tower at his kind of like... trying—clearly preoccupied, trying to figure out how to like... how to balance his time between this tree nonsense and the Samot stuff.

AUSTIN: Yeah. Um. He knocks on the door as he opens it. Y'know? And like, strides in. And he's like:

AUSTIN AS SAMOL: Ephrim. We've not met. Briefly, I guess, but. Not by name.

SYLVIA AS EPHRIM: Yeah, I suppose not. I figured you'd want your time alone with your son, and things have been b—apologies for the rudeness, that I haven't formally introduced myself—

SAMOL (overlapping): No, none needed, none needed. We're all busy. Take a seat.

EPHRIM: Uh, please, go ahead.

SAMOL: So I just wanted to say. Y'all been doin' a good job. And I'm impressed. I don't know what comes next, you know. You would think—god of all things, father of creation, etcetera, etcetera, but I know what's happenin' *now*, not so much tomorrow. And you can tell that because a decade ago I thought tomorrow would mean this place would be covered in snow, and instead it is thriving. But I need you to do a thing, and I need you to do it soon, it is *killing* me. This place needs a *name*, Ephrim.

EPHRIM: [laughs] Yeah, you're right.

SAMOL: This is a world of *names*, do you know the story with Samot? He didn't have one, and so he stole, stole from Severeia, stole the name wolf, stole his brilliance, stole his strength, stole his love of wine and books from others. Until I gave him a name, and gave him real form. And then he could *bundle* all that up until he was a person. *Samot!* And then he gave himself all sorts a other names. [chuckles]

EPHRIM: Alright, I think I...

SAMOL: So. Think on it. But. People here have to know that. And that will give them hope and it will give them direction. Somethin' to lean on. The Ruins of the Last University just don't inspire confidence.

**[TIMESTAMP 1:00:01]**

EPHRIM: I guess... [exhales] Yeah. You're right. I guess things become, uh—somehow a lot more real when I'm not just some...

SAMOL: Uh-huh.

EPHRIM: ...fill-in leader for some rag-tag group.



SAMOL: Yeah. Permanence. A decade is a long time for someone like you. [pause]  
Before I go, is there anything else you wanna talk to me about?

EPHRIM: Well—

AUSTIN: And I think he like, locks eyes with you on this one.

SYLVIA: Oh. [laughs quietly]

EPHRIM: Yeah. There's... [sighs] There's a lot I need to talk to you and Samot about.  
You're—I, I wish I could've told Sa—talked to Samoths about it too. Uh...

SAMOL: Mm.

EPHRIM: Just so... [sighs] Just so he'd know, you know?

SAMOL: Mm-hm.

EPHRIM: I can't... I don't know how sincere you'll find an apology for what I did to  
Maelgwyn. But it's all I can offer. I don't have—I don't know what I can do, here? But,  
uh... I couldn't—I—I see... I see, I hear these stories and I see these pictures of him and  
I know that I have taken someone... [stammers] that means the world to people away  
from those people. And, uh... part of me wishes I had a way to absolve myself for it, but I  
don't, I can only stand here and tell you what I did, and that I'm sorry for it. And, uh...

SAMOL: [sighs] I'm not lookin' for an apology, but I do appreciate the words.

EPHRIM: He... I don't know if I have much place to speak on this, but I don't know if it  
was him at the end, and I don't know if that's any comfort at all? But... there's just  
something that's been—well, there's been a couple things that've been eating away at  
me, but the fact that his family might not know about that has been a major one these  
past ten years.

SAMOL: There are consequences that, in time, will become clear. I suspect you had  
your good reason, and I have certainly done my share of violence. So. I'm not here to  
judge you, but I appreciate the perspective, and the honesty. And, though it wounds  
me... to know what was done, it is good to... [pause] Finality is appropriate, in some  
instances. In many. It opens up possibility of a new thing.

EPHRIM: Yeah, I... I agree. Um... thank you.

SAMOL: Good luck.

EPHRIM: Thank you.

SAMOL: Get yourself some confidence. You been doin' it. Let yourself have that.

AUSTIN: And he stands up.

SAMOL: When you speak, people will listen. But you gotta speak.

AUSTIN: And he like, taps the cane on the ground and turns and steps out. And, um. Heads away. I think, Throndir, looking for you.

DRE: Yeah, 'cause I don't think Throndir's gonna seek out Samol.

AUSTIN: Yeah. Yeah.

DRE: Not because he doesn't wanna talk to him, but because it's just—[makes "I don't know" noise]

AUSTIN (overlapping): Yeah, yeah. Where does he find you?

DRE: Hm. Probably... I think in the cemetery.

AUSTIN: Yeah.

DRE: That's where Throndir just goes to think about stuff, and he's trying to figure out—"Did I say the right thing to Blue J., what should I say to Chatterchin..."

AUSTIN: I think he's like, walking through the gravestones with you. Behind you. And he like, he comes to Morbash's and like, shakes his head and is like:

AUSTIN AS SAMOL: Damn good warrior. Damn... Quinta Quatrana—

AUSTIN: Or, not Quinta Quatrana, she's not, no.

SAMOL: Jerod Shiraz... Damn. Throndir.

DRE AS THRONDIR: Mm?

SAMOL: Y'all buried a lotta people, huh?

THRONDIR: Yeah.

SAMOL: That's part of it. I should know. [sighs, pauses] No bow?

THRONDIR: Nah, I don't—I—[stammers]

SAMOL: You were the man with the dog and the bow, that's the whole thing!

THRONDIR: [laughs]

SAMOL: The *Ranger*.

THRONDIR: Yeah, well. You know. Things change, things don't fit anymore.

SAMOL: Like the, like the cloak? Like you need a bigger cloak.

THRONDIR: No, I think if anything, goin' through, y'know. [laughs] Ten years without [??] any food!

SAMOL (amused): Yeah, you lost a little. I gotcha. Same. Y'know.

THRONDIR: Yeah. No, the, uh... The oni kid. They're the Ranger now. I don't think they believe it yet, but. They are.

AUSTIN: Again, I think he does the thing where he's like—thinks to focus on, on Hieron and like, sense who Blue J. is and find and understand who Blue J. is. He's like:

SAMOL: Yeah, they are. Yeah. That's a Ranger right there. [pause] I didn't expect to find you taking on a protégé.

THRONDIR: [exhales] It's kinda one of those things that I think they kinda took on me more than anything.

SAMOL: But you didn't—

THRONDIR (overlapping): But it's been nice.

SAMOL: But you didn't push 'em away.

THRONDIR: No.

SAMOL: They uh, they uh... They explain to you the deal? The oni situation?

THRONDIR: No?

SAMOL: Maybe it's not my place.

THRONDIR: No—okay, 'cause... I mean it's not, but you should tell me anyway.

SAMOL: [laughs] That's how it is, huh?

THRONDIR: [laughs] Yeah. 'Cause... Blue J. and Red Jack aren't gonna tell me. Or if Red Jack does tell me, it'll be like, a weird metaphor that takes like an hour.

SAMOL: That big voice of his. He thinks he's a goddamn good storyteller, he don't know the first part. [pause] Red Jack is old. Or—Red Jacks are old? Reds Jack are old. [laughs, sighs] So. Do you know the story about... the true wild? Not just horses and whatnot, but y'know, centaurs and... gryphons and owlbears and such.

THRONDIR: ...No.

SAMOL: Alright. I'll give you the short version. Severeia was dead! Samot had killed her. And when I brought her back and made Samot into a boy instead of a killer, she was filled with joy. And added to the menagerie of this world. All sorts of new things. Things only a dying, dreaming mind could imagine. And one of those things was Red Jack. Red Jack was the opposite of death in many ways. Red Jack was a being who sprouted new lives around him, and those new lives grew in strength as they faced adversity. As he did. Until adversity met adversity. There have been... less Red Jacks than you may think, but more than one. And only ever one. [pause] Over time one of his boys grows until... there is a dispute. And the mantle passes on. And that is the deal with Red Jack. Blue J., I—y'know? Maybe things go different, I don't know. [sighs] I'm glad to see you carin' about these people still.

**[TIMESTAMP 1:10:00]**

THRONDIR: What else would I be doing?

SAMOL: Runnin'.

THRONDIR: [laughs] Tried that. Didn't work.

SAMOL: Yeah. Same. It was *real* easy. It was so easy to not care. And just be on a boat—or an island that was sorta like a boat. With a house on it. You were there. It was nice.

THRONDIR: Yeah. But you're lyin'.

SAMOL: Yeah.

THRONDIR: 'Cause otherwise you'd still be doing it.

SAMOL: It was nice! I'm not sayin'—listen, I'm not *lyin'*, it was *nice*. [DRE laughs] But. There came a point. You know. Sometimes things come into focus and you realize who you care about. [pause] Alright. I'll leave you to it. The grieving and the thinking and everything in between.

THRONDIR: Thanks for tellin' me.

SAMOL: Yeah. Don't tell them I told—well. I mean, what are they gonna say?

THRONDIR: Eh, you know.

SAMOL: “*God* told me,” what're you—y'know—

THRONDIR (overlapping): There's a lotta books around here, I can make somethin' up.

SAMOL: Yeah, yeah—don't lie to them, don't like to 'em. You gotta lie to people you don't like, don't lie to the ones you do.

THRONDIR: Yeah, fair.

SAMOL: Alright. I'll catch you around. We're gonna do a song... dinner thing, I think, in a little bit. You come through.

THRONDIR: Okay...

AUSTIN: And then he leaves you. Anything else you wanna do before song and dinner with Samol? [DRE laughs] Alright. Um. So I think he meets Benjamin, Hadrian. He comes to your house, he meets, y'know. Rosana and Benjamin. And Benjamin has like a million questions. [laughs]

AUSTIN AS BENJAMIN: What was—what was there, first?

AUSTIN: And Samol's like:

SAMOL: Well, there's just me!

AUSTIN: And they just like, chatter for an hour. And Benjamin shows him some magic, and, um... man, maybe this is where you figure out what's happening. Because I think Samol is like, impressed? Like, you know that Obama like, impressed meme face?

ART: Yeah. Uh-huh.

AUSTIN: Like the—he does that face? And he's like:

SAMOL: No offense, Benjamin, but those are some pretty impressive tricks. Sorry. *Spells*. I know they're not tricks.

AUSTIN: And Benjamin's like:

BENJAMIN: That's right. They're spells.

AUSTIN: And Benjamin's like—or, Samol's like:

SAMOL: No offense to you or your family, but—not much in the way of magical aptitude in the past? Unless Rosana you've been secretly studying—

AUSTIN: And she's like:

AUSTIN AS ROSANA (laughing): No, no. I stick to the humanities, mostly.

AUSTIN: And he says, to you:

SAMOL: I know you are a man of faith, but. Creating...

AUSTIN: Whatever the fuck he does. 'Cause you could've created light as a paladin, right? You had Create Light as a spell, right?

ART: Yeah, uh-huh.

AUSTIN: I just think he says, like:

SAMOL: The sort of things Benjamin does, that's not a—it takes some natural skill, certainly, but—where'd you learn all this? Books here?

AUSTIN: And Benjamin like, seems caught out a little bit? Um, because like, telling your mom you read it in a book is one thing, telling your dad that you've been studying while he's away is another thing, but like—when God is like, "Where did you learn magic from?" it's a little different. And he's like:

BEN: Um... I can show you, I guess. [pause] Gimme a second, I'll be right back.

AUSTIN: And he like, runs into his room, and you hear him lift a floorboard up. And pull out a box, like a wooden box. And he comes back and he has this like, little yellow crystal. And there's like, other ones in there. And he says:

BEN: So I—When we first got here, I found... a couple of these.

AUSTIN: And he holds it up to a light, and it flickers for a second, and there is a projection in your living room of the Wizard Fantasma. Who says:

AUSTIN AS FANTASMO: Identity is the first component. This is beyond debate. Before we may refer to this reagent or that somatic expression, we must first conceptualize a *this* or a *that*. Things made by—things made whole by their boundaries. This staff is distinct from this floor which is distinct from me, though I touch both. What is, is itself.

AUSTIN: And he has found... lecture recordings by Fantasma.

ART: *Oh, boy!*

AUSTIN: [laughs] Janine in the chat says "It's called YouTube, and," and then—

JANINE: I just want to point out I said “It’s called YouTube” before you even brought fucking the crystals out! [SYLVIA laughs]

AUSTIN (amused): Okay. Good. Okay. Good.

ART: I confirm that.

JANINE (overlapping): So I’m like, two for two on psychic jokes right now.

AUSTIN: You are two for two on psychic jokes right now.

ART AS HADRIAN: Um... That’s... Is this... Are these just recor—Is this dangerous?

AUSTIN AS SAMOL: Magic is very dan—magic’s dangerous, Hadrian. I don’t know what to tell you. Yes. Of course magic’s dangerous.

HADRIAN: No, but, is it dangerous that it’s Fan...tasmo—is—

SAMOL: You want me to... check?

HADRIAN: I mean—I suppose?

AUSTIN: And I think Samol again like, takes a seat and like, focuses. And he’s like, doing his version of What Here is Evil, I guess? Y’know, he’s kind of just sensing out what is what in this room, and then like, in the University. And he says, like:

SAMOL: Those are fine. But Rosana, Hadrian, listen to me. There is a presence here that is not... Arrell either has someone or something here.

HADRIAN: In the University or this house?

SAMOL: The University. This house is fine. The boy’s crystals are fine.

HADRIAN: Okay, we’ll look for it. I mean... if he comes here, Throndir’s gonna murder him, so, I don’t—I guess Throndir’s already murdered him, I don’t really understand...

SAMOL: [sighs] Yeah, well. You look into it. Let’s finish the other business first.



HADRIAN: Yeah.

SAMOL: I am starving, and I would love to play guitar for all of you. You wanna go to the dinner hall?

HADRIAN: Absolutely. Let's go.

AUSTIN: What is for dinner?

[long pause]

ART: Uh... Ephrim?

SYLVIA: Wh—

AUSTIN: Ephrim cookin'?

ART: Ephrim probably knew who was cookin'.

SYLVIA: [laughs] Sorry. I got really confused. Um... I don't know, we probably have like, a bunch of people who help make food, right?

AUSTIN: Yeah. What is it, though? What's the big meal?

SYLVIA: Oh. Um, shit.

JANINE: There should be a really good stew with like, a good crusty bread.

AUSTIN: Ooh, yeah.

SYLVIA: Yeah, I think a lot of it's stuff from the garden, the underground garden, specifically—

AUSTIN: Yeah.

SYLVIA: —partially because we're like "We should probably get this stuff out of there a little bit, with the tree pokin' in."

JANINE: Ooh! Do you know how in Cooking Mama when you make stew you serve it over a split baked potato? For some reason? That's how you make stew in Cooking Mama, I always really wanted to try that, it' looked really good.

DRE: Yeah, I didn't know that, but that sounds good!

SYLVIA: So Mama made dinner. [JANINE and AUSTIN laugh] And uh... it's got, uh, split baked potatoes in the stew—that actually does sound really nice.

AUSTIN: That sounds good. Yeah.

SYLVIA: Like honestly I could go for that right—

AUSTIN (overlapping): We do know that vegetable—or like, that's definitely on the of the things you grow in the garden and stuff.

SYLVIA: Yeah.

AUSTIN: Um... god. And y'all eat. And then—I think like, Samol gets up and sits on line—we've talked about it like—like, the mess hall is also a makeshift stage, like performance place, like he gets up on a little elevated stage with a guitar and like. Sings to everybody. Like, old songs. Thrandir, you heard some of these songs when you went to the University of Music down in the Buoy. Do you remember that?

DRE: Mm. Yeah.

AUSTIN: Like, people were playing them, but he is playing the Samol version of it. You know? There's, there's—a little old rhythm and blues, a little Tom Waits in there, there's a little Dylan, there's a, uh, there's a little Jimi, he gets y'know he gets a little, some flourishes in there. And, like. I don't—the three of you who met him before met him at his most mundane and his most desperate. And there was no joy in his voice, ever. Outside of like, when things started to get a little chaotic and he kind of was amused by it? And maybe that's why he's in a good mood today. [laughs] Is like—

*[MUSIC - "TELL ME" - BEGINS]*

***[TIMESTAMP 1:19:44]***

AUSTIN (CONT): He feeds on the energy of change, and the energy of life, and everything else, and... he performs his fuckin' ass off.

*"TELL ME" LYRICS:*

*There is a copse upon a hill  
Five tall pine trees stand breathing  
A boy I know goes walking there  
In the early hours of a winter evening*

*He carries books that I know well  
Says he spends his evenings reading there  
Shakes his snowy boots off at the door  
Teases needles from his yellow hair*

*Understand  
I know the earth beneath feet  
I know the birds in the cottonwoods  
Watching him go down the track, ask  
When will he be back?*

*He doesn't tell me any secrets  
He knows that I could know them if I wanted  
He doesn't talk about the icy river  
The fish hiding in the reeds within it*

*I could know where he goes if I wanted to  
When will he tell me?  
I could know where he goes if I wanted to  
When will he tell me?  
I could know what he does if I wanted to  
When will he tell me?  
I could know where he goes if I wanted to  
If I wanted to  
When will he tell me?*

AUSTIN (over the instrumental ending of the song): Y'know. Live music is not a thing that y'all have talked about there being in this place, but if he has one gift to give to this entire community, it's that after this live music is a thing that happens all of the time. Y'know, there's that classic

line of the like—um, it's used to describe both The Velvet Underground and also The Pixies which is like, "Their albums didn't sell that much, but everyone who bought one started a band."

[MUSIC - "TELL ME" - ENDS]

AUSTIN (CONT): And that is the case with everyone in this roo—not everyone, but a lot of young people in the room tonight. Who are like "Oh *shit*, music is *dope!*" [laughs] Like, "I wanna learn an instrument, I wanna learn how to play guitar, I wanna learn how to make cool sounds. And sings songs. And write poetry." And like, there is this like, breath of creativity. This is the Breath of Hieron, right? That comes into the room tonight. And it's a nice night. Given everything else. Anything else before the dinner is over? Any other actions people wanna take? [pause] Um. It's a real full moon tonight, by the way.

JANINE: Um. I was gonna say that Adaire was not actually at the dinner?

AUSTIN: Okay.

JANINE: But was in the sort of infirmary area doing the—again, going back to the like, making stuff and boiling the rags...

AUSTIN: Yeah. Yeah.

JANINE: But just 'cause I wanted a moment of her, like, opening the window to to let the music in kinda thing?

AUSTIN: Mm. Yeah, that's nice. I like that a lot. I think it like—you can see it puts Samot at rest a little bit? You're in that room, right?

JANINE: Yeah.

AUSTIN: I guess where you're like making the rags and stuff—yeah, yeah. You're not just letting the music in to random other room. [laughs]

JANINE (laughing): —and leaving? No, no.

AUSTIN: I think like, Rix and Rowe are there and they seem him perform and that's nice. I think—not there with you, there in the meeting hall. Um. Anybody else have somethin'.

JANINE: God, they're definitely going to start a band.

AUSTIN: Oh, a *hundred percent*. A *hund*—listen, the Rathskeller is gonna end up being—

JANINE: They're both gonna wanna play guitar and it's gonna be a fuckin' thing.

AUSTIN: I think—I think is gonna give Rowe a guitar and be like "This isn't a regular guitar, it's a bass guitar, it's an acoustic bass guitar." This is totally a regular guitar, just do the rhythm part real loud. [JANINE laughs] So. God. Alright. Dinner ends. It's a warm night. It's a warm spring night, it's like dewy, it's like, a little too humid, actually. It's one of those nights where like, the bugs are out, but also it's been a nice night and everyone's had a couple of drinks so it's a little okay, y'know. Um... I think the party environment continues outside. Like, people are staying up and like, throwing balls around and like, maybe there's a bonfire going. Y'know? Someone else breaks out there guitar and is like "I'm as good as he is!" [laughs] And they are not, but it's funny. But. Y'know. That is the atmosphere tonight. It is a nice night.

JANINE (overlapping): "I invented a song called Wonderwall. You're gonna love it."

AUSTIN: [laughs] God!

JANINE: "Everyone come to the quad, everyone!"

AUSTIN (amused, overlapping): Oh my god.

DRE: Yeah, it's about the star wall.

SYLVIA: I was literally about to make that joke. [JANINE laughs] It's—

ART (overlapping): Wonderwall would be huge, it's, it would really speak to people, I think.

AUSTIN (overlapping): Wonderwall—yeah. [laughs] Oh my god. If the world didn't have Wonderwall, we would need to invent it, right? So...

JANINE: "Big star wall" does have the exact same number of syllables. [AUSTIN snorts]

DRE: Champagne Supernova's about this moon that's gonna crash into us.

AUSTIN (overlapping): That's gonna crash? Yeah, a hundred percent. Uh huh.

SYLVIA: We're gonna do an Oasis parody album!

AUSTIN: Oh my god, finally. Merch! [SYLVIA laughs] Samol sneaks away. Also like, Samol's not

up there like “Hey everybody it’s me, God. Uh, now this next one goes out to my boy Samot!” Like no, he’s just like, playin’ the part a little bit. People know he’s important because he’s talking to the important people, but he isn’t like—[stammers] When he tells—he definitely does the thing of like, telling stories—this is a VH1 Storytellers event more than a MTV Unplugged, y’know? There’s a lot of like, breaking down stuff. But he never like, he tells stories about the world that don’t have him in it, and he also tells stories about the people who are here. You know what I mean? So like, he tells a story about um, about the gnolls when the gnolls used to be wolves. And like, plays a song about that. He tells a story about the origin of the weavers. He’s like, he’s like hittin’ the right touchstones here. And I would say he probably does end on a song—he probably ends on a song about Samot and Samoths falling in love that—over the course of history—this is not the guy playing Wonderwall, by the way, this is Samol, I’m rewinding it a bit. [laughs]

AUSTIN (CONT): He plays a song about Samot and Samoths that was like, popular in the era when—like the era of peace when the two of them were together and Maelgwyn was a little boy. But that song has been like, completely... it’s like hearing a different version of the lyrics. A thing we looked up recently is, uh. Hail to the Chief has lyrics in America, it’s the song that is the presidential anthem, like—*[humming Hail to the Chief] bum bum bumbum bum bum bum bumbum bum bum bum*. That one? Uh, and the lyrics in English that Albert Gamse set to the music are *[singing] “Hail to the chief we have chosen for the nation! Hail to the chief we salute one and all! Hail to the chief as we pledge cooperation in proud fulfillment of a great and noble call!”*

AUSTIN (CONT): And the original version of that by Sir Walter Scott which is from a play was: *[singing again] “Hail to the chief who in triumph advances! Honored and blessed be the evergreen pines! Long may the tree in his banner that glances flourish the shelter and grace of our line!”* And that’s just like so much better, and the rest of the thing is about heaven-sent happy dew, and highland glens, and ours is all about being strong. Gonna make our country song. And that is the version that passed down, the version of the Samot and Samoths song is like the most like, *[to the tune of Hail to the Chief] “Love is good and love is powerful and these two guys were really in love!”* [laughs] It’s just really broad. And the version that Samot sings—sorry, that Samol sings is much more particular. And soft, and real. And you know, the hook is the same. But, but other than that it is a—a different verse. And he puts the guitar down. He leaves the guitar—it’s not his guitar, it’s one of y’all—it’s a guitar from the rec hall, probably. Y’know? And it sounds a little better the next time someone plays it. And yeah. And I think he goes into the room with you, Hadrian and maybe Adaire, you’re already there.

**[TIMESTAMP 1:30:05]**

AUSTIN (CONT): Um... yeah, I think like—Hadrian you open the door, Adaire is there, Samol is there with you, Hadrian. What do the three of you do? I guess the two of you do at this point.

JANINE: I think Adaire honestly is probably like—offers to leave. [chuckles]

AUSTIN: Okay.

JANINE: Like, she's mostly just been like, holding the fort down?

AUSTIN: Yeah.

JANINE: Makin' sure no one's snoopin' around, gettin some work done... y'know.

AUSTIN: Yeah.

JANINE: But I think maybe she's like "Oh, I should get dinner! Mm, I'm hungry! Bye!

AUSTIN AS SAMOL: The stew was exceptional. You should get some of that. [pause] Adaire? Before you go, I just wanna say. Thank you again. Rags and all that. It means somethin'. It ain't mean nothin'. And, uh... what else. Um. Stew was good, get some of that stew.

JANINE AS ADAIRE (soft, amused): You said that already. Appreciate it.

SAMOL: I'm just—it—split potato. Lemme tell you. And I guess just, last... you were...

AUSTIN: How does a god say "You always keep it one hunna"? [JANINE laughs] How does a god say "You've always kept it real"?

SAMOL: The people here, they have a lot of... it can be hard to see things the way they are, for real. For real, for real. Keep... keep 'em honest. You how to do that.

ADAIRE: Shit, do I?

SAMOL: [laughs] You *know* how to do it, whether you do it or not, that's a different thing.

ADAIRE (overlapping): That's a good, yeah. That's the, that's the read, isn't it?

SAMOL: Yeah. Alright.

ADAIRE: You take it easy.

SAMOL: Thank you.

JANINE: And she leaves.

SAMOL (calling after her): Get two bowls! It's real good! [JANINE laughs] Of the soup!

ADAIRE (amused): Stew! Two potatoes, you mean! Two potatoes of stew!

SAMOL (overlapping): Stew! Right. [chuckling] Get two potatoes—yeah.

ADAIRE: That's a lotta potato, but I'll work it out. [AUSTIN chuckles]

AUSTIN: And he sits down next to Samot. Um... whose wounds are still open and not closing, and in fact probably larger in some ways than they were. And are probably infected even though you try to keep it clean as possible; you don't have good medicine.

ART: Yeah, we've been out of gauze for days, I mean...

AUSTIN: Yeah.

ART: We need gauze.

AUSTIN: And he like, runs his hand over his son's head, which is again, growing kind of a fuzz again. And... holds his hand and squeezes it and is like, giving Samot life in doing that? Like, there's no big ritual here, he's not like "Alright, now, set these seven candles alight!" Samot just slowly comes to a bit more and more. And Samot is there with you, Hadrian, and with Samol, too. And he's like:

AUSTIN AS SAMOT (weakly): [exhales, inhales] Dad... Hadrian, I... oh...

AUSTIN: And Samol is just like:

SAMOL (soft): Shh. Rest.

ART AS HADRIAN: He came after the last time we spoke. Almost immediately after.

SAMOT (soft, weak): Of course he did. He's a good dad.... Thank you for coming. The treatment's going okay?

AUSTIN: And Samol says, like:



SAMOL: Yeah, yeah. They got all sorts of... magic books and all sorts of shit here.

AUSTIN: And he's like:

SAMOT: Am I... Am I home? Am I in the University...? I'm here.

HADRIAN: Yeah.

AUSTIN: Like, it hits him where he is. He knows where he was coming, but then an explosion happened. And like, he didn't put it together.

SAMOT: Take me... [sighs] You shouldn't move me.

AUSTIN: And Samol's like:

SAMOL: No, we shouldn't move you.

SAMOT: How are things in... the Heat? The Dark? The stars? The... [sighs] The strange plant-life. Are things being done? [pause] I had a plan—[groans]

AUSTIN: And Samol squeezes his hand again.

SAMOL: Plenty of time for plans. *Plenty* of time for plans. Talk to him, Hadrian. I need to focus.

HADRIAN: The—A lot of people have come here when they heard... There are stars here. Um... there's other—there's stuff you shouldn't worry about right now, but there's stuff to worry about in a little bit.

SAMOT: [quiet laughter] I love to worry. It is true, of me.

HADRIAN: Yeah... um. But things are fine. Things are gonna be fine. You're gonna be okay and we're gonna... We're gonna work on stuff.

SAMOT: Samoths said that you love to work hard. You went to... paradise and you spent every day working the fields. Hadrian. You have to let loose sometimes.

HADRIAN: People need help.

SAMOT: I know, I know. A good party is a way to help.

HADRIAN: Hm. Yeah, maybe.

SAMOT: Dad, how are you?

AUSTIN: And Samol like, lets go—not lets go, but loosens the grip a little bit. And is like:

SAMOL: Oh, you know me. Kickin' around. Out of the Buoy, I'm up near your old tower now.

AUSTIN: And Samot is like:

SAMOT: Oh, that place... It's still fallen over, right?

AUSTIN: And Samol's like:

SAMOL: Yeah. I thought about—

AUSTIN: And he uses one hand to kind of motion to like, pick it up and put it back on top.

SAMOL: I thought about rebuildin' it, but it seemed gaudy these days. Big ol' tower, you know.

AUSTIN: And he's like, Samot is like:

SAMOT: I'll be honest, it was gaudy then. But... it seemed like a powerful symbol.

SAMOL: In any case, I've been havin' a good time. Um. You know that uh, that little one Fero... the Druid.

AUSTIN: And Samot is like:

SAMOT: Ah... Severea and Galenica's...?

AUSTIN: And Samot nods. Or Samol nods, and is like:

SAMOL: Loud mouth on him. Shit. But. He's alright. He, uh... it's good. It's good, I learned some new songs. These plants. They're wild. You'll see. You rest.

AUSTIN: And he lays back a little bit, and Samol squeezes his hand.

SAMOL: You have any questions left, Hadrian?

HADRIAN: You know, I might, I might not, I might be ready to... to stop looking in this particular question... for guidance.

SAMOL: No, no—oh, you mean like, for guidance. I thought you meant literally physically not look at me now.

HADRIAN: No, no, yeah. I'm here until this is over, I—if you need anything, if you need just the support, I'm here. But I think I'm ready.

SAMOT (overlapping weakly): What does he need support for?

HADRIAN: What's that?

SAMOT: What does he need support for, he's fine, he's seen so much. He supports us all, my dad... literally. It's a bad joke. I've not been out of the city in a long time—lost my edge.

HADRIAN: I think the [??] is in the effort right now. [pause, speaks uncertainly] I don't know that... I want to be the one to tell you this.

AUSTIN: No. Samol looks at you and is like—[makes negating noise] "It's okay, I'll let him know when it's time." You know, that kind of look.

ART: Yeah, yeah. Everything... I'm just trying to be a good second, second mate? That's not even a thing, is it, it's a first mate—

AUSTIN (amused, overlapping): I don't think that's a thing! Takin' that MD away.

ART: Second banana? But that's really not what I mean—[ART, DRE laugh]

JANINE: Co-pilot?

ART: I wanna be a real good...

JANINE: Squire?

ART: Helper-guy.

AUSTIN: Yeah. And I think Samol just gives him a squeeze again, puts his hand on his side—[MUSIC - "WHISPER" - BEGINS]—and like, you can see the wounds are closing a little bit. Um, this is not going to heal him permanently. But it is going to give him like, consciousness, it's going to give him bits of his power back. And it's going to let you do whatever the next step is to actually, finally heal him. Um, not to get like, very mechanical about it, but that's what's happening here. And I think he says, like:

SAMOL: So, I heard you got to, uh, talk with Samoths.

AUSTIN: And he's saying this to Samot, Samot is like:

SAMOT: Yes. Yes, it was good. I miss him a lot. And—he thinks he's closed that sword off, I have ideas.

SAMOL: You always have ideas, boy.

SAMOT: That's why I'm who I am.

AUSTIN: And Samol's breathing slows. And he leans in and kisses Samot on the forehead. And he reaches out with his other hand and puts it on your shoulder, Hadrian. And then he whispers something to Samot. And I don't know that you hear it. Samol can make it so that his words are not for you.

ART: Yeah, that's fine.

AUSTIN: And there are... three moments of realization on Samot's face. The first is... anger. The second is love. And the third is *cunning resolution*. He has an idea.

ART: ...That's great.

AUSTIN: And his father collapses.

[MUSIC - "WHISPER" - ENDS]

**[TIMESTAMP 1:41:22]**

*[there is a long pause after this moment]*

*[MUSIC - "THE TREE BLOOMS" - BEGINS]*

AUSTIN: Outside, the tree blooms. Little flowers bud all along its branches and it grows even bigger. And at the corners of Hieron, magic begins to die. This world is a corpse, now. If there is something else to come, it will either be this one revived or transposed or it will be something new altogether. Long live Hieron.

*[MUSIC - "THE TREE BLOOMS" - ENDS]*

AUSTIN: There is a funeral. Benjamin was right. It is just not for who he feared it would be. And there is... the strangest decoration. Because it is the decoration for the arrival of someone, not for the leaving. Garland made by the children of the town. It is bright and colorful, as he was. And it is outside of... the University walls at the cemetery-temple. Um, and it is small. But it is... People arrive for reasons that they don't know. And strangers too, and the stars are still here. Um. Does anyone have words? Who leads this? Hadrian? You ever bury a god before?

ART: No, but, um... I suppose I have as... as much a claim as anyone.

AUSTIN: I think it's like, Rosana has been the leader of the, of the church here?

ART (overlapping): Yeah, and if she wants to do it that's awesome.

AUSTIN: Yeah. [laughs] And you just stand there and look pretty.

ART: Yeah, I think the idea thing would be like... I mean, I think Fero's gonna be pissed.

AUSTIN: Yeah...

ART: When we didn't wait. Um, but I think it's important to like, get this over with.

AUSTIN: Yeah.

ART: And like, Fero's a bit of a dick sometimes, so like.

AUSTIN: Mm. You know I guess that's a question, it's like, do you wait for them to get back?

ART: N-no, 'cause like, it can be any amount of time, right?

AUSTIN: Yeah.

ART: Like. I mean, this could be because I come from a religious tradition where you have to hold the funeral right away.

AUSTIN: Right, yeah.

ART: Um, you know, me in real life. But like, I feel like lingering over these things for too long is just like... is bad news, you know?

AUSTIN (overlapping): Yeah. Finality is good sometimes. Uh-huh. Yeah.

JANINE: It does kind of feel like—I feel like it'd be a reasonable superstition for people to have that like. If you wait too long for a funeral you're inviting another one? You know?

AUSTIN: Yeah. Yeah, yeah, yeah. I mean, I should say, the last thing—there's a thing we skipped over here, right? Which is like... the moon hits. Overnight. Before the funeral. But it's just felt as a shake all the way down here. The river overflows. The like—there is flooding into the farmland. The Outhouse where Fero set up, like that place is flooded. I think a lot of the areas like—it is water, and it made recede eventually? It may not? But like, the moon hit the ground last night, way to the north. Or hit the water last night, way to the north.

JANINE: I have a morbid question.

AUSTIN: Yeah?

JANINE: Does that wash up the rest of the debris from the explosion onto the like, farmland and stuff?

AUSTIN: No, 'cause that's further south. So, that's, that's far enou—

JANINE (overlapping): Okay. So most of it washed downstream already.

AUSTIN: Yeah. Yeah, yeah, yeah. I mean, so even the explosion originally was further south than where the river hits.

JANINE: Okay.

AUSTIN: So you're good on that. But yes, it would absolutely wash up more of the retinue and, you know. All that other stuff. But like, in the middle of the night the moon just got so big it looked like—it did look like it was setting on the horizon to the north the way the sun can. And then—catastrophic hit. And there was no resistance to it. Because Samol was already dead, right? And god, at least he didn't feel *that*. And yeah, Rosana leads the sermon. And... gives a... The service she gives is about—'cause like, what is the faith at this p—maybe this is a question for you, Art, as the player of the character who has had so much to do with faith.

ART: Mmhm.

AUSTIN: With the knowledge of y'all have of the world, like what is the faith? 'Cause it's not just worshipping Samoths at this point, right?

ART: It's hard, because—I don't know who knows what.

AUSTIN: Yeah.

ART: Like, in the world?

AUSTIN: Yeah! Me either!

ART: A lotta—a lotta shit's gone down, you know?

AUSTIN: Yeah. And this is a place also—this is a thing I guess Ephrim and Thrandir, you hit on when you built the temple. Was like, this temple is not a temple of Samoths. This is like a generic—I think you described it as being almost Unitarian in nature, right?

SYLVIA: Yeah. Um, it was—its purpose was sort of like, because we had so many different cultures coming here, anybody could use it for whatever services, I think?

AUSTIN: Right.

SYLVIA: Yeah.

AUSTIN: So I think then Rosana goes broad, right? Um. She has a whole thing, I'm not gonna give a whole sermon, you know? But I think the takeaway is a bit where she says that:

AUSTIN AS ROSANA: We stand on the brink of nothing. And nothing is... indifferent. And it is cruel. It would a soon consume us as hear our words and pleas. And so we should not beg with it. Or beg to it. We should... we should... There is an old saying.

And it is that... nothing abhors a vacuum. But more than that, it hates creativity and newness. And the joy of... creation. So we should each, everyday, walk through the world... and bring new things into being. In this way we honor what we've lost, because that was the gift given to us. Our lives, our bodies. Our souls. All that we are

AUSTIN: And that is the gist of it. It's a moving sermon, and she's good at this, Hadrian. Like, oh shit, she could have been doing this—she *has* been doing this for a decade, she *could've* been doing it for two or three! You know? [laughs]

ART: Yeah.

AUSTIN: She's been a leader in the—she's been a lay-leader in the church for most of your life, or at least someone who's been active, but like. Seeing her come into her own as a leader has been really good.

ART: Most of our lives *together*, not most of...

AUSTIN: Right. Yeah, yeah, yeah.

ART (amused): Not most of my total life.

AUSTIN: Right. Yeah. Anything else? As we put a god in the ground. I think... you bury him in the cemetery. Which is weird. And I'll say right here, like. There is no soul of Samol out there, waiting in line to go into the Heat and the Dark? He gave everything he had to Samot. So this isn't a situation where like, Adelaide can be like "Aha! Loophole! I grabbed your soul!" Like, no. His soul is inside of Samot's now. Like, he—they did the fusion dance. They didn't do the fusion dance, it's actually way more like when Piccolo absorbs Nail on the planet Namek to get more power. It's way more like that. [AUSTIN, DRE laugh]

**[TIMESTAMP 1:50:00]**

ART: I'm glad we got that straight.

AUSTIN: Uh-huh!

DRE: And of course, Samot has the same line of dialogue right after?

AUSTIN: What is that line?

DRE: Oh, Jesus, Austin...



AUSTIN: Like “I feel so powerful” or whatever?

DRE: Yeah, it’s Piccolo like “Oh, *yeah, YEAH, YEAH, I feel AWESOME!*”

AUSTIN (laughing): “I feel awesome!”

DRE: It sounds like—if you remember those fuckin’ old like, weird like, power thirst meme videos making fun of energy drinks? It basically sounds like that.

AUSTIN: Yeah. Yeah, you’re right. God. Is there anything else we need to do tonight? If there’s a final thing... I think all the shoes have dropped. Except the tree. The tree is gigantic. The tree is growing—I think that is the thing, the second thing you see. Like, at some point—oh, I guess the big thing is how are you healing—let’s start there. Samot. Y’all have a choice, and maybe you don’t wanna make this choice right this second, but, I think you actually need to make this choice this episode. Um. Which is: You have some options available to you for this next step. There’s three on the table. And I’m gonna like, hand-wave the rolls because I know that Adaire you’ve been watching Uklan Tel, you’ve been watching the like, Uklan Tel machine put stuff together over the next week or two, you know what I mean—we’re time-jumping here a little bit. The north game, the Isles of Flight game have lined up along the way here.

AUSTIN (CONT): And, um. The choices you have from what you study are the weird arcane dust that was given to you by the lich, Arrell. The star-stuff. Which, I think is presented in kind of vials, or like, sticks that you would heat, or like, a vial that you would heat up and then pour in? And then the alloy of the Heat and the Dark that, uh, Uklan Tel has made. Now, I can tell you what, under study, you know—I think Sunder can probably help discover what the arcane dust is. And it is like, it is like a... [sighs] A, um, necromantic dust, I guess? That would give, um, Samot greater control over the powers of life and death? That would allow him to like... take mortal wounds and not die. And would, you know. Give him a little bit of the old necromancy juice. And also Arrell made it, so like who the *fuck* knows. I’m giving you the like, “Oh, here is what the mechanical effect would be for this person,” but also who knows.

AUSTIN (CONT): The star-stuff would, um—I think there are experiments for this where you put a little bit of it down and you see the other star-stuff reacts to it—would give Samot the ability to control and shape star-stuff. Um. And then the third is the alloy that Uklan Tel made. And also the stars, uh. Who knows. Clearly they seem loyal to Samot in some way, even though it’s a weird sort of loyalty. And then the third one is the Uklan Tel alloy material between the Heat and the Dark and the star-stuff that worked on Ephrim and kind of was just mortal flesh on Ephrim. We have *no id*—I am saying out loud right now that I—you have not done the legwork to know what it would do to his body. Because you don’t have—I mean. You could do some gross shit with Samot’s body but I feel like that’s too far.

JANINE: [makes noise of distaste]

AUSTIN: Yeah. You could do some tests and shit, but. Eh, if you wanna do that, you could do that before the body's in the ground. Shit.

JANINE: I don't...

SYLVIA: That's...

JANINE: I mean, scientific method-wise I don't think that would even be relevant information.

AUSTIN: Sure.

JANINE: 'Cause you've already said it requires conscious control.

AUSTIN: Yeah. Totally. Well—and also, the other thing that's different is that—actually, I guess they're both one removed from the Heat and the Dark, so in some ways they are very similar, in terms of like, structure. Someone else had something there that I stepped on? Sorry.

SYLVIA: Oh, no, I was just saying, like. The idea of experimenting on Samol is really disrespectful so I don't think we'd go for it.

AUSTIN (overlapping): Yeah, it's terrible. No.

SYLVIA: Like. Just from a character perspective.

AUSTIN: Yeah. Yeah.

ART: I have a, just a question.

AUSTIN: Yeah.

ART: Um... So you said that all magic in the world started...?

AUSTIN: It's gonna slowly go away, yeah.

ART: So I—I think that might be a case against the arcane dust.

AUSTIN: Mmm. Tap my head.

SYLVIA: True.

AUSTIN: True.

JANINE: Yeah.

AUSTIN: Good catch.

ART: Also that none of us particularly care for...

AUSTIN: Arrell.

ART: The Wizard Arrell.

AUSTIN: Yeah, like, did we even get a reaction from Throndir wh—oh, you spit, you spit on the paper. Yeah, right, okay.

JANINE: I mean, the guy sucks but also he was magically tricked into having feelings about this person as a friend, so he probably wouldn't do anything to deliberately fuck him up.

AUSTIN (overlapping): Right. True. Mmhm.

ART: That is true—[stammers] We would be forced to believe that that is Arrell's best effort.

SYLVIA: I... yeah, I don't know. There's like nothing about any of that dude's past actions that lead me to believe that he wouldn't do some underhanded thing for like, his own belief of what the greater good is.

AUSTIN: Mmhm.

SYLVIA: Especially with this stuff, like.

JANINE: But he wouldn't like, deliberately kill him...

SYLVIA: I don't think he'd kill him, but, do we want—what if Samot becomes a lich like he is, or something?

JANINE: Yeah... I'm—this is not me saying we should do the thing, I'm just saying—

SYLVIA (overlapping): No, for sure!

JANINE: —you know, fair consideration.

SYLVIA: I'm just bringing up like, yeah I'm just bringing up the issues with it.

ART (overlapping): We should just give it to him when it's over.

JANINE: Be like "Look at this weird shit."

AUSTIN: Yeah.

ART: Yeah, he might know. Also, there—[laughs] He also thinks that Arrell is his friend, it might—

AUSTIN: No, he doesn't. He does not, we don't know that.

ART: No?

AUSTIN: He thinks *Fantasma* was his friend.

DRE: Mmhm!

ART: Mmm. Alright.

DRE: Oh, yeah.

AUSTIN: Uh-huh!

DRE: Yeah, let me fill him in on that shit. [AUSTIN laughs]

ART: Well either way I think he'd appreciate the mental puzzle that is the weird dust. [AUSTIN laughs, DRE makes skeptical noise]

AUSTIN: Mmhm!

ART: It's rude to steal someone's gift.

AUSTIN: Alright. So. What do y'all decide? I mean you c—I guess you can also ask him, right?

JANINE: Yeah, I—

AUSTIN: I mean, he's aware enough, he can make decisions.

SYLVIA (overlapping): Yeah...

DRE: Yeah.

JANINE: I sort of regretted that we didn't ask Samol. Uh...

AUSTIN: Mm...

JANINE: But the—that's only like, as a proxy if Samot's not conscious. And Samot being conscious, it makes sense to ask him what course of care he... he thinks would be best. Rather than us just like, doing a thing 'cause like, we think it's better.

AUSTIN: Yep. Totally.

JANINE (laughing): We don't fuckin' know anything more than he does, honestly, about any of this shit. Certainly.

SYLVIA: Probably less!

ART: We know dramatically less, I think is...

JANINE: Yes!

AUSTIN: Let me pause for a second really quick and actually go back a little, because—Samol dies, and in my mind like, Samot like, went back to sleep at that point. But did y'all have words, Hadrian? After that happened?

ART: I think Hadrian kind of feels sheepish and a little guilty because—

AUSTIN: Yeah.

ART: Samot did ask, and then... and then I, I obfuscated. But I of course believe that it was the right thing, and believe that Samot knows that I did the right thing, but like.

AUSTIN: Right, right.

ART: I'm kinda gonna give him a little space for a minute.

AUSTIN: Okay. Yeah, okay.

ART: I'll respond to any direct questions, you know, but...

AUSTIN: Yeah, I think he would—if you had that impression, I think... again, especially when he gets that look of resolution in his face, is happy to have you leave to start thinking and planning and being Samot. So yeah, I think you're able to find him—I think—so the thing is, I think he... um, yeah. He's able to—

ART: Does he attend the funeral?

AUSTIN: N—um, did he? Maybe. Like, those wounds are not gone yet. But yeah. Right? You figure out how to get him there. Um...

ART: I mean, I'll fuckin' *carry* him if that what it comes to, it's just...

AUSTIN (overlapping): Yeah. Totally. He's there for it. For sure. For a hundred percent sure. Um. And, you know, is... sobbing at points, for sure. And then also has like, a sort of steeled focus at other points. And then, and then yeah. I think actually, there's a point where he requests to go to his room, to be like, cared for in his room. And like, I guess you could say no... but. Y'know.

ART (laughing): That would be a real dick move!

AUSTIN: Mhm. Yeah. The...

JANINE: So we're asking him, right?

AUSTIN: Yeah, you're gonna ask him. But you're asking him—I just wanted to frame that in his room, basically. As he's in his like, gigantic gold and red gaudy-ass bed. You know? Under the covers. With makeshift bandages on, and like, rags that you've made. And he's like...

**[TIMESTAMP 1:59:37]**

AUSTIN AS SAMOT: The alloy is a fascinating suggestion. But... frightening, I'll say. The dust is altogether out, obviously. Magic is leaving the world, and I don't know this... so-called wizard. At all. [exhales] The star-stuff is appealing. I know it well. I created it. And having the direct control would be... beneficial. The fear, of course, is whether it gives them control over me. But the same could be said for the alloy. [sighs] There are no easy answers here, but. I suppose I would prefer the stars... to the alloy. Though it seems like it has good work for you, Lord Ephrim.

SYLVIA AS EPHRIM: Yeah. There hasn't really been any negatives to it yet aside from initial pain of, uh, the... obviously, we don't know what's gonna happen with you if we try it.

ART AS HADRIAN: If you wanna talk to the semiotician...

SAMOT: Please. That would be—that would be interesting. I've not spoken to one in quite some time. Give me an hour with him.

HADRIAN: I'm sure he'll find that agreeable.

ART: Hadrian says with no real conviction.

EPHRIM: He might push for more. [AUSTIN laughs] We'll keep him to an hour.

SAMOT: Appreciated.

AUSTIN: And Uklan Tel is super excited, obviously. And it is—if someone stays and listens, it is basically—it's interesting. Uklan Tel holds his own, but like, when it gets to the specifics of this shit he kind of gets schooled. Which is weird, because no one schools Uklan Tel, who is one of the smartest people alive. But Samot is the god of books? *And* wine. So, uh. Yeah. Kind of is just like "You don't know that this works at all!" Like, says the stuff that y'all said, but is also Samot. Y'know? And I think Uklan Tel is like, leaves that room feeling embarrassed that he let himself be flattered into thinking he could do this on his own. And like, do this in the conditions he did them in, and be pushed to a point where he was willing to take that big of a chance on something like this. And so it gets him back on the straight and narrow a little bit? To the point where I think Uklan Tel says like "I've had second thoughts about the procedure..." And so yeah, I think it ends up being the star-stuff. Which.

JANINE: [begins to speak, then stops]

AUSTIN: The stars help apply, if that's—go ahead.

JANINE: I was just gonna say like, I... [sighs] I feel like this probably a thing, um... I wanna say that maybe Adaire stood by the door during that conversation. But I feel like maybe... [laughs] Maybe this is a bad idea. But also seeing Uklan Tel really like, dejected, um. I think maybe she would say some like:

JANINE AS ADAIRE: You know, we don't have to throw this in the trash.

AUSTIN: Right.

ADAIRE: This is still a world where the Heat and the Dark's advancing, this could still be... useful down the line. But it is definitely not ready yet.

AUSTIN AS UKLAN: Of course. Of course, I would love—[stammers] Ms. Ducarte, you've been a great help over the last week or two. I would love to continue to have your support in this endeavor. Thank you, again.

AUSTIN: Alright. So yeah, I think they help you perform this procedure. And... it goes as well as it can. The—it like, burns away the remnant dark like, emptiness of the Heat and the Dark, the Nothing in those wounds. So now when Samot has his shirt off he has cool glowing scars! [laughs] Forever. And I think it like... There's a point at which he looks at you and oh, his eyes are like that too. He just has this glow, like literally from him, but also in his eyes now. And he's still recovering, like this stuff will take a while to set. He's not like "Alright, bye! I'm gonna go home now!" He's gonna be here for a while as this finishes. And I think Ch... Chapter *[note: Austin meant Obelus, not Chapter, who is in Audbade]* before they leave, thank you, they thank you all for letting them help and for letting them see their lord. And also, um, make a point of inviting you all to their citadel to the east. Where they would like to show you—and you knew this was one of the spots on the map, so to speak, already? But they give you an open invitation to go see the world they are building. And, uh. And yeah. That's. That is it for them. They leave. Any other things to do before we wrap? I have one more thing to—I have one more shoe to drop, I guess? But that's it.

ART: Someone should tell Samot about the Ordennan fleet.

AUSTIN: Oh, that's true.

ART: Maybe someone who saw it.

AUSTIN: Yeah. Fair.

JANINE: [sighs reluctantly] Alright... um.



ART: Those are the best people to tell people about things.

AUSTIN: Mmhm!

JANINE: Uh, I mean yeah. Adaire tells him about that for sure. And also about like, the Ordennan that she met, and...

AUSTIN: Mmhm. He's like, um—and I think like, Corsica is in the conversation too, it's like a military-adjacent thing or whatever. He's like:

SAMOT: Of course.

AUSTIN: I think he and Corsica at the same time are like "Of course."

SAMOT: If they take the city—if I'm not there, they will likely be able to take the city. It will come as a shock to my people. I need to get better as quickly as possible. I need to take my home back. I will focus on getting strong. And then I will focus on ending... the Ordennan threat once and for all. Does anyone have any wine?

EPHRIM: We can find some.

AUSTIN: So yeah—I wanna end on this shot. Then like, someone goes to get the wine. And you're up, up in this tower, right? So like, you don't wanna go all the way downstairs to get the wine—there is like a wine attic up here somewhere at some floor, you know? You get some supplies here.

JANINE: Yeah, that's where you hear people keepin' their wine. [laughs]

AUSTIN: Well it's a big tall tower, you can't carry a whole wi—you know like, sometimes you need a mid-tower wine trip, you know? I imagine there's some at the very top, there's some in the middle, there's some at the bottom.

JANINE: This is a place that he designed, so that does make sense.

AUSTIN: Exa—yeah. A hundred—[laughs] a hundred percent!

JANINE: It's a room that everyone's like "Is this... a mid-tower wine—what the fuck?"

AUSTIN: [laughs] You know, honestly it's the same wine cellar and it, y'know—it pulls from the same supply, you know, it's a shelf that has the wine in it, and there's casks and stuff, and it is

on a higher floor but it's—when you pull it it disappears from one of the other shelves in the basement or the attic. And when you're doing it you see something else out the window. Which is off in the distance, you see another one of those trees. It's smaller than the one at the Last University, but it is the same shape, basically. It's out in the ruins of Rosemerrow. And there's one to the southeast, also. There might be more that you can't see because they're too far away. Um... but spring is here. And it is these big trees. And—you know, there's already been smaller jungles and swamps, we've already seen the world overgrown—*[THEME MUSIC - "SOMETHING" - BEGINS]*—but this is like... this is big on a different level. I think maybe Ephrim, in your mind—I don't know if you're helping get the wine, but—you hear the anvil. The hammer hitting the anvil still. Whoosh, clink.

*[THEME MUSIC - "SOMETHING" - PLAYS OUT TIL 2:10:26]*