

[Spring in Hieron 03: Hospitable to You](#)

Transcribed by @robotchangeling

["Something" by Jack de Quidt plays]

AUSTIN (as Samol): There's a timeline, and I can poke at that ball of energy all I want, but I don't see a way of making it live without me. But...to the south, to the east, even Arell to the west, people are working on it.

KEITH (as Fero): On the ball?

AUSTIN (as Samol): On life without Hieron. On a world without me. And we are eating pheasant. Let's spend some time working on new things. Forget about saving the day, forget about being a hero. Let's just spend some time figuring out some new stuff to do.

AUSTIN (as Rosana): I'm glad now that Benjamin is not in that prison. Even if at the time, when everything was on fire...whoever was in there, that wasn't Hadrian, and it wasn't me. But if Hadrian is really in this blade, then we need to start fixing it. Uklan, how long?

AUSTIN (as Stornras Glasseye): It will take, a little while.

AUSTIN (as Rosana): Months?

AUSTIN: And he says,

AUSTIN (as Stornras Glasseye): Years.

DRE (as Throndir): Okay, I have something, I don't know if it'll help, but I can't get anything out of it.

AUSTIN: What is it?

DRE: The book.

AUSTIN: Mmm. I think Uklan Tel's eyes light up, and he says

AUSTIN (as Uklan Tel): You would give this up? This was not part of the original design of the blade, but perhaps, perhaps this could...there could be something here, I'll begin reading at once.

DRE (as Throndir): Let Benjamin help.

AUSTIN (as Uklan Tel): Benjamin? The boy?

AUSTIN: And Sunder says, like,

AUSTIN (as Sunder Havelton): Yes, he has some aptitudes that could come in handy.

AUSTIN: And he says,

AUSTIN (as Uklan Tel): Of course! He always was bright.

AUSTIN: For a brief moment when the thunder cracks and the lightning strikes the ocean out in the distance, and you look out and see the storm, the boat rocks in a way, and you straighten yourself out, you find your footing, in a way that is right for the sea at home, it's as if...when that thunder cracked, it tied you back to that place for just a moment. And it's almost nauseating, right, because you've spent the whole night out on this other ocean.

[song ends]

AUSTIN: Fero, it has been another year of working on things at the tower of Samot. And the thing I want to call your attention to is that from both sides this place is getting kind of squeezed. On the west, the Heat and the Dark is closing in, and on the east the arcs of the star-stuff have gotten closer and closer. What's your year been like?

KEITH: I think it's...I think it's a lot of brainstorming...

AUSTIN: Yeah.

KEITH: No, I think it's a lot of just hanging out, I bet I've tried to do a bit of like the stuff I missed doing from being alone, which is like...

AUSTIN: Oh, yeah.

KEITH: So in my head I was like, oh I'm probably making a bunch of stuff, I probably am, but most of my time I bet is just like, oh it sure is nice to...you know.

AUSTIN: Like peace and quiet type stuff?

KEITH: Yeah to have another, to have a new cave to be in.

AUSTIN: Do you ask any questions? I mean like, Samol gives you room, like Samol is not gonna push on you outside of these like big yearly meetups or whatever. But I also...I guess I imagine y'all have had conversations throughout the year, you know? But it's not a...he's never too keen to initiate, he does like giving you space. But as the year's coming to a close...I think

as the year's coming to a close, you catch him one day working on the, on Hieron's Breath, this big orb of energy, and he's in his dragon form, and then he slips out of his dragon form and just like falls onto his back. What do you do?

KEITH: I change into a sort of jackrabbit with these huge feet, and take like one huge bound—

AUSTIN: *[laughs]* Okay, and you get to him.

KEITH: —over there, yeah.

AUSTIN: Okay, yeah. He gets back up, he's alright, he fell, you know? He's like,

AUSTIN (as Samol): Ah, I'm fine, Fero, I'm fine, I'm fine, I'm fine, I'm just gonna go sit down for a little bit.

AUSTIN: And makes his way over to like a bench nearby basically, it's like a little stone bench. You know what it is, is actually, this is kind of near where Tabard and the Pala-din were back in season 1, and that camp is still basically there, their kind of stage camp. And he sits there, he's eating some sort of soup. And he—

KEITH (as Fero): Tide corn soup?

AUSTIN (as Samol): *[sighs]* Tide corn soup, you know it. Big fan, big fan.

KEITH (as Fero): Yeah honestly you made them way better than I thought they were gonna be.

AUSTIN (as Samol): I tried to go sweet, but not too sweet.

KEITH (as Fero): Yeah. I like sweet, but not too sweet. I like sweet—

AUSTIN (as Samol): Too sweet—

KEITH (as Fero): —but too sweet by definition is too sweet.

AUSTIN (as Samol): It's right there in the words, that's what I, that's what I say.

KEITH (as Fero): Are you alright?

AUSTIN (as Samol): *[hesitates]* Yeah. I'm getting up there, Fero, you know that!

KEITH (as Fero): Mmhmm.

AUSTIN (as Samol): And I'll be honest, it's been great seeing you do all this, it's given me life, it's given me a little extra energy, a little pep in my step, a little bit of movement again, but. Still getting up there. I'll be alright, but. But I'm getting up there. *[sighs]*

KEITH (as Fero): Is there something else you can do to that ball?

AUSTIN (as Samol): Nah.

KEITH (as Fero): You're always doing the same thing to it.

AUSTIN (as Samol): What did I tell you about the Grand Tour, they ran up and down the countryside for eons, there isn't a...single magic fix for this, not as far as I know. And there ain't much I don't know, so. Like I said, people working on it. There's Arrell out west, trying to figure out how to change the way the star-stuff works...

KEITH (as Fero): Is he good? *[laughs]* Is he a good guy?

AUSTIN (as Samol): *[tired]* I don't know, man.

KEITH (as Fero): Everyone seems pretty split on him.

AUSTIN (as Samol): *[sighs]* It is complicated in ways I am glad I do not have to deal with.

KEITH (as Fero): Got it. So, check one for the box of things you don't know.

AUSTIN (as Samol): *[interrupting]* You shouldn't be putting people in weird brain cells—

KEITH (as Fero): Right, yeah.

AUSTIN (as Samol): —or whatever.

KEITH (as Fero): Brain prisons you mean, by cells.

AUSTIN (as Samol): Yeah like a prison cell, not like little tiny...we don't know what cells are, we don't have science like that.

KEITH (as Fero): Right.

AUSTIN (as Samol): In fact I don't know that cells exist, the like—

KEITH (as Fero): What's the integer, even.

AUSTIN: *[laughing]* Right, exactly.

AUSTIN (as Samol): That's not good, he shouldn't be doing that. But, I do get it, and that way he's doing stuff could theoretically one day save people, I don't know. I wouldn't do it.

KEITH (as Fero): He should just ask first.

AUSTIN (as Samol): He should. He's not a good person, regardless of what...of whether what he's doing is good. Samot got some machinations...Samot got more machinations than—

KEITH (as Fero): Samochinations.

AUSTIN (as Samol): He got some machinations, you know what I'm saying?

KEITH (as Fero): It's a sick dance, I bet, is the machination. *[Austin laughs]*

AUSTIN (as Samol): I know Uklan Tel's studying the Heat and the Dark. I'm sure Ephrim has some stuff. And down below...

KEITH: Is Uklan Tel studying the Heat and the Dark, now?

AUSTIN (as Samol): Yeah, yeah.

KEITH: Sorry, this is me, Keith. 'Cause I—

AUSTIN: Oh, yes.

KEITH: 'Cause I failed a roll that convinced him to stop studying it?

AUSTIN: No no no no no, that's not what the fail was.

KEITH: Was that not what the fail was?

AUSTIN: No, the fail was that he threw himself *into* studying it. You...or sorry was it that, yeah yeah yeah, it was.

KEITH: I thought that it was—

AUSTIN: With the star-stuff.

KEITH: No, I was trying to convince him, like 'hey, you shouldn't...like why don't you go do something about it, instead of just reading about it', and I failed that roll—

AUSTIN: Right.

KEITH: And then you had him do what I said but then that was a bad thing and not the right thing to do.

AUSTIN: Right, when I say study, he used to be studying it in books.

KEITH: Right. Oh, now he's like out there.

AUSTIN: Now he's like, a field researcher type, you know what I mean? Now he's like, ready to be like...he's in it. The last shot of him in Winter is, he's at an alchemical table and he's working on samples of the star-stuff and the Heat and the Dark together, at the alchemy table. So he is working on stuff actively, and not just studying it in a book, you know? Samol continues and like,

AUSTIN (as Samol): You know, there are people all over the place who are trying to figure stuff out, but, I certainly can't see any solutions. I would love for there to be one, because, quite frankly, it would let me take a step away. I'm done, Fero. I ever tell you I was the first thing alive?

AUSTIN: He grins.

KEITH (as Fero): You were the first thing alive? That's wild.

AUSTIN (as Samol): Nothing blinked, that's...I was the first thing.

KEITH (as Fero): That's nuts!

AUSTIN (as Samol): There was no one for me to talk to!

KEITH (as Fero): No one even to tell!

AUSTIN (as Samol): No one even to tell. You know when people go like, 'ah, I've been here too long. Ah, I'm stuck in this job.' I've had the same job since I was born. Now, I wanna say it, I have a lot of autonomy, I got a lot of freedom, I can kind of do whatever I want, most of the time...and that's great...but. I'm, I'm, I'm done. I been done. And my kids didn't want me to go, and they fought over it, and...people don't want me to go don't even know my goddamn name, and they don't want me to go because they, they got their own jobs and their own families and, turns out if I go it inconveniences them by...ceasing all existence, which, fair, I guess. But I'm ready. I couldn't be more. It's sad.

It's...sad. But I made peace. I love my kids, and I love...all y'all. But it hurts, Fero. This isn't, like,

AUSTIN: He points to the Ordenna thing like on the side of his shoulder.

AUSTIN (as Samol): I can't fix this, this is like this forever and it hurts, constantly.

AUSTIN: He like lifts up his shirt and you see where like, he just has open wounds on his body.

AUSTIN (as Samol): This hurts all the time. All the time!

KEITH (as Fero): There's no vine that you can make for that?

AUSTIN (as Samol): *[chuckling a little]* I can make it hurt a little less, you know. Why do you think I made halfling pipe leaf? But...

KEITH (as Fero): I don't know, what, is that why?

AUSTIN (as Samol): It was part of it...

KEITH (as Fero): I've got some!

AUSTIN (as Samol): It was part of it, you know, we could hit that pipe, shit. [Keith laughs quietly] But even then, you know. *[chuckles]* There's not enough halfling pipe leaf in the world to make me not be in pain. Deep pain. So I hope someone figures it out.

KEITH (as Fero): You know, I'm, you know. I don't wanna sound—

AUSTIN (as Samol): Wait. Wait wait wait, do you...wait.

KEITH (as Fero): What?

AUSTIN: I think maybe this is when you both feel it? I guess...you can talk to plants, right, you can like feel plant life and stuff too?

KEITH: Yeah.

AUSTIN: You're like joking about pipeleaf and vines and making new stuff, and...there is a new type of plant life that you feel, pushing up through the snow to the east. Actually, from all around you. It's like...a bunch of budding plants have all sprouted at once, or are in the season of sprouting and all of a sudden it's like *[makes a bunch of quick sounds in succession]*. I bet you've been around an animal when it gives birth to a bunch of kids at once, you know—

KEITH: Uh huh, yeah.

AUSTIN: It's like that but all through these woods. Poking up through the snow, are...you know, you've been working on new types of animal life? Someone's been working on new types of plants. And he goes,

AUSTIN (as Samol): That wasn't me.

KEITH (as Fero): Wasn't me.

AUSTIN (as Samol): *[surprised]* Fero, I don't...I don't know what those are. Fero, I don't know what those are.

KEITH (as Fero): I don't know what those are either. I can hear 'em.

AUSTIN: He like walks over to them. He goes,

AUSTIN (as Samol): What are they saying?

AUSTIN: They are saying...they don't speak in like common tongue, Fero?

KEITH: No. I do, by the way, I do have a move called 'thing talker', where—

AUSTIN: Thing talker, right. You don't have to roll it, I'll just tell you what it is.

KEITH: I don't have to roll it anyway, it's just an ability—

AUSTIN: Oh, okay.

KEITH: It's passive ability.

AUSTIN: Cool. What's it say?

KEITH: *[reading]* "You see the spirits in the sand, the sea, and the stone. You may now apply your spirit tongue, shapeshifting, and studied essence—"

AUSTIN: Cool.

KEITH: *[cont.]* "—to inanimate natural objects, plants and rocks, or creatures made thereof, as well as animals. Thing talker forms can be exact copies, or can be mobile, vaguely humanoid-shaped entities."

AUSTIN: Okay. And spirit tongue lets you understand things, right, that are akin to the—

KEITH: Yeah. Spirit talker's for animals, and thing talker is for organic matter.

AUSTIN: Right. I'm...technically the way it works is like it says like, 'your native land', but you've been here for three years, so at this point, this is your native land, or four years. But I will say, maybe the first thing here is you actually, these are not of this area. These are from something else, these are from another place, where you have not been, but—

KEITH: Are they akin?

AUSTIN: They are akin, there are like jungle plants here? And you haven't been to the jungles, except that one time that you went through that door to the other place, to the islands, to where the...remember you stepped through the magic door that teleported you and all that? That was kind of a jungle.

KEITH: Yeah.

AUSTIN: So you don't really know them super well, you have eaten that vine, so maybe you studied that vine, maybe you find something that's like that, akin to that. But it's not akin to, because it's...

KEITH: If I can hear it but not understand it, that's okay.

AUSTIN: Here's the way I'll frame it.

KEITH: Yeah.

AUSTIN: Is. There is a certain...plants often don't have that much to say. Plants all say different things, because they are a little bit different, I do think that the plant you chew to make your wing muscles hurt less is different than the halfling pipeweed, is different than a pine tree, is different than a fern, is different than a whatever, but there's a commonality which is, they...you know how in Mass Effect the Elcor would for politeness' sake say how they felt, and they'd be like—

KEITH: Yeah, yeah, yeah.

AUSTIN: —resigned, resignation, sure I'll do it...

KEITH: Yeah they wanted to write HK-47 again

AUSTIN: Yeah but they couldn't actually—

KEITH: —but they couldn't have any way else to do it.

AUSTIN: Uh huh, yeah, totally. It's like except that every time it's like, 'I'm growing, and, blah blah blah.' Like 'I wanna grow more'. *[laughter]*

AUSTIN: It's just a constant feeling of slow, continual growth. These instead of having that same sort of feeling, of like, slow continual growth, have a...there's a desperation in their mode? There's a sort of like—

KEITH: Have to...gotta do this

AUSTIN: I have to grow as quickly as possible. I have to fill in everything. I have to, like...there is no desire to like, blend in with the world...there's no equilibrium, there's no like...Here's one. There's no like, 'I need to get closer to the light', 'I need to go where there's rain', this stuff is self-sufficient. This stuff is growing under its own will? I guess I'll put it this way, this stuff doesn't need to eat either. And that's new. So yeah like all the other plants are like 'I need water', 'I need light'. These are not that. These are just like, 'I am growing forever'. And that's not a thing that they say, but that's an absence in like, you expect to hear the thing that all plants say, which is about what they need to grow, and it just doesn't do that, and is actually kind of hostile to your presence. In fact I think at one point, a little kind of ground vine wraps around your leg, and you're able to pull yourself away, but it pulls back almost like a snake. There's a moment where this flower blossoms and it looks almost like a bird opening its wings, and you turn to look at it and it closes shut. Spring is here. And Samol goes back to his bench. And he goes,

AUSTIN (as Samol): Well, I did say I wanted people to keep working on it. Fero...

KEITH (as Fero): Yeah?

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

KEITH (as Fero): I don't much like those!

AUSTIN (as Samol): *[slowly]* Yeah...like I said, I want there to be a new world and new things in it and all that, but I...I hope y'all can find a place in it for yourselves, too. Those stars, like the stuff Samol made, that *could* exist, right? Let's say for whatever reason it beats back the Heat and the Dark, and this whole continent gets taken over by the star-stuff. That world could exist. But I don't see a place for your kind in it, and that doesn't leave me feeling too good, so. I would...I'm gonna call it a day. You gonna stick around more, or do you think, maybe...Fero, it's hard for me to ask you to go back to those people who need you. It's hard because I am here now, and not, I'm not with my family. And there are times when they've needed me, and I feel like a hypocrite. But at the same time...there are people who would be better off with you than without.

KEITH (as Fero): Yeah, I'll go.

AUSTIN (as Samol): Just like that?

KEITH (as Fero): Yeah, just like that.

AUSTIN (as Samol): Well, you know where to find me.

KEITH (as Fero): Yeah. I...I mean, here, right?

AUSTIN (as Samol): *[chuckles]* Everywhere, but especially here.

KEITH (as Fero): Sure. Oh, good point. Good point, Ron.

AUSTIN (as Samol): *[laughs]* I can't believe you call me that. You're the first person to call me Ron.

KEITH (as Fero): *[laughs]* Is that true, am I the first?

AUSTIN (as Samol): People call me Hieron, people call me...but like, I don't think they're saying, 'hey, hi Ron', I don't think that's what that is!

KEITH (as Fero): You don't think that's what that is?

AUSTIN (as Samol): Maybe it is, I don't know!

KEITH (as Fero): Maybe it was always meant to be that.

AUSTIN (as Samol): Goddamn, I thought it was...you know what, I'm not gonna get into it. You got a good heart, Fero.

KEITH (as Fero): I know.

AUSTIN (as Samol): *[laughs slightly]* Maybe not, I don't know, I'll have to rethink that.

KEITH (as Fero): Does a good heart...do you sacrifice a good heart by agreeing that you have one? Is that all it takes?

AUSTIN (as Samol): That's all it takes, it's quick: boom, bad heart! *[pause]* You got a good one. And...

KEITH (as Fero): I know.

AUSTIN (as Samol): I wanna see you bring it out in other people. And also I want to see the look on their faces when you turn into a sea squirrel for the first time. *[laughing]*

KEITH (as Fero): *[laughs]* They might have already seen one!

AUSTIN (as Samol): Oh, true. Well then a new thing, whatever new is that you ain't make in front of them yet. I'm looking forward to it.

KEITH (as Fero): Something really...I want to make something really sticky.

AUSTIN (as Samol): Okay, don't do that.

KEITH (as Fero): Something that can like, roll—

AUSTIN (as Samol): Number one, don't become air just in case, because if you become air there's a chance you might take air away. Don't become sticky 'cause what if everything just becomes sticky? I don't know! What if you—

KEITH (as Fero): Well, maybe it doesn't leave that much of a trail, but what if I could like, what if I could just flip flop up a tree or whatever, that would be sick.

AUSTIN (as Samol): It would be very sick.

KEITH (as Fero): *[laughs]*

AUSTIN (as Samol): Be careful and...you don't need like a bagged lunch or anything, right?

KEITH (as Fero): No I, I literally don't, but I'll take one.

AUSTIN (as Samol): I'll see what I can do, I'll just. You know, give me a little, I'll. Okay.

AUSTIN: *[laughing]* He actually...you know what, you're in this camp, you're in a former military camp, I'll bet you he finds some rations from the past that he can pull into the future.

KEITH: *[sarcastic]* Oh, great, you've got fresh, fresh stale bread from the past.

AUSTIN: Delicious. All yours.

KEITH (as Fero): Excellent. You know what, I actually don't need any food. Do you have something to drink, though?

AUSTIN (as Samol): Yeah, that I can give you. I'll give you something special, actually.

AUSTIN: And that he actually has like a nice...he gives you like a wineskin—

KEITH: Like a waterskin, wineskin?

AUSTIN: Like a waterskin, but with like...he gives you two, he gives you one filled with water, and then one filled, he's like,

AUSTIN (as Samol): And this is my special brew.

KEITH (as Fero): Oh, boy.

AUSTIN (as Samol): I had a little patch, down by Hieron's Breath, down near the big energy ball I'm always working on? I've been growing stuff there, so. A little fruit, you know, different types, ferment it—

KEITH (as Fero): Thanks.

AUSTIN (as Samol): —turn it into a nice wine. Do you drink wine? Are you allowed to drink?

KEITH (as Fero): Am I not—yeah, no one ever said I can't drink.

AUSTIN (as Samol): Eh, you can drink.

KEITH (as Fero): Yeah.

AUSTIN (as Samol): Listen, if I tell you you can drink, you can drink.

KEITH (as Fero): Nice. I've got, like, pipeweed, so I don't think—

AUSTIN (as Samol): Right.

KEITH (as Fero): —anything's too big of a deal.

AUSTIN (as Samol): You don't have to leave...Uh, sorry, sir, you're gonna have to leave the pipeweed with me.

KEITH (as Fero): *[disappointed]* Am I, for real?

AUSTIN (as Samol): No!

KEITH (as Fero): Oh.

AUSTIN (as Samol): But, you could leave me a little bit, if that would be alright.

KEITH (as Fero): You could *make* some!

AUSTIN (as Samol): Fine, *[laughing]* I guess I could make my own pipeweed, I just thought maybe—

KEITH (as Fero): Do you want to make me some and then you can have this dried up shit that I have had for like—

AUSTIN: *[laughing]* Five years!

KEITH (as Fero): Five, six years? Is that what you want, do you want to give me some fresh stuff and you get this?

AUSTIN (as Samol): I thought maybe there was like a sentimental value, I thought maybe we could exchange gifts...

KEITH (as Fero): No it's, it gets better with age, it's aged.

AUSTIN (as Samol): Some aged pipeweed, that's what I've always wanted.

KEITH (as Fero): You know what they say, they say. You know one year is pipeweed, three years it's medicine, seven years is treasure.

AUSTIN (as Samol): Wow.

KEITH (as Fero): Yeah.

AUSTIN: The treasure anniversary.

KEITH: Well, of weed.

AUSTIN: Right, the treasure weed-iversary.

KEITH: Yeah.

AUSTIN: Welcome to my new show, Weed-iversary. *[Keith laughs]*

AUSTIN (as Samol): Alright, fine. Be safe. I don't have like a big final speech for you. There isn't, that isn't a thing.

KEITH (as Fero): Can I do a final speech?

AUSTIN (as Samol): Sure, do you wanna try? Have you given a—

KEITH (as Fero): Do you wanna do like a graduation music?

AUSTIN (as Samol): *[imitates music]* I don't have my guitar. Oh you know what, I can...you know what, give me a second.

AUSTIN: And he ducks into that little, there's a building next to Hieron's Breath, there's like a little structure that fell off the tower. I think it's like an overturned balcony, with like big columns and stuff, and he comes back out with a guitar. And he starts playing, just like, speech music, just like background slow acoustic guitar.

KEITH (as Fero): Can you do it in a minor key? 'Cause it's not, my thing's not the brightest thing, to say.

AUSTIN (as Samol): Oh. That's normally my territory, okay I'll...minor key. Alright.

KEITH (as Fero): Alright.

AUSTIN (as Samol): Strummin'.

KEITH (as Fero): You know. Listen. You want me to go out there, and try and help, and I'm gonna try and help, but, you know. If you're a bush, and everything else is the leaves and the berries and it's all you, you know. Every bush that's ever died had the leaves on it die with it, and so, if that's the thing, then that's the thing, I guess.

AUSTIN (as Samol): You weren't kiddin'.

KEITH (as Fero): No.

AUSTIN (as Samol): Yeah.

KEITH (as Fero): But I'm—I'm gonna try!

AUSTIN (as Samol): You don't wanna add something like, oh but the berries fell and then the seeds and, a new bush? From one bush there are like a thousand bushes?

KEITH (as Fero): Oh that's good, that's a good point! See that's why you get to be the first guy.

AUSTIN (as Samol): That's it, that's why, that's why I get to be the first guy.

KEITH (as Fero): But those...ah, never mind.

AUSTIN (as Samol): You know what, forget about it. Stay rude, Fero.

KEITH (as Fero): *[sharply]* No! *[laughs loudly]*

AUSTIN (as Samol): *[laughs]*

AUSTIN: He laughs and sees you off. And yeah, as you take...do you fly out, do you walk out, what do you do?

KEITH: Yeah, okay, here's what I do. I'm gonna show off.

AUSTIN: Okay.

KEITH: Here's what I'm gonna do. Do you remember, we were talking about centaurs earlier, what I'm gonna do is I'm gonna turn into one creature that is a guy riding a horse.

AUSTIN: Oooh.

KEITH: But it's all one thing.

AUSTIN: That's a lot. Okay, great. Do you want to roll this?

KEITH: *[laughs]* Sure, yeah, I'll roll it.

AUSTIN: Oh, my god, if you get a 12+... *[Keith laughs]* That's a wisdom roll.

KEITH: Yeah...

AUSTIN: *[sighs]* My god, you got a 12.

KEITH: *[shouts]* 12! *[laughs excitedly]* It's like...it looks like two separate things, but it's all one thing.

AUSTIN: What is it? Is this like...what is it? What type of creature is it that you've introduced to the world?

KEITH: It's a...I guess it's a fulltaur?

AUSTIN: *[sighs]* So like a centaur, it's like a mimic became a centaur.

KEITH: Yeah. It's like a centaur grew legs—

AUSTIN: Like fake, human legs.

KEITH: —and moved back, fake human legs and moved back, and it had a real horse head. Like it shares—

AUSTIN: But what is it in nature? Like, is it—

KEITH: I think it's a kind of horse.

AUSTIN: So it's just like a regular horse. It doesn't hurt anybody. In my mind, I hear that, and it sounds like the way like...okay. You know in *Breath of the Wild* where you like roll up on a person who's like 'oh, hey, there's a person in the street' and you're like 'oh, hey, how's it going?' and they're like, oh, sike, we're part of the Yiga clan and we're here to fuck you up.

KEITH: Yeah, yeah yeah yeah.

AUSTIN: It's like that. Or like a, what are the flowers that—like a venus flytrap when you're a bug—

KEITH: Okay.

AUSTIN: —you're like 'oh wow, look at that bright colorful flower'.

KEITH: No, I think it's the opposite...okay, so here a thing, I've been watching *Twin Peaks: The Return*.

AUSTIN: Great.

KEITH: And here's what it is. You know how...so it can do just enough...it's a horse.

AUSTIN: Yeah.

KEITH: And the person is like a defense mechanism, and it can do just enough person to get by.

AUSTIN: *[laughing]* Okay.

KEITH: Like it can just—it's Dougie, is on the horse's back, and it can do just enough, like, to get itself out of a short mess.

AUSTIN: Right, like it—

KEITH: And people are just like, 'oh, you know, this is like a weird guy, but that's not a horse, it's just a weird guy'.

AUSTIN: Perfect. God. God. Okay. Perfect. So you like turn into one of those. Samol just like bursts out laughing. So he looks at you first, like: did he make a horse? No, that's not, wait. Shakes his head—

KEITH: *[cackles]* Like I'm cackling, Fero's cackling—

AUSTIN: Yeah.

KEITH: —but like, I'm not—

AUSTIN: Is it the horse laughing, what's cackling?

KEITH: I think at the same time as it's the guy on laughing, but it sounds like a weird fake laugh—

AUSTIN: *[fake unnatural laughing]* Ha ha ha ha ha ha ha.

KEITH: —the horse is like, making happy horse—

AUSTIN: *[horse whinny sounds]*

KEITH: Yeah the horse is like whinnying, yeah.

AUSTIN: Right, perfect, good. Ah, and they said I couldn't do a horse sound two seasons in a row! *[Keith laughs]* And you ride out, and like...you ride through the woods, and there are all this new weird plant life sprouting. And even now in the early days...I think, you know, again, it takes you a while to get back out of the Mark of the Erasure's area, and back into like, Hieron proper. You see this stuff continuing to grow, and they're like gigantic. Like, you know, there are plants in our human world where we're like, 'wow, that's a real thing, huh?', and it's just those, right? It's just like, sequoia trees.

KEITH: The wildest shit.

AUSTIN: The *wildest* shit. Which, we'll have to come up with, you know, it is 11:17pm so my brain is a little shot currently—

KEITH: That meat flower, maybe? That thing's huge.

AUSTIN: Yeah, that thing's huge! Or the corpse flower, the one that smells really bad?

KEITH: Yeah, that's what I'm talking about.

AUSTIN: Yeah, that one, totally. All that stuff.

KEITH: You know those things are like 6 feet tall or something?

AUSTIN: Yeah, they're gigantic, they're gigantic!

KEITH: They never say that, they're like, 'this flower smells like meat', but they never say like 'this flower is bigger than you'. *[laughs]*

AUSTIN: Yeah, exactly, exactly. So, and none of it was there before, and all of it reads as different to you. And this is, out of character, this is the stuff that Alyosha has been making. And it has been slowly working its way up from the very bottom of Hieron. From the very lowest strata, the very lowest lamina, down near where like the Heat and the Dark is like nipping at Alyosha's feet, that motherfucker is just hammering away on Samoth's forge, or I guess on the Dark Son's forge, turning divine blood into creation, into new life, but it is not life that is particularly hospitable to you.

["Still Winter" by Jack de Quidt plays]

[TIMESTAMP: 0:30:20]

AUSTIN: Alright! Count the dead and forecast the weather.

DRE: *[laughs]* No dead, though!

AUSTIN: Is that true? That's true, right?

SYLVIA: ...Yes.

AUSTIN: Okay.

SYLVIA: We're about to be in a bad spot with the Ordennans, but right now we're good.

AUSTIN: No, you should be fine, they only need one medicine.

DRE: We have medicine

SYLVIA: Yeah they need one, yeah yeah yeah.

AUSTIN: Yeah.

SYLVIA: I'm just saying, they're the closest—

AUSTIN: They're the closest. So everybody advances by one, right, everyone's S goes up by one, and then the...temperature was fine last time, right, you spent your fuel, no one's...or it wasn't, but we already dealt with it.

DRE: Mmhmm.

AUSTIN: And then, hunger is gonna start, right? How much food do we have, five food?

DRE: Yeah. So we'll have to feed five people, including people who get hungry.

AUSTIN: Okay, yeah. So that will be...we'll erase that as it's time. Cool. Time to roll for temperature! 2 again. Lots of 2s here. Thankfully, you have that fuel, right?

DRE: Mmhmm.

AUSTIN: So that again drops it to, what, that drops it to...

DRE: 3.

AUSTIN: 3 remaining, okay.

DRE: *[quietly]* Shit.

AUSTIN: I mean, so it's ration time. So, ration that fuel. Then, who gets fed, and who gets medicine right away? I guess Jerod probably gets the medicine right away?

SYLVIA: Yeah, Jerod has to.

AUSTIN: So there's that. 1 medicine left.

SYLVIA: My gut here is either Corsica or Rosana...

DRE: Yeah, that's mine too.

SYLVIA: 'Cause they're both really important [AUSTIN: Yeah] to keeping this thing running, and also they're both very important to us as characters, just in general.

AUSTIN: Yeah.

SYLVIA: So...my gut instinct is to just go with Rosana, [AUSTIN: Okay] because she's got enough on her plate.

DRE: Fair.

AUSTIN: Alright, so no more medicine. And then who eats?

SYLVIA: How much food do we have?

AUSTIN: You have 5.

DRE: Yeah.

SYLVIA: Okay. I would *prefer* if the sick ate.

AUSTIN: Sure.

DRE: Yeah, fair.

SYLVIA: That makes, you know, the most sense.

AUSTIN: Alright so that's 2, so you have 3 food left, that's Corsica and the orcs both have eaten.

SYLVIA: Okay. Dre, do you have anybody that you want to make sure gets fed here?

DRE: Mmm. I mean, Rosana again.

AUSTIN: Okay.

SYLVIA: Okay.

AUSTIN: 2 food left.

DRE: So you have 3 unfed.

SYLVIA: Yeah.

DRE: And I have 2, but that's 'cause I have 2 of my people are *[laughs]*

SYLVIA: Yeah, exactly. What group is Rosette a representative of again?

DRE: The moths.

AUSTIN: The moths.

SYLVIA: Right.

AUSTIN: The moths and the weavers, yeah.

SYLVIA: Hmm...maybe...It'd be helpful if the scouts were in good shape, so we could, you know—

AUSTIN: Yeah, sure.

SYLVIA: —in fiction be like, hey, they can go out and do stuff, and be scouts.

AUSTIN: Yeah, totally. So that's Blake Bromley.

SYLVIA: Yeah.

AUSTIN: One more.

SYLVIA: My gut here is with Chatterchin and the gnolls, but if you...

DRE: Yeah, I'm with that.

SYLVIA: Okay.

AUSTIN: Sounds good. I'll just make note of that last occurrence real quick. And Chatterchin is the third one, right?

SYLVIA: Yeah.

AUSTIN: Or the final one, rather.

DRE: Yeah, the last one, yeah.

AUSTIN: Okay, food is gone. Alright. Medicine is gone. Fuel is at 3. Okay. Animals: 0, food: 0, medicine: 0, fuel: 3. Temperature 2, but that's taken care of. Alright. It is your turn Ephrim to go...right, it's Ephrim's turn this time?

SYLVIA: Yeah, my quick question is just—

AUSTIN: Ephrim's turn on xbox?

DRE: *[laughing]* God, fuck off.

SYLVIA: Oh my god.

AUSTIN: Rosana...Rosana says it's my turn on the xbox. Alright, gather supplies. What are you doing?

SYLVIA: Well, I got a quick question just about...'cause I'm still kinda iffy on how [AUSTIN: Same] sickness works.

AUSTIN: Yes.

SYLVIA: It's 3, dead, and then...you need three marks on sickness to die, does that mean they die at the end of next turn, so we could get—

AUSTIN: They will die at the end of...if you heal both of them at the beginning of next turn, they are safe.

SYLVIA: Okay.

AUSTIN: If you have 2 medicine going into this next turn, they will both live.

SYLVIA: Okay.

AUSTIN: But you need that 2.

SYLVIA: Yes.

DRE: At least the storeroom's fixed.

AUSTIN: Yeah, that's great. You're not wrong.

SYLVIA: And so if I switch for food here, I don't roll my 1d3?

AUSTIN: No, you do roll your 1d3.

SYLVIA: I do still do that? Okay.

AUSTIN: Yes, a hundred percent. Roll those dice?

SYLVIA: Yeah, I think we have to go with food here [DRE: Yeah] as the main thing, Dre, unless you've got another idea.

DRE: Nah, I think it's...

SYLVIA: I'm open to suggestions. It's kinda like, we gotta make the decision there. So that's 2d6, right?

AUSTIN: Yeah. No, wait, wait wait wait, wait. Yeah, it's 2d6, it's 2d6 for food and then Dre gets to roll a 1d6 also.

SYLVIA: Yeah.

DRE: Hell yeah.

AUSTIN: That's an 8, that's a lot of food. Dre? Or, Throndir?

DRE: Yeah.

AUSTIN: That's another 2, so that's 10. 10 food total.

SYLVIA: And then I roll my 1d3?

AUSTIN: And then you roll your 1d3 for medicine.

ALL: Ahhh.

AUSTIN: Hey, that's a 3, look at you.

SYLVIA: I think I've gotten 3 on all of those.

AUSTIN: That's real good. I will say your fuel is still not in a great place.

SYLVIA: Mmhmm.

AUSTIN: You really gotta hope, you really gotta hope that you get something good for that temperature, a low temp.

DRE: And we need a 1, basically.

AUSTIN: You need a 1, basically. Or, a good occurrence, right? Which, okay so first of all tell me about getting this food, tell me about getting that medicine.

SYLVIA: I think this is just, the garden is starting to get going.

AUSTIN: Okay.

SYLVIA: Like we've spent so much time working on this thing [AUSTIN: Yeah] and trying to expand it, and the water's been fixed, it is finally the first harvest where this is like, oh this is a functional garden.

AUSTIN: Yeah. In fact, what if above ground it's now become like a bit of a...of a farm.

SYLVIA: Yeah.

AUSTIN: What if also there's now farmland out here? I'm trying to figure out how to do this the way I'd like to do it, I think I...let's see, you just go like this, and then go *whoop*, it's gonna look real bad for a second, but don't worry it's gonna get fine. *Choo*, follow that line up, and then around, and then *boop*, there we go.

DRE: [*impressed*] Mmm.

AUSTIN: I can move that, just a little bit. There we go. And right like, above ground. [*laughs*] Above ground, farm. Bop. Cool. And then what about the medicine?

SYLVIA: Medicine...I want to do something new for that, I don't wanna just be like 'it's the garden again!'

AUSTIN: 'It's the garden again', yeah, totally.

SYLVIA: Oh! Sun's breath has started growing on the hillside by the cemetery.

AUSTIN: Looove it.

SYLVIA: Just naturally.

AUSTIN: Nice. So good.

SYLVIA: Okay.

AUSTIN: I'm just gonna dot it with like, little...well that doesn't really come through, because it's not...boop! There we go! That's a hill, and then I can just dot it with yellow, and then it'll look cool. Awesome. I like those.

SYLVIA: Okay...now...

AUSTIN: Occurrence. 2d6.

SYLVIA: Occurrence, yes. Okay.

AUSTIN: Give me that good, good roll.

SYLVIA: [*nervous*] Oh boy, yeah, let's hope for the best.

DRE: Them double ones.

SYLVIA: 3 and a 1.

AUSTIN: Let's see. *[reading]* "While returning to the village with supplies, the adventurers are set upon by a blinding flurry of snowfall. Some of the supplies were dropped and lost in the storm, remove 2 units of each supply type gathered on this turn." Well, that medicine really, man.

SYLVIA: God...

AUSTIN: This game is rough, y'all. So minus 2 to each food and medicine. Yikes.

DRE: Alright we still have enough food to feed everybody. So there's that.

AUSTIN: There sure is.

DRE: Just trying to keep it posi, here.

AUSTIN: Uh huh! Yikes. Huh. Well, the good news is...there is one good news. It has been four and a half...you're ending your fourth year here. And, god, I don't even know. Are you that thing that you were when you left, Fero? Are you that shape?

KEITH: I've been traveling forever, right?

AUSTIN: Yeah.

KEITH: So I guess I could just be that...

AUSTIN: I kind of love it, if it's that. If on the fuckin' horizon...

KEITH: Yeah, that's funny, yeah yeah yeah.

SYLVIA: *[apprehensive]* Oh no.

AUSTIN: Do you want to just...okay. Here's what I need you to do.

KEITH: Okay.

AUSTIN: I need you to describe—

KEITH: Am I coming here on purpose?

AUSTIN: Yeah! Right?

KEITH: Okay. Sure.

AUSTIN: It seemed like it, it seemed like you were.

KEITH: Okay.

AUSTIN: I think maybe you heard, bit by bit...you know, I can tell you who you heard it from. You heard it from like, a snow elf or a goblin, that there was like...or both, you kind of heard like, *[mocking character voice]* 'yeah the fuckin, Ephrim and Thrandir, and Red Jack and all those people, they think they're such hot shit back at the university', and bit by bit you find your way there.

KEITH: Okay.

AUSTIN: What do they see on the horizon approaching?

KEITH: They see...god is it me or is it just some guy?

AUSTIN: I think it's just some guy, right?

KEITH: I think it's just some guy, I think each time it's a different guy.

AUSTIN: Okay...

KEITH: You see a guy sort of poke up over the hills, and as it gets closer you're seeing a horse. It's a guy trotting towards you on a horse. The horse is saddled, it's a saddled horse. And the guy's just wearing, probably...I guess just linen pants and maybe just a white shirt. Very basic. Not carrying anything.

AUSTIN: Just on the horse. Just getting closer.

KEITH: There is a saddle, maybe a saddle bag.

AUSTIN: Sure.

KEITH: Getting closer.

AUSTIN: Stranger though, right?

KEITH: Stranger, stranger.

AUSTIN: Which one of you goes out to see who it is? Maybe a scout runs up and tells you guys, like,

AUSTIN (as scout): There's a figure approaching on a horse!

SYLVIA: I'm gonna go, I'm gonna say hello to the strange traveler.

AUSTIN: As you approach...do they see anything different, Fero?

KEITH: If I'm hearing 'hello', then this guy is gonna say 'hello' back. Just,

KEITH (as fulltaur): Hello.

SYLVIA (as Ephrim): *[softly]* What. *[normal volume]* Do you need somewhere to stay? What brings you to—

KEITH (as fulltaur): Nice day we're having.

SYLVIA (as Ephrim): It's lovely.

KEITH (as fulltaur): Lovely day today.

SYLVIA (as Ephrim): Do you have a name?

KEITH: The figure sort of collapses in on itself—

SYLVIA: Oh!

KEITH: And sort of folds inward and shrinks down, and I think that when it's over, there's a much smaller figure there, sort of tucked down, and I stand up and then put my arms out, and I say,

KEITH (as Fero): It's Fero!

SYLVIA: I wanna hug my little buddy! If he lets me. *[Keith laughs]*

AUSTIN: Ah, perfect. Good. God.

SYLVIA: I'm so glad he's okay. I thought everyone was dead.

AUSTIN: Yeah...no, he learned how to be a weird horse person.

KEITH: I learned to be one creature that is a person riding a horse.

SYLVIA: It's so good. That's so good! *[Keith laughs]*

AUSTIN: Alright, we—

KEITH: What did we call it, did we come up with a—was it a fulltaur?

AUSTIN: I think it was a fulltaur

KEITH: A whole-taur, let's say a wholetaur.

AUSTIN: A wholetaur. I hate it, I hate it. I hate it so much.

SYLVIA: Oh my god...

KEITH: W-H-O-L-E-T-A-U-R. It's a wholetaur.

AUSTIN: Okay, good.

SYLVIA: I cannot wait to listen to whatever the fuck you guys did, I swear to god. *[Keith and Dre laugh]*

AUSTIN: It was good, it was so good.

["(Welcome To) Aubade" by Jack de Quidt plays]

AUSTIN: So, it is another year inside of the island town of Aubade. What are y'all up to, how has it been this year? Anything jump to mind in terms of concerns or things you think you've spent this year doing?

ART: Yeah, I think this is the year that Hadrian starts to get restless?

AUSTIN: Yeah.

ART: I think this is when Hadrian thought that this would be over by.

AUSTIN: Is there a thing you look for in terms of like...is there some sort of... *[music comes to an end]* ...habit, of like, alright, going home now.

ART: Yeah I think it's like, I think at the end of every week Hadrian like, packs up all his—I guess he doesn't have much stuff, but I don't know what the visual of that ritual is, like...

AUSTIN: I mean here's a question, have you gotten more stuff? Since being here?

ART: I mean probably, right? I'm not just wearing the same two outfits.

AUSTIN: *[laughs]* Probably not.

ART: It's probably like, five or six outfits by now, right?

AUSTIN: Probably.

ART: Seven, eight maybe. How many outfits do people have? How many...everyone else say how many outfits you think you have.

AUSTIN: What do you mean by an outfit?

ALI: Six? Four. I have a lot of t-shirts.

AUSTIN: Sixty-four? *[Ali laughs]*

AUSTIN: That's my favorite, game system.

ALI: *[laughing]* I really only have four but I have like seven t-shirts, so.

AUSTIN: Are we talking about pants? Is the word...when you say outfit do you mean pants? *[Ali laughs]* Because I suspect that most people have more tops than bottoms.

ART: Well but we're in a weird situation, 'cause we're not accumulating—

AUSTIN: I'm not, I'm not commenting. *[Ali giggles]*

ART: —clothes in the same fashion.

AUSTIN: Right, right, right.

ART: 'Cause if you're like, oh I need more clothes, and they're just going to be provided basically magically, would you be like, well I need one more pair of pants, or just be like, I need a whole...

AUSTIN: Or would you stop caring 'cause you can just get new ones?

JANINE: Are you doing your own laundry?

AUSTIN: Good question.

JACK: Are you doing laundry?

ALI: Mmm.

ART: These are all great questions. *[Ali laughs]*

AUSTIN: As always the answer here is me going, like, do you? I don't know, do you? Do you want to? Someone here likes doing laundry, someone in this town *loves* doing laundry and does their laundry, for sure.

ART: But are they like doing everyone's laundry, 'cause that feels rough.

AUSTIN: Only the people who want to be doing more laundry than they have, right?

ART: Sure.

JANINE: If you're not doing laundry but you're summoning new clothes, what are you doing with your old clothes?

AUSTIN: Toss them in the hamper?

JANINE: Do they just disappear?

AUSTIN: Yeah.

ART: Well it's not like packing up two years worth of individual clothes, that would be...we'd all be just drowning in clothes by now.

AUSTIN: Is the moment...are there outfits you find yourself packing that you haven't worn in a long time, where you're like...one week Hadrian got really into like, bad red pants, *[laughs]* and he hasn't worn them in a year and a half, but he's packing all his stuff, and those bad red pants appear again. Not that Hadrian couldn't pull off red pants, these are just particularly bad red ones.

ART: Sure, always good to have a gift for the fan artists in every episode. *[laughter]* Hadrian in his bad red pants is it for this week. *[laughter continues]* But yes, right. It's like the eight outfits that Hadrian thought were his packing clothes [AUSTIN: Right] when he started this tradition. And like every week sort of packs his clothes and like, goes to where he figures out would be, I don't know where that—

AUSTIN: Is it like the docks, are you just like waiting by the docks? Are you going to church? What is...

ART: Yeah, I think that's it, is like, every week Hadrian goes and waits by the docks and figures one of these weeks someone will be like 'oh, we figured it out, it's time to go'.

AUSTIN: Mmm.

ART: And every week it doesn't happen, and he walks back and unpacks that bag because I think that's just a more...impactful image.

AUSTIN: Let's zoom in here, maybe. There's one weekend, or whatever day it is of the week that you arrive here, and you see...so you're at the docks, you're at the Halisham docks, here, on the map. I think maybe off to the east...actually you know what, maybe it's like not even off to the east, maybe it's just straight ahead, out on the coral, or the kind of reef that's the sandbar that's beginning to become an atoll around the island here as time passes—

ART: So you're talking like this?

AUSTIN: I'm actually thinking directly across from you, like right here.

ART: Oh, okay.

AUSTIN: You see it? Is the star, Chapter, who you can see just kind of pacing around the edge of this growing atoll, and is...I mean, I guess I can just tell you, 'cause you kind of look for long enough...is sort of building a...at first it looks like, oh, are they building a sand castle? And then you realize like, oh no they're actually like, continuing to construct this sandbar, but like a little bit further on, right? So they're like standing at the edge of the sandbar, and then they're like slowly building out a second sandbar, that almost mirrors this first one. And they like erase it and start over again, and they're doing all of that stuff, and I think at some point, they catch your eye, and wave you over.

ART: And this is a traversable span? This is, I can just walk over there?

AUSTIN: Yeah, I'm gonna say it's low tide, which means that there's almost a little bit of a...the ground pops up here a little, like it's a shallow, you'd have to get your legs wet maybe? Or if you seem like you don't want to do that, Chapter makes a land bridge for you.

ART: No, I think Hadrian is fine with this. Hadrian's grown a lot since episode one.

AUSTIN: Mmm. *[laughs]* Not afraid of sinking, anymore.

ART: Yeah. Well, also, these aren't heavy clothes anymore, these are—

AUSTIN: Sure, sure.

ART: This is Hadrian's summer look. Are there seasons here?

AUSTIN: Only tides. Low tide and high tide.

ART: Alright, so the temperature is relatively constant?

AUSTIN: Yeah, yeah.

ART: Is it like...really constant? Is it like, every day is, every minute is 73 degrees or whatever?

AUSTIN: No, I think there's a...*[laughs]* No, I think there's a range, I think that you get as low as like, the high fifties and as high as like, the mid nineties.

ART: Alright. So hadrian yeah just wades across and, I guess...what do you do when you like, un-wade? When you like get out of wading, is there a word for that?

AUSTIN: Dry off. No, I don't know, I don't know what it is.

ART: Like what does the creature in the black lagoon do? What is that verb when he's coming out of there? *[Ali laughs]*

JACK: Emerge.

AUSTIN: Ooh, emerge, yeah.

ART: Ooh, emerge.

AUSTIN: Thank you, good. They say,

AUSTIN (as Chapter): *[voice edited to sound echoey]* Greetings, Hadrian. Are you waiting for your ship home?

ART (as Hadrian): Yeah...I don't think it's gonna come today.

AUSTIN (as Chapter): No. Mine either, and yet, I cannot shake the thought of my old duty.

AUSTIN: And they kind of do literally begin to build a...I think they literally in front of you rebuild, just out of the sand using their hands, they kind of lift up and...you know like the way magneto would lift some metal, you know?

ART: Sure.

AUSTIN: Except they're lifting the sand, and the sand is kind of coalescing into that kind of glowing star-stuff, and recreates a...they recreate like a model of the canyon, the kind of marketplace in Rosemerrow where you first saw them, where Hella killed them? And the chaotic cataloguing of everything that they, where they were like building all sorts of nonsense? They were building like bridges where there are supposed to just be benches, and trees where there are supposed to be banners hanging from the sides of walls and stuff. And they say,

AUSTIN (as Chapter): I did not know what the world was, then. I only had a loose understanding of what was in it. And now I am here.

ART (as Hadrian): Yeah, I'm. I'm sorry about that.

AUSTIN (as Chapter): You made things hard to see, but you did not strike the killing blow. You need not apologize.

ART (as Hadrian): Yeah...Do you...do you think we're getting out of here?

AUSTIN (as Chapter): You, perhaps. Me, unlikely. I am more concerned about other things getting in here.

ART (as Hadrian): Well, tell me about that.

AUSTIN (as Chapter): You know the Heat and the Dark, yes?

ART (as Hadrian): Yeah, um...yeah.

AUSTIN (as Chapter): It will reach here too, eventually.

ART (as Hadrian): What are you, what are you all doing to stop it?

AUSTIN (as Chapter): I...I was not meant to work alone. My kind...we were meant to build a new world in Hieron, together. One that could survive the coming Heat.

ART (as Hadrian): Sure, sure.

AUSTIN (as Chapter): Here, I work alone. And...I have an option.

AUSTIN: And I think they lift this canyon, again which is the high towers of Rosemerrow, this kind of model that they've built out of the sand, they hover it up into the air in front of you, and it transforms into a model of this island. And they say,

AUSTIN (as Chapter): I could duplicate this land, into something resilient, something made of my own self, just as this land is...made of something holy, too. But, I do not

believe that those like you would be able to survive there. New life would thrive, life also born of me, and would resist this...the temperature, of the heat.

ART (as Hadrian): I'm really interested in solutions right now that are good for the people who already exist.

AUSTIN (as Chapter): Yes, well, there is the other.

AUSTIN: And I think that, that whole last segment was definitely, they animated that, right. They kind of illustrated it by doubling the island, and then you watched as the Heat and the Dark approached, you don't see that but what you see is the old island kind of, disintegrates and the sand just drops back down to the sandbar.

ART: Sure.

AUSTIN: And they say, "there is a second option", and they bring that back up and dissolve their star-stuff copy, and they say,

AUSTIN (as Chapter): I could sacrifice what is left of myself, in order to assure that nothing ever enters here again.

AUSTIN: And a shimmering kind of aura, a sort of sphere wraps around, envelops the island. And then they say,

AUSTIN (as Chapter): Yet also, nothing would ever leave.

ART (as Hadrian): Mmm...I'm not thrilled with that either, what does, what does Samoths say?

AUSTIN (as Chapter): I suspect that is a conversation best had with him directly.

ART (as Hadrian): Yeah, I should probably...

AUSTIN (as Chapter): Have you thought on this, Hadrian? The Heat and the Dark, and what is to be done?

ART (as Hadrian): No, I don't...I don't know that I can be productive in that vein, I'm...I'm more of a blunt instrument.

AUSTIN (as Chapter): I have found this island a whetstone.

ART (as Hadrian): Heh.

AUSTIN (as Chapter): Sharpen yourself on it.

ART (as Hadrian): Sure. I'll do my best. Thank you.

AUSTIN: They...god, what do they do? They want to like give you a gift.

ART: Perhaps a boat out of here! *[Austin and Ali laugh]*

AUSTIN: I think, you know, we see the thunder and the lightning in the distance from the storm, and they say,

AUSTIN (as Chapter): Visit me again in a week, and I will...I will see if I can offer you some respite.

ART (as Hadrian): Okay. I'll be here next week, I mean I'm here every week.

AUSTIN: And when you get to the docks the next week, they actually are already...they're at the docks, they're not out on the sandbar, and they lead you from the docks, without saying a word, through the streets, and out into the fields of the Shrine of Sabinia, and deep in the fields, there is a...it's literally a thing, you've been in the fields. I suspect you've even worked the fields once or twice, you know, or more, depending on how much you'd like to, again. But there is effectively a smaller...there's almost like, you know on a roof of a city apartment building, there's like a doorway that goes down to a stairwell, and there's just kind of like the doorway and a little bit higher than a human head, there's just an enclosure that the doorway's attached to, you know what I'm talking about?

ART: Mmhmm.

AUSTIN: There's just one of these, in the middle of this wheat field. And they open it, and it is...as soon as you open it, you recognize that it's built from the same material that the Shrine of Sabinia is, and they lead you to a round room, where they explain that messages can be sent. And that this cannot be done so long as the sword is broken. Or rather, messages sent now may not be heard, because the sword may or may not be fixed yet? But, that if you come here every week, and pray, and speak, and write, and try to communicate with all your will, there is a chance that whoever bears the sword will hear what you're saying. And they say,

AUSTIN (as Chapter): It is, of course, unsure who will hear your message.

ART (as Hadrian): Yeah that's tricky, isn't it?

AUSTIN (as Chapter): I find it is better to speak, than remain silent.

ART (as Hadrian): *[chuckles]* Alright. Thank you for this.

AUSTIN: And then they just kind of awkwardly stand there, *[laughs]* like they don't know, they don't get that, what they've basically given you is a very private space, and in fact are just like, 'alright, now let's go, what are you gonna do with it'.

ART: Okay. So, I have no idea who might have this.

AUSTIN: Mmhmm.

ART: So...so I can't tell them to go find...my wife, that's ridiculous, it could be someone with ill intention.

AUSTIN: Right.

JACK: Also, just like, a voice comes screaming out of the sword and goes *[imitates distant yelling]* "Find my wife!" *[laughter]*

ART: Well I mean...I could use her name and...

JACK: "She's called Rosana! She's somewhere around here, where are we?"

ART: Well, she's in Rosemerrow, right, so—

JACK: "Does that still exist?"

ART: —that's a start.

JACK: This is how your voice sounds when it comes out of the sword. *[laughter]*

ART: I assume—

JANINE: It's been two years, too, you don't know where she is.

JACK: Oh, god, that's true. Just say "Tristero, Tristero" over and over again, and it will...

ALI: *[laughing]* Don't do that.

ART: I think I want them to find Throndir.

AUSTIN: Mmm.

ALI: Mm.

ART (as Hadrian): Find Thrandir. Give this blade to Thrandir. Thrandir's probably somewhere...

JACK: He's got a big dog.

ART: Big dog. It's big dog season.

AUSTIN: God. And I think we get a...god, do we get the shot of like...because I might go back on what I just said, I was saying like it only works if it's fixed, but I do like the image of Sunder Havelton and Stornras Glasseye getting this note that is like, "find Thrandir". And whatever, you're like blessed by Samoths and whatnot, right?

ART: Yeah, and his most famous blessing is, using a broken sword as if it were a functioning sword. *[Austin laughs]* I think that's in the scripture.

AUSTIN: That's in the scripture, yeah, a hundred percent. Yeah, I think maybe that is just...what's it look like, what's it sound like—is it voice? 'Cause we've seen now...I mean, Hella, this is as much your authorship now as mine.

ALI: Hmm.

AUSTIN: Like, the blade at first called out to you, and said "Tristero, Tristero, Tristero". Presumably, people were here warning you of that? Or in this room, warning you of that, Hella?

ALI: *[laughing quietly]* I guess.

AUSTIN: And being like, 'yo don't, no, no no no no no no no, no'. But we've also seen it as like, an image, as the blade moves through the air, as you swing it. Which I imagine was someone in here being like, 'oh, this—you can't just say words with Hella, like—' *[Ali laughs]* The way Hella understands this sword is, she swings it around like a weapon, so the way we're gonna communicate with her is by like, *[laughing]* making images appear, when she does that. How do you think Sunder and Stornras get this message? *[Ali continues laughing quietly]* Sorry for dragging you, sorry.

ALI: No, I just love everyone in town like, sitting in this little cave like 'what's she gonna get up to today?'

AUSTIN: Uh huh, no, totally.

JACK: Oh no!

AUSTIN: And I think it's like shadows on the wall, it's the smallest picture of, like...you know, I kind of talked about this before, like even Samoths can't see outside of the blade and understand everything that's happening.

JACK: You know when, like, sometimes the back of an iphone catches the light, and you get the reflection of the apple?

AUSTIN: Yeah.

JACK: Rather than it just being a—sometimes it's just a reflection of light, and sometimes it's just a—you could be like, oh, I see the apple on the back of my phone. It's that mixed with a camera obscura in this tiny room, right?

AUSTIN: A hundred percent.

JACK: Like little fractured images, that are like—

AUSTIN: And I do imagine that they're different depending on who has the blade, right? Like I bet you if Arrell had this blade, there would be, those images would come in differently, and maybe even more clearly, right? Or if Samot had this blade right now, *[Jack laughs]* things might be different. But I think especially with Sunder and Stornras, that sort of like, yeah the reflective light that's like just...it feels almost like an accident, right? It almost feels like you've caught something out of the side of your eye. And I guess what it is here is, it is a campfire, it is a tent, it is often the sound of movement. It feels like echoed from down a canyon hall or something, you know, you can hear that there's lots of movement every now and then, there's shouting or the light moves with a hurry, as if they're being chased or pursued. But yeah, I think that they, on their side...I guess going back to you, Hella, how do they hear "find Throndir and his big dog"?

ALI: *[laughs]* Well, the blade's broken—

AUSTIN: Ephrim, of course, is the big dog, to be clear.

ALI: You're right. The blade's broken, so I think that it's like, a little distorted.

AUSTIN: Mmm.

ALI: But that it's like...I don't know, they're like wizards, so it has to be like, cool. *[laughs]*

AUSTIN: Yeah. Maybe it's like—

ART: Everything a wizard hears is cool. *[Ali and Austin laugh]*

AUSTIN: Maybe it's almost like an etching appears in the side of the blade—

ALI: Ooh.

AUSTIN: —and Stornras can do a temporary bond long enough for it to finish being etched, you know what I mean? Like across the entirety of the blade. And then using magic, Sunder can like pull the letters out of the blade and hover them in front of them to read what it says.

ALI: Oh, or they like pour wax on it, and like...

AUSTIN: Yeah! Yes, yes, yes, they do like a...yeah yeah yeah, totally, I love it. Good. Yeah. Okay. Cool. And that is how they know where to go. They have been lost until now.

ART: And if we're just gonna yada yada the whole year, I think every so often he tries to change it up, like,

ART (as Hadrian): *[uncertain]* Throndir? Is it...

ART: Like after like a month or two, it's like,

ART (as Hadrian): Thron—Throndir? Is it Throndir, now? *[laughter]* Throndir, find—

JANINE: Stornras.

ART (as Hadrian): If it's Throndir, give me a signal. Throndir?

AUSTIN: I think at some point, Sunder figures out how to communicate who it is, which...god, how would Sunder communicate to you who she is...

JANINE: Fake being a god?

JACK: 'It is I, Samote'.

AUSTIN: That seems like a lot. *[laughter]*

ALI: Maybe they have—I shouldn't jump in, but like, maybe if they had like a—

AUSTIN: No, please, this is the place.

ALI: Like they were exploring that horrible tower together—

AUSTIN: Yeah, yeah.

ALI: —and if they had like a call sign or something like that that they would like write down hallways to be like, okay Hadrian went down this hallway so we don't have to explore or whatever.

AUSTIN: I think it's a dandelion.

ALI: Ooh.

AUSTIN: You get the image back of a dandelion, which is what Uklan Tel used to teleport y'all from the tower, out. Which mean you don't know if that's Sunder, if it's Uklan Tel, if it's Throndir, if it's...like you don't know, but it's someone you know and can trust. So at the very least, you know the sword is in good hands.

ART: Sure. But then I might open up a little more, you know, like,

ART (as Hadrian): Hey, it's Hadrian, but they must know it's Hadrian, oh shit...

ART: This is all part of it.

AUSTIN: *[laughs]* Great.

ART (as Hadrian): 'Cause they knew to use the dandelion, so they must know—

AUSTIN: *They* know.

ART: *They* know. *[Ali laughs]* But yeah,

ART (as Hadrian): It's us, we're in here, get us out of here!

AUSTIN: And I think the last message you hear that year is just like, "be patient". And I think that's it, I think there is...what's happening outside is there's a moment where they need to protect the blade, and Stornras takes half, and Sunder takes half, and it's split apart, with enough distance that you can no longer communicate.

ART: Well, the response to "Be patient" is "Find Rosana".

AUSTIN: Okay.

ART: If I think it's my last chance, I'm gonna go for it.

AUSTIN: Yeah, that's good. Alright—

ART: *[indistinct]* —they weren't kidnapped by someone.

AUSTIN: Yeah, right, uh huh. Hella, Lem, Adaire?

[TIMESTAMP: 01:07:03]

JANINE: Which?

AUSTIN: I'm asking. I'm asking who has a thing.

JACK and JANINE: *[simultaneously]* Uh...

JACK: Oh, no, go ahead.

JANINE: No, you go ahead.

AUSTIN: Also, I wanna be clear, y'all can have scenes together. And should, there's a lot of time in here.

JACK: Oh, that's absolutely true, yeah.

AUSTIN: Like I don't want to close off any possibility of character interaction. I'm happy to literally be quiet as people frame scenes together a la something like Dream Askew or Kingdom or something like that.

ART: Alright, but don't talk to me on sword day. *[laughter]*

JACK: Or 'go down to the dock' day.

AUSTIN: Right, the two important days *[laughing]* in Hadrian's week. *[Jack laughs]*

ART: You can come down on dock day, you just have to come to the dock. I'm just not gonna go anywhere else, that's where I'm hanging out on dock day. *[laughter]* At the dock.

ALI: I had an idea that I don't know if I have to like, rethink now, or like works as an extension of this scene almost?

AUSTIN: Mmhmm.

ALI: 'Cause I wanted to get in some like, Hella-Hadrian bro time.

AUSTIN: Yeah, totally.

ALI: 'Cause like, they don't get a chance to hang out when it's like, awful?

AUSTIN: Right, and now we've had literal years of it, so. What is that?

ALI: Well I also wanted to make it like, a little uncanny and also speak to the tension of this place, [AUSTIN: Mm...Mmhmm] and I was thinking like, a fishing trip with like the star or something—

AUSTIN: Oh my god.

ALI: —that might be... *[laughs]*

ART: I love it, but I need to blow my nose real quick.

ALI: *[laughing]* Okay.

AUSTIN: Is it just the three of them, the whole crew doesn't go with this?

ALI: I mean, anyone can come. It's been a couple years, I keep getting my like, part-time salary from Adaire's store, *[Austin laughs]* I've maybe upgraded my boat, and yeah. Anyone can come.

AUSTIN: Does Hella make a point of getting better at boating?

ALI: *[sighs]* Well—

ART: Hadrian can teach you boating, that could be a montage.

ALI: *[giggles]* Well she knew, right, but it was never something that she did simply for like, pleasure. And like, didn't start doing it here, like didn't start doing it as a thing to like, 'oh this would be fun', but like a thing that I need to do. But then like, ends up being someone who has a hobby? And is like, 'oh, this is great'.

AUSTIN: Mmhmm.

ALI: 'This is great, actually!'

AUSTIN: 'I love boats.'

ALI: Uh huh! *[laughs]* So yeah, I think that she's like...there's like a point of it that turns, right, where it's like 'don't come near my boat, I'm gonna go alone today, I'm just gonna go look out or whatever' and then—

AUSTIN: Uh huh. And those are the days that Adelaide always tries to crash it. *[Ali laughs]* But that's not today, we're not getting that boat scene today.

ALI: But after a year and a half in, it's like, 'oh I upgraded the like, thing on this, on the wheel or whatever, and it's so much more sturdy and you should come check it out'. *[laughs]* And it's like, okay, Hella's really into her boat, and like also inviting people to things suddenly.

JACK: Did we decide what the boat is called?

ALI: *[softly]* Oh, no.

AUSTIN: We didn't, and need to.

ALI: No...I don't know what she would name a boat. 'Cause it has to be—

ART: The Upper Coast, and you say it real quick so it sounds like upper cut. *[Ali laughs]*

JACK: Adelaide's like, 'you should name it Adelaide, or the Adelaide'.

AUSTIN: Right, of course. Or the pearl, or...

JACK: The pearl, the pearl of Nacre...

ALI: Lord...no, Adelaide suggests very..."you should call it the Queenkiller, since they don't call you that anymore". *[laughter]*

AUSTIN: Yes, that's a hundred percent right.

JACK: God.

AUSTIN: 'It has a ring to it'.

JACK: You gotta take it where you can get it, right, you know? If that's on the side of a boat...

AUSTIN: God, that's a good name for a boat! The Queenkiller.

JACK: Imagine seeing a boat in real life, called "The Queenkiller".

ALI: I would love to, if you're listening and you have a boat, please. You have my permission.

AUSTIN: So who's on this fishing trip?

ALI: Who wants to come?

JACK: I'm busy.

ALI: Oh. The whole year? *[laughs]*

AUSTIN: Damn.

ALI: Okay.

JANINE: Well, is this gonna be the 'Hadrian teaches Hella to boat' scene? Or is this a different thing?

ALI: No, we're just hanging out, pal-ing around.

JANINE: Well, I'll come then.

ALI: We've been friends for years.

AUSTIN: Adaire's out here trying not to make it awkward. *[laughter]* Hella's out here hoping that it will be awkward. And you've asked the star to come too, you've asked Chapter, the star you killed, to come, also? Is that what you said at the beginning of all this?

ALI: I think they should be there.

AUSTIN: Okay.

ALI: Right?

AUSTIN: You think they're just there—

ART: This is awkward. *[Janine laughs]*

AUSTIN: They're just on your boat when you arrive, looking out at the storm, and they just stand there. Also, they're wearing clothes today, which they do not normally do, and I think that they're wearing—

ART: A floppy fishing hat?

AUSTIN: That is where I was going, yes. *[Ali laughs]* They are wearing, like, what Data would wear on Star Trek: The Next Generation *[ALI: Oh, perfect]* if someone said that Data needs to become a fisherman.

JANINE: A fisherman, and not a stereotypical sailor? Like we're not talking about a little—with the lapels and the tie and the little cap?

ART: No, I'm thinking like, Gilligan.

AUSTIN: Yeah, I'm thinking like that Gilligan hat like...yeah, like a bucket hat fisherman, you know?

JANINE: Hmm.

ART: A mountain dew fisherman. *[Austin laughs]*

ALI: Anyway, I think...I think it's not so much that Hella like invites them, but like, goes to the dock and Hadrian is talking to them, and is like—

AUSTIN: Yeah.

ALI (as Hella): Oh, yeah, you can come too, sure... *[Ali laughs]*

AUSTIN: God.

ALI: But is trying, is making an attempt.

AUSTIN: Yeah. Have you been fishing on your boat before? 'Cause I know you do like your boat a lot, but is this like, we're going out fishing, we'll see how that goes.

ALI: I think maybe this is like the first or second time? Where it's like, oh I have this boat, this sounds fun.

AUSTIN: Is this fishing with rods or fishing with nets?

ALI: Ooh. Probably rods?

AUSTIN: Okay.

ALI: Or like, little...you know how to catch crabs and lobsters and stuff, you have the little baskets or like the little cages?

AUSTIN: Mmhmm.

ALI: I think it's like that sort of thing, where it's like, *[laughs]* we're gonna go out like a couple of miles and then drop these cages, and then just like hang out on this boat.

JANINE: *[apprehensive]* Mmm...

AUSTIN: The star, Chapter, they've definitely brought a rod.

ALI: Oh, that's—

AUSTIN: They are going to do rod fishing, they've convinced themselves this is what this needs to be.

ALI: That's fine. God, I don't know, it's like...god, it's like that thing at a party, where it's like, oh, yeah, I was invited here by one person, and then it's all of their friends?

AUSTIN: Right. I mean in this case, it's at least people who know each other.

ALI: Yeah, yeah, yeah.

AUSTIN: At least Adaire and Hadrian like, have spent time together.

ALI: This is true. But like Hella isn't a good host, so she just like, I assume you all get along.

AUSTIN: And then kicks back with a beer, like?

ALI: Sure! *[laughs]* It's a very relaxing, you know, this is like a day off on the boat.

AUSTIN: Yeah, yeah.

JACK: How did you manage to persuade Adelaide not to come?

ALI: I mean she can be there, but she probably...I don't know, it's probably like a—well, *[laughs]* it's a private thing, I have to talk to Hadrian and she's like 'oh, he's boring'.

AUSTIN: She would love to watch you talk to Hadrian, though.

ALI: *[laughs]* She can be here!

AUSTIN: She can be here, but I don't want her like stealing the scene?

ALI: Yeah.

AUSTIN: So I think she's going to be pouty and quiet for the most part, here.

ALI: Fair.

AUSTIN: And maybe talking to Adaire.

ALI: Sounds good, perfect.

ART: Pouty and quiet steals a lot of scenes sometimes, though. *[Ali laughs]* I don't know where y'all hang out.

ALI: But yeah, I don't know, I think Hella's trying, and then she's just talking to Hadrian and the star, and being like,

ALI (as Hella): So...what are y'all...what have you been talking about?

AUSTIN (as Chapter): The eradication of existence.

ALI (as Hella): Uh. Oh...

AUSTIN (as Chapter): And what is to be done.

ART (as Hadrian): That's true, that is what we've been talking about, it's...tiring.

AUSTIN (as Chapter): How do I know when a fish is on the line?

ART (as Hadrian): Oh, it'll pull.

ALI (as Hella): Yeah.

AUSTIN (as Chapter): The waves pull.

ART (as Hadrian): Not then.

AUSTIN (as Chapter): Hmm.

ALI (as Hella): Yeah, it'll feel like a fish, like something's stuck on it.

AUSTIN (as Adelaide): Do you fish much, Adaire?

JANINE (as Adaire): I mean, not lately.

AUSTIN (as Adelaide): You strike me as like, a...like a working type. Get your hands dirty.

JANINE (as Adaire): I don't know if you mean that to sound rude, but from people like you, statements like that tend to come off rather rude?

AUSTIN (as Adelaide): No, it's a compliment. I know too many people who are afraid of hauling in nets, and...what are, descaling a trout? Whatever it is that fishers do.

ART (as Hadrian): Cleaning, we call it cleaning.

AUSTIN (as Adelaide): I didn't ask you, Hadrian. *[Ali laughs]*

ART (as Hadrian): I know, I...I know the answer to your question, is all.

AUSTIN: The star like pulls up...excitedly, is like,

AUSTIN (as Chapter): I have a big one!

AUSTIN: And begins to reel it in, and reel it in, and reel it in, and reel it in, and reel it in, and just keeps reeling it in? And just doesn't stop reeling it in. It just keeps going. And is just like, in this...it's as if you're in a disney, not these characters would know this, but it's like an animatronic of a fisherman just constantly reeling, basically. But they don't, there's nothing. *[laughing]* I'm not sure that the rod is real, or that there's a line that goes beyond a few feet deep in the water!

ART (as Hadrian): I don't think you're casting right.

JANINE: I—

ART: Says Hadrian, like looking over the edge of the boat.

AUSTIN: Adaire?

JANINE: *[laughing]* I don't know how to say the thing I want...I think Adaire like stands up, and sort of...not even stands up, I imagine her like, she's maybe sitting somewhere and then she's like, she's been leaning towards Adelaide and now she leans more towards the star, and just like checks out the rod and like,

JANINE (as Adaire): Oh yeah we don't sell those pre-lined...you know you have to buy the fishing line, and then...you know, if you want, we have a counter, the counter in the sporting goods section, that they'll set you up with it, but you have to do that...

AUSTIN (as Chapter): Of course, I will visit your shop, and you can teach me how to fish.

JANINE (as Adaire): Oh, it was mostly just the line...

ALI (as Hella): I might have some like, downstairs? I have like a little...I didn't know that you didn't have a...give me a second. You can have a—hold on.

JANINE (as Adaire): How are the waves pulling it?

AUSTIN (as Chapter): They pull it to and fro, here:

AUSTIN: And they hand you the rod, and it—there is something on this line. It feels like there is something on this line.

JANINE: There is an actual line, then?

AUSTIN: Yes.

JANINE: Okay. I think Adaire...Is Hella in the—

AUSTIN: Hella went downstairs, uh huh.

JANINE: —downstairs of the boat, shit.

ALI: *[laughing]* No, it's like a open, it's like a garage—

AUSTIN: *[laughing]* It's like a garage?

ALI: No, no no no no no, no no no no no, it's like a trunk, it's like if a car had a trunk

AUSTIN: Okay.

ALI: It's like big enough to fit a person in. It's just like two doors.

JANINE: It's like a hatch?

AUSTIN: I think the moment where you see that there's like a super super thin star-stuff line, like it's just like a perfectly—like it catches a gleam of the sun.

ALI: Hmm...

JANINE: Okay, can I turn around and just hand this to Hella? *[Ali and Janine laugh]* That's why I was looking, like this is definitely both me wondering where Hella is in terms of context for the scene, but also Adaire looking over her shoulder like,

JANINE (as Adaire): Hey...

ALI: *[laughs]* Hella turns back with like line in her hand, *[Austin laughs]* and then just it's replaced with the fishing hook, and she's like,

ALI (as Hella): What the fuc—okay.

ALI: [laughs] And then like, I think she goes to reach for the thing, but is like afraid to touch it to reel it in.

AUSTIN: Because it's made of star-stuff?

ALI: Yeah!

AUSTIN: Yeah. I think it feels familiar to you in a sense, which is, there is a death about this object? Like, you can hold it, it's not gonna kill you, you're not sure if that's only because you're in this sword. Right, like—

ALI: Okay.

AUSTIN: It's sort of like, in a weird way, is being in Aubade the equivalent of wearing a hazmat suit around star-stuff. Do you know what I mean? Except it's like, or like, oh yeah we've all been breathing in the antidote to this poison [laughs] that I'm now holding in my hands. But it feels like death the way the sword could, the way the power of Tristero did, but different in that like, it is not the same sort of death. It is the same absence of regular life, and so it is the same sort of like feeling of disconnection from living things, but it is not simply Tristero's death. But you can hold it here, it's fine.

ALI: Okay.

AUSTIN: And, I think at this point Adelaide has like, slinked her way behind Hadrian, and is like leaning up, and like half whispering to him, and is like,

AUSTIN (as Adelaide): You surround yourself with such adventurous people, Hadrian.

ART (as Hadrian): We're adventurers.

AUSTIN (as Adelaide): Even here? In this...pleasant land?

ART (as Hadrian): Being here doesn't change who we are.

AUSTIN (as Adelaide): [chuckles] Say that for yourself. I was once the Queen of Pearls, hmm?

ART (as Hadrian): They don't have pearls here?

AUSTIN: It's funny, as you say that. Hella, are you reeling?

ALI: Yeah, I was gonna correct myself to say that like, if it feels like the sword, [AUSTIN: Yeah] there's a moment of hesitation, and then she just like immediately gets it.

AUSTIN: Oh, she's like, oh yeah, I got this shit, totally.

ALI: Yeah, 'cause the thing with the sword is that like, even though it was magic, and it was terrifying [AUSTIN: Mmhmm] the way that I've always thought of it with Hella is that like, when she held it in her hands it was like having a pair of shoes that you didn't have to break in.

AUSTIN: Mmhmm.

ALI: And then just that sensation of being like, oh I'm comfortable again. *[laughs]*

AUSTIN: Right.

ALI: I have the thing.

AUSTIN: You yank, and pull, and reel, and you realize that oh no the star was reeling, and there was something attached, and it was just deep deep deep deep down, and you pull it up, and at the edge...I think you just have to see it, it glows at first? And it is like a multipart eel made of pearls. It is like a string of pearls, with sharp teeth, and a weird glowing orb head. And it's big it's like—not as big as your boat is, but it's as big as some boats have been. *[laughter]*

ALI: God. Man. I think that she like...my first instinct was like, oh she just drops the thing, which she like super doesn't do that.

AUSTIN: That's what any of us would do in this circumstance.

ALI: *[laughs]* Right. I think that she does the more Hella Varal thing, and is like the thing that she has wanted to do for a while, and just does the like swift yank up to—

AUSTIN: Mmhmm.

JACK: Time to murder a pearl eel. *[laughter]*

AUSTIN: Aww.

ALI: She does the very stern like, lift up, where it's like, as if she just flicks her wrist but is able to put her whole weight into it, [AUSTIN: Mmhmm] and then like, as soon as it hits the boat, like puts her knee on it and goes on top of it, and just like grabs a knife from her back pocket, and just like cuts into it immediately.

AUSTIN: God. Right, there are two cuts, the first cut opens the pearl eel under what would be the throat, and a bunch of pearls just fall out. Like literally inside of it is just a collection of pearls. And then, there's a second cut that snaps what would be I guess the head pearl off, as if it was on a string. As if it was like literally a string of pearls. And the rest of them all like, not only lose life, but these giant pearls just go rolling across the deck of your ship. I think a couple of them fall back into the sea.

ALI: *[laughs quietly]* I think Hella very like casually does not somehow roll her knee on one of these pearls and is able to like, stand back up.

AUSTIN: Good job.

ALI: And like looks really proud of herself, and is like, yeah, like— *[laughter]*

JACK: Like, I know what fishing is?

ALI: Or just like, I don't know that this should be like a great thing for the rest of the characters? Where it's like, oh this is the Hella that we know.

AUSTIN: Right—

JANINE: I'm imagining Hella looking so proud, but everyone else on the boat is looking like super confused at what just happened. *[laughter]*

AUSTIN: God. This is the worst Monsterhunter level, this is... *[laughter]* Hadrian, how are you taking all of this in?

ART: Not...great.

AUSTIN: 'Cause I think the other thing is like, things calm down after that and the sun is setting and you can hear like sea birds, and you know, you're checking on the crabbing buckets and the stuff that you've dropped into the sea and like, that stuff's all regular fish and crabs and other stuff like that. But like everything calms down after that, and like, that was definitely the old Hella, but then it's also Hella sitting on a boat, and like soaking in the sun.

ALI (as Hella): *[happy]* Ah, this is fun, man, thanks for coming out.

ART (as Hadrian): *[uncertain]* Uh huh... *[laughter]*

ALI (as Hella): Are you okay? Did Adelaide say something? Did she say something to you? I'll talk to her.

ART (as Hadrian): I'm not a hundred percent sure that she didn't make that happen somehow. We were having a very on-brand conversation for that to happen.

ART: I guess there's no way Hadrian says "on-brand". *[laughter]*

ART (as Hadrian): It just happened immediately after we were talking about pearls.

ALI (as Hella): Oh, man. *[sighs]*

ALI: And Hella's that sort of drunk and tired where she just like accepts it, *[laughs]* and like, lets her disappointment show, where it's like,

ALI (as Hella): Man, I thought that was cool...god damn it...well, I don't know, her—

ART (as Hadrian): Hey. I had a great time, we should do this again.

ALI (as Hella): Yeah! Yeah yeah yeah, it's been good to have the time, while we have it.

ART (as Hadrian): Yeah. It's great to hang out and have no one die. *[Ali laughs]*

AUSTIN: In the background, Chapter still has the black point where the *[laughs]* blade pierced them...constantly smoldering... Is there more here, or is it...a thing I will say, is like, if there are conversations that need to happen between characters, we should find time to have those conversations. Years are long.

ALI: Yeah.

AUSTIN: And that doesn't need to be right now, that could be the end of Hella's scene, we still have Lem and we still have Adaire, for this year.

ALI: Yeah, I'm good with that being my scene, unless people who are in the scene want to do stuff before it ends.

AUSTIN: I think before the boat fully departs, or as people are leaving, Adaire, sorry not Adaire, Adelaide, my bad, does lean over and whisper to you,

AUSTIN (as Adelaide): Don't worry, it wasn't me.

AUSTIN: And then Chapter says,

AUSTIN (as Chapter): I devised the pearl fish.

ALI (as Hella): Wh—

ART (as Hadrian): *[mildly horrified]* Why? *[Ali and Austin laugh]*

AUSTIN (as Chapter): I had the image in my mind and thought it would be good to bring it into reality.

ALI (as Hella): It was sick, thanks.

AUSTIN (as Chapter): I assure you, you caught it, though.

ALI (as Hella): It was a team effort.

AUSTIN (as Chapter): Thank—

ALI (as Hella): *[simultaneously]* Thanks? *[laughs]* Right, yep, thank you, you're welcome.

AUSTIN: And then just like, is beaming, *[laughs]* literally beaming with light, holding the rod, and then just like steps, big step off the boat back onto land.

ALI (as Hella): Listen, I am...we don't have...when you're at the docks, and if you see me here, you can...you're welcome, any time.

AUSTIN: Who's that to, Hadrian?

ALI: Oh, that's to the star, that's to the star.

AUSTIN: Oh, okay, okay. *[Ali laughs]* They are just...I think they just say,

AUSTIN (as Chapter): Of course!

AUSTIN: And then walk away.

ALI: *[laughs]* An attempt was made.

AUSTIN: Yeah. Good effort, good hustle out there. *[Ali laughs]* Adaire or Lem?

[TIMESTAMP: 01:28:02]

JANINE: I just want to make it a point to mention that when Adaire disembarks from that boat, she's holding her skirt like an apron full of apples but it's just full of giant pearls, almost certainly, right? *[laughter]*

AUSTIN: Good, perfect. Yeah, perfect, good.

JANINE: She's not gonna ask people to carry baskets home for her, but she'll take what she can get.

AUSTIN: Mmhmm! God.

ALI: God, Hella's even gonna be like,

ALI (as Hella): *[excited]* Oh, man, do you think we can sell these in the store?

JANINE (as Adaire): Oh yeah, I've got ideas.

ALI (as Hella): What if I had my own desk? *[Janine laughs]*

AUSTIN: *[laughs]* I mean, do we just run into that sequence? You said you had ideas, Adaire?

JANINE: I don't know, that's not what I wanted for my scene, [AUSTIN: Oh, okay] but I'm sure there's like a practical use for a whole bunch of pearls.

AUSTIN: I bet!

JANINE: The scene I actually want is with Samothēs.

AUSTIN: Where is it?

JANINE: At his place? *[laughs]* I don't know that—

AUSTIN: The castle? Okay.

JANINE: I don't know that Adaire would be like, 'hey, meet me for coffee' or something, like I don't know that she's that...

AUSTIN: Forward, or...

JANINE: Cool and casual, with deities?

AUSTIN: *[laughs]* Sure, okay.

JANINE: So I imagine she like shows up at his—probably like gives him warning, 'cause like she's a business lady at this point, she understands what it is when someone walks up and—

AUSTIN: Mmhmm.

JANINE: —and makes a demand of your time when you haven't scheduled anything, you've got shit to do...

AUSTIN: Right.

JANINE: So she probably, like, RSVPs or whatever.

AUSTIN: Where is Adaire the most comfortable? Like where would be the most comfortable place where she can have the conversation she wants to have?

JANINE: Uhh...

AUSTIN: Even in a way that might be more honest than she could admit to herself, do you know what I mean?

JANINE: That's a difficult conversation, 'cause I don't think the places she would be comfortable are here. I think this whole place is a place where she is trying to fake it until she makes it in terms of comfort.

AUSTIN: Mmhmm. Yeah, yeah.

JANINE: So I don't know that there like, is a place.

AUSTIN: Okay.

JANINE: The thing that does make her more comfortable is the—

AUSTIN: *[crosstalk]* I guess the other framing on it, is what is—yeah go on.

JANINE: Sorry, is the like, pretense of it being like a business call, kind of thing.

AUSTIN: Okay. Then yeah, I then I think it's set up to be this like...I suspect that you are seen in a room you've never seen before, in terms of it being like, oh you're in Samoth's office. And like, I don't know that that motherfucker has an office besides right now, but it's convincing!

JANINE: *[laughs]* The desk is just a big anvil.

AUSTIN: Yeah, basically, right? Or at the very least there is a little anvil on it that has a pen inside of it, you know? Or a letter opener—

JANINE: The pen's a little hammer.

AUSTIN: Yeah exactly, exactly. And I think, you know, it's another room that overlooks the city, that you can see in the distance. It's midday, it's a post-lunch meeting, which means you've had your rejuvenation in the midday. And, you know you were shown in, and he's immediately very welcoming, but also very professional, and he says,

AUSTIN (as Samothos): Ms. Ducarte! Been looking forward to speaking with you more. Take a seat.

JANINE: I think Adaire does. *[laughs]* I'm trying really hard not to laugh a lot, because it feels like he's LARPing businessperson?

AUSTIN: He is!

JANINE: *[laughs]* And it's very funny to me.

AUSTIN: Uh huh. He's wearing his business robe. *[laughter]* No, I actually think that he's probably wearing—

JANINE: It's just a very funny image.

AUSTIN: I think he's probably wearing some...what would he be wearing, god.

JANINE: No shirt, but a tie.

AUSTIN: Just a tie. Uh huh! No, I think he's wearing kind of a...I think he has like tan pants on with...I think he's cheating, *[starting to laugh]* he doesn't have shoes on, he's in his own house, and so he doesn't have shoes on behind his desk. But he's wearing kind of a blue shirt that has like, it's like a blue tunic top with silver lining and silver detailing, that has like one of those, not shoestring, but like the string necks, do you know what I'm talking about? Like the collar that you can string together, basically?

JANINE: Mm.

AUSTIN: And it's—that's still loose, he's still getting the chest hair out there, he's still Samothos, but you know it's a nice flowy blue tunic, kind of like loose in the arms, and he looks comfortable. You take a seat, I'm guessing?

JANINE: Yep.

AUSTIN (as Samothos): So, how can I help you?

JANINE (as Adaire): I'm looking into launching this new line...

JANINE: And like I think Adaire has like a sort of...I think it would look, I don't know what the exact name for it is, but you see it for like, pen rolls, tool rolls, but it's like a strip of fabric where you have pockets in it and then you roll it up and then you tie it closed. So it's like a tube kind of thing—

AUSTIN: Okay.

JANINE: So I think she has something like that that's wrapped up, that she sort of opens up on the desk, and on the inside there's... *[laughs]* I guess a bunch of, like, pearl bangles, and like—not bangles, but they're like, you know, they're like cuffs and—

AUSTIN: Yeah.

JANINE: Like, bigger than bracelets.

AUSTIN: Mmhmm.

JANINE: There's like a little hinge on them and stuff, and they look like solid pearl that has been carved. They're probably not, 'cause I don't think you can do that, but something along those lines.

AUSTIN: Sure.

JANINE: And she offers him one, and...

AUSTIN: Like some samples?

JANINE: *[laughs]* Yeah, and is like,

JANINE (as Adaire): You know, it can really do wonders for a new product if established figures in the community wear it, or are seen enjoying the product publicly.

AUSTIN (as Samoths): Hmm.

JANINE (as Adaire): So I was wondering if you'd be interested in...in trying a sample for yourself.

AUSTIN: He like squints at you a little bit. And lifts it up, and like appraises it, and he says...I think what he says, is like,

AUSTIN (as Samoths): You built this yourself? You designed it, the clasp?

JANINE (as Adaire): I mean, I had help, I had...

AUSTIN: *[simultaneously]* He's like actually really interested in the clasp mechanism.

JANINE (as Adaire): You know, it's...you have a little, the pin that goes inside to make sure it sets straight, and then you get the little latch internally, on the inside of the cuff, and then you don't see it, but it still kind of locks into place, and you can just kind of flick it if you want to take it off...

AUSTIN (as Samothēs): You should show the clasp. It's good. People will...I understand it's jewelry, and you don't want to show the mechanism, but I think the mechanism is the bracelet.

JANINE (as Adaire): My concern would be that because you have the hinge on the one side and the clasp on the other side, people are gonna have to make a choice about what side they want facing which direction? And you can run into issues where it might catch—if someone's not wearing a shirt, for instance, and they're wearing the armband, you might have an instance where the clasp—

AUSTIN (as Samothēs): I wouldn't know what it's like to not wear a shirt.

JANINE (as Adaire): *[laughs]* That's good, that's a funny one. Where like the clasp would catch on the skin or something, so, you know—

AUSTIN (as Samothēs): Maybe—

JANINE (as Adaire): —I'm a little concerned about that.

AUSTIN (as Samothēs): You say that people would have a problem because they'd have to choose which to show. I think that choice is a selling point.

JANINE (as Adaire): Yeah...

AUSTIN (as Samothēs): Because, it's the same product, but you're effectively saying, 'look, some people are clasp people, and some people are,'—what was the other thing, a bracket or something? Whatever the other thing was that you said that I forgot a moment ago, not that I'm not paying attention, it's just 8:40pm at night, while we're recording, so. *[Janine laughs]*

AUSTIN: But I actually think this is the direction he's going in, right, like he ends up...he starts by LARPing businessperson, but then, like, he's a designer. *[laughs]* Design is his passion. And ends up going down that route. I think at some point he says, like,

AUSTIN (as Samoths): Your store, your shop. It's filled with many things I've seen before here, many objects that I've seen others sell down Cunningham Street, but every now and then...I know you pride yourself on being someone who can gather together objects that are thrown apart, so that instead of having to stop in at two, or three, or four shops, you can just stop at Adaire's. And, every now and then, I think an idea like that slips into your wares, too. You take a good idea from this product, and one from that, and find a synthesis. Which is a talent, Ms. Ducarte. And it's not one...and I don't mean this...I hope you don't take this as insult, but, it is not one I expected from you.

JANINE (as Adaire): No, that's fair.

AUSTIN (as Samoths): How is the shop going, all said?

JANINE (as Adaire): It's fine.

AUSTIN (as Samoths): Just fine?

JANINE (as Adaire): *[slowly]* You have...created a place, where. I don't know how to even say this. It's weird to...I've sold things before. And I have usually sold things that I have had to scrape together in a bunch of different senses.

AUSTIN (as Samoths): Mmm.

JANINE (as Adaire): And... *[sighs]* there's always been a cost, and the value of them has always been proportionate, but there isn't really a cost here, and there's value, but it just kind of feels like something everyone agrees on. It doesn't...I don't hurt while I'm spending time with a craftsman thinking about how to make the hinge work better. I'm not being deprived because I have to put my attention one place instead of in the place that gets me the most immediate return.

AUSTIN (as Samoths): Mm.

AUSTIN: He's like nodding along.

AUSTIN (as Samoths): Adaire, do you want to know the number one lesson I learned in my time here? And I've spent a lot of time here.

JANINE (as Adaire): I mean, sure, it'd be rude if I said no.

AUSTIN (as Samoths): *[laughs]* It would. There is nothing about this place, nothing, that is impossible out there. We just failed to make that world.

JANINE (as Adaire): I mean, who's this "we"? What the hell was I supposed to do?

AUSTIN (as Samothres): No, I—not you...me, and mine, and those who we surrounded ourselves with, the powerful—

JANINE (as Adaire): Oh, totally. *[quiet laughter]*

AUSTIN: And he says,

AUSTIN (as Samothres): *[serious]* And also, to be fair, those who were opportunists of the world we built. We were encouraged, in moments. And, while we bear power that many do not, we are just as susceptible in our egos. If you do leave here, consider the world that is there, and consider this one. And consider others, and find the one that is most appealing, and pursue it, at any cost.

JANINE (as Adaire): Any cost?

AUSTIN (as Samothres): *[pause]* Any cost.

AUSTIN: He smiles, and says like,

AUSTIN (as Samothres): I don't know how much you know of me, and how much you know about weird echoes of my story, and a million other things, but if there is one thing that is true about me, it is that I was cost-averse, for a long time. And in some ways, I think I've made Aubade a place that reflects that, in that I've done my best to remove cost altogether. But now what I know is, that if I could go back, if I could remake Hieron, if I could reshape and reconfigure as I once did, I would make it like this at any cost to myself.

JANINE (as Adaire): I don't know how much that would actually help you. *[pause]* Let me ask you something. So...it doesn't really apply here, I guess. Okay, let me say—

JANINE: *[laughs slightly]* It's so hard to find out how to phrase things. I'm tired. Okay. I think Adaire says,

JANINE (as Adaire): Imagine you have a group—this'll be a real stretch for you to imagine.

AUSTIN (as Samothres): Mmm.

JANINE (as Adaire): Imagine you have a group, of people who are very loyal to you. And then they have a group of people who are...less loyal to you, but still, you know, know about you, still operate in a society where you're the guy. And say there are people in that second group who don't have the things they need. And they go to the first group,

and ask for help. And the first group says, cool, we have the stuff you need, we can help you, but only if you join us. Fuck those other guys, they couldn't help you, we can help you. And you just have to belong with us, and be super into the big guy, and—

AUSTIN (as Samothres): That's me.

JANINE (as Adaire): That is you. And then, whatever you need, you got it.

AUSTIN (as Samothres): *[laughs slightly]* That was the world I was from, Adaire. And it is the thing I am saying I regret. The lesson I've learned, is that there should not be a first group and a second group. Those who spit on my name should be well fed.

JANINE (as Adaire): Even here?

AUSTIN (as Samothres): Even here. This is not a—a tyranny. If the people would see me go, I would be gone, I would just be the earth under their feet.

JANINE (as Adaire): But tyranny isn't always about what...your role in it is. You know, you can be completely absent, and a tyranny of you can still be there.

AUSTIN (as Samothres): You would prefer a world in which they went unfed, so long as it was me who was feeding them? You want a world in which, maybe everyone does manage to get what they need, but they get it by their own hands, and the big guy isn't the one providing, because that way...it's not all in my control.

JANINE (as Adaire): I don't know what I want, and I have the luxury of that, because I'm a lady who just has to worry about selling booze or maps or bracelets, and not shaping everything around me to some kind of perfect equilibrium. That's a luxury, I get it.
[laughs]

AUSTIN (as Samothres): It is, it is, Adaire, and there is something else I had to learn. Which is, I need to be clear, we did experiment. We did let go of the reigns sometimes, and try out different arrangements. And each time, the thing we learned was, someone took a cost. And then we would try a new experiment, and different people would find that they were the ones taking the cost. Again and again. And that was awful, also. This is why I've arrived where I have. Not because it's some intuition, not because it's a gut moral good. Because I've seen the other ways. And because, when I first arrived here, I had something much different in mind, a new empire of fire, and turned away from it. I'm not saying this is the only way it will ever be. I have no interest in opposing those if they wish to break off and go live in the sandbar, and if someone comes to me and says "Hey, do not feed me today. Do not provide," if they truly will, then I will respond in kind. But know that I don't arrive at any of this on a whim. And I cannot undo what has already been done. Even when we had the power to change history, all we were doing was

layering. We were never undoing. You do have the luxury, and I hope you have it for as long as you wish. It is a beautiful bracelet, and I would be pleased to wear it.

JANINE (as Adaire): It's an armband, it's supposed to fit really tightly on—it'll like make your arms look buff. Buffer. They're already buff, it like enhances the buffness.

AUSTIN: He slides it up so that it's,

AUSTIN (as Samoths): Oh, okay, I see, yeah.

JANINE (as Adaire): Yeah.

AUSTIN (as Samoths): Not loose. Clasp. I worry this will send the wrong message, people will think that Adelaide has begun to take over.

JANINE (as Adaire): I mean, all she really does is sit in boats and eat apples, and say kind of backhanded compliments at people. It's not really like she's making power moves.

AUSTIN (as Samoths): Why would you describe her in all of the ways that appeal to me? *[laughter]*

AUSTIN (as Samoths): In any case, I will see you around, Adaire Ducarte.

JANINE (as Adaire): Yeah, you take care.

AUSTIN: *[laughs]* Ali in the chat—

ALI: Says "high five, Sam".

AUSTIN: Uh huh!

[TIMESTAMP: 01:47:12]

AUSTIN: Lem, tell me about your year.

[pause]

JACK: So when we last saw Lem, he was in the library.

AUSTIN: Mhm.

JACK: Well, I guess at the theater.

AUSTIN: The theater, yeah yeah yeah.

JACK: And I think Lem has rented a studio or something, [AUSTIN: Mm] and has just been trundling books backwards and forwards from the library.

AUSTIN: Mhm.

JACK: And has maybe hired a researcher or something?

AUSTIN: Cool.

JACK: I think the image Lem is trying to cultivate in some way, is one that he thinks of when he thinks of Ventaro Doce?

AUSTIN: Oh, that's interesting, yeah.

JACK: Just this like learned sage who has surrounded himself by centuries of learning, except Lem is just sort of doing it by like, running backwards and forwards from the library?

AUSTIN: Uh huh. Also a book, fake it 'til you make it here.

JACK: Look. We're in Aubade, everyone's faking it 'til they make it.

AUSTIN: Yep.

JACK: Just surrounded by books and things. And I think what Lem has is a list of questions.

AUSTIN: Okay.

JACK: And I think he's going down the list. And finding answers and writing them. So, you know, things like...who made my violin?

AUSTIN: Good question. Who made your violin?

JACK: It was a guy! It was just a guy, we've talked about this on the show before, right, but I think Lem knew that it was just a guy, [AUSTIN: Yeah] but is interested to go like,

JACK (as Lem): Ah, right, interesting, who made this, and now let me look into his family and see what else he made, let me see if I can trace the history of this object before it arrived in the Archives. Good, I've done that, let's move on—

AUSTIN: *[laughs]* Uh huh.

JACK (as Lem): Who was the first person to get that kind of coffee [AUSTIN: Right] in the canteen at the Archives that I had when I was a kid, who did that? That's amazing! Okay, right, next object down on the list.

JACK: And I think he has answered like hundreds of questions.

AUSTIN: Is there anything he's answered that's actually meaningful? In a way that is not just this sort of like...I mean I guess for the Archives, the sorts of questions you're answering are incredibly meaningful in terms of the pattern, but—

JACK: I don't think he's even done that yet! I don't think he's even begun to approach those sorts of questions yet—

AUSTIN: Right, right.

JACK: Or if—I mean it's the Archives, so he kind of has, but like—

AUSTIN: Yeah, that's the thing, right? Anything you do is useful for the Archives, right, because now you have a history of the violin, and a history of the violin is something that could be put into a pattern, right? And so, you have been kind of creating an encyclopedia of things that could theoretically one day be valuable for some pattern, but they're not catalogued in any way that is like...you don't know why they would ever be useful, you know?

JACK: And also that's an accident, right?

AUSTIN: Right.

JACK: That's like the person trying to invent one thing and accidentally inventing velcro or something.

AUSTIN: Right.

JACK: But I think there comes a point where...I think two things happen. I think Lem's questions start to get more...maybe petty is the word I'm looking for here?

AUSTIN: Mmm.

JACK: Like, you know when...have you ever cheated in a Bethesda game, Austin?

AUSTIN: Yes. Absolutely.

JACK: And you know sometimes you start by going like, give me forty health potions.

AUSTIN: Yeah.

JACK: And the game's like—

AUSTIN: I need seven lockpicks. I'm not gonna unlock the door, but give me the lockpicks so I can just try to unlock the door using the lockpick mechanic.

JACK: Yeah, exactly. You know, I just want it as a fallback. Or it's like, fine, just teleport me to Whiterun.

AUSTIN: Right.

JACK: And then there comes a point where you're like, I want to be the strongest man in the world. *[laughter]* So I think Lem is just like, can I get Morbash's records from when he first arrived?

AUSTIN: Mmm.

JACK: Or when he was first teaching? Or like, oh that person who slighted me, can I find something out about them.

AUSTIN: Right.

JACK: And then I think the second thing that happens—

AUSTIN: I do want to be clear, the places that you're getting this are primarily Samol's books that you brought in with you from when all that happened, because the stuff here would not be up to date in that same way.

JACK: No—

AUSTIN: So what you're effectively looking looking through, is like Santa's naughty and nice list?

JACK: Yeah, yeah. Absolutely!

AUSTIN: Do you know what I mean, like that is just...and so there's an important distinction here, because you and I love bureaucracy, and we love talking about records and archives and things like that, but I think the texts that you're looking at have a very, like...they're narrative, they're not—

JACK: They're like, salacious, almost?

AUSTIN: Well, it's not just salacious, I think that they have a certain like, a Twainian quality to them. There's a certain sort of, these are parables. You don't just get Morbash's history, you get a parable about the time that, as a seventeen-year-old, Morbash cheated on a test, you know what I mean?

JACK: Right, right right.

AUSTIN: So yes, a little salacious, but like there is a sort of...you know, they're written in Samol's voice, and that means that they have his character.

JACK: Yeah.

AUSTIN: Which, I don't know if that colors the—as you get more petty, that is the way it goes, right? Because the stuff about the violin, maybe you actually can find in some old records that came in here through someone else who was killed once, or something, right? But like, the more modern you get, the more petty that you get about your own life, the more you're hearing Samol's voice in your head, because these are literally his words about the world.

JACK: And also the further I'm getting from the Isle Aubade, right?

AUSTIN: Right. Yeah.

JACK: Just in terms of like, the situation of my research—

AUSTIN: Yeah.

JACK: —is less and less rooted in the place that I am, and more and more rooted, you know, somewhere else.

AUSTIN: Yeah.

JACK: And then I think there kind of comes a day where Lem sits at his desk and sort of thinks, alright. Okay. I can—I can do this. I'm going to crack the pattern. I've got everything.

AUSTIN: Mhm.

JACK: I must have everything that I need here, and I've got enough time—

AUSTIN: Yep.

JACK: —and I'm gonna crack the pattern. And I don't know whether or not he communicates that to somebody. I think...*[sighs]* I don't know whether or not he would go to Samoths about it. Ah, maybe it's Hadrian!

AUSTIN: Yeah. I can see that being—

JACK: I think Lem sends Hadrian a message, and says: meet me at my office.

AUSTIN: Which is at the Cartwright house, is that basically the Yellow House of this place?

JACK: Yeah, it's like a private room in a coworking space?

AUSTIN: Yeah, great.

ART: I really missed the office rush, everyone— *[laughter]*

AUSTIN: You can have an office, if you want.

JACK: You have a vestry, don't you?

AUSTIN: Yeah, you have the whole place where you can talk through the sword, that's your office, right?

ART: I don't think there's a desk or anything, or like a filing cabinet...

AUSTIN: You have that, Hella has a boat, Adaire has a shop.

JACK: *[simultaneously]* A shop. *[laughs]*

AUSTIN: Samoths has a make believe office, and Lem has a coworking space.

ART: Is there someone to get me a water, I don't... *[laughter]*

JACK: Yeah, exactly. Free coffee, free filter coffee. Yeah, do you show up?

ART: Sure!

AUSTIN: It's not sword day, so.

ART: If it's not sword day or dock day, eh. *[laughter]* But by this point you must know the days, so.

JACK: Yeah, yeah yeah, I think Lem knows that that is important to you enough not to get in the way of that. Or maybe just knows that you wouldn't come.

JACK (as Lem): Hadrian, it's good to see you.

ART (as Hadrian): Yeah, how's it going?

JACK (as Lem): It's exciting, it's exciting. We're all in an exciting time of our lives!
[laughter]

ART (as Hadrian): Yeah...the time we were trapped in a sword for three years...I'm sorry, three plus years.

JACK (as Lem): Look, there's trapped, and there's trapped. But it's funny that you should mention that because I brought you here because I...I want to get out, but I want to bring something with me. And I want to know if I can count on you to help me with that.

ART (as Hadrian): What are you try—what is it?

JACK (as Lem): Well, I don't know yet, that's kind of what I'm—that's kind of what I'm...I'm looking for something. Do you remember when I appeared in the house?

ART (as Hadrian): I don't know if I remember that, was that before or after I appeared in the house?

AUSTIN: After.

ART: Okay.

JACK (as Lem): I'd been sent there by the orcs.

ART (as Hadrian): Okay. What are they looking for?

JACK (as Lem): I don't know, but they knew that I would find it. They had confidence in me. Which doesn't happen very often! But I was told that—

ART (as Hadrian): That's so sad.

JACK (as Lem): Oh, it's, you know, it's fine. We're in a better place now!

ART (as Hadrian): We're trapped in a sword.

JACK (as Lem): Ah. Again with that "trapped".

ART (as Hadrian): Can we leave the sword?

JACK (as Lem): Well, not yet, hopefully. I need to find an answer, Hadrian, and I think the answer is here. And it's made more complicated by the fact that I don't really know what the question is? And I've never known the question.

ART (as Hadrian): This is very conf—are you sure that I'm the person you want to talk to about this? *[Austin laughs]*

JACK (as Lem): Hadrian, you... *[sighs]* You know how to carry things.

ART (as Hadrian): I mean, I'm very strong, but Hella is really strong too...

JACK (as Lem): I need to know that when the gate is open, that you will allow me to bring something with us when we go. And, maybe that you won't open the gate until I've found what it is that I'm looking for.

ART (as Hadrian): So you don't know what it is? But, you want me to help you get out of it, and you—again, you don't know what it is, but you want us all to stay here, until you're done finding the thing that you don't know what it is.

JACK (as Lem): Well I know that you might be a part of the answer. That's the only thing I can really know for certain.

ART (as Hadrian): Is this some sort of like, spy thing? Are you talking in riddles on purpose? *[Austin laughs]*

JACK (as Lem): No, this is...I was sent to the house. You were in the house. Surely that's deliberate? And obviously Adaire and Hella were also in the house, but you seem to be the one among us with, most interested in leaving this place. I've seen you by the docks. I've seen you do whatever you do in that field, I don't really understand what's happening there. You can't go yet, Hadrian.

ART (as Hadrian): People on the other side need me, need all of us! We are... *[sighs]* important isn't the right word, but we are—

JACK (as Lem): No, no, we are important.

ART (as Hadrian): I was gonna say—I think useful is more right.

JACK (as Lem): *[uncertain]* Well, I—I don't know if I...surely they can be a little patient. And we can come out of here with the answer? And we can set it right?

ART (as Hadrian): You think the answer is here?

JACK (as Lem): I think here is where I'll find the answer.

ART (as Hadrian): And you're a hundred percent sure that you didn't mean to have Adaire come here and talk to you, 'cause she feels like the person best at finding answers.

JACK (as Lem): I don't know if I need you to find the answer, Hadrian. I might need you to be the answer, or part of the answer.

ART (as Hadrian): Well, if you need to find me, I'm right here, we can go whenever.

JACK (as Lem): But you're not gonna go whenever, you're gonna go as soon as the gate opens, Hadrian, and I don't know if I can be ready.

ART (as Hadrian): Well, we don't know when the gate's gonna open. Was this conversation as confusing in your mind when you called me?

JACK (as Lem): I don't know what is confusing here, Hadrian.

ART (as Hadrian): You don't know what's con—okay, I just want to go back to the top of this. You don't want me to go—

JACK (as Lem): No.

ART (as Hadrian): —you don't want any of us to go—

JACK (as Lem): No.

ART (as Hadrian): —until you find a thing.

JACK (as Lem): Yes.

ART (as Hadrian): You don't know what the thing is.

JACK (as Lem): No.

ART (as Hadrian): You don't know when you're gonna find the thing.

JACK (as Lem): Absolutely not.

ART (as Hadrian): I might be the thing.

JACK (as Lem): *[stammers]* Anyone might be the thing, Hadrian!

ART (as Hadrian): But how are you gonna know when you find it? What if you never find it?

JACK (as Lem): *[pause] [not confident]* I'll find it.

ART (as Hadrian): I mean, I don't want this to be one of those "the real treasure was the friends we made along the way" moments, where we spend a hundred years in the sword, and then you're like "oh, it was friendship, we needed to be friends". We're friends now! *[soft laughter]* I mean, you could come on more trips on the boat, but. *[laughter]*

JACK (as Lem): I don't think what I'm looking for is friendship, hadrian.

ART: *[sadly]* Hm. That's so sad.

JACK (as Lem): Please don't go.

ART (as Hadrian): I can't promise that. There are people out there who need me. People I made promises to before I made promises to you.

JACK (as Lem): *[uncertain breath]* Really?

ART (as Hadrian): I had a life before we met, what do...

JACK (as Lem): *[softly]* Well, we've never talked about that.

ART (as Hadrian): It doesn't seem...I don't like talking about it when we're not...I don't want to feel that longing, I want to be where I am.

JACK (as Lem): So you miss them?

ART (as Hadrian): Of course I do.

JACK (as Lem): Okay, there might be something there. There might be something—

ART (as Hadrian): We were gonna be gone a matter of weeks—

JACK (as Lem): Sorry, could you just give me a moment.

JACK: And Lem just starts taking notes.

AUSTIN: Yeah. Just like deep instrumentalization of like, everything that happens?

JACK: Mhm!

AUSTIN: 'Cause something there is no—oh yes, there might be people who care, it's—

JACK: *[laughs]* No.

AUSTIN: It's, oh yes, people who care, I can work that into the formula.

JACK: There is an avenue, I've found an avenue!

AUSTIN: Yeah.

JACK: Yeah. Does Hadrian just like wait for Lem to be finished, or...?

ART: Yeah, I mean, what else, there's nothing but time here, I feel like.

JACK: *[laughing]* God.

ART: If you want to say goodbye for forty-five minutes, I think Hadrian's good for that, too. The like, 'well, gotta be going, okay. Hey' what's...' I don't know, you know what that's like, I don't need to act it out.

JACK: *[laughs]* Yeah, I think Lem just writes for ten or fifteen minutes, and then puts down his pen and looks at Hadrian and says,

JACK (as Lem): Thank you so much for coming. I think it's been really, really important. I hope that we can spend more time with each other in future, I'll try and come on those boat trips.

ART (as Hadrian): Great. I'd really love that.

AUSTIN: Is that true? Not Hadrian, but Lem—

JACK: Yeah!

AUSTIN: —does Lem make the effort?

JACK: Oh, to then go on boat trips?

AUSTIN: Yeah.

JACK: Yeah, totally. I think—

AUSTIN: Is—go ahead

JACK: What were you going to ask?

AUSTIN: I was gonna ask, do you go on boat trips? Or are you on a boat taking notes? And I think you can do both, but like. Fundamentally, when we see the next boat trip, maybe this year ends with another boat trip. When Lem is there, is it...Lem talking to someone in a way that is, where the primary motivation is interaction with people and having *[laughs]* a good time *[Jack laughs]* and passing the time with other people. Or, is everything returning to this first motion—I spend a lot of time with journalists. And I've spent a lot of time in L.A. in the past, and Art I think you can probably speak to this. I think it happens in journalism, I think it happens in the entertainment industry, that there can sometimes feel like there is a final cause behind every social interaction, that is about the advancement of some project? Where it all works back down to the thing that you're trying to advance. Whether that is placing a pitch at an outlet, or finding out if the person that you're talking to is a source that you could use for a story, or finding out if someone could read a script you've written. Do you know what I'm talking about, basically?

JACK: Yeah.

AUSTIN: I'm curious, versus being at a party and being with people where the time disappears and you've spent time with them. Where is Lem at?

JACK: I think that Lem has wrapped notebooks in a oilskin.

AUSTIN: *[laughs slightly]* Mhm.

JACK: And has packed that into a waterproof bag, and has boarded the boat. But I think that for whatever reason, maybe it's where his head was at that day, or maybe it's something about the water, or, you know, lord knows it's something about the company that he's spending *[laughs]*, the notebooks don't come out. And I don't think this is necessarily the sign of a particular turn in Lem *[AUSTIN: Right, right]* away from these things, I just think that there is still, somewhere within him, this...the books are in his bag.

AUSTIN: Yeah yeah yeah.

JACK: But I don't think he's writing in them. This evening.

AUSTIN: And, you know, in a place that was not Aubade, in a place that is maybe the place that Samoths intended to make when he first came here, maybe the books do come out. Or maybe

it needs to be a turn. But here, there is the time for you to just have a day [JACK: Yeah, absolutely] where you intended to bring the books out, but you didn't.

JACK: Yeah. And, you know, maybe I just got into a really interesting conversation about the fossil record, *[laughs]* or something.

AUSTIN: *[laughs]* Right, yeah, maybe it still does come back to research, but it is that sort of like, *[excited voice]* "Oh I have all these interesting ideas to exchange with blah blah blah blah blah," et cetera.

JACK: Right.

AUSTIN: Yeah, and I think that year ends with all of you on the boat. I think the...at the like year end festival, you know, maybe that's happening while y'all are out on the boat, Chapter deploys...I don't think Chapter's on this ride, Chapter is with Samoths and like, there's some sort of holiday here. You have maybe done the morning part of the holiday, this is the evening part, this is the fireworks, except instead of fireworks it is the first demonstration of the protective shell that Chapter was describing to you, Hadrian? They deploy a kind of mock version of it, and so there's this beautiful shimmery kind of like cloak of stars that covers everything. Kind of like, it's almost like a dome that covers everything in the horizon, and at night it literally just looks like stars in the sky twinkling. And when it happens...I mean, I guess the thing is, it's not the real thing. One, because you know Chapter is still alive. And two, because you, on the boat, can still hear and see the lightning and thunder from the storm *["Something" by Jack de Quidt begins]* in the distance. And, there's a moment where you feel the tug of the tide pulling you towards it, and Hella, you're able to, you know, right the ship, and make sure you stay in control. The thunder cracks, and it's almost like the inverse, you know, you've used Ordennan boats before, Hella, [ALI: Mhm] where they resist magical pulls, you know what I'm talking about?

ALI: Mhm.

AUSTIN: Remember we've talked about how like, their boats are like temples, and they're made of the metal, and that means they can resist magic, and blah blah blah. This is like, it leans in. It's like whatever this place is, is desperate to be swallowed by that storm. And you keep it right, but, it's right there, on the edge.

[song plays to the end]