

## **Sangfielle 46: Wax, Iron, and Ichor Pt. 3**

Transcriber: robotchangeling

**Austin (as Alekest):** Chine, you are really determined to throw yourself at any problem that approaches you, huh?

**Austin:** Asks Alekest.

**Dre (as Chine):** Yes, because the two people in there did the same thing for me.

**Austin (as Alekest):** No, they didn't. That's not what they did. They didn't throw themselves ceaselessly and without preparation, or alone. If they did, all of you'd be dead by now.

**[Music begins: "Sangfielle"]**

**Austin (as Bucho):** We have to do something, or all these people will die.

**Austin:** And a second bolt of red lightning— and everyone feels this who's inside the church at this point. Red lightning streaks down through the sky, through the flame, and is swallowed whole by the canopy of the Shape tree, preventing it from blasting you free.

**Jack:** Pickman is trying to pray to Fulmina, and all she can see in her mind is the like, the awful sound and black smoke and fire of the fiery train.

**Jack (as Pickman):** This is a fucking nightmare.

**Jack:** Says Pickman.

**Austin (as prisoner):** [frightened] Did you take care of the guard?

**Keith (as Lyke):** The guard? [muffled laugh from someone]

**Austin (as prisoner):** The guard.

**Keith (as Lyke):** No.

**Austin:** Stomp, stomp, stomp. [Keith laughs]

**Janine:** Okay.

**Sylvia (as Hazard):** Oh, gosh.

**Keith:** Great.

**Janine:** Well...

**Dre:** Mm-hmm.

**Austin:** Someone is coming up the stairs.

**Janine:** All right, let's take care of the guard.

**Sylvia:** I am pulling out my gun.

**Dre:** I am transforming into a weird rat shrew.

**Art:** I am full of bees.

**Austin (as kid):** Miss Shape Knight, there's...you should come over here and look.

**Austin:** And like draws you over towards the western door here. This door has like iron— it has like a window with iron bars over it, and through those iron bars, red light is streaming through. And outside, you can make out an open air bridge over a long river of molten red metal. [pause] I think that you, being particularly keyed in with that, start to think like, where the fuck is Alaway?

**Jack:** Mm.

**Austin:** Because the Alaway you know would have come to taunt you specifically for having gotten one over on you. Also, the three of you really pick up the sounds of fighting [Ali laughs] coming from this right, this wall over here.

**Sylvia:** A lot of pinging.

**Austin:** A lot of pinging, yes. [Ali laughs]

**Sylvia:** A lot of noises of things bouncing off of armor.

**Austin:** Yes. Yes. Yes.

**Sylvia:** A lot of, "Ah, shit."

**Austin:** Pickman, Marn, Es, and Bucho see the barbs and thorns of Aterika'Kaal breach from the inside of this wax and metal figure, and then like, you know, the camera moves to the side, and there's Lyke, you know, touching it from the back of the neck. Scary, IMO.

**Janine:** Mm...

**Keith:** The whole game's scary.

**[song ends]**

**Austin:** Welcome to *Friends at the Table*, an actual play podcast focused on critical world building, smart characterization, and fun interaction between good friends. I'm your host, Austin Walker. Joining me today, Andrew Lee Swan.

**Dre:** Hey. You can find me on Twitter at [@swandre3000](#).

**Austin:** Alicia Acampora.

**Ali:** Hi! You can find me over at [@ali\\_west](#) on Twitter. You can find the show over at [@friends\\_table](#).

**Austin:** By the way, we know that the Twitter account for the show is not tweeting out that the show is live week to week anymore. We don't— we're trying to fix it.

**Ali:** Yeah.

**Austin:** Our podcast host's back end is weird now. I don't know. Anyway. Sylvi Clare.

**Ali:** It'll get sorted.

**Austin:** Mm-hmm. Sylvi Clare.

**Sylvia:** Hey, I'm Sylvi. You can find me on Twitter at [@sylvibullet](#). And speaking of podcast back end problems, look out for a new *Emojidrome* RSS feed soon, 'cause our last one got broken.

**Austin:** No!

**Dre:** Oh no.

**Sylvia:** It's a whole— the hosting service shut down, and it's just been a whole thing.

**Jack:** Oh, yikes.

**Sylvia:** Anyway.

**Ali:** Oh no!

**Keith:** Oh no.

**Austin:** Oh, that's the actual nightmare.

**Sylvia:** If you've been wondering where that show's been, that's the explanation.

**Austin:** There you go.

**Dre:** Oh.

**Janine:** Hey, I'm Janine. You can find me at [@bleatingheart](#) on Twitter.

**Austin:** Jack de Quidt.

**Jack:** Hi. I'm Jack. You can find me on Twitter at [@notquitereal](#) or buy— *and* buy any music featured on the show at [notquitereal.bandcamp.com](#).

**Austin:** Art Martinez-Tebbel.

**Art:** Hey, you can find me on Twitter at [@atebbel](#), which I will only be updating from the fine browser at Microsoft Edge.

**Austin:** Okay. [Ali laughs, muffled]

**Art:** Available on your PC, no matter what, I think.

**Austin:** So you're not gonna update from your phone. That's what you've just committed to. From an app. [Ali gasps]

**Art:** Yeah, and I think even more, I don't...I'm not logged in on Twitter on this computer, actually, so uh...

**Austin:** Great. Perfect.

**Art:** Bye, everyone. [Ali and Janine laugh]

**Keith:** You've been doing your Bing quizzes? You've been doing Bing quizzes, Art?

**Art:** Uh, excuse me?

**Ali:** Huh? [laughs]

**Austin:** Oh my god.

**Keith:** You can get points. You get points for doing Bing quizzes. [quiet laughter in background] And then you can buy raffle tickets on xbox.com. [laughter] Buy Bing— buy— do Bing quiz, get raffle tickets. Xbox.com.

**Art:** I don't know if this is— is this real or not real?

**Ali:** This is not a sponsorship. [laughter]

**Keith:** I'm saying— welcome to *Friends at the Table*, sponsored by—

**Austin:** What is this voice that he's doing?

**Keith:** Keith Carberry sponsored by Xbox. [Sylvia, Ali, and Dre laugh]

**Austin:** It's like he's elongating every—

**Art:** Where do I see Bing quizzes?

**Austin:** Oh my god.

**Keith:** [laughing] You can do Bing quizzes now to get points!

**Ali:** Remember when Keith said he did not like being a menace?

**Austin:** I do recall this, just the other day. [Sylvia laughs]

**Jack:** You mean the boss? [Austin laughs]

**Keith:** Is it a menace to tell you about getting points from doing Bing quizzes [laughter continues] and points that you can put towards a raffle ticket to get a Microsoft laptop?

**Austin:** Also here today, Keith J. Carberry.

**Keith:** Hi, you can find me at Twitter at [@KeithJCarberry](https://twitter.com/KeithJCarberry), or you can find the let's plays that I do at [youtube.com/runbutton](https://youtube.com/runbutton).

**Austin:** You have anything else you want to plug?

**Keith:** [simultaneously] And microsoft.com.

**Austin:** Is there anything— yes. [Austin and Ali laugh]

**Dre:** Twitter.com/majorkeith.

**Keith:** Yeah, you can— yeah, all of our podcasts and YouTube videos are hosted on microsoft.com and msn.com. [quiet laughter]

**Art:** Does MSN still exist?

**Janine:** Like trying to sell me printer ink or something. [Ali laughs]

**Dre:** This Major Nelson rebrand is weird, but... [Sylvia laughs softly]

**Austin:** Yeah, MSN's still running, I guess.

**Keith:** Oh, yeah. MSN's still running, and it's there for Run Button now. That's it. That's all it does.

**Austin:** Msn.com/runbutton. [Sylvia laughs]

**Keith:** Yeah.

**Dre:** Jesus. [laughs]

**Keith:** Do Bing quizzes.

**Art:** I still don't know if this is real. [Keith and Ali laugh]

**Keith:** Yes, it's extremely real! Everything I've said has been totally true. You can absolutely do this. [back to "sponsored" voice] You can exchange your Bing points, Bing quiz points and get Xbox Live money.

**Austin:** Why's he sound like this?

**Janine:** I figured out— I figured out what this voice is reminding me of. It's reminding me of that crypto rapper lady who got arrested. [Sylvia and Keith laugh]

**Austin:** Oh, do you mean, Razzlekhan?

**Janine:** I mean Razzlekhan. I mean the alligator...

**Austin:** Alligator of Wall Street?

**Janine:** Crocodile of Wall Street?

**Austin:** The croco— no, that— hmm.

**Janine:** Versace Bedouin?

**Austin:** Yeah, the Versace Bedouin. Oh my god.

**Art:** Hey, for no reason, what's the capital of Canada's Yukon Territory? [Keith and Austin laugh]

**Janine:** Yellowknife?

**Sylvia:** I think it is Yellowknife, yeah.

**Janine:** Why?

**Austin:** How many points is that?

**Art:** No, that's wrong. I'm sorry.

**Austin:** Damn.

**Art:** You both got that wrong. [laughs]

**Sylvia:** Oh no.

**Janine:** What? What is it?

**Art:** It's Whitehorse.

**Austin:** Mm.

**Janine:** Oh, I always get those confused.

**Sylvia:** Yeah. Color, noun.

**Janine:** Is Yellowknife the Northwest Territories? I always got them confused.

**Sylvia:** Yeah.

**Austin:** Wait a second. Is Sangfielle...

**Sylvia:** I literally don't...I always failed geography.

**Austin:** Is Sangfielle in Canada? Like...

**Janine:** Oh, yeah.

**Austin:** It's color noun city over here, huh?

**Janine:** Yeah.

**Sylvia:** It's just Ontario.

**Austin:** Blackwick. Yellowfield. Fucking...what was that, blue something? Bluerock? We got all sorts of color noun cities in this fucking game.

**Art:** Oh, man. I got 10 Bing points. [laughter]

**Keith:** Wow, Art, what are you gonna spend it on? What is—

**Janine:** Wow, Art, you better enter yourself in that raffle. [Sylvia and Ali laugh] Get a raffle ticket. Put your name in the tombola, Art.

**Keith:** Raffle tickets are 100 points.

**Art:** Are you kidding me? [Ali and Janine laugh]

**Keith:** Yeah, but if you get them in a bundle of 20, they're a lot cheaper per.

**Janine:** That's a lot of quizzes. [quiet laughter continues as Austin begins]

**Austin:** Today, we are continuing our game of *Heart: The City Beneath* by Grant Howitt and Christopher Taylor. Our goals are to ask questions instead of planning; to evoke an atmosphere of wonder, horror, and humanity; to build and break tension; to pay attention to what happens—or, to what everyone at the table wants, both long and short term; and to play to find out what happens. Okay, so... [sighs] The, uh, the big guy. I don't have a name— I didn't really have a name for that character, outside of this is a— it's a big guy. And I have stats, but that was kind of all I had on that character. I guess three-faced goat construct is what I'd actually written down. The three-faced goat construct has been defeated. Alekest and Pickman, you've had your little conversation and the exchange of a heart. [laughs] Heart, lowercase H.

**Jack:** But not in that way.

**Austin:** Yeah, but not in that way. Yeah, yeah, yeah. And then there are still these other rooms. There is, uh...so, if we're looking at this north to south. [laughs softly] 'Cause, if you remember, there were some map issues last time. Uh, there is the stairs all the way at the north, and then there's kind of a T junction. If you go down the T, we have the room that Marn, Bucho, Pickman, and the others were all locked in on the right, this big furnace room. There's also this other smaller room, which I think, you know, without...this isn't a dungeon, right? So I can be pretty quick as you kind of scope this place out. That's very clearly the quarters of Ekashi Wolff, who, you know, would have been one of the people who ran this Triadic Pyre temple. And then, along the top of the T, of the T junction, there are two other major rooms here. And both of those, the doors are locked, but they're locked from the outside, not the inside. They may even have like bars. They might be barred in the way that you think of like, you know, lowering a big wooden plank to keep a door locked. Do y'all...which one of those do you go into first?



**Keith:** So, okay, so we have the two— we have the two rooms up there, and then we have this smaller room, the like little closet one.

**Austin:** Yeah.

**Keith:** Have we been in the closet?

**Austin:** Uh, you haven't been in any of those rooms yet. I just described that the smaller room that is, it's not a closet, it's just a regular room size.

**Keith:** Oh, okay.

**Austin:** Because of it being a bedroom. It's— those are Ekashi Wolff's quarters, Ekashi Wolff who died trying to push the Magistrates out of town and who previously was one of the kind of town council members and one of the head priests here at the Triadic Pyre, who gave you your first job, back, the Hymn of the Mother-Beast mission.

[0:10:11]

**Keith:** Well, I guess, by the, uh...by the *Indiana Jones and the Last Crusade* rules, I'm gonna go for the small unassuming room.

**Austin:** Mm. [Sylvia laughs] Okay.

**Art:** Mm.

**Austin:** Sure. That room, Ekashi Wolff's quarters, very clearly have been being used by...I guess maybe they're not very clearly being— uh, yeah, let's say there's some wax residue that makes it pretty clear that someone made of wax was using this room.

**Sylvia:** Oh.

**Austin:** And it's pretty easy for you to jump to like, oh, this is— Alaway was using this as their kind of, their personal quarters during this takeover. And you're able to—

**Sylvia:** Is there anything cool in here?

**Austin:** Um, probably. I think, you know, we know that Alaway takes lots of notes. My suspicion is that you would find a journal—

**Dre:** Ooh.

**Austin:** And some maps and drawings.

**Sylvia:** Okay.

**Austin:** In fact, you have the beat 'Find something useful to my enemy,' or whatever, right?

**Sylvia:** "Claim a D10 resource needed by your target."

**Austin:** Hmm.

**Sylvia:** So I—

**Austin:** I don't know if it's a D10.

**Sylvia:** If this isn't D10 level, I understand.

**Austin:** It's probably...you know, you know who probably has a D10? Is, uh...is Alaway  
themselves, like on their person.

**Sylvia:** Yeah.

**Austin:** Did you not also have "Travel to a dangerous place to find something of particular  
interest to your target"?

**Sylvia:** Right.

**Austin:** Because I think that...you'd find notes here, right? You can take like D6 Alaway's notes  
or Alaway's sketches or something.

**Sylvia:** Okay, cool.

**Austin:** Because we know that Alaway was very interested in different utopian dreams than the  
Wrights of the Seventh Sun, maybe overlapping ones though. And that's, you know, whatever  
research they were doing, the Wrights would probably still be interested in, you know?

**Sylvia:** Would that be like Occult, Religion?

**Austin:** That's Occult, for sure. Actually, you know what? It'd be Technology, because we know  
that Alaway has this like City of Lights vibe.

**Sylvia:** Right.

**Austin:** So still very much up the Wrights thing.

**Sylvia:** Okay.

**Austin:** Keith, were you trying to find notes specifically or like trying to find det— like, what were you looking for here?

**Keith:** Um...I'm looking for weird stuff.

**Austin:** Weird stuff.

**Keith:** I'm looking for any— yeah, I want to find...if there's not anything in particular that we're...

**Austin:** There is.

**Keith:** Okay.

**Austin:** There is a...a sort of, you know, there is a sort of ceramic container, like a little ceramic jar, and something is bubbling and shining a light here. This is...I mean, we've already seen—

**Keith:** That's a clue. This is what that is.

**Austin:** It's a clue.

**Keith:** A clue.

**Austin:** Uh, you could take this as a D6 resource of...this is Religion, and it is, you know, the river. It's...I'm trying to think of what would we call this at this point without explaining exactly what it is, 'cause you don't know what it is yet. But like, D6 canister of flaming river or whatever. It's the river that's outside. It's like a little bit of the river that Alekest and Pickman were just standing near.

**Keith:** Hot cluesy.

**Austin:** Right, just write clue river. Yeah. [laughs softly] Which, clear that Alaway was doing some sort of research there.

**Keith:** Okay.

**Austin:** While Hazard and Lyke are in this room picking it over, anyone else going into, as Keith has already said, library or chapel?

**Janine:** Chapel sounds fun.

**Austin:** Chapel sounds fun. All right.

**Art:** Yeah, would love to see a chapel.

**Austin:** Yeah. Um, I will say that as you go into this chapel, you realize something interesting, which is...I mean, one, there is a person here who is praying, and that person I think is recognizable to anyone who had time— who spent time here before, like during the Eastern Folly days. This is Sister Marisha, who used to run the Boundless Conclave here, before going to the Hymn of the Mother-Beast and being replaced by Stanislaka. Marisha is praying at an altar. And, I mean, this is the thing that becomes clear, is this is not an altar to the Triadic Pyre and nor is the kind of mosaic work that lines the walls here. Who here went to the hymn? Did anybody who just came into this room go into the hymn? Pickman, you did, right? And I don't know, Marn, are you also in this room, this chapel?

**Ali:** Um, I guess I'm wandering with people. I'm probably sticking to the group.

**Austin:** Okay. Well, the group is already kind of—

**Dre:** Okay, then I will be there too. [Ali laughs]

**Austin:** Okay. So the whole, the whole rest of the group has gone to the chapel. All right.

**Dre:** Chine is basically sticking close to Marn this whole time.

**Austin:** Sure. That makes sense.

**Ali:** Sure.

**Austin:** Um, I'm gonna say that Bucho and Alekest actually go the other direction to the library. To kind of like, keep— make sure that there's nothing that's gonna surprise the rest of us from behind. But for those of you who went to the Hymn of the Mother-Beast, you remember this actually, from the priory inside of it. This type of mosaic work, some of the icons and images of the Mother-Beast, you recognize as being very similar to the ones you found both in the entryway there, and then, I don't know if you remember, there was a room where Virtue stole a very important book. [Sylvia laughs]

**Jack:** Oh, yes.

**Austin:** That room, this is like just like that room. It's a very similar little chapel. And I think Sister Marisha stands and turns in shock at seeing you and is like:

**Austin (as Marisha):** [relieved] I thought you were...

**Austin:** Um, now I'm trying to remember which of you did spend time in Blackwick. I guess Chine for sure, right? She says:

**Austin (as Marisha):** Chine. Have you disposed of Alaway's—

**Austin:** I don't think she would know Alaway's name.

**Austin (as Marisha):** Have you disposed of that creature with the faces?

**Dre (as Chine):** Mm, he's not here...

**Austin:** Oh, no, you did. I'm talking about the the goat, the three-faced goat. You disposed of the three-faced goat.

**Dre:** Oh. Oh, yeah, yeah, yeah, yeah.

**Austin:** For sure. Yeah.

**Dre:** Oh, god. Yeah, that was...phew, that was a long time ago.

**Austin:** Uh huh.

**Dre:** I think that's— I think that's what Chine says.

**Dre (as Chine):** Uh, yeah, it was a long time ago.

**Austin:** Wait, no, it was like two minutes ago, Chine. [Ali laughs] That was the creature you fought here in the T junction.

**Dre:** Jesus. I'm mixing that up.

**Sylvia:** Chine perceives time differently.

**Austin:** Mm-hmm.

**Dre:** No, I'm like, *me* is legitimately mixing that up with like the, uh, the goat person we fought leaving the...

**Austin:** Mm. In...

**Sylvia:** Oh.

**Ali:** Mm-hmm.

**Austin:** Right, right, right. Sure.

**Dre:** Yeah, yeah, yeah. Okay.

**Austin:** Yeah, right. Yes.

**Dre:** Uh...Chine looking very fucked up. [laughs]

**Austin:** Yeah, uh huh.

**Dre (as Chine):** Yes, we did.

**Austin (as Marisha):** [sighs] It seems you've been...through it. Are you alright?

**Dre (as Chine):** Uh...no, but enough?

**Austin:** What are your current Fallouts?

**Dre:** I am Furious.

**Austin:** Mm.

**Dre:** I am Shattered.

**Austin:** Ah.

**Dre:** And lights dazzle and hurt me.

**Austin:** Right. Well, this is thankfully a pretty dark room, lit only by candlelight. She says:

**Austin (as Marisha):** So, can...can I go? Is the way out clear?

**Dre (as Chine):** Last I checked.

**Austin (as Marisha):** All right. Well, thank you so much.

**Dre (as Chine):** You gonna tell us what you're doing here?

**Austin (as Marisha):** [confused] I've been imprisoned. I'd hoped that you'd come to rescue me.

**Dre (as Chine):** Well, I mean, I'm not gonna stop you. But is there anything we should know?

**Austin (as Marisha):** Uh, the...the candle.

**Austin:** I almost said the candle man. His name is— their name is not the candle man. [Dre laughs]

**Sylvia:** Are you sure? [Keith laughs]

**Austin:** And it's weird, 'cause like, they're not...

**Dre:** Ah, love that Jordan Peele...

**Austin:** [laughs] Alaway is not like appearing like a priest anymore, right? So like, there isn't like a quick— and like, what would Alaway even seem to be, at this point, to Sister Marisha? I think maybe just—

**Keith:** A monster called the candle man?

**Austin:** The candle— oh, the candle man, yeah. Uh huh.

**Austin (as Marisha):** The candle man.

**Austin:** Which sounds good, so I'm gonna use it.

**Austin (as Marisha):** Kept me here researching strange things, for the last few weeks. I assume you've not dealt with them.

**Dre (as Chine):** No, um, not yet. I mean, we have before, but not permanently.

**Austin (as Marisha):** [sighs] I will say that they had a sort of a sense of vengeance in them. They asked about the woman you travel with sometimes, Virtue, a number of times.

**Dre (as Chine):** [sighs] Well, he's gonna be very upset if he's here for Virtue.

**Austin (as Marisha):** And, uh, the little one. Marn?

**Ali (as Marn):** Yeah. Hi.

**Austin (as Marisha):** Oh, I didn't see you. I'm sorry. Yes, quite a...a tinge of anger when your name was raised.

**Ali (as Marn):** Oh.

**Austin (as Marisha):** In any case, I don't understand why...why I was detained, even. I didn't...the things I was researching could not have been any use.

**Dre (as Chine):** Do you have your notes, or...?

**Austin (as Marisha):** Um, no, the...my captor kept them. And mostly I didn't take many. I was interviewed daily at threat of violence, and if I didn't make progress...

**Austin:** And her face kind of shifts uncomfortably to indicate that like there was, you know, violence used to coerce her into doing more research.

[0:20:00]

**Austin (as Marisha):** [sighs] It's about the nature of godhood, which is a strange thing. And you would think, given...

**Austin:** She gestures at her own kind of religious garb.

**Austin (as Marisha):** That I would have a stronger feeling about it. But the truth is: here in the Heartland, what is a god? You know? There are very few...very few things that are true, aspects that are universally true from deity to deity here in Sangfielle, here in the world. Some grow and grow and grow, and others like Kaitankro seem happy to remain in a single form. Some change over time; others see eternal. Some are immortal; others live for only the matter of years. I think, at the heart of it, what this candle man wanted was to know how to grasp the power of one, which I of course explained is a very difficult thing. And I did more reading, but how do you take a god's power when a god is in control of that power? It's dangerous to approach from the first. But even if...

**Austin:** And I think she looks at you, Chine.

**Austin (as Marisha):** Even if you had, for instance, the capability of consuming something godly and taking it into you in a way that *would* grant their power to you. Well, a god could simply shut that power off a moment before its consumption, if it truly is a god we're speaking of. And if that's the case, then the only time that you could ever truly consume a god's power and make it your own is to join with it or take it while it's still being used, at which point the defense is very high. You take—

**Dre (as Chine):** So did you like learn anything about how we can kill him or take care of this or stop them?

**Austin (as Marisha):** I would suspect that...I would suspect that any method would kill...you said—

**Austin:** Did you say the name? I don't remember if anyone here has said Alaway yet, but...

**Art:** I don't believe so.

**Austin:** Yeah, I don't think so either. As far as she can tell, this particular piece of information is just like, hey, this is a really ambitious person, right? We've also said, by the way, that Alaway at



this point— the last time we saw Alaway, Alaway was using they/them pronouns, or was using...when we first met Alaway, Alaway was Regan Alaway, was using he/him pronouns; briefly was Gala Alaway, using she/her pronouns. I've been using they/them, because we just haven't seen Alaway at this point, and we've said before that Alaway's pronouns shift. So that is the reason why I have not been like, "Dre, use they/them," because, you know, I don't know—I'm not sure what Alaway we will see at this point and what pronouns Alaway will be using. Or I kind of know, but you don't fucking know, and you last saw Alaway as Regan, so. Yeah, so for her, Alaway is just like a weirdo [laughs softly] who wanted to learn some stuff about gods that's very hypothetical, you know? Clearly does not have a whole picture of things. And I think she just says like:

**Austin (as Marisha):** If that's all, I'd like to get back to my people.

**Jack (as Pickman):** I'm sorry. Um, you're unaware of what's been happening outside, aren't you?

**Austin (as Marisha):** Um, I knew a storm was anticipated sometime soon, but I had assumed that had passed.

**Jack (as Pickman):** Blackwick has come to ruin.

**Austin (as Marisha):** Excuse me?

**Jack (as Pickman):** Alaway and their waxen army have swept through the streets, killing or turning many of the townsfolk. Deputies have set up in the north and are holding that part of the town.

**Austin (as Marisha):** Deputies of whom? The council's?

**Jack:** This is a sore subject for Pickman, because... [laughs softly]

**Austin:** Mm.

**Jack:** Because the presence of the Magistrates here stems, on some level, directly from the incident in the hymn. [laughs softly]

**Austin:** Mm-hmm.

**Jack:** Where we were warned...

**Austin:** Which Marisha warned you of.

**Jack:** Specifically. I think Pickman kind of just sulkily says:

**Jack (as Pickman):** The Pale Magistrates arrived.

**Austin:** It clicks in her head. It takes a beat, and then it clicks in her head. And she becomes the most scolding nun stereotype you can imagine, [Sylvia laughs] and is just like:

**Austin (as Marisha):** [scolding] What did I tell you? You group of— [angry sound] You thought you could just change things to make them better. And in the process, you made it worse for so many more people, didn't you? How many did they hurt? We warned you about them! You could have let us handle it.

**Dre (as Chine):** So do you want us to just leave you here, or...

**Austin (as Marisha):** Don't you dare threaten me, Chine. I knew you as a little boy, and I could... [frustrated exhale]

**Dre (as Chine):** No, you couldn't.

**Austin:** She walks up to you, like fearlessly.

**Austin (as Marisha):** Do you even remember where you came from?

**Dre (as Chine):** I don't need to.

**Austin (as Marisha):** You have no loyalty to this place, really. What are you doing here?

**Dre (as Chine):** I'm getting my two friends, and I'm gonna kill the person that you don't even know is a vampire, so that you *can* keep staying here.

**Austin (as Marisha):** Move out of my way.

**Dre (as Chine):** Would be glad to.

**Austin:** And shoves past you and begins to head up the stairs. Still kind of scary up there, by the way, just as a reminder. I think when we last left them, there were a bunch of people in that room on the kind of middle floor, in a kind of big storage room where they had been kept prisoner.

**Jack:** Yeah, I'm gonna go...I'm gonna go up after her, I think.

**Austin:** Yeah. You follow her up? What's the...what are you...are you trying to like stop her? Are you trying to...?

**Jack:** Um...what's her title? Sister?

**Austin:** Sister is what we've been using, yeah.

**Jack:** Yeah.

**Jack (as Pickman):** Sister, it is dangerous outside. I'd be happy to take you where you needed to go.

**Austin (as Marisha):** [testily] Fine.

**Austin:** I think she says:

**Austin (as Marisha):** [sighs] Can you get me to the Conclave? Are there people there?

**Jack:** Uh, what do we know? Probably no.

**Austin:** You last saw Kerr Kern there a couple nights ago, along with Stanislaka, the current Boundless Conclave, like, attendant.

**Jack:** Mm.

**Austin:** Like, taking care of people there, basically.

**Jack:** Yeah.

**Austin:** And I think, Pickman, you will have put together that the bridge downstairs sort of leads over to the...that building, the Boundless Conclave building, but like a lower basement that you're not even sure the people who run the Boundless Conclave know is there at this point, you know?

**Jack:** Yeah.

**Jack (as Pickman):** The Conclave is safe. There's a...the Magistrates brought a Carpana scientist, whom I don't trust as far as I could throw them. But other than that...

**Austin:** [laughs softly] I bet you could throw 'em pretty far. You're pretty big. [Ali laughs softly]

**Jack:** I don't... [laughs softly]

**Austin:** That was me, that wasn't...

**Jack:** I think that's very rude. [Ali and Austin laugh] Um, but I think Pickman says:

**Jack (as Pickman):** The passage overland is dangerous. But if you're prepared to come back down the stairs, we may be able to find a route underground.

**Austin (as Marisha):** Fine.

**Austin:** And on your way back through the stairwell and then the kind of T junction, Alekest and Bucho are walking down the hallway with a third party, the person who was being held in the other room, the library. And that is a person you recognize, Pickman, [laughs] and so does Marisha. And it is Ekule Polyte.

**Jack:** [laughing] Oh my god.

**Austin:** Who is the person that you took from their custody to return, which kind of put all of this into action to begin with, sparking all of this so many months ago. And Polyte is like, just, you know, chatting the ears off of the other two Shape Knights at this point, telling some story, probably telling a story about what happened, right? Which is like:

**Austin (as Polyte):** This Alaway fella kept coming by, and *da da da da da da da da*. And like, every night, came by and asked me for some more information, and...

**Austin:** And I think Alekest just looks at you and says:

**Austin (as Alekest):** Do you know this guy?

**Jack (as Pickman):** Yes, I do.

**Austin:** Marisha crossing her arms.

**Jack:** Pickman, you know, turning her head slowly between Marisha and Polyte.

**Austin:** Uh huh.

**Jack (as Pickman):** [reluctant] Yes, I do.

**Austin (as Polyte):** Well, look who it is! I haven't seen you in...phew. I mean, you left town. What did you, you went down towards, uh, Sapodilla last I heard.

**Jack (as Pickman):** Mm-hmm.

**Austin (as Polyte):** You doing all right?

**Jack (as Pickman):** In a manner of speaking.

**Austin (as Polyte):** Well, I gotta thank you and your friends here for busting me out. [less enthused] I see you found the Sister as well.

**Jack (as Pickman):** You have gotten us into a lot of trouble, Polyte.

**Austin (as Polyte):** Ah, I mean, I thought we'd gone through the trouble already.

**Jack (as Pickman):** The Magistrates descended on the town looking for you.

**Austin:** And his face, his long seahorse snout goes serious. I don't know what that looks like.  
[Art laughs]

**[0:30:03]**

**Jack (as Pickman):** They killed Proctor Wolff.

**Keith:** Unfortunately, it looks very funny when a long seahorse snout goes serious.

**Austin:** Ah, fuck. [Jack and Keith laugh]

**Jack:** It curls up and makes us sound like *whoop!*

**Austin:** [laughs] Oh no!

**Keith:** Yeah, it's like a clown's tie, like *vrr-wrr-wrr-wrr*. [Sylvia, Ali, and Austin laugh]

**Austin:** He goes:

**Austin (as Polyte):** [voice falls] Proctor Ekashi Wolff. The Pale, the Pale Magistrates.

**Jack (as Pickman):** Mm-hmm.

**Austin (as Polyte):** If I had known, I would've...I've been down here the last couple weeks.

**Jack (as Pickman):** Okay.

**Austin (as Polyte):** I wasn't even supposed to be here anymore. I was supposed to be out of town, but the person who was supposed to come pick me up never showed. Is— is everything all right?

**Jack (as Pickman):** "Is everything all right?" What do you think?

**Austin (as Polyte):** Well, I— no, I don't think it is. I suspect not. I know what they get up to.

**Jack (as Pickman):** For now, the Magistrates have gone. They don't know where you are. We didn't give up your location. It came at an immense cost.

**Austin (as Polyte):** And this Alaway was working with them, or...?

**Jack (as Pickman):** No, that was a separate problem that descended at about the same time.

**Austin (as Polyte):** You think maybe he kept me hidden, so that they...there'd be more chaos.

**Jack (as Pickman):** I don't know. Maybe.

**Austin (as Polyte):** 'Cause no offense, but I suspect the people would have given me up, if it was the Magistrates and all.

**Jack (as Pickman):** Maybe. I don't know. We are in hot water.

**Austin (as Polyte):** Well, you know, Blackwick has a lot going for it. Maybe we could help repair it, you know? In fact, I was just...I was just telling these other two Knights that there was actually more going on here in Blackwick than I knew about. You know, I'd obviously done some research into the whole Mother-Beast thing, during, you know, the last time we all intersected.

**Jack (as Pickman):** Uh huh.

**Austin (as Polyte):** But it turns out, down here, this library has some different books, tell stories a little differently. And, uh, it turns out...

**Austin:** And kind of resummarizes something that I'm just gonna resummarize in my own words, because it's months old now. The thing that you learned when you went to the Hymn of the Mother-Beast was...I don't know if you remember. Does anybody remember the sort of like arc of what happened with the Mother-Beast and the hymn and why they were in the hymn to begin with?

**Sylvia:** They were trying to like save their god, weren't they?

**Austin:** Yeah, so—

**Sylvia:** [indistinct] like a moment in time, kind of frozen.

**Austin:** Yeah, exactly. So, so before the Panic, something happened. The Mother-Beast started to seem worried about something. The Panic being, you know, a couple hundred years ago, a few hundred years ago, when Sangfielle got weird, capital W weird. Before that happened, the

Mother-Beast seemed like worried about something, and around then, lost or...either lost her child or, you know, gave her child away or her child died. You're not really sure. What happened isn't really clear. It's not clear that the sort of worshipers of the Mother-Beast ever really knew that firsthand, but there's lots of like poems and stories about absence. And soon after losing that child, the Mother-Beast became increasingly ill, and in order to prevent her from dying entirely, what was said, what, you know, it's kind of funny here. What Virtue read—and I don't think anybody else ever read this story, [Sylvia laughs] but Virtue did—is that the Sisters of the Mother-Beast cut off the Mother-Beast's, like, seven of the Mother-Beast's eight legs or something and used those as the sort of raw material to do a ritual that would create this everlasting hymn that they could bring the spirit of the Mother-Beast into and continue to worship it as a living god. And that's what we kind of got. That was the story that we got. What Polyte explains to you now is:

**Austin (as Polyte):** You know, up in the mountains, there's another part of the Mother-Beast left, still pumping away. And I think, from readin' it, I think that's where all the stuff in the mines comes from. The heart of the Mother-Beast.

**Jack (as Pickman):** Another part?

**Austin (as Polyte):** Yeah. You know the, um...there's that river.

**Austin:** Kind of points down the, down the hallway towards the door that leads out into the kind of caverns where that glowing orange river runs.

**Austin (as Polyte):** I rightly think that's her blood.

**Jack:** This is too complex for Pickman. This is...Pickman is now sort of looking over her shoulder back at the rest of the group. [laughs softly]

**Austin:** Uh huh.

**Sylvia:** Walking into the room with a bunch of wax-covered books.

**Sylvia (as Hazard):** Hey, guys.

**Austin:** Uh huh. [Sylvia laughs] Um, so that's the situation. And I think what becomes clear is the two of them did not get to compare notes. Sister Marisha learned...Sister Marisha was tasked with finding out a way to capture a god's power but believed that there was no way to get access to a god, 'cause a god will defend itself, and you'll have to catch a god in the act and sort of consume it while it's using godly power, and a god could just stop using godly power, and at that point, you're just eating a hunk o' chunk. A hunk o' chunk...a hunk o' chunk! You're just eating a hunk of flesh.

**Jack:** [laughs] Yeah, a hunk o' chunk.

**Ali:** Yeah.

**Austin:** You know, maybe you get the domain if you're Chine, but you're not gonna get god's power. You're not gonna get— if Chine ate a piece of Aterika'Kaal, Chine wouldn't get plant powers forever, you know? Maybe you would get the Wild domain, but not...you wouldn't become Aterika'Kaal.

**Sylvia:** I think Chine literally did eat part of the Mother-Beast, right?

**Austin:** This is true. Exactly. [Ali laughs]

**Sylvia:** Yeah.

**Austin:** Exactly, but did not become godly in any sort of way. Meanwhile, what Polyte looked into and discovered is there's actually a constantly on part of a god, pretty close by, that has no way of defending itself. And it is the heart of the Mother-Beast that is pumping this massive river of fire and stuff, which sort of—

**Keith:** It's spending a lot of time making clones of three goofballs. [Sylvia laughs]

**Austin:** I mean, I think it's making— I think it's spending no time doing that. That's the thing, is like, it's just...whatever you find in those caves comes from that heart constantly. I mean, this is the thing that I think Polyte actually kind of explains to you, right? which is that...and this is probably new also. The...the room that you're in, the building that you're in...I guess, let me slow down.

**Austin (as Polyte):** When y'all came to town, it was probably your thought that the Triadic Pyre and the Boundless Conclave built these structures from the bottom up. But in fact, they were just extending foundations laid long ago. The Abbey of the Mother-Beast up on the hill, near where I guess these deputies are, that was only one part of a much larger complex. That was where the most devout lived, but down here, regular folks were living as if it were a town like it is today. And in effect, the Mother-Beast kept court here. She provided for those people. The caves were not filled with sort of the things they are today. There was no industry here. She was just taking care of her young, like a...like a lioness providing raw meat. She would howl new things into existence. It said in one book that every morning she gave birth to a new sun. It was before the six suns, I guess. Anyway, this whole place was—

**Art (as Duvall):** Probably back when there were five suns.

**Austin (as Polyte):** Maybe she was the sixth, right.

**Art (as Duvall):** The last day.



**Austin (as Polyte):** Yeah. Right, yeah. Could be.

**Art (as Duvall):** Rough week for... [Austin laughs softly]

**Keith:** For suns.

**Austin:** For suns.

**Austin (as Polyte):** So, yeah. So, things were different back then. And I suspect that when people started building this place back up, they found parts of those old buildings and thought: eh, why not build here? So. So, between that and the fact that that heart is somewhere up in those caves above. And I have some maps I could, I could show you back in the room. I really just want to be as much of a help as I can.

**Jack (as Pickman):** What will you do if the Magistrates come back while you're being a help?

**Austin (as Polyte):** [exhales seriously] I suppose I'll face 'em. I'm all right in a fight. It sounds like you bloodied 'em up pretty well. They'd do me in. It is what it is. I did my job.

**Jack:** I am so curious about the circumstances of what happened in the Magistratum. Pickman doesn't— well...Pickman is from the Magistratum.

**Austin:** Mm-hmm.

**Jack:** No, not really.

**Austin:** Mm, no, Pickman's from a train.

**Jack:** I was gonna ask him, "Who did you kill?" but I don't think...

**Austin:** Yeah.

**Jack:** Yeah, I don't think would really, you know... [Sylvia, Dre, Jack, and Austin laugh] Yeah. Not interested.

**Jack (as Pickman):** The nun wants to go to the Boundless Conclave. I think there's a route under the ground. Will you come with us?

**Austin:** He nods and says:

**Austin (as Polyte):** Yeah, it's right across that bridge. I spent the better part of 20 minutes a night for the last two weeks trying to get someone's attention over there, but I think it's all boarded up.

[0:40:09]

**Jack (as Pickman):** Not a problem.

**Austin (as Polyte):** Here, I'll show you.

**Austin:** If you follow him, he leads you to that door that you stepped out of with Alekest. And I mentioned before that it has kind of like, the...it has kind of a barred window. And he produces from his back pocket a little slingshot and some like little stones, and he basically says like, every night he would find a way out of his room, 'cause he's a spy, he can do that. And would sneak down here— he was afraid of going upstairs, 'cause he would be doing this while the three-faced goat creature construct was like walking up and down the stairs and therefore not down here and when he could tell Alaway wasn't here. And he would like shoot little stones over at the other building, basically, across this long bridge to try to get anyone's attention to try to get someone over here. It just didn't work, 'cause there just wasn't anybody up there. So. Or, you know, the actual answer is more complex than no one heard. The literal thing in my prep is that if you had gone to the Boundless Conclave and talked to people there, they would've be like, "We're hearing weird noises in the basement." [Jack laughs] And what you would have found was that there was a fake wall that led out to this bridge and a bunch of little slingshot bullets at the door, or at the base of it. So. [Ali and Art laugh]

**Jack:** God, it's a real like "thought I heard a rat" problem for the people in the Boundless Conclave. [Dre laughs]

**Austin:** Uh huh. That's exactly it. A hundred percent what they— that they are thinking. Or like, they're thinking worse. They're like, is Alaway doing something down here? Are there Magistrates? Like, what is happening? But just someone shooting little...

**Jack:** Like a weaselly little guy trying to...

**Austin:** Yep. Trying to get help. So. Y'all head out on this bridge? Is there something else you're doing?

**Ali:** I have, just before we do like a full regroup...

**Austin:** Please.

**Ali:** Two things, medium quickly. I don't want to say very quickly. [Austin chuckles, Ali laughs] Did, um, Mariska...this is...Mariska, is that it? Mariska?

**Austin:** Marisha, Marisha.

**Ali:** Marisha, sorry.

**Austin:** It's like Mariska but with an H instead of a K.

**Ali:** Yeah, yeah, yeah. My bad.

**Austin:** Yeah.

**Ali:** Um, did she leave behind anything particularly interesting? The thought that I have is like, if Marn is a researcher, and she was looking into this stuff for Alaway...

**Austin:** Mm-hmm.

**Ali:** Is there a way of being like, oh, you know, the progression of research here could lead to like the progression of what Alaway's thoughts were?

**Austin:** Totally. I think that like, between the chapel and the library, you should take a single D10 resource that's D10 Occult Religion, that is like...

**Ali:** Please, yeah.

**Austin:** Books on the nature of a god or something like that.

**Ali:** Yeah.

**Austin:** Or nature of stealing godhood.

**Ali:** [quietly, as if typing] Books on nature...

**Art:** Great book to have. [Ali laughs]

**Austin:** Mm-hmm.

**Art:** Really excited for you.

**Austin:** Mm-hmm.

**Ali:** Yeah, thank you. I'm happy to get this.

**Art:** If you want to do some book trading later.

**Ali:** Plea— you know? [Austin and Ali laugh softly] This is the character to do that with.

**Austin:** That's one.

**Ali:** While we're here...

**Austin:** Yeah.

**Ali:** I think Marn says:

**Ali (as Marn):** Chine, are you feeling alright?

**Dre (as Chine):** Uh, no? [Sylvia laughs]

**Ali (as Marn):** Oh. Okay, yeah. You want to talk about it?

**Dre (as Chine):** Um... [awkwardly] This is backwards. I was actually gonna tell you that *I'm* here to listen to *you* talk, talk about it.

**Ali (as Marn):** Oh. Oh, sure. Yeah, sure. I mean, it's been a long day.

**Dre (as Chine):** Yeah. [brief pause] Do you want to talk about it?

**Ali (as Marn):** Um, eh...

**Janine:** Well, someone's got to talk about something. [Ali laughs]

**Art:** This is the worst conversation I've ever heard in my life. [Janine and Ali laugh]

**Austin:** Mm. [laughs]

**Keith:** And we talked about Bing earlier. [Austin and Ali laugh]

**Ali (as Marn):** I'm tired, all right? You know, I just...this...it's a lot.

**Dre (as Chine):** No, yeah, I—

**Ali (as Marn):** I don't love this.

**Dre (as Chine):** I just liked when you listened to me when the roles were reversed, so I wanted to...we don't— you don't gotta talk, though. [Ali laughs softly]

**Ali (as Marn):** Sure. Yeah, I feel you. I get it. Thank you. You just seemed...I just thought...

**Dre (as Chine):** Should I ask Pickman? [Ali laughs]

**Ali (as Marn):** You know, maybe...maybe we get out of here, we all kinda...the four of us. You know, everybody maybe.

**Dre (as Chine):** Sure. [Ali laughs softly]

**Ali (as Marn):** We can all talk about it.

**Ali:** Well, I'm done in this room. [Sylvia, Austin, Ali, and Keith laugh]

**Austin:** All right.

**Dre:** Nods. Follows. [Dre and Ali laugh]

**Art:** I'm gonna die. I'm gonna...

**Austin:** Uh huh.

**Sylvia:** Really quick, before we move on, just because I remembered that I have a move that morphs all my resources sometimes...

**Dre:** Oh.

**Sylvia:** Hazard is gonna fold up the notes and put them in the little mouth on the mask, so they don't change.

**Austin:** Gotcha. Yes.

**Sylvia:** Yeah.

**Austin:** Good idea. Yeah.

**Ali:** Oh, good call. [laughs]

**Sylvia:** Yeah. Those seem like I don't want them transforming into like fucking LEDs or whatever the fuck happened to my candles.

**Austin:** [crosstalk] Uh huh. Yeah. [Ali and Austin laugh] Um, y'all head out onto this bridge?

**Jack:** Yeah, let's...

**Austin:** I'm asking.

**Sylvia:** Yeah, sure.

**Jack:** Yeah, let's do it.

**Austin:** Yeah, all right.

**Keith:** Yeah, I'd do bridge.

**Austin:** It's what I described before. It's this big cavern that runs, uh...it runs west to east. East would lead you— if you followed it east, you would end up in the kind of lake eventually, or down near the lake, the mouth of this at least. And if you went west, you'd end up higher up in the mountains. And so like, you can see the change in elevation. You can follow that river, you know, upwards. It is very hot out here on this bridge, and also this bridge is kind of scary. In my mind, it's kind of, um...it's made with a sort of...I mean, between the orange light and whatever kind of light material this, or kind of lightly colored stone that this bridge is made of, it has a sort of pink shade. It feels like crumbly to look at. If there were ever any kind of...not banisters. What do you call it that kind of guards you on the side of a bridge?

**Jack:** The balustrade?

**Austin:** Yeah. Not anymore, certainly. And in fact, like I mentioned before, midway across it, right above where the kind of lava river is, there is a sort of...it looks sort of like an altar or something, this kind of big rectangular box that's up like about chest height on you, Pickman. And there's one of those, and then there's clearly a hole in the bridge for where a second one of those would have been, and it seems like it's been lowered in or fallen in. It seems like lowered, because the way it's broken away from the bridge, it's clean. It's not like it's like been...it's not like something broke and crumbled away there. It's just like something was like, purposefully lowered down into the river of lava. And then at the opposite end, the southern end of this bridge, is a bricked over wall that you can tell pretty quickly, again, as everyone sees, is like, oh, that would be about where the Boundless Conclave building is. That would be like the furthest north point on the Boundless Conclave, you know, three or four floors down, basically. And I think, pretty quickly, Polyte kind of just goes over, picks out a, you know, flicks out a little knife and begins to kind of like chop away at the wall to try to like get the mortar out and force the thing open, the passageway open. It's not really working. That's not the tool to use for this.

**Jack:** What's the vibe between Marisha and Polyte like?

**Austin:** Bad!

**Jack:** Given that I think Marisha was pretty pro hanging Polyte.

**Austin:** Yeah. I think Pol— okay, it's bad in the direction of Marisha. Like, Marisha does not like this, because Marisha knows what the cost is and cares deeply about that cost. Polyte cares about the cost but doesn't...but Polyte is the one at blame and doesn't like dodge that at all. Do

you know what I mean? Polyte isn't like, "Well, it's not my fault that the Mag—" like, no, Polyte's like, yeah, it's my fault. But like, that's also...Polyte is like...Polyte's like a magic spy, you know? I guess not magic yet, is on the way to becoming a magic spy. [Ali laughs softly] Polyte like—

**Jack:** He's kind of like a baby magic spy.

**Austin:** Yeah, Polyte they did the thing that's going to let him go back to Kay'va and get the magic part of being a spy, you know? So. But maybe between...between Polyte—

**Keith:** He seems likable enough.

**Austin:** He's fine. You know? I think he's fine. He tells a good story.

**Keith:** He doesn't seem like the best guy.

**Austin:** No, but who is? It's Sangfielle. You know?

**Keith:** Yeah.

**Austin:** Bucho and Alekest, I think, eventually just like shoulder charge into this room through the brick wall. You know, Bucho already helped do that once, so what's twice in one day?

**Keith:** Oh, great. I was just about to ask if maybe we had a better tool, but that works.

**Austin:** Nah, shoulders.

**Keith:** Shoulders.

**Austin:** Shoulders and train armor does it. And it opens up into a large room with a kind of...I'd say it's kind of almost like a circular room. And at the western end of that room, there is a large kind of...almost like a, almost like a, uh, a dais. You know, this kind of like throne, but the whole thing is raised. There's no throne chair. It's just the kind of raised part where a throne would sit on top of. And it's...you know, I think maybe even it clicks in your mind that some of the, uh, the mosaic work that you saw in that chapel maybe included this kind of Mother-Beast at, you know, at repose lounging. And you're like, oh yeah, that's the throne of the Mother-Beast. When the Mother-Beast was here, it was this large almost stage-size throne. And besides that, this room, which is like a throne room basically, is basically picked over and empty. You know, maybe there's a cand— a large, you know, golden candlestick left, you know, knocked over on the floor.

**[0:50:02]**

**Sylvia:** I'm gonna take that.

**Austin:** There's some like old ratty carpet. You take this giant candle— and when I say a candlestick, I don't mean a candle. I mean like a...

**Sylvia:** Yeah.

**Austin:** What's the word for this?

**Jack:** Like a Hitchcock special.

**Sylvia:** Yeah.

**Jack:** The candlestick that Hitchcock was tempted to steal in Marielda.

**Austin:** Is that—

**Sylvia:** It's gotta be worth something.

**Austin:** It's big. I'm talking about— I'm talking about like from the ground up. Do you know what I mean?

**Sylvia:** Hmm...yeah.

**Austin:** What's that called?

**Sylvia:** If I can't drag it, then, you know.

**Jack:** A candelabra.

**Austin:** Is that called a candelabra? I thought a candelabra was smaller than that.

**Art:** Yeah, I thought a candelabra went on your piano.

**Austin:** Yeah, yeah, yeah. What's the...

**Jack:** Mm. If you're Dracula.

**Sylvia:** I know it's not a sconce, 'cause that goes on the wall.

**Austin:** It's not a sconce.

**Janine:** Floor candelabra.

**Austin:** Yeah, what's a floor...?



**Sylvia:** Okay. I'll give up on the big candlestick. [Dre laughs]

**Austin:** You can take it. It's very funny to think of you carrying around a big candlestick. I'll give you the stats on it. It's just one of those stats is going to be Awkward. Take D6—

**Jack:** Hazard uses it as a weapon. [Sylvia laughs]

**Austin:** Take a D6 Religion, uh, Awkward. [Sylvia laughs]

**Janine:** Churchproducts.com says it's just called a floor candelabra. So.

**Austin:** Okay, well, there you go. Floor candelabra.

**Janine:** Thanks, churchproducts.com.

**Sylvia:** And this is in Resources or Equipment?

**Austin:** I think that's resources.

**Sylvia:** Yeah, figured.

**Ali:** Are we about to have two little guys carrying big sticks? [laughs]

**Austin:** I think so.

**Sylvia:** Let's go!

**Keith:** Is there a big stick I could find somewhere in here? [Ali and Austin laugh]

**Sylvia:** Yeah, let's go for the triple.

**Dre:** Mm.

**Austin:** Not in this room. You have to find another...

**Art:** Is there a very small stick in this room? [Austin laughs] Just the littlest stick you can find.

**Austin:** You know, I don't see any around.

**Art:** [disappointed sound]

**Austin:** You have to give me a roll for that.

**Janine:** Can I get a handful of slime?

**Austin:** No! [Janine and Art laugh]

**Dre:** Icky.

**Sylvia:** Again, I've realized now that I gotta just be picking stuff up so it can transform into weird things possibly, so. [Ali laughs]

**Austin:** Yeah, that's the way this game works. Yeah.

**Sylvia:** That's why I'm grabbing a big ol' candelabra.

**Austin:** But yeah, so, and from here, I think, you know, Marisha and Polyte are able to find their way up through here. Um, there really isn't much in this place, because unlike the Triadic Pyre place, this place has not been taken over by an evil wax vampire who wanted to get to the heart of a god to become one, you know? This is just like an abandoned underground place that hasn't been explored in generations.

**Keith:** Well, that's good.

**Austin:** And that Marisha is actually familiar with. So, Marisha actually probably has been down here, 'cause during Marisha's term, Marisha is a Mother-Beast person, and probably like did have to come down here once a year to do some sort of ritual, you know? So actually, generations is wrong. Marisha would have come down here once or twice, you know, a year or something, and is able to lead Polyte back up. But we're— here's the situation. We're at the situation here, which is there's some sort of ritual going on, in which you suspect, um...you know what, I'll lay it out even more directly than that, because I can talk to you in terms of just gameplay mechanics. And I can— we can zoom out a little bit and think about everything in play. Somewhere nearby, probably at either the foot or the head, probably the head of the river, because the river probably flows from wherever is left of the Mother-Beast's heart, Alaway is doing some sort of ritual to become a god. Meanwhile, we know a train is approaching from somewhere. We know the sandstorm grows ever closer. We know that on top of the second kind of the hightown of Blackwick, the deputies are up there, and I think by now they probably are...like, they are using the opportunity at this point, of the streets being empty except for the wax thralls, to start clearing town, you know, clearing it out. I think maybe they're even a little worried about like, what do we do if we don't do something before this storm hits? That could give this fucker, this wax fucker, the cover necessary to roll up on us and hurt us, so we gotta clear them out now. And that's kind of the situation.

If you want to try to go confront Alaway, that's a choice. You want to do something else, that's also a choice. What I will tell you is that the way I've kind of made this, kind of schematized it, there is a ritual happening, and there are a couple of different ways to like begin to disrupt that ritual. Going to fight Alaway is one of those ways, but there are a bunch of other things that you could do that I think it's fair for you to think about, based on your various, you

know, expertises around invoking the Shape or the Structure or the Course to try to intercede on your behalf. On trying to get to the Hymn of the Mother-Beast and seeing if maybe the nuns there could intercede, since the spirit of the Mother-Beast is still there, for instance. Trying to intercept Alaway mid-ritual and just directly confronting it. The thing truly is that it's going to take a combination of things. We can think of this almost as like a Delve, in which you need to do a certain amount of damage, not to Alaway, but to the ritual, through a combination of things. There is no single answer for this, but the situation will be pretty bad if he gets the power of the Mother-Beast. We don't need to get into particulars, because maybe you'll stop it. But you can imagine what, like, based on what Polyte was saying, how the Mother-Beast was as a complete being, someone who could just howl things into existence. Given what his goals had been when we first met him; given, you know, how they've acted since then, in terms of spreading themselves into all these different beings. All of that seems...you know, given how vengeful the look in the eye of Gala Alaway was before you shoved her into a wax vat [Ali laughs softly] and turned her into a big wax creature, or a wax cylinder, I guess. All of that is trouble. So, I think—I think it's probably worth talking through what options are, and if this is a like, alright, Team A is gonna go fight Alaway. Team B is gonna go do something else. I want to read this book. I want to try to cast this spell, et cetera. So.

**Keith:** So, sandstorm, I think, personally feel like I can cross that off as something I don't think I can change.

**Austin:** You don't want to fuck with the sandstorm.

**Keith:** Right.

**Austin:** The sandstorm, as a reminder, is a thing that we've talked about as being a sort of—being a big agent of change. It's one of these things that the Course releases, or it's part of the Course, that as it hits things, there's this chance of like, it passing—there's a chance of it passing through a town and the town just completely becoming a different thing, you know? You know, it runs—it's sort of like the Moon-Touched Woods that you passed through where Marrowcreek was, where like things just are exposed to the raw Course and the Course changes what they are, you know? So that's a— it's a really powerful thing to try to invoke or control, but oh my god, how do you do that, right?

**Keith:** Well, I think—

**Austin:** So you don't want to fuck with that.

**Keith:** No, I don't— well, but now I'm saying— now I'm thinking, what if we do want to fuck with it. What if we want to get, try to get it to change Alaway?

**Austin:** Totally—

**Keith:** Into something that's not trying to do the stuff that they're trying to do.

**Austin:** Mm-hmm. Would totally help.

**Art:** Oh, that's an interesting thought.

**Austin:** Yeah.

**Sylvia:** How would we go about like directing it, though?

**Keith:** Or- or, [Sylvia laughs softly] just throw them in the path of it.

**Art:** There's no bad ideas in brainstorm.

**Sylvia:** Yeah, but—

**Austin:** That's true. That's exactly right.

**Sylvia:** Yeah, I just figured like...like, I'm with that plan. I'm just like, I figure he's gonna be stationary, right? Can we get to the bigger map so we can see the like river and stuff?

**Austin:** Yeah.

**Keith:** Yeah. I guess I don't know.

**Austin:** Which...

**Keith:** We haven't seen what's going on. Like, I don't know if this is like a Metapod situation and...

**Austin:** Which map do you want?

**Sylvia:** The world map might be good?

**Austin:** The world map.

**Sylvia:** 'Cause then we can kind of mark where stuff is.

**Austin:** Yeah. The river, so to speak—I'll just draw it through Blackwick, I guess—is just like, *boop*, you know?

**Sylvia:** Okay.

**Austin:** It's under— but it's underground. You know, we don't...

**Sylvia:** Yeah.

**Austin:** You've passed through it. The team that went to Yellowfield like had to cross part of it at one point, basically.

**Jack:** We don't actually know where Alaway is right now, do we? Other than the—

**Austin:** Like I said, probably at the fount, at the top of this river, right?

**Jack:** The heart.

**Austin:** If this river flows from the heart of the Mother-Beast, that's up. You can kind of just visualize like, oh yeah, that goes up.

**Sylvia:** Which direction, like, where's the sandstorm coming from?

**Austin:** From the south.

**Sylvia:** From the south? Okay.

**Austin:** Yeah, so sandstorm coming from this direction. Train, I think, also generally coming from the southish? South or east maybe. I don't remember if we said a specific direction. I guess the train station is northeast Blackwick, so if it's coming by that rail, it would be the northeast.

**Sylvia:** Okay.

**Austin:** And that's kind of fun to, visually, also, you know?

**Keith:** So the train's going from the south to the northeast, you said?

**Austin:** No, it would probably be like this little line I just added.

**Keith:** Oh, okay.

**Austin:** Right?

**Keith:** Oh, from the northeast. Okay.

**Austin:** Yeah, yeah, yeah. For people listening, I added a, um...a train line. [laughs softly] I added a little black squiggle [Sylvia laughs] going northeast over the crescent. This is the path that you took where you ran into those skeletons. Do you remember when you ran into the skeletons, Keith?

**Jack:** Mm-hmm.

**Keith:** Could never forget them.

**Austin:** Yeah, that's— you met them basically right here, so, right at the top of it, so.

**Keith:** We never did any— we never did any more Queen stuff, huh?

**Austin:** No. She's still there. I know what her— I know what her relation to all this is, actually. So.

**Sylvia:** Let's forget about this and go on a skeleton adventure.

**Dre:** Hell yeah.

**Austin:** Listen, I— here.

**Ali:** [quietly] Yeah.

**Keith:** Lost cause.

**Austin:** Let me raise this real quick. Deadass. Y'all could leave. [Ali laughs]

**Sylvia:** I mean, the thing...the thing I have going on with Hazard right now is: well, this guy's not mad at *me*.

**Austin:** Mm-hmm. That's correct.

**Sylvia:** So.

**Keith:** Stakes are— stakes are pretty high, though. [Austin laughs softly]

**[1:00:00]**

**Sylvia:** For sure, for sure.

**Jack:** Yeah, the potential consequences here...

**Sylvia:** I'm just saying leaving seems very reasonable to me.

**Jack:** Yeah.

**Keith:** Hazard's like, yeah, there's a lot of bad gods.

**Sylvia:** Yeah.

**Austin:** There are! There are.

**Sylvia:** Most of 'em.

**Art:** Fair.

**Austin:** So yeah, maybe leashing the sandstorm is a little bit big. And I think, again, more importantly, that alone wouldn't do it. The different things you could do could all contribute to doing it, but you're gonna have to kind of try to disrupt this from a couple of different angles. Because it turns out doing a ritual that gives you the power of a god lets you resist other powers pretty well, you know? But it's doable. If you act now, at least. Or, again, you could leave. Leave Blackwick to its fate. Seems like it's going pretty bad here. You know, hitch a ride on the next train, and...

**Ali:** But this is...

**Keith:** Yeah, no one said we had to solve this. Presumptuous of us.

**Ali:** But like, on a long enough timeline, Alaway being a god is gonna be a worldwide problem.  
[Jack laughs]

**Dre:** Yeah, that's probably not great.

**Keith:** Yeah.

**Austin:** Maybe.

**Jack:** Yeah.

**Austin:** Listen, listen, listen.

**Keith:** Yeah, hey.

**Austin:** It ain't good, but—

**Keith:** We've already made that choice once, though. [Ali laughs]

**Austin:** But, real quick. The Boundless Conclave has like a thousand gods.

**Ali:** Oh, sure.

**Austin:** Right? Like, you live in that world. You live in a world where, at the beginning of this season, Keith could once per session do a move that would introduce us to a new god. And could do that forever.

**Jack:** This is a god...

**Keith:** That was a blast.

**Jack:** This is a god that has a particular distaste for us.

**Austin:** Right.

**Jack:** And... [Ali laughs] Based on what we learned about their sort of ideological plan in Yellowfield—

**Austin:** Yes.

**Jack:** Is conce— is unpleasant. Now, I'm sure there are a lot of unpleasant gods out there.

**Austin:** Mm-hmm.

**Jack:** We've been lucky to meet people like—checks notes—Erlin, the wet god. [laughter]

**Austin:** Uh huh.

**Dre:** Uh huh, yeah.

**Sylvia:** I mean, there was that doctor god who seemed kind of unpleasant at the time.

**Austin:** That was an unpleasant god, for sure.

**Keith:** Oh, I loved the, the...

**Sylvia:** Listen, I loved him, but he was also unpleasant.

**Keith:** Ah, what the fuck—? Becker. The Becker god.

**Sylvia:** Yes. Yes. [laughs]

**Austin:** Uh huh.

**Jack:** But this person is like, “Uh, I would like to assimilate everybody into wax. And also what if, uh, we could bring humanity to a better and brighter future with the power of the machine!”



**Austin:** Mm-hmm.

**Jack:** [slowly] Also, I think that Pickman believes in her soul that trying to become a god is something that people shouldn't do.

**Austin:** Oh, okay. It's a shame, it's a, you know. [someone laughs] It's a good thing you don't know anybody who fucks around with gods and stuff like that, just generally.

**Jack:** Mm-hmm.

**Keith:** I mean, no one currently in the party is doing that, is trying to *become* a god.

**Austin:** Mm.

**Jack:** At the same time, Sangfielle is big. You know, we could— we could leave it [Jack and Austin laugh softly] and then just watch it get wiped out in the background. Um, do we know...? Okay, we've come up from the ground floor, right? And we're now in the bottom of the Boundless Conclave. There are people sort of milling around nervously and things?

**Austin:** I mean, if you would like to be, yeah. You can be wherever you want right now that's a place that you've been in the session. Or in this arc, basically.

**Jack:** How long do we have?

**Austin:** What do you need? You don't know the answer to that, right?

**Jack:** No. Marisha might. I'm—

**Austin:** Does not.

**Jack:** Does not? Okay.

**Austin:** Absolutely does not.

**Jack:** Could be hours, could be days?

**Austin:** Does not know.

**Jack:** Yikes. Okay.

**Austin:** Couldn't know. Right? Like, this is...how long does it take? I bet it would take different for you than Marn. I bet it would take— you know what I mean? Like, how in tune are you to the heart of the Mother-Beast?

**Jack:** Right. Right, yeah. And—

**Austin:** What's the weather like today? You know?

**Jack:** Yeah.

**Austin:** But imminent. Not weeks.

**Art:** Can we all give our guesses of how attuned we are to the heart of the Mother-Beast, one to ten? [Jack laughs]

**Austin:** Yeah, one to ten. Let's go through.

**Art:** Just go around the table.

**Jack:** Three.

**Sylvia:** Uh, like a two?

**Art:** Also a two. I'm gonna go with two as well.

**Dre:** Mm.

**Ali:** If Pickman's a three, I'm probably a four.

**Art:** Wow, that seems like (??? 1:04:00) [Ali laughs]

**Keith:** Wow.

**Ali:** [indistinct, still laughing] I'm just saying.

**Keith:** I'm gonna say — I'm gonna say three but a tepid three. Like, I'm...

**Austin:** Mm, mm.

**Keith:** Like I don't want to say two, even though it might be.

**Art:** I think you could be a four.

**Keith:** You think I could be a four?

**Ali:** Yeah, I think you could be a four or five.

**Keith:** Wow.

**Art:** You don't *have* to be. I'm not...I'm not...

**Ali:** I think you just have the experience with gods that you would be able to like read her, right? You know?

**Keith:** Okay. I'll go four. [Ali laughs] I'll go four. I don't know *this* god.

**Ali:** Sure.

**Dre:** Mm.

**Keith:** And all the gods that I know have been very different. But I do feel like I have the most experience with gods.

**Austin:** I don't have an Es number. I don't have a Chine number. [Ali laughs]

**Dre:** What are we— what are we saying this number out of?

**Janine:** I, uh...

**Art:** Ten.

**Austin:** One out of ten.

**Ali:** Yeah, ten the highest.

**Dre:** Oh. Oh, okay, so we're all pretty low.

**Art:** Well, not so fast, Chine.

**Austin:** Yeah. Come on, Chine. [Ali laughs]

**Keith:** Yeah.

**Janine:** Mm...

**Austin:** I got a number in my head for Chine. It ain't that low.

**Dre:** Yeah, no, it's, uh...

**Art:** If you say four, you've broken the scale, and we all have to go to one. [Jack and Keith laugh]

**Dre:** Yeah.

**Janine:** Mm.

**Keith:** The bad curve. We don't like that curve.

**Dre:** Yeah, probably an eight?

**Austin:** That's what I think. I think it's an eight.

**Jack:** Mm. Yeah.

**Keith:** Yeah, that's an eight.

**Jack:** Sounds about right.

**Keith:** Yeah.

**Austin:** Yeah.

**Janine:** Yeah.

**Austin:** That was the number in my head.

**Janine:** I feel like maybe, maybe a three.

**Art:** So have we properly considered Chine just sort of takes the place here? Just wait until the last minute and do like a switch, like an Indiana Jones style switch? [Ali laughs]

**Austin:** We've not talked that through.

**Janine:** Wha-

**Keith:** We put Chine in place of the Mother-Beast?

**Art:** No.

**Austin:** In place of Alaway.

**Art:** In place of Alaway.

**Dre:** Yeah.

**Ali:** Then what happens to Chine?

**Art:** Whomp, whomp. What?

**Ali:** Then what happens to Chine? [laughs softly]

**Dre:** I get to party. [Keith laughs]

**Ali:** Oh, do you want to party?

**Keith:** You get those last two points real fast. [Dre laughs]

**Art:** Yeah.

**Austin:** I mean, shit, you have a...what's your Zenith, Chine?

**Dre:** Um...

**Austin:** Become one with the Course and bind you and your creature's essence to it?

**Dre:** Yes. I don't want to bind my creature's essence to it.

**Austin:** Yeah.

**Keith:** How bound is the—

**Jack:** Ain't that the way.

**Keith:** What's the creature's number?

**Austin:** Hard to say.

**Dre:** Yeah.

**Austin:** Um, but was...

**Jack:** Wait, what was Es's number?

**Dre:** And—

**Austin:** Yeah, what was Es's number? [Ali laughs]

**Janine:** Oh, I don't know, like a three, maybe? 'Cause like, not really any deep connection, but also just kind of a like, yeah, you're a weird being that doesn't quite have...you got bits but not a body kind of sometimes.

**Austin:** Yeah, yeah, yeah.

**Janine:** You know.

**Austin:** You are similar.

**Art:** Hate when that happens.

**Janine:** I can respect it.

**Austin:** Yeah. We got a lot of bits but not bodies.

**Janine:** Yeah.

**Austin:** Or bits as part of bodies or bits separate, but you know. Anyway. It is, you know, was recovered from the mines. We, again, none of you in character know this, but Virtue read a book once [laughs] about how the egg sac was produced by— it was a grape seed at the time. A grape seed was either— either came out of the Mother-Beast, or the Mother-Beast had this grape seed and protected it and it turned into the egg sac, or...I don't remember exactly how that detail was colored, but like, there was a connection between the two already. So I think that it's probably...maybe not Chine high, but up there. Seven?

**Jack:** Okay. I...we can figure out if this is an in character proposal as we go.

**Austin:** Mm-hmm.

**Jack:** Do we want to just do some reconnaissance on Alaway? Head up the river, figure out like what the state of affairs is.

**Austin:** Mm.

**Jack:** Because we can make all the plans we want about like, lure them into a sand— I'm not saying these are bad plans. I'm saying that like, if the whole situation up there is completely fucked, we might get a better idea of how we want to move, just by going— it's not far, up into the hills. We can figure it out. We might also want to split our forces such that—like with a linkpearl or something—such that, um, [Janine and Austin laugh] we can like... [laughing] If one group of us dies or something, [Dre laughs] the other team can...

**Keith:** What do you mean? [Ali laughs]

**Sylvia:** That's not gonna happen.

**Jack:** I just think— we've heard, you know, the two people who have been working on this have given us useful information, but they've given us pretty limited information. And I think that Pickman's response to this would be different if I saw this with my— you know, is this something we need to move on this moment? Or is this something that we can like go and look for help from somebody on?

**Keith:** Hey, I'll take a look. I'll go take a look.

**Austin:** All right. Who else is gonna go upriver and try to figure out what the deal is with this ongoing ritual?

**Jack:** It could just be us two.

**Austin:** Could be.

**Jack:** I might bring Alekest, if possible.

**Austin:** Yeah. He'll go along.

**Jack:** Also, this is, by the by...um, Ferna the Wise, who wrote the book about gods?

**Austin:** Oh, yeah, uh huh.

**Keith:** Hmm. I have that book, right?

**Austin:** I think Art has that book. Is that true?

**Jack:** Like a Carpana god scholar.

**Austin:** Oh, oh, oh. That, that— okay, sorry. Wait, wait, wait. Uh, no, Ferna wrote about everything. There happened to be a chapter on gods.

**Jack:** [laughs softly] Oh, okay.

**Austin:** That was the chapter we focused on, because that's what Lyke was interested in, but that book, *Sa'Ferna-ta-Fera* does have, like, it has every domain.

**Jack:** Mm.

**Austin:** It has stuff about literally everything that this kind of sage ever talked— not *ever* talked about.

**Keith:** Yeah, it's one really smart person's encyclopedia interview.

**Austin:** Yeah, that's exactly right. Yes.

**Jack:** Amazing. I didn't know if like, you know, A, they might be dead, B, I didn't know if there was like an actual specialist in this particular niche that we could rope in.

**Austin:** No. I mean, that...that book would totally maybe have some stuff to say, right? But...

**Keith:** Well, I'll say that I've—

**Austin:** In the sense that I would let you use it as a resource. I'm not holding anything back. Like, I'll say that, right?

**[1:10:00]**

**Jack:** No.

**Keith:** Yeah.

**Austin:** Like, there's no secret solution to this that I haven't already said out loud.

**Keith:** Yeah.

**Austin:** Outside of things that you could invent that I think— that I go like, “Whoa, that's sick. Yeah. Give me a D10,” you know? [Ali and Dre laugh]

**Keith:** Yeah, if there's something about gods in that book, I've read it, at this point.

**Austin:** That's right. Yeah. Yeah. And again, it's basically the stuff that, the combination of—

**Keith:** That we talked about during the library episode?

**Austin:** Well, like the...that stuff, but it's also, I'm saying that like part of how you understand what the stakes of this moment are, are because Lyke, you've read that book, right?

**Keith:** Right. Yeah, yeah, yeah.

**Austin:** Like, when I kind of hand-waved and kind of summarized some stuff there, that's partly because you understand the stuff that you read there about how some gods— or about how the gods that, um...I think Ferna was the name of the person, right? Ended up, you know, saying like, gods need to expand constantly. And so you know that that's one perspective on gods.

**Keith:** Right.

**Austin:** You know that stuff.



**Keith:** And that we've seen that happening.

**Austin:** Yes.

**Keith:** But also we've seen it not happening.

**Austin:** We've seen it not happening.

**Keith:** But it was rare. It was an ex— it was like...

**Austin:** This is...and I didn't like, I didn't get deeper into the metaphysics of why Alaway needs to make this, needs to do this here and now, but the like, there is a longer metaphysical thing I've written down, which is about how in Sangfielle—

**Keith:** I should talk to Kaitankro.

**Austin:** —anything can become anything else at any moment. But in the moment that it's a thing, it's the thing it is. And in the moment that a thing is doing a thing, it's doing the thing. And so that is the moment at which you need to grab a god's power, in the moment it's being used, not just...you know, this is, you could have a, you could have a...you know, Hazard knows this very well. You could have a god's heart in, you know, in your hand, and over the course of moving through Sangfielle, it could turn into a stone.

**Keith:** You can't put lightning in a bottle. You have to put it right in your mouth.

**Austin:** You gotta put it *right* in your mouth.

**Sylvia:** That's right.

**Austin:** A hundred percent. So. [Sylvia laughs quietly]

**Jack:** All right. Let's go north. Or east.

**Austin:** West. It's west.

**Jack:** West.

**Austin:** It's west up the mountains. East is into the ocean, or the, uh, lake.

**Keith:** Pickman, do you need a compass? [laughs]

**Sylvia:** Wait, sorry, real quick. What was the other group's plan to do again?

**Austin:** I don't know.

**Sylvia:** Okay.

**Austin:** I would love to know.

**Sylvia:** 'Cause that's what I was waiting to...

**Austin:** Mm-hmm.

**Sylvia:** Before I decided on which way I was going. [laughs]

**Art:** Yeah, I don't think we should choose a whole group before both groups have been defined, I think. [Ali laughs]

**Austin:** Mm-hmm, mm-hmm.

**Jack:** Okay, my proposal is: go in that— go in a direction towards Alaway and do a little bit of reconnaissance. No plans for engagement, unless it goes completely wrong. Figure out what we're dealing with and how fast we need to deal with it.

**Keith:** And really, how often does it go completely wrong?

**Dre:** Eh...

**Keith:** Good point.

**Austin:** So that's...that's who?

**Ali:** Well, what would group two be doing? Taking a nap or something? [laughs]

**Dre:** I mean...

**Austin:** Taking a nap.

**Dre:** That's probably not a bad idea for Chine. [Dre and Ali laugh]

**Austin:** Uh, I will say, you're at...I mean, listen, you're at—

**Art:** Done. I'm in group nap. [Ali laughs]

**Austin:** You're in group nap. Okay. Group nap it is.

**Sylvia:** Something that just kind of occurred— like, kind of unrelated, but something that just occurred to me is this river does have two ends to it, and we're only assuming that he's at the top.

**Austin:** Uh, I'm gonna give you that it's probably the top and not the bottom.

**Sylvia:** Okay, cool.

**Austin:** If the thing— I gave you enough that it's like, it's about the heart of the Mother-Beast. And it's Sangfielle, maybe it could be going from bottom up. You're right, it totally could be. That's how Sangfielle works.

**Sylvia:** Yeah.

(crosstalk ??? 1:13:23)

**Keith:** The other thing is probably the nuns, right?

**Sylvia:** We can just know that, then that's fine. I don't...

**Austin:** You know.

**Sylvia:** Yeah.

**Austin:** Yeah. Mostly it's like, we could make up some stuff that happens the other direction, but it's not going to be...it's not going to necessarily be thematically interesting in any way, 'cause you know what I mean?

**Sylvia:** Yeah.

**Austin:** Like, maybe you see some skeletons down by the lake. That's cool. That's fun. And hey, maybe that's a thing you want to do. Do you want to go try to like parley with the, with Altapasqua the Drowned Empress or whatever and see if you could get some help? Like, you know? That's not a— that's not nothing.

**Art:** It's not bad.

**Austin:** Yeah.

**Sylvia:** Yeah.

**Keith:** Water is super effective against fire.

**Austin:** I've heard this.

**Sylvia:** That's true. I've been playing Pokémon.

**Ali:** Mm.

**Dre:** Mm-hmm. [Austin laughs softly]

**Sylvia:** I'm down. Like, I think just in general, like the other group going to a like neighboring area to either get help or like give a heads up that there might be an evil wax god coming through...

**Austin:** Mm-hmm.

**Sylvia:** Isn't a terrible idea.

**Austin:** What, the other area, you said?

**Sylvia:** Oh, just like, I don't know what else is like in...

**Austin:** Yeah.

**Sylvia:** I haven't really looked at the map super close.

**Austin:** There's just isn't that much, at this point, right? Like, at this point, in Blackwick...

**Sylvia:** Yeah, I figured it probably is just the skeletons, right?

**Austin:** I mean, inside of the lake. None of you have ever been there. You don't know how to breathe underwater, as far as I know. Maybe one of you does? Does any—

**Keith:** Uh, I could soon, if I decided to.

**Austin:** I think you could soon, yeah. [laughs] Which is a weird thing.

**Janine:** Should I be on that team instead? 'Cause I feel like that...that's plausible.

**Austin:** Sure. Other stuff—

**Janine:** I'll go where I'm needed, you know?

**Austin:** Yeah, I get you. Again, the other main resources that we've kind of talked about is, if you get into the hymn, you could try to get the Priory of the Mother-Beast to support by doing something with the spirit of the Mother-Beast which is still alive there.

**Sylvia:** Speaking of that, I think I need to roll one D4 Blood Stress 'cause of I'm Bleeding.

**Austin:** Oh, your end of a scene. Yeah, uh huh.

**Sylvia:** Two.

**Austin:** Take two, and give me a Fallout test. Mm, that's not bad.

**Sylvia:** Or, uh, does my Protection apply for Bleeding or no?

**Austin:** Yeah, totally.

**Sylvia:** Okay, cool. So I just take one.

**Austin:** Yeah.

**Sylvia:** No Fallout.

**Austin:** No Fallout. Phew.

**Sylvia:** I rolled an eleven.

**Austin:** Nice work.

**Keith:** Good roll. Strong roll.

**Sylvia:** Thank you.

**Austin:** Um, there are, uh...there is a Blood doctor upstairs. There's a D8 Blood doctor upstairs.  
[Sylvia laughs softly]

**Dre:** Ooh.

**Austin:** Kerr, uh, Kerr Keen. No, Kerr...what's Kerr's other name? It's not Kerr Keen, 'cause Kerr is trying to become a keen. Kerr Kern?

**Jack:** Is it Kern?

**Austin:** Kern.

**Art:** Name yourself for the job you want.

**Austin:** Kerr Kern Keen. Yeah, uh huh. [Ali laughs]

**Jack:** This little shit. We should... [laughs softly]

**Dre:** Wow.

**Art:** Uh huh. [Keith laughs]

**Jack:** We should get a discount.

**Ali:** She should be out of here by now. Like, 1000 percent. [laughs]

**Austin:** She's helping people.

**Ali:** I mean, if she fixes my face enough that I can speak and look respectable to the water god, I'm team that.

**Austin:** Uh huh.

**Ali:** But I can't do that at the moment. [laughs]

**Austin:** Are you— are you gonna try to tell her to fix y'all up for free?

**Ali:** For free?

**Dre:** Uh...

**Keith:** Wow.

**Austin:** You gonna make the case?

**Dre:** I don't—

**Keith:** Pull rank.

**Dre:** I don't feel...I mean, I am Furious, but...

**Jack:** Oh, she's a real piece of shit.

**Keith:** Wait, so you're saying that she set herself up in a...in like a, you know, the siege of a city to help people for money?

**Austin:** Well, she's helping the... [Ali laughs] I think the regular people she's probably helping for free, using the supplies from the...the church.

**Keith:** From the—

**Austin:** But we're playing a game called *Heart: the City Beneath*. And in that game, when you want to get healed, you have to spend resources.

**Jack:** Or we press gang her into...

**Keith:** Hey, that doesn't make her not an asshole for changing the rules all of a sudden.

**Austin:** It also— listen, that's not her rules. Her rules, it's also the rules for the person who's worse at healing. If you want to ask Stanislaka, she can heal you for cheap too, it's just she won't be able to heal any Fallout, 'cause she's not that good at it.

**Jack:** I think we should...I think...I don't know. Marn, she stole your research. How do you feel about strong-arming—

**Austin:** She didn't steal anybody's research! Wait a second.

**Ali:** She didn't steal anything. She's just sitting around with it very comfortably in a way that's very annoying.

**Jack:** Okay. I—

**Ali:** But. [laughs]

**Jack:** Yeah, I suppose. I don't know. I have like—

**Keith:** And you came to her, like, urgently. Right?

**Ali:** I...I sent a message to headquarters that was like, "Hey, I got some shit I have to talk to you about. Can you have someone come through so we can talk about this?" And they were like, "Yeah, we'll send some intern who's really busy."

**Austin:** [laughs softly] She's not an intern. She's one step away from being your peer.

**Ali:** Well, they like outsourced her. Anyway, we don't have to get into this. We have to figure out what our party wants to do. [laughs]

**Art:** A big step, from what I think. [Ali laughs]

**Ali:** But if we— if team— team go check shit out, great.

**Austin:** Uh huh.

**Ali:** Team get healed, question mark, and then do something in Blackwick, question mark?

**Dre:** Mm-hmm.

**Keith:** Now, is it...am I...am I still on team go or am I on team...?

**Austin:** We don't know.

**Ali:** That's up to you.

**Austin:** We are at— we are at figure out what team, what the teams are doing, I think.

**Keith:** Yeah. I just, I guess what I need from people is to tell me: do I do the kind of healing that people need?

**Ali:** I mean, if there's already a Blood person upstairs and your thing is...

**Keith:** Well, I also heal, uh, Echo, Supplies, and Fortune.

**Ali:** Oh, sure.

**Keith:** Stress.

**Janine:** Oh, just the Stress.

**Keith:** Yeah.

**Dre:** Yeah.

**Keith:** Yeah, but—

**Austin:** That's a free heal.

**Keith:** That's a free heal.

**Austin:** But you could use that place, also, for spending resources to heal.

**Keith:** Right.

**Austin:** You can give Aterika'Kaal resources to do...

**Keith:** And then I have one big heal that I can do for Blood.

**Austin:** For one person, right?



**Keith:** For one person.

**Ali:** Mm.

**Keith (as Lyke):** So, if that's the sort of thing that people need, then I'll— I can do that. But if it's not, then...I mean, I guess I can open the gate. I don't even have to go in. But I recommend that I go in. [Ali laughs]

**Dre (as Chine):** Oh, yeah?

**Keith (as Lyke):** Yeah, for no reason.

**Art (as Duvall):** That's your recommendation?

**Ali (as Marn):** Wait, what gate?

**Keith (as Lyke):** You know, my gate that I can do.

**Ali:** Have I been in your gate?

**Keith:** Oh, we barely know each other.

**Ali:** Oh, [laughs softly] right, yeah.

**Keith:** I can o—

**Ali:** We met at the, uh...

**Keith:** Yeah. [Ali laughs] We had downtime together, a little bit. We went shopping together.

**Ali:** Mm, mm-hmm. Oh, yeah!

**Keith:** Have you— has Marn really never been inside the Sanctum of the Stone Chorus?

**Ali:** I went to the wet god one.

**Keith:** Okay. Okay. Yeah.

**Keith (as Lyke):** So I can do that, and it's different now. Don't worry about it.

**Ali (as Marn):** [brief pause] Sure.

**Keith (as Lyke):** I mean, it will actively detract from the seriousness of the situation to worry about it. [Ali laughs softly]

**Austin:** Mm.

**Ali (as Marn):** I'm not worried.

**Ali:** I glance to Es and Pickman. [Ali and Janine laugh]

**[1:20:02]**

**Jack:** I...as a proposal for a second team activity, I don't think going into the hymn would necessarily be a bad idea.

**Dre:** Ooh.

**Jack:** If we know that this power is coming from the Mother-Beast, from a part of the Mother-Beast, and there is a bit of its spirit still alive inside the hymn, that might also be worth...also, nobody knows how the Mother-Beast works better than the nuns inside the hymn, right, Austin?

**Keith:** Mm.

**Austin:** Yeah, they were alive when she was.

**Jack:** Yeah.

**Austin:** They've never died. They've been in the hymn for hundreds of years.

**Keith:** Here's a question. This, saying to go to the hymn reminded me or made me think of this. But uh, Alaway's trying to siphon off a certain— uh, siphon off the Mother-Beast's power. But what if someone had like a second, like a different thing that we could redirect the siphoning off into and at least take some of that god power away? Maybe get two—

**Sylvia:** Are you gonna suggest Aterika'Kaal?

**Keith:** I'm just— no bad ideas, brainstorming. [Sylvia and Dre laugh]

**Austin:** Do you say this in character?

**Keith:** Yes.

**Austin:** Okay.

**Sylvia (as Hazard):** Uh, that feels like a last resort.

**Keith (as Lyke):** If someone had some vessel that already had a god in it. [Sylvia laughs softly]

**Dre (as Chine):** Mm.

**Sylvia (as Hazard):** Oh, do you know anyone like that?

**Keith (as Lyke):** I'm just, again, just spitballing.

**Dre (as Chine):** Wait, you carry a god around with you?

**Keith (as Lyke):** And that it's one that we know, um, isn't trying to, you know, howl, you know, machines, and that isn't trying to kill us.

**Dre (as Chine):** Wait, wait, wait.

**Keith (as Lyke):** Yeah?

**Dre (as Chine):** How long have you carried a god with you?

**Janine (as Es):** We know that? [Sylvia laughs]

**Keith (as Lyke):** Session one. [Austin and Sylvia laugh]

**Dre (as Chine):** How come you didn't— how come you didn't pull the god out when we were getting killed by the beast that lives in your head?

**Keith (as Lyke):** It's not that kind of god.

**Ali (as Marn):** There's a beast that lives in this guy's head?

**Dre (as Chine):** Yeah, we fought it twice. [Jack laughs]

**Keith (as Lyke):** It doesn't live in my head. It just reminds me of itself in my head, I think.

**Art (as Duvall):** What are some other things this god has done recently?

**Keith (as Lyke):** It helped us kill that beast!

**Art (as Duvall):** But maybe like, go back a little further.

**Dre (as Chine):** But you just said it wasn't that kind of god.

**Keith (as Lyke):** It w— it wasn't at the time, I don't think.

**Dre (as Chine):** Oh, okay.

**Keith (as Lyke):** Um, and we have to go— you can't let it out. It's not a— it's not a...

**Dre (as Chine):** Sure, sure, sure, sure.

**Keith (as Lyke):** It's gotta go— you have to go to it, so.

**Art (as Duvall):** But like, if you were making a résumé for this god.

**Keith (as Lyke):** Yeah.

**Art (as Duvall):** What would like its last couple jobs be?

**Keith (as Lyke):** It spent a long time in a little pot. Before or after that? Which way do you want me to embarrass myself? [Austin laughs quietly]

**Art (as Duvall):** I was hoping before, but it's really dealer's choice.

**Keith (as Lyke):** Okay. Before it was in my backpack, it was bigger and meaner, and it lived in a door inside the Dayward YVE's place, where they had kept it under a bad curse that made it kill people in a *different way* than it likes to.

**Dre (as Chine):** Mm-hmm.

**Sylvia (as Hazard):** But it does like to kill people.

**Keith (as Lyke):** It does—

**Art (as Duvall):** It likes to kill, but just...yeah.

**Janine:** It was just very, very sick, and... [laughs]

**Austin:** Mm.

**Janine:** Needed some medicine.

**Keith (as Lyke):** I think what it likes to do is drink blood, and killing people is the most reasonable way to do that.

**Sylvia (as Hazard):** So it's a vampire.

**Dre (as Chine):** Uh...I mean, I don't know.

**Keith (as Lyke):** No, it's an ani— it's a god plant.

**Dre (as Chine):** Yeah. No, there's a difference.

**Austin (as Alekest):** No, that sounds— that sounds like a vampire.

**Austin:** Says Alekest.

**Dre (as Chine):** Hey, there's a difference.

**Keith (as Lyke):** It's not a vampire. It just needs the...it just needs the stuff that's in blood to live!

**Austin (as Alekest):** [crosstalk] No, a vampire's anything that saps the life of another thing to extend its life and power.

**Sylvia (as Hazard):** Everybody knows that.

**Keith (as Lyke):** But it's different. It's different.

**Dre (as Chine):** Mm. That's not true.

**Austin (as Alekest):** It's not true. We're fighting a wax vampire. That's—

**Dre (as Chine):** Well, yeah. But you said anything that eats something else. Do you...you eat vegetables.

**Keith (as Lyke):** This is—

**Austin (as Alekest):** No, it draws the life out of— the life force out of a currently living thing.

**Dre (as Chine):** Oh, okay.

**Austin (as Alekest):** Yeah.

**Keith (as Lyke):** Right, Aterika'Kaal just kills people.

**Austin (as Alekest):** Yeah, yeah, yeah— is that true?

**Keith (as Lyke):** Well, it will.

**Austin (as Alekest):** Can it like move life force around from one thing to another thing, the way a vampire might?

**Ali (as Marn):** Can we get back to the task at hand?

**Austin (as Alekest):** Hmm.

**Keith (as Lyke):** We can just...okay. I can— we can do both. So.

**Janine (as Es):** What if when I drink water out of a cactus?

**Austin (as Alekest):** Are you killing the cactus?

**Janine (as Es):** It's still alive.

**Austin (as Alekest):** Well, then what's the difference between you and a vampire?

**Janine (as Es):** I'm draining it. I guess I'm a cactus vampire. [laughs softly]

**Keith (as Lyke):** Attitude. It's attitudinal.

**Ali (as Marn):** I [clears throat meaningfully] think we—

**Keith (as Lyke):** Sorry. Marn, go ahead. [Ali laughs]

**Ali (as Marn):** We should go—

**Dre (as Chine):** Oh, I'm here to listen, Marn, sorry.

**Ali (as Marn):** We should go to the hymn, 'cause I think those folks deserve to know what's going on. And whatever Lyke is going on, we can talk after hours. We...we work together. We have all day to talk about these things.

**Keith (as Lyke):** I don't think there's after hours for a while. I think it's just on hours for a little bit.

**Austin (as Alekest):** Maybe it's about how it's the exclusive way they can extend their life and power. Most people don't have to eat from living things. Vampires can *only* eat from living things.

**Ali (as Marn):** I need to get Bucho. [Ali laughs softly]

**Keith (as Lyke):** But everything that you eat that's not a living thing was a living thing.

**Dre (as Chine):** See, that's what I was saying.

**Austin (as Polyte):** Well, then we shouldn't have any problem with vampires.

**Keith (as Lyke):** Again, it's attitudinal.

**Dre (as Chine):** Yeah.

**Austin (as Polyte):** Hmm.

**Keith (as Lyke):** Vampires are villains.

**Austin (as Alekest):** I agree with Marn. I agree with Marn, we should probably send some people to the...vampires aren't *all* villains.

**Keith (as Lyke):** Okay.

**Austin (as Alekest):** That's painting with a very broad brush. I've known a few.

**Ali (as Marn):** Yeah, Virtue was great. [Sylvia and Jack laugh]

**Austin (as Alekest):** I didn't know...was Virtue, uh...

**Austin:** Does Alekest know Virtue? No. Probably has heard the news.

**Austin (as Alekest):** Oh, Sapodilla Virtue. You knew Sapodilla Virtue?

**Ali (as Marn):** Yeah, yeah, yeah.

**Sylvia:** Oh, you know big SV? [laughter]

**Ali (as Marn):** I taught her how to, you know, know where the moss grew.

**Austin (as Alekest):** [impressed] Oh.

**Dre:** Taught her everything she knows. [Ali and Sylvia laugh]

**Sylvia:** God.

**Ali:** Well, I'm going upstairs to get my face fixed.

**Dre:** Yeah, I'm gonna go get my everything fixed.

**Sylvia:** I would also like to stop bleeding, yeah.

[Music plays: “Sangfielle”]