

SPRING IN HIERON 28: SIGNIFICANT CONCERN

Transcriber: Cole

Austin: Throndir, it is not that much longer after you return to the shore, after dropping the um, the plates for the designs of the pala-din, the kind of blue plates, into the sea that you find yourself climbing onto a rooftop in the city of Coraline. Which is the nearby kind of more urban area of Alcyon, where the largest of the bells is. It's been, I'd say, a few hours, but you know, you don't need to eat or sleep or drink, right? Except for the emotional energy of other people. **[Austin and Sylvia laugh]** And you've told me that you have an object. Would you like to share with the class what that is- what your goal here is?

Dre: Uh, I want to try and disable the bell that has-

Austin: Have you gotten permission **[Dre sighs long]** to disable this bell or are you just like going for it?

Dre: Yeah, I think I try to talk to Tabard about it.

Austin: Ok. The case you make- What's the case- When do you do this? Do you do this as soon as you're like, coming back on shore?

Dre: Yeah. I mean, I think the case-

Austin: After you've made some separance- uh-

Dre: Yeah.

Austin: -some separation from Ephrim?

Dre: Yeah. I mean, I know as a player that it was Arrell. I don't think there's any way for me to know as a character that it was Arrell.

Austin: No, correct.

Dre: But even Tabard was like, 'You know, this is out of the ordinary. It shouldn't be ringing this song at this time.' Um-

Austin: Yes. Yes.

Dre: So I-

Austin: So, do you get permission to go-

Dre: Sorry.

Austin: -fuck with it or to go investigate it? To do what?

Dre: Um-

Austin: What do you try to get here? And then we can-

Dre: Yeah.

Austin: -have this conversation.

Dre: I wanna- I wanna try to take the, as we discovered, the clapper out of the bell.

Austin: Out of the bell.

Dre: Yeah. Not like destroy it or break it, but just take it out for now.

Austin: And- So, I think- I think given the circumstances, I'm not gonna make you roll for this. Um, he says- [sighs] I guess what he says is like,

Austin (as Tabard): Alright. You can go for it. [light laugh] But I- I am not in a position where I can tell the guards or the- and if anyone sees you that it's okay for you do this.

Dre (as Throndir): Sure.

Austin (as Tabard): I don't have that authority.

Dre (as Throndir): Ok.

Austin (as Tabard): But- but you know, as far as my personal blessing goes, you go right ahead. [Austin laughs lightly, while Dre laughs]

Austin: Um, so yeah, we get you kind of scaling one of the walls here. Throndir fuckin' doing some Assassin's Creed shit which, in my opinion, is good. And you see it, and it's like a- it is a bell tower that is from a previous age. Like, it's an ancient, ancient, ancient bell because it's from, at the very least, Marielda times. But potentially before that even, right? And I do think that, you know, this isn't a particularly militar- militant town or military town, but we do know that there are guards, and we do know that in the current situation, Tabard has put out notes to be aware for strange activity because of Arrell. [light laugh]

So, I do think there's a moment here where you spot kind of on a couple of the rooftops between you and the big bell tower, a couple of guards who are chattering at- on a- not like, on the rooftop, but on a balcony nearby. There's like, a series of interconnected bridges that connects homes from one to another. It's kind of a dense, mediterranean town. And there are crossings from like, one- one house to the other. One building to the other. And you have to like, go kind of right past them on a neighboring rooftop to- to get to the direction you're going. And

then, even if you did that, they would have a pretty clean view of the clock tower itself- or the bell tower itself. What do you do?

Dre: Um, I just want to sneak by them.

Austin: Ok. That's simple. That's just a Defy Danger dexterity. That's just a classic roll. That's just- You know, did you ever hear of a tabletop role playing game? [Sylvia laughs] You roll some dice, you find out what happens? [light laugh]

Dre: Alright, how do I set it so I'm rolling-?

Austin: Fun interaction between good friends, baby. [laughing] Uh, Defy Danger dexterity.

Dre: Ok. Alright. It just pops up with the thing.

Austin: It should.

Dre: I haven't rolled Defy Danger in a while.

Austin: Wow.

Dre: Ok, it's an eight.

Austin: Alright, that's an eight. Alright, you stumble, hesitate, or flinch. The GM will offer you a worse outcome, hard bargain, or ugly choice. Um, so the danger here is being seen. I don't think that you get seen, but the thing that happens right after is- and you hear this as they're- as they are- as you're climbing the bell tower- one of them is like, you know,

Austin (as unnamed guard): Yeah, Jorge should be on bell tower duty in just about five minutes, and then you can get some rest.

[Jack de Quidt's "[Something](#)" begins playing in the background]

Austin: And so, you have a very short amount of time to learn how to deconstruct a bell. [light laugh]

Dre: Hm.

Austin: Throndir.

Dre: That's fine.

Austin: And as soon as you get up there, the- you can immediately hear steps coming from below, as- as someone- a pala-din, actually I suspect that this is an anchor because you can hear the clanging of their feet as they climb the stairs.

[Music plays out to end]

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. And joining me today is Andrew Lee Swan.

Dre: Hey, you can find me on Twitter [@swandre3000](#).

Austin: Keith J Carberry.

Keith: Hi, my name is Keith Carberry. And you can find me on Twitter [@keithjcarberry](#), and you can find the Let's Plays that I do at [youtube.com/runbutton](#).

Austin: Art Martinez-Tebbel.

Art: Hey, you can find me on Twitter [@atebbel](#). Congratulations to Otis for winning season one of One Song Only [@onesongpod](#), and when is this episode going up?

Austin: Da- Good question.

Art: Well, either-

Austin: Ughhhh, not-

Dre: Next week?

Austin: Ok, let me- Not next week. Well, yeah- No. No, next week is- Next week- Next week is the other stuff that happened last time with Arrell and such.

Dre: Mmm.

Austin: That has not happened yet. So, I think it won't be until the 9th at this point.

Art: Oh, so week- So, that's all I can say.

Austin: We're in between, right? Cause we're gonna tease next week.

Art: Ok, tease it next week.

Austin: [quietly and overlapped] We're gonna tease it next week.

Art: So, this coming- When you're hearing this, this coming Tuesday, head on over to fangamer and check out all our new merch.

Austin: It's sick. We have merch, and it's f- It's fangamer who is making it, and they rule. And the merch is incredible, and some of it was made by some fan artists who also rule. And it's

exciting. And I'm excited, and you can go get ready to pre-order it this Tu- er order it this Tuesday, right?

Art: Yeah, order it on Tuesday, the 14th cause that's- Is that a Tuesday? Am I fuckin' this all up?

Austin: Um, so yeah, go-

Dre: May 14th is a Tuesday.

Austin: May 14th. May 14th, pre-order- er order some merch at fangamer. Fangamer, just search for Friends at the Table. We'll- we should be there. It's super exciting. I'm hyped to start promoting it and for y'all to see it all.

Art: Like, two weeks ago they've seen all of our promotional shots cause that's when that's gonna happen.

Austin: Did we shoot those yet?

Art: No, that hasn't come yet. And they're sending me like, a not-real version of the badge. It's gonna be hilarious.

Dre: Is that a thing we're doing?

Austin: Yeah, we're shootin' promo shots. It's exciting.

Dre: [high pitched and long] Whaaaaaat?

Austin: I know! Um, and as always, you can support us other ways like, for instance, telling your friends about the show, [**Sylvia** clears their throat] because we don't really do any other promotion. Um, I guess, in some ways, our fangamer merch is the biggest like, sort of promotional deal we've ever done in the sense that people will be like, 'oh, what's this on the fangamer website? I'm just a gamer who likes- who's a- I'm a fan and/or a gamer. And I just go to fangamer to see cool, new merch from various franchises that I might like. Wow, look at this cool badge with a dog on it. Look at these mechs. That's a cool map.'

Art: Yeah, our biggest promotion up until now has been having famous people like us.

Dre: Uh hm.

Austin: [laughs] Yeah. Having- [laughs harder] Exactly. And saying nice things about us on their various platforms. [**Sylvia** laughs]

Dre: I should point out uh, Rage 2 drops on May 14th, so maybe we should start like, beef with Rage 2?

Austin: Yeah, I can't do that cause of my job.

Dre: Alright, fair.

Austin: But- but you can. [laughs]

Dre: [laughs] Yeah, ok.

Austin: As always, you can also support the show by going to friendsatthetable.cash. We are kicking off already, our new podcast- not new podcast. Jesus Christ. Postcard series. The first of the postcards, I literally got it in my mail today.

Keith: Oh, me too.

Austin: We have another set of- That'll be a full- I think an eight card set, all set in Spring in Hieron, following a mystery. Following a kind of um, an ongoing mystery about a missing... Um, I guess how do I want to frame this without spoiling anything? A box of tea has gone missing, and the Golden Lance is on the case. If you like Callowkeen, our cool gnoll flying- flying gnoll painter. A Golden Lance member from the current university arc.

Or Maria Velasinha, who is the former justiciar who Hadrian kind of gave a 'scared-straight' talk to and set on the straight and narrow and has since joined up with the Golden Lance. It's the two of them trying to find this box of missing tea that- that maybe has mysterious origins and will tie into some bigger plot stuff. Nothing like, essential-essential, but it's really cool. It's micro-fiction that Jack and I wrote. And **Janine** is doing the art for it. And it's all really cool. So- so check that out. Again friendsatthetable.cash, to support us there. Alright, so, before we start, let's go-

Sylvia: Also joining is Sylvia¹.

Austin: [pauses] Did I not say Sylvia?

Sylvia: No. [laughs]

Austin: I'm an asshole. [**Sylvia** and **Keith** laugh hard]

Art: I'm sorry, Sylvia. I got us off on a tangent.

Sylvia: Nah, I thought- [**Austin** groans in the background] I was gonna interrupt earlier, but I thought it would be funnier if I let you finish the plug.

Austin: I'm so mad at myself.

¹ The name in the audio recording is no longer in use, hence the audio/transcript discrepancy.

Sylvia: It's fine. It's fine. Don't worry about it.

Austin: It's not fine. Sylvia, take an extra long intro.

Sylvia: Uh, you know what? I will.

Austin: Thank you.

Sylvia: Because- Ok, hi. I'm Sylvia. You can find me on Twitter-

Austin: [interjecting] Hi, Sylvia!

Sylvia: Hi. [@captaintrash](#). I have another show called [Emojidrome](#), and by the time-

Austin: It's a good show.

Sylvia: -you're listening to this, we'll have launched a Patreon as well.

Austin: Yay! [kiss foley]

Keith: Nice.

Sylvia: Uh, [patreon.com/emojidrome](#), and we're doing a Death Note podcast as our patreon thing.

Austin: Hell yes! [laughs lightly]

Dre: Aw, damn.

Sylvia: And it's called 'Hold This L,' so- [Dre laughs]

Austin: Yes. [kiss foley] Perfect. Yes! I'm clapping my hands. [clapping]

Sylvia: I'm very excited. My co-host, Ryan, has never seen it. He doesn't know anything about it. It was very formative for me in high school.

Austin: God.

Sylvia: So, look forward to that. We should hopefully have got that going by the time this airs.

Austin: Um, I will also have been on the first episode of the Great Gundam Projects: Victory Gundam.

Sylvia: Mm.

Austin: V-Gundam season. Which is a free one, that you can- You can listen to the first episode of any new season from Great Gundam Project for free. So, you can uh, find that by joining- or

looking at the Abnormal Mapping patreon. Also, I think I've restarted my patreon by now, but not for anywhere- You can't- you can't give me money on it. But I'm reactivating it so I get that sweet founder's deal. [Sylvia laughs] Because patreon is fucking up everybody-

Sylvia: Yeah.

Keith: Yeah.

Austin: -and decided to make money worse for a lot of people.

Keith: They-

Austin: So, I'm just gonna reactive mine cause you know what? You never know. Digital media? I work at a company that just laid off a bunch of people. You never know, and I'd rather have that opportunity and possibility than not.

Art: It's a scam.

Keith: [overlapping **Art**] Yeah, they did it in a sneaky way where they said everybody who's already got a patreon doesn't need to worry. So, everybody who already has a patreon didn't go and complain to patreon about their dumb idea.

Austin: That is exactly what they did. Yeah. Yep.

Art: They're gonna go back on it. I bet anything.

Austin: Mm. I don't know.

Keith: I think this is the one that sticks.

Austin: I think this sticks. I'm with Keith.

Sylvia: My big conspiracy theory is that-

Austin: [overlapping **Sylvia**] They're gonna fuck over a lot of people.

Sylvia: -they're trying to like, drive up people signing up with this. And then they're gonna get rid of it.

Austin: Ohhh.

Sylvia: But I think I'm-

Austin: That's possible.

Sylvia: -I'm probably just like, totally out of left field on that one.

Art: Nope, I'm with Sylvia.

Dre: Yeah, that sounds more plausible to me actually.

Keith: I would love- I would love to be wrong on this. I would love it that-

Austin: I think this is very descriptive of our various worldviews. [**Austin** and **Sylvia** laugh] And they all are all tied to big companies suck. And venture capital is terrible. It's just a matter of degrees as to how much we think they suck or the particular ways in which they suck.

Sylvia: Yeah. [**Austin** laughs]

Keith: If this was all some dumb scam to like, get suckers to sign up for their website, that would be honestly comparatively great.

Austin: Yeah, exactly. Totally. Um-

Sylvia: Yeah.

Art: It's a long term scam. They're not gonna roll it back for months, if not years, but eventually they're gonna- they're gonna twist that knife.

Keith: My worry is that not only- not only is this actionable about charging people more money, it's about setting up the next time they update it, they're like, 'oh, and now the founders also aren't founders anymore.'

Austin: Yeah, that is also going to happen, for sure.

Sylvia: Yeah, fair.

Austin: So, Throndir?

Dre: Mm.

[0:15:00]

Austin: Actually, wait. Really quick, let's go over- Have any bonds or- bonds changed or anything else?

Sylvia: I have a-

Keith: I had solved a bond with Hadrian, but I haven't re-written it yet.

Sylvia: Um, I think I might have mentioned last time that I was thinking- Oh, yeah. I have one with Hadrian that I need to like, nail down. And I'm thinking of changing my one with Throndir, too. But I think that one's still like, applicable for the time being.

Austin: Yeah, maybe- maybe try to aim to resolve that in this session or- or soon.

Sylvia: That's what I was thinking, yeah.

Austin: But you know, if you think of something for Hadrian, feel free to fill it in during the session.

Sylvia: Of course.

Austin: I'm fine with that.

Sylvia: Yeah.

Austin: And just ping me you know, in DM or whatever to cl- to approve it. Likewise, Fero and Hadrian, who I know you both are also like-

Art: I have my Fero bond.

Austin: Yeah, what is your Fero bond?

Art: Um, I- Cause I was- I was coming from a very harsh place. [light laugh]

Austin: Yes. You were.

Art: So, my new Fero bond is 'Fero is a frivolous sort, but not unkind.'

Austin: Can I get a second sentence on that that is somewhat actionable?

Art: Uh-

Austin: Either about-

Art: Well, all I have to- All I have to do is see him be not frivolous or unkind.

Austin: No- [laughs] Give me that in words that are like, about what you will do or want him to do. Do you know what I mean?

Art: Yeah, uh huh.

Austin: So that it can drive play instead of just being like, a statement about the world. It's still useful, but a little bit more, it would not be bad. Um, and then Fero, you are also sitting on- You want there to be a Hadrian, but you don't have it yet, right?

Keith: I- I have- I have some drafts. I just haven't worded it a way. It's about Arrell and Hadrian and- and Benjamin.

Austin: Alright.

Keith: But I haven't gotten it down yet.

Austin: Again, if you figure it out, feel free to DM me.

Keith: Ok.

Austin: For now, Throndir, you're climbing- You've climbed up into the top of the bell tower. There is a bell here that is again, extremely old. And the sound of whoever I said- Was it Jorge [jor-hey]? Jorge [jor-j]? Jorge is climbing- They're- they're climbing up the stairs. The long uh, stone staircase. The tall, stone staircase into this ancient bell tower. And you are looking at a bell. What do you do?

Dre: Oh boy. Um, I need to find a way that I can like, try and break this bell. But not like, super break it.

Austin: Yeah.

Dre: Um, is this a-

Austin: That's a good question.

Dre: Is this a case where I could Discern Realities?

Austin: This is a case where you could Discern Realities. Uh, which is a-

Dre: That thing we should probably always do more of?

Austin: Always. [Dre laughs] It's a wisdom check. What's your wisdom?

Dre: Uh, plus two.

Austin: Alright.

Dre: And I've also got special questions for my class, as well.

Austin: Oh, hell yeah. That's an eleven.

Dre: Ok.

Austin: So, you crushed it. So, you can ask what? Three of the following questions?

Dre: Yep.

Austin: 'What's happened here recently? What's about to happen? What should I be on the lookout for? What here is useful or valuable to me? Who is really in control here? What here is not what it appears to be?' And then your bonus ones, 'What is my best escape route? Where is my best cover? And which of my allies is most vulnerable?'

Dre: Ok.

Austin: And you actually get an additional question-

Dre: Oh jeez.

Austin: -because of Eagle Eyes also. So, you get four questions here. Jeez! [overlapped] You should be using this move all the time.

Dre: I don't even know what I'm going to ask, Austin. [laughs]

Austin: [laughs] I know.

Dre: Ok, what should I be on the lookout for?

Austin: Um, ughhhhhh [thinking noises] da-da-da-da-da- Mm. I would say- [exhales] So, I don't think that's gonna- That's not the one that's gonna give you how to fix a bell or break a bell safely.

Dre: Uh hm.

Austin: But it does give you something else important which is, you spot a very familiar looking scorch mark on the ground.

Dre: Oh cool.

Austin: Um, which reveal- Which you immediately point- you know, recognize is the- the kind of ad hoc calling card of Arrell's teleportation spell.

Dre: Yeah.

Austin: From whenever he teleports from place to place, he leaves that scorch mark on the ground or wherever he teleports someone. And so that is there, and I think Thrandir is- Let me roll up and look at your stats- [pauses] Eh, you probably- It's been a decade, but-

Dre: [laughs] God, it has.

Austin: You probably remember. Or I guess, you know what? He teleported that person away from- from- Oh, you weren't there for that though. Hm. Were you? No, you were there for that. You were there for that when he teleported away the um, the- his like, the representative-

Dre: Yeah.

Austin: -from Velas who brought the stuff.

Dre: I mean I was also there when he teleported himself away after I accidentally didn't kill him.

Austin: Right, but I'm saying that was like a whi- that was a decade ago.

Dre: Hm. Yeah.

Austin: But I was trying to think of a more recent example, but uh, yeah. I think you remember that.

Dre: Ok.

Austin: So, you're like, okay. So, that's one thing that you should be on the lookout for is that Arrell has not like, left this area necessarily.

Dre: Yeah. Um, what here is useful or valuable to me?

Austin: Uh, ding-ding-ding. You're able to- Using that, you're able to figure out a way to- What's this look like? You tell me. How do you- What is it to remove the clapper from a bell safely? [light laugh]

Dre: Uh, that's a good question. Let me pull up this-

Keith: Sorry, was the ding ding ding, uh the bell [Dre laughs] ringing?

Austin: [overlapped completely by Keith] It was the bell. It was the bell ringing.

Keith: And this is all for naught? [Dre keeps laughing]

Austin: Yeah, uh hm. Uh huh. And be like, 'oh'.

Art: Those are the three tones. [everyone laughs] Ding, ding, and ding.

Dre: Uh hm. Um, I'm looking at bell anatomy diagrams right now.

Austin: Sure. Um-

Dre: I mean I don't know, is there just like a- You said this bell is old as hell. Is there just like, a crack-

Austin: This bell is old as hell.

Dre: -where it looks like you can break the clapper off pretty easily or-?

Austin: Oh, so you're breaking this bell?

Dre: Just-

Austin: You're just not breaking the bell part.

Dre: Just the clapper. Yeah, that part's easy to replace.

Austin: Not the yoke or the um, headstock or the crown?

Keith: What about the mouth or the tongue?

Austin: What a- Yeah. Or the lip or the bead line? [light laugh]

Dre: Mmm.

Austin: Or the waist?

Dre: Those all sound like way more important to like, the structural integrity.

Austin: Than the uvula? Yeah. [**Dre** laughs] I think that's true. So-

Keith: I-

Austin: Sorry. It's called a clapper or a uvula, by the way.

Dre: Yeah. Yeah.

Austin: For people listening who haven't-

Keith: Yeah. Which makes sense because it hangs from the mouth.

Austin: It does hang from the mouth. Wow. [laughs] True.

Art: Yeah, I hate it. I've- I hate it. [**Sylvia** and **Keith** laugh]

Dre: Yeah, I also hate it.

Austin: Um, you know, yeah. I'm fine with that. There is a- there is a thing where you could just reach out and pull on the clapper, and it'll break.

Dre: Ok.

Austin: You still have two questions. [light laugh]

Dre: Yeah, um... Ok, what's my best escape route.

Austin: The- the win- the win- Ohhh. The window. There's like, the big- It's like one of those bell towers that has like, the big archways, and you are able to spot like, a um, a way down pretty quickly. Like a number of handholds and footholds that can get you down most of the way, and then you can kind of like, leap into um- like there's a fountain on a rooftop nearby, and you can leap into that and be safe.

Dre: Ok. Uh, what here is not what it appears to be?

Austin: I'm thinking really broadly here because you're up high, and so maybe there's something I can give you that's like, you're looking out from the top of the bell tower. So, let me look at my notes really quick.

Dre: I mean obviously before I jump out the window, I have to perch on the side of it, and the camera-

Austin: Yeah. Uh huh.

Dre: -spins around in a big circle.

Austin: And synchronize.

Dre: Yeah.

Austin: Yeah, uh huh. Of course. Of course.

Art: Then jump into that hay pile. [**Austin** laughs]

Dre: And a Kodiak woof echoes throughout the screen, as I synchronize. [**Sylvia** laughs]

Austin: God. [**Art** groans in background] Yeah, you have- I guess- I was about to say, 'do you have eagle eyes,' but you literally have the move called Eagle Eye, right? Um, so alright. So, I think... What was the exact question again? It was 'what here is not what it appears to be?'

Dre: Uh hm.

Austin: [sighs] So, I think- I'm trying to stay limited in terms of who I want to put on screen here. Um, but I want to give you something cool also. You- Alright, so I guess here is- here's a thing that is not what it seems to be. Um, from this high vantage point, you see a- you see a- one pala-din who is like, super traditional, old-school white marble pala-din with um, kind of a purple tunic on speaking with a tall elven man, or figure. Uh, you can't- You don't know who it is from- Uh, I mean you recognize a staff. You can kind of start to put po- you know, one and two together to some degree. And the uh, pala-din figure- Again purple tunic, green belt, um- I trying

to think of like a cool, identifying mark. I think actually has like, [light laugh] a specific and kind of purposeful cut of like, a diamond shape in his head. Like at the top of his scalp. His like, marble scalp, and it's like a- kind of a- it looks professionally- professional done.

But he is clearly walking and talking with someone who- it's easy to guess is Arrell um, pretty far away from here. I actually think that they're walking through the um, the kind of fountains between the conservatory and the governor's house, which as you might recall is like, a big, huge fountain um, like- it's like a football field big, if not bigger that has a bunch of fountains like, spraying up from the ground. And so, they're like, walking in and out of the- the kind of sprouts of the fountain- spurts of the fountain water. So, they're kind of camouflaged if you were walking at ground level, but you're high enough up in Coraline that you can look down and see into the- the fountain and spot them there. So, this is Arrell apparently talking to someone local.

Dre: Alright, that's bad.

Austin: That's not- it ain't good.

Dre: Alright, I'm gonna-

Austin: I'm not- I'm not gonna make you roll to get away here because you found the best escape route, but I am gonna narrate one more thing. I think this is like, everyone else is sleeping at this point. The sun begins to come up. And it takes you only as long as it takes you to get down to the bottom of the tower before you realize it's like, a super hot day. It's hotter than- Like, it's immediately- you can feel the heat. And you aren't the ranger anymore, but you were the ranger. You know that it's not supposed to be this warm this early in the day. Um, and as you look east and start heading back towards the direction you're- you are staying, you can look up in the sky, and see that a second sun has risen. There are two suns in the sky.

Keith: Very normal day.

Austin: Extremely- This is gonna be a normal one, y'all. Totally a simple, normal day. Good morning, everybody. What are you all gettin' up to the next morning, the next day?

Keith: I have got work to do by the fields or as by them as I can be.

Austin: Cool. Let's talk about that. What's the work you want to do here?

Keith: I'm-

Austin: You like, go out bright and early in the morning. I think you were gonna- you were gonna hang with some of the- the pala-din you'd spoken to last session. And they were gonna like, set you up.

Keith: Yeah, I spoke to someone who I can't remember if you- I think you said they were in charge of or worked with like, a huge chunk of the- of the farms here. The- the poisonous-

Austin: Yeah.

Keith: -farms of like, Spring plants. Dangerous Spring plants.

Austin: Uh, yeah that was Omera and Tanyel.

Keith: Right.

Austin: The two moms who run one of these big kind of vineyards. It's this one right here. The one I just- I just hit near where the road forks before you get towards the conservatory and the governor's house.

Keith: Ok.

Austin: And yeah, I think it was- I think it was Tanyel who- who was like the anchor who is going to show you some stuff. And you know, she sets you up by the- you know, as close as she can without it being too dangerous to you. And I think you still have that mask on and whatever else.

Keith: Uh hm. Yeah. Um-

Austin: Also, wait. You see the suns. What is your reaction to this?

Keith: Um, well, I know- I know what makes the second sun. I know what I think makes the second sun.

Austin: What do you think makes the second sun?

Keith: It's that ring.

Austin: It's that ring. Someone put on that ring.

Keith: Someone put on- and then, and so I'm like- I guess I'm concerned.

Austin: Or it's some- it's one of those, right? Maybe it's not that ring, but there are ways to make another sun appear that have to do with those- the kind of sun relics.

Keith: Yeah.

Austin: Like that ring is. Yeah.

Keith: I- If I'm gonna be honest, Fero sees the second sun and goes, 'That's something to do with Hella or you know- It's something- it's something to do with like, some Last- like, that's

some Last University shit. I am all the way over here.' **[Austin laughs]** 'I can't do- I'm so far- I'm too far away to be concerned about this.'

Austin: I'm not in that arc this- this session. Uh- [laughs] I'm not in the home game.

Keith: Yeah, someone else- someone else literally has this, and if they don't, then I'll find out when I get home.

Austin: Yeah, uh huh. Cool.

Keith: Cause I have a very important thing to do, as far as I think.

Austin: Which is?

Keith: I have to make a new animal.

Austin: Ok.

Keith: And I- and for the first time in a little bit at least, I really want to uh, to be able to use Origin of the Species for this.

Austin: For this. Which is when you cre- literally create a new species.

Keith: Right, exactly.

Austin: And seed it into the world. So-

Keith: Does- now- Does Safewater need a little mask?

Austin: Yes. Do you prepare a little mask?

Keith: I prepare a little mask for Safewater.

Austin (as Safewater): Safewater. Thank you. Thank you.

Keith (as Fero): Can you wear this? Do you have- You don't have ears. There's gotta have- there's gotta be like some way to tie this around your head.

Austin (as Safewater): Yes.

Austin: What? Wait, what? Birds have ears.

Keith: Yeah, but they don't have like-

Austin: Oh, you mean like-

Keith: The way you put those masks on is-

Austin: Yeah.

Keith: -you hook them around the ear. And I- you can't do that on a bird.

Austin: Did you just turn into Goofy for a second? You sounded like- [laughs] You made-

Keith: Did I?

Sylvia: Gah-hyuck!

Keith: Did I do like a-

Sylvia: A-hyuck.

Austin: Hyuck.

Keith: A-hyuck.

Austin: 'Ya hyuck 'em around their ears, Maxie.'

Keith: [light laugh] Ya hook them around their ears. But wait, but birds don't have ears to hook around. They've got like, holes.

Austin: I did a search- I foolishly did a search for 'bird mask' [laughs] forgetting that human beings- [everyone laughs]

Keith: Yeah, you've gotta- you've gotta- in quotes, you gotta say 'masks for birds.'

Austin: [still laughing] Uh hm. I did that search, and-

Keith: It's still people wearing bird masks.

Sylvia: [laughs] Yeah.

Austin: It's still pe- [laughs] it's still that.

Sylvia: Oh no.

Austin: It's still mostly that.

Sylvia: There's some- Ugh.

Austin: Uh hm. Yeah. ok. Um, I don't know how it go- It goes- probably goes around the entire head, right?

Keith: Little cloth. I'm gonna say little cloth, and then instead of like, bands that go around your ears, it's you tie- tie it in the back.

Austin: So, yeah. I think you tie it. You tie the mask around their little head. And um, they say,

Austin (as Safewater): Safewater.

Austin: And like, prop up on your shoulder. So, this gives you what? A plus one on-

[0:30:00]

Keith: A plus one to um... one of th-

Austin: So, you basically- You're basically spending the day studying the essence of these plants so that-

Keith: Yeah.

Austin: -you can then incorporate more of this type of plant into a being that you're making, right?

Keith: Uh-

Austin: Or are you not making- What are you making?

Keith: I'm not making something-

Austin: You're not making a Spring creature.

Keith: I'm not making a Spring creature; I'm making a creature that understands the Spring creatures.

Austin: Interesting. Ok. Cool. I like that a lot. What are you making?

Keith: Um, [exhales] so I was- I had been think- Since the beginning of the season, and **Art** referenced this last recording session, um- Art, you said something like, 'why don't you just make a thing that eats these plants?' And it- which is something that I had- I had been thinking about every single time I think about Fero since the first- since the beginning of the Spring season. And I was just like- like, 'wow, that would be a really useful thing to do', and also it feels like, maybe um, like 'oh, we don't need to worry about this one third of all of our problems.'

Austin: Uh hm.

Keith: Cause I just made a- an animal that likes to eat them. And eats them so fast that it's not a problem anymore, but coming here gave me the idea of what if we had an animal that tended to the plants in the same way that the pala-din tend to them?

Austin: Mm.

Keith: And so, I was- I spent the week um- or I spent a few days researching the ways that different animals sort of cohabitate with- with plant life. Or um-

Austin: Right.

Keith: Or are symbiotic with them.

Austin: Right. Right. Which is like-

Keith: Um, and-

Austin: In other words, this isn't necessarily- So, like the pala-din tend to- to them to uh- so that they can grow them and get a certain- get like, the oil from the berries and stuff or whatever.

Keith: Yeah.

Austin: But- but the- There are animals that their existence tends- Like, there is- The way that they live happens to intersect with the way certain plants grow or certain habitats exist that they either protect them or because they eat what they eat or because they bring on other animals, the- the environment shifts in a way that is symbiotic for both, right?

Keith: Yeah. It's sort of like- I gave- I sent you some examples of like, whackier versions of this.

Austin: Uh hm.

Keith: But like, a very basic example is how like, they say that goats are really bad for grass cause goats eat grass from the root and destroy the grass.

Austin: Right. Right.

Keith: But sheep just trim grass.

Austin: Mmm.

Keith: And so like, a lot of farmers like, don't need to like, do a lot of lawn mowing because they have a bunch of sheep that eat all their grass at the right level.

Austin: Right. And then you can bring in- I've definitely seen also like, parks bring in goats to eat like, invasive species of grass or weeds or whatever-

Keith: Yeah.

Austin: -because they will actually uproot them all the way.

Keith: Uh hm.

Austin: And so, that like, is actually a permanent fix in a way that just mowing would not be.

Keith: Yeah. one of my favorite things that I found was uh, the damselfish. Which basically facilitates the gro-- or it um- Damselfish can determine through their own diet the way that coral reefs grow.

Austin: Oh, interesting.

Keith: Because they pick and choo- they pick and choose what you know, pieces of things that might turn into coral to keep around based on if it has the right sort of algae that they like to eat on it. And they will like, go so far as they'll like- like, take far away from the reef anything that they don't want.

Austin: [laughs] So that there's a greater chance that the stuff that they do want actually succeeding and growing and populating.

Keith: Right. Yeah. Exactly.

Austin: Really interesting. So, is that the- Is the goal here to basically get this type of um, of Spring plant that is doing more than just trying to grow and consume-

Keith: Yeah.

Austin: -and in doing more of this kind of chill version of that here-

Keith: [overlapping] The thing that you said-

Austin: -that feels like it's more like life?

Keith: The thing that you said last second was uh- it's still saying 'grow', but it's sort of the- the way that 'grow' is conjugated implies like- like, 'grow together.'

Austin: Yes.

Keith: Like, 'let's all grow.'

Austin: Yeah. Yeah. There's a collective element to it, for sure.

Keith: Right.

Austin: Cool.

Keith: And that's something I would like to see cultivated.

Austin: Yeah. Alright. So, you do what here? You do- Uh, Origin of the Species is um, 'instead of spending time in contemplation of an animal spirit, you may conceive of a new type of life. When you spend an extended amount of time to design a new type of life, take- roll plus INT.' And your INT is eleven, but you get a plus one here because of um, because of Safewater. So, you're getting- It's- it's 2d6 plus one, right?

Keith: Yeah.

Austin: Uh, and-

Keith: And the- the penalty of failing the roll is that I have to like, start from scratch.

Austin: Yes.

Keith: Um, but the penalty of-

Austin: But a mixed success would like, give you steps towards it, right?

Keith: Right. Yeah.

Austin: Here's a question. Is anyone here helping you? Did you get help from anybody here?

Keith: Um, I bet I- I bet I told our party. Um, I don't know who- I- I'm trying to think of who in our party would- would be best at this. And that I- Unfortunately, I think all the people that would best at helping me here aren't- are NPCs, not PCs.

Austin: Like- like Benjamin or Highwater or something.

Keith: Yeah, Benjamin was who I was thinking of.

Austin: Yeah.

Keith: Or Highwater, yeah. Um, but-

Austin: Is that something that would be- Like, um, I guess there is my question is like, would either Ephrim or Hadrian be willing to let their respective charges go to help with this?

Sylvia: I mean, if it's the help with the issue of the plants, I think Ephrim would be fine with it. He would probably just ask Highwater to like, keep an eye on Fero while she was there.

Austin: Yeah. Yeah. I like- I also just love the idea of Fero plus Safewater and Highwater.
[Austin and Keith laugh] That' just a good party. That's a good party.

Keith: A collection of the different waters.

Austin: So, here's what I- Here's where I'm gonna house rule this really quick. One of the things that- One of the ways in which um, you- 'Hirelings do what you tell them to, so long as it isn't obviously dangerous, degrading or stupid, and their cost is met.' This isn't obviously dangerous, degrading or stupid, but it is- it is a little bit dangerous. Um, so when- when a hireling finds themselves in a dangerous, degrading or just flat out uh- you know, crazy- this is the text of the book- situation due to your orders, roll plus loyalty. And this the case of like, 'you want me to get that close to these plants that are very clearly really dangerous?' Um, so you should roll High- er uh, yeah, Highwater's loyalty which is- I have it written down already- Um, 2d6 plus two, Ephrim. And this will also stand in as like-

Sylvia: Oh ok.

Austin: -an aid roll basically.

Sylvia: Alright. Now, I get um- I should mention this actually.

Austin: Yeah, you get bonuses on this, yeah. What's that?

Sylvia: I do. Cause I- So, I leveled up last time. I think we mentioned it at the end of that session.

Austin: Yes.

Sylvia: Hopefully on the episode. And in doing so, I took the skill Voice of Authority-

Austin: Uh hm.

Sylvia: -which gives me a plus on when I'm ordering hirelings, including my retainers, so that would add this- make this up to plus three then, correct?

Austin: I think so. Yeah.

Sylvia: Alright. That's a nine.

Austin: Alright. Is that before or after the- Oh, you already just did it manually.

Sylvia: Yeah. I did it manually.

Austin: Alright, so- so, she will do this, but will- So- so, Keith, you can take a plus one here. I think that she's probably helping you by like, sketching things out and like, taking note- You know, she was a- she was an assassin basically-

Keith: Uh hm.

Austin: -which means also like, knows some alchemy and knows some like, basic chemistry and stuff and so can kind of like, tell you some stuff about how these plants work and what they need and what tending to them would be like. Um, but she- to do this, she is getting in there like, pretty close. And so, um, if- if your roll goes bad, she could be- she could be caught up in whatever the negative effects are. But this means you get-

Keith: Ok.

Austin: -2d6 plus two instead of 2d6 plus one.

Keith: Ok. Now the- I really want this to go well. I'm considering- I'm considering playing with Chimera first also.

Austin: Which does what?

Keith: So, Chimera is a move that lets me combine aspects from up to three different shapes.

Austin: Ok.

Keith: This is a regular move that doesn't have any like, consequences specific to failing it.

Austin: Other than-

Keith: Besides that- Other than the regular thing-

Austin: The regular stuff.

Keith: -that when you fail something, it's bad.

Austin: Yeah.

Keith: Uh, but it- but what- but when I do- when I have made something as a chimera, it gives me another-

Austin: You get a bonus.

Keith: -bonus.

Austin: Right.

Keith: But I- but I don't know. I- you know-

Austin: Is this thing a chimera?

Keith: -I don't know that I want this to be a- be a chimera.

Austin: Right, that's the thing is like, 'is it a chimera or is it a new thing?' Like, a truly different type of thing.

Keith: I think it's a truly new thing.

Austin: I think we roll it, man. I think it's-

Keith: Yeah.

Austin: -2d6 plus two is not a bad roll to have on this. Um, it's- You'll- you'll get there.

Keith: Yeah.

Austin: We'll see. Maybe you won't.

Keith: 2d6 plus two?

Austin: 2d6 plus two. We'll learn something interesting about the world regardless. I like this direction-

Keith: Yeah.

Austin: -for Fero in general. Um, so-

Keith: Is it plus three? One from Sa- One inherent-

Austin: One fr-

Keith: Inherently.

Austin: No.

Keith: One from Safewater, and one from-

Austin: I don't think you have one inherently cause you only have an eleven intelligence. It's one from Safewater-

Keith: Oh, it's-

Austin: -and one- Yeah.

Keith: Right, I have plus zero in intelligence. Right. Yeah.

Austin: You need one more there which you're close to getting, but not that close to getting. You still need another seven-

Keith: Two more?

Austin: -seven H- No, seven XP. It's-

Keith: No, sorry. Two more intelligence cause tve-

Austin: Oh.

Keith: It's thirteen, not twelve.

Austin: Is it thirteen? It's not twelve in this game?

Keith: It's fuckin' thirteen. No, it's not.

Austin: What is this game we've been playing for five years?

Keith: Right? Yeah. Let me- let me just double check. Yeah.

Austin: No, I think you're right. I think you're right.

Dre: Yeah, it's thirteen.

Keith: No, it's four- Dude, it's fourteen.

[crosstalking]

Dre: Is it?

Austin: No, it isn't.

Keith: Oh, no. It's- it's-

Austin: Fourteen has to be plus two.

Keith: It's thirteen. It's thirteen.

Dre: No, fourteen is plus one.

Keith: It just took a second to update.

Austin: [incredulous] Fourteen is plus one? Fifteen is plus two.

Dre: Yeah.

Austin: But-

Keith: Fifteen is plus two. But yeah,

Austin: But you get-

Keith: But it starts at thirteen.

Austin: Ok. That's still a lot.

Sylvia: Uh-

Austin: Wow, so you need two intelligence.

Keith: So, I need-

Sylvia: I don't think-

Keith: I need seven XP, and then- and a whole other level.

Austin: Which is impossible cause you'll have been level ten, so you'll have to change classes [laughs] to get your intelligence up more.

Keith: Yeah, yeah, yeah.

Austin: Anyway-

Sylvia: I'm pretty sure sixteen is plus two, by the way. Cause I just bumped up my charisma to fifteen and didn't get an extra plus on that.

Austin: And didn't get a plus two?

Sylvia: Yeah.

Keith: Yeah.

Austin: Check the book while we-

Keith: And then eighteen is three.

Austin: Right.

Keith: And eighteen's the cap.

Sylvia: Yeah.

Austin: And eighteen's the cap. So there's no- there's no wiggle there. Anyway-

Keith: Yeah. High bar.

Austin: High bar. 2d6 plus two.

Keith: Alright. I have it in here. Nine.

Austin: Hey, that's a nine! That's a nine. That's a step- that's a step-

Keith: Alright. That's a partial success.Ok.

Austin: [exhales] That's six plus six plus one. Yeah. Um, so what is this- So, what is this- So- so one, you're making a- You make the first step here, right?

Keith: Yeah.

Austin: Listen, in some ways this is better because it means we get to really draw it out. [**Austin** and **Keith** laugh]

Keith: Yeah.

Austin: It means we get to-

Keith: Yeah, yeah, yeah.

Austin: It's- and it's a big thing. The thing that you're talking about is like, introducing a new species to this world that is um, really going to change the direction of things. So, what's- What is the species that you're trying- trying to make?

Keith: For the first time, too. I have ne- I haven't done anything that's really made a big impact. The biggest thing was- was like, the- was the um, the fungal foxes.

Austin: Yes. Yes, which were cool.

Keith: Or wait, were they cats?

Austin: They were cats.

Keith: They were cats.

Austin: Yeah.

Keith: The other thing was the foxes.

Austin: Yes. So, yeah. You take one hold. You'll- you need a total of three hold to successfully build this.

Keith: Yeah.

Austin: So, you'll need to do this again at some point. You know, maybe we wrap back around towards the end of this session or the end of another session or like, the beginning of another session.

Keith: Yeah.

Austin: But what is the- what is the thing you're trying to build? What is the hold-up? I'm curious. What is the thing that you're like, 'I can't quite crack it.'

Keith: Um, ok. So, I- In my head, like if- if this was successful, this is what it's gonna look like. And so- or this is what it's gonna be. And so- and I know exactly why it's not working also- like what-

Austin: Ok.

Keith: If this thing didn't work, and it didn't, the reason it wouldn't was that uh it was sort of like- You know the zoobooks for frogs?

Austin: Oh, I do.

Keith: There's a very classic-

Austin: Yeah.

Keith: -rai- like a- like a rainforest tree frog on there.

Austin: Uh hm.

Keith: And so, I was thinking of like, a very sort of like, happy-go-lucky like uh, bipedal um, frog type thing. And I think that what happens is that it's ju- it's too- it's not um- it's too- it's too- It's not- it's too friendly with the plants. [Sylvia laughs lightly] Like, it's- it went too far in the other direction [Austin and Sylvia laugh] where it's like, when they plants are acting up, it's- it doesn't like, stop things. It can't like, take a bite out of the plant and be like, 'No, this is a- this is as much as you can grow for now.'

Austin: Yeah.

Keith: Uh, so yeah. I think I- I think I over um- overcompensated my fear of just making a thing that would destroy all the plants and be done with it.

Austin: Right. Right. Totally. Um, alright. So, like it hops away, you know? Or you hop away.

Keith: Yeah.

Austin: I guess you don't hop away. But you're like, 'ah, it's doesn't- it doesn't-' You know, maybe a couple of them do get made, but not enough to last, you know?

Keith: Uh hm. Yeah.

Austin: They'll live a short life here, and then a hawk will eat them or the plants themselves here will devour them or whatever, you know?

Keith: Yeah, uh hm.

Austin: And so- and so yeah. It's just- it doesn't quite work. But you've made steps. And I think- I think both Safewater and Highwater try to console you. Like-

Keith: Thanks.

Austin: Safewater- Safewater- Safewater is just like,

Austin (as Safewater): Next time. Next time.

Keith (as Fero): Thanks, Safewater.

Austin: And Highwater is like,

Austin (as Highwater): They're right. They're right. Listen, Marielda wasn't built in a day, right?

Keith (as Fero): Yeah. Thanks, Highwater. [Austin and Keith laugh]

Austin (as Highwater): No, I'm serious. I'm serious. You're- you're- You turned into a frog, and I think that's really cool.

Austin: And Safewater is like,

Austin (as Safewater): Cool. Cool. [Keith laughs]

Keith (as Fero): It is pretty cool. [Austin laughs]

Austin: Great. Love it. Um, Ephrim and Hadrian, what are the two of you up to on this fine morning with two suns? And also, hey, can I- can I hear what you think about when you see that there's a second sun in the sky? Both of you.

Sylvia: I think my immediate reaction is 'well I can't stay here very long. There's something going on.' Uh, it kind- not- Like, I don't think Ephrim knows about the ring stuff.

Austin: Ring. Yeah, I don't think so.

Sylvia: But I think-

Keith: No, you were there I thought. Right?

Sylvia: Was I there for that?

Austin: Hm. I don't think either of you were there for it. But-

Keith: Wait, what was the second sun thing that I was there for?

Austin: You were there for the-

Keith: The underground of Rosemerrow.

Austin: -the underground sun that was the sword that Ephrim had.

Sylvia: Yeah.

Keith: Right.

Austin: That Ephrim still has.

Sylvia: Yeah, and I- Maybe that's kind of a-

Keith: Oh, take it out. Three suns.

Sylvia: [light laugh] I- Uh, you know what? That actually seems like- a kind of a thing I would do just to be like-

Austin: Just to see.

[0:45:00]

Keith: Yeah, just to make sure.

Sylvia: Ugh.

Austin: Uh hm.

Sylvia: Because the last time I took this- The first time I got this thing, it got rid of a sun. So, I don't know.

Austin: Because you pulled it from a place, right?

Sylvia: Yeah, exactly.

Austin: Yeah. Uh hm. And you've never really taken it out separate from that, right? In terms of- You've just had it- It was never put together until you put it together and then killed Samoths with it.

Sylvia: Yeah, and then since then-

Austin: And then otherwise you've kept it sheathed.

Sylvia: Yeah.

Austin: Alright. Uh, so as you begin to pull it out, one, I think the- the wound in your arm begins to grow.

Sylvia: Ok.

Austin: And you feel it again. And I don't remember, last time did we say that you knew that it was open again? When-

Sylvia: Uh, yeah. I think so.

Austin: Ok.

Sylvia: I think- Did we? I feel like we did. I feel like Ephrim knew that there was-

Austin: Yes.

Sylvia:-or at least there's something going on with it.

Austin: But you didn't know where it came from.

Sylvia: Yeah.

Austin: But didn't know where that came from because you didn't know that it was from Thrandir.

Sylvia: Uh hm.

Austin: So, one, I think you feel it sting again.

Sylvia: OK.

Austin: Take one damage, but you don't have to- Don't subtract the total this time.

Sylvia: Ok.

Austin: And two, [exhales] I think someone steps in. I think you actually hear the voice of Galenica in your head.

Sylvia: Oh.

Austin: Because this is their domain. And they say,

Austin (as Galenica): Child of the sun, stop.

Sylvia: I'm gonna pause.

Austin: Uh huh.

Sylvia: Like just- like where I am, so it's like- part- like, mid-unsheathing.

Austin: Yeah.

Sylvia: And just kind of like, wait and see if there's more of a response, [laughing] I think.

Austin: Um, I think that they say.

Austin (as Galenica): The cult cannot know that there is another.

Sylvia: Ok. I'm gonna sheath it. I'm- that- no- Mentioning the cult in a way, one, that is seemingly opposed to them-

Austin: Yeah.

Sylvia: -definitely engenders me to that idea. And two, [exhales] I don't want to make things worse. We've already got an evil lich around here somewhere.

Austin: Yeah, totally. [Sylvia sighs] But you never know. Maybe they'll be- there will come a time.

Sylvia: Yeah. Oh, I have a feeling. Um-

Austin: [light laugh] Yeah. [Sylvia sighs] Hadrian, what about you?

Art: I think, and this is probably- I don't know, maybe- I might have to say this out loud and see how it feels. I think Hadrian feels like there's bigger things to worry about right now.

Austin: Uh huh. Ok.

Art: Like, this is a- this is obviously a big deal and probably pretty important. And I think- I think Hadrian might even have enough to put together that this is- this probably means bad things for Hella.

Austin: Yeah, you can put together this is tied to Hella in some way. You were there when Hella and ring and all that. It was you and Adaire, and I guess Throndir was there. Throndir was there. Throndir was there.

Dre: Uh hm.

Austin: You're right. Yes.

Art: But like, not right now. It's just-

Austin: Yeah.

Art: It's just- It isn't the- It isn't on the most- the five most important things right now, and-

Austin: Right.

Art: -we just got to worry about that, you know?

Austin: I love Hadrian's Youtube video series 'The Five Most Important Things in a Week.' [Sylvia laughs lightly] It just like- It just helps me like, put things in order and like, make sense of the world. You know?

Art: Uh, I mean, you kid, but I think Hadrian would have an amazing Youtube channel. [Dre laughs]

Austin: Yeah, me, too. [Dre laughs again]

Art: The Hadrian starring in the-

Keith: 'Five New Ways to Pray When Your God is Dead.' [Sylvia and Austin laugh]

Dre: Woof.

Austin: God damn.

Art: Hadrian in a remake of that movie that came out last year with Anna Kendrick as the like, mommy blogger-

Sylvia: A Simple Favor.

Art: Yeah, A Simple Favor. There you go.

Sylvia: Yeah.

Austin: Mm. Mm. So, yeah. So, you're also just kind of like, 'uh'- I do think that both Benjamin and Rosana are a little more shook about it. I think Rosana is like,

Austin (as Rosana): [whispering] Do you know- do you know what's going on with that? Is this something we need to be-

Austin: I don't- That's foolish. She says,

Austin (as Rosana): I cannot believe this. Is this... the university? Is everyone ok?

Art (as Hadrian): Oh, um. Probably not. This is really bad news, and I'm- I'm really sorry. But we have to focus on just like, living through the next thirty-six hours right now.

Austin (as Rosana): We should finish what we need to finish here as soon as possible and begin heading back.

Art (as Hadrian): I agree with you a hundred percent.

Austin: And I think Benjamin is sketching it. Also a sketcher. And is like, not like looking up [laughing] into the sun and then looking down. But you know, is trying to capture this very- It's a low-hanging sun cause the sun is rising still, and so it's like, that really dark like, that deep red-orange right now. Both of them are. Um, cool. So, what else is- what else is poppin' this morning? What do you all get up to? It's like, afternoon by now, I'd say. Y'all had a late night, so you probably actually woke up a little late. And uh, you know, there's breakfast, and you notice that there are more guards around today given the events of last night. Who else is up to some stuff?

Dre: Um, I want to tell Hadrian about what I saw last night.

Austin: Sure. Go ahead.

Dre: Because I want to try and track down this distinctive looking pala-din.

Austin: Yeah. Where are you having this conversation?

Dre: Um, I think that depends on how much Hadrian wants this conversation to be heard by Rosana and Benjamin.

Art: I think this has to be the moment where- where Hadrian is just like,

Art (as Hadrian): Yeah, you can say anything in front of them. It's- it's all- Like, they're- they're in it now. I can't- I can't pretend that they're not in danger or that I can protect them from danger, except when they're standing right next to me.

Dre (as Thrandir): Yeah.

Art (as Hadrian): Like, there's no more like, blocking them out and hoping it avoids them. It's- we're all in it now. God, that sucks to say.

Dre (as **Thrandir**): Uh hm.

Austin: Uh hm.

Dre: Ok.

Art: That now it's just like- just stand right next to me. [light laugh] And I'll jump in front of the thing before it hits you.

Austin: [light laugh] Right.

Keith: Bummer.

Austin: Um, so yeah. So yeah. I guess the conversation then is what? In- in the room that Hadrian and co. are staying in, Thrandir?

Dre: Yeah, I think so.

Austin: Ok.

Dre: It's probably a secure enough place. [overlapped] Oh shit.

Art: I mean keeping in mind that nothing is that secure if Benjamin's there.

Dre: Yeah. It's like- Yeah. How- Mmm. Mmm.

Austin: Uh huh.

Dre: Yeah, probably not in front of Benjamin, huh?

Art: You know what we should have figured out is some sort of code.

Dre: Yeah. Um...

Keith: Still time.

Dre: [jokingly as Thrandir] Ala-din's-pay [Keith and Sylvia laugh] hanging out with **Austin** laughs] Rrell-Aay. [laughs]

Austin: Great. Undefeatable.

Art: Yeah.

Dre: [laughing] Yeah. He'll never know.

Art (as **Hadrian**): Um, that was- that was in the middle- in the middle of the night?

Austin: What was?

Art (as Hadrian): [half-jokingly] Ate-lay ast-lay ight-nay?

Austin: Oh. God.

Dre: Oh boy. No. Uh, yeah. I think we can't have this conversation in front of Benjamin.

Art: Um, then I don't know if we can have it right now.

Dre: Alright. Ok. That's- Ok. Alright, then we'll have it.

Austin: Ok.

Dre (as Thrandir): Ok, so um, goo- good news.

Art (as Hadrian): You wanna like, write it down?

Dre (as Thrandir): Oh, we could write it down.

Austin: You could write it down-

Dre (as Thrandir): Alright, I'm gonna write-

Austin: -assuming that that's how it works.

Dre: Yeah, I'm gonna write it down. Um, so you know, I give the summary.

Dre (as Thrandir): [written] I went to break the bell last night. Did that. Um- [Austin and Keith laugh] Saw- saw the scorch marks that showed Arrell was up there, and then saw Arrell talking to the pala-din.

Dre: And you said the distinctive thing was they had a uh-

Austin: Like, a diamond-

Dre: -a diamond? Yeah.

Austin: -carved in their- in their- the marble of their head.

Dre: Gotcha.

Austin: Um, did you- did- Does Hadrian know about the bell? Like, why you would do that?

Dre: Oh. Um, good question.

Art: I don't think so.

Dre: But I'll tell him anyway.

Austin: Yeah.

Keith: Hadrian was there that morning.

Dre: Yeah.

Austin: Yeah, but- but does- do people put together that like, that's a vampire thing?

Dre: Listen, if Hadrian is nonplussed about two suns, I don't think a bell's gonna- [Austin and Dre laugh] It's not gonna register.

Austin: Ok. Yeah, fair.

Art: [jokingly] Well, like went to destroy the bell. Got it. Ok. [Austin still laughing] How'd it go?

Austin: I forgot that part of our mis- Yeah.

Dre: [jokingly] Listen it was Arrell's bell, so I had to- I had to- Oh hey, huh. [laughs]

Austin: Yeah.

Art: That's what people say in this world. Arrell's bells.

Dre: Uh hm.

Austin: Yep. [laughs]

Keith: Damn. Those are his bells now? Shit.

Austin: Um, so yeah. You get this letter, Hadrian. Or he- you know, he hands you that- a note that says that.

Art: Ok, I mean I guess we'll just- we're just like, sittin' here like, passing notes like we're in like, biology class or whatever. Like-

Dre: Uh hm.

Art: Like-

Art (as Hadrian): [written] Ok. What- what- Should we tell- should we tell Tabard? Is that- is that what you want to do about it?

Dre: Shrug.

Art: Did you actually shrug or did you write me a note that said shrug? [Austin laughs]

Dre: No, I did- [laughs] I actually shrugged.

Art (as Hadrian): [written] And there's- there's two things that are happening. We're either being like, massively betrayed right now or Tabard should know about it, and- and both ways we should just go and say something because if we are being massively betrayed, we can just skip to the next step where it's just- which is fighting our way out of it.

Dre (as Throndir): [written] Ok.

Austin: So you-

Art: I'm glad that sounded good to you. I'm- I'm-

Austin: So, you go find Tabard?

Art: Yeah, and with like- with Rosana and Benjamin and like, they can like-

Austin: Yep.

Art:- I guess, stand outside for the meeting part. [light laugh]

Austin: Alright.

Dre: Or we can just keep writing notes. [laughs]

Keith: Um, I- I think we- we've established that there is some sort of uh, significant range on the like, Arrell's hearing around Benjamin. Like, it's not-

Art: Yeah, you're right. We probably do need to stick with the notes.

Dre: Uh hm.

Austin: Love it. Love this- this montage sequence of people writing notes back and forth on paper which I'm sure is not like, a particularly-

Keith: Yeah, it's- Have fun explaining why you have to do that to Tabard.

Austin: That- Tabard knows that now, right?

Keith: Tabard does not know that Benjamin is the reason why Arrell came.

Austin: Oooh, right.

Dre: Oh shit.

Keith: That was- that was very gracefully side-stepped.

Austin: Uh huh. That was just 'we have an enemy,' right?

Keith: Yeah.

Dre: Yeah.

Austin: Yeah, which is like,

Austin (as Tabard): Your family can come in, Hadrian. [light laugh]

Art (as Hadrian): Oh.

Austin (as Tabard): What's mine is yours.

Art (as Hadrian): Um, no. It's alright. They're um...

Dre (as Thrandir): The kid's freaked out.

Art (as Hadrian): Yeah. [Keith laughs hard throughout] And we can't let him hear about it. So, we have to write notes.

Austin: Defy Danger charisma. You can aid each other if you want to. [Austin laughs as Keith is still laughing]

Sylvia: Christ almighty.

Keith: We brought him! We- he didn't need to come. We brought him so that we could write notes. [Austin laughs, someone claps]

Austin: [overlapped] He's just right outside.

Keith: We could've just said like, 'Hey, bud. Wanna go to the library?'

Art (as Hadrian): It's dangerous. I- We brought him-

Dre (as Thrandir): Yeah.

Art (as Hadrian): -to protect him from danger.

Austin: Can- Ok, which one of you-

Keith: Ok.

Austin: -is rolling charisma?

Dre: God. Hopefully Hadrian.

Art: Yeah, I have a plus two in charisma.

Austin: Alright. Well then, Throndir you can aid to- you can roll to aid to if you'd like to.

Dre: Yeah.

Austin: Your bond with Hadrian, which is what again?

Dre: 'I was upset with Hadrian, but no one deserves to pay for their mistakes this deeply. I must help him keep Benjamin safe.'

Austin: Appropriate.

Dre: Uh hm.

Austin: Give me a 2d6 plus one to aid.

Art: Oh my god.

Dre: Oh.

Austin: That's a four.

Dre: I guess that doesn't matter if it adds a plus one or not, huh?

Austin: Nah, it doesn't really. Not with a four. So, ok. Let's get this- let's get this real roll going. Uh, and we'll wrap back around to this aid.

Dre: Good thing I rolled that. [laughs]

Austin: Wow. Yeah, wow. Hadrian rolled a thirteen. So, the charisma- So, Tabard is like,

Austin (as Tabard): Yeah, ok. Makes sense. [everyone laughs]

Dre: Ah, yeah. Got it. Yeah. [laughs]

Austin: God damn.

Art (as Hadrian): Yeah, get over here. We're gonna write notes.

Austin (as Tabard): Yeah, of course, that makes perfect sense. That makes perfect sense.

Austin: Um, I will wrap back around to your failure here, Throndir. Um, go ahead and uh- and tell me what this note conversation is.

Art: Uh, it's- it's just- It's telling Tabard that Arrell was talking to these other- these other pala-din.

Austin: Um, and Arrell instinct- err not Arrell. Sorry. Tabard sees the thing with the- with the diamond- you write down like, 'oh yeah, there's a diamond'- and instinctive- instinctively, says,

Austin (as Tabard): Grel?

Austin: Which Arrell can hear because Tabard speaks. That is your failure here is like, yes, you've convinced him that it's ok for you to use uh, notes, but he does not in this one moment keep quiet as he identifies the person with the diamond, who is Grel who you may remember from the meal, um, Tabard mentioned- I think he mentioned Grel. I think he said like, 'You know, Grel and Alvena givin' me shit about this or that'- or like, he was basically talking about the- the counsel being a pain. Um, and I think he like, says it out loud and then he goes like,

Austin (as Tabard): [gasps]

Austin: [light laugh] And then like, takes the pen and writes- or whatever, the pencil and writes that Grel is um- I think he writes,

Austin (as Tabard): [written] Grel is a mean and grumpy shit [Austin laughs light] who thinks that the Fel anchor should be turned away because we don't have the resources for them.

Dre: Mm.

Austin (as Tabard): [written] Do you think he's working with Arrell?

Dre: Nodding.

Art (as Hadrian): [written] Yes. Yeah.

Austin: This is all written at this point.

Art: Yeah, this is all written. Yeah.

Art (as Hadrian): [written] Yes, I think that's the only- or at least- or at least Arrell is trying to curry favor.

Austin (as **Tabard**): [written] Right.

Dre (as **Thrandir**): [written] I mean if Arrell is trying to make pala-din and uh, this Grel person just wants the Fel anchor to go away.

Austin: Right. Uh, and so I think he just writes like,

Austin (as **Tabard**): [written] Thank you. I will deal with it.

Art (as **Hadrian**): Thank you for your time. Glad to get-

Art: This is out loud again.

Austin: Uh huh.

Art (as **Hadrian**): Glad to get all of that important-

Austin (as **Tabard**): I hope your family is well. Sorry about the freaked out kid. Uh- [Austin and Dre laugh] If y'all ever need anything, you know where I am.

Art (as **Hadrian**): Yeah. Thank you.

Austin (as **Tabard**): Lounging. [Dre laughs]

Art (as **Hadrian**): Yeah.

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

Austin: Uh, cool.

Art: That went medium bad. [Austin laughs]

Dre: Eh. Eh.

[1:00:00]

Austin: So, Thrandir's done. Hadrian's done. Ephrim, are you gettin' up to anything today during the day?

Sylvia: The thing is I feel like at this point, all of Ephrim's focus is on the Arrell situation. And-

Austin: We should get to it.

Sylvia: Yeah.

Austin: What- What is- what is the Arrell situation like? What are y'all doing with this lead- like, is there an awkward family dinner ahead of this? Is there- What's prep for that look like if no one has anything else to do?

Sylvia: I mean think-

Keith: A lot of note writing.

Austin: Yeah.

Dre: I mean I'll go burglarize Grel's house or whatever. [Austin laughs]

Sylvia: You know actually f-

Keith: Like for clues or just for like, stuff?

Dre: For- you know, for clues.

Sylvia: Following up on the Grel thing could be a good path-

Austin: Totally.

Sylvia: -to take.

Austin: The thing is I can- I can pretty much narrate a little bit here which is like, if y'all go to Ar- to Grel's place, you will find other pala-din like, running his shit and bringing him in.

Sylvia: Ok.

Austin: And him being like,

Austin (as Grel): I don't know what this about.

Sylvia: Ok.

Austin: Um, like, and I can- I can actually just- We can like, montage this. I just really want to focus our time on like, the thing if we care about the thing.

Sylvia: Yeah, ok.

Austin: Because it's- The Grel stuff is interesting and it gives you some context, but it is not going to be- I don't want you- I don't want a failure snowballing at this point where you're like, 'and then the rest of this game is y'all got caught breaking into a slime ball's apartment.' [Dre laughs]

Sylvia: Ok.

Austin: 'And then now the- now the pala-din hate you,' and that's not where the focus of this story is at this point.

Keith: Yeah, there's definitely a way to miss the forest through the Grel tree. It's like-

Sylvia: That's a good point.

Austin: Yeah.

Keith: Yeah.

Austin: But what I will give you then is just like, um-

Art: Hadrian, of course, doesn't go because this is ridiculous at this point.

Austin: Right, well you know, we get- maybe we get the- Ephrim and Thrandir grouping being able to get into his ap- his dorm. He like, lives at the conservatory at like a suite- in a suite because he's like a high-tier academic who lives on campus. [laughs] And um, you know like, all the high-tier academics do. And you're about to see him ta- You're able to find like, notes bet- that of communication between- that have been going between him and um, various places.

Dre: Hmm.

Austin: About trying to offload these Fel anchor, basically.

Dre: See, everybody's writin' notes these days.

Austin: Everybody's writing notes these days. Um, and he basically had struck up a deal with someone named Arrell or just 'A' from Velas to like, take the Fel anchor and like, arrange for them to have homes in Velas. Now you tell me if you believe that or what that might mean. Who could say? Um, but- but that is what was- That is what was happening here. He had basically- he was like, preparing his next big rhetorical push during like, The Debates- capital 'T', capital 'D'- was going to be that like, 'of course, we cannot harm others like ourselves who need homes, but we should be thinking about the limits of what our society can handle, and we are at our limits now. This is why we don't create more pala-din except for on schedule.

And introducing you know, new Fel anchor with different needs is not a thing we can do responsibly, but I met this very wise politician from the opposite side of the continent named Arrell who is willing to take- you know, give them homes and uh, has assured me that there are practices in place,' and blah-blah-blah. And it sucks. This dude fuckin' sucks. And it's very clear, he does not even necessarily believe his own bullshit. Or he believes his own bullshit to that he does think that bringing them onboard is too much danger and too much resource- He does think that, but there is something in there that reveals that he didn't even want the regular anchor to come, and it's-

You can even find notes or like, versions of the drafted- previous drafts of this speech or lines edited out or cut out like, struck through, in which he references that the hardship of when the anchor came onboard, but he's crossed it out because he knows that it doesn't play well anymore. But that's what he really believes. He thinks that this should just be pala-din. Um, cause he fuckin' sucks. So yeah, you get that, and I think Hadrian, you probably get Tabard explaining that to you also. And so he is being held for- for questioning and like, to see if he's part of a bigger conspiracy and blah-blah-blah. So yeah, to some degree this has given us a little bit of clarity on what will happen here in the long run, so- you know, nice- nice work getting that dude out of the picture, even if it didn't involve like, stabbing him. [Austin and Dre laugh lightly]

Um, alright. Like, let's- let's talk about what the plan is, if there is a plan. What's the night- Oh, a thing happens, actually. Now that I think about it. By the time- Thrandir- Thrandir and Ephrim, as you leave Grel's apartment and look out, again kind of to the sky as you- you're heading back, uh- [foley] fwoo, one of the... How do I explain this? One of the suns is filling- uh like a- Like, imagine a sun- you know how a sun is an orb? But we don't see it as an orb that often? It's like a circle mostly. What if- what if it was like a glass orb and someone started filling it with blood? So that you could see the blood running down the kind of spherical contour of the interior of the- of the sun. Because that's what's happening. The sun- the second sun- the new sun is filling with blood.

Dre: Aw, sick.

Austin: Uh huh.

Art: Hey, Austin, what's happening in the other game?

Austin: It's going great, bud.

Art: Hmmm.

Austin: It's so good. Um, people here are not happy. There is an emergency Debate, capital 'D' in the middle of the fountains. The red is like, starting to cast over parts of the land and turn it red in color.

Keith: It is so suspicious that we know about the Arrell stuff and also know about this stu- Like, everything bad that's happening happened since we show up, and we're like, 'yeah, that's- we have something to do with that again.'

Austin: I mean, have you- Have you told people about this? Or are you being quiet about the sun?

Keith: Uh, no- Well, if som- Has someone asked?

Austin: I think it's just in the way of being like, 'I can't believe there's a second sun that's filling with blood. [lightly laughing] What is going on?'

Keith: Yeah, I guess the blood thing is new for us, too.

Austin: Right, totally.

Keith: If I had to- if I had to say either way. [laughs]

Dre: Yeah.

Austin: God.

Dre: Yeah, No, it's a new one.

Sylvia: Yeah.

Austin: Yeah. That one's new.

Dre: You know, it's just generation remix at it again.

Austin: [light laugh] Love it. Love it.

Keith: Have you heard of sun, but blood?

Dre: Ok. What do we want our number one priority here to be? Cause originally we came here to I guess get some pala-din to either come over or figure out how to make our own and also to try and get some kind of knowledge that would let us break Arrell's conduit over Benjamin.

Austin: Uh hm.

Sylvia: Yeah, I think- I think the first thing- the 'try to learn about pala-din and- and-or make our own' has kind of gone by the wayside, especially after conversations with Tabard and Ephrim understanding more about the pala-din themselves. I think that maybe we- I think the big shift now is protecting that information from Arrell cause he was specifically looking for that. We've dumped that in the ocean, right? Yeah.

Austin: Yes.

Sylvia: Um, so keeping that a secret from him, I think is kind of the big one. And then I mean I see a solution to severing the tie between him and Benjamin, but it doesn't seem like it's gonna be an easy one.

Dre: Oh, is it severing his face? Cause I'm into that.

Sylvia: Possibly. Um, but like, again that's also messy, and there's a lot of- This is kinda one of the things I wanted to talk about when we were planning this is, we arranged to meet with him in a library near residential areas.

Austin: Uh hm.

Sylvia: And he's very dangerous. And I'm worried about that.

Dre: Uh hm.

Sylvia: And this can be in character if you want, guys, but like,

Sylvia (as Ephrim): I'm worried about ex- like, collateral damage from him cause we don't know how powerful he's gotten since we last saw him, and he was already really powerful. Or I guess since we last saw him before he showed up here.

Art (as Hadrian): I don't think there's a place where collateral damage from Arrell is not a significant concern. I don't- like-

Sylvia (as Ephrim): My question is there's these smaller islands to the south here, are those populated?

Sylvia: Do we know that? If you look on the map-

Austin: Uh, yeah. Yep.

Sylvia: -they're populated as well?

Austin: Everything-

Sylvia: Ok.

Austin: Uh, yeah. Though- though I think probably less so, right?

Sylvia: Uh hm.

Austin: Um, like the- like, here and here? Yeah.

Sylvia: Yeah.

Austin: Definitely less so.

Sylvia: Ok. [sighs]

Sylvia (as Ephrim): Yeah, like I mean, I guess we could try- There's- there's ver- we don't really know how his teleportation works aside from assuming it's tethered to

Benjamin in some way. Um, and even then, we're assuming that, so there's a chance that he will- he could have to show up in the same area as him or he-

Sylvia: I mean this is character cause I know that he showed up in the tower, but like,

Sylvia (as Ephrim): We- we also have no guarantee that he'll show up in the library.

Austin: Right.

Sylvia (as Ephrim): Either. So, it's kind of just one of those things where we- what we need to do before the agreed upon showdown, I guess, is like, how to minimize harm to the pala-din and the people of Alcyon cause like, we- we have a responsibility to that. We brought this here. Uh, and two, how to not get killed by a lich.

Austin: Uh hm.

Keith: Is this- are we in a big meeting? Is this is like a-

Sylvia: I-

Keith: This is all of us right now, right?

Sylvia: Yeah, I figured- if-

Austin: Except Benjamin presumably?

Sylvia: Yeah, I-

Keith: Right.

Sylvia: Yes.

Austin: Like, where is this?

Sylvia: Um-

Austin: Are we kind of like cutting between out and in character there? So I just want to make sure.

Sylvia: Yeah, it was a little- Uh, I mean I probably- it probably would be at the governor's uh, house, right?

Art: Um, then I guess like, the thing is that- I like redact what I said, and Hadrian is probably with Benjamin and Rosana in the library.

Austin: Ok.

Sylvia: Ok.

Austin: This is before-?

Art: This should be well before time.

Austin: Well before. Yeah, ok.

Sylvia (as Ephrim): Yeah, I mean so does anybody- [light laugh] I was kind of like, gettin' the floor open there- Does anybody have any ideas on how we could handle this cause I have my retainers and that will help us in some way, but even with our numbers advantage here, we need some way to make sure- or at least minimize the chances that he's going to decimate us all.

Sylvia: Do we- Could someone refresh me? What exactly is he- he's- Like, what was his excuse for coming here? Coming back, right?

Keith: He- Arrell wants to uh, bui- same as us, wants to be able to build pala-din-

Sylvia: But-

Keith: -and have them as his personal army.

Sylvia: Is that what he said- What was the reason he gave us?

Austin: Yeah, he made that-

Sylvia: He gave- said that to us in the library?

Keith: Yeah.

Austin: He explicitly said he would use them to help retake Marielda.

Sylvia: Ok.

Austin: Or retake the City of First Light. But also to um, study to see if he could put human souls into 'em.

Sylvia: Right.

Austin: Because the pala-din are able to- and the anchor are able to survive around these plants and humans can- er you know, mortals currently cannot. And so, if the Spring wins, like then how are we gonna live?

Keith: Yeah.

Austin: Like, yeah maybe the Spring beats the Heat and the Dark, but our bodies will not. And so-

Keith: I feel- I feel like-

Austin: -his vision is like, is that.

Keith: I feel like he's uh- he's decided that a lot of people hate his bubbles [light laugh] and are like, 'ok, I guess we gotta-'

Austin: That's still his- Yeah.

Keith: -'figure out some way to-.'

Austin: I mean like-

Keith: 'I guess I gotta figure out some way to let people still be on the regular world.' [Austin and Keith laugh]

Austin: Right. There is- that is pretty accurate, right? Like, no one rolled to see if he was lying about that, but you know, Arrell is not- Arrell will lie to you to get to his ends. But he is very clear about what his ends are-

Keith: Yeah.

Austin: -and those are honest, which is he wants people to continue to live. And some of them wanna live in bubbles, and some of them he thinks- and some of them won't at this point. You're right. And so, I think it's a fair extrapolation that like, he wants to be the person who helps- he wants to help people, but also he thinks the easiest way to do that is to put him in charge and to- it often means he's making decisions for other people. It often means he's undermining communities where things are safe so that things get more- he's like, an accelerationist in a sense. Right? Or he's like-

Keith: He's sort of like the guy that says like, 'if you just made me the dictator of the world, I could fix everything.'

Austin: That's one, but he's also the person who is like, if like- all you motherfuckers don't understand how serious this is, and so if I- like, the- He's the one who is like, 'the theater is about to be on fire, and I've said quietly this. People have said for a long time everyone should leave the theater. No one is leaving the theater, so I'm gonna shout fire. In fact, maybe I set the place on fire so that you can see [Austin and Keith laugh] you know, that there is a fucking fire here.' Um, except that that falls apart cause he isn't using the Heat and the Dark, right? He's, in fact, been very clearly avoiding- Of the various forces on the table, the one thing that I have written down that is like, Arrell does not fuck with the Heat and the Dark because he knows-

Keith: Wait, he-

Austin: -it's a little too dangerous.

Keith: -he did give- He did give um- He was- He gave Samot that thing. What was that?

Austin: That was- It was undead- That was like, nec- necrotic magic. It was-

Keith: No, necrot- Ok. Got it.

Austin: Yeah, yeah, yeah. He's- he's- you know, lich, undead magic. He's a-

Keith: Uh hm.

Austin: -he's fine fucking' around with undead shit.

Keith: Yeah.

Austin: But he does not- He knows the danger of the Heat and the Dark and does not- You know, maybe there's been a time when I've mentioned it here or there or maybe I've fucked up there. But one of my like, key rules when it comes to trying to figure out how to communicate stuff about the various antagonists of this game is that the- ok, what is their feeling about star stuff? What is their feeling about the Heat and the Dark? What is their feeling about the Spring? For this season. And for him, will not fuck with- with the Heat and the Dark because it is a dead end, you know? Um, so- so yeah. Though I bet if he found- if someone like, convinced him or if he found a way that he thinks he could successfully master the Heat and the Dark-

[1:15:00]

Austin (cont.): -at this point, what would stop him, you know? Um, so- so, yeah. I think all of that is fair to start- to think about with him, whether or not your character believes it or not, it's worth me saying out loud that's how I want to frame him is that like, he is someone who thinks he knows best, for sure. In contrast to someone like Fela Malle who I think does not have a solution, does not have a- does not understand the stakes necessarily.

Keith: Um-

Austin: Or in contrast to the now deceased like, Samoths two or whatever, you know? They're not the same type of villain.

Keith: That's- this is sort of what Fero was saying in character last episode to Tabard, I think. Or I guess it was to everybody which was like, 'Arrell's not like, making enemies on purpose. Like, he's trying to do his thing, and it is actually worse for him if everyone hates him cause he is trying to do something.' He's not a good guy, but he's not like, about to come and um- like if he

has a chance to do things in a way where we just give him what he wants, like he's not just gonna come kill everybody.'

Austin: Yeah.

Keith: If there's still that chance. Although, you know, last time I really got to know Arrell, he was not a lich.

Austin: Right. Right. Totally. He was in a different place, [light laugh] you know?

Keith: Yeah.

Austin: Um, and maybe even you hadn't seen a lot of how far he was willing to go. Like, it's probably true, he isn't quote, unquote trying to make enemies, but he is willing to make enemies in this pursuit.

Keith: Right.

Austin: Right?

Keith: Yeah. Um, he's both- yeah, both trying- trying to not make them, but also willing to make them.

Austin: Uh hm.

Keith: And probably thinks that it's necessary to make some.

Austin: There are times, yeah.

Keith: And tonight might be one of those times.

Austin: Right.

Keith (as Fero): We have to figure out a way to have- to have like- I think we have to have Benjamin away, but also close enough to where if Arrell tries to use Benjamin as like, a bartering chip that we can get there in time.

Austin: Uh hm.

Dre (as Thrandir): Yeah, I mean the- I guess the thing is is that either he can teleport far enough away from Benjamin that just because we're close to Benjamin doesn't mean we can always see him coming or going or he has other things set up in this city to let him do that. Cause like-

Keith (as Fero): It might be both, but it's definitely the former. I mean, you know. He-

Dre (as Thrandir): Yeah.

Keith (as Fero): There are- there are definitely times where Benjamin has not like been around at the university where then Arrell showed up and- the time- There was a time where um, he projected a message into my head and Benjamin like wasn't in the room, I don't think.

Austin: He was not in the room.

Keith: Yeah.

Austin: His range is- is pro- potentially bigger than that.

Keith: Yeah. Um, I always imagined that it was like, most of the university counts as an area where he can- he can know what's going on.

Austin: Is there any research happening? Is there any like-?

Sylvia: Yeah, so-

Austin: There is this whole conservatory and like, this whole university set up here, too.

Sylvia: I was wondering if there was a way to look into um, not even canceling it out, but helping- but some way to suppress magical energy at all.

Austin: Mm.

Sylvia: Obviously with a lich it's different, but my thinking here is that if they can- like, at least Ephrim's thinking here is if we can find a way to keep him from teleporting or just-

Austin: Right.

Sylvia: -vanishing whenever he wants, then we have at least something of an upperhand there.

Austin: Totally. Give me a um- So, are you going to like, the library to look through stuff on this or-?

Sylvia: I wa- I was thinking yeah. That would work.

Austin: Alright. That's a Spout Lore. When you consult your accumulated knowledge about something, and accumulated knowledge can be your books. It can be whatever.

Sylvia: Alright.

Austin: It can be stuff you already know. It's intelligence. Roll plus intelligence.

Sylvia: Alright. That's a plus two-

Austin: Alright.

Sylvia: -and I got a thirteen.

Austin: Hell yes. You did. So, on a 10+, the GM will tell you something interesting and useful about the subject relevant to your situation. Um, so you're looking at like, 'hey, is there any way to cancel out magical effects,' right?

Sylvia: Yeah. Um, I think the like- it- Yeah, I think that's kind of the big- the board one. More specifically just something that would keep him in one place.

Austin: Yeah.

Sylvia: Like to cancel out the teleportation is kind of the big one at the forefront of his mind.

Austin: Yeah.

Sylvia: But yeah, just in general, canceling out his magic.

Austin: So, I think you find it in a really weird way which is um, you find it in a text on weapons. And you find a note about a type of alchemical solution.. Effectively a poison that Samot used to use. Maybe still does on long campaigns. A post civil war. Post war against Samoths. Recently, right? In the last few hundred years presumably. And it's- it's pala-din oriented because sometimes Samot would go on these long campaigns and would, for instance, run into coll-orchish collectors and get into a fight or run into wharvers or members of the Cult of the Dark Sun or local bandits and get into a fight and lose some pal-din.

Um, and you know, as powerful as Samot can be, there's a reason why he traveled with Tabard and with you know, entire ranks of pala-din. And sometimes with them broken, you would not have the resources on hand to repair them. So, what if you could make some new ones? And Hadrian might remember this well which is there is- They used to carry a type of weapon that was- or they used to kind of dose their weapons in a formula that would slowly turn someone into a pala-din. And the thing that you learn is, once that starts- stops happening, methods of long distance transportation, any sorts of like- any sorts of teleportation- telepa- uh, teleportation or haste or like, movement type spells won't be able to work because the part of them that is the pala-din will be like, resistant to that effect. There are other things also, right?

So like, if there was a person who was trying to cast a spell on themselves to give themselves like, fire powers, the fire would be deactivated around that- that body part. And because teleportation requires like, complete transportation, then they need to be like, protec- er their entire body needs to be full and not be in this state where they are mid-transformation. The theory is like, 'ok, once someone is fully a pala-din, you can do the- you can do the transportation again, but in that in between state which lasts hours, as Hadrian knows well, they

would be in a position where they couldn't just teleport away.' I don't know if that's a thing you want to do to Arrell.

Sylvia: That- That- Ugh. [exhales]

Austin: But-

Sylvia: It's definitely an option.

Austin: And also it doesn't- it doesn't work instantly, which again Hadrian can tell you. There is like, a start up period during which the- the stone has to start spreading. But you find the- not only a formula for it, you find some because Tabard would have had it, you know, from when he was a pala-din. It is not looked kindly upon, using it.

Sylvia: Alright.

Austin: But you have it, and that's what they would have here. They're not a mage society. They don't know how to cast spells. They don't have like- They're not Ordenna. They're not mage hunters, you know? But this is an effect that a weapon that they would have would do for you.

Sylvia: Ok.

Austin: So you have a- you can totally have a couple of doses of that to put on weapons or whatever.

Sylvia: Um, oh. Ok. Ooo, oh, I got an idea. I'm gonna talk to Highwater. My former assassin friend.

Austin: Yes. Yes.

Sylvia: And I want to talk to her about-

Sylvia (as Ephrim): How would you administer poison to somebody from a distance?

Sylvia: Basically.

Austin (as Highwater): A dart. Or maybe um, an arrow. Or if you could convince a mosquito to deliver the toxin.

Keith: [laughs] Very thorough explanation.

Austin (as Highwater): You have to- you have to you know, see what you can see.

Sylvia (as **Ephrim**): You- [exhales] you wouldn't happen to know how to make any of these darts or have any, would you?

Austin (as **Highwater**): Um... what would a.... [hems and haws] noble retainer like me uh, be doing with tools like that?

Sylvia (as **Ephrim**): Highwater. Remember who you're talking to here. Remember how we met. It's fine.

Austin (as **Highwater**): Of course. I do have- I- I do- I did keep my- my dart gun. Just in case. I know that like, a sword is more heroic, but-

Sylvia: No, this is- this is what we need.

Sylvia: Um, so what I think I'm gonna do- So, there's two- there's two big ideas here, and I think one of them even could be plan A and one of them could be plan B.

Austin: Uh hm.

Sylvia: Um, is- So, my two ideas are either coating- Actually, this is a good question, cause Throndir's using one of the Golden Lance guns, right? Is that just magic that shoots out of that. I can't remember.

Dre: Nah, I got bullets.

Sylvia: You got bullets? Good.

Austin: Yeah. You got bullets.

Sylvia: So, I was thinking either coating some of his bullets in it or use- having Highwater somewhere inconspicuous and try and have them use the dart on him. Uh, but we can have- if we have enough to coat a couple things-

Austin: Yeah, totally.

Sylvia: -we could try- try both of them. Yeah.

Austin: Throndir, you in on plan?

Dre: Oh yeah.

Austin: Alright. Alright, yeah. And so it- I- Wherever this fight ends up happening, I'm cool with Highwater having been set up somewhere.

Sylvia: And uh, I'm gonna- I gonna obviously let Marigold in on the plan, too, so my two-

Austin: Yes.

Sylvia: -trusted retainers are one, in on this, and also aware of the plan-

Austin: Uh hm.

Sylvia: -in case they need to give the other backup.

Austin: Sounds good.

Sylvia: Yeah.

Austin: Um, any other planning going on here? Or conversations?

Sylvia: I mean I guess- [light laugh] Should I talk to Fero about the mosquito thing?

Dre: Oh boy.

Sylvia: My worry about that is that you have to put that on your physical body to do it-

Austin: Yeah. Uh huh.

Sylvia: -and I don't want you to get one, stuck as a statue or two, even worse, stuck as a mosquito statue. [Austin laughs] Um- which would be really hard to find.

Keith: I can tal- I can talk to mosquitoes. I could convince a mosquito to do it.

Sylvia: I guess this kind of comes down to how much of this stuff do we have.

Austin: I think-

Sylvia: Would this take away from one of those I had earlier or-?

Austin: Yeah. I also think-

Sylvia: Yeah.

Austin: -more needs to be a- I think that Highwater is wrong about- Like, there are poisons that you would-

Sylvia: Yeah.

Austin: -be able to deploy that way, but I think you'd need more than what-

Sylvia: Ok.

Austin: -a mosquito can deliver in this scenario.

Sylvia: Ok. I figu- I figured we'd check out every avenue there.

Austin: Of course. Of course.

Sylvia: Alright. I think I'm set then.

Austin: Alright. Any- anybody else? Where's this happening? I know we talked about trying to lead him far away, but it- it didn't sound like we had a determined, definite place.

Dre: Ok. Um...

Austin: I guess it's- it- So, let's- You meet at night time, right? Is that what the plan was? Tomorrow night is what he had said?

Keith: I don't think it was night. I thought it was afternoon.

Art: I thought it was night.

Austin: I thought it was after dinner cause it was like, the same time tomorrow-

Sylvia: Yeah.

Austin: -type of thing.

Keith: Oh ok.

Austin: And you all had had dinner. The reason I bring it up is because the sun changed shape before this happens, which is an important detail. Um, the first sun has begun to set, but the second sun is still up there. And a thing what happened is the- the bottom of- Ok, so imagine you have uh, the sun or an orb. And then you grab the bottom of it and you pull down on it in such a way that like, it turns into like, almost like a teardrop or like a- like an egg shape. So, now it's like an egg filling with blood. But the first sun, the regular sun is continuing to set. But not the blood egg.

Sylvia: Uh, how's that affecting like, the light and stuff?

Austin: It is-

Sylvia: Is it getting dark?

Austin: It's getting dark and getting red.

Sylvia: Ok. Um-

Austin: And it's continuing to fill with-

Keith: Lighter than usual because there's no moon, right? Or there's only half as many moons.

Austin: There's only half as many [laughs] moons. Yeah, also that. Also that.

Sylvia: An idea for-

Austin: Uh, but also like, it's clear this is not an eclipse. It's clear this is not- This is fucked up. People are scared. And like, I think this has caused more people to go inside today. Like people are just like, in their homes. Tabard has sent out word that everyone should be safe until whatever this is passes. Um, there are probably cults here. Like- like lower case 'c', ancient Greek mystery cult type things, where this happens to line up with some of their beliefs. And so, yes, a lot of people are probably inside, but I think you probably have pockets of people having big blood egg parties. Um, you know?

Sylvia: Ugh.

Austin: Stuff like that.

Keith: Do we get any like, invites to any like, uh bacchanalias?

Austin: Yeah, totally. Those- those are popping off in the wine fields, for sure. In the vineyards.

Keith: Nice. Very cool. [laughs]

Austin: Yeah.

Sylvia: How busy is it by the statue of Galenica?

Austin: There are lots of guards around. But that's it.

Sylvia: Lots of guards around? Ok. Oh, that's it? Ok.

Austin: Because- because Tabard put them there after you said so.

Sylvia: Yeah.

Austin: And because if the- if the plan is for that- is for them to not be- for the location of the plates to not be known, you gotta keep up those appearances.

Sylvia: Uh hm.

Keith: Is there a plan for Benjamin?

Austin: I haven't heard one.

Keith: Like- what's the- what-

Sylvia: Yeah, it's the only question mark.

Keith: I guess, you know, Hadrian has been talking to Benjamin. I'm- I'm worried about like, not knowing how that's going to play out. Art?

Art: Yeah?

Keith: Do you know how that's gonna play out? Do you know what your plan is for Benjamin?

[Jack de Quidt's "[Something](#)" begins playing in the background]

Art: Uh, I mean, yeah. We're- we're in different spaces, so- so you're not hearing this like, officially, but I'm gonna kill Arrell before anything bad happens to Benjamin.

Austin: [quietly] Great. And that's the plan.

Keith: Ok, that's... Alright.

Sylvia: Yeah, we have such similar plans. [Sylvia and Austin laugh]

Dre: It's really just good group synergy.

Austin: Love it.

[Music plays out to end]

[1:30:00]