

Autumn in Hieron 28: A Choice About What You Believe

Transcriber: Rhys

[Autumn Not Winter begins playing]

AUSTIN: The Valesian council was sending you to recover... to investigate and potentially find, um, more of what you found that first tower.

ART: I think we have to have, like, a really frank conversation with Uklan and Sunder.

AUSTIN: Uh-huh.

ART: About like--cause I don't think they... they might not know how bad things are. I mean, Uklan probably has an idea because he's uh, he's really hurt.

AUSTIN: (laughing)

AUSTIN: These are--they don't look like... Uklan Tel or like Lem King, the other orcs you've met.

AUSTIN (as ORC NPC): I personally have *no problem* with the elves. But there is a way about this. You have to go to the office, you have to get the paperwork that says you're allowed to be here.

NICK (as Fantasma): It seems to me we are looking at another reality, the same as we were when we were inside the... manufacturing... area.. that I... destroyed.

AUSTIN: With a book over his heart in one hand and a bottle in the other... and that gaze, even in this kind of primitive... y'know, religious icon, is the same. And it sees right through you. Samot, the Boy King.

AUSTIN: The elf party gets back first to find broken windows and a missing orc.

[Autumn Not Winter stops playing]

DRE: (singing) Eatin' this ham, everybody's on a break. Eatin' this ham and it's just little me!

AUSTIN: ...Hey. Hi. I just sat down.

DRE: (laughing)

NICK: Hello.

AUSTIN: How's it going? What was that?

DRE: Uh... nobody was here so I just started singing a little song to myself while I ate this piece of ham!

NICK: (laughing)

AUSTIN: Huh.

NICK: I sat down and I heard singing in my headphones as they were just sitting on my desk but I--(laughing)--I picked it up and you had stopped, like, on the way to my head.

DRE: (laughing)

AUSTIN: All right. We're back. What do you do? So Uklan, Uklan Tel's gone, Sunder is not pleased about that, uh, the throne room or this part of the throne room where you've been camping out has been trashed, your stuff's been kicked over. Um... none of your stuff is *missing*, but there is blood on the ground, and...

DRE: How much blood?

AUSTIN: Mm... you've been cut this bad on your adventures before.

DRE: Okay.

AUSTIN: So, like, not--he's not dying. But it ain't good.

DRE: Okay. Yeah. Yeah, I mean, I can roll uh, I can roll a Hunt and Track to see if we can figure out where he took 'em.

AUSTIN: Sounds good.

DRE: Okay. Can I take, uh, can I take the search bonus on that as well? From Kodiak?

AUSTIN: Oh yeah def--oh, well, yeah. I think so. That's not, like... There's like a--is there a separate thing for track?

DRE: Uh... I don't think there is.

AUSTIN: No, this is good. You're good. Yep.

NICK: That, like, has to be a thing that a dog would give you a bonus to.

AUSTIN: Well it's weird because the way it works is that you pick what it's trained in doing, so Dre's--so Kodiak is, is, what... attack monsters, attack humans, search...

DRE: Guard, and search.

AUSTIN: And guard. But like, doesn't have perform, doesn't have scout, doesn't have hunt.

NICK: Okay.

AUSTIN: Or labor or travel.

DRE: I really wanna... I really wanna teach him to perform! I mean I don't know when ever that would be useful, but it would be adorable.

AUSTIN: You don't wanna give up an entire level to teach Kodiak to perform? No?

DRE: (laughing)

AUSTIN: Weird.

DRE: Weird. All right.

AUSTIN: What are Kodiak's weaknesses, by the way?

DRE: Uh, he's stubborn.

AUSTIN: Okay.

ART: He works too hard, he's too committed...

AUSTIN: What animal would Kodiak be if he was an animal?

DRE: Well no, cause he... (laughing)

AUSTIN: An eagle. Okay.

DRE: I mean he's stubborn because I didn't raise him from a puppy. Like, I found him.

AUSTIN: Right, okay.

DRE: Ours is more of a friendship than like, a master-pet relationship.

AUSTIN: Anyway.

DRE: Anyway. I'm gonna roll this.

AUSTIN: Make your... make your tracking roll.

DRE: Ten!

AUSTIN: Okay.

ART: Boom!

DRE: Do you want me to read the flavor text for...

AUSTIN: Yeah, please.

DRE: On a 10+, uh, I follow the creature's trail until there is a significant change in its direction or mode of travel, and I also choose one: gain a useful bit of information about your quarry, uh, or determine what caused the trail to end. So I guess... useful bit of information?

AUSTIN: Sure. Okay. Um, so they do start this way, and then about here--so about halfway between the tower, the kind of bottom, so--for the people listening, there's a big bottom chunk of the tower, big like south, to, south-east to north-west chunk of the tower at the bottom of this map, and about halfway down that, halfway to the kind of, um, makeshift barracks that is at the bottom of this tower, that I'm gonna make visible, now, that I should have done that much earlier, actually, uh... The tracks turn, and begin marching back up to the north. Far to the north. Again it's the middle of the night, so I don't... or it's not the middle of the night, but by the time you kind of get that turn around and start going north again, and I think by the time you get up to this residential spot it's probably around 11 p.m. Um, and you can decide whether or not you want to finish that now, or come back in the morning, or what. But, but... the extra little bit that you notice is... that at first you think he's leaving you breadcrumbs. There are lots of little... There are lots of little divots in the ground where it's like he... dragged his foot extra deep in the ground.

ART: (quietly) Oh no.

AUSTIN: And so it's like oh, maybe he's trying to like, help you follow his track. But you're also... but sometimes it's weirder than that? It's like a weird loop? Or like, it's like a sharp press down, like he like *really* like hammers it in, or, or maybe it's not him at all, maybe it's a pala-din with a weird foot, or, who knows. It's really hard to tell. But there are these strange markings throughout, um, throughout the path.

DRE: I wonder if it's pattern magic. Or attempts at it.

AUSTIN: Right.

AUSTIN: So you're up at the residential, kind of, sliver here. And it's about--just about midnight.

DRE: Can you, uh, click on again where we are?

AUSTIN: Yeah, I'm doing it right now. Can you see it?

DRE: Uh... no, actually. That's weird.

AUSTIN: Really? Okay, maybe it's just being weird. Um... let me refresh Roll20.

NICK: I also...

DRE: Oh, there it is. I see it.

NICK: Oh, yeah.

ART: I did that one. That was me, that was me.

AUSTIN: (laughing)

DRE: Oh.

NICK: Oh, okay.

ART: I was... I was seeing if just like clicks were broken.

AUSTIN: Right. It's probably me.

ART: That was you.

AUSTIN: No, that wasn't me, I haven't done it yet.

ART: Oh.

AUSTIN: (laughing) Uh, this is me.

ART: That one wasn't me.

AUSTIN: This is me. Do you see that?

DRE: So that residential--okay.

AUSTIN: So you guys kind of went south and then turned back around and, like, made a little loop from there up to here, and then up to here, and then finally you're up here at around midnight.

DRE: And this is--that's where Hadrian was once, right?

AUSTIN: Right. Um... and it's not the end of the trail, the trail continues north.

DRE: Not into the residential, but like--

AUSTIN: No, continuing north-west, along the side of this tower, yeah. You feel like that would be another three or four hours before you get, like... by the time you get up to the buildings, or the sections you haven't been to before, it'd be another three or four hours you'd be going without sleep.

ART (as Hadrian): I mean, this—

AUSTIN: (overlapping) And you're fine to do that.

ART (as Hadrian): --this is a residential area, neighbourhood, we could--we could stay here. There are even places I think, like, might be safer to stay for us. But... but they're onto us now, there's no safety here anymore.

DRE (as Throndir): There's even less safety for Uklan.

ART (as Hadrian): Yeah. But what do we accomplish by getting there exhausted?

AUSTIN: Sunder says...

AUSTIN (as Sunder): Who knows what they're doing with him. I... (deep breath) I need to push ahead, even if you don't.

ART (as Hadrian): No, we're not, we're not doing that, let's all go.

DRE (as Throndir): Yeah. Let's stick together. Let's all go. I won't sleep much anyway, so let's go.

AUSTIN: Also Hadrian doesn't need to sleep, so. Fantasma, are you on board with this?

NICK (as Fantasma): (grumpy sigh) I... I'm not sure that they would harm him, they did not seem to be... the types.

DRE (as Throndir): There's *blood*.

AUSTIN (as Sunder): There are worse things that they could do than harm him. He's a very smart man, and I don't want... I don't want to think about what they could do with his knowledge.

NICK (as Fantasma): Fair enough.

ART (as Hadrian): Who are--I mean, who... who is pulling the strings there? I mean we met Tabard, he explained some stuff, but, but who do they represent?

AUSTIN (as Sunder): I haven't been there myself, but... the City of First Light stands tall in the south. And their forces are... as strong as any left on the continent. Samot's reach is long. And it's only... it's only natural that he would want to reclaim what was once his. Let's go.

AUSTIN: And she begins walking further to the north.

ART: Yeah, let's go.

DRE: Yeah, I follow, let's go.

AUSTIN: It's a quiet night, um, here. Y'know, there's not... no one's talking, obviously, and there isn't--you don't hear much movement anywhere. I'm gonna move this away, this is also not here anymore. And... as you get closer to the north, and the kind of area around the tower kind of closes in from the west and the east, you can start to hear the whipping winds of the blizzard just outside again. Slide you up here.

AUSTIN: At about... y'know, couple of hours after midnight, uh, you hear... What did it sound like when you dispelled the, the Ordennan dimension? Was there like a sound associated with that?

NICK: Um... it was less a sound and more like the immediate absence.

AUSTIN: Okay. Then that actually works really well, because... suddenly the whipping winds of the nearby blizzard stop. And... you can feel your heart beat, but you can't even hear it. And then a few seconds later, it comes back, things come back. Whoops, sorry, I didn't mean to lift you. As you get up to the little, there's this kind of like little, um, choke point between this little chunk to the left here, to the west, and then the zone where there was just the raw rupture where Hadrian was lost last time. You can feel a little bit of energy in the air, and... Sunder says...

AUSTIN (as Sunder): There was some sort of barrier here, some sort of wall. They had him get rid of it. Let's get--let's keep going.

AUSTIN: And the trail moves up further, until you're here, um, where you can see... So, one, you hear a different thing, you continue to hear the whipping winds, but you also hear... you also hear a sort of, uh, a low rumble of activity, um, from a city. The sort of like--the early, early, early morning--people are waking up, and going about their business, um, and that's coming from the inside of that building. The second thing is that you see a strange light coming from in there. Should also note--

ART: Similar to the other strange light?

AUSTIN: It's not as bright as that, but it's s~ort of similar. It has the same like, the same coloring and the same like, kind of um... it has the kind of same effect on the early morning like, mist, right, like it kind of saturates the air in a similar way, but it's nowhere near as bright as the light is to the south-east. Also--

NICK: It's got like, a similar texture.

AUSTIN: Yes, exactly. Behind you as you walk past this chunk here, you can see that the north-eastern face of it is broken off completely, and inside is a sort of um, uh... what do you call those things with the planets? Um... an orrery. So like a, like a, kind of like... big, metal, like, reconstruction of planets and, and, uh, a single body in the middle, that's kind of clearly the sun. Let me bring this up front... Roll20 is really good and I am still not super good at using it. There we go.

AUSTIN: So yeah it's like, it's like one of those things that's like, the big metal uh... like, gears and stuff, where like, there's a bunch of different orbs that represent planets, uh, and again in the middle is a, is a large stand-in for the sun. What do you do?

ART: What does it appear to be made out of?

AUSTIN: (sighs) Some sort of metal that has retained its sheen. It's a golden, or a--it's a golden color but you doubt the whole thing is made of gold.

ART: Sure. But everyone knows the sun is really made of iron.

AUSTIN: Right. This is true. At least, Samoth's sun.

AUSTIN: So do you go into this room? This last section? That's where the trail leads.

ART: ...Yeah. Given infinite time I would poke around that, that other place, but...

AUSTIN: But--

DRE: Is Fantasma still invisible?

NICK: No.

DRE: Okay.

NICK: Fantasma is really distracted by the orrery though.

AUSTIN: Yeah. Sure. Understandably.

NICK: When, when they first see it he walks up to it and uh, like sort of says somewhat under his breath...

NICK (as Fantasma): Astounding.

DRE: Throndir shushes him very quietly.

NICK: Actually, can I... um... can I do a quick uh, lore... check?

AUSTIN: Yeah, absolutely.

NICK: To see... let's see, no that wouldn't be spouting lore because I'm not...

AUSTIN: Well what's the thing you want to do?

NICK: I want to see if I know anything about any of the actual... I want to compare what we're seeing here to any known celestial bodies.

AUSTIN: That's a lore check, I think. That's a--you can Spout Lore on that. I'll tell you something useful about it if it's a 10 or above, or I'll tell you something interesting if it's, if it's 7 to 9.

NICK: Right. Okay, um...

AUSTIN: So that should be an Intelligence roll.

NICK: And I'm actually going to consult my Book of Names which gives me a +1 on spouts... perception.

AUSTIN: Sure.

AUSTIN: Well.

NICK: Eh.. uh... okay. But that's a 6.

AUSTIN: Right, which is a fail.

NICK: Yeah.

AUSTIN: All right. I think you're... It sounds like you are drawn to it, a little bit. Y'know, the rest of the group moves on, and you find yourself looking through your Book of Names and trying to compare different sketches of the known universe or the known... y'know, there are probably--especially now, in the era of the post-Erasure, who even knows what cosmology and the understanding of the celestial bodies is.

NICK: Right.

AUSTIN: There's probably lots of competing theories. What you do... what you notice is actually part of what... what Hadrian, what Art said earlier, which was 'we all know that the real sun is made of iron'. And this sun is larger, and not as dense, and not as densely packed as the iron sun is supposed to be, um, which is strange. Because remember, y'know, Samoths goes and--and, uh, into the volcano or whatever, and gets--and makes the sun out of, out of a kind of volcano of iron, out of the kind of molten iron of a volcano.

NICK: Right.

ART: 'Or whatever'. How dare you.

AUSTIN: Or whatever.

DRE: (laughing)

AUSTIN: And he puts it in the sky. But, while you're busy flipping through books... You're busy flipping through books and stuff, and--and you think that everyone is there with you. They are not. They've all moved on. And...

NICK: I've lost track of everybody.

AUSTIN: You lose track of everything and everyone and you are here, everyone else has moved into the throne room at this point. P.S., this is the throne room. You see that immediately.

ART: Oh, the one on top.

AUSTIN: Yeah the one on top, it turns out. I thought that was--like--my whole fear for this whoole segment of the game was like... I had to put the throne room at the top, it has to be at the top, but they're gonna know to just go to the top, of course they're gonna go right to the top. And yet, here we are, I had to drag you here...

ART: Wait wait wait, I think it's important to note that you put bad stuff north of the first throne room. How could we go there? There's bad stuff there.

AUSTIN: No, actually, I didn't, I put 'strange movement' above the other one, up here. It was just strange movement, who even knows!

NICK: Yeah but there was, there were bad things on the map between our camping spot and the entire north half of the tower.

AUSTIN: Right, but you could have just cut through and around, it would have been no big deal.

NICK & DRE: (laughing)

ART: I still want to know what's in the three places we didn't go!

AUSTIN: Good question.

ART: I wanna hundred per cent clear this or we're not going anywhere!

DRE: (laughing)

AUSTIN: You have to also explore the inverted tower, afterwards, though. Hundred and ninety-eight percent.

NICK: I was gonna make the same joke.

AUSTIN: Aw, I'm sorry. I should have let you.

NICK: No, it's good. I'm glad somebody did.

AUSTIN: So... ah, one second, I'm gonna move you over.

NICK: Also: inverted tower, in a previous D&D campaign I played, it was a fictitious world that we had made up and the--I played a gnome in that world, and in--I wrote, like, tons and tons of lore, like we set up a wiki for that campaign and ninety-five percent of the pages were gnomish lore. I went nuts. And they, they lived in this thing that they called the inverted tower, which was really just a shaft like, going infinitely long into the planet.

AUSTIN: Rad. That sounds like some um, some uh, what's his name. (whispered) Oh my god. Fantasy writer. British. He's--he died recently, sadly.

NICK: Oh--Pratchett.

AUSTIN: Pratchett. That sounds like a Pratchett thing to me.

NICK: Yeah. I mean--yeah. Like, basically all of my fantasy stuff is basically just really just Discworld.

AUSTIN: That's fair. Y'know. That's fair. All right.

ART: I would like to--hold on. I am gonna start talking about reasons not to put your throne room at the top of your giant tower city.

AUSTIN: Okay.

ART: Reason the first. (laughing) What if you need like a centralised location for, for like locating the bureaucracy? You don't want to be so far removed from the lower levels that your influence isn't felt.

AUSTIN: This is--sure, sure.

ART: Reason the s--reason the second. If you get too high, your view is pretty pointless, right? Like you wanna be able to see the texture of the things around you, not just like... oh yeah, I'm really high up, I can see like...

AUSTIN: You mean like--the aesthetics of the view, is what you're saying. Good.

ART: Yeah, the, the aesthetics of the view. You want people to like... to come and be like 'oh yeah this is a cool throne room, look at all the stuff you can see' not like 'this is, this is a throne room but like, all I'm seeing is like... non-differentiated land', right, like 'oh yeah it's just trees'. (sarcastically) Ooooh. Barely textured green.

AUSTIN: (laughing) great.

ART: Reason the third--

AUSTIN: More. Okay.

ART: --I feel like assassins would be more likely to get you on the top floor because they can just come in on the top.

AUSTIN: How would they get there?

ART: They're assassins.

AUSTIN: This is like a--this is like a city... this is a big tower.

ART: I don't know, magic!

DRE: You've also missed the obvious, like, the most obvious reason which is the fourth: when it falls, you fall the furthest.

AUSTIN: Yeah.

ART: No, your tower's never going to fall, you're king of a giant tower city. No one builds a giant tower city that isn't just obsessed with hubris.

AUSTIN: It's strange because as you step into this throne room--and again it's, it's kind of like the whole area around the throne room, as well, the throne--the whole level of--kind of the royal level, here. This tower hasn't fallen. You're back on--it's back on its right side, the second you step inside of it, and in fact the second you step inside through a hole in the wall, the hole in the wall is gone from behind you. The way you came in is not here anymore and your feet feel firmly planted on the ground, and there does seem to be a tower underneath you again. And there is some activity through here. There are servants rushing around. Again, like the previous part of the throne room you'd been to already, there was a... there's lots of red and gold, but this space feels lived in in a way that the other one didn't. And mixed in with the red and gold there is a lot of, of, kind of, marble--white marble work that stands on its own. It seems almost as if the red and gold here is--it's almost outdated. It's almost like that was the old fashion, we haven't really kept up with that, and whenever we built in a new room or a new wing we went in this other direction. So I guess I'll start by asking if you want to make a Search roll.

ART: Enthusiastic yes.

DRE: Yeah, I would.

AUSTIN: Yeah, okay. Sunder certainly agrees. Who wants to make that roll?

ART: Are we aiding each other on this [Austin overlaps] or are we making separate rolls?

AUSTIN: You can, you can totally aid each other. One roll. One roll for the group. So, Hadrian if you...

ART: Who's got the best WIS?

DRE: Uh, well, I have plus one but then I also get the plus two from Kodiak helping. So plus three altogether.

ART: Well then you should probably do it.

DRE: Okay.

ART: Hold on, I'll roll Aid.

DRE: Roll away, sir.

ART: Uh, hold on, I can't... Oh right, cause it's weird. Uh, roll plus Bond, so it's just plus one. It's a 9. I don't think that does anything.

DRE: Do I get a--

ART: On a 7-9, you also expose yourself to--I give you a plus one, and I expose myself to danger, retribution or cost, which I can't imagine being anything of any consequence in a place like this.

DRE: No, it'll be fine. Uh, so I guess that makes it a 2d6 plus four, right? Okay.

ART: Well is Sunder aiding? I guess she doesn't have moves.

DRE: Oh, 11. Is Austin gone?

AUSTIN: I've been muted. I'm bad. I've been talking and been muted. Whoops. Sorry. Whoops. Ugh. I disappoint myself sometimes. Okay.

NICK: That'll be an interesting...

AUSTIN: Little--yes.

NICK: ...finished edit when this goes up later.

AUSTIN: So, yeah. So... you get to choose three from--from medical supplies, rations, information, something--long-lost knowledge or useful information, or a useful tool or weapon. So you can choose three of those.

DRE: Can you give me the list again, Austin? I'm sorry.

AUSTIN: Sure. Something to eat, useful tool or weapon, useful information or long-lost knowledge, or medical supplies.

ART: We need a tool or a weapon, that's what we're here for.

DRE: Yeah. I would agree. I would also say info.

ART: And knowledge. Yeah. We're on the same page on that one. Uh, could probably get some pretty sweet grub here. But medical supplies might also be super helpful cause we're about to have to take a very hurt person out of here.

DRE: Yeah, I would almost lean more towards medical supplies than food.

AUSTIN: Okay. For the medical supplies--

ART: Turning down the prime rib, that's respectable.

AUSTIN: You manage to find two... okay so in--you're being very careful here. As careful as can be, which means a lot of like, bad TV-show style poking your head out of a hallway to see if the coast is clear and then tiptoeing around.

DRE: Do we all like stack up and then Kodiak pokes his head out at the bottom?

AUSTIN: Oh yeah. Absolutely. Yeah.

DRE: Perfect.

AUSTIN: And you manage to find in a washroom a pair of small vials that you *think* are probably healing potions? Go ahead and write those down as healing potions.

ART: Healing potions, question mark.

AUSTIN: The second thing that you asked for was information, right? Uh... let's see, let's look at these notes that I have. Okay. You find... So you're trying to get a feel for where you are and what's going on here, and... you end up finding a... you end up spotting--okay. This is what it is. You end up finding a balcony. And in that--from that balcony, you can see below, and you kind of like--instinctively, both of you instinctively look to the sun to kind of get your bearings. Throndir, because you're a ranger, and that helps you get your bearings, like 'oh okay well I know it's about this time, where is the sun in the sky, okay cool'. Hadrian, because you look to the sun for all things. This is, this is the first law of Samoths.

NICK: Praise the sun!

AUSTIN: Praise the sun. So you find the sun in the sky, and it's your sun, you recognise your sun, and then you follow it down, you look *down*, expecting to find--you kind of look towards where Velas would be. You realise you're on a westward-facing balcony, and you look over to where Velas should be, but you don't see Velas. You don't see the--the Mark of the Erasure, you don't see the blizzard, you don't see Auniq to the west, either. You see a city that stretches out beneath you. A city of stone, and ash. And you wander around this balcony and, and you realise that you're in a completely different place than you were before. You are--this tower is not as

high as the other one would have been. It's still a tall tower, it's about as tall as that first tower that you went to as a party was, out on the Isle of Eventide, but this tower... is, instead of being isolated, is at the heart of--of activity, of civilisation, of commerce. And to the south-east--sorry, south-east might be wrong, let me look at the map, let me *actually* look at the map--south-east is wrong. To the north-east, you see from this balcony, the... murmuring, and the smoke of a volcano.

ART: Ooh. Let's stay in this reality.

AUSTIN: So that's your information, is, you are in the City of First Light.

ART: Yeah.

AUSTIN: Third thing is something useful, is a useful item. Okay. You... you find them. You find the group, you find Uklan Tel on his knees in front of what looks like some sort of, um, giant mirror. It is in... it is in a room that is only a few steps from the actual massive throne room, which you have not gone into yet because there are actually lots of people in there. But in this adjacent room, there is a wall that is basically a whole mirror, and Uklan Tel is there looking up at it. And he is surrounded by pala-din, by Tabard, and he has in his hands now, a strange book. What do you do?

ART: Oh, that's--you remember the part where at 7-9 I expose myself to danger, retribution or cost or is this that danger, retribution and/or cost?

AUSTIN: This is that danger, retribution or cost.

ART: Great, um...

AUSTIN: You're exposed to it, you don't--y'know, I'm not punishing you, right, like you could leave.

DRE: Do they know we're here?

AUSTIN: Not yet.

ART: So I have a couple, like, theories as to ways that this fight just doesn't immediately start with me fighting you guys. But I don't know if they're going to work.

AUSTIN: He only had your right hand the last time he saw you.

DRE: Here's what I could do--I could do a Called Shot and if I shoot him in the head and roll a 7 or 9 he can do nothing but drool for a couple of... for a couple of rounds.

AUSTIN: That's not a bad idea.

ART: That'd help.

DRE: I don't know how we're going to kill these statue things.

ART: Same way you kill anything else.

DRE: But I wonder if they could even do anything if Tabard is--is, y'know, not in the fight.

ART: I would like to think that Tabard does not have, have a constant telepathic control over all of them at once because that's a powerful man that I don't wanna fuck with. That's a man who could probably see through my eyes *right now*.

AUSTIN: Fantasma, you realise you're alone.

DRE: Oh, shit, we don't even have Fantasma to cast Charm Person on him, either.

ART: Whatever. This guy's--this guy's gotta go.

DRE: Yeah, that's fair.

NICK: Is there any... immediate danger?

AUSTIN: No. I mean, you're not--you don't see... no-one's here.

NICK: Okay. Uh, Fantasma has the sudden realisation that he has been lost, y'know, in books for a good minute, and uh--

AUSTIN: (laughing) I really thought you were gonna say 'for all of his life', because... that is the actual case.

NICK: (laughing) Yeah, okay. Uh, for the hottest minute that ever was. It's so hot that this minute spanned the life of a hundred-year-old elf.

AUSTIN: Yes.

NICK: No, but okay. In *this* moment.

AUSTIN: Yes, I understand.

NICK: Y'know, has a sudden like...

NICK (as Fantasma): Oh, oh dear. I am alone.

NICK: And he looks around, like takes off his little like grandpa glasses... which, I actually--I don't know, did I ever mention--did I ever say... describe him as having grandpa glasses?

AUSTIN: I don't know, but they're good, I like them.

NICK: Yeah, like, now--okay, so, after the--some of the fanart we got by Emily, @silverskinned on Twitter, and in that Fantasma has grandpa glasses and it's perfect. Takes off his grandpa glasses to like, to look around, takes them off the end of his nose, and then... just sorta shrugs, and puts his glasses back on, and goes back to the passage he was in.

AUSTIN: Oh, boy. Okay. Okay, that's the person he is.

NICK: Look, Fantasma knows that they're--he has faith in his... *compatriots*, like he knows that they could take care of themselves.

ART: I've heard what you've had to say about faith before and that's a lie.

NICK: (laughing)

AUSTIN: So in the room with the mirror, the mirror room...

ART: Could I uh, could I Discern Realities real quick?

AUSTIN: Yes.

DRE: Oh boy. Don't...

ART: It's fine.

DRE: Don't mess--don't mess this up!

ART: What's the worst thing that happens.

AUSTIN: (quietly) A lot.

DRE: He sees us!

AUSTIN: Well. With a five...

DRE: Art, should... shoulda let me shoot him in the head!

ART: I don't think anyone's stopping you from shooting him in the head.

AUSTIN: Well we have to finish what's about to happen here, which is... You um, y'know, in your--in your eagerness to Discern Realities you step into the room and... and like are kind of (quiet laughter) *sneaking up* on them I think? And trying to like make a, make sense of what's happening. And of *course*, there's a mirror, the whole wall is a mirror, so he just sees you. And he turns, and sighs, and then says:

AUSTIN (as Tabard): I warned you to leave.

AUSTIN: He being Tabard.

ART: Sure.

AUSTIN (as Tabard): It's already too late. For you, for him.

AUSTIN: He looks down at Uklan.

AUSTIN (as Tabard): We have what we came for. (sighs) Maybe we could find a place for you here, maybe you could serve under me. I can ask my master to show you some degree of... amnesty. You would make good pala-din, it turns out, I'm sorry to say.

ART: Was that would or would not?

AUSTIN: Would.

ART: Hmmmmm.

AUSTIN (as Tabard): Drop your weapons.

DRE: Does he know I'm here?

AUSTIN: (overlapping) I guess he hasn't seen--no, he just knows... yeah, he just knows that Hadrian is here.

DRE: Ah-- (desperately) I'm gonna call my shot! I'm gonna go for it!

AUSTIN: Okay. How's that work? Read me Called Shot.

DRE: So... on a--when you attack a defenseless or surprised enemy at range, you can choose to deal your damage or name your target and roll plus DEX. Uh... if I do a successful headshot, if I do at least a seven or nine they do nothing but stand and drool for a few minutes. If I do a ten plus, I get the same benefit as seven to nine, plus I deal damage.

AUSTIN: Okay.

DRE: I could also go for arms, where they drop anything they're holding, and then legs, they're hobbled and slow-moving, but I think...

AUSTIN: You think the headshot is like, the bit here.

DRE: Yeah. Yeah.

ART: Yeah.

DRE: (whispered) Oh, boy. All right, here we go! Good thing I leveled up my DEX! *Twelve*, what's up!

AUSTIN: Hoo! What *is* up!

NICK: Nice.

AUSTIN: So... so you do your damage, plus they stand and drool, so give me your damage roll.

DRE: Is that just a d8? Do I add anything to that?

AUSTIN: No, unless you're also attacking with Kodiak.

DRE: Uh... yeah, I mean I would be.

AUSTIN: (laughing) So you're shooting him and then Kodiak is rolling in to get that... get them bites.

DRE: Oh yeah!

ART: Wait, your weapon doesn't give a plus damage anyway?

AUSTIN: No, most weapons don't.

DRE: No.

AUSTIN: Swords are special, there's a handful of special weapons, but...

NICK: I mean, look, any good hunter class has like... animal attack and that--that power shot bound to the same key, you know. You just do that.

DRE: Would I add this... adds Ferocity, so that's 1d8 plus 2. Uh, four, okay. I got the good roll out of the way early.

(laughter)

AUSTIN: And he has armor on, so... or I guess it's a headshot, so he doesn't have head armor, that's good. You... okay, so your arrow--you release your arrow, and it... (sighs) he doesn't--does he already...? One second, I need to make sure of something. Right, right right right. I knew he was missing something. I didn't know if it was an arm or an eye. Uh, it's an arm, so I can't, so--yeah. You catch him in the... he's missing his left arm? Right now? So you catch him in his right eye with... with this arrow.

DRE: Augh!

ART: Eugh.

AUSTIN: And he's like:

AUSTIN (as Tabard): Ahh!

AUSTIN: And he holds it--

NICK: (whispering) Headshot.

AUSTIN: Yeah, it's just, it's in there, he is like... isn't sure what to do, um, and the other pala-din all draw their swords and turn, but seem to be... there are five others in this room. We should make this room. We should make this room really quick. This is a room worth making. Close all these windows...

NICK: (whispering quieter) Headshot. Headshot.

AUSTIN: (whispering) Nice.

NICK: (whispering) Nice.

DRE: (laughing)

AUSTIN: Is your next character just going to be Francis York Morgan?

NICK: (laughing) Oh, man. That would be great.

AUSTIN (as Francis York Morgan): Have you read the Lord of the Rings, Zach?

AUSTIN: It's just that, but instead of eighties movies it's all fantasy novels.

NICK: Oh, I love that game.

AUSTIN (as Francis York Morgan): You know some people think it's called Game of Thrones, but the actual book is called A Song of Ice and Fire.

ART: Boooooooo.

AUSTIN: Where is... let's draw a map... drawin' maps. Where--what--what--who--ah? Okay.

NICK (as Francis York Morgan): Most people like the Rincewind cycle of Discworld, but I'm always a big fan of the witches.

AUSTIN: Let's get, um, how do we... let's get icons back over here. Can I--can you use your icons? Can you just... two of you added icons to your thing, can I just like drag that over? Is that gonna be massive? Oh, it works.

DRE: Aw, nice!

NICK: Cool.

AUSTIN: All right. Fantasmio's not there. Art, why have you not linked in your rad icon to this game? Hm?

ART: I have no idea what you're talking about.

DRE: This guy.

AUSTIN: Oh my god. We have all this great fanart...

NICK: Yeah. Shout out again to that fanart, by uh... @silverskinned...

ART: But how do I put it in here? What does that even mean?

NICK: If you go to your character sheet, and you hit 'edit'...

DRE: You can upload a picture.

NICK: You'll have 'avatar'. And you can just upload a picture there.

ART: Oh. I'd have to like... sure.

NICK: It's on... You, Art, and everyone listening, can find this amazing fanart at streamfriends.tumblr.com.

AUSTIN: Thank you.

DRE: I always forget we have a Tumblr.

AUSTIN: It's a cool Tumblr.

NICK: I made that Tumblr and I forget we have a Tumblr. (laughing) I made it and Kelsey just took it over.

AUSTIN: Oh, did she?

NICK: Cause she is... yeah. Well--thankfully, because I've, again, I forgot about it, but Kelsey took it over because she's the best.

DRE: Yeah, Kelsey has kinda taken everything over.

AUSTIN: That's true.

NICK: Yeah. I'm okay with that.

DRE: In a good way, yeah. God, that picture of Lem is so good.

ART: Wait, plugging it in here did like nothing. Is it Bio & Info?

DRE: You have to hit 'edit' for it to pop up.

ART: I hit 'edit', nothing happened.

DRE: Uh, are you on... Bio & Info?

ART: Oh, here it is. No, it like... the pop-up--when you do the pop-up part, it still doesn't edit over it, the regular window.

NICK: Oh--yeah.

ART: There we go. There he is.

AUSTIN: I'll grab him and drag him to the map... clear that out... hey, there he is! Look at that. Look at that!

NICK: I would... if I had infinity money, I would absolutely start an animated show with those...

AUSTIN: Oh yeah, that would be the best.

NICK: With the characters as designed by @silverskinned on Twitter.

DRE: That's a big mirror!

AUSTIN: It's the whole wall, y'know?

DRE: Is uh, is Uklan in this?

AUSTIN: Yeah, I have to add him real quick. He's an orc, look that up--Keith, you can cut all this, probably, right bud? Thanks.

NICK: They call that the uh... the four-fifty-one model of mirrors.

DRE: And is Sunder with us? She's not with--she's not with Fantasma.

AUSTIN: She is. She's with you guys, yeah, good call.

DRE: At least we have one wizard here.

AUSTIN: Mhm. Well, she's not even *really* a wizard, she's a--it's a whole thing.

DRE: (laughing) Whatever. Numbers.

AUSTIN: Yes. Numbers is good.

ART: Everyone agrees that my best course of action here is to try to just take out Tabard while he's stunned, right? Like forget all these other people, just like... just like hit him, in the face, with all the face-hitting stuff I got.

DRE: Yeah. I would even say--

ART: Which is just a sword, I don't...

DRE: If you could hit him in the neck, to cut *off* his face, that would be even better.

AUSTIN: That'd be pretty dope.

ART: Yeah, I don't have that.

AUSTIN: You don't have--no? That's not a thing you have?

DRE: You've got a sword.

ART: I don't have, like, Called Shot. I have a sword...

AUSTIN: (quietly) You two are here...

NICK: Is Hadrian still in his, like--

AUSTIN: Yes.

NICK: --footie pyjama under-armor? (laughing)

AUSTIN: Totally.

DRE: (powerfully) Underarmor!

ART: First of all, how dare you.

DRE: It's fine, he's in Underarmor, he can protect this house.

NICK: So--y'know, actually--y'know what I always imagined that looked like, actually? Was what your Inquisitor is wearing when you're hanging out in Skyhold.

AUSTIN: Oh, yeah, totally. That's totally it.

DRE: Yeah, I--I thought of um, who's the--who's the Warden in Inquisition? The thing he wears when he's around Skyhold. That's what I always pictured Hadrian in, being naked. But yeah, the Inquisitor clothes is probably a good call too.

NICK: And like--they have fancy buttons, and the buttons have like... the Samothres sun symbol on them...

DRE: Fancy!

AUSTIN: Sorry, I'm trying to get this right.

ART: I wonder if my rock hand would make a decent, like, a half-hearted shield. We'll find out if I need to... Defy Danger.

AUSTIN: If you need to block something? Yeah. Okay. There we go, this--oop, didn't mean that one. There we go. That mostly works, right? All right.

NICK: So--so Art, would you say it is (slowly) now the time for maybe clobbering? (laughing)

DRE: (laughing)

AUSTIN: I--mm. Okay.

ART: I'm never gonna live this down back on Yancy Street, back in Velas.

NICK: (laughing)

DRE: Should I--should I yell 'bow on'? Is that how this works?

AUSTIN: Stop it. We're done, I'm--shut it down, Friends at the Table's canceled. What, uh--what are you doing?

ART: I wanna hit--I wanna hit him in the face. I wanna hit Tabard in the face with my sword.

AUSTIN: Let's give it a shot.

DRE: If he's stunned, do you still have to roll?

AUSTIN: Uh, yeah, because there are these other dudes here, who are--who are taking up a defensive posture, yeah.

DRE: Oh, yeah, they could like step in the way.

AUSTIN: Specifically this one who's right next to him.

DRE: Woof.

ART: Mother *fuck*.

AUSTIN: Dude. That's a bad roll.

ART: Whatever. We know I live till Christmas.

DRE: Do we?

AUSTIN: Might have to retcon some stuff real--real quick.

DRE: Yeah I mean we've already--we've already said that there's multiple universes within Friends at the Table, like... We could just easily, like, 'yeah, Christmas episode was a different

universe, where Hadrian survived!"

AUSTIN: Um, so yeah.

ART: Here's what really happened: all the murderers got away, cause everyone's a big coward.

AUSTIN: So I th--yeah, yeah, you specifically swing on Tabard, and then like *just* before your golden sword hits, the... one of the pala-din--the pala-din right next to him reaches out with their blade and intercepts it, y'know, pulling it aside.

ART: Sure.

AUSTIN: Sunder steps in, and uh, and begins to--to chant some stuff, and draws her sword, and is setting up to, to kind of take on the two over here to the right.

NICK: Um... at this point, Fantasma suddenly remembers he actually never quit the telepathic link with Sunder, uh, and just sort of casually asks...

NICK (as Fantasma): So uh... what's happening over there? Do you... do you lot need any help?

AUSTIN (as Sunder): (angrily) Not now, old man.

DRE: Actually no, yeah, now! Now. Now would be a great time for help!

NICK (as Fantasma): Uh... okay.

AUSTIN: You can tell she's in trouble. You can tell she's in trouble, and mad at you.

NICK: Oh, okay. (laughing)

AUSTIN: Throndir, what are you doing? Or--Fantasma, are you going to start making a move here? Towards this?

NICK: Yeah. Uh, somehow, even though it's not actually in--like somehow Sunder hears the sharp crack of a large book being closed very quickly.

(laughing)

AUSTIN: All right. Let's say--it'll take you a few turns, because like, you have to get in here, and then she has to direct you here... so let's say... let's say four turns before you're here. Okay. Throndir, what are you doing?

DRE: Uh, I'm gonna, I'm gonna attempt to shoot Tabard with my bow.

AUSTIN: Okay.

DRE: (quietly) DEX roll... Uh, seven.

AUSTIN: Okay, on a seven, what happens.

DRE: I can deal my damage to the enemy, uh, but I also have to choose one. So I can move to get the shot, placing me in the danger of your choice, I can take--I have to take what I can get, so I take minus 1d6 damage, or I can take several shots, reducing my ammo by one. Um, I'll just reduce my ammo by one.

AUSTIN: Okay. Where are you at on ammo now?

DRE: I'll be at five, now.

AUSTIN: Oh, yeah, that's plenty. You're great. All right. So, go ahead and do your damage.

DRE: So I'll do 1d8 plus two to do, uh... Uh, five. Cool.

AUSTIN: All right, that's, that's all right.

DRE: It'll keep getting better by one!

ART: People don't have a ton of hit points.

AUSTIN: Yeah, he does have armor on here, which helps a little bit, but--but you're, you're making progress.

DRE: Um, actually--

AUSTIN: You catch him in--what were you going to say?

DRE: Is he--he's not considered defenseless, cause even though he can't do anything, his other people are with him, right?

AUSTIN: Right, that one dude is just guarding him, like that is the action this guy is taking. But--what were you going to suggest?

DRE: Well, I mean, I could try Called Shot again, cause if he's defenseless, but...

AUSTIN: Right, right. Yeah--yeah, I see what you mean.

DRE: ...he's not, at this point, I think that's--I think that's fair.

ART: I could try tackle that guy if Called Shots are the way you wanna do this, I [UNINTELLIGIBLE] ('think that's fine'?)

AUSTIN: Yeah, that could work. Um, you catch him--

DRE: Just keep peggin' this dude.

AUSTIN: You catch him in his upper left shoulder, the arrow sinking deep in, uh, to his flesh.

DRE: Okay!

AUSTIN: These two begin marching down on you, Thrandir, and Hadrian, uh, this one--this one's still on guard duty, he is not actually taking a--a shot on you. But these two are charging at you, Thrandir, give me a... I guess--I guess what are you doing? Are you going to defy this danger?

DRE: Yeah, I mean I would probably be trying to like... run away, so I could like, y'know, still have shots on... have a line of sight on him.

AUSTIN: Okay, so you're not gonna--okay. So Defy Danger DEX, that sounds like to me?

DRE: Sure.

NICK: I know they're not supposed to be...

DRE: Seven.

NICK: I know they're not supposed to be as, y'know, that big, but I've been imagining these guys, the pala-dins as the--the big dudes in the beginning of Tower of Flame, Dark Souls II.

AUSTIN: Oh, yeah, totally.

DRE: Oh, yeah, yeah! That's a--yeah.

ART: Ooh, seven is not great on Defy Danger, huh.

DRE: Hey, it's worse than a--it's better than a six!

AUSTIN: You... you can either--so one of them, one of them grabs you from behind as you--as you--like, grabs you and spins you around, um, and is getting ready to stab into you, and you

can either shake off your quiver or take damage.

DRE: Ughhhh. So that would leave me unable to use my bow?

AUSTIN: You'd go down to--you'd go down to one ammo temporarily. So you could still fire--you still have like, the bow, the arrows that you have in your hand, but that's it.

DRE: Sure. Uhhh, I'll shake off...

AUSTIN: I imagine you Legolas style, with like the--y'know.

DRE: I'll shake off the quiver.

AUSTIN: Okay. So you lose five ammo, for now.

DRE: Okay. Temporarily, yeah. So I'm down to one.

AUSTIN: Temporarily. Uh, and you get away. What are you doing... what are you doing, uh, Hadrian?

ART: I'm gonna try to hit him again.

AUSTIN: (laughing) Okay.

DRE: (laughing)

AUSTIN: Nothing wrong with it.

ART: I--I hoped that him...

AUSTIN: Oh, you take--take XP for these failed rolls, everybody. Everybody who's failed rolls.

ART: Oh, sure.

DRE: Does seven--seven's not a fail, right?

AUSTIN: Seven's not, no. (Art overlapping) But Fantasma needs one, Hadrian needs one...

ART: (overlapping) So I failed two rolls in a row.

DRE: I did a three on that... move I made earlier, so that's one.

AUSTIN: Right, yeah.

NICK: Wait, what did I...?

AUSTIN: I dunno, you failed an Intelligence roll, a long time ago.

NICK: Oh, that's right. Yeah, okay.

DRE: Many moons ago.

ART: I failed both the--the Discern Reality and my previous attack.

AUSTIN: Yes, right, so that's two.

DRE: Level it up! All right!

AUSTIN: Yeah, you're getting that experience! There you go, that's a hit!

ART: Boom!

AUSTIN: Good job.

DRE: Hit that man. Punch that man.

AUSTIN: Uh, with Hack and Slash, when you get a seven to nine, you deal your damage and also you take damage?

ART: But he's stunned and the other guy's guarding?

AUSTIN: Yeah... I'll let you have it. In my heart of hearts I think that other guy should get to swing back on you, but that, but that's okay.

ART: Ehh, well then do it. It's plus one from that, cause it's the sword, so it's six.

AUSTIN: Right. Right right right. Okay. You... slash at him with the sword, getting past this other guy's defences, you knock him back. This guy moves up past you and does hit you... for one! Light hit.

ART: That's a pretty light hit.

AUSTIN: That's a pretty light hit. He, he--

ART: Ah, but shoot him now, shoot him now!

AUSTIN: This guy here has a, again he has the sword that he blocked that first shot of yours with, and kind of hits it--the broad side against the side of your neck. He was going for a, like a kill shot, and just--no. Just, clank, no--no big deal. Uh, Sunder is engaged--is engaging with these folks in a, in a sort of like, with these two pala-din, in a--in a duel that is not evenly matched, let's say, but is, like, keeping her busy. For the time. For the time being.

DRE: Wait, who's--

NICK: She's kiting them around--

ART: Wait, not evenly matched which way?

AUSTIN: She's stronger than them. But like, but they're capable of keeping her busy for the time being.

DRE: Sure. Because there's two.

AUSTIN: Mhm. Thrandir, what are you doing?

DRE: Uh, I'm gonna again go for uh... I'm gonna try and shoot Mr. Man over here.

AUSTIN: Okay.

DRE: I assume we're just--we're just doing regular dice roll again, right.

AUSTIN: Yeah, yeah.

DRE: Okay.

AUSTIN: Again, unless you're gonna do another Called--(sigh)

DRE: *Fuck.*

ART: Fuuuuck.

DRE: That's double ones. That is double ones.

AUSTIN: This is--this is a bad--you're not doing great.

DRE: No.

NICK: Snake eyes!

AUSTIN: Yeah. So... So you fire off your last arrow, and these two close in on you. What do you do? Let's stay with you for a second.

DRE: Sure. Well I mean I've got my spear, um...

AUSTIN: So you take that out? At this point, attacking them from this position--they're inside of spear range. So you could, you could, you'd have to--you could attack them, but you would--you would definitely get hit by one of them at least, or two you could Defy Danger to get some space and get them back into your like, proper distance.

DRE: Yeah, I'm gonna try and Defy Danger.

AUSTIN: Okay.

DRE: Would that be a DEX as well?

AUSTIN: I think that'd be--yeah, that'd be a DEX. Yeah.

DRE: Well, can't get any--it *literally* can't get any worse than a five, so. Hey, there we go!

AUSTIN: That's good.

DRE: That would have been good last time.

AUSTIN: Let's say--woah, that's not what I wanted to do. Whuh-oh. Keep that there, okay. Um... let's say you have to take a step back, maybe? Or where do you wanna go from here.

DRE: I would--I would almost rather like, like step *through* them instead of going towards Tabard.

AUSTIN: You like dive through them? Yeah, okay, that's fair.

DRE: Yeah. Or could I--or, or could I dive through them and grab my quiver back up?

AUSTIN: Yeah, sure! Ah--yeah, this, you could, you could do that.

DRE: Sure. Okay.

AUSTIN: So go ahead and grab that. Uh... Tabard is alive, and awake, and charges in at Hadrian. What do you do? He is looking like he's going for like a tackle, here. Like a football style--he only has one arm, but he's looking like, grab, like--slam you to the ground.

ART: Am I bigger than him?

AUSTIN: You're the same size. You're both big men.

ART: But he only has one arm?

AUSTIN: Yeah, but he's lived--he knows how to use that one arm pretty well.

ART: I still think I can like...

AUSTIN: Eh, give it a shot.

ART: I think I can like shrug him off, I think I can--I think I can Strength this. I think I can beat him strength to strength.

AUSTIN: You can--yeah, you can definitely Defy--Defy Danger Strength this, for sure.

ART: And my Strength rolls have been going great, who said they weren't?

DRE: (laughing)

AUSTIN: There you go! There you go.

DRE: Nice!

NICK: Yay, good rolls!

AUSTIN: He like, wraps around your body to try to hold you in place, and you're able to shrug him off, uh, to the side. He spits--he spits on the ground, reaches up, pulls *out* his eye with--with the arrow still in it--

DRE: (disgusted) Eughhh.

AUSTIN: --and tosses it away, and says:

AUSTIN (as Tabard): An eye is little to lose for Samot, God-King of us all.

AUSTIN: And draws his sword.

ART: Oh, he wants to do religious trash-talk. I'm--I'm the king of this.

(laughing)

ART: I invented religious trash-talk. But it's not my turn.

AUSTIN: It is not your turn. (mumbles) Add Fantasma at the end of this hallway here...

DRE: I was about to say, is he.. How close is he?

AUSTIN: He's getting here. I think he's two turns away still?

DRE: Yeah, either one or two.

AUSTIN: You're running through this hallway. Fantasma, a thing you notice is a procession. You--you kind of see it three different times. You see it--you *hear* it in the big throne room as you have to sneak across that at one point.

NICK: Okay.

AUSTIN: You hear it again as you're moving closer to here, um, and then you realise you're--you've kind of skipped past it by using servants quarters and like, weird, y'know--weird tunnels and stuff, weird secret passageways. And it's behind you, now, but there's another--twelve people, or so, uh, coming this way. And coming--and when I say a procession, I mean that it has a sort of, uh, it has a sort of... what's the word I'm looking for.

NICK & AUSTIN: Formality.

AUSTIN: There's a sort of regalia to this, to this marching. So it is a couple of armed folks, but there is also like, people who are definitely servants involved, um, and--

NICK: So--there's a colour guard?

AUSTIN: Yes, exactly. So--I'm gonna say you're two--you're two away, and they're a couple away from you, behind you, at this point.

NICK: Okay.

AUSTIN: Sunder has knocked out one of these--one of these dudes.

NICK: Do any of them look like--

ART: I have a--

NICK: Wait. Do--do any of the people behind Fantasma, uh, look like the pala-din?

AUSTIN: Yeah. There are absolutely--among them there are... Among the twelve, there are six, who are--who are not just pala-din, but who are like, well--like dressed in armor that is, that is

substantially better than the ones that you've been fighting.

NICK: Okay.

ART: I have a point of order. I forgot that I get plus 1d4 damage when I'm on a quest.

AUSTIN: Oh, that's--yeah. Agreed.

ART: So, uh... three more damage. For my last--for my last successful attack.

AUSTIN: There you go. Now you're making--now you're making it happen. Okay. What do you do, on this attack, or on this round?

ART: Um, shit. I mean I got--I just have to keep attacking him. This guy needs--this guy's gotta go.

AUSTIN: Okay.

DRE: Yeah.

ART: Um... although I actually had a--an idea that I guess I'll...

AUSTIN: You're in a bad place now, I will say, because--so, you're in a place now where this guy is behind you, um, or to your--there's one to your right, one to your left, which means you're opening yourself up to attack if you attack either one of them without Defying Danger to get better positioning.

ART: Well. What if I have an even stupider move?

AUSTIN: (immediately) On to it. What's up.

DRE: (laughing)

ART: What if I uh, what if I tackle this one.

AUSTIN: O...kay?

ART: To try to bring my people into the fight with Sunder because--because she was able to take on two of them, maybe the two of us can more easily take on three of them.

AUSTIN: (skeptical) Sure. Give it a shot.

ART: So I wanna like--

AUSTIN: (interrupting) He is, for people listening--Hadrian is now going to basically march across the room, to a different corner. He's kind of in the middle right now, and he wants to go to the like top right, the north-east of the room, to--slam-tackle this guy.

DRE: Nice. [UNINTELLIGIBLE?]

AUSTIN: I still think that's a Defy Danger to get around this guy, though.

ART: Right, cause I'm gonna Heisman pose him?

AUSTIN: Absolutely.

ART: I mean there is no Heisman trophy in this world, but I wanna--

AUSTIN: Oh do you mean the Hadrian trophy?

ART: --I wanna stiff-arm him. Yeah, the Hadrian trophy that's awarded to the, the best uh, dude. Just the best dude.

NICK: The best Hadrian.

AUSTIN: The best dude. Right. Great. Go. Make your roll. Make your Defy Danger. This is a Defy--so this is another Strength check, then? Cause you're like, you're--you're... givin' him the old... the old Heisman.

DRE: He'll heave-ho.

ART: I mean it's a lot of things. It's--it's Strength, it's Dexterity, it's Constitution, it's everything. It's a little bit of Charisma, cause of the pose.

AUSTIN: The pose is real good. (laughing) I think let's just call it a Strength. Cause you're, you're basically trying to stiff-arm him. Jesus Christ, Art.

ART: I'm trying to level up!

DRE: (laughing)

AUSTIN: You uh...

ART: Everyone sucks but not as much as I do!

AUSTIN: It's true! You give him the Heisman, you give him the old boom, and then he just like...

he doesn't... it hits him in the face? And it's like not a big deal at all, because he's a statue man, and he just cuts you across your gut with his sword, but you're able to like, you're doing the whole Heisman, so your body's already tilted away from him. So it just catches you.

ART: And I'm probably clenching my core.

AUSTIN: Yeah. Exactly. So you're good, and you're up here now. Uh...

DRE: Oh, Christ.

AUSTIN: Um... duh duh... duh... They, these two are back on you again. They are not letting you rest. And this time they're trying to box you out. They're trying to make it so that--they're trying to push you into this corner, basically.

DRE: Sure.

AUSTIN: What do you do?

DRE: Ohhhhhh man. Um...

AUSTIN: One more round and then Fantasma's here.

DRE: Yeah, I guess it's time to deal with these guys. Uh, I'll try and... shoot the one that's to, I guess, my left. The one that's between me and Tabard.

AUSTIN: Okay, sounds good.

DRE: Eleven. There we go.

AUSTIN: That's a hit! That's a good hit.

DRE: Eight damage.

AUSTIN: Okay. You uh, it--you catch him right in the neck, and the arrow shatters the stone and the--the head falls on the ground with a thud. He's dead.

DRE: All right!

ART: Wow! These stone dudes are not as tough as I thought they were.

AUSTIN: No, they're just stone dudes, y'know.

DRE: But these snow *dudes*!

AUSTIN: Especially a good hit. A good--a single big, good hit will, will do--will do wonders.

DRE: But these snow dudes.

AUSTIN: Snow dudes... snow dudes are rough. Also I should note that this one has a symbol on both of his shoulder pauldrons that are not on the other ones. So he's the--

DRE: Which one?

AUSTIN: The middle one.

ART: I didn't see your indication.

AUSTIN: Sorry, the middle--the middle one. There you go.

DRE: Oh, his honor guard, basically?

AUSTIN: Yeah, yeah. He's a little bit tougher. Um... Tabard's sword is out, Art, and... he points it at you. And says... let's think what he says here. Uh... he says:

AUSTIN (as Tabard): I am Tabard Alon, Sword of Samot, Defender of the True King, Officer of the Order of Princes. I order you to drop your sword and kneel.

AUSTIN: I think that's a Defy Danger... either Wisdom or Charisma?

ART: It's a Charisma roll for him.

AUSTIN: Yeah. I mean it isn't a roll for him.

ART: If he has to make it.

AUSTIN: NPCs never roll, except for damage.

ART: Sure.

AUSTIN: So I think it's a Defy Danger--

ART: But Charisma is how Paladin powers work.

AUSTIN: Right. So I think for you it would similarly be a Charisma... defence? I think, lemme, lemme look up Defy Danger and see, and see if uh... gimme a second.

DRE: Ah... through mental fortitude is Wisdom.

ART: Charisma...

AUSTIN: Yeah. Then that would be... I think that's what it is. Cause it's not... You're not resisting with charm and social grace. You're resisting--this is a Wisdom effect. In D&D, this would be a Wisdom effect. You would be rolling, uh--what's the Wisdom base check in D&D? Like Reflex is Dexterity, and... It would be like a willpower check, in D&D, which would be Wisdom.

DRE: Oh yeah, Will.

AUSTIN: Right. So, so yeah, give me Wisdom.

ART: Sure. All right. Throw my heart with... [UNSURE]

AUSTIN: You're seeing through his power.

DRE: You are due, Art. Nope!

ART: I'm not!

AUSTIN: You're not.

DRE: Not yet! Soon. It's coming.

ART: I'm up to twelve XP!

AUSTIN: Your hand opens and the golden sword falls to the ground. Um, and you feel more of your arm become marbleized at that, too. And your knees start to give way.

ART: Yeah, yeah. Uh huh.

AUSTIN: This guy moves behind you and puts his sword to your neck.

ART: (resigned) Yeah.

AUSTIN: Fantasma, you're here now. You're almost there.

DRE: Heyyy!

AUSTIN: Almost there.

NICK: Wait. I'm here, or I'm almost--

AUSTIN: You're almost there. You're here in this hallway. You're like outside--you're to the south, now. If you scroll down on this screen, you'll see where you are.

NICK: Oh, yeah, all right.

AUSTIN: Throndir, what do you do?

DRE: What's Uklan doing right now?

AUSTIN: He's like in--he is like looking at this--he has this book. He's in kind of an--a... he's not chanting, but he's in a trance.

DRE: Is he like... looking at the book or the mirror?

AUSTIN: Both. His eyes are moving rapidly between the two.

DRE: (sighs)

NICK: Um... wait, hang on. On Fantasma's sort-of turn, he's gonna shout down the hallway... (laughing) Hang on, I need to make sure I back away from the mic a good distance.

DRE: (laughing)

AUSTIN: Yeah. Great.

NICK (as Fantasma): (distant yelling) Never fear, my friends! Fantasma is on his way!

AUSTIN: Great!

NICK: I hope that didn't blow out everything.

AUSTIN: No, it's fine. You're good. Throndir, what are you doing?

DRE: Oh, boy. Um... How does Tabard look right now, is he...?

AUSTIN: He's hurt... He ripped his own eye out a few minutes ago, and he...

DRE: Yeah, it's kinda... that's kinda fucked up!

AUSTIN: Y'know, he's been cut pretty bad, he's been shot, you shot him in the shoulder. He isn't--he's in pain, y'know. But he's also, again, like Hadrian, a faithful servant to his lord, so... is kind of powered by that faith.

DRE: Can I get a shot on the thing, on the one that's holding Hadrian?

AUSTIN: Not without taking a hit from the one to your right. Which is fine, if that's a thing you wanna do, but--but, it's a thing.

DRE: Hmm. Yeah, I'll do that.

AUSTIN: Okay.

DRE: Does that--

NICK: I really want Tabard--oh, no, sorry, go ahead.

DRE: Should I make a Defy Danger before shooting, or should I shoot...?

AUSTIN: No, you--if you make the Defy Danger, that's your turn, basically. Y'know.

DRE: Okay. No, I'll just roll for the shot, then. All right, nine.

AUSTIN: So... use an ammo, lower your attack, or...

DRE: Um... I'll use an ammo. So I think I would--so I lost one, cause I discarded one earlier, then I lost another one from when I missed that shot, so if I discard one here I'd be down to three, right?

AUSTIN: That sounds right, yeah.

DRE: Okay.

AUSTIN: So you basically have to take multiple shots. The way ammo works here is like, it's an abstract system, and it's--you're effectively taking three shots, y'know, to hit, and the overall number--the abstract number of ammo you have left goes down by one, y'know. So you like--(pew)--miss, miss, and then finally you catch one that hits this guy. So give me the damage.

DRE: Yep. Right, d8... Oh, shit. Well, and I forgot to put my two for Kodiak, so three.

AUSTIN: So Kodiak is also rushing over there. We should have a Kodiak symbol, just so we... Gimme a good bear. Or, bear, he's not a bear at all! He's a dog!

DRE: I mean he looks kinda like a bear! He's a big dog.

AUSTIN: Is there a mastiff? Can we get a specific--he's a mastiff, right? Is that wrong? I don't see any mastiffs here that aren't... this is all bad. I'm just gonna get a dog.

DRE: All right. I'm not gonna--I've rolled better when I don't click on things on the character sheet, so I'm gonna type everything in.

AUSTIN: I took a bear instead. Look at this bear. Okay. So, plus two from that, right?

DRE: Yeah. So three altogether.

AUSTIN: Three altogether. There's armor to take into the consideration.

DRE: Blech.

AUSTIN: Yeah.

DRE: So, zero. (laughing)

AUSTIN: Uh... no, you still did--you still hit him. It wasn't great, but you did okay.

DRE: You did a thing.

AUSTIN: You did a thing.

DRE: I'm as good at hitting him as that guy is at hitting Art.

AUSTIN: (laughing) Right. Right.

DRE: That's his superpower.

AUSTIN: But you do also take... two from this guy, who charges in with--at you with his fist, actually. He's like--he's going to--stop you from shooting, and when he sees it's too late, turns his hand into a fist, and follows through. Which is why it's like--it's not a great hit, but y'know, he punches you, take two damage.

DRE: Cool. But I get to take my one armor off of that as well?

AUSTIN: Yep, totally. Um... Tabard turns and points--

ART: It's--aww.

AUSTIN: What were you gonna say?

ART: (playful indignance) I should go before Tabard.

AUSTIN: Well--sure. You have a knife to your throat. What do you do?

ART: I wanna use *my*--my version of that. I wanna--I wanna use...

AUSTIN: There is a knife to your throat. So whatever you use--

ART: I can't talk?

AUSTIN: You can start to talk. Whatever you do, this guy will cut your throat. Like, you can make that move if that's the thing you wanna do. But that--but you're--you are, you would have to Defy Danger or take full damage from this guy's knife on your throat.

DRE: I know we've joked about this, but I would really rather Hadrian not be dead.

AUSTIN: (laughing) That would be real bad.

DRE: That would be real--I would be bummed if that happened.

ART: (pained noise)

NICK: I want Tabard to make Hadrian start punching himself with his arm.

DRE: Stop hitting yourself! Stop hitting yourself!

NICK: Stop hitting yourself!

ART: I mean... how much damage could it possibly be?

AUSTIN: (whispered) A lot!

ART: I'm at twenty-one!

AUSTIN: Okay...

DRE: I don't know if you know how throats work, Art.

AUSTIN: Yeah.

ART: I assume every part of my body has an equal number of hit points, just like in real life.

(laughing)

AUSTIN: Sadly not.

ART: (dejected) All right.

AUSTIN: I mean you--again, you wanna make that chance, I'm not gonna stop you. You're--

DRE: I mean, you're due.

ART: What am I defying--How do I Defy Danger against...

AUSTIN: I don't know! What do you--how do you get out of a situation like that? You can totally--y'know. There are--I'm open to suggestions.

NICK: Fantasma *is* on his way.

ART: Yeah... I just kinda wanna see what happens if I do it. I kinda wanna see what happens if I try to I Am The Law back at him.

AUSTIN: Yeah, that's fair, I--I'm also interested in that, but I'm also... you're in a bad fictional spot right now, right? And... the fiction has to lead the rolls here.

ART: Yeah, all right, we'll--we'll have to--I can't figure out a way to Defy this Danger that isn't like...

DRE: Sick judo throw, just...

ART: I think it's hard to do that with--what I have is like, you just drop, right? Like... instead of kneeling, you go to prone.

AUSTIN: Sure.

ART: But that's like... that's probably DEX?

AUSTIN: That's probably DEX. That sounds like DEX to me.

ART: And I don't--the way I'm rolling... the way I'm rolling, I don't think I could do it.

AUSTIN: We both know that's not how it--

ART: So I'm officially... I'm officially passing my action, and I'm going to roll DEX, *just* to see what would have happened, in this alternate reality we're creating.

AUSTIN: Okay. Let's see what would have happened.

ART: This roll does not count for anything, and I'm not doing it. Eh...

DRE: God damn it.

AUSTIN: It's a shame you didn't...

ART: Well--I mean that would have been a hard, hard choice.

AUSTIN: Okay. So you--okay. So, Tabard is turning to point his blade at Throndir, uh... and he isn't using any sort of magic power here, he--he literally just says:

AUSTIN (as Tabard): Drop your bow. We have both of your friends.

AUSTIN: What do you do, Throndir?

ART: (indignant) No they don't!

NICK: Did... did Tabard not hear that Fantasma is on the way?

DRE: Yeah!

AUSTIN: (laughing) Great.

DRE: Maybe he doesn't care about a wizard! That seems pretty rude. Also--

ART: He's no sell on the threat. [UNSURE]

DRE: Also he doesn't--what's going on with Sunder? She's still fighting, isn't she?

AUSTIN: She's--she's fighting this dude, yeah.

DRE: Uh... (baby noises)

ART: Look. Your path here is clear: kill the one that has my--that's holding me hostage. Just--kill that one with one shot, like that--like with your second shot like you killed the other one with one shot, and then... and then we're back--we're back, baby!

DRE: I don't know if I can! Um... Yeah. But I will. I--I--Throndir's done surrendering to people. So I'm gonna, I'm gonna try and shoot at the one that's holding Hadrian.

AUSTIN: Okay.

DRE: I'm typing this out, cause I don't trust the Roll20 sheet any more.

AUSTIN: (laughing) Okay. Good. Great.

ART: That's how computers work.

DRE: Eh... seven.

AUSTIN: All right. Uh, what do you--what are you taking of your options? You're running outta that ammo.

DRE: I know...

AUSTIN: It might still be the best choice, but...

DRE: I think it is. I think I'll just burn another ammo slot.

AUSTIN: Down to two. And again, you're still right next to this dude, so you're gonna get hit again, here.

DRE: That's fine. 1d8 plus two...

AUSTIN: Okay. I mean he's--he's been rolling terrible too, so.

DRE: Yeah. Well, and I--I mean I'm--

AUSTIN: Well, take six.

ART: Yeesh.

DRE: Okay. Well, five after armor.

AUSTIN: And what's your--what's your damage? Let's see your damage on this.

DRE: Ah, fuck!

AUSTIN: Plus two, remember.

DRE: I added--that's with the plus two.

ART: That *is* with the plus two.

AUSTIN: Oh, you *added* the two there. Okay. Hm. Okay. That's a shame.

DRE: Yeah, it is.

AUSTIN: You catch him again in the shoulder, and... You do damage, so, so here's what I'll say is he--he flinches a little bit, his--his--you catch him in the shoulder, and his arm goes up, freeing Hadrian for a brief second so *maybe* there will be an opportunity for something here. As you do that, though, you catch a--you catch a blade in the side, Throndir. Um, and this guy is now pinning you to the wall. He like has his blade in you and is blocking your--your ability to take shots. Fantasma's here!

DRE: (laughing)

NICK: Fantasma throws--

ART: Do something dramatic!

NICK: --throws open the doors (AUSTIN makes wind foley) and announces... (laughing)

ART: I thought it was just a hallway, I didn't think there was a door.

AUSTIN: Ehh, there's a door. There's a door now.

NICK: He uh--he Prestidigitations up a door...

DRE: (laughing)

AUSTIN: Uh huh.

NICK: So that he can then throw that door open. And then uh, and--and says:

NICK (as Fantasma): Unhand my friends you... evil... jerks!

NICK: And then uh, shoots--what's that?

AUSTIN: He's a real orator.

NICK: Yep. Uh... and then he uh, shoots Magic Missiles at Tabard.

AUSTIN: Okay. So... forget the spell, or open yourself up to retri--or to danger, or take a minus one ongoing? Magic Missile's a good one.

NICK: Yeah... it's also the only like damage I can do.

ART: Lemme pitch you on opening yourself to danger, cause... well... maybe.

DRE: It's fun! It's worked out for me so far!

ART: I don't think it's gonna generate more dudes, right? Like... so one of them will have to move?

AUSTIN: Remember there is a whole retinue behind him.

NICK: There is... yeah.

AUSTIN: Also he did just shout that 'Fantasmo is here'. So I already have good fictional recourse for why they might be hurrying.

NICK: (laughing)

ART: No, I'm pretty sure no one heard that.

AUSTIN: Okay.

NICK: I mean no one *seemed* to hear it the first time... no one cared, apparently...

AUSTIN: To be fair--you then narrated *opening the doors*, so maybe they literally just didn't hear you. (laughing) Cause the doors were still closed! 'Did anybody hear--?' (distant mumbling) 'Oh, no, I--the wind, maybe?'

DRE: Must have just been a sword, must have just been a sword.

ART: Yeah where'd the--we didn't open those doors!

DRE: How did we get in here?

AUSTIN: This place is a mystery. All right, what's...

NICK: I'm... I'm gonna forget it.

AUSTIN: Okay. Gimme your damage.

DRE: Oh, shit.

ART: Kill him.

NICK: Ah, what is damage, is it 2d4?

AUSTIN: 2d4. Yeah.

DRE: Please kill this man. Just magic him right in his face.

NICK: Five.

ART: That's not--that's not terrible.

AUSTIN: That's not terrible. You--he, he--you catch him--are those individual missiles, basically? Two different missiles?

NICK: Yeah, yeah.

AUSTIN: Okay. The first one catches him in--in the shoulder and he like buckles for a second, and the second one sends him down to his knee, but he doesn't fall. He pushes himself back up with his--with his blade hand, and like... and shakes himself loose and like, does like a nice cape toss, he just like (cape swish foley). There is a strange thing--

NICK: Like that--like that Bloodborne gesture.

AUSTIN: Yeah, exactly like that. There is a strange thing: you've broken through his armor, with--with one of those missiles, and underneath there is no--there's no blood. You can see where his flesh gives way to marble.

NICK: (quietly) Oooh.

AUSTIN: Um... Sunder has pushed this guy back to the corner, and drives through his chest with her sword.

ART: Her situat--her situational awareness is basically terrible, I just wanna throw that out to you right now.

AUSTIN: She's fighting dudes, y'know.

DRE: We're all fighting dudes!

ART: She's fighting the wrong dudes!

AUSTIN: Well if she turned her back... y'know! Fighting is tough.

DRE: (laughing) This rough and tumble world.

AUSTIN: Hadrian, you can give me a Defy Danger now without--without risk of instant death. You're still at risk, but like--and you still have to Defy Danger to get away, but...

ART: Sure, uh... can I sell you on a Defy Danger Strength, in that I wanna like kinda like turn around and UFC [shunt? UNSURE] his legs?

AUSTIN: Sure.

DRE: Yeah! That's the Hadrian I know and love! Nope! It's not.

ART: Fuckin' hell!

NICK: (whispering) Jesus Christ.

DRE: I'm telling you man, you gotta type those rolls out.

ART: That was two ones. That was *ones*. Man, if I live through this, I'm gonna have so much XP.

AUSTIN: I know! This is--you're--this is *bad*! What happened?

ART: I don't know! That's my fifth failed roll this session!

AUSTIN: You get ah--you get a knife deep in--or the blade of this guy's sword goes deep into your arm from the top down, through the shoulderblade.

ART: Yeah, that sounds rough.

AUSTIN: It scratches against the marble that is inside of your hand. It's a strange feeling. It's like brushing your teeth but worse. It's like scraping--not the bone, it's past the bone, and it's onto this other material that is in your body now that you can sense and feel that you don't really understand.

ART: Hey buddy. Can we talk about what it feels like when you brush your teeth? Because I'm pretty sure it's not supposed to feel bad at all.

AUSTIN: Is it not supposed to feel terrible? You know what I mean. Like it's, it's--

DRE: No, it's uh... it's kind of a pleasant thing.

AUSTIN: But it feel--it's not like brushing your skin. It's a different--you can tell, oh yeah, this is what teeth feel like, teeth feel different than skin. Uh, and this is like that, except it's a--it's a sword. Do you not brush your teeth with swords?

DRE: I mean that's kind of what flossing is...

ART: No, I think--I think you should talk with your dentist?

AUSTIN: Hmm... weird.

DRE: When the dentists do the picks it's kinda like brushing your teeth with swords.

AUSTIN: Right. Sort of.

DRE: Sort of.

AUSTIN: *Sword* of. Uhh... Jesus Christ.

ART: Booooo.

AUSTIN: But you manage to--you manage to get out of his grasp at least, and roll to the side, let's say.

ART: Let's. (laughing)

AUSTIN: Throndir? What are you doing?

DRE: Uh, so this guy has me pinned up against the wall?

AUSTIN: Uh huh.

DRE: Uhhhhh... What--how--how is he holding me there? Is he just like--basically like he's boxed me in?

AUSTIN: Yeah. Yeah. He's boxed you in, he's well--there's no way you could get off a shot at this point without taking tons of--without getting crushed, basically.

DRE: Yeah. Like some old-school attack of opportunity D&D archery rules.

AUSTIN: Right. But--but he's also, um, y'know he isn't... he's mostly concerned with keeping you in your place, and not letting you shoot again, which means that you could kind of maneuver around without taking damage? Like you could go left or right here. That's a quiver, I'm gonna get rid of that. And you can move left or right here--oh, I made you really tall. Whoops.

DRE: (laughing)

AUSTIN: But you couldn't, um...

DRE: I'm a big boy now.

AUSTINS: If you want to get a shot-taking position, you would have to Defy Danger. But mostly he's--he's interested in making you, like, as long as you don't look like you're being aggressive, you're not going to get attacked at this point. Tabard is--has ordered them to kind of like end the combat, y'know.

DRE: Sure. Um... Yeah, I guess I'm gonna try to take this guy out. Um, how would I do that? Let's see.

AUSTIN: That's a good question. Remember you do your damage even when you're not using--like the way Dungeon World works, it's not about like--your damage isn't tied to your weapon, it's tied to your class. So as long as you're like, attacking, you can totally do damage.

DRE: Yeah. I'll try to do some like--CW Arrow like, bow-fu stuff on this guy. So that's a Strength roll, right? Cause it's a melee attack?

AUSTIN: Yeah, it's a melee attack. Sure.

DRE: All right. Eh, and eight. Okay. I'll take that.

AUSTIN: That's a hit. Uh, do you... open yourself up to counter-attack, or do you... is it reduced damage, is that what the other Hack and Slash thing is?

ART: No, you're thinking of--if it's ten, you can add--

DRE: Yeah, I think he just always gets to do an attack on me.

AUSTIN: So you just--you just always get the counter-attack, yeah. You're right.

DRE: Uh, do I roll damage first, or do you roll your damage?

AUSTIN: Yep. It's the same time.

DRE: Uh--and would I--I guess I wouldn't get Kodiak, cause he's over there, mauling that other dude.

AUSTIN: Yeah. I think that--again, fictionally, that's not great, yeah.

DRE: Sure. So yeah, just a straight seven, then.

AUSTIN: Okay.

DRE: Still pretty good on a d8 roll, I'll take that!

AUSTIN: And you take--and you take five. Um, you... you're not sure if you've killed him, or if you've knocked him unconscious, or if he is just ah, like--his connection has been severed, or something, but you manage to like... I'm imagining you, like you said doing this weird bow-fu where you're like, you catch him in the legs a couple of times, and then you spin it around in your hand and like catch him in the back of the head, and he tumbles forward.

DRE: Yeah!

AUSTIN: He tumbles forward and like stabs you in the process? But at least he has--stumbled forward, y'know? Um... and I think we're back around to Sunder, who does see him here now, and whispers a few words, and does like a weird hand gesture, and a ball of fire appears in her hand, ready to be blasted out on her next turn.

DRE: I feel like she should have done that at the start. That seems like a opener.

AUSTIN: She had been doing that sort of stuff over in the corner, y'know? With those other folks.

DRE: All right. That's fair. Listen, I don't wanna tell her how to wizard. I shouldn't be a backseat wizard.

AUSTIN: Yeah. Please don't--don't wizard-shame. Let her do her magic the way she wants to.

NICK: Wait, did she--she sees that Fantasma is here?

AUSTIN: Oh, I don't think she is--no, she's attacking this dude. She's attacking the dude who used to have Hadrian. She has not even--she has not said a thing to you.

NICK: Gotcha. Okay. I didn't know who you meant by he sees that--'she sees that he is here now'.

AUSTIN: Oh, no, no no no. Sorry. What I meant to say was that she sees that she is clear now. She isn't surrounded by dudes, like, she can just take a shot. She can spend the turn doing some cool magic shit instead of doing--instead of like, barely managing her situation.

NICK: I thought maybe she was going to throw a fireball at Fantasma.

AUSTIN: No, no. She's mad at you, she's isn't *that* mad at you.

NICK: (laughing) Because--yeah. okay.

AUSTIN: I don't--I don't think. I don't *think*. Maybe she's that mad? I don't know. All right, uh... Tabard steps to Hadrian, who is--who is able to get up, now, you're up, and I think he just looks at you in the eye, um, and y'know, has his blade out to his side, uh... There's a--there's a lot he's trying to communicate with his vision. And again you can see, under the--y'know, the left part of his chest, over his heart has been--has been opened up to you, and you can see that he is stone inside. He is the thing he's been warning you about since the moment you met him. Don't be pala-din.

ART: Yeah, he's a big stupid liar, I get it.

AUSTIN: Well, y'know. Maybe--

ART: Oh, sorry.

AUSTIN: Maybe, y'know, maybe he doesn't know what he is. Who--who even knows. Um... and he raises his blade to come down at you. Give me a Defy Danger. This is a--this is a desperate act, or a--an almost... there's something about this that is empty. Like he isn't going to not hit you, but. Give me a Defy Danger.

ART: Uh--how would you like it?

AUSTIN: What are you doing?

ART: What I would like to do is catch his sword in my stone hand, and like... and fuck him up.

AUSTIN: Yeah. Do it.

ART: But you can tell me that that's not possible.

AUSTIN: That's totally possible.

ART: So that's... Constitution? That's Strength.

AUSTIN: That's Strength. Constitution would be like, taking it--

ART: Or it's DEX, cause I'm catching something?

AUSTIN: Mmm, no, because you're--the thing you're catching is a sword.

ART: All right. Uh, so we said Strength.

AUSTIN: Yes.

DRE: Come on, Art. You're due.

ART: Ohhh, that's not how it works.

DRE: Yeah it is.

ART: None of this is how it works.

DRE: Yeah it is. Oh my *God*!

AUSTIN: (whispering) Jesus Christ.

ART: I don't know what to do. I don't know what to do.

AUSTIN: I've never seen--this is amazing.

ART: What's even happening!

DRE: Legitimately, how close are you to leveling up at this point?

AUSTIN: No, he's had to--he's--

ART: I'm halfway to my next level.

(laughing)

AUSTIN: Just... Jesus! Christ!

NICK: You're not--you're not doing great right now, but you're learning a lot!

AUSTIN: You're just, you're really, this is, y'know. This is one of those things you're gonna--you're gonna really love it in a year. You're gonna be so happy that you went through all of this. Where are you at, HP-wise, right now?

ART: I got fifteen.

AUSTIN: No.

ART: I got eight.

AUSTIN: There you go.

DRE: Jesus.

AUSTIN: You don't catch--you, you... oh, right. You reach up to grab it, uh, and you hold it there for a second, and he shakes his head and sighs, and you put your hand down and he lifts his sword up again slowly, and takes a cut of you.

ART: Ugh, he's beating me in the being a badass about this thing, and that's what really is getting me, is that I have material together, and I haven't been able to use it cause I'm just getting my ass kicked, and you can't trash-talk when you're getting your ass kicked.

AUSTIN: Oh, that's true.

ART: Ugh!

AUSTIN: Two three, four five. Yeah, okay. One second. (under his breath) One two three four... four, five six seven eight nine ten. Yeah, that's right. That's right. Okay.

DRE: Aw, *jeez*. Look at all those anime people!

AUSTIN: Look at all these animes I'm bringing into town.

NICK: Ohh. That's... holy cow.

AUSTIN: Fantasma... I guess these people are actually at the--they're still not--they're not quite here yet. But they're here.

ART: Woah!

DRE: You should close that door.

AUSTIN: Fantasma, what do you do?

ART: (laughing)

DRE: You should close the door!

AUSTIN: Hadrian, sword in your--in your arm, sword in your shoulder, you uh... you look down, through the--through the doorway, and looking up at you as you lay there is, of course, Samot, his eyes on yours.

ART: Wait, like literally?

AUSTIN: Literally. In the hall. Surrounded by guards, and servants.

ART: Oh, god.

AUSTIN: Fantasma, what do *you* do?

NICK: I like that--I like that Samot on, uh, on the play field here looks like he's an aristocrat from [TOO QUIET]

AUSTIN: He is an aristocrat from Legend of Galactic Heroes, thank you very much.

NICK: Okay. (laughing)

DRE: I told you, it was an anime.

AUSTIN: He is a *super* anime. He is the *most* anime.

NICK: Oh, boy. Okay.

AUSTIN: He is the most pretty boy of pretty boy animes that there are. So what are you doin'?

DRE: (whispering) Close the door!

NICK: Do I-- (laughing)

ART: Yeah, that'll keep them out.

NICK: So obviously I hear them behind me, right?

AUSTIN: Yeah, you absolutely hear them behind you.

NICK: Okay, um... do I recognise Samot?

AUSTIN: I don't think you've ever--I mean you--maybe if you studied him and a statue, but Art has been--Hadrian has been *dreaming* of this face since--since before he left for this trip. It may have subconsciously been why he took the ability not to have to sleep anymore, was so he wouldn't have to see this face. And here it is.

ART: And here it is anyway!

AUSTIN: Yup!

NICK: So Fantasma has no idea who that is.

AUSTIN: No.

NICK: Okay.

DRE: Oh, boy.

NICK: (sighs) Okay, but--Fantasmo does see this obviously still very important young man approaching, surrounded--

AUSTIN: Flanked, yes.

NICK: --flanked by, uh, guards and, very obviously under his command. So it's pretty obvious that whoever this is outranks, uh, Tabard, right?

AUSTIN: Yes. This man has a presence. This man has a... a violence in his step. Like... anywhere he is is where he's supposed to be. And when he looks at you, it feels like you're doing something wrong. Which, for Fantasmo, is not a thing that is familiar to feel. Y'know?

NICK: Right. Yeah. Like, he hasn't felt that since he was in undergrad.

AUSTIN: Yes. Exactly.

NICK: All right, I'm gonna... can I get up to him in one turn and still do other stuff?

AUSTIN: Yeah, up to--up to... yeah, sure.

NICK: Yeah. I'm gonna walk right up to *Samot*--

DRE: Oh, boy.

NICK: --*Samot*, sorry.

AUSTIN: No, it's fine. *Samot*, *Samot*, *Samote*, there's all sorts of pronunciations. *Samoths*.

NICK: And I'm going to--

ART: I mean he probably has a pronunciation that he prefers.

AUSTIN: Probably.

NICK: I'm going to--I mean, y'know, Fantasmo doesn't know who this is, so, whatever. Fantasmo is going to reach out and try to, uh, just--not threateningly, not, y'know... he's gonna like, try to

touch his shoulder. Is that a... Defy Danger?

ART: Oh, boy.

AUSTIN: Yeah, that's a--that's a... that's a Defy Danger, because these guys (DRE sneezes) like, in complete, uh... completely synchronized move up, like, to flank you in, basically. And--and if you reach out at, at him, will move. So yeah, give me a Defy Danger DEX.

NICK: Um... what about a--I mean--hm. It's not really... oh wait, not. What about a Defy Danger Charisma?

AUSTIN: I mean the thing that you're defying here is them. He isn't moving to stop you. Do you see what I mean? So yeah, you would have to--I just don't think that it's possible for them to be like, convinced that you're allowed to touch... this--you know what I mean? There are--it's not a bad thought. There is a scenario in which that's the right call, I know what you're going for--it might work with Tabard. It won't work with this, with--with him.

NICK: All right, there's my Defy Danger DEX. Oh, that was a good roll.

AUSTIN: But also a bad roll, because--because on a seven to nine: you stumble, hesitate or flinch. The GM will offer you a worse outcome, a hard bargain, or an ugly choice. Are you trying to do something with this touch?

NICK: Uh, yeah, I need to touch him in order to charm him.

AUSTIN: In order to do Charm Person. I mean this is--this is... might be busted from top to bottom.

NICK: Okay, well, Fantasma doesn't know that.

AUSTIN: Right right right, it's important--I know, I know, so I'm trying to think of what the most interesting version of this is. Um...

NICK: Fantasma has no idea that he is trying to charm a *god*.

AUSTIN: A god. Right, exactly.

NICK: He just sees, like... y'know, like, this--this person makes him a little unnerved, but he assumes that that's probably just because of his, like... this is obviously a high-ranking *somebody*. And he's guessing that that's why he feels so unnerved or [UNINTELLIGIBLE]

AUSTIN: I'm just gonna let you do it. I'm--y'know. I'm just gonna let you do it. You managed to--you didn't fail the roll, the hard choice here is--is I think what comes next. Tell me how you

charm--what's Charm Person like as a spell?

NICK: Um... well the spell description says 'the person you touch while casting this spell counts you as a friend until they take damage or you prove otherwise'.

AUSTIN: What's that--what's that like in terms of an experiential sense, like, what's it feel like for them? Is it like oh, suddenly they just like you a whole bunch, is it--is there some sort of false memory happening, is there...?

NICK: I--um, no false memory, but I think there is definitely like an immediate sense of familiarity, you know what I mean?

AUSTIN: You can--you can do this, but... he'll get in your head, too. You're opening yourself up in the same way that you're opening him up.

NICK: Sure.

AUSTIN: Okay. You know very well who Samot is. Samot is your friend, the--the true ruler of Hieron, he has lived here since before the Erasure, he is the one person on this planet who--who can hold back the tides of chaos, um... he is--he is the Boy-King Matured into the emperor that everyone deserves. You have undying loyalty to him. And--and you are happy that he counts you among his friends.

ART: (pained noise)

AUSTIN: Meanwhile.

NICK: I, uh--oh, shoot.

AUSTIN: That's a turn. That's a--y'know. Jeez.

NICK: Yeah, no. I get it.

DRE: That is a turn in many ways.

AUSTIN: Sunder lets--lets fly--yes. Lets fly with her fireball thing, uh, blasting this--whoop--blasting this guy off, and I can't move him further for some reason, I've lost him behind this mirror, um, and the second she does that, she shouts to Uklan, she says:

AUSTIN (as Sunder): *Now!*

AUSTIN: And he breaks from his--

ART: Oh, I hope this is something big!

AUSTIN: --breaks from his trance, reaches into his pouch, and tosses a dandelion in the air.

ART: Sure, no, it's great, every--everyone shut up.

NICK: And then this--this is where the anime ending song, uh...

AUSTIN: Comes in, yeah.

NICK: Starts up.

AUSTIN: Hadrian, what do you do?

ART: I mean... I sorta wanna just--I sorta wanna just see what happens when this dandelion hits the ground.

AUSTIN: It's up in the air.

ART: But I think I gotta take care--it's just floating there?

AUSTIN: No no no, this is--this is all in a moment. (snaps fingers)

ART: I gotta hit Tabard and I gotta not miss and I gotta stay alive.

AUSTIN: (gleeful) Oh, that is true. It's so true.

ART: But like... but--he can kill me. Very easily, right now.

AUSTIN: Are you, is that--where are you at?

ART: I'm at eight, and he's rolling a d10.

AUSTIN: He is rolling a d10. What's your armor? Oh, you don't have any armor anymore! Right! Uh huh!

DRE: (laughing)

ART: Yeah. It's sitting in some jail in, um... in uh...

AUSTIN: Auniq, yeah.

ART: In Auniq.

NICK: (whispering) God. This whole trip has just been the tragedy of Hadrian.

AUSTIN: It's up there.

ART: But I gotta do it, I don't have any other choice! What am I--y'know, I'm just gonna like--I'm not gonna like cower in the fetal position and hope that he doesn't hit anything vital when he hits me.

AUSTIN: Yeah, I'm with you.

NICK: Yeah. Yeah, totally.

AUSTIN: So this is what he does.

ART: I'm not even looking. I'm gonna--I'm gonna turn away, I'm gonna click the mouse...

DRE: I'm not looking neither! Ohh, I'm too scared!

NICK: I'm looking. ...Oof.

DRE: (noise of great anguish) Nooooooo!

ART: It's been nice playing with you guys.

AUSTIN: It's weird how you were, like, the star of that holiday special. And also...

ART: You can find me on Twitter at @atebbel, um, I hope that my replacement is uh, is someone that we all like. I'm gonna go--I'm gonna go check the PDF to see what happens when someone dies.

AUSTIN: I--I know what happens when someone dies.

DRE: Austin knows!

AUSTIN: Because this has--this has happened recently. By the time you hear this, of course, Hella has already dealt with that quite a bit. Um... one second, I do have to pull up the move, because...

DRE: Hey remember--remember when I wanted to take that--that level that would let me learn cleric spells like healing spells?

AUSTIN: (laughing) Yeah, I do remember that!

ART: You were never close enough to do it.

DRE: And remember when Art was like, 'shouldn't take that, that's *my* thing'!

AUSTIN: That is what happened. That did happen. Um... here we go, moves, basic moves. Ohhh, boy, I have a basic idea of what--of what happens here. Okay. Let's actually talk about what happens here.

ART: Sure.

AUSTIN: You... so--sword in hand, you just thrust up at him. You're both on your last legs. This is like a... this is a--this isn't a single thrust, I think, this is like a desperate exchange of blows in the final moments of this thing, where your sword moves up, his blocks it off to the side, and then he comes back around with like a nice big sweeping slash across your chest. Last Breath: when you catch a glimpse of what lies beyond the black gates of Death's kingdom--the GM will describe it--I will--then roll. Just roll, plus nothing. Yeah. Death doesn't care how tough or cool you are. On a plus--on a ten plus, you've cheated Death. You're in a bad spot, but you're still alive. On a seven to nine, Death himself will offer you a bargain. Take it and stabilise, or refuse and pass beyond the black gates into whatever fate awaits you. On a six or lower your fate is sealed. You're marked as Death's own and you will cross the threshold soon. The GM will tell you when. Okay. So--

ART: Hey guys. You know--okay, go.

DRE: Oh, I'm really not looking at this one. [UNSURE]

AUSTIN: Give me the roll and then we'll talk about what Death's kingdom is.

ART: But--but my rolls have been so bad!

AUSTIN: Uh huh.

DRE: Oh, I can't look! I'm too scared!

AUSTIN: 2d6.

NICK: Roll the--roll the roll! Come on! Just get it over with. Like a band-aid.

AUSTIN: Or--d10, what am I saying. Not 2d6. What am I talking--I said 2d6. Was that--is that right? Is that what we roll in this game? What do you roll in this game?

ART: You need to get a ten. How do I get a ten--I can't get a ten on 1d6.

AUSTIN: Oh, right. Right. I forgot--I forgot *everything* about this game in that moment! So, on an eight--he rolled an eight.

ART: I rolled an eight.

AUSTIN: Hm?

ART: I was just saying I rolled an eight, out loud.

NICK: Can I--can I do the voice for Death?

AUSTIN: You don't have to, because Death--Death has no power here. We know where Tristero is. Tristero's kingdom is small. Tristero's kingdom is on some--some bay, somewhere. He ceded his power all those years ago to keep his holiday destination safe. And he ceded that power to who else but Samot, Boy-King. Death's--Death's kingdom is here. Action freezes, and... Tabard's blade, covered in your blood, holds still in the--in the air, along with the dandelion, along with the remnants of the blast of fire that Sunder Havelton had shot off. And... creeping out from under Fantasma's hand, slowly, he kind of lifts it, gracefully, and puts it aside--puts it back on--on Fantasma's side, and pats him on the side of--of his shoulder. Samot walks forward, through the doors, towards you. You and he are the only two things that move here. He reaches down and offers you a hand. What do you do? (long pause) Are you silent for a moment?

ART: (sighs) Yeah. I like, I'm--I like I can only imagine my eyes are just disbelief.

AUSTIN: Yeah. He says--

ART: And I mean disbelief in all--in all the ways.

AUSTIN: He looks around the room.

AUSTIN (as Samot): Even I didn't expect this drama today. Interesting. My friend... Hadrian, is it?

ART (as Hadrian): Yes.

AUSTIN (as Samot): You are a faithful man, and unlike Tabard, you would not make a good pala-din. You will face a time soon where you will have to make a choice about what you believe. I let you walk from here today on the condition that you give that thought--or that you give that choice lots of thought. I have made my fair share of poor choices. Believe me. But you have the fire in you that I had when I was young. I respect

that. I hope, like me, you find that you can pair that fire with some wine, and some love. If you can't... then you really only will be Samoth's pet. Here.

AUSTIN: He reaches back around his--his neck and undoes his cape. It is a--it is a strange thing. It is pure white, and you think that it must be, y'know, silk or linen or something, but when he lays it around your neck, um, you realise that it's warm, it's like fur, it's like... the fur of a wolf.

AUSTIN (as Samot): We all have our enemies. It's hard to tell when you've beaten them or when they've beaten you. Take my offer, leave, and keep me in mind. I'll see you again, I promise.

AUSTIN: Do you take his hand?

ART: ...Yeah.

AUSTIN: All right. [*Eve's Light Parade begins playing*] And just like that, not only are you stabilized, you are healed back to max. [*guitar enters*] And--the sword wasn't in Tabard's hand, it was in *your* hand. And he was the one on his knees. And you were pulling the life from him. And he makes eye contact with you in a way that no one else in the world could. Because he knows what it means to promise something to Samot. And he knows what you've just done. Mark on the wall, there, comes together, and you see what pattern magic really means, because there across from you, in the mirror, is not the tower. It's Velas. It's *home*. And they point you towards it.

AUSTIN (as Sunder): Let's go.

AUSTIN: --says Sunder.

AUSTIN (as Sunder): Now.

AUSTIN: Uklan tosses Thrandir the book that he'd been reading from... and jumps in.

ART: I turn and back out.

AUSTIN: Sure.

ART: And as I get to like the threshold, I wanna like shout back:

ART (as Hadrian): Did you make me come here? At the tower?

AUSTIN (as Samot): You've been chasing me a long time.

ART: He steps out.

AUSTIN: And we're back in Velas.

[Eve's Light Parade stops playing]

AUSTIN: There is a--out on the Garden District of Velas--you remember Velas is split into kind of three and a half districts, sort of--the fields are kind of attached to the Sun District, which is the old rubble where--where the temple to Samothos is. Then there's the Fish District, filled from top to bottom with--with marketplaces, and little stores and shops and work--y'know, craftsmen stores, and kind of middle class housing, and then there's the Garden District where the Velesian Council holds its meetings, and where the highest of the high class are. And you are suddenly there, out on one of the--the promenades of the Garden District, and... you've found, uh, you find yourself in front of what else but a giant mirror. The people who are setting it up--freak out, and drop it, and it shatters on the ground, closing the portal back behind you. One of them--one of them is just like:

AUSTIN (as NPC): (panicked gibberish)

AUSTIN: And the other one is so practically--practical-minded that he can't even focus on what just happened. All he says is:

AUSTIN (as NPC): Ugh! God damn it. We have to get another mirror in here from Rosemerrow. We have to have this set up by next week. They're saying that the--that the uh, Festival of High Sun will be here.

AUSTIN: And he walks away, as preparations for the festival begin to start. I think we call it there.

DRE: Yeah.

ART: Sure.

NICK: That's a good place.

AUSTIN: I'm trying to think if there's any specific codas here worth talking about. Um... okay.

NICK: Fantasma walks away, and just says:

NICK (as Fantasma): I'm very tired.

AUSTIN: Yeah. You know that you can go back to your--you have a place in the attic of a friend of yours in this district that you can retreat to. On your way there you catch out of the--the side

of your eye, you swear for a second you see an old friend of yours. You're not sure which old friend. You have a bunch. Throndir, you're back in this town where you don't know anybody. Y'know, you know these guys, but both of them have their own issues, and Sunder and Uklan decide they have to leave immediately. They're going to check in at the, ah, at the Archivist's kind of outpost here and then leave. But they thank you and say--and tell you, Throndir, that if you ever--if you ever feel like working for someone a little better equipped, that you should seek them out. Hadrian--

DRE: I--can I respond to that offer?

AUSTIN: Yeah, definitely.

DRE (as Throndir): I appreciate it, but... I have no home. I have no family. I have this job, and I have my friends.

AUSTIN: Sunder nods and says:

AUSTIN (as Sunder): There's nothing better. Uklan, let's go, old man.

AUSTIN: She doesn't even look at Fantasma when she leaves. Hadrian, what do you do that night?

ART: I feel like normally I'd be like, really enthusiastic about like... spending time with Throndir, especially like, alone in a new city, like trying to get him into... into the community. But I don't think--I don't think Hadrian has it in him. I think he just kinda likes... walks away, like:

ART (as Hadrian): Don't give Fantasma that book.

ART: --walks away.

AUSTIN: (laughing)

DRE: Well--cause, I guess I technically have two books now, don't I?

AUSTIN: What's the other book?

DRE: The one I got from--the orc harvest party book. Or is that the one that he was reading from?

AUSTIN: That's the one--no, okay, sorry. Yeah. That one they request from you. The orc harvest party, they want. That's what they were going there for.

DRE: Can I ask them what it is?

AUSTIN: Um--they say yeah.

DRE: I mean I *do* ask them what it is, I don't know if they'll tell me, but.

AUSTIN: She... she looks at Uklan to get the kind of approval, because like, even though she works with them now, he is still the dude from there, y'know, he's still the orc, and she's kind of still a freelancer in that way. And he says:

AUSTIN (as Uklan): That tower was--was... powered by a... immense, immense source of energy. And we at the Archives, as we continue to collect things, and put things in order, and try to fix this world gone mad we, we--we need to have power. We need to figure out how to harness the energy that we know is here in Hieron. And if we--if we can do that, then we can fix things. This is a way to fix things.

DRE (as Throndir): Then take it. And fix things.

NICK: I--when, uh--so, after the spiel about the book and everything, as Uklan and Sunder are walking away, and like, Fantasma sees, um, y'know, Fantasma notices that he's just been completely snubbed, he like sort of leans into his staff, like *really* heavy, and just looks like, y'know, he got... looks like he's about to topple over or something. And then says, like sort of repeats:

NICK (as Fantasma): I am so very tired.

NICK: And then heads off, just--without saying a word, heads off to his little place in the attic.

AUSTIN: Final shots of Throndir?

DRE: He's probably heard rumors that there's someone else like him in town.

AUSTIN: Shame you can't find her. It's a shame. She's busy, tonight, it turns out. All right. So they have that book, you--

ART: Wait, I have--I have more on what Hadrian does.

AUSTIN: Yeah, please.

ART: I don't--we can roleplay as much or as little of this as you want but I think he goes to the--to the church.

AUSTIN: Give me the--give me the final scenes of an HBO drama of this.

ART: I mean I--I do know that scene, but he goes to the church, he goes to Lucius, he tells him like, y'know, the broad strokes of what happened, explains, y'know:

ART (as Hadrian): My armor's gone, my weapon's gone, all my stuff is gone, y'know, if there's a procedure to replace some of this stuff, y'know, I wanna--I wanna do it.

ART: Y'know, I tell him as much as I can. And I do not tell him about... I don't tell him about anything like that.

AUSTIN: (laughing) You can't even say it. You, the player, can't even say it. So you don't tell him about Samot, you don't tell him about... any of that.

ART: No. And then--and then like, y'know, they talk for a little bit, Hadrian leaves, he goes back to his quarters and he's like... y'know, there's the--there's the shot of him just like, sitting there reading his holy book, but like looking distracted. And then, y'know, we cut to a--sort of like Hadrian in disguise, y'know like, Hadrian's a big dude, it's hard for him to hide, but like--I'm assuming he has clothes that don't have religious iconography on them, right? Like he... he has his day off clothes, or a cloak, or whatever. All of this, probably.

AUSTIN: His laundry clothes, yeah.

ART: And he goes out to a tavern and sits alone with a bottle of wine.

AUSTIN: He's not alone. There's another guy who stays at that tavern sometimes, who is... he's desperate for someone, for anyone to talk to about his trouble. There's a warmth there, deep in him. You can feel him--that he's a family man, that he cares, but--not tonight. Hadrian can't reach out to that man tonight.

ART: Oh, you're a son of a bitch.

AUSTIN: So he goes--back upstairs, and goes to sleep. And... Hadrian processes. XP!

DRE: Austin Walker. Austin Walker, you're a motherfucker. (laughing)

AUSTIN: (laughing) I've been known. All right. End of session: choose one of your bonds that you feel is resolved, completely explored, no longer relevant or otherwise. Ask the player of the character that you have the bond with if they agree. If they do, mark XP and write a new bond with whomever you wish. Let's see. Let's see what bonds are like right now.

NICK: I don't have any.

AUSTIN: Don't have anything new to change, you mean?

NICK: Oh... no.

AUSTIN: No, that was a weird one for that. Again you can also say, like, 'oh, this isn't relevant any more', and change it, it doesn't have to have played out necessarily. But if--but, again, if you would like it to play out in the future, leave it, y'know?

DRE: Yeah, I think both of mine stay.

AUSTIN: You should have three... oh, no, you don't have three, cause you haven't met anybody else in the party. Right.

DRE: Yeah.

AUSTIN: All right.

ART: Um... I could talk about my Throndir bond, if we want. 'Throndir has a good soul, but he needs to be guided upon the proper path'. I like basically completely refused to just do that. And like maybe that's the resolution there, like...

AUSTIN: Yeah, I think so too.

ART: I don't have it in me.

AUSTIN: Also--I think, Fantasma, you have to think about your bond with Hadrian now. Because the thing that he is woefully misinformed about the world about is that there is--that there is a god, that there are gods. And for you it's all like--it's all magic, right? But now you're buds with a god, who you *must* believe is a god.

DRE: He's your liege.

AUSTIN: So maybe he's still--right, he's still misinformed about the world, right? But maybe in a new and different way.

NICK: Sure. Do I--I mean...

AUSTIN: I don't know! I don't know what you have to--you don't have to be a believer now, but like... y'know.

NICK: I mean, I think Fantasma would think that his, uh, his somehow immediately lifelong friend, um, which I really love that...

AUSTIN: Me too. Yeah.

NICK: I love that he turned it around.

AUSTIN: It's both--it's just both ways, now, y'know?

NICK: Yeah. It's great. I think that--I think that he thinks that his friend is--just knows some super powerful magic.

AUSTIN: Super good magic, right.

NICK: Yeah, that Fantasma doesn't know yet.

AUSTIN: It still might be worth rewriting that in--in terms of like... because now he might not be woefully misinformed about the world so much as like, he's pledging allegiance to the wrong power? He's... there's something, you know what I mean? Like you're right, it doesn't have to be that he's--he believes this guy's a god, now, like maybe--maybe that's what he even believes his friendship with Samot is, is like--'that dude thinks he's a god, people call him a god, but like... I know he's just a real powerful magician like *me*, y'know, I tease him about it'.

NICK: And--and, y'know, like... in these, like, memories that don't exist but do, uh, y'know, Fantasma genuinely respects him as a person, but that respect originally came from 'I gotta figure out this guy's power. I gotta--I gotta know what he's up to'.

AUSTIN: Yeah, yeah. That's good. So yeah, think about that. We don't have to change anything right this second. What were you starting to say, Art, about--about Hadrian's with Throndir? Oh--right, you mentioned it, you did, you explained it. And then...

ART: Yeah, but I don't know what the--I mean, I need a new one, and I don't know what it is right now.

AUSTIN: We can think about it. But again, it should be something like--it should be something like... that you don't have time for Throndir, that you don't have the energy for him, that you don't have... I don't know.

ART: Sure.

AUSTIN: And Throndir, do you have any? I guess not really?

DRE: I don't think so. I think I have one, but it plays out after the holiday episode.

AUSTIN: Right, right. Which is next, basically. Right? Like this is it, this is up to the holiday episode, basically. So if you're listening and haven't listened to that yet, do that, and then come back and listen to this, because...

DRE: Now that we know it's not gonna be retconned, or an alt universe, or something...
(laughing)

AUSTIN: And because there's lots and lots of like, dramatic irony at work here.

ART: Yeah, I'm--have I already fulfilled my bargain with Samot? Was that it? Did I--

AUSTIN: Yeah, I think so. I think so.

ART: Ughhhhh. I need to go for a walk.

AUSTIN: (sympathetic laughter) Um, okay, rest of XP, right.

DRE: You have killed monsters before.

AUSTIN: (less sympathetic laughter) God. That fuckin' episode. Jesus Christ.

DRE: (laughing) Hey man. *This* fuckin' episode.

AUSTIN: Yeah... and y'all haven't even heard the other half of--of Boat Party's, the one that's coming out next week for Boat Party? Woof! Woof. All right, did you--okay. Alignments, did anybody... uh, fulfil your alignment?

NICK: Uh... no. Fantasma even lost respect through power.

ART: I could make a really...

AUSTIN: Through power, yeah.

ART: I could make a really weird case that I denied mercy to an unbeliever, but it's a fuckin'... it's a stretch.

AUSTIN: That's a fuckin'... reach, yeah.

ART: (laughing)

AUSTIN: Did you learn something new and important about the world? Yes.

ART: Oh, man.

AUSTIN: Did you overcome a notable monster or enemy? Yes.

NICK: Yeah.

AUSTIN: Did you look a memorable treasure? Yes. One, two, three, plus all of your failures, you guys are all at least level seven now, right?

ART: How many XP is level--it's ten per level, what's the formula here?

AUSTIN: No, it's--it's... it should just be in there. It starts at seven, I think? It's seven plus your current level.

ART: So that's why this one's ten. Okay. So that's why this one's ten. All right, so... I'm gonna level up--I'm gonna level up after my walk.

AUSTIN: Okay. That sounds good.

ART: But I'm up to--I'm up to four, and I'm really close to five.

DRE: Good lord. Yeah, we didn't free anyone. The closest person would be Uklan, but he's the one that busted us out of the mirror, so.

AUSTIN: No, he busted you out, yeah. He knew what he was doing.

ART: Yeah, he coulda fuckin' hurried up with it.

AUSTIN: Pattern magic is very complicated.

DRE: Takes a while, yeah.

AUSTIN: He had to put those--he had to read, like, page thirty-two, and then page a hundred and seven, and then page twelve, and then page twelve again three times, like it's not--there's no--pattern magic is weird.

DRE: Yeah. Had to kick his boot heel along the way the whole time.

ART: People suffered for his--for his slowness.

AUSTIN: Yeah, they sure did. All right.

NICK: I really liked imagining that scene as if like--like it's a sudden cut out into the forest, and like his first heel drag like lights up.

AUSTIN: Yeah, totally. Exactly.

NICK: And then the next one lights up, and then, like, suddenly it forms, like, you can see

patterns and like things and it just like whooshes all the way up to the tower.

AUSTIN: Yes. Exactly. Exactly. Totally. All right, I think we're done? My name's Austin Walker, you can find me on Twitter at [@austin_walker](#). You can find me on Twitch where we stream video games; that's at [twitch.tv/streamfriends](#), you can find our archives at [streamfriends.tv](#), thanks to Andrew for putting these back up on [streamfriends.tv](#), it's really good cause I know that there are like a handful of you out there who listen to it just on YouTube, so you can do that if that's a thing you'd like to do. Where else, you can find the stuff that I write at [clockworkworlds.com](#), and I link to everything I do there, basically, so just check there, I'm writing for Paste and Gamespot and some other places. So--check that out. Andrew, where can people find you on the internet?

DRE: You can find me--just navigate your favorite web browser to [hotbrowser.club](#) and that will take you to my Twitter page. I'm with Austin on Stream Friends, if you've enjoyed me playing this pen and paper game, by the time you hear this, hopefully my Baldur's Gate 2 playthrough, which is running on old D&D rules, will start showing up on [streamfriends.tv](#).

NICK: Yaaay.

AUSTIN: Nice. Nick, where can people find you?

NICK: You can find me at [nicksrat.ch](#). That links to all of my stuff.

AUSTIN: And Art, besides out taking a walk, where can people find you?

ART: Yeah, you can find me walking around the Silver Lake Reservoir, for the next, y'know, forty-five minutes or so, or you can find me on Twitter at [@atebbel](#), you can read things I write at [comicmix.com](#) and it's not related to me at all but, y'know, maybe you wanna see what's going on at [contentburger.biz](#).

AUSTIN: (laughing) You should do that. You should go to [contentburger.biz](#).

NICK: Yeah. Go do that. You should go watch the best Shenmue let's play... I've ever seen.

AUSTIN: Oh, it's so good, it's such a good Shen--it's so good. I could go for a fruity grape right now.

NICK: Yeah. Totally.

DRE: (giggling)

NICK: Getting all squinty-eyed just thinking about it.

AUSTIN: Real talk, please also if you--if you enjoyed this, go to our iTunes page and like us there, give us a--give us a rating, write a review. That would be cool if people saw that this was good and that you like it.

DRE: Yeah. Oh, and if you, if you like the music, you can visit Jack's Bandcamp, notquitereal.bandcamp.com and pay money to download the music and have it at your leisure.

AUSTIN: It's so good! It's so good.

DRE: It's--it's stupid good.

NICK: Yep. It's really good.

AUSTIN: Okay. I think that's it. It's--I feel like I can't leave. Like I feel like I'm looking--I have to not look at the map of Velas otherwise I'm never going to be able to stop thinking about what happens next. (sighing)

ART: (sighing)

AUSTIN: (sighing again)

ART: (sighing one last time)

AUSTIN: Everyone just breathe. Okay. Have a good night, everybody.

ART: All right.

AUSTIN: Let's go to time.is. Give it a clap

ART: Yeah, great.

AUSTIN: It worked great! That was perfect! Dice were in our favour. Let's go at fifty seconds.

(extremely out of sync claps)

AUSTIN: Okay. Bye. Sorry. Sorry, Keith. Bye.