

[Winter in Hieron 05: Blood Doesn't Run](#)

Transcribed by Kara @karathenerd [00:00 to 45:53] Cole [0:45:53-finish]

Austin: Twinbrook sits between the Cloud and Rose riverbanks, and it is morning in Twinbrook. You've left The Primping Badger, the inn where you were staying and where you'd had breakfast. And the second that you step out into the town, you hear the sound of metal against wood.

[Jack de Quidt's "[Inside](#)" begins playing]

Austin: To your left, towards the pathway that you took to Twinbrook, you see a crowd beginning to gather. They're watching, under the light of the sun, a mothman strike the dam with his steel sword, over and over and over again. What do you do?

Art: I concentrate for a moment, and ask what here is evil?

Austin: Hella.

Art: Yeah, what new things are evil?

Austin: And probably a couple of people here: one or two.

Janine: The baker.

Art: Just like, random people?

Janine: A shifty baker.

Austin: Yeah, a real shifty baker and Hella.

Art: Did you say banker, and Janine said baker?

Austin: Well, we all have our biases, Art.

Art: Okay.

[Laughter] [Long pause as music finishes, until 2:22]

Austin: Welcome to Friends at the Table, an actual play podcast focused on critical worldbuilding, smart characterization, and fun interaction between good friends. Today we are playing [Dungeon World](#) by Adam Koebel and Sage LaTorra, which is a hack of D. Vincent Baker's Apocalypse World. My agenda is 'to portray a fantastic world, to fill the character's lives with adventure, and to play to find out what happens.' I am Austin Walker, you can find me on

twitter [@austin_walker](#), and you can read the things I write and edit at [waypoint.vice.com](#), also joining me today, Janine Hawkins.

Janine: Hey, I am [@bleatingheart](#) on twitter.

Austin: Arthur Tebbel.

Art: Hey, I'm [atebbel](#) on twitter

Austin: Andrew Lee Swan

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

Austin: And our intrepid producer and roleplayer, Ali Acampora.

Ali: [laughs] Hi, you can find me [@ali_west](#) on twitter, and you can find the show [@friends_table](#).

Austin: Shout outs to Ali for quickly hacking together a little mini episode that is, by the time you hear this, will have shown- will have been exhibited at a museum? Which is weird.

Ali: Uh huh!

Austin: That's a weird thing that's happened! So, thanks, I guess, to the Victoria and Albert Museum, in England. It's a real museum where our show was for like, a single night thing on virtual reality and real lives and games?

Art: The eleventh most attended museum in the world.

Austin: Wow.

Dre: Jesus!

Austin: Friends at the -

Art: Yeah.

Austin: Friends- Us? Us? Hm.

[Laughter]

Ali: Yeah.

Austin: We all make choices in- in this life.

Art: They can't take it back. I've checked. Once you've exhibited something, that's always happened.

Ali: They're gonna hear this and regret it though.

Austin: Oh, boy.

Art: Whenever they get to 'Ibex is daddy,' they can't take it back.

[Laughs]

Dre: God.

Austin: He is though. [Laughter] So, before we start I just want to go over character alignments and bonds, so that we can make sure we're all good on all that stuff. So, let's start with Hadrian, who's at the top of my character sheet list.

Art: Yeah, which is not alphabetical. My alignment is Lawful, and lawful for a paladin means 'to deny mercy to a criminal or unbeliever.'

Austin: Mhm.

Art: My bonds are that 'Hella is at a spiritual crossroads, and only I can see her through it,' 'Thrandir's morality is a broken clock, I must lead him to the correct time.' and 'Fantasmo saved my life and returned my faith to me, I owe him one.' And that will be overwritten as soon as we get something with our new... pair.

Austin: Yeah. [Ali laughs] Here's a thing, did you write down what your vows are somewhere?

Art: Did I?

Austin: Oh boy.

Art: I didn't.

Austin: And what your quest is?

Art: My quest is to save Hella from the evils that surround her.

Austin: Uh huh.

Art: The evil and inequity of the world.

Austin: Yep.

Art: That's not how it's phrased. **[Ali laughs]** My... The things I get for it are, I'm immune to her blade-

Austin: Mhm.

Art: -and I sure wish I'd just said Ordennan steel that would've been like, the better version of that.

[Ali, Austin laugh].

Austin: Yeah, that would be really good.

Ali: Whoops.

Art: Yeah, the examples I took are very limited, one. And the ability to understand all languages. I don't know if that's both ways.

Austin: Right. That's- Yeah. Well, hm...

Ali: Historically- Yeah.

Austin: Yeah. I'll say as long as you can make the sounds. Like, it could be a Chewbacca situation.

Art: Do you mean literally me, or do you mean like...?

Austin: Yeah.

Art: Okay.

[Dre laughs]

Austin: Abso- I absolutely do. Um-

Art: Aaaaaaaaaah! **[Chewbacca noise attempt]** That's not very good. See? I don't want to run into any wookies out here.

Austin [laughing]: No, it wasn't- Also, that's not really a Chewbacca situation. Chewbacca could understand what Han Solo said and what everybody said. Just-

Art: Yeah. And then everybody understood him.

Austin: That's true, isn't it?

Art: Yeah, people- everyone learned wookie growing up.

Austin: Huh! Weird.

Art: Yeah.

Austin: The things that I required of you, or that your god required of you, were valor, forbidding- suffering an evil creature to live, and truth, forbidden lies. You're not allowed to lie, and you are not allowed to let an evil creature live.

Art: Yeah.

Austin: You know? I think there's probably limits to that, but like, you know, I'm judging you. Samoths and I.

Art: I sure didn't ask if anyone was evil at our meeting- at our breakfast meeting.

Austin: But they're- they're still around and are not. Well... [pause; deep inhale] No, they're not.

Art: It's weird that you're telling me things that I'm specifically not asking for. It's kinda rude.

Austin: But you did ask though. You asked when you came outside the Primping Badger. And they're like, around.

Art: Okay, I didn't know that this had this kinda range.

Austin: What are you- They're right there. They just came out with you. They're outside with you. They're right there.

Art: Alright. Alright.

Austin: I'm not givin' you anything extra. Don't worry about it.

Art: I was sayin' I don't wanna have to like, run across, like, 'Oh, yeah there's someone evil fifty miles away...'

Austin: 'Why didn't you kill them?'

Art: 'Get on your horse, Hadrian.'

Austin: Right. Thrandir, let's talk about your alignment and bonds.

Dre: Hey! I'm Chaotic, [Austin laughs] Chaotic ranger. That means 'free someone from literal or figurative bonds,' [Austin still laughing] What- what'd I do?

Austin: You said it like you were at like a mall-based dating kiosk.

[Lots of laughter]

Austin [doing an impression]: 'Hey! Um, I'm chaotic.'

Janine [doing an impression]: 'I'm chaotic, and I'm a manager at the Kinko's.' [**Ali** laughs]

Art: Y'all are going to different malls than I am.

[Laughter]

Dre: And you know what? You should print a printer. That's what- that's what I think!

Ali: God.

Austin: Okay! Good. Good, good, good.

Dre: My bonds are 'I implicitly trust Hadrian for fighting to protect me,' 'Adaire, does not understand life in the wild so I will teach them,' and 'I could learn a lot of Hella about how to be an adventurer for hire.'

Austin: Oh, I love how naive and wonderful Throndir is.

Dre: He's just a nice boy!

Ali: I have a lot that I could teach, what are you talking about!?

Austin: Yeah, okay.

Dre: Yeah, no!

Austin: So, Hella, what's your alignment?

Ali: My alignment is that I am Evil. Which means [laughter]... My alignment is to destroy something rather than try to understand it.

Austin: Mhm.

Ali: Which I have done in the past.

Austin: Sure.

Art: Oh boy.

Ali: [laughs] And my um... I have two bonds. One is with Hadrian, and that is 'I don't understand the extent of Hadrian's troubles, but I've made hard choices, and I've met gods, too. Hadrian has my ear and my blade whenever he needs it.'

Austin: Okay. And-?

Ali: Yeah.

Austin: That's a long one. You gotta cut that one down a little bit.

Ali: I gotta cut both of them down, so much. And then the other one- I have one with Adaire which is, because of some stuff that we don't know about her yet...

Austin: Wait, don't we know about it? Do we not know about this?

Ali: We don't know about this.

Austin: Okay.

Janine: We didn't touch on that at all before.

Ali: Yeah.

Austin: Okay, well, go ahead.

Ali: [laughs] So, 'whatever she does to avoid attention isn't my business, so long as she's useful when the time comes around.'

Austin: Okay. Well, Adaire, what are your alignments and bonds?

Janine: My alignment is Neutral, which for a thieves is 'avoid detection or infiltrate a location.' My bonds are 'Hadrian has more use than most of his sort.' Uh, 'Thrandir knows things that I can benefit from.' And 'Hella has my back when things go wrong.'

Austin: Good. These are all good ones. These are all... Okay. So, this moth- this mothman- This is Frond- is slashing at the dam with his curved sword. And he's out just like, in- This is the first time you're seeing him in bright daylight. There's a sort of like, gooey, black blood running from his side, from his wounds from last night. He has like, a gigantic, big, bug head with huge like, multifaceted eyes, and is just slamming the sword again and again against the dam, um, kinda futilely.

Janine: Can I get like a team huddle here?

[laughter]

Austin: Yes, totally.

Janine: Adaire like, gestures at everyone like, 'come here.'

Austin: There are people like, laughing at the moth.

Janine: Yeah, of course.

Austin [overlapping]: There are people like- Yeah.

Art: [overlapping] Wait, is this moth-?

Dre: I don't like this.

Austin: There are like guards, nearby that are like, not even doing anything cause this is so-like a waste of time.

Art: Yeah, I was gonna ask that. Is this gonna happen? Is he gonna destroy this? Is he gonna destroy this dam? Like, what kind of- what's this dam made of?

Janine: Lots of futile things don't really work out usually, right? Like that's probably- I don't know, I just- [**Austin** laugh]

Ali: Yikes.

Art: But these yokels probably aren't like, dam experts. [**Ali** laughs]

Austin: I mean they built the dam.

Art: Not all of 'em!

Austin: Sure, true.

Janine: So, okay. Adaire's gonna like, beckon everyone over,

Janine (as **Adaïre**): Throndir, do have like- Can you like, talk bug or something? Is that like, a thing you do?

Dre (as **Throndir**): Yup! Yup.

Austin: What is it?

Dre: I'm just-

Austin: What?

Dre: Uh, I have... Let's see. Where is it on my sheet? 'Wild empathy. I can speak with and understand all animals.'

Austin: Totally.

Ali: Huh.

Janine: Okay.

Dre: If that counts for the situation.

Austin: Yeah, it counts. Um...

Dre: Okay.

Austin: Mm. [sighs]

Art: I have a voice that transcends language.

Austin: I'll let you both do it. I want to be clear, this thing isn't an animal. It speaks an animal- It speaks a language that you- your knowledge of bug language helps you understand what he's saying, but he is not a bug. Like he's a-

Dre: Yeah, that's fair.

Austin: He's a sapient humanoid being.

Dre: Okay.

Janine (as Adaire): Okay. So here's... the thing that I'd like to do, if y'all are cool with it. I would like-

Janine: I don't like saying, 'I would like' That's not good. [**Janine** and **Ali** laugh]

Janine (as Adaire): Okay, okay, here's the thing. I've got a dude who can probably talk to this bug. Why don't you see if you can like, talk him down?

Janine: Him? They? I don't know.

Janine (as Adaire): Talk them down a little bit. Hella, if you could go with him and make sure the moth doesn't like, spin around and wail on him, that'd also be really good. Hadrian, would you mind coming with me to find like a...?

Janine: Is there like, a mayor or something? Who runs this town?

Austin: You would know. So tell me.

Janine: Okay.

Austin: Who runs this town?

Janine: I'm gonna say he's technically a mayor, but calls himself a viceroy.

Austin: Okay.

Janine: Cause that seems like something that would happen-

Austin: Wait, we can't use that.

Janine: No?

Austin: There's a- Well, you can use viceroy. There's another thing that we figured out that's similar. There's the vicereine, which is one of the heads of the three bloods of Ordenna- the three clans of Ordenna. But viceroy is a different thing than vicereine, so...

Janine: Sure, we could also go with like, Lesser Regent. Or something.

Austin: Lesser regent, yes.

Janine: The Lesser Regent of Twinbrook.

Austin: I gotta get a name really quick... this is Lesser Regent... [thinking noises] da-da-da- [to self] Who do I got here?

Art: Can you imagine having to introduce yourself as Lesser Regent?

[Laughter]

Austin: Yeah, Lesser Regent Rowena.

Janine: Okay.

Austin: Rowena Lee is her name.

Janine (as Adaire): So, does that sound cool, Thrandir and Hella? You try and you know, diffuse the situation as calmly as possible. Cause there's a lot of people around, and we don't need to make this more of a fuss than it is necessarily. And Hadrian, you come with me to Lesser Regent Rowena's place? Is that- How we feeling about that?

Art (as Hadrian): Absolutely.

Janine (as Adaire): Okay.

Dre (as Thrandir): Yeah, sure!

Janine (as Adaire): Alright.

Ali (as Hella): ...alright.

Austin: Alright, cool. So, who wants to go first? Let's see what's up with the bug, first, and then we'll pivot. So, Thrandir and Hella, you get a little bit closer. And he's just chopping away at this wood. And like, he's making a dent, but he's hitting like the railing. [**Dre** laughs an 'aww'] It's not

even- it's not even the base of the dam. Like, he's standing on the dam hitting the railing with his sword. What do you do?

Dre (as Thrandir): Hey, Hey! Hey buddy are you okay? Are you lost?

Austin: Hella, you hear a series of like, clicks and squeaks.

Ali: Great.

[0:15:00]

Austin: Thrandir you hear him say like,

Austin (as Frond): I'm doing exactly what I'm supposed to be doing. I'm fine! Go away!

Dre (as Thrandir): Okay, but here's the thing. I think your arm's probably going to fall off before you finish what you're supposed to be doing.

Austin (as Frond): Just get out of here! You shouldn't be here.

Dre [as Thrandir]: No, I mean, that may be true. This is probably your place more than mine.

Austin: Clank, clank, clank, clank. He's still hitting.

Dre (as Thrandir): Hey, can you- can you just like- can we just chill with the sword until- and have like- and just have this conversation?

Austin: A little halfling goes like,

Austin [as Halfling]: The elf's talkin' to 'im! **[Ali laughs]**

Austin: Give me a Defy Danger charisma, or actually- or a Parley if you're offering something here. But it doesn't sound like it. It sounds like you're just trying to convince him without any leverage.

Dre: Yeah, sure. Okay, I'm really bad at charisma, so let's see how this goes!

Ali: If this is a Defy Danger, can I like, aid in some way here?

Austin: Yeah, totally. Totally. How are you aiding?

Ali: I mean I don't know. Cause like, the danger is really... it has a-

Austin: The danger is you annoy this guy enough to turn on you.

Ali: Right.

Austin: That's- I'll state the danger. So.

Ali: Okay, because like, Hella's there to like, look intimidating,

Austin [overlapping]: Be intimidating? Yeah. Yeah.

Ali: Yeah, so like, so that whoever this is doesn't want to attack Throndir?

Austin: Totally. Yeah, give me a- give me a roll. You don't have a bond with Throndir, though, do you?

Ali: Oh, I do not. But, is that just a-?

Austin: It's just that you don't get a plus one.

Ali: Okay.

Austin: Unless you write a bond with Throndir.

Ali: [laughs] We'll get one. I don't want to just write one for this.

Austin: Okay. I understand.

Ali: But it's 2d6, right?

Austin: Yup.

Ali: And that's an eight, which is-

Austin: That is an eight which means that you give Throndir the plus one, but you also open yourself up to retribution or harm.

Ali: Oh, that's fine.

Dre: It'll be fine.

Ali: Yeah.

Austin: So, give me the Defy Danger- Well, friend.

Dre: Well, okay. Hold on. **[Ali sighs]** I get Hella's plus one, right?

Austin: Yeah.

Art: Yeah, it's a six.

Dre: And then I'll use my plus one prep point to get it up to seven.

Austin: That's not bad. That's not bad.

Dre: Can I do that?

Janine: Yeah.

Dre: Okay.

Austin: He says,

Austin (as Frond): Fine, but if you want to talk, come with me.

Dre (as Thrandir): Okay, yeah, that's fair.

Austin: And he turns and begins to walk away, down the pathway away from town.

Ali (as Hella): What's fair? What's...

Dre (as Thrandir): I'm gonna- I'm- Okay, he wants to talk, but he wants to be away from here, which I think is good? [Hella sighs] Because I don't think anyone's gonna try and kill him in the woods.

Austin: Mhm.

Dre (as Thrandir): So, I guess if you want to stay you can, but you can- you can go. I don't know. It'll be fine. It'll be fine!

Ali (as Hella): Yeah, let's just get out of here. Why are we getting involved with this?

Austin: Alright, so you walk outside.

Dre: I whistle for Kodiak to follow me.

Austin: Yeah, Kodiak comes with you, and it seems okay. Like, Kodiak isn't- Kodiak is a little like, 'grr' at first, but then as this guy leads you out of town and then takes a left turn and starts walking through the woods- Like, he's not walking... He seems very comfortable walking. He isn't- he's just kind of like, not stumbling forward, but kind of.. not aimlessly- It actually just feels like it's very everyday or ordinary to him, you know? And he's just walking, out the- like, with you, through the snow south away from town.

Austin (as Frond): What is it you want to know?

Austin: And again, Hella, he's just like [various chirping and purring and clicking noises]

Ali [Laughs]: Hella is so upset. [**Dre** laughs]

Dre (as **Thrandir**): Listen, I think- you know, I think we got off on the wrong foot with the whole wagon thing yesterday. And I think that maybe we can help each other out.

Austin (as **Frodo**): Most of you don't speak. How could you help?

Dre (as **Thrandir**): We found your list? I mean if you let us know... you know, what you need and what you're using it for maybe we could help you out.

Austin: Do you- do you show the list? Or, who has the list?

Dre: That's a good question. Who does have the list?

Janine: I put that in my inventory.

Austin: I think Adaire has it.

Janine: Along with the twenty-five silken coins.

[**Ali** laughs]

Austin: Right. Good.

Janine: Just cause I don't use that money doesn't mean someone doesn't use that money.

Austin: Right. Frodo just says like,

Austin (as **Frodo**): We tried trade; they won't trade. We need to take it. We need a lot. We need a lot.

Dre (as **Thrandir**): Listen, I understand. I've been... I've been on your side of the situation before, and I know that there's a lot of people in this world that you can't trust and deal with, but I want you to understand that I'm not one of those people.

Austin: It stops dead in its tracks and turns and looks at you in the eyes and says,

Austin (as **Frodo**): You look like them though. Just like them. It's very thirsty.

[pause]

Austin: So, Rowena's office is in the third tav- in a tavern in this tiny town. We should called it fucking Three Inns, instead of Twinbrook. You're in the Regency Inn and Tavern, which is why she has called herself the Lesser Regent. Or maybe that's why this place is called the Regency Inn and Tavern and not the other way around. I think her office is probably like, literally just the

suite at this tavern, that is like- has been converted from a bedroom into an office. Or like, it's the living area of this big suite that just has like, an old desk in it, lots of paperwork. There's like a blackboard that has a map- like, a really sh- like, Adaire you know that map is not a good map. But like, it loosely understands where the trade routes and stuff are.

Janine: Mhm.

Austin: There's lots of like, negatives written down- like, negative numbers, and then just like, big circles, and just like, notes that are like, 'Fix this' underlined three times. So, uh- and Rowena has probably one big guard. There's one big human guard whose arms are crossed, and he's wearing leather armor with sort of like, almost like, oval like, leg guards- like thigh guards around the sides and front and back and has just like, a- He's a guy who wants to look real mean, but you can tell he ain't that mean. [**Janine** and **Art** laugh] And he has a name tag on. And it says, Clive.

Art: It says Clive?

Austin: Yeah, Clive. Rowena says,

Austin (as **Rowena**): Oh, boy. I heard you protected Saul last night. That was really good. We really needed these supplies. Thank you so much.

Art (as **Hadrian**): Of course.

Janine (as **Adaire**): I know, so that's what he hired us for. So...

Austin (as **Rowena**): So, no reward or anything. That's good, Clive. [lightly laughs]

Janine (as **Adaire**): Oh no. [**Austin**/Rowena sighs relief] I actually came to offer you something.

Austin (as **Rowena**): What's that?

Austin: She's like, a halfling woman whose sitting in a tall- it's a barstool from downstairs that she has up here, so that she's at the top of this very big desk. And when you say- when you say you have something to offer, she leans forward on the barstool and puts both of her arms- er her elbows down on the big desk and leans forward.

Janine: So, here's the gamble that Adaire is taking here.

Austin: Uh huh.

Janine: Which I'm going to lay out immediately. So, you mentioned that in Twinbrook, there had been Sis- I think it was Sister Carol came through-

Austin: Yes. Yep.

Janine: -and did some churchy stuff.

Austin: Mhm, I think she's still here.

Janine: And- Okay, well, that's even better cause my thought is that that probably wouldn't be happening if the Lesser Regent wasn't kind of into that scene. Like, there would maybe some pressure on her to leave or something.

Austin: Mhm.

Janine: She probably wouldn't have stuck around quite so long, at the very least. So, Adaire shows up with Hadrian whose like, Mr. Fancy Samoths Armor stuff.

Austin [overlapping]: Mr. Samoths. Uh huh.

Janine: And her offer is... that, as sort of a, you know, gesture of good will, because we're sort of coming through here anyway, she was wondering if the Lesser Regent would be willing to give her some sort uh... some sort of identifiable thing. Like, if she's got a monogrammed handkerchief or something- something that is strongly attached to Rowena that Hadrian could carry around. And since they're journeying down and then coming back through Twinbrook, it would sort of pick up the accumulated blessings of Samoths and so on as they traveled.

Austin [laughing]: This is very complicated!

Janine: Basically, by carrying this thing on his person-

Austin: Uh huh.

Janine: -he could confer some of the blessings of Samoths upon it, and then when they come back through Twinbrook-

Austin: Uh huh.

Janine: -they would return it to her, as, you know, as like, a nice gesture.

Austin: And what do you- what do you want in exchange for that?

[Ali laughs]

Janine (as **Adaire**): Nothing! Nothing at all.

Austin: She like, looks- she looks around at an invisible audience. She like, tries to Jim Halpert.

[Laughter]

Janine (as **Adaire**): Faith gives, ya know? Like, it doesn't always have to take,

Austin (as **Rowena**): Are you one of the... are you a sister? A laysister also? The whole Samoths thing?

Janine (as **Adaire**): Oh, no. But, you know, the family- it's- there's a lot of it in there, and you kinda pick it up and take it to heart, even if you have other plans for your- for yourself.

Austin: Samoths- er Samthoes, fuck. Hadrian, what are you doing? How does all of this strike you?

Art: I think kind of like... [**Ali** and **Art** laugh] I think there's like a- there's like a- you know, she does the Jim Halpert look as you-

Austin: Uh huh.

Art: And then Adaire says that, and he kind of like, does it back.

[Laughter]

Art: Like, I don't think-

Austin: Right.

Art: I don't think he has a very good poker face.

Austin: No, well, you can't lie!

Art: Over here like-

Austin: You literally can't lie. You're under vow not to lie. [laughs]

Art: Yeah, I mean, that's- I think that's technically a reasonable trade, but I think I'm compelled to be like,

Art (as **Hadrian**): If it's a blessing on your handkerchief I couldn't do it right now, but it could be arranged. It would only take a matter of hours. I-

Austin (as **Rowena**): Clive, what's happening? Clive! Clive! What is happening, Clive?

Austin: And Clive says like,

Austin (as **Clive**): I think they are offering to bless your stuff, or something.

Austin: And she's,

Austin (as **Rowena**): We're very busy, and it's very- I appreciate the offer, but I think, uh, you can just take the mission to Rosemerrow. They'll really love you all down there. Its beautiful. You should go visit it. I[overlapped] But I have a lot to do.

Art (as **Hadrian**): What is... happening?

Austin (as **Rowena**): I have a lot to do right now. So, thank you so much. Just you can- You know where the stairs are.

Art (as **Hadrian**): I don't think you heard me. I asked you if you knew what was happening down by the dam.

Austin (as **Rowena**): Oh, I thought you meant generally 'What's happening?' Like, 'What is the situation that's happening in this room right now ?' Cause that's the one I'm confused by. The dam, what do you mean? What's happening by the dam?

Art (as **Hadrian**): There's a small... man hacking with a sword.

Janine (as **Adaire**): You should go take a look. Just like, peak out real quick.

Austin (as **Rowena**): Clive. Clive, what is happening at the dam?

Austin: And he says,

Austin (as **Clive**): One of them moths is hittin' it.

[Laughter]

Austin (as **Rowena**): Is the dam okay, Clive?

Austin: And he goes:

Austin (as **Clive**): Yeah, yeah, it's sturdy.

Austin: She's like -

Janine (as **Adaire**): I don't know I mean I saw some- some leaks spring. You might want to go check it out.

Austin: Oh, Christ. Alright, give me a... give me something for that. Give me also a Defy Danger charisma.

Janine: I just hit charisma for that, right? I don't know how-

Austin: Yeah

Janine: -I've already completely forgotten how to do this.

Austin: Yep, that's it. Roll charisma.

Janine: Click and drag to roll the dice...?

Austin: Oh, that's not- You don't have to do all that. That's twelve though.

Janine: Nice.

Austin: She goes like,

Austin (as Rowena): [groans] There's leaks. Alright, alright, alright, Clive, go get the builder's union. Tell them to go try to- Can you take him? Can you take him and go get the builders union with him and show them the leaks, and they'll take care of it? Chase the moth off. For Samoth's sake. [sighs]

Art (as Hadrian): Of course.

Austin: So, Clive begins to- he's like,

Austin (as Clive): Ah, yeah.

Austin: And starts to step out of the room .

Art: This feels a little bit like a waste of our time to...

Janine: Mm.

Austin: She's not a believer. Like, she is not a- that's just not what she is. You can't just make her a believer.

Janine: Well, it was a worthwhile gamble, I think.

Austin: I guess? I'm still not sure what the end game here was. [**Janine** sighs]

Art: Yeah, what happened if she said yes?

Janine: I got a piece of collateral. Not collateral, but I got a piece of weight for a Parley that could eventually happen.

Austin: Oh, maybe, yeah. I think that that's pretty roundabout. In general, Parley is looking less for- like, you can totally parley money or something that's like someone's- like, blackmail somebody. But it's also just like, it's what we saw before which is like, my parley is, 'The thing you don't want is to be dead.' That can totally be a parley leverage. Or like, 'I know how to fix your thing' can be a parley leverage. It doesn't have to literally be a thing. Like a physical thing.

Janine: Mm.

Austin: Good- which is important enough- And listen, you got Clive. That's- that's some leverage.

Janine: [Laughing] Not really.

Austin: By the time you get downstairs- it's gonna work out in your favor. By the time you get downstairs, the crowd has already dispersed, and the... you know, moth is gone, and so are Hella and Throndir. And there- you can see some footprints in the snow heading away, and it's at that moment you hear a scream coming from the shops area. What do you do?

Art: The shops area here?

Austin: Yes, north of that though, actually. Like, up- up- So-

Art: Up where it says shops area.

Austin: For people who are listening, the way this town is laid out is kinda like uh- kinda north to south. And southwest is the Primping Badger where they were staying. To the kind of northwest is the Cloud River. To the northeast is the emptied out Rose River. Near the Rose River is where the- Rowena's offices are. And to the north is a whole bunch of shops and residential stuff. The very north is where you heard this. Like, all the way up there- like, the very northern side of the town. To the north of that is just woods again.

Art: Sure. Hadrian just takes off in that direction.

Austin: When you get there, you see the cart that you were escorting slowly being rolled away. What do you do?

Art: By?

Austin: You can't see. It's just rolling away.

[0:30:00]

Art: I'd like to just grab the back of the cart? I'm just gonna assume I can- I can win a cart tug of war right now. **[Ali laughs]**

Austin: Give me a roll. Give me a Defy Danger dex- er strength. Cause as you touch it and grab it, it does pull faster-er harder than you are. But you rolled really well, so you hold onto it. And you hear things snapping below the cart. You hear like, cr-crack, cr-crack [snapping noises vocalized by **Austin**]

Art: Huh?

Austin: But it stops.

Art: Can I like, peak under?

Austin: Totally.

Janine: It's gonna be a corpse, isn't it?

Austin: It's not a corpse.

Janine: Oh, that's good.

Austin: As you look under, you just- by the time you look under, there are some broken twigs and then like, holes in the ground.

Art: What is this, a Looney Toon? What's happening here? **[Ali laughs]**

Art: I try to like, slide the cart back so I can look at the holes from above.

Austin: Totally. You slide it back, and then you can see that the holes are about like- I'd say the size of like, a baseball. Maybe a little bit bigger than that.

Art: Okay, so little.

Austin: Yeah, but there's a bunch of them. And they're like, in- every few feet there's another one leading from where the shop cart was originally.

Art: Hm. Is the inside of the cart disturbed?

Austin: No, not as far as you can tell.

Art: Alright, I guess I just start pushing it back.

Austin: Okay. At that point, Saul pops his head out from the cart, and goes like,

Austin (as Saul): Oh, thank god. You found me. You saved me. That's what I'm paying you- Paying the right people.

[Art laughs]

Art (as Hadrian): Sure, I-

Janine (as Adaire): We didn't found him. He drifted a few feet down the road.

Austin (as **Saul**): Yeah, but they were taking me!

Art (as **Hadrian**): Who was?

Austin (as **Saul**): I don't know... This place is..

Janine (as **Adaire**): The moles?

Austin (as **Saul**): Maybe! I don't know from moles. I just want to get out of here. I want that bridge to be fixed. I want to get out of here. Never liked this town. I know my cousin lives here and all; I don't like it.

Janine (as **Adaire**): Saul, why don't you go to the Primping Badger and just have a drink and relax a little bit?

Austin (as **Saul**): Fine. Who's gonna watch my cart? What if they come for it again?

Janine (as **Adaire**): Clive? I don't fuckin' know. [**Ali** laughs]

Austin: Clive says like,

Austin (as **Clive**): I'm supposed to be at the dam. Why...?

[laughter]

Janine (as **Adaire**): Go look at the dam, Clive.

Austin (as **Clive**): This is a waste of my time. Okay.

Austin: He wanders off. Um, in the woods-

Art (as **Hadrian**): I mean we could push the cart to the Primping Badger. I mean it's not that far.

Austin: Yeah, you could. You totally can do that. You can park it right out in front of the Badger.

Art: Yeah.

Janine: Wedge something under the wheels so it won't roll around.

Austin: Yeah, Saul is happy with that.

Janine: Get some like, rocks in there.

Austin: Yeah.

Janine: Put a stick in the spokes.

Austin (as **Saul**): You can't put rocks- if you put rocks on it it gets too heavy for the weighing station, and they charge you more taxes.

Janine (as **Adaire**): No, on the ground, honey.

Austin (as **Saul**): Oh, okay, okay.

Janine (as **Adaire**): Like, under the wheels. Yeah.

Austin (as **Saul**): I do the opposite of it sometimes. I make it lighter so that we can get through the polling stations, you know?

Art (as **Hadrian**): What do you put in a cart that makes it lighter?

Austin (as **Saul**): That's a trade secret.

Janine: [laughing It's feathers, ain't it?.

Austin [laughing]: It's feathers. Yup! He thinks it's feathers. [**Dre** laughs] In the woods, you're drifting further and further away. What do you wanna- what are you asking Frond?

Dre: Well, they said it's thirsty, so I guess my next question is,

Dre (as **Thrandir**): What is thirsty? Like, what's thirsty?

Austin (as **Frond**): Our friends.

Dre (as **Thrandir**): Oh, like- like more folks like you or-?

Austin (as **Frond**): No. No, no, no, no, no. No, it's- you'll see. I'll introduce you.

Dre (as **Thrandir**): Okay!

Austin: And at that, he tries to flutter off, but his wings are all fucked up from the fight last night and can't quite get the speed goin' on his wings, so he's kinda just like floating in front of you by like ten feet or so.

Dre (as **Thrandir**): Hey, what's your name again?

Austin (as **Frond**): [various clicking noises] Frond.

Dre (as **Thrandir**): Frond, here. Just have one of these.

Dre: And I hand him one of my healing potions from my bag.

Austin: Okay. He shakes his head.

Austin (as Frond): It's too late.

Dre (as Thrandir): What do you- what do you mean it's too late?

Austin: He like, pokes the side of his wound. He's like,

Austin (as Frond): Eh, blood doesn't run.

Austin: And then he gives you like, a weird bug smile. And seems to be totally okay with the fact that he's a dead bug. That he's an undead bug.

Dre (as Thrandir): [sighs] Well, this isn't good.

Ali (as Hella): [exasperated] Thrandir, what are we doing?

Dre (as Thrandir): We're gonna...

[laughter]

Austin (as Kodiak): Woof! Woof! Woof!

Dre (AS Thrandir): We're gonna help-

Austin (as Kodiak): Woof!

[laughter]

Dre (as Thrandir): We're gonna help this bug, and it's gonna be great. Listen, if you-

Ali (as Hella): Why-

Dre (as Thrandir): -if you want to go back and like, get Adaire and Hadrian-

Ali (as Hella): I'm not having you walk into the middle of the fucknig woods with this thing, and then just turn around and not know where you are.

Austin (as Kodiak): Woof! Woof! [pant- pant]

Ali (as Hella): Oh boy.

Dre (as Thrandir): Okay. Hi, Kodiak. Listen.

Janine: That's A+ dog foley

[laughter]

Austin: Uh huh. I do my best.

Dre (as Thrandir): Okay. I think if you- Do you want to go get them? I can send Kodiak with you, and he'll bring you back to me.

Ali (as Hella): [whispered] Why are we out here? [regular voice] Sure, well...

Janine: You could just send Kodiak

Austin: You could just send Kodiak. That's true. [Ali laughs]

Dre: Yeah. No, that's true. I was wondering if that was like, what you were insisting on with your dog noises.

Austin: Uh un. I was insisting on the thing you were saying, which was like, go back with Kodiak, and then Kodiak can bring you back. But I actually think you're totally right, Kodiak can probably just go get people .

Dre (as Thrandir): Yeah, okay. Listen, I'm gonna send Kodiak. He'll get Adaire and Hadrian, and we'll go- we'll go see what's goin' on.

Ali (as Hella): And then we'll all be in the middle of the woods. Thrandir!

Dre (as Thrandir): You'll be in the middle of the woods with me.

[Everyone laughs hard]

Dre (as Thrandir): That's- That's fine. Like, it's not a scam.

Ali: That's fine?

Janine: Wink.

[More laughter]

Dre: [laughing] Ugh, no! No! Why?!

Art: 'You'd be in the middle of the woods with me, with whom nothing ever goes wrong in the woods!'

Dre: Those were different woods!

Austin: Yeah. Lord.

Dre: [laughing] Listen. I am The Ranger. Okay? It's gonna be fine.

Austin: That's it- I want Throndir to actually say that. [**Austin** and **Dre** laugh] Like, it's gone to his head that people have started calling him the ranger. Just a little bit.

Janine: He's got a tattoo on his arm.

Austin: But it's also a little bit- it also reads a little bit like, trying to convince yourself of something. Like, 'It's gonna be fine. I'm the ranger. It's fine!' I love it, so much.

Ali (as Hella): [sighs] We don't know how to get across the thing anyway, so fine. Fine.

Dre (as Throndir): Yeah, see? I bet they- if they're strong enough to pick up Adaire, they could probably help us. They could probably fly us across! It'll- Listen, this is gonna be great. We're gonna solve all our problems. We're gonna help some new friends...

[**Ali** groans]

Dre (as Throndir): That's what this is all about, right? This whole adventuring thing.

[laughter]

Austin [face in his hands]: My sweet, soft boy.

Ali (as Hella): Oh, honey. Alright, you know what? Just, yeah. Let's go shopping for this thing. Let's go. Just keep going.

Austin: So, do you turn back, Hella?

Ali: [laughs] Well, Kodiak is going back, right?

Austin: Oh right, Kodiak is going back. I keep forgetting that. My bad.

Ali: No, I'm following Throndir cause he might still just get ambushed. Like, [frustrated sigh].

Austin: Yeah, that's fair. [Pause]. Mhm. Alright, so what are Adaire and Hadrian doing at this point?

Janine: Probably following the footsteps right? Like we sorted out- Well, we didn't really sort out the cart thing, but we-

Austin: No.

Janine: ...we did as much as I think is maybe- Oh, wait. I could have detected a thing.

Austin: Yeah, you could've.

Janine: That's a thing I can do.

Austin: You could all do that. There's all sorts of moves for that.

Janine: Ah, dang. Maybe I should do that. Cause holes in the grounds trying to steal a cart seems like a thing that maybe is gonna come back.

Austin: Yeah, everyone was kinda like, 'Meh, that's happening.'

Janine: Yeah, how 'bout-

Art: Well, I'm counting on him being safe. He's in the middle of town. If it starts happening again, lots of people will be around.

Austin: Mhm.

Dre: Clive will be there.

Janine: I'm not worried about Saul!

Art: I'm worried about Saul! He's a nice man, kind of.

Janine: I guess. [laughs] He's very-

Art: He only sort of offends me with his insistence that I'm some brigand.

Janine: Yeah, well. Um...

Art: I'm hangin' out with a lot of brigands. I don't know.

Janine: [laughs] Okay, so I- we should follow those footsteps, but before we do, I would like to take a look at those holes. I guess that would be Discern Realities? Would it? Or?

Austin: Yeah, Discern Realities- Um... unless you have something else specific.

Janine: Not really. I have Trap Expert. I have trap things?

Austin: Yeah, these aren't- these are not traps, no. This is not like a man-made trap of any kind.

Janine: I could poison though. [laughs]

Austin: Don't poison-

Janine: I think it's-

Austin: Yeah.

Janine: I think it's Discern Realities.

Austin: Yeah, give me Discern Realities. Are you like- What are you doing to investigate them?

Janine: I'm probably like, kind of leaning over them, not- I'm not like, putting my eye up against them or anything, but I'm like, looking around them and tryin' to see if I could see anything inside. Or-

Austin: Okay.

Janine: So, that's wisdom?

Austin: That is a seven. So, when you do that, you get what one question, is that correct? Yeah.

Janine: Uh, yes.

Austin: One of these questions.

Janine: The question im going to ask is... 'What should I be on the lookout for?'

Austin: You like, trace these back- the holes- Like, you initially trace them back to where the cart was, and then you realize that they go back further than that- from that. They continue north to the northern border of the town where the treeline picks back up, and um... You see that they are like- they become more and more numerous out in the woods. And like, you do- There's just like, a shot of you looking around and seeing that there are all of these holes in the ground for like, a hundred feet in every direction. So, you should look out about being near trees.

Janine: Okay.

Austin: Like, maybe that's a thing... I guess it depends on how long- how often you've been in this town. You can give me a Spout Lore if you want to figure out what this is. Because you've been to this town a number of times.

Janine: Okay. That's INT I think? Yeah.

Austin: Yes, yup. That's an eight, so I'll tell you something interesting, but not useful.

Janine: [laughs] Okay.

Austin: It's up to you to make it useful. That's what a seven to nine happens in Spout Lore. So, there are like- it's just like, one of those other- I told you about Red Jack last week which was just like, a fairy tale to keep kids from being bad. There's another one which is like, to keep kids from wandering off into the woods in Twinbrook and probably in Rosemerrow, too. It probably begins in Rosemerrow. There are fairy tales about living trees that steal children who wander too far away from town and squeeze out all of the liquid in them so that they can-

Janine: Eww.

Austin: -so that they can drink and grow. These are old stories. Very old stories. And when you think about the way that the stories are told- It's one of those things where like, there's an expression in that story about like, 'The roots come out from under ground and grab you, you know, round the side,' or something like that. And that's not- it's never made sense before really, but now you're like, 'Oh, this is what it- They come out from underground. It's not like the roots of a tree necessarily. It's like, they pop out right from underneath you.' Weird.

Janine: I thought you said it was up to me to make that useful.

Austin: That's not useful. I don't think that's that useful. Like, you don't get a bonus on any future rolls, and you don't necessarily-

Janine: Sure, sure.

Austin: Don't get grabbed by the roots is not a- you know... Have fun with that!

Janine: So, I guess we're following... Are we following the footsteps, Hadrian? What do we want to do?

Art: I mean you know things I don't right now, but-

[crosstalking]

Austin: Do you share- share with Hadrian-?

Art: Yeah.

Janine: I mean I'm not going to tell him about fairy tales.

Austin: Fair.

Art: Yeah, I think it's important that we get to Hella and Throndir who probably need us. These woods are creepy. And they followed a bug person.

Janine: Agreed.

Austin: Throndir and Hella,

Janine: Oh, wait. Sorry, the thing I'm gonna tell him is to watch his step so he doesn't break his ankle tripping on a hole-

Austin: Nice. Good.

Janine: [laughing] -running in a forest.

Austin: That's a good way. That's a smart way of setting that up. at least. Hella and Thrandir, you see shapes in the sky. Like, the trees begin to thin out as you near a clearing. I'm going to go back to the other map just so that we can get a sense of where you are at this point. You've walked now for probably two hours. And at this point, Hadrian and Adaire are following you. I'd say you're like here-ish? Kind of this- You see where the tree line kinda breaks? And there's like, more trees further down? You're nearing that first tree break. And you- you see shapes in the sky, and at first- I mean a number of them... a number of them just look like the moth people. And then there are other ones that are boxy and that have weird lines hanging down from them. And you get a little closer, and you realize that they're kites. At this- at seeing these, Frond manages to like, run up a sprint and jump and fly with half of his wings and is very excited to be back here. What do you do?

Dre (as Thrandir): Frond, what are those- what are the- Are those kites?

Austin (as Frond): [bug clicking] They're children playing.

Dre (as Thrandir): Oh, that's sweet.

Janine: Mm.

Ali (as Hella): What? What?

Austin: You get- [laughs] Yeah. What's sweet? Good question, Hella.

[Laughter]

Austin: Do you tell Hella what Frond said?

Dre: Yeah! Sure! Yeah.

Ali (as Hella): Fine.

Austin: Good! There is- you kind of keep moving through the trees, and eventually it opens up. And you see a number of large wooden structures that have a- So, let me kind of just like, paint you the picture of this space as you come into it. There are a bunch of wooden homes. They kind of have like, white walls- white slat walls with lots of snow on the roofs. There are a couple of them that are just like big- just like, one big, huge long cabin that's kind of towards the center of the little settlement. There's a big dip in the ground, in the middle. And there are a bunch of like, things moving around here.

[0:45:00]

There are a couple of moth people, and it takes you a second, but then you notice, there are actually a lot of moth people above you asleep in the woods. While your eyes are moving down from the kites, you see a number of moths asleep on the trees above you. There probably

are- I mean quick count? A few dozen. And then you notice there's a lot of bright colors moving around at the- in this little town. And they are- I guess they're- they're the size of- Some of them are the size of halflings. Some are a little bit smaller than that. And they have like, bright red and bright blue and bright green skin. And some of them are the ones playing with the kites. A lot of them have really shitty bowl cuts.

Dre: Aww.

Austin: Like, dark black hair.

Janine: That's very judgy.

Austin: Yeah.

Janine: Maybe someone's making it work.

Austin: No. None of them were making it work. [**Janine** laughs]

Ali: Aw, come on.

Dre: They do what they can, Austin.

Austin: Yeah. They're doing their best, I guess. And then in the center of this-

Janine: It's good they have bowls, at least.

Austin: At the center of this village, the ground dips, and you're not- You see a big circular shape there that is like, I guess, sort of like- It's hard to make out from there from- from as far away as you are. You'd have to get closer to see what it is and what the things playing are. Do you get closer?

Dre: Of course.

Austin: Hella?

Ali: Sure. [laughs]

Austin: Does she? How's she- Is she just like, 'Fuck it. Whatever happens happens,' at this point?

Ali: Yeah, I mean she's following Throndir-

Austin: Ok.

Ali: -and like, she doesn't- She doesn't want to be separated from him, like full stop.

Austin: Ok. So, the little red and green and blue things are humanoid creatures with kind of smooth skin- smooth like, deeply colored skin. Big, bright, yellow eyes. And they're shouting to each other in what to both of your ears sounds like a perversion of the common tongue and are playing with kites and are like, running through the snow. There are a couple of moths who are moving with buckets over their like- you know, the stick with two buckets on it, over the- to the big center pit. And there, in the middle of that pit, is what looks like- at first you think it's like, a big pine cone, and then you know- you notice that it's like, a big collection of like, wood and branches. And Frond, at this point, has left to go towards the big house. What do you do?

Dre: I guess I shout out,

Dre (as Thrandir): Frond! Should we- should we stick with you?

Austin (as Frond): One second. I need to see if he's back yet.

Dre (as Thrandir): Oh- okay. Hella, he's just- he's going to see if someone's back. So, I guess we should...wait?

Ali (as Hella): Great. Cool. Okay.

Austin: Hey, Hadrian and Adaire?

Janine and Art: Yeah.

Austin: You hear- you hear Saul screaming.

Janine: [sighs] Oh boy.

Austin: You're in the middle of the woods, and then you hear the sound of-

Janine: That's not where we left him.

Austin: -of hooves. There's like, two pairs- or there's not two pairs of hooves. There's four pairs of hooves. There's one pair that's going very fast, and there's another one that you can tell- I guess, I don't know how- how acquainted with horses you are, but if you were acquainted with horses, you would be able to tell that one of them is not able to keep up as well as the other one.

Janine: I would say Adaire is probably fairly acquainted with horses.

Austin: Well, you can hear there are two pairs of horses- one pair of horses, and one of the horses is struggling to keep up with the other one.

Art: Are they coming this way?

Austin: Yes. From- towards Twinbrook. They're off in the distance, so like, you could turn around and see Saul's cart and Ace, the huge Clydesdale with Red Jack riding on it down towards you.

Art: Alright. I'm gonna wait until they're close enough, and then I'm gonna order them to stop.

Austin: Alright, give me a roll for the order. What do you- what's that look like?

Art: Like I said I don't have much time; I'm being charged at.

Art (as Hadrian): In the name of Samothēs, God Kings of this land- God King of this land, stop your horses and lay down your arms, and let that man go!

Austin: Give me a- give me a roll.

Art: And I roll charisma.

Austin: Yeah, what is this move called?

Art: This move's called 'I am the Law.'

Austin: Mm.

Art: And they can either back away cautiously or flee, do what I say, or attack. It's worth noting it's always been attack.

Austin: Yep, mhm.

Art: That's if I get a seven plus. On a ten plus, I get a plus one forward.

Austin: Okay. Give me a roll. That's a good roll.

Art: Sixes!

Austin: That's a fourteen. God damn!

Ali: Wow.

Janine: Shit.

Austin: Red Jack, this big red oni says,

Austin (as Red Jack): Whoa! Ace.

Austin: And stops the cart in front of you. His hand is long- er his arm is- is longer than it was before, but he still doesn't have a hand from where Hella cut it off.

Art: Gross.

Austin: He has a stump that's wrapped in bandages. And he stops and says,

Austin (as **Red Jack**): Aha! This is why you didn't stop me in town. You're here! In the woods! [Ali laughs]

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

Austin: And he just has a big, shit-eating grin on.

Ali: [whispers] God.

Austin: Saul says,

Austin (as **Saul**): I told ya they were going to come for me.

Art (as **Hadrian**): He didn't- You didn't say it enough, honestly. [Austin and Janine laugh]

Austin (as **Saul**): You gonna blame me? He stole me. He kidnapped me. You're gonna blame me, the kid in this scenario. Unbelievable.

Janine (as **Adaire**): Ok, Saul, he didn't- he didn't kill you, so obviously you're like- You know, we're still kind of doing okay here. [Ali laughs]

Janine: Adaire probably put- you know- gonna put on like, a fairly cheerful face like, 'Oh, you know, I was actually hoping to run into you.' To Red Jack, not Saul.

Austin: Not Saul. Right.

Janine: Definitely not Saul.

Janine (as **Adaire**): I've got a- I've got a proposition that I think might be beneficial.

Austin: I love we're already in a world in which Adaire saying, 'I have a proposition' is like, a recurring bit. Good.

Art: I'd like to just do a quick Jim Halpert look at Saul, and then I promise I'm done with Jim Halpert looks as an Adaire reaction. It was good. I got it twice. I think we're done with it, but I think we need one right here.

Austin: We'll see.

Austin (as **Red Jack**): A proposition?

Austin: And Red Jack hops off of his horse.

Austin (as Red Jack): Hmm.

Austin: And he like, strokes the- the long beard- er not beard. But like, there's a sharp goatee he has.

Austin (as Red Jack): What sort of proposition?

Janine (as Adaire): Well, you see we have a bit of a dilemma. And you seem like a dude who can get places, but you're also a dude who's got like, some-

Janine: Adaire's probably not saying dude. Why am I saying dude?

Austin: You're fine. Keep movin' [**Janine** laughs]

Art: 'Hang loose, Red Jack.' [everyone laughs]

Janine (as Adaire): You seem- you seem like you've got some- some things that are causing you trouble, and I think we could maybe do a little quid pro quo and solve each other's problems.

Austin (as Red Jack): Oh. A little quid pro quo was what got me into this trouble to begin with, but I'm always eager to hear new opportunities.

Janine (as Adaire): Yeah, you gotta be open to stuff.

Austin (as Red Jack): HA HA HA!

Austin: He just like, belly laughs.

Austin (as Red Jack): Walk with me. The sun draws near its conclusion.

Ali: [whispers] Oh my god.

Austin: And begins to walk. And at this point. Kodiak comes up and like,

Austin (as Kodiak): Roof! Roof!

Austin: Like is sprinting towards you to save you and then is just like, disappointed by the fact that it's not a fight and that everything is fine.

Janine: Aw, baby.

Austin: Yeah.

Austin (as Red Jack): So, what does this proposition-

Art: Hadrian moves to comfort Kodiak. I think- I think that's a trait I wanna-

Austin: Everyone loves Kodiak.

Art: Yeah.

Austin: It's the name of the show actually.

Dre: He's a good dog!

Austin: Mhm.

Art: [in a voice] Everybody loves Kodiak.

Austin: Good. [Ali and Janine laugh]

Art: My flawless Brad Garrett to go with my flawless Sean Connery. [everyone laughs]

Janine: Hm.

Janine (as Adaire): So, the proposition is I noticed that when you- when- when we had that unfortunate run in before in the forest, I noticed one of your people took water which I thought was kind of interesting. We found a list that also mentioned water again. Kind of interesting since uh, you know, Twinbrook is... a twin brook area. And at the time, it seemed a little strange. So, we got to Twinbrook, and I noticed the dam, and then things started to make a little more sense. Uh, I'm willing to bet that you guys are south of that dam, and it's causing you some problems. Am I right about that?

Austin (as Red Jack): Well, she's put it together, Ace.

Austin: And Ace neighs.

Austin (as Red Jack): That's about the gist of it.

Janine (as Adaire): Well, the dam was installed in Twinbrook- Twinbrook for some reasons that are, you know, bad. But I think there's- there's a way that maybe the people of Twinbrook could still have what they want without, you know, interfering with what your people need. And I would be willing to try and broker that, if you would be willing to- to help us out.

Austin (as Red Jack): We've tried speaking with them. They're no... They have no interest-

Janine (as **Adaire**): They're probably scared to death of you. Or they think you're hilarious. They think the moth people are hilarious. I don't. But they do.

Austin (as **Red Jack**): They're cruel, and we have no interest in trading with them. We want what's ours which is the water.

Janine (as **Adaire**): Yeah, and I can- I think- I think I can arrange that. I think we can sort that out.

Austin (as **Red Jack**): Hm. Why should I believe you?

Janine (as **Adaire**): They don't even need to know- they don't even need to know that- that you guys are involved in this because I- You know, there are things- there are solutions that may appeal to them just on the merits of the idea alone.

Austin: I do think you'll need to parley here.

Janine: Okay.

Austin: This is where you wanted to have the thing?

Janine: Yes.

Art: Hey, **Austin**.

Austin: It represented- Yeah.

Art: While we're- while we're just having a fun time- [**Ali** laughs]

Austin: Yeah.

Art: What here is evil?

Austin: Nothing.

Art: Oh!

Janine: That- do I-? Do I get like, a top neutral vibes?

Art: I am pleasantly surprised.

Janine: Is he neutral?

Austin: No, he is not neutral. He is- he is not neutral.

Janine: Oh, okay.

Austin: He was not neutral, and he is not- he is not evil. Worth noting there cause we- I don't know that this made it into the previous episode. One of the things that I want to start doing in this season is a move called Talk Alignment or Speak Alignment, which harkens back to an old tabletop- an old D&D thing. Which was that characters in first edition D&D could speak their alignments. They knew their alignments like a language, and so I wanna give plus one ongoing to speaking with someone in your kind of- your native alignment. So- so that's-

Art: How do we... do we do that by just like, starting and see if they pick up on it?

Austin: You... Yeah. You- again it's like, about dropping coded language. It's like- it's like dog whistles and- and using jargon that is like, appropriate. It's like, speak libertarian would be a thing in our world. **[Janine groans]** Where like, you're talking about-

Art: Yeah, I know.

Austin: [lightly laughs] Yeah, yeah I know you know. Or again like, speak- speak progressive would totally- totally be a thing in our world.

Art: Sure.

Austin: Before you roll- I mean I'm gonna keep the roll that you just made, but I need to know what your leverage is.

Janine: Mhm.

Austin: Like, how were you- how were you proving that- that you have some ability to make what you're saying happen happen?.

Janine: I could like- Would it work to tell- just straight up tell him the plan and prove that it's better than what they have now?

Austin: No. Uh un. When you have- 'when you have leverage on a GM character and manipulate them, roll charisma. Leverage is something that they need or want.' So, you need to show that you- you- Like, you have to have that leverage. You could be lying. Totally. But on a seven to nine, they will do what you ask, but they need concrete assurance of your promise- promise right now.

Janine: I was tryin' to get the concrete assurance before and it didn't work out.

Austin: Yeah, I don't think the issue- I don't think that like, 'Here is a napkin with her stamp on it' would have- would be concrete assurance that you actually have his best interests at heart. **[Janine groans]** So, here's what he says. He says,

Austin (as Red Jack): Fine, but you let us have this cart. We need the water in it immediately. And then we will return and speak.

Janine (as **Adaire**): Saul, what else- Is there anything else cool in this cart? Or-

Austin (as **Saul**): Yeah, there's all my money...

Janine (as **Adaire**): Well, they-

Art (as **Hadrian**): Let Saul have his- let Saul have his money.

Janine (as **Adaire**): Yeah, I mean like-

Austin (as **Red Jack**): Fine.

Janine (as **Adaire**): You guys don't use that kind of money anyway, right? And you said you don't want to trade with the people, so what good's that money?

Austin (as **Red Jack**): Fine. Let him have his coin. But give us this-

Janine (as **Adaire**): Coin is how we eat, man. We gotta- you know.

Austin (as **Red Jack**): Give us the supplies, and tell us- No. You will meet-

Austin: And he uh- he points off into the distance back towards the north.

Austin (as **Red Jack**): There is a glade north of here. We will meet there tomorrow at noon.

Art (as **Hadrian**): And the- the 'we' in that is the two of us and...

Austin (as **Red Jack**): A representative of Twinbrook.

Art (as **Hadrian**): Got it.

Janine (as **Adaire**): Okay. Does Saul need to go with you? Or he can- he can head back with us, right? Or we keep- [quietly] Are we're gonna keep going, Hadrian? We turnin' back?

Austin: I think he looks at Saul-

Art (as **Hadrian**): We should probably see what Kodiak wants.

Janine (as **Adaire**): Yeah.

Austin: He looks at Saul, and he spits on the ground.

Austin (as **Red Jack**): Men like that have no place in my town.

Janine (as **Adaire**): Well, that works out then.

Austin: As you start to- So, at that point, Kodiak is like, [whimpers] and doesn't know what to do. He's here to like, lead you back. Can you talk to animals now, **Art**, or just- What's your deal?

Art: My- The official- the official wording on it is 'a voice that transcends language.'

Austin: Okay. You can talk to- you can talk to Kodiak.

Art: Alright. I don't know- I didn't know the dog- we're counting dog as a language.

Austin: Well, because... Throndir can talk to him. [**Ali** snickers] I don't think you can understand Kodiak.

Art: Okay.

Austin: But Kodiak understands your voice.

Art: I can just talk to Kodiak.

Austin: Yes.

Art: [amused] So, I have to like, get Kodiak to answer my questions through dog?

Austin: Yes. Uh huh. [begin panting as Kodiak]

Art (as **Hadrian**): Kodiak, is Throndir okay?

Austin (as **Kodiak**): [whimpers]

Art (as **Hadrian**): Do you know where he is?

Austin (as **Kodiak**): Roof! Roof! Roof!

Art (as **Hadrian**): If you know where he is, take us to him now.

[1:00:00]

Austin: At this point, Red Jack and the cart are going back south towards the Old Man's Chin, this village. And so, Kodiak goes like,

Austin (as **Kodiak**): Woof!

Austin: -and then turns around and starts following after Red Jack.

Art (as **Hadrian**): Oh, this is awkward. We said bye to him.

Austin: Saul says,

Austin (as **Saul**): I'm not going back with him. Guy's a monster. Look at him.

Art (as **Hadrian**): Lots of-

Janine (as **Adaire**): I mean he seems fine.

Austin (as **Saul**): He's all biceps.

Janine (as **Adaire**): He's funny.

Austin (as **Saul**): He's funny looking. Not like me.

Art (as **Hadrian**): He's a man of his word, which is more than we can say for many. Saul, go back to town. No one's out here to get you anymore.

Austin (as **Saul**): What? Do you think he just told all them that? How- What if they're still gonna get me? They don't know.

Art (as **Hadrian**): They wanted your cart. You don't have the cart anymore.

Austin (as **Saul**): [resigned] That's fair. That's fair. Yeah. Okay.

Austin: And he starts, uh-

Janine: I should- Mm. I'm- I'm really torn here. I- On the one hand, I need to make some arrangements, clearly.

Austin: Mhm.

Janine: But also Saul should maybe have someone... But splitting up also seems like a terrible idea. Splitting up more than we already are.

Art: How far are we from town?

Austin: Pretty far. You'll- By the time you get there, it'll be nighttime.

Art: So, by the time we get there and come back for- for Throndir and Hella, it's going to be real late?

Austin: Yeah, yeah, yeah. There's no getting back and then coming back before tomorrow. Like, by the time you get-

Art: Saul's okay, but- but these are- these are our friends over here.

Austin: Mm. [**Janine** sighs]

Art (as **Hadrian**): We could take Saul with us. I could take Saul with us.

Austin (as **Saul**): I'm not goin'.

Janine: [laughing] I'm not- I don't give a shit about Saul. [everyone laughs] Oh my God. Do I not give a shit about Saul.

Austin: Mm. [overlapped by **Janine**] You know what Saul says?

Janine (as **Adaire**): I'm thinkin' like, reasonably he wants me to meet him at this glade noon the next day with a representative from the town. That's gonna take a little doing.

Austin: Saul says,

Austin (as **Saul**): You know what it's gonna take is a little money~. [**Ali** laughs]

Janine (as **Adaire**): You volunteering?

Austin (as **Saul**): No, I'm asking... You give me a couple bucks; I'll make it happen.

Art (as **Hadrian**): We just saved all your money.

Austin (as **Saul**): Right. I need a little more to make this happen.

Janine: [in character voice] Saul, I need you to parley me because I don't believe you can make it happen. [everyone laughs]

Austin: That's not how it works.

Janine: Isn't it?

Austin: No, no. I don't ever make any rolls. None of my characters have to roll for anything ever... except damage. That's the only thing GMs roll.

Janine: [laughing] Can I Discern Realities on Saul?

Austin: Yeah, he's not lying. He's offering you- What he's saying is actually that you can recruit him as a hireling who will then go do your work for you.

Janine: Oh, I see. I see.

Austin: That is literally what he is- Yeah.

[crosstalking]

Janine: We don't get to like, look at his stats or anything, huh?

Art: Oh, I got a bonus for hirelings.

Austin: Do you? Yeah, I'll tell you- I can tell you what his- what his shit is. Give me a second.

Janine: I need to know he can get shit done for me. That's all.

Austin: Yeah, totally. He- Alright. Here we go. Making a hire- 'Hirelings do what you tell them to so long as it isn't obviously dangerous, degrading, or stupid, and their cost is met. When a hireling finds themselves in a dangerous, degrading, or just flat out crazy situation, due to orders, roll plus loyalty. On a ten plus, they stand firm and carry out the order. On a seven to nine, they do it for now, but come back with serious demands later. Meet them- meet them, or the hireling quits on the worst terms.'

Janine: Mm.

Austin: So, a hireling has a skill, a cost, and a loyalty score. 'Their cost can be things like, the thrill of victory or an uncovered knowledge or fame and glory.' Saul's cost is money.

Janine: That's fair.

Austin: And the skill that he has is...He has two skills, I'll say. He has the minstrel skill- uh, a hero's welcome, which is when you enter a place a food, drink, or entertainment, you'll be treated as a friend by everyone present, unless you're actions prove otherwise.

Janine: Hm.

Austin: You will also subtract the minstrel skill from all prices in town. And... he has the...

Let's see. I'm gonna say the priest's skill, ministry. When you make camp with a priest, if you would normally heal, you heal- you heal plus the skill that he has. Like, he can- he can like, basically get you- get you sutured up and stuff. And he just has good supplies with him. That's the way he does that is like, 'Oh, yeah. I have- I have some rubbing alcohol that'll clean that wound right out.'

Janine: That wasn't in his cart, right?

Austin: He has- he always keeps a little-

Janine: Ok.

Austin: He keeps two flasks on him. One has whiskey and one has rubbing alcohol.

Janine: You're not gonna want to mix those up, friend.

Austin: Well, he does sometimes to play tricks on people. He's that guy.

Janine: Oh, dear. Okay.

Austin: So, yeah. You could hire him for ten coin. [**Janine** sighs] And he'll get- he'll get the people in the glade for you.

Janine: Hadrian, what's your like, coin situation like right now?

Art: It's a funny story about my coin situation. I've literally never written down any coins I've gotten.

Austin: Oh buddy. I mean you got- All your stuff was taken away from you.

Art: Yeah. So, I guess I was at zero-

Austin: You can have-

Art: -and then I didn't make any money after that.

Austin: No, you didn't.

Art: So, I think I'm still at zero.

Austin: Yeah. Well, the church provides. You know?

Art: Yeah. I'm not hungry.

Austin: Adaire, what's your coin situation like?

Janine: Ten.

Austin: Oh, funny.

Janine: Cause I'm new, so I didn't... Got my levels boosted; did not get my liquid assets boosted. [**Ali** laughs]

Austin: You could- you could Parley. [amused] This is a tricky one. You could give him the- the moth coins- the silken coins, if you succeed at Parley. But the leverage he wants is like, he wants to hold the regular coins. If you- if you don't get a ten- if you don't succeed-succeed, he will want to hold those ten real coins you have. But if you-

Janine: Why would he take the silken coins though?

Austin: Because the thing that you're trying to set up is like, 'Oh, we can do deals. Like, we could open up a whole new line of trade for you.'

Janine: Oh, yeah. Okay.

Austin: And then they'll be worth something.

Janine: Alright. Um-

Austin: Give me a Parley.

Art: I do not have the hireling move. It's worth noting.

Austin: Oh, I thought you did.

Art: Nope. It exists, and I didn't take it.

Austin: Good.

Janine: No whammies.

Austin: Well, that's- that's a success.

Janine: Okay.

Austin: He says like,

Austin (as Saul): Yeah, but I'm gonna need to hold onto the real ones. I'll trade- I'm trustworthy. I'm in your employ now. Funny because you're also in my employ. It's a complicated situation.

Janine (as Adaire): It is.

Austin (as Saul): But as you know- you scratch backs, you know? Different investment rates and all that.

Janine: I'm keeping the silken coins, right?

Austin: Yeah. You're keeping the silken ones.

Janine: Okay, I'm gonna- I'm gonna let him hang on to my normal coins, but I'm going to give him a real fucking hard look-

Austin: Mhm.

Janine: -and mention that like,

Janine (as Adaire): I'm very good at counting now. You know?. Like, a lot of people aren't anymore. I'm very good at counting.

Austin: He winks and says,

Austin (as **Saul**): Me, too. Eh? [**Janine**/Adaire groans, 'eh']

Austin: And he winks again. And then he does a little skip and starts walking away.

Janine: Does he want to know what he's doing?

Austin: He was there for that whole conversation.

Janine: Okay. Alright.

Austin: Right?

Janine: He has to- well, okay- to find a representative to negotiate for the town. That's- Okay.

Austin: Yeah. Yeah. He's good.

Janine: Okay, okay. We're good.

Austin: Alright. Back in the- in Old Man's Chin, which is the name of this village, where do you two-? Did you guys go to the big hall where Frond was?

Ali: We were waiting for him, right?

Dre: Ugh, yeah.

Ali: For him to come back out.

Dre: I think we decided to wait for him.

Austin: Oh, yes. So, he pops back out and says,

Austin (as **Frond**): Oh, he's not here yet. But- but... Are you-? We have- we have food.
[clicks in moth language]

Dre (as **Thrandir**): Yeah. That- that would be good. Hella, are you hungry?

Ali (as **Hella**): Thrandir... [laughs]

Dre (as **Thrandir**): [exasperated] What? They're-

Austin: The big moth- the big mouth nods excitedly when you're- when Thrandir says, 'Are you hungry' as if to say like, 'Yeah yeah yeah. Come eat. Come eat.'

Dre (as **Thrandir**): Come on. They're be- They're being polite. Come on. They're offering us food.

Ali (as **Hella**): [whispers] Oh my god. [regular voice; resigned] Alright, fine. Yep.

Austin: As you start to move inside, you hear a like- just a range of children's voices going like,

Austin (as Random ChildreN): Hey! Hey! What are you~?

Austin: And like, they're all calling after you. And these little like, ogre children start like, circling you- a little bit like vultures. [**Dre** laughs] And some of them are reaching up and trying to touch your sword, Hella.

Ali: Oh, um- [laughs] It's fine that they do that. Is the sword responding?

Austin: No...

Ali: Okay.

Austin: Well... how's that sword work? [**Ali** laughs harder] Let's see. I don't think so. I don't think the sword is doing anything right now.

Ali: Yeah, sometimes it just does its own thing, but-

Austin: They just- Yeah, it does. [**Dre** laughs] Um, I think that they just- I think they're very confused. Not they. The sword is very confused. The children are very like, enamored because it's so bright, and like, they don't- they don't see stuff from not inside of this little village that often.

Ali: Gosh.

Austin: And they're just like, surrounding you. And the- Frond laughs at your whole situation. Are you just like, ignoring them and walking in? What are you doing?

Dre: Thrandir is playing with all of these children. [**Ali** laughs]

Austin: [amused] Oh my god. How are you playing with them?

Dre: I think like, at first, just kinda like, 'Hey! Hi! Hey!' Um, but oh, what- I bet Thrandir knows like, a really shitty magic trick.

Austin: What is it?

Dre: That he never gets to pull out. Oh, he- he pulls a stone from some kid's ear.

Austin: The kid like, takes it and then eats it.

Janine: [quietly laughs] Oh.

Dre: [amused] Okay. Sure.

Austin: Like, and crunch, crunch crunch.

Austin (as **Random Child**): Yum!

Ali (as **Hella**): [quietly] Throndir...

Austin: And then the other kids are pulling on your sleeves like,

Austin (as **Random Children**): Candy, candy, candy, candy, candy, Candy, candy, candy.

Dre (as **Throndir**): [laughing] Okay. Oh, it's stone candy. Yeah. No. This works. Uh... Throndir probably does this trick on like, three other kids before realizing that there's not any other stones that he can paw off the ground. [laughs more]

Austin: [amused] He just- Good. Great. Yay.

Ali: Hella is now laughing at Throndir.

Austin: This is all very good and cute. I think we just get a shot of all of this happening where the camera pans up a little bit, and the weird like, collection of twigs in the middle- the like-like ball of sticks just like, shutters briefly. And no one notices it, but the audience sees that happening in the background. At this point, the sun is getting towards setting, and eventually the kids go away. And Frond leads you inside. And inside, sitting on a throne of- God, what would it be made of? I think the throne is also made of silk- is the moth that tried to steal Adaire. Who is sitting with her legs kind of crossed and her arms out. You know, she kind of- The person- the body language she has is definitely the cool alien queen lady from Destiny. **[Ali laughs]** What is her name?

Dre: Ok.

Austin: Do you know the lady I'm talking about?

Dre: Oh, the- the woman that runs like, the nightclub satellite?

Austin: I don't know if it's a nightclub satellite, but yeah. Not the nightclub. No, the woman who runs the- No, you're thinking of Mass Effect.

Ali: Right.

Dre: Oh, yeah. Sorry.

Austin: That's also the same- that's also the same... Aria from Mass Effect 2, not Aria from COUNTERWeight.

Ali: Aria gets there. Aria gets there in the end. [laughs]

Austin: Yeah, that's true. Late game Aria Joie. Like, endgame Aria Joie gets that. Fuck, I forget what the Queen of the Awoken is called, but her. She has kind of that vibe going on, and she can evoke a certain sort of human language, or common tongue. And it's very weird.

It sounds a little bit like- You know the radio in the Brave Little Toaster? Who can talk by like, replicating sounds?

Dre: Yeah.

Austin: Like, by playing different radio things.

Dre: Okay.

Austin: It's like- it's like that. Where she can't actually make the sound. She can just repeat the sounds she's heard that other people have said. So, her voice is a mix of all of these different other human and halfling and orc voices.

Dre: I love that you went for the radio from Brave Little Toaster. And not like, Bumblebee from Transformers for this.

Austin: Yeah, fuck Bumblebee from Transformers. [**Dre** laughs hard] Bumblebee's fine. Bumblebee's fine. That's not- that's not fair. But yes. That is where my head is at. And she says,

Austin (as Moth on Throne): Welcome. Welcome.

Austin: I can't do a bunch of different voices. I'm not going to do that.

Dre: That's fair.

Austin: And maybe after a certain point, it actually becomes a sort of like- after, you know, ten minutes talking with her, it actually becomes sort of background. Like, you're totally able to just like, follow along with what she's saying.

Austin (as Moth on Throne): Food for our guests.

Austin: And she like, gestures for you to sit down... around- This room is really dark. There's lots of windows here. Like, so the sides are all these logs, but the roof has big windows that you can see can be rolled away. There's like- there's like- rollers that can pull them down and like, off the top of the roof and then down to outside. And there is- there are no- there's no fire in

here. There's no torches or anything. So, right now it's just the sunlight keeping this room sort of lit, but it's not that lit.

Austin (as **Moth on Throne**): Surprised to see you. Did not expect you would come here without arms.

Dre (as **Thrandir**): You know I- I'm a little surprised to be here, too, but it's a- it's a pleasant surprise.

Austin (as **Moth on Throne**): I imagine this is not how you expected your day to go.

Ali (as **Hella**): Nope.

Austin (as **Moth on Throne**): Well, eat.

Austin: And uh, god. They bring out a fox [**Ali** sighs an 'aw'] on like a little tray. What do you do?

Ali: [sighs] **Austin**.

Austin: What do you do?

Dre: Uh, I eat.

Ali: Yeah?

Austin: So, like seconds? What- Are you just like cuttin' into this fox?

Dre: Oh, I mean like, I kind of like- I think I look at- kind of the rest of the room to see- Are they like, saying moth grace? Or like, is there some custom I'm unaware of?

Austin: No, they're probably like- There's like- I'd say there's probably ten moths in here, along with Rosette, who is the- who is the I guess Queen- Queen Moth. I don't know if moths have queens. This one does, and they're all just kind of like, [moth sound foley]

Dre: Are they like, looking at us and waiting for us?

Austin: Yeah yeah, yeah. To see what you'll do.

Ali: What's the fox situation here? Cause I assume if these are like, bugs, it's like, not...

Austin: It's- it's a dead fox.

Ali: Right.

Austin: That's been like, it just laying flat out. It's gross. It's not a good look.

Ali: Yeah. It hasn't been like butchered in any sort of way or like...

Austin: Well, in some way but it hasn't been prepared,

Ali: [laughing] Right, yeah.

Dre: Is it like- Has the fur been taken off?

Austin: Not yet.

Dre: Okay. I think, actually, Thrandir looks and says like,

Dre (as Thrandir): I don't want to make this awkward, but is there- you know, is there a custom? Should I- should I serve you all? Should- How-? I don't want to be disrespectful. This is your place.

[1:15:00]

Austin: She just like, let's you talk for a minute, and then everyone starts laughing. And she like, claps with her wings. Remember her wings are really long, but they like, open and shut really rapidly. And they- and claps and then another moth brings out little like, paper-wrapped packages and tosses them at your feet. And inside are rations that they've stolen from other carts.

Dre (as Thrandir): Oh, okay.

Austin: And she says

Austin (as Rosette): I was very curious to see what you would do.

Austin: And then one of the moths just like, picks up the fox tray and just brings it to her instead of you. **[Ali laughs]** And she starts eating it. And I'm not going to go into the gory details of it. It's very gross.

Dre: Thanks. **[Ali laughs again]**

Austin: There's acid spit involved; it's gross.

Ali: Aw, come one.

Austin: So, I think it's- it's- You kind of hang out with them. Do you have questions? Do you want- do you want to ask questions or talk or- What's your- what's your dinner like?

Dre: Um... god, yeah. I mean I guess I've never met moth people before. So like, I have a lot of questions. What do they call themselves?

Austin: They make a noise that to you- Like, you're able to hear it, and it just sounds like they're called 'the people.'

Dre: Okay. Yeah, that's fair. **[Ali laughs]** Um-

Austin: She says,

Austin (as Rosette): What do you call yourself?

Dre (as Thrandir): Well, me personally, my name is Thrandir. But people would refer to like, the people that I belong to as- as elves.

Austin (as Rosette): What's that mean?

Dre (as Thrandir): Oh, that's a- that's a complicated question.

Austin (as Rosette): We call you ears.

Dre (as Thrandir): Oh, that's fair! No, yeah. That's a pretty good.

Art: **[whispers]** Stand up for yourself. You have a name.

Dre (as Thrandir): Wait, like you- like you call- you're gonna call me ears? Or like, my people ears?

Austin (as Rosette): Your people, but you, too.

Dre (as Thrandir): Okay.

Austin (as Rosette): You're soft ears. Ha ha ha.

Austin: And the whole room breaks out in a laugh. You're letting this Queen Moth neg you right now. What's-

Dre: **[laughs]** I know. Well, I'm in a room with like-

Janine: Well, you're just probably softer.

Austin: **[laughs]** It's true. That's fair.

Dre: Listen, I shot her in the side. I'll let her- I'll let her get me back on this one.

Austin: Mhm.

Ali: Can I um-

Austin: Go ahead.

Ali: -Discern Realities real quick?

Austin: Yeah.

Ali: I imagine the while Thrandir is like, chattin' it up and havin' a good time- [laughs]

Austin: Yeah.

Ali: Hella is like, sitting back and trying to like-

Austin: Totally. Give me a wisdom.

Ali: -get a sense of the space. So, that is a nine. Oh, wow. Okay.

Austin: Alright, so you get one question.

Dre: You can do a prep point to get ten.

Austin: Oh, true. You totally could.

Ali: Oh, we still have-? We still have those prep points.

Austin: Yeah, you have those until the end of the Twinbrook adventure.

Ali: Oh, ooo, okay.

Austin: Which we're still in.

Ali: Yeah. Otherw- okay. So, it's a difference between one or two or three here. Yeah, I'll take...

Austin: Okay, give me- give me those.

Ali: What here is not what it appears to be?

Austin: That big collection of wood in the middle of the place.

Ali: Okay.

Austin: I think your initial thought was that it was kindling. Like, that's what it appeared to be. It was like, 'Oh, they're gonna do a big bonfire here later.' But I think you overhear someone say like-

Austin (as Random Moth): it's time- it's time for drinking. It's time to- it's time to give it its drink.

Austin: And then someone like, quickly rushes out with a- with a bucket of water- a couple of buckets of water. Actually, I think probably two or three people do... go out. And you're able to like, follow their eyes- er you're able to follow them as they leave the room, and the door is open, and you can see other people tossing water on the top of this thing.

Ali: Okay. What should I be on the lookout for?

Austin: It's a good question. I guess it feels like you're being played with here. Whatever Frond has set up, Frond doesn't have any authority here. So, while Frond seemed happy to have you around, you don't necessarily have the protection of Rosette.

Ali: Okay. Oh boy. That makes this third question really tough.

Austin: Mhm.

Ali: Because I feel like, what is about to happen is worth knowing.

Austin: Yeah.

Ali: I feel like I have...

Austin: You- I'm tryin' to think how you would just discern this. Uh, the sun is about to set, and that means all of the moths in town are going to wake up.

Ali: Oh!

Austin: That's the thing that's about- You can- you can see that like, as the sun- There's a moment in this room where the sun passes the edge of the window, so it just gets really dark in here, and you can see their eyes glisten when that happens. And you like- suddenly the chattering of their like, mandibles gets really creepy and more active than it had been before. And you can hear all of them- every few seconds their wings like, flutter and little bits of dust are like- of like, the wing-like dust kind of come off of it. And like, the whole room is a little hard to breathe in now. It's almost like there's a lot of pollen in the air. And you realize like, "Oh, they're all like- They're nocturnal, so they're all getting a little bit tougher and a little bit more um, awake and aware.' Hadrian and Adaire, it's about this time that you make it into Old Man's Chin. How's it going?

Art: Great.

Janine: I mean how- how is Red Jack as far as traveling companions go?

Austin: Oh, he's- he's great. Like, what do you want to know? He's got stories, man.

Janine: Is he chatty?

Austin: Yeah, totally.

Janine: Yeah?

Austin: He's super chatty.

Janine: What stories he got?

Austin: He tells you about the time he was at the Last University and fought a mind ogre.

Janine: Oh shit.

Austin: He tells you about the time he- he built a boat from a house, and then when he got to the place he was going, he broke it down and turned it into a nice house again. He tells you about the time he climbed two mountains in one day. He tells you about-

Janine (as Adaire): That one seems fake.

Austin (as Red Jack): No, that one's- It's very real. They were- they were- they were small mountains but- [**Dre** laughs]

Janine (as Adaire): Oh, okay. Okay.

Austin (as Red Jack): No one likes the story when they know it's small mountains.

Austin: He tells you about- Eventually I think he tells you about coming to Old Man's Chin. He says,

Austin (as Red Jack): Oh, well, sometimes I think my adventuring days are behind me. And it was on one of those days that I found this little village and decided to make it my home. They were a good sort. I'd never met people like them before, but they seemed dedicated to their cause. And I value dedication and honesty.

Art (as Hadrian): Absolutely.

Janine (as Adaire): Yeah, those are good things to value.

Austin: He nods and grins, and he says.

Austin (as Red Jack): And they like to have a good time. HA HA HA! [**Janine/Adaire** laughs quietly]

Austin: And then he reaches back and grabs a bottle and takes a swig off of it and puts it back behind him. It's definitely a bottle of something that was in Saul's cart. [**Austin and Janine** laugh]

Janine: Well, Saul's not here. He's not gonna know.

Austin: Nope.

Austin (as Red Jack): So, tell me. That friend of yours with the blade-

Austin: He like, holds up the arm that Hella removed his hand from and says uh-

Janine: Mhm.

Austin (as Red Jack): Whose sword is that? What is it?

Janine (as Adaire): I mean it's hers.

Austin (as Red Jack): Did she make it? Is she a- a smith?

Art (as Hadrian): No, I've never much- I've never much asked. Its very-

Janine (as Adaire): Yeah, I don't really ask about people's hobbies. I leave that to them.
[Ali laughs]

Art (as Hadrian): It's an exceptional blade.

Austin (as Red Jack): Hm. You shouldn't trust it. Or her.

Janine (as Adaire): I thought you were in the market for one.

Austin: He shakes his head.

Janine (as Adaire): You're just not into it. That's cool.

Austin: He shakes his head and then- and then looks up as the sun continues to drift away behind the horizon. And he says.

Austin (as Red Jack): It's almost night now. It will be a long one.

Art (as Hadrian): Hm.

Austin: He goes,

Austin (as Red Jack): Yea!

Austin: And like, pulls up the reins on Ace and the other horse, and they start hustling a little bit faster.

Janine: Adaire's gonna hop in the back of that cart.

Austin: [laughs lightly] Good call. Hadrian?

Art: Uh, yeah.

Austin: Alright.

Janine: Not gonna run like a chump in the woods after this devil guy. [Ali laughs]

Austin: Good. And you begin making your way towards Old Man's Chin, and eventually the moon comes out. And you all get- You're all there now. The dinner is over inside of the big log cabin, and you come outside, and you see all of these moths bringing water to the big collection of twigs in the middle of the town. The children have all gone to bed. And there aren't any other troll-y people- There aren't any other oni like Red Jack. There's just all of those children and the moth people. And now you. Kodiak runs up to Throndir barking. And again like, it's dark. There aren't any lights out here. Do any of you seen the dark? Is that a thing that anybody here has?

Art: Nope.

Dre: I think so.

Ali: There's like, moonlight though, right?

Janine: [overlapped] That seems like a Throndir thing.

Austin: Yeah totally. But that's still not like- That's still dark, you know?

Ali: Okay.

Austin: You're totally right, like-

Art: Let me- let me check. Create Light might be a Cleric rote.

Austin: It is.

Art: Then I could do that.

Janine: They might not like that. [Ali laughs]

Austin: What's that like?

Art: 'An item you touch glows with Divine Light about as bright as a torch. It gives us no heat or sound. It requires no fuel, but is otherwise like a mundane torch. You have complete control of the color of the flame. The spell lasts as long as it is in your presence.'

Austin: Adaire, do you stop him from doing this? It sounded like you were not into it.

Janine: Um-

Austin: Or I guess, Hadrian-

Janine: Do I know he can maybe whatever the hell color he wants?

Austin: I guess Hadrian, do you actually announce that you're gonna do this or do you just do it as it gets dark?

Art: I think I have to like- Yeah, I have to like, do it. So-

Art (as Hadrian): I mean it's getting dark. We can't see. What do you want?

Ali (as Hella): Fair.

Janine (as Adaire): Yeah, I mean we're just hanging out in a- in a village full of like, nocturnal- nocturnal folks who don't have lights maybe for- I'm just- Can you make it like, purple or something? So, easier on the eyes. It'll still illuminate, but it won't- it won't be as harsh and probably less likely to piss them off.

Art (as Hadrian): Oh- oh, okay.

Austin: [laughs] Good.

Art (as Hadrian): I don't feel like this is really enough light as to be offensive, but I'll- I'll do whatever I can to observe custom.

Art: Is there like, a piece of-

Janine (as Adaire): Better safe than sorry, you know?

Art: -like, a medium sized stick or something? Like a torch sized stick or something I can find?

Austin: Yeah, sure. Totally. There's even just like a torch in this back- in the back of this wagon that you could just use light on, instead of lighting it on fire.

Art: Sure. I guess this is just like a spell, huh?

Austin: Yeah, it is. It is.

Art: I'm not really good at this.

Austin: Good. Let's give it a roll.

Janine: You'll be fine.

Austin: That's a seven. So, when you cast a spell you have to decide either: you lose the spell, you get a minus one forward on spells, or you draw attention to yourself.

Art: Um...

Austin: I believe those are the three things.

Art: Yeah, it's attention, lose it, or minus one ongoing.

Austin: Minus one on spells. Yeah.

Art: I could really use a good communing anyway. I'll take the minus one.

Austin: Okay. You take the minus one. The- You can feel like- I think the feeling is like, it actually costs a little- It's actually a little bit harder to convince your lord to produce this purple light than the beautiful light of the sun. And there's kind of- like it-

Art: Yeah, it's gross, ugly light.

Austin: You're putting- you're putting his light under a bushel basket right now.

Art: Sure.

Austin: So, it's a purple bushel basket, and also it's like a- it's like a Spencer Gifts bushel basket. So, it's extra bad. [**Dre** and **Ali** laugh] Kodiak runs up to you, Thrandir, barking and like, leaps up at you to paw at you and lick your face.

Dre (as **Thrandir**): Hey, hey! It's okay. It's okay. Good job! Good boy.

Austin (as **Kodiak**): [pants and whimpers]

Austin: Uh, everyone's here. What are you all doing in the Old Man's Chin?

Art: Great question.

Dre: I wanna- I want to go look at this- this thing in the middle that they're all pouring water all over.

Austin: As you start to get closer, Frond gets closer to you and says,

Austin (as **Frond**): No, no, no, no, no, no, no. No. You are not allowed.

Dre (as **Thrandir**): Okay. No, that's fair.

Austin (as **Frond**): Not yours.

Dre (as **Thrandir**): What- what- What is-?

Austin: He begins like, pulling at you with his- like, his clawed hands-

Dre (as **Thrandir**): Nah, I mean I'll-

Austin: -by the collar.

Dre (as **Thrandir**): I'll go willingly. What- What's down there?

Austin (as **Frodo**): It's our friend. It's our friends.

Austin: He says. Which I think in moth tongue is just like, an extra- the way they pluralize is there's an extra like, chitter at the top. So, it's like, [mimicking moth tongue] 'Chi 'nglear. Chi-chi-chi 'nglear.' [**Ali** and **Dre** laugh] Like, he goes back and adds the extra chitter at the top.

Dre: Did I get a good enough look at it at all that I could- maybe-

Austin: You could Discern Reality's here. You're a ranger.

Dre: Well, could I try to roll Kindrali's Chosen?

Austin: Sure. How does that work?

Dre: 'When you consult-'

Austin: It's been a while since we've done that one.

Dre: '-Kindrali, He Who Knows, about a historical artifact, place, or event, roll plus WIS.'

Austin: Yeah.

Dre: It's basically Spout Lore, more or less.

Austin: Yep, go ahead. But what- You kind of have his knowledge along with yours.

Dre: Yeah. That's ten.

Austin: There is a ten. So, on a ten plus, get something interesting and useful.

Alright. So, in Kindrali's- the end of Kindrali's- You kind of get like, Kindrali thinking- So, for people who've just started listening, Kindrali is this like, Ogre King who was in- near the mark of the Erasure, who was near Samot's big tower. He- he was part of the goblin and- and snow elf group of survivors. He also popped up in Marielda briefly. And he says,

Austin (as **Kindrali**): Oh-

Austin: I don't remember- what the fuck did Kindrali sound like? I think it was like, slow spoken and deep.

Dre: Yeah

Austin: But wasn't- wasn't as playful as Red Jack is. He says,

Austin (as Kindrali): Switchlings or twiglets or sap- sap- [sighs] They've had- they've had-

Austin: I'm going Red Jack. That's not right.

Austin (as Kindrali): They've had many names. They-

Austin: And it starts to move as as more water is poured on it, and you can see that like- As more and more- Like, they've pulled the water off the cart as it's arrived, and there's so much activity and chittering and like, joy as they have all of this extra water now. And they begin pouring it. And he says,

Austin (as Kindrali): It- it's a collection of lives. Strange lives from the woods. In the old days, they were called weavers.

[1:30:00]

Austin: And the thing- it sprouts, but it doesn't sprout like plants. It doesn't sprout green. It sprouts flesh from the wood. Pale human skin. **[Art groans 'ugh']** And you can see it begins pushing itself up with hands. And in the moonlight, the eyes inside of it begin glistening. And the Weaver King pulls itself from its pit. What do you do?

Art: Is this thing evil? **[Ali laughs]**

Austin: Hm. No. The moths are like, ecstatic and begin like, outputting all of these spores at this- er not spores, but like, they have that weird wing dust that starts spreading as they like, open and shut their wings ecstatically.

Dre: I think Throndir turns to Frond, and says,

Dre (as Throndir): Are we still safe here?

Austin: He says like,

Austin (as Frond): Very safe. Very, very safe.

Austin: And Frond like, takes off in like, a running, leaping jump towards the Weaver King and like, kneels in front of it.

[Jack de Quidt's "[Inside](#)" begins playing]

And one of the many hands reaches out and touches Frond and like, slowly strokes one of its bent antennae and puts out- another hand reaches out for this huge ball of twisted flesh and rests it on the wound that you gave him that eventually killed him. And then when they remove the hand, the wound is healed. And I suspect, Hadrian can just sen- probably Hadrian and Throndir can sense that there is a life where there had been unlife before. He has resurrected. A number of holes appear in the ground all around. And twigs start to pop up through.. Dry and dark. And then you see that they're not twigs, but again, they're wooden hands. And the snow shakes as people start to crawl towards the Weaver King all around you.

[Jack de Quidt's "[Inside](#)" plays to the end]