The Realm of Mortana

# Characters

## Armstig Gorsum

Player: Shield

Class: Monk, Way of the Open Hand

Race: Worgen (Wolf Person)

6’0”. White fur, yellow eyes, wears shorts. Got sunflower from Miyu, wears it on shoulder

## Johnny Horshot

Player: Centaurus

Class: Swashbuckler Rogue

Race: Worgen (Wolf Person)

6’4”. Bluish black fur, lawful good

## Miyu Juinkama

Player: Valgard

Class: Cleric

Race: Spider Lady

7’4” spider centaur lady. Owns a flower shop on the island. Long black hair, pig tails. Glasses, two red eyes, red clothes

## Roth Harkaj

Player: Trent

Class: Barbarian

Race: Kobold

Small kobold, 50 lbs

## Selena Barus

Player: Tora

Class: Paladin

Race: Fish Lady

6’2” Buff fish lady, piercing, tattoo on anchor on right eye, scantily clad

Beat Armstig at arm wrestling

## Titus

Player: Azul

Class: Fighter

Race: Human

5’9” Red hair anime character. Likes to get drunk and start bar fights

## Slick

NPC

Race: Frog person

Small frog person, about same height as Roth. Owns the The Soggy Toad, a dingy boat vessel. He’s also the captain. Prefers to avoid participating in combat and food fights.

## Garry

NPC

Race: ? tentacle creature

Miyu’s pet “plant”. She brought him aboard the boat on their sea journey and now he’s an honorary crew member.

He sits in a potted plant with outstretching purple tentacles. In the center, he has a yellow parrot-like beak.

# Chapter 1

“Hurry up!” A Worgen with bluish-black fur ran on all fours through the plain towards town. “We’re going to be late!”

“I’m running as fast as I can!” A white-furred Worgen ran on all fours behind him.

“I knew we shouldn’t have let that strange scent sidetrack us.”

“You and I both know that scent, Johnny!”

Johnny rolled his eyes. “There’s not going to be pancakes in the middle of a forest, Armpit.”

“Armpit” laughed. “Well you’ll never know if you never look!”

“And we didn’t. Probably an illusion or something.”

“A very nice smelling illusion.”

They ran into town and went to the town hall. They turned a corner and almost ran into a giant blue fish lady.

“Hey!”

“Oops! Sorry!” Armpit ran past without giving her a second glance.

“Excuse us.” Johnny ran after.

They got to the town hall and stood up like normal civilized members of society.

Johnny looked at the time. “We’re late.”

“No worries.” Armpit shrugged. “They probably haven’t started yet.”

“It’s a whole half hour since the meeting was supposed to start.”

“We’ll just ask what we missed.”

Johnny rolled his eyes and opened the door. The meeting had indeed not started yet. In fact, there was no one there! Just the gnome elder that was holding the meeting.

“Great! We missed the meeting!” Johnny threw his arms in the air.

“Finally! About time!” The gnome elder set his papers down in a huff. “Are you two ready for the meeting?”

“Wait? The meeting hasn’t started yet?” Armpit took a seat.

“No one showed up!” The gnome huffed. “It’s just you two.”

“Ok, so what are we here for?”

The gnome handed them a map. “It is time. You need to go here and retrieve the tablet from this cave. When you’re done, we’ll arrange transport for you to the mainland.”

“That sounds good.” Johnny nodded.

Then the doors opened, and the fish lady they saw earlier came in. “Sorry I’m late.”

The gnome handed her a map. “Go retrieve the tablet from this cave.”

“Ok.” She looked at the map. “Hey I know you too! You almost ran me over earlier.”

“Heh heh, sorry. That corner was really tight, not much visibility. Are you alright?”

“Yeah, I’m fine. Just miffed.”

“Understandable.”

“I’m Armstig Gorsum.” Armpit held out his hand.

“Selena Barus.” She shook his hand.

“Man that’s a strong grip.”

“Thank you.” She turned to the bluish-black wolf. “Hello.”

“Johnny Horshot.”

“He really likes the brothel.” Armstig jabbed him.

“Nice to meet you Johnny.”

“There’s more of you I assigned to this mission, but they never showed up.” The gnome packed his papers up.

“Don’t worry, we’ll go find them.” Johnny offered.

The gnome directed them to the flower shop in town. The shop was open when they got there.

“Miyu? Is Miyu here?”

“How can I help you?” A giant spider centaur appeared from behind a flower stand.

“You’ve been assigned to come on a mission with us.”

“Oh! Right! When’s the town hall meeting?”

“It’s over. We’re going on this mission.” Johnny hands her a map.

“Ok, hold on. I gotta close up my shop. Give me half an hour.”

“Ok.”

Johnny and Armstig browse the shop while she cleans up.

“What kind of flower is this?” Armstig points to a yellow circular flower with a brown center.

“That’s a sunflower. 3 copper.”

“I’ll take one.” Armstig paid for it and wrapped it around him, setting the blossom on his shoulder. “How does it look?”

“Like you’ve been frolicking in a field of flowers.”

“Nice.”

“What’s this?” Selena points to a blob with tentacles sitting in a pot.

Miyu dropped some flies into its beak. “Oh this? This is Gary.”

“I see.” Selena watched “Gary” eat the flies.

Miyu the Spider Lady cleaned up her shop and met them outside. Then she notices a red-haired human getting kicked out of a bar across the street. “Titus!”

“Huh?” He takes a sip out of his bottle and leans drunkenly against a post.

“Titus did you get yourself kicked out of another bar?”

“Miyu? Oh that? No… no, no.” He stuttered. “The bartender just got angry at me. Nothing permanent. \*hic\* I’m sure of it…”

Miyu rejoins the party. “This is Titus. He’s a bit drunk, but he’s coming with us.”

The party went to the cave on the map. Miyu helped Titus travel. Armstig and Johnny got there first and scouted it a bit.

“There’s this door here, but we don’t know what’s behind it.” Johnny said. “I’ve already unlocked it.”

“Alright, stand behind me!” Selena took the lead and opened the door. “It could be dangerous.”

“I can’t see.” Titus complained.

“I got you.” Miyu poured magic into a sunflower on her person, and it glowed bright like its namesake. It lit up the dark cave.

“That’s better.”

The party followed Selena the Fish Lady down the hallway. She took in a deep breath and smiled. “It smells like salt water in here.”

The hallway led to a square constructed room with a table in the middle. The door closed behind them.

“Shoot.” Johnny goes to pick the lock open, but there is no lock. They’re trapped in the room.

“There’s writing on the wall here.” Selena noticed. She squinted at it. “It appears to be a… recipe for… pancakes?”

“Pancakes? Ew.” Titus leaned up against a wall.

“Johnny, I dare you to dance on that table.” Armstig teased.

“I challenge you to a dancing competition.”

“You’re on!” Armstig jumped onto the table and did a little jig. There was a saw on the table. Armstig gracefully dodged it as he danced. He made it look real easy. “Ok, your turn!”

“Watch how it’s done.” Johnny hopped onto the table, but real soon into his dance, he slipped on the saw and landed on his back.

“Never seen that one before! Good one!”

The saw landed next to Selena. Miyu saw and confiscated it. “It’s not safe to play around such a sharp weapon.”

“Eggs? No bacon…” Selena tried to decipher the “pancake recipe” on the wall.

“A pancake recipe?” Miyu asked.

“Yeah, do we have the ingredients?”

Miyu looked at the wall. “I don’t think this is a recipe, hun.” She read it out loud. The riddle talked about putting two halves into one.

“Do we have to chop the table in two and then combine it back together?”

“That I can do.” Selena thrust her greatsword down into the middle of the table, splintering it in half. She examines it now. “Did that do it?”

“One more step.” Miyu puts a hand on each side of the table. “Can you lift them up for me?”

Selena holds the two halves of the table up so that they touch. Miyu’s hands lit up and a white light formed in the crack. When the light faded, the table was whole again.

*Click!*

The door opened and the party went to the next room.

There, the room was half flooded. Three platforms stood up out of the deep water.

“I take it we have to stand on each of those platforms?” Selena dived into the water and breached the surface, jumping into the air to reach the first one. *Click!*

Miyu climbed up the wall, across the ceiling, and let herself down gently with her webs onto the second platform. *Click!*

Armstig cracked his knuckles and dove into the water. He swam to the far wall, climbed up it, and jumped off. He barely missed the platform, grabbing onto the edge with his wet paws and pulling himself up. *Click!*

The door opened, and the party followed Selena down the hallway to another closed door.

Johnny pricked his ears. “It sounds like there’s gas of some kind in there.”

*TOOT!* Someone farted.

“Ew! Now there’s gas in here!”

Selena bursts through the door and the party follows her. Except for Titus, who kind of lags behind. (it was probably him)

Inside the room, there’s a misty fog obscuring the whole area except for a tiny sliver where the party walks freely.

Selena inhaled a big breath and let it all out in one powerful blow. The fog swirled around in the air and moved about chaotically. It all vacated its position and was forced into the hallway where Titus stood.

As the mist swept over the party, they all had visions of their worst nightmare flash briefly before their eyes

“My booze! No!” Titus screamed. He thrashed about wildly on the floor. “Where has it all gone? That can’t have been the last bottle! In the whole world! No!” We wept on the floor.

“Titus, titus.” Miyu picked him up. “It’s ok. It’s just a nightmare.”

Titus calmed down.

The room was now free of mist and the tablet was clearly visible on the other side. Johnny went over and picked it up. It was a stone disk about the size of a large dinner plate. It had some kind of writing on it. It looked like Sylvan, but none of the words were right.

“Armpit, you know what this is?”

Armstig glanced at it. “Not a clue. That’s what we came here for, right?”

“Yes it is.” Selena took it and examined it. “I don’t believe it!”

“What?” Johnny gasped. “What does it say?”

“It’s another recipe for pancakes!”

Miyu face palmed.

KRAAAAAG. The altar stand the tablet was on descended into the floor. The room shook.

“Is that… bad?” Armstig gulped.

Miyu shown her sunflower light on the wall behind the altar. A crack appeared. “It’s a tunnel!”

The crack widened up, revealing a secret back exit.

“That’s convenient.”

The party takes the secret passage out to a beach. Selena held the tablet up to the sun to shield her eyes.

On the beach were two wooden statues. Miyu approached one and examined the moss. It was a dangerous kind of moss that spread rather quickly. She got to work quarantining it.

“Hey Johnny!” Armstig raced to the statue where Miyu was. “First to the top of the statue wins!”

“Sure!”

“No! Don’t disturb the moss!” Contested Miyu.

“You heard her.” Selena grabbed Armstig as he climbed the side. She set him down on the ground next to the statue.

*RATTLE RATTLE.* The statues shook. They were coming to life. Miyu backed away. Armstig readied himself for battle.

Johnny lept into action. He pierced it with his rapier, but hit the statue’s hammer instead. Then he went in with his dagger and scraped a whole in the moss and the wood. Then he runs out of melee range of the statue.

“Don’t hurt the moss!” Miyu complained. She shrugged. “But I can’t have these statues harming them.” She whispered words of discouragement at the statues. The words floated through the air and latched onto the statues’ helmets. The statues shivered.

Titus went wide eyed and jumped on a statue, punching it through the chest. “I can’t wait to make a boat out of you!”

Selena plunged her greatsword into the same statue, splintering the wood that Titus punched. Her sword lit up, exploding the wood and causing wood chips to fly everywhere.

The damaged statue gains consciousness and grabs at Titus. Titus hops off and lands on the ground. It then goes for Selena, whose sword was still in its chest.

“My god protect me!” She yelled.

The statue’s hammer came down on her, but at the last moment, it veered off course and hit the ground. A blue sphere flashed over Selena.

The second statue wakes up and sneaks up behind Armstig and Selena. It swings its hammer down onto Armstig, crushing him. But mid-swing, discouraging words echoed and caused it lost its grip on its hammer, missing Armstig by a hair. Then it uppercuts Selena with the hammer, knocking Selena away, who pulls her sword with her. Her shield flashes back up as she lands against the cliff wall.

Armstig claws the first statue, but it blocks his fist with its hammer. He swings his other fist, and gauges its knee. The statue falls to the ground. Armstig turns around and hits the second statue, but his attack was blocked by expert placement of the hammer handle.

Johnny goes in and slices the statue’s back as it laid on the ground on all fours. He jumps away before the statue can hit him back.

Miyu escapes the situation by climbing up the cliff wall. She points at the statue prone on the ground and spits on it, with deadly accurate spit. “Pain of a Thousand Wounds.” Magical energy fills the spit as it travels. When it lands on the statue, its whole neck and head dissolve and it collapses onto the ground.

Titus picks up the disembodied statue arm and yells “Your gonna be my boat too!” at the second statue. He swings at the statue and dents its side with the statue arm.

Selena whispers, “You who have angered my god shall pay!” She lept into the air and slashed the second statue straight down the middle.

The statue blocked her sword with the handle of his warhammer, but her sword lit up and slahed right through it, striking its body behind it. The statue swings its hammer wildly, but it falls apart and it flies away in two pieces. One piece hits Titus, but he blocked it with the statue arm.

Armstig jumped into the air and kicked the statue in the face. The statue toppled over backward. Armstig landed on its leg and slashed its hand to bits with two quick claw strikes. “It’s all you!”

Johnny stood still, waiting for his opportunity to strike. Then, in a flash, he dashed across the statue’s neck. He stuck his rapier in the exact spot on the statue’s neck. When he pulled out his rapier, the statue’s neck exploded into a bunch of tiny pieces. Its head rolled down the beach.

“Nice stab!” Armstig high fived Johnny.

“Nice kick!” Johnny high fived him.

Miyu approached Selena. “Are you hurt?”

“I’m fine thanks.” Selena’s hands glowed, and the scrapes on her midriff disappeared.

“That’s good to know. Say, why did you do what you did back there?”

“Because the statues were attacking us?”

“No I mean about the mist. Why did you blow it all in our faces?”

“Well, it got the mist out of the room, didn’t it?” Selena grumbled away.

Titus swung the statue arm wildly, banging it against the already dead statues.

“Titus, dear, stop that. You’re hurting the moss.”

“Oh, sorry.” Titus threw the arm away across the beach.

Miyu crawled over the statues and began quarantining the moss. “Can’t have this spreading all over the place.”

Johnny went over to the head that rolled away and picked it up. It was quite heavy and had a displeased look on it.

“Yeah if I were a statue on a beach, I’d be pissed too.” Armstig joked.

“Yeah.” Johnny kicked something. “Say, what’s this?” He pulled it out. It was a bottle of rum! “Rum! Score!” Johnny uncorked it with a claw and took a swig.

“Booze?” Titus turned to him. “Let me have some.” Titus took the bottle and gulped it down.

“Hey, save some for us.” Johnny grabbed it back and took a big swig.

Armstig sighed. Then he yelled, “Johnny! I challenge you…” He knelt in front of the detached statue arm. “An *arm* wrestling competition.”

“You’re on!” He tossed the rum bottle to Titus, who greedily grabbed it.

“You’re going down this time!” Johnny said. He braced arms with Armstig.

“Nah, I got this one. I knocked down the statues,” Amrstig’s arm pushed hard into Johnny’s. “I’ll knock down your arm too.” Armstig’s arm touched all the way down. He won.

“Ok, best two out of three.”

They went again. Armstig won again.

“It’s out of three. Again!”

Armstig pushed hard, but Johnny pushed harder. He won this time. “Hah! Take that!”

“Good game, Johnny.” Armstig smiled.

“What’s going on over here boys?” Selena approached.

“I just won the daily arm wrestling competition.”

“Oh yeah? Congratulations.”

“Thanks!” Armstig held out his hand. “Wanna face the winner?”

“Nah, I’m good. I don’t want to intrude.”

“What? Afraid you’ll lose?”

“Huh, ok.” Selena knelt down at the arm and gripped Armstig’s hand. He winced.

“Ok ready? Go!” Armstig quickly slammed her arm down on the table. “I win.”

“No fair. I wasn’t ready.”

“Too bad, I won.”

“Best out of 3!”

“Ok.”

They went again, and Selena quite handily slammed his arm into the ground.

“Hmm… lucky. Well now to round 3.”

“Here we go.”

They arm wrestled the third and final time. Armstig gave it his all, but Selena pushed his hand all the way down. It wasn’t even a contest.

Armstig wrang his arm out. “Wow… you’re strong.”

“Thank you.” She smiled.

“Ok, move please.” Miyu came over and started quarantining the moss on the arm they were using as a table. “Ok, now that that’s done. Can I see the tablet, please?”

“Whatever.” Selena tosses it onto the arm.

Miyu rolls her eyes, but says, “Thank you,” anyway.

Titus drank the rum all the way to the last sip.

“Ok, that’s mine.” Johnny declares.

“No, I want it!” Titus says.

“Let’s arm wrestle for it!”

“You’re on!”

Titus and Johnny lock arms. They start and it’s an even contest. Johnny pushes to his end, and then Titus pushes back. Finally Titus makes it to the table.

“Ha!” Titus exclaims. “It’s mine!”

“No, best two out of three!”

“Ok.”

They go again. It takes a little while, but Titus eeks out a victory. He gulps down the last sip of rum. Johnny smacks his lips in disappointment.

The party walks back to town. Along the way, they pass the forest where Selena lives.

“Bye everyone!”

“Be safe now getting home.” Miyu says.

“Wait you live here?” Armstig asks, following behind Selena.

“Follow me home and get a punch.”

“Is that a good thing?”

Selena presents a fist. “What do you think?”

“Ok. That’s a no. See you later, fish lady.”

“Bye!” She waves happily back.

She goes to her forest house and stares at a picture of her father. She gives it a big hug before starting chores.

The party walks across the plains and reaches town.

“Race you to the town hall!” Armstig gets down on all fours and dashes ahead of the group.

“Hey! Wait up!” Johnny also gets down on all fours and sprints after Armstig.

When they get there, a little kobold is walking up the front steps to the town hall. Before he opens the doors, he turns around and sees them getting closer.

“What are you… what are you doing here?” He almost drops his spear.

“Not to worry little lizard.” Armstig pats the kobold on the head. “We’re hear to talk to the elder gnome, not you.”

“Oh you’re here for the meeting!”

“The meeting?” Johnny and Armstig exchanged glances. They both burst out laughing.

“What’s so funny? This meeting is very important and I…”

“My guy…” Johnny took a deep breath. “The meeting is over. Hours ago.”

“What? That can’t be.” The kobold gasped. “It’s at 3:30, right?”

“No, it was at *8*:30. This morning.”

“Oh…” He went pale. “Crap! It happened again.”

“Don’t sweat it. We were late too.” Armstig opened the town hall doors. They all three walked in.

“Ah, Roth Harkaj, pleasure to finally see you.” The gnome elder greeted the kobold.

“Sorry, elder.” Roth blushed. “I’ll try to be on time next time.”

“You’re here with Johnny and Armstig, I see. I take it you helped on the adventure to the cave?”

“The cave? Yeah, sure did. We cleared the goblins out of the cave, just like you asked.”

The elder gave him a look with his eye.

Armstig laughed. “Well, there sure aren’t any goblins in that cave.”

“A quite unexpected surprise. But anyway, I assume you have the tablet?” He held out his hand.

“Yep! Sure do!” Armstig searched his person, and looked in his shorts. “I don’t got it. Do you?”

Johnny pointed behind him. “I think spider lady has it.”

“And where are they?”

“Here!” Miyu and Titus walked into the town hall. “Here you go.” She handed it to him.

“Thank you very much.” The gnome elder examined the tablet. “Let me tell you about this here artifact. It was made by the very elder who brought us to this island, many years ago…”

Titus snored.

“Well, I see I’m boring you…” He grumbled.

“Titus!” Miyu pinched his cheek and shook it. “Wake up!”

“So about your reward: boats have already been arranged to take you to the mainland.”

“Thank you.” Johnny smiled.

“Anything else you wanted?”

“Yeah, how about a good pancake recipe?” Armstig asked.

Johnny looked at him.

“What? All that talk about pancakes made me hungry.”

“I do indeed know of a pancake recipe. I’m quite famous for it, if I do say so myself.”

The gnome makes pancakes that look absolutely delicious.

Miyu blocks Armstig from them and sniffs.

“They smell so good!” Armstig tries to get past her, but she webs his feet and he trips.

“They smell funny.” Miyu tastes one and gags. She swallows, but then immediately drowns it in water. “These are nasty!”

Armstig looks up, wide eyed.

The gnome elder sweats. “No they’re not *nasty*… more like, an acquired taste.”

“I dare you to eat one.” Armstig looks up at Johnny.

“They can’t be that bad.” Johnny picks one up and puts it in his mouth. He recoils and spits it out. He throws the pancake away, and it lands on the wall and sticks to it. “What is this?”

“A pancake.” The gnome looks dejected.

“Oh honey, let me help.” Miyu enters the kitchen and puts together some absolutely delicious pancakes. “Try these.” She lets Armstig out the web cocoon.

He tries one and howls. “These are amazing!” He gobbles two down.

The gnome elder takes a bite. “Oh my…” He sits down and start welling up with tears. “These are divine! I can’t believe… I’ve never had anything as good as this. My whole life has been a lie!”

“You’re welcome, honey.” Miyu stacks the last of the pancakes on the table. “I’m glad you enjoy them.”

The party down the whole stack.

“Titus, do you want a pancake?”

Titus roll his head around to her. “Nah, miss. I want \*hic\* booze.”

“Are you sure? They’re delicious.”

“Sorry, I have a… history with pan \*hic\* cakes. I don’t like them.”

“Ok. Do you need some sleep?”

Titus nods. Miyu picks him up and takes him out. She takes him to a tavern and pay for a room for him. She tell him not to get into any trouble, and he doesn’t. He instead instigates a fight between two other guys, and then joins in when he’s ready. Clever trouble maker.

Back at town hall, the worgens are still there.

“I don’t know about you, but I’m still hungry.” Armstig rubs his tummy.

The gnome lights up. “I could make more…”

“I could make more pancakes.” Johnny interjects. He gets right to work, making a full stack. “Don’t eat any until I’m done.”

“Ok.”

He finishes, and they dig in. But the pancakes were horrible. “Bleh! These are bad!”

So Johnny makes a second batch, and these ones are actually ok. “These will do.”

They had lots of leftovers. “Hey, maybe we should take these to fish lady?”

“No, she said not to follow her home, remember?”

“You’re right.”

So they go to the blacksmith instead, right before he closed shop. Johnny buy a cutlass and Armstig buys nothing because he has his natural wolf claws.

“Wanna pancake?” Armstig holds out a pancake to him.

Bofur the dwarf blacksmith ignores that one and takes a random pancake from the stack, nearly toppling it. “Hmm! Thank you!” He takes one bite and immediately starts vomiting. “That’ so gross! Reminds me of the time the elder gnome made pancakes for our spring get together. And everyone got sick. I got diarrhea that lasted days.”

“Well hopefully you don’t get sick that long this time.”

“Anything else I can help you with?”

“Nope, see ya!”

The worgens go to a tavern and sleep in the attic.

“That was a fun day!” Armstig gets comfy. “I wonder what’ll happen tomorrow?”

“It sure was.” Johnny replies. “I’m looking forward to it.”

# Chapter 2

The morning air wafted in the dusty tavern attic, tingling the nose of a certain worgen.

Armstig sat straight up and stared out the grated window. He stretched as far as the attic would allow, yawning with a big wide open maw. He kicked Johnny. “Time to wake up!”

Johnny groggily sat up. He gave Armstig an inquisitive look. “Armpit?”

“Yes. It’s that time of day already.”

The two worgens climbed down the attic ladder with their gear and headed out. They walked through the town and the plains to the island mountain. The sun peaked out from beyond the horizon, illuminating the mountain peak. It was a relaxing climb to the top, where they sat down cross-legged and meditated.

The two were silent as they sat, save for the occasional wolf noise and burp.

Johnny’s ear twitched when he heard crunching.

“Oof. What’s that noise?”

Armstig swallowed. “Sorry, I got snacky. Want some?”

Johnny opened his eyes. Armstig was holding out a bag full of dried pancakes. “Are these from yesterday?”

“Yeah, but they’re sun-dried. They’re pretty good, even the bad ones.”

Johnny takes one and eats it. He continues meditating while chewing.

They sit, eyes closed, doing nothing but being silent. And loudly crunching on pancakes, which they serve themselves with a free hand every now and then.

“My towel’s dry.” Armstig proclaimed. Standing up, he pulled the formerly wet towel off his neck.

“I’m almost there.” Johnny took another bite before standing up.

“Mmm… I’m hungry. Looking forward to a proper breakfast.”

“Not today, Armstig.”

They climbed down the mountain.

“You’re not coming to breakfast?”

“You go. I got some important business to take care of.”

“Ok… I’ll meet you back in town.”

Johnny ran ahead to town, leaving Armstig behind on the plains.

Armstig was pleasantly surprised to find the farmer’s market open as he arrived. He sniffed the air. It was all his favorites. He followed the scent to a stand that was serving farmer’s wraps: bacon, egg, and cheese all wrapped in a corn flour tortilla. He savored every bite. He sat down on a bench and watched the crowd.

His ears pricked to a familiar voice. Down the street, Miyu the spider lady was scolding Titus the drunkard.

“Titus! Explain this!” Miyu pointed to the broken window of the Salty Dog tavern.

“Somebody drank all my ale.” Titus tipped his bottle upside down to show that only a drop came out.

Miyu squints at him. “I’m going in there, you stay right here, understand?”

“I’ll… stay around.”

“Right here.”

He nods.

Miyu walks into the tavern and seems to have an amicable conversation with the tavern keeper there.

Meanwhile, Titus spots the farmers market and makes his way over. He finds a stand giving out free samples of beer. Without talking to the attendant, he picks up a glass and pours it in his mouth. His face contorts for a moment, then his drunken smile returns.

He nods at the attendant. “I love the buzz I’m getting off this \*hic\* but fix the flavor or stay with the original stuff.”

“Thanks for the feedback.” The attendant takes the glass from him. He slaps Titus’ hand to keep him from taking another sample. “Only one sample per customer, please.”

“What? You got enough here.”

“Only one sample per customer.”

“Why, you got a ship full of beer here. Can’t I just have one more?”

“No. If you want more, you can buy some.”

“Hmmm… ship full. Could I buy a whole ship full?”

The attendant took out a piece of parchment and a pen. “What would you like?”

“A hundred cases of the classic stuff. None of this experimental… stuff.”

“Alright, and how are you paying for it?”

“Don’t worry. Somebody with the ship will take care of it.”

“Who?”

“Short guy, think he’s a gnome. Yeah.”

“Name?”

“Bo…. Bofum.”

The attendant writes down the info. “The elder?”

“Yeah. And when you make the bill, can you write ‘love titus’ on it?”

“Consider it done. And which ship are we bringing this order to?”

“\*hic\* I don’t know.”

Armstig looked towards the docks. “Yeah, which ship *are* we going on?” He strolled down the street to the boat docks. He found a wide dock pole and perched on it. There were lots of boats on the dock. There was a giant galleon, one or two skiffs, a pair of dinghies, and an absolute dock ton of row boats. They practically littered the place. There were several beached on the shore, some moared to the dock, some moared to other boats, and more on shelves. One floated upside-down in the bay, and another one hung out on the top of the office building.

“How did that get there?” Armstig pondered. He made his way back to the farmer’s market, where he found Johnny eating some breakfast.

“Mission success?” Armstig asked in Sylvan.

“Just some rumors.” Johnny muttered back in Sylvan. “Some guy, looks like us, digging a hole somewhere. Could be a forest, could be a beach.”

“Get any scents?”

“No, he’s long gone by now. But he definitely was here.”

“Man am I sore!” A little kobold stretched as he waited at the breakfast stand. “Thank you.” He took his food.

“Oh hey! Roth!” Armstig waved him over.

“Huh? Oh hi.” Roth came over and sat next to them.

“How was your morning?”

“Just got done training in the woods. Moved a few logs around, you know, helping the beavers out.” Roth took a bite of his breakfast.

“Hey, word of warning.” Johnny wiped his hands. “If you see another worgen like us around here, watch out. He’s bad news. Come to us immediately if you see him.”

Roth nodded as he chewed. He unwrapped his sandwich further to find that it came with an orange slice. “Eh.” He picked it out and looked at Armstig. “You want this?”

“Sure, thanks!” Armstig takes it and swallows it. “Hmm… oranges. Not a bad idea.”

Armstig goes back into the farmer’s market, looking for something in particular. He finds a fruit stand ran by a nice young lady in a yellow sun hat. He breathes in the smell of oranges and sighs happily. “Mm… citrus.”

“Fan of the oranges?” The lady greets him.

“It’s my favorite fruit.” Armstig picks one up.

“Well, nobody has better oranges on this island than me.”

“I’ll bet. Can I try one?”

She shakes her head. “No sorry, no free samples at this stand.”

“How much?” Armstig takes an orange and starts peeling it.

“How many you want?”

“Hmm…” Armstig pops a slice into his mouth. “Hey Johnny! How long are we going to be this boat ride?”

“Huh?” Johnny yells back. “I don’t know!”

“I think maybe a week?” Armstig shrugs at the lady.

“Get a hundred oranges!” Johnny suggests.

“Why not? A hundred oranges please.”

The lady produces a crate full of oranges. “Here you go. That’ll be 2 gold.”

“Thank you!” Armstig paid her and took the crate full of oranges. He sat down next to Johnny.

“These are nice oranges.” Johnny eats one.

Armstig picks one out of the crate and tosses it in his mouth whole.

Roth gets up and goes into the farmer’s market to get a whole crate full of apples.

“Score!” Johnny and Armstig dig in and take an apple each. They both enjoy the fruit.

“Which is better, these apples or these oranges?” Armstig asks.

“It’s hard to compare,” Johnny said, taking a bite of both apple and orange. “But I’d have to say the oranges.”

“Hey oranges are the best fruit!” Armstig ate another orange.

Johnny bit into an apple and nearly choked on it. He gagged and spit out a chunk of apple. “Went down the wrong pipe. I’m ok.” He looked at the apple chunk on the ground.

“Are you going to eat that?” Armstig pointed at the apple chunk.

“No.”

Armstig picked up the apple chunk and popped it in his mouth. He swallowed it. “It’s got a special flavoring to it.”

Roth looked on in disgust. “I gotta sail with *these* guys?” He muttered to himself under his breath. He set down the apple he was holding, and tried to prevent himself from vomiting.

“Well,” Johnny looks at the time. “It’s time to go see about that boat. Elder Bofum is expecting us soon.”

Johnny, Armstig, and Roth went to see the elder gnome at town hall. The elder gnome gives them the option between a human named Brand, or a frog named Slick. The three voted, and Slick was the winner. The gnome said he’d make arrangements for Slick to transport them.

[insert boat scene]

[insert orange-throw-at-slick scene]

[insert boat-boarding scene]

[insert worgen-brushing scene]

[insert storm scene]

[insert johnny’s-armor scene]

The party had sailed for 7 weeks when they found a shipwrecked boat.

# Chapter 3

[insert worgen brushing scene]

[insert worgen meditating on bow scene]

[insert Selena diving to investigate scene]

Suddenly, a ship arose out of the water. Its tattered boards were covered in seaweed and barnacles. And despite the many holes in its hull, it floated on the water. It coasted towards them and jostled their boat when it hit. Aboard the vessel, a horde of undead skeletons waited to invade. Four planks were laid down, acting as a bridge to The Sloppy Toad.

“Why is there so many bones?” Roth pondered.

*AWWWOOOOOOO!* howled Armstig.

Miyu dropped her things, peeked out, and scouted the skeletons. She shot a glob of web from her spinneret. The glob landed on the edge of the ship and exploded, covering four skeletons in sticky web particles. Miyu ran back down the stairs and yelled at Titus, “Get your drunk ass up! We’re being attacked!”

Titus slammed his bottle of ale into the ground as he jumped to his feet. He ran past Miyu and into the battle. Johnny was drawing his weapon. The pirate skeleton captain was stuck in the web, Armstig was watching from the crow’s nest, and Roth was pacing back and forth.

“WHY are there SO *many* skeletooons??” Roth held his hands to his skull to keep from popping a vein. He went out of control. As he walked back and forth, he grew from half the height of a human to the size of an elephant. “WHY?” He saw the captain wearing a fancy captain’s hat, while the rest of the skeletons were basically nude. “YOU!” He walked to the captain, but got stuck in the web. He tripped and missed his attack on the captain.

“Har! You don’t scare me!” yelled the pirate captain. “Put your hands up and all we’ll take is your treasure!”

Johnny stabbed a stuck skeleton in the web, did a front flip over the kneeling giant Roth, and stabbed another skeleton in front of Titus. He jumped back as the skeleton tried to attack him.

Instead, that skeleton attacked Titus. Being a bit too drunk yet, Titus didn’t dodge and got caught by the blade. “Nyaha! I am a master swordsman! Er, skeleton!”

But that was just what Titus needed. His eyes sobered up and grabbed the skeleton, spun it around, and kneed it in the butt. It slammed into the pirate captain, who was stuck in the web. The pirate captain held up his sword, slicing his crewmate into pieces. The flying bones knocked a tooth out of the pirate skeleton captain’s jaw. Titus jumps into the web from the edge and uppercuts another skeleton up and out of the web, sending it to the crack between the boats. *SPLASH!*

The pirate captain raised his sword to attack Titus, but Roth swung his only free non-stuck hand and cut off his sword arm. The captain’s sword twirled into the water.

Seeing an opening, Johnny dashed back in. His cutlass danced all over the pirate captain’s chest.

The pirate captain looked down, saw nothing was missing, and yelled, “Ha!”

But he spoke too soon. Cracks formed in his ribs, and soon they broke apart all together. The pirate skeleton captain collapsed into a pile of bone chunks of the ship’s deck.

“Who’s got the last laugh now?” Johnny sheathed his cutlass.

But despite their pirate captain dying, the skeleton crew were still raiding the boat.

Armstig lept into action to do a bit of crowd control. From his perch in the crow’s nest, he lept onto a skeleton’s head, taking a minor scrape from its bony shoulder blades. Its spine crumpled under the sudden additional weight and it collapsed onto the floor. Armstig plucked its skull of its neck and tossed it into the jaw of another skeleton, knocking its head clean off.

Two more skeletons jumped aboard and swung their swords at Armstig. He dodged the first one and ducked the second, charging up for a jump. He jumped to the height of their heads and did a perfect split to kick both their skulls straight off their bodies.

“No one is going to take down this ship!” Johnny called out in Sylvan.

Armstig responded in Sylvan, “I got you brother!”

The skeletons kept coming.

“Why are there so many bones??” Roth complained again.

Miyu the spider lady arose from the lower deck after securing a safe place for Garry. She saw the undead horde and steeled her gaze. Her eyes glowed white, she reared up on her two hind-most legs, and shouted in a booming voice, “In the name of all that is holy, be gone foul creatures!”

The skeletons stopped in their tracks. Many of them dropped their weapons. They scrambled to get back on their own ship, many of them tripping and falling into the water as they fought over the space on the boarding planks. When the reverse skeleton stampede was over, only a few brave skeletons remained.

“You think you can scare me with your holy nonsense? Nyah! I am on fire!” A flaming skeleton pointed its flaming sword at Miyu. “Fire!” It threw a flaming bottle of ale onto the web, lighting it on fire. Roth, Titus, and Johnny were all caught in the web, and they suffered severe burns.

“Hold on I’m coming!” Miyu ran to free her friends, but she was a bit too hasty.

“Get her!” The flaming skeleton ran at Miyu, jumping the gap in the ships.

Two more skeletons appeared on the deck of the skeleton ship. They wore robes that glimmered an eerie, ghostly blue. They formed finger guns with their hands, cocked the “hammer”, and pulled the “trigger”. Purple magic energy balls swirled around their “barrel” finger and shot at the party.

A purple magic blast hit Armstig, but he blocked it with his arm, letting it get slightly singed. One hit Titus, who drunkenly shrugged it off. Another hit Roth, who cried out in pain. And the last hit none other than Miyu, wounding her back hind-most leg.

“I hate spell casters!”

“Don’t worry,” yelled Titus, calmly taking the fire burns and magic blasts, “I got them! You go get safety!”

Miyu didn’t hesitate. She vacated the battle and went down to the lower deck.

“Yar! You’re not getting away that easily!” The flaming skeleton chased after Miyu, but Roth tripped it with his tail.

“Why are there so many skeletons??” Roth was freed from the web by the fire, and now he was free to rage. “Get off the ship!” He yelled. He grabbed the flaming skeleton entirely in his fists and flung him overboard and onto the pirate ship. Sure, he took a bit of burn damage from holding something that was literally on fire, but that didn’t matter, did it?

Well, it turns out it *did* matter. Roth had taken as much stress as he could handle. He didn’t even get to see how the flaming skeleton landed. He passed out and reverted to his small, regular kobold size and took a nap in the middle of the battlefield.

The flaming skeleton did, in fact, land. It landed right on top of a spellcaster skeleton, knocking it out. The flaming skeleton struggled to separate its bones from the other skeleton and struggled to get up.

But Titus was faster. He leapt onto the skeleton ship and picked up the other spellcaster skeleton. They’re surprisingly light, as a matter of fact. He lifted it above his head and launched it at the flaming skeleton. “Stay away from Miyu!”

The spellcaster skeleton landed on the flaming skeleton, created a skeleton sandwich.

Armstig got to work knocking the boarding planks off and into the water, while Johnny worked on putting the fire out with a nearby barrel of water.

But before they could separate the ships, the flaming skeleton built up energy and exploded! Bones flew everywhere, as did tattered pieces of magic robes. Standing on the charred pirate ship deck, in the midst of the bones, was the flaming skeleton! “Nyah! You’re cooked now!” The flaming skeleton walked menacingly close to Titus.

By now, the boats were drifting apart. The gap was now too far for Johnny or Armstig to jump across. And Roth was out of commission.

Titus, for his part, showed no fear. He punched the flaming skeleton in the face, once with each fist. The skeleton lost some teeth, but the fire burned his hands. He definitely took more damage from that exchange.

The flaming skeleton stepped closer, raising his sword up. Titus backed up and into a corner. He grabbed a random leg bone he found on the ground and held it up.

“Nya! How humorous!” The flaming skeleton sliced right through the bone, leaving Titus defenseless.

The pirate ship’s bell rang and the deck shook. The ship began to sink back into the ocean.

“It looks like your time is up.” Titus smirked.

“Nya! I work better under pressure!” The skeleton herded Titus into the captain’s quarters.

Titus dodged swing after swing, but was running out of time. It seemed that the flaming skeleton would get him before the ship sank. And when the ship did sink, it would take him along with it!

The floor poured up through the holes in the floor, putting out the fire on the flaming skeleton’s feet. But its swinging sword made it impossible to get a hit in.

Suddenly the windows burst open!

Selena the fish lady crashed in through the window, spraying glass and water everywhere. She somersaulted into the room and carried the momentum into her greatsword. It blocked the flaming skeleton’s attack and knocked its sword out of its hand, and its hand off its arm. She thrust her sword into its flaming chest from the safe distance of 5ft away.

“Nooooo!” The flaming skeleton cried in agony.

“By holy thunder, die!” Selena’s sword crackled with holy lightning that blew up the flaming skeleton, shattering it and sending pieces flying everywhere.

Titus briefed a drunken sigh of relief. “Where have you been this whole time?”

Selena showed her ripped shorts. “I got caught below decks when the pirate ship floated to the surface. And I don’t intend to have it happen again when it sinks down.” She grabbed Titus against his will and swam to The Sloppy Toad.

Miyu waited on the deck with a spider web to make it easy to climb up.

Selena tossed Titus into the spider web, getting him stuck on the side of the hull. Selena, herself? She dove deep and turned around, gaining speed. Then she breached the surface, catching enough air to somersault back onto the deck.

“Titus!” Miyu called out. “You good down there?”

“I’m fine! It’s a nice view.” Titus hiccupped. “Got any ale?”

The party helped Titus aboard. Miyu and Selena healed the cuts, wounds, and burns they all suffered. Then it was time to heal the hunger, so Miyu left to cook dinner.

Everyone gathered around the table in the lower deck.

Eventually Miyu came out with the food, all at once: grilled meat, fried vegetable stir fry, and an assortment of chopped fruit for decoration. “We have to ration our supplies, and we really can’t afford to put this much of them into this meal, but screw it! You guys did great out there, and you all deserve this meal.” She carried each of the dishes from the kitchen all at once with her many spider legs.

Armstig hungrily snuck a piece of grilled chicken off the plate before she could even set it on the table.

Selena scolded him. “Nuh uh! No eating until everyone has been served.”

Armstig’s ears drooped, and he set the chicken on his plate, waiting patiently. He gave it one good lick though.

Miyu seat the food on the table and served everyone their portion of it.

“Now can I eat?”

“Yes, Armstig.” Miyu patted him on the head.

“So,” Captain Slick said as he ate with food. “I’ve never seen such a fine battle before.”

“You all did very well.” Miyu agreed.

“I oughtta pick one of you as my first mate. I could use an extra set of hands in case something happens.”

Armstig raised his hand. “I nominate Johnny! He’s got lots of experience aboard boats and sailing.”

Johnny humbly nodded.

“Are you kidding? I know this water better than anybody.” Selena wiped her hands clean.

“Well, I wasn’t actually serious, but you bring up good points.” Slick finished his meal. “I shall pick one of you.”

“And…?”

“It is…” Slick tried to build suspense, but he couldn’t handle it. “Selena! Welcome to the crew!”

“Thank you.” She bowed her head.

“Of course he’d pick the fish lady.” Armstig grumbled.

“Fish lady? Who said that?” Selena stared at the worgens.

Armstig went silent, and pointed at Johnny.

Selena got in Johnny’s face. “Don’t you ever address me as fish lady again, or I’ll teach you what it’s like to be a fish!”

“Ok, I won’t.” Johnny turned back to his meal.

Selena sat back in her chair. “No one calls *me* ‘fish lady’.” She grumbled.

Titus chugged another bottle of ale and slammed it on the floor.

“Titus, slow down on the liquor.” Miyu reached across the table to wipe slobber off his face.

“Nah, mom. I need to get drunker! It gives me poweeerrr.” He sloppily uncorked another bottle and took a swig.

“You heard her.” Selena loaded her spoon with stir fry and flung it at Titus.

Titus looked down at his shirt and chuckled. “Is that *my* puke? I don’t remember.”

“Food fight!” Armstig yelled. *AWWWOOOOOO!*

He flung stir fry at Selena. It was about to go down.

Before things got too ugly, Slick and Roth escaped to the upper deck. Miyu dragged Titus out as well.

Selena, Armstig, and Johnny had an epic battle flinging food at each other. When all the ammo ran out, Selena was covered in head to toe in gravy, vegetables, and fruit slices. Armstig was just as messy, but he had fur that things could stick too. Johnny, somehow, came out unscathed. He had a single piece of meat on his face and a single splotch of oil on his shirt.

“Ha! Good game!” Selena laughed. She opened her arms for a big hug, and squeezed Johnny tight.

Armstig join in to make it a group hug.

When the hug ended, Johnny was no longer significantly cleaner than them.

“Ha! Gotcha!”

Miyu called them up to the top deck. Selena came up and dove off the side of the ship. Johnny answered Miyu’s call.

Armstig instead picked up Garry, who was excited because he smelled food. Armstig set him on the table in the middle of the aftermath. “Enjoy, Garry!” Tentacles flew everywhere, mopping up all the squished meat and flung veggies. Armstig escaped to the top deck to let the living garbage disposal work its magic.

“Ok, line up on the side of the ship.” Miyu sternly told the worgens.

Armstig’s ears folded back and he cowered. He tried to be sneaky and climb up to the crow’s nest, but Miyu saw him.

“I see, Armstig. Get down here. Sit next to Johnny.”

Armstig got down and did so.

Miyu created a boat load of water above their heads that came down on them over the course of a minute or two. It washed all the food out of their hair. Well, mostly.

Miyu inspected their fur. “I’m going to have to brush you guys all over again. Tsk. Tsk.”

“Again?” Armstig’s tail wagged. He elbowed Johnny. “We should have food fights more often!”

Miyu gave him a stern look.

“Or… maybe not.”

Miyu shot him a smile and patted him on the head.

[insert miyu training selena in acrobatics training montage scene]

[insert miyu teaching selena to read common montage scene]

[insert miyu making wetsuit for selena montage scene]

[insert armstig training “pinkie-ups” montage scene]

[insert johnny training armstig in sleight of hand montage scene]