

# Kingmaker Chapter Six: A Hard Rain

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**SOUND:** Typewriter sounds. Contemplative piano music plays underneath the narration.

**HISTORIAN:** If you asked the people who worked alongside him in the Feverite militia, they would tell you that one of Eisen Iyer's greatest traits was his adaptability. He was the type of person who made mistakes often, but never made the same mistake twice. He was an exemplar of the old artificer motto, "Make what you need, need what you make." Following the mishap at the Devil's Maw park, Eisen was putting that adaptable ingenuity to good use and working on a gravity-defying enchantment for his boots.

**SOUND:** Metal magic and nails and hammering and stuff.

**EISEN:** If this spell works the way I want it to, which it had better, I'll be able to climb straight up out of any pit I find myself in by simply walking out. No matter how smooth the walls are. No more mountain-climbing cleats needed.

**TELESPHORE:** Or perhaps you could save yourself the effort and simply not fall into any more pits.

**EISEN:** Haha, you see...That's the difference between you and me, Telsie. I'm always planning ahead, backwards.

**COLETTE:** (sounding ill) Once you've perfected the spell you'll enchant *our* boots too, right?

BEAT

**EISEN:** (non-committal) Yeah, sure.

**TELESPHORE:** Well, it's a moot point because we won't be returning to the Devil's Maw ever again, nor will we ever visit any comparable pits or abysses.

**COLETTE:** Thank God for that.

**EISEN:** Hey, Colette, you're not looking so good. Is everything alright?

**COLETTE:** Other than the migraine to end all migraines? No, but thanks for asking.

**HISTORIAN:** Colette wasn't fully aware at the time, but it was in fact, much worse than a migraine. Her symptoms began shortly after the Devil's Maw, an inevitable side-effect of over-relying on the magic of Kingmaker diamond. The transmutation-fusion spell which had bound it to her protected Colette from the worst of the diamond's effects, and this was quite fortunate, since scientific tests on Kehrseite crystal done in the years following would prove that

the material was capable of producing enough energy to stop the heart of an African elephant at a distance of 75 feet. Even with her body absorbing a tiny fraction of that radiation, Colette was still experiencing muscle aches, blurred vision, fainting spells, nausea, and an acute cranial distress that, in her native language, Colette likely would have described as “todeskampf”.

**COLETTE:** Funny, I can't tell if negative thoughts are helping dull the headache, but neither seem to be going away.

**SOUND:** Multi-door opening, Eisen walking into the kitchen then coming back.

**EISEN:** Here, try this. It's raw ginger root, does wonders for nausea. It's what my mother always used to give me when I was sick, and I always have Telsie keep some in the kitchen just in case.

**COLETTE:** Thanks. I don't suppose you have anything for headaches, too? I used to take these laudanum tablets that always helped when I would get migraines.

**EISEN:** Yeah, no, we're unfortunately fresh out. (yelling towards the driver's seat) And who's fault is that?

**HISTORIAN:** Following the events that befell the trio at Phalloides' Apothecary in Shaunicht, Telesphore had been refusing to stop at apothecaries for several days.

**TELESPHORE:** It can't be helped, every apothecary we've driven by recently has given me absolutely atrocious vibrations.

**EISEN:** Just admit you're scared of them!

**COLETTE:** Stop yelling!

**SOUND:** She falls back onto the sofa.

**COLETTE:** Gotta say, I'm warming up to the idea of yanking this horrible thing out of my skull. Is Ariadne in the area?

**EISEN:** She'd kill you.

**COLETTE:** Your point being?

**EISEN:** Tel, what's the closest town?

**TELESPHORE:** Right now? We're just outside of Beaupont.

**EISEN:** Good, we'll take a detour. Beaupont is a small town, but they probably still have a doctor, and Diamond-head's in dire need of medical assistance.

**HISTORIAN:** The town of Beaupont was primarily agricultural, and not too different in population density to Colette's hometown of Champignon. Like Champignon, Beaupont was located along the Rhine, and bordered the Seltsamwald. Its name, which is French for 'fine bridge', was both literal and figurative. Beaupont was accessible from the main road via the moderately famous Mantalope Bridge, an ornate stone bridge that had been built in the late 18th century by Catholic monks. The town itself also served as a bridge of sorts, as it was the last vestige of civilization before the countryside gave way to the alien landscape of the Seltsamwald.

**COLETTE:** How exactly are we going to be able to let the doctor treat me without him seeing the Kingmaker? I've already blown my cover to one person this week, I'm not keen to repeat that.

**EISEN:** Well, with your hair done up like that, it's not quite as noticeable... If he doesn't look closely, he probably won't know it's there.

**TELESPHORE:** I don't think he'll be able to avoid looking closely. He's a doctor, and he'll be treating her for a headache.

**SOUND:** Colette stumbling.

**EISEN:** Woah, woah, easy...you okay there?

**COLETTE:** Not especially.

**EISEN:** Here, lean on me, I'll lead you. It's not that far.

**HISTORIAN:** The town doctor of Beaupont was a man by the name of Edwin Giroux, who prior to setting up his practice, had run a traveling medicine show along the river, often venturing across the borders to Prussia, Austria-Hungary, and Switzerland to sell his dubious wares. He was by no means the best doctor in the VSR, but given Colette's dire situation, it was a step up from nothing.

**SOUND:** The gang enters the doctor's surgery.

**EISEN:** We're here to see Doctor Giroux about a migraine.

**GIROUX:** Certainly. May I take your names so I can make you an appointment?

**EISEN:** The patient is Miss ...Gina...Hofer, and we're her traveling companions, Iyer and Winterlich. Miss Hofer is in quite a bad way, so how soon will the doctor be in?

**GIROUX:** You're in luck. He's here, now, and he doesn't have any appointments for a good few hours. I'll go and fetch him.

**SOUND:** He leaves, then immediately comes back.

**GIROUX:** Good morning, I'm Doctor Giroux.

**HISTORIAN:** This was a little joke that Doctor Giroux liked to play on his new patients. He would pretend to be his own secretary before putting his apron and gloves on and re-introducing himself.

**COLETTE:** My vision's going in and out. Is that the same guy?

**TELESPHORE:** Yes.

**GIROUX:** Your vision's going in and out, you say? That's not a good sign. How many fingers am I holding up?

**COLETTE:** ...Twelve?

**SOUND:** Giroux clicks his tongue.

**GIROUX:** Not good at all. Could you describe the rest of your symptoms to me?

**COLETTE:** Where to start? My skin is clammy, my head is aching, my muscles feel weak, and I haven't been able to keep down solid food since last night's supper.

**GIROUX:** I see. And there's no chance that you might be pregnant?

**COLETTE:** No.

**GIROUX:** Any chance at all? You *are* traveling with these two men, neither of whom are your husband...

**COLETTE:** (indignant) No chance whatsoever.

**GIROUX:** None?

**EISEN:** None.

**GIROUX:** Well if it isn't *that*, my best guess is that you're suffering an acute fever. Here, I'll take your temperature. Put this under your tongue for me, thank you.

Beat

**GIROUX:** Hmm. 41 degrees. That's very bad.

**HISTORIAN:** As a friendly reminder to my international listeners, 41 degrees centigrade is equivalent to 103 degrees fahrenheit. So, it was indeed very bad.

**COLETTE:** How bad? Fatally bad?

**GIROUX:** Well, there are a number of treatments that might be helpful for your current condition. First, I would recommend a cold compress over your forehead, and drink plenty of water - radium-enriched, if you have access to it. Depending on how bad the migraine is, I can also

offer you an electro-static bath. Electricity has been shown to do wonders for aches and pains. But, if you would like that treatment, you'll have to pay extra.

**TELESPHORE:** How *much* extra?

**GIROUX:** Four hundred marks-

**EISEN:** Four hundred?!

**GIROUX:** -And 60 bruchteil.

BEAT

**EISEN:** Well, it's been nice knowing you, Colette.

**COLETTE:** Hold on, you cheapskate- Let's not forget that the whole reason I'm sick is because I had to - (she remembers that a stranger is present) *Over-work myself, for your sake.*

**GIROUX:** You know, fevers are often a side-effect of venereal disease.

**COLETTE:** No!

**TELESPHORE:** Doctor Giroux, if I may. We understand that the wages that the government allows you are limited, and that you might need to supplement your income with experimental therapies. But we are simple traveling merchants with about 300 marks between us, and we'd rather not have our friend drop dead on us.

**EISEN:** Believe it or not she's actually somewhat important.

**TELESPHORE:** We'd be willing to pay for your services in some other way, if you'd allow it.

**GIROUX:** Now that you mention it, perhaps there is something you could do for me. Well, not for me, but for my brother. Do you know of La Chapelle du Mante-loup?

**TELESPHORE:** Of course, it's the tallest building in town.

**GIROUX:** My brother Alain is the pastor there, and he and his fellow clergymen recently had one of the holy relics stolen from the church vestry. I think he would greatly appreciate the help in getting it back, especially from some people of your profession, and if you did so, I would let you use the electrostatic bath for free.

**COLETTE:** That sounds good to me.

**TELESPHORE:** You have yourself a deal, Doctor. Pleasure doing business with you.

**SOUND:** Church bells ringing

**HISTORIAN:** The Mantelope Chapel, better known as La Chapelle Du Mante-Loup, was an infamously hideous piece of architecture. The garish buttresses which supported the structure seemed to jut out at unnecessary angles, lending the building an uncanny appearance which only became more pronounced after the deadly fire of 1873 left deep cracks on the outside of the steeple. The contemporary fiction author Theodor Schreiber, whose crime novel "Under The Faithless Moon" was set in Beaupont, wrote of The Mantelope Chapel that it "stood despite its own efforts" and was "seemingly as removed from civilization's handiwork as the Seltsamwald itself." How fitting, then, that the chapel shared the name of one of the Seltsamwald's most dangerous predators.

**SOUND:** A slight echo indicates the group is inside the chapel

**ALAIN:** You must be Iyer and Winterlich. Edwin phoned ahead and told me to expect your arrival.

**COLETTE:** See, I was ninety-percent sure you'd just be him again, but this time dressed in a soutane.

**ALAIN:** Whatever do you mean?

**COLETTE:** Nothing. It's a pleasure to meet you, Father.

**TELESPHORE:** Apologies for our tardiness. (sarcasm) My business partner here insisted on changing into his finest boots.

**EISEN:** Have you seen this place? I'd rather have my enchantments at the ready in case it decides today is a good day to finally collapse in on itself. No offense, Priest.

**ALAIN:** I assure you this house is as sound as rain on rooftops. It is reinforced not only by mere masonry, but by God's very will.

**SOUND:** A bit of debris falls from the ceiling, hitting the ground and shattering.

**EISEN:** Right. But if you did need someone down here to check on the mere masonry side of things, I can walk straight up the steeple and have a look for let's say... four hundred marks and sixty bruchteil.

**COLETTE:** Your brother mentioned a stolen relic? Can you tell us more about that?

**ALAIN:** Ah yes, our missing piece of the shroud of turin. It was the chapel's oldest and most prized acquisition. My brother likely didn't mention its applications, and that's not at all surprising. It's a miracle the likes of which could end medicine as a business.

**COLETTE:** Well, that's quite the claim. I remember reading about the shroud of turin in school, but I never heard about part of it being here in Beaupont.

**EISEN:** It'd be monumental if it were true.

**ALAIN:** Edwin was skeptical at first too. But when he saw the shroud drink the consumption from a dying man's body, restoring the patient's health and vitality, even a seasoned physician like him was convinced that the power of The Lord dwelled within that cloth. Though he didn't use those exact words.

**TELESPHORE:** If that story is real, then I can see why he wouldn't have directly brought it up.

**COLETTE:** It does sound... just a bit more pleasant than electric shocks. I'm certainly open to it.

**ALAIN:** Indeed, my child. The shroud offers painless healing to those of the faith, and were the relic here right now, we could sort that fever of yours with just a prayer.

**EISEN:** But it isn't here, is it? That's what you need us for.

**ALAIN:** Yes. We have reason to believe that the thieves who took the shroud are a pair of troublemaking sinners who dwell just inside the Seltsamwald. They are witches, who cast diabolic spells that twist the earth and sour the air. These blasphemers have coveted the relic since it entered the church's possession. They would turn its glorious blessing to a curse if it would please their king Lucifer.

**EISEN:** So we're dealing with a pair of nature mages then? Based on your description, I'm guessing one of them specializes in earthcraft and the other-

**SOUND:** String music fades in

**ALAIN:** Now don't you misunderstand me, Mr. Iyer. While it is true that God gave man dominion over many aspects of his creation, we are only afforded that free reign if we accept his glory into our hearts. That is the difference between the nature magic practiced by the devout, and the baser manipulation of the elements that calls itself witchcraft.

**HISTORIAN:** At the time of the 1886 revolution, the head of the Catholic church was Pope Leo XIII, often called the Social Pope, or Pope of the Workers due to his support of the rural working class. Though he decried the violent methods used by the Feverites during the February Revolt, the Catholic Church was still instrumental in aiding their cause. This was in no small part due to the fact that the Desrosiers family were Protestant, and had discouraged Catholicism within the kingdom, but it has often been said that the passion with which the revolutionaries fought to secure worker's rights inspired the Pope to spend the final seventeen years of his life preaching for agriculture cooperatives controlled by peasant farmers. He held the biblical notion of humans as the Earth's custodians in high regard and believed that farmers and other caretakers of the land had great spiritual importance. It is perhaps no surprise, then, that by the 1910's, many Valorian nature mages had been inducted into the Catholic church. It was not uncommon in many villages for the local priests to have at least some degree of magical dominion over the elements. Alain Giroux, for example, was a seasoned hydromancer, able to cast spells that let him manipulate the flow of water. In particular, he had mastered a spell that allowed him to call down rain at his will, which made him very popular among the local farmers.

**EISEN:** Aye, sure, I get it, you wanted thieves don't show up for the sermons. But about their elemental specialties—

**COLETTE:** Oh, anything but witches.

**EISEN:** Not to remove the fun of superstition, but after having a close call with a top-tier flesh witch, I find it hard to be scared of run-of-the-mill *nature* witches. Any competent mage should be able to hold his own against one if it comes to a fight.

**TELESPHORE:** (sarcastic) If only we could find a competent mage on such short notice.

**COLETTE:** And aren't there two of them? That'd be one more than a one-on-one.

**EISEN:** Look, if you've seen The Pyromancer's Guild of Crystal City perform their annual exploding light show, you've seen the worst a nature mage can do.

**HISTORIAN:** Every year, on the night of Konigstodestag, The Pyromancer's Guild - formerly a battalion of Feverite-aligned nature magic practitioners - would put on a lengthy showing of fire and light spells to startle and amuse an intended audience between the ages of 6 and 12. Parents very rarely stayed for the entire performance, preferring to recuse themselves to the nearby Klangholz Pub while their excitable children were occupied.

**TELESPHORE:** We attended an underwhelming magic show one time, and you never let it go.

**EISEN:** Regardless, I'm not going to be shown up by some glorified gardeners.

**ALAIN:** I take it that means you're accepting the job?

**TELESPHORE:** Seems like our best option. What do you think, Colette?

**COLETTE:** I wasn't expecting we'd be getting involved in a literal witch hunt, but if this shroud really is everything Father Giroux says it is, I wouldn't want it in the wrong hands. Especially if it could get rid of my fever.

**ALAIN:** Excellent, the Prior will lead you to the neck of the woods where the witches can be found. I imagine with your skills, you'll be able to handle the matter from there.

**EISEN:** Now that's what I call a vote of confidence!

**HISTORIAN:** Prior Gregor was the Pastor's right-hand man, and from his youth he had always towered over the other boys. Those who knew him said his rarely-heard laughter was as thunderous as his more commonly heard biblical chanting. In the years since donning the cloth Gregor had studied Latin to make his impassioned proclamations less upsetting to listeners in his parish, but anecdotes suggest this had the opposite effect.

**SOUND:** tracking through forest



**GREGOR:** This is as far as I can take you into the Seltsamwald. Beyond here you will find the land to be infested with curses, which makes it quite unfit for a holy man like myself.

**EISEN:** Well, it wouldn't be work if you didn't leave us the hard part.

**COLETTE:** He means that we appreciate your help, Prior. Don't mind his manner of speaking.

**EISEN:** Hey! I said exactly what I meant.

**COLETTE:** You can snap at me all you want when my ears stop ringing.

**GREGOR:** I'll await your return not far from here. God's grace be with you.

**SOUND:** Gregor vanishes into the bushes.

**COLETTE:** Ok, I know my eyes are bad right now, but did the Prior just teleport?

**TELESPHORE:** That wasn't teleportation, he just seems to be good at hiding himself. Not unheard of for a Catholic.

**EISEN:** Hm. He sure was in a hurry to get out of here.

**HISTORIAN:** Prior Gregor's skills at hide-and-seek were something of a local legend in Beaupont. When he was a boy, Gregor once hid himself in the abbey after choir practice, and was undiscovered for nearly six days. He was summarily made a permanent resident at the church after it was found that his parents had skipped town in his absence.

**SOUND:** Footsteps through the forest as the trio treks forward

**TELESPHORE:** Those with clear vision should keep an eye out for beasts and other creepy-crawlies. Witches aren't the worst thing we could meet out here.

**COLETTE:** I'd hate to run into another Mantalope right now.

**EISEN:** Come on. One mantalope is no match for Telsie and I. You've seen that first-hand.

**TELESPHORE:** It's still best to be on our guard, Iyer. Beaupont isn't the capital of mantalope-themed stonework for no reason.

**HISTORIAN:** Telesphore spoke the truth. The stretch of Seltsamwald near Beaupont had long been a hotspot for mature mantelopes to find mates. Male and female mantelopes are both more aggressive when searching for a mate, and pairs of them will attack anything that enters their shared territory be it animal, vegetable, or mineral. Incidentally, it is a commonly held myth that male mantelopes die during the mating process as their heads are eaten by the female. While there are recorded cases of this happening, it is not uncommon for the female to only partially devour her mate's brain, allowing the male to live for several months without his head.

**SOUND:** Unusual bird trill

**COLETTE:** What was that?

**EISEN:** Didn't sound like a witch.

**SOUND:** wings flapping.

**COLETTE:** It's getting closer!

**HISTORIAN:** From the canopy above descended a winged beast with leathery flesh the color of the night sky. It was a creature not of this world, and one that could only be encountered in the Selstamwald. Telesphore was the only member of the group who had experience with such a creature.

**SOUND:** Bird lands on Telesphore, fluttering.

**TELESPHORE:** There, there, little one.

**SOUND:** Bird trills again, calmer

**EISEN:** Aww, look who's made a friend.

**COLETTE:** Is that a raven? It doesn't have feathers.

**TELESPHORE:** It's closer to a bat, actually.

**COLETTE:** It doesn't have fur.

**SOUND:** Bird-thing flies away.

**TELESPHORE:** Well, it's gone now.

**EISEN:** Were you considering offering it a job?

**TELESPHORE:** Nothing of the sort. That was an Obelos, they are solitary scavengers who absorb the residual magic from spells to season the carrion they eat.

**EISEN:** Ha, and Colette thought it was dangerous.

**COLETTE:** As if you had any idea about it!

**TELESPHORE:** If an Obelos was here and wasn't actively feeding, then it was likely drawn by a spell that was recently cast. Which means...

**COLETTE:** The witches are close.

**EISEN:** Or that they know we're here.

**TELESPHORE:** Or both.

**HISTORIAN:** It was both.

**SOUND:** The ground collapses and the trio yells as they fall into a pit with a thud

**COLETTE:** (groaning) Is everyone alright? All limbs intact?

**EISEN:** *Your* limbs certainly are! You just kicked me in the bloody head.

**COLETTE:** Well, you didn't land exactly where I'd want you either.

**EISEN:** Likewise. That goes for you too, Telsie.

**TELESPHORE:** I don't know what you're complaining about. As I recall, you quite enjoy when we wind up in this position.

**EISEN:** Not when we're in the woods... Well, not this time.

**COLETTE:** That's enough fun for now, boys. Let's dust ourselves off and figure out how we got down here.

**SOUND:** The group disentangles themselves and stands up.

**TELESPHORE:** Oh, don't tell me... We've fallen in another damn hole.

**EISEN:** At least this one is just made of dirt. That's a step up as far as I'm concerned.

**TELESPHORE:** You are the last one of us that gets to decide what a step up is!

**COLETTE:** No, he's right. I'll take this pit over the Devil's Maw any day. Much less slimy.

**YVONNE:** Don't celebrate too soon, I could still conjure some mud and fungus down there.

**COLETTE:** Who said that!?

**YVONNE:** I'm up here! Not that there is anywhere else you could look.

**HISTORIAN:** Standing at the rim of the rather deep pit that Colette, Eisen, and Telesphore found themselves in was Yvonne Lavigne - the younger of the two sisters who had stolen the shroud from the chapel. True to Father Giroux's assessment, she was a nature mage who was gifted in earthcraft.

**YVONNE:** You all look absolutely "pit"-iful!

**SOUND:** Yvonne laughs.

**EISEN:** I don't think you know who you're messing wi-

**SOUND:** Yvonne tosses a few clumps of dirt at Eisen's face, which he sputters and spits out

**EISEN:** Eugh! Were there worms in that?

**YVONNE:** Yes, and there'll be more where they came from if you don't tell me what you're doing here.

**COLETTE:** We were sent on behalf of The Mantelope Chapel to get back the relic you stole!

**YVONNE:** Oh, well in that case...

**SOUND:** Yvonne throws clumps of dirt at Colette. Colette spits and coughs.

**COLETTE:** Right in my eye!

**YVONNE:** It's like mom always said, there's no sense in having a pit if you've got nothing to drop into it.

**TELESPHORE:** I can see that we won't be able to do this reasonably.

**SOUND:** Telesphore is hit with the dirt. He's unphased.

**TELESPHORE:** (playing off the disgust) Is that the worst you've got?

**YVONNE:** Oh no, certainly not. If I wanted to, I could simply close off the top of the pit and let you all gasp for air until you passed out or your thrashing caused a cave in. But I wouldn't do that sort of thing, because I'm nice.

**COLETTE:** Clearly.

**EISEN:** How about instead, I throw something at you?

**SOUND:** Eisen's wrench flies towards Yvonne but stops short in mid-air.

**HISTORIAN:** What Eisen failed to consider in that moment is that Yvonne's older sister, Mirielle Lavigne had been close by the entire time. The natural force which she specialized in was gravity, her manipulation of which allowed her to fly, lift heavy objects unaided, and in this particular instance, interrupt the trajectory of Eisen Iyer's wrench before it made contact with her sister's skull.

**EISEN:** Damn it, I knew I should have confirmed the other one's specialty before we left.

**MIRIELLE:** You don't understand the "gravity" of the situation.

**YVONNE:** Nice one, Mirielle!

**COLETTE:** This is good, right guys? We've got 'em right where we want them.

**EISEN:** You're that delirious?

**YVONNE:** You're making a mistake listening to anything Father Giroux tells you. That so-called shroud is our rightful property.

**EISEN:** You know what? I'm sick of yelling, I'm coming up there.

**SOUND:** Anti-gravity noises. Eisen starts walking up the side of the pit.

**EISEN:** And you laughed at me for thinking we'd be falling into more pits! Well guess what, I thought ahead. Fool me once, shame on me, fool me twice...you won't.

**COLETTE:** You said you'd do our boots too!

**EISEN:** Not now! I'm currently winning.

**YVONNE:** What the heck is he doing?

**MIRIELLE:** Ugh, Artificers.

**EISEN:** What's wrong, witch? Your gravity spells not working on the guy with anti-gravity boots?

**MIRIELLE:** (deadpan) Oh no, not those. (beat) Yvonne, drop a rock on him.

**YVONNE:** Coming right up.

**SOUND:** Yvonne grunts as she flings a boulder onto Eisen.

**EISEN:** Oh, that's a big rock!

**SOUND:** Eisen falls back into the pit with a sizable rock on his chest.

**COLETTE:** Ouch, that was loud!

**EISEN:** (straining) Poor you, you must be in a lot of pain.

**HISTORIAN:** Seemingly unfazed by being knocked down, Eisen attempted to use the boots again to scale the side of the pit.

**SOUND:** Anti-gravity noises.

**YVONNE:** This guy just won't give up.

**MIRIELLE:** Do we have another rock?

**TELESPHORE:** (right behind them) I think it'd be funny if you pushed him down with a big stick this time.

**SOUND:** Mirielle and Yvonne scream.

**TELESPHORE:** Hello.

**MIRIELLE:** Our sincerest apologies, I didn't realize you were one of our Good Neighbors.

**YVONNE:** Yeah, we're very sorry, *sir*.

**TELESPHORE:** Oh, no need for formality. My name is Winterlich, and I'd like to respectfully ask that you let my associates out of the pit.

**YVONNE:** Why is a neighbor working for the church?

**MIRIELLE:** Let's not badger our guest, Yvonne. (to Telesphore) I'll pull your friends out immediately.

**SOUND:** Colette and Eisen are lifted by gravity magic out of the pit.

**COLETTE:** Whoa. Too fast. Gonna pass out.

**EISEN:** It's okay, I've got you. Stay with me, Diamond-head.

**TELESPHORE:** She's very ill, as you can likely tell.

**YVONNE:** Yeah, your friend looks like death warmed over. It almost makes me feel bad for throwing dirt at her.

**TELESPHORE:** We thought the shroud could help her condition, or at the very least we could trade it back to its rightful owners in exchange for medical treatment.

**MIRIELLE:** We already told you, we are its rightful owners. That church is not where it belongs.

**TELESPHORE:** They seem to disagree.

**YVONNE:** Do you even know what it really is? Because it definitely isn't the Shroud of Turin, I can tell you that much.

**COLETTE:** Well, that's disappointing.

**YVONNE:** Oh, everything that Father Giroux probably told you about the cloth's healing properties is true, don't get me wrong. But it's not a holy relic. It's woven from plants that grow here in the Seltsamwald and enchanted with herbal concoctions of my own making.

**MIRIELLE:** Simply put, it's a potion in textile form.

**COLETTE:** That means it can still heal!

**MIRIELLE:** Oh yes. Better than any quack doctor's latest folly. What new expensive treatment is Giroux's brother trying to sell now?

**COLETTE:** Electro-static baths.

**MIRIELLE:** Yeah, you're lucky you ended up here. Electricity and water is never a good mix.

**EISEN:** Well, I wasn't gonna say anything.

**TELESPHORE:** Perhaps we can arrange a trade. You cure Miss Geise's fever, and we'll leave Beaupont without a word to the church.

**YVONNE:** I mean, I was having fun throwing things at her. But this works for everyone. Here, let me see your head so I know what kind of potion I'll need.

**COLETTE:** Alright, but you have to promise not to freak out.

**HISTORIAN:** Colette removed her hat and parted her hair to the side, letting Yvonne get a good look at the Kingmaker.

**MIRIELLE:** That's impossible-

**EISEN:** Actually, it's the result of a very advanced fusion-transmutation spell. We're working on getting something done about *that* next.

**MIRIELLE:** You've got some accident prone people on your hands, Winterlich.

**TELESPHORE:** I know. Aren't they adorable?

**YVONNE:** Oh, I can see why you've got a fever. The skin around the diamond looks like it might be infected. Please, come with us, we'll take you to our cave and get you fixed up.

**HISTORIAN:** And so, Iyer, Winterlich and Geise followed the two witches they'd originally been charged with apprehending, to a secluded grotto in the side of a hill, along the banks of one of the Rhine's smaller tributaries. Yvonne's earthcraft allowed for the entrance to be opened or scraped away entirely if the sisters needed to hide. In most cases, the disguise was seamless. But little did the sisters know that the one man in Beaupont more capable in the art of hiding had been tailing Iyer, Winterlich, and Co. the entire time. Prior Gregor committed the location of the witch's cave to memory, and while Colette awaited her treatment, the prior hastily made his way out of the Seltsamwald and reported his intel to Alain Giroux.

**GREGOR:** They've been deceived by the sinners, Father. It seems that we couldn't rely on a band of out-of-towners.

**ALAIN:** Such a shame. The girl at least seemed like she was a good Catholic. But those who fraternize with servants of the Devil are servants of the Devil themselves. A hard rain shall fall upon all of them.

**HISTORIAN:** Meanwhile, Yvonne was putting the finishing touches on the potion.

**YVONNE:** The fear of the Seltsamwald is really holding the modern world back from its benefits. The leaves we used to make this cloth are hardly even that rare, it's just the reputation this forest has that keeps outsiders away. It's more economical than a flask, because the fabric allows it to store multiple doses of healing spells.

**TELESPHORE:** You two could turn quite the profit if you decided to sell this as an invention.

**MIRIELLE:** Aren't your kind meant to be more in touch with the earth?

**TELESPHORE:** I simply live in the world as it is.

**YVONNE:** You can think however you like about it, but for us having the means to heal is not about the profits. Especially if that means that a group like the Church will place my creation on a pedestal and demand a premium for its use.

**COLETTE:** I gotta say, that's awfully Christ-like of you.

**YVONNE:** I will put some dirt in your eye if you don't take that back.

**SOUND:** Yvonne wraps the cloth potion around Colette's head.

**YVONNE:** That should do for the recipe. Hold still.

**SOUND:** Magical healing potion noises.

**COLETTE:** Oh wow, I feel better already. That's amazing.

**EISEN:** Nature magic works faster than I thought.

**MIRIELLE:** That's not the only advantage it has over artifice.

**EISEN:** You better watch it.

**COLETTE:** I can see everything so clearly again. Let's get out of town before I have to lay eyes on that horrendous chapel.

**TELESPHORE:** Amen to that.

**SOUND:** Water trickling in through the ceiling

**YVONNE:** Is it raining?

**MIRIELLE:** That's not what our charts predicted.

**SOUND:** Water flow increases.



**EISEN:** It's a real downpour!

**COLETTE:** Hold on- didn't the priest say he was also a nature mage? What did he say his area of expertise was?

**EISEN:** He didn't.

**MIRIELLE:** (gravely) It's water.

**HISTORIAN:** Father Alain Giroux had arrived outside the cave, having been led there by Prior Gregor. He had pulled water from the river in order to create a torrential rainstorm. He planned to drown the witches in their cave, or failing that, lure them out into the open.

**MIRIELLE:** Yvonne, open the cave.

**YVONNE:** But Mirielle, we could dig a tunnel deeper down into the earth and he might not catch us.

**MIRIELLE:** If we move down we risk getting hit with the groundwater too. We have no choice but to confront them directly.

**EISEN:** Colette, do you think you could blast him?

**COLETTE:** I'm not sure how I would feel about vaporizing a man of the cloth, Eisen.

**EISEN:** (sarcasm) That's helpful. Telsie?

**TELESPHORE:** My gun's waterlogged. And so is my suit- I wish this would stop happening.

**EISEN:** Hey, at least it's just water this time.

**MIRIELLE:** Yvonne.

**YVONNE:** Alright, I'll open the cave and we'll take down these pompous bastards.

**MIRIELLE:** (proud) That's my sister.

**SOUND:** Cave opening, water flowing out.

**ALAIN:** And so they emerge from a crevice of the earth. The spawn of satan that dares walk in our midst and defile the shroud of our lord. May this flood cleanse you from our land and your tainted souls along with it.

**COLETTE:** Why did you lie to us, Father? It cheapens the Lord's name to pass off someone else's work as his own.

**ALAIN:** You dare accuse me of blasphemy when you carry the cursed legacy of the Desrosiers family within your flesh!

**COLETTE:** I didn't *choose* that! I would rather *not* have that be the case!

**ALAIN:** Oh, but such things are not up to mere mortals. All of our choices and circumstances are part of His grand design. And just as you are burdened with being a vessel for the Kingmaker, I am burdened with the solemn task of fortifying that which stands against evil. The diamond will find a new home within The Vatican, as will the shroud once its contemptible history has been stricken from canon.

**YVONNE:** Give it a rest!

**SOUND:** Yvonne drops Alain into a pit.

**ALAIN:** (yelling) I defy your devilish pit.

**SOUND:** Alain fills the pit with water and escapes.

**YVONNE:** Hey, no fair, you can't just fill the pit with water.

**TELESPHORE:** Looks like his trick has yours beat, Eisen.

**EISEN:** (annoyed) Aye, whatever.

**ALAIN:** The hour has come for your final baptism.

**SOUND:** Columns of water rush forth, trapping everyone.

**HISTORIAN:** With a wave of his hand, Alain swept the remaining water up into a vertical column, enveloping everyone present except for himself, Prior Gregor, and Mirielle, who was able to fly out of the way of the spell just in time.

**COLETTE:** Hold your breath!

**SOUND:** Water sweeping upwards.

**EISEN:** (underwater) I hate nature magic.

**SOUND:** Telesphore teleports out of the water.

**TELESPHORE:** Nice try, pastor, but-

**SOUND:** Prior Gregor runs up and punches Telesphore in the gut.

**HISTORIAN:** While Telesphore was able to teleport out of the area of Alain's spell, he was unprepared for the superlative hiding abilities of Prior Gregor, who snuck up on him with devastating quickness and delivered an agonizing body blow.

**TELESPHORE:** *Owww.*

**ALAIN:** Excellent work, Prior Gregor. You will be rewarded handsomely when the Pope delivers unto us the payment for these artifacts.

**SOUND:** Eisen, Colette, and Yvonne struggle as they are being drowned.

**ALAIN:** Such a shame that your last words won't be heard through the waters of your damnation. Pray for forgiveness, if you can, but Our Lord will not receive it.

**SOUND:** Water rushing into the sky accompanied by the sound of deep pulsating bass from Mirielle's spell. Everyone gasps for air.

**HISTORIAN:** Alain's mastery of hydromancy was formidable, but what he hadn't accounted for was that Mirielle Lavigne was an even greater master of gravity magic. With finesse and battle-tested sureness, the so-labeled witch turned her spells on the rainstorm itself, causing the deluge to reverse: falling back upwards rather than towards the earth.

**MIRIELLE:** Nature is connected, Priest. Rain needs gravity to fall, otherwise it's just misplaced water.

**ALAIN:** You heathen! God's kingdom bends to me, not you, and not Lucifer!

**MIRIELLE:** You say I am a witch, and you believe this, even though I studied my nature magic at the same academy where you would have learned yours. The only difference between our dedication to the craft is that your faith blinds you to where your powers fall short. You may think your god is all-powerful, but you are just a man. And it's clear that I got better marks than you.

**GREGOR:** Father! He's hitting back!

**SOUND:** Telesphore starts slapping him silly.

**TELESPHORE:** How do you like it? How do you like it?

**ALAIN:** Prior Gregor! Hide! I'm sure the rain will return soon! God will not abandon us in our time of need!

**EISEN:** I'm almost positive he has more important things to worry about.

**MIRIELLE:** You want to take it from here, artificer?

**EISEN:** Gladly.

**SOUND:** He whistles. Magic wrench noise

**ALAIN:** I've faced heathen artificers before. You're all the same. You believe man's works are greater than God's.

**EISEN:** Well the funny thing about that is: sometimes they are.

**SOUND:** Eisen wallops Alain with his wrench.

**HISTORIAN:** Eisen took his fair share of swings at Alain Giroux, but didn't beat him up any worse than what his brother could fix. After a few days in the electrified bath, the priest was right as rain and resumed his services with a previously unseen spark in his demeanor. Prior Gregor on the other hand, was never seen again. This is widely believed to have been of his own accord. As for the Lavigne sisters, they found themselves needing to relocate.

**SOUND:** Car exhaust

**YVONNE:** Thanks for letting us hitch a ride in your van.

**COLETTE:** It really is the least we could do. I felt better than ever! Physically. Emotionally, I'm still not quite over the whole *assaulting a priest* thing.

**MIRIELLE:** We promise we'll get out at the next town. You won't have to worry about us after that.

**EISEN:** Probably for the best. Though it wouldn't be the worst thing in the world if we ran into each other again.

**MIRIELLE:** Thank you, that's very touching.

**TELESPHORE:** It's not as if we could have left you where you were. The Church will be looking for you now, and they won't rest until they have two witches to hang. You should both count yourselves lucky if it doesn't end up being you.

**YVONNE:** You seemed way more cheery back at the woods, Winterlich.

**TELESPHORE:** Well, perhaps this experience has got me reflecting on how easily land can be claimed by illegitimate authority. Food for thought.

**EISEN:** You're actually thinking about the big picture for once. Do you need a magic cloth for your head as well?

**HISTORIAN:** On that note, Eisen, Colette and the Lavigne sisters got in the back of the van and Telesphore drove off. His remarks would end up being more prescient than he knew at the time—a year following the assault of Father Giroux, the township of Beaupont would incorporate the area of the Seltsamwald that the Lavigne sisters once called home. Just as the species from the Kehrseite once encroached into human territory across the blur, the people of Beaupont cut through the forest to make room for more farmland. The cave is now, to the best of my knowledge, being used as a wine cellar for a local vineyard.

**MEG:** This episode of The Kingmaker Histories was written by Gus Zagarella and audio engineered by Meg Molloy Tuten, with executive production by Henry Galley. Our music comes courtesy of Vivek Abishek. This episode featured, in order of appearance, David Ault as the

Historian, Taqi Nazeer as Eisen, Josh Rubino as Telesphore, Blythe Renay as Colette, Roscoe Braman as Doctor Giroux, Dan Zappulla as Father Alain, Gus Zagarella as Prior Gregor, Kelly Nugent as Yvonne, and Sena Bryer as Mirielle.

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