

G.O.B.L.I.N.S.! Intro

*A cello and violin play discordant notes, cymbals and a xylophone join in.
A piano plays a light, twinkling melody over it.*

SFX of a ventilation system running in a large, echoing room.

SFX of papers rustling.

ELIZABETH

I'm just saying, if you had a system and kept—

SFX of ELIZABETH stapling papers together.

ELIZABETH

—all the receipts together somewhere, then it would be much easier! I mean it's not like it's a surprise?

ELISAR

How were we supposed to know it was time for the annual audit?

SFX of ELIZABETH stapling violently.

ELIZABETH

It's... it's annual, so it's the *same time* every year.

ELISAR

Chill out, Laserbooth. It always gets done.

ELIZABETH

I would *love* to 'chill out' but thanks to Nyx I've had no sleep for a week, and if we don't get this done, Sleipnir might come back to investigate, or worse someone from the Fae.

SFX of a door creaking open.

SFX of HOOPER entering while humming happily.

ELIZABETH

Oh, good, Hooper. You'll back me up. These accounts are a mess!

SFX of HOOPER pulling up a chair.

HOOPER

[in a cheerful singsong] Ooh, messy mess.

TRIBE

We *have* a system: We leave it till the last few hours before the Ostara Equinox deadline and then hope someone else does it for us!

HOOPER

[happily] Oopty-boooty! Works every time!

ELISAR

You've got all my expenses, right? It's very important I get reimbursed.

ELIZABETH

Scrawling 'clothes, various' and a really, *really* large number on the table in eyeliner, isn't really best practice. Is 'moon silver' the elf currency?

ELISAR

Yah, it's one of them. Just make sure I get paid back, right?

HOOPER

[blissfully] Ooh, maybe we'll get paid in hugs and gumdrops!

ELIZABETH

And Tripe, [sighing] this receipt here, I can't even *read* it. It's covered in some weird sticky stuff.

TRIBE

Werewolf blood.

ELIZABETH

Right, okay. Must remember to wash my hands. What is the receipt for?

TRIBE

Werewolf blood.

ELIZABETH

[Under her breath] Obviously.

SFX of more paper rustling.

ELIZABETH

Why are there so many purchase orders for grave dirt? It's *so* expensive and we are *surrounded* by graveyards.

TRIBE

Er, Hooper likes the really good Columbian stuff in the mornings.

HOOPER

[in an uwu voice] Yummy! Hooper wuves his warm cup o' wakey-wakey.

TRIBE

[slowly] Yeah... He does, but he usually doesn't talk in the third person.

ELIZABETH

Hooper, are you okay?

ELISAR

Never mind him, make sure you include my expenses for hoof oil and mane extensions. I *think* I've managed to swing an invite to the centaurs' annual rumpus parade, [chuckling] and those guys don't mess around. Full sicko-mode guaranteed.

HOOPER

[in an uwu voice] Naw, friendly horsies.

ELISAR

The theme this year is 'trot 'til you drop', it's going to get lathered.

SFX of HOOPER making happy neighing noises.

SFX of ELIZABETH setting the paperwork down.

ELIZABETH

Tripe, what's wrong with Hooper?

TRIBE

I'm not sure... Hooper, what would you call this?

SFX of TRIPE presenting a spoon.

HOOPER

[in an uwu voice] Shiney scooper friend.

TRIPE

Okay, it's a spoon.

SFX of TRIPE presenting a book of ancient spells.

TRIPE

What about this book of ancient spells?

HOOPER

[in an uwu voice] Ooh... Special bang-bang magic! Shh!

TRIPE

Okay, I see.

SFX of TRIPE presenting the bone sack.

TRIPE

And this bone sack?

HOOPER

[in an uwu voice] Tripey's cuddle sleepy-time pillow. Is pretty!

TRIPE

He's not wrong, but that's *not* how the Hooper I know speaks.

ELIZABETH

[gasping] It's not another boggle, is it?

TRIPE

No, I'd have noticed that, unlike *some* people.

SFX of quick, continuing rubbing noises.

HOOPER

[in an uwu voice] Hoopy is happy and wants to pway!

ELISAR

Guys, could you keep it down? I'm trying to buff my ear points.

ELIZABETH

Elisar! I think Hooper's ill!

TRIPE

It's worse than that. He's cursed.

ELISAR

So?

SFX of rushing tinkling sound, indicating NYX's magical appearance.

NYX

Ooh, goody, a curse! I love it when really bad things happen to people. Or goblins. Or anyone really.

ELIZABETH

You really are a piece of work, you know that, Nyx? You failed to get my soul taken by the Devil, so you curse my friend.

NYX

I wish, cursing a folkloric creature is a bit outside of my pay grade, but your assumption that I would be so vindictive is flattering.

ELIZABETH

Oh, well, alright, then, well, how did this happen?

TRIPE

Hooper, think carefully. Did anything *weird* happen to you yesterday, any-anything cursey?

HOOPER

[in an uwu voice] Ooh... Hoopy went out for naughty dwinkies with taily fish-ladies.

NYX

He's like a horrid, gnarled baby.

ELISAR

Hey, you said you were going to a seminar. No fair. I love Merfolk. Human in the front, party in the back. Am I right?

TRIPE

Went drinking with the Merfolk, right.

HOOPER

[in an uwu voice] And Hoopy felt all silly-fizzies on his walk home.

TRIPE

Walked home pissed, okay, and then?

HOOPER

[in an uwu voice] And Hoopy really needed to do a Number Six and went twinkle-winkle in the forest.

ELISAR

Number Six? [chuckling] Now that's a good night!

TRIPE

Where did you go... 'twinkle-winkle'?

HOOPER

[in a singsong uwu voice] There were all the pretty toadstools, and I watered them, so they be bigsy and strong!

TRIPE

[after a beat] Hooper, tell me you didn't piss in a Faerie Ring.

ELISAR

Oh damn!

NYX

Now *that* is hilarious.

ELIZABETH

Wait, wait, 'faeries' like the Fae? Like the terrifying, malevolent rulers that we're meant to be hiding *me* from? Hooper is cursed by them? [gasping] Oh God, what does this mean? [panicking] A-a-are they controlling him? Can they– Can they hear through his ears? [huffing] We should do something! Tripe, what do we do? [without waiting for a response] Urgh, right, Hooper, come here, let me look in your ears!

SFX of HOOPER whimpering and complaining about having his ears inspected.

ELIZABETH

Just... just let me move that out of the way. Oh my God, is that supposed to be here?

TRIPE

No, don't! Stop touching him! It doesn't work quite like that!

SFX of HOOPER's whimpering stopping as ELIZABETH lets up.

TRIBE

He's not under a Thrall. Well, I don't think so, but it is going to be difficult. Only a faerie can remove a Faerie Curse.

ELIZABETH

But how do we get them to do that? If the Fae are all-powerful and... and evil, they're not going to help us.

TRIBE

Well, the Faeries aren't exactly a co-operative bunch, especially with each other. [sucking a breath in through his teeth] The only option we have is to... speak to one of them alone. When they do something together as the Faerie Court then there's... not much you can do, but *most* of the time they're all working on their own stuff.

ELISAR

Which is mostly planning how to bump each other off and get influence with Titania... [huffing a laugh] I mean, who wouldn't... [making a lustful purring noise]

NYX

Cool it, elf! Titania's not into failed elf middle managers with an inferiority complex.

SFX of ELISAR turning on NYX.

ELISAR

I'm not a failed elf! I mean, unless she's into that, then sure. I'm a *big* failure, now step on my neck, Queenie.

TRIBE

We need to get this sorted *now*. Faerie Curses develop quickly.

ELIZABETH

What will happen?

TRIBE

It's bad. Hooper is turning into his worst nightmare. A fluffy, adorable, cuddle bug.

HOOPER

[in an uwu voice] Yay!

ELIZABETH

I mean, that doesn't sound bad.

TRIPLE

He'd still be Hooper, trapped in there somewhere, but he'll be compelled to be cute as a button on the outside, and on the inside his mind will unravel from the behavioural dissonance until...

HOOPER

[in an uwu voice] Oopsie-doopsie!

ELISAR

Until it's time for the shovel of mercy.

NYX

Thwack!

ELIZABETH

Oh, oh no.

TRIPLE

He's gonna keep on getting cuter and cuter and cuter until midnight. Look, his eyes are already much bigger and more appealing.

SFX of a magical effect affecting HOOPER.

ELIZABETH

And his trotters are looking *furrier*, more like kitten paws? What happens at midnight?

TRIPLE

It's permanent.

SFX of HOOPER rocking his chair excitedly.

HOOPER

[in an uwu voice] Forevers and forevers, hooray!

ELISAR

This is terrible! He's gonna get fur stuck to all my velvet and that's hell to get off.

ELIZABETH

If they are as disunited as you say, there has to be at least one faerie who we can... reason with. Hoopy, I mean Hooper, obviously didn't *mean* to urinate in their Sacred Circle. We can just explain this was a mistake.

TRIBE

Elizabeth, you can't go!

NYX

No, it's a *great* idea, Lizzy! Why don't you just trot along to the Faeries and ask for their help? I'm sure they'd be delighted to see you. Why not tell them your true name while you're at it?

SFX of ELIZABETH leaning forward in her chair.

ELIZABETH

We can't just leave him like this!

TRIBE

Don't worry, I've got this. A goblin started it and a goblin should end it. Hooper–

HOOPER

[in an uwu voice] Hoopy!

TRIBE

No, thank you! Do you remember seeing anyone while you were, erm...

HOOPER

[in an uwu voice] Making golden sparkles from Mr Happy?

TRIBE

Oh, that's... Oh, dear. Look, was there *anyone* else there?

HOOPER

[in an uwu voice] Erm... Hoopy saw a tiny, meanie lady and she was awful cwoos.

TRIBE

Well, that could be any of them. Ah-Anything else?

HOOPER

[in an uwu voice] Um... She said, 'How dware you despoil the sacred gwove of Bwack Annis?'

ELISAR

Oh, minotaur piss. Black Annis.

NYX

This just gets better and better!

ELIZABETH

I've read about her! She's a... a hideous old hag—

SFX of HOOPER, TRIPE and ELISAR all frantically shushing ELIZABETH at the same time.

ELISAR

Woah, woah, woah, woah, woah! Easy there.

TRIPE

Shh! Shh! No, we don't need to... Shh, shh!

HOOPER

Bad! Bad! Bad! Bad! Bad! Oh dear, bad bad! No, no, no!

ELIZABETH

Sorry, I mean... ah... an unconventionally attractive older lady, er, with long arms and *iron claws*, and she... she reaches into children's rooms at night and scoops them up and out of their beds and takes them away!

TRIPE

Only sometimes.

SFX of ELIZABETH leaning forward in her chair again.

ELIZABETH

Tripe, stealing children is *bad*, even if you only do it sometimes.

ELISAR

God, you're so morally rigid.

TRIPE

No, I-I meant she only sometimes has iron claws and long arms, when she wants to mess with people. Most of the time, she appears as a tiny, rosy-cheeked lady in a ballgown, swooping around, giggling and leaving a wake of glitter behind her. Like a magic baby that will kill your whole family.

ELIZABETH

I read she has a belt, hung with flayed child skins?

ELISAR

She *does* usually wear that, to be fair, [hissing] even with the ballgown.

ELIZABETH

Yikes. Urgh. Well, are you going to speak to her? I mean... Won't she just kill you?

TRIPE

There's no way Black Annis will undo her own curse, but there is one faerie I know how to find, who might have a reason to help us. Come on, Hooper, we need to go to the Night Market.

SFX of HOOPER sliding off his chair.

HOOPER

[in an uwu voice] Yay! Can we get Ice Cweam?

TRIPE

Well, yeah! I'm not going to the Night Market without getting ice cream, I'm not an idiot.

Transitional music.

SFX of a ventilation system running in a large, echoing room.

ELIZABETH

This is a total disaster, Elisar, we need to do something!

SFX of ELISAR's leather trousers creaking as he shifts in his seat.

ELISAR

Just carry the seven and make sure all the number-thingies add up. Chop, chop, mundo, the deadline is midnight and the fines for late filling are very... physical.

ELIZABETH

[angrily] No, not about the accounts, they don't matter! [thinking better of it] Okay, that was a bit much. Good accounting *is* the bedrock of a functioning society. [sighing] I'm talking about the Faerie Curse. Everything I've heard about them is just so terrible, I just can't... *imagine* them ever helping, I... I mean... are Hooper and Tripe doomed?

ELISAR

[musing] Hmm-yeah, maybe a *bit* doomed, but it was Tripe's idea to go so it kind of... feels like it's not my problem?

ELIZABETH

Look, I think Tripe is great but... Well, if my life was on the line, I'm not sure if I'd *want* to rely on someone who, you know, gets so distracted by bones?

SFX of ELISAR not responding.

ELIZABETH

Elisar?

SFX of ELISAR suddenly paying attention.

ELISAR

Huh? Oh, I wasn't listening. Was that mirror always there? Get a load of these cheekbones...

ELIZABETH

Elisar, focus! I also don't get why the Faeries cursed Hooper to turn into something so... er... adorable.

ELISAR

Classic Faerie Curse.

ELIZABETH

Is it?

ELISAR

Sure! I mean they *could* make your whole body leak out through your ears or... send a swarm of wasps to constantly eat your head and have it grow back, but faeries like something a bit more... ironic.

ELIZABETH

Ironic how?

ELISAR

Like individual personal torture. Like... Okay, right, imagine if I got turned into like a total dud, you know? Real mithril-plated, twenty-four carat loser. Never got invited to parties, everyone was always laughing at me behind my back, *but* I was *also* cripplingly obsessed with image and status. That would be... a *total* nightmare.

ELIZABETH

[carefully] Have... have you ever annoyed any faeries?

ELISAR

Nope!

SFX of ELISAR lounging in his chair.

ELISAR

Everyone finds me charming.

ELIZABETH

Right... Hmm. And so, you're saying, fo-for Hooper, being a sweet, little poppet is a nightmare?

ELISAR

Sure is, it's just not the goblin way.

ELIZABETH

Huh. I wonder what my worst nightmare would be?

SFX of rushing tinkling sound, indicating NYX's magical appearance.

NYX

Ooh, what about—

ELIZABETH

[cutting them off] —being followed around by a poltergeist who was always *butting in* with a rude remark?

NYX

Am I your worst nightmare? What a compliment!

ELIZABETH

No, you're just... an annoying little fly. I hardly notice you.

NYX

Your worst nightmare is probably something like... giving a presentation to the County Councils Network's Annual Conference, but all your slides are selfies you took of yourself trying to look 'corporate'?

SFX of ELIZABETH turning in her chair to glare at NYX.

ELIZABETH

Hey, that was you?

NYX

Of course. Or, *or* going to a site meeting and finding out that, instead of appropriate safety gear, you had to wear a crash helmet and wellies in the shape of udders.

ELIZABETH

[unfazed] I styled that out.

ELISAR

[laughing] Oh, haha, what about, er, like tripping over in front of your boss and accidentally *groping* them on the way down?

ELIZABETH

Not helping!

ELISAR

I was just joining in. Chill out.

ELIZABETH

Well, [sighing] if that's the worst the Faeries have up their sleeves, then I'm pretty sure I could survive it. Heh. I mean I've faced the actual Devil, haven't I?

ELISAR

Faerie Curses aren't going to stop at embarrassing you, Eexeberth. They're *much* worse than the Devil, he has to wait until you're dead.

NYX

I'm working on that one for you.

ELIZABETH

I know that, Elisar, *I know*, but we have to at least try and help them!

SFX of ELISAR putting his foot down.

ELISAR

Face it, right now, Hooper is a couple of hours away from permanently becoming a living cuddly toy, [sighing] just with a screaming goblin mind trapped inside it for eternity and there is *probably* nothing we can do.

ELIZABETH

You don't sound that cut up about it?

ELISAR

Eh, these things happen. To other people.

ELIZABETH

[sighing] And it's not just Hooper. What about Tripe? I've never seen him so worried. In fact, I've... I've never seen him *worried*. He's putting himself in danger, going to a faerie, and if he fails... He'll never forgive himself.

ELISAR

Another Faerie Classic.

NYX

Faeries love collateral damage!

ELIZABETH

What do you mean?

ELISAR

Oh, like, say, if you'd razzed off a faerie and they wanted revenge, they'd take the person you care about the most—

SFX of ELIZABETH gasping and sitting up in realisation.

ELIZABETH

Oh no. *Dhruv!*

Transitional music.

SFX of a raven squawking.

SFX of ELISAR's and ELIZABETH's muffled, echoing voices, accompanied by an ongoing twinkling magic effect.

ELISAR

Oh, like, say, if you'd razzed off a faerie and they wanted revenge, they'd take the person you care about the most—

ELIZABETH

Oh no. Dhruv!

SFX of the twinkling magic effect stopping with a whooshing sound.

BLACK ANNIS

[sighing] See, Cailleach? They're fools. [giggling]

SFX of a raven squawking.

BLACK ANNIS

The elf preened in it, even pointed it out to the others, and... nothing!

SFX of a raven squawking.

BLACK ANNIS

Eh. You have far too much respect for the lesser races, it makes you weak.

SFX of a raven squawking.

BLACK ANNIS

Which one of us is stuck as a Raven?

SFX of a raven squawking sheepishly after a beat of silence.

BLACK ANNIS

Mhm, exactly. Now make yourself useful and tell the others what we saw.

SFX of a raven squawking, followed by wings flapping as it flies away.

SFX of BLACK ANNIS making a grunting purring noise in self-satisfaction that morphs quickly into an unhinged giggle.

SFX of the twinkling magic effect starting up again with a whooshing sound.

SFX of NYX's and ELIZABETH's muffled, echoing voices, accompanied by an ongoing twinkling magic effect.

NYX

Oh, Dhruv, yes, that would be delicious!

ELIZABETH

What would they do to him?

SFX of the twinkling magic effect fading out.

SFX of the voices becoming distinct once again.

SFX of a ventilation system running in a large, echoing room.

ELISAR

Who knows? Turn him into a lock gate in one of his stupid canals? [huffing] Although, he'd probably like that.

ELIZABETH

All this time I've been going out with Dhruv and I've been putting him in danger...

NYX

So much danger!

ELISAR

Yeah, like, unimaginable danger.

ELIZABETH

Oh, God, I never thought about that.

NYX

And he's *extra* vulnerable: a human! Can't see beyond the Veil, has *no idea* what's coming for him, a sitting duck!

ELISAR

[sullenly] He'd probably like being a duck as well.

ELIZABETH

Elisar, you can lay off him for five seconds!

SFX of ELIZABETH pushing her chair back and getting to her feet.

ELIZABETH

This is so unfair, I-I can't... I can't believe it.

ELISAR

I thought Tripe showed you his pop-up book?

ELIZABETH

[sucking a breath in through her teeth] Urgh, yes, I-I know... but I... I sort of thought of Dhruv as... as separate from all this... [sighing] I thought I could just have this *one thing*.

NYX

[in a singsong] And you know the only thing you can do to protect him?

ELISAR

Break up with stupid Canal Boy immediately?

NYX

I've never said this before but yes, Elisar is right! You have no choice but to break up with your boyfriend right now. While we listen.

ELISAR

[acting badly] Oh no, that's really rough, what a shame. Maybe put it on speakerphone?

ELIZABETH

Elisar!

ELISAR

Just so we can support you.

ELIZABETH

Oh, God, do I have to do this now?

NYX

[excitedly] Yes! No, just let me get comfy! Okay, go!

SFX of NYX settling in a chair.

ELISAR

Don't rush her. Anytime in the next three minutes, Eexeberth.

NYX

And after you've dumped Dhruv, you can hurry off to find the Faeries.

ELIZABETH

You'd love that wouldn't you? [huffing] Except as soon as I found one, you'd pop up and say, 'Oh, look, Black Annis, a human!' And I'd be toast.

ELISAR

Oh, no, don't worry about it. Poltergeists are *terrified* of faeries. Mind you, so is everyone else.

SFX of ELIZABETH sitting up with interest.

ELIZABETH

Oh *really*? Terrified, you say?

NYX

Shut up, elf!

ELISAR

Faeries hate poltergeists 'cause they're always doing things trying to get humans to notice them which threatens the Veil. So, they tend to squish them on sight.

ELIZABETH

That makes sense, actually, explains why you've never ratted me out to the Faeries, Nyx. I *had* been wondering.

NYX

I could rat you out any time I wanted!

ELISAR

There'd be no need to rat you out if a faerie *actually* saw you. The Fae aren't gonna just buy the old 'Oh, yeah, this is our new troll colleague'-ruse. Kind of astounding that it's actually worked so far, actually.

ELIZABETH

So, I can't leave the office and risk being seen... Hmm... But I *can* see if there is any advice about breaking Faerie Curses in Hooper's library. *I'm* the only one, other than Hooper, that knows the filling system. [proudly] He showed me his index cards.

ELISAR

Yeah, I suppose. Knock yourself out.

ELIZABETH

See, Elisar, when we work together, we *can* come up with solutions!

ELISAR

Mhm. Don't remember being helpful, but, if it works, I want the credit!

ELIZABETH

Deal.

NYX

And don't forget...

ELIZABETH

[sighing] And break up with Dhruv. Fine. But I'm calling him from the library. On. My. Own. This is not a spectator sport.

Transitional music.

SFX of a bustling, lively market. Traders advertising their wares, the jingling of trinkets, footsteps, voices of a crowd, distant music.

HOOPER

[in an uwu voice] Aww, look at the shiny gemerals on this stall!

SFX of HOOPER playing with some trinkets.

MARKET TRADER

Oi, unless you're buying something, keep your hands to yourself, weirdo.

HOOPER

[in an uwu voice] Hoopy can pay with hugs?

MARKET TRADER

You what?

TRIPE

Stop it! S-sorry, he... He's just had a rough day. He didn't mean anything by it. Hooper, put down those phoenix turds.

SFX of HOOPER licking a phoenix turd.

HOOPER

[in an uwu voice] Hmm, tastes like happiness.

MARKET TRADER

You're paying for those. Now!

TRIPE

Right, yes, oh-of course. Sorry...

SFX of TRIPE handing over a few coins.

TRIPLE

[stammering] And now money has changed hands, and we're friends—

HOOPER

[in an uwu voice] Besty-friends forever!

TRIPLE

Er, Hooper? Triple needs to talk to the trader now, so just... look and, and, and don't touch, okay?

HOOPER

[in an uwu voice] Oksey-dopesy!

TRIPLE

[sighing] Right, er, so, as friends, maybe you could help me find someone?

MARKET TRADER

We're not friends, just acquaintances. [hurriedly] Unless, of course, you want to buy something else? Then, maybe the blossoms of friendship would bloom!

TRIPLE

Okay... Er, what about a... a bowl of that delicious-sounding Perpetual Soup you're advertising?

MARKET TRADER

That is *not* an advert.

TRIPLE

But y-your sign says, 'Perpetual Soups, Useful Objects'.

MARKET TRADER

'Perpetual Soup's Useful Objects'. *I'm* Perpetual Soup.

TRIPLE

Well, that's... not... at all... confusing.

PERPETUAL SOUP

Buy something, goblin.

TRIPLE

Sure, wh-what about this—

HOOPER

[in an uwu voice] –pointy lollypop?

TRIPLE

–sinister looking knife?

PERPETUAL SOUP

That? That’s a Cerulean Dagger.

SFX of the CERULEAN DAGGER swishing.

PERPETUAL SOUP

Never goes dull, never gets lost.

TRIPLE

Is it... whispering something?

CERULEAN DAGGER

[whispering] Kill them all. Kill them all now. Stabby, stab, stab, stab!

PERPETUAL SOUP

Yes... it does constantly whisper at the holder to slaughter the innocent and the guilty alike. In the end, everyone always snaps. Couldn’t let it go for less than... five ashen ducats.

TRIPLE

Er, well, what about this–

HOOPER

[in an uwu voice] –glowworm’s dollhouse?

TRIPLE

–helpful looking lantern?

PERPETUAL SOUP

That’s a soul-beacon! Full of trapped souls. Gives eternal light, just as long as they don’t ever escape and turn on their owner. Ten ashen ducats.

TRIPLE

This–

PERPETUAL SOUP

–harrow-bone flute. Dance yourself to death. Fifteen ashen ducats.

HOOPER

[in an uwu voice] Pretty.

TRIPE

Do you have anything for sale that *isn't* dangerously cursed?

PERPETUAL SOUP

No.

TRIPE

Okay, can I just... give you some money... a-a-and you can tell me where to find the Faerie Leannán Sídh?

PERPETUAL SOUP

Sure, your funeral. Thirty ashen ducats.

TRIPE

Thirty?! Okay, [sighing] wha-whatever...

SFX of TRIPE counting and handing over more coins.

PERPETUAL SOUP

Oh, well... This time of night, she'll have shut the Wagon of Wanton Insights. Shame really, since the all-night cafe got bought by centaurs, it's the *only* decent place for a cup of Cursed Oak Chai.

TRIPE

Right, so...

PERPETUAL SOUP

[emphatically] I don't have anything against centaurs, per say, but the *whole* area's gone downhill since—

TRIPE

[loudly cutting in] So... so where... where would she be now, then?

PERPETUAL SOUP

Oh, by now she's usually in The Gilded Hex over there, counting the takings. But if you're put off by a few lightly cursed objects, I'm not sure she's going to be your bag either.

TRIPE

Er, unfortunately, that bag is our only hope. Come on, Hooper!

HOOPER

[in an uwu voice] Bye-bye, horsey racist!

PERPETUAL SOUP

[calling after them] Freaks!

SFX of HOOPER and TRIPE crossing the market, footsteps on grass, before a heavy door opens and closes as they enter The Gilded Hex.

SFX of a lively crowd, laughter, indistinct roaring and clanging, and unnerving carnival music.

HOOPER

[in an uwu voice] Hoopy doesn't like this place.

TRIPE

Eh. Me neither. Don't wander off, and... and don't *speak* to anyone. I'll do all the talking.

HOOPER

[in an uwu voice] Ooh! Hoopy sees pork scratchings!

TRIPE

Absolutely not, we don't eat or drink anything. It's a Faerie Tavern! Everything is a trap.

SFX of HOOPER making a noise of disappointment.

TRIPE

Hello there, barperson, and a very good evening to you.

RAGNA

[in an unfriendly manner] What do you want?

TRIPE

My friend and I need to speak to, er, Mistress Leannán Sídhé?

RAGNA

Do you have an appointment?

TRIPE

How believable would you find it if I said yes?

RAGNA

Depends.

SFX of coins changing hands.

RAGNA

Come with me, I'll show you to her office.

TRIBE

Thanks. Hooper, don't ever get cursed again. I was saving that money for a deluxe gibleth-sheath.

HOOVER

[in an uwu voice] Whoopsy.

TRIBE

I hate having unsheathed gibleths.

SFX of footsteps on a wooden floor before the tavern noises fade out.

SFX of a ventilation system running in a large, echoing room and a crackling fire.

DHRUV

[his voice coming through Elizabeth's phone] I'm not saying I don't get it, but we could do long distance, we could make it work, you could send me your survey notes and we could edit them together on Zoom.

ELIZABETH

No... I'm— I'm sorry, I... I just can't do that sort of thing. I... [sighing sadly] I've really loved our time together, truly I have, but I'm— I'm... [trying to control her emotions] I'm an all or nothing kind of gal, you know?

DHRUV

(sadly) I know, I've seen your metadata indexing proposal, so thorough, so beautiful.

ELIZABETH

But, look, if I ever get transferred back from the Norwegian office of... Fjord Planning, [taking a deep breath] I'll definitely give you a call. Best of luck with the Narrowboat Heritage Weekend, I know you'll ace it.

DHRUV

Goodbye, Elizabeth.

ELIZABETH

Goodbye, Dhruv.

SFX of ELIZABETH hanging up her phone, sighing deeply and sniffing a little before clearing her throat.

SFX of a door opening and ELISAR entering, crossing the room to stand beside ELIZABETH.

ELISAR

All done with Canal Boy?

ELIZABETH

He was so nice about it. But I can tell I hurt him.

ELISAR

Oh, don't worry, I'm sure he'll find someone else in... five seconds.

ELIZABETH

Elisar!

ELISAR

Sorry, just trying to cheer you up. Any chance you feel like doing some more of the expenses audit?

ELIZABETH

[tiredly] I can't think about that right now. [taking a bracing breath] I've got to go through all these books to find what Hooper has written about Faeries.

ELISAR

Look, I know a lost cause when I see one. You don't piss on a Faerie's ring.

ELIZABETH

Just help! [huffing]

SFX of ELIZABETH turning pages.

ELIZABETH

I can't find what I'm looking for. All of these occult symbols and mysterious magical objects keep getting in my way. I'm surprised Hooper's bothered with all this décor. Eldritch guttering candles

melting onto skulls? It's not very goblin, and it kind of feels like a fire hazard—

ELISAR

[cutting in] Oh, that wasn't Hooper. That's just what happens when you get a load of magical books in one place.

ELIZABETH

What, all this stuff just turns up?

ELISAR

Uh huh.

ELIZABETH

How?

ELISAR

Just... magic.

ELIZABETH

Oh, well, why then?

ELISAR

Dunno, reckon it feels like it's expected.

ELIZABETH

It *feels*? What feels, who feels? Magic isn't a person.

ELIAR

No, but it's not *not* a person either, it's like... loads of bits of not-a-person that when all added together still isn't a person but, you know, isn't *not* at the same time.

ELIZABETH

I don't get it. Help me look, will you? I know Hooper has this whole volume on Faeries somewhere around here.

SFX of rushing tinkling sound, indicating NYX's magical appearance.

NYX

[gleefully] You won't find it.

ELIZABETH

[in annoyance] What have you done with it? Nyx, this is serious, lives are at stake.

NYX

You were the one who said I was incompetent. 'Small fry,' I believe was the term you used. If your friends die it'll be your own fault.

ELISAR

Any chance it's this *massive* book trapped inside a giant glass bottle?

NYX

Must be torture! You can see the solution right in front of your eyes but there's nothing you can do to get it!

SFX of ELISAR breaking the glass bottle.

NYX

Urgh! Bugger.

SFX of rushing tinkling sound, indicating NYX's magical disappearance.

ELISAR

[flatly] Not your best work, Nyx.

SFX of a heavy book being opened and pages being turned.

ELIZABETH

It says here, 'Faeries hate iron'. And lemons.

ELISAR

Will that come in handy?

ELIZABETH

Maybe we could, er... throw some lemons at them? Or an old gate?

ELISAR

Yah, maybe keep looking?

SFX of another page being turned and ELIZABETH sighing.

ELIZABETH

[sighing] And they can't lie! Not directly.

ELISAR

Can't or don't?

ELIZABETH

Erm, not sure, what's the difference?

ELISAR

Never mind, keep going.

SFX of ELIZABETH turning yet another page.

ELIZABETH

Erm, so, yeah, er... Although they can't, or *don't*, lie, 'they delight in riddling speech and deception'. And if you know a Faerie's true name, you can 'compel it to grant a single boon'.

ELISAR

Oh, a boon. A single one. That's good.

ELIZABETH

Do you know what a boon is?

ELISAR

Yeah. It's like half an angry monkey, the back half.

ELIZABETH

It means a favour. The Faerie has to do what you ask it.

ELISAR

Oh, right. Well, that's probably even better.

ELIZABETH

So, I'm thinking if we can find Black Annis's true name, Tripe can force her to take the curse off!

SFX of ELIZABETH turning pages to scan for BLACK ANNIS's true name.

ELIZABETH

There's a whole page here on Black Annis. [sighing] It's a bit hard to read, er, the text is *really small* and the handwriting is... Well... [trying to cheer herself up] It probably wouldn't win any prizes at Worthing Council's Christmas party.

ELISAR

They had a handwriting prize at the Christmas party?

ELIZABETH

Not officially, it was just something I used to do for... fun... Anyway, hold that candle a bit

closer, I can't see properly.

SFX of a lively crowd, laughter, indistinct roaring and clanging, and unnerving carnival music, though muffled, as though from next door.

SFX of heavy footsteps, followed by a door creaking open.

LEANNÁN SÍDHE

[whinging] What do you want, Ragna?

HOOPER

[in an uwu voice] Raggy's gone, poof!

SFX of LEANNÁN SÍDHE sitting up.

LEANNÁN SÍDHE

Eww, you're not Ragna. What do you want, *not*-Ragna?

TRIPE

My friend and I are but humble goblins, who have travelled many leagues to visit the great Faerie Leannán Sídh.

LEANNÁN SÍDHE

Er, that one doesn't look much like a goblin. Looks more like a... sick armadillo with big eyelashes.

HOOPER

[in an uwu voice] I can be a wittle ball! Look?

SFX of HOOPER curling up on the floor with a squeak.

TRIPE

He's, erm... He's a bit ill right now.

LEANNÁN SÍDHE

Mange?

TRIPE

Not mange, more... more a... more a sort of *curse*-like thing, [stammering] and we wanted to ask—

SFX of LEANNÁN SÍDHE's clothes rustling.

LEANNÁN SÍDHE

[delightedly] –for my help? I see! And why would I bother with *that* rather than, say, popping you both in a kettle and sinking it to the bottom of a well?

TRIPE

[stammering] Good question, erm, so, we... we *do* work for the Fae Council and help you, I mean the Faeries, I mean, we, we help keep the Veil *intact* and we want to keep doing... that, er... uncursed, if that's... at all possible. For the greater good?

LEANNÁN SÍDHE

[laughing] Oh, you work for us! Oh, well, you should have said! [yelling] Ragna, get me a kettle!

HOOPER

[in an uwu voice] Let's go whoopsy-down into the bwig, dark well!

TRIPE

No, no, no. That's not– that's not– We, er, we didn't just come empty handed. We have come here to... to... *offer* you a once in a lifetime chance to... [searching for the right words] *really* get one over on Black Annis.

LEANNÁN SÍDHE

[gasping in excitement] Black Annis? The friend of my bosom for millennia? My companion through a thousand blood-soaked adventures and nights of *unbridledly* violent mischief making? My sister? In Faedom? A chance to '*get one over on her*'?

TRIPE

That's right.

LEANNÁN SÍDHE

[evilily] Excellent. What have you got?

TRIPE

Oh, yeah, well, my spherical friend has been a... a little bit silly and, er, *cheesed* off Black Annis just a... just smidge, due to some er... *light*-hearted alfresco garden decoration.

LEANNÁN SÍDHE

I'm sorry?

TRIPE

[carefully] A brief spell of... amateur fountain making in an inopportune location.

LEANNÁN SÍDHE

Cut to the chase, goblin.

TRIPLE

Let's just say he—

HOOPEE

[in an uwu voice] —went wee-wees all over her Faerie Ring.

TRIPLE

Er... yeah.

LEANNÁN SÍDHE

[giggling in delight] Oh, that is marvellous! Stinky goblin piss all over her precious toadstools? No wonder she's mad at him. That's the best news I've heard since that manticores *somehow* got into her palace and got her handbag pregnant. That is good work, goblin.

TRIPLE

Oh, uh, I'm very glad you see it like that. A-and since you do, you wouldn't want my friend Hoo— [stammering] my friend whose name isn't important right now, to suffer as a result?

SFX of LEANNÁN SÍDHE leaning closer.

LEANNÁN SÍDHE

[overly sincere] Oh, oh, oh, of course not!

TRIPLE

Oh, great. You see, Black Annis, who is *notoriously* bad at taking a joke, cursed him to... turn into this... snuggle-sized puff of cuteness.

LEANNÁN SÍDHE

Mmm, and at midnight the curse is permanent.

TRIPLE

And since only a Faerie can remove a Faerie Curse, we were wondering if you might like the chance to, er, undo her work?

LEANNÁN SÍDHE

[in an uwu voice] Aww, the poor little floof-nugget.

HOOPER

[in an uwu voice] Meep.

LEANNÁN SÍDHE

Of course, I can help him. I wouldn't want him to suffer... *all alone*.

TRIPLE

Oh, great! Erm... wait, hang on, when you say 'all alone'...

SFX of LEANNÁN SÍDHE casting an ongoing spell, a twinkling magic effects and the sound of stretching and twisting.

TRIPLE

[in a pained voice] Oh, oh... What's happening to me?

SFX of TRIPLE making noises as he too gets turned into a cuddly toy.

LEANNÁN SÍDHE

[in an uwu voice] Now you can be two fuzzy little heart-melters together.

TRIPLE

Argh, my face! It's getting all soft and strokable!

LEANNÁN SÍDHE

Say 'thank you', goblin. This is your reward for bothering me while I'm trying to work.

TRIPLE

[his voice beginning to shift] Oh, there's a fluffy tail growing out of my loincloth!

LEANNÁN SÍDHE

Just be glad it's so much fun to toy with you, or you'd both be dead already. Oh... I might just call Black Annis.

TRIPLE

I thought you *hated* Black Annis?!

SFX of TRIPLE's transformation finishing up.

LEANNÁN SÍDHE

Hate, love, what's the difference? She's my best friend. And she will enjoy this immensely.

SFX of LEANNÁN SÍDHE's magical phone dialling out.

HOOPER

[in an uwu voice] Oh, Tripey-poo, you look so snuggable!

TRIPE

[in an uwu voice] Oh, Hoopy. We're in twouble.

LEANNÁN SÍDHE

Hello, darling. Drop whatever you're killing right now and get over to The Gilded Hex. I think I've got something you'll enjoy.

Transitional music.

SFX of a ventilation system running in a large, echoing room and a crackling fire.

ELIZABETH

Okay... Black Annis... Likes child theft, torture, cats, obedience... Dislikes humans, other Faeries, everyone else...

ELISAR

Anything about her name?

ELIZABETH

Hooper's written something here:

*'Her name on the page would awaken a curse,
And so the sharp-minded must work out this verse.'*

ELISAR

This is so cringe, I bet you love it.

ELIZABETH

*'To understand this bad wish
At the start, the unluckiest letter
Then, a pint to quench your thirst
Family jewels bring up the middle
But are rejected in the end
And when complete a man speaks!'*

It's a riddle!

ELISAR

Oh good, I'm amazing at riddles.

ELIZABETH

Okay, what does this one mean?

ELISAR

Erm...

SFX of rushing tinkling sound, indicating NYX's magical appearance.

NYX

You don't stand a chance figuring that out.

ELIZABETH

'The unluckiest letter'...

SFX of ELIZABETH muttering the alphabet to herself.

NYX

You'll fail and Hooper and Tripe will die because of you!

ELIZABETH

[ignoring them] A pint of something... beer? No.

NYX

And that means you'll be stuck here forever, never going home again.

ELIZABETH

'Family jewels'... to be honest, that sounds more like something Tripe would say about my tattoo. My tattoo of a giant's—

NYX

[cutting her off] Just me for company for the next, oh, fifty years. Unless you die a horrible, painful death, of course.

ELIZABETH

What's another word for 'reject'?

NYX

And people will start to notice that the G.O.B.L.I.N.S. office isn't doing any work and come looking for what happened. You'll have to go into hiding!

ELIZABETH

And the whole thing means ‘a man speaks’?

NYX

Desperately trying to stay hidden, while the whole might of the Faerie Council searches for you.
And when they find you...

ELIZABETH

[crying out excitedly] I’ve got it! I know her name.

NYX

Urgh.

ELISAR

Oh, right, yeah, yeah, me too. Why don’t you just whisper it to me, so I can check you’re right?

SFX of ELIZABETH stepping up to ELISAR to whisper in his ear.

ELISAR

Urgh, your breath is all clammy.

ELIZABETH

Right! I’m off to find the Faeries, Tripe said they were going to the Night Market.

ELISAR

Pfft. Night Market is *huge*. You’ll never find them in time.

ELIZABETH

Nyx, tell me where they are.

ELISAR

[in a rush] No way, you can’t risk it! Nyx, whatever you do, *don’t* tell her.

NYX

What makes you think I know?

ELIZABETH

Because I know you. You wouldn’t be able to resist it, you’re always peeping and spying. You’d want to pop along and see Hooper... turning into his worst nightmare.

NYX

[tauntingly] It’s not just Hooper now!

ELIZABETH

Tripe as well? [taking a deep breath] Right, I have to find them!

ELISAR

Nyx, if you tell Leaseberth and she goes off to try and help, it will be the *worst* thing you've ever done.

NYX

[triumphantly] Hooper and Tripe are at The Gilded Hex!

ELIZABETH

Bingo! Elisar, fast travel to... wherever that is, right away.

NYX

What?!

ELISAR

Oh, gryphon tits, why do I have to go?

ELIZABETH

I can't show myself to a Faerie, but you can. Elisar, please! Please do it for all of us. [begging] Do it for me?

ELISAR

Oh, gods, fine, just to shut you up. But if *I* get turned into a... barrel of hoof lube for the centaurs' rumpus, it will be *all your fault*.

SFX of a rushing magical effect as ELISAR fast travels.

Transitional music.

SFX of a lively crowd, laughter, indistinct roaring and clanging, and unnerving carnival music, though very muffled, as though from multiple rooms away.

LEANNÁN SÍDHE

Aww, how's it going boys? I must say, both of you are looking very adorable. I might have to

have you skinned and turned into a tippet for the next Faerie Ball.

TRIPE

[in an uwu voice] Tripey-poo would not like that.

LEANNÁN SÍDHE

Or maybe I should keep you both as pets? For a while.

SFX of HOOPER making a sad chirruping noise.

SFX of a twinkling magic effect as BLACK ANNIS arrives.

LEANNÁN SÍDHE

Black Annis! How wonderful to see you.

SFX of footsteps as they approach each other.

LEANNÁN SÍDHE

You're looking so... *well*.

SFX of BLACK ANNIS and LEANNÁN SÍDHE exchanging cheek kisses.

BLACK ANNIS

Oh, and you, my dear Leannán Sídhé! What an unexpected delight to visit your charmingly rustic little... hmm... what do you call this place again? A hovel?

LEANNÁN SÍDHE

This is The Gilded Hex! The Faerie Tavern sung of in legend? Oh, don't worry if you're not up to speed with the cultural zeitgeist.

BLACK ANNIS

Oh, no, no! I *adore* how quaint it is. It's sweet when people pour their whole identity into something so... manageable. [laughing pleasantly] And much better than that filthy wagon you did that silly fortune telling thing in. Hah! So glad that's over. Honestly, darling, it *was* beneath you.

LEANNÁN SÍDHE

Oh, the Wagon of Wanton Insight is doing rather well, thank you. Mediums' Guide called it 'the most influential house of fortunes of the century'.

BLACK ANNIS

Oh, hoho! My, how impressive! I've always admired your passion for... involving yourself in the

goings-on of the lesser folk.

LEANNÁN SÍDHE

[in an increasingly condescendingly sweet voice] Oh, well, not all of us can flit through life achieving nothing, cloistered away, happy just killing people and never worrying what people think. Ambition is such a curse.

BLACK ANNIS

[in an equally condescendingly sweet voice] Oh, darling, you mustn't fret about what other *people* think! [returning to her normal voice] Honestly, in your case, it's not worth it. And my ambitions are very well served these days.

SFX of BLACK ANNIS moving around the room.

BLACK ANNIS

The Faerie Council have seen sense and have recently taken my advice on a number of matters.

LEANNÁN SÍDHE

Grand! Oh, so very grand! And I must thank *you* for arriving with such urgency. You must have been oh so very busy '*advising on "matters"'* How lucky for me you could take the time.

BLACK ANNIS

Oh, [laughing] I was very busy, of course! But as soon as I heard you needed help, I thought, [sighing theatrically] 'I'm probably the only person she can ask.' Some people really struggle with keeping friends.

LEANNÁN SÍDHE

Mmh, yes. Some people can be so needy, can't they? It must be *exhausting*, being that empty.

BLACK ANNIS

Speaking of exhaustion, you look utterly drained. Is everything falling apart again, or are you between crises?

HOOPER

[in an uwu voice to TRIPE] Why are faeries fwighting?

TRIPE

[in an uwu voice to HOOPER] I think they're fwiends.

SFX of BLACK ANNIS crossing the room and settling on a couch.

BLACK ANNIS

So, what is this problem you simply couldn't manage by yourself?

SFX of LEANNÁN SÍDHE crossing the room and sitting down beside BLACK ANNIS.

LEANNÁN SÍDHE

Oh, no problem, and if I needed help, I certainly wouldn't bother *you*.

SFX of both of them laughing and giggling falsely.

LEANNÁN SÍDHE

I just thought you'd be amused to see these two. They came to me begging for help. Apparently, one of them used to be a goblin, and you turned him into this?

BLACK ANNIS

Oh, that does sound like something I would do.

LEANNÁN SÍDHE

I was *appalled* to hear that he had befouled your sacred Faerie Circle, so very embarrassing that you couldn't keep even a simple goblin away from it.

BLACK ANNIS

[softly, with less put-upon mirth as before] Oh yes, I remember this one. We've been keeping an eye on him and his friends for a while.

LEANNÁN SÍDHE

As soon as I heard about all that *nasty goblin piss* being splashed around those lovely toadstools, I thought, 'How terrible, poor Black Annis. Her life is so empty and now the one thing she cares about has been besmirched so awfully.'

BLACK ANNIS

Hhm. You are *so* sweet, but please don't worry about me. Not everyone has to place their self-worth in material objects like... Faerie Rings and hovels.

SFX of LEANNÁN SÍDHE laughing and shifting in her seat.

LEANNÁN SÍDHE

[bristling and breathing heavily] It's a *tavern*.

BLACK ANNIS

[cheerfully] Exactly. Those as well. What happened to the other one?

LEANNÁN SÍDHE

Oh, he had the gall to ask me to remove your curse. As if I would do that to someone who's almost like a sister to me. A much *older* sister.

SFX of a muffled rushing magical effect as ELISAR arrives in the room next door.

SFX of a door being thrown open and ELISAR bursting in.

ELISAR

Hooper, Tripe, I'm here to save you!

SFX of HOOPER and TRIPE making shushing sounds.

TRIPE

[in an uwu voice] Names, Ewisar, names!

ELISAR

Oh, right, yeah, I forgot, whoof, it's not like you're going to get more cursed, is it? Anyway, speaking of names: Prepare to cower, Black Annis, for I know your true name.

BLACK ANNIS

[clearing her throat] *I'm* Black Annis, over here, elf.

ELISAR

Excellent. Who is the other one?

LEANNÁN SÍDHE

[laughing] I am the Great Faerie Leannán Shídhe.

HOOPER

[in an uwu voice] Elly-welly, what are you doing here?

ELISAR

Eh? Oh, right, yeah, er, I come on a rescue mission. As I say, I know your true name, Black Annis, and so you are compelled to grant me a... [clinking fingers] ...-gutan? Boon! A boon. You'll grant me a boon.

BLACK ANNIS

[unimpressed] Oh, really? And what is it?

ELISAR

It means a favour. Don't worry if you've never heard the word before.

BLACK ANNIS

I meant, what is my name, elf? I am obliged to offer you a guess, and once you are wrong, well, we'll see where the night takes us...

ELISAR

[stammering] I-it, er, it's, erm... urgh, i-it's... oh, Gollum balls, I've forgotten.

TRIBE

[in an uwu voice] Oh, Ewisar, you weally are useless.

HOOPER

[in an uwu voice] Hoopy is weally, weally mad at you.

ELISAR

Hang on, hang on. It was a riddle.

SFX of ELISAR walking over to HOOPER.

ELISAR

Hooper, you must remember it! It was in your handwriting. Something about a pint of beer?

LEANNÁN SÍDHE

You goblins just keep offering yourselves up as playthings.

ELISAR

[offendedly] I'm not a goblin, I'm an elf.

LEANNÁN SÍDHE

[simultaneously] Whatever.

BLACK ANNIS

[simultaneously] Whatever.

ELISAR

Think, Hooper, the riddle said something about family jewels.

TRIBE

[in an uwu voice] That's easy, a di-

BLACK ANNIS

[cutting him off] Well, as fun as this is...

SFX of BLACK ANNIS getting up and stalking towards ELISAR.

BLACK ANNIS

I think it's time to share the fate of your friends, elf. With a curse of your own. Make your guess, now.

ELISAR

[hurriedly] 'Elisar.' No! That's my name.

LEANNÁN SÍDHE

Incredible.

ELISAR

Please don't make me cute.

BLACK ANNIS

Worse. I'm going to make you human.

SFX of BLACK ANNIS cursing ELISAR with a twinkling magic effect.

ELISAR

Oh, God, I've got visible pores. Why is death so scary?

TRIPE

[in an uwu voice] No time for an existential cwis, Ewisar! Try to remember the widdle!

LEANNÁN SÍDHE

A pathetic trio. Honestly, I don't know why we bother cursing them. Their lives must be hell already, being this useless.

BLACK ANNIS

Ah, it's a kindness, really, letting them experience the power of the Faeries, like putting a crown on a toad. Incidentally, how is your boyfriend?

LEANNÁN SÍDHE

Oh, he is well, thank you, and he is a prince of the Merfolk, not a toad, but I understand you'd get confused.

ELISAR

There was something about a *bad wish* and an unlucky letter.

TRIBE

[in an uwu voice] Hoopy, does that dwing any dwongs?

HOOPER

[in an uwu voice] Hoopy can't remember. Head is full of sparkles and wainbows!

LEANNÁN SÍDHE

Oh, I'm so rude! Anni, are you still seeing that bird?

TRIBE

[in an uwu voice] Anything else, Elisar?

ELISAR

I suddenly have this *weird* feeling that everyone's having a better time than me? Like... there's some secret trick to life, I was never told?

BLACK ANNIS

That 'bird' is Cailleach and she is a very powerful witch, as it happens.

TRIBE

[in an uwu voice] That's just the humanness talking. Remember, you're an *elven pwince*. Now, what was the widdle?

ELISAR

When it's done 'a person speaks'. No! A Man! Specifically, a man speaks in the end. Am I a man? I don't feel like I'm doing manhood right... Family jewels in the middle, I remember that!

TRIBE

[in an uwu voice] Okay, a bad wish, could that be a curse? An unlucky letter, family jewels, a man speaking... Hoopy, come on, think! What's the name?

HOOPER

[in an uwu voice] I think... [straining] I think... [with huge effort overcoming the uwu voice and shouting normally] Malediction!

SFX of BLACK ANNIS transforming, shrieking, groaning and gurgling while the magic roils in the background.

ELISAR

That was it! Right, yeah, I knew I'd remember.

BLACK ANNIS

[in a growling, monstrous voice] You bastards! How dare you?

ELISAR

Eww, what's happening to her?

LEANNÁN SÍDHE

[insincerely] Oh, no, sister! Now everyone will see your true form. Oh, how terrible for you!

SFX of the transformation finishing up.

BLACK ANNIS

[in an unearthly echoing, slurring voice] Shut up, you! Shut up!

TRIPE

[in an uwu voice] *Malediction*, by your true namey-wamey, I command you to remove these three curses and send us home!

SFX of a whooshing magical effect, transporting TRIPE, HOOPER and ELISAR away.

LEANNÁN SÍDHE

Would you like a cloak?

BLACK ANNIS

Yes.

Transitional music.

SFX of a ventilation system running in a large, echoing room.

SFX of NYX raging and smashing things in the background.

ELIZABETH

It's so nice to have you back to your old selves. Although, I don't think Nyx is that pleased.

TRIPE

Eh, hard to tell, they're like this a lot.

ELISAR

Yup, everyone back to normal, all thanks to my extraordinary bravery and quick wits.

HOOPER

[huffing] Except you forgot the name, got cursed yourself and nearly completely *screwed* all of us.

SFX of rushing tinkling sound, indicating NYX's magical disappearance.

ELISAR

‘Nearly.’ [clicking his tongue for finger guns] But didn’t. Anyway, you were the one that *pissed* on a Faerie Ring, pretty idiotic move.

HOOPER

It’s so strange, I... I’d never do something like that, but maybe I drank something that disagreed with me... but... but it felt like I was *compelled* to do it.

ELISAR

[sarcastically] Oh yeah, and I was *compelled* to chunder in the sacred spring at Sulis Minerva.

ELIZABETH

Hey, now, Elisar, may have messed up the execution *a bit*, but he was *really* smart in the library, playing along with me to make Nyx tell us where you both were.

TRIPE

He was?

ELISAR

I was?

ELIZABETH

Oh, yes! He pretended to *beg* them not to tell me your location and acted *really* worried about my safety. When he thought, I was going to face the Faeries myself, he panicked really convincingly.

TRIPE

Oh, *really*?

ELISAR

Yup, uh huh, totally convincing, I knew what was going on. [taking a deep breath] I love plans, and schemes and... so forth. [quickly changing the topic] Hey, is that mirror about? I want to make sure all those... disgusting, visible human pores have gone.

HOOPER

I'd never keep a mirror in here, anything could be looking through, you know that!

SFX of rushing tinkling sound, indicating NYX's magical appearance.

ELISAR

But there was a m—

SFX of NYX smashing something loudly to interrupt him.

NYX

I thought at least *one* of you would end up getting... splunged or imprisoned in a briar bush or pursued by your own shadows! This is so unfair!

SFX of NYX going back to raging and smashing things in the background.

HOOPER

[tiredly] Elizabeth, can you *do* anything about them?

ELIZABETH

Oh, let them get their feelings out. They've had a really disappointing day. I was thinking, those two faeries, they're... they're not exactly going to forget about two goblins and an elf guessing one of their names, aren't they going to like, come get us?

SFX of rushing tinkling sound, indicating NYX's magical disappearance.

HOOPER

Black Annis is bound not to attack us, at least not directly, since we have her name, and, er... Well, Leannán Sídh doesn't seem like the type to go out of her way for someone else's revenge.

TRIPE

Yeah, as far as she's concerned, we're more of an embarrassment to Black Annis alive than dead, or worse, cute.

SFX of HOOPER and TRIPE shuddering.

ELISAR

So, let's keep out of any other Faeries way 'til Beltane and we can get Eeznit here off our hands.

ELIZABETH

Right, yeah, and... and I can go home... and it'll be safe for Dhruv and me to see each other again. [sighing] Though, I guess I'll... never see any of you... again...

HOOPER

[sadly] It's how it has to be, I'm afraid. This isn't your world.

ELIZABETH

Sure, I know.

HOOPER

Anyway, it's nice to be back to normal. Tripe, I think you deserve a reward for saving me, and I need something to clear my head. [enthusiastically] Let's do something *extra* gobliny to celebrate!

TRIPE

[vibrating with excitement] Hooper, do you mean...

HOOPER

Yes, Tripe, that's exactly what I mean.

TRIPE

Mess day!

G.O.B.L.I.N.S.! Outro:

*A cello and violin play discordant notes, cymbals and a xylophone join in.
A piano plays a light, twinkling melody over it.*

Transcript by Franziska Mohr.