

Episode 50: Enemy at the Gates

Content warnings: Bombardment, domestic terrorism, mob violence

Brendan (as Samnael): An excerpt from the letters of Lieutenant Samnael Evergrace. But you know that already, don't you? Seems you know all about me by this point. See, I know my sister isn't getting these letters. So I've been pouring my heart and soul out to... whoever *you* are.

Well, what am I supposed to think? I come to my desk one day and there's a pile of my letters. Postage from hell knows where, openin' other people's mail. Infringement of privacy! Someone's reading my woes as fucking spectacle? As entertainment? Hell, my whole job is intelligence gathering and I don't know who you are or how these got here. Is this Nikolaj's doing? A parting gift for the old spymaster? Thanks for the job. Here's your dirty laundry.

Maybe I would be angry before the world went to shit. But even now, writin' words that I know will never reach my sister, which might not even reach you, I'm... hopeful. There is someone else out there hearing what I have to say, even if they don't know me. Even if they've never met me or anyone like me.

[music plays - [“The Consonance That Echoed Forevermore”](#) by Devin Nelson]

I'll never know the colour of your eyes, the shape of your hands. But I hope that when your eyes and hands hold this letter, that you remember Samnael of the Sharp Rebuke, whether xe's sitting on top of the world or buried six feet deep. If I do make it to the top of the world, I'll send you a letter or two.

[music break]

[music ends]

Brendan: Anything else we want to cover with the Hexed attack on the senate?

Devin: I think Kael is there too, but doesn't get caught in the blast, but gets caught in the sort of shrapnel of it and gets injured.

Gavin: Oh my god, now we have Kale and Sophina...

(Brendan chuckles)

Gavin (cont'd): Like bed, bed mates.

Brendan: Yeah. How're you gonna-

Gavin: Hospital bed neighbours.

Brendan: Exactly.

Devin: Oh no.

Kris: Ugh...

Gavin: Oh boy.

(Kris groans)

Devin: Junior speaker okay?

Brendan: Junior speaker Draknor is not permitted on the senate floor.

(Devin laughs)

Kris: Not after the incident.

Brendan: Oh! Actually! I just had a dream last night about an orangutan situation.

(Kris laughs)

Brendan: It was really upsetting.

Matthew: (deadpan) Wow. Jesus.

Brendan: It followed me home from Home Depot. I was really scared. (chuckles)

(Matthew laughs)

Devin: Also the librarian of the Unseen University in the Discworld books is an orangutan.

Matthew: Mhm.

Brendan: Oh... Amazing. My new character is senator Vahn born of Renwahl.

(Matthew chortles)

Kris: (concerned) Mmm...

Matthew: Oh my god.

Gavin: Conveniently absent from the explosion.

Brendan: I'm sure he was at the front of the group trying to calm the common people pleading for the senate to hear them.

Gavin: Sure.

Brendan: I think Vahn will also be a Perspective. For now. So...

Devin: Do we have to establish new bonds for everybody?

Brendan: Hmm...

Devin: I got sandwiched in between the two people making new main characters-

(Brendan laughs)

Devin (cont'd, cross): So I got a lot of work to do now.

Brendan (cross): That's right, that's right.

(Kris chuckles)

Brendan: Gavin, do you want to go first?

Gavin: Sure. Sophina's bond with Dorado is, the only greater threat to my supremacy than Azar is an anarchist.

(Kris chuckles softly)

Gavin: And my bond with Kael is, Kael knows how to control the hearts and minds of the people. I will not let them be martyred, but I must silence them.

Devin: Brutal.

Brendan: How does Kael feel about Sophina?

(Matthew chortles)

Devin: Hmm. (chuckles) Not a fan, but... (chuckling) not sure how to phrase it. Hmm. I kind of want to flavour it the same way I flavoured the Lark one...

Brendan: Mhm.

Devin (cont'd): And say that Sophina will be remembered in the annals as being cold and cruel.

Brendan: Sure. What is Kael's bond with senator Vahn?

Devin: I don't know if they've really interacted very much. Hmm.

Matthew: He's been around the estate.

Devin (cross): Yeah.

Brendan (cross): Without a doubt.

Matthew: Definitely met him.

Brendan: Yeah.

Devin: What was his, he was kind of just like... milk toast rich dude, right?

(Matthew laughs and Kris snickers)

Devin: What was his vibe?

Kris: I think we've only really seen him interact with Azar.

Brendan: Vahn born of Renwahl is a proud member of the Archadian elite who understands that their time, the time of the Archadian empire, for whatever good or bad it may have done, is over, and the people of Tzel Sh'El deserve a strong senate that will fight for them, that will do what must be done in order to make sure the kingdom goes on. And the difference between Vahn and Weigraf is Vahn believes it.

Devin: Hmm.

Brendan: If you'd like, I could do mine with Azar first.

Devin: Sure.

Matthew: Yeah, I'm curious.

Brendan: Yeah! Vahn needs... (typing) Vahn *wants* Azar's cooperation, not his domination. For both their sakes.

Matthew: Hmm. Azar needs his father to step out of the way.

Brendan: Yep. Kris, it looks like you have a Dorado bond for Sophina?

Kris: I don't care what Sophina has read. Her bullshit movement will go nowhere, and I'll see to that personally if need be.

Matthew: Hell yeah.

Brendan: Cool.

Matthew: New commander right there.

Brendan: Mhm.

Matthew: What's it called when you have a headcanon about your own show?

Brendan: Canon.

Gavin: Oh, canon.

(Matthew and Kris laugh)

Brendan: I actually have one for Kael, too, if that would help, Devin.

Devin: Okay. I'm figuring out how to phrase mine, but yeah.

Brendan: Yeah. Vahn's bond with Kael is, (typing) Kael is willing to speak truth to power. Vahn needs Kael to roar.

Devin: Hmm, okay. What I had so far was, Vahn doesn't seem the type to feed the Legion to the wolves, but I do not trust his ability to wield power effectively.

Brendan: That's great. That's very good. I think that's all of them, right?

Devin: Mhm.

Brendan: Okay.

Kris: Mhm.

Brendan: Matthew, it sounded like you had a Crossroad to propose.

Matthew: Yeah, it's a simple one. Does Azar's coop succeed?

Brendan: Did you say "coop"?

Matthew: Sorry.

Gavin: Coup?

Matthew: Yeah.

(Devin laughs)

Matthew: Does his coup succeed? Does his coupe- does his hatchback, does his...

Kris (cross): Does his sedan...

Gavin: His coop de grace?

Matthew: It's a sedan, yeah. No-

(Kris snickers)

Matthew: Does Azar's coup succeed?

Brendan: Okay.

Matthew: Gavin, I think both of us were on the same page on this, where the interesting thing is not is the coup attempted, it's does the coup succeed.

Gavin: Yeah. 'Cause there *will* be a coup this Crossroad.

Matthew: Mhm. Or we can make it vaguer, then, if you want to open up the door for it being the Sophina coup here. We could say just, does the coup succeed?

Gavin: No, because if Azar's coup fails, Sophina's coup succeeds.

Matthew (cross): Ahh, I see.

Gavin (cross): Or Dorado's. We're go-

(Devin laughs)

Gavin: What's gonna happen is I'm gonna overthrow you. We're gonna keep overthrowing each other-

(Matthew laughs)

Brendan: First in, last out.

Gavin (cont'd): Until the kingdom falls apart! Yeah.

Matthew: God...

Gavin: And then Dorado's gonna pick up the pieces.

Brendan: Okay, fill it out on the Crossroads page. And then I think you get the first turn, right?

Matthew: Oh, heck.

Brendan: I think that's true. It's been a couple of weeks since we played this. Let me double check the rules.

Matthew: Will the Legion... Well, that doesn't really work with the "Will the Legion".
(laughs)

Brendan: Mhm.

Gavin: Will the Legion successfully coup the-

(Matthew laughs)

Gavin (cont'd): Senate?

Brendan: Coup de Gracie.

Matthew: Will the Legion successfully coup the senate?

Brendan: Will the Legion overthrow the senate in-

Matthew: Sure.

Brendan (cont'd): For Azar.

Matthew: Yeah.

Brendan: Or, in Azar's name.

Matthew: In Azar's name. Sure, let's get some name shit in here. We got in a lot of Draknors.

Gavin: We're gonna, season two we're gonna have some people Born of Azar.

Matthew: Yeah.

Gavin: And it's gonna be fine.

Kris: Christ.

Matthew: That's where it's all heading.

Brendan: Six seasons and a movie.

(Matthew chortles)

Brendan: Yeah, I believe the first turn is yours.

Matthew: Well, I had all these ideas, but then people switched characters and stuff.

(Brendan laughs)

Matthew: God. Okay. Well... Okay. So let me go with one of the things that I had planned, 'cause I still think it's good and I think we're going to get Vahn and Azar stuff later on anyway.

Brendan: Sure.

Matthew: I would like to have a scene with Azar and Sophina where we get their motivations, and how those motivations differ, on screen.

Brendan: I think that's great.

Gavin: Okay.

Matthew: Azar is going to try to go to Sophina. So I think, Gavin, interrupt me at any point if you feel like this is not something you'd agree with. But we'd established that Sophina had gone basically under the protection, quote unquote, of Vahn born of Renwahl, and that she was sequestered, functionally, in the estate. Under guards to protect her, quote unquote, but really just to make sure that she doesn't cause any direct trouble herself.

Gavin: Yep.

Matthew: So I think one day, I think Sophina probably, it's not just like a room. I think Sophina probably- The estate's *big*. I think Sophina has access to a wing of the estate.

Brendan: Mhm.

Matthew: Nobody go in the east wing, the fascist lady is there.

Devin: Where do they put Kael?

Matthew: The west wing, there's one room that they touch, where we can have a standoff.

(Devin chuckles)

Matthew: (chuckles) That's entirely up to you. We can figure these details out later.

Gavin: I do kind of like the idea of Kael and Sophina doctored in the same room.

Matthew: That's fun.

Devin: Or across the hall from each other.

Gavin: Yeah.

Matthew: Sure. But I think Kael is not in this scene. I think Azar would have timed this out so that Kael was not even in the estate. Like Kael had to go, I don't know, look at records from the archives or something.

Gavin: Mhm.

Matthew: Approve stuff from the senate after it burned or something. I don't know. And I think that there's no announcement or anything. This is midday, just before or after a lunch sort of timing here. And Azar just opens the door. And wherever Sophina is sitting, he walks across and sits down on the other side.

Gavin: I think she's sitting cross-legged on the bed that they've made for her.

Matthew: Ah, perfect. Then he goes and sits down on Kael's bed across the room.

Gavin: Yeah. And she's all bandaged up. The remains of her easy to eat lunch in front of her.

Matthew: Mhm. I think the door has been left open so that you can see there's no guards outside.

Gavin: Mhm.

Matthew: And I think that Azar says, "I thought it was high time that we had a chat."

Gavin (as Sophina): Did you now?

Matthew (as Azar): We are after the same thing. There's no need to lie. No one's listening.

Gavin (as Sophina): I know what you are after. And I know that you're doing a terrible job of it.

Matthew: He lets that pass. "If I'm wrong that you are not after the throne, I'd very much like to know what you are after."

Gavin: She puts her hands up in a shrug. "Guilty."

Matthew (as Azar): It's surprising to me that someone who is after the throne of Novara would do so much to threaten the city.

Gavin (as Sophina): *I'm* not threatening the city. I've never a day in my life made any threats to this city.

Matthew (as Azar): Again, no one is listening.

Gavin (as Sophina): How about you take a look at your own actions? Bringing in a standing army into the center of this city. You think I'm the threat here?

Matthew (as Azar): How many senators has my Legion killed so far?

Gavin (as Sophina): I can imagine that you would know better than I, seeing as I'm trapped here.

Matthew: "Again," he is just grimacing now. Every word of this conversation is torture for Azar. "No one is listening in."

Gavin: Yeah, I think, taking a step back here, I think Azar just doesn't get it.

Matthew: No, this is entirely true.

Gavin: That she's not lying. She wholeheartedly- The best con runners con themselves.

Matthew: I think Azar says, "Did you or did you not allow the Hexed into the city?"

Gavin (as Sophina): (laughing) Oh, Azar. Accusing me of things I've already accused you and proven that you've done! So ridiculous.

Matthew (as Azar): The Hexed were not among the refugees that we brought in. They were clean.

Gavin (as Sophina): Are you so sure?

Matthew (as Azar): (sighs, deeply frustrated)

Gavin (as Sophina): How am I to know that you didn't intentionally bring them in? There's no Serikali here to prove that we're not being listened in on, to prove that you're telling the truth here.

Matthew (as Azar): I don't understand why you're so combative. We could help one another.

Gavin (as Sophina): You know what your problem is, Azar?

Matthew (as Azar): Please, illuminate me.

Gavin (as Sophina): You think that you can just point a gun at your problems, at the city, and they'll just hand you the throne.

Matthew (as Azar): And you think you need the city to burn first?

Gavin (as Sophina): Sure, you can take a city. No one's *ever* going to follow you. You don't take a city with an army, with guns. That's why you will fail.

Matthew (as Azar): Word on the street is that I'm much more popular than you. I don't intend to take the city with a single gunshot. But if that's all you think of me, then this conversation is over. Enjoy your lunch.

Gavin (as Sophina): You surround yourself with sycophants and they tell you what you want to hear.

Matthew: He's, he's just walks away.

Devin: Right outside the window where this conversation was happening, Argyle was sitting on one of the tower spire things.

Gavin: Can I make a Perspective prediction here or do I have to wait for my scene?

Brendan: No, you absolutely can. You're in the scene. You can do it right there.

Gavin: If yes, it will be short lived.

Matthew: Can you make a specific prediction about an individual?

Brendan: I don't think that you can. You can say the reign that will follow is, is short lived. I think that's fair to say.

Gavin: Okay.

Brendan: But yeah, there should be room to interpret what happens when we see if these actually execute.

Gavin: Mhm.

Devin: Not a specific dunk. (chuckles)

(Kris snickers)

Brendan: (laughs) Yeah, these should all be sub tweets.

Gavin: Okay.

Brendan: Okay.

Matthew: I'd like to use an order real quick.

Brendan: Oh, please.

Matthew: So this is the order that I talked about on the Discord. I think that Azar lends Aoife to Lance and with the note that Aoife's eye can spot out Hexed, and that Aoife can then be used to root out any remaining Hexed among the citizenry.

Brendan: Okay, that happens.

Devin: Is it just like a brutal execution squad kind of thing?

Matthew: That's a bit up to Lance. So it's up to you.

Brendan: It's team All Talk, Eye Talk.

(others chuckle)

Brendan: Huh?!

Devin: I guess the eye does speak.

Kris: I Talk, You Talk.

(Devin and Gavin chuckle)

Gavin: I Talk, You Shoot.

(Kris chuckles)

Matthew: There we go. Now we got it. If Lance was going to ask Azar how to do it, Azar would definitely suggest to make it big in public, because the Hexed are probably not in family units. And so making it really clear, these are the safe people. These are the people who are Hexed. I think is much better than trying to do it secretly.

Brendan: Mhm.

Devin: Yeah. But I'm still trying to think if Aoife would just walk into a crowd with a fucking pistol and take somebody down or if she'd be sniping people, following them and sniping them.

Brendan: Well, I think-

Matthew: I think that's not just Aoife.

Brendan: Yeah, I think the... The allure to having Aoife there, to be clear, is Aoife has the ghost vision. To be able to spot out-

Devin: Fair.

Brendan (cont'd): That one, that one, that's- they're getting away.

Devin: She doesn't necessarily need to be the violence dealer.

Brendan: Sure.

Matthew: Exactly.

Kris: Yeah, Aoife's-

Matthew: Go ahead, Kris.

Kris: Oh, no. Yeah, it's like Aoife's just there to identify them mostly and then Lance is Lance, and will go in and be like, behold! Scooby Doo pull off the mask.

Gavin: I just want to point out that the optics of this is fucked.

Kris: Yeah.

Matthew: It's the city guard doing it. Yeah. But, you know, there's going to be people who are like, we need order right now. And so-

Brendan: Yeah.

Matthew (cont'd): Riot cops in the street.

Brendan: There are a lot of people that are like that, yes.

Matthew: Riot cops in the street with a death squad. What could go wrong?

Brendan: It is my reaction, I think. Vahn, I think we see Vahn at one of the balconies of the estate looking over the city, like witness. There's some smoke rising from some areas where refugees and citizens are clashing. There's probably another Hexed altercation somewhere else in the city. He knows that elsewhere these patrols are hunting through the citizenry looking for threats.

I think if yes, (typing) other... Hmm. Hmm hmm hmm. I'm trying to phrase it as such that other... No, I'll just say it outright. (typing) Other fascist forces will ally themselves with Azar. And by that I specifically mean members of the Eyes of Smoke. (typing) Part of the... Eyes of Smoke will... Again, that's really specific. I can't name a- I can't say a specific thing in that way.

Matthew: I think your first draft of that was good.

Brendan: Okay.

Gavin: If you build it, fascists will come.

(Brendan chuckles)

Matthew: Yeah. Exactly.

Gavin: All they really want is power, so they're going to toady up to the one with the most power.

Brendan: Devin, reaction.

Devin: So when Matthew said that Kael was not at the estate when that was happening, I'm trying to think about where they would have been. They probably need a bodyguard and somebody to help them. I think they got burned pretty bad, but I don't know if that stops them from doing their job.

Brendan: I mean, last we saw Kael, Kael had a burgeoning tribe of apostles.

Devin: Mhm.

Brendan: There'd be no shortage of people that wanna help Kael out.

Devin: Yeah. I'm trying to think who's a sufficiently big enough person that could like-

Kris: Kayo.

Devin: (giggles) Do you think Kayo and Kael are like Luke and Yoda?

(Brendan laughs)

Kris: I mean, they hung out before, sort of.

Devin: (chuckling) Yeah.

Kris: If you want to count, you know, interrogation time with Karla as hanging out.

Devin: Yeah. Did Kayo ever get involved in their weird game?

Kris: Maybe at some point. I don't, I...

Devin: It was like a playing card game with role play elements.

Kris: Oh god.

Brendan: Kael probably asks to play it while they're recuperating.

Devin: Mhm.

Kris: Yeah. 'Cause I wonder if it's like a double thing of yes, physically help Kael get around where they need that help. But also... I don't know, just, you know, let Azar know, hey, what's going on there when I'm not there. Or in those spaces where I'm not necessarily.

Devin: How does Kayo feel about Sophina?

Kris: (raspy) Does not like... Like, is this lady letting Hexed into the city? Fucking why?

Devin: Okay, just because Kael might ask Kayo to come help them in and out of their room and stuff, and Sophina's right across the hall. And Kael probably also hints at like, ah, I'm in a dangerous position at the moment. (chuckles) I know she's-

Kris: Yeah, I think Kael has become, Kael has probably become one of the people that Kayo is like, this is one of my ones.

Devin: Mhm.

Kris: So I'm gonna make sure nothing hurts you.

Devin: How's Kayo been feeling in general? I think my reaction here is just Kael getting out of the house with Kayo. I think they're doing some clerical task that's not important to the scene, but is like asking Kayo how they're feeling about all of this.

Kris: I think it takes Kayo like a really long time to answer. (chuckles) There's a lot of like, I don't know how much, how many words you want from me. And also... I don't know if any amount of words would communicate- And then just, "Bad."

Devin: Hmm.

Brendan: Is there a preference for one side or another?

Devin: I don't think we're there yet.

Brendan: Okay. Gavin, reaction.

Gavin: My reaction is some of the Hexed do have family members. And those family members are not happy that cops are killing their family members and are trying to hide these Hexed people, despite the fact that that is dangerous.

Matthew: Can we get this from Sophina's perspective somehow? 'Cause the character isn't the city, right? The character is Sofina.

Kris: Or Lark's?

Brendan: Or Lark's, yeah. Lark's would be okay here.

Gavin: Yeah, maybe Lark goes to P'nai Revkah and overhears a conversation with the rabbi, like somebody teared up talking about how they're afraid that the guard are going to come take away their child or their husband or something. How does that sound?

Brendan: I think that's great. That's good. Is there a prediction?

Gavin: I already made a prediction for this scene.

Brendan: That's true. Okay. Kris, reaction.

Kris: I think we see Argyle at a later time in conversation with the new spymaster, Nikolaj. Nikolaj just turns a book that he's reading towards Argyle and starts pointing, you know, points out a line and the two of them just look at each other and just sort of shake their heads.

Brendan: Good.

[music plays - "[The Precession of Rot](#)" by Devin Nelson]

Brendan: Good, good, good.

Devin: Also, by the way, get ready for multiple coups.

Kris: Uh huh.

[music break]

[music ends]

Brendan: I would like, hmm, I think I would like a scene to do with... Oh! I know. There's an attack.

(Kris makes a surprised noise)

Brendan: Ruin's forces, I think, make a serious attack at one of the gates. And I think Vahn is there. Who else would be there? Trying to like-

Devin: (quietly) Lance.

Brendan: Lance is absolutely there. Trying to both oversee the defense and make sure that people in the nearby neighbourhood are safely evacuated out, so that they're not hurt by artillery.

Kris: I think Dorado would be there.

Brendan: Uh huh. Vahn is... Vahn's torn off his sleeves in order to more effectively carry barrels of water, to put out fires that have started from... They have they've just handed Embers, the flaming deer horse skeletons, to Grafted, and the Grafted are just throwing them over the walls.

Kris: Christ.

Brendan: And so even when one of these things just dies or crashes into something, it starts a conflagration. And there are people just hauling enormous barrels of water and Vahn is like, has torn off the sleeves of his senatorial robe, has girded his loins, and is just carrying these barrels of water over his shoulder to these places to try and pour water on them and protect the city. What are Lance and Dorado doing?

Kris: I think Dorado's first question to Lance is just it are- Who's- It feels like it should be one of us is in charge of dealing with the stuff that actually gets into the city, the other should be in charge of dealing with what is happening at and beyond the wall. So is just like, which of us is doing which? Just to Lance, real quick?

Devin: I think Lance would be the type to be barking orders and sending people to and fro to where they need to be.

Kris: But does Lance want to focus on, do we want to have those two for it? 'Cause I think Dorado's argument would be like, your city guard, your people know the city, at least might know where to get people to that is safer or more reinforced, faster.

Devin: Mhm.

Kris: Legion has been dealing with, you know, the- Ruin and them for however many weeks, months.

Devin: Yeah.

Kris: I don't- Me, Kris, I don't remember how long it's been, right? City guard, do the city thing. Legion will deal with the wall.

Devin: Yeah, there's probably public parks that are designated emergency meeting grounds.

Kris: Yeah, or like some kind of public buildings. I'm just wondering, if they're throwing shit over hand, then it's just like a park is wide open.

Devin: I think they're setting up community med tent kind of things, too.

Brendan: Dorado, you're coordinating forces at or beyond the wall?

Kris: Yeah.

Brendan: Do Legionnaires go out into the field?

Kris: I wonder, 'cause we gotta get them away from the wall some. There's only so much we can do that from on top of it.

Brendan: Mhm.

Devin: I mean, it makes sense for Aoife to be there on the wall with a sniper rifle.

Kris: Yeah, Aoife with a sniper rifle, get a couple of people on the ground, just like take out the, or hamper if you like- I wonder if it's like hamper the Grafted, or maybe do some, set up some kind of distraction thing to scatter the Embers that the Grafted don't have ammo easily on hand to throw.

Brendan: Right. Yeah.

Kris: And then from the wall, they try to deal with the Grafted because, you know, might ask who has experience with these grafted, right? Like who's fought one of these? How do you fight them? It's like not on foot. (laughs)

Devin: I think Aisling would volunteer.

Brendan: Of course. You know what this kind of sounds like?

Kris: Oh, dear.

Brendan: A secondary mission.

Kris: (laughs) Oh no! (muffled) Oh no.

Matthew: Would Aoife get XP for it? 'Cause that could work out nicely.

Kris: Oooh.

Brendan: Yeah. I mean, if you're willing to wager the Legionnaires, I would certainly give you the reward.

(Kris and Devin exhale loudly)

Devin: What would our dice pool be though?

Kris: Christ. 'Cause this is definitely assault and I think Aoife and Kayo still have harm. Harm? Damage? What is it?

Gavin: Yep.

Kris: Yep. Good. Great. That sounds fine. Nope. Damn guilt.

Brendan: Is everyone on board for that? You could say no, that's perfectly fine.

Kris: Oh, it's neat, but I am terrified. I just- I- Hmm.

Brendan: That means it's probably good.

Gavin: I mean, I could tell you how many dice it is before we say yes or no.

Devin: Yeah.

Kris: Please.

[music plays - "[Bracing For The Tide](#)" by Devin Nelson]

Gavin: Are all on the mission oathsworn to the Legion? Yes?

Devin (cross): No...

Brendan (cross): I don't think-

Kris: If the city guard is purely in the city and not dealing with this up here?

Brendan: No.

Kris: Because I think that was what Dorado was trying to angle for of like, you know, the stuff in the city better, deal with the city. That's city guard.

Brendan: My feeling is the answer is yes to this unless Kayo or Aoife have taken issue.

Devin: Was Kayo here as well? I didn't hear that.

Brendan: Oh, I don't know. (chuckling) I just assumed that Kayo was here if Aoife was here.

Kris: We're dealing with an assault on the walls. I feel like Kayo would be like, go do that.

Devin: Yeah.

Kris: Especially if there's people going beyond the walls.

Gavin: Intel. Dorado, Azar, do you spend one Intel to gain foresight and info?

Kris: We have four.

Brendan: Yup.

Matthew: Yeah, we can go ahead and spend an Intel here. That'd be fine.

Gavin: Okay, that would be two.

Kris: That's a bunch.

Gavin: Veteran, is everyone on the mission a specialist or soldier? I'm not gonna send a soldier squad. Just... No. Leadership. Does any Legionnaire distrust the leadership or not fear them enough to obey orders on the battlefield? This is really-

Kris: No.

Gavin (cont'd): A Aoife or Kayo question.

Devin: No.

Kris: Yeah, no, not here.

Gavin: Are required specialists or equipment not on the mission? No.

Brendan: This is an assault mission.

Gavin: Yeah. Kravannder, did you equip the soldiers with black shot?

Kris: ... Yes, I will.

[music ends]

Gavin: Okay. Any Legionnaire starting the mission wounded? Yes.

Kris: Yes.

Gavin: So we'd have two dice if we rolled this.

Kris: (exhales) How ya feeling, Devin? (laughs nervously)

(Devin laughs nervously)

Gavin: Feeling lucky?

Devin: Ah, yeah. I just don't want her to get fucked up here and then not be able to go on the next main mission.

Matthew: Two dice, you have- what? It's better than, better than chance, better than 50% of getting some kind of success here.

Devin: Yeah.

Kris: Oh boy. 'Cause I don't remember what the four to five is on a...

Gavin: Four to five is fail the mission or succeed, kill two squad members, and all specialists take level two harm.

Kris: Goddamn. Wahhh.

Brendan: I've got a devil's bargain for you, Devin.

Devin: Mmm. What's that?

Brendan: If Aoife takes harm, you don't have to mechanically market down. But what it means is Aoife can't go out on patrol with Lance and the guard anymore.

Devin: Hmm. With that, that would cancel the whole take down the Hexed plan, wouldn't it?

Brendan: They just have to figure out who the Hexed are themselves.

Devin: Sure.

Brendan: Okay. Gavin, you've got 3d6 now.

Gavin: Okay. And the devil's bargain is if Aoife gets injured...

Brendan: Then Aoife can't help patrol the streets for Hexed.

Devin: What if we get a 6?

(Brendan chuckles)

Kris: Then Aoife wouldn't be injured?

Brendan: Yeah, if it's a 6 then you get the reward for having completed the mission.

Devin: Sick. (laughs)

(Kris chuckles)

Brendan: If you do the thing, then you do the thing.

Gavin: Well, that's a five.

Brendan: Five.

Gavin: So, we got two choices here.

Kris: (high-pitched) Okay.

Gavin: Fail the mission, or succeed: two squad members die, all specialists take level two harm.

Kris: I think Dorado might pull people.

Matthew: Well, it's-

Gavin: Our Morale is 10.

Matthew: Yeah, we could take the Morale hit, but also the people dying, you know... We don't have to have those be the rookies that went on the mission. There's a lot of people around to die. I think people are going to die regardless in this scene.

Kris: Yeah.

Matthew (cross): Or do you think it has to be rookies, Brendan?

Gavin (cross): No, the two-

Kris (cross): It would have to be.

Gavin: It has to be two squad members.

Matthew: Alright, we can still take the Morale hit if we're worried about that.

Brendan: Yeah. I mean, to be clear, I think lots of other people are dying around you.

Kris: Yeah, it says two squad members die.

Brendan: Yeah.

Kris: Specifically. 'Cause I could see like, what is- I guess what does the success look like, I guess? What is the reward? 'Cause we know what the, at least part of the penalty, is if we... Or we know what the success costs, but what do we gain from it?

Matthew: And what would failure look like, is also probably worth putting on the [unintelligible].

Brendan: Sure. Here's what I'll say. I think if you succeed, then the Never won't attack the city in this force again for the rest of this Crossroads. If you fail, then I'm going to roll 1d10 and destroy one of our locations again.

(Kris makes a small scared noise)

Brendan: Destroy, damage. I think people could still go inside the senate, it's just... Wanna put it to a vote? This is a democratic Legion, right?

(Devin chuckles)

Kris: Mhm. And there's five of us, so we shouldn't end up with a tie.

Brendan: (chuckles) Well, I'll reserve my preference after everyone else votes. Gavin, how are you feeling? Success or failure?

Gavin: I want to see... I, Gavin, want to see the failure.

Brendan: Okay. Kris.

Kris: Hmm.

Gavin: This is like a mini Crossroads.

(Brendan chuckles)

Kris: Mhm. Oh boy.

Matthew: We can go back around to you, Kris, if you need time.

Brendan: Sure. Yeah.

Kris: Yeah. I'll think on it for a second.

Brendan: Matthew.

Matthew: Does Aoife get XP either way?

Gavin: Yes.

Matthew: Is that how secondary missions work? Then I think failure-

Gavin: They both have already gotten-

Matthew: Right.

Gavin (cont'd): The XP.

Matthew: Then I think failure is more interesting.

Brendan: Devin.

Devin: Yeah, let's fail.

Brendan: Fail. Kris?

Kris: Alright. I count for four people by myself now.

Matthew: It's true.

Brendan: No, no, no.

Matthew: No, Dorado gets that. That's the new-

(Kris laughs)

Matthew (cont'd): New commander power.

Kris: It's the commander bonus?

Matthew: Mhm.

Kris: Commander bonus? I also pre-ordered Kingdom 2e, so I get that-

(Matthew and Brendan laugh)

Kris (cont'd): That's my special rule. (laughs) No, but yeah, I think, you know, Dorado seeing how things are going on the ground, is like no. Retreat.

Brendan: Okay.

Gavin: I've marked XP for Kayo and Aoife. Kayo seems to have leveled up.

Devin: Hell yeah.

Kris: Heyyy.

Matthew: Is that the last bit you needed, Devin?

Gavin: No.

Devin: No.

Matthew: Oh. You need one more round of level up-

Devin: Yeah.

Matthew (cont'd): For your end game build?

Devin: Mhm.

Gavin: Three more XP.

Kris: One more mission.

Matthew: Okay.

Kris: One more primary.

Brendan: I'll see if I can send you some more missions.

(Devin laughs, Matthew and Kris chuckle)

Brendan: Yeah. You fall back.

Matthew: God.

Brendan: Fire continues to rain down on Novara.

Devin: Yeah. I- since we spent some black shot, I feel like maybe some flames from these... What were they called?

Brendan: The Embers.

Devin: Yeah. Some of the flames whip off of the Embers as they sail over the wall and falls into a whole container of black shot and there's an explosion on the wall. Everybody's running and screaming. It sucks.

Kris: One just lands right up on top of the wall and it's running around all frantic.

Brendan: Yeah. I rolled a one.

Kris: Oh...

Brendan: That's the estate.

Devin: Oh my god!

Kris: Oh no.

Matthew (cross): Let's goooo.

Gavin (cross): Oh! Oh, oh, oh!

Kris: RIP Sophina?

Gavin: Please let me! Please let me!

(Kris giggles)

Brendan: Gavin, please. You have the floor.

Gavin: Yeah. Brewing among the people there have been rumours that Vahn and Azar attempted to assassinate Sophina, and they are holding her captive. And in all

of this chaos, Sophina's aid riled up a riot of people to come storm the mansion and take Sophina back by whatever means necessary. Salt the earth.

Matthew I think I might want to Fight or Fix that.

Brendan: Please.

Gavin: Okay.

Matthew: 'Cause we're supposed to be the heroes of Novara and we haven't seen any public support for Sophina before. So it seems like a lot to get there.

Kris: I mean, she's got her whole movement.

Gavin: Yeah.

Matthew (cross): We can-

Kris (cross): Which is maybe like-

Brendan: I agree we have gestured to the Eyes of Smoke as a movement, but we haven't seen it on screen. I agree with that. It is like-

Matthew: If this is-

Brendan: Yeah.

Matthew: If this is Eyes of Smoke pretending that they're like they got rid of all their robes and they're just putting on regular people clothes, right, to make it look like an angry mob that loves Sophina, I'm on board with that for sure.

Brendan: Yeah.

Gavin: No, I think there are people here who are... built into it.

Kris: I meant anti-refugee people.

Gavin: Yeah.

Matthew: Oh, for sure.

Gavin: Yeah.

Matthew (cross): But I can't see the anti-refugee people-

Kris (cross): That seemed more like her base.

Matthew: The anti-refugee people, I assume, would be people with some degree of power or money, and I can't see them *personally* storming an estate.

Gavin (cross): Like-

Brendan (cross): No, so-

Gavin (cross): The thing-

Brendan (cross): Just to-

Gavin: The thing is here that a lot of the time, especially... we have precedent with this with the Eyes of Smoke, that fascists will hide until it is time to act. And so the fact that we haven't seen it on screen doesn't necessarily mean that it hasn't been happening. It's just that it hasn't been shown that the people who are sympathetic to Sophina have been hiding it for a moment like this to, you know, put Azar or whatever in a false sense of security.

Brendan: I absolutely agree with that. I think the contention is, as storytellers, it would be good to have had them visible in secret on screen so that we set up that Chekov's gun to fire, right? But-

Matthew: (stutters) I don't mind if Sophina goes free here.

Brendan: I think there's a way to bridge this gap, which is there are people here who the camera recognizes on screen as people that have been fighting with refugees, people who we've seen that are in the city guard who are not dressed in their city guard uniforms, and people that we have seen that are Eyes of Smoke people that are just dressed in plain clothes. Who are a mix of agitators, but who have been riled up and who are being directed by people who, just at glance, are like, no, we're just sick of the authority. We want our freedom. We want freedom for the senator that they have captive in there. But who are actually acting as professional agitators and professional revolutionaries. Is that fair?

Gavin: So your fix is the whole thing is fabricated.

Matthew (cross): Not the *whole* thing.

Gavin: And I guess mine is a yes, but there are people who are general- genuinely believing in this thing. Who have been genuinely duped or there are genuine people like fascists here who are like-

Matthew: Sure.

Gavin (cont'd): There is sympathy among the public.

Matthew: Sure.

Brendan: Yeah. I think... Very, very pertinently, I get a real freedom convoy kind of thing, where it's like-

Kris: Uh huh.

Brendan (cont'd): They're not- The original people that are there are not truckers. They're Nazis hiding in trucker costumes. But once they're there, people that actually do feel this way are like, oh, well, there's truckers there, I'm gonna go help.

Kris: Yeah, like they're, they're the Eyes of Smoke or, you know, Sophina's agitators. They know which fires to add fuel to.

Matthew: Mhm.

Gavin: Mhm.

Brendan: Sure.

Kris: They know who those people are, but those people *are there*.

Brendan: Okay.

Devin: What does this mean, though? 'Cause if the place gets destroyed, we can't use it anymore. What happens to all the people there?

Brendan: I think it's damaged.

Matthew: Yeah, we can still use it.

Brendan: Yeah.

Matthew: Yeah.

Kris: Yeah, it's damaged.

Brendan: Yeah. I think there's a-

Devin: Kael could hide in a closet with a knife and be fine?

(Matthew and Brendan chuckle)

Kris: I mean, if Kael is in- I mean, no- Yeah, that's true. I was like, Kael's in a different wing. They wouldn't know. Yeah, (chuckling) they would go through the whole building, wouldn't they?

Brendan: I was going to-

Matthew: I mean- Go ahead, Brendan.

Brendan: I was going to say, I don't think this is bloodless. I think Samnael dies.

Matthew: Damn.

Kris: (quietly) No.

Gavin: Holy shit.

Brendan: I think xe is reacting to the damage, is checking to make sure that Kael is okay, that Sophina is still there. Hears a commotion at the door, lays a hand on xer saber, and just discovers this flood of people with knives and torches, and just disappears under the surge. And just as quickly they take Sophina away.

I think it would be good to, we don't have to have it right away, but we should figure out a name for this movement. Because it wouldn't be the Eyes of Smoke. It would be something else.

Matthew: Mmm.

Gavin: What's the opposite of despair?

Matthew: Hope?

Kris: Hope?

Brendan: Hmm.

Gavin: Yeah. Soldiers of Hope? Proud Hopefuls-

Matthew: Jesus.

Gavin (cont'd): Something like that?

(Brendan and Kris groan)

Brendan: We can think on it.

Gavin: I am making intentional allusions here.

Kris: Yeah.

Brendan: Yeah.

Kris: Uh huh.

Brendan: Okay.

Kris: Novara's Hope?

Brendan (cross): That was my scene.

Gavin (cross): (laughing) Novara's Hope...

Brendan: I am gonna mark... Fuck.

(Kris chuckles)

Brendan: I'm gonna mark Crossroads.

Gavin: Really?

Brendan: But I'm also going to mark Crisis. No wait is it... I forget the damn rules.

Kris: We should be at 3 Crisis now already, right?

Matthew (cross): We should be.

Devin (cross): Oh yeah.

Brendan (cross): We should be at 3.

Devin (cross): Yeah, I should have marked that earlier.

Kris: Okay.

Brendan: "Mark Crisis, otherwise mark Crossroads." I- Boy, I could see it going either way because there's as much motivation for something has to be done and something has to be done now from an event like this as there is everything is going to fall apart. Yeah, I'm going to stick with Crossroads. Devin, reaction.

Devin: (chuckles) Like I described, Kael had a knife and hid in a closet. I think survived or they didn't find them. But they crawl out and see the damage and... (chuckles) I said they were stressed before. They've almost been killed like two days in a row.

Brendan: Mhm.

Devin: I think... I think people are panicked. I think tensions are rising and everybody's looking behind, looking over their shoulder. Everybody's paranoid. I wonder if this- Okay, so I'm just describing the Kingdom. So I'm just describing the Legion, right?

Brendan: Yeah.

Gavin: Yes.

Devin: Yeah, I think there's just this sense of paranoia and this just charge in the air. I think everybody's ready to snap.

Brendan: Gavin.

Gavin: The people who follow Sophina are emboldened. They stormed a building and they got what they wanted and they succeeded. They feel great. They feel like they could do this again. Maybe Sophina is giving a rousing speech at, I don't know, some square in front of the senate or something. The...

Kris: There's that big plaza.

Gavin: Yeah, giving a rousing speech about how great everyone was and how bold they were and how we need more bold people like you. And they're going to be the leaders of the next great movement that will bring this city to greatness. And I'm going to make a prediction. If no, Sophina will successfully rule the...

Matthew: You can't make a prediction about individuals.

Gavin: Damn. Okay. If no... the Eyes of Smoke will control the city?

Brendan: Yeah.

Matthew: Sure.

Brendan: That's okay. I have a prediction, or not a prediction, but a proposal that Sophina's speech gives the group their name: The Bold Few.

Gavin: Oh, I wrote a name.

Brendan: Oh, well-

Gavin: I like The Bold Few.

Brendan: Oh, okay.

Gavin (cross): But yeah, we can have Sophina-

Brendan (cross): Where'd you write it?

Gavin: I wrote it in general.

Brendan: Oh, I'm sorry.

Gavin: Yeah, Sophina could be like, "You are the defenders of hope. You will root out the despair!"

Brendan: Mhm.

Gavin: Mhm.

Brendan: Great.

Kris: Oof.

Brendan: Kris, reaction.

Kris: Dorado squad and then gets back from the wall, sees the state of things here at the estate, and Dorado, I think, makes a beeline for wherever the hell Nikolaj is. Just being like, what of this did you know about? And I wonder if Nikolaj like actually says... cops to recognizing people in the crowd that stormed through the estate. 'Cause some of them were Eyes of Smoke, right?

Brendan: Uh huh.

Matthew: Mhm.

Kris: Yeah, (stutters) they talk and I don't know if I have an order right now. I feel like I should, but I can't think of one.

Matthew: Perfectly fine.

Brendan: Matthew, reaction.

Matthew: We don't have to figure out what happens from this, and if we need to... If anything happens and a Fight or Fix needs to happen, et cetera. But I think that this moment happens, which is that when sort of the crowd has cleared and Azar is sort of stepping through the fucked up husk of his father's estate and he comes across the body of Samnael. And he kneels down and sort of picks xer up...

[music plays - "[What Has Yet To Be Written In The Annals](#)" by Devin Nelson]

Matthew (cont'd): And just stands there, eyes unfocused. And then he says, because he knows that Lark is listening, "Kill her."

[music break]

Brendan: Oathsworn is an actual play podcast created by...

Devin: Devin Nelson,

Gavin: Gavin Fregeau,

Kris: Kris Allison,

Matthew: Matthew Guzdial,

Brendan (cont'd): And me, Brendan McLeod. All music for the show is created by Devin Nelson. Find it and more at devindecibel.bandcamp.com. Find a link to their music and any of the games that we have played in the podcast description. Follow us [@oathswornpod](#) on Twitter, or [oathsworn](#) on cohost. If you liked the show, please consider sharing it with a friend or leaving a five star review on Apple podcasts. Until next time.

[music fades]