

*Erick, Isaac, Sarin, the Drunk Pirate, and the Strange Bird Cultist all stand outside a cell in the Bird Cult compound.*

Isaac: Erick, I sadly must rely on you. The child must be taken somewhere safe, but The Architect likely has people watching me. I need you to take her—

Erick: *(he begins to monologue, time slows but does not completely stop)* at last, I am making progress with Isaac! He has entrusted me with the most important and sacred duty of protecting this sweet child. I shall take her back to my opera house, where I shall raise her as if she is my own child. She practically could be, I can already tell she and I are very much alike.

Isaac: *(speaking to the Strange Bird Cultist)* —bring you to The Architect now.

*Isaac and the Strange Bird Cultist exit.*

Sarin: *(starts to wander out the door)*

Erick: Safe journeys to you all! *(he follows Sarin, talking to her in a rather cheerful manner as they walk)* Hello there, dear child!

Sarin: Hello.

Erick: *(suddenly realizes that he has no idea how to talk to children)* so... what do you want to be when you grow up?

Sarin: I have considered killing all of my sisters and becoming queen, but I am no longer so sure.

Erick: *(he nods sagely)* I see. I'm sure you'll figure something out that you enjoy doing. Perhaps you could... murder other people instead of your sisters? That seems like solid career advice. I, dear child, am an actor! *(dramatic flourish)* Although, I do dabble in many things.

Sarin: You're very strange.

Erick: *(he smiles at her, pats the top of her head)* as are you, I'm sure I will make a great parent for you, just as Isaac asked.

Sarin: *(looks at him, considering)* Where will we live?

Erick: I have a private box at the opera house I own. We can stay there, and if you so like I can arrange for it to be retrofitted to accommodate your comfort. I assure you, the seat cushions are quite possibly the most comfortable thing in the entire city. And if they are not, I shall acquire whatever is.

Sarin: You do not have a house?

Erick: I do, yes. But I am not often there, because as an actor I find it most beneficial to live in my element. Alas, I am not sure it would be wise to take you there, some of my neighbors might recognize you and I'd hate to have to murder them. *(he sounds as though he could care less)* So I suppose if that is where you would rather live, it can be arranged.

Sarin: (nods)

Erick: *(he claps his hands once)* lovely! I shall be right back. *(he steps out of sight into an alleyway, and emerges a few moments later in an outfit with an absurd amount of ruffles at the collar and obscenely poofy pants, he speaks in a rather atrocious approximation of some sort of foreign accent)* Ahhhh, bonjour mon chéri. If any of my neighbors ask, my name is Erique, oui?

Sarin: (laughing) Ok.

Erique: *(he laughs as well, the two of them walking down the streets of the Royal City)*

*End Scene*