Here There Be: Outcasts

Dungeon Master & NPCs: Ren Heulyn Tryner
Meredith: Ewa Ladkowska
Jaspar: Jack Docking

Episode One

> **Minstrel:** Friends, lend me your ears! Let us remember the days of old! This land used to be riddled with spellcasters. They had spread through the kingdom like a plague. But all that ended when Queen Myfanwy raised her sword! She cut down the evil mages and drove magic from the kingdom. It's only due to her that we live in peace today.
>
> **Minstrel:** Now the Prince Regent, he upholds the laws, certainly, but he's not strong in the way Queen Myfanwy was. There's talk that magic is slowly seeping back into Carlad. If we're to survive the reemergence of witchcraft and devil worship, then we need a leader with a backbone. But fear not, friends! In just a few months, Princess Jenifry will come of age and take the throne! We've all heard the rumours; she takes after her grandmother. She will be the one to bring back the safety Myfanwy brought us! She will be our saviour!

[MUSIC: In The Workshop]

Ren: Our story starts in the kingdom of Carlad in 1671. Underneath a small abode in the capital, Caerbryn, is a basement, filled with various cobbled together contraptions. Metalworking tools lie in neat rows on surfaces. Everything has its place.

Ren: An elderly tortle hunches over a workbench, tinkering on something. Her eyes are milky white and her head is nearly fully contracted back into her shell. A young tabaxi perches on a stool in the corner. Jaspar, would you like to describe what you look like?

Jack: Uh, absolutely. So, Jaspar looks um … Is wearing workshop gear at the moment. With an apron, a belt, with a number of tools around their hips. They are wearing harem pants, which have multicoloured flannel patches from where it's been ripped in the past. They're wearing very large boots and their fur is a dark purple colour, with goggles on their forehead.

Ren: The tortle puts down what she's doing and reaches for something on the workbench. Her hand finds an empty place of the work surface and she pats her hand around a bit, looking for something. She then slowly stretches her neck out.

> **Wirta:** [Slow and croaky voice] Jaspar, did you move the caliper?

Jaspar: [Queens accent] Oh uh, well, if I did I don't remember, you know. There's so much around this, you know. I'm trying ta reach for all sorts of tools and sometimes I put them in the wrong place, and I'm sorry. I'm sorry, it was probably me.

Wirta: You know I can't find anything if it's not where it's supposed to be.

Jaspar: Yeah I know. I'll have a look for it okay?

Jack: And Jaspar starts rummaging around.

Wirta: I'd appreciate it if you could find it sooner rather than later, I need it to finish thi -

Ren: She stops talking in the middle of a sentence. There's silence for a few moments, then she speaks again.

Wirta: [Sudden Southern US accent] Oh this one's blind. Uh, hey uh, Cân Gâ - no, no no ... Jaspar! Jaspar.

Jaspar: Uh, yeah?

Wirta: I need you to get some scrap metal from the blacksmiths.

Jaspar: Oh, yeah, yeah no problem! I'll just uh, get changed.

Jack: And Jaspar runs up to put on a cloak, that will cover his face, as well as a bandana that will cover his mouth.

[Music starts playing, a single note, played over and over in a consistent rhythm. Whispered voices start speaking in short sentences, fragments of conversation. Topics range from grocery requests, to declarations of love, to bedtime stories for a child. The music and the voices stop suddenly.]

Ren: Only a couple of streets away, a young half-elf enters a graveyard and begins to hear a faint whispering coming from each grave. The name this person gave to this phenomenon is the "Whispers of Bone". Meredith, you've been able to hear this since you were very young; the murmurs of people long dead.

Ren: They repeat things that they said when they were alive; most of it is fairly mundane stuff. For example right now you can hear someone reciting a recipe for welsh cakes, faint humming, and someone bartering over the price of lamb.

Ren: The graveyard is attached to a temple; an octagonal shaped building with a domed roof. The temple is made from grey stone and has a few tall and thin windows. The graveyard itself is

awash with red spiders lilies. They grow around the graves in clusters, just like at your home temple.

Ren: There's only one other person in the graveyard at the moment, a half-orc kneeling in front of a gravestone a distance away from you.

Ren: Would you like to describe your appearance?

Ewa: Yes, of course. So, Meredith is a very, very tall individual. They have short, black, wavy hair and they're wearing a chainmail, but on top of that they've got a poncho, in the colours of their god, Freya. We've got white, red, black, and gold. They've got some loose fitted trousers, some boots, and some warm, wooly socks. Oh and they're holding a staff. Don't forget the staff.

Ren: You walk inside the temple and you see that the interior is an arcade, a series of arches supported by pillars. The pillars are marble, but the arches are grey stone, just like the exterior of the building. In the center of the temple is an octagonal stone pavilion. You know that this would be where the priest preaches from. It's early afternoon at the moment so there aren't many people in the temple. There's a few worshippers around who are all kneeling or sitting on cushions in quiet meditation.

Ren: Just like your home temple, there are murals covering the walls. You're drawn to one in particular. It's of Freya shepherding the dead to their new lives. A dark skinned woman looks down upon the dozens of silvery figures all marching in the same direction. Red spider lilies grow beneath her feet and the feet of all the figures she watches over. She smiles down at them and her eyes are kind and warm.

Ewa: Uh, can Meredith put their hand on the mural. Or at least, like kind of put their hand up, but not exactly touch the wall but in more like a "wow, they've got it here too!" [*Ren laughs*]

Ren: Yeah sure.

Ewa: Yeah.

Ren: You're approached by someone fairly quickly -

Ewa: Oops.

Ren: He's a dwarf, he has tanned skin, he's got blonde well-groomed hair and beard. He's wearing white robes with red and gold embroidery and you know this marks him as the head priest.

> **Priest:** How can I help you my child?

Meredith: I'm Meredith. I'm looking for my dog? Have you seen it?

Priest: I'm afraid we don't get many dogs in here.

Meredith: Oh … Onions.

Priest: I can ask around if you want?

Meredith: Yes please.

Priest: My name is Melmyr Whitmaul, I'm the head priest here at the temple.

Ewa: Meredith kind of like, takes the hand and kind of wants to shake it.

Ren: He chuckles a little at your awkwardness and takes your hand and gives it a firm shake.

Melmyr: Where're you from, Meredith?

Meredith: Llaneirian.

Melmyr: That's a fair distance.

Meredith: I'm from a small temple.

Melmyr: An acolyte, I see.

Meredith: Yes.

Melmyr: Well it's a pleasure to have you here.

Meredith: Thank you.

Melmyr: We can offer you food and shelter as long as you're staying in Caerbryn.

Ewa: Meredith nods.

Melmyr: A dog you say? You came all the way from Llaneirian to find your dog?

Meredith: Yes.

Melmyr: That's unusual!

Meredith: It's a very important dog to me.

Melmyr: I can see that.

Meredith: Very, very important.

Jack: It's a very long game of fetch, really.

Melmyr: I'll ask around. I'll ask around for you. Hopefully we can find it.

Meredith: Thank you.

[music]

Ren: Hello and welcome to "Here There Be"! This is a Dungeons and Dragons podcast, but don't worry if you've never played before, you don't need to know the rules to follow this story. Think of it like this: D&D is just the tool we're using to tell this story, to weave this narrative as you might say. We're going to playing it kind of light on the rules, we might ignore rules where it suits us or the story. Character and roleplaying comes first, D&D later. We're also not going to explain any rules as they come up so we don't lose the narrative flow. You're gonna, don't worry. You're still gonna have a pretty good idea of what's going on. Now before we get back to the story, we're going to a round of introductions.

Jack: Hello! My name's Jack Docking. I will be playing the character Jaspar, the one with the accent that will change multiple times throughout this series.

Ewa: Yeah, and I'm Ewa. Ewa Ladkowska, and I'm playing Meredith. A very tall half-elf.

Jack: With a staff.

Ewa: With a staff.

Jack: Very important - very important there's a staff.

Ewa: Don't forget the staff.

Ren: The dog is also very important.

Jack: Yeah.

Ren: Hugely important.

Ewa: Life or death situation.

Ren: And I am Ren Heulyn Tryner, your DM.

Ewa: Woo!

Ren: They/them pronouns, please and thank you!

Ren: I want to take this opportunity to talk about another D&D podcast. The Frost Walkers Podcast is a year old dnd 5e actual play run by a group of young adults who are passionate about telling their story! Set in the arctic town of Timshul the party is a group of misfits who despite their many differences become a family together, and save the town from countless monsters and other insanity. There's a party hat wraith, an ice prince. And of course tons of ice cream to be had! You can find the frost walkers anywhere you can listen to podcasts like Spotify and ITunes. Since they're entering their final arc now is an awesome time to catch up!

Ren: And now without further ado, let's get back to the story!

[MUSIC: Main Theme]

Ren: As Meredith settles into the temple, our other hero approaches. Jaspar, you usually take a shortcut through the temple of Freya graveyard when heading to the blacksmiths, it's quicker and there's less people. As you reach the gate to the graveyard, both you and Meredith within the temple hear a startled yelp.

Jack: Jaspar, cautious continues into the graveyard.

Ren: Meredith, what are you doing?

Ewa: I look around and see if anyone else noticed.

Ren: Doesn't seem like they did. Melmyr has moved away from you by this point and everyone else is still deep in meditation.

Ewa: I walk to the - the nearest door to go out.

Ren: Upon exiting the temple, it initially looks like no one's in the graveyard anymore. However after a moment you first notice the figure standing at the gate. Jaspar, what exactly do you look like right now?

Jack: So Jaspar is basically covered head to toe. He is wearing a cloak at the moment with a bandana over his mouth. The goggles are on, gloves on, basically completely covered so you can't really determine who he is.

Ren: It's also worth noting that you can't tell he's a tabaxi right now. His tail has been tucked away and because he's wearing harem pants and weird boots you cannot tell what the shape of his legs look like.

Ren: The second thing you see after that alarming figure is a pair of legs poking out from behind a grave in the general vicinity of where that half-orc was earlier.

Ewa: So, Meredith looks at the figure at the gate and then to the legs and then back at the figure, then back to the legs, then back to the figure, and kind of slowly turns towards the legs but still facing the figure and gives it - gives the figure a small wave.

Jack: The figure waves back. And cautious walks towards the legs that are poking up.

Ren: You have not noticed them yet.

Jack: Have I not? Ah.

Ren: No, you have a low passive perception!

Jack: Ah! Then in that case, I just wave. I stand there and wave.

Ewa: Yeah, Meredith approaches the legs.

Ren: Okay. It is indeed that half-orc you saw before.

> **Meredith:** Oh, onions.

Ren: He seems to be either unconscious or dead, you can't tell from this distance. He's in his late-twenties maybe, green skin - like most half-orcs - unkempt hair, bit of stubble.

Ewa: Quickly check his pulse.

Ren: Make a medicine check.

Ewa: Alright.

Ren: That - that was nineteen! What's your bonus?

Ewa: Five.

Ren: You - okay?! Twenty four! [laughs]

Ewa: Yas.

Ren: That's pretty good! Okay, alright, with that you can tell he is alive, he is unconscious, but he is fading fast. You can see he has some burns on his face, it's not your usual sort of burn-looking burn. It's almost - It's almost shaped like frost, like tendrils of frost. As you watch, a couple of electric arcs quickly zip across his skin.

Ewa: Meredith starts looking behind them to see if there's anyone else nearby or if they are like alone with this figure.

Ren: Jaspar, what are you doing?

Jack: Jaspar's sort of started walking up to Meredith.

> **Jaspar:** Uh, hey. Was it you that was screaming? Or -
>
> **Meredith:** No.

Ren: At this point you can see the unconscious body too.

> **Jaspar:** Oh, oh that makes much more sense.
>
> **Meredith:** We have to help.
>
> **Jaspar:** Do you want me to go get someone?
>
> **Meredith:** Yes please.
>
> **Jaspar:** Yeah! I'll be right back.

Jack: And Jaspar runs into the uh - into the temple.

Ewa: I'm gonna quickly use a cantrip.

[MUSIC: Sparing the Dying]

Ren: What are you casting?

Ewa: Spare the Dying. Meredith puts their hand on the half-orcs cheek. You se a glow with like - it looks like there's a light shining through with some glittery dust.

Ren: Like dust hanging in the air in a beam of sunlight.

Ewa: Yes.

Ren: With that, an almost imperceivable sigh escapes his lips.

Meredith: [sighs]

Ren: And you can tell that he has been stabilized, he is no longer in danger of dying.

Ewa: Yay!

[Ren and Jack laugh]

Ren: Okay Jaspar. Inside the temple - You've run inside the temple, you burst the doors open, alarming some of the worshippers inside. What do you do?

Jaspar: Uh, Is anyone here a doctor?

Ren: You see uh, you see a dwarf in vestiges coming quickly towards you.

Melmyr: Are you alright?

Jaspar: Uh yeah, we've got a bit of a situation out in the graveyard there. There's uh, this half-orc on the floor, just - just - I heard a scream and then the half-orc was there and I just need some help.

Melmyr: Lead the way, lead the way.

Jaspar: Uh yeah!

Jack: Jaspar leads, yeah leads the way.

Ewa: Do I have time to explore the light thingy?

Ren: Hang on, the what?

Ewa: The light. Is it like ...

Ren: What the burns?

Ewa: Yeah can I explore it or see if there's anything around -

Ren: Um we're gonna get to you in a second.

Ewa: - to find the cause or whatever.

Ren: We're gonna, okay. Meredith, as you're kneeling there over this man, you see something out of the corner of your eye, a light just zip behind a grave.

Ewa: So is the guy stable now?

Ren: Yep, he's stable, he's fine, he's gonna be okay.

Ewa: So Meredith slowly stands up to follow the light.

Ren: You head over towards the grave you saw it disappear behind, but you find nothing behind it.

Ewa: Oh.

Ren: You … you suddenly see it again, but a bit further off and to your left. It sort of bobs and hovers in mid-air for a bit? And then suddenly zips across the graveyard and then just blips out of existence.

Ewa: Ooooo.

Ren: At this point Jaspar and Melmyr have exited the temple.

Ewa: I hurry back to the body.

Ren: Melmyr hurries over towards you and gets down on his knees beside the half-orc.

> **Melmyr:** This - this is Sir Gethin. Sir Gethin Greene! He's a knight!
>
> **Meredith:** Oh.
>
> **Melmyr:** He - he needs help.
>
> **Meredith:** Yes. Yes. Yes he needs help.
>
> **Melmyr:** Well bring him inside. Bring him inside.
>
> **Meredith:** Okay.
>
> **Jaspar:** Yeah, no worries.

Ren: Between the three of you, you manage to carry Gethin inside. You lay him down on the floor of the temple. Melmyr quickly gets to work, he sends another acolyte off to the temple of Pelor, which has a hospital wing, to fetch a nurse. What do you do in the time being?

Ewa: I'm putting my hand on his forehead to check temperature and act like I'm helping out.

Ren: Jaspar, anything you're doing?

Jack: Jaspar is just going to look around the temple.

> **Jaspar:** So uh, what's your name?
>
> **Meredith:** Meredith.
>
> **Jaspar:** Oh uh, nice to meet you, Meredith.
>
> **Meredith:** And you are?
>
> **Jaspar:** Oh I'm Jaspar.

Ewa: Meredith nods.

> **Jaspar:** So um - did you see what happened or -?
>
> **Meredith:** No.
>
> **Jaspar:** Okay. Do you - Do you know who could have done this?

Ewa: Meredith shakes their head.

> **Jaspar:** Okay.
>
> **Meredith:** He's okay?
>
> **Jaspar:** Yeah! I'm just in a bit of a hurry. So uh, I don't wanna stick around here too long, you know?
>
> **Meredith:** Where are you off to? Oh can you help me?
>
> **Jaspar:** Uh yeah, sure sure.
>
> **Meredith:** Yes yes, I'm looking for a dog. Have you seen it?

Jaspar: No but I love dogs!

Meredith: Great! This is fantastic! Would you would you like to help me?

Jaspar: Yeah! Yeah course! I got an affinity with animals, you know? I can help you out! Yeah! What type of dog is it?

Meredith: Okay so once we're done - It's a deerhound.

Jaspar: Deerhound, oh they're big dogs.

Meredith: Yes.

Jaspar: Okay uh yeah -

Meredith: Have you seen it?

Jaspar: No, I would have seen one around the city, but yeah I haven't seen one, but I'll definitely help you look. Yeah.

Meredith: Great. Well, lets stay for this.

Ewa: And Meredith points at the body.

Jaspar: Oh yeah yeah.

Jack: Jaspar's slightly disappointed that he can't go looking for dogs at the moment.

Meredith: And then we can go look for my dog.

Jaspar: Okay good good yeah. I'll stay put for now then.

Meredith: Thank you, sir.

Ren: After a short while, a nurse arrives at the temple. He's a gnome and he's wearing white robes with a high collar, the mark of a nurse. He starts tending to Gethin and not too longer afterwards, Gethin wakes up.

Meredith: [gasps]

Gethin: [Irish accent] Did anyone of you see who did that?!

Ewa: Meredith just shakes their head.

Gethin: Did - did you see? There were lights, there were lights! That was magic!

Ren: And a quiet hush falls over the temple as he says that.

Gethin: That was magic I - There were - there were lights ...

Ren: Melmyr quickly hurries over.

Melmyr: Sir Gethin, these two found you, they could - Meredith, did you see anything?

Meredith: No.

Gethin: Are you sure? Are you sure?

Jaspar: I didn't see anything, no, no!

Gethin: Nothing at all? There were lights, little floating - They hurt! They hurt!

Ewa: Meredith puts their hand on his forehead.

Meredith: Are you alright sir?

Gethin: No, I'm not alright!

Meredith: Okay.

Melmyr: These two saved you, Sir Gethin. They helped you, they brought you inside. They called someone for help.

Gethin: Oh right well, thank you for that. What are your names?

Meredith: Meredith.

Jaspar: Um ... Jaspar.

Gethin: Meredith. Jaspar. Thank you.

Jaspar: That's no worries, honestly. We wouldn't have left anyone to, you know, rot away outside. Heh.

Gethin: Yeah, yeah ...

Ren: And he gets a very thoughtful look on his face.

Jaspar: Okay! So, now that you're awake, can we look for that dog now?

Jack: And Jaspar looks at Meredith excitedly.

Meredith: We're looking for a dog. Have you seen it?

Gethin: No? No, I haven't seen a dog.

Meredith: Oh.

Gethin: If I see one I'll let you know?

Meredith: Thank you?

Jaspar: Fantastic! Brilliant! Now, lets have a search. Where did you last see it?

Meredith: In the graveyard?

Jaspar: Oh okay. Ooh. you weren't attacked by a dog were you?

Meredith: No! No. My ... dog. My dog - My - my dog -

Ewa: Meredith just kind of like fades away.

Jaspar: Are they okay or -?

Gethin: Are you alright, Meredith?

Meredith: I'm looking for my dog. Have you seen it?

Gethin: I already said I hadn't seen it, no.

Ewa: Meredith looks really, like, sad.

Gethin: Oh, I'm sure it'll turn up at some point?

Meredith: It's very important. Very very very very important!

Jaspar: No! That - that's fine! Listen, if we've got no other business to deal with here we could, you know, go have a look for it. I'm happy to help.

Ewa: I look expectantly at both Jaspar and the knight.

Gethin: Well - I'm not feeling too good right now, but I could, uh, help you.

Ren: He gets a little - a small smile comes across his face and he sort of looks up and to the side for a second, thinking.

Gethin: You know what? I think I know someone who could help you out.

Ewa: Meredith steps a bit closer, but then realises that's a bit awkward so steps back again.

Gethin: If you help me get home, I can introduce you to someone who I think you'll be good friends with!

Meredith: Yes please.

Jaspar: O - oh okay, yeah sure.

Ren: He starts getting to his feet, much to Melmyr and the nurses protests. He looks awful by the way, he's still got those burns across his face. He looks exhausted, he's a real mess, and as he gets up he kind of staggers to one side and falls on Meredith.

Ewa: Meredith holds him up.

Gethin: Thank you. Thank you.

Ren: He starts staggering towards the exit of the temple with your help. Gethin leads you out of the temple and into the city streets. After a couple - after a few minutes it becomes fairly clear where he's leading you. The castle walls tower over you. The castle is guarded at the main gates by two knights at all times. The knights easily let you in with just a friendly greeting towards Gethin. Just beyond the walls are nearly two dozen timbre-frame houses. You pass through these houses and come up to a stone wall with a gate in it. After passing through the gate, you can now see the castle properly. Neither of you have seen it before and it towers over you. It's nearly completely circular and sits upon a high Motte, a man-made mound. There's a steep staircase that leads up to the simple gateway of the keep. As you climb these steps, Gethin turns to you Jaspar.

Gethin: Uh, Jaspar? Should've mentioned this earlier, but they're not gonna let you in if you keep your face covered.

Jaspar: Oh. Right. Yeah. Could you just give me one minute? I just need to adjust some things, you know? I'm just gonna -

Jack: And Jaspar is going to have a look for an alleyway, he can discreetly -

Ren: [laughing] You are standing - You are standing on the steps leading up to the castle.

Jack: Ahhhh.

Ren: You are in plain view of everyone in the outer bailey, as well as the guards at the top of the staircase.

Jack: Noooo.

Ren: Yeah, it's - yeah.

Jack: Uhhhh I should have thought this through. Okay, that was dumb. Um. [laughs]

Ren: [laughs] What are you doing, Jack?

Jack: Oh god this is a bad idea. Um. Okay, Jaspar is going to walk backwards and trip up over himself and fall down the stairs. And as that's happening, he's going to cast Disguise Self.

Ren: Oh my goood!

Jack: Just - just - just -

Ewa: Are you serious?

Jack: Just like a massive -

> **Jaspar:** Ow - ee - oo - ah - ee - ah - oh!

Jack: As he's - as he's rolling down the stairs casting the spell on himself! [Ren laughs]

Ren: Oh what would this be?! Okay I think I need you to roll -

[Jack and Ren laugh]

Ren: - sleight of hand. Yeah go for sleight of hand.

Jack: Yeah, sleight of hand. What is wrong with me? Okay.

[Ewa and Ren laugh]

Jack: Ooh! Ooh, no! That's good! That's very good!

Ren: What - what is it?

Jack: Hang on, I'll just check.

Ren: Tell us!

Jack: Yes, sleight of hand, so - yeah that's a twenty five. That's good.

[Ren laughs]

Ren: We've had like two rolls so far. It's been twenty four then twenty five. This is great!

Ewa: Yas!

Jack: To be fair, who's watching me for casting spells as i'm falling down a long flight of stairs? I'm not being funny. [laughs]

Ren: Okay. okay so you dramatically throw yourself down these stairs and expertly … with barely a whisper, with barely a hand motion, you cast Disguise Self on yourself. And what do you look like now?

Jack: So, Jaspar dusts himself off and takes off the cloak. And you see fluffy, black, curly hair, that he rubs. As he pulls off the goggles you see blue, piercing eyes. And as he takes off the bandana you see a very pale, gaunt-looking face of a young fifteen year old boy. He sheepishly walks up the stairs and goes -

> **Jaspar:** Sorry about that. Yeah, that's fine.
>
> **Gethin:** You took quite a tumble there, are you sure you're alright?
>
> **Jaspar:** Yeah! I'm fine. I'm fine. I'm okay, I just - I need to sit down so can we just get going? Please?
>
> **Gethin:** Alright then. On we go.

Ren: You continue up the steps to the castle, again the guards at the front let you in. Once entering the castle, Gethin leads you into what must be the great hall. It's a large circular room with a high impressive timbre roof. There's a large fireplace on the left side of the hall. There are only two people in the hall at the moment. They're sitting at a table playing cards. One is a gnome in their late-teens with light brown skin. The other is human, around the same age and has olive skin. Gethin waltzes, as best he can, still kind of leaning on Meredith, up to them and he asks them -

Gethin: Have any of you seen Merri?

Ren: As he says that he signs something to them, in sign language. The gnome signs something back to him, and then Gethin replies again in sign language. He then turns away from them and says -

Gethin: Alright! Alright, lets go - lets go sit down.

Ren: And he leads you out of the great hall. He takes you to a small square room. The ceiling is domed and covered in gold honeycomb vaulting. There are stained glass windows in three of the walls, each one a couple feet above eye level. The floor and walls are a greyish blue marble, there's a few armchairs and end tables against the walls. There's also a rather blank section of wall. You can see that there's a small hook in the center of it, it seems like a painting once hung there.

Gethin: Alright, alright -

Ren: Gethin settles himself down into an armchair.

Gethin: Alright, Merri'll be along in a moment. He's my squire. You're gonna - he's a nice kid. Your age, Jaspar? Little older?

Jaspar: Oh.

Gethin: He's a good kid and he needs friends. Which is why I think you'll be - you two, you'll be perfect for him.

Jaspar: Oh right, and he'll be able to help us find the dog?

Gethin: Sure! Sure! Yeah.

Ewa: Meredith's just looking at the two of them. Thinking how long this is gonna take.

[Jack laughs]

Gethin: He'll be along in a moment, don't worry.

Meredith: Sir?

Gethin: Mm?

Meredith: What were you doing in the graveyard?

Gethin: Visiting a grave? What most people do in graveyards.

Meredith: Oh I'm so sorry, did someone die?

Gethin: Typically people die before they get put in graves, yeah.

Meredith: Yes but were you visiting someone special?

Gethin: I was. I was yeah. Very special.

Meredith: May I ask who that was?

Gethin: It was uh … my fiance. He - he died three years ago. It's the anniversary of his death today.

[pause]

Gethin: Sorry! Don't mean to make things a little bit uh dour in here. [laughs]

Meredith: It's alright, I'm used to this. Dead people.

Gethin: Right, mm.

Meredith: I myself work at a graveyard.

Gethin: That one there? The temple of Freya? I haven't seen you there before.

Meredith: No in a small town. Llaneirian.

Gethin: Oh right yeah, I know it. Yeah i know it.

Ren: At this point, the door to the room opens and someone that can only be Merri enters. He's around sixteen, seventeen years old maybe? He's got brown skin, freckles, and short, brown, curly hair. He stands up straight, but his head is bowed.

Merri: Uh, Gethin? You called?

Ren: He looks at the two of you, kind of confused.

[pause]

Ren: Oh right that's me, I play Gethin. I play Gethin!

[Jack laughs]

Ren: Hang on a minute!

Jack: ["Irish" accent] Aye, aye it was me that called you! [he drops the accent] Sorry.

> **Gethin:** Merri! Merri! This is Meredith. This is Jaspar. We're gonna go look for a dog!

Ren: Merri looks confused for a moment, then resigned, surprisingly quickly.

> **Gethin:** Right well off we go then!
>
> **Meredith:** Oh thank you sir! Thank you so much!

Ewa: And then Meredith's trying to shake hands.

Ren: With Gethin or Merri?

Ewa: Merri.

Ren: He awkwardly reaches his hand out and shakes yours.

> **Meredith:** Thank you so much! This means a lot to me, this is my life! I need to find this dog! And it's important, very very important! We are in -

[pause]

> **Jaspar:** You know, I offered first.
>
> **Meredith:** Th - thank you, Jaspar.
>
> **Jaspar:** No, no, it's fine. It's fine. Lets go.

Jack: And Jaspar walks out the room just, a bit annoyed.

Ren: Gethin hauls himself to his feet and starts walking after Jaspar and Merri is left to follow him out of the room going -

> **Merri:** Gethin, are you - you look awful!

Ren: You leave the castle, you exit the walls, and as soon as you're on the street, Gethin turns to you, Meredith, and he says -

Gethin: So where did you say you last saw this dog?

Meredith: At my temple?

Gethin: The one in Llaneirian?

Meredith: Yes.

Gethin: Why are we in Caerbryn?

Meredith: Because it's a big city.

Gethin: But we're miles away from Llaneirian!

Meredith: But they've got big temples of Freya here!

Gethin: Does the dog like Freya?

Meredith: Yes, it's a graveyard dog.

Gethin: Which means what exactly?

Meredith: To help people on their journey when they die.

Gethin: I thought only dead dogs did that.

Meredith: Only what?

Gethin: Dead dogs! That's what you do right? You bury a dead dog in the graveyard and it sends people off to wherever.

Ewa: Meredith's trying to find words but not quite finding them.

Jaspar: Are there dead dogs that take people off?

Gethin: Well it's just a superstition really.

Ewa: Meredith's not looking great.

Jaspar: Meredith, is this dog actually alive?

Ewa: Meredith's trying to like hold back tears.

Ren: Gethin and Merri both look concerned and confused.

Jaspar: Ohhh no.

Gethin: Meredith, are you alright?

Meredith: [audibly upset] I just want to find my dog. Can we just carry on?

Ren: Merri kinda awkwardly pats you on the shoulder.

Meredith: It's just a deerhound. Anyone can spot a deerhound. It's not that difficult!

Jaspar: Meredith … we can't exactly find the dog if it's dead, you know?

Meredith: I didn't say it was dead!

Gethin: Alright, well - well why don't we just start asking about a deerhound?

[pause]

Gethin: I'll take that as a yes alright let's go!

Ren: And Gethin starts marching through the streets. He almost immediately needs to lean on Merri.

[Jack laughs]

Jack: Jaspar sort of, rubs his forehead.

Jaspar: Come on you. Let's go this way.

Jack: And he takes Meredith by the arm and they start moving to go round asking questions.

Ewa: Meredith follows.

Ren: I need you both to roll investigation checks.

Ewa: Brilliant! Thirteen.

Jack: Five.

Ren: Ooooo. Okay, so, Jaspar while you have forgotten that it's actually a deerhound, you start looking for a greyhound. [Jack laughs] meredith meanwhile, you manage to find someone who has seen a dog.

Meredith: [gasps]

Bypasser: Yeah I saw a dog. I saw a dog. Yesterday. Big. big it was. Scary. Killed a horse. Was it your dog? Did your dog do that? Should keep it on a lead you should!

Meredith: Where is it now?

Bypasser: The dog? I don't know, i can tell you where the dead horse is but not the dog.

Ewa: Meredith's like nodding.

Meredith: Yeah, okay.

Ren: You're pointed a couple streets over to the stables. Upon arriving there and asking about and after the stablemaster seeing Gethin and immediately sort of stepping into an awkward half bow but then stopping himself and saying -

Stablemaster: Uh - Sir Gethin! Here here -

Ren: He leads you - he leads the four of you inside and you find a dead horse, covered by a white sheet. Meredith, you can hear it neighing. This doesn't surprise you. It is the Whispers of Bone after all, you've heard them your whole life as far as you can remember.

Ewa: Meredith kneels down and puts their hand on this dead … animal.

Jaspar: I thought we were looking for a dog.

Ewa: Meredith's too consumed with what's happening, what they can hear.

Ren: Gethin pulls back the sheet to take a look at the horse.

Gethin: Well it does kinda look like a dog did this.

Ewa: Inspection! I want to see if it's like a dog or a wolf or something bigger.

Ren: Okay okay, roll ... nature.

Ewa: Eight.

Ren: Mmmm I mean it could be a dog - could be a dog - could also be a wolf, maybe.

> **Meredith:** Sir?
>
> **Gethin:** Yeah?
>
> **Meredith:** Describe the scene.
>
> **Gethin:** There's a dead horse under a sheet?
>
> **Meredith:** No, explain the day before. Please.

Ren: Oh! You're talking to the - oh. I thought you were talking to Gethin!

Ewa: No.

[Jack laughs]

Ren: Okay sorry, take that again. The stablemaster replies and says -

> **Stablemaster:** I wasn't there myself. There was a great ruckus in the night, and came down and the horse was dead. Didn't see what did it.

Ewa: What did they neighing sound like? What kind of emotion? The voice?

Ren: Right now?

Ewa: Yeah.

Ren: Right now, you can't hear it. You turn around and the horse is no longer on the ground. It towers above you, standing. The white sheet has slipped back just enough to reveal its head and it stares down at you with cold eyes.

Jack: Uhhh.

Ewa: Meredith kind of cowers down, like staring up at this thing. Like, um, I was not expecting this!

Jack: Can we all see this?

Ren: Yes you can.

Ewa & Jack: Ohhh! Ohhhhh!

Jack: Okay, that's not good. [laughs]

Ren: Meredith, does a twenty one hit your AC?

Jack: NO!

[Ren laughs]

Jack: No, noo!

Ewa: Uh yeah AC eighteen.

Ren: The horse rears back, silently.

Ewa: Whyyyy.

Ren: And it brings its hooves down upon you. You take eleven points of damage.

Ewa: Wait what?!

Ren: Eleven points of bludgeoning damage.

Ewa: Oh this is not looking good!

Ren: Immediately you hear cries of alarm from everyone around you. Gethin starts pushing everyone back. He shoves Merri and the stablemaster back out of the way and he grabs the back of Jaspar's collar and starts dragging him backwards.

Jaspar: Wuh!

Ren: What are you both doing?

Ewa: He drags us back, yeah?

Ren: He is dragging Jaspar backwards, he cannot reach you.

Jack: Yeah I am not arguing. There is a big horse that is going to stampede. So I'm getting out of there.

Ewa: Um, can I get behind something?

Ren: You can dart into one of the stalls.

Ewa: Yes please.

Ren: Okay.

Ewa: Immediately.

Ren: Cool.

Ewa: Help.

Ren: You've backed yourself into a corner now!

Jack: Ohhhh, okay.

Ren: Guess the horse is gonna attack again!

Ewa: Noooo!

Jack: Okay, what is in the room?

Ren: You can hear - you can hear Gethin behind you shout your name in distress.

Ewa: I'm just looking for my dog.

Ren: Does a nineteen hit?

Ewa: Yeah?

Ren: Okay. You take eight points of damage.

Ewa: Well I'm gone now.

Jack: No! No.

Ewa: Wait, wait no I'm not.

Jack: Oh hang on.

Ewa: No I'm not. Wait hang on.

Ren: No you have more - you have more hit points than that, don't you?

Ewa: Sorry.

Ren: It was an eleven and then an eight, that's nineteen. You have more hit points than that.

Ewa: Oh, sorry I did maths wrong.

[Ren laughs]

Ewa: I was doing it with the armor class.

Ren: You do not have too much left though.

Ewa: Yes yes yes, where's the calculator?

Ren: You are now backed into a corner, this horse looms above you, one hoof still on your chest. You can feel - there's gotta be at least a couple ribs broken there.

Jack: I'm gonna run up. And I'm gonna - as im running up im gonna cast speak with animals

Ren: Ooooo!

Jack: Very covertly.

Ren: [laughing] Very covertly! How are you - okay okay okay okay

Jack: I mean, there is a big horse stamping on our friend. [laughs]

Ren: Sleight of hand!

Jack: Okay. Oh oh oh! twenty five! Again!

Ren: What?!

Ewa: Thank god.

Ren: Oh my goodness!

Jack: That's - wow, okay! Just my lucky day!

Ren: This really makes up for how you two rolled when it came to stats.

Jack: Yes, definitely. [laughs]

[Ren cackles]

Ren: Okay so, what are you doing?

Jack: So I run behind the horse and I go -

Jaspar: Hey! Hey! No! Don't do that!

Ren: Roll persuasion?

Jack: Is everyone just hearing me go "neigh!" the whole time?

Ren: Yeah! Yeah they are!

Jack: Yeah, brilliant.

Ren: They don't immediately know it's magic. Cause they did not notice you cast the spell, but you are making very convincing horse noises right now.

Jack: Okay so that's persuasion … That is thirteen.

Ren: Well, the horse rolled a natural twenty against that so -

[Jack groans]

Ewa: Oh my god!

[Ren cackles]

Ren: Meredith, what are you doing?

Ewa: Um, so, there's no way out, right? In that corner?

Ren: The horse is blocking your exit. Not unless you start like climbing over the stall, which you could do.

Ewa: Yeah, I'll have to do that.

Ren: Okay. You start scrambling over the stall and - I won't make you roll for it, you manage to do so, but that will take most of your movement. Seeing you manage to get over the stall, Gethin runs forward and he grabs you by the back of your collar again, Jaspar, and starts tugging you away, out of the stables, yelling at you all to run. You all sprint from the stables and outside you take a moment. Gethin looks back at the stables and you don't hear anything.

Jaspar: Okay, so that was … odd.

Gethin: Wait here, I'll go check.

Ren: Merri kind of protests a little bit as Gethin starts moving off alone to the stables. He peeks his head around the corner, then looks back at you all and says -

Gethin: It's on the floor again. It's not moving.

Meredith: Something's wrong.

Gethin: Well yeah I think something's wrong!

Meredith: No but that's not the way the circle of life works.

Gethin: Yeah I - yeah no -

Meredith: Yeah if - Because if it died, it shouldn't … it should be dead.

Gethin: That is how death works, correct, Meredith.

Ewa: Meredith's like - a flash of like "I'm not stupid".

[Ren and Jack laugh]

Gethin: Sorry, that was uncalled for. Keep going, keep going.

Meredith: Do you think there are more things like this happening?

Gethin: Do you think this is connected to the lights I saw?

Meredith: No, to something else. Um … [noises of difficult thought]

[Ren laughs]

Ewa: Meredith's trying to put the words together, it's like -

Meredith: So, so what would you do if, possibly, this happened more often?

Gethin: I'd get a witchfinder in.

Meredith: A what sorry?

Gethin: A witchfinder.

Meredith: A witchfinder. What does a witchfinder do?

Jaspar: Finds witches.

Gethin: No it doesn't, that's uh - witches don't exist, we all know that. But uh - The name's misleading but - they find - they find - A witchfinder seeks out magic users and brings them in for a bounty.

Meredith: Oh. But the horse is not - It's an animal.

Gethin: Well I assume someone did this.

Meredith: Ohhh.

Gethin: From what I know about magic - Dead things don't just come back to life! Something brought it back!

Meredith: Well we need to find this person then!

Gethin: We do.

Meredith: Well that's our next mission! Who's with me?

Gethin: Yeah I'm with you! Merri's with you too, aren't you, Merri?

Merri: Yeah I - Yes I'm with you …

Ewa: I look at Jaspar.

Jaspar: Well I'm late coming back so i might as well stick out for the whole thing.

Jack: And Jaspar puts on the cloak again, and the bandana, and the goggles.

Gethin: Right well, it's getting dark now. I don't think there's much more we can do today. I need to report this to Jenny anyway, so - Right. Thank you, again, you two, for your help. Thank you. Um. I'm sorry we couldn't find your dog. I'm sure - I'm sure - Merri would love to help you out again, wouldn't you, Merri?

Ren: And he looks at Merri with a grin and Merri looks again very resigned to this. He has already accepted that this is just the way it is with Gethin.

[Jack laughs]

Meredith: We're going to find the imposter.

Gethin: Tomorrow - tomorrow I'll come find you. Where -

Meredith: I'm at the temple.

Gethin: Temple. Temple of Freya, yeah. Jaspar, where can I find you?

Jaspar: Um. Well. I - I sort of uh … I live around, you know? I'll come to the temple tomorrow.

Gethin: Alright? Alright.

Ren: Kind of narrows his eyes a little, looks a little confused, but he accepts it.

Gethin: Well then! We'll see you tomorrow! Right, say bye, Merri!

Ren: And Merri says -

Merri: Goodbye. Lovely meeting you both.

Jaspar: Yeah, see ya!

Ewa: Meredith just gives a little wave.

Ren: And with that, Gethin and Merri leave.

Jaspar: Meredith.

Meredith: Mm?

Jaspar: You uh - your dog. It's not magic, is it?

Meredith: Um … my dog … magic … My dog's not magic. My dog's not magic … My dog … My dog didn't do anything wrong! If you are accusing my dog of doing something wrong, my dog has been the most loyal - loyal animal by my side, and i will find him, and i will bring him back, where he will find true peace!

Jaspar: Okay. I'll see you at the temple tomorrow, and we'll find this greyhound together. Okay?

Meredith: Deerhound.

Jaspar: What?

Meredith: Deer - hound.

Jaspar: So I've been looking for a greyhound this en -

[Ren laughs]

Jaspar: Goodnight, Meredith.

Jack: And Jaspar walks away, tutting - just - just - mumbling to himself.

Jaspar: [annoyed mumbling]

[MUSIC: An Impossible Dream]

Ren: That night as you both fall asleep, you find yourselves having a dream.

Ren: You stand in the great hall, which is filled with people. Sitting on a throne on the dais before you is a young woman. She has dark skin and long, coily hair, and she wears a crown.

Ren: A rather short figure steps up before her throne. They're covered in black feathers and has a long, dark beak, making them resemble a raven. You would recognise them as a kenku. As they stand before who you can only assume is the future Queen Jenifry, they lift the lute they're holding and begin to play. The notes fall from their strings and the hall above you is suddenly lit by floating globules of soft light. One of these sinks downwards until it rests on the floor and shifts into the form of a knight. Several more of the lights also float to the ground and merge together into the shape of a dragon. The dragon rears back and opens its maw in a silent roar. The knight draws their sword and readies themself for the battle ahead. The dragon stalks forward and makes a sweeping attack with its tail, which the knight leaps over. The dragon then opens its jaws again and this time sparks fly forth from it, mimicking a stream of fire.

Ren: Looking back at Queen Jenifry, her face is alight; she seems thrilled by this very obvious display of magic. People all around the hall are reacting in similar ways. They wince when the knight takes a hit and cheer when the dragon finally is defeated. The kenku's performance is met with loud applause; there's no fear, no hatred, only wonder. It's an impossible dream, and it slips from you quickly, leaving you in the darkness of dreamless sleep.

[music fades]

Ren: Hello again and thanks for listening! If you enjoyed this episode, be sure to check out our Twitter and Instagram. You can find us on both @HereThereBeCast. We post things like character art, maps, and other behind the scenes stuff. You'll also find a link to our website, where we're going to be posting transcripts of each episode. We'll be releasing an episode every two weeks, which means our next one comes out on the tenth of February. See you then!