

Episode Twenty-Five: Vae's Terrible, Horrible, No Good, Very Bad Day - Part Four

Dungeon Master: Xaan

Jerome: Lady

Mogan: Queen

Vae: Alex

Snow: Bean

Leif: Selah

Kareus: Kian

Content Warning:

Xaan: Critically Chaotic is a rowdy dungeons and dragons podcast that consists of adult themes and humor. Content warnings for this episode can be found in the episode description, as well as a link to transcripts. Because of some real life circumstances, Selah will be missing for a few sessions, and thus Leif will be off on a solo adventure for several episodes. Rest weary traveler, and enjoy.

Recap:

Bean: In the last episode, the Vox Anima launched their rescue mission to find Vae. After a hard first round fighting cultists, the Vox decided to take a small break before delving deeper into the hideout. While everyone gathered their strengths and spell slots, Jerome gave Harber a quick visit to pay his grates. Now back at their best, or as good as they can be, the Vox heads into the darkness that awaits them.

[theme song]

Xaan: So you all take your rest at the shop, nobody really bothers you. There was like a, a, brief exchange between Valen and the shopkeeper but then you guys are just kind of left alone in the corner booth and, you just rest, you eat a little bit, and it's all... fine and dandy. And then when you all are feeling a lot better afterwards, you all pack up again and head back to the same location. It is

still empty aside from the dead bodies. No- it doesn't seem like anybody new had come through, nothing new is there. And now you all can proceed through the trap door if you would so please.

Lady: I would so please, please. Wait! Open the trap door first and look down before you jump in head first. [giggles]

Xaan: You all open up the trap door and then there is a ladder leading down and below it is still dark, but it's not pitch black like this room was. You can still see a little bit down below like there's dim light, and you see a somewhat small room below and it looks like it's empty.

Lady: Alright. I'm gonna turn to the rest of the group.

Jerome: A'ight. Do we wanna do this, do we wanna do subtle style take two or kickin' and screamin' bust in there? In case there's anybody down there. It doesn't look like there is but y'know, never hurts to be cautious.

Kareus: We might want to do some sort of scouting party with two at first, and then everybody else comes down? Maybe? Or we can just... head in.

Jerome: Scouting party of two then! I would like to volunteer myself for one member of the scouting party, cause you know, stealth. And blending in. Anybody else want to be member number two?

Kareus: I can come.

Jerome: Alright. Real quick, do you wanna wear like, a disguise just in case? 'Cause you're looking a little very noticeable and recognizable.

Kareus: I'm not sure there's much point at this point but I'm happy to put one on if you think it's best.

Jerome: It wouldn't hurt, is my take on it.

Lady: So I'm just gonna pass him, basic, very like, one minute disguise from the disguise kit stuff. Can- Can I retroactively have changed back into Jack?

Xaan: Yeah, I figured that you would've just switched back on the way there.

[spooky music begins playing]

Jerome: Alright, I'll lead the way, I guess.

Lady: And so Jerome is going to go down the ladder.

Kian: And Kareus is going to fall- follow after him.

Xaan: You find yourself in a room! It's a small room, and there's not too much in this front room, there are two doors, one to the east and one to the south. And on both of the doors there is a wooden mask hanging on said door.

Lady: Can-Can I see if there's anybody down here that's like obviously lying in wait or hear if there's anything beyond the doors?

Kian: Yeah, can I make a perception check as well? Or investigation?

Xaan: Yeah, do investigation.

Kian: That's seventeen for me.

Lady: That's eleven for me.

Xaan: Okay. Jerome you don't see anybody in this room, you don't hear too much beyond it, besides a, you hear like, a small shuffle through the south door and Kareus you are able to hear the sound of someone kind of mumbling to themselves, in the south, through the south door, and then to the west door you hear the sound of like footsteps and shuffling, but it's hard to tell like, how many people are in there.

Kareus: Alright, I think he's gonna leave over to Jerome and convey that there's people behind both doors and then say,

Kareus: I can perhaps sort of act as our Ele and scout in Wildshape, try and see what we're up against? For both rooms?

Jerome: Sure, if you wanna scout ahead I'll let the others know what's up down here.

Lady: Is there room under the doors for him to scout ahead?

Xaan: There's room under the south door, but not to the east door.

Kian: Not even as an itty bitty spider?

Xaan: Suuure, an itty bitty spider can probably get through.

Kian: Nice!

Lady: I don't, I don't imagine you'll move very fast as an itty bitty spider if you do though.

Kian: Eh... but... I wanna know what the fuck we're up against. [laughs]

Lady: Fair enough. So, I'll alert the rest of the party to scooch down whilst Kareus investigates.

Kian: I'll approach the south door first and turn into a spider. And crawl underneath the door, because that's the one you said that there was room in, right?

Xaan: Yes.

Kian: And then I'll go on in and look around, do you want me to make a stealth check?

Xaan: Yes. How obvious are you as an itty bitty spider?

Kian: Do get advantage from being an itty bitty spider? [laughs]

Xaan: Yeah.

Kian: That's a twenty-one.

Xaan: Yeah, you crawl under there. And you are able to see inside this room, which is a bit more of a jagged room and when you walk in, you get like, you feel this kind of almost oppressively just like, atmosphere in here. And you can see a lot of drawn illustrations on the wall and several masks that are decorating as well. And there is one cultist that looks to be dressed like a regular cultist that looks to be dressed like a regular cultist from before, and then one archcultist that are speaking together.

Kian: Okay. But no sign of Vae?

Xaan: Correct.

Kian: I... There's a door at the far end, right?

Xaan: Yeah, there's also a door a, another door at the very south.

Kian: Okay, I'm gonna go ahead and slip by the two cultists and go to that door to see what's beyond it.

Xaan: Okay. This door is actually even more secure than the eastern door. There's like, not a single crack in it that you can find even as an itty bitty spider. You do see a big lock on the door that can imply that you need a key from somewhere in order to get through.

Kian: Can I make a perception or investigation check to see if I can tell what's beyond the door at all, or have any hint towards it?

Xaan: Yesss. Roll investigation.

Kian: [dice rolling sounds] That's another seventeen.

Xaan: You, so there's another mask on the door, and this one looks a bit different. The others were very simple wooden masks whereas this one appears

to be carved to look like a cloth mask. So it's a bit more... ornamental than the other ones.

Kian: Okay. And I don't get any hint of what's beyond it at all, beyond that?

Xaan: No. It seems like the, the only hint would be the-the mask that is on there.

Kian: Okay. I'll... go ahead and go back to the eastern door and check out what's in there then.

Xaan: Okay. You're in a hallway.

Kian: Alright. I would like to traverse the hallway to the other door. [laughs]

Xaan: Alright. So you slip under this door and you find yourself in a far bigger room and so, in this one there are a couple benches that are, er, sorry. The room is shaped like a sideways T, so you're, so when you enter the room, you're at like the top part of the capital T and then it extends more east. And on the north and south sides of the long part of the room, there are benches. And similar to the other room that you have been in, there are a lot of illustrations that are on the wall, this one, these ones are more, they're more detailed and you can make out a lot more specific figures. The most prominent one that you see in a lot, in a lot of the different illustrations is someone that is constantly wearing a mask that looks very similar to the ones that are decorating along the walls. And then at the far end of the room where it extends out eastward, you see two cultists that are standing side by side that are looking at something that is on an altar of some kind. But because you are an itty bitty spider on the floor, you cannot see what is on the table.

Kian: Alright, I would like to crawl along the ceiling to look at- er, to be above the altar and see what's on it.

Xaan: Okay. So, you crawl up onto the ceiling, and you get a good look and you see a familiar little creature, you see Ele,

[Kian gasps]

Xaan: That is on the table.

Kian: [choked] Okay. I would like to go back to Jerome very quickly. [wheezes]

Xaan: Alright.

Kian: 'Cause there's no other ex-exits from that room, right?

Xaan: Okay.

Kian: Okay. Yeah. I'm going back to Jerome. Oh, did- could I tell if Ele was hurt at all already?

Xaan: Ele didn't look great.

Kian: Oh, God, okay. I'm going back to Jerome, I'm turning back to Kareus, and I'm going to gesture to the eastern room and be like,

Kareus: Ele's in there and he does not look good, I think we should go in there first. There's two cultists.

Xaan: There's three.

Kian: Three cultists. [giggles] I said three!

Jerome: Shit, fuck, alright.

Lady: I- During the time that Kareus was down there, I let the others know that it was okay to come down, so. I wanna do the standard, "Is this door trapped, and then is this door locked," on the east door.

Xaan: Alright, roll investigation.

Lady: [dice rolling sounds] Fourteen?

Xaan: You do not see any traps on the door.

Lady: Alright. Test it, see if it's locked?

Xaan: It is not locked.

Lady: Alright. Just gonna go through the door then.

Xaan: Alright.

Lady: Mhm. Alright. I'm gonna peek around the corner, is there anything of note?

Xaan: Nope. It's just a hallway.

Lady: Alright. Before going down the hallway, turn back to the others.

Jerome: Kareus you said that there was three folks in there, right? Alright. Let's go on in and surprise 'em and kick ass.

Lady: Alright. I would like to make my way over here, check for traps on the door... Probably not, but like, never hurts. [dice rolling sounds] Eighteen?

Xaan: You do not find any traps on the door.

Lady: Alright. I want to quietly test the handle, see if it's locked.

Xaan: It is locked.

Lady: Alright. I would like to stealthily pick the lock.

Xaan: Alright.

Lady: Yes, alright. I got twenty-two for stealth.

Xaan: [overlapping] Alright, you are so quiet.

Lady: And... Nineteen for thieves tools.

Xaan: You get it unlocked.

Lady: I would like to turn back to the rest of the party and make a, [chuckles] countdown motion to the ones in sight, of like a 'three, two, one' before busting the door open and I would like to make a surprise attack. On number three.

Xaan: Alright.

Lady: So- do I have to roll for stealth?

Xaan: I mean, you-you're like busting in the door and going in real quick, right?

Lady: Yees, but... In like a, not like busting in, busting in, but like a... burst through the door, attack of surprise.

Xaan: Yeah, but, like that's not really being stealthy, that's just moving quickly, so I don't think you have to roll stealth. Like, you-you'll-you'll get the surprise round, the others won't because you all have to stream through the door.

Lady: I can live with that! I want to make a, a just regular old rapier attack on cultist number three.

Xaan: Alright.

Lady: So... [dice rolling sounds] That is a dirty twenty.

Xaan: Alright. That hits.

Lady: That is seven damage.

Xaan: So you burst in, you rush and you stab at this guy with your rapier.

[Spooky music fades into battle music]

Xaan: Getting off seven damage before anybody can react. And so now, roll initiative everyone! [laughs] Three of us got twenty-two.

[Everyone overlapping]

Xaan: Very amusing.

Kian: Jesus

Alex: Oh my god.

Lady: It be like that sometimes.

Bean: What the hell?

Xaan: [laughs] Everyone is ready! Okay. So... first up is going to be Kareus.

Kian: Okay. I was not prepared for this... Okay. Then I'm gonna move there and use Thorn Whip on number one. Does a twenty-one hit?

Xaan: Oh... you know... it just does.

[Bean and Kian giggle]

Kian: That does... [dice rolling sounds] Two damage, piercing damage, and drags him ten feet closer to me.

Xaan: Next up is Jerome.

Lady: Is there any way I can delay my turn to be after Mogan's?

Xaan: Yeah. I'll move you in the order. Then instead next up is Mitra! Who's at the very back.

[Bean and Lady giggle]

Lady: Ohhh no!

Xaan: It's okay! She can move kind of faster. She can move... Eh, but does she really want to because that makes it harder for the others, eh, she'll-she'll also delay her turn, I dunno when she's gonna go, but she's gonna delay, because

she can't get through. [laughs] So... next up is the cultist group. So, number three who is very surprised by this guy just bursting in and slashing at him is going to try and hit back. So he tries to slice at Jerome, but Jerome is ready and dodges it at the last moment so it just barely grazes against his shirt. And then number one is also going to attack. Going to try to attack Karrie, who [dice rolling sounds] Thorn Whipped him. So that's going to hit you Kareus for five damage. Okay. And then, number two gonna go up and try to attack Jerome as well. [dice rolling sounds] And misses!

Alex: Smiley face.

Xaan: [overlapping] That is the end of that.

Bean: What's the smiley face..?

Xaan: Well, you're about to find out.

[Bean and Kian whine]

Xaan: So, Jerome and Kareus, while you two are fighting against these cultists and the others are attempting to get through this hallway, a couple of beings materialize from the shadows.

[Kian whimpers, dissolves into nervous giggling]

Xaan: They- they appear to be literally shadows. They appear to be just like, misty, sentient, shadow people that just form within the darkness.

Bean: Oh...

Kian: What the fuck...

Xaan: [overlapping] So that's fun! That's gonna go up to Kareus... Going to... roll to attack!

Kian: [overlapping] [weak] Greaaat!

Xaan: That hits!

Kian: Oh no. Okay.

Xaan: Kay. Cool. Okay. This is gonna be fun!

Kian: Oh god!

Xaan: So- so first, you're gonna take [concerning dice rolling sounds] Oooh. Uh.

Lady: Ki-Kian, how-how beefy is Kareus?

Kian: [incredibly high pitched] He-he's-he's medium amounts of beefy! He's at twenty-four health right now.

Xaan: You're gonna take thirteen necrotic damage.

Kian: Holy shit! Okay! Hold on! Fffffff- I don't know what twenty-four minus thirteen is, lemme fuckin' do that. [through strained laughter]

Lady: Eleven.

Kian: Eleven? Great! Great! Fun. Love that.

Lady: Fear!

Xaan: So yeah, you're going to take thirteen necrotic damage, and THEN, here's the fun part! [evil laughter]

Kian: Oh boy!

[Alex cackles]

Xaan: So, when you get hit... [dice rolling sounds] You feel, eulgh, eulgh! You feel yourself... weaken. You feel like a frailty run through your body as this like shadowy hand just like slashes across you. So. Your strength score is going to reduce by four.

Kian: Oh.

Bean: WHAT?!

Kian: Okay!

Xaan: Yeah! So your strength is now at six, and uh...

Kian: [overlapping] Which puts me at negative two, fun.

Xaan: Yeah. And lemme just double check... I mean, okay, so, for one, for certain, if you any of your ability scores including strength reach zero you die.

Kian: OKAY.

Xaan: But lemme just double check if there's any other like, things! Anyway. So... that was the first time. The second guy still needs to go. Okay, this guy can get here. And then also... as a bonus action, shadow number one is going to use the hide action. To basically materialize into the dim light that is in this room. So I'm gonna write down what the hide score is. And then the second guy is going to do the same at the end of the movement. Okay! So that's the shadow's turn. Next is Valen's turn. All he can do, well, I guess, he can use his action to dash to get in further... Yeah. So he's gonna do that to get here to help flank but, by going through he is going to create an attack of opportunity from the shadow. Yes. So unfortunately that hits. Lovely. Lovely. [dice rolling sounds] So Valen is going to take... ten damage. And his strength, his, the- the very core of himself, is gonna be reduced by two. Valen runs in, he doesn't notice the shadow in the darkness, but he knows that he can't like get somewhere to attack fast enough so he just goes extra fast to try to assist Jerome in flanking across from cultist number three. And unfortunately he runs past the shadow who's hand just grazes across his chest as he runs and so he took ten points of damage and two point reduction in strength. Next up is Mogan!

Queen: God. I don't wanna go. [laughs]

Lady: Could I- Could I go before Mogan, if you'd prefer?

Xaan: Sure, since you're still technically just holding your turn.

Lady: Alright. Seeing Valen's sacrifice play, I'm gonna take advantage of the flanking and attack cultist number three with advantage. [dice rolling sounds] That's a four and nineteen! [laughs]

Xaan: That hits.

Lady: Yaaay! And I'm gonna do a good ol' fashioned sneak attack. So, that hits for twelve.

Xaan: Alrighty. Next up is gonna be Mogan.

Queen: Oh, god. Okay. Well he's just gonna go blaze'a'gloring, running in, cause he's stupid and love, and I love him. So he's just going to go in, okay. So I'm attacking number one. I got a seventeen.

Xaan: That hits.

Queen: Twelve points of damage!

Xaan: Next up is Snow.

Bean: Cool! I'm gonna try and see the shadow.

Xaan: Alright. Roll perception.

Bean: [dice rolling sounds] So I take it it doesn't beat my passive perception, eh? Or I don't beat it with my passive?

Xaan: Oh yeah, your passive is pretty fucking high. Yeah, you see it.

Bean: [cackles] Fuck you, shadow! [laughs] Sorry.

Xaan: I forgot that you and Kareus have fucking ridiculous perception.

Bean: Yeaaaah, that's what Alex kind of made that small comment, and I was like, 'I woondeer.'

Kian: [laughs] Haha, fuck you, shadow creatures.

Bean: Yeah! Bitches we can see you. Alright, cool. I am going to uhh... I'm gonna cast Sacred Flame, which is a cantrip, on the shadow that's near me. So it needs to succeed on a dex saving throw.

Xaan: Okay. What's your dc?

Bean: Thirteen.

Xaan: It fails.

Bean: Haha! Fuck you. Alright. Then it is going to taaaaake [singsong] not the best, but that's fine, it takes four radiant damage.

Xaan: It reacts extremely poorly to that. It-it screams in pain and, you-you've cast the spell before, but it seems to just like, flare up with like extra bright flames, like it did even more damage than it usually does. Next is going to be Mitra, who is finally going to go now that the hallway is clear. So she is going to punch that cultist! And that is going to hit, so she punched for... six damage. And then she's going to punch him again for her bonus action, and that hits... [dice rolling sounds] and kill him. So Mogan, you see this halfling that has joined you on your adventure, run up behind you and just like squeeze in through you punch this guy like twice in the dick, and then he keels over dead.

[Bean cackles]

Xaan: Next up is Kareus!

Kian: Oh boy. Okay. Um. [sighs] So I can see the shadow creature 'cause of my passive perception, right?

Xaan: Correct.

Kian: Okay. I'm gonna go ahead and cast Produce Flame, which, and yeet it at the shadow creature.

Xaan: Alrighty.

Kian: Twenty-two hit?

Xaan: That hits.

Kian: Okay. [dice rolling sounds] Uhhhh... That is five points of damage.

Xaan: What type of damage is that?

Kian: Fiiire.

Xaan: Alright, so you blast this purple flame at it and it almost seems to kind of absorb the fire, it makes sounds of pain but unlike Snow's which seemed to flare up extra bright, yours is just immediately dimmed and consumed.

Kian: Damnit!

Xaan: Next are the cultists... So, let's see. There's a few of them. Number one is going to... Attack... Jerome.

Bean: Isn't number one the dead one?

Xaan: Oh yeah, he died! This is why I need to remember to mark that he died. Nevermind!

[Bean giggles]

Xaan: Number one doesn't do anything.

Bean: Number one's dead.

Xaan: Number one's dead. Number two on the other hand! [giggles] Is going to attack Mogan... [dice rolling sounds] He's the only one in range. And misses. And

then number three is going to attack at Valen... [dice rolling sounds] And does not miss.

Kian: Oh no!

Xaan: Valen's gonna take... A nice eight damage.

Kian: [weakly] How is my boy doing on hit points..?

Xaan: He's looking a bit rough. He's-he's-he's gotten a couple good slashes despite his uh... despite his shield. Yes. And then that's it for them. And now the shadows come out! And so... Let's see, the first shadow is going to... attack Kareus.

Kian: Oh, great.

Xaan: Because Kareus attacked it. [dice rolling sounds]

Kian: [seethes] Mmkay...

Xaan: I don't think that hits, though. Nope! It misses.

Kian: [overlapping] [sigh of relief] Oh thank god! [wheezes]

Xaan: So you see the- you see the shadow hand reaching towards you and you go 'NOPE!' and you successfully like, jump back out of the way.

[Bean and Kian laugh]

Kian: Audible nope! [laughs]

Kareus: Nnoope!

[Kian wheezes]

Xaan: The other one is going to try to reach for Snow. [dice rolling sounds] And also misses.

[Bean cackles triumphantly]

Xaan: It like reaches towards you and then I think you like, threaten it a little bit with another sacred flame which makes it kinda flinch back and not touch you.

Bean: [cackles] I'm just like holding the sacred flame in my hands, I have it.

Xaan: [laughs] You're like 'I'm ready.'

Bean: Waiting. [laughs]

Xaan: And then both of them are going to attempt to hide. [dice rolling sounds]

Bean: Kareus and I are like, 'try with our all-seeing eyes!' [giggles]

[Xaan giggles]

Kian: [snickers] You love to fucking see it.

[Bean giggles]

Xaan: [dice rolling sounds] OOH. Snow, yours got a nat twenty!

[profound silence]

Xaan: So- so the shadow in front of you just disappears, you cannot see it, unless you roll for it. But even then, it's a nat twenty so you have to get a nat twenty to see it. But, Kareus, you can still see yours.

Kian: [significantly subdued] Thaaat's greaaat. Love seeing this nightmare fuel.

Xaan: Next up is Valen, so Valen is going to attack cultist number three, and has advantage due to the flanking... [dice rolling sounds] Alright! He hits, so he got slashed with a scimitar and he's going to slash back foooooor five damage. And that cultist number three looks like he's on his last legs, he's looking very bloodied. Next up is Jerome!

Lady: I would like to scooch my way on over to here, using my cunning action to disengage from the-the-the shadow monster. And try to [giggles] get at the cultist number three before he fucks up Valen even more. [chuckles]

Xaan: Alright.

Lady: So, I... do a good ol' fashioned attack. Does a sixteen hit?

Xaan: Yes.

Lady: Yaay! Alright. Good ol' fashioned sneak attack. Twelve points of damage, again.

Xaan: You gut him like a pig! So that is another cultist down.

Lady: I-I-I don't think I can do anything about Valen and the shadow creature person, and so I'm just gonna... hang out right here and just be, be chill.

Xaan: Next up is... Mogan!

Queen: He's, he's just going to try to stab number two.

Xaan: Alright!

Queen: That is gonna be a ten.

Xaan: Unfortunately that does not hit. Next is Snow.

Bean: [sighs] I guess I'm gonna try to see if I can see the one in front of me, I might as well give it a shot, right? Let's see, why the fuck not? Who knows? Dice, please, for the love of god. Please. Don't fail me today. It failed me today, okay, cool.

Xaan: Aww.

[All giggle]

Bean: So I can't see it still, okay. [sighs] If I cast a spell at the other one, are there Kareus and Mitra in the way for that?

Xaan: No.

Bean: Dope. 'Kay, so the one that's by Kareus, I'm gonna cast Guiding Bolt on. [dice rolling sounds] That is... sixteen.

Xaan: Thaaat hits!

Bean: [grumbling] Fuck you, you stupid little shit, you're going down.

[Xaan and Kian giggle]

Bean: Apparently I have a lot of rage today, I don't know what's going on guys. [dice rolling sounds]

Kian: [overlapping] It's wonderful.

Xaan: [overlapping] Uh, your sister was kidnapped, that's what's going on!

Bean: [laughs] I've a lot of rage going on. Oh, right, that is... Ho-ly mother of god! [singsong] That is twenty-one radiant damage.

Kian: NICE.

[Bean laughs]

Xaan: Dead! Gone!

Bean: Fuck him!

Xaan: You, you shoot that Guiding Bolt at the shadow and there was just a burst of light and then when the light dims it's gone. See? See, they're not so bad, especially when you have a cleric.

Bean: [giggles] I'm useful!

Xaan: Alright, next up is Mitra. Who is going to attempt to [dice rolling sounds] see the enemy, and cannot! So she is going to just move up here to try to punch the other cultist. Just like, dodging between Mogan's legs, punching cultists. [laughs] That hits. [dice rolling sounds] That's gonna be eight damage. She's going to Flurry of Blows, which is going to allow her to hit two more times. [dice rolling sounds] That hits... for six damage... and she gets to punch one more time! [dice rolling sounds] For... Eight damage. Monks are fucking broken! And he's still alive, but her Flurry of Blows knock him prone to the ground. Now back at the top of the order is Kareus.

Kian: Okay... seeing Snow take down the Shadow creature near me, I think what Kareus is gonna do is he's gonna turn into a panther. Um. [laughs] And-and he's going to go to number two and bite the shit out of his prone ass.

[Bean cackles]

Xaan: Alright, go for it. Tear his face off.

Kian: Dirty twenty. [wheezes] That's seven points of damage.

Xaan: You bite his face off and he dies!

Kian: Nice.

Xaan: Now all that's left is the shadow that is currently very hidden. Let's see. Cultist group can't go, they're all dead. Okay, the shadow is going to appear. Fwosh. And is going to once again try to reach for Snow. [more dice rolling sounds] That's a nat one!

[Bean cackles]

Xaan: I don't really see... So here's the thing about shadows. They're immune to a lot of conditions, including being prone, so I can't just knock this guy prone. So I think instead, Snow, you get to give an attack of opportunity on this guy. He like,

he appears to attempt to reach for you, and I think that you're just like, ready so you can just like blast him with a cantrip.

Bean: Ooh... [sighs] Oh, I can only use a cantrip? [giggles]

Xaan: Yeah, because it's not, it's not a, it's like a reaction attack, it's not a full turn.

Bean: [overlapping] Fiiiiinnee... fine... Then Ima do Sacred Flame again, so dexterity saving throw thirteen.

Xaan: Fails!

Bean: [cackles] Fuck you you piece of shit! Alright. Let's see. Oh, that's seven radiant damage!

Xaan: And just like that, you fire off an attack as a reaction and it- there's a bright burst of flame and when the flame dies out so does it.

Bean: Beautiful.

Kian: Thank God.

Bean: I think, after that, as soon as that one's gone, Snows gonna turn to the group and...

[music fades out]

Bean: Very just kind of concerned, be like,

[spooky music fades in]

Snow: I think... I think maybe lighting up the room is the way to go down here.

Jerome: No, yeah, given-given all that. Your instincts in the top room were wrong- were, no, they were not wrong! I'm bad at speaking. They were not wrong, just... early.

Bean: [laughs] She's just gonna nod and like, 'yep, I get it. I get it.' [giggles]

Jerome: Roll call, how are people feeling?

Kian: Kareus is going to turn back, [stammers] back into Kareus, and say,

Kareus: I've been better but I'll be fine.

Kian: And then I think he would like to go over and check on Ele.

Xaan: So Ele is looking worse for wear, still alive, still like, relatively okay. But looks very tired, looks kind of hurt, and when he focuses on you all and recognizes your faces, especially Snow, he kind of starts freaking out and chittering and like... like kind of tries to stand up, but they-they, so he's in his moth form and they've done the terrible thing where like, like, with bug taxidermy how they've like pinned the wings.

[Bean gasps, scoffs]

Xaan: The wings are pinned to the, the altar.

Bean: Immediately Snow's gonna take the pins out, and rather than let him flap his wings which I'm sure are injured right now, she just kind of like picks him up in her hands.

Xaan: He immediately like, cuddles up into your hands and is chittering very anxiously.

Snow: I-I know, Ele, I know, it's okay. We're, we're gonna get her.

Bean: Is there like, [sighs] I don't want Ele to get hurt anymore, is there like some where I could put him where he'd be... okay, and like, safe? [giggles] Like in my bag or something? Like I don't know I just don't want him to get hurt.

Xaan: [overlapping slightly] Yeah. Yeah, your bag should be okay.

Bean: Okay. I'm gonna like find him a nice like, squishy soft place in my bag and just,

Snow: Just... rest, it's okay, you, you did your best, we'll- we'll get her.

Lady: Alright. Can-can I case the room to see if there's anything of note?

Xaan: Yeah. Roll investigation.

Lady: Alright. This is also a, 'is there anything to jack.' [dice rolling sounds] Uh... fourteen.

Xaan: You find five silver and ten copper between the-the dead guys. And you also are able to find a key on one of the cultists.

Lady: Alright. Ima, Ima take that. Do the, do the shadow things have any remains?

Xaan: No.

Lady: Neat. Is there anything noteworthy in the room, beyond the altar?

Xaan: No. It looks like a creepy sacrificial room. But you don't see anything like, of particular note beyond the everything.

Lady: Alright. [laughs] Okay. I'm gonna... Turn to Valen who got kinda nae-naed earlier,

Jerome: Valen, you gonna be good to continue with us? You look like you took some hits earlier.

Valen: Oh, yes, I'll-I'll be okay. I, I'm feeling a little dizzy but I-I can keep going.

Jerome: Alright, if you say so... I ain't gonna disagree with you, but... keep an eye on yourself, a'ight?

Valen: I will, yes. Thank you.

Jerome: A'ight. Let's go... see if there's anything in the southern doors. Kareus mentioned that the south room didn't have anybody in it, so that'll be a good avenue for investigation. I'm also... I'm also thinking we should maybe grab the masks off the doors just in case we need them for any sort of future business, nnh.

Bean: Before we leave the room, Snow's gonna cast Light on her necklace again.

Xaan: Alrighty. It casts a nice, bright light in the room.

Bean: Yep. Bright, slightly blue.

Kian: Real fast, I think I would like to cast Cure Wounds on Valen as we leave.

Xaan: Alrighty. How much do you cure him for?

Kian: Ten.

Xaan: Ooh! Very nice.

Valen: Oh! Thank you, Kareus. I- I feel a lot better now.

Kareus: Good.

Kian: And then he just nods and then follows the others out.

Bean: Snow's gonna also give a quick look over at Mitra to see if she needs anything.

Xaan: Mitra looks great.

Bean: Perfect.

Xaan: She-she didn't even get a- a scratch on her.

Bean: Alright. She just gives her a nod then and goes out of the room.

Lady: Were there any masks on either side of this door?

Xaan: There's a bunch kind of lining the walls of a bunch of different types.

Lady: Can- I'd like to grab one of each type if I can hold it.

Xaan: Sure.

Lady: A-about how many different types are there, would you reckon?

Xaan: Four types.

Lady: Can- can you describe them, vaguely?

Xaan: There's a wooden one that looks very plain, there's one that is black that looks featureless, there's one that is actually cloth, not just carved in the fashion of cloth, and there is one that is only a half-mask that goes like, down the front of the face a la Phantom of the Opera.

Lady: Alright. Ima just take one of each, and then scoot back over here and grab the wooden masks from each of these doors as well.

Xaan: Alrighty. You now have six masks.

Lady: Are the masks from those doors like the one that was hanging on the wall in the Thistles hideout?

Xaan: Yes. The plain wooden ones.

Lady: Standard procedure. Does- does the door down here look like it have any traps?

Xaan: It does not.

Lady: Alright. Is it locked?

Xaan: It is not.

Lady: Alright.

Jerome: There wasn't anybody in this room earlier, right Kareus?

Kareus: Not that I could see, but... [sighs] Still be careful.

Jerome: Since shadow creatures are exist, would you like to breach the room, Snow? Since you got the whole... magic light thing going for you?

Bean: She nods and kind of moves past Jerome and through the door.

Xaan: You walk on in and you find what looks to be a kind of worship room. You feel like a heaviness in the air as you enter. And you can see a lot of illustrations along the wall, similar to the sacrificial room, but not as detailed. And there is a more ornate mask that is hanging on the wall, er, on the door to the south. But otherwise, there doesn't seem to be anything in this room.

Jerome: Mmmmm... Love me some weird cult shit. Ugh.

Bean: Can I do a quick religion check on the room?

Xaan: Certainly.

Bean: Seventeen. [singsong]

Xaan: What exactly are you trying to figure out with the religion check?

Bean: [sighs] A, if I recognize the heaviness, of like, the room to be similar to anything I have felt before in relation to Mask, and B, just if I can get anything beyond the fact that it's like, a worship room.

Xaan: Uhhh... yes. So, the heaviness doesn't really remind you of Mask necessarily? But it does remind you of... It feels like consecrated ground. So, it's like, it's that kind of like, physical heaviness of you almost-

Alex: [overlapping] Desecrated.

Bean: Desecrated.

Alex: Desecrated ground.

Xaan: Desecrated! It's a des- it's desecrated ground! That gives like a kind of evil heaviness to the air. And then what was the second part of the question?

Bean: Just if I can like figure anything out beyond the fact that it's like a room of worship.

Xaan: No, that's really all that it seems to be, it seems like this is where like, prayers happen or people kind of gather for special religious ceremonies. You can see like, a lot of, it-it's for Mask, but there's a lot of similar kind of religious items that are on tables and hanging up on the walls. But nothing out of place from a general worship area.

Lady: Can I... Look and see if there's anything to jack? Or if there's anything that might be of particular interest to Harber.

Xaan: Sure.

Lady: That's a nat twenty.

Xaan: The, everything looks like it's general stuff you kind of get or make, but the thing that kind of like, has the most interest that more ornate mask on the wall that looks fancier than all the other ones that you have seen before.

Lady: Alright. Can I tell if this mask is like, in any way cuuursed or bad to the touch?

Xaan: When you, what is an investigation check that you did?

Lady: Yeah.

Xaan: Um... do you touch it? Or do you just look at it?

Lady: I'ma just look at it for now.

Xaan: It has a weird vibe to it.

[Bean seethes]

Xaan: It feels... eh? Eeeh?

Lady: Mmmmmm don't like that. [giggles]

Bean: Can I do a check on it?

Xaan: Sure! You can do a religion check.

Bean: Yeah, Ima do a religion check, that just seems like it makes the most sense. That's an eighteen.

Xaan: So, Snow, from what you can tell, based on your religion check is that, when it comes to... desecrating ground, it's usually like an item that is used to create the desecration and then that creates like, this circle of just like... bad mojo.

[spooky music fades out]

Xaan: And this-this is the item. This mask? It's, yeah, this is the desecration, this is where it's coming from.

Bean: Silly question, maybe. Can I attack it?

Xaan: Sure!

Bean: I wanna break it. [laughs] But not with my hands, because I don't trust touching it. I'm gonna, I'm gonna use my-my big battleaxe. [laughs] 'Cause that's not excessive at all.

Xaan: Alright.

Bean: Can I maybe like... [giggles] Can I maybe like use the axe to like, knock it to the ground first so I'm not just smacking the door? [giggles]

Xaan: Sure!

Bean: Cool. I [laughs] knock it to the ground first.

Xaan: Okay.

Bean: And now I'm gonna attack it.

Xaan: Alright. You don't have to roll an attack, you can just roll damage.

Bean: Okay, dope, I was gonna say if I rolled an attack that was gonna be really good but okay. I'll just roll damage. [wheezes]

Xaan: 'Cause there's not, there's nothing for it to like...

Bean: I dunno, some items have a dc. [giggles] Seven damage.

Xaan: Alright. You bring your axe down onto it and you crack it, kind of across the front. It seems to be made of like, some kind of metal so you don't like go through it like wood, but you do crack it with your axe.

Bean: Cool. Can I hit again? [laughs]

Xaan: You can hit as many times as you'd like.

Bean: Cool. I'm gonna hit until I can get it to break if possible. [laughs]

Xaan: Alrighty.

Bean: That was six-six damage?

Xaan: Kay. You-you break through a little more. [wheezes]

Bean: Four.

Xaan: A little- a little bit more, you're almost, it's almost broken into pieces.

Bean: [overlapping] Five.

Xaan: It, it's, it shatters.

Bean: Dope.

Xaan: It splinters off into twisted metal.

Bean: Fantastic. Did anything, [laughs] Did anything change in the room?

Xaan: You still feel the desecration. That-that didn't go away. Yeah.

Bean: Alright. Snow's gonna kinda look up and realize literally everyone is standing behind her as she just beat the shit out of this inanimate object.

[Kian wheezes]

Bean: And realize she looks fucking insane right now. [laughs] And, [wheezes] and she-

Lady: Jerome was actually cheering Snow on the entire time she was beating the shit out of this mask.

[Bean giggles]

Kian: Heh.

Xaan: He was like 'YEAH, SNOW!'

Bean: She's gonna look at everyone and just be like,

Snow: I'm not gonna say that that was rational, but I did have a reason? It didn't seem to do what I expected, but, I did- there was an intention behind that.

[Bean wheezes]

Jerome: The vibes were fucking off, I don't blame you a fucking bit, you fucked that thing up, and you fucked it up good, you made the right fuckin' choice. Euuuhh!

Bean: She kind of just like, nods, a little hesitantly, slightly concerned and is like, 'alright.'

Snow: Who had the key? We should go through.

Jerome: Oh, that's me. I-I got the key.

Lady: Real quick, does the, does the mask continue to have bad vibes despite being destroyed?

Xaan: I mean, you just in general get bad vibes off of this thing but it-it's less bad vibes now that it's in pieces.

[Bean giggles]

Lady: Hmm.

Bean: Fuck that mask.

Lady: Can I set it, I know it's a metal mask, but can I put it on fire?

[Bean snorts]

Xaan: [weary] You can trrrryyy...

Lady: I- can- I wanna, I wanna nudge the pieces into a, a corner over here and try and set it on fire. [giggles harder]

Xaan: Okay, go for it.

Lady: Alright. [laughs] Listen! It's got bad vibes! It's-it's bad! Just... I-I have a... I-I have a... cantrip for Firebolt. Takes a- I don't, I don't-

Xaan: [overlapping] You have a cantrip for Fireball?!

Lady: [laughs] Yeah..?

Xaan: Is that a *cantrip*?!

Lady: It is..?

Xaan: The fuck?

Alex: *Firebolt*.

Bean: [overlapping] Firebolt.

Xaan: [overlapping] But-

Alex: I think it should be firebolt, not fireball.

Xaan: Okay, [laughs]

Lady: [overlapping] I said firebolt!

Xaan: I was like 'fireball's like a first or second spell, what are you talking about?'

Lady: Did I-

Xaan: Yeah. [laughs]

Lady: I'm sorry,

Xaan: [overlapping] I was so confused.

Lady: I'm bad at enunciation!

[Alex and Bean laugh]

Alex: That's fine!

Xaan: Okay, Firebolt, got it!

Lady: [overlapping] It's the Jerome!

Xaan: Go for it! Try to set it on fire!

[Alex and Xaan laugh]

Lady: Alright...Euuh... [laughs] [dice rolling sounds] It does six-six flammable damage- fire damage.

Xaan: Alright you-you-you send a bolt of fire at it and it poofs into some flames!

[Bean giggles]

Xaan: It's now very hot metal.

[Bean laughs]

Lady: I feel better.

Bean: Alright.

Xaan: Good. Good Jerome.

Bean: Snow just kind of gives him a nod,

Snow: Alright. Let's-let's get Vae.

Lady: Alright. Unlock the door then, oh, wait, no, I want to hear if there's anything beyond the door first.

Xaan: Roll perception.

Bean: I'll give you Guidance.

Lady: Alright. Yay!

[Bean giggles]

Lady: I haven't had Guidance in so long!

Bean: [giggles] Snow hasn't really given anyone Guidance in a while, man.

Xaan: She's been busy!

Bean: She's had some shit going on.

Lady: Seventeen.

Xaan: You don't hear anything beyond the door.

Lady: Alright. I'm gonna unlock it.

Xaan: You open up the door, and look it's a hallway!

Bean: Oh my fucking god.

[all laugh]

Kian: Hate... that...

Lady: Alright!

Bean: Xaan, you just want to torture us with these tiny ass hallways.

Xaan: It's not my fault that they built their architecture this way!

Bean: It is your fault.

Lady: It is your fault!

Xaan: It's not my fault!

Lady: [laughs] [stammers] It is exclusively your fault!

Xaan: [overlapping] Are you going through the door or not?

Bean: Go through the damn door.

Lady: I'm going through the door! Is there any traps?

Xaan: You already checked this door!

Lady: [overlapping] I gotta check for traps. I-I'm, I'm in the doorway, any traps in this tiny hallway?

Xaan: You die immediately. [laughs]

[Bean cackles]

Lady: God damnit!

Xaan: No, there's no traps.

Lady: Alright. Any traps on the door?

Bean: Oh my god. [cackles]

Xaan: No! There's no traps on the door! [laughs]

[spooky music starts again]

[Bean wheezes]

Lady: I'm paranoid! Is the door locked?

Xaan: No!

[Bean cries from laughter]

Lady: Okay! Can-can I hear anything beyond the door?

[Bean cries harder]

Xaan: Roll a perception!

Bean: [dying] Have Guidance!

Lady: [also dying] I got a nat 1!

Xaan: No! There's nothing beyond that door! It's a void!

[Bean cackles harder]

Lady: Great!

Queen: Can I just have like, Mogan just charge past them and just go in?

Xaan: Yeah, go for it!

[Ominous noise, music picks up]

Lady: You can.

[all laugh, mumble]

Queen: For the love of God. He's just so irritated that we're going so slow.

Xaan: Go for it.

[ominous noise repeats]

Bean: [quietly] I accept that for him.

Xaan: You-you burst on through into the room.

Bean: Oh, God, this is not gonna go well.

Kian: [strained] Mmn, hate that.

Queen: No it's not, but Mogan's pissed.

Bean: [sighs] I don't blame him. Fully accept it, honestly.

Kian: I don't like those images...

Bean: Oh god.

[Various sounds of pain]

Kian: One fucking bit!

Lady: Oh god! Please! [laughs] Mogan!

Xaan: So, Mogan, you charge on in, you burst through this door...

[Ominous noise repeats]

Xaan: And these very large, shadow creatures, which are called Shadowlurkers and I must shout out Lemire on Redditt for this homebrew creature...

Bean: Oh God!

Xaan: They turn to you, and everyone, let's roll initiative!

[music builds]

[everyone makes more sounds of pain]

Bean: Okay-

Queen: Let's go!

Bean: Can we have- can we have like four seconds so I can pee before this whole bullshit starts?

Xaan: Yeah, let's take a brief break. [laughs]

Bean: Dope, Ima go pee.

[theme song]

Xaan: Critically Chaotic is a dungeon and dragons podcast brought to you by the following people. The DM is Xaan, who can be found at @Xaandiir on all platforms. Vae is played by Alex, who simply cannot be found. Snow is played by Bean, AKA Alexa, who can be found in a variety of ways but mainly @alexandra_jaden on twitter. Kareus is played by Kian, who can be found as @lostfanboy on most platforms. Jerome is played by Lady, who writes, quote, 'and that's all you get, you dirty gremlins.' Mogan is played by Queen, who chooses not to be located at this time, or ever. Leif is played by Selah, also known as Strawberry online, who can be found at @_str4wberrymilk on twitter. The theme song is Melody by Emorie. If you would like to support Critically Chaotic, please consider leaving a five star review and following us on whatever podcast listening platform you are currently using. You can find us @critchaoticpod on twitter with no underscores, where we post updates and retweet fan content. For any other platforms you would like to find us on, please look in the description. We will see you next week for the continuing adventures of Vox Anima. Have a great week, everyone.

[theme song fades out]

Xaan: By the way, Kian, I don't remember if I've ever brought this up, but it's very funny to me, that when you play Kareus your volume drops like... a lot.

[Kian wheezes]

Xaan: And so you'll be like, [lowers volume] You'll be like softly speaking as Kareus [raises volume] and then you'll quickly talk about something out of character! [lowers voice again] And then you'll be back to speaking very softly... [chuckles]

Kian: [cackles] He's very softspoken! I am a loud bitch! [wheezes]