

The Kingmaker Histories Chapter Thirteen: Synecdoche

SOUND: Typewriter sounds. Contemplative piano music plays underneath the narration.

HISTORIAN: Every mage worth their salt possesses a personal grimoire. More than just a book of spells, a mage's grimoire is at once a sketchbook, diary, recipe folio, and log of experiments. Every new tool and ingredient, every new spell learned from another mage, every dream, every intention, is recorded for future use. And in being recorded, a spell gains its power. It is said that the grimoire is a physical extension of a mage's mind, the first step towards bringing their imagination into the real world. As such, grimoires are a vital resource for any scholar of Valorian history when it comes to researching a historical magic user. A grimoire can often contain notes on current events, spells that were used in key moments, and even from a purely aesthetic standpoint, it paints a very clear picture of its owner's personality. Ariadne Culver's grimoire, for an example, contains neatly penned bullet points, has pages clearly marked with the date and time of each new revelation, and is bound in the tanned skin of a hanged man. In sharp contrast, Eisen Iyer's grimoire, which as far as I know is now in a private collection, is well-worn, covered in pen doodles and grease stains, and it contains notes and sketches that are extremely disorganised.

HISTORIAN: Despite that lack of organisation, Eisen's grimoire contains some of the most innovative and unique notes and ideas in the field of industrial artifice. There are early versions of what would become the Kleist Technique, unfinished concepts for new weapon modifications dating back to before the February Revolt, and technical drawings detailing charms and wards for everything from clocks to motorcycles. But nothing in Eisen's personal grimoire is more impressive than his notes on the many modifications and improvements he performed on -

GOTTLIEB: One 1908 Jotnar model 6 transit van, black lacquered, delivered to you at great personal expense straight from the Crystal City impound lot.

COLETTE: I never thought I'd say this, but I missed that hunk of junk.

EISEN: Oi, you watch your mouth. Apologise to her right now. (to the van) It's okay, she didnae mean it.

TELESPHORE: We can't thank you enough for saving it for us, Chief Gottlieb.

GOTTLIEB: No problem. Now, about payment-

TELESPHORE: (sighs) Of course, of course- We'll give you a hundred up front and you can expect the other six sometime after the end of the month....more or less.

HISTORIAN: Telesphore produced a 100 mark banknote from his wallet and slid it into a small slot in the palm of Gottlieb's mechanical hand.

SOUND: Mechanical whirring.

GOTTLIEB: I'll hold you to that. (mocking) Love the beard, by the way.

SOUND: The van doors open.

COLETTE: Oh, what the hell?

EISEN: Aaron, you snake!

GOTTLIEB: What? I got you the damn van, isn't that what you wanted?

COLETTE: Yeah, but all our stuff is gone! All *my* stuff... (dejected) I was using the cargo bay as a bedroom... One of those crates had all my clean clothes in it.

GOTTLIEB: I had to pull a lot of strings to just get the van back, do you really think I had the cash to *also* buy back all the junk that was inside it? Excluding all the boxes of contraband that was no doubt already destroyed before I got there-

EISEN: Bullshit, you're the chief inspector, you've got the money-

GOTTLIEB: *Former* chief inspector.

TELESPHORE: Eisen, try to keep a calm head, will you? As long as we still have the synecdoche, the multi-door will still work, and we'll still have everything in the storage room.

GOTTLIEB: There are *rooms* in that thing?

EISEN: Yeah, in case you forgot, I'm a pretty damn good artificer.

TELESPHORE: Well, now that that's all squared away, shall we take our leave?

GOTTLIEB: Fine by me. I hope we don't run into each other any time soon.

EISEN: Likewise.

SOUND: Van doors closing, engine starting up.

SOUND: Urgent, adventurous orchestral intro music.

HISTORIAN: The trio loaded into the van and headed off. After a month away from it, this felt like a well-earned homecoming.

EISEN: Oh, listen to that engine. Music to my ears. (to the van) Aye, daddy's missed you too.

SOUND: Van parking.

EISEN: Telsie, you don't remember where I put the synecdoche, do you?

TELESPHORE: Isn't it in the back?

EISEN: It's an empty van, there's nothing it could be hiding behind.

TELESPHORE: At least Crystal City's finest had the foresight to let us keep the sofa.

EISEN: It's nailed to the floor.

COLETTE: I can't believe I finally got a decent rotation of staple pieces going and now it's all gone. I'm gonna have to start **again**.

EISEN: (sarcastic) Oh, boo hoo, you don't have your spring wardrobe? (gasps mockingly) What if someone from the society column sees you? Oh, the scandal!

SOUND: The Kingmaker flickers

COLETTE: Keep that up and you'll be sorry.

EISEN: Oh, come on, honey, we both know you don't have it in you. You like me too much.

TELESPHORE: Didn't you have a few new pieces that you were working on in the back room?

COLETTE: Yeah, but one still hasn't been pinned and I need to redo the buttons on the other one. And neither are comfortable enough to wear to bed.

Beat

COLETTE: Telesphore, could I-

TELESPHORE: (resigned sigh) Yes, you can borrow one of my shirts.

SOUND: Multi-door

EISEN: Bathroom's in working order too.

SOUND: Multi-door

EISEN: And the kitchen.

COLETTE: And storage?

SOUND: Multi door.

EISEN: Aye, we're four for four. The synecdoche has to be around somewhere if it's all working normally.

TELESPHORE: You know at some point we ought to go into storage and itemise everything that we still have.

EISEN: It can wait for tomorrow. Right now, I don't know about you two, but I'm absolutely beat.

TELESPHORE: Oh, I couldn't agree more. It'll be so nice to have our own bed back.

COLETTE: (grumbling) Speak for yourself.

TELESPHORE: -And my own pyjamas, and my slippers, and my razor. I'm going to take a hot shower, and then I'm *finally* going to get this nightmare off of my face.

EISEN: And just when I was starting to get used to the beard.... Ah, well. You'll look good either way. Goodnight, Colette.

TELESPHORE: Goodnight, Colette.

COLETTE: Goodnight, gentlemen.

SOUND: The multi door opens and closes. Colette sighs. She unfolds the sofa bed. In the background, the shower starts running. Telesphore sings indistinctly.

COLETTE: Alright sofa, my old enemy. I'm back.

SOUND: Colette lays down.

HISTORIAN: Surprisingly, sleep came to her easily. She and the men had all had a thoroughly exhausting month, and there was a feeling of calm and safety that came with being back in a familiar bed, no matter how uncomfortable. The three of them did not stir again until well into the next day.

SOUND: Bedsheets rustling.

EISEN: (still waking up a little) Morning.

TELESPHORE: Good morning.

EISEN: What time is it?

TELESPHORE: (yawns) It's about 10.

EISEN: Good thing we don't have anywhere to be today...

TELESPHORE: Lucky us.

SOUND: They kiss.

EISEN: Telsie?

TELESPHORE: Yes, my love?

EISEN: Am I still dreaming, or are there a bunch of red marks on the walls?

TELESPHORE: I don't-

Beat.

SOUND: He sits bolt upright.

TELESPHORE: Oh, dear god.

EISEN: That's not ...*blood*, is it?

TELESPHORE: No, no...it smells more like...(sniffs) paraffin wax?

HISTORIAN: What Iyer and Winterlich had awoken to was a series of what appeared to be crude petroglyphs that had appeared on their walls in bright red crayon. They were, at first glance, at least, utterly benign- mostly shapes resembling flowers and leaves, and at least one that looked like it might have been meant to be a window. What made them a little more concerning in context, was the fact that when the men looked around their room, it became evident that the furniture had also been defaced, and was in a state of total disarray.

SOUND: The multi door. The sound of a sewing machine running.

TELESPHORE: Colette? (pause, then a bit louder) *Colette*.

SOUND: The sewing machine stops.

COLETTE: What?

TELESPHORE: How long have you been awake?

COLETTE: About an hour.

TELESPHORE: And you haven't seen anything...out of place?

COLETTE: What kind of 'out of place'?

TELESPHORE: I'll take that as a 'no'.

COLETTE: What happened to you?

TELESPHORE: Come and have a look.

SOUND: The multi-door. They walk through.

COLETTE: (shocked) Holy hell, is that-

EISEN: It's not blood. It's wax.

COLETTE: *Wax?* What were you two *doing* in here?

TELESPHORE: You think we'd deface our own property like this?

COLETTE: Well / certainly didn't!

EISEN: So that means we've either been visited by a very artistically-inclined poltergeist in the night, or....

Beat

EISEN: Oh no. No. No...I need to check something.

TELESPHORE: Is it a problem with the Synecdoche?

EISEN: Hopefully not!

SOUND: Frantic footsteps. Multi-door.

Beat

TELESPHORE: So, how's the dress coming along?

COLETTE: The skirt's basically done, but I'm thinking of doing some accordion pleats on the bodice, so that'll take a few hours.

SOUND: Eisen comes in.

EISEN: It's not in there!

TELESPHORE: The Synecdoche?

EISEN: Aye! It's completely gone!

TELESPHORE: So you *didn't* put it in the smart place. You had it out behind some crate in the cargo bay, didn't you?

EISEN: Now is *not* the time. Everyone get dressed.

COLETTE: Why?

SOUND: Multi-door

TELESPHORE: The kitchen's been mostly spared...save for the fact that everything's on the floor.

COLETTE: What's a synecdoche?

EISEN: What about the bathroom?

SOUND: The multi-door opens. Water rushes out. Broken faucet spraying everywhere.

TELESPHORE: Well, it's not good.

EISEN: Shit.

COLETTE: And nobody's going to tell me what a synecdoche is?

Beat.

EISEN: Right, sure. Well, Colette, I'm gonna assume you had a doll house as a kid.

COLETTE: Yeah.

EISEN: And I'm gonna assume you're familiar with the concept of a poppet.

COLETTE: Those little dolls that fleshcrafters use to break people's limbs?

EISEN: More or less. So, a Synecdoche is to a building what a poppet is to a person. It's an enchanted miniature that can reflect and influence space in the real world. It's how I get the rooms on the other side of the multi-door- I have my wee doll-sized version of all four rooms, label them with the numbers, throw on a couple of replicator charms and some spatial compression sigils, and there you have it. Four rooms for the price of one.

COLETTE: So you could've added another room?

EISEN: What?

COLETTE: Another room. For me to sleep in.

EISEN: What's wrong with the fold-out?

COLETTE: Aside from everything? I didn't realise how much that mattress sucked until I was away from it for a month- my back is killing me! Plus, I was sick of having to keep my spare clothes in a crate. Even if I *had* shirts right now, I wouldn't have a place to hang them. And, as we've learned, things in the cargo bay can *very easily* be stolen!

EISEN: This really isn't the time. We need to find out who took what at the police auction. Telsie, can you fake us some papers and get rid of the names on the side of the van? We might have to go back to Crystal City-

TELESPHORE: Not yet, it's too dangerous to go without a plan. Not with the military crawling all over the place. We should go to an inn and use their telephone first, and I'll put a call in with the Dumbwaiter Fraternity.

EISEN: You can't possibly get that information from asking your network of waiters-

TELESPHORE: You'd be surprised. Even cops need to eat, Eisen.

HISTORIAN: They left behind their campsite on the outskirts of Taurea and entered the town proper, to use the public telephone at an inn called The Headless Deer. Telesphore made a call to a friend who worked at a patisserie in the Justice Quarter that was popular among members of Crystal City's police force.

SOUND: Bar ambience.

TELESPHORE: (on the phone) Yes? Yes. No. Could you speak up a little bit? I'm in a pub. Alright, I can wait. (pause) You have it? Excellent.

Beat. Telesphore listens to the other side of the conversation.

TELESPHORE: Oh. I see. That makes sense. Thank you so much, Brigitte. Give my love to your husband. *Ciao*.

SOUND: He hangs up.

EISEN: Right, c'mon then. What did she say?

TELESPHORE: While she was serving coffee, she overheard a certain Inspector Cyril Fashingbauer talking to his partner about the new dollhouse he got for his daughter.

EISEN: Oh, anyone but Fashingbauer. I remember that prick from my Feverite days- the guy's a mad dog.

HISTORIAN: 'Mad dog' was perhaps the mildest thing that Cyril Fashingbauer could be called. He was a pyromancer, known for his use of the highly destructive and controversial Halogi technique. Apocryphal stories from the Valorian Revolutionary War claim that two imperial soldiers guarding the city courthouse saw Fashingbauer, encased in white-hot flame, running towards them out of the darkness like a speeding comet, and promptly shot themselves in the head rather than face the man in close combat.

COLETTE: Well, it doesn't necessarily mean he's got the Synecdoche. Right?

TELESPHORE: Direct quote, from him- "It's amazing the things you find at police auctions."

COLETTE: Well, shit. That's our guy.

TELESPHORE: That's our guy.

EISEN: (defeated) That's our guy.

COLETTE: How are we supposed to get to his house? I can make us some disguises to fool the guards at the city checkpoint, but I don't think we can exactly *walk* into a cop's house.

TELESPHORE: I have a better idea. Since the kitchen is mostly in order, I might be able to whip up something.

COLETTE: What kind of something?

TELESPHORE: Something a mentalist friend of mine showed me how to make a while ago.

SOUND: boiling water

HISTORIAN: The potion which Telesphore fixed for his companions was something called Robber's Aide, a mentalism recipe with a storied history that could fill a book of its own.

TELESPHORE: Take this and you'll appear oddly familiar to any new person you meet for 12 hours. It'll have no effect on Cyril, since he's met Eisen before, but on his wife, it'll work a treat.

HISTORIAN: In August of that very year, Vincenzo Peruggia would famously take a dose of robber's aide that allowed him to walk into the Louvre after closing and steal the Mona Lisa.

TELESPHORE: You just need to come up with a plausible enough lie about where she would've met you.

EISEN: Work function, a few years back. That seems believable.

TELESPHORE: And what's the story for why you're visiting?

COLETTE: To return a book he lent us-

EISEN: No, Fashingbauer doesn't read. Books are too flammable. We'll make it a record.

COLETTE: How will we get to the Synecdoche?

TELESPHORE: Leave that to me. I'll sneak in while you keep the lady of the house distracted.

COLETTE: Do you know the wife's name?

EISEN: I don't, I haven't spoken to Cyril in about a decade.

COLETTE: Alright, so 'Mrs. Fashingbauer' it is.

SOUND: Pouring shots.

TELESPHORE: Alright, bottoms up.

SOUND: They all clink glasses and neck their shots.

COLETTE: Eugh, it tastes like cough syrup.

EISEN: You get used to it.

TELESPHORE: Alright, once I've got the Synecdoche, I'll come back around the front and knock on the door as a signal.

SOUND: Street ambience. They get out of the van and knock on the door

GRETCHEN: (other side of the door) Coming! Just give me a second.

SOUND: She opens the door.

GRETCHEN: Oh. Hi?

COLETTE: Hello, Mrs. Fashingbauer. We're friends of Cyril's, from the police.

GRETCHEN: Dear God- Is he *dead*?

EISEN: No, I just wanted to return a record he lent me over the weekend- it's my day off but I didn't want to wait until Tuesday, especially since I knew I'd be in the neighbourhood. Oh- forgive me, my name's Vivek Gadhavi, this is my wife, Gina. I think we met at the police fundraiser...?

GRETCHEN: - 1907, they held it at the...oh, what was the place called?

EISEN: The Eastern Star, over on Grand Street.

GRETCHEN: Yes, that's right! Oh, that feels like a hundred years ago, doesn't it?

COLETTE: I know, time really gets away from you.

GRETCHEN: Oh, here, don't stand around for too long- you're not supposed to 'congregate' anymore, apparently. Come inside.

SOUND: They come inside.

COLETTE: (to Eisen, hissing) Your *wife*? What the hell, Eisen?

EISEN: (to her, whispering) Well we can't exactly pass for blood relatives, can we?

GRETCHEN: Pardon the mess- I will have to clean before Cyril comes home.

COLETTE: And when *does* he come home, normally?

GRETCHEN: (puzzled) His shift ends at 4. You'd know that, surely.

EISEN: Sure, but I stay at work late, so sometimes she gets the times mixed around.

COLETTE: 'Working late' - Is *that* what you call it?

EISEN: (stern) Let's not talk about this here.

HISTORIAN: While Eisen and Colette sat in the drawing room with Mrs. Fashingbauer, giving a very convincing performance as a couple on the edge of divorce, Telesphore cased the joint from the outside. He surreptitiously navigated the alleys behind the block of townhouses and looked for a window that gave him a clear view into the Fashingbauer family home.

TELESPHORE: Alright...that looks about as good as I'll ever get from this angle.

HISTORIAN: He looked through the window, and, in the way that only one of the Good Neighbours could, he went inside.

SOUND: Street ambience abruptly stops. Floorboards creak.

HISTORIAN: He could tell he'd teleported into the master bedroom not just by the size of the bed, but by the fact that much of the furniture was coated in a protective layer of asbestos.

SOUND: Asbestos crinkling.

TELESPHORE: *Hideous*. She should leave him.

SOUND: He opens the door, walks into the hallway and stops.

TELESPHORE: Oh- hello there.

HISTORIAN: Staring at him from the end of the hallway was one of the Fashingbauer children. Cyril and Gretchen Fashingbauer had four children, in fact, all daughters. The oldest, Alix, was 16, the middle two, Diana and Katherine, were 12 and 8. The youngest, Lisa, was only four, and as such, she spent her days at home with her mother while her sisters were away at school. She was, Telesphore assumed, the person currently in possession of the Synecdoche.

LISA: Hi.

TELESPHORE: Don't mind me, I'm friends with those two nice people sitting in the drawing room with your mother.

LISA: Okay, bye.

SOUND: Lisa runs off.

TELESPHORE: Hold on a moment, my dear- your father didn't bring home a new dollhouse recently, did he?

LISA: Yeah, he did. It's ugly but I fixed it with my crayons.

TELESPHORE: Oh, did you! You know, I would *love* to see it.

LISA: Why?

TELESPHORE: Because I'm a bit of an aficionado. I even sell doll houses from time to time. My name's Telesphore, by the way. What's yours?

HISTORIAN: Meanwhile, Eisen and Colette sat on the sofa, taking coffee and cake with Lisa's mother.

SOUND: Asbestos crinkling. Plates and cups being set out.

GRETCHEN: I know the asbestos covering isn't very comfortable to sit on, but I can't tell you how many headaches it's saved me to have the whole place fireproofed. And really, when you live here, you don't even-

SOUND: She starts coughing.

GRETCHEN: -Oh, excuse me- You don't even notice it.

SOUND: Eisen digs into the cake.

EISEN: (while chewing) This cake is lovely.

COLETTE: So is the coffee. Thank you so much, Mrs. Fashingbauer.

GRETCHEN: Please, call me Gretchen. So- how have you been finding this abominable business with the castle? You know, I read in Der Schnatz that the guys that did it broke out of prison not five days ago. I don't even feel safe going out to get groceries on my own anymore, not with the idea there might be bomb-throwing anarchists waiting down every dark alley.

COLETTE: Well, we don't really live in Crystal City-

SOUND: Eisen stomps on her foot.

COLETTE: Ow!

EISEN: (gritted teeth) Yes we **do**, *honey*. (to Gretchen) We used to live in the Fabric District but last year we got a place in Fisherman's Quarter and, well, *Gina's a bit racist*.

SOUND: Gretchen stirs her coffee.

GRETCHEN: (not buying it) Uh-huh...

SOUND: Colette sips her coffee.

HISTORIAN: Colette and Eisen were both wondering at this point, what was taking Telesphore so long to steal back the Synecdoche. They were unaware that Lisa's arrival had complicated matters somewhat. Telesphore naturally had reservations about stealing from a child, but he was finding that his usual bartering techniques had no effect on her.

SOUND: Telesphore sits on the bed.

LISA: No, you can't sit there. You have to sit here.

TELESPHORE: (humouring her) Alright, when in Rome...

SOUND: He sits down on the floor.

LISA: Okay, this is my dollhouse.

TELESPHORE: And you're certain you're happy with it, Lisa?

LISA: Yes. The little dolly sleeps in here, and the big dolly sleeps in here.

TELESPHORE: But that's the kitchen.

LISA: She likes to eat biscuits while she's sleeping.

TELESPHORE: And what have you done to the bathroom?

LISA: It's a swimming pool now. Papa took me and Kathy to the public baths and I went in the water but my dollies don't know how to swim so they can't go in the water. They have to learn.

TELESPHORE: I see. You know, I'd be willing to give you a similarly-sized doll house in exchange, one that will be much nicer, with prettier furniture and actual windows. Wouldn't you like a prettier dollhouse?

LISA: No thank you, Mr. Telephone.

TELESPHORE: But you said it yourself, you think this one's ugly.

LISA: No, it was ugly, but then I put nice big red flowers on the wall. Now it's pretty.

TELESPHORE: I suppose you make a compelling point.

SOUND: Coffee pouring.

GRETCHEN: So how did you two meet?

EISEN: It's a funny story, really. See- we actually met when I arrested her.

GRETCHEN: Really! (laughing) What did you do?

PAUSE

COLETTE: Murder!

EISEN: (quickly) She was innocent, though, it was just for questioning.

SOUND: Colette squeezes his arm.

COLETTE: It'll be a funny story to tell our kids!

SOUND: Knocking at the door.

EISEN: (to himself) Oh, thank god. (to Gretchen) Well, the missus and I really ought to be going, but it was lovely catching up.

SOUND: They stand up.

COLETTE: And we'll get the door for you while we're on the way out, don't bother getting up. Thanks so much for the coffee, again.

GRETCHEN: It was my pleasure, really.

SOUND: Eisen opens the door. Scary music fades in.

CYRIL: Thanks, Gretchen. I left my keys in thewho the hell are you?

EISEN: (scared shitless, trying to hide it) Cyril, my good man! I was just, uh...

GRETCHEN: Aren't these your friends from the station?

CYRIL: No, I've never seen this guy in my life.

EISEN: Really? Because I could've sworn that-

CYRIL: Wait.... I know you- I know you! You're that little shit from the Engineers division who used to goad me until I lit up! You'd put bets on how long it'd take! You made me ruin every book I ever tried to read, every sandwich I ever tried to eat...

SOUND: The crackling of fire starts and gets louder.

EISEN: You must be thinking of some other handsome rogue. (he laughs nervously)

CYRIL: What the hell are you doing sitting in my drawing room talking to *my wife*?

EISEN: Just having a friendly chat! We were just on the way out, in fact. (desperate) Col- I mean- *Gina*? Little help?

COLETTE: You know we're not actually here for your wife, we're here for your daughter-

CYRIL AND GRETCHEN: *What?*

COLETTE: -'s dollhouse....

SOUND: the fire gets louder.

EISEN: Colette, stop digging our graves and *run*.

COLETTE: Already doing it!

SOUND: Whoosh of fire, Colette and Eisen scramble to the back door. Cyril gives chase.

GRETCHEN: Cyril, mind that you don't burn the bookcase!

CYRIL: (while running) Yes, dear!

SOUND: Colette fumbles with the back door.

COLETTE: The back door's locked!

EISEN: Out the way, I've got this.

SOUND: Eisen zaps the lock and the door opens.

CYRIL: Get back here, you scoundrels!

GRETCHEN: (yelling from the living room) Not in the house, Cyril!

SOUND: Whoosh of a fireball. Colette and Eisen run into the back garden.

TELESPHORE: Need some help getting over the fence? Regrettably I have both hands free.

EISEN: Perfect timing. My knee is killing me.

SOUND: They clear the fence just as another fireball comes at them.

HISTORIAN: With only seconds to spare, the trio cleared the fence, bolted to the van and drove off.

EISEN: What took you so long?

TELESPHORE: Have you ever *tried* bargaining with a four year old? It's impossible. They're immune to logic. I wasn't making any progress at all.

COLETTE: Is Fashingbauer still chasing us?

EISEN: No...Looks like he ran out of steam.

TELESPHORE: (sighs) So I guess our options now are accepting that the state of our furniture is forever at the whims of an infant, or all sleeping together on the sofa for the foreseeable future.

COLETTE: Wait- I think I have an idea. Eisen, could you make another Synecdoche?

EISEN: I'd have to find all the sigil designs I drew in my grimoire again, but sure, I ought to be able to. Why?

COLETTE: Because believe it or not, I know someone who makes *really* good miniatures.

HISTORIAN: With that, Telesphore took them to Champignon, and parked the van outside of the old house that Colette used to call home- still sporting the 'room to let' sign in the front garden.

SOUND: Colette knocks on the door. The door opens.

NINETTE: Oh, my stars! Colette Geise, is that you?

COLETTE: Hi, Ninette!

SOUND: They hug

NINETTE: I heard you've been having a busy few months! Oho, and look at these two handsome young men you've brought with you! Which one's mine? (she laughs) Oh, I'm only joking. It's a pleasure to meet you both.

COLETTE: These are Iyer and Winterlich. They're my business partners, I guess.

TELESPHORE: Enchante, Mrs. Benoit.

EISEN: Colette's told us so much about you.

NINETTE: Hopefully only the more entertaining stories! And hopefully I live up to them. Come in, come in.

SOUND: They walk inside. Eisen takes a seat at the table.

COLETTE: Are my things still up in the attic? My clothes and records and all my fabric and everything?

NINETTE: Of course they are, dear. Cleo from the hair salon kept saying I ought to sell it all, but I suspected you'd be back one day. I've got a good sense for that sort of thing. Mind the Queen Anne's Revenge, the glue's still drying on Blackbeard's chest hair.

COLETTE: Ninette, we were actually thinking of commissioning you to make a few dioramas. With less little naked guys than these ones, though. We just need the rooms. Think of it as me making up for the last three months of rent I owe you.

NINETTE: Of course, dear, how many do you need?

EISEN: Five.

COLETTE: Five?

SOUND: Enigmatic, quirky string music fades in and continues until the end.

EISEN: Kitchen, bathroom, storage... two bedrooms.

COLETTE: If you're willing to pay for it, I'm not complaining.

HISTORIAN: The trio joined Ninette for dinner, stayed the night, and Eisen spent the next day working on the new Synecdoche using Ninette's vast collection of model furniture. Eisen and Telesphore's room was a near-perfect recreation of how it had been before being defaced, the bathroom got a slight upgrade, and of course, Telesphore consulted on the layout of the new kitchen. Colette, given free reign, chose a striking and very fashionable art nouveau style for her new room. She would spend the next few days covering the walls in sketches of potential new dress designs. Perhaps most importantly of all, she now finally had a place to hang her shirts.

MEG: The Kingmaker Histories is a production of We Are Not Alive. This episode was written and audio engineered by Meg Molloy Tuten, with foley design by Jam Wright, and executive production by Henry Galley. Our music comes courtesy of Vivek Abishek, and our theme was written and performed by Professor Shyguy. This episode featured, in order of appearance, David Ault as the Historian, BK Dawson as Gottlieb, Blythe Renay as Colette, Taqi Nazeer as Eisen, Josh Rubino as Telesphore, Meg Molloy Tuten as Gretchen, Kai Ava Hauser as Lisa, Rob O'Dwyer as Fashingbauer, and Erika Sanderson as Ninette. If you'd like to support the show, visit the links in the show notes. Thanks for listening, and we'll see you in two weeks.