*Transcribed by Sena Bryer.*

*A note for our readers: “Jess” is Jesse’s in-game avatar’s voice. “Jesse” is the voice of his internal thoughts.*

[A scene outside of time. A historian reads from a book.]

**Julienna Fruy:** No matter where, no matter when, no matter if the world is at peace or enveloped in terrible war, you will always find adventurers in Mardéon. Some folks swear they are worse than fleas, but just as many welcome their company, or at least their coin. And, if this humble author may input her personal opinion, life would be much more boring without them.

They come from all walks of life, from princes to paupers, holy men to savages, of all races and all genders, and no two have exactly the same quest, save for perhaps 'wander aimlessly'. In my homeland of Thaar, we have come up with ten basic classes from which we categorize adventuring professions. They are as follows:

Fighters. Fighters form the largest denomination, being those who simply pick up a weapon and hack at things with it. They are not always so simple, however--the Blademasters of Terland and the Berserkers of Sosi are nothing short of masters of the craft.

Knights. Knights are former soldiers who either abandoned their post or were dismissed. Most still carry with them the honor that came of their old job, but there are a few who are horribly cruel and without mercy.

Monks. Monks originated in the high mountains of Lagan, living ascetic lifestyles and seeking to attain spiritual enlightenment. They generally fight with only their bodies--fists and feet and so on--though some are known to wield a walking staff as deadly as one might a blade.

Hunters. Since the dawn of time there have always been hunters--men and women who live off the land and prefer the wilderness to society. The bow and arrow is their usual weapon, and some are even able to tame wild beasts to fight at their side.

Thieves. Thieves have perhaps the simplest of definitions: those who steal as a profession. Many will rob a man to survive, but for thieves it is their job, their way of life. If they must fight a foe, they prefer it to be quick, clean, and most of all, quiet.

Minstrels. Minstrels are the storytellers of the world, singing the songs that reminds us of that which came before us. In recent times, the sirens have evolved their songs beyond merely words and melodies into magics as strong as any wizard's, elevating the profession.

Priests. It is not uncommon for one devoted to a faith to travel the world and spread their word. That could mean healing the sick or it could mean spreading their gospel

through force, or even making sacrifices to appease their god. Not all faiths are the same.

Druids. In the beginning of history, only dryads knew the secrets of communicating with nature, but in time the knowledge spread across the world. It is said that some powerful druids may even change their form at will, but this is largely considered only rumor.

Wizards. Spellcraft tantalizes all minds at one point or another. Through magic, wizards bend not only the elemental forces of nature to their will, but also arcane energies. However, just as many earn their living by performing tiny day-to-day spells or simple parlor tricks.

Summoners. The last of the ten classes, summoners are wizards who dabble in magics forbidden by laws of most of the Six, conjuring spirits, demons, and even the undead to do their bidding. The dark elves of Sonésa deny that they endorse this practice, but few believe it.

[Fade to silence. The main theme plays.]

**Jess:** From "Mardéon: A Visitor's Primer", written by Julienna Fruy.

Episode 5: Rascals of the Sea.

[Waves crash gently against the stony shore where Jesse lies asleep. A wet squish as something rouses Jesse awake.]

**Jess:** Hrm...

[A second squish. Jess yawns. Something flops away, then jumps into the ocean.]

**Jess:** [Jolting awake] Huh!?

[Nothing and no one responds.]

**Jesse:** I'm alive, at least. So no angry monsters or bloodthirsty dark elves. [Pause.] Or annoying cat boys.

[He yawns again.]

**Jesse:** There is something out in the water, though. [Pause.] Is that a person? Or just a fish?

**Siren 1:** [Distant, calling out] *Oy, meel mutam! U ku zo si mans? Ema ne li koms rodzerne.*

**Jesse:** What is she saying?

**Jess:** [Calling back] What?

**Siren 2:** [Frightened] Tiim! Lukrenemi ka kuzh ziloyek.

**Jess:** I'm sorry, I don't understand that language! Can you just swim to shore?

**Jesse:** Do they understand me? I thought everyone started with Common as a language.

**Siren 1:** Nulomi ne li koms yenur kuren.

[Siren 2 swims to shore.]

**Jesse:** Whoa! She's a fast swimmer!

[The siren flops out onto the beach]

**Jesse:** Oh. Or she could be a mermaid. [Pause.] No scales though, so I guess they didn't want to go with the 'part fish' look. She's got horns too--that's weird. [Gasps.] Oh. She's wounded.

**Siren 2:** [Begging] Tiim.

[A pause.]

**Jesse:** Huh. This is the first time I've ever looked down on someone in this body. Sure. I'll give you a heal, merlady.

[Jesse casts his spell.]

**Jess:** *Regenerative Wind.*

**Siren 2:** [Surprised] Luturta nak rekoshuur!?

[The siren grabs Jesse by the arm.]

**Jess:** Whoa, hey! What are you doing!? Let go!

**Siren 2:** [Calling out] Mortash!

**Jess:** 'Mortash'? What does that mean!? Hey, what is your friend casti-- WHOA!

[The siren back in the water casts a spell that YANKS his friend back to his position, and thus, yanks Jesse back as well. They fly through the air and then splash into the water. Jesse tries to swim back to the surface, but is repeatedly pulled down underwater.]

**Jess:** [While struggling to stay afloat] Hey! Let go--

[The sirens laugh hysterically as they pester Jesse.]

**Jesse:** My air meter is flashing red! They're gonna kill me at this rate!

[He manages to resurface, and takes in a heavy gulp of air.]

**Sirens:** [Distant, laughing] Nyeh nyeh!

**Jess:** Yeah, well right back at you! I hope you get caught in a speedboat propeller, you dolphin-looking assholes!

[There's no response. They're gone.]

**Jess:** Tch. Whatever. The shore's not far.

[Jesse begins swimming.]

**Jesse:** Man, I'm slow in this body. The priest's robe probably isn't helping though. Maybe I should have picked a mer-whatever they were as my character's race. [Pause.] Although then I would've been stuck in this game and stuck in the water. They were able to breathe air, but the one who flopped out onto shore moved like her legs were glued together and stuffed in a sack. Being a girl's not so bad compared to that. [Pause.] Huh. The things you think sometimes.

[Scene transition. Jesse makes it to land, walking out onto the shore. His clothes are sopping wet, and his shoes squish with every step.

**Jesse:** Man, I'm soaked. And ringing the cloth out doesn't do anything. I guess miraculous technology can only do so much. I hope it dries off soon though. [Pause.] Hmm... If the clothes are annoying, just take them off. I still haven't seen my character naked. Or, as naked as they'll let me be. [Grinning] And what's the point of inhabiting a virtual body if you can't take your clothes off and mess with it, right?

[With a cliche chorus of angels and a strum of a harp, the angel on Jesse's shoulder descends to dish out some advice. It speaks with Jesse's voice, but in a very dignified, heavenly manner.]

**Jesse (angel):** Jess, don't do this! It's too risky. Those mermen could still be there!

[With a wail of a guitar and cackling imps, the demon on Jesse's other shoulder appears. It also speaks with Jesse's voice, but grungy and sleezy.]

**Jesse (devil):** Ehh, so what? You're on shore--they can't get you up here, and they can't fool you with that trick again. You're safe!

**Jesse (angel):** You don't know that!

**Jesse (devil):** You're a man, aren't you, Jess? It's only natural that you want to sneak a peek. Ethan should've known this was going to happen when he--

**Jesse (angel):** That's right. He could still be watching too. The last thing you want is to give Ethan even more ammunition.

[A pause.]

**Jesse (devil):** Yeah, I got nothing.

**Jesse (angel):** You can take the shoes off. Does that sound fair?

**Jesse (devil):** [Bratty] Whatever...

[Jesse starts walking along the beach, barefoot. It's quiet, naturally quiet.

**Jesse:** It looks like it might rain. I hope not--it's cold enough already. Of course, that is assuming weather follows the same laws in this world as it does in the real world.

[He takes a deep breath in, smelling the air.]

**Jesse:** It doesn't smell like rain though. Certainly not rain on the beach. I know that smell.

[The quietness of the Isle of Jelor shifts to the cacophony of a busy beach on Earth.. People are shouting, children are playing, and cars are driving by on the nearby freeway. But it isn't clear. It's muddled, a memory.]

**Jesse:** No, no. Not St. Pete Beach. A real beach. A quiet beach. One without the noise and the smog, where I can bury my feet in the sand and not worry about getting trash stuck between my toes. [Pause.] Marco Island. Let's go to Marco Island.

[The background sound shifts to seagulls cawing and waves gently rolling in, with a warm breeze.]

**Juan (child):** Hey Jesse! C'mon! Last one to the beach is a barf bag!

**Jesse:** Oh, right... Juan would be there, wouldn't he?

**Jesse (child):** Shh! If Mom hears you say that you'll get in trouble!

**Jesse:** We were always together back then.

**Juan (child):** So don't tell her and she won't know!

**Jesse (child):** Juaaaan! C'mon!

**Jesse:** I wonder what he's doing now. Last thing I remember was the mural commission in New Mexico. I wonder if he's still on that or if he's somewhere else now? [Pause.] He was always so much better than me. He did so much more. Not like his useless twin brother who wasted his time playing video games.

**Jesse (child):** Hey! Juan! Stop kicking sand! And give me back my chancletas!

**Jesse:** Okay... Maybe not that memory. What about Disneyworld?

[The sounds of the beach are replaced with the organ of a theme park ride.]

**Jesse (child):** Juan! Stop pushing me! I'm gonna-- AAGH!

[A loud splash from within the memory..]

**Jesse:** Damn it, Juan! Even in my daydreams you're pestering me!

[The memory dissipates in his mind, and the beach of the present returns. He treks quietly through the sandy shore.]

**Jesse:** Huh. Some ruins up ahead. Doesn't seem like there's anything there. Or anyone. [Pause.] I should still be careful. Ethan made me an easy target to spot with this damned pink hair. I'm starting to wonder if a sneakier class would have been a better--

[His footsteps stop.]

**Jess:** Oh crap!

**Jesse:** That's a campfire. And some of the embers are still smoldering. Someone was here recently. Better leave before they can return.

[Jesse scurries away, and the scene transitions to further along the shore..]

**Jesse:** There. That should be far enough. [Sighs] So much to worry about in this damned game. [Pause.] Although, if that were all I had to worry about that wouldn't be too bad. Thank goodness this released in summer when I'm not in classes. That's the last thing I need: to fail all my classes and get suspended from college because I'm stuck in a video game of all things. I don't even want to think what Mom will--

**Jess:** [Gasps] That's it!

**Jesse:** It's so obvious! Why hadn't I thought of her earlier? The longer I'm stuck in here, the more people in the real world will wonder what's happened to me, and Mom especially. With Juan and me both no longer living in Tampa, there hasn't been a day that I didn't receive a message from her, telling me how much she missed me or how bored she was. [Pause] Mostly the second one. But eventually she or someone else will wonder what's happened to me, and Ethan won't be able to keep me a secret if that happens. He'll have to tell someone! And then I'll be on my way out!

[Mounted footsteps approach. Jesse doesn't notice.]

**Marcus:** You a long way from home, ain'tcha, elflin'?

**Jess:** Eek! Who--

**Jesse:** Oh. He's uh... tall. And very well armored. Is he a human? Is he here to kill me? Or capture me? Or-- [Pause.] Okay, calm down, Jesse. He's not reacting. He must just be an NPC. Try asking him a question.

**Jess:** Is... this... Han Tol?

**Jess:** Dumb question, Jess! Of course it's Han Tol!

**Marcus:** [Laughing] Han Tol! Naw! Ha ha! Han Tol's across the strait, way over yonder.

**Jesse:** Or maybe it's not?

**Marcus:** This here's the Isle a' Jelor, and behind me over there is the town a' Southreach, a' the Kingdom a' Thaar.

**Jess:** ...Oh.

**Jesse:** I thought the shore I swam to was the same one I left, but those flipping mermen dragged me all the way to an island!

**Jess:** May I enter this town?

**Marcus:** A' course, elflin'. I apologize if I made ya fret. Thought ya was a siren at first.

**Jesse:** Siren. Yes. That's what they were called. [Pause.] But they can't walk. Flipping NPC.

**Marcus:** Good thing ya wasn't! C'mon. Follow me inna town.

[He brings his horse to a gentle trot. Jesse follows.

Marcus: It ain't too much to look at, our little Southreach. It's only a few years been here, after all. But it's a good place. Don't get to thinkin' all a' Thaar's like this though. If your travels take ya to Everfaith, well... even y'all's 'rainbow city' don't hold a candle. [Pause.] Oh! Pardon me, elflin', I almost forgot. My name's Marcus Fen, a man a' the Handsguard.

**Jess:** Uh... nice to meet you.

**Jesse:** Sorry, pal. You're not getting my name. That is staying hidden until the end of time.

[A pause.]

**Guildleader:** [Very far away] Hey! Hey you!

**Jess:** [Shouting back] What'd you say!?

**Guildleader:** I said 'Are you an elf?'

**Jess:** Yes?

**Guildleader:** Excellent. Come here--I need help with something.

**Jesse:** What on earth does she specifically need an elf for?

**Jess:** Sure.

[Jesse hurries ahead.]

**Guildleader:** [No longer far away] You're tiny.

**Jess:** You're not exactly a giant yourself.

**Jesse:** Cool hair, though. I'll give you that. The bright blue on black is a good combination of light and dark.

**Guildleader:** Smaller foes are harder to hit. That's important for a monk. [Pause.] Come with me.

**Jess:** Where?

**Guildleader:**

The docks. The ferryman to Han Tol will only let us on his boat if a high elf is with us.

[The Guildleader walks away in the direction of the town. Jesse follows.]

**Jess:** 'Us'?

**Guildleader:** My guild and I. We total five.

**Jess:** Why don't you just swim the strait? That's how I got here.

**Jesse:** More or less.

**Guildleader:** [Incredulous] Swim the strait? This may be a Thaarian settlement, but this island belongs to the sirens. The waters even more so. And in case you hadn't noticed when you came here, Thaar and Shentikare hate each other. We'd be torn apart before we made it halfway.

**Jess:** Okay. I wanted to get back to the mainland anyway. Does the ferry cost money?

**Guildleader:** I don't believe so. It just requires a high elf be present.

[The Guildleader stops.]

**Guildleader:** What?

**Jess:** I didn't say anything.

**Guildleader:** Damn. That figures. [To Jesse] We're too late. The ferryman just left. [To her guild] How long until he's back? [Pause.] Damn it. All right, yes. I'm going to log off until then. Meet you back at the dock in an hour? [Pause.] Okay. [To Jesse] He's not coming back for another hour. Will you still be on?

**Jesse:** Always...

**Jess:** Yeah. The dock, you said?

**Guildleader:** Good.

[She logs out.]

**Jesse:** [Sighs] It's always so depressing to watch someone do that.

[He takes his glove off.]

**Jesse:** Still no change. Not like the glyphs would just magically come back anyway. No, I've got to get it back myself. [Pause.] But how is the question. That woman with the blue streak in her hair was in a guild--A guild might help me to find information but it would also make life even harder for me. Pretending that I'm a girl is trying enough as it is, but constantly having to make up lies and excuses to satisfy Ethan's cruel game on top of that would be far too nerve-racking for me to handle. [Pause.] And there was something about that woman that I didn't quite like anyway. Far too business-like.

[Scene transition. Time passes as Jesse EXPLORES THE TOWN.]

**Jesse:** It's not nearly as crowded here as other places. Did I accidentally wander into a high-level zone?

**Southreach Merchant:** Fish! Get your fresh fish! [To Jesse.] Howdy there, elflin'! Fancy a salted cod? Caught fresh this morning!

**Jess:** How much?

**Southreach Merchant:** Normally five copper, but for the young elflin', I'll make it only three. How's that sound?

**Jess:** Sounds like you got yourself a deal, mister! [Pause, clears his throat] ...Yes, please.

[Cha-ching!]

**Jesse:** Do I just... eat it as it is? Or do I cut it up or...? [Pause.] Ah, screw it. Itadakimasu!

[He bites into the fish, and instantly starts to cry from how good it tastes.]

**Jess:** [Still chewing] Let me have four more, sir!

[Cha-ching! Jesse stashes the extra fish.]

**Jess:** Mmm, saving those for later! Man, I forgot how good food can taste when you haven't eaten anything. [Pause.] I wonder what else there is in town.

[He walks through the town. Arrows fly through the air at a target, at rapid-pace.]

**Jesse:** That one's gotta be a player. She's hitting her marks way too easily.

**Brit'ney:** Oh yeah! 20-hit combo!

**Jesse:** Yep. Definitely a player. I wonder how much the game helps you with that. I've never felt anything guiding my movements when I swing my staff, but maybe it's different for the more combat-y types.

[He makes his way to a weaponsmith, where inside the clang of metal on metal and the hiss of the bellows can be heard.]

**Jesse:** Oh, that heat feels so good.

**Jess:** Hey, sir! Sir! Do you sell priest weapons?

Southreach Blacksmith: Nope.

**Jesse:** Darn.

[Jesse WALKS to the docks.]

**Jesse:** Well, there's the ferryman. Only other elf here. I guess I'll just wait.

[He climbs up on top of a large crate.]

**Jesse:** There we go. Surprisingly comfy for a wooden crate.

**Southreach Dock Worker:** Uh...

**Jess:** Hm?

**Southreach Dock Worker:** Sorry, elflin', but we needs to load them boxes you sittin' on.

**Jesse:** Neeeeever mind.

[He hops back off and walks to the edge of the dock]

**Jess:** Excuse me? Ferryman?

**Elven Ferryman:** Well yes, how can I help you, priestess?

**Jess:** How long until your ferry leaves?

**Elven Ferryman:** Oh, twenty minutes, give or take. I try to leave on the hour, but sometimes I'm a bit off.

**Jesse:** How very un-NPC of you.

**Jess:** Okay. I'll wait.

[Scene transition. Time passes as Jesse waits on the docks.]

**Jesse:** It is definitely about to rain.

**Jess:** She'd better show up soon if she wants a ride back. If she's not here when it's time to go then that's just tough--

**Guildleader:** Tough what?

[A pause. Multiple footsteps indicate she is with a group.]

**Jesse:** Of course you show up right as I say that.

**Jess:** [Dryly] Brought your whole posse with you?

**Jesse:** I had a feeling that hunter might have been with her.

**Guildleader:** These are the officers of my guild. Absalom...

**Absalom:** Greetings, fellow priest.

**Guildleader:** ...Brit'ney...

**Brit'ney:** Brit'ney Ravenwolf, thank you.

**Guildleader:** ...Pip...

[Pip grunts in greetings.]

**Guildleader:** ...and Griffin.

**Griffin:** Hey.

**Jess:** Hey. [Pause.] What happened to you?

**Griffin:** Paralyzed.

**Absalom:** His body went numb, so he can't move.

**Jesse:** Oh. That's unpleasant.

**Absalom:** Pip is carrying him around until we can find a way to cure him.

**Griffin:** Or it wear off.

**Absalom:** Or it wears off. Unfortunately, I can't cure paralysis yet. That's higher level.

**Jess:** Me neither. Sorry.

**Brit'ney:** That's all right! Pip doesn't mind lugging him around like a sack of meat, do you big boy?

[Pip gives a low grumble and rolls his eyes.]

**Guildleader:** We'll find someone in Han Tol, but that's not important. [Pause.] Elf. Are you still--

[She is interrupted by a scream from further inside the town. All the NPCs HURRY to see what the commotion is, the ferryman included.]

**Brit'ney:** What the hell d'you think that was?

**Guildleader:** It doesn't matter. Let's speak to the ferryman and-- Where did he go?

**Griffin:** He ran off to go see.

**Guildleader:** [Scoffs] Elf, you're coming with me.

[She grabs Jesse by the wrist and pulls him along.]

**Jess:** W-Wait, no! Let go! I can follow-- Agh! Don't touch me!

**Brit'ney:** [Voice trailing away] He'll come back! We can just wait! [Pause.] Or not...

[Jesse finally breaks free as the two of them reach the source of the commotion. A large number of townsfolk are gathered around something, shouting and cursing.]

**Guildleader:** Looks like the NPCs caught a couple of intruders. It's impressive all the things the A.I. in this game can do. [Pause.] We're still better though. Always will be. If these two have a brain between them, they'll find a way out.

**Jess:** These two what? I cant--

[A pause.]

**Jesse:** [Grinning] Oh. Oh this is too good.

**Siren 1:** H-Hey! I remember you! You're that cute high elf from this morning!

**Jesse:** Now you speak the language as me?

**Siren 2:** Could you help us out? The humans here really hate sirens. I don't think they're going to let us go. They might even kill us!

**Siren 1:** We were just exploring, that's all! Honest!

**Southreach Dock Worker:** Ya know these fishtails, elflin'?

**Guildleader:** Yeah, you know these guys?

[The crowd goes silent, waiting for Jesse's answer. A tense pause.]

**Jess:** Nope. Never seen them.

[The crowd alights with noise and anger, beating the tar out of the two sirens. Jesse gives a happy sigh.

**Jess:** Shall we leave, Mr. Ferryman?

**Elven Ferryman:** Er... yes. Yes, of course.

**Credits, read by Sena Bryer:** This was episode 5 of Dreambound. Dreambound is written, directed, produced, and edited by Sena Bryer. The role of Jesse was played by Brandon Acosta and Daisy Guevara. The Guildleader was played by Cole Burkhardt. Brit'ney Ravenwolf was played by Dallas MacKenzie. Absalom was played by Daniel Santoy. Griffin was played by Brandon Nguyen. Pip was played by Sena Bryer. Julienna Fruy was played by Stacey Cotham. The sirens were played by Ashe Thurman and Océane Lanteigne. Marcus Fen was played by Kyle Claset. Jesse (as a child) was played by Ken Vo. Juan (as a child) was played by Daisy Guevara. The elven ferryman was played by Garrett VanValkenburg. The villagers of Southreach were played by Tarek Esaw, Brandon P Jenkins, and Sena Bryer.

Dreambound's main theme is "Blue Light", by Pinofas. Other music used in this episode was by Alexander Nakarada. Proper attribution can be found on our website at **www.senabryer.com/dreambound**.

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Stay safe everyone, and we'll see you in the game.