[Monster Hour theme]

Quinn: Hello, everyone, and welcome to Monster Hour. I am Quinn, your Keeper of Monster and Mysteries. With me today are Hannah.

Hannah: Hi, it's Hannah. I play JR the Crooked.

Quinn: Kyle.

Kyle: Hey, it's Kyle. I play Alvin the Monstrous.

Quinn: And Teo.

Teo: Hello. I am Teo, and I play Constance the Expert.

Quinn: So last time, Alvin and Constance, you continued your investigation of the woods after ditching Detective Galvan. Alvin, you were able to find evidence exonerating yourself. JR, you were picked up outside of the Colorado National Laboratory along with Leon and taken into the station. You were interrogated for a little while by Officer Nguyen before he retrieved Chief Stoney. You had a bit of a conversation with your friend on the force. He was none too pleased. And when we left you-

Hannah: Yikes.

Quinn: -he had just gone to look after the kid in the interview room across from you and was subject to a very strange phenomenon. Constance, you had split from Alvin and further investigated the forest, and you came across another one of the missing kids, Rahul, who was stuck down in a ravine with a broken leg. You moved to administer some first aid. And when you did so, he grabbed your hand and pulled you towards him.

We're going to pick up back in the forest with Constance and Alvin.

Teo: Real quick. Are his fingers sticky?

Kyle: [chuckles]

Quinn: What?

Teo: Kids usually have sticky fingers! It's a thing. It's true.

Hannah: She's not wrong.

Teo: It will honestly affect how Constance reacts to this situation.

Quinn: I'm going to say yes.

Teo: Okay, perfect.

Quinn: I'm still struggling to see the relevance, but yes.

Kyle: [chuckles]

Teo: Yeah. Okay. No, this is important. I think what happens is I register the visual of him grabbing me, and all of a sudden, my mind flashes and I am opening up my brain to previous incarnations, as if maybe my grandmother has experienced something like this before, and I'm flashing to her with my Past Lives.

Quinn: Okay.

Teo: [rolls dice] That's a 9.

Quinn: On a 7 to 9, a past life has a little experience. Ask the keeper one of the questions below. What did a past life discover about ___? How did a past life deal with ___? What important hidden secrets can a past life show me the way to? What did a past life learn too late to help them, or what can specific past life ___ tell me?

Teo: How did my Buni deal with being attacked in the field by folks that she wasn't quite sure if they were good, bad-- The world is pretty murky. So, how did she deal with situations like this?

Quinn: So, like last time, you feel this presence around you and encompassing you, and you lose consciousness.

Teo: Fun.

Kyle: Huh.

Quinn: And Alvin, from your position, you see as Constance is being pulled forward, her eyes roll back into her head, and you can just see the whites. And then, Constance, you wake up and you are in a small village. There are one-story buildings that are largely made of stone and wood. There are cobblestone paths, and you are standing in the middle of the street, and you can see up ahead of you, there is a person advancing towards you, and they are holding a rifle. You hear this voice coming from you, and I think by now you recognize it as your Buni's voice. [as Buni] *Vasili, put the rifle down*.

And instead of putting the rifle down, they raise it, and your vision changes as you can feel your body roll to the side and a crack rings out through the air and you hear a bullet whiz by you, and you take cover behind a nearby building. In the background, you can hear this strange song, this really enchanting melody, but it's dimmed. It's almost as though you're hearing it underwater. This person with the rifle is continuing to advance on you. You slink around this building, and this person hasn't noticed your movements, and you slip behind them and crack them over the head with the butt of your own rifle, and they crumple to the ground unconscious.

Teo: Ooh.

Quinn: Then suddenly, you're back.

Teo: Hoo. Huh.

Quinn: Your face is about an inch and a half away from Rahul's face, and his stomach is starting to convulse in this unnervingly, unnatural way. It's expanding and contracting and spasming, and he's staring directly at you. Alvin, what are you doing?

Kyle: I just arrived. Didn't really witness him being weird. Still think he's just a kid. So, I'm actually going to yell down to Constance, like, [as Alvin] *Hang tight, one sec*, and then spin on my heel and go back to Detective Galvan and Fred in a kind of like, [as Alvin] *Whoa, whoa, what the heck is going on here?* I'm going to try to get the scruff of their jackets and pick both of them up.

Quinn: You get a little closer, and you can see that they're wrestling over Detective Galvan's gun, which looks like it's come out of its holster. So, go ahead and roll actually to Protect Someone.

Kyle: Okay. [rolls dice] Ooh, it's a 7.

Hannah: [laughs]

Kyle: 7 is still not a failure.

Quinn: Okay. Who are you protecting?

Kyle: It's both of them, really. I'm trying to pick both of them up because I'm a big boy, and hold them apart and just kick the gun away.

Quinn: Yeah. All right. On a 7 plus, that's sufficient. You grab both of them and you pull them apart, and you kick the gun not far.

Kyle: Sure.

Kyle: Like, it goes end over end across the forced floor and gets maybe a foot away, but it's out of their immediate grasp. As you are doing that, Fred looks at you and then glances at Detective Galvan, and he starts to breathe really heavily. His chest starts pumping.

Kyle: [as Alvin] *Uh, Fred, are you okay?*

Quinn: Do you want to do anything else?

Kyle: Alvin doesn't know what's coming.

Quinn: That's fair.

Kyle: I have a pretty good idea because I have player knowledge of what Stoney's going through right now. But Alvin's just thinking they're fighting over a gun and Fred's doing something sick.

Quinn: So, you pick Fred up, and his chest starts to convulse. He looks like he's about to throw up, but not just like your regular sickness, like something is really wrong. And suddenly, the movements stop. And from his mouth, this cloud of bright magenta and fuchsia, these just tiny little flecks like bits of dust pretty explodes out into your face.

Kyle: [as Alvin] *Ah*!

Quinn: Roll +Weird.

Kyle: [rolls dice] 12.

Quinn: You feel a really strange sensation. You feel like there's someone else in your head. Just for a moment, but it's not a feeling that you're likely to forget soon. This pressure in the back of your head. And then almost as quickly as it appears, it subsides.

Kyle: I shake my head with a shock, so I probably dropped both of them, give a growl and was like, [as Alvin] *Fred, what was that?*

Quinn: Constance.

Teo: Oh, yes.

Quinn: You are about one inch away from Rahul's face-

Teo: Oh, yeah.

Quinn: -and his stomach is churning. What would you like to do?

Teo: With that memory of my Buni, I realize that I should probably protect myself first. So, I yell, [as Constance] *Sorry,* and headbutt Raul very hard [Hannah laughs] with the intent of getting him to release my arm so I can run. I would say that's an Act Under Pressure?

Quinn: I agree.

Kyle: [laughs]

Quinn: It could be Kick Some Ass if you're really trying to hurt him. But if your goal is to mostly escape, then go ahead and Act Under Pressure.

Teo: Yeah. [rolls dice] That's going to be a hot 10.

Quinn: Are you using your, "I've read about this sort of thing”?

Teo: Yeah.

Quinn: I must know what book you read about headbutting.

Kyle: [laughs]

Quinn: I'm going to need the title, and maybe the author.

Teo: Okay. The title is *How to Defend Yourself Past Midnight for Dummies*, and the author is Jessica Furtherfield.

Quinn: Love it. Excellent. Thank you. Okay. On a 10, you do what you set out to do. So, you headbutt Rahul in the face, and you are able to escape from his grasp. The tightness of his grip lessens, and you take a few steps away. What do you do?

Teo: I'm going to run, probably towards Alvin, because he can help.

Kyle: [chuckles]

Quinn: You sprint away. And as you do, you hear Rahul's voice say, [as Rahul] *Wait. Come back, I still need help. I still need help,* as you run away.

Teo: [as Constance] *I'll come back for you later, kid*.

[laughter]

Quinn: You sprint up the ravine, and you see Alvin standing between Fred and Detective Galvan. He's got just these little follicles of brightly colored substance all over his face. And Detective Galvan has stumbled back a few steps and has fallen down to the ground, and she is reaching for her pistol. Fred has adopted a low crouch and is just squared off facing Alvin.

Kyle: I think, unfortunately, Alvin's face is half between.

Quinn: Yeah?

Kyle: I think so.

Quinn: Okay.

Kyle: He got exploded in the face. It would be an unconscious sort of transformation. It may not be full coyote, but the features are a little mushy.

Quinn: Constance, you get a good look. Alvin's face is certainly not full coyote, but he's got a weird snoot protrusion, and there's fur beyond a normal beard, like up to the eyelids. And he very clearly is not human.

Teo: Oh, boy.

Quinn: In front of Fred and Detective Galvan.

Teo: [as Constance] *Oh, no, your very fast hair growth is back.*

Kyle: [as Alvin] *What in tarnation was that pink stuff that's on my face? Oh, my nose.*

Teo: [as Constance] *My love, no. Oh, no*.

Quinn: This is like the worst high school drama program.

[laughter]

Teo: Yeah, we're not good actors. Really quick, do I still have my walkie-talkie on me?

Quinn: Yeah, presumably.

Teo: Okay. I am now-- I have stopped running. Something is going on. I'm going to pull out the walkie-talkie and I'm going to radio, [as Constance] *Hey, we're near the ravine creek area. We found the last child, and we need help. We need lots and lots of help to anybody who has their walkie-talkie on*.

Kyle: While Constance is doing the call, I think Alvin is squaring with Fred being like, [as Alvin] *Fred, what was that? What are you doing?*

Quinn: Constance, a few moments pass, and then you hear the walkie-talkie give a familiar crackle, and a voice says, [as Verna] *Yeah, this is Verna. I'm heading your way. Just hold tight.* And Alvin, you're squared up against Fred.

Kyle: Just putting myself between Fred and Constance and Detective Galvan.

Quinn: So, you're squared up against Fred, and you see that Detective Galvan has picked up her pistol and she's alternating between pointing it at Fred and pointing it at you.

Kyle: I wave my hand behind me, be like, [as Alvin] *Hold on, hold on, hold on*.

Quinn: [as Galvan] *What on earth is happening here? What are you? And Fred, what on earth is happening to you? What's wrong with you? What was that?*

Kyle: [as Alvin] *Well, I don't know. He put this pink stuff in my face, and now my face feels all funny. It's brand new to me. Hold on*.

Quinn: And as Detective Galvan is pointing the gun at the two of you, Fred takes off sprinting into the forest.

Kyle: Shit. I run after him.

Quinn: Are you regular running, or are you sprinting like No Limits?

Kyle: I'm going to No Limits after him.

Quinn: Roll +Weird.

Kyle: [rolls dice] 9.

Quinn: On a 9, you do it, but choose one consequence. You suffer one harm, you take minus one forward, or you need to rest right now.

Kyle: Now, I'm assuming that the suffer one harm goes through my “Immortal”.

Quinn: I think it has to for it to mean this to make sense.

Kyle: Yeah. It's like cool, yeah. One harm, negated. All right, I'll take the one harm.

Quinn: You leap forward, and it's stronger than it was before, and you fly forward and you actually crash headlong into a tree that was about 10 feet in front of you, [Kyle laughs] and you suffer one harm.

Kyle: [as Alvin] *But will go. I'm okay.*

Quinn: You bounce off of that, and then tear off after Fred and catch him within a matter of maybe 10 or 15 seconds. He got a bit of a head start on you, but you are so much faster than him. What do you do?

Quinn: I'm pinning him to the ground face down, probably. I just yell back like, [as Alvin] *I got him.*

Quinn: I don't think there's any move here. I think you tackle him, and you pin him to the ground, and he is struggling against you, and you can hear him say, [as Fred] *Let go of me*.

Kyle: [as Alvin] *Give me one good reason why.*

Quinn: And as soon as you say that, his stomach starts to convulse again.

Kyle: Okay. Yeah, I push his face into the dirt.

Hannah: Oh, boy.

Teo: Ooh.

Kyle: No.

Hannah: [laughs]

Teo: At least I just headbutted somewhere.

Kyle: No, no, no, not again.

Quinn: Why don't you Read a Bad Situation?

Kyle: [laughs] Okay.

Teo: Oh God.

Kyle: [rolls dice] 8.

Quinn: You get to hold one, and you can use that to ask one of the following questions. What's my best way in? What's my best way out? Are there any dangers we haven't noticed? What's the biggest threat? What's most vulnerable to me? Or, what's the best way to protect the victims?

Kyle: I think actually what might be a good one is, are there any dangers I haven't noticed?

Quinn: I don't think there's any danger that you haven't noticed. I think the danger is that whatever is happening with Fred, it's right beneath you. And the danger is that turning his head to the side may not afford you enough protection.

Kyle: Right. The cloud burst out of his mouth, right?

Quinn: Yeah.

Kyle: Yeah. So, I'm going to point his mouth at the ground and hold it at arm's length if it goes off, because I don't want to let him go. Like, if he gets away, then he could go hurt somebody else or we lose a pretty big clue.

Quinn: Yeah. You turn his head and try to face it towards the ground. And again, this psychedelic, multicolored cloud of particulates explodes outward. It's not pointed towards you, but it definitely surrounds you. And so, roll +Weird again.

Kyle: Okay.

Quinn: But take a +1 forward for trying to control the direction.

Kyle: Okay. [rolls dice] 6 plus 4, so 10.

Quinn: Okay. Again, you are fine. You feel this intrusion, but it fades as quickly as it comes on once more. And Fred pushes his face against yours and says, [as Fred, frantic] *Let me go. Let me go. Let me go. Let me go.*

Kyle: I take my big furry hand, and I clamp it over his mouth and nose and say, [as Alvin] *Will you cut it out? Cut it out. No. Bad friend.*

[music]

Quinn: JR.

Teo: Uh-oh, so worried. Yeah.

Quinn: You just watched Stoney take this blast of strange dust that's this magenta and fuchsia color, and he stumbles backwards and slams into the interview table, and then falls to the ground. And for a moment, he's just lying there. And then the kid stands up. And Stoney stands up. And the kid sits down, and Stoney moves over and does something on the wall that you can't quite see, and then he opens the door to the interview room very calmly, and walks over to your interview room and opens the door and sits down.

Hannah: Okie-dokie.

Quinn: [as Stoney] *J…R… Such a strange name. Secretive. You have a lot of secrets, this one thinks.*

Hannah: [as JR] *I'm sorry. What was that? Are we now talking--? Oh, boy. Oh, no*. [laughs]

Quinn: [as Stoney] *It keeps a lot of secrets from you too though. So strange how you all interact. Such needless complication.*

Hannah: [as JR] *You doing all right, Stoney? How's it hanging?*

Quinn: [as Stoney] *Huh, another one of your funny colloquialisms?*

Hannah: Oh, I don't like this at all. I would like to try and Read a Bad Situation.

Quinn: This is a bad situation that you could read.

Kyle: [chuckles]

Hannah: Yeah. This is real fucking bad. I don't like this at all.

Kyle: [laughs] I read a bad situation.

Hannah: [laughs]

Kyle: Yes, it's bad. You've read it.

Hannah: [rolls dice]

Kyle: It's very bad.

Hannah: Oh, fuck. [laughs] That's a 5.

Kyle: Oh.

Quinn: Okay.

Kyle: Oh, we're down to two.

Hannah: Okay. Mark experience.

Kyle: Oh no.

Quinn: Yes, mark experience.

Hannah: All right.

Quinn: I'm going to take a different kind of hard move.

Hannah: Shit.

Quinn: [as Stoney] *Your concern for this one, it's so touching. That's the phrase, right? Touching? I'm still learning. You're attracted to this host.*

Hannah: [as JR] *I mean, I don't think that takes a mind reader to figure that out.*

Quinn: [as Stoney] *Yeah, he knows too.*

Hannah: [as JR] *Oh, well, of course he does! I'm not some-- Oh, Christ. What is going on?*

Quinn: [as Stoney] *Would it hurt you to know that he doesn't feel the same way? That he thinks you're at best, an unconventional asset and at worst, a dangerous liability?*

Hannah: I'm going to do some magic right now. Right now.

Quinn: [laughs]

Hannah: I am done with this conversation. I am getting out of here right fucking now!

Quinn: What kind of magic are you trying to do?

Hannah: I'm trying to get out of the other handcuff.

Quinn: Okay.

Hannah: [rolls dice] Magic. That's a 6.

Quinn: Oh, boy.

Hannah: [laughs]

Teo: TV magic.

Kyle: Uh-oh.

Teo: Magic, magic, magic.

Kyle: Uh-oh.

Hannah: Magic.

Quinn: So, what's your word?

Hannah: Out. Out, out, out, out, out, out, out. Run out right now. Don't like this at all.

Quinn: You say out, and from the breast pocket of your suit jacket, the key floats out by itself and is suspended in the air for a second and then clatters on the desk in front of you.

Hannah: I grab for it.

Kyle: [chuckles]

Quinn: It is out of your range.

Hannah: Fuck.

Quinn: [as Stoney] *Well, what on earth is this?* And Stoney picks up the key. [as Stoney] *We got a little bit of time. I'm going to learn it all in the end. So, you might as well pass the time with a bit of friendly conversation. What's this fine thing?*

Hannah: [as JR] *It's an antique-*

Quinn: [as Stoney] *I can tell.*

Hannah: [as JR] *-from my grandmother.*

Quinn: [as Stoney] *No, I don't think so.*

Hannah: [as JR] *Yeah. It was passed down through the JR family tree.*

Kyle: [laughs]

Teo: Through the JR family?

Hannah: [as JR] *From mother to daughter, and I'd really like it back. It's got a lot of sentimental value. Please give me that back.*

Quinn: [as Stoney] *That was an interesting thing you did. How does it work?* And Stoney taking the key back and forth in his hand and flicking it, like, trying to get it to do something.

Hannah: [as JR] *I don't really know.*

Kyle: [laughs]

Hannah: [as JR] *Like, I have an idea, but I got the key. Didn't get an instruction manual. Probably got lost several generations ago. You move and you put the instruction manual in one box, and then you show up at a new house, and the instruction manual is not there, and then oh, no, you've got the family heirloom with no instructions. Can I please have that back right now? It's very important to me.*

Quinn: [as Stoney] *No, definitely not. Does it need a word?*

Hannah: Can I try to manipulate him into giving me the key back?

Quinn: You may not.

Hannah: Fuck.

[laughter]

Teo: Kind of already failed that one.

Hannah: Shut up! [laughs] I'm having a very bad day, okay? I just found out that my crush doesn't like me back, which, like, that wasn't a surprise, but still. I'm going to have to go home and write my journal about this. I'm going to be very sad. I'm going to be taking, I'm

sorry, Constance. So many long baths. Lots of long baths. Gonna be a lot of Sarah McLachlan's playing.

Teo: All right.

Hannah: Going to write some poetry. Anyway, it's real shitty.

Quinn: Stoney is waving the key around. It's like, [as Stoney] *Does it need a word?*

Hannah: [as JR] *I don't know.*

Quinn: [as Stoney] *Fire*. And he waves the key and shouts, [as Stoney] *Fire*. And nothing. [as Stoney] *Huh.*

Hannah: [as JR] *Can I have my key back? Can I?*

Kyle: [chuckles]

Hannah: [as JR] *Okay. You're not going to give me the key back. Where is Stoney? You're not Stoney, obviously. Where is he?*

Quinn: [as Stoney] *Well, he's here, isn't he?*

Hannah: [as JR] *Yes, literally, you're walking around in a Stoney skin suit, but where the fuck is Stoney?*

Quinn: [as Stoney] *Oh, he's in here. He's doing just fine.*

Hannah: [as JR] *How do I know he's doing fine? I don't believe you. I don't, I don't believe.*

Quinn: [as Stoney] *Well, I think you're just going to have to trust me.*

Hannah: [as JR] *Ooh, you're not in the circle of trust though. Stoney was in the circle of trust.*

Quinn: [as Stoney] *But JR, isn't that what we do, JR? Blind trust? I trust you, you trust me, and we get through this crazy world together.*

Teo: Ewwwww no.

Hannah: Did Stoney get possessed by the ghost of a failed country singer? What is going on here?

Teo: That's what I'm thinking.

Quinn: I mean Stoney is kind of a country boy.

Teo: He is. Yeah.

Quinn: [as Stoney] *I'm going through the files here. That seems to be the way we work.*

Hannah: [as JR] *Oh, is this the royal "we"? Is this you and Stoney hanging out or like people? Like what?*

Quinn: [as Stoney] *You and this one. That's how you get along.*

Hannah: [as JR] *But you're not Stoney. He's in there, but you're not Stoney*!

Quinn: [as Stoney] I mean *as far as everybody else is concerned.*

Hannah: [as JR] *Now, can I please have my key back?*

Quinn: [as Stoney] *I mean, listen, JR, don't worry about it too much. Just give me a few more minutes and then the two of you will be reunited.* [musical underscore]

Hannah: Shit, shit, shit. Can I do magic again? Can I try to do magic again?

Quinn: You can do magic. You're going to take a -1 on your roll, because the key is not on your person.

Hannah: All right. I want out. He's going to puke spores on me, and as much as I'd like to keep this going. [rolls dice] That's an 11.

Teo: Ooh.

Quinn: What is your effect?

Hannah: I want out of the handcuffs. I've already got one hand out of it. I want the other hand out. I want to be able to snatch my key, and then I am booking it out of this police station, and nobody is stopping me.

Quinn: You shout out once more, and when you do, the key, just like a sunburst, explodes in this flash of light. When it fades, the other handcuff is shattered, and both of your hands are free.

Hannah: Yes. All right. I am grabbing that key, and I am getting the fuck out of this police station right now.

Quinn: Well, Act Under Pressure to grab this key while Stoney is momentarily distracted.

Hannah: [rolls dice] Oh, no, no, that's a 3.

Kyle: [laughs]

Teo and Hannah: Oh, no.

Teo: Mark that experience.

Hannah: Oh, Christ.

Quinn: You could use luck.

Hannah: Oh, mmm, God. Okay.

Quinn: You don't have to.

Hannah: If I don't get that key back-- fuck it. I'll use a luck point. All right, so that means luck point.

Quinn: Okay.

Hannah: So that means no experience then.

Quinn: No experience.

Hannah: Okay. No experience. Use a luck point. That means it is an automatic success.

Quinn: Yes.

Hannah: Okay.

Quinn: So, you're not caught off guard by this. You've seen the key do its thing before. So, you, suddenly freed, check Stoney with your shoulder and grab the key and throw open the

interview room door and step into the hallway. To be clear, Stoney is not incapacitated. And almost immediately, he moves to follow you. And the kid in the other room has also stepped up and is heading towards the door.

Hannah: Shit. Okay. Is there a backdoor--? [crosstalk]

Quinn: Roll to Read a Bad Situation.

Hannah: Yes. [rolls dice] That's a 7.

Quinn: On a 7 to 9, you get to hold one.

Hannah: Best way out. JR is looking out for number one right now.

Quinn: The best way out for you is to use the entrance that they would use to take in like high-profile criminals who are at risk of potentially facing violent threats, which is in the back near the cell block area. It would normally be locked, but with your key, you are quite confident that you can get out that way.

Hannah: That's where I'm going.

Quinn: And that would avoid the main lobby and any other dangers.

Hannah: Okay. I would like to do that, but I'm going to turn and yell over my shoulder. [as JR] *Stoney, I'm coming back for you, just not right now. I'll save you. I'll try to save you, but I got to go.*

Teo: [giggles]

Kyle: [chuckles]

Quinn: You sprint down the hallway and shout this back at Stoney. He steps out of the interview room, and the kid steps out of the interview room, and they're standing together in this hallway, staring at you. They're both motionless for a second, and then Stoney picks up his police radio-

Hannah: Fuck.

Quinn: -and you can see him whisper something into it, and then you turn the corner and get away.

Hannah: Okay.

Quinn: You sprint down a few more corners and you reach the cell block area. And as you're running through trying to book it out, you hear a voice from behind, you say, [as Leon] *Wait. JR, what are you doing?*

Hannah: Oh, fuck. Is Leon still--?

Quinn: You recognize Leon's voice.

Hannah: Shit. Where is he? Is he in a room?

Quinn: He appears to be in one of the cells.

Hannah: Is he handcuffed?

Quinn: No.

Hannah: Is the door locked?

Quinn: Yes.

Hannah: Okay.

Quinn: Is that a problem?

Kyle: [chuckles]

Hannah: Okay, I'm going to stop. I'm going to unlock it with my key. [as JR] *Leon, we're going. There's bad shit going on, and you and I need to get the fuck out of here right now.*

Quinn: I don't think there's any reason that Leon wouldn't believe you.

Kyle: [laughs]

Hannah: Okay.

Quinn: I don't think you need to manipulate him.

Hannah: Yeah, I didn't think so.

Kyle: He's predisposed to believe you because he's your sidekick.

Hannah: Oh, my God.

Teo: That's right.

Quinn: Yeah. If this keeps going, you might have to take an ally move.

[laughter]

Kyle: Yes.

Quinn: This is a narrative function. Like, Leon fought a strigoi with you.

Hannah: Right.

Quinn: There's no reason he wouldn't believe you if you say something weird is happening that he wouldn't go with you. So, you unlock the cell door. Your key vibrates the same way as it has in the past, and the door swings open. You and Leon take off, and you reach the rear entrance, which has a very heavy lock.

Hannah: Guys, I'm so scared right now.

Quinn: But that too swings open effortlessly.

Hannah: Okay.

Quinn: And you're in the rear of the police station.

Hannah: Okay.

Quinn: There's a fenced area with barbed wire on top and a gate with a gantry and a handful of police cars, but you don't see anyone in the immediate vicinity.

Hannah: Do you guys suppose the key works on cars? I don’t-

Teo: I don't see why not.

Kyle: Worth trying.

Hannah: All right. I don't have a lot of time and I don't have a lot of options, but I would like to see if the key will start the car too.

Quinn: JR, you're able to unlock the car, no problem, and you hold the key up to the ignition, and nothing happens.

Hannah: Nothing happens?

Quinn: No, the car does not start.

Hannah: Shit. I don't have enough time to hotwire a car.

Quinn: Leon's just standing outside the car staring at you. And as you're trying to use the key on this car-

Hannah: I'm holding it to the end-- [laughs]

Kyle: Tapping a key around.

Quinn: You see that rear door swing open--

Hannah: [as JR] *Okay, time to go. Time to go.*

Quinn: And three police officers run outside, guns drawn.

Hannah: [as JR] *Time to go, Leon*, and I run away.

Quinn: JR, as you take off, you hear an officer say, [as Officer] *Stop, don't move. Hands on the ground.*

Hannah: Yeah. It's not happening.

Quinn: Roll Act Under Pressure.

Hannah: Ooh, I'm so scared right now. [rolls dice] That is a 6. I'm going to get shot.

Quinn: Yeah, you do. The officers, I don't think all of them open fire, but one of them definitely takes a shot and hits you in the leg. You take two harm, and your movement is going to be impeded.

Hannah: Ouchy.

Quinn: You made it about halfway to this gate and you still have about halfway to go. And Leon sees you fall, and he takes cover behind a police vehicle, [as Leon] *JR, what are we doing? Why are they shooting at us?*

Hannah: [as JR] *We're running from the fucking cops, and I just got shot in the fucking leg. And this adrenaline is going to wear off at some point, but we need to get away before it does.*

Quinn: What do you do?

Hannah: I'm still running.

Quinn: It's going to be another Act Under Pressure, and you're going to have a -1 because you are injured.

Hannah: Damn it. This is going very badly. [rolls dice] That is a 9.

Quinn: Okay. On a 7 to 9, I'm going to give you a worse outcome, a hard choice, or a price to pay. I think I'm going to give you a couple options here.

Hannah: All right.

Quinn: Either you are going to get shot again, Leon is going to get shot escaping, or Leon is not going to escape.

Hannah: Goddamn it, Quinn.

Kyle: [chuckles]

Hannah: You're being a real shit right now.

Quinn: [chuckles]

Hannah: A real shit. Okay. Leon's going to get shot.

Quinn: Okay.

Teo: [giggles]

Kyle: [chuckles]

Hannah: I'm not leaving him behind, and I'm not taking another wound.

Teo: [giggles]

Quinn: Okay. You get up, and the shooting pain runs through your leg as you put pressure on it, but you bear down and take off towards the gate, and you shout back at Leon to get his ass in gear. He takes off, and one of the other officers takes a shot, and he gets hit in the torso and falls. You pick him up, and the two of you sprint out, and you press your key to the gate, and it swings open. What now?

Hannah: Well, they have my goddamn cell phone.

Quinn: They have all of your equipment except for your key.

Hannah: We got to get to the Prospector.

Quinn: I think Leon agrees with that plan. How are you going to do it?

Hannah: How far away are we from the bar?

Quinn: We established that the Prospector was reasonably close to the city center, but you're still probably like 2 miles.

Hannah: Oh, shit. Okay. Leon's got all his stuff, right? Like, [as JR] *Leon, get a Lyft. We're going to the Prospector*.

Quinn: Okay. To be clear, this fence is a wire fence, and the cops can still see you. And in fact, they are moving to pursue you.

Hannah: Oh, okay. Well, we need to keep moving.

Quinn: Yes.

Hannah: Can Leon do this? How badly is Leon hurt? Yes, I know he got shot, but how shot did he get?

Kyle: But he is used to it.

Quinn: There's a bloom of blood on his shirt.

Hannah: [as JR] *Unlock the phone, buddy. Give me the phone. We've got to keep moving. Come on.*

Quinn: He hands you the phone, and he coughs, and some blood comes out, and he says, [as Leon] *Why do I always get shot when I'm hanging out with you?*

[laughter]

Hannah: [as JR] *Is this really the time, Leon*?

Teo: [laughs]

Quinn: [as Leon] *Humor lightens the mood. [coughs]*

[laughter]

Kyle: My boy.

Quinn: So, JR, how are you escaping?

Hannah: I'm going to call Lyft. We're going to get in the car, and we're going to go to the fucking Prospector.

Quinn: Okay. It's going to be-- Actually roll 2D6 and add half your luck.

Hannah: So, that's one, two, three, four, five. Is it round-down or round-up?

Quinn: Round up for luck.

Hannah: Okay. [rolls dice] 10.

Quinn: There is a Lyft that is very close to you, like one minute away.

Hannah: All right.

Quinn: And if you move towards it, you'll be able to outpace the cops.

Hannah: I do that.

Quinn: You're staggering down this street, and the police come out. At the same time, this Lyft driver pulls up, and you open the door and you throw Leon in the seat, and you hop in, and the driver looks back at you both bleeding and says, [as Lyft driver] *What the fuck, man? What the fuck is going on?*

Hannah: [as JR] *Prospector. Fucking go*.

Quinn: Roll to Manipulate Someone.

Teo: JR, you're going to have such a bad rating after this though.

[laughter]

Hannah: It's not my phone. It's Leon's phone.

Kyle: It’s Leon’s.

Teo: Oh, that's right! Perfect.

Hannah: I'm going to use my “Grifter” ability. If I'm going to manipulate something, what will convince this person to do what I want?

Quinn: I think shouting belligerently is probably the best way, or the other way that you could do it is by telling them that you need to get to a hospital, but they would take you to the hospital. If you tell them hospital, I'll give you a +1.

Hannah: No, I'm not telling them a hospital. [rolls dice] It's a 7.

Quinn: They'll do it, but only if you do something for them right now to show them that you mean it. I think you're going to have to threaten this person with physical violence.

Teo: Yeah! Sorry, that's--

Quinn: Wow Constance jesus.

Hannah: All right. Okay.

Teo: [laughs] JR's a badass!

Hannah: What kind of car is this? Is this like a--?

Quinn: Oh, it's a Prius. It's a Prius, for sure.

Hannah: Okay.

Teo: Of course.

Hannah: So, I crawl up into the front seat, leaving a trail of blood, and I lean in real close and I go, [as JR] *If you don't take me to the Prospector, I will fucking kill you right now.*

Quinn: And suddenly, the car screams forward, and you sail away from the police station.

Hannah: Yes!

[laughter]

Teo: Whoo.

Hannah: Yay!

Quinn: That was fun.

Hannah: Oh, no.

Teo: Good job.

[laughter]

Kyle: JR, you're doing a really good job of laying low here in Firmament.

[laughter]

Hannah: It's not my fault!

Kyle: [laughs]

Teo: It really isn't. This is really not on you.

Kyle: Listen, nothing you've done in your life is your fault.

[music]

Quinn: Hey everyone, it's your spookmaster, Quinn, here. Thanks much for tuning into Episode 10 of Monster Hour. You know, I really couldn't think of a better time of year for us to

hit double digits than when we all get to be the real monsters. I hope you all are listening in the dark with all the lights off, curled up under a blanket, or carving pumpkins with a mug of spiced cider in hand, or working on your costume. And you know, if you're not, just don't tell me. I don't want to know. Just let me have this.

I want to let you all know that our Monster Hour stickers have arrived, and they look absolutely killer. We've got some pictures up on our social media if you want to check them out. We're also super close to hitting our goal of 50 followers. So, while you're there, go ahead and smash that retweet button so we can start giving those baddies away.

And of course, a special thank you to all the creepy critters out there who've taken the time to leave us a rating and review or recommend us to a friend. Don't forget that if you tweet about the show using *#monsterhourpod*, you might just wind up as a character. I'm not sure we're going to get to any of this mystery, but there will definitely be some new folks coming in the next one. Promise.

That's all I got for you this week. We'll be back with Episode 11 of Monster Hour on November 5th. Stay spooky.

[music]

Quinn: Constance, Alvin has just sprinted away going after Fred-

Teo: Cool.

Quinn: And Detective Galvan is sitting on the forest floor, and she has her gun in her hand. I think she's lowered it now that Fred and Alvin are both gone, but she turns to you and says, [as Galvan] *Constance, what on earth is happening?*

Teo: [as Constance] *Keep that gun up*.

Quinn: [as Galvan] *Did you see him?*

Teo: [as Constance] *Keep that gun back up. I don't know what's going on over there, but you're going to want to help this child that we've been searching for. But he is also not okay. He's got some weird sort of the-- Hmm.*

Quinn: [as Galvan] *The cloud, like Fred?*

Teo: [as Constance] *Yes. But it seems to be more in the stomach region at the moment, but that's--*

Quinn: [as Galvan] *It starts and then they expel it from their mouth*.

Teo: [as Constance] *Yeah. So, that's happening to Rahul right now.*

Quinn: [as Galvan] *Wait, did it get you?*

Teo: [as Constance] *No.*

Quinn: She raises the pistol up to--

Teo: [as Constance] *Hold on. No, because I headbutted a child, and I only would do that if it was-- Well, I don't know if I only would. One can't really say what they would only do.*

Quinn: [as Galvan] *How do I know it's you?*

Teo: [as Constance] *Do you want to talk about my lover again?*

Quinn: Roll to Manipulate Someone.

Kyle: [chuckles]

Teo: [laughs] [rolls dice] Oh, well, that's a sweet, sweet 9.

Quinn: On a 7 to 9, they'll do it, but only if you do something for them right now to show that you mean it. I think she holds the pistol up a little bit higher and she says, [as Galvan] *What happened to John? You tell me right now. Stoney told me that he's missing. I don't buy it.*

Teo: [as Constance] *John?*

Quinn: [as Galvan] *The other biker, Earl's friend. There was a call that had his body at your doorstep. What happened to him?*

Teo: [as Constance] *Okay, I'm going to level with you, because honestly, I'm very bad at lying. I'm actually surprised you bought the whole lover thing earlier. There's some weird shit that goes on in our town unrelated to this weirdness. That was a different kind of weirdness that's kind of like a vampire, but not. I could explain it to you. I could show you some books. The basic gist is that his blood was drained from his entire body, and he may or may not have turned into something weird. We can talk about it later, but I will deny it as soon as we're in a normal situation.* And I smile kind of haphazardly.

Hannah: [laughs]

Quinn: She lowers the gun.

Teo: I give her, like, a sad thumbs up like, [as Constance] *Yeah, we're both in this world.*

Quinn: [as Galvan] *You and I will talk about this later*.

Teo: [as Constance] *All right.*

Quinn: [as Galvan] *Is Alvin going to be okay?*

Teo: [as Constance] *I have no idea*.

Kyle: [as Alvin] *I got him.*

Teo: [as Constance] *I know about as much as you do right now.*

Kyle: [as Alvin] *Got him.*

Teo: [as Constance] *Oh boy.*

Quinn: [as Galvan] *Quickly. We have to go help him.*

Teo: [as Constance] *No. Stop.*

Quinn: She stands up. [as Galvan] *You don't want to help him?*

Teo: [as Constance] *I have no idea what is happening right now. I just think we should approach everyone that we don't see immediately with just a little tinge of suspicion. So, I would just have your gun raised as you approach, because I don't have a gun. So, I'm relying on you for that one.*

Quinn: [as Galvan] *Okay, let's go.*

Teo: [as Constance] *Are we just going to leave the kid?*

Quinn: [as Galvan] *Is he like Fred?*

Teo: [as Constance] *Basically, yeah.*

Quinn: [as Galvan] *Then yes. I think we should leave him for now.*

Teo: [as Constance] *Okay. You said it, not me.* I'm going to follow her now.

Quinn: The two of you head into the forest and come upon Alvin, who has Fred pinned to the ground. And these particulates, these bits of fine dust, bright pink, hot pink, deep dark purple, fuchsia are covering his face, but he's got Fred pinned down to the ground. Detective Galvan has her gun trained on the two of them.

Kyle: [as Alvin] *Oh thank god. Fred, cut it out. Stop it.*

Quinn: [as Fred, frantic] *Let me go! Let me go!*

Kyle: [as Alvin] *No! Stop it!*

Quinn: What do you do?

Kyle: I'm trying to cover his mouth up with one big hand.

Quinn: He bites your finger.

Kyle: Fucking hell. [laughs]

Quinn: There's no harm, but he bites your finger.

Kyle: I pull his shirt up over his head.

[laughter]

Quinn: Okay, you do.

Kyle: I tie it around in a little knot.

Quinn: Okay. [laughs] Yeah, you do it. It's fine.

Kyle: And sit on him. [as Alvin] *Stay*.

[laughter]

Teo: Okay. Constance sees this awkward, very clumsy experience and goes, [as Constance] *I think Alvin's probably fine for now.* [Kyle laughs] *This seems pretty in character, to be honest.*

Quinn: Detective Galvan looks at you, and she holsters her pistol and looks at the two of you.

Kyle: I look at Constance and be like, [as Alvin] *Is she okay?*

Teo: [as Constance] *Yeah, she's fine. We're trying to figure out if you're cool because given your other situation, you might respond differently.*

Kyle: [as Alvin] *He barfed this gross pink shit in my face a lot.*

Teo: [as Constance] *That's usually bad*.

Kyle: [as Alvin] *It was nasty.*

Hannah: [laughs]

Kyle: I try to start wiping it off of my face, which also is an act of masking whatever's left of wolfishness in my face.

Teo: [as Constance] *Detective Galvan, my lover is not--*

Quinn: [as Galvan] *You admitted that was a ruse. I think we can drop the act at this point.*

Kyle: Oh, thank God.

Teo: [as Constance] *Yeah. Look, I was trying to protect him because obviously he's not--*

Quinn: Human?

Teo: [as Constance] *No, he's still human. He just isn't all the time. So, he might actually respond to this different than we do. Alvin, maybe you make sure all that stuff is away from you before we approach.*

Kyle: [as Alvin] *Yeah, I keep wiping*.

Quinn: Yeah, you wipe it all away.

Kyle: And I wipe it off on Fred's pants.

[laughter]

Quinn: Okay. We won't go into the details of how you do that, but you do it.

Kyle: Oh, just like on his pant leg.

Quinn: You clean off all this detritus.

Kyle: Wipe it off with my hand and-

Quinn: From your face.

Kyle: -wipe that off on his pant leg. I'm not doing it on my pant leg. This is Constance's.

Teo: [as Constance] *Thank you. I appreciate that*.

Quinn: Okay. So, what do the two of you do? You have Detective Galvan standing there in shock a bit. And you have Fred, who is still screaming to let him go, but you're sitting on him, Alvin, and he's got the shirt over his head. So, what do you do?

Kyle: I look at Galvan and be like, [as Alvin] *Well, you are police, right? Do you have anything-?*

Quinn: [as Galvan] *Oh, what?*

Kyle: [as Alvin] -that can *help here?*

Quinn: [as Galvan] *I don't even know what this is*.

Teo: [as Constance] *Oh, do you have any handcuffs? Oh. Yeah, you're not going to know what this is.*

Kyle: [as Alvin] *We don't either!*

Teo: [as Constance] *Spoiler alert. Werewolves are real. Vampires are real. Pretty much any of those weird, spooky, scary stories that you've heard are probably real, or some variation of them are real. Don't know what this is yet, but it's probably something like that. My*

grandma apparently hunted this kind of stuff. So, I have a bunch of books at my place, and maybe we can find out more about this later. But for now, I think we should probably subdue.

Quinn: [as Galvan] *I mean, I can*-- [crosstalk]

Kyle: [as Alvin] *Like handcuffs*.

Teo: [as Constance] *Yeah.*

Kyle: [as Alvin] *You got handcuffs?*

Quinn: [as Galvan] *I can handcuff him, certainly, but okay. All right, fine.* And she pulls out a pair of handcuffs and handcuffs him.

Teo: [as Constance] *Just accept that you're going to be in the not knowing category for a while.*

Quinn: [as Galvan] *All right. Very well.* And she handcuffs him-- do you want her to handcuff him to a tree? Do you want him to be handcuffed just on the ground?

Kyle: Probably to something.

Teo: Yeah, otherwise he'll run away.

Kyle: He seems to be pretty adamant about running away.

Teo: Yeah.

Quinn: She handcuffs him to a tree in a secure fashion.

Teo: [as Constance] *We should probably grab the other infected being.*

Kyle: [as Alvin] *We go find the kid?*

Teo: [as Constance] *Yeah*.

Kyle: [as Alvin] *He's infected too, huh?*

Teo: [as Constance] *Yeah*.

Kyle: [as Alvin] *Galvan, do you want to keep an eye on this one, see if you can get anything out of him?*

Quinn: [as Galvan] *I mean, yes, I suppose I can try to interrogate him.*

Kyle: [as Alvin] *Don't get too close though*.

Quinn: [as Galvan] *I certainly will not. Keep in touch on the walkie-talkie.*

Kyle: [as Alvin] *Sounds good. We'll be right back.*

Teo: Can I jump on Alvin and have Alvin like--

Kyle: Piggyback?

Teo: Yeah. Do his fast moving in the forest?

Kyle: Yeah.

Quinn: You're not that far from the kid and the ravine.

Teo: Oh, okay. All right. I still jump on Alvin out of sheer excitement that I'm not the one with the least amount of knowledge in this situation.

Quinn: Okay.

Kyle: [laughs]

Quinn: It probably still only takes you a few minutes to get back to the ravine where Rahul is in the same spot.

Kyle: I will slowly approach like, [as Alvin] *Kid? Whoever you are, be cool.*

Quinn: Rahul doesn't respond.

Kyle: [as Alvin] *Be cool. Step, be cool.*

Teo: [as Constance] *He's going to do this until you get close enough that he can spit on you, Alvin*.

Kyle: [as Alvin] *Rahul, I'm going to come closer, but I want you to put your shirt up over your head.*

Teo: [laughs]

Quinn: Rahul does not do that.

Kyle: [as Alvin] *Okay. You're being very difficult*.

Quinn: He's just staring at you.

Kyle: [as Alvin] *What are you doing out here?*

Teo: I pull out my pepper spray.

Quinn: There's no response.

Kyle: [as Alvin] *We have to just get this kid, huh?*

Teo: [as Constance] *Probably.*

Kyle: I lean back and whisper to Constance, [as Alvin] *Make a distraction. Do something weird*.

Teo: I start dancing toward a tree and then dancing with the tree.

Hannah: [laughs]

Quinn: So, Alvin, are you trying--?

Kyle: I'm trying to separate, like put space between me and Constance so that if Raul looks at one of us, he won't be able to see the other one.

Quinn: Okay. So, the two of you have split up. What now?

Kyle: As soon as he looks at Constance, I'm going to pounce on him. Try to clasp a hand over his dang mouth.

Quinn: Alvin, this is going to be an Act Under Pressure from you.

Kyle: Okay.

Quinn: And Constance, you're going to be Helping Out.

Teo: Okay.

Quinn: So both of you roll +Cool.

Teo: [rolls dice] Ooh, that's an 11.

Kyle: [rolls dice] An 8.

Quinn: Unfortunately, that's not going to be enough to put Alvin over into full success. So, Alvin, on a 7 to 9, I'm going to give you a worse outcome, a hard choice or a price to pay.

Kyle: Mm-hmm.

Quinn: You sprint towards this kid as Constance creates a bit of a distraction. Rahul looks away momentarily. But as he sees you approach, he snaps back, and you can see that stomach movement happening again.

Kyle: Mm-hmm.

Quinn: You can get there in time to clasp a hand over his mouth, but that cloud is still going to come out. Or you can break away and avoid the consequence, but you won't have addressed the kid.

Kyle: I'll do a last second leap out of the way.

Quinn: You do so, and you leap over a cloud and land on the other side of the kid. He turns his head to face you and gives a bit of a scowl.

Kyle: [as Alvin] *Didn't see that coming, did you, punk?*

Teo: [as Constance] [shouting from a distance] *Nobody says punk anymore!*

Quinn: This time, there's no reaction, and you reach him without consequence and clasp a hand over his mouth, and he bites your finger again.

Kyle: [as Alvin] *Naughty boy.*

Quinn: [laughs] What are you doing? You've reached Rahul and clasp a hand over his mouth.

Kyle: I have a young boy.

Quinn: [fake old timey newsman accent] You've captured a young boy!

Teo: Oh no.

Kyle: I've captured a young boy. I pick him up.

Quinn: Okay.

Kyle: [chuckles]

Quinn: You're holding a young boy overhead.

Kyle: He’s been very naughty. [as Alvin] *Who are you?*

Quinn: [as Rahul] *I think the question is, what are you?*

Teo: Oh, he's confused about your situation.

Kyle: [as Alvin] *I am Alvin Hughes.*

Quinn: [as Rahul] *Strange creature, trapped between man and beast.*

Teo: I start running towards them, but I'm going to keep a bubble distance just to capture the thing's attention.

Quinn: It looks your way, but it doesn't respond.

Teo: Okay.

Quinn: And then it trains its eyes back on Alvin and says, [as Rahul] *So strange*.

Kyle: [as Alvin] *Yeah, we're all a little bit strange. So what's your deal? Who are you? Where'd you come from? What do you want, and what's your deal?*

Quinn: [as Rahul] *Such an interesting concept you humans have of names. I don't really have one, but I suppose you could call me the Consensus. And I want… all of you*.

Kyle: [as Alvin] *Say like a Borg kind of thing. Are you from space?*

Quinn: [as Consensus] *Borg*?

Kyle: I look in the kid's ear.

Quinn: [as Consensus] *Don't know this one.*

Teo: Clearly, not into pop culture references.

Kyle: Yeah, hasn't taken over a nerd yet.

Teo: No. [as Constance] *Hey, Alvin. Ask it what it takes to release its hold.*

Kyle: [as Alvin] *What she said. Can you let go?*

Quinn: [as Consensus] *I mean, I could, but I won't*.

Kyle: [as Alvin] *Why not?*

Quinn: [as Consensus] *This place, this world, it wasn't meant for me. The very air is oppressive. Every breath leaves me hungrier, thirstier, lesser. But these vessels,* and he raises his arms to gesture to himself in this halting, strange fashion, *it nourishes them. They give me a safe harbor. And if I collect enough of them, perhaps I can create a different world. Or a new one.*

Kyle: [as Alvin] *Yeah, not a huge fan of that. Out you go.* Going to turn him upside down and shake him.

[laughter]

Kyle: [as Alvin] *Out you go. Come on.*

Quinn: Okay.

Kyle: [as Alvin] *Out*!

Teo: Constance is literally hands-- Like head in hands, really embarrassed at this idea, but go on.

Quinn: Okay. You shake the kid by his broken leg, and it breaks more.

Kyle: Uh-oh. Oops!

Hannah: [laughs]

Teo: [as Constance] *Alvin, what do we need to survive?*

Kyle: I hold the kid up. [as Alvin] *Constance, you go for it.*

Teo: [as Constance] *No, no, no. I'm not getting close.*

Kyle: [as Alvin] *But just yell at him.*

Teo: [as Constance] *Just choke him out a little bit. Not enough to kill him.*

Quinn: [laughing] Just choke him a little.

Kyle: [as Alvin] *What?*

Teo: [as Constance] *Just enough to make him pass out.*

Kyle: [as Alvin] *Is Rahul still in there with you?*

Quinn: [as Consensus] *Well, yes, in a way.*

Kyle: [as Alvin] *In a way?*

Quinn: [as Consensus] *He doesn't have any control, but yes, he's here*.

Kyle: [as Alvin] *How do you do that little tummy thing?*

Quinn: [as Consensus] *That's how I grow*.

Kyle: [as Alvin] *You can just do that all the time, just over and over and over and over and over again?*

Quinn: [as Consensus] *Well, within reason. Nothing can grow infinitely forever, but*--

Kyle: [as Alvin] *Okay. We're going to go on a walk. Let's*-- [chuckles]

Teo: [as ConstanceI still say you choke him out, and then he won't have anywhere to go, if the only vessel closest is you which he clearly can't inhabit.

Kyle: [as Alvin] *Hmm. You need your hosts conscious?*

Quinn: [as Consensus] *Hmm, no. I mean, this one's defective anyway. You can kill it if you want to*.

Kyle: [as Alvin] *Yeah, I'm not doing that*.

Hannah: No!

Kyle: Can I investigate this thing as I'm asking these questions?

Quinn: Yeah, absolutely. Roll to Investigate a Mystery.

Kyle: Okay. [rolls dice] Never mind. I got a 3. I sit down and think about things real hard for a bit.

Teo: Oh boy.

Quinn: [musical underscore] So, you're holding Rahul upside down and questioning him. And eventually, I think he smiles and says, [as Consensus] *Ah, okay. I think I'm tired of this. Did you wonder why I was answering all of your questions?*

Kyle: [as Alvin] *Yeah, a little bit. I thought maybe you were just as curious as I was.*

Quinn: [as Consensus] *I mean, I'm learning a lot as I grow, but that doesn't really require interacting with you.*

Kyle: [as Alvin] *Uh-huh.*

Quinn: [as Consensus] *I had a different motive in mind*. And Constance, you hear a low growl behind you.

Teo: Ah, goddamn it.

Kyle: Ah right, cause of the thing that we don't know about. You, listeners, you know, what's up?

Teo: [giggles]

Quinn: Constance, you turn around, and behind you is a wolf.

Teo: Sweet.

Quinn: But something is wrong. [music picks up] Around its shoulders and its torso, there's this enlarged mass, and it looks like a chaotic honeycomb of hardened, dark purple ridges, and these fleshier magenta pores like a harlequin morel mushroom.

Hannah: Gross.

Quinn: You can see all around its eyes are these fine pale threads that seem to be sprouting out of the sockets themselves. They're this slightly pinkish hue and they're feathering out in this branching pattern. And as soon as you notice it, it leaps towards you.

Teo: I jump up the tree that I'm standing next to while spraying my pepper spray-

Quinn: Act Under Pressure.

Teo: -at its eyes. [rolls dice] Oh, Constance is having a good day because she got a 13.

Kyle: Whoa!

Quinn: Okay.

Hannah: Jesus!

Quinn: Again, I'm going to need to know the book that you read.

Kyle: [laughs]

Teo: Okay.

Quinn: This is my condition for this move, is that I'm going to ask you what book you read.

Teo: Okay. This is *Camping for Girls Who Got Kicked Out of Girl Scouts* by Peggy S. MacGuffin.

Quinn: Excellent. Love it. Okay, this wolfish creature leaps towards you, and you spring up with surprising nimbleness and scamper up the tree that you are nearby. It snaps at the air where you were just a moment ago, but you reach a low hanging branch and you spray it with the pepper spray.

Teo: Yes.

Quinn: It gives a howl.

Teo: I stick my tongue out.

Quinn: Alvin, what are you doing?

Kyle: Oh, no, this is something I can deal with. I put Rahul down and square off with the wolf. I yell at it, [as Alvin] *Hey!*

Quinn: It howls at you.

Kyle: [as Alvin] *I can do that too.* [Wolf howls] *You dumb mushroom wolf.*

Quinn: I think at your provocation, it bounds towards you.

Kyle: Yup. I'm going to try to rope-a-dope it a little bit, wait for it to come close and do a little sidestep/use its momentum against it.

Quinn: Roll to Kick Some Ass.

Kyle: Slash. [rolls dice] 8.

Quinn: You inflict harm as established. So, you try to step out of the way, but this wolf responds with lightning reflexes and just tackles you, and the two of you trade blows. You punch your claws into its flesh, both fungal and normal, and you inflict some harm. It in turn bites you for two harm.

Kyle: That is one harm-- I inflict two, by the way, and it ignores armor.

Quinn: It bites you and then scampers away and howls again.

Kyle: I yell at the tree like, [as Alvin] *Ooh, could use some backup.*

Teo: [as Constance] *Okay*. What's up in this tree with me? Is there another branch near me?

Quinn: Sure. Yeah.

Teo: Okay. I break off a piece of a branch and try to hurl it at this wolf thing. I am fully aware that that is going to be a Kick Some Ass roll. [giggles]

Quinn: Actually, you break off a branch and you throw it, and it hits the wolf and doesn't do anything.

Teo: Ah, fuck.

Kyle: [as Alvin] *The radio, Constance*.

Teo: Oh, yeah. That's probably a lot better. Okay.

Quinn: Throwing a branch from that distance is a zero harm move, and there's no way--

[laughter]

Teo: Yeah. But you know what? Constance wouldn't know that. Constance's ability-- [crosstalk]

Quinn: Fair. I support your decision.

Kyle: No book about throwing branches in the ranges thereof.

Teo: [laughs] Yeah, I haven't read that book yet. Okay, cool. I pull out the radio. [as Constance] *All units, we have a serious problem. Detective Galvan, get your fucking ass over here. Sorry I'm swearing. Sorry, I can't help it. We need help.*

Quinn: [as Galvan] *You want me to abandon Fred?*

Teo: [as Constance] *He's tied to a tree, get over here*!

Quinn: [as Galvan] *Okay. Are you still at the ravine?*

Teo: [as Constance] *Yes but have your gun ready to kill a dog. A wolf. A wolf.*

Quinn: [as Galvan] *Okay, fine*.

Kyle: [laughs]

Quinn: [as Galvan] *You're so weird. I'll be right there. Galvan out.*

Teo: [as Constance] *Thank you for using the out. Constance out.*

Quinn: Alvin, what are you doing?

Kyle: With the adrenaline running, this may be bad when Galvan shows up with a gun. But I think Alvin shapeshifts.

Quinn: Okay. You become a coyote. A large coyote.

Kyle: I think I become a big old coyote.

Teo: Oh fuck.

Quinn: You're not quite the same size as this wolf, but you're reasonably comparable.

Kyle: This other wolf has all that pink and purple harlequin pattern shit all over it, right?

Quinn: Yeah.

Teo: Okay. I hope Galvan is smart enough to figure that one.

Quinn: Mostly around the torso, but there's a clear difference between the two of you.

Kyle: There's like a big growth thing on the-- more mushroom on the back.

Quinn: Yeah. So, it's encasing its torso, like, from back to stomach.

Kyle: So, I think I'm going to attack, charge the wolf, but I am going to target that growth.

Quinn: Roll to Kick Some Ass.

Kyle: [rolls dice] 9.

Quinn: You punch into this fungal flesh, and it's tough. Like, you've held a mushroom before and it breaks like nothing, but this is hard. And in fact, you think your attack is doing less damage.

Kyle: I do ignore armor though.

Quinn: Fair. You still do the same amount of damage, but you feel like you're doing less.

Kyle: [chuckles] It's tougher.

Quinn: And the wolf, in turn, bites your calf, and it drags you right over to Rahul. And with surprising vigor for someone who has been tossed around on a broken leg, he flops over and pancakes you and you can see his stomach start to move.

Hannah: Oh fuck!

Kyle: Do I take no harm?

Quinn: Sorry. You also take two harm.

Kyle: Oh, great. Okay.

Teo: Constance sees this. [as Constance] *Hey, Rahul, you're wasting your time with that being. My family has a history of destroying entities like the Consensus. You really want to get your hands on some good, good files, you're going to want to get to me*. And I jump down from the tree.

Quinn: At that, the wolf springs towards you.

Kyle: [laughs]

Teo: Okay. I will start running towards where Detective Galvan is coming from.

[laughter]

Kyle: Oh, whoops.

Quinn: Act Under Pressure.

Teo: Fuck me.

Kyle: [laughs]

Teo: Tried to be a hero. [rolls dice] 12.

Quinn: You do what you set out to do. I think you jump over logs and you move through this underbrush in a way that prevents this wolf, which is clearly faster than you. Like, in an open field, you would be toast. But you are able to move with surprising agility, and you rendezvous with Detective Galvan, and the wolf is right on your heels as you meet up with her.

Teo: [as Constance] *This one! This one!* I yell.

Kyle: [laughs]

Quinn: And she raises the pistol and takes a shot. Alvin, what are you doing?

Kyle: I'm going to use my jaws to gently but firmly fling this little boy off of me.

Quinn: I can't imagine this being anything other than Kick Some Ass.

Kyle: Yeah.

Quinn: I'm struggling to think of a gentle way that you can fling a child-

[laughter]

Quinn: -with your canine jaws.

Kyle: I was going to try to just bop him on the head a little bit, like softly, but I don't have human arms right now.

Teo: No.

Kyle: So, difficult to do that. I'm going to try to gently fling the boy, and I think in my head, [as Alvin] *I'm sorry. I'm sorry. I'm sorry*. [rolls dice] That's a 9 again.

Quinn: You trade harm as established, but this child is unarmed. Narratively, I don't think the cloud would happen in time. So, I think you inflict harm as established, which is to fling this kid gently, I guess.

Kyle: I'm not using my big claws.

Quinn: Okay. I think your coyote bite without its own natural attack probably does just one harm.

Kyle: Okay.

Quinn: But you fling this kid a little bit away and you're safe for the time being.

Kyle: I take off after where the other wolf went.

Quinn: Constance, this wolf is in midair, and you see Galvan take the shot, but it's still hurtling towards you.

Teo: And Galvan shot it and it's not responding?

Quinn: It took the bullet and it's still flying towards her. It was midair when she shot it.

Teo: I'm going to shove Galvan and myself out of the way.

Quinn: This is going to be a Protect Someone.

Teo: That is terrible for me, but let's find out.

[laughter]

Teo: [rolls dice] No, [Kyle laughs] that's not great. 8.

Quinn: So, on a 7+, you protect them okay, but you're going to suffer some or all of the harm. So, I'll give you a choice. It's going to get one of you.

Teo: Ughh. I'm going to have it get Galvan. I'm so close to being unstable.

Hannah: [laughs] Yeah! Now, you know how it feels to have to choose [Teo laughs] between you and somebody else getting hurt!

Teo: I know.

Hannah: Yeah! Now that the shoe's on the other foot, it doesn't feel so fucking good, does it? Huh?!

Kyle: [chuckles]

Hannah: Sorry.

Teo: I'd just like to note for the listeners that I still have not shot anyone in my party.

Kyle: [chuckles]

Hannah: Fuck off!

Quinn: Constance, you think about shoving Galvan the way, but you realize you're not going to have time. And instead, you leap away and this wolf just collides with Galvan and knocks her to the ground. You can see this fungal layer start to pulsate-

Kyle: Uh-oh.

Quinn: -and expand. I think you know what's about to happen.

Teo: I'd like to first point out that this last choice was made based on a book that I read called *Profiles in Realistic Survival*. It is the followup to *Profiles in Courage*, [Kyle laughs] and it is far more useful in everyday life. Anyway, whoo. Okay, I just go running back towards Alvin. God, I'm done with the forest. I want to be out!

[laughter]

Quinn: You take off running towards Alvin, and you look back just in time to see this rapidly expanding fungal form of this wolf suddenly contract and a cloud of spores shoot out fully encompassing Detective Galvan.

[Monster Hour theme]

[Transcript provided by SpeechDocs Podcast Transcription]