

Autumn in Hieron 18: Magic (Or Something) Is All Around Us

Transcriber: R

KEITH: Hey, guys, it's Keith, you might know me from this podcast and editing this podcast. Just a quick note ahead of time, just wanted to let everybody know this is a super short episode, uh, because the next episode gets into some sort of new game-ster stuff and Austin spends the first few minutes kind of setting up that, that that new stuff and it would be a total waste to have that as part of this episode, because then next week you'd get into it and everybody would've forgotten and it would be terrible. Also Art's audio is a little messed up. I did my best to fix it, uhm, it's pretty listenable mostly, ah, but he just wanted to come on and say that he's sorry, so Art, take it away.

ROBOT SYNTHESIZER VOICE ("ART"): Hello! It's me! Arthur Tebbel! I am sorry that my audio was messed up this week. Keith tried his best to fix it and he did a great job. I really appreciate him and his work. Without him, I am nothing.

KEITH: Thanks, Art, I appreciate it --

ROBOT VOICE: I am a boy lost at sea. We thank Keith for all that he does for us.

KEITH: Well, that's not necessary, but go ahead if you need to.

ROBOT: Keith is now, Keith is forever

LOW ECHOEY ROBOT TONES: Keith is now, Keith is forever

Overlapping different Robot voices: Keith is now, Keith is forever (repeated)

KEITH: Thanks, Art, that was really sweet. Aaaaaanyway, on to the show.

THEME SONG STARTS

AUSTIN: Hey everybody, welcome to Friends At The Table, an actual play podcast focused on critical worldbuilding, smart characterization and fun interaction between friends. We are, as always, presented by streamfriends.tv and runbutton.net. Today we are continuing our game of Dungeon World, a game by Sage LaTorra and Adam Koebel based on a hack of, uh, Apocalypse World by D Vincent Baker. Uh, and, uh... We're gonna - I'm gonna jump right into it today. And then we'll have room for recap in a moment or two, but I wanted to immediately like, paint this opening scene for us. Uh, as always, our agenda is to portray a fantastic world, to fill the character's lives with adventure and to play to find out what happens. Um, at the very end of the last session, the every end, you passed through the worst of the storm. Um, that is in the mark of the erasure, and you've run into two people. Uh, a human lady with red hair and a lot of strange equipment and belts and robes and a sword
(Dre chuckles)

And you recognized her, uh, Fantasma, and with her was a large orc, ehm, who had a pair of glasses on and was very clearly from the new archives. Ehm, at the very beginning of this, you know, there is a (tsk sound). I kinda wanna again, kind of paint you guys the- the picture. You, you're still kind of probably covered in ice and snow from passing through this huge blizzard, um, and you... are under the shadow of a MASSIVE tower that has fallen on its side. Uh, for Fantasma and for, um, tsk, Hadrian, this tower, the style of this tower, is familiar. It's like the one that you, that you explored on the Isle of Eventide, back on our first adventure, but it is much more massive. This tower would house the entire population of Velas easily, with room to spare, um. The two of them, Lady Sunder Havelton, who is the curator-in-residence at the new archives and formerly the dean of arcane acquisitions at the university council of deans, and Uklan Tel, who is the semiotician emeritus at the new archives, they lead you to a nearby hill, uh, which is a kind of a small crevice in between a couple of hills where they've set up camp. This area is gorgeous. Um, it's, rolling green hills, there's lots of flowering, uh, just like, wildflowers, that are in bloom, and it's... it's one of those scenes that changes the way that you understand scale. Um, it's sort of like. I don't, I don't know if you've had this experience before, but it spent a long time driving past small, um, like, windmills? Or not, Not windmills, but uh, like, wind power.. things? You know?

ART: (something unintelligible that I'm guessing is) Turbines?

DRE: Wind turbines?

AUSTIN: Wind turbines, thank you. Um, they're like, they were small, and they were in Jersey and there were a few of them on the way in to Atlantic City. And then one day I drove past a bunch in upstate New York coming down from Ontario to NYC and they were like the biggest thing I'd seen that were that shape. Like obviously I've seen skyscrapers and stuff before but like... I've seen lots of big buildings, but I hadn't seen anything that was like this, this was just like the most massive wind turbines I've ever seen, and it just like completely... reminded me of my, my, the smallness of my being, and the size of things that people can create, and just... this is like that for you. Like, this is a tower but it feels like a mountain but you know a person touched all of it. You know? So it's weird to think that. Uh, and to feel that way. Um. Again, this area is beautiful and it's warm, but it's... tsk... it's not, you're not like immediately joyous, right? Um, the, the semiotician, Uklan, who has, he is kind of a gray skinned orc with red hooded robes and sashes and like, like Sunder, has like a bunch of belts and pouches and she looks... he kind of looks... they BOTH look like final fantasy characters in a sense, right?

(Art laughs in the background)

AUSTIN: That's like the aesthetic of the New Archives, it's like, it, it doesn't, there's just a lot of places to put things and to carry things and like, I'm certain they have access to hammer space, uh, so, and he has a pair of those, like, pince-nez glasses on, and he has like, he's older, he has a scrunged-face but a friendly scrunged-up face, there's a kind of grandpa quality to him?

DRE: Avuncular?

AUSTIN: Yes. And he kneels down, uh, at the campsite between a couple twigs. You guys are still like shaking and still cold. And he starts to like, move the twigs around, pushing on them here or there.

AUSTIN (as Uklan, in understanding): Ah, ah.

AUSTIN: And then he cuts a little piece of the end of his belt off and drops it right in the middle of a pile of sticks and the second it hits the whole thing comes, comes alive in flame. Um, and almost instantly you feel your bodies warming, warming up from the supernatural cold you passed through. Hadrian, even you, who had not felt cold, because that was one of your powers, the powers of the vow you had taken,

ART: Sure

AUSTIN: Even you suddenly felt something warm inside of you. Which is weird.

ART: It is weird!

AUSTIN: Uh, Uklan is seated on a little foldout chair that he has set up a little ways away, um, and he's scribbling in a notebook and, and, kind of referring to some maps and a bunch of other papers. Uh, Sunder is up on the hill and she's scanning the horizon with her eyes. The three of you sit for a while, and as the cold leaves you, you feel something missing, somehow. Like there is a hole in you. At first it feels like maybe the cold drilled down so deep into you that you lost something, but after a bit of time, each of you, on your own, can't help but wonder if that feeling of emptiness was within you all along and you just hadn't noticed it yet. Sunder returns from the hill to look you all over. Again, um, Fantasma, you know her. You knew her.

NICK: Yeahhhh

AUSTIN: You knew her from when the University still stood. Um, ah, I think maybe, maybe I'm wrong here, we can talk about this, but, uh, my image of her in relation to you is that like she is a friendly, a playful rival? Um, that respected you, but differed almost entirely. Um.

NICK: Okay

AUSTIN: But still respected what you did, right. So you were, um, this, this... man of theory, right, this man of letters who stayed inside -

NICK: Right.

AUSTIN: - who worked on, on completely theoretical concerns, who worked through magical formulae and who, you know, didn't really care about practical magic, or, or only did in an abstract sense, right?

NICK: Mmm, yeah.

AUSTIN: And she was very practical, and she was outgoing, you know, students loved her, and she was worldly, she traveled away from the university a lot. And, unlike you, she was deeply appreciative of semiotics, the sort of um, magical abilities of the new archivists.

NICK: Mmhmm.

AUSTIN: The, the kind of thing that Jack's character Lem does.

NICK: Right.

AUSTIN: Um, but again, there was still a sort of friend... friendliness between the... that she felt towards you. I don't know how you felt towards her. But she definitely thought that you were kind of... she could see through your scrooge-ey... your scrooge-iness?

NICK: Sure.

AUSTIN: and understood like, for whatever reason, I'm glad he's around. Um, so she kind of comes over and does a little crouch around the fire with, with all of you, and she's looking at Fantasma but kind of addressing everybody.

AUSTIN (as Sunder): So what the hell happened? You all look like you had a rough trip.

AUSTIN: What do you tell her?

-pause-

ART: I look, I look at um, uh, *laughs*

AUSTIN: mmhmm...

ART: ummmm.....

AUSTIN: Throndir?

ART: Throndir.

DRE: Hey!

ART: Sorry. I lo... love you guys.

ALL LAUGH

DRE: It's, you know, it's been a while, we all gotta work out, work out the kinks.

AUSTIN: mmhmm

This is the ten minute point

ART: yeah. It's been a little bit, right?

DRE: We should have done roleplay stretches before we set out

AUSTIN (overlapping Dre): Yeah, it has, we shoulda. (tunelessly:) LA LA LA LA LALALALALA

NICK (overlapping Austin): Unique New York. Unique. New York.

SOMEONE (I can't tell who, overlapping Nick, sing-song): boo boo boo boooooo

(Art laughs)

ART: *laughs* you can't go on recording without an obscure home movies reference.

AUSTIN: um...

ART: But yeah I'm gonna let him lead this, it's his thing.

AUSTIN: Throndir, or Fantasma?

ART: Throndir. I mean, I mean our trip was his...

AUSTIN: Well, He was your... Yeah, that last bit was definitely his thing.

(DRE laughs)

ART: That was the bad part of the trip as far as I'm concerned

AUSTIN: *SIGHS* ah, ok...

DRE: That was the bad part, I guess. Um, I guess if you're gonna give Throndir the lead he will spin a yarn.

DRE (as Throndir): Um, Well that's Fantasma and my name's Throndir, by the way, nice to meet you, thanks for this... wonderful fire. Um,

(ART and AUSTIN laugh in the background)

DRE (as Throndir): I met, uh, Fantasma and Hadrian back in Velas, I was, I was paid by the council to, to help them come here. You may have noticed I'm one of the snow elves, I grew up in the city that's not... that's not far from here. Um, so I led them deep, deeper than I've ever been, into the mark of the erasure, where... where we fought various creatures including, well, some, some interesting things happened, um

AUSTIN: She laughs.

DRE (as Throndir): But we were doing fine until we decided to see if we could stop back at Auniq to get some supplies before making the final push to the tower and uh... They weren't happy to see me or us, um, we barely got out.

AUSTIN (as Sunder): Well, I'm glad you did.

AUSTIN: She now does look directly at Fantasma.

As Sunder: I'm surprised to see you here, of all places.

NICK: How long has it been since they've seen each other?

AUSTIN: How long have you, how long has it been since you left? How long has it been since the fall of the tower... Of the university, rather?

[NICK AND AUSTIN talk over each other a little here, it's hard to understand either one of them – 12:23)

NICK: At least, at least fifty years?

AUSTIN: See, I thought it was closer to like, ten to twenty. I thought it was –

NICK (overlapping): oh really? I thought it –

AUSTIN (overlapping): Yeah, I have it written down here, let me see –

NICK (overlapping): oh, alright.

AUSTIN: Um, *clicking noises* yeah, 25 years.

NICK (overlapping) 25, okay.

AUSTIN: Yeah, yeah yeah, which is the middle ground. In fact, I think

NICK (under Austin): [something unintelligible, 12:38)

AUSTIN: here's, yeah, she is, she is human, right, and she's in her, she's in her fifties now.

NICK: Okay.

AUSTIN: which were, that was how I was imagining her, as being kind of middle aged, still with a lot of life in her –

NICK: Right.

AUSTIN: Right, like, She's, she's the sort of person you can imagine retiring early so that she can go visit the world while she still has lots of spring in her step

NICK: Sure.

DRE: She's the *cool aunt* that (over Austin) you look forward to seeing at thanksgiving dinner.

AUSTIN (overlapping): Yeah, yes yes yes, she's absolutely cool aunt, that is who she is

(DRE laughs)

AUSTIN: that is completely what I had in mind. So yeah, the last time you saw her, she was much younger, right, like, she was a prodigy in practical magic, she was really good at, ah, kind of intuitively putting things together, not like you at all, right –

NICK: Yeah...

AUSTIN: Like, she isn't a wizard. She, she, she is a... I mean I've been calling her internally, in my own head, a witchblade, like that sort of (ART Laughs really loud) combination of *Austin huffs a laugh* NOT like the comic, Art! *laughs* Um,

ART: You can't undo it!

DRE: How much clothes is she wearing, if she's a witchblade?

AUSTIN (overlapping): No, no, she's...

(Everyone laughs)

AUSTIN: but, you know, this kind of, there is something... more like the D&D sorcery kind of spellcasting happening with her (DRE humms) which might, for you, Fantasma, explain why she likes the, the semioticians a little bit, right –

NICK: Sure.

AUSTIN: - that she, like, oh, magic is all around us, or *something* is all around us, we can bend it to our will if we do it right. She's even, she's much more wild than they are, right, like she's much more... capable of touching the arcane in the air, and like, bringing it into, into power for her momentarily, but would not be great at what you do at all.

NICK: Sure.

AUSTIN: but it's been 25 years, so who knows.

NICK: Right.

AUSTIN: So yeah, she asks you, so she says

(as Sunder): I'm shocked to see you here. I'm surprised you're not huddled away in some small cave somewhere with a bunch of books around you, this isn't like you

She says, she says,

(as Sunder): This isn't like you, old man!

(DRE laughs)

NICK (as Fantasma): I have no more books left to study. I am finding new ones.

AUSTIN: mmm. She nods her head, um, it's the sort of thing like that is, it communicates, it communicates that she's now putting together the pieces about who you are, right, like, okay, that's, that's what it would take to get you out of there –

NICK: sure.

AUSTIN: right, that's where your priorities are.

(someone clears their throat)

AUSTIN, (as Sunder): so, how do you all kn-

NICK: And that's also, uh, you know, that's really him putting a spin (AUSTIN: mmhm) on the fact that he doesn't have his cushy little cloister anymore.

AUSTIN: Yes.

(As Sunder): so did you all know each other before you were sent on this, uh, little endeavor?

NICK (as Fantasma): sort of.

ART: (overlapping) ah, [incomprehensible – 15:46]

(Dre laughs)

DRE (as Throndir): Well, they knew each other, um, before this, but I'm, I'm the new guy!

(Austin(?) laughs)

AUSTIN: She reaches out and puts a hand on your shoulder.

(As Sunder): Don't worry, there's always a new guy (Dre giggles), you'll be part of the crew in no time.

She does... at this point, with her hand on your shoulder, she says

(As Sunder): So what are you, what are you looking for? What are you here for?
And she's addressing, I think, I think she's addressing Throndir directly here.

DRE (as THRONDIR): to be honest, I think I know what I'm looking for more than when this started, but I still don't, at the same time.

AUSTIN: she looks over at Hadrian and Fantasma –

NICK (overlapping): (huffs) Fantasma rolls his eyes

AUSTIN and DRE laugh

ART (as HADRIAN): We, we found a tower in the North and, and in that tower there was, there was a map and this is, this is indicated on that map. (then some unintelligible stuff – 16:55)

AUSTIN (as SUNDER): lots of it here. We're here, you know, for the usual, reconnaissance, investigation, retrieval, this is what the new archives has us doing and honestly I've been... petitioning to get the funds for this trip for two or three years, now. Finally got it, was about ten of us, the prince over there and I are the only two that are left.

ART: I can't remember how much I know about Jack's life from the...

AUSTIN: I don't think you know anything.

ART overlapping: 'Cause like—

AUSTIN overlapping: -- You know he was an archivist,

ART (overlapping): Right

AUSTIN: you don't know that he's on the run, because... eh hh (noise of indecision)

ART: Is it intel

AUSTIN: Maybe

ART: There was stuff before the first game, where we --

AUSTIN: right, but he wasn't... he was on the run then, but... but he didn't know that they knew that he stole the fiddle, or the violin, from them at that point.

ART: Okay, so --

AUSTIN: but, but where th... you may have gotten the lightest hint was when you first came back from that first tower, jack made himself scarce often. Like you had all those debriefings with the counselors and he would like... show up late and leave early. And like, sometimes people would come in looking for him moments later, but it was never... who knows, y'know?

ART, (overlapping): I don't think Hadrian's the "light hint" kind of guy.

AUSTIN: (laughs) Right. Exactly.

DRE (overlapping Austin): yeah....

(NICK laughs)

ART (as HADRIAN): It's, it's really too bad you didn't get to meet our other companion, he was, he was one of, he was from your... your group.

AUSTIN (as UKLAN TEL): Mmm. There's lots of us out there. *deep breath in* I'm sure he's, uh, off doing... something else important.

ART (as HADRIAN): Yeah, yeah I.... really have no idea.

NICK: Uh,

AUSTIN: This one --

NICK: Fantasma shoots Hadrian a glance and just, like, subtly shakes his head a little bit.

ART: something incomprehensible, 19:00

(DRE laughs)

AUSTIN (as SUNDER): To be honest, I-I-I'm- I'm glad I'm at the Archives now, after the university fell I didn't think... *deep inhale* well, I'm glad I'm there, but it's... it's weird, you know. *deep inhale* Academics, right?

AUSTIN: She laughs.

(As SUNDER): This one doesn't think this tower fell.

And she shrugs and, you know, behind you, is the tower. *chuckles* that's fallen across miles, you know, five or six miles of tower that's just like, splayed across these hills, clearly broken into tons of little pieces, some sections still put together, but also just... rubble. (incomprehensible, under art)

ART: There's like no chance it was built sideways?

AUSTIN: No chance. No chance anyone built this this way.

ART: Alright.

NICK: wait. Is she saying, uh –

AUSTIN: she's saying Uklan—

NICK: uklan, ok.

AUSTIN: thinks this tower never fell.

NICK: hmm. Like –

DRE: Throndir kinda perks up and says,

DRE (as Throndir): No, it, it stood once.

AUSTIN

As Sunder: I know, I know... I know.

DRE as Throndir: No, I...

AUSTIN as sunder: So, uh, what do you think? You up for, for an adventure? You want to, uh, scout this place out with us?

ART as Hadrian: absolutely! Absolutely I do!

DRE as throndir (overlapping): Yes.

AUSTIN as sunder: Hey, prince!

She calls over to him, and he like, sighs, and comes over.

DRE: Prince is here?

AUSTIN as Sunder: He's, he's, sort of a prince? He's sort of a prince. The archives has a real complicated political history, It's just... Yeah anyway he was a prince, and then he wasn't a prince, and now I think he's a different sort of prince? I just, I just like to give him shit, he hates it.

DRE, ART, NICK laugh

AUSTIN: He like, stumbles over, and, and grumbily (grumpily? Grumbingly?) walks over with, with a pile of like maps under his arm, and like, and he's like reading a, a, some sort of chart or he has something in his hand with writing on it that he like, his eyes don't leave it, and he like crinkles up his face and pushes his glasses up on his head

As UKLAN TEL: [big sigh] ah, okay. Here's uh, whewhwehwm (series of mumbling of breathy sounds as if searching for words, I don't have a better way to transcribe it. 21:02)

He puts down things like one by one and reaches out to shake your hands one by one.

As UKLAN TEL: Ah, okay. Ah, I am Uklan Tel, uh it is, it is a Pleasure of *mine*, to meet *your* acquaintances. (clears throat) Now, now. Um, uh, would you hand me, would you...

He points to Thrandir and like immediately has, has recruited Thrandir, whether he wants to be or not, to be his like page, like

AS UKLAN: would you spread this out for me, son, please?

DRE as thrandir: What? Yeah, uh, sure, okay

AUSTIN: and hands you a map

As uklan: we have to act quickly,

He says.

In fact, in fact

And he takes, he reaches into the like side of his robe-sleeve, and pulls out a pen, and like immediately begins to redraw part of the map. And you can see as he's doing that, it's because the map has begun to fade, even though he's been working on it this whole time

ART: is this.... What I'm looking at on the screen, here?

AUSTIN: You should zoom out some.

ART: got it, got it.

AUSTIN: Um, so. Just to be clear, it's hard for me to know hwat you can see, because I have stuff that's like the GM level versus the, like, the player level and stuff –

DRE (overlapping): Sure

AUSTIN: -- but. So. What you're looking at is, um, kind of a hand-sketched map of the fallen tower. Um, there's a big chunk to the southeast that runs, kind of runs southwest to northwest, let's say, southeast to northwest rather, um, and there's kind of a big chunk of four sections, um, which is surrounded by a couple of other, uh, like chunks that have fallen off, maybe? Um, it doesn't line up perfectly, like there's, this isn't just like "oh, it fell in place". There are things, things out of place. There's this big gap –

ART (overlapping): wait, what do you mean it's fallen in four chunks

AUSTIN: It's, I mean they're put together still. There's four levels.

ART: oh, okay, I got it.

AUSTIN (overlapping): This section here, the southeastern section, is kind of a big base level chunk that is still together, that's four sections. Then a big break with a little bit in the middle, um, another extra wide section, or maybe it fell the wrong way it's hard to tell, um, and then a few other major sections to the northwest of that. You are, on this map, kind of towards the southwest, um, if you see the campfire –

ART: incomprehensible (23:42)

AUSTIN: Yeah, you guys are that little sun symbol.

DRE: Okay.

AUSTIN: ah, um. [mouse click, weird mouth sound (maybe sucking teeth?), big sigh] So, he says,

As UKLAN: this is the basic, uh, structure of what we're looking at here. We haven't gotten close enough to investigate any of these sections but we have seen some strange movement in, uh, the, a number of the areas of the, of the tower.

No, he doesn't say "the tower". He just says, "of the structure". [with a laugh] He'll never say that this is a tower. Um,

all along the side of it there's been... strange movement. Small groups of, ah, we're not sure, we'll have to get closer. What we think is, that most, we think that lots of people lived here. And

when lots of people live in a place, even if no one lives there anymore, there's always something of value. [same weird mouth sound] Do you know what you're here for? Specifically?

NICK as FANTASMO: I'm hoping to find another book.

Austin as UKLAN: Yes, this is certainly a place where we can hopefully find a great deal of information. Hopefully I won't have to fight you for it. Haha! ... hah... uh..

DRE: [laughs] lead balloon, buddy! (not sure what exactly he says. 25:07)

NICK: Fantasma, like, has no reaction, just stares at him blankfaced.

ART AS HADRIAN: Um, I mean, I seek the evil that caused the, the destruction of these lands, and to... to destroy whatever I can.

AUSTIN: He shoots, he shoots Sunder a look.

As UKLAN: Oh, yes. You're here to [sarcastically] fight the evil. We've run into those like you before. [deep breath] There'll be something here for you to hit, though, ah, ahah, ahem, it does look as if you're a bit ill-equipped currently.

DRE: [quietly] daaaaang

AUSTIN: what are you wearing and what do you have at this point, Hadrian?

ART: nothing. Like, whatever I was wearing in jail.

AUSTIN: underclothes, basically?

ART: I mean, I've imagined they're, you know, no one just puts armor on their skin –

AUSTIN: right, that's what I mean, but it's –

ART: so it's probably like decent clothes, you know, I'm probably wearing pants and a shirt

AUSTIN (overlapping): right, right, but they're not like good, they're not like... going-out clothes?

ART: Right.

DRE: I'm kind of picturing, and I – I d—I don't like referencing other media but I'm picturing what Blackwell wears in Dragon Age Inquisition when he's not in his armor. If you know what I'm talking about, Austin?

AUSTIN (overlapping): Mmm, I can see that.

DRE (overlapping): like that kind of padded underclothing, you don't just wear a shirt under your chainmail or whatever.

AUSTIN (overlapping): Yeah, yeah, I do. Yeah! Right right right, yeah, that's a good point because it'll get stuck and junk.

ART (overlapping) : and I'm sort of imagining that it's embroidered with a, with a holy image, because that seems like the kind of thing, um, a guy like Hadrian would do, like, "yeah, all my stuff needs this image on it, this is important."

AUSTIN (overlapping): Right.

NICK: I was imagining, like, long john onesies.

AUSTIN: that's what I had been imagining too, until now, seriously, but I like this, I like this more.

NICK (overlapping): with the butt flap, and everything.

AUSTIN laughs.

DRE: Buttflap hanging open?

several people giggle.

AUSTIN: yeah, I'm fine with the padded undergarments. That does make sense, especially since you were going into a place that was going to be cold, even though you took that vow, like who the fuck knows, like, wear the good stuff.

Nick (muttering, overlapping): long johns are the fucking good stuff (incomprehensible)

DRE (muttering, overlapping): yeah I agree

ART (overlapping): and, it's also, and this only occurred to me today in the shower, is that, um, when... my vow is to find the truth of the... and so we find the truth here, I stop, right, and I suddenly need to eat and sleep and not freeze to death again.

AUSTIN (overlapping): Right, yeah. Mmm. Yeah, yes. That'd be bad.

ART: Yeah, I don't have any food any more.

AUSTIN: this is the strange tension of, of religious vows.

ART: yeah, well I can probably transition my vow to "crush the snow elves"

AUSTIN laughs

DRE: oh, boy

AUSTIN: alright, so, I think, you're right, I hadn't thought about that you have a symbol, uh, a kind of visible symbol besides your ring. Um, did you keep your ring? Did you get ot keep your ring, or did they take that from you?

ART: um, I don't remember, I don't remember that we decided that.

AUSTIN: Well, they took your armor.

ART: right.

AUSTIN: and the way you've been describing it, you were missing that, that piece, that chunk of armor around your ring finger, is that correct?

ART: Right, yes.

AUSTIN: does the ring slot on top of the armor, like, would they have to take the ring off to take your armor off. Or would it slip through? Do you know what I mean?

ART: yeah, I do, I'm having trouble like picturing what I think these gauntlets look like. Like, because the –

[crinkly sounds]

AUSTIN: I mean, they look like whatever you think looks coolest. And like –

ART: I mean I've always, I've always imagined the hands a little bigger, because I'm always just trying to get to that, that "seventh sea big hand" thing...

AUSTIN: Right.

ART: So, so, in that case it would slip over.

AUSTIN: There's a faction in the game 'seventh sea' that has cool big gauntlet hands that break things, it's good. (overlapping) Alright. You can have your ring, that's fine.

ART (overlapping): Yeah, that's all I've ever wanted

DRE: giggles, sings "all I've ever wanted"

AUSTIN: [laughs] We're singing now, we're the singing podcast, uh, that's where the bucks are.

DRE: mmhmm!!

NICK: that's just dre! Dre's just singin' all the time.

AUSTIN: He's a big singer. He's that *big singer*.

NICK: I mean, that's why we love you, Dre.

AUSTIN: Uklan, mmm... in fact, because he sees that you are um, ah, a knight of samoths, um, he doesn't just say what he says before, which is "we've run into you people before", he says, um, he additionally says, uh,

As UKLAN: when, when all your god has is a hammer...

And he trails off

ART (maybe as Hadrian?): I may be dumb, but I know idioms.

Everyone laughs.

AUSTIN

as UKLAN: so. It was my thought that we might start...

and he points to the small chunk here that's closest to you. Did you guys see that? Am I on the wrong layer again? [clicking sounds] okay, uh, there.

As Uklan: we could start there, from coming up from the south, towards this chunk that's, that's to the south of the rest of the structure, there's, there's movement to its north but if we stay, if we're careful, we should be okay. From there, I'm not sure. Uh, it's hard to tell... it's hard to tell which side of this is, is which, or, or what would be where.

DRE: Austin.

AUSTIN: yes?

DRE: would Kindrali remember anything about what the different segments of the tower were used for?

AUSTIN: [deep inhale] do you have a move for this?

DRE: yeah! I could use "Kindrali's Chosen"

AUSTIN: sure!

DRE: uh, when I consult Kindrali, he who knows, about a historical artifact, place or event, roll +WIS. [pause] ah, eleven!

AUSTIN: cool, what happens when you succeed?

DRE: On a 10+ I get something interesting and useful.

AUSTIN: okay. Um, [exhale] Kindrali... Kindrali has clear memory, looking in from some of the mountains to the west, of, from ah, from, you guys remember there's kind of a sh—like a little kind of... not the appl- not that the Appalachians are... low, low mountains, but they're not like. Super big mountains. They're kind of like –

DRE (overlapping): no, they're not like the rockies.

AUSTIN: Right, they're not the rockies. So like, the kind of low appalachain-style mountains to the west of you, that you were briefly in when you were hunting that owlbear and kind of went up against the word-eaters... he was looking in as the tower was... when the tower was at full swing, um, and the... you can kind of piece together that on our map, the south east, here, is the bottom of the tower. Uh, going from southeast to northwest, that it fell in the western area. And then at the very bottom is where most of the people lived and worked. He saw people going in and out of there often, and there were also strange, like, there were other towers, smaller towers, connected at such levels that you could like. Go up and in to the sides of higher levels, but most people were down at the bottom, do you know what I mean, like there are other towers around this one that bridged in at let's say the middle of the area.

DRE: Sure

AUSTIN: But down here, only, the only one, or, most of the people were going in and out of those bottom few levels, which are on your map to the southeast. And you, again, you see this through his eyes, right –

DRE: Yeah

AUSTIN: which is a strange thing. One, because he's just way taller than you (breathy laugh) [DRE laughs], everything... you're just not in your body when you see this memory. And two, because there's, there's kind of an emotional part of that experience, right, and I think for, for Kindrali, it was a sort of. A combination of amazement and fear? Um, I, I don't want to make this, I'm not making this comparison.... I want to make this comparison not necessarily free of political claim –

DRE: sure

AUSTIN: -- or political connection, uh, but specifically what I'm thinking about here is the feeling you might have had if you were, uh, let's say, a white german in the 1930s, seeing the way that Hitler rebuilt the German economy and state.

DRE: sure

AUSTIN: Um, and exploded industry, right? How did this happen so quickly? How, what's going... like, there is something amazing and something terrifying about

DRE: yeah

AUSTIN: the deployment of that level of industry. Um, you know. This tower, in his memory, it's miles and miles and miles high, it's... it's a city, it's a standing city. Um. That's terrifying. And, also impressive. Especially, you can feel Kindrali think to himself, especially for a human

DRE: [laughs] um, so I guess that Thrandir kind of snaps back from his vision, and points at the southeast, and says

This is where the tower once stood. These were the lower levels, this is where the people lived. If we're looking for information, if we're looking for the important things, they'll be further up

And he traces his finger up to the northwest.

AUSTIN as UKLAN: that's fair. Um, hm. (clears throat) Alright then.

He, he again, Uklan doesn't even, there's something in his voice that like, he's just like... "alright then." He's not gonna ask you how you know that, (DRE: yeah...) he's dealt with weird stuff, his life is going and dealing with weird stuff, he's met sages and he's met oracles, you know, like. "Okay, this kid just has this power, okay. (DRE: Yeah) Let's roll with it, you sound confident.

As UKLAN: then let me propose that we begin by going... here, and then working our way up. (clicking sounds)

[Note: 35:20 is where Art's already-bad audio starts being really difficult. There are parts where there is no audio for him at all, and other parts where it's intermittent and I could only get syllables]

AUSTIN: Yeah... uh, what's the ra—

DRE: Gooooood call.

AUSTIN: good question, what's the range is on that? [long pause] no, um, what do you *think* the range is on that? Again how are you, do you, I forget how this works, do you pick a sense or something? Or am I thinking of, thinking of one of fantasma's spells

NICK: yeah, that's..

AUSTIN: that's detect magic? Okay. Yeah, just check for a second, I'd appreciate that. Nothing in your immediate vicinity, nothing at this camp is evil. These people are not evil. Right, they're not secret evils. They might have (laughs) they might have wildly different understandings of what is good for the world, but they are not *evil*

DRE: yeah

AUSTIN: right, right. Right.

[pause]

ART: -oh, it's the -ation of --- Um, pr—when you pray for guidance, you ask what here is evil, and the GM will tell you honestly. And I guess what, what I was checking was our vicinity. I want to know these people, I want to know

AUSTIN: yeah, that's good. That's fine. Okay.

ART: --sure it's gonna get murky up ahead.

AUSTIN: It will. Laughs. Uklan, he kind of motions, he puts his staff down on the ground and motions off toward that broken off chunk

As UKLAN: shall we?

DRE as THRONDIR: yeah.

AUSTIN: alright, so. Here's here's part one of new things I want to try, new cool things. Um, one of the things that you can do in dungeon world is create new moves, right, this is, this is uh, one of the features that I like most about it, because it empowers both players and GMs to really create something that is unique and reflects their specific circumstances and their campaign. So, the way this works is, you can visit any of these places. In order to visit and explore them, it will take basically a work day, of time. These are, each of these places is big, is legit big. I'm not gonna like, we could spend an entire adventure in e- in a single one of these spaces. Instead, two things I'm gonna do. One, I'm gonna give you an overview of what's in each of them, as you pass through them. Then you'll each be able to ask me a question or ask me, like, oh I want to look specifically for this thing, and we'll determine what happens based on that.

Two, whenever you, whenever you are willing to, whenever you want something a little bit extra, you can go for it, but you will have to roll for it. Um, uh, it's a move I'm calling "search and scavenge" which is a 2d6 plus wisdom. Um, it, on the, on the, you, you roll, whenever you search the ruins of the tower, and open yourself up to harm, but potentially find something useful. On a 10+ you choose three, on a 7 to 9 you choose one. You can get something to eat or drink, which is plus 2 rations. You can find a useful tool or weapon, you can find useful information or long lost knowledge, or you can find medical supplies. The reason that this is important is, because each chunk that you go to – and here "chunk" I'm talking about every kind of subdivided section, there are four in this big area at the bottom, one to its east one to its west that's six, seven eight nine ten eleven twelve thirteen... fourteen. There are fourteen. Each one of those will take you the travel and exploration, will basically be taking you a full day. To travel there, to explore it thoroughly, to come back to camp.

DRE: gotcha

AUSTIN: so you can visit any of them, and I'll give you the base level detail, and you can also do this move to try to get more. If you fail that move, stuff will jump off. Like, but I'm not gonna

say “oh, you went to this place...” I’m not necessarily going to say... some of these places have some *things* in them, is what I’ll say. (breathy laughs)

DRE laughs

AUSTIN: that are just there. And some stuff might jump off. But, you won’t be put, you won’t be put into immediate irrevocable harm. I’m not gonna make a “hard move”, to use the parlance of dungeon world, just because you went to a place. What you’re gonna end up doing is opening yourself up to that if you based on if you do this other move, or other actions that you do. So that’s part one of the new thing I want to try. There’s another thing that we’ll get to, I think momentarily.

DRE: Okay.

(clicking sounds)

AUSTIN: um...

DRE: Perfect. (laughs)

AUSTIN: Yeah, uh huh. As you, so you start to approach this, uh, this chunk here, let’s move you guys up to here, let’s say, and you can tell even from this distance, uh, that it is different than the rest of the tower. It is more ornate. It looks like the top of the tower that you saw on eventide. Lots of, uh, embellishments, lots of kind of ornate decoration. But it’s also in lots of places, been smashed to rubble. Um, it’s completely torn apart in places. The outside of that structure is white, but inside you can see lots of blues and golds, very... very regal. As you get closer and closer, you notice above a... there’s kind of like an open window, not a window, but... there’s a balcony with a big, big window. You know what I mean, imagine a Victorian era party, where people sneak out onto the balcony to whisper gossip, right? That sort of balcony is what I have in mind. Does that make some sense?

DRE: yeah

AUSTIN: you, Fantasma and Hadrian, see a symbol that you recognize, that you saw in the first tower that you traveled to. Do you remember that, do you remember that kind of... that room where you found the first map, the kind of that. Floor.

NICK: Yeah

AUSTIN: you remember that there were those rooms around it that had supplies and armor on them? On the armor there was a series of symbols, there was, uh, a, a shield, there was a sun, there was a tree, there was a, uh... a ship, and then there was an open book, with like a cup of... a cup in front of it. And on the top of this kind of, like, window balcony area, the windows

are all shattered obviously, but you can see it was a window. Above that, there is, large, the size of a person, that symbol engraved there.

ART: oh, *fuck*.

AUSTIN as SUNDER: Well godDAMN, prince, you were right!

AUSTIN: Uklan gasps.

as UKLAN TEL: the tower of Samot. I knew it. There are conflicting reports, but it's said that here is where the boy...

[sound of waves]

AUSTIN: and he trails off into a story.

[theme starts]

AUSTIN: and here, we're going to start playing a different game. This is another game by D Vincent Baker, who made Apocalypse World, who also makes a bunch of different really interesting games, he made dogs in the vineyard years and years ago. And recently he released a series of tiny games made to be played, meant to be played primarily through social media networks, especially google plus, (DRE hmms) which is where a lot of the indie roleplaying game community is. Someone is super breathe-y right now. I don't know who that is. I think that Art might be stress breathing, but I'm not sure... I think it stopped. It stopped.

ART: w-who..?

DRE laughs

AUSTIN: ah, (laughs)

ART: --because I stress passed out--

AUSTIN: laughs louder

[theme continues to play]