

[Hieron: The Months of Autumn Pt 2](#) (transcribed by Han @mercutioes)

[Samol coughs.]

AUSTIN (as Samol): Apologies, Captain Glass-Eye. I drifted for a moment there. You know what they say, with wisdom comes age, and I am very wise. (Sigh.) Well, hell. Where was I?

[MUSIC underneath - "Inside".]

AUSTIN (as Samol): Right, right. Those three fools walkin' in the snow. Well, four I'd guess, if you count Thrandir's dog, Kodiak. Actually, let's say four and a half, since somewhere along the way, Thrandir picked up another companion. The spirit of that old ogre-king, Kindrali, He Who Remembered The Day. In truth, he remembered a lot of days. In any case, them fools were walkin' in the snow after their run-in with the Word-Eaters, heads held high like children who build a sandcastle but who do not understand the tides. But they learned, and quick. They wandered a few steps too close to the fortress-town of Auniq, the last bastion of the authoritarian snow elves. And they found themselves face-to-face with spear and arrow.

[MUSIC ends.]

AUSTIN (as Samol): These snow elves, well, you need to remember, in the old days, when things first started to fall apart - the so-called Erasure and all that - they were the ones who built a shocking coalition, elves and goblins and a few mages, an orc or two. Even a couple of them bird folk. They invited them all to Auniq, you know. But then the Word-Eaters, they did a number on 'em. Bit by bit they lost their compassion. Soon, they lost enough that they became somethin' different, somethin' cold and cruel. That's something Thrandir, Fantasma, and Hadrian would learn about soon. They were locked away in the city's prison and stripped of their belongings.

Thrandir, who was an exile of Auniq, remember, he was forced to report to the council of elders, where he pled for the freedom of himself and his traveling companions. He may have, uh, burnt the last one of his bridges in Auniq forever. He tried to leverage the, the status his parents had in Auniq to guarantee freedom for himself and the others. But in truth it was a different sort of burnin' that freed them in the end. Along with the few goblins who were also locked away in the city's prison, Fantasma and Hadrian busted their way from captivity. The goblin sappers turned inward, settin' torch to town. And in the chaos, the trio from Velas found exit through a blasted hole in the city's huge spiked walls.

[FLASHBACK to Autumn in Hieron.]

ART (as Hadrian): We've all, we've all lost important things today. Except Fantasma.

[Laughter.]

DRE (as Throndir): I don't know. He lost part of his stomach.

[More laughter.]

ART (as Hadrian): Well and perhaps he lost a bit of his... I was gonna say arrogance but that's certainly not true. Um... yeah, we've all, we've all, we've all been humbled today.

NICK (as Fantasma, arrogantly): I've lost *nothing*.

ART (as Hadrian): You don't need to take it so personally. (to Fantasma) You got stabbed really badly.

NICK (as Fantasma): I still saved *your* ass.

[DRE laughing.]

ART (as Hadrian): I'm trying to make, I'm trying to make the kid feel better.

NICK (as Fantasma): Oh. Oh, right, um.

[DRE keeps laughing.]

NICK (as Fantasma, slowly): At least you still have... both of your arms.

[DRE fucking loses it.]

AUSTIN: *This guy.*

ART (as Hadrian): Good... good point.

DRE (laughing): I would imagine at that point Throndir can't do anything else but laugh at the absurdity of everything. (Sigh.)

DRE (as Throndir): So what do we do? Hadrian, I... we have to go get your stuff back, right?

ART (as Hadrian): I don't believe that's my path right now, I believe I'm being... I'm being pointed toward the tower.

[FLASHBACK ends.]

AUSTIN (as Samol): The tower in question was massive. This is Samot's old tower, remember? All magic and brilliance and arrogance and wine and possibility. When I say massive, I... it's like your fleet. Your whole fleet, all of it. And those soldiers you have, the new ones. Pile them all together, they still wouldn't compare. But it doesn't stand up anymore. Not since, uh... not since that day. One of them days Kindrali remembers.

[FLASHBACK to Autumn in Hieron.]

AUSTIN: The vision... here's what you see. You see goblins and snow elves raising this wall. It's, it's a hot summer's day, which is a sharp contrast to what it is now. People are sweating, people are handing water to each other. Everyone is working. Kindrali... you're seeing from Kindrali's perspective, he's tall, he's taller than everyone else here, right? And at this moment he is carrying a big log over to slam into the ground to be, the, the edge of this section of the wall. And the tower is standing in the distance, high above everything else, and something briefly catches in the sun. And all at once, the earth shakes and what, what seemed like a symbol of absolute dominance and power, that something so big could, could exist at all, becomes a symbol of vulnerability as it cracks - first down the center and then, as it nears the base, around its circumference. Kindrali turns and shouts for everyone to go inside, to run back to the town that they just built. Everything was fresh then, there is no snow here. And he looks back over his shoulder one more time as he sees the tower, he's, you feel it in him that he is praying to himself that it does not fall on them because it would be so easy to have everything they've worked for destroyed in a second. But it doesn't, it falls longways, it falls away from - not away from them, but it falls parallel to them. And he, he says, at the very end of the memory, "by Samot."

[FLASHBACK ends.]

AUSTIN (as Samol): And as Throndir saw the destruction of the tower of one god, Hella, Fero, and Lem stood in the palace of another - Adelaide, Queen of Death. The killing of Angelo Triste, Captain Calhoun, did not go unnoticed. Even though he was, himself, an accused traitor, the truth and culpability of his treason had not yet been determined before court. And so, Hella was put on trial for his murder. Now, the way innocence is determined in Nacre is a little different than how it's done out Ordenna-ways, Stormras. In Nacre, it's more about the feeling of the community than it is about pure evidence. After all, in most cases, you have to go on living with the person accused of a crime forever, Nacre being a town of undead and all that. So the question ends up bein', can the community move forward with the criminal still in it.

There was another bit of un-traditional legal ceremony at play, too. Hella's companions, Lem and Fero, were her prosecutor and her attorney respectively. And Lem, well. He was under direct order - if the queen believed that he was not properly upholding his

duty as prosecutor, he'd have his own sentence to deal with. It was bound to go bad from the start.

[FLASHBACK to Autumn in Hieron.]

AUSTIN: Ventaro Doce is sort of like the master of ceremonies. That's what court cases have, right? Masters of Ceremonies?

[ALI giggles.]

KEITH: Emcee Ventaro?

AUSTIN: Right, right. He's basically the... bailiff? And like, Adelaide is already seated when everyone comes in, like this is not a "please rise for" situation? But when he takes the center, he goes to the center of the stage and says,

AUSTIN (as Ventaro): Here in the light of Adelaide Triste, the Queen of Death, Empress of Pearls, the Reluctant Savior of the Longest Light, Blessed By the Far Sea, we begin the trial of Hella Varal, charged with the murder of Prince Angelo Triste, Lord Tristan the Ninth, the Ivory Crown, Our Brother, the Prince of Pearls, the Emir of Alabaster, the Reluctant, the Betrayer, the Coward, the Wretched, the Abdicator of Hope. Begin proceedings.

AUSTIN: And he turns and gestures towards you, Lem.

JACK (as lem): People of the court, I stand before you today with great sadness in my heart because the person that I am sitting opposite is a great friend of mine and someone who I've traveled with. However, I have been lucky enough to spend time with Grummond's Retroactive, with the Confiscated [unintelligible?], with the whole collection of legal textbooks provided to me by my dear friend, Ventaro Doce. And I've come to an understanding that this system of justice in your beautiful town is incredibly powerful and effective, and it is my duty to carry it out regardless of my personal feelings. Um, back where I come from, we have grown up with the belief taught to us that if something is written in a book it is true, and I feel no reason to doubt that belief today. And having studied the textbooks, I feel that I am about to perform as best I can regardless of the circumstances and I only ask that the citizens of Nacre and Fero and Hella will forgive me for the action that I am about to do.

JACK: and I sit down.

KEITH (as fero): I stand before you today with my good friend, Hella, who murdered my other good friend --

[AUSTIN and ALI cackling wildly. JACK also chuckles.]

ALI: Yeah? Wait a minute...

JACK: Lem just like... Lem just like... (dissolves into laughter.) Just like, folds his hands in his lap and sits back in his chair.

ALI (overlapping): Hella's eyes, like, slowly widen.

AUSTIN (as the crowd): Mumble mumble mumble mumble.

[All still laughing.]

KEITH (as fero): Murdered my other good friend, Calhoun, who you know as Angelo but we don't know him as Angelo even a little bit, really. He was prince here or something, uh, but I know him and Hella knows him and Lem knows him as Calhoun, uh, and there's very good reasons why she did what she did and why we're all not mad at her.

[ALI laughing.]

[Looooong pause.]

KEITH (as fero): And a lot of it is weird and magical and I think you'll come to find that the person that Hella killed is not the person... that you think that she killed. Thank you.

AUSTIN: Okay. It is, it is the next phase, it is the phase of "The World of Objects and Ideas", where you can present evidence and arguments. Lem goes first, Lem is going to go first every turn - prosecution leads.

JACK (as lem): People of Nacre, I was witness to a terrible thing in that tower and in fact, it was a terrible thing several degrees more severe than I can even begin to convey to you [???]. While I was present in the tower, I learned about a horrible event - an army is coming our way.

AUSTIN (as crowd): Mumble mumble mumble mumble.

[JACK laughs.]

JACK (as lem): In terrifying metal ships, strange contraptions bolted to the decks. And as we learnt of this news in the tower, the prince Angelo begged with our party, begged with Hella, to leave immediately and work to turn these ships around. Since I arrived in Nacre, I've been told over and over that I am not able to leave, and had we been able to follow Angelo's orders, we would have been able to turn back this army, but as it stands I

am afraid that it might be the case that none of us are going to be able to leave Nacre, and as such, Hella's actions in the tower were not just murder of an innocent man, but also the potential destruction of the last hope that Nacre has facing this horrifying mechanical army.

[KEITH laughs.]

KEITH (as fero): Yeah, I saw the ships, they're *really close*.

[AUSTIN laughs, ALI lets out a distressed "oh my god" in the background.]

KEITH (as fero): They're really close, like, that's... yeah, they're, they're really close and, um, the, all of the fish in the water hate being near their boats?

[FLASHBACK ends.]

AUSTIN (as Samol): It's true, Fero had spotted your ships while prowlin' the skies the night before. Y'all shouldn't have followed them there. The problems that spread through this land now, the ones y'all believe you're fixin'? None of it woulda happened if not for you. In any case, while you were movin' in the port, Hadrian, Fantasma, and Thrandir were pushin' through the coldest cold at the near center of the Mark of the Erasure, stompin' through snow and ice toward that fallen tower, leanin' on the horizon like a plateau.

[FLASHBACK to Autumn in Hieron.]

AUSTIN: It gets colder than anyone here has ever felt before. Blizzard conditions pick up as you get closer and closer and closer. You're trudging through ice that feels like cold steel against your face, you know, it's, it's not so much snowing here as it is, as ice is dropping from the sky. But something is pulling you forward, and if you can just get through this, you feel... an impossible warmth closer to the tower, and you think you see green. You push through and suddenly, you're out of the storm and through the, once you're past the snow and the ice, once your vision clears, you're in a field. You're a hundred yards or so away from the tower and it's beautiful. The sun is out, there are flowers blooming, there are trees here that, that, you know, would be dead easily in the climate you just passed through.

[ART hums.]

AUSTIN: And, strange of all, you see two figures looking at the tower off in the distance. One of them is, is big, bulky, balding, gray-skinned, firm tusks. The other - Fantasma you recognize her instantly. You would obviously recognize that frizzy blond hair anywhere. This is someone you knew back at the University. If you were the one who always stuck in the, with your nose in the books and didn't have any practical experience, she was the one who was always off on some

adventure or another. She didn't really pay much mind to traditional magical theory, she kind of figured it out as she went along, and there was a friendly rivalry between the two of you, but you haven't seen her since the tower fell, since *your* tower. Excuse me. Since your university fell. But here she is, and here's this orc, and here you are in a thing like, like paradise compared to where you just were. One of them turns and puts their hands... the orc turns and puts his hand over his eyes to kind of look at you and waves. It's a friendly gesture and a confident one, it's the sort of wave you make when you're not threatened, when whatever, whatever this thing that just fell into your lap is, they're nothing, they're not a big deal. Like, come over we'll talk.

ART: Finally, some fucking civility.

[AUSTIN laughs.]

DRE: Right.

AUSTIN: As you get closer and closer, there is a strange juxtaposition, here. On one hand, the climate and your environment is beautiful and it brings peace. There are butterflies here, and birds are chirping, and there are wild berries on bushes. There's kind of a, some light rolling hills to the north where the tower has been broken in many places. It almost looks like the tower caused the hills. This is the best spring day you've ever felt, do you know what I mean?

ART: Sure.

AUSTIN: And in that way, yeah, there is something alien about this. There is something, you know, there are hot days and there are, and there are cooler days, but there is rarely, like, that, that nice spring day feel where, like, you can just do anything today, you know? And that's what this feels like. But the other hand of the juxtaposition is the presence of the tower. It is, it is a tall -- or, it's tall even though it's on its side and it's, it's not casting a shadow now because the sun is to the west but its size alone is so magnificent and so *strange* that you feel almost dominated by its presence.

ART: Hmm.

AUSTIN: And it... there's no movement there, but it feels, it feels inhabited. In fact, maybe it's unfair to say that maybe there's no movement there. As you approach, off in the distance, to the north where it's fallen - it's fallen kind of south to north - up towards the hills, you swear for a brief moment that you see more bodies moving near the tower. They look like they -- it's hard to tell if what they're doing is... if they're... it's hard to know if they're sentient beings, if they're sentient people, or if they're creatures from this distance, they're so far off. But something just feels off about them, something feels weird, something feels strange about this whole place. Finally, when you get within sight, you know, kind of facial recognition of the two in front of you, the orc, Uklan, laughs.

AUSTIN (as Uklan): Ah, you've finally made it. Glad you'll be joining us after all. We were worried for you for a while there. We thought maybe those elves had been the end of you.

[FLASHBACK ends.]

AUSTIN (as Samol): Uklan Tel, Semiotician Emeritus of the New Archives, one of the smartest folks I've ever known. Maybe the closest to get to the old powers that me and my kind ever had with his, uh, his "pattern magic". And that's a fact he keeps close to his chest. Doesn't want folks to know what he *could* do, push come to shove, and he ain't a bad writer, either. If you ever get a chance you should read his book, uh, what's it called... the, uh, the Illustrated Concordance of Marielda. You ever get that chance, you better take it.

In any case, Uklan Tel was not alone. He was joined by Curator-in-residence Sunder Havelton, a former member of the Last University, which made her a peer and a rival of the Great Fantasma. Where the elven wizard was, uh, let's say... of *taut personality*, Havelton was bloomin', boisterous, adventurous. Still, each had a great deal of respect for the other and after a brief conversation, the groups joined, recovered, and set out to explore the monstrous tower. When it fell, it had broken up into a bunch of individual chunks and each one seemed to be a pathway into a place where things were different. You know how I go on sometimes about how, uh, well maybe if this ain't happened or maybe if this had then things would be different. The tower was that idea made *material*. Uklan Tel called them ruptures in history — again, a little bit like the power to rewrite things like I used to have just, a little more *wild*.

And in one of those alternate worlds, standin' on a royal balcony captured inside of a strange bubble, the group came across their old compatriot, Hella Varal, a vision of confidence and power and as it goes, a little bit of evil, as Hadrian would call it. In that world — I see your eyes gleamin', I do — Varal had led Ordenna to capture and rebuild the Tower of Samot, had claimed its power for you and yours. And when that world's Hella saw Hadrian and the others, well. She wasn't too thrilled. But before she could do any real harm, Fantasma interceded.

[FLASHBACK to Autumn in Hieron.]

NICK: [sighs] Since I don't like her getting at like, potentially gettin' at my buddies who y'know, I, Fantasma would never admit that they were his buddies.

AUSTIN (amused): Sure.

NICK: If he were asked, his idea would be,

NICK (as Fantasma): It did not seem strategically sound to let her attack my bodyguards.

[Austin laughing.]



NICK: So I'm gonna try to cast Dispel Magic? Which is a new spell I got.

[ART: impressed 'ooh' in the background.]

NICK: And I'm gonna try to dispel the whole effect.

AUSTIN: Okay.

NICK: I don't know if that's too big?

AUSTIN: I think you should roll it.

NICK: Okay.

AUSTIN: There are ways for this to be interesting.

ART: Wait, are you trying to dispel the bubble? Or are you trying to dispel this whole alternate reality that we're seeing?

NICK: Yeah, I'm trying to dispel that 'cause Austin said that that was magical.

AUSTIN: It is, he's not wrong.

ART: Yeah, dispel it, that's great.

NICK: In origin.

AUSTIN: Let's give it the roll.

DRE: *Jesus*, Nick.

NICK: What?

[inaudible crosstalk of despair.]

AUSTIN: Do the roll, do the roll.

ART: No, I'm super excited for this.

AUSTIN: Me too.

DRE: Yeah.

[All laughing a bit.]

AUSTIN: Yeah, I don't care what the roll is, any way it goes is a good roll. Okay!

NICK: Nine.

AUSTIN: Means you basically succeed but you draw, you pick one of those things.

NICK: I'm gonna, I'm gonna forget the spell, even though that's not the most fun thing to do.

AUSTIN: No, that's fine. You cut, y'know, she's... at this point, she looks in and makes eye contact with the people in the bubble as you're preparing the spell. She cuts the, again, the kind of hole in the bubble, reaches out with her gauntlet, grabs it, and tears it just as your spell goes off. Like, she's ready to jump into this bubble when you launch... what's the spell look like?

NICK: It looks like a...

AUSTIN (interrupting): No, what do you do to do it?

NICK: Well, I mean, no one can see Fantasma right now, but I actually kneel down and I put two fingers between my eyes and I... I'm mumbling some magic words that, you know, mostly indecipherable. And then I tap my staff and when I tap my staff on the ground, it sends out a ripple.

AUSTIN: Okay.

NICK: From where my staff hit. And as the ripple moves outwards, it just washes away everything.

AUSTIN: Okay. It hits Hella's, well, it immediately hits the ground as the ripple moves outward and it, the ground beneath your feet changes from this kind of polished stone — cause you're out on this balcony — to old ruined rock. The vision that you see to the west changes back to the woods as they were once, when you traveled through them. And from this height, because you are still at this moment high up in the air... you can still see Velas, *waaaay* off in the distance, where the ocean hits the end of the continent. It moves over, it envelops Hella, or rather, Hella is erased from existence just before she jumps into the bubble, and then that effect continues throughout this space and you realize that a tower that was once standing is now in the middle of falling again? The walls start to shake and crumble. The floor tilts and gives way. Sunder drops her shield and shouts, *we have to get out of here now*.

ART: Great.

NICK: Wait a minute.

AUSTIN: I think we're gonna need —

NICK: What's falling?

AUSTIN: The place you're in.

[FLASHBACK ends.]

AUSTIN (as Samol): Let me be clear, before your stomach gets hungry for a meal you can never have, when Fantasma dispelled that world, he didn't just send he and his crashin' down. He didn't just erase an entire other existence. He erased the very possibility of that world existin' *ever*. You missed your chance, Glass-eye. Instead, we got this world, your damn zealotry, the clankin' feet of your armies. Speakin' of, it was just a little bit after that when Hadrian first learned where he got his title: paladin (pron. pal-a-dinn). The thing used to be called "paladin" (pron. pal-a-deen). See, that group — Hadrian and Fantasma and Sunder and Thrandir and Uklan Tel — they weren't the only ones at that tower. There was a group of Samot's loyalists there too, led by a noble soul, Tabard Alon. And when I say loyal, I mean, I mean *loyal*. Loyal in ways men can't be. But you know all about that, don't you? You count on it. In any case, that man, Tabard, and his forces, they ran into Hadrian and the others. In the tussle, Hadrian found himself caught in the arm by one of them marbleline soldiers, and soon his hand and the rest of his arm, they were turnin' to stone too. Eventually, the group was captured and after Tabard fed them, as is in accordance with Samot's conventions of war, he and Hadrian, they had a little *chat*.

[FLASHBACK to Autumn in Hieron.]

AUSTIN (as Tabard): What are your names? I hate to be rude, but when I was young I was taught: always use a man's name. He deserves that much, at least.

ART (as hadrian): I am Hadrian.

AUSTIN (as Tabard): Hadrian. Good name.

ART (as Hadrian): I'll spare you the honorifics.

[DRE laughing.]

AUSTIN (as Tabard): And you?

AUSTIN: He looks at the snow elf.

DRE (as throndir): My name is Throndir.

AUSTIN (as Tabard): So are you from Auniq? Do you represent them?

DRE (as throndir): I'm from there. It would be a stretch to say I represent them.

AUSTIN (as Tabard): IT's a tough thing. Sometimes it's not your choice who you represent. Now listen, the thing is, this is... a destination. This is a land with a history and with a holy power. I'm not sure what you hope to find here, but whatever it is, it is not worth your time. I'm offering you this out of generosity and as a brother to another who serves our Lords. Leave now, and there will be no conflict. We outnumber you, we know more about this place than you, and we have the right to be here. A right won in ancient conflict. Take this opportunity and leave.

ART (as hadrian): [sighs] I want to thank you for your hospitality. It means the world to me. I've experienced unbelievable rudeness on my journey to get here. I appreciate the way you feel, I don't know of these ancient conflicts you talk about. I'm not really sure I understand our bond of brotherhood but I feel it. Unfortunately, I... I can't do what you ask. I've been ordered to do this by people that I can't disappoint in this matter. I'd rather not... fight? I've had quite enough of all of this but I was sent here for answers and I can't leave without them.

AUSTIN (as Tabard): It is a tough thing to be obliged to the divine, but in my time I have learned that it is one thing to be devout and another to be paladin. The paladin are tools to be used and discarded. They know what they are. I will always remain devout, and I advise you do the same, but sooner than later you will understand that to be paladin is to be nothing.

AUSTIN: He shakes his head.

AUSTIN (as Tabard): Bring them some... bring them some chicken, have a meal, return to your camp, and think it over.

ART (as hadrian): Hey, do you know anything about this?

ART: And I hold my hand up.

AUSTIN (as Tabard): [laughs] Well they have you now. It'll be a long couple weeks... and then, you'll need to be put away for an even longer couple of weeks.

AUSTIN: And he looks over at the few knights caged.

AUSTIN (as Tabard): After that, you'll be fine. After that, you'll *really* be paladin.

ART: Hadrian flexes his hand, he looks at his hand and closes it and opens it.

AUSTIN (as Tabard): Maybe you don't understand how dire this is.

AUSTIN: And he looks at it for a second, raises his hand, and closes it? And your hand closes with his.

AUSTIN (as Tabard): To be paladin... is to be used.

[FLASHBACK ends.]

33:38

(from this point onwards, transcribed by Hannah)

AUSTIN (as Samol): Tabard had made his case and about three week travel to the west, Lem King, the bard turned prosecutor was makin' his too. It was time for closing statements. One last appeal to those representatives of Nacre who would decide if Hella, and by extension if Lem, was innocent or guilty.

[FLASHBACK to Autumn in Hieron]

JACK (as Lem): People of the court there are two simple points that I would like to make. Point number one: You might think you're ghosts *now*...

[Keith, Ali and Austin all laughing a lot, Austin clapping, Ali audibly laugh-crying]

JACK (as Lem): Point number two-

AUSTIN: That might be-

[Keith and Ali still laughing]

KEITH: Comedy's everywhere guys.

[Ali laughing]

AUSTIN: It'll sneak up on ya'.

JACK: [laughing] Point number two: What a terrible thing that was done. For Hella to not only prevent [scoffing] Ugh, ugh [disdainful voice] I've travelled with these people for.. How long have we travelled together for Fero?

[Austin laughing]

KEITH (as Fero): Oh! Uh.. Nearly a year?

JACK (as Lem): I've travelled with these people for nearly a year, and-

KEITH (as Fero): Well, Hella for less time, me, nearly a year.

JACK (as Lem): Yeah. Yeah.

KEITH (as Fero): And then I kind of I-, I was your neighbour for a bit too.

[Austin laughing]

JACK (as Lem): Yeah. And in that time..

JACK (presumably not as Lem): [laughs] you were great, it was great, we had a great time.

AUSTIN: Remember that time we had that orange juice that was good. That was good, y'know remember..

[Ali laughing]

KEITH: Freshly squeezed! I don't even need to drink, it was just nice.

JACK (as Lem): Oh, do you have that book I lent you? [silent pause] Okay.

[Austin and Jack laughing]

JACK (as Lem): Okay, so. In that time I've seen my friends, friends turn into birds, decapitate people, fall off buildings, very nearly get blown up by bombs, hide from people-

KEITH: Objection! The decapitation was you!

[Ali, Austin and Jack laughing]

AUSTIN: Fuckin'... roll it! [laughing] You.. Yeah, you roll it.

KEITH: It's plus five right.

AUSTIN: Oh wait wait wait wait wait, you have to know what Jack was going, what was Jack going to be rolling before?

[Jack laughing]

AUSTIN: Was it, that was a spin straw? Or was that a..

JACK: Yeah, it was a spin straw.

AUSTIN: Okay. Because if --Yeah, so go ahead and roll your objection.

ALI: God..

KEITH: Eight.

JACK: Oh [sighing].

AUSTIN: So with an eight you have to change from spin straw to something else.

[Jack laughing]

AUSTIN: Because, because he called you out on that bullshit, right?

JACK: Mhm.

AUSTIN: Like, he called you out and said no no no [laughs].

[Jack, Keith and Ali laughing]

JACK: Hang on. Goddamnit, Fero [laughs].

JACK (as Lem): We are wasting time. My studies prior to the trial, in Ventaro Doce's library, revealed to me that at a conservative estimate, and I was never particularly strong at maths, but I double and triple checked my figures here. At a conservative estimate, Nacre can muster 30,000 ground troops. This is simply not enough, based on my reports. We need to muster everybody, we need to get people into the streets. We need to get people manning barricades, we need to get people in the harbour. And why the *hell* are we still waiting around in a court. They'll be here by nightfall. We need to convict Hella within fifteen minutes.

[Keith laughing]

JACK (as Lem): Fif-, like, y'know, y'know, between that little marker over there and that marker just below it. A unit of time I'm calling fifteen minutes.

[Austin laughing]

KEITH (as Fero): The thing that I hope we've established today is that Hella in an effort to save herself took the life of a man that I find dear, that Lem finds dear and that she finds dear. At the will of the man who lays still at the foundation of this very place, Tristero. And that when it was all done, she saw Calhoun sitting on a throne in Tristero's robes. And he greeted her and she greeted him back and now here we are.

AUSTIN: At this point, Lem and Fero's duties are complete. There's nothing they can do anymore. And at this stage, there is for, for, for Fero there really is a similar feeling to the moment when the man let himself fade away. That you saw when you first arrived at Nacre.

KEITH: Mhm.

AUSTIN: It, in that it is equally sad, regardless of what the outcome is, to put this thing, this complicated thing, away, and to know that there is nothing left to be done here. But also joyful because thank god it's done. Finally you can move on. Whatever happens-

KEITH: Yeah.

AUSTIN: ..you've made it through this thing. This thing, this life. The crowd is kind of an autonomous like machine-

KEITH: Yeah.

AUSTIN: ..talking amongst themselves and trying to figure out who will move forwards and speak for them. [silent pause] So, a man-uel, Emmanuel, steps forward [laughs] and stands lets say in front of the chair where all of the witnesses had seated themselves. So he can address the court. [sighs] He steps up and sighs and kind of looks down.

AUSTIN (as Emmanuel): [wearily] Hello [sighs] I am Emmanuel Aracia La Salle and I [sighs] I speak for the people of Nacre, the Pearlescent Kingdom, Empire of Ivory and Alabaster. And.. I have to say you three have been trouble since the moment I've met you..

KEITH: Vote of confidence, Jesus Christ.

AUSTIN (as Emmanuel): You have, from the beginning, interfered with.. our culture.. our plans, and now.. our very heritage and nobility... But.. I think at the end of the day you're just fools. You're not malicious... Regardless of the events last night in the tower.. it seems foolish of us.. to restrain a woman with Hella's strength, in the eve of what seems to be.. a dramatic confrontation.. And from what we know, we do not believe that she is an Ordenan spy or an agent of an enemy of Nacre. And so we move you, your highness, to please.. find Hella Veral innocent so that we may move on and begin our preparations. As for-

AUSTIN: And he looks over at, at Lem.



KEITH: Who did save his life.

AUSTIN (as Emmanuel): [sighs] Nevermind.

AUSTIN: He says, and steps away. Not making eye contact. So, the crowd begins to disperse. They don't get to be here for the final judgement, they've said their due and now it's time for the just record. Doce stays obviously, that's kind of his, his job here, is to enter this into the records of, of Nacre. And looks up at queen Adelaide Triste who smiles at Hella and nods her head, and the pillar begins to drop, and you're free to go. [laughs] She then turns her eyes to Lem, [sighs] and sighs.

AUSTIN (as Adelaide): We have a complicated relationship to.. the events of today.

AUSTIN: She says.

AUSTIN (as Adelaide): Sometimes what we hold in our hearts goes against.. the duties we must perform. I know that better than you could ever understand. We know that better than, than you could ever understand. Its seems that.. you however were almost proud to flaunt your loyalty to your friend in our court. It pains me to free one of you and imprison another but here we are. You will, from this moment forward, be attached to our Codery and as we leave our humble city you will remain an attendant to our moving library, where you will serve under Doce until you've worked off your sin.

[FLASHBACK ends]

AUSTIN (as Samol): But before that group could leave, your fleet came into the harbour, guns blazin'. You didn't even send a messenger did you? No envoy. No parley. You didn't even *ask*. Funny thing is, she wanted you to invade. She knew what would happen, you would become her envoy, to the whole of Hieron. Don't look at me like that, look on your face right now is like a little boy who just found out today is tomorrow. But you knew, right? You know you carry Nacre with you, right? You stayed there too captain and you wonder why the world's turning against you [laughs]. All those cannonballs couldn't stop her plans. Couldn't stop Lem King either from making one last stop. He had a bakery to visit and a man to see. Let's not chop words here, I can't speak for either of them. But I will say, in my personal opinion, and hell if I ain't an expert. Those two had eyes for each other. But those eyes were paired with minds that understood the realities of the world. Talk about today's and tomorrows not lining up. Hell of a thing.

[FLASHBACK to Autumn in Hieron]

AUSTIN: You're running and you see it, you do [laughs] finally see it. You see the Da Salle bakery, you didn't know his last name before but you know it now.

[Ali gasps]

AUSTIN: And he's in there and he's baking bread. And you can see that things are just like a mess now because the, the cannonballs are hitting and he's covered in flour. And there are

people inside sitting at little tables that have, that are in the process of like trying to turn them over and, and like hide under them from whatever's about to happen. And.. you can keep going to the palace or you don't have to. Or you can stop.

[Ali gasps, Jack laughs]

AUSTIN: I don't know, I don't think he sees you. You don't get that. You don't get to have eye contact unless you.. want it enough to not go to the palace.

JACK: Is he in danger?

AUSTIN: I mean, the whole city's in danger. Right?

JACK: [laughs] Mmmmm.. He's baking so he doesn't seem tremendously concerned.

AUSTIN: Oh, he was baking. I mean he's like, I think he's like --In that, he had been baking. I should have been more clear. Right, like, he was in the middle of baking when all of this jumped off.

JACK: Right.

AUSTIN: And people in the place are now like losing it a little bit and are like nervous and worried and are hoping.. Like, they don't know what the plan is. They're, y'know, it turns out that the things that, that people were talking about at the palace turned out to be true, I guess. And he is in the back room. Y'know he's probably like, he's probably putting stuff away, right? Like he's probably like, oh well I have to put this --Okay, I have to [sighs] --This has to go back into storage now.

JACK: [pained] Huh.

AUSTIN: But like, in my vision of the place it's like, glass windows with, with like the n-

JACK: Is it like the sort of a bakery that Janine would design in the Sims if she was making a really nice bakery.

AUSTIN: Yeah. There is, there is more of a back room though, that's like visible. It has like, you know like, the cutout in the wall-

JACK: Oh yeah yeah yeah.

AUSTIN: Where you can s-, that's where you can see him. In the back, in the kitchen, like putting stuff away and hurriedly moving around with, with again little splotches of flour on him.

[Jack sighs]

AUSTIN: You have to make the decision. You have to either st-, you can..

JACK: Okay. I'm going to the cafe. I'm doubling down.

[Ali sounding happy in background]

AUSTIN: Okay.

JACK: Well no, here's, here's my thinking, right?

AUSTIN: Uhuh?

JACK: All of my-

KEITH: Here's my thinking: I don't ma-, I don't care how mad this is gonna make Keith.

AUSTIN: [laughing] Yes.

JACK: Well, A, he's not gonna know, B [laughs]-

[Austin laughs]

JACK: ..all the times I've ever encountered Emmanuel so far I have been a tourist.

AUSTIN: Mhm.

JACK: And I figure that in a city that is under attack, conveying a box to my friends in an attempt to escape the city, I might be able to be an adventurer. Which is kind of my job.

ALI: Aww.

[Jack and Austin speak at the same time]

JACK: And I'm hoping that-

AUSTIN: [laughs] So you wanna like make-

KEITH: Well, to be fair, the first time you were attacking his ship.

AUSTIN: You're like, looking to like, to make a good impression. Alright, yeah, you, you swing in and you make eye contact with him-

JACK: Oh god.

AUSTIN: And he says:

AUSTIN (as Emmanuel): What are you doing?

JACK (as Lem): We need to move. Now. Let's go.

AUSTIN (as Emmanuel): No, I, I, I, I cannot. I cannot. [laughs] I have worked *too hard* for this.

[Jack laughs]

AUSTIN (as Emmanuel): This is my place and I'm going to defend it. There's no, there are no two ways about it.

JACK (as Lem): And nothing's gonna change your mind then?

AUSTIN (as Emmanuel): Margerie, Margerie, bar the door.

AUSTIN: And she like slides the thing in front of the door and like they begin to like pull down grates on the inside.

AUSTIN (as Emmanuel): You have to leave. Lem.

JACK: Alright, okay. So, I reach into my pocket and I give him.. my business card.

[Austin, Keith and Ali laughing]

AUSTIN: He like, raises his eyebrow

AUSTIN (as Emmanuel): [mumbling reading sounds] Archivist?

JACK (as Lem): Let me know you're um..

AUSTIN (as Emmanuel): You're an Archivist?

[Ali laughing]

JACK (as Lem): Uh, trainee, yeah.

AUSTIN (as Emmanuel): I thought you were a musician?

JACK (as Lem): [laughs uncomfortably] There's lots of us.. yeah, there's lots of us.

KEITH: I thought you were a pirate!

[Jack, Austin and Ali laughing]

JACK (as Lem): We, we, we, we do okay. Y'know if you're-

AUSTIN: [Making explosion sound effects] Explosions outside [laughing].

[Jack laughs]

JACK (as Lem): Let me know if, if you're, y'know, sort of north. [stutters] You'll work it out. Just um-

AUSTIN (as Emmanuel): I, I-

JACK (as Lem): Alright, good luck.

AUSTIN: He goes [starts to speak].. and then he turns and then lets you go.

JACK: [sadly] Mm.

AUSTIN: He says, but just as you're leaving. He says:

AUSTIN (as Emmanuel): Be safe.

JACK (as Lem): Thankyou. You too.

AUSTIN (as Emmanuel): Velas, right?

JACK (as Lem): Yep, that's the place.

AUSTIN (as Emmanuel): Velas. Alright.

JACK (as Lem): Bear it in mind.

AUSTIN (as Emmanuel): Alright.

[FLASHBACK ends]

AUSTIN (as Samol): As you were bombardin' Nacre, and breakin' up them lovebirds our friends at the tower, well. They found themselves in a tricky spot. See, Tabard Alon, the leader of the Paladine there, he had told them that if they left he would leave them be. But they did not leave. And so he did not leave them be. Instead, he and his force, they attacked. And in the process, they captured Uklan Tel. That group, they, they understood what some of the archivists didn't. They knew how powerful Uklan Tel was. And now remember, Tabard reported to Samot, and Samot, he had use for that kind of power. Just imagine what could be done. The heat. The dark.

They're, they're coming again, you know. Ain't never left really. And in my time, in my version of time it's been a whispers length since the nothing threatened us. Every cough, every shudder, that's part of me trying to stave them off. And you know how Samot gets. When a catastrophe is coming.. You gotta try, right? Well, them fools from Velas, they tried too. They tracked Uklan Tel and the others to the tower's enormous throne room. This was the old one, remember? From before Samot moved to Marielda from, from before he renamed that place the City of First Light. The funny thing, something about that part of the, the tower palace was a pathway too. Not to another world, but to Samot's new tower. The one on the island to the south. And Hadrian saw that place briefly, he walked through that pathway, he heard them chant Samot's name. He saw the streets and the volcano where Samoth's first turned iron into function. Only thing is, pathways like that, most of the time, this time included, they work in two directions. So while Hadrian, Fantasma, Thrandir and Sunder were skirmishing with Tabard and his paladine in an effort to rescue Uklan Tel. Well, Samot himself, The Knower of Things, The Child who Apologised, The Boy King Mature, he walked down that path too. And just in time. See, Tabard had struck Hadrian *close*. No need for the curse of marble and loyalty to take Hadrian's life, a blade would do. But at that point remember, the kingdom of death, Tristero's kingdom, that was limited to Nacre. And so as Hadrian bled out he turned to another one of my kin, the one that was close at hand.

[FLASHBACK to Autumn in Hieron]

AUSTIN: Death's, death's kingdom is here. Action freezes and Tabard's blade, covered in your blood, holds still in the air, along with the dandelion, along with the remnants of the, the blast of fire that Sunder Havelton had shot off. And creeping out from under Fantasma's hand, slowly, he kind of lifts it gracefully and puts it aside, puts it back on Fantasma's side and, and pats him on the side of, of his shoulder, Samot walks forward. Through the doors. Towards you. You and he are the only two things that move here. He reaches down and offers you a hand. What do you do? [pauses] Are you silent of a moment?

ART: [sighs] Yeah. I like, I'm, I'm, I like --I can only imagine my eyes are just disbelief.

AUSTIN: Yeah. He says-

ART: And I mean disbelief in all, in all the ways.

AUSTIN: Mhm. He looks around the room.

AUSTIN (as Samot): Even I didn't expect this drama today. Interesting. My friend, Hadrian, is it?

ART (as Hadrian): ...Yes.

AUSTIN (as Samot): You are a faithful man, and unlike Tabard, you would not make a good paladine. You will face a time soon where you will have to make a choice about

what you believe. I let you walk from here today on the condition that you give that choice lots of thought. I have made my fair share of poor choices, believe me. But you have the fire in you that I had when I was young. I respect that. I hope, like me, you find that you can pair that fire with some wine.. and some love. If you can't then you really only will be Samoth's pet.. Here.

AUSTIN: He reaches back around his, his neck and undoes his cape. It is a, it is a strange thing. It is pure white and you think that it must be, y'know, silk or linen or something. But when he lays it around your neck you realise that it's warm, it's like fur, it's like the fur of a wolf.

AUSTIN (as Samot): We all have our enemies.. It's hard to tell.. When, you've beaten them, or when they've beaten you. Take my offer, leave, and keep me in mind. I'll see you again. I promise.

AUSTIN: Do you take his hand?

ART: ...Yeah.

[FLASHBACK ends]

AUSTIN (as Samol): Amazin' isn't it? Hadrian and Hella both walked out of death's door. Samot gave Hadrian his life back, and in the process he took Tabard's, revealing in that moment that Tabard too was paladine all dressed up. It was an old trick, somethin' a, a loyal artificer of Samoth's cook up ages ago. Uklan Tel with the last little bit of his strength, he brought his magic to bear and opened a door back to Velas, before Fantasma could walk through though, he tried one more spell. He tried to charm my boy Samot. And that went about as well as you might expect. Let's just say, the two are fast friends now and in a way they've always been. After that, the group, the whole group, Uklan Tel included, they got back to Velas where the city was preparing for High SUNday. A celebration of the day Samoth's first put the sun in the sky. Most of the time it's a holiday of joy but this year well, well I guess I actually, I'm gettin' ahead of myself a little bit. Because around that same time Hella and Fero were confrontin' Adelaide Triste in her throne room. And it was quick, and confusin'. They didn't know what they did, I'm still not entirely sure they do. In any case, Hella took Adelaide's head. I guess she learned something from her early encounter with Brandish, huh? And at that moment, Adelaide's plan came into full effect. When she was killed by the woman she called her Ordenan sister, Adelaide was able to lift herself up into the true kingdom of death, deposing her brother Angelo, who had only just taken over for their father. And I know you're probably confused by all that too, the lineage of the gods and the powers of dark blades. Save your questions. Answers'll come when they're supposed to. What you need to know though is now that Adelaide was truly the kingdom of death, she would watch over Hieron and laugh. And she didn't just do it from her throneroom either, she travelled with Hella, livin' up there in her mind. A direct connection to the material world. [sighs] And Hella, and Fero, and Lem they travelled back to Velas. And that's when the group reunited just in time for High Sunday . Around that time they actually, they lost track of Fantasma. In truth he's retreated to a little hideaway he had in town and then retreated even further into his own thoughts and memories. He'd found out that there was a group in Hieron, a group acting in his name. Callin' themselves the, the disciples of Fantasma. Welding dangerous

magic. They said they believed that to bring the world peace everyone needed to be their *purest, truest* selves. Not too much information on what they meant by that though. One of the so-called disciples of, of Fantasma was the man Gregalos? The one who commissioned Lem, Fero and Hella to go south. To go to that other mark on the map. Which is to say.. to come see me. Shame they never got here, huh? You know what I say, if only, right? Because the thing about Gregalos is, that mornin', as the sun started to rise on that holy day he was killed and hung up on a wooden perch like a scarecrow, out in the fields beyond the walls of Velas. A little child found 'im. By morning's light the Golden Lance arrived. Victoria Solomon and Dr. Gloria Lake a pair of investigators wielding the sort of weapon you'd mistake for unholy sorcery.. But a cool, objective sense of justice that I bet you'd be right at home with . The Lance deputised the group: Hadrian, Fero, Hella, Lem and Thrandir. And told them to investigate what happened to figure out who had killed Gregalos by the end of the day. Now, those folks, they ain't detectives, but they're resourceful. They followed leads and leveraged political connections. Everything was goin' so well until.. the storm came in.

[FLASHBACK to Autumn in Hieron]

AUSTIN: You hear a clap of thunder in the distance. And I think this is about the same time, this is all of you finishing your investigations in your, in your places. And you step outside and what was once bright, shiny day, has gotten a little overcast.

[MUSIC (Eve's Light's Parade) begins playing in the background]

AUSTIN: It's still bright, the sun is still, y'know, almost magically cutting a hole through the clouds. But, and for most of you, this is the first time you've ever seen it, snow starts falling from the sky. For those of you who went to the Mark of the Erasure, you've dealt with snow before and you understand what it is. But for the rest of you this is literally the first time your lives that you've seen anything like this. And it's the same for everyone else in Velas. And to have it happen on such a holy day.. This isn't a, a flurry. This isn't a, a small, y'know sprinkling of snow. Quickly, this becomes a blizzard.. The paraders run inside as quickly as they can, good for some people, y'know the, the laughing buck is finally filled with folks to eat and drink.. But for most people, they're troubled in a way that they can't really put into words. You can't even imagine what it's like out on the beaches. But the sun keeps shining.

[MUSIC fades away]

[FLASHBACK ends]

AUSTIN (as Samol): Now you all.. Y'all were uniquely suited for dealing with a magical snowstorm, huh? All that Ordenan steel. But the people in Velas, they still ain't recovered. So you can imagine how hard the investigation got at that point. Not only because it was hard to move in the blizzard but because the snow it.. confuses things. It's hard enough to see five feet in front of you..it's even harder to see yourself. [sighs] It was Hadrian. Hadrian's the one who



found the killer. It was a man named Jericho. Jericho Alum, a faithful man to the so-called church of Samoths in Velas. Loyal to the church's leader, Prelate Lucius.. Jericho was a family man, down on his luck.. Not that different to Hadrian truth be told. And well Hadrian.. Hadrian found him there, lingering on the edges of his own mind, up in some tavern room he was rentin'. [sighs] Old man like me ain't supposed to get too sentimental, I know. It interferes with the, the storytelling so uh.. Well, in anycase.

[FLASHBACK to Autumn in Hieron]

AUSTIN: You lay your hand on him and bring him back to clear mind. You can feel that he is in, like beside the pain that you can take away, you can feel through the touch of Samoths that he is in a dark place, generally.

ART: I, I think I knew that just, just in general.

[ALI laughing]

AUSTIN: Yeah, but you feel it, y'know?

ART: Yeah, sure.

AUSTIN: Like, remember when we talked about how you could feel the cold even though you didn't, you weren't cold? This is the same. Where you can feel the emptiness, this is similar to that. And it hurts you can't, you can't take that away from him. And that hurts you emotionally in a weird way.

ART: Yeah. That sucks.

AUSTIN: He comes to, what do you ask him?

ART (as Hadrian): What happened last night?

AUSTIN: He looks at you and he says:

AUSTIN (as Jericho): [weakly] Did, did Lucius send you?

ART (as Hadrian): [sighs] I spoke to Lucius earlier.

AUSTIN: Aww.

AUSTIN (as Jericho): Does he know its done?

ART (as Hadrian): I.. He must. It's everywhere.

AUSTIN (as Jericho): Did, did he say if... [sighs] Did he say if my sin was clear? If my soul was clean, in the face of Samoths? Our lord, our god, our sun. Our *son*.

AUSTIN: And he [shuddering noise] on the word son, crumples a bit.

ART (as Hadrian): Lucius is, is, is failing you, my son.

ART: I shouldn't have said that.

[Keith and Ali laughing]

AUSTIN: Well you did! It came out, it came out didn't it [laughing].

AUSTIN (as Jericho): [upset] Ohh, my son..

[Keith and Ali still laughing]

AUSTIN (as Jericho): Lucius has helped me. Lucius has helped me. Lucius has been the only one to help me.

ART (as Hadrian): Did he, did he have you, did he have you kill that man?

AUSTIN (as Jericho): [horrified] That man was a monster! That man, he was a.. That man would have us all seen in our own private hells. I stopped a bad thing. I..

ART (as Hadrian): I know. I know you-

AUSTIN (as Jericho): I cleared my soul. I *had* to.

[silent pause]

ART (as Hadrian): I promise you I've killed, I've killed monsters for our lord. I know what that's like.

[silent pause]

AUSTIN (as Jericho): Will I be okay?

[silent pause]

ART: I, I wanna put both of my hands on his shoulders.

ART (as Hadrian): It's gonna be.. It's gonna be okay. You're gonna be okay.

ART: ... And then I wanna s-, I wanna snap his neck.

[Ali gasps]

AUSTIN: And he falls to the ground. And he gave no resistance. And he doesn't have a last word. He doesn't *get* one. You took that from him.

[FLASHBACK ends]

AUSTIN (as Samol): Stormras you're, you're as much of a fool as Hadrian was then. But you know how old I am, yeah? *Very* old. And you must think, with the sort of vision like mine, with the distance and grace that comes with *aeons* o' life. You must think that makes a man cynical. What's one life in a pool o' millions, right? Well boy *understand* I come from *nothin'*. That means that I am *intimately* aware, in a way that *no-one* else can be, of what happens when a man's life is taken like that. Each early death is a tragedy. Each life, it ain't a miracle, it's a protest, it's *defiance*. That man wasn't a sinner in a, a rented tavern room. He was, he was thirty seven birthdays placed side by side. He was twelve homemade fishin' rods, the last two, gifts to his little boy. He was his momma's catfish recipe. And on better days he had one hell of a smile. And there ain't a thing that nothin', that the heat and the dark, hates more than a smile. Because a smile is the first step towards makin' something new. So you'd better not glower at me captain. You'd better grin. I think, deep down, Hadrian knew all that too. Knew what he was doin'. But, at the surface level, I don't know. He didn't know anything. If, if Jericho had killed Gregalos and if Lucius, leader of the church, had ordered him to do it then what did that mean Samoths wanted? What did all that mean for Hadrian? He needed answers.

[FLASHBACK to Autumn in Hieron]

ART: Can I get a, a --Can I cast a spell here, real quick?

[Ali laughing]

AUSTIN: Sure.

ART: I'd like, I'd like guidance.

[Austin laughs]

ART (as Hadrian?): Tell me whose side I'm on.

AUSTIN: Tell me how Samoths would show you that he's angry with you? How would he tell you, to knock it off? Or to s-, to butt out.

ART: I don't, I don't know.

AUSTIN: Earlier he did it by showing you the door. Now I think.. your ring falls off your finger.

[FLASHBACK ends]

AUSTIN (as Samol): With no more guidance than that. The Golden Lance gathered the group and demanded answers, not just about who was responsible for the death of Gregalos but for a number of other things too. For instance, Captain, the Lance wanted to know who broke the noble, Therat Saal, the merchant prince out of prison. You wouldn't know anything about that now, would you?

[FLASHBACK to Autumn in Hieron]

AUSTIN: Who broke Therat Saal out of prison, and why? Under whose orders?

JACK: Mitta, under the orders of Prelate Lucius.

KEITH: Well, hold on, it was-

DRE: We don't need to say her name do weeee??

[Ali and Dre laughing]

JACK: Oh wait, we're saying this to the Lance. Okay. Oh yeah, hm.

AUSTIN: This is the question I'm asking. You guys can talk among yourselves and then tell me, final answer.

KEITH: I say:

KEITH (as Fero): Someone broke, broke Saal out under the orders of, of Prelate Lucius.

AUSTIN: Okay.

ART (as Hadrian): No, I'm not naming my people and letting your people go.

[Ali laughing]

KEITH (as Fero): Well they're not my p-, neither of them are my people.

[Audio skips to later in scene]

AUSTIN: Should Mitta be punished?

KEITH: Yes.

ALI: N-, no.

DRE: No.

JACK: Hmmm.

AUSTIN: Alright, this sounds like a roll, who wants to roll it?

[Ali laughing]

[Audio skips to later in scene]

AUSTIN: Who killed Gregalos?

KEITH: The f-, the Prelate did! [laughs]

AUSTIN: Wh-

KEITH: [laughing] No, it was Jericho.

DRE: Jericho under orders of the Prelate.

ART: So I guess I'm rolling against whoever wants to tell them it was Lucius.

ALI: Which is every... one... else?

AUSTIN: I think it's everyone.

[Ali laughing]

JACK: Mhm.

KEITH: Yeah.

JACK: Hadrian, what's your charisma stat?

AUSTIN: No no no no no how are you doing it?

KEITH: I could roll strength and punch him in the face.

JACK: [incredulously] Hadrian?

ART: I'll strength roll you.

[Audio skips to later in scene]

AUSTIN: What was Lucius' motivation?

JACK: Oooh.

DRE (as Throndir?): He was, he was concerned that the Book of Life that was in Fantasma's possession would lead to a great catastrophe.

ART (as Hadrian?): He's a rogue agent acting irresponsibly.

AUSTIN: Hmm.

DRE: Oooh.

KEITH: I would say both of those as one answer.

JACK: He's a Prelate! I don't think he's a *rogue* agent [laughs]

[Ali laughing]

[FLASHBACK ends]

AUSTIN (as Samol): The group debated and fought over the details but eventually, there in the church, while Lucius looked over his congregation, the group gave their answer to the Golden Lance. The Prelate was responsible for the death of Gregalos, just like Jericho was. And he acted, they believed, because he wanted to intercept dangerous magic, including the book that the group first found at the top of the Tower of Eventide. But the Golden Lance, they ain't about motive. They're about *justice*.

[FLASHBACK to Autumn in Hieron]

AUSTIN: They are *mostly* impressed with your ability.

[Ali laughs]

AUSTIN: I think.

DRE: [whispering] Can I keep the hat?

AUSTIN: No.

DRE: [sadly] Aww.

[Ali laughs]

AUSTIN: They tell you they might call on your service again in the future. That, most of you have proved yourselves more than adequate in putting together the pieces of a mystery, even on a day like today. They will.. deal with Lucius themselves. And.. hope that you have a fine holiday.

[faint laughter from someone]

AUSTIN: She nods to you, Victoria Solomon does, unhinges the strange weapon at her side, points it at Lucius... and evaporates him.

ART: Jesus, in f-, in front of the -?

AUSTIN: In front of his flock.

ART: The mass??

DRE: Ohhh.

ALI: Whaaaaaat??

AUSTIN: She holds it above her head, and says:

AUSTIN (as Victoria Solomon): Remember the power of the Golden Lance. We bring justice to those who try to hide in the shadows of your fear and your belief. We are the lightbringers.

AUSTIN: Puts it down, and leaves.

DRE: I gotta *get* me one of those.

ALI: Yeah!

[FLASHBACK ends]

AUSTIN (as Samol): By around that point you got what you came for. The storm did too.

[FLASHBACK to Autumn in Hieron]

AUSTIN: I see, y'know, Solomon and Lake riding off into the snow, back to the southeast. I see the remaining fireworks finishing over the, over the temple. I see the ashes of Lucius-

ALI: [quietly] Jesus.

AUSTIN: ..resting behind the, the, the altar, or the podium maybe where he was standing.

[Ali laughing]

AUSTIN: Mitta has slipped through the, or y'know, not the main gate, over the wall let's say, and through the fields of wheat. Y'know there are, there are Golden Lance investigators on horses looking for her but she escapes. Elgash Or has settled into a nice little compartment in the basement of, of Mishaud's house and plans to leave in the morning safe and sound. And I'm not sure where the rest of you are. I think, I think we get a shot of, of the Ordenan prince Therat Saal on a boat, climbing onto the Ordenan warship, shaking hands with the captain. It, it fires a single shot over Severia hall. A warning. Before it, it un-anchors and, and drifts away into the storm. And I think.. that's it. I feel like I'm forgetting something big. Am I forgetting something big?

KEITH: That would be difficult for us to know.

AUSTIN: It would be, wouldn't it.

[Keith laughs]

AUSTIN: Oh!

JACK: Oh!

AUSTIN: Do you have a thing?

JACK: Oh I was just gonna say, what happened to that, what happened to that, that Jericho man?

[MUSIC begins playing in the background]

AUSTIN: I [sighs] --You see him being found. Fisher Lacey finds him on the floor, later that night. And after a day of trying to keep everything together for everyone else, she finally lets herself break down, in tears. And she collects his things and she puts the blanket over him, and she sends for the guards, and she burns his clothes. And back in his attic, Fantasma jumps up. Filled with forbidden knowledge.

[MUSIC fades away]

AUSTIN (as Samol): And then, well [sighs]... The story gets complicated after that. It's, it's a lot longer and frankly, you don't make for good conversation. My point is, that's who they are, that's why they do the things they do, that's where they came from. The ones you're looking for, they ain't here. Half of them are a month and a half away, off in the mountains somewhere. The other



half, well they were here, but like I said it's complicated. They're gone now. So you make your choice. Test yourself on me, and on this blade I carry, see who bleeds first. You could do it, you know? You could be the one who finally kills me. You, them, others. Y'all carried Adelaide's curse here. That means I could finally die, really and truly. All you gotta do is try. *Or..* if you really wanna stop the cold, and the undeath, and all that stuff you think is unholy. Well [sighs], if you really wanna do more than just extend the military might of a nation, if you really wanna do *penance* for the sin that your three clans did all those years ago. Then you *listen to me*. Take this blade and deliver it where it needs to go. Meet them in the mountains. Find Lem, find Fero, find Fantasma. Beware the prophet Ephrim. Tell them all what happened here. [sighs] Make your decision quick, Captain Glasseye. I am bored. And tired. And you, friend, you don't seem to know how to smile.

[MUSIC playing faintly then fades away]

END