

2-01 Curious Beginnings

(1:15:21)

Fjord: I don't have a problem with goblins, but you guys aren't in any trouble, are you? No one's after you?

Jester: Because she is all kinds of trouble.

Nott: No one is after me!

Travis: Can I make an insight check?

Matt: You may.

Travis: 13.

Matt: If you want to go ahead and try and lie.

Sam: That's a 14, except negative three to performance.

Taliesin: I've been waiting for this for so long.

Sam: So 11.

Matt: So are you lying?

Sam: I am lying. I am definitely on the run from someone.

2-08 The Gates of Zadash

(1:26:52)

Jester: How old are you, Nott? Are you a little goblin? Or are you a normal adult goblin?

Nott: Well, you know, the funny things about goblins is we don't really celebrate birthdays or anything so it's hard for me to know exactly. There's no real holidays in clans.

Jester: Are you fully grown or are you still growing?

Nott: I'm of child bearing age. So I'm about somewhere between six and nine.

Jester: Okay.

Caleb: What is today?

Nott: So that's like a grown-- almost grown goblin.

Jester: Oh, okay.

Nott: Yeah, but like I said is really hard for me to tell. It's not like we had a party every year.

2-11 Zemnian Nights

(0:41:51)

Pumat: If you look over there.

Matt: He points on the wall, you see a framed symbol: three diamond shards that all point to the center in a flux capacitor-like design.

Pumat: I'm actually an annex of the Cerberus Assembly. So I get certain favors and I do things for them. I provide them, occasionally, with my capabilities and some enchanted objects, and in return they were kind enough to provide me with, well me, and him, and him.

Nott: So the Cerberus Assembly is that powerful with magic?

Pumat: They're about the most powerful you find in the Empire, yeah.

(0:50:44)

Fjord: Pumat, before we go, I wanted to ask you, I know that you're an annex of the Cerberus Assembly. How do you feel about the governing parties here in town? Are you happy with the way things are run?

Pumat: I mean, overall it seems to be as fine as it can be.

Fjord: Right.

Pumat: You know, some folks don't have as much coin as others, but what can you do to really help them? We do what we can, but there's a lot of dangerous things out there. We got all sorts of baddies coming over from Xhorhas, we got the possible encroaching of foreign powers always looking to peek over the mountain range and try and steal some of our hard-earned materials. So I think it's good they keep us nice and safe and, I mean, I got myself a fine business, too.

[\(2:11:35\)](#) *Description of the plot of The Courting of the Crick*

Matt: However, it does speak of a Crick assassin that had snuck its way past the borders during the conflict, and had attempted to take the life of a general named Theo. [...] The assassin is revealed to be from the Kryn Empire of Xhorhas, with dark blue-purple skin, gray-white hair, and pointed ears of elvish lineage.

Marisha: He's a dark elf, right? Or a drow?

Matt: She is. It's a female dark elf. The armor is described to be chitinous, almost organic in its design, though metal. You learn a little bit. It goes into a discussion of the term "Crick." The term "Crick" is actually a slur against the people that come from the Xhorhasian side of Wildemount. It's short for cricket because supposedly when the Kryn armies charge into battle, there are designed holes and tubes in the armor that sounds like a flock of crickets rushing into battle. It's meant as an intimidation tactic. It's this high-pitched screaming cricket chirp that rushes in, so that's where the term "Crick" comes from. It is used in a derogatory fashion towards individuals who live within the empire of Xhorhas and Kryn. The book talks about them dueling wits, finding common ground, and getting angry at each other and murderous, then turns into this torrid love affair in this very Anthony/Cleopatra feel to it. It's very dry. It's an older book. It doesn't match some of the imaginatory flair of some of the other smut that you briefly perused as you were walking in the bookstore earlier. You glean a little bit of information, should this be accurate at all, of some of the relationships or dynamics of the empire and the Xhorhasian folk that live beyond the border.

[\(3:09:19\)](#) *Continued description of The Courting of the Crick*

Matt: More reinforcing more of what was there. Because a lot of the information about Xhorhasian society is still largely unknown or uncatalogued, you get the sense the more you read, and the more the perspectives of this assassin's left across the way, you're uncertain as to how accurate any of it is— but it talks of a torturous society of bloodshed and beasts. Talking of this terrible life of endless wastes of carnivorous and cannibalistic creatures and that the Crick nation being this terrible place of perpetual inner turmoil, and vying for the next position of power. The assassin that falls into this relationship falls into it as perspective of being saved, of being taken from this terrible place and brought into the good graces of this General, and brought into the comforting realm of the Empire. However, upon being discovered, ends up being captured, tied, and killed. The last part of the book deals with the General going through his own grief and the process, but also understanding it never could be, and was probably for the best. You're left with a unsatisfied meh feeling at the end of it all.

2-12 Midnight Espionage

[\(3:52:54\)](#)

Matt: As you guys are rushing, you suddenly hear this very loud, high-pitched whine sound. You're like (pained sound). It causes your head to— and you, especially glance over as you begin to surmise the direction, you look past and you can see the Tri-Spires there. In the direction, you see the mighty Zauberspire, of the Halls of Erudition there in the distance, and you see there this growing, black, spherical mass beginning to emerge from the side of the lower third of the tower. You watch as it expands, the whining gets louder and louder. You hear this crack sound as the black sphere suddenly folds into nothing, and where it was, you see all the stone that made that part of the tower collapse, crush, and then stumble. The tower begins to slowly shift, as you

hear in the distance screams echoing around. The music stops. The attention of the guards suddenly shift over from the banging door to the tower crumbling. You watch as the tower– suddenly there's a flash of blue light, and the tower stops. You see a brief shift of a force field on the bottom that holds it in place, partially collapsed. You see two figures take off from the top. You see two other figures leap out of the hole from where the explosion, weird black sphere was at the base of it, and leap down about 35-40 feet, below the tree line. You see the two figures begin coasting, flying through the air in the direction where they were, as bolts of energy start arcing out of their hands towards where those two other figures fell.

[\(3:57:06\)](#)

Matt: As you make your way back towards the alley, over by where the gala is, you see a shadowed figure dart out from behind, and a bolt of lightning strike. There's a detonation of burned ozone as the figure falls to the ground, smoking. [...] All you can see is the cloak. The cloak is blocking most of the body, you see a hand behind that's like a leather gauntlet except for fingers exposed. The fingers appear to be– the glove or design of it are almost like they were dipped in blue. Like there's some sort of a blue tipped glove as its dragged back.

[\(4:01:29\)](#)

Matt: It is spatters of blood, and as you glance up right there at the intersection, you see a figure, one hand against the wall, breathing heavily. You glance towards it and take a moment as the light globes are now shifting out to light the space. You see a humanoid figure, seemingly male in outline, adorned in jet black, insect-like leather armor that protrudes in large sweeping hooks at the joints - the elbow joints, the shoulders. A helmet that's form-fit black leather and onyx studs wraps around their head. It looks demonic, the brow plate sweeping backwards into rear facing horns. Their other hand is dangling, clutching a cannonball-sized, twelve-sided dodecahedron shape, about that big, that has a handle on each side. It's emitting a dull undulating grey glow.

2-13 Lost & Found

[\(0:50:20\)](#)

Thuron: What happened to the Beacon?

Molly: It's right there. Is it important?

Thuron: Yes. Very. We are here to retrieve the Beacon from the empirical bastards in Zadash. We had it. I have it. I don't know what happened to my companion, but, so far, I am successful. And I need it.

Molly: What is the beacon for?

Thuron: The beacon is part of our culture. The beacon allows the rebirth.

Molly: The rebirth of what?

Thuron: Of our people. The Beacons are sacred. I have lived four lifetimes. As long as the Beacons remain, me and my people will live more.

Jester: Do you make babies still?

Thuron: We do.

Jester: Okay. And they live as long as the Beacon lives too?

Thuron: The souls continue. With each rebirth, the memories retain.

Caleb: What is your intention for the people in this empire, this kingdom?

Thuron: We live. We worship. We learn. We die. We are reborn until we are perfect. We find more Beacons.

Jester: There's more of them?

Beau: Is this thing what we saw take out half the Zauber Spire?

Thuron: No. That was my companion.

Molly: Sorry to tell you, but I think your friend may have got hit on the end of something fierce and may not have made it. I thought I saw someone fly by and take him out. I'm sorry.

Thuron: That's all right.

Beau: Is it just the two of you or were there more?

Thuron: For this mission, just the two of us. We had help, but...

Fjord: Where are you trying to get to?

Thuron: Out. Of the city.

([1:03:58](#))

Molly: How did you lose the thing in the first place that you need to get it back?

Thuron: It was taken from Xhorhas.

Molly: By who?

Thuron: (chuckles darkly) From your f***ing wizards.

Molly: How did they take it?

Thuron: I don't know the details.

Molly: Did they come to you?

Thuron: I was just sent to retrieve it. I don't know all the answers.

Molly: Sent by whom?

Thuron: By my empress.

Molly: Your empress? Which empress would this be?

Thuron: Empress Leylas Kryn.

2-16 A Favor in Kind

([3:21:49](#))

Matt: There's been assaults on the garrison. It seems similar to what you heard wandering through the street before, there have been more whispers of children being stolen in the night from homesteads close to the border.

([3:38:03](#))

Marisha: I tell her about the Xhorhasian spies and the terrorist that we encountered. Does she seem like she knew that knowledge or not?

Matt: She knew that they had come through; she is caught off guard that you had actually encountered them directly.

Dairon: Interesting. I will take this into my studies.

Beau: They said they were looking for an artifact. Something that the wizards here had stolen? Something that they said furthered their bloodline and made sure that they furthered their population. I don't know. Do you know anything about it?

Matt: Dairon goes from this very cold exterior. For the first moment, you see a brief crack of emotion, and she leans in.

Dairon: Whatever those things told you, do not trust it. Do not take it as anything but desire to conquer and kill.

Beau: Why else would they attack the tower if they weren't looking for something specific?

Dairon: Oh, I'm sure they were looking for something. Do not show pity for these things.

Beau: I never said I show pity. I wanted to know what the hell this artifact was that they were after. Figured you here at the Cobalt Soul would know.

Dairon: Unfortunately, the detailed business of the Cerberus Assembly is very carefully guarded and outside of our jurisdiction, but we're doing our best to keep an eye in case anything slips through the cracks. They do a lot of good, but I don't trust a mage that powerful.

Beau: We wouldn't have any records on some Xhorhasian artifact that apparently keeps them alive?

Dairon: None that I've come across. Keep your ear out. If you encounter another one of these things— these objects— or at worse, another one of these Cricks, bring what it has, bring it to us.

2-17 Harvest Close

(2:25:41)

Page: --witch skies now darken Brokenveil, over 1000 dead, the Ashguard Garrison is taken.

Starosta: What's the king's response?

Page: --formally declared war on Kryn Dynasty and the wastes of Xhorhas.

Starosta: I'll send word to General Grinbreaker and begin preparing her legion to move east. Tomorrow we'll notify the public, but page, return word to REXXENTRUM that ZADASH prepares to join the front. Now, go.

2-18 Whispers of War

(1:23:38)

Trent: Well, it was an unfortunate incident that, thankfully, we were present, both of us, to take care of it before it grew too dangerous.

Yasha: What were you fighting?

Trent: That seemed to be assassins sent by the Kryn dynasty, terrible Cricks that had attempted to steal something that should not fall into their hands.

(1:28:26)

Beau: One last question, Oremid. The Cobalt Soul's been talking about moving to the front line. Do you have any idea if we're going to get the same support from the Hall of Erudition? Because I know you're a fan of our work and we're such a mutual fan of yours.

Oremid: To the front line of what?

Yasha: Ah, you know.

Oremid: We train a good number of war mages, yes. Some of our finest will be present at Bladegarden and beyond. Should things escalate any further, I'm sure a number of our circle will also join where it's necessary.

Beau: Beautiful.

Oremid: You have my word and the word of the Assembly.

Beau: Cobalt Soul's got your back too.

Yasha: But to be clear, do you know what you're fighting?

Trent: We have been studying for quite some time as is the nature of protecting our people here, yes, but there are still many mysteries beyond the boundaries. Why? Is there something you know that we don't?"

Yasha: Just if you're fighting— I just wanted to know if you were fighting the Kryn.

Trent: Very much so. They have killed many of our people. The skies to the east darken, and we want to keep that darkness from spreading. We wish the sun to continue to rise on this empire, and currently it does not over the Ashkeeper Peaks.

(1:35:25)

Nott: Yasha. Just so we know and can-- I trust you. But if there's anything that we need to know, now would be a good time to tell us so that we're not in danger. Are you a Xhorhasian spy come here to do bad things to the empire?

Yasha: No.

Molly: Oh my god, you've discovered why she's been with my circus all this time, working as a bouncer.

Nott: Well, why are you here then? Why did you flee?

Yasha: Well, I don't know if that is any of your business at this time.

Nott: Well, I want to know in case they're going to come try to kill you and kill me by accident.

Molly: If they try and kill you to get answers, then, this way, you don't know anything. Then you're really not worth anything.

[...]

Nott: I just want to know if you're on their side or the Xhorhasian side so that when this war comes, that we're not caught in the crossfire. That's all.

Molly: What side are you on?

Nott: I'm on my side.

Molly: Exactly.

Yasha: I'm not on any side, but I do think what we are fighting is something very terrible.

Nott: You mean what *they're* fighting?

Yasha: Yeah.

Nott: In Xhorhas?

Yasha: Yeah.

Nott: The Kryn?

Yasha: Yeah. I mean, we heard about them in the north and they're mostly dark elves that settled in a massive ruin that was completely forbidden for us to travel to.

Nott: Did they do bad things to your people?

Yasha: Yeah. The ones that went there. They do keep their skies dark. It's some kind of dark magic that we don't know of that keeps the sun away. They've enslaved men and beasts and demons under their banner.

Nott: That sucks.

Beau: Have you seen the dark skies?

Yasha: I've never been there because it's hard to get there and it's not someplace I would want to go alone.

[\(2:44:03\)](#)

Caleb: I am going to tell you the story of how I murdered my mother and father.

Nott: Oh!

Caleb: When I was younger, I grew up in a small township outside of REXXENTRUM called Blumenthal. My mother's name was Una. My father's name was Leofric. Everyone was very excited about me when I was young. I was bright and confident. People used to say that I glided through life and everything just worked for me. As I got older, it became clear that I had a knack for the arcane. Everyone talked about this Soltryce Academy, maybe I would go there someday. The way they do things at that Academy, they don't take all-comers, they look for the diamond in the rough and every couple of years they find one. But when I was a young man, adolescent, really, they found three of us. Another boy and a girl, and--

Nott: From your town?

Caleb: *Ja*, from Blumenthal. And we were accepted.

Nott: How old were you?

Caleb: I was young.

Beau: What's young? Teenager?

Caleb: Yeah. Anyway, we went there. I studied for a year. I worked so hard. It came easier to me than the other two, but they were also very accomplished. There were other students from other parts of the Empire

there, and a little over a year of learning all they had to impart, I met a man named Trent Ikithon. He became our teacher.

Beau: Why didn't you say anything earlier?

Caleb: Earlier when, earlier tonight? Earlier a week ago? What do you mean?

Beau: When we were talking to Trent. You know we were talking to Trent.

Caleb: After a year of studying in the main school, Trent handpicked all three of us again, and we left the school proper and went with him to a home out in the countryside where he trained us. It was a good time. We believed in the Empire, we were going to keep it strong. He was cruel. He hurt us a lot. Made us go through extreme circumstances, but we got strong. I also fell in love, but that's another story.

Beau: One of the other students.

Caleb: Yeah. We rose through the ranks and it was the Empire over all, and eventually, he wanted to test our allegiance, so strangers were brought in-- traitors. Disgusting people, *traitors* to this empire, and we killed them.

Nott: You were just students?

Caleb: Mm-hmm.

Beau: He made you executioners?

Caleb: We wanted to be.

Beau: Caleb, that's deeply f***ed up, you know that, right?

Caleb: Yeah. A few months of studying, of a little bit of torture, a little bit of murdering dissidents and traitors and deviants.

Beau: Then one day your parents are brought in as traitors. No?

Caleb: No. We were ready to graduate, and the last test of our allegiance was-- I'm getting ahead of myself. I went on a trip home and visited my parents and when I was there, in the middle of the night, I awoke and overheard them talking, and went to the stair and listened to them talk about revolution and tearing the Empire down, and I felt disgraced and shame for my family. My mother and my father, who were so wonderful to me when I was a child, and were so happy for me to go to the Academy and believe in the Empire *so much*. I went back to the school and when the three of us were summoned and told what was expected of us, I knew what had to be done. We went to this other boy's home first, Eodwulf, and we stood by as he killed his parents. We went to Astrid's house, and had dinner with them, and she poisoned them. Then we went to my home and we grabbed a horse cart, and in the middle of the night, placed it against the door to the home and I set it on fire.

Beau: You had to do this to graduate, to prove your loyalty.

Caleb: Well, yeah, but it didn't exactly go according to that plan because as soon as I heard my mother and father screaming inside... I was so sure, until I wasn't, and I broke a bit.

Nott: Did you go in after them?

Caleb: No, I went to an asylum for a number of years. I broke. I don't remember so well what happened to me there. It was quite a number of years. Years later, a woman was there, and she, another patient, put hands on me, and she took the clouds away. She took it all away, and not just my madness, but the fake memories that Ikithon put in my head of my parents.

Nott: Fake memories?

Caleb: Wanting to betr-- yes.

Nott: Wait, there was a false memory? He tricked you?

Beau: Into hearing their talks against the Empire, is that what it was?

Caleb: Yes, but it doesn't matter, because I still wanted to do it when I did it.

Nott: But you didn't know what you were doing--

Caleb: So what?

Nott: You were brainwashed.

Caleb: So what?!

Nott: Programmed.

Caleb: Doesn't matter, I should have-- I'm a disgusting person. It doesn't matter. Anyway, all that gone, just like that. I ran. Not right away; I pretended like nothing had changed for several weeks. She went stark raving mad 15 minutes later herself, the woman who helped me. I killed one of Trent's people there, and took this. I pull out the necklace. This has been keeping me hidden for years. For five years.

Nott: What do you mean, hidden?

Caleb: They can find who they want, but not with this. They cannot find me.

[\(3:29:22\)](#)

Madeer: History can be done. Arcanists can be done. Please, do sign in here.

Caleb: *Ja.* Caleb Widogast.

Madeer: And your friend?

Nott: Veth.

[\(3:34:46\)](#)

Matt: What are you looking for? You have to give me something to go on here, otherwise this is going to turn into an hour and a half of me telling you about the history of the Age of Arcanum.

Liam: I want the furthest extent of transmutation and changing reality.

Matt: Okay. There are discussions about transmutation on a powerful level. It involves the creation of turning mountains into mobile clouds. It speaks of, in the Age of Arcanum, there were floating cities. There was arcane technology utilized in that period, which was this magical utopia, but a lot of that was lost in the war, partially because a lot of these mages, when they had developed magic to this point, weren't satiated with their mortal capabilities, and that was when they were easily corruptible by the betrayer gods. Then it goes into discussion on the Calamity. Magics that can alter the fabric of reality exist out there. Some of them appear to be myth, some have been wiped from time and history because they've been voted too dangerous and they're supposedly under lock and key in other places of the world, if not completely eradicated because it was not fit to leave them in the hands of mortals.

Liam: This was in one of these tomes?

Matt: Yes.

Liam: Then I will focus on that, because I'm interested in that.

Matt: It speaks on theories and manipulations of-- if you're looking for things reality-based, reality's a big scope. Transmutation specifically, most of what you can glean from this discusses the idea of turning from one creature to another, turning from one substance to another, how they would be able to build fortresses out of stone and then turn it to diamond for extra protective elements, and those were the great palaces of that age.

Liam: You know my main interests. Do I find anything of that in here?

Matt: You find some discussion of it. You find some discussion of the manipulation of time, but what minor manipulation is capable through magic is merely to slow or expedite what happens. Accelerating time to a certain degree becomes very dangerous, and there is talk of some mages that have attempted to reverse time in short stints, and that process is both very taxing and in the past has completely annihilated those who toyed with that power. It speaks specifically of two different mages who believed that they could possibly alter choices, alter elements of their past to benefit their future, their gaining of power and influence. One was turned to dust, the other was never seen again.

[\(3:39:02\)](#)

Liam: I skim the book on the Cerberus Assembly.

Matt: Okay. It has a breakdown of previous members who passed away. It's a dialogue of how it was established. The name was actually a reference to a group that existed in the Age of Arcanum. It talks about how there was a war of mage houses 150 years ago in the empire that nearly destroyed part of the capitol,

Rexxentrum. As part of the ceasefire and the arrest of all these mage houses that were at war, opposed to imprisoning them, they agreed to bind themselves to the empire and work for them. That's where the Cerberus Assembly was established as a power under rule of the king, and since then, it has flourished. It has helped the kingdom rise to power, to conquer the Julous Dominion, and they work with and under the king. It talks of all the members, it talks about what they do. Trent is in there as Master Trent Ikithon, who is the Archmage of Civil Influence. Civil Influence is the title. He is essentially the propagandist and the constructor of the face of the empire in upper echelon circles. It speaks of Martinet Lunidus Da'leth, the Archmage of Domestic Protections, who is the oldest and original member of the Assembly who still lives, who was there when it was built and currently is considered the leader of the Assembly. It speaks of Marquis Jenna Iresor, who is the Archmage of Industry, is one of the younger members of the Assembly. There is Master Doolan Tversky who is the Archmage of Dysology.

Sam: Are you saying these out loud?

Laura: Yes, he is.

Liam: I could say I'm muttering them under my breath.

Matt: There's Lord Athesias Uludan, who is the Archmage of Diplomatic Union. There's Lady Vess Derogna, who is the Archmage of Antiquity. I'll send you these later, it's fine, I'll send you an email. [...] There's Headmaster Zivan Margolin, who is the Archmage of Conscription. And then there's Headmaster Oremid Hass, who is the Archmage of Cultivation. Those are the eight members, currently.

Talks Machina - Whispers of War

[\(0:18:28\)](#)

Liam: Frumpkin happened after he got out. He spent- so the age timeline-ish. Let me see if I can remember this. I wrote it out for myself. Tapped for school at age 15. Meets Ikithon around 16.

Sam: Is that when you met the other two kids?

Liam: He would have met them at the regular [Soltryce]. They were from his area as well even though he didn't know them before going in. So age 15 to start at the Academy. After about a year, this man showed up and took him and the other with him, Astrid and Eodwulf. Somewhere in the middle of that year was when he visited home for R&R and bad things. Then, roughly around 17 is when the worst happened and he would've been, I think I wrote out to like 28 for where he was.

Sam: Wait, in an asylum for that long?

Liam: Yep.

Sam: What?! That's messed up.

Liam: When he got out he ran, but he was totally alone and the first step was a cat. The second step was a goblin. And the third step was a group.

Sam: Your guy was institutionalized for a decade?

Liam: Yes.

2-19 The Gentleman's Path

[\(1:29:07\)](#)

Nott: No, my hometown is further to the south, it's the opposite direction.

Jester: Oh really?

Nott: Yes. But there is no hometown. We travel around a lot, we have an area of operation, but never really called one place home.

Jester: So you're nomadic. Do you have little huts you put up as camping tents?

Nott: Yeah, there's tents, and some people sleep in bags or huddle together. Whatever we can find, really, leaves.

Jester: Did you like that?

Nott: No, it's terrible. Would you like that?

Jester: I don't know, I've never tried it!

Nott: No, it's not fun at all. You find whatever piece of cloth you can and wrap yourself in it and some mud and that's your bed. It's terrible.

Jester: Is that why you left?

Nott: That and many other things, yes. Have you ever seen a goblin before?

Jester: I saw you.

Nott: Yes. Well, have you seen any others?

Jester: No.

Nott: Have you heard stories of them?

Jester: I could tell you, but I feel like it's offensive or something.

Nott: I mean, you can tell me. There's no love there. Everything you've heard about goblins is true. They're awful in every way.

Jester: Well, my mom used to tell me that if you act up too much, the goblins will come in the middle of the night and steal you away.

Caleb: My father used to tell me that they would steal children. *Ja.*

Jester: Yeah.

Nott: All right, so that's true. But it doesn't really matter if you're good or bad; we will come and steal you if you are a child, anyway.

Jester: And would you eat? Because my mom said you would eat them!

Nott: Take it easy. We would share with the rest of the clan. But of course we would eat children.

Fjord: Is she telling the truth? Do I feel like she's telling the truth?

Caleb: Excuse me, Nott, are you taking the piss right now?

Nott: I'm really not. Goblins are terrible, terrible creatures.

Jester: Did you ever eat a little child, Nott?

Nott: With great honesty I can tell you that I've never eaten a child.

Taliesin: Insight check. I've been holding out.

Matt: If you wish to see if she's telling the truth, roll an insight check.

Taliesin: Nope. Natural one.

Sam: Kind of hard to read.

Matt: She's hard to read. She seems honest and forthright in what she's saying.

Molly: Has she tasted human flesh?

Nott: Listen. My clan, I can't speak for other clans, but the goblins that I was with for quite some time, we stole from people. We stole food, we stole money when we could, we stole clothing and provisions, but when times were tough, we would steal the people, too.

Fjord: You and your brothers and sisters? Or you and your children or parents?

Nott: Well, goblins don't really-- I'm sure I have parents.

Fjord: Oh. But you're not super tight with them.

Nott: Yeah. Once a child is born and nursed for a bit and then it's communal property. As soon as you can work, they give you a job and you do the job.

Fjord: No favorite brother or sister or playmate or--

Jester: Do you even know who your brothers and sisters are?

Nott: Everyone in the clan, I assume, is related somehow, but--

Jester: Oh.

Nott: Yeah. There was no real family ties.

Fjord: Do you fight any urges when you see a small child walking through the city, to go up and, I don't know, I don't mean any disrespect, but to snatch it?

Jester: That sounds a little s***ty, Fjord.

Beau: That's definitely a little s***ty.

Yasha: But yeah, you don't see it and you don't get hungry?

Fjord: Yeah, no, I'm being honest. Because if I know there's a little kid running around, and if you're f***ing tracing the damn thing, I want to know that I can put a hand out.

Caleb: With all due respect, she is smarter than that.

Nott: Caleb, as always, is right. I do not have an urge to kill and eat children.

Fjord: Just checking. I haven't met many that do, so pardon my, you know--

Nott: I do have cravings for things I assume you, other species, do not.

Jester: Like what? Maybe we do.

Nott: Rats.

Yasha: Well, that I understand.

Nott: Cats sometimes.

Caleb: Frumpkin goes back to the Feywild.

Nott: Bacon. I really like bacon.

Jester: Everyone likes bacon. Bacon is super good.

Nott: Just in general, meat is pretty good, but no. A human child is a wonderful thing. Why would I want to kill or hurt a human child?

Jester: Yeah! She doesn't want to hurt her baby, Caleb!

Nott: No. I'm not bloodthirsty. I just get hungry for food sometimes. Not for flesh. I just like meat.

[\(3:24:58\)](#)

Beau: Nott, did you recognize any of those goblins?

Nott: I did not. No, this is not my clan at all. Which is not surprising, since we operated not in this area.

Jester: Did you hang out with ogres, too?

Nott: No, we did not. I've heard of goblins hanging out with ogres before, and I don't think they're too dissimilar. But we didn't.

Jester: Nott, are you okay?

Nott: I think so.

Jester: Was it weird to fight other goblins?

Nott: It was very rewarding.

Jester: Oh. You liked it?

Nott: Yes. I'm only sad that one got away.

Beau: Nott, do you share the same hatred in yourself?

Nott: What do you mean?

Beau: You seem to hate your kind quite a lot. I don't know.

Nott: Do I hate myself? No, I'm cool. I mean, she had wings, so you want to talk about that instead?

Beau: Yeah, we can. Yeah, hey.

Fjord: You seem real excited to hurt your own kind.

Nott: Well, I know that I'm a goblin. For as long as I've been alive, I haven't felt comfortable in my skin for as long as I can remember. I just feel like I shouldn't be-- I don't fit in with them. It's not just that. This feels wrong, like I should be in a different body. The way they act, and the way they are. It's just not me. They do horrible things to people, and they seem fine with it, but I don't know. I never felt the same as them. It's not that I don't like myself or anything; I think I'm okay. But I just don't like how I feel when I see my hands or my feet. They just feel wrong. I want to be different.

Caleb: Was there anyone you were close to?

Nott: Not in my clan, no. But there was someone. I think I was telling you before that they give you a job as soon as you're able to do one. They tried me on so many different jobs. But I was not a soldier, I was not a good cook, I wasn't good at sewing or building. So they stuck me with the torturer.

Jester: What?!

Nott: I wasn't the torturer. I was the torturer's assistant.

Jester: Oh, you were *Nott* a torturer.

Nott: No. I saw a lot of things, and there was a halfling village not far away. They captured someone from the village and they wanted me to kill him. But instead, I was kind to him, and he started talking. My fellow gobbies didn't like that, but they allowed it because I was getting valuable information about where the halflings kept their food, and where they went to harvest, and where we could attack them. But I became friends with him. He was nice.

Jester: What happened to him?

Nott: Well, I hope he got away.

Jester: Did you leave before he did?

Nott: We left together.

Jester: (whispers) Really?!

Beau: What was his name?

Nott: It's not important. He was just a nice man.

Jester: Did you love him?

Nott: I don't know. He was a chemist, so he taught me about alchemy, and liquids, and potions and things. And he taught me his language. When he had taught me everything he could, they said to kill him. But I didn't want to, so I got *real* drunk, and I created a distraction, and I hope he got away.

Jester: What was the distraction?

Nott: I shot one of my fellow goblins in the butt.

Jester: That's good.

Nott: He yelled a lot. Then we ran off in separate directions, and I've been running ever since.

Jester: Wow.

Beau: Where would he go?

Nott: I assume back to his village.

Jester: But your goblin friends knew where the village was.

Nott: Yes, I know, but I don't know, I can't go to that village. I'll be stoned to death.

Jester: Why? But you helped him!

Nott: I'm a goblin.

Caleb: What if we went with you?

Nott: You could maybe go.

Jester: What if we cast Disguise Person on you, and you could find if he was okay?

Nott: I mean, we're going the opposite direction.

Jester: What if after we do this, we go down there and see?

Nott: I don't know if we should go back. There's too many bad people around there. What if I run into the tribe? What if someone from the village sees me? They hate goblins.

Caleb: Did you see what Yasha just did though?

Nott: Yeah, that was freaky deaky.

Jester: We just killed two ogres and some wolves, and a bunch of other goblins. We could probably do some serious damage to your old, mean tribe.

Beau: Nott, there are bad people everywhere.

Nott: I know.

Beau: Doesn't mean you have to associate yourself with them.

Jester: Just because you look like them, doesn't mean that you have to be like them.

Beau: Yeah, you're one of us now. And aren't we great?

Nott: Yes?

Jester: There's that creepy smile again, Beau.

Beau: I'm trying real hard to not make it super scary.

Caleb: I think it is a good idea to go there, when we are finished.

Nott: I'm okay for now, just getting away from them has been wonderful. And I've met you, Caleb, and you don't seem to care how I look or who was.

Caleb: I do not care. I know who you are now. If you don't want to go back there, we don't have to go back there. But if you actually do, don't be afraid to ask. I will go with you.

Fjord: Yeah, we all will.

Beau: I think we're all a little bit of an island of misfits.

Fjord: Knowing all that, you showed a lot of bravery tonight.

Beau: Nott the Brave.

Nott: Well.

Jester: Maybe there is a comma.

Fjord and Beau: You earned your comma.

Nott: Let's just call it a hyphen for now.

Fjord: Congratulations, Nott.

Nott: And maybe we'll move to an ellipses or something.

Fjord: Working our way through syntax.

Yasha: Nott, I'm very sorry we made fun of you eating children.

Nott: That's okay. I haven't eaten any children! I have no desire to eat children! But I've seen children being eaten, and goblins are awful. They're terrible in every way. If you're not good, they cut you, or kill you or throw you away.

Yasha: Wait, so you ran away?

Nott: As fast as I could.

2-23 Have Bird, Will Travel

[\(2:10:34\)](#) *To Caleb, in front of Kiri*

Nott: Things are looking up and, you know, earlier you said that I could come talk to you whenever I want, and thank you for that. That makes me feel very good. Yeza was his name. The halfling man. Before. That's all. I just wanted to say his name out loud. It's been a while.

2-30 The Journey Home

[\(2:00:43\)](#)

Matt: The two of you noticing as the cloud covered skies-- the snowfall has lightened, it's not as heavy as it was in the morning, but there is still a faint, soft falling of snowflakes in the air. The now gray and white city with the edges of the roads mucked with dirty snow and mud, being tracked through from all the foot and cart traffic. You do notice off to the sides near one of the inns or taverns that you have not had the opportunity to visit yet, within the Clover Plaza, you see a small gathering or meeting that catches your attention. You glance over and-- you wouldn't have context. Actually, none of you have the context for this. The two of you see a small meeting, between two really burly-looking figures in armor. A similar style-- or at least a haphazard patchwork-style of armor and adornments as some of the others that patrol the streets, keeping an eye out. Look like thugs a bit. You see two of them meeting with two figures that are in heavy cloak and hood. Because of your perceptive abilities, you notice that they are of a similar skin color as Ophelia. Their features are very

fine, and their lithe bodies vanish within the heavy cloaks that guide them. You do see bits of armor protruding off the side of one that appear to be dark and insect-like.

Jester: Does it look like the guy that we met down in the sewers?

Matt: It does. As you're watching out you see them discussing-- there is a brief transaction in the shadows of this alleyway and a handshake from the two cloaked figures and these two others. As you ride by and continue southward.

2-31 Commerce & Chaos

(1:34:56)

Matt: So on that specific thing you learn about the Kryn Dynasty, which is the Xhorhasian society that exists in the ruins of Ghor Dranas. You know that most of them were drow, dark elf, from what you've heard and the ones you've interacted with. Now, the drow were brethren alongside all elves in the past history until their minds were corrupted and swayed by the terrible silver tongue of Lolth the Spider Queen, one of the Betrayer Gods. Under her will they became deceptive, cruel, and violent. When the Betrayer Gods were defeated and banished during the Calamity, and the Divergence that separated the mortal realm from the gods that once threatened to destroy it entirely, the drow returned to their subterranean cities to rebuild their power far from the burning light of day. Much of the recent studies into current drow society across Exandria speak of growing paranoia and madness that's seeping in with the believed influence of Tharizdun, the Chained Oblivion. Whether it be by proximity of remnants of his power deep beneath the surface that have grown close to these societies, but there is whispers and research that says that some of these dark elf societies are being driven slowly mad by this influence. Strangely, what studies you've been able to find that talk about penetrating the Kryn Dynasty's intense boundaries [...] But for those who were able to move past the boundaries to research more of what little is known of the Kryn Dynasty, there is little in iconography under Lolth or Tharizdun. And what remains of that is ancient and crumbling and largely ignored by the society.

Liam: Do I find any mention of these beacons, he mentioned beacons, plural, and reincarnation or multiple lives?

Matt: There's nothing about beacons, nothing about reincarnation. However, it does speak of the dynasty worshiping something other, something that is new and dangerous as far as the Cobalt Soul is concerned, with what little research they have. They refer to it as "The Luxon" and seek to bring all under its burning banner. They've rallied to the surface of Ghor Dranas, casting the skies in eternal midnight that spreads with their dominion. They've begun taking the ravenous hordes of beast-men and terrors of the Xhorhasian wastes, and indoctrinate them under this new false god. You also learn that a number of people, mostly children of adolescent age, have been found abducted in the night by the Kryn on occasion, though the number has steeply grown this past generation, years after the first open conflicts with the Kryn began. The last thing you discover is the leader of the dynasty is known as Empress Leylas Kryn. She is called an "umavi" by them, though the word's meaning is unknown by current research. Accounts of the Empress speak of her as a powerful and dangerous warrior on the battlefield. And well over 600 years old or more, as records date back that far since she arrived in local history. That's what you've discovered about the Kryn Dynasty and Xhorhas.

(1:40:24)

Matt: You do pick up, because of your very high roll, there are apparently some newer arcane experiments regarding time and reality being fielded within the Soltryce Academy in REXXENTRUM. A newer magical energy seems to have been discovered, or rediscovered, that can seemingly adjust such properties with ease. It's being referred to as "Dunamis." But other than that, there's very little information because all that seems to be proprietary within the Academy.

Talks Machina - Beyond the Boundaries

(0:30:34)

Liam: Fire was his first, and he has a real affinity for it. [...] Some spells he's finding, some he's purchasing, but the fire is a natural progression. The Fireball was just him leveling up. I take that to be him further understanding what he can already do and magnifying it. [...] He needs to master the misery or pain so he's ready to deal with facing his ex-teacher some day or other people.

(0:53:30)

Liam: That would be bad stuff, bad news.

Sam: What, Astrid?

Liam: Yeah. [...] I don't know if it's good or bad. It's just complicated.

Sam: We don't really know about your past. And what Sam Riegel knows about your past, Astrid has got to be either super bad guy now, super dead, or something else that we don't know about!

Liam: That's one of the many things that Caleb wonders about every night before he falls asleep. About both his friends. He doesn't know. It's been 16 years since he saw them last.

Brian: How old is he again?

Liam: 33.

Sam: This all happened when he was 17? What's the math?

Liam: I've written down. It's 15 or 16. In the asylum for 11ish years. Out on the road on his own for five.

2-46 A Storm of Memories

(0:24:33)

Matt: There's a lot of ships. Probably about 20 or so. They're mainly Concord military vessels, similar to the one you saw and avoided on the outskirts of Nicodranas. Glancing over, there are a few groups of soldiers on the docks stretching. Looks like they're loading supplies into the ships. They're making a stop and the ships are waiting for others to fill up because it's a small dock. It's mainly meant to maintain, at most, six or seven ships at a time, so they're having to go in waves to take supplies and they're probably cleaning out some of what Bisaft Port has.

Travis: As we make our way by, can I identify a low-ranking member of one of the crewmen of one of those ships as they're, perhaps, reaching for a bundle or something?

Matt: Sure, yeah. There's a number you can go ahead and stop. There's one of them nearby that is sitting there stretching legs and gathering their supplies in a small sack. They probably bought a few things to take on the path.

Fjord: You there! By gods, you guys are stocking up something fierce!

Crewman: Yes, we are making our way through the waters. This is just a quick stop.

Fjord: Amazing. Do you mind if I ask where all this traffic is going?

Crewman: Well, with the recent attacks, the war at the Empire, it's getting a little hairy, so the Marquis Olessia Lapudis is calling many of the warships to the southern coast to be a precaution near the border.

Fjord: Oh, I understand. I'm sorry to hear it's moving so aggressively. Are you concerned, or do you feel strength in your numbers?

Crewman: (noncommittal consideration) This is a conflict between them, but it is still important to be careful. We have an alliance from a trade standpoint with the Empire, but they are not entirely the most pleasant people, so they can deal with their problems and if comes to us, we'll keep it to the shore. The good news is, as far as I know, Xhorhas isn't a naval-oriented people. What I have heard is the underelves apparently snuck

past the mountain range and attacked further inland. Felderwin was assaulted and the fields were set ablaze. A smart move in cutting the food from the people, eh? These beasts are clever. Be careful.

2-47 The Second Seal

(3:27:01)

Caleb: Sometimes it sounds like you don't have much love for home.

Nott: Yeah, it's a little complicated. I really didn't like most of it. Certainly not my clan, as I've told you guys. There's a few folks that I didn't mind so much. There was one gentleman I wouldn't mind just checking in on. Make sure he's okay.

Caleb: One of your clan?

Nott: No. Just a friend of mine that I--

Caleb: Not one of your clan.

Nott: No, they're not my friends at all. They're bad. This halfling man who lived in the town near where the goblins lived. So I just want to see if he's okay. He was very special to me. I'm worried about him. Do you have anyone like that?

Caleb: No.

Nott: Well, you do.

Caleb: Well, not besides you.

Nott: Not at home.

Caleb: Not besides you. Your clan is all right with you? Is there any friction we should be--

Nott: I would assume not. No, they're not okay with me. I did not leave on good circumstances, under good circumstances with them. If we pass through, I would either not want to see them or if we did, be ready for a fight.

Caleb: Oh, so, oh. So you want to go home briefly, but not to see the clan, but just this one fellow?

Nott: Mm-hmm. Yeah. I didn't-- yeah. I don't-- I'm sorry, I'm just so nervous about it. I don't want to see the clan ever again, if I can help it.

Caleb: So we're going around your home is what you're saying.

Nott: We might have to go through it to get past it, but yeah. I don't really consider myself one of them any more. I just want to see if my friend is okay.

Caleb: Yeah, whatever you need, we'll do.

2-48 Homeward Bound

(2:13:34) *Looking at the beacon*

Matt: Takes it and begins to cast a spell that you recognize as an Identify spell. Casts another spell that you don't recognize. (sighs) Takes a moment and concentrates on it, and you watch his face go slack-- a familiar expression that many of you have seen your friends as they concentrate on it do so. [...] About a minute passes, and then the muscles in his face tighten back into his neutral expression.

Yussa: This is-- I have studied much, and this is new to me. I'd be worried if this was something dangerous that I knew and understood well. I find it far more concerning that this is something I know nothing of. Where was this found?

Beau: Zadash. After the Spire attack.

Fjord: In the hands of an assassin.

Beau: Either it was in the Tri-Spire and they successfully exited with it, or the Xhorhasian were trafficking it.

Jester: I think the Tri-Spire stole it from the Xhorhasians and they were trying to get it back.

Beau: That's what we believe.

Yussa: Very interesting. (sigh) Whatever magic this is, it blends elements of arcane and divine, but is outside of what I know, can sense. It's very alien.

Beau: Yussa, do you know of the Empire, the Clovis Concord, stealing artifacts from other shores?

Yussa: I mean, if there is any sort of dominion to hold, you take what is available. I mean, everything as far as Vasselheim to Emon to Ank'Harel. Anyone in power has their threads and eyes out for what could possibly help them maintain their positions in power and what dangers there are out there. That is beyond morality, that is just simple intelligence to survive in a world that is continuously beset by darker powers and things beyond our control. If this was taken from Xhorhas, then god knows what they were attempting to do with it.

Jester: Make babies.

Yussa: Make babies.

Jester: Well, that's what the guy said.

Caleb: Very bad people want this thing.

Yussa: Then very bad people will be after you.

Nott: Well, we're also sometimes bad people, so.

Yussa: That does not necessarily mean you're protected. Just be careful.

Jester: Do you have any ways to protect us? Right now, we're keeping it in this bag. Do you have any better way to keep it secret?

Yussa: I think that is probably the best method you have. Remove it only when absolutely necessary and for short periods of time. That will protect from divination on this plane, but only this plane.

[\(3:12:16\)](#)

Jester: Where is your family? Where are they located? I'm sure not the actual city-city, right?

Nott: You mean the clan?

Jester: Yeah.

Nott: No, they don't live in the city.

Jester: What about, you know--

Nott: The fellow, my friend?

Jester: Yeah, the guy.

Nott: Yeah, he's in the city somewhere. Yeah. I know where the house is.

[\(3:13:27\)](#) *In Felderwin*

Matt: Glancing over towards the first main plaza intersection of this part of Felderwin, there's a few people talking. You can see a blue flash catches your attention out of the corner of your eye. You can see Righteous Brand soldiers standing with an elven woman in fine flowing clothes of green and black. She angrily gives a few off-handed orders at a distance, while the source of this blue flash, a male figure, is standing where he previously was not. This figure that apparates is wearing deep blue robes and appears to be elven. Very long, white hair, also an elder elf, though of pale skin in comparison to [Yussa Errenis]. Approaches with haste towards this woman. They begin to whisper for a moment before he shoos off the rest of the guards, and they being to walk together, the pair of them, having a conversation.

Sam: Do I recognize either of those people?

Matt: Roll a perception check.

Sam: 19.

Matt: You see them. You don't recognize them. [...] This appears to be of northern elf. Most of that bloodline stems from Meleismere and split off into Bysars Tyr.

[...]

Liam: Do I recognize that person from my time at school?

Matt: You recognize both of them. The woman is Lady Vess DeRogna, the Archmage of Antiquity of the Cerberus Assembly. [...] The man, the elder elf, is Martinet Lunidus Da'leth [...] Archmage of Domestic Protections.

(3:18:37)

Matt: There is an inn called the Glassy Grass Inn that's you're familiar with, Nott, burned to the ground. There is another building next to that. There's the Brenado Apothecary that is also burned to the ground. [...]

Nott: Stop the cart.

(3:20:32) *At the apothecary*

Matt: This was a place of business that appeared to have a few rooms of homestead attached to the back of it, but all of that has burned and fallen inn.

(3:21:04)

Crownsguard: I don't want to fight those things.

Nott: What things?

Crownsguard: The cricks! The things that came in and did this?

Nott: Were you here? Do you know what happened to this place?

Crownsguard: Yeza? I know they haven't found a body, so that's something. His boy Luc is found same and is staying with, what's her name?

Matt: Looks over at the other person, the woman.

Crownsguard: At Old Edith's house.

Sam: Do I know Old Edith?

Matt: You know of Old Edith. Older woman a few buildings down?

Nott: He's okay?

Crownsguard: Yeah, Luc's okay.

Nott: Did the party that came into attack, were they taking prisoners, or were they killing?

Crownsguard: From what I heard, they just burned and slashed. Just under 100 crownsguard were killed, a few of my friends, 14 civilians died in the fires. It was the weirdest thing. I watched friends of mine begin to slow down.

Nott: Were you there?

Crownsguard: Yeah. Thankfully, not on the front line.

Nott: How did they get away, the Cricks? Did they go underground.

Crownsguard: They went back from where they came, to the tunnels and collapsed them behind them.

Nott: Which tunnels? Where?

Crownsguard: Between the city and the Tillage.

Matt: Points in the direction where those two were walking.

(3:32:23) *The burned notes found in Yeza's apothecary basement*

As we continue to invoke the beacon with extremely focused energy of different spectrums and sources (divine and arcane), the effects unleashed are ever curious, and reach far beyond this laboratory. The dunamis field often sightlessly encompassed an entire portion of the town, with locals complaining of an ill, sluggish sensation akin to being dragged down. Others at different experiments rumored of witnessing people and livestock moving at a noticeably faster or slower rate within entire sections of the city in proximity to the laboratory (rumors we squashed by spreading a batch of molded fruit crop).

Based on our previous experiments and extracted techniques from captured Kryn operatives, the abilities of dunamis and dunamancy within Xhorhas appears to focus around the manipulation of gravity, entropy, and

time itself. Yet, while the basis of what dunamancy origin glyphs we were able to acquire show it to exist outside of the established schools of magic, there are similarities to the origins of some magics within the 8 schools that resemble dunamis. This magic, by my theory, is deeply rooted in or related to the ancient history of some arcana we take for granted. If these beacons are just the surface, what eons-old rituals have they lurking beneath their baneful citadel in Ghor Dranas? To think such vile underscum might be capable of making time and fate itself their slave is a terrible thought.

While I took the Kryn's societal disposition of despising destiny and fate as mere philosophy, I'm beginning to believe it goes deeper than that. Between the fragments of power we've only begun to unlock within these beacons, and the capabilities of the Kryn on the battlefield, I surmise they have been learning to bend and break threads of destiny for hundreds of years. Be this truth, I cannot imagine the Raven Queen looks down upon them favorably either, though the thought brings a laugh to my lips

(3:33:52)

Extremely difficult to work with. Attempts to isolate a substance capable [of] containing and sustaining the dunamantic energies within a casing has proven both time-consuming and costly. But I believe it is only the beginning stages. While I find this alchemist obnoxious in his simplicity, the Academy's eye for talent proves itself again, for at the very least his instincts are solid, and his intellect too limited for disloyalty.

In these past weeks, we have successfully distilled a single vial that should enable a temporary influx of dunamis to even an untrained soldier. Once I can remove the beacon itself from the process, I hope to have this alchemist produce a number of batches over the next twelve to sixteen months, refining the method with each step until we can certify its use in combat.

Word has found me of Trent finding a few of his proteges have a knack for early dunimancy and I am eager to look over their findings and perchance fold these skills into my own. Imagine [what] could be accomplished by the Assembly should we further learn to command these-- of existence. The dreams are already thrilling. Regardless, I have multiple unrelated-- looking quite optimistic. My hope is-- ridiculous. My presence is--

(3:25:04)

Matt: You do find the basement door, which you know of. The basement is locked. [...] The room is tossed. Not like you remember.

[...]

Beau: What would someone want here?

Nott: I don't know. Chemicals. He kept chemicals here.

(3:31:29)

Caleb: Have you ever seen [the tripod] before?

Nott: No. I've never seen this before.

(3:44:22) *While disguised as Veth*

Veth!Nott: Edith, it's me. Where's my son?

Edith: I thought you were dead.

Veth!Nott: I'm not. Let me see him right now.

Edith: Luc?

Matt: You see a small halfling boy, maybe no more than 5 years old, peak around the doorway. Shaggy, light brown hair. Blue eyes.

Luc: Yeah.

Veth!Nott: Hi.

Luc: Daddy said the goblins killed you.

Veth!Nott: Well, they didn't.

Sam: I'll pull out the doll of King Bertrand and give it to him.

Veth!Nott: I bought you that and other toys. How are you? Are you okay? Did they hurt you?

Luc: Edith says Daddy went away to help the war, but I think she's lying. He's probably dead, too, like I thought you were.

Veth!Nott: [...] Did they touch you?

Luc: No. Daddy locks me away when the mean lady comes by.

Veth!Nott: The mean lady? What does she look like? Who is she? Oh my gosh, it's so wonderful to see you.

Sam: I pick him up and give him a big hug and kiss.

Matt: He stiffens up. He's overwhelmed and untrusting of the scenario, but you still pick him up.

Luc: Mean lady. Pointy ears.

Veth!Nott: Yes. She comes often?

Luc: *nods*

Veth!Nott: And you go somewhere safe when she comes?

Luc: Daddy put me in my room.

Veth!Nott: What about the last time?

Luc: In the night, when all the loud noises happened.

Veth!Nott: Yes?

Luc: Daddy just pushed me out of the house and said, "Go," so I ran to Edith. Everything was on fire.

Veth!Nott: You're very smart. You've always been a very smart boy. You're a good boy. Your job is to stay safe. When you were running away, did you see anything of dad?

Luc: No, just a lot of scary people in armor.

Veth!Nott: I'm so sorry I wasn't there to protect you.

Luc: Mommy, where were you?

Veth!Nott: I was far away. I was trying to get back. I was trying to come back, I was. I was trying so hard. I'm not strong enough to come back yet. But know that I'm always thinking of you. I send you things so you remember me and I hope Dad gives them to you.

Luc: We get presents, but he just says they're from somebody.

Veth!Nott: That's fine. It would be hard to understand, but I love you so much and I've never stopped thinking about you and trying to come home. I didn't want to go away. I'm going to find your father, I will. Then maybe we can be a family again.

[...]

Luc: And you're alive again?

Veth!Nott: I will be, too. [...] Thank you. Sorry, Edith.

Edith: I'm just happy to see you're okay.

(3:51:36)

Edith: Look, Veth. Wherever you go, just let me know how I can help. [...] He's a good boy. You did good.

Veth!Nott: Yeah?

[...]

Matt: At that point, back where you rode from, walking across the street are the two figures that you saw where you first came towards the plaza. Walking and quietly talking to each other and heading towards the rubble of the apothecary.

Caduceus: We're going to get in the cart and move now.

Talks Machina - Homeward Bound

(0:20:35)

Matt: This is an opportunity, with the war, where I was like, "Okay, Caleb definitely has a connection loosely with the Cerberus Assembly." As much a connection, we'll have to find out as we go. Nott's story, I just kept thinking, "What are the weak points of an empire that's able to hold their own on a front line?" That's the food supply. Felderwin is one of the largest providers of food, so that would be an attack point. But what would draw them out there? Without going into too many reasons. There's a lot of reasons why that attack happened.

Marisha: Very Soviet Union--

Matt: Kind of! But also based in the idea of one of the things that may have really sparked this war and the experimentation- the room that they had discovered and the notes from Lady DeRogna.

Dani: Is that who the notes were from?

Matt: That was basically, yeah. It was her notes down there.

[...]

Brian: Something in there sparked the war?

Matt: Well, no, the idea that this experimentation and talking about with what the Kryn are capable of doing with this dunamis and dunamancy type thing.

2-49 A Game of Names

(1:26:28)

Fjord: Did they catch any of those that were guilty of all this?

Simone: No, they came in without warning and just tore through, burned things and left.

(1:45:25)

Beau: Jeff, I was curious if you happen to know what happened to Yeza Brenatto or if you were around when the Apothecary burned.

Jeff: Yeah, that's where I got all this. Was trying to get people out of the flames. Managed to get his son out, it seems.

Beau: Really?

Jeff: Yeah. Cricks got him and ran.

Beau: The cricks got him?

Jeff: Yeah.

Beau: Did you see which direction they ran?

Jeff: Back to their f**ing hole. They headed northward.

Beau: You're sure it was the cricks.

Jeff: Yeah! It was like four of them.

Beau: Did you see anything else?

Jeff: Yeah, I saw the fire they pushed me into when I tried to stop them. [...] It was crazy. They came in quick. Fires were set before we knew what was happening.

Beau: Did you feel like they were looking for something in particular? Were they targeting places?

Jeff: I guess? The last place they left was the Apothecary.

(1:54:05)

Crownsguard: They didn't dig [the holes]. Someone dug it for them.

Fjord: Is that right?

Crownsguard: Some big old mouth made of teeth just carved out of the ground and withdrew and the poured out.

Fjord: My god, that sounds terrible.

Crownsguard: Yeah. I hate this job.

[...]

Jester: Was it like a worm or something?

Crownsguard: Something like that, yeah!

Fjord: Did it come out of the ground, or did they go back in after?

Crownsguard: It broke through, came out just a few feet, the it pulled back in. We were like, "What the f*** was that?!" And the cricks just came running out.

Jester: Do you think the Kryn came out of the worm thing?

Crownsguard: It's possible.

Fjord: How big was this creature?

Crownsguard: I don't know, it was just big. From what I saw, it was maybe like ten feet wide.

(2:03:05)

Matt: You can definitely tell that the edges and top of the tunnel have a smoother, natural carving to them. Whatever creature [did this] definitely burrowed. With that roll, I'd say you do make a few footsteps that resemble a more armored boots that are more unique against the profile of the general crownsguard and/or Righteous Brand soldiers.

Taliesin: In both directions?

Matt: In both directions.

(2:28:04) *Divination*

Caduceus: What is Yeza's destination? Pushing a few days forward.

[...]

Wildmother: Ghor Dranas.

(2:42:41) *Sending*

Jester: I'm a friend of Veth. We know you've been taken. But stay hopeful. We're looking for you. If you can, tell us where you are currently.

Matt: There's no response. And then a very faint one.

Yeza: Hello. I don't know. It's very dark. I have to be quiet. But thank you.

(3:14:49)

Matt: The tunnel widens and drops off like a cliff. You hear a very faint sound that sounds like running water.

[...]

Nott: They didn't just burrow from Xhorhas, they floated!

Jester: Yeah, that's how they do it so quickly or whatever!

Beau: I wonder where this underwater system goes!

[...]

Matt: It is a chamber. What you've stepped into appears to be a subterranean cavern. About 30, 40 feet ahead of you, it drops off about ten feet before it hits another straight away. As it curves to the left, you can already smell the minerals and hard water smell of the interior of this chamber. You glance over to the side and let the orbs drift a little further and you can see a river. It's an underground river, it seems to have carved its way through the lower portion of the chamber. It vanishes further below. [...] As the orbs move through, there are crystal-like, quartz crystals the jut from certain portions of the ceiling and where elements of various [...] stalactites [...] that come down quite a bit from a 15 foot high ceiling from where you're standing that almost

reach the floor where you are, but over this point where it ends and goes further below. [...] You can see the faint natural arch of a continuation.

2-50 The Endless Burrows

(1:31:33) *Sending*

Jester: It's me again! Can you let us know if you've been on the move or if you're staying in the same place? Are you in--

Yeza: No, they just have me in a room. We haven't been traveling underground since we got out. But they have me in the city now.

2-51 Xhorhas

(0:59:08)

Beau: We're not looking for a Xhorhasian party. Did you happen to see any higher-echelon-looking mage folk come through, maybe a week or two ago?

Nott: Maybe with a big worm?

Beau: Purple worm, real big.

Kaulden: We've seen a worm move through, about a week and a half ago. Went far east, straight across the plain.

Nott: Towards that dark place?

Kaulden: No, that's northward. This went eastward.

Jester: To probably Ghor Dranas, yeah.

Nott: Is that toward Ghor Dranas?

Kaulden: As far as I know, that's probably where it was headed.

Fjord: That would be the direction we're supposed to go.

2-57 In Love and War

(1:24:01)

Yeza: Who's there?

Jester: Guess who it is!!! [...] I don't have a word limit now, buddy!

Matt: As soon as you say that, he skitters back a bit.

Yeza: Oh, I recognize that voice.

Jester: Yeah, right?! Just like I said, Yeza.

Yeza: You weren't lying!

Jester: No! You're not crazy, I swear.

Matt: He scrambles up a little bit, getting to his feet, catches himself on the wall, woozy.

Jester: Take it easy, you been down here I don't know how long.

Yeza: Where is she?

Jester: She is waiting outside the cell. I'm just coming because I just want to let you know that, as you know, things are a little different than they were before, right? But she still loves you so, so, so much that we all had to come here for you. We came really far to rescue you because she loves you so much. Okay?

Yeza: Okay.

Jester: Okay, and just keep an open mind that sometimes we look different, but in our hearts, we're still very much the same.

Yeza: Do you have any food and water?

Jester: Yes!

Yeza: Really, anything.

Jester: Yeah, I have this really crusty-- okay.

Matt: He's just scarfing.

[...]

Yeza: Water?

Jester: Yes.

Yeza: Thank you. *burp*

Nott: It's his burp!

[...]

Jester: Okay, well, close your eyes!

Yeza: Okay.

Jester: Okay, Veth, come in here then.

Nott: Hi, sweetie. It's me, huns buns.

Matt: His eyes open and blink and he rubs them.

Yeza: I thought the packages were a joke someone was playing on me.

Nott: No.

Yeza: Was that really you?

Nott: It was me. I was trying to make sure you were taken care of. You're a terrible cook.

Yeza: Unless it's compounds, yeah. Where have you been?

Nott: A lot has happened. When we separated that night, I was taken and terrible things were done to me and I was changed a bit.

Yeza: It's okay.

Nott: Don't touch me, not yet, anyway. I'm sorry, what you're seeing is not how I really look, it's an illusion. I'm afraid you won't like it. And that's okay because it's not me, it's what they turned me into.

Yeza: You think that matters?

Nott: Yes, I do. It matters to me.

Yeza: It's still you, right?

Nott: It is.

Yeza: And you're alive?

Nott: I am.

Yeza: That's the best news I've heard in a long time.

Nott: If I show you, will you promise not to laugh or cry or throw a rock or something?

Yeza: I promise.

Nott: She's really strong, so if you did, she might just like--

Jester: I would cut you.

Nott: Yeah. I was going to say restrain because he's my husband.

Jester: Don't you hurt my friend. She loves you so much.

Yeza: Okay.

Nott: She's my friend. I have a bunch of friends, they're probably poking their heads in right now.

Yeza: Hi, friends.

Nott: They helped me get here, and they helped me find you, and they're going help me become me again. But for now, they've helped me get to you, which is the best gift ever. I'm so happy you're alive. I saw Luc, he's okay.

Yeza: Is he all right?

Nott: He's okay, he's fine, he's safe in Alfield for now. But actually--

Yeza: When they attacked, luckily he was at Edith's and I was afraid until you began to talk to me, but I didn't know who to trust any more. I've been in a daze, I'm sorry.

Nott: We have a lot to talk about. I don't know they'll let me take you away today, for now, just know that my only existence has been getting back to you, the boy, the whole time. I'm sorry it's taken me this long.

Yeza: It's okay.

Jester: I'm going to back out of the room to give you guys some privacy.

Nott: They turned me into a monster, honey. Just I won't always be like this, but-- you know, Beau made a good suggestion. Maybe just come over and take my hand first.

Matt: As he reaches out, there's a trepidation like he's afraid you'll disappear. He touches your fingertips, takes your hand, runs his fingers over yours.

Nott: It's a little weird.

Yeza: Why? Maybe, but you're warm.

Nott: Touch my face.

Yeza: There's a lot going on here.

Nott: Yeah. Maybe the touch thing makes it creepier somehow.

Matt: He finds the ears.

Nott: Those are long. They just keep going

Matt: Touches the nose and lips and the chin.

Nott: It's a mess. It's a nightmare this place. This whole area is just rough.

Yeza: It's you, right, it's Veth?

Nott: It's me. I mean, I think it is. It's me, it's me inside, but it's the wrong body. It's the wrong body, but it's the right me. So-- here, I'll just show you.

Sam: I'll drop the spell.

Matt: There's a brief moment where you hear the breath (inhale). You watch him process.

Sam: I'll turn around slowly.

Matt: As you turn around, you feel his hand touch your shoulder and stop you.

Yeza: It's still you, though, right?

Nott: Yeah.

Yeza: That's all that matters. It'll take getting used to. I don't even-- that's a lot of teeth.

Nott: It's a lot of teeth, yep. We don't have to kiss or anything. I don't know how that would work. I spent some time with the goblins when they held me prisoner, they don't really kiss. I can see why. It would just be a lot of clacking.

Yeza: Like throwing all the dishes into a pile, yeah.

Nott: Yeah! I know I'm hideous, you don't have to hold back.

Matt: He takes you and wraps his arms around you.

Sam: I'll hug him back, squeeze his little butt.

Matt: No words, just holds you for a minute, two.

Nott: I'm so happy to see you. I'm so happy that you've seen me. It's like a fresh start, well, no. It's like a new chance. There's still a long way for me to go, and I'm afraid.

Matt: He looks you in the eyes, bends down a little bit.

Yeza: What are you afraid of now? I mean, you survived what the goblins did to you, you came this way. I know how far you came. They dragged me through it. This is a very bad place. And you came here for me. That's braver than I could ever be. I don't know what you could possibly be scared of now.

Nott: I'm scared of having to do it all again. Now that I'm with you, I don't know how I could be apart, but I think for us to be together, we'll have to be apart again. We've learned things that have complicated our lives even more than before.

[\(1:37:28\)](#)

Yeza: It's been really intense for a few months.

Nott: Our son is out there and I'm afraid now that he's actually in place that's maybe even more dangerous than this cell. One of us needs to get him. I don't know if can be you. I don't know what they have planned for you.

Yeza: The lady?

Nott: What lady?

Yeza: DeRogna, the one that hired me.

Nott: Who's that? Caleb!

Caleb: Yes?

Nott: Who's DeRogna?

Caleb: She's a member of the Cerberus Assembly.

[...]

Yeza: If I go back, I have to be careful. That lady, she's in with some really powerful people. We began to run these experiments.

Nott: She hired you?

Yeza: Yeah. They reached out. Recommendation, who would have thought?

[\(1:40:36\)](#)

Essek: Or we could discuss it now. As the means for your release.

Nott: Sure.

Caleb: What do we need to cover here, sir?

Essek: This DeRogna; what did they hire you for? What did you do? And what do you know of what you've created.

Yeza: I don't have a special talent or anything. She hired me, she brought this strange box thing. She began to do experiments. She brought some people in to do different types of magic, arcane, divine, I don't know the variations there. They'd be able to pull this weird, ethereal film out of it, this gray mist and then it was my job to try and find a compound that it would adhere to so it would be brought into an actual usable, physical form. They paid well. They said it was for the good of the Empire. The Empire's always been kind to us.

Fjord: [coughing fit] Excuse me.

Nott: In a very limited way. Just making sure the roads were okay.

Yeza: For months, we worked in the basement. I was working on trying to get this to work. It was really frustrating. They were frustrated with me. They threatened to cancel the contract. I found a compound that would actually bond this material. We made one successful vial of it. It was a breakthrough. I was proud. She's usually very intense, but she was very nice that day. She was very positive. She said this was good work, she appreciated it. She said to hold off on the experiments for a while. She took the box back with her, saying they were going to hire me to make a lot more of these soon. They were going to ramp up production. Hopefully be enough gold to where we could buy a new home for me and Luc. And now you! Thinking Deastok or Trostenwald or something. Not but two days later, the house was attacked. Thankfully, Luc was off at Edith's house and they destroyed everything. They asked me questions, but Lady DeRogna said not to tell anybody anything. If anybody was told about what we were doing, she would take Luc away. I can't let that happen. She can't know about this.

Matt: He looks at the Shadowhand.

Yeza: She cannot know about this, please. They dragged me through all these terrible places chained like a giant nightmare. This worm thing. They brought me here. They watched me from the shadows, asking me questions about experiments and starving me, but I didn't say anything. I didn't say anything because I knew you were coming and I didn't want anything to happen to Luc. I didn't tell them anything. That's it.

Essek: Very well. It seems that not all forms of interrogation are effective, but alternate means can be. Prisoner's free to go. He's your charge now.

Nott: Really?

Essek: Of course. We have what we needed.

2-71 Family Gathering

([1:50:15](#))

Marion: I've been asking about how things are going [in Felderwin]. Apparently, it's not quite time to go back yet. There's still challenges and battles being waged up there. Word of a rise in goblin attacks in the cities as well, so we're just taking care of them for as long as we need to.