[Monster Hour theme]

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

Kyle: Hi. I'm Kyle. I play Alvin the Monstrous.

Quinn: Teo.

Teo: Hi. I'm Teo and I play Constance the Expert.

Quinn: And Hannah.

Hannah: Hi. I'm Hannah and I play JR the Crooked.

Quinn: We opened last time in the studio, where the three of you had been abruptly confronted by Georgiana's sudden malady and an amnesiac Agent Pax at your doorstep. Despite not remembering who they were, Pax was quickly able to diagnose the illness as the wasting disease of the vrykolakas, a plague vampire native to the Balkans.

A quick dip into Constance's lore library revealed the disease to be fatal after seven days and that the only cure was to kill the monster that inflicted it or to transfer it to another person. It's not really a cure, I suppose.

Teo: No.

Kyle: [chuckles]

Teo: It’s a-- [crosstalk]

Quinn: It's a cure only for one person.

Kyle: Yeah.

Quinn: The three of you immediately set about gathering more information and making preparations to rid Georgiana of the disease. As you notified your friends and allies, you made two more ominous realizations. First, it wasn't just Pax who didn't remember who they were. Stoney had no memory of the Agent who had turned his town inside out with their investigation. And second, it wasn't just Agent Pax. No one in the Daylight Society could remember who Kristen was.

As everyone converged on the studio to welcome you home, Constance and JR did some more research into the vrykolakas. JR visited the public library, learning that the monsters were exceedingly rare outside of Greece and the surrounding area. A vision from Brandusa, Constance's Buni, revealed that the creatures could be slain like most vampires, by removing the head and burning the body.

Meanwhile, Alvin went to Kristen's apartment to go check in on her. Just as you all feared, she too seemed to have no idea who she was. Nor did she recognize Alvin, which made for a rather awkward and unproductive conversation.

Hannah: [laughs]

Quinn: [crosstalk] Ultimately, you were forced to leave your number, inscribed on a rock.

Kyle: Yeah.

Quinn: Not a note. On a rock.

Kyle: Indelibly.

Teo: Forever.

Quinn: In hopes that she might call. As you were leaving, you were overcome with the uncanny sensation that you were being watched. We're going to pick up right there.

Kyle: Okay.

Quinn: Alvin. As you pedal down the streets and through the bike lanes and greenways of Firmament, you feel like you are being watched. You can't tell by what, but it always feels like it's just at the edge of your vision.

Kyle: Anything smell different?

Quinn: It does not.

Kyle: My keen nose?

Quinn: You don't notice any peculiar smells.

Kyle: Hmm. I give Constance another call.

Quinn: Okay.

Kyle: Beep, beep, beep, beep. Ring, ring. Ring, ring.

Quinn: [laughs]

Teo: [as Constance] *What's up? I'm trying a new thing.*

Quinn: Whoa. Some energy.

Kyle: [chuckles]

Kyle: Ring, ring. Wazzup.

Teo: Wazzup. I'm bringing back the 1990s. It's how I--

Kyle: Wazzup.

Hannah: Oh, no.

Quinn: [laughs]

Hannah: No. I know this is part of your cultural catch-up with your aunt, but I'm going to say, first of all, VH1, I love the 1960s, 1970s, 1980s, 1990s will do a decent job of helping her. And second of all, there are some things that you don't need to teach her about.

Kyle: [chuckles]

Teo: I think that's up to her to decide.

Quinn: Alvin, this is the conversation that you hear in the background-

Hannah: [laughs]

Teo: Yes.

Quinn: -as you are pedaling on your bicycle, navigating through traffic, while also trying to discern, where this utterly strange and alien phenomena seems to be coming from.

Kyle: [as Alvin] *Can you hear me? Hello, can you hear me?*

Teo: [as Constance] *Yeah.*

Kyle: [as Alvin] *It's Alvin. It's Alvin.*

Teo: [as Constance] *I know. It tells me. The phone tells me.*

Kyle: [as Alvin] *Okay. Well, this is a good step. I have a feeling of being watched.*

Teo: [gasps]

Kyle: [as Alvin] *Kristen wrote that earlier and now she can't remember who she is. So, just--*

Teo: [as Constance] *Oh, God.*

Kyle: [as Alvin] *You guys know who I am, right?*

Teo: [as Constance] *Yes. Alvin, look, pay attention very closely. You need--*

Kyle: [as Alvin] *Oh, God.*

Teo: [as Constance] *You need--*

Kyle: Sorry.

Teo: [as Constance] *You need-- This is like being at a bar when you're a youngin. You need to write my address on your arm right now, so that you know where to go.*

Kyle: [as Alvin] *I don't have a pen still. Okay*.

Teo: [as Constance] *I mean, I'm not going to say it, but you know what I mean.*

Kyle: [as Alvin] *My arm is the rock.*

Teo: [as Constance] *Yes*.

Quinn: This is getting worse. Memento.

Hannah: [as JR] *No. Alvin, don't carve your arm. No, no. no.*

Kyle: I carve an Alvin into, I guess, the underside of my arm, because it's not covered in fur.

Teo: Wait. You're carving yourself into your arm?

Kyle: What did you say to carve?

Teo: No. No. [laughs] My address, so that you can get here.

Kyle: That's way more letters.

Teo: Than your face?

Kyle: Oh. My name.

Teo: Put your name in letters. Okay. I thought you were carving a little Alvin into yourself.

[laughter]

Kyle: This is my self-portrait.

Hannah: Why would he do that? This doesn't make any goddamn sense.

Teo: I knew.

Kyle: I had amnesia. Like, [as Alvin] *I don't know who I am, but this looks like me. Why did this happen?*

Hannah: [laughs]

Kyle: Or, does it? It probably doesn't look like me.

Teo: [as Constance] *Okay. You need to put my phone number. Carve my phone number, so that I can tell you how to get here.*

Kyle: [as Alvin] *Yeah.* I do that on the other arm.

Teo: So, did you write Alvin one arm? [laughs]

Kyle: Yeah. Well, I misunderstood the instructions. Also, I pull over to do this, because I don't think I can hold a phone and-

Hannah: Oh, my God.

Kyle: -carve in my arm while.

Quinn: No. I might make you roll to act under pressure if you were still moving.

Kyle: Yeah, I'm definitely not going to try that.

Quinn: I am curious, because you do have immortal, which reduces harm by one. And we've played that frequently as fast healing. I think if you're trying to carve into your own arm. Boy, this is dark.

Teo: [laughs]

Hannah: It's going to heal up.

Kyle: Dire circumstances.

Quinn: I think it just heals back up.

Hannah: Yeah.

Kyle: Oh, no.

Teo: It doesn't scar?

Hannah: No.

Kyle: yeah. It's my supernatural healing.

Teo: Oh, God.

Kyle: Tough skin. [as Alvin] *Constance?*

Teo: [as Constance] *Okay. All right.*

Kyle: [as Alvin] *Okay. I tried it. That didn't work. I need a different--* Hold on. I look for a brick.

Hannah: Why is this a better option than finding a pen and paper?

Quinn: Alvin, you are pulled over to the side of the road on the sidewalk here. You know, there's a few houses, there's a corner store and I think there's some miscellaneous things on the side of the street that you could pick up and take.

Kyle: Yeah.

Teo: It's a corner store.

Kyle: I'm going to grab something that I can etch the phone number and address as fast as I can. Time is of the essence. I don't know if I'm going to forget who I am in 10 seconds-

Teo: That's fair.

Kyle: -or if it takes a day.

Quinn: Alvin?

Kyle: Yeah.

Quinn: As you are writing Constance's address into-- What did you pick up? I'm curious.

Kyle: It's town, so there's probably not rocks or things around. So, I think he's just going to try to find a piece of a brick or discreetly pull off a little piece of concrete.

Quinn: [chuckles] Fantastic.

Kyle: And chisel in the numbers there.

Teo: Public works. Not going to be happy.

Quinn: Excellent. So, you break off a piece of concrete.

Kyle: It's an old mining town. This is back to its roots.

Quinn: Alvin, as you are inscribing Constance's phone number into this bit of concrete, I need you to roll to read a bad situation for me.

Kyle: [rolls dice] 9.

Quinn: On a 7 to 9, hold 1.

Kyle: I have an idea of what I think the biggest threat is. So, I guess the best question here is, are there any dangers I haven't noticed?

Quinn: Alvin, you're standing on the corner of the street, and I think you finish doing this carving. And again, you feel that sensation of being watched. It's stronger now. You turn to your right to look at the intersection of the street.

The first thing you notice isn't a physical presence. It's a distortion. A distortion of light, of shadow, of perspective. A field of space, where the depth and angle of the objects are wrong in ways that don't make sense, where the basic tenets of order and geometry have been tossed aside.

The more you stare at this intersection, the more it feels like you are looking into an M.C. Escher painting. The sheer act of beholding it leaves you dizzy and lightheaded. As you're trying to perceive this flayed reality, you realize that it is not static. In response to your prolonged gaze, the distortion moves, darting quickly up and to the left without any consideration to the laws of gravity.

It leaves a trail of warped perspective in its wake, like a streaky mane of surreal tendrils. As it moves, you can just barely make out minute flashes of light and color swirling and flickering at the center of the field.

Kyle: That's weird. I pocket my bit of concrete. Was it going up and to the left, away from me?

Quinn: To the extent that you can even perceive.

Kyle: Right.

Quinn: It appears to have disappeared into, behind, around the corner store. But the notion that it even exists in space in such a way that you can track it like a physical object, doesn't quite track.

Kyle: It's ludicrous.

Quinn: It is ludicrous.

Kyle: It was there and it has moved and it is now gone. It is not there, as much as it ever was there.

Quinn: Correct.

Kyle: Yeah. I yell out to no one in particular around me. [as Alvin] *Can't get me that easy. Got a steel trap of a mine. Also, I've seen weird stuff. I met King Arthur.*

Quinn: Alvin, as you shout this, several people start to look at you.

Kyle: After carving into a bit of the wall?

Quinn: Yes, you're definitely drawing some attention to yourself. As you do this and as you shout out, a rush of deep discordant tones that seem to come from every direction all at once, rapidly assault your eardrums. It might almost be mistaken for a roar or a scream if it didn't sound so utterly alien. And for several seconds, you are utterly overwhelmed by this aural assault, and then it abruptly stops.

Kyle: Well, if I'm going to forget who I am, best do it with friends, I suppose. I'm just a simple boy. I have no hope of following and investigating this anomaly. So, I think Alvin just in a bit of a panic, just says sorry to everyone around him and hops on his bike and tries to tear off back to Constance's as fast as he can.

Quinn: Yeah. You hop on your bike and you peel out. I guess to the extent that a bicycle can peel out, which is probably not really at all.

Kyle: I can make it happen.

Quinn: You hightail it away from this intersection. The feeling, the sense of being watched follows you. That thing that you can't quite see, that you can't quite make out on the edge of your perspective does not abate or lose track of you.

Kyle: Yeah. I think his only hope, is that if it is an entity of some kind and is not currently inside his head, passing over the threshold of Constance's apartment may provide some protection that he doesn't have out here.

Quinn: So, you're tearing through town. As you make your way towards the studio at a breakneck pace, you notice something strange up ahead. At the intersection up ahead of you, there is a wall of darkness. It stands about 30ft high and it is blocking the path in front of you.

Kyle: It's like, from building to building?

Quinn: Yes.

Kyle: Are cars coming through it?

Quinn: Yes. As you get closer to it, a car drives right out of it.

Kyle: 30ft high. We've got some buildings here. I mean, Alvin, he's primal now in his urge to try to get back to Constance's place, so he may abandon his bike and try to parkour the building to try to get up and over it. 30ft's a pretty high jump even for no limits, but--

Quinn: I'll allow it.

Kyle: I think if he's got a wall on either side that he can use to kick off.

Quinn: It's wild, but I love it. Give me a no limits.

Kyle: You bet. [rolls dice] 8.

Quinn: On a 7 to 9, there's a consequence.

Kyle: I think a minus 1 forward.

Quinn: So, tell me about this climb.

Kyle: He's gunning his bike as fast as he can. He sees this 30-foot wall of darkness which seemingly is only perceivable to him. And so, I think he takes one foot, swings it onto the bike and uses the gyroscopic properties of the bike to give himself a kick off. Place a foot on the frame of the bike as it's going and try to push off of the bike, loop around one of the awnings of the shop that's right there, of course, it's a barber shop.

Quinn: [chuckles]

Kyle: And then, I think he starts to get a little wolfy as he needs to do this. He kicks his feet into the brick of the building, making small indents that he can get purchase on. Launch off of that and swing off of iron rot balcony up and clear the 30 foot top of the wall.

Quinn: Yeah. So, you perform this wild acrobatic Peter Parker maneuver and you go sailing over the top of this wall of darkness. As you do, you can see beneath you, it looks from a top-down perspective, not so much like a wall, but a sphere-

Kyle: Uh-oh.

Quinn: -that's raised up about 30ft. You swear as you're sailing over this and towards the other side, that you can hear music and specifically the sound of a violin playing.

Kyle: Oh, nuts.

Hannah: Oh. Fucking Dorian.

Kyle: If I'm reading this correctly, I did not clear a wall. I am soaring over the top of a pitch black solid. [chuckles]

Quinn: Yes, you are sailing over the top of a sphere of darkness.

Kyle: The parabolic trajectory of my leap has me careening probably directly into it.

Quinn: You would guess that you are not going to clear the whole thing. You are likely to land inside of it, but you do think you're going to get most of the way.

Kyle: Okay.

Quinn: Is there anything you do before you fall in?

Kyle: I think he just curls up in a safe fall position. He puts his hands around his head, tucks his knees in and just tries to relax.

Quinn: Okay. So, you fall into the sphere of darkness. I think you hit the ground a bit awkwardly, which causes your minus 1 forward. So, you're not injured, but you're shaken and bruised. As you stand up in this inky black darkness, a spotlight comes on overhead and you are illuminated.

Kyle: I get up, and brush my jeans off and I go, [as Alvin] *Hey, Dorian*.

Quinn: The only response that you get is, again, that barrage of deep, low tones that reverberate through your eardrums and your whole body for a couple of seconds.

Kyle: [as Alvin] *You should practice more. That was an awful sound.*

Quinn: Alvin, give me a roll to read a bad situation.

Kyle: Yeah. Thank you. [chuckles]

Teo: [chuckles]

Kyle: [rolls dice] Nope. 4.

Quinn: You are struck with a powerful blow in the back. You're going to take one harm and you're going to go careening forward end over end to the edge of the spotlight. You look behind you to see Cecilia standing with a giant hammer.

Teo: Oh.

Kyle: Wait a minute. Oh, no. Yeah, I know what's happening. Oh, by the way, Quinn, did we recover our harm from the last adventure? We just got back.

Quinn: You did not.

Kyle: We did not. Okay. But I do ignore one harm, so I think-

Quinn: Yes.

Kyle: -it's still okay. Oof. This is just like something that I have a memory of.

Quinn: Well, maybe not you, but somebody.

Kyle: Yeah, maybe not me, but somebody. Yeah, I guess I didn't see Cecilia specifically, did I?

Quinn: You are contemplating this. As you do, you see Cecilia dressed in garish carny clothing, carrying a giant wooden mallet. After striking you with it, she heaves it up over her shoulder and begins advancing on you.

Kyle: I squint my eyes a little bit. I go, [as Alvin] *This probably isn't real.* And I turn around and I try to run in the direction that I was headed when I careened over most of this.

Quinn: Give me a roll to act under pressure.

Kyle: Okay. Now, Quinn, this is pretty weird.

Quinn: Alvin, this is about as close to the purest [Kyle laughs] form of weird that it could possibly be.

Kyle: This is about as weird as it gets.

Quinn: It's about as weird as it gets.

Kyle: Okay. [rolls dice] It's an 8.

Quinn: On a 7 to 9, I will give you a worse outcome, a hard choice or a price to pay.

Alvin, I think you have a couple options here. You can take Cecilia head on, you're going to get hit, but you're pretty sure that-- She's clearly in the way of you escaping based on your recollection. So, you can take her head on and you're going to take a hit, but you'll get out just fine.

You can dodge and weave, but you're going to lose something important in the process. Or, you can go a different way, but you're going to risk inviting new danger.

Kyle: Oh. hhis decision, I think just narratively for Alvin, he is not one to shy away from taking things head on. But also, on the off chance that this is actually Cecilia, he doesn't want to hurt a friend. So, I think he's going to try to get around Cecilia in that direction. And that may be feigning a head on charge and then juking out of the way.

Quinn: Yeah. So, you charge straight towards Cecilia. She raises the hammer up to strike you, and you bob and weave and you're able to execute a pretty clever maneuver here. But you do in the process, I think you do like a little roll and you can feel and I think probably hear that rock that you etched your phone number into-

Kyle: Uh-huh.

Quinn: -clatter out of your pocket right between Cecilia's feet.

Quinn: Yeah. I think it was only this piece of concrete was only halfway in a pocket anyways.

Quinn: Oh, yeah, it was concrete. Not the rock.

Teo: Yeah.

Quinn: Now, the rock is back at Kristen's place. I think Alvin goes, [as Alvin] *Well, shit. But has to keep going*.

Quinn: You sprint forward through this darkness. It only takes a few seconds for you to burst forth on the other side. You look behind you and see it's just a similar wall of pitch black.

Kyle: Hey, Quinn?

Quinn: Yeah

Kyle: My bike didn't happen to roll through this, did it?

Quinn: [chuckles] No. No, it did not.

Kyle: Nuts.

Quinn: That's a narrative consequence of the choices that you've made. [chuckles]

Kyle: Yeah, that's fair. Then, it's on foot. He's just going to keep running and try to just push this particular phenomenon out of his mind for now, because he does not believe that it was real.

Quinn: Alvin, you take off running. Once again, you're sprinting down the street, through intersections, blazing past people in cars and dodging in and out of traffic as you go. Just trying to go as fast as you can, because you feel that presence again. And this time, unlike before, where its position was difficult to quantify, you feel it behind you and you can feel it getting closer.

Kyle: If I'm getting close, I think it might be time to turn on the afterburners.

Quinn: Give me a roll no limits.

Kyle: Putting on a show today, Firmament. Look at this weird guy. [chuckles]

Teo: [chuckles]

Kyle: [rolls dice] That is 7 plus 3 is 10.

Quinn: On a 10 plus, you do it. Is there any flash here or is it just you sprinting as fast as you can?

Kyle: Okay. So, maybe I sprint as fast as I can, but there's a couple places where there's a shortcut that would be a little bit longer to take, because say, there's a little wooden fence. But I run right through it, leaving an Alvin sized hole [Quinn laughs] in my-- [crosstalk].

Hannah: Oh, boy.

Teo: Wow.

Kyle: It's like, I cut through the back gardens in one of the Cornetto trilogy movies. But instead of hopping over them, I go right through in the middle.

Teo: [chuckles] Yes, I understand that.

Kyle: [chuckles]

Quinn: Alvin, you-- not parkour. What's the opposite of parkour?

Kyle: Par through?

Quinn: You par through. You par through [chuckles] Firmament-

Hannah: You par fall.

Quinn: -and you reach the doorstep of Constance's studio and you throw it open. As you do, you hear that horn one more time, that rush, that cacophony of tones, and you slam the door shut.

Kyle: If you'll allow me, I throw the door open, I hear the sound, I clasp my ears, give it a yell and just fall inside.

Quinn: Yeah, absolutely. And JR, Constance and the rest of the assembled Daylight Society look on in shock as you fall, heaving into the studio.

Teo: [as Constance] *Alvin. Oh, my gosh. Alvin, do you know your Alvin, Alvin?*

Kyle: It's the cacophony.

Quinn: It's gone.

Kyle: Yeah. Okay. Yeah. I think I'm just on the ground and I slowly pull my hands away from my ears. It's like, one eye opens and I go, [as Alvin] *I think so*.

Quinn: Alvin assembled ahead of you and Constance and JR, this is the group that you had just convened. You were just getting the meeting started. You see the Daylight Society. Leon, Cecilia, Jasper Galvan and Sara are there. It has grown. The Daylight Society's ranks have swelled in your absence. Jenny and her bandmates are there, Brie is there and Eve is there.

Kyle: Oh, man, we're going to get the whole town.

Teo: Oh, boy.

Kyle: What a party.

Quinn: Oh, I should add. Sorry. In addition to the Daylight Society, Georgiana, Mr. Blue and Agent Pax are all there as well.

Hannah: Love it.

Kyle: Right, right, right.

Quinn: So, it's real crowded in the studio.

Kyle: It's full. It's full.

Quinn: It's a full house. But yes, this is the assembled group.

Kyle: I think from the floor, Alvin points us to the ceiling and goes, [as Alvin] *I knew it. I was right.*

Hannah: [as JR] *You were right?*

Teo: [as Constance] *What?*

Hannah: [as JR] *What's going on her, Alvin?*

Quinn: Cecilia's looking around like, [as Cecilia] *What?*

Kyle: [as Alvin] *What?*

Quinn: [as Cecilia] *What did I do?*

Kyle: [as Alvin] *Nothing. That's the point. You did nothing. I had quite an adventure.* I pat myself and I realize, [as Alvin] *Oh, the concrete's gone. Constance, I assume you may have filled in some folks I met. I found Kristen. Does anybody remember Kristen?*

Hannah: Quinn? [crosstalk]

Quinn: It is a mass of blank faces.

Teo: I mean, we? Including us?

Quinn: No. Constance and JR, you still know Kristen.

Teo and Hannah: okay.

Quinn: But no one else has any recollection.

Hannah: God.

Teo: Oh. Come on, everybody.

Hannah: Cool.

Kyle: Yup.

Hannah: This is fine.

Kyle: [as Alvin] *Figured as much. She has no idea who she is either. I left a tasteful note*.

Teo: [as Constance] *Good*.

Kyle: [as Alvin] *But I was followed and chased back here by space?* [crosstalk] like space.

Hannah: Chased by space?

Kyle: Yeah. It was like if you take space and you put it inside itself and then flip it back inside out again. It's kind of--

Teo: [as Constance] *Alvin, did someone offer you something on the street and did you take it?*

Kyle: I look around at the half-finished paintings around Constance's place. Does any of them look like what I saw?

Teo: Ooh.

Hannah: Good question.

Quinn: Oh. Interesting.

Teo: Very good question.

Quinn: Interesting. Hmm. No.

Kyle: [chuckles] I look at the paintings. None of those. Yeah, it was like a weird non-Euclidean tesseract situation. [as Alvin] *Anyways, it's a presence. You feel it watching you.*

Teo: [as Constance] *Great*.

Kyle: [as Alvin] *I think it preys on memories in some fashion, because I ended up back in The Hollow Circus for a moment.*

Hannah: Oh.

Kyle: [as Alvin] *And Cecilia was there with her hammer. Do you remember the hammer?*

Hannah: [as JR] *I remember the hammer. Yeah.*

Kyle: [as Alvin] *Do you remember the hammer?*

Quinn: Cecilia's like, [as Cecilia] *Vaguely, yes*.

Kyle: [as Alvin] *And then, there I was. Because you hit me with the hammer and I was like, what? No, this all happened before. She wouldn't do that again. Not our Cecilia. Not my good bud. And so, I knew it wasn't you.*

Quinn: [as Cecilia] *I've been here the whole time.*

Kyle: [as Alvin] *I know, right?*

Quinn: [as Cecilia] *Everyone--* [crosstalk]

Kyle: [as Alvin] *That's how I was right,* and so I ran away really fast. But it makes a really loud noise. Nobody heard a bwaa, just as I came in the door, right?

Hannah: I'm sorry. Can you describe the noise again, bwaa?

Teo: So, an EDM drop.

Kyle: It's like a bwaa.

Hannah: Okay.

Teo: Got it.

Kyle: But like a hundred of those.

Teo: Oh, that does not sound pleasant.

Quinn: The rest of you heard nothing.

Kyle: Here's a question for you, Quinn. Did it stop as soon as I got inside or did it do its normal play and fade out?

Quinn: It stopped as soon as you went inside.

Kyle: Yeah. Big smile. [as Alvin] *Constance, your wards are working,* is the good news.

Teo: [as Constance] *Okay*.

Kyle: [as Alvin] *If you don't mind, I might stay here for a little bit?*

Teo: [as Constance] *Yeah. Probably good*.

Kyle: [as Alvin] *Does anybody have any tea?*

Teo: [as Constance] *Yes.*

Kyle: [as Alvin] *I need to-- Oh, that was a big-- I was running a lot. I need to sit down for a second.*

Teo: I get Alvin tea and then just-- I slipped right under the saucer a nail file for him, because he's probably got a bit of a jagged nail from that whole situation.

[chuckles]

Quinn: Constance, you put the tea on Alvin. I think Sarah brings a blanket over and wraps it around you and just gives you a big hug.

Kyle: Yeah.

Quinn: She doesn't say anything. She just holds you. Everyone just waits. Like, I don't think anyone says anything. I think they're waiting to see what the three of you do,-

Kyle: What we do. Yeah.

Quinn: -what the three of you say. And honestly, probably if anything bad happens while they're waiting.

Kyle: [chuckles]

Quinn: So, it's just silent for a while.

Kyle: Yeah. I think Alvin is quiet for a little bit too. He's been hurt and he's taken harm a lot, but he's used to that and he's taken that a lot. So, this feels like a near death situation to him where he almost lost himself. I think I look up and say, [as Alvin] *Have we talked about the plague vampire yet?*

Teo: [as Constance] *Nope, Nope, we're just getting started*.

Quinn: [as Cecilia] *We were just getting started.* Leon says, [as Leon] *Boy, it sounds like maybe there's two things going on here. It's usually just one thing. It's great that now there's two things.*

Hannah: [as JR] *We got a big organization here. So, honestly, I think we can handle two things. I think that really speaks to the really good community organizing that you've done. I'm very proud of it and I want to acknowledge that. I see in you just a lot of potential sidekick. I think we can. This is, you know--*

Kyle: Deputy?

Hannah: [as JR] *It's a lot, but we can handle this, can't we? That's power of positive thinking. I learned a lot when I was gone, including the power of positive thinking.*

Quinn: [chuckles] Leon nods.

Hannah: Quinn, what all have we gotten up to while Alvin was out fighting the black jelly bean?

Quinn: I believe that we're all caught up time wise.

Hannah: Okay.

Kyle: Oh, right. Yeah. Because you went to the library.

Quinn and Hannah: Yeah.

Quinn: Constance's seance and your research more or less ran simultaneously with Alvin's experience.

Hannah: Okay.

Quinn: He arrived slightly later than you all, but you all convened with the Daylight Society. You were just about to get started going over what's going on with the vrykolakas.

Hannah: Okay.

Quinn: I think you just finished introductions with Agent Pax, who no one remembers.

Kyle: Right. [chuckles]

Hannah: Right. I got a question for you, Quinn.

Quinn: Sure.

Hannah: If I introduce them to our good friend, did we come up with a codename for them?

Teo: Blue?

Hannah: No, no, no, no, no. Paxy--

Kyle: Oh.

Teo: Oh.

Kyle: Blue. Also, Blue.

Teo: Also, Blue.

Kyle: [chuckles]

Quinn: Yeah. That's a choice actually you probably need to make is whether or not you're going to introduce Mr. Blue, who's currently in disguise as a kindred or as someone else.

Teo: This is the inner circle, right? It's a big inner circle.

Kyle: [chuckles]

Hannah: It's more of a large kind of oval at this point. But why not? The more brains on deck, the better, in my opinion.

Quinn: Okay.

Kyle: Yeah.

Quinn: So, you've introduced Mr. Blue.

Teo: Yes.

Quinn: Hannah, what was her question about Pax?

Hannah: Oh, like say I answer-- First of all, if we come up with a code name for Pax or we just introducing them as Pax.

Kyle: Like an aliens?

Teo: If I had forgotten who I am, I'd want people to tell me the real answer, you know? I think we should introduce them as Pax, because that's who they are.

Hannah: Okay. Well, we'll introduce them as Pax. I don't know their first name.

Kyle: We can leave off Agent.

Hannah: Yeah. [crosstalk] to say--

Teo: Yeah, exactly. They don't know.

Kyle: That bit.

Quinn: I did actually once say their-

Kyle: Shit.

Quinn: -first name, which is Lamond. Lamond Pax.

Hannah: Lemond. Pax. Okay. Let's just go for Pax. We'll just call them Pax. So, my question is, if I introduce Pax to Leon, and then Leon leaves the room and then Leon comes back, does Leon remember Pax?

Teo: Ooh. Yes.

Kyle: Did you do a little experiment?

Hannah: [laughs]

Teo: Testing.

Quinn: Interesting. Yes.

Kyle: Which makes sense if we remember them. Maybe there is some event.

Hannah: Like a tether?

Kyle: Yeah. Or, some event that happened here in the human world while we were often Otherwhere, and so were not affected. But it's like a onetime event. It's not like--

Teo: Right. Not ongoing.

Kyle: Pax didn't turn into the silence or whatever.

Hannah: Okay. All right. As long as there's a tether, it's a bit of that-- If anybody's seen Coco, the very sad realization that you have the two deaths, the first death is when you die and the second death is when everybody who you know forgets about you?

Teo: Yeah.

Kyle: Mm-hmm.

Hannah: So, this is like, as long as there's a tether to somebody, there is at least a recollection of who that person is now, if not a recollection of who they were before the memory got wiped. Okay. Okay. Well, that's useful information. That's okay.

Quinn: Yeah, important question. Good experimentation.

Hannah: Yeah.

Teo: Yes.

Hannah: Yeah. We got to know the rules of the game if people are going to get forgotten.

Teo: I'm so proud of us. We're not just smashing and grabbing, you know?

Hannah: We're smart.

Teo: Look at this.

Hannah: We're smart.

Kyle: Only done a little smashing.

Hannah: Yeah.

Quinn: Alvin raises his hand, [as Alvin] *I did a little--*

Kyle: [as Alvin] *I did a little smashing on my way*.

Quinn: [as Alvin] *Some light smashing*.

Teo: But functional smashing.

Kyle: Yeah. I needed to do it.

Hannah: [as JR] *Alvin, have you described to us what the forgetting thing was like, what the black jelly bean was like?*

Kyle: [as Alvin] *Best that I could. Yeah.*

Hannah: [as JR] *Okay. So, did you describe the violin music?*

Kyle: [as Alvin] *Yeah.*

Hannah: [as JR] *Okay*.

Kyle: [as Alvin] *I think he said that by saying he was running and then he was transported back to The Hollow Circus.*

Hannah: [as JR] *Gotcha. Okay. So, we know that the--*

Kyle: [as Alvin] *Dorian wasn't there. I only saw Cecilia.*

Hannah: [as JR] *Right. But the forgetting--*

Quinn: [as Alvin] *I did hear some violin music.*

Hannah: [as JR] *The forgetting thing is clearly linked to Dorian, the Tall Man*.

Kyle: [as Alvin] *That's, I'm not sure*.

Teo: [as Constance] *No, I don't think so.*

Kyle: [as Alvin] *See, I'm not sure if it's actually linked to Dorian, per se, because that was, to me, a mirage, like a memory of an experience in The Hollow Circus. Now, the weird thing was, that was Constance's memory of being in the spotlight and getting attacked by Cecilia.*

Teo: [as Constance] *Mm-hmm*.

Kyle: [as Alvin] *So, that was Constance's memory, which is a little confusing why it was served up to me, but it wasn't like Dorian set up The Hollow Circus in the middle of the street, because people could see The Hollow Circus when it was real. This one seemed to be imperceivable to everybody, except for me.*

Teo: [as Constance] *Yeah, that's weird.*

Kyle: [as Alvin] *So, I think whatever this monster memory thing is, it maybe it feeds on memory-- There's something to do with memory I think is been--*

Teo: [as Constance] *Yeah. It's eating them.*

Kyle: [as Alvin] *Maybe it feeds on it. Maybe it's doing something like that. I don't know why it was that particular memory. The trail goes cold there.*

Hannah: [as JR] *Well, and we still do have Dorian to worry about. He's out there-*

Kyle: [as Alvin] *Yeah, definitely.*

Hannah: [as JR] *-somewhere.*

Kyle: [as Alvin] *Definitely out there.*

Teo: [as Constance] *Although we've got his number.*

Quinn: [as Leon] *Several members of the Daylight Society hold out their palms, and there's just the vague outline of a red circle on them.*

Hannah: [as JR] *Oh*.

Teo: [as Constance] *Yeah. What happened here?*

Kyle: [as Alvin] *What did you agree to?*

Teo: [as Constance] *Yeah*.

Quinn: [as Leon] *Oh, no, these are the original ones.*

Teo: [as Constance] *Oh. From-- Yeah, when they were--* [crosstalk]

Quinn: [as Leon] *They never went away, so I assume weren't able to do what the Tall Man asked.*

Kyle: [as Alvin] *Oh, right. That was our original deal is do the thing and then everyone's-- Oh. Right.*

Teo: [as Constance] *Look, we're pretty sure we can get rid of those marks, because we've got the Tall Man's number. And by number, I mean, name. And boy howdy, is that powerful in that culture.*

Kyle: [as Alvin] *Yeah. By name, he doesn't like that.*

Teo: [as Constance] *Yeah. Again, I can't find a better use case than Rumpelstiltskin at this point.*

Kyle: [laughs]

Teo: [as Constance] *Let's not worry about that. We're pretty sure we know how to deal with that. Definitely better than some of the other things we have on the plate.*

Quinn: [as Leon] *Agreed.*

Kyle: [as Alvin] *Yeah. We at least have an idea and answer for one of these three things.*

Teo: [as Constance] *The memory thing is the most concerning to me, because if we forget that it's a problem, that's a problem.*

Kyle: [as Alvin] *That's true.*

Quinn: [as Jasper] *Yeah, I agree. I think that's the real monsters forgettin', right?* says Jasper. I think Leon continues, [as Leon] *Well, I mean, aside from these,* and he gestures again to the mark, [as Leon] *Things have been kind of quiet here, honestly. I mean, Mayor Chamberlain got the appointment to the Senate seat. Everyone outside of us was a little surprised. None of us are given whatever she's mixed-up in. But besides that, the Cabal has been quiet, the lab's been quiet. Not much to report.*

Kyle: [as Alvin] *I guess the other thing, the third, the plague vampire, that's one that definitely has a timer. So, we got, what, six days left to figure that one out?*

Quinn: Everyone looks around nervously.

Kyle: [as Alvin] *Leon, we saw on your murder board been investigating some of these hotspots. One of them you had identified there was in Romania? Is that correct?*

Quinn: [as Leon] *Yeah. Near the Scărișoara Cave*.

Kyle: [as Alvin] *Yeah, at the caves. I don't suppose in your research to identify this as a hot spot, you saw any descriptions of activity similar to what we're looking for, the kind of wasting disease seven days disappearing?*

Quinn: [as Leon] *Not that specifically, but certainly a higher prevalence of supernatural illnesses. I mean, we have to make inferences, obviously. The ME Is not going to just say died of magical disease, but yeah.*

Kyle: [as Alvin] *[chuckles] Cave's a spot to investigate, I suppose, but I feel like we need a little more to go on before we just actually use magic to get somewhere.*

Quinn: [as Leon] *So, we've got three distinct problems. We have Dorian, we have the plague vampire and we have this mind eraser?*

Kyle: [as Alvin] *And not the drink.*

Quinn: [as Leon] *No, not the drink. Although that does sound pretty good right now, honestly.*

Kyle: [laughs]

Quinn: [as Leon] *Any thoughts on how we tackle one of these?*

Teo: [as Constance] *This is entirely speculation, but Hannah, my theory is that we would probably need to use magic to locate the vampire, because we know how to kill it. We just got to cut its head off like any other vampire. So, we don't need magic for that. But a locating spell of some kind. I don't know-*

Hannah: [as JR] *Yeah. Yeah.*

Teo: [as Constance] *-how that drives.*

Kyle: [as Alvin] *Well, if we're going big magic, we may better served to flip it a little bit. Because if the wasting disease is tied to the. It goes away when the creature dies. So, there's some connection between Georgiana and this creature. There may be a way. If we're going big magic, why don't we do some summoning portal or something?*

Teo: [as Constance] *Ooh*.

Hannah: [as JR] *Yeah. That's what I was thinking.*

Kyle: [as Alvin] *Skip the air travel, and just pull on this tether.*

Teo: [as Constance] *Yeah. Oh, I figured we're doing teleporting. We don't have the money for airplanes. We got to go teleporting.*

Kyle: [as Alvin] *But this way, we don't have to.*

Teo: [as Constance] *No, we don't go anywhere. They come to us.*

Kyle: [as Alvin] *We don't have to find it. You just say it comes here, because we know where we are.*

Teo: [as Constance] *Yeah, I like that.*

Hannah: [as JR] *Yeah. And then, that's what I was thinking was like, do big magic and then do one of the smaller magic spells to trap it here.*

Kyle: [as Alvin] *I'll just grab it.*

Hannah: [as JR] *Yeah. Oh.*

Teo: [as Constance] *Yeah*.

Hannah: [as JR] *All right*.

Teo: [as Constance] *It's just a vamps.*

Kyle: [as Alvin] *It's just a vamps. That's level one stuff.*

[laughter]

Kyle: [as Alvin] *I think the memory thing is currently the pressing thing, because we have answer with Dorian, if he shows up or if we go find him, we can choose to do that. The memory monster was trying to get, I presume, get me or do something with me. It got Kristen, it got Pax. What would be helpful is knowing if there's a reason for its targets, if there are other targets. Because we're trying to approach this like the other monsters that we're practiced in hunting is try to deduce its patterns, maybe finding out if anybody else. That's a difficult thing to do. No one remembers who they forgot.*

Hannah: [laughs]

Teo: [as Constance] *Yeah, that's what I'm saying. If we forget that we forgot, it's a problem.*

Hannah: [as JR] *I think we also just want to warn everybody, that if you are having-- If you feel like you are being watched or followed, you need to come back here as soon as possible, because it is safe here.*

Kyle: [as Alvin] *Yes*.

Hannah: [as JR] *It is not safe-- Like, we can't protect you if the jelly bean catches you.*

Teo: I go over to where I have a bunch of my canvases and some other things stored, and I pull out just a bucket of sharpies, and I put it on the table and I say, [as Constance] *Everyone, pull out a sharpie, write your name, the phone number of the studio and the address of the studio on your arm right now, just in case. And I do that as well.*

Quinn: Yeah. Everybody grabs a sharpie and starts going town on their arms, writing all the details down.

Teo: Great.

Teo: Cool.

Kyle: No, I don't need a pen.

Quinn: [laughs]

Hannah: No, no.

Kyle: I'm kidding. I'll do it.

Hannah: It's so unsanitary.

Kyle: I'll do it.

Teo: I guess if it heals right away. It's like a whiteboard. You've made your own whiteboard.

Kyle: [laughs] Yeah, it's Etch A Sketch.

Teo: Disgusting.

Quinn: Yeah, it's more like a Flesh A Sketch.

Kyle: I carve into my arm, and then I wave my arm around a bit and it clears.

Quinn: Basically, yes.

Teo: I just want to note Quinn's amazing joke there, Flesh A Sketch?

Quinn: Flesh A Sketch.

Kyle: Flesh A Sketch. Very good.

Hannah: Oh, God.

Teo: Beautiful.

Hannah: It flew right past me. That is good.

Kyle: Flesh A Sketch, or is it-

Hannah: That's very good.

Kyle: -Etch A Flesh?

Quinn: First one is better.

Hannah: Flesh A Sketch. Yeah.

Kyle: First one's better.

Hannah: Yeah.

Teo: Okay.

Kyle: I take two sharpies.

Hannah: Tall man's going to surprise me at some point. I would prefer to get this taken care of before we deal with the vampire, because I don't want it hanging over me. I have a feeling that there's going to be some resolution to this that is not going to be super great for me. But the alternative is we start doing some vampire hunting and Dorian shows up at an extreme, inopportune time.

Quinn: Okay. So, JR, you want to tackle Dorian? That sounded slightly weird. You want to tackle your Dorian problem?

Hannah: Yes.

Teo: There you go. I'll also tackle Dorian. Yeah.

Hannah: I would like to kill him.

Teo: That's part of it.

Hannah: Yeah.

Kyle: [chuckles]

Quinn: Okay.

Kyle: Well, I think the memory monster is top of mind for Alvin, and his whole experience that he went through felt like a bending, a warping of reality. He remembers Sarah had just found out about a particular Imagine Labs VR experience unveiling. And his going back to The Hollow Circus felt nothing if not like a VR experience. So, I think Alvin wants to go investigate Imagine Labs.

[as Alvin] *Oh, dip. Kristen's not with us. She forgot everything, and she works at Imagine Labs.* [Teo chuckles] *It's all coming together.* [Hannah laughs] *I'm going to Imagine Labs.* I'll take Leon or Sarah if they want to come along.

Quinn: Yeah. In fact, I think Sarah insists, in fact, on accompanying you after hearing about your experience just now. She won't let you go alone.

Kyle: Yeah. And with two Hughes, nothing going to get us.

Quinn: [chuckles] Constance?

Teo: I think I will take the opportunity, while everyone's following leads, to go talk to my mom, check in since I got back. And also, oh, boy, I don't know exactly what I'm going to say, or how I'm going to say it, but prepare her for the mind fuck, that will be her sister.

Quinn: Okay. I assume that's probably just you, or are you going to-

Teo: Yeah. [chuckles]

Quinn: -bring anybody with you?

Teo: Oh, I don't want to burden anybody-

Kyle: Jasper.

Teo: -with my family. Good God, [Kyle chuckles] what a terrible idea that would be. No, no, no. No,, I'll go alone.

Quinn: Okay. And JR?

Hannah: What I would like to do is first take the piece of paper that we have of Dorian's true name, and I'm going to write that on my arm in sharpie, and then I will also take the paper as well, in case, for some reason, I don't know, he shows up with acetone and the permanent marker rubs off entirely. So, that's what I'd like to do. And my guess for where I can find him is going to be the Moonscape.

Quinn: Is anyone coming with you?

Hannah: I don't know.

Kyle: Sidekick.

Hannah: Oh, God.

Kyle: Sidekick.

Teo: Yeah.

Hannah: [laughs]

Kyle: But wait, if you make it known that you're going to go deal with Dorian, don't you think Leon would want to come and help fuck up-

Hannah: Oh, God.

Quinn: -Dorian and just really-

Hannah: Yeah, it's true.

Kyle: -put him on blast for everything that he put Leon through?

Hannah: I don't want my twerpy sidekick to get hurt. I mean, I'll tell folks look like, [as JR] *This is what I'm doing. I am not going to be upset if nobody wants to come with me. I would like a lot of snacks when I get back, because I'm going to be real tired and I don't think this is going to go super well. But if there are people who want to come with me, I also can't guarantee that I'm going to be able to keep you safe. So, with all of that said, is there anybody who would like to drive me to the Moonscape?*

Kyle: [chuckles]

Quinn: JR, it is crickets from the Daylight Society.

Teo: No Leon?

Hannah: Yeah.

Quinn: Leon is looking straight down at the floor.

Teo: Oh.

Hannah: Wow.

Quinn: However, one person raises their hand, and it is Agent Pax.

Hannah: Wait, what?

Kyle: Oh, hell yeah.

Quinn: They look at you and say, [as Agent Pax] *I'm frankly quite bored sitting here. Sounds like--*

Teo: [laughs]

Kyle: Yes. Yes, get the team back together again.

Quinn: [as Agent Pax] *I don't really understand what all is going on, but if you need a partner, I'm happy to oblige.*

Hannah: This is the weirdest team up ever, and I'm super-

Teo: I love it.

Hannah: -fucking into it.

Teo: So good.

Quinn: [laughs]

Hannah: Quinn, I am so into this right now. This is fucking dope. Yes.

Quinn: [laughs]

Hannah: Awesome. All right. I shrug and I'm like, [as JR] *All right, let's go get the black beauty. I think she's still mostly running. I can't remember the last time I had to drive her. We had a run in with a large artistic bison.*

Teo: [chuckles]

Kyle: [chuckles]

Hannah: [as JR] *Yeah, let's go hit up the Moonscape.*

Kyle: I just want to say, there's an image in my head where you're heading out and you tell Pax and you're like, [as JR] *Make sure you bring your gun*. And Pax is like, [as Agent Pax] *What? I don't have it,* and feels it in [Hannah laughs] on the hip, [as Agent Pax] *How did you know?*

Hannah: I look back and I go--

Quinn: Yeah. That’s absolutely how it happens.

Hannah: I go-

Kyle: [chuckles]

Teo: Yeah.

Hannah: -[as JR] *Magic*.

Kyle: With some jazz hands.

Hannah: Yup.

[Monster Hour theme]

Quinn: Hey, folks. Quinn here. Thanks so much for tuning into Episode 41 of Monster Hour. And more importantly, congratulations on making it to the year 2021. 2020 is well and truly and finally over. The world isn't magically going to become a better place overnight, and there's still plenty of work to do, but closing the page on that Monster of a Year is definitely a start. So, cheers.

As always, I want to thank everyone who's been helping spread the word about the show by leaving us a rating and review, giving us a shout on social media and recommending the show to a friend. We hit 20,000 downloads over the holidays, which is absolutely rad as hell,

and it wouldn't be possible without all of your help. So, from the bottom of our hearts, thank you.

Don't forget that if you tweet about the show using *#monsterhourpod*, you might wind up with a character named after you. We've got one coming up in the second half here, named after Ada Karen Black on Twitter, and likely several more this new arc. So, now's the perfect time to fire up that bur app and get tweeting.

I also want to give a shoutout to our newest Patreon supporters, Ella and Serro. A big thank you to Ella, Sero and all of our patrons for supporting the show and helping us bring you awesome bonus content. In case you missed the preview on our feed last week, we just released our first exclusive one shot, a Brandusa backstory episode featuring special guest Susannah Lewis from Thornvale. If that sounds like your jam, now's the perfect time to join Ella and Serro in backing us on Patreon.

Our spooky spotlight this week is Untitled Dice Game, a fellow Monster of the Week podcast, where agents of the Department of Deliverance keep ordinary people safe from the things that go bump in the night.

Chris: Howdy, listeners. I'm Chris, the friendly neighborhood keeper from Untitled Dice Game, here to tell you about our actual play Monster of the Week podcast. It features a group of hunters with strange talents who've been recruited by a secretive government agency to fight monsters. Each week, we release a new episode packed with improvised humor, horror and enough bad decisions to derail a train. Find us at *untitleddicegame.com* or search us out wherever you listen to podcasts.

Quinn: That's all I've got for you this week, folks. We'll be back with Episode 42 of Monster Hour on January 19th. See you then.

[Monster Hour theme]

Quinn: Alvin, you and Sarah make your way across town to Firmament College to the computer science engineering hall where Imagine Labs is located. Tell me about your approach.

Kyle: I think our first angle is to just go in. Interested about the VR experience that's coming in a couple days.

Quinn: Okay.

Kyle: We learned about it. Sarah at least knows details about it that we could use to seem like we're enthusiasts and we are hoping for a tour. Maybe we can go in. Ooh, yeah. Maybe we go in and we're like, [as Alvin] *We run an influential brother-sister YouTube tech review YouTube channel.*

Quinn: [laughs]

Kyle: And we are excited about this new opportunity for clicks.

Quinn: Amazing.

Hannah: Love it.

Quinn: What is your channel called?

Kyle: [chuckles] The channel is called-- Oh, man. I'm trying to come up with the rhyme. Two Hughes and some news.

Quinn: [laughs]

Teo: I like that.

Hannah: Two Hughes Tech News.

Kyle: Two Hughes Tech News.

Teo: [gasps] Yeah.

Quinn: Oh, there it is. Yeah, love it.

Hannah: Yup.

Teo: Boom. There goes the dynamite.

Hannah: Yup. [laughs]

Quinn: Okay. Two Hughes Tech News.

Kyle: Two Hughes Tech News.

Quinn: So, you head inside. I think it's late afternoon, so the labs are open, although most of the classes are wrapping up. You head through the computer science engineering building until you reach Imagine Labs, the cloistered off glass paneled lab building. And through the glass doors, you can see several computer terminals. You can also see several workstations. But all of it seems to be powered down for the day. There is nobody there right now.

Kyle: Well, honestly, having nobody here is a better outcome than what Alvin was going to panic and blurt out. So, I think I say, [as Alvin] *Okay, this is good. We can try to sneak in, right?*

Quinn: [as Sarah] *Yeah. Let's just go in. We can just go in, right? Let's go.*

Kyle: [as Alvin] *Let's just go in.* The doors, I presume, are locked.

Quinn: Yes.

Kyle: The sliding glass doors do not slide.

Quinn: As you approach the door, I'm going to give you an oops.

Kyle: [gasps] Yes.

Quinn: You probably would have noticed this anyway, but I'm going to call it an oops regardless.

Kyle: No, it's because of my keen detective eyes.

Quinn: There are two pieces of paper taped to the door. The first is a broad note that just says, “Imagine Labs testing and Tech facility. Please direct media inquiries to the press office at the Colorado National Laboratory.”

Kyle: [as Alvin] *Oh, you have the press office of the National Lab. Well, in another life, Sarah, there's still a chance for two Hughes Tech News to really bust open this whole story.*

Quinn: The second piece of paper is a job posting at Imagine Labs.

Kyle: Oh, shit.

Quinn: They have an unexpected and unplanned vacancy, and they need someone to fill immediately, their chief coding and hardware engineer director. A position, Alvin, you know--

Kyle: Was Kristen's. Yup. I'm starting to think that this monster isn't just a monster, but might be some directed thing. If there is something that they're afraid, people learn. Kristen got whammied. She was working here. Her position needs filling immediately. Probably turn around for the VR event. Pax asks a lot of questions and I just went and talked to Kristen.

Okay. I take a picture of the papers and give Sarah a little thumbs up and say, [as Alvin] *Okay, start looking for other doors or hinges or windows or something* and I start-- Can I actually get fingernails in the sliding door and just try to pull it open?

Quinn: Sure.

Kyle: I'm not trying to just break it apart. I'm trying to test to see how strong it really is closed.

Quinn: Oh. I mean, you could force this thing open if you wanted to.

Kyle: Yeah. Can I take a look to see if there's any obvious alarms attached to it?

Quinn: Sure. Give me a roll to investigate a mystery.

Kyle: Okay. [rolls dice] Nope. 3.

Quinn: It's a hard move time.

Kyle: We knew it was coming.

Quinn: It’s hard 6.

Kyle: We knew it was coming.

Quinn: You're investigating this door, and you pull it slightly and an alarm starts to go off. Just loud blaring alarm.

Kyle: We could just back off, wait for people to come check it out and that nothing's there, and then come back and try again? But it feels like the trail runs cold as soon as people show up here.

Quinn: What do you do?

Kyle: Jeezy Petes. No, I don't think I pry that door open. There's no idea what's in there or how big it is or how fast people are going to show up. So, I think I yell at Sarah and be like,

[as Alvin] *Cheez it.* I think we want to run quickly to the nearest little study lounge and pretend to be students.

Quinn: Okay. Give me a role to act under pressure.

Kyle: Super-duper. [rolls dice]

Quinn: This is not weird before-- [crosstalk]

Kyle: Absolutely not. That's a dang 4. [as Alvin] *Sarah, you*-- Oh, it's still a 4. Well, I leveled up. I leveled up, Quinn. What an episode.

Quinn: [chuckles] I think what happens is, Alvin, you and Sarah tear off through the halls. And we, the audience, as you take a turn down one of these halls, see a security camera with a red light flashing.

Hannah: Oh, no.

Kyle: [laughs]

Hannah: Smile [crosstalk]. You're on camera.

Quinn: And the two of you sprint by. JR, you and Pax are going to go confront Dorian.

Hannah: Mm-hmm.

Quinn: Tell me about your approach.

Hannah: First, we stop and get a snack. It's very important.

Quinn: [laughs]

Hannah: Very crucial for everybody out there who's haunting monsters. You need to be well hydrated and you need to not be hungry. You go into a fight hungry and you make bad decisions. So, I think we do a Starbucks drive through first.

Quinn: Okay.

Hannah: And then, once we've got coffee and I've got a toasted cheese Danish, we're going to drive out to the Moonscape. I've got on one arm, the name. On the other arm, I've got written down how to say it. And in my pocket, I have the original. I expect that, and you'll tell me how this plays out, is that I need to go back to where we were in the Moonscape when he opened the door to Otherwhere.

Quinn: So, you may recall that's actually where you landed back originally, and Dorian wasn't there.

Hannah: Oh. [crosstalk]

Quinn: But you reached the, not the trailhead, but you reached the entrance to the park. And in the visitor's board, there is a small envelope pinned to the corkboard that says simply JR. It's sealed in red wax.

Hannah: Great. All right. Okay. I go get the envelope. I shake it a little bit. Does it seem magicy?

Quinn: I'm not quite sure how you could tell just by shaking it.

Hannah: Does it smell magicy? I give it a good sniff.

Quinn: No, it just seems like a normal envelope.

Hannah: Okay. All right. Okay.

Quinn: Albeit consistent with the ones that Dorian has given you previously.

Hannah: Right. Okay. I'm going to very carefully open the envelope.

Quinn: You open it, and it explodes. No.

Hannah: The end.

Quinn: No. You open the envelope, and nothing happens. Inside is a single sheet of paper.

Hannah: Uh-huh.

Quinn: It's a short missive that reads simply, [as Dorian] *"JR & Crew. If you're reading this, I can only assume that you've arrived back home successfully. Congratulations. Good job. Come find me at the Stacks when it's done, so that we can resolve our business.* D.

Hannah: The Stacks?

Quinn: The Stacks was the coffee shop that you met Dorian at in the beginning of the third mystery. It seemed like that's the place where he likes to hang out.

Hannah: I don't like this. There's going to be other people around.

Kyle: Is that on campus?

Hannah: Yeah.

Quinn: It is just off campus.

Hannah: Yeah. Oh. I don't like this. All right, let's get back in the car. Coffee's starting to wear off.

Quinn: Pax looks at you and they're like, [as Pax] *Are you okay?*

Hannah: You know, the face I'm making. It's like--

Quinn: Pouting voices. [laughs]

Hannah: Yeah.

Quinn: Pouting face.

Hannah: [as JR] *Man, I thought I was going to be all clever. That's fine. It's fine. It's fine. We got to go to another location, which I'm not thrilled about, because there's going to be people there. And we should try to not let them get hurt.*

Quinn: [as Pax] *Okay, I will endeavor to do that.*

Hannah: [as JR] *Yup. That's good advice for life, generally.*

Quinn: [as Pax] *Yes*.

Hannah: [as JR] *Try not to hurt other people.*

Quinn: [as Pax] *It's one of my general rules.*

Hannah: [as JR] *Yeah. It depends on the situation.* A lot of situational ethics that JR has to deal with from time to time that we don't need to get into now. [as JR] *Okay, let's go to the fucking Stacks. I'm going to probably-- I know Constance is on her way to talk to her mom. I'm probably going to give her a call and just say, I don't know if I'm going to get a hold of her, but if I do, I'm going to tell her what's going on, and then I'm heading over to the Stacks.*

Quinn: Okay. Yeah, you let her know. The two of you get back in Black Beauty and head back into town. On your way there, I think Pax, on the way out was pretty quiet. But on the way back, they say, [as Pax] *So, what's the deal with this Dorian guy? Seems to have caused some consternation for you and your friends.*

Hannah: [as JR] *So, he's a supernatural being that used to live in another dimension and left, because he didn't think it was cool enough and he thought everybody was super lame-o. And then, as it turns out, he was wrong. It's cool to be square. And he wants to go back. And the way he does that is by making people promises and using the magic from a promise with a human being making a pact with them.*

Quinn: [as Pax] *Oh, he's fae.*

Kyle: Oh.

Hannah: [as JR] *Yeah*.

Teo: Oh.

Hannah: [as JR] *How did you know that?*

Quinn: They shake their head and they're like, [as Pax] *I don't know.*

Hannah: [as JR] *Huh*.

Quinn: [as Pax] *I seem to know, I guess, more than I thought.*

Hannah: [as JR] *Yeah*.

Kyle: Muscle memory from being on the FBI. Aberrant Events Division.

Hannah: [as JR] *Yeah*. *As you may have noticed*, and I hold my hand up, so that there's the red circle, [as JR] *We made a pact, and I need to get out of that.*

Quinn: [as Pax] *How did you get mixed up in all of this, JR?*

Hannah: [as JR] *You know, that is a really long story and I will tell it to you after we take care of Dorian.*

Quinn: [as Pax] *Fair enough. Just good to know who you're working with.* So, the two of you arrive at the Stacks. It's getting late in the afternoon at this point. But the Stacks is open late as it serves students and their late-night studying habits, so you head inside. It's not immediately clear where Dorian is, but you do recall last time you met him in the far back.

Hannah: Yeah. I don't like this, Quinn. I really don't like this. I don't like this at all.

Quinn: Hannah, I don't know what you're worried about, Hannah.

Hannah: I don't like this. Okay. How many people are in the Stacks? Like, how busy is it right now?

Quinn: The front section, where most of the tables are concentrated, there's some people there. There's probably like a dozen folks. The back areas, where there are more bookshelves and creating not quite labyrinthine, but corners and pockets and back areas, it's more sparse.

Hannah: Yeah. I think I'm going to-- With Pax behind me, I'm going to make my way back towards where we last had coffee with Dorian, when we thought he was just a run of the mill asshole.

Quinn: Yeah. Simpler times.

Hannah: [as JR] *Yeah. Remember those days, guys? I mean, just like, oh, Leon's boyfriend, stupid.*

Kyle: [chuckles]

Hannah: [as JR] *Those good times. I like that.*

Quinn: So, you and Pax make your way back through the bookcases to the far back of the Stacks. And seated at the same table, you see Dorian. Perfectly coiffed, red hair, his fine suit. He's reading a copy of Utopia, and he looks up at you and smiles. [as Dorian] *JR, it's been a minute. Have a seat.*

Hannah: [as JR] *I think I'll stand. It's fine. Not planning to be here long, anyway.*

Quinn: [as Dorian] *Well, good. I take it that our business is resolved then?*

Hannah: [as JR] *In a manner of speaking.*

Quinn: [as Dorian] *Is it done?*

Hannah: I'm not going to get any closer to him, because I don't want to. But I look at him and I go, [as JR] *We found out exactly what Otherwhere is about, and you're going to take this off of my hand.*

Quinn: [as Dorian] *[sighs] That's inconvenient.* And you notice that the mild din of the Stacks, people chatting quietly and shots being pulled and the low murmur of conversation has all stopped. [as Dorian] *You know, I seem to recall we had a certain agreement struck, JR*

Hannah: [as JR] *We did have an agreement, and then I changed the terms.*

Kyle: [chuckles]

Hannah: [as JR] *Because the thing is, Dorian, that's not your name, is it? Names have power, don't they? Real names. My name isn't JR. That's the name I tell everybody. But that's not my real name. You tell everybody your name is Dorian, but that's not your real name, is it? This is your real name.*

Quinn: His eyes narrow.

Hannah: I lean in. [as JR] *You're going to go far away from here, because your real name, Dorian, it's weary but wakened, a light on the reverie of once was and may yet be. Nay, the Master of Rings, encircling and straying the hollow masses. Nay, the besotted hunted, veiled in oil and parchment. Nay, awash and indulgence suspended in levity, weightless of being. Nay, the contrarian, unbowed and prideful in the face of unknown calamity, truest to themselves, the sublimely intemperate mountebank who plays the world as their fiddle. And you are breaking this pact.*

Quinn: All around you, the sound of the cafe returns to normal. Dorian sits up very straight and eyes you with very thin, narrow eyes and says, [as Dorian] *you have my attention.*

Hannah: [as JR] *Take this off of my hand, and break the pacts that you have made with the people in this town.*

Quinn: [as Dorian] *Very well. I will release you from your agreement. I will release everyone in this town from their agreements, and you will never see or hear from me again, provided that you burn my true name from your mind.*

Hannah: [as JR] *I mean, I'm assuming that's going to be some kind of magic on your part, because I don't know how to burn something from my mind.*

Quinn: [as Dorian] *Yes.*

Hannah: [as JR] *Okay. Yes. That's the deal.*

Quinn: Dorian stands up, walks over to you and holds out his hand in a completely normal fashion. Nothing supernatural. It doesn't extend out. His movements are utterly ordinary.

Hannah: All right. I shake his hand.

Quinn: The ink on your arm vanishes, the piece of paper goes up in flames and the circle on your palm disappears.

Hannah: Wow. Okay.

Quinn: [as Dorian] *I can't say it's been a pleasure, JR.*

Hannah: [as JR] *Yeah, I can't really say the same either. It's a mark of a good negotiation. Both parties walk away a little unhappy.*

Quinn: [as Dorian] *Indeed. And lucky for you, I have a new plan. Great seeing you again, Agent Pax.* And he nods towards Pax, who looks confused, puts his hands in his pockets and slowly walks out of the Stacks.

Let’s jump to Constance.

Teo: What'd it do?

[chuckles]

Quinn: Some weird energy coming from Constance.

[laughter]

Teo: Look, Constance is trying out new greetings, you know? You always want to be flexible and update your lexicon.

Quinn: So, Constance, you are headed to go meet up with your mom. It's the middle of the day on a weekday, so she's going to be at work at the Colorado National Laboratory.

Teo: All right. I bring my Instagram backpack. I think that's it. Yeah. And I head out.

Quinn: You drive across town, and you reach the Colorado National Laboratory in its gleaming, resplendent modernist glory and you head inside.

Teo: All right.

Quinn: One thing you notice immediately upon entry is there is a very large sign for Imagine Labs. You notice that off to the left, there is a display area with a encased in glass, but a very sleek, stylish looking VR headset.

Teo: Ooh. I take a peek. I'm also trying to procrastinate a little bit. This is not going to be a fun experience with my mom, so want to check it out. I want to see if I could potentially put it on. We'll see.

Quinn: It does look like it's available for demo, or perhaps it would be soon, perhaps for a launch event coming up. But currently, there's no one there and it is locked up for the day.

Teo: And there's nobody around?

Quinn: No. You're in the main lobby of the Colorado National Lab. So, in addition to this, there's the reception area, there's the coffee stand. There's the receptionist, there's a few people getting some snacks and treats and there's just some people filtering mostly out because it's nearing the end of the day, but a few people coming in as well. So, no, you're definitely not alone.

Teo: Okay. Okay. But it's locked up behind glass. It's not--

Quinn: Yeah, this particular display is unattended, but you are not unattended more broadly.

Teo: Right. I backtrack a little bit to the receptionist and I go, [as Constance] *Just curious, what's up with the VR headset? What's that about?*

Quinn: [as Ada] *Oh, you haven't heard?*

Teo: [as Constance] *No*.

Quinn: [as Ada] *It's very exciting.*

Teo: [as Constance] *Oh. Do tell*.

Quinn: [as Ada] *Well, Imagine Labs, the commercialization project that Auggie Ball has been working on, one of our most brilliant scientists here, in partnership with Firmament College, is getting ready to launch. They've got a groundbreaking VR technology.*

It's really exciting for your average user. It's compatible with most mobile devices and you can just hook it up and go. It's the latest cutting edge, like Oculus or anything else. But the real exciting piece is the BCI, the brain control interface. So, you can actually--

Teo: [as Constance] *Sorry. The what?*

Quinn: [as Ada] *The BCI, the brain control interface. So, there's a cranial dome that you can get it hooked up to. It actually will map your thought processes as they align with different images. And so, if you have the proper equipment and time to train the device to match your brainwaves, you can actually control the device just with your mind.*

Teo: [as Constance] *Oh, boy. Okay, we're on some like Elon Musk-level brain biohacking.*

Quinn: [as Ada] *Elon Musk is trash. Auggie Ball is a genius.*

Kyle: [laughs]

Teo: [as Constance] *No, agreed there. Agreed. Okay. Wow, that sounds indeed very groundbreaking, and also super unsafe. Is my mom working on this, by the way? She never tells me what she was doing.*

Quinn: [as Ada] *I'm sorry, who's your mom?*

Teo: [as Constance] *Magdalena*.

Quinn: [as Ada] *Magdalena Rodescu?*

Teo: [as Constance] *Yeah, that's my mom. Is she working on this?*

Quinn: [as Ada] *Your mother is the President of the Colorado National Lab. I mean, she's overseeing all of it, this project, everything in the lab.*

Teo: [as Constance] *That's right. I'm glad that you know it. You know, sometimes women don't get the credit they deserve for their contributions.*

Quinn: [as Ada] *Agreed*.

Hannah: [as Constance] *I'm curious someone who works here, and I know it's going to be hard for you to give me a real answer, because I did tell you I was her daughter. But in the X amount of time that she's been president, we would say how many time intervals now?*

Hannah: [laughs]

Quinn: She looks at you and she looks confused, and then she looks almost embarrassed and she's like, [as Ada] *I'm not actually sure. It's been a little while though, I think.*

Teo: [as Constance] *Good. Good. Yes. Okay. In the amount of time that she's been the president, how do you feel about her? How do you feel that she's handling this project and the other-- What are the other projects? I'm trying to remember right now. There's this one and then there's the other ones.*

Kyle: [chuckles]

Quinn: [as Ada] *I think you can talk to your mother about the projects. I'm the receptionist. I don't work with her ever. But she seems well liked and competent.*

Teo: [as Constance] *Well, that's very kind of you to say. You know, as the receptionist, I think you're not giving yourself enough credit. You see everyone who walks in and out of here, all the little conversations that they have when they think that you're not paying attention. I know how it is. I was a receptionist at a vet clinic for a little bit. Boy, did I overhear some wild stuff.*

Quinn: [as Ada] *Well, people are perhaps more discreet at the National Lab here.*

Teo: [as Constance] *Sure*.

Quinn: [as Ada] *But by all accounts, seems to be well liked and respected.*

Teo: [as Constance] *Great. Good to know. Great talking to you. Sorry, I didn't catch your name?*

Quinn: [as Ada] *My name's Ada.*

Teo: [as Constance] *Hi, Ada. Nice to meet you.*

Quinn: [as Ada] *Pleasure to meet you as well.*

Teo: [as Constance] *I'm going to go see my mom. The president, now? Yeah, that's what I'm going to do.*

Quinn: [as Ada] *Okay. I'll let her administrative assistant know.*

Teo: [as Constance] *Oh, no, no, no. I want to surprise her. I've been out of town for a while and I know that she was really worried about me being gone. I want to give her a quick little jolt of that family excitement. I don't know what that means. I want to surprise her.*

Quinn: Give me a role to manipulate someone.

Teo: [chuckles] Constance is so bad at playing it cool. [rolls dice] Oh, good God. That's a 4.

Quinn: Ada looks at you and says, [as Ada] *I have to let her know. I can't actually let you back until I do.*

Teo: [as Constance] *Here's an idea. What if you tell her I'm someone else?*

Hannah: Oh, boy.

Quinn: She picks up the phone, punches a few quick numbers and says, [as Ada] *Director Rodescu's daughter is here to see her. Constance. Great.* And she looks at you and says, [as Ada] *You can head on back now. Sorry.*

Teo: [as Constance] *No worries. I get it, Ada. I do. I also have been very strange to you. I'm so sorry. I'm just dealing with some other stuff going on. Don't worry about it.*

Quinn: [as Ada] *Okay. Well, I hope you have a nice reunion with your mother.*

Teo: *Don't we all? All right.* And I walk back.

Quinn: You head back. I think you have to follow some signs, because you don't actually know where the president's office is.

Teo: Nope.

Quinn: But eventually, after some searching, you make it there. It is quite a fine and one might even say resplendent office. You step through the sliding glass door and see your mother standing behind a resolute oak desk.

Teo: When I look around this room, does this look like my mom has decorated? Like, is there a nameplate, is there any plants that are very my mom?

Kyle: Is there any of your art on the wall?

Teo: Yeah. Or, pictures or anything?

Quinn: I do think that there is one of your paintings hanging up.

Kyle: Aww. Okay.

Quinn: And by all accounts, it looks like it is your mother's office.

Teo: Okay. So, either she's a fast decorator, or she's been here at least a little bit. As I walk in, I say, [as Constance] G*ood to see you, President.*

Quinn: She looks at you in shock and stands up and says, [as Magdalena] *Constance, my dear.* She rushes over to you and gives you a serious hug, and she says, [as Magdalena] *Constance, my dear, I haven't seen nor heard from you in almost two months. What has happened? I've been worried sick about you.*

Teo: [as Constance] *I'm sorry. To be honest, I didn't know if I was going to be coming back, and it just felt wrong to promise you anything less when I didn't know. But I'm okay.*

Quinn: [as Magdalena] *Constance, I know that we have had our disagreements, but I thought we had turned over a new leaf, my dear.*

Teo: [as Constance] *Me disappearing was just something I had to help a friend. I didn't want to lie to you and you were going to ask if I was going to be okay, and I honestly wasn't going to know the answer to that. So, I--*

Quinn: [as Magdalena] *Wait. What happened? Where did you go?*

Teo: [as Constance] *I'll get to that. That's part of the reason why I'm here. But real quick, congratulations on the promotion.*

Quinn: [as Magdalena] *Yes, it's. It's very exciting. The opportunity came about. I thought I would throw my hat in the ring, and there it went.*

Teo: [as Constance] *Well, I'm very-- Look, you deserve it. I'm just a little startled because-- Yes, I was gone for a bit, but not that long. What happened to Dr. Nassim Tamina?*

Quinn: [as Magdalena] *Who?*

Teo: [as Constance] *The person who had this job before you.*

Quinn: [as Magdalena] *Constance. I have had this position for several years now.*

Hannah: What?

Teo: [as Constance] *Hmm. So, wait. Then why were--* How do I want to phrase this?

Kyle: Why did it seem like no big deal when I said congrats on the promotion? [chuckles]

Teo: Yeah. [chuckles] [as Constance] *So, then, what did you think I was congratulating you for?*

Quinn: [as Magdalena] *I don't know that you ever actually did congratulate me on my promotion.*

Kyle: [chuckles]

Hannah: Fair.

Teo: [as Constance] *Wow*.

[laughter]

Quinn: [as Magdalena] *I thought, better late than never.*

Teo: [as Constance] *Okay. Well,* [Kyle laughs] *you are my mom. That passive aggressive was right on point.* I say that under my breath. I'm like, [as Constance] *Oh, well, yeah, at least you are my mom. Yeah*. *A couple of years now, who had this position before you, do you remember?*

Quinn: She looks at you, and she looks confused for a second, shakes her head and says, [as Magdalena] *I seem to have forgotten their name. I'm sure there's a record of it somewhere.*

Teo: [as Constance] *Yeah, like in a records room? You, guys, keep print records, right? Not just digital?*

Quinn: [as Magdalena] *Of course. Yes.*

Teo: [as Constance] *Great. Just good to know. I'm sorry that I never congratulated you when it happened. I am very proud of you. I noticed the VR set on my way in. It looks like that's almost ready to launch, huh?*

Quinn: [as Magdalena] *Yes, Dr. Vaul's project*. *It is very exciting. We are very excited. It should be a great day for the lab and the world, really. The applications are limitless.*

Teo: [as Constance] *Such as?* And I sit down, like I'm just trying to have a casual conversation with my mom.

Quinn: [as Magdalena] *Well, most people think about gamification, but there's plenty of opportunities for medical treatment, for sharing of Information and conveying of ideas for education. The applications are so broad, it strains human imagination.*

Teo: [as Constance] *Yeah, I can imagine.* [chuckles] *I assume that being the director, that you've tried it?*

Quinn: [as Magdalena] *Of course, dear.*

Hannah: [as Magdalena] *How many people have gotten to try it? Like, is this something I could sign up for? Is this just people in the lab? Like, who's had the opportunity to test run it so far?*

Quinn: [as Magdalena] *Only a few folks have had the opportunity to test the BCI interface. It's a complicated setup, but I could certainly get you in to test the rest of the module.*

Teo: [as Constance] *Sure. I'm just curious. I mean, you said it was complicated. Who's had the chance to actually do it? Who else could tell me about what the BCI experience was like?*

Quinn: [as Magdalena] *It's primarily Dr. Ball. You know, dear, if you had just gone to the interview, you could have been involved in this very project.*

Teo: [as Constance] *You know, I'm already regretting not going to that meeting.*

Quinn: [as Magdalena] *You and me both, dear. You and me both.*

Teo: [as Constance] *Well, yeah, I get that. I'm sorry again about that. I know it's tough on you to see me live a very different life than you do.*

Quinn: [as Magdalena] *Well, I worry about you, dear. But I think it'll all be okay.*

Teo: [as Constance] *I hope so. Well, I did come here with a reason. I've been procrastinating here on how exactly, what exactly I want to say to you about this. So, I know that this is going to be hard to hear for a couple of reasons.*

The first one, is that you're not going to believe me. And if you do believe me, you very well might be angry with me, because I'm going to tell you that I can't give you more answers right this second, but I want you to have the time to sit with what I'm going to tell you and think about it before you make any decisions. I know you're not going to want to hear that, but I think it's only fair to give you the chance to process what I'm going to tell you before you make any decisions, okay?

Quinn: [as Magdalena] *My dear, I really wish you would just get to the point.*

Teo: [as Constance] *Yeah, yeah, I know. I'm really building this up. It's going to be like an explosive bomb. Okay.*

I was in a parallel universe of sorts. I went there, because I made a promise to some friends. And to keep them safe, I had to go there and fulfill a commitment. But in the course of being there, I ran into someone and I brought them back with me. They are in Firmament right now. I won't tell you where yet, but-- And then, I look her straight in the eye and I try to have the most like convincing--

Quinn: She's looking exasperated back at you.

Teo: I know. Like, [as Magdalena] *Come on, get it over with.* [chuckles]

Quinn: Yeah. It's like, [as Magdalena] *Why are you drawing this out so much?*

Teo: Because I know how big it's going to be. With the most persuasive look on my face that I could possibly have to have her believe me, I say, [as Constance] *I found Georgiana and I brought her home with me.*

Quinn: She stares you dead in the eyes and says, [as Magdalena] *My dear, if this is some joke or new performative art? I really do not appreciate it.*

Teo: [as Constance] *It's not a joke. It's not a joke. She wants to see you. She's in town.*

Quinn: [as Magdalena] *My sister has been missing for almost 40 years.*

Teo: [as Constance] *I know. She's in town.*

Quinn: [as Magdalena] *Then where--*

Teo: [as Constance] *She has her reasons.*

Quinn: [as Magdalena] *If this is true, my dear, then why is she not here? What on earth--*

Teo: [as Constance] *She didn't leave you or Buni or Bunelu out of any malice. She was very, very badly hurt. She was attacked. I know you don't want to hear it, but she was attacked by a thing, one of those things that Buni would always go after. And instead of dying, she was given the opportunity essentially to go to an alternate universe where her wounds would be healed. And that happened. And that is where she has been.*

I know this is a lot to take in, I know that this is a story that you don't like to believe or think about and I know that your relationship with Buni is very different than mine was, but that's what happened to her. I brought her back and I made her two promises.

First, I told her that I would help her get better. Because the moment she landed back on this plane of existence, that life threatening situation came right back up. So, I promised her I would help her and then I promised her that I would get her to you. That is the only reason she's here is to see you. But she doesn't want to see you until she's better.

I can't sit here knowing that your sister is in town and you don't know that, which is why I'm here against her wishes to tell you this. This is where it's going to be very hard for you, because I'm asking you to sit on that information to believe me. Believe me.

Quinn: [as Magdalena] *You come here after two months.*

Teo: [as Constance] *And to wait.*

Quinn: [as Magdalena] *No call, no text, nothing to tell me where you are or how you're doing, and you come telling me that my sister, who's been gone for 40 years, has been living in an alternate dimension after being attacked by a monster? And you come to tell me that she is back, but she won't see me. She doesn't want me to know that she's here, but you want to tell me, but I can't see her.*

Well, Constance, this has-

Teo: [as Constance] *Not until she's better.*

Quinn: [as Magdalena] *-been interesting. If what you say is true, I don't know what to say. But until then, I think that you should leave.*

Teo: [as Constance] *I'm not leaving yet. You can kick me out, and that's fine. But I need you to hear me.*

Quinn: [as Magdalena] *I have heard plenty.*

Teo: [as Constance] *I am going to fix what is wrong with her. I'm going to do that as quickly as possible. That may take a couple of days, that may take a week, that may take a month, I don't know. But the moment I do, I'm walking her up to your door. So, I need you to be ready to see your sister again.*

And by the way, to be ready to see your sister again the way that she was. She has not aged. I feel like you deserve to know all that, because if she just shows up at your door in a month and you don't know any of this, I just don't think that's fair.

Quinn: [as Magdalena] *I would welcome my sister back with open arms, no matter what.*

Teo: [as Constance] *Great*.

Quinn: [as Magdalena] *But until then, this is a tall tale to bring in,-*

Teo: [as Constance] *I know.*

Quinn: [as Magdalena] *-someone who's already dealing with a lot.*

Teo: [as Constance] *Why are you already dealing with a lot?*

Quinn: [as Magdalena] *If you were here, Constance, maybe you would know.*

Kyle: Oof.

Teo: [as Constance] *Well, I'm so sorry that I was busy saving the lives of my friends and also, by the way, finding your sister. How terrible of me to be gone for a couple of months to deal with that.*

Hannah: I mean, I do got to say, I think I'm on your mom's side, Constance, a little bit.

Teo: About not telling her?

Hannah: Well, about like, [as Constance] *Hey, your sister's back, but you can't see her.* It's fine. Just a little bit.

Quinn: I think Magda turns and goes and sits down at her desk and starts looking at some papers on it.

Teo: I just briefly touch her shoulder and then I say, [as Constance] *I'm sorry. I know that you're mad at me and that's okay with me. It would be unforgivable for me to sit with her for God knows how long without you knowing that. And you can continue to be mad at me forever for that. That's okay. I love you.* And I walk out.

Hannah: Aww.

Quinn: As you walk out, you hear the door shut behind you. You make your way out of the lab. I think most folks are leaving at this point. And you head back to your car. As you close the door, you feel something watching you from the backseat.

Hannah: Oh.

Teo: Shit. Shit.

Hannah: Oh, no.

[Monster Hour theme]

[Transcript provided by SpeechDocs Podcast Transcription]