

## Winter in Hieron 16: Is There Anyone Else?

Transcriber: Cy @vlasdygoth

ALI: Last time, on Friends at the Table.

JACK: We found out through researching that Lutz probably wasn't killed, he was kind of spirited away by Arrell, who is a rogue wizard from the Last University who is attempting to kind of put people inside bubbles, in which they can work indefinitely to try and prevent the arrival of the Heat and the Dark. At the same time, the various districts have each taken suspects, and at a certain time are going to execute them, which might cause a rush to execute the other suspects to try and be the one to prove that you've caught Lutz's murderer.

*[MUSIC - Outside]*

ALI (as Hella): And like, all of the stuff that she's been fighting for is—

AUSTIN (as Marisol Sweetwater): *[cross]* Oh boy.

ALI (as Hella): True. Oh...

*[laughter]*

AUSTIN (as Marisol Sweetwater): No, I'll— listen, it's just... you sound like those protesters, I— I'll look into it. Okay? I give you my word, we believe in the truth here, but... you're asking me, you're telling me I get one thing to look for, we'll look into it, we will, I promise you, I give you my word—

ALI (as Hella): *[cross]* It's the history of this whole place!

AUSTIN: So you're searching Elgash Or's body, actually, when you find like a tiny little box. The way it works is that— you understand how it works in such a way that you can kind of read the pattern backwards based on the information contained within it. You have to break it apart to see what the last like, twenty inputs were, basically? And you work out that he sent a message to the Archives and it says "The Wizard is coming. Move the book."

AUSTIN (as Obelus): Why has the church failed?

ART (as Hadrian): Why, what, what do you think the church should've done here?

AUSTIN (as Obelus): The nothing is coming. And we were not supposed to arrive to a world like this. They do not know the cost of saving it. They are frightened of us and of our task.

*[MUSIC - Outside fades]*

AUSTIN: Welcome to Friends at the Table, an actual play podcast focused on critical worldbuilding, smart characterization, and fun interaction between good friends, I am your host Austin Walker, and before we roll into the finale of this mystery arc in Rosemerrow, I just want to take a second to formally say that Nick Scratch, who plays Fantasma is taking a step back because of a busy life, a busy schedule and compatibility with some of the recording times and

some other stuff like that. There is a chance that he'll come back in the future, you know, to do a guest spot or something like that but I, I just want to take this second to say thank you to him for all the hard work he put in as Fantasma and, and frankly in helping me and working with me to come up with some of the, the stuff that has happened with that character and some of the larger reveals around him over the past few episodes. You know, obviously I had figured out some of that stuff on the lead-in to this, but I had some other plans and then when the scheduling took a nosedive, you know, he and I sat down and kind of scrambled to put together something that would be fitting and appropriate to resolve, you know, the Fantasma arc. Tie up some loose ends, do some reveals at a point maybe where they would not have been originally, but still made sense for the show I think. So shoutouts to Nick for being such a key part of Friends at the Table for so long, both as a player of Fantasma, and also as an emergency producer, which he was a few time back in season one. You know, send Nick your love please, he's @drevilbones on Twitter, doctor is abbreviated so it looks like it says drevil bones, d-r-e-v-i-l-b-o-n-e-s. Drevilbones. So again, thanks to Nick. Anyway, and then, we go to Fero and Throndir. Who are in Roseheart criminal custody.

DRE: Woohoo.

AUSTIN: Alright, gimme a roll. There's an eight. So you've already gotten most of what you're going to get out of Gloria Lake. And Victoria is still behind the interrogation room as far as you know, no one's letting you in there. But you each have a question to ask, or a thing to do. So tell me what that is, I will be, you know. Very lenient in what I allow here.

DRE: Um... I mean, is it, is it too smartass-y for my question to be how can we see Victoria?

AUSTIN: I'll just give you that, that's a freebie, which is like, by force? Or by stealth. But like, there's no trade you're going to make to get that door open.

DRE: Okay.

AUSTIN: This is Roseheart, right, like, this is the height of, of power in Rosemerrow and so the people here are like, especially pissed off about Lutz being killed? These are people who like, Lutz knew all of their families probably, in the way that, that he does, in the way that he's this super personable politician. And so, they're all convinced that they have the right person, and they're all like "nuh uh, no one goes in and sees her." Like... we've got special laws in place about assassins just for this reason.

DRE: I don't know if you feel this way Keith, but I feel like this trip isn't really worth anything if we don't get in there to see Victoria.

KEITH: Yeah, we should totally definitely get in there and we're like... come on, we got the badge, we've got the badge and everything!

AUSTIN: They're— you can't convince them this way.

KEITH: [cross] Okay.

AUSTIN: If you wanna get in it'll have to be by force or by sneaking.

KEITH: Okay. Um...

DRE: Sneaking sounds better.

AUSTIN: Mhm!

KEITH: Sneaking sounds definitely better. What is the sort of, what's the sort of layout that's in front of us for this?

AUSTIN: It's— her interrogation room is on a circuit that's patrolled, that is like... a couple of like, kind of blocks down from, not city blocks but like, cell blocks or kind of, building blocks in a sense, down from where Gloria was being held. But like, just tell me how you're doing it in an interesting way that will count as one of your questions, will be getting in, like the thing that you do with that is I got in via blank.

KEITH: I could—

AUSTIN: *[cross]* And then you'll get something.

KEITH: I can get in by turning into a mouse. Or, you know any number of— yeah.

AUSTIN: Right, something, sure. But does, and then, you go in that way, you become a digging vole and then dig in and then open the door for Throndir?

KEITH: Yeah, yeah, totally.

AUSTIN: Or are you, okay. The first thing you see is the two bodies of the interrogators shriveled on the ground.

KEITH: Okay, not good, not a good start.

JACK: *[cross]* This keeps happening!

KEITH: This keeps happening— hey, maybe not a good idea to fuckin lock people up like that and not check on them and not let anybody else in!

AUSTIN: The second thing that you see is... who hasn't noticed you yet is, she probably has noticed you. Victoria Lake.

KEITH: Okay.

AUSTIN: Who is... kind of like, so she's seated in a corner with her feet up, like on the table.

KEITH: Yeah.

AUSTIN: On the interrogation table, just killing time basically?

KEITH: She's like way relaxed?

AUSTIN: Yeah.

KEITH: Okay.

AUSTIN: And then you go to open the door to let Throndir in, and Throndir, as Fero opens the door for you, behind him there is a flash of light and a robed figure with slick black hair shows up, and it's Arrell. Who none of— neither of you have met before.

KEITH: No. Do I— I recognize Arrell, though.

AUSTIN: Do you?

KEITH: Do I not? I mean we heard all about him, right?

DRE: He looks like Fantasma, right?

AUSTIN: He doesn't look like Fan— He's a little bit younger than Fantasma, and has different hair and a slightly different face.

KEITH: *[cross]* But like, we can—

AUSTIN: A more squared face.

KEITH: We can probably guess.

AUSTIN: Yeah, you can, you can put that together but you don't recognize him.

KEITH: *[cross]* Right, that's what I mean. So like, we understand that who this is.

AUSTIN: It's— It's, that must be Arrell, yes, totally.

KEITH: Yeah.

AUSTIN: And also because, because this is when Victoria's name was here on this list. And when she sees him there, she puts her feet down and stands up. And picks up her hat—

KEITH: And I've opened the door for Throndir so I am, I am a person again.

AUSTIN: Yes.

KEITH: So I'm not like, I'm not like hiding out.

AUSTIN: And she like, sees Arrell and stands up and puts her hat on. And she's like...

AUSTIN (as Victoria): Huh. This I did not expect.

KEITH (as Fero): Hm. Which part?

AUSTIN (as Victoria): How're you doing Fero?

KEITH (as Fero): Hey.

*[Dre laughs]*

AUSTIN: Arrell shakes his head.

AUSTIN (as Arrell): You two should leave.

KEITH (as Fero): Who, me and Victoria?

AUSTIN (as Arrell): No, Victoria's coming with me.

KEITH (as Fero): Hmmm. No.

AUSTIN: There is like a pulse of... not a pulse of energy, what's the opposite of a pulse? What goes in into—

KEITH: A vacuum?

AUSTIN: You know, a pulse goes outwards? Yeah but like, the same, I guess like a pulse inwards, a vacuumous pulse that goes inwards, towards...

JANINE: A hiccup?

AUSTIN: Kind of like a hiccup.

*[Dre laughs]*

ART: A momentary suck?

*[laughter]*

ALI: That's a Friends at the Table character.

AUSTIN: Yup! Momentary Succ, s-u-c-c.

SYLVIA: Give 'em the dog badge.

AUSTIN: Uh huh!

JACK: Oh jeez.

AUSTIN: Uh... and you all feel weaker in that moment. And also in that moment, Arrell like lifts a hand, kind of backhands, like nothing in the air and there's like an impact in the side of the walls, as if he's deflected something away from him.

AUSTIN (as Arrell): Tricks like that— tricks like that won't work on me.

KEITH (as Fero): What kind of trick was that.

DRE (as Throndir): Yeah, and who are you talking to?

AUSTIN: He's talking to Victoria. He hasn't even looked at either of you.

KEITH: He did tell us to go, though, so at least he—

AUSTIN: Yes.

KEITH: At least we're not being totally ignored.

AUSTIN: Yeah. And the trick like that is that she was like... you should all take damage is the thing that you should do, but we're not gonna count that, unless it's gonna, maybe, I mean, you know what hey, fuck it, take d4 damage real quick.

DRE: Okay.

AUSTIN: I'll just roll it. You never know. Take three damage each.

KEITH: Okay.

DRE: Those are... okay.

AUSTIN: No armor. And Arrell reaches out a hand and begins to say words under his breath. What do you do?

KEITH: I... okay.

DRE: So Victoria attacked him.

AUSTIN: *[cross]* Well, she—

DRE: Is, maybe?

KEITH: *[cross]* She tried to.

AUSTIN: Maybe, she did something.

DRE: Okay.

KEITH: She tried to do something and he stopped it and then also, pulse, reverse pulsed us.

AUSTIN: No, you just got caught up in the pulse that she was doing.

KEITH: Oh, okay. What's the layout of the room? There's you know, obviously there's like a roof.

AUSTIN: It's— it's, yeah. So it's just, it's an interrogation room. She's dragged a table into a corner that she then put her chair in and like had her back to the wall and put her feet up.

KEITH: Okay.

AUSTIN: With the two guards like shriveled up on the ground. They might not be dead, they might just be incapacitated, you haven't checked, they look like super dehydrated.

KEITH: Right.

*[Ali giggles]*

DRE: Oh, I know what I do.

JANINE: *[cross]* Momentary Succ joke there.

KEITH: Oh, okay, looks like Throndir has an idea.

AUSTIN: What's up, Throndir?

DRE: I'm gonna shoot Arrell with an arrow of the Wordeater.

AUSTIN: Okay, what's that do? Or give me a roll, first of all. Give me a roll.

DRE: Yeah... twelve.

AUSTIN: Alright. Do—

DRE: Well, with, one of my Wordeater arrows I don't do any damage but I perform Discern Realities and answer three questions from their perspective.

AUSTIN: Good call. Give me that Discern— so you, that successfully does Discern Realities so just ask me the questions.

DRE: Yeah. What is about to happen?

AUSTIN: Arrell is going to steal, is going to kidnap Victoria and put her into a bubble universe.

DRE: Okay. What here is useful or valuable to me?

AUSTIN: *[laughs]* Leaving? Uh... what else?

*[Dre laughs]*

KEITH: I hate when that's the answer.

AUSTIN: Look, I mean, yeah, but... you know, Victoria? Would be great to not have her disappear?

DRE: Right.

AUSTIN: Um... I'm trying to think of other things that would be useful. Or valuable. Trying to think of things that you have or that... that...

DRE: I mean let's see... I've got my orange orb from the tower, I've got my Ordennan sword...

AUSTIN: *[cross]* That could be useful.

ALI: Wait, wouldn't it be things that are useful to Arrell?

AUSTIN: Oh you're right, it's from *Arrell's* position. You're right.

DRE: *[cross]* Oh, yeah, you're right, you're right.

AUSTIN: You're right. Thank you very much.

ALI: You're welcome.

DRE: Good call, Ali.

KEITH: Great.

AUSTIN: So... the things that are useful to Arrell, definitely Victoria. The... dead bodies, which make it look like Victoria like, killed them and escaped. Like, that there was no Arrell involvement here. What else? ... Arrell's got most of what he wants, man, you know?

DRE: Yeah.

AUSTIN: But I guess so here's— it's the— Victoria is a thing that he has not captured yet. And so there is certain value in having a non-human in one of the— someone who is not traditionally alive in one of these dimensions.

DRE: Oh.

AUSTIN: Because that hasn't— he hasn't tested that yet. He doesn't know what happens if you put a vampire in one of these weird universes.

DRE: Hm, okay, interesting. Um... let's see, which one of these would be the most useful from his perspective?

AUSTIN: Or like, what is useful— you get his information.

DRE: Right.

AUSTIN: But *to* Throndir. So it's about gaming it in a weird way.

DRE: Yeah. I guess what should I be on the lookout for?

AUSTIN: Her power, probably? Oh, and Gloria. Gloria Lake. He's worried about Gloria Lake, who is a lesser thrall, is like not as powerful as Victoria is, who can trace her bloodline all the way back to Claret, but who... so like, that is the other thing. Just like, that little pulse was like, a little, that was like a little fun jab. That was not like, what Claret, or sorry, what Victoria can do. The other thing that's important, the other thing that's valuable is just like, his spells, right? Which he knows lots of.

DRE: I send Kodiak to go get Gloria?

AUSTIN: Good call.

KEITH: That is a good call.

AUSTIN: It's like, bark— woof, woof, and is like, running through the hallway. What about you, Fero?

KEITH: I... *[sighs]* This is tough because I don't, I don't know if what we're doing right now is being in a fight.

AUSTIN: It sort of is.

KEITH: It sort of is, right? That's what it seems like.

AUSTIN: Mhm.

KEITH: So, I guess what I'm doing is... you know what? I'm going to be the giant vole.

AUSTIN: Uh huh.

KEITH: And... let me roll that, first of all.

AUSTIN: Please.

JACK: I can't imagine this is going to go well.

KEITH: *[cross]* I believe this is the roll for that. So that's an eleven, so I get my maximum amount of hold for that, three hold.

AUSTIN: Uh huh.

KEITH: I'm gonna use one of those hold to do the vole's special animal thing and I'm gonna dig through the ceiling.

AUSTIN: So you're gonna jump up?

KEITH: Yeah.

AUSTIN: That's a big jump.

KEITH: It's a big vole.

AUSTIN: How big is this vole? Well, because, a vole is tiny, so a giant vole in my mind is like a person-sized thing. You're saying it's like a double giant vole.

KEITH: I'm saying— I'm saying that it is a *giant* creature that is a vole.

AUSTIN: I see. Not that it is...

KEITH: Right, giant-sized vole, which might be the size of a dog, but a giant thing that is a vole.

AUSTIN: Okay.

KEITH: I was picturing it— well, I was picturing it like, probably like five feet tall, which makes it like, eight feet or nine feet long, not including tail. Because voles are longer than they are tall.

AUSTIN: Okay. What do you do with the ceiling.

KEITH: I make a hole in it.

AUSTIN: Okay.

KEITH: Up, out to the outside, to where, to where escape is.

AUSTIN: *[cross]* To like, the next floor up?

KEITH: Oh, is it a multi-level building?

AUSTIN: Yeah, it's like a jail. They're in like the basement of a jail?

KEITH: *[cross]* Okay. Yeah, sure.

AUSTIN: They're in the basement of like, a police station. So like, doing that would like pop you up in the reception booth, which would be hilarious.

*[Dre laughs]*

KEITH: Then yes. Also then yeah.

AUSTIN: The halfling cop like goes to bite into a donut, and is like aaaa!

KEITH: Yeah. So what I was kind of picturing is—

AUSTIN: What is this big vole!

KEITH: I was kind of picturing it like, you know, a nice and secure building, but also just one floor. But now that I know we're in the basement of a multi-level thing, you know. We could, that's still a way to escape.

AUSTIN: It is, yeah, you could totally get out that way, that's fair.

KEITH: Yeah, for sure.

AUSTIN: You could also just leave, also, there is just the door, like, there is, there are lots of ways to get out of here for sure.

KEITH: Well, isn't, isn't Arrell at the door?

AUSTIN: No, Arrell is—

KEITH: 'Cause you said that Arrell appeared behind Throndir, who is—

AUSTIN: No, behind *you*, because you were opening the door.

KEITH: Oh, behind me? Oh, okay, I understand, sorry.

AUSTIN: Yes.

KEITH: Well. I'm still, I'm still doing this thing.

AUSTIN: That's fair, that's fine! At this point, Victoria and Arrell are like, Arrell is, is firing off magic missiles, and Victoria is like trying to dodge between them, all of her stuff is like this weird area of effect stuff. That every time that she is like, trying to drag out Arrell's life force, you're also caught up in it. And so she does this again, and like... Her true form like, her like vampire form is just like, her but tougher and like, more attractive? She doesn't get ugly, she gets like more—

KEITH: She's bigger and—

AUSTIN: No, she gets flusher. Like, her...

KEITH: Oh, flusher, okay.

AUSTIN: It's as if she has more blood in her, in her like, you know.

KEITH: Okay, I'm sorry, you said buffer and more attractive, though.

AUSTIN: Yeah, she just looks healthy. Like, she looks like has a nice glow.

KEITH: [cross] That's what I meant by bigger, I meant like, more ripped.

AUSTIN: You know?

KEITH: Yeah.

AUSTIN: This is the same thing that happened with Claret, so this shit ain't new.

KEITH: Right, yeah.

AUSTIN: Both of you take another five damage.

KEITH: Five? I thought it was one d4?

DRE: Oh, going up.

AUSTIN: Not this time. Like I said—

KEITH: Two d4? Alright, well, just so you know, every time that I take damage, I also get balance?

AUSTIN: Okay, that's fine.

KEITH: Which, I spent all of my balance, so I have two balance now.

AUSTIN: That's fine. So take another five each. This time, there is like a visible, like, you can literally see the air around you gets like, misty with blood. As it's being pulled from you.



KEITH: Yeah. Can I just like, say like, stop hitting me with that please? Just say that?

AUSTIN: I, don't, yes. You can totally say that. That is a thing you can say.

*[Dre laughs]*

JANINE: You can say a lot of things.

ALI: Uh huh!

AUSTIN: You can say all sorts of things.

KEITH (as Fero): *[cross]* Please stop doing that! Do a different thing to Arrell!

JANINE: You can say pass me a Coke, but that doesn't mean it's gonna happen.

*[laughter]*

KEITH: I just want— I just wanna put it out there that like, you're, hey!

AUSTIN: She's like—

KEITH (as Fero): You're, I'm here to help, you're hurting me too! You're hurting me and not the important one to hurt.

AUSTIN (as Victoria): *Fine.*

AUSTIN: And then like, grips... the like, reaches out her hand and makes a fist and all of the, like, the misty blood stuff in the room condenses into a glowing red blade. Of like, it's similar in light and fire to what the, the orc Golden Lance member in Marielda had.

KEITH: Okay.

AUSTIN: It's like his katana, basically. And charges at Arrell, and now they're in like a dope, sword versus staff fight.

KEITH: I realized how low my health is, can I because— *[Austin laughs]* Can I have, can I have used Shed?

AUSTIN: Sure. You're no longer a vole?

KEITH: I am no longer a vole, correct.

AUSTIN: Okay. Mhm!

KEITH: I am at four, I'm currently at fourteen HP out of twenty.

AUSTIN: *[cross]* Okay. That's, you're..

KEITH: *[cross]* So it's not, not you know, it's not super low, but I'd rather just not be a vole.

AUSTIN: Arrell... kind of signals that he's getting sick of being around all of you and slams his staff into the ground.

KEITH: Yeah.

AUSTIN: And a mist begins to form out of the base of it that, that now it replaces the weird blood mist. A, a blackish—

KEITH: *[cross]* It's a mist-based fight.

AUSTIN: This is, yeah, it's a mist-based fight, it totally is, I kind of... I guess none of you have died, right?

KEITH: No, I've never died.

DRE: No.

AUSTIN: Neither of you? It's the sort of mist that exists in the plane of Tristero. That kind of like, makes all of that world dark and hard to kind of, pierce with, with regular sight? It's, you know what it— it's actually like the fog that protected Nacre. It looks like that. Which is like, hard to even look at. It's like... it's there, but it's kind of like Silent Hill fog in that way, right? Like, it's just a town that exists but for whatever reason no one goes there. And so that begins to spread. And so that has just spread through this room now. That's a thing that's happened. Nothing else has happened yet, but that stuff is there. Throndir?

DRE: I'm gonna draw my Ordennan sword, and I'm also gonna pull out the orange orb I got from the tower.

AUSTIN: Nice, good call.

DRE: And I think I'm just gonna, I guess I'm gonna join this melee, and I'm gonna try and fight this bad wizard man.

AUSTIN: Alright, give me a, give me a roll.

DRE: Actually, I think what I really wanna do is I wanna try and break their\* staff with my sword.

AUSTIN: That's— gimme a roll, give me a, so that's a Hack and Slash.

DRE: Yeah. Uh... And let me add the extra modifier for using the orb...

AUSTIN: Ephrim in the chat says "Oh please be careful sweet boy."

DRE: It's fine, I'll be fine. I'll be fine.

AUSTIN: Uh huh!

DRE: I got an eight!

AUSTIN: Uh, okay. That's gonna be really bad, but okay. *[Dre laughs]* No I mean like, it, it partially is gonna be really fucking good. Do, so, so when you do an eight, seven to nine on, on Hack and Slash, you deal damage but the enemy also makes an attack against you.

DRE: Probably shoulda drank one of those healing potions before I waded in there.

AUSTIN: Yeah, dude.

DRE: It's fine! I've got thirteen.

AUSTIN: Oh, buddy. *[Dre laughs]* Okay, so... You cut through.. Do your damage, first of all.

DRE: Five.

AUSTIN: Alright. Mark that down... That is enough to break the staff, which is pretty impressive, because like... breaking Arrell's staff is like, a valuable thing that you just did. Hundred percent, I'm not gonna like, take that away from you, that's a really cool smart thing that you did. So, there's a thing that happens though, which is, so Arrell is the Wizard, which means that he has the spells that the Wizard has, and so there is a spell called... there's a couple of things that happen all at once here.

KEITH: Let's hear 'em all.

AUSTIN: Okay. So he has a spell called Contingency, which is... choose a fifth level or lower spell you know, describe a trigger condition, using a number of words equal to your level. He has a pretty high level. The chosen spell is held until you choose to unleash it or the trigger condition is met, whichever happens first. You don't have to roll for the held spell, it just takes effect. That spell is that if his staff is broken, it lets off a fireball.

ALI: Oh.

DRE: Oh, oh, yeah.

AUSTIN: A fireball does two d6 damage.

DRE: Okay.

AUSTIN: Which ignores armor. Now, there's *also* the matter of Cloudkill, which is the spell that he put in place before.

DRE: Sure, yeah.

AUSTIN: That says that whatever—

JACK: Who names a thing *Cloudkill*?

AUSTIN: It's like an old DND thing, so...

DRE: Yeah.

JACK: Oh, okay.

AUSTIN: So, Gary Gygax, I guess?

JACK: And Arrell, I guess.

AUSTIN: Yes, right. Whenever a creature in the area takes damage, it takes an additional, separate one d6 damage which ignores armor. And *then*, there's also the—

DRE: *[laughs]* But wait, there's more!

AUSTIN: But wait there's more, there's also... the ability, the Wizard ability, where'd it go, not... a Greater Empowered Magic, which says the spell's effects are doubled. So that's six d6 that ignores armor.

DRE: Alright. Fuck me up, fam. *[Ali whines, Dre laughs]* So if these all roll— oh, yeah. Okay.

AUSTIN: That's eighteen. And that hits everybody here.

JACK: Oh, jeez.

ALI: Oh...

AUSTIN: 'Cause Fireball's an A.O.E. and so is Cloudkill.

JACK: Does that also hit um, the Golden Lance?

AUSTIN: Yeah. Oh yeah.

JACK: So what happened was like, Fero was like, please don't attack all of us! And then Arrell just went like, ah.

AUSTIN: Oh, right, attack all of them! That's right!

DRE: *[cross]* Good call!

JACK: *[cross]* Ah, yeah!

AUSTIN: Oh, yeah, good one. Good one, friend.

KEITH: Wait, so that's eighteen damage...

AUSTIN: Yes.

KEITH: Okay, I'm dead.

DRE: Yeah, if I'd drunken a healing potion, I totally could've lived.

KEITH: Wait, can I use— can I roll my balance?

AUSTIN: What's that do?

KEITH: That is I can use— for each balance I have—

AUSTIN: *[cross]* Yes.

KEITH: I can roll one d6 of healing.

AUSTIN: Yes.

KEITH: Sorry, one d4 of healing. So I have two, I have three balance now. Three balance.

AUSTIN: *[cross]* Give me, give me those rolls. And you're at zero, so, yeah. Use that and you'll heal back up, because you can't go into negatives. In this game.

KEITH: Slash roll... three d4... health is eight.

AUSTIN: Alright, so you're back up. *You* are back up to eight. Throndir. Pal.

DRE: Dead af. As the kids would say.

AUSTIN: Gotta click on Special Moves here real quick to see what happens.

DRE: Yup!

AUSTIN: This is gonna get very good in a second.

KEITH: Is the cloud still there?

AUSTIN: No, this consumes the cloud.

KEITH: *[cross]* Okay.

AUSTIN: Like, literally what happens is so you break that staff, and this is like the slow motion vision if it is as it breaks, there is like a single drop of fire that like, hits the ground, and then like puffs up into this huge ball of fire which like, almost like chain lightning or something bounces between the little droplets of mist.

KEITH: Yeah.

AUSTIN: And like, it gains a sickly like greenish glow and burns everyone in here really badly, except for Arrell.

KEITH: I'm so bummed because I had a— I had an idea to get that mist out of here, too.

AUSTIN: Sometimes things move fast, you know?

KEITH: I know, you're right, I had— but I had it fucking in the chamber too, though!

DRE: Yeah, I had ideas about not being dead and uh...

AUSTIN: Roll two d6.

DRE: Just straight up?

AUSTIN: That's how Last Breath works. Roll low.

DRE: Was about to say, I want a low on this one, right?

AUSTIN: Yeah. Mhm. Alright, eight.

DRE: *[cross]* Ah, that's not good, that's an eight.

AUSTIN: On seven to nine, death himself will offer you a bargain. Take it and stabilize or refuse and pass beyond the black gates into whatever fate awaits you. So.

JACK: Oh no!

AUSTIN: Couple of things happen here, and actually you're gonna get, this is gonna be, this is gonna be good. *[Dre laughs]* So, I think for you—

DRE:*[cross]* Sorry, [???

AUSTIN: The thing that's weird is that, for one second, there's that weird mist that I was describing that hid Nacre? And then in the next second, you're still seeing that mist, except you're also in a throne room that is... the throne room of Nacre. Or at least, a version of it where, sitting in a, a throne of ivory is Queen Adelaide Tristero, Queen of Death. Who like, is like,

AUSTIN (as Adelaide): Hah! *[Ali laughs]* I knew one of you would make it eventually, but I didn't think it would be the Ranger.

DRE (as Throndir): Well, I don't— I don't know where I am, but I don't think I planned to be here.

AUSTIN (as Adelaide): No, you didn't. Come, come take a seat.

AUSTIN: And she just like points at the ground in front of her. There's no chair.

DRE: Yeah, sure, alright.

AUSTIN (as Adelaide): How are you today?

DRE (as Thrandir): Um... you know, it's a stressful day, um. I have a feeling that right now I'm probably pretty bad off, though.

AUSTIN (as Adelaide): You are. But... I have a bit of an offer for you. You see, I *could*—

AUSTIN: And she like, moves her hand over and reveals the gaping maw of nothing that surrounds all of Hieron. And you can see that there are a number of like, dots falling into it now and then. Not, not a lot, though. Like, not— It's almost like a black hole, except like, very sparse? And she says

AUSTIN (as Adelaide): I could let you fall into the nothing. And... become at rest. That's a rare offer these days. But you've done well and you've traveled with... friends of mine, and so I'll give you this offer, and you can rest your head. Or... you can go back and do me a favor. I'll let you know what that favor is at a later date, of course.

AUSTIN: And then you feel something else, because back in the real world Victoria Solomon has been like, kicking the shit out of the Wizard Arrell. Literally, with her feet, and then also with her blade. She is fucked up, like she also got hurt really bad from that, from that explosion, but now that he doesn't have his staff, he also does not have like, many of his spells. And is just like, cutting the fuck into him, and every time she hits him, her sword gets bigger and more glowy. And so, finally, Fero like, I don't know what you're doing in this, maybe you're helping out? But Arrell like, retreats.

**[30:00]**

He like, manages to pick up both of his parts of the stave, and like put them together and like, snaps them? Like, almost back into place, and when it does that, there is like a little, there is a little pulse of energy of like, kinetic force, and then he vanishes. In a big flash, in a big flash that scorches the ground. And so, then, you get this other feeling on the back of your neck. And it feels like an offer. It's on the back of your neck because like, it's like, it's like a little bit of like a backrub, but then also like pulling you up by the, the scruff of your neck like a, like a mother cat would lift its, its kittens. And there's also like, a bit of heat on your chest from where the badge is placed. And you're getting an offer.

DRE: Is this, is this offer separate from Adelaide's offer?

AUSTIN: Yes. There are two offers you could make here, or two, two things that you could do here to keep living. One is you could owe Adelaide a favor and go on living as like a regular human being. The other is that you could become one of these weird vampires and join the Golden Lance.

DRE: Oh... Before I make this call... can I roll Kindrali's Chosen to see what I know about vampires?

AUSTIN: Sure.

DRE: Okay.

AUSTIN: Gimme a roll.

DRE: That's twelve.

AUSTIN: Oh, that's a twelve, so what are you, what's the, how's that move work again?

DRE: On a ten plus I get something interesting and useful.

AUSTIN: Okay, so. Here's what you know. *[sigh]* Vampires used to... vampires have existed for as long as strange creatures have existed in this world. Kindrali doesn't really know what the like, heritage is, he doesn't know what the first vampire was, he doesn't know if that was Claret Holiday or somebody else, he didn't know Claret Holiday personally, probably, at least not during her time in... not during her time in Red House, nor during her time as a child in Red House, nor during her time as a leader of the military, nor during her time as the secret member of the Golden Lance in Marielda. She was, she was Golden Lance, she was Lance Noble Violet, who we never specified. Who had maintained that commission and then never like, was public about it? Because she was... she was sort of ashamed of being like, The Man. And then when she fled, and this is stuff that Kindrali can tell you, when she fled Marielda with guilt over what happened in Red House, she brought the Golden Lance outside. And reformed them as sort of like, traveling justice-bringers who were outside of any sort of traditional convention of law and order. And she, she and her partner, they always work in twos, they always are partners, her partner... Lilith were the first of the Golden Lance outside of Marielda and, and don't have like a direct connection in a weird way. They aren't an extension of those two. They fled and set themselves up as this new thing and forged a bunch of documents that were like fake treaties that they then showed people.

DRE: *[giggles]* Perfect.

AUSTIN: And because they were vampires, were able to sustain life through the terrible events of the Erasure and then lasted, presumably a longass time but Kindrali doesn't remember, he was gone for most of it, but there's a direct line between them and here, so.

DRE: But so—

AUSTIN: So yeah.

DRE: And I guess like, I mean, vampires aren't like, this isn't like a DnD thing where vampires are inherently like an evil, terrible thing?

AUSTIN: No, no, they're like, they're weird, they're like... they live on the life force of other things, and they have a hard time not just constantly sucking in the life force of other things around them?

DRE: Mhm.

AUSTIN: But also they are in control of that in like a... they're not just like, they don't like lose their minds and go like, pin people to the ground and bite their necks and shit.

DRE: Okay.

AUSTIN: So. That's your offer.

DRE: Oh, fuck. *[laughs]*

KEITH: Be a vampire, duh!

DRE: Ali in the chat says "Please know that I will kill you because I don't understand you." Yeah, that's fair.

AUSTIN: But you'll kill him also if he says no to this, right?

ALI: Uh huh.

DRE: Right, yeah, there's just, yeah. Um... Yeah, I'm gonna, I'm gonna take Victoria's offer.

KEITH: Yeah, like duh!

AUSTIN: Alright. *[laughs]* You can like, feel Adelaide's like, grasp as you're pulled away. And then like, it turns from a grasp into a push, and she's like ah fuck it, like, who cares about you. I like Thrandir that your name in roll20 is "Thrandir and Kodiak," good.

DRE: Mhm!

AUSTIN: And you're lifted back up, and feel like you just have the worst fucking headache. And there's nothing visibly that different from you. Again, maybe you might just look actually a little more healthy than you normally do.

DRE: I was about to say, yeah, do I look like a little more...

AUSTIN: A little rosy cheeks.

DRE: Yeah.

AUSTIN: Mhm!

KEITH: Dang, Thrandir looking good after death.

AUSTIN: It's true! *[Dre laughs]* Are there other questions here, did you both get a question?

DRE: I guess? I guess?

AUSTIN: Victoria's like— at that point Gloria comes in and is like,

AUSTIN (as Gloria): Oh! Oh. Wait.

KEITH (as Fero): You missed *everything*.

DRE (as Thrandir?): Yeah.

*[laughter]*

ALI: Is... Arrell was still there, right?

AUSTIN: *[cross]* Oh—

KEITH (as Fero): *[cross]* We tried to get you right away, I can't believe you only showed—

AUSTIN: *[cross]* No Arrell, Arrell teleported away.

ALI: Oh, oh oh.

DRE: Uh, this is in character.

DRE (as Thrandir): How did he get away, I broke his staff that was the whole point of this whole thing!

KEITH (as Fero): He got, he put the two pieces and kinda touched them together.

DRE (as Thrandir): Well that's not fair. That's not fair at all!

KEITH (as Fero): *[cross]* Yeah it is super not fair.

AUSTIN (as Gloria): He's a very powerful magician, you can't trust him.

AUSTIN: Says Gloria.

AUSTIN (as Gloria): I don't trust any magicians.

DRE (as Throndir): Well...

AUSTIN (as Gloria): Not even stage magicians.

KEITH (as Fero): I especially don't trust stage magicians.

AUSTIN (as Gloria): They're frauds!

KEITH (as Fero): They're total frauds. At least Arrell can actually kill us.

AUSTIN (as Gloria): Exactly.

JACK: Austin... Austin has made so many references to stage magicians and illusionists throughout this game.

*[Dre and Ali laugh]*

AUSTIN: Mhm!

JACK: That I am now really, *really* like intimately upset that we didn't go and see Espanarde because I feel that like... there's definitely something there!

AUSTIN: Uh huh! This is the second time you didn't go see Espanarde. He was in the last detective game, too. Anyway.

DRE: Um, where's Kodiak?

AUSTIN: Kodiak came back with, with Gloria Lake.

DRE: Okay.

AUSTIN: Yeah, you're good.

KEITH: Does Kodiak react any differently?

DRE: I was about to say, is—

KEITH: With Throndir being a vampire?

AUSTIN: I'll let— you tell me, Dre.

DRE: I mean... he notices something is up but like... I mean I'm different but I'm still me.

AUSTIN: Yeah.

DRE: That's not, that's not gonna like, that's not gonna break what we have.

AUSTIN: He definitely like goes like

AUSTIN (as Kodiak): *[growls, sniffs, grumbles, whines]*

DRE: *[cross]* I imagine his response is like—

AUSTIN: *[whines]* He like, comes around eventually.

DRE: Yeah, you have that friend who's making a decision that you don't agree with and you're like—

AUSTIN: Yeah.

DRE: Man, I hope this goes better for you, I don't think it will, but I love you so like, I'm in, I guess. *[laughs]*

AUSTIN: Uh huh! Alright. Do you stay? Or do you go?

DRE: Me?

AUSTIN: No, like all of you. Like, the door is open, there's a hole in the ground, you can hear the guards coming. Victoria is, there are dead, there are dying guards on the ground. There are scorch marks everywhere, and there is the four of you. Five of you, with Kodiak.



DRE: Yeah, and I guess there's no evidence that Arrell was here at all.

AUSTIN: No. Or like, the stuff that you know is evidence, but not stuff that anyone else, they're like oh yeah you guys did this, you fuckin are trying to break her out of prison.

DRE: Yeah. Hm. I guess we go? I don't know, what does, what does Victoria think. I mean, I say go.

AUSTIN: Victoria—

KEITH: *[cross]* Um, according to Gloria, Victoria and Gloria could have escaped at any time.

AUSTIN: Yeah, I think Victoria sits back down.

DRE: Okay.

KEITH: Yeah, so.

AUSTIN: Now it should be clear why Victoria could've escaped at any time.

DRE: Yeah, nobody saw us come in here? So maybe we should leave.

AUSTIN: There was that big vole. People saw the big vole upstairs.

DRE: Yeah, well you know.

KEITH: Yeah but I don't look like a vole.

AUSTIN: Okay. People are going to put together that the Druid did this. Down the line, not right this second, but like to be clear.

KEITH: *[cross]* I, hey—

AUSTIN: All it takes is talking to a few people to be like, "Oh there was a giant vole" and someone's gonna be like, "Oh, you mean Fero?"

KEITH: Eh, fuck it. Fuck it! I'll stay, what do I got to be afraid of, I could just be a vole.

AUSTIN: *[cross]* Okay!

KEITH: I could just get out.

AUSTIN: That's true, yeah. Just, team fuck off, we could get out of here whenever we want to.

KEITH: Yeah, fuck yeah. Like, straight up. If they don't believe us, we're gone.

AUSTIN: Mhm.

DRE: Should I, should I go so we have like one person on the outside? *[laughs]*

KEITH: Nah, fuck it! We can do this, we've got it.

DRE: I don't— uh!

AUSTIN: Alright no, I like it, fine.

DRE: Okay, yeah fine, fuck it!

AUSTIN: Okay! You're all connected now as one of these suspects. Janine.

JANINE: Hey.

AUSTIN: Adaire, I need you to make a roll.

JANINE: Oh boy. Okay.

AUSTIN: Two d6 plus one. There they go. Okay, eight. Okay. Oh, buddy. Oh pal.

JANINE: Yeah?

AUSTIN: Oh... Kay. *[sigh]* So. There is, this is only a couple blocks away from—

JANINE: Hey um, can I, can I specify I'm not walking in with unconscious Sol and that I like, take a minute to like slap his cheeks and, okay.

AUSTIN: Yep, uh huh.

JANINE: Okay, I just wanted to clear that up.

AUSTIN: Yeah. God, if you'd gotten a nine, I'd give it to you because of Sol being there, as like another bonus or something, but an eight is an eight. You've gotta double up sometimes to get those extra people. Remember I was worried, I was like, ugh, will two d6 plus however many people are there work because you can just guarantee success if all of you do a thing?

JANINE: *[cross]* There's a lot of ground to cover!

AUSTIN: There's a lot of ground to cover, it worked out! Okay, so, you know how the, the Rosemerrow Current is a working like, mill that's been turned into a printing press. This is like an old, shitty windmill that has been turned into a, the like, a kind of detective's office for the Major Crimes Unit for Rosemerrow. *You* know as someone who has maybe dipped on, dipped her feet into the less than legal side of things that this is the only group in Rosemerrow that is allowed to do an investigation prosecution across every sub district of Rosemerrow. They like, the... It's also the police in the Mills, so like the Mills is kind of not holding anybody yet, or if they were they would be here. And they're not. I think you probably learn that from whoever is like at reception to this group. It's not, probably not even, it's probably like a junior detective or something right, it's like a, someone who's been assigned to do like stakeouts and to do like, coffee runs, basically, for this group. Who lets you know that they don't have a suspect yet and that if you'll hang out, you'll be able to meet Bray Tevilton, who is the Chief Inspector.

And so you wait for a little bit, and then you meet with, with Tevilton, who tells you that he hasn't detained any suspects, much to his boss' chagrin. He doesn't believe everything here adds up. He doesn't think any of the suspects did it, and that while he... while he can't stop all of them, basically, he's there to, to, he is trying to find out who really did it, but then also he can only really detain one person for you. That's all he has the resources to do, basically. He is a, also a halfling, he is also like, four foot four, four foot three, he's kind of, he's not short, he's like average halfling's height. Dark features, bald head, kind of deep-welled eyes, has seen a lot of things, button up shirt, or sorry it's like a button up shirt but the top button is undone, he's not wearing his tie. Pants and suspenders, you know, he's a detective.

AUSTIN (as Tevilton): So. Who's this Sol Cider-Brew you've brought me? What's he got to do with it?

AUSTIN: Also, wait a second. He's a cop. What's your real name?

JANINE: It's Adaire.

AUSTIN: What's your real name?

JANINE: Adaire.

AUSTIN: Out of character?

JANINE: Oh. *[laughs]* Addie Kneath-Forman. Kneath hyphen Forman, Kneath with a K.

AUSTIN: Addie? Okay. He like—

JANINE: It's worth noting she, she was only ever Addie in Velas and by the time she moved on from Velas she had picked a new name.

AUSTIN: Mhm. He like, starts going through paperwork when he looks at you and is like—

AUSTIN (as Tevilton): I recognize your face. I have a sketch of you from a little town outside of Velas. You're with the Golden Lance?

JANINE (as Adaire): Life takes us in all kinds of directions.

AUSTIN (as Tevilton): You know there are still warrants out for your arrest, Addie.

JANINE (as Adaire): Yeah, well. Again, life takes us in all kinds of directions.

AUSTIN (as Tevilton): Yeah, sometimes you buy a... fake medicine from a con artist. All kinds of directions.

JANINE (as Adaire): It wasn't fake. It did things.

AUSTIN (as Tevilton): A kick in the gut does things too. Doesn't help your kidneys, though.

JANINE (as Adaire): Look, I'll... I'll listen to your advice on medicine when you can make good medicine. This is not, this is not what I'm here for.

AUSTIN: He pours himself a drink.

AUSTIN (as Tevilton): I make, I make medicine as good as you.

AUSTIN: He pours a second one.

AUSTIN (as Tevilton): Would you like some?

JANINE (as Adaire): You just, you just bought that. That's different, you didn't even make a cocktail. It doesn't count. Mixology is an art. Look, again, this is not what I am here for. I'm here on business.

AUSTIN (as Tevilton): *[cross]* So what are you here for?

JANINE: And I tap my medal.

AUSTIN (as Tevilton): Miss uh.. What do you call, Ducarte?

JANINE (as Adaire): Ducarte.

AUSTIN (as Tevilton): That's a good name.

JANINE (as Adaire): Means "of map."

AUSTIN (as Tevilton): Not as good of a name as I thought. *[laughter]* So what can I help you with? Ms. Ducarte.

JANINE (as Adaire): Okay, well, for one thing the tone is a lot, considering I'm like a million miles ahead of you on this investigation business. I don't even do this stuff for a job, you know! I'm just like, this is just a side thing right now and I'm still fucking... look I have this guy and he's a witness. I thought I would do you a—

AUSTIN (as Tevilton): Mhm.

JANINE (as Adaire): A solid. By bringing you some information in return for maybe... tidying up some potentially unfavorable loose ends.

AUSTIN (as Tevilton): First of all, Miss Ducarte, we have plenty of information. Otherwise, we would've rushed to make an arrest like the other departments throughout Rosemerrow. Second of all, thank you for the witness. So. What do you want in exchange?

JANINE: Uh, is this basically counting as like my question.... thing?

AUSTIN: Yeah.

JANINE: Cause, okay.

AUSTIN: No, you know what, no, you can get a question and this, this the, the, the base thing for this was that he gives you, that he basically takes a suspect off the map.

JANINE: Mhm.

AUSTIN: What he can do is... he'll just tell you straight up.

AUSTIN (as Tevilton): If you have evidence that proves that one of these suspects beyond any doubt is innocent? We can take them into custody here and over a time, we can release them. Eventually, there'll be enough time that it is not of anyone's interest to execute them. The politics moves fast in Rosemerrow. But I can only do one. We have our own leads. We have our own people to protect.

JANINE: Okay.

AUSTIN: *[cross]* That suspect list again.

JANINE: So what's— yeah, what's our timeline here again? I know that...

AUSTIN: This is it. The next turn, the trigger gets pulled.

JANINE: Yeah, yeah.

AUSTIN: Victoria Solomon. Iduna Fel. Arinia Slayton. Blake Bromley. Lenny Lenova. Mother Glory. Isaac Adelton. And then, I don't think anyone's gonna try and save the Dark Sun or, or Obelas.

JANINE: Mhm. *[sigh]* It's tough. I, I had not planned, I was obviously like, I'm not gonna get everyone here, I'd been hoping for two.

AUSTIN: Yeah. If you'd gotten a ten this would be two.

JANINE: Ugh. So, next turn, everyone who is captive is getting killed, basically?

AUSTIN: Yeah. Like, if you wanna intervene physically and do that thing, you can totally do that thing, but like that is... the ones who I think people care about are not necessarily— I guess, if you wanna go try to break Blake out of captivity instead of going to answer these questions at the end with the rest of everybody, that's a thing you're totally allowed to go do, but also that will make you a wanted felon.

*[Janine groans]*

ALI: A *felon*?

AUSTIN: Yeah, you can't free the fucking person who killed the chancellor! They believe that, like they, they are going to kill—

ALI: *[cross]* Yeah...

AUSTIN: This person who they caught sneaking out of the fucking chancellor's high house.

ALI: Oh, yeah, okay, yeah.

JANINE: People are gonna hate me for this...

AUSTIN: Uh huh!

JANINE: Okay.

ALI: Welcome to the show.

JANINE: Yep! *[Dre laughs]* Adaire's gonna... I'm gonna use my Sol card and get Blake's feet out of the fire.

AUSTIN: Tevilton nods.

AUSTIN (as Tevilton): Look out for your own, huh?

JANINE (as Adaire): That's not it at all. We're dealing— you know, we're dealing with some fucking magical nonsense, and people are apprehending a fuck— someone who steals vases and shit? Like? It's not, it's stupid.

AUSTIN (as Tevilton): The rest of it's all smart? No, that's fine.

JANINE (as Adaire): No, I mean it's, it's all pretty stupid, but like you're tying my hands here. What am I gonna do, pull my knife on you and make you free everyone? No.

AUSTIN (as Tevilton): It wouldn't work. Again, we have limited resources, we can't be everywhere at once.

JANINE (as Adaire): Mhm.

AUSTIN (as Tevilton): I'll dispatch— I'll dispatch someone. And you tell the Golden Lance that Rosemerrow held up its side of the bargain and we respected your badge. Is there anything else?

JANINE: *[sighs]* I wanna know specifically why... a... law enforcement organization in Rosemerrow didn't make a move on any of these super obvious, super enticing targets that are all over the place. Like he, I've been told, okay, like—

AUSTIN: Yeah.

JANINE: Like, they have info, but I wanna know specifically like, they had opportunities certainly to act on all kinds of things even with that info.

AUSTIN (as Tevilton): We had, we had good information that a number of the suspects had alibis. We had nothing open and shut. Your testimony as a deputy of the Golden Lance works for that, but it'll only work so far. I believe in justice. I do the best I can with what we have. And I believe there is another suspect out there. Who we will stop at nothing to locate. But my men can't be everywhere.

JANINE (as Adaire): Yeah, well, that's a nice thing that you can tell people when the gnolls kick off some sort of fucking war with you guys that's fine, I'll be out of town, so.

AUSTIN (as Tevilton): *[cross]* You want me to go free Mother Glory, I'll go free Mother Glory.

JANINE (as Adaire): No, no! I'm just saying. You're—

AUSTIN (as Tevilton): Don't put this on me, Ducarte.

JANINE (as Adaire): This isn't my town.

AUSTIN (as Tevilton): Then—

JANINE (as Adaire): I'm leaving. Like, what the fuck does it matter to me?

AUSTIN (as Tevilton): That's a bigger question, then. If you just keep walking away, you'll never believe in anything. I'll be here when the riots happen, or whatever comes next. I'll keep trying to make things good. You keep walking away.

JANINE (as Adaire): That sounds good do me.

AUSTIN (as Tevilton): Unless there's something else? We're very busy.

JANINE (as Adaire): So am I.

AUSTIN: And he drinks the drink he poured for you. Alright.

JANINE: *[laughs]* After what I just did, after what I did to Sol, I'm not in a drinking other people's drinks mood.

*[Ali laughs]*

AUSTIN: Fair, fair. Yeah. So. Next scene. Final scene. Where is everybody? The kind of plan was to go back to... to Roseheart to meet back up at Roseheart Criminal Custody and... with the Golden Lance and kind of share findings here, but if people wanna be somewhere else, you know. We're not playing the board game. You could be somewhere else instead.

ART: Sounds good to me.

AUSTIN: The, the Roseheart part, or something else? Or being somewhere else?

ART: Yeah, the Roseheart part.

AUSTIN: Okay, yup.

JANINE: So wait, if we're, if we have to go to Roseheart to answer questions or is that not?

AUSTIN: *[cross]* Yes, yeah.

JANINE: Okay.

AUSTIN: Victoria Solomon will want to have— Victoria and Gloria are both like, alright, who's the baddie here? Though now I think it's clear, for them. There are other questions that they have though, as they've been locked up.

JACK: Um... God. Fero, are you... I mean.

AUSTIN: Right, there is also what's next in general. Yeah, I'm very curious where Fero goes for this.

KEITH: Uh, do I, do I know that Mother Glory didn't get saved before, like, without, do I have time to even—

AUSTIN: I mean, where are you?

KEITH: I was in Roseheart.

AUSTIN: Right. Like, where do you wanna be when it's time for the execution? Because, like. What that would look like would be somebody coming to stay the execution.

KEITH: I would, I'll, I would go to, where is it, it's in Viridian Village, right?

AUSTIN: *[cross]* It's in Viridian Village.

KEITH: Yeah.

AUSTIN: Viridian Village, yeah.

KEITH: I would be there, over Roseheart, probably.

AUSTIN: Yeah.

KEITH: But it's a question of if I know that that's happening.

AUSTIN: You know it's scheduled to happen. You don't know for sure whether it was stopped or not. Right?

KEITH: Yeah.

AUSTIN: Also, you were waiting with Victoria for them for like, to be, for guards to come like see what the fuck was up, so we'd have to resolve that first before you went anywhere.

KEITH: Okay, right, yeah. Then, yeah, I'll go to Viridian Village for sure.

AUSTIN: Okay, so we'll resolve the Roseheart stuff before that. Who else is where?

DRE: *[cross]* I guess—

JANINE: *[cross]* Adaire's in Roseheart.

DRE: *[cross]* Yeah, I guess I'm at Roseheart too.

SYLVIA: *[cross]* I'm in Roseheart as well.

AUSTIN: Okay, so like.

JACK: *[cross]* If, if Fero's, yeah, if Fero's going to cover Viridian Village, I'll go to Roseheart.

AUSTIN: Okay. So everybody's just gonna be at Roseheart first for this, so we'll do that in that order of just like, the time everyone's back at Roseheart is when the guards have kind of like, there are probably a dozen guards who have like, surrounded the interrogation room? The two guards who'd been kind of bled dry of life force have been pulled away, but no one quite knows what to do with the vampires... who seem to have at least... Victoria isn't hurting anybody, so. So I think it ends up being Kel Carolina, who is Lutz's right hand. They show up and like usher you into the room, the interrogation room past all of the guards. With the, the Golden Lance members. And Kel is like

AUSTIN (as Kel): Alright. This is very non-traditional. Unorthodox. But I wanna hear it all before I make the final call here.

AUSTIN: I don't think that they really understand the severity of like, the fact that they can't just be like, that holding down the Golden Lance is a lot harder than it seems, necessarily?

KEITH: Right.

AUSTIN: So let's get on to questions. Victoria wants to know... I have nine questions here. The way this worked in the first game, the first time we did this game was if someone wanted to be the person who answered, you rolled two d6 plus intelligence, wisdom, or charisma, your choice. The highest number gets to decide who answers the question, and each person can only answer a question once, but obviously there are more than, I guess there are eight of us, or eight of you, so you can almost all answer a question. So, or, but in this case, there are enough things where it feels like you could just quorum and come to a conclusion. It's up to you though, but we need to decide before we start answering questions.

ALI: Oh.

AUSTIN: Did you just want to agree and come to a democratic vote, or do you wanna roll to see who gets to answer these questions?

ALI: That?

KEITH: Oh, what do we, we did the roll last time, right?

ALI: Yeah, that...

KEITH: Fuck that. Let's not do that again.

*[Dre laughs]*

ALI: I mean, that depends on the question, right? That's the point of it.

JACK: *[cross]* No, let's roll!

DRE: I mean, rolling is interesting because it like, it allows for...

JACK: It allows us to prejudice the questions, right?

DRE: *[cross]* Yeah.

JACK: Prejudice the answers.

AUSTIN: Mhm.

JACK: Yeah. I, I vote rolling.

KEITH: Okay, well. Okay, let's, everybody's in favor of prejudicing the questions and answers and I'm in favor of a democratic vote.

AUSTIN: Uh huh! Okay, it sounds like we're rolling.

KEITH: Okay.

AUSTIN: So. Question number one. What happened to Chancellor Lutz?

DRE: I think we can all, we probably don't have to roll on this one.

ALI: *[cross]* Yeah.

AUSTIN: If you don't want to. Unless you want to— like, you can answer this question a bunch of different ways. Like, there are ways to answer this question that maybe are not true, but will lead to things.

JACK: I think if we want to leave open the door for that later, we should roll for all of them to make that mechanically easier?

AUSTIN: Yep.

JACK: How much we rolling here?

AUSTIN: It is two d6 plus either intelligence, wisdom, or charisma.

KEITH: God. Is Hadrian gonna get it, I hate it when Hadrian answers questions.

*[Jack and Dre laugh]*

ART: Yeah, cause last time using that system you hate, you got my guy killed, who turned out to be defending us all from the evils that we're fighting now.

AUSTIN: *[cross]* He was also evil.

DRE: *[cross]* He was also pretty rude.

AUSTIN: To be clear.

KEITH: He was also evil!

AUSTIN: Things are complicated.

KEITH: He was, it was just happenstance and he *happened* to be doing the right thing.

AUSTIN: *[cross]* He was— I mean he also didn't, he also knew what Arrell was up to and was opposed to it, but like, you know. Alright, so either Art or, or Adaire. Either Hadrian or Adaire. Say what happened to Lutz.

ART: I'm gonna let you have it or I'll roll for it if you don't want it.

JANINE: I mean, I'll, I'll take it, I feel like this is the straightforward thing.

AUSTIN: Mhm. So?

JANINE: Okay, so the thing that happened was the... Wizard? Sorcerer?

AUSTIN: Wizard's right, he's the Wizard.

JANINE: Arrell is making these like, pocket dimensions to store people in so they can work on solutions for the whole end of the world part two. And also just protecting some people, and he wanted to put— he put Lutz in one of those, and we've seen a lot of the scorch marks that indicate similar things sorta happening in that, so Lutz is probably not actually dead, but just in some sort of weird pocket world that we can't get to because Arrell is a fucking nightmare boy.

AUSTIN: True. Take an XP, everybody.

JANINE: Hooray.



AUSTIN: Alright. Two.

DRE: Oh, everybody, okay.

AUSTIN: Yeah, yeah, yeah, this isn't just a one person—

JANINE: I'm gonna level from this I hope! I'm really close.

AUSTIN: *[cross]* I, yeah. I would imagine so. I would imagine so. Alright, second question, everybody but Adaire roll. The question is, what created the three scorch marks in Lutz's bedroom? You need to get what all three were from.

JACK: Oh.

AUSTIN: That's a four, Jack.

*[Dre laughs]*

JACK: I'm so charismatic.

AUSTIN: You are! You're the Bard.

JACK: I rolled two ones.

AUSTIN: You did, somehow.

SYLVIA: *[cross]* Oh, buddy.

ALI: Aw.

AUSTIN: Is that everybody again? So this one is going to be Hadrian.

ART: So one is... One is the, the taking. One is the escaping, and then the third is... what was our best guess there?

JACK: Like, some sort of offensive blast?

ART: Alright, I'll go with some sort of offensive blast.

*[laughter]*

JACK:*[cross]* You know, the— you know the three sorts of magic: trapping, teleporting away and...

KEITH: *[cross]* Offensive blast.

ART: *[cross]* Some sort of offense.

AUSTIN: I need more on the escaping one. What do you—

ART: Isn't that like, it's, it's Arrell leaving, right?

AUSTIN: Is that what you're, is that your final answer?

ART: Unless someone's gonna tell me I'm wrong.

AUSTIN: *[cross]* I, here, I'll, I will, there are three blasts. One is near the window, one is underneath the inside of the window, one is out on the balcony, and the third one is the one that goes through the bed and to the wall, so you need to mark those three.

KEITH: *[cross]* One thing that we know is— one thing that we know is that Addleton was there and escaped as a wolf. As, not as a wolf, sorry, as a gnoll.

DRE: *[cross]* As a gnoll. Yeah.

KEITH: As a hyena. Person.

ART: So it's not how he, he didn't get out using a— I don't know. We don't seem to know this one.

AUSTIN: Okay.

ART: Unless, like, yeah these, we've we've talked it through.

AUSTIN: You wanna just put something on the paper?

JANINE: One—

ALI: We did.

JANINE: One of them seems like breaching, one of them seems like taking, one of them seems like poofing, but I don't know.

AUSTIN: *[cross]* I— well that's no, so no xp. One of them is offensive, you got that one, that's the one that goes through the bed and the wall, for sure. One of them is, is escaping, which is the, it's how Blake got away, Blake blinded everybody.

ALI: Man...

JANINE: *Oh*.

ALI: I knew that, but I didn't think that I did.

AUSTIN: *[cross]* With flash paper.

JANINE: Oh, I didn't think flash paper would leave like a scorch like that.

AUSTIN: Like, weird magical flash paper that they got from Espanard, which you would've known if you'd asked that question, or if you'd gone to Espanard.

ALI: *[cross]* *God*.

JANINE: *[cross]* *Oh*.

DRE: *[cross]* Ahhhh.

JACK: *[cross]* *Oh come on!*

AUSTIN: The third one is the blast on the balcony which is the being taken to the other dimension and going away. Addleton was never in that room, Addleton was in Roseheart, but Addleton was never in the high house itself.

KEITH: Okay.

AUSTIN: Alright. Three. This question is, when and where is Ordenna invading the continent?

DRE: Oh...

ALI: Don't worry about it.

*[laughter]*

ART: The next, the next snow. The next, the next bit of high blizzard.

JACK: *[cross]* The next massive snowfall—

AUSTIN: So, is this Jack or is this, or is this Lem or Throndir?

JACK: What do you think, Throndir?

DRE: I'll let you have this one.

JACK: Okay. This is when the next massive snowstorm happens, they're going to target Velas.

AUSTIN: Okay.

JACK: That's right, right?

AUSTIN: Take, take XP, yeah.

JACK: Yes.

AUSTIN: Okay.

JACK: Just like a, point of note, that I meant to ask during that scene, they like, they explicitly used the word invasion right, they weren't trying to couch it in anything at that point?

AUSTIN: Jerod— Well, no, I was, I built that Jerod, I was trying to, again that was kind of an abstraction that you kind of put together. Jerod was speaking in lots of metaphor and parable and was not, did not use the word invasion. But there is no doubt that that is an invasion.

JACK: That that's what's about to happen, okay.

AUSTIN: Yes, yeah.

JACK: Good grief.

AUSTIN: They're better at their job than— she's better at her job than that.

JACK: We haven't been to Velas at all this season, right? We kind of started there.

AUSTIN: You started there, yeah.

JACK: *[cross]* Very briefly.

AUSTIN: Yeah, like offscreen, basically.

JACK: Yeah.

AUSTIN: Alright. Four. Gimme some rolls. Is that it? It should be four rolls here, so it's either—

ART: *[cross]* That's right, yeah.

AUSTIN: — Throndir or Ephrim.

SYLVIA: Fero got that as well.

DRE: *[cross]* Wait, or Fero.

KEITH: *[cross]* Yeah, so there's a three way tie.

AUSTIN: Oh, or Fero, three way tie, hot. Well, if one of you wants to— here's the question, the question is who destroyed the New Old Museum.

SYLVIA: Um... Well.

JACK: Uhh.

*[laughter]*

KEITH: I want— I think that we should, whoever answers the question I think that they should say that Arrell did it.

SYLVIA: I'm... I'm with that answer.

DRE: Yeah, I mean, I ain't no narc, so sure.

*[laughter]*

ART: Morality is for other people, the Seasons of Heiron story.

AUSTIN: *[cross]* Right, that's what they say. So who's doing the answer here, who's lying?

SYLVIA: I'll do it.

AUSTIN: Okay.

SYLVIA: Also—

JACK: We're just looking them dead in the eye. Our fire mage is looking them dead—

*[laughter]*

AUSTIN: Yeah, it's perfect!

DRE: Yeah.

AUSTIN: That fucker Arrell, he, that was him. That was all him.

SYLVIA: What, he got Fero and Throndir with a fireball! He's got it too, it's fine.

AUSTIN: Uh huh!

DRE: He leaves scorch marks everywhere.

AUSTIN: God

SYLVIA: Exactly.

DRE: It's a open and shut case.

KEITH: *[cross]* Yeah, like, kind of everywhere too.

SYLVIA: *[cross]* His buddy Isaac was there too, like, come on. It's obvious.

JANINE: One of them was smoking drugs...

*[laughter]*

AUSTIN: Yup, uh huh! Zero, zero XP on that one. It also wasn't the answer you thought it was, but I guess no one, again, no one went to the New Old Museum this game.

JACK: Actually, wait a second, how did the fire in the New Old Museum start?

KEITH: *[cross]* Wait, wasn't, was it not uh—

SYLVIA: Me!

AUSTIN: We have moved over. We have already left.

KEITH: Hold on, I thought one of us set fire to the New Old Museum.

AUSTIN: Yup. Uh huh.

SYLVIA: *[cross]* It was, like, definitely me!

KEITH: Yeah.

ART: *[cross]* Yeah. It is very clear that you guys think that.

AUSTIN: *[cross]* There is data earlier in this game— yup. That is not what burnt down that museum.

ALI: Mhm.

SYLVIA: Huh.

KEITH: Okay.

AUSTIN: Which is information I introduced earlier in this game, not today, but in a previous session, but it just, yup.

SYLVIA: *[cross]* Oh, goddammit!

ALI: Yep!

AUSTIN: Alright, number five. Who made the hilt?

JACK: Oh god.

AUSTIN: Oh sorry, you should've rolled first.

KEITH: Yeah.

ALI: Who *made* the hilt?

KEITH: *[cross]* Can I just not roll?

AUSTIN: Mhm.

DRE: Oh, is it... I mean was it... Samot or Samothos? I don't know.

ALI: We were told, right?

KEITH: Well I got a twelve on the one that I definitely for sure don't know, so.

ART: *[cross]* I can't say, but it's probably—

JACK: I...

DRE: Jack, do you remember? This was...

JACK: No, I had no real, Austin might be able to correct me here, but I had no direct understanding of who made this thing, right?

ALI: No, but it's Samothos. The hilt is from the sword that he tried to give to Maelgwyn, right?

JACK: Oh.

DRE: That makes sense to me. That's what I thought it was, but.

ART: But then it's not the, the artef— It's not...

KEITH: Jack, you still have to roll, right?

JACK: No, I, I answered one of the earlier questions, so.

KEITH: Oh.

ALI: I—

AUSTIN: Did you? Wait, which one did you, oh yeah, yeah yeah, right, you're right.

KEITH: Okay, so it's either me or... or Hella.

AUSTIN: It's... you.

KEITH: So it's me.

AUSTIN: Cause you rolled a twelve.

KEITH: Okay, so I'm, I'm... I'm just parroting what Hella whispered to me.

AUSTIN: Which was...

KEITH: Which was that, that it was...

ALI: Yeah, does anyone know that? I, I know that 'cause I... *[laughs]* Listened to the show.

JANINE: Didn't, wasn't there a thing about the, the Cult that was into the sword being from like, the east or something?

SYLVIA: I mean, there was like a statue of Samothres in their place too.

ALI: *[cross]* Yeah, what is Lem's understanding of this, 'cause he's the one who would have... maybe not the right answer but an answer that anyone would have.

JACK: Like a, a wider understanding? Or more specifically because of this incident?

ALI: I mean, you were the one that was dealing with it, so if anyone had, if any of these characters could speak to it, it would be Lem.

JACK: *[cross]* Well... yeah.

ALI: I know, I think that the answer I said is correct because I...

JACK: I mean I asked a... I asked a pastry chef and he didn't know.

ALI: Yeah.

JACK: Um... I'm willing to, I'm willing to go with Samothres, though Lem himself doesn't...

ALI: That's the... yeah.

JACK: It feels like Lem is trying to put together a puzzle that he doesn't understand all the pieces of, or to put it more glibly, I guess like, the pattern doesn't make sense? Is it, there's a statue of someone that he knows it should be, and he's hearing from others that it might be to do with Samothres, but at the same time everything about this doesn't reflect what Lem believes he knows about the god. So I'm... I'm not answering this question, but I'm willing to like, cautiously put my, put my token on Samothres.

ALI: Okay.

ART: We don't think there's a chance it's the, it's the Artificer Mundane whose name I forgot?

JACK: Primo?

ALI: Primo.

ART: There we go. I had Giuseppe for some reason...

KEITH: *[cross]* Well this is not a—

*[laughter]*

SYLVIA: Oh, buddy.

AUSTIN: That's his middle name.

ALI: Adjacent, but no.

KEITH: This is not a mundane sword, right? Or a sword hilt?

AUSTIN: Yeah...

JACK: I don't think Primo would make this at all.

ALI: *[cross]* Yeah, this isn't... yeah.

JACK: *[cross]* This doesn't feel like a thing Primo would make.

SYLVIA: We also have like, I don't think we have any way of in character knowing who Primo is.

AUSTIN: Who Primo is? Right.

ALI: Yeah.

AUSTIN: There might've been in the city somewhere, but.

KEITH: Yeah.

JANINE: Or that theatre guy might've had it, or at the museum.

JACK: *[cross]* There's like, something—

*[laughter]*

SYLVIA: Fuckin' stage magicians.

KEITH: So Jack, you're saying maybe Samoths, and Ali you're saying maybe Samot.

ALI: *[cross]* I'm saying Samoths as like a listener, he's\* saying it in character, which is... yeah.

KEITH: Right. Oh, okay. Oh you said Samoths, I thought you said Samot.

ALI: No, no, no.

KEITH: Oh, okay.

ALI: Yeah.

KEITH: Then I'm going to say, *I'm* going to say, I *also* say Samoths, and I'm very confident about it.

JACK: Ah, jeez.

AUSTIN: Take an XP.

ALI: Okay.

KEITH: Alright.

DRE: Ay!

KEITH: I have leveled up.

JACK: This sword was made by Samoths for Maelgwyn? When was that?

ALI: That I... believe I remember an implication, but it was two weeks ago.

AUSTIN: That's actually, the thing you're thinking of was not actually that.

ALI: Oh, okay.

JACK: Oh, wow. So we just... nice.

AUSTIN: Good old Sherlock Holmes Consulting Detective!

KEITH: *[cross]* I said I was very confident.

*[Ali laughs]*

AUSTIN: Yup! You are, you are conflating something from a Rosemerrow episode, I believe, Ali.

ALI: Oh, kay.

AUSTIN: Which is fine, that's not like, that's a...

ALI: Okay.

AUSTIN: Sometimes the brain makes interesting connections. Where has Arrell gone? And this is down I guess to Hella and Throndir?

DRE: Oh, shit. Where has he gone?

SYLVIA: I think...

JANINE: He went to the...

SYLVIA: He went to the Archives, didn't he?

JANINE: Yeah it was—

ALI: He makes the— Yeah. He makes those bubbles...

JANINE: There's that note.

ALI: And, yeah.

SYLVIA: Yeah.

JANINE: I wrote that whole note down.

JACK: Yeah.

ALI: Uh huh.

AUSTIN: So wait, where did he go? This is Hella answering, Hella?

ALI: Yeah. Yeah, so he like makes those fucking bubbles and he goes into them, and then I think he wants to go to the Archives for some reason? I don't know.

JACK: You— yeah.

AUSTIN: Alright.

JANINE: *[cross]* "The Wizard is coming, move the book."

AUSTIN: Yes, he's going to the Archives, correct. Alright.

ALI: Another XP.

AUSTIN: Another XP. Throdir.

DRE: Okay.

AUSTIN: You're up, bud. Where is the Sect of the Dark Sun headquartered in Heiron?

DRE: Uh... I mean the closest thing we got was that theatre in this town, right?

AUSTIN: No.

JACK: I don't think that's their hq, there were like five dudes there and I killed one of them.

DRE: *[cross]* I mean I don't—

ALI: But that's a place to... you know. Question people.

KEITH: Maybe it's underneath the Old Museum, the New Old Museum.

JACK: No. Well...

JANINE: I was just on this page in my notes.

DRE: I mean it's probably somewhere in Marielda, is probably actually the answer, but.

JACK: *[cross]* No, underneath the Old— Somewhere in Marielda?

ART: Is it City of First Light though?

ALI: Yeah...

JACK: Yeah, also like, we have no real conception of what's happening in...

DRE: Yeah...

JACK: *[cross]* Like I don't know if Marielda is functioning right now.

ALI: *[cross]* They seemed kind of void nun-y though, so.

DRE: They seemed *what*?

JACK: *[cross]* They did seem super void nun-y!

ALI: They, yeah.

DRE: Yeah, yeah, like, like I'm saying as Andrew that it's probably somewhere in Marielda.

ALI: Right.

DRE: But I don't think we got any of that info during this play session.

ALI: *[cross]* Yeah, they were like Yellow House adjacent?

DRE: Yeah.

ALI: In a weird way?

ART: *[cross]* You can guess.

JACK: *[cross]* But they could've— oh, go on.

ART: That's how we got Samoths, like...

ALI: Yeah.

JACK: Also, wasn't someone saying something about them maybe coming from the east?

DRE: Oh, shit.

ART: That's also in the east.

DRE: Maybe.

ART: *[cross]* Or, west of Marielda.

JACK: Again, I keep trying to zoom out of the Rosemerrow map, like an open world map to try and—

AUSTIN: Do you, would you like that? Would you like to go to a different map?

JACK: Is it going to be helpful?

ALI: Depends.

DRE: Probably not?

ALI: It's up to you to make it helpful, he can only give, whatever.

*[laughter]*

JACK: I hate you.

DRE: Yeah, we rolled a seven to nine on this...

AUSTIN: Um, give me a second, give me a second here.

JACK: On this using the map.

*[Dre laughs]*

AUSTIN: Here, I'll just link you.

JANINE: I wrote "Dwarven origins" question mark in my notes, but I don't know if that was a thing that came out? A Victoria and Gloria's notes thing, a thing that I suspected for some fucking reason? I don't know. But there.

ART: Yeah, I think City of First Light is the, is the good guess.

DRE: Okay. I mean, does anybody have anything better, because I think that's what I'm just gonna go with.

ALI: Yeah... I mean, I always get caught up in the thing like, I don't know how Thrandir would know that at all, but I mean it's a game.

DRE: *[cross]* I mean we're saying it's from, the sword, the sword hilt's from Samoths, Samoths is there...

ALI: Oh, oh actually yeah, they were the ones who dealt with...

JANINE: Yeah.

ALI: He was there, so yeah.

DRE: Yeah, I've been there! Kinda sucked, but you know. So yeah, the City of First Light.

AUSTIN: Incorrect.

DRE: Yeah.

ALI: Okay, oh.

AUSTIN: I'm just gonna show you the answer, which you got this game.

ALI: *Ohhhh*. Wait. No.

JACK: Wait, what?



JANINE: Wait, what? Where? What did you say, Austin? I didn't—

ART: *[cross]* Wait, I thought he was against them?

ALI: Yeah.

AUSTIN: Yes. What?

ART: He was anti....

JACK: *[cross]* I didn't hear what anyone said at all.

JANINE: I don't know what anyone's talking about.

ALI: The yellow line.

DRE: *[cross]* Yeah.

ART: The end of the, the golden line.

*[Jack gasps]*

AUSTIN: Yeah. Obelas told you exactly where they were from and where to track them down.

JACK: Oh no!

ART: I thought that's where his\* people were, I was...

ALI: Yeah.

AUSTIN: No, he\* said the way you could help us was—

ART: *[cross]* I got that backwards.

ALI: *[cross]* Oh...

AUSTIN: Was stopping them.

JACK: Oh yes, you're right, goddammit.

ALI: Well, shucks.

DRE: Womp womp.

ALI: Well, Throndir wasn't there.

AUSTIN: And the other answer, the other answer I would've taken here was Kanton, the dwarven encampment which is what, which is what the... the Golden Lance told you in a previous, like, session. Okay. We're back to needing a roll from everybody. These are big ones, and these are big ones in a way that I'm gonna let everybody roll for, for both of them. Eh, maybe I won't. You know what, I'm gonna give everybody the questions. I'm gonna give you these two remaining questions, and then from there we have to, you'll decide where you wanna prioritize these rolls. I think maybe I'll count this last roll for both of them and you have to decide which one you wanna— ah, I'll let you roll twice, it's more fun. So this first one is what should the Golden Lance do about the undead?

*[Ali and Jack laugh]*

ALI: I rolled a four, so.

DRE: That's gonna be, uh...

ART: Hey, I won! We're going to war with Ordenna, everyone!

*[laughter]*

DRE: Hell yeah, let's do it!

ALI: Stop it.

SYLVIA: I'm down.

ART: They're gonna kill— They're probably gonna kill my family.

JACK: God.

ALI: Oh...

AUSTIN: Yeah. They might.

JACK: Yeah, that's actually...

SYLVIA: Yeah.

AUSTIN: But that's not, I'm, to be clear, I didn't say what should they do to *Ordenna*. I said the undead.

ART: Yeah. Defend, defend Velas?

AUSTIN: Okay.

ART: Yeah, I think, I think Hadrian, Hadrian thinks that the, the Ordennan method is flawed and should be stopped before it kills a lot of people. We can solve this. We can solve this, we don't need to just put the torch to the world.

AUSTIN: Okay. You get an XP for this, no matter what you said, so take an XP.

ALI: Everyone?

AUSTIN: If you disagree, you don't get an XP.

KEITH: Wait, if you *disagree* you don't get one?

AUSTIN: Yeah.

KEITH: Alright.

ALI: I cannot— Can I get like half of one if I'm still figuring it out? *[laughs]*

AUSTIN: No, no.

ALI: I guess, I guess I got all my XP last game, so it's fine.

JACK: I just leveled up!

AUSTIN: Nice.

SYLVIA: Same.

AUSTIN: One more, give me one more roll everybody, except for Hadrian.

ART: First you're like, everyone can roll twice, and then you're like, everyone but Hadrian.

AUSTIN: *[cross]* Yeah, I don't want you to get both of these, that's no fun. Right?

ART: Can I just roll for fun?

AUSTIN: Yeah, roll for fun. We'll just see. Alright, he would've lost anyway.

ART: Yeah.

AUSTIN: Yeah.

KEITH: Is that eleven from Thrandir for this one or for last one?

AUSTIN: Yeah, that's for this one.

DRE: *[cross]* Yeah.

AUSTIN: And Adaire, no Adaire was last one was an eleven. So it's gonna be Thrandir.

Thrandir. Like the, the moral center of this game.

DRE: Yeah, exactly!

AUSTIN: The like, common sense moral center of this game. I've thought about that a lot of like, Thrandir is the one who like, does what's in his gut is right, there's no, there's no like greater purpose, it's just like, oh yeah, this feels like it's the right thing to do, we'll do that. Who of the following should the Golden Lance be prioritizing? The Wizard Arrell. The star folk, the stars, whatever you wanna call them, they have a name that you don't know yet. The Cult or the Sect of the Dark Sun. The Schism of the New Archives, which you only got a taste of but, but there's more of here if you'd looked in different places. I think that's it. Ordenna is not on this list. They can't fight a war. But there is, there are things happening in those other groups.

ART: And to be clear, you mean like, negative attention.

AUSTIN: Yeah, yeah.

KEITH: Right.

AUSTIN: Where should they kick down some fuckin' doors?

KEITH: I'm feeling either Dark Sun or the stars. Right?

DRE: Oh, see, I'm saying like, Dark Sun or Arrell is where I'm leaning.

SYLVIA: Yeah.

KEITH: Well, 'cause—

JACK: Yeah.

ALI: Yeah.

KEITH: 'Cause Arrell, that's damage that can be reversed, technically, and also those people aren't dead. And the Dark Sun is specifically trying to, to hasten what's happening, and the stars are screaming fire people.

DRE: *[cross]* Oh, you know what? No, no. It's Arrell. Arrell created a puppet that became my good friend and then he took all that away.

ALI: Yep.

ART: Good choice.

AUSTIN: Good choice. Take an XP, everybody.

ART: We all fucking... agree.

ALI: That's how we play games.

AUSTIN: Yes.

JANINE: And again, we don't get an XP if we disagree?

ALI: Uh huh!

DRE: Right.

*[laughter]*

AUSTIN: Correct~

KEITH: So that's zero XP from last two for me.

ALI: Come on.

DRE: *[cross]* So only me gets an XP huh? Yeah, okay, cool!

ART: What if that was one of two answers we would've given.

AUSTIN: No, be honest with yourselves. I trust you all.

JANINE: That's like the last answer Adaire would've given.

ART: *[cross]* I'm being honest, I was deeply conflicted.

AUSTIN: Mhm.

ALI: Hella's like, I told you that guy sucked.

*[laughter]*

DRE: Wow!

ART: I also told everyone that guy sucked, that's why I think I'm entitled to this XP!

ALI: I would've told them to go after Arrell, but not because he... created a friendship shadow.

AUSTIN: Yeah, that's fine.

ALI: *[cross]* Okay, okay.

AUSTIN: What matters is the name, the name.

DRE: Ends justify the means.

ALI: Alright.

AUSTIN: Friendship shadows, okay.

*[Ali laughs]*

KEITH: You know that classic, truism the ends justify the means.

DRE: Mhm!

AUSTIN: Okay. Those are the questions. So what do you do now, is the question. Like... I really don't wanna fucking show the death of Mother Glory, it's really depressing. Like I don't wanna, I don't wanna think about it, but I guess I have to in some ways. So does anybody go?

JANINE: Wasn't Fero gonna...

ALI: Yeah.

AUSTIN: Fero was gonna go.

KEITH: *[cross]* I'm gonna go, yeah.

AUSTIN: *[cross]* Alright.

JACK: Yeah, Fero had like, a plan.

ART: Never met her.

KEITH: I didn't really have a plan, I was just gonna go.

AUSTIN: Alright, you're there.

*[Ali sighs]*

DRE: I mean, are you going to try and stop it? Or are you going just to observe?

KEITH: I'm just gonna play it by ear, it's kind of my thing.

ALI: *[cross]* Oh my God.

JANINE: Oh, God.

JACK: Oh, okay.

JANINE: It's an execution.

DRE: If you pitch it as trying to stop it, like. Throndir will go with you.

KEITH: I... I can't imagine a version of stopping it that having like... more swords there would help.

DRE: Yeah, that's fair.

AUSTIN: She is being kept in a cage. Next to a large, makeshift platform where they will force her to walk up and at which point, they will kill her. They have... they've brought out a fucking weapon of war. Like a, an arbalest or something to launch a very large— to skewer her, basically. Because like, she shakes off their spears. And because you healed her so she isn't even as weak as she was once? It's... she does, her head is down, the snow has turned to hail. There's thunder and lightning. And if you want to, you can talk to her before she's led up top. She sits on the ground inside of her cage.

KEITH: Um... I... Yeah, I go up to talk.

AUSTIN: *[sigh]* Alright, Mother Glory, sitting on the floor.

KEITH: Are they there?

AUSTIN: No.

KEITH: Okay.

AUSTIN (as Mother Glory): Fero. I thought you'd be gone by now.

KEITH (as Fero): No, I didn't have anywhere else to be.

AUSTIN (as Mother Glory): Do you have the contract?

KEITH (as Fero): They're looking for it.

AUSTIN (as Mother Glory): Good.

KEITH (as Fero): I don't know if there's anything I can do to stop this.

AUSTIN: She just shakes her head.

AUSTIN (as Mother Glory): Did you try?

KEITH (as Fero): I thought one of my friends was helping, and then she didn't.

AUSTIN (as Mother Glory): What did I tell you about counting on people, and how disappointing it can be?

KEITH (as Fero): I didn't have any other choice, there was no time.

AUSTIN: She just like...

AUSTIN (as Mother Glory): *[sighs]* I don't want my last moments teaching— to be teaching a halfling a lesson. But there's always time. Sometimes you've just already spent it.

KEITH (as Fero): Yeah. That's a good point.

AUSTIN (as a guard): Alright, buddy. You got your time.

AUSTIN: A couple of guards come over.

KEITH (as Fero): Hey, can we just let her go?

AUSTIN (as a guard): Alright, pal, good joke.

KEITH (as Fero): What do you got, any evidence?

AUSTIN (as a guard): Go stand with the fuckin other popcorn eaters.

KEITH (as Fero): I mean, come on, some evidence? Or anything?

AUSTIN (as a guard): Come on.

AUSTIN: And then like—

KEITH (as Fero): What do you got, like, eyewitness testimony? Wink.

AUSTIN: They nod.

KEITH (as Fero): Yeah, and?

AUSTIN (as a guard): That's enough.

KEITH (as Fero): Alright.

AUSTIN (as a guard): She killed, she killed the chancellor. She killed the most important person in Rosemerrow. That's enough. Now get out of here.

AUSTIN: And half of like, the one door of her cage opens up, and a bunch of dudes with spears like, prod at her as she walks up onto the stage. I'm not gonna describe her getting killed. Because it's not a pleasurable thing, and it's not something I want to linger on here. And she doesn't make a grand speech. She doesn't... try to rally any troops. I think Jerod Shiraz is there with a detachment of, of the Anchor to watch what Rosemerrow calls justice and to think about whether she made the right call in terms of who to side with. I imagine that Obelas watches from the third, or from wherever Obelas wound up, because Obelas is no longer, they're not in Viridian Village anymore. But, very curious being. *[sighs]* I... She gets killed. She's dead. It's not long after, Fero, that you receive a request to go to the woods to meet with some of the other gnolls who are now left without a leader. Do you go?

KEITH: Yeah, I go.

AUSTIN: So there is like a, there is like a gnoll village out in the woods, like over here in the southeast. There's a number of gnoll villages in the woods, and I think the most surprising thing you see is that there's infrastructure that you never knew existed. There are like, the equivalent of roads for gnolls, which, which in some instances is just like dirt paths, and other times is like trees, treelines being cut in a certain way, or the branches being removed from the trees in certain ways that allow you, that allow the gnolls to move from branch to branch easily. Like, almost like, sky like, roads in the, inside of the tree branches. And eventually you're led to a, to a center, central village where the gnoll who you met forever ago... what was his name?

Snicker... snape?

ALI: Chatterchin?

AUSTIN: That's— Chatterchin! Snickersnape?

*[laughter]*

KEITH: Snickersnape! They're both there.

AUSTIN: They're both there, yeah, thank you. Thank you, Keith. Chatterchin is there, and he is like not laughing the way he was before, so much.

AUSTIN (as Chatterchin): Thanks. Thanks for coming, Fero. She... we don't know what to do.

KEITH (as Fero): I, I don't know what to do. I thought it was gonna go different, I thought, I thought she was gonna get out.

AUSTIN (as Chatterchin): Yeah... But we have the, the contract at least, so that's something.

KEITH (as Fero): Yeah. Oh, did you find the contract?

AUSTIN (as Chatterchin): I mean, we know what was in it. And—

KEITH (as Fero): Right.

AUSTIN (as Chatterchin): And...

KEITH (as Fero): The, the newspaper is looking for it to publish it.

AUSTIN (as Chatterchin): *[cross]* Yeah. Yeah. They'll find it.

KEITH (as Fero): Good.

AUSTIN (as Chatterchin): Gotta have hope.

KEITH (as Fero): Yeah.

AUSTIN (as Chatterchin): So you gonna help, or...

AUSTIN: He's like, kicking the dirt a little bit, with his big hyena paws.

KEITH (as Fero): I don't know what I, I don't know what I can do. Like, if they publish the contract?

AUSTIN (as Chatterchin): Well I mean, if you say it's real, and you know, you know people now, you know... you know Kel, you know all sorts of people who could—

KEITH (as Fero): Yeah.

AUSTIN (as Chatterchin): Who could help if you just... Listen. Lutz made it so that we could go in there if we had an advocate with us, someone, someone who said we were allowed to be there, a real halfling.

KEITH (as Fero): *[cross]* Yeah.

AUSTIN (as Chatterchin): With, with a real bloodline, like you. And if you help us, we could maybe... You're no Mother Glory, a little short, but.

KEITH (as Fero): Yeah. I'm a little short.

AUSTIN (as Chatterchin): Heh. Just a joke.

KEITH (as Fero): Do you— Is there anybody else?

AUSTIN (as Chatterchin): Oh.

KEITH (as Fero): No I mean, I'm curious.

AUSTIN (as Chatterchin): You're the first one who we really brought here before. We work with some sometimes, but. You... Blake is okay. They seem good. But not like politics good, they don't know how to speak right.

KEITH (as Fero): Right, and they're in jail.

AUSTIN (as Chatterchin): Oh, yeah. That part's not good either.

KEITH (as Fero): For being a thief.

AUSTIN (as Chatterchin): Right. No. No one's ever... no. ... Anyway, it's not. We all have a lot, I guess, in life.

KEITH (as Fero): Yeah.

AUSTIN: And I think things unfold for the rest of the suspects, too.

*[MUSIC: The Wythered Route]*

AUSTIN: Stornras Glasseye and the Chief Justiciar Quinta Quatrona apprehend and behead Iduna Fel. Stornras is there, upset, but silent. He was her friend, but it was his duty. He feels in his heart that he was betrayed by you, Hadrian. He recognized a familiar taste for justice in you. For his part, in Fel's capture and execution, he is given her commission. No longer Captain or Adjutant, he is Justiciar now. And he has the badge, the blade, and the small detachment of anchor to prove it.

Arinia Slayton, who no one ever checked in on, hears a knock at her door, and receives from two guards a letter explaining her execution, and the ingredients for a very special cocktail. The treasonous rich don't face spears. They drink themselves to death.

I said before that there is a point at which it becomes less politically valuable to execute someone, even a traitor, that if you're too late, you've missed the window of opportunism. And yet, two weeks later, Lenny Lenova is led into the central square of Westshore-upon-Sea. He is paraded around in front of his former subjects, and he's executed under the moonlight. But this is not an apolitical act, or a devotion to honesty, or righteousness. It's just another new political play. People are already saying that the sergeant, who's cleaning up Westshore has a bright, bright future.

Sol Cider-Brew waits in a cell, confident that Arrell will come and save him. But Arrell doesn't come. It's hard to work that particular spell without a fully functioning staff. Worse yet for Sol, his jailer is perceptive. When it is time for Sol's execution, it is done with Ordennan steel. Men like that do get theirs. Some just have a little extra time first.

Blake Bromley, on the other hand, is taken into protective custody by the Major Crimes Unit.

JANINE: I wanna be there for that.

AUSTIN: That's, okay, that's good, are you just like, in the Mills like waiting for them to show up?

JANINE: Probably like, leaning against a wall sort of, you know.

AUSTIN: Okay. Tevilton comes in with, or Tevilton's probably there too, just like, looking you know, over his glasses as he's doing paperwork, and Blake is brought in in handcuffs. And Blake is like,

AUSTIN (as Blake): Alright, alright, you don't need to be so pushy, jeez! Knew I could trust you, Adaire.

JANINE(as Adaire): Well, I made a promise.

AUSTIN (as Blake): Sometimes a thief doesn't keep a promise.

JANINE (as Adaire): Well, not every thief has a good understanding of valuables. Some valuables can't be stolen. Some have to be paid for.

AUSTIN: They give you a little wink, and they say like,

AUSTIN (as Blake): I get what you're saying. You're saying I'm great.

JANINE (as Adaire): That's pretty much what I'm saying.

AUSTIN: And then the guard like, knees Blake in the back and says

AUSTIN (as the guard): You're still under arrest, pal! Let's go!

*[MUSIC: The Wythered Route fades and Outside begins]*

AUSTIN: And they lead them to a cell that's higher up in the mill. But they will not be executed and will likely be released, or just serve some jail time for theft or something? Tevilton's still trying to work it out.

Every few nights after that, a new star falls in the distance. And under that uncanny light, Heiron moves. Ordennan warships drift into position just beyond view of Velas. Alyosha, interim Prellate and Exarch of Samoths begins to gather a Velasian flock to flee the artillery. The Cult



of the Dark Sun spreads its message of peaceful hopelessness while Arrell keeps his sights on the New Archives. But he doesn't move yet. He has some repairs to attend to first, and after all, he is very good at not being seen, and very, very patient. And there, somewhere deep to the south, the Boy King Matured, the Last Wolf Alive, Samot, looks with disdain at pieces on a board. There just isn't enough time.

ART: Austin, I have, I have one more thing I need to do. I need to ask for help.

ART (as Hadrian): Alyosha, I know we've, we haven't worked together long, and I know that I'm already asking a lot of you, but I need, I need one more thing. I need you to get me in front of Arrell. I need his help.

*[MUSIC: Outside fades]*