

Elmer Audition

Peaks of Consternation

=====One Year Ago=====

In a distant and most dangerous plains of existence. A giant figure is walking up a mountain. The snow storm ripped through the sky. Violently cascading off of the landscape. The tall, hairy figure is breathing heavily, his footsteps were deep and slow, but he is determined to reach the top.

After what seems like an age he reaches an opening in the mountain face, and a wave of relief washes over him as he approaches the cave. The cavern looked barren of life, but he dare not go inside without asking. He gave three loud knocks to the mouth of the cave, which echoed down the cavern.

“Winged one!” He shouts. “I have followed your instruction. I have waited five years and have arrived on the date you promised me!” He was met with no response. The giant man looked around inquisitively, and grew frustrated.

“If you intend on making me wait longer, then I’ll sit in front of your door for another five years if that's what it takes!”

A voice responds. “I have not forgotten our appointment Yuqhahagiabekl. You may enter.” He enters the barren cave, a small fit for someone of his stature, but he manages to make his way through the cave by crouching down. As he goes deeper, the light in the cave shifts, the walls looked to morph and shift. The damp, cold facade of an unwelcoming cave lifted to reveal a bizarre home. As he reached a room at the end of the cavern, a dim but warm light illuminates the place as the last of the illusion fades away, created by a strange large stone in the center. With walls lined with alien-like swirls and strange artifacts, talismans, and other abnormal decorations adorning the interior. They were arranged in ancient language no ordinary person could hope to understand.

In the center of the circular room was a figure sitting on a pedestal. He was covered in short, thick, black hair that changed to brown depending on how he moved in the light. Large, shiny red eyes stared back at him, and on his shoulders were large fuzzy wings that overshadowed his silhouette. Making him appear as a single triangular black shape.

The figure speaks. “If I’m being honest, I hoped that you wouldn’t come, that you forgot, or that you had something more important to do.”

Elmer stared back at him, “Nothing is more important to me than this.”

The Winged One dejectedly looks at him. “My insights rarely end in people leaving satisfied. There's a reason why most of my kind are now in hiding, and I’ve seen too much despair to continue these meetings.”

"I'm not most people." Elmer confidently rebukes. He places an object in front of the Winged One, undoing its covering to reveal an iridescent flower. "I've kept my promise and have waited, and brought what you asked for. Now I ask you to fulfill your end."

The Winged One looks to the side. "...Listen, Elmer. Perhaps this was a bad idea to begin with."

Elmer scowls back at him. "Why not?"

The Winged One explains, "Our visions do not show any future in guarantee. We only get glimpses of threads. Possible pathways in the future. They're based on what we sense in the cosmos as well as the knowledge we gather ourselves. I've been wrong before, I may see something that has no remote chance of happening. And then what? You react to an impossible outcome?"

Elmer sits down in front of him, gazing intensely at him. "I know the possibilities, and the risks, I need to know."

"But why are you so distressed!?" The Winged One snaps. "Given the nature of your desperation I can only presume this dream is one that has shaken you to your core!"

Elmer relaxes himself. "I understand your concern, and I appreciate it. Nevertheless, I need to know. I have this horrible feeling, that whatever this dream is...I can't live another moment without finding out what it could possibly mean."

The Winged One calms himself, "Very well, but you might not like what you see..."

=====Present day=====

A tall figure walks across the snow peppered landscape, casually glancing from side to side. The frigid land is accented by cascading hills and mountains that accentuate the beauty of this land. Despite this wonder, the figure looks around awkwardly, scratching his head.

"This is the correct planet right?" He thinks to himself. "Third try's the charm as they say." While looking in the distance, he squints his eyes and sees what looks like a sign next to a road. Looks promising, even though roads are not his favorite areas to frequent. He walks towards it, and while hiding behind some rocks, looks to his right, then left. Just to make sure that no one sees him. Unwanted attention never leads to anything good.

He looks at the invitation, and tries to see if the words on it match any of the ones on this sign. Looking back and forth, then checking again, and seeing that the symbols on the invitation does indeed match the ones on the sign.

"Ah, this is it! This must be the town at the base of the mountain. Which means..." He looks up and sees the towering mountain range, filled with peaks covered by stormy clouds.

"One of these is the mountain with the Bifrost thingy. Hmm, it'll probably be best to ask which is the correct one, it doesn't seem smart to check every single one until I get lucky."

He makes his merry way into town, but still making sure that he isn't seen. He doesn't want to get closer than he needs to. Things never tend to go well whenever he just walks into a big populated area. A more gentle approach is needed. Even with the sun shining down, he was still able to maneuver his way through the alleys and backwaters of the welcoming winter town.

"Ok, I need to find someone who likely wouldn't freak out when they see me, but also won't be believed if they told anyone afterwards. Hmmm, who fits that description?" He peaks from behind a corner and scans the people in his general vicinity. He then sees a man stumbling out of a pub, slurring his words, but walking somewhat straight. Seems like he's just aware enough. Probably the best he can work with on such short notice.

He makes his way to a new hiding position and places himself in the path of the man. When the man comes into position, Elmer pokes his head slightly out from the corner of the building. Still keeping himself in shadow.

"Hey, buddy" Elmer asks in a half whisper. The man jumps slightly, but comports himself, since he has no idea what he is really talking to.

"Hellow guy, whhy are you behind that cornor?" The man asks the strange giant face he vaguely sees around the corner.

"I'm looking for this thing called the Bifrost Terminal, I got this invitation to come here, but I'm having trouble finding the place. Wanna help me out?"

"Thee Beefrost? Ya ya its up that way, I thank. Its some kind of historicial monument or sometin, but lately lots of weird folks have been poking around there laterly. It's that talk of the tawn" He says pointing up what looks like the tallest mountain. Elmer takes note of the peak he's pointing at, then an idea crossed his mind that made him smirk.

"Thanks for your help!" He says while poking his full head into the light, giving a big smile to the drunkard. Freaking him out and making him fall back. The man stumbled and ran off, yelling to everyone that he saw a monster. Elmer grinned to himself before leaving the area without a trace.

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He walks in the direction the man told him, an easy hike compared to what he's used to, that is until he reached the foot of the mountain. Elmer stopped and looked around himself, looking to see how there are no more trails that lead up. Then looked upwards, seeing that the mountain face became ever steeper, and the perpetual storm certainly did not seem very inviting.

"Hmm, that does seem like quite the hard journey. That is if you're not someone who can open dimensional rifts, hehe." He waved his hand and wiggled his finger to the air, upon which opens a rift in front of him.

He chuckled to himself as he stepped through "Now that I've narrowed down the location, I've basically arrived. I feel bad for the others having to walk or fly up there, but for me, this base camp is no more than one step-" As he enters through the portal, he finds himself stumbling. The next thing he knew, he's face planted into the snow.

“Huh, that's new...” he said while still face down. Pulling himself out of the snowbank, and shaking off the excess frost out of his eyes. He sees his surroundings are different. He looks behind them and sees flickering of faint lights through the snowy winds.

“Well, that must be the city, meaning I did move, but I’m clearly not at the top. It must be that this bifrost thing is somehow messing with my rifts. This problem must really be serious.” He looks back to the city, then back up to the mountain.

“I think I must be at least half way up. Hmmm, maybe if I try another one...” he says while once again opening a rift, he steps through only to walk face first into a tree, with a pile of snow falling on his head.

“Huh.” He shakes the snow off his head again, then looks around, seeing that he’s only traveled about 50 feet from his last location.

“Welp, I guess I’m walking the rest of the way.” He shakes the rest of the snow off and begins walking. The winds were harsh, and the path steep. But it wasn’t much of a problem for Elmer. He has been in similar storms and rougher mountains. But the cold, it was a bit much even for him. Even he could feel himself getting a bit chilled from the intense blizzard.

He continues up and up, not seeing anything out of the ordinary, another tree, another rock, another...wait. He looks at a stone on the mountain face, it is as big as he is, but strangely enough it has been cut into a perfect square. No not a square, it is broken on one side, a corner? He realizes what he’s looking at, and he peers above him. He squints his eyes to see through the storm, and there he sees it. The terminal. Or at least a part of it. This rock must have broken off and tumbled down. With his goal in sight he pushes on. The closer he got, the more he thought he was seeing things. The structure he glimpsed, it just got bigger and bigger, no it was huge.

Without even noticing, his next step was no longer on the natural mountain rock, but on a stone structure. So close.

He continued on this path, wondering if he would run into any of the other contractors. Eventually reaching some stairs. Of course they are made for small-foots (what sasquatches call non-sasquatches) in mind, so he makes his way up facing sideways, so his feet better fit onto the steps. Towering the terminal is a feat onto its own. It just keeps going and going. His progress was slowed significantly, but it allowed him to further soak in the pure scale of this place.

After what seemed like ages, he saw that the stairs eventually end, he quickened his pace and he found that there were no stairs left. He looked out off the ledge, the blizzard makes it impossible to see the city from here. Or much of anything, it was surreal, like he was on a big floating island, cut off from the rest of the universe.

An enticing aroma drifted by, he had worked up quite an appetite with that walk, he turned around to be greeted with the majestic courtyard of the terminal. It seemed like there was always something to marvel at, he thought while walking underneath the archway. Elmer shook his head, telling himself, “Food first, sightsee later.”

He looks to see a large, illuminated tent with campfires lit inside. “Jackpot!” He said with a mischievous grin. He had snuck up to tents before, even though some people were outside taking in the sights, Elmer effortlessly snuck past them. The hairy giant poked and prodded

around the tent, looked for an opening in the tent, like a tear or separating piece. He knew since it was brighter inside than it was outside, he wouldn't cast a shadow that they could see. Eventually he found a small tear, to which he gently widened with his fingers to look inside.

It was quite a colorful congregation of characters. He had even recognized some species that he had seen in his previous travels, and some hints from others that he may have visited their worlds in the past, like the fashion or cultural markers. But still there were many more that he saw no familiarity in.

"They really got folks from all over haven't they? As old uncle use to say, the universe is always bigger than you think." He thinks to himself. Looking through his peephole, he continues to survey the crowd. Even though he has an invitation, he still likes to be cautious of whomever he is meeting.

Looking to his left to where he sees a smoking grill roasting what looks like steaks, with a strange toothed creature cooking on top of it. Other's are surrounding and chatting with him as they eagerly await their share.

"Hmm, that food is made for the contractors right? Meaning me! I'm sure they won't mind if I take my share."

He sneakily moves around to the tent wall where the grill was near. When he arrived, he thought of his plan to swipe some. He could probably take them without anyone noticing, but then he has another thought. He's going to be working with these people anyways, no use hiding forever. Well in that case, might as well make an impression.

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A few people were gathered around the grill, some conversing, but most of them just enjoying the calm moment. When suddenly, they hear a ripping in the tent, a sound that was slow and soft so as to not make them jump, but it made them turn in attention. It was then when they saw a massive hairy arm slowly and gingerly reach tearing into the tent. The hand is twice the size of their heads, and is as long as some of them are tall. It moved slow and deliberately, in a manner so natural and calm it completely contrasted the terror on their faces. The hand gingerly grabs a piece straight from the flames and pulls it behind them. They all turn around to the opening where the arm went through. Nervously, one of them reaches for the tear, he grinds his molars thinking that a fight is about to commence. Grabbing the tear with his encrusted hands and rips the opening as wide as his arms would allow. He sees the thing in front of him, and the rest peek out from behind.

One of them took a torch from the tent and held it up, to reveal the beast. It was lazily sitting behind them; already swallowing the huge chunk of their dinner. Shaggy, wild looking, and huge, the beast looked at them dully, while the party were considering pulling out their weapons.

The beast lifted his hand, pointed at the fire and said. "Mmmmh, what kind is that? Cause I want seconds." They're expressions changed from fear to comical confusion. Before they knew

it the beast got up and grabbed the remaining pieces. Eating the full sized meals like bite sized snacks.

"Mmh, this is quite good...oh right." He wipes his hands on his hair and sticks out his immense paw for a handshake.

"Hi, friends call me Elmer!" He said with the friendliest smile he could conjure with his teeth and fangs. The group just stared back at him, utterly perplexed on how to respond. Elmer looks around confused, "Oh wait, were you gonna eat that?"

The man cooking the steaks pauses, then snaps out of his confusion and shouts, "OF COURSE WE WERE! Do you know how hard it is to get steaks all the way up here?"

"Oh my bad haha they were very good though. Hey, why don't one of you give me a hand." The request was quietly denied by everyone since they obviously knew that helping him up was practically impossible, and that they're still taken aback by him.

"Very well, I'll let myself in." He says while casually standing up and walking through the tear, making a bigfoot sized hole in the tent. The warmth of the tent quickly began to escape, letting in the frigid cold.

"I'm sure that'll be easy to fix right?" Elmer asked, immediately people around him began to shiver. A handful of people came up with patching and began to fix the tear.

One of them approached him, he was covered in a goey substance. "What are you doing here, if I may ask?"

"Me? I got this invitation to come here, I'm here to help with this spirit problem you all are having here." With that, the tension was completely gone, as the few who didn't put it together that he was one of the contractors realized they were all on the same side.

"Quite the gathering we've got here, so many new faces, and as it happens I love meeting new people!" Elmer boasts. Others were beginning to notice the giant new figure and came over to see what the fuss was all about

"So what do we call you?" Enquired the man with goo on his face.

"Well my full name is Yuqhahagiabekl."

"I'm sorry what?"

"Yuqha-hagia-bekl." An answer that didn't help anyone at all. "Well nevermind that, friends call me Elmer. Which is what we are, for the job at least right."

"Oh ok, that's definitely easier to say, nice to meet you Elmer, you can call me Paintman."

"Nice nickname! What is up with your face though?" Elmer says as he touches the top of his head. He sniffs the strange substance, certainly doesn't smell like paint. His curiosity gets the better of him as he sticks out his tongue for a taste.

"I wouldn't recommend that, no one has ever eaten it and lived." Elmer paused, then retracted his tongue.

“Well thanks for letting me know, but I doubt anyones ever tried.”

Paintman sigh, “Yes, guilty as charged, but I wouldn’t want to find out anyways.”

“Hmm, well played Paintman.” He says while smearing the substance on the tent wall. “But I’d still want to find out before our job is done here.”

A man with glasses asks inquisitively, “Hey Elmer, why are you called Elmer?”

“Oh that haha! You see my friend back home, Javor, he gave me the nickname thanks to this bald spot on my forehead. Said it looks like a tree, and referred to me as a walking tree for a time. So he said he’ll call me Elmer. A big sturdy tree!” Elmer boasts with a big belly laugh.

“Oh that makes sense.” Says the man with glasses.

The toothed man, still angry, figures he might as well meet the one who ruined his afternoon. “Well, I’m Molars, good to meet you I suppose. As you can see I’m serving as basecamp’s cook.”

Elmer looked at him excitedly. “So you’re the one who made those amazing steaks! You’re my new favorite person here!” He says while wrapping his arm around Molars head and giving him a noogie. Molars pushed him off and walked away frustrated. Elmer greets more of the people around him. Seeing a small pink haired girl.

He instinctively picks her up, “Aww aren’t you cute!”

The pink haired girl furiously gestured to him to put her down, upon which Elmer just looked at her amused. “Everyone here is so tiny haha!” The girl then angrily scribbled down symbols on her notepad and presented it to Elmer.

“Um, what’s that?” Elmer asked, with the girl becoming even more aggravated.

In response a strange man with black eyes speaks while leaning on one of the tent posts. “She says she wants you to squeeze harder.”

“You sure? Ok then!” Elmer said happily with the girl terrifyingly waving her hands to stop. But before he did anything, another interjected.

“No no no no! She wants you to put her down.” Said the man with glasses.

“Oh, why didn't you just say so.” He gently put her down. She then scribbled some more words on her notepad. Which caused some of the others around them to start snicker.

“What does that mean?” Elmer asks, stroking his beard.

The man looked at the notepad, adjusting his glasses. "It says, um....(better not read that outloud). Well she's introducing herself, this is Doe Hawthorne. She's not very talkative, so she writes things down for people to read. And that over there was Khorn, don't mind him."

"Oh sorry, I've learned a few languages, but I'm still learning to read." Elmer responded with a chuckle.

"Uh huh." said the Paintman.

"And you are?" Elmer gestured to the man who helped him read Doe's eloquent messages.

"Oh I'm Kasper," said the man with glasses, "Kasper Reenberg, paranormal investigator. Well honestly given the things I've seen here so far, you included, I'm starting to question how much I even knew to begin with."

"Paranormal investigator? Right I've heard of smallfoots like you, I think I had a few of you guys following me one time. Or something like that. Well no need to search this time right? Haha!" Elmer said while **lightly** patting his back. A gesture which knocked the wind out of him. "Well now I know that you're the smart guy with all the answers around here, I'll be sure to come to you for anything else I was wondering about, or if I need a translator for Doe, HAHA!"

Looking around more, Elmer turns to two others who were sitting away from the commotion, seemingly ignoring what was going on. They were sitting slumped in their seats, lazily sprawled out over the bench staring into space. With a few steps he walks the width of the tent to meet them.

"Hello fellow contractors!" The two dark haired people, lazily looked up at him with sleepy eyes. Elmer extends his hand for a handshake, upon which the man carelessly lifts his arm.

"Mal, this is Francis." They shake hands, as Elmer's grip clearly is a bit uncomfortable, even for Mal. But he hid it behind his straight face.

"Call me Elmer. Cool names! Let's show this ghost who's boss right!" He said, lifting his hand for a high five towards Francis. Upon which she just blankly stares back, blinking one eye at a time as if she was about to pass out.

After a few moments of awkward staring, Elmer high fives his own hand, "Nice to meet you too!" he says smiling, but moving on to the next contractor.

It was then when a slim man approached Elmer and greeted him, he was about to extend a handshake, but quickly and subtly pulled it back when he realized that wasn't a good idea.

"Welcome to basecamp, call me Cain, I'm the organizer of this operation."

"Ah Cain, thats right. So you're the guy huh? You know when I first saw the letter, when I was told the name on it was Cain, I thought it could be that other guy. But nah that was a dumb idea to begin with."

Cain stood awkwardly. “Um, ya ok so you are prepared to help us right?”

“Yes of course! And I hear there is a substantial reward for us right?”

“Absolutely. I have a hefty some prepared for everyone who helps us root this spirit out.”

“Very nice! Ok rich boy, I’m sure once we get in there we’ll have that ghost with its tail between its legs in no time!”

Cain, while admiring his confidence, can’t help but to hide his unease. “Ya, erm, that’s the spirit.”

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For the next few days, more and more strange characters arrived at the base camp. A dog woman and cat boy, an enchanting dancer in red, an amorphous shadow being, cyborgs and hitmen of several shapes and sizes, and many many more. He greeted all of them with all sorts of mischievous hijinks, some appreciating them more than others. Elmer, his pranks, relaxed nature, and general friendly demeanor became a familiar presence, with most coming to see him as the crazy uncle of basecamp.

He often found it amusing when Paintman and Lens asked him questions, conversations with them were more technical and focused on the details of each other's lives, to whatever extent they were comfortable with sharing. Others like Doe, Ceilo, HellHound, Val, Moss, and Lyra were uneasy around him for a time, but eventually came around to accepting the idea that his antics were just his way of being friendly. Even if he annoys them at times, they’re friendly with each other. And for others such as Gahamar, Khorn, Mal, and Francis, his personality was a bit too much, eventually just accepting to tolerate his presence. Him and Molar have developed a strange dynamic of their own. With Elmer becoming a taste tester for many of his dishes, but at the same time being all too eager to take what he is cooking all for himself. Out of all the contractors, Kasper and Nephela became very good friends with him. They often liked exploring, chatting, and making jokes at each other's expense, and they all hold a strange fascination for each other, their professions, and stories.

He would spend time walking the grounds of the terminal, never venturing inside, but studying the impressive makeup of its structure. Time seemed to blend into itself, each day fading into the next, with the only times he snapped out of it being the moments he enjoyed with his new companions. Then, the day finally came. As if someone violently woke him from a dream.

Cain called to everyone saying that it was time for them all to enter. But as everyone was gathering their things, Kasper made an announcement.

“Everyone come over here, I thought it would be a cool idea if we were to all get a picture together, so we could remember this when we get back home.” Everyone seemed to like

the idea. Except Elmer. His kind notoriously being wary of cameras. Instead of joining the others he went back in the tent and waited for them to finished. Kasper noticed this and followed him. When he looked inside, he saw Elmer lazily sitting slumped on a crate, chin resting in right hand and blankly staring off.

“Hey, what's going on Elm?” Kasper said standing in front of him, They were at eye level thanks to Elmer sitting down.

“*Sigh*. Look I appreciate what you’re trying to do, and I get it right, but, it’s just not a thing I’m used to, being on camera. My kind, we spend our whole lives trying not to be seen, so that people would leave us alone.”

Kasper looked back smirking, “I get it, but honestly, what are you talking about?”

Elmer tilted his head, “Huh?”

“Elmer, you are one of the most persistently annoying creatures I’ve ever met in my life. Not that I’ve met many others, but that besides the point. You’re one of the most outgoing and curious people here. Always getting into people’s business, and chatting with them, making them laugh, or trying to. Why are you acting now like you’re some sort of wandering loner? You’re the one always telling us that you’re not like the rest of your kind.”

“I don’t know, this feels different, like it's something permanent, the picture that is. And also... *sigh* well don’t tell the others, but I’ve been having second thoughts over the last few days. I don’t know if I’m going into the terminal.”

Kasper was taken aback. “You waited until now to tell anyone this!?”

“I know I know, it wasn’t very polite of me. I’m just getting this new weird feeling, like I might regret coming here for some reason. But if I might not go into the terminal anyways, I don’t deserve to be in the picture with all of you. It’s fine really, just go ahead without me.”

“Elm, look around you, we’ve all been together for only a few days and I feel like we all, or most of us, have already become lifelong friends. Just look out there.” Kasper gestures outside the tent. “Everyone there is lined up for the picture, and they're waiting, for you!” Elmer looks back at him, realizing what he’s saying.

“Look, if you want to back out, then that's fine with me, I won’t fault you for it at all. But I’d be lying if I said it wouldn’t be the same without you.” Kasper said with an understanding smile. Elmer looked down, thinking to himself. Kasper got up and made his way to the tent exit.

“Alright...”

“Huh?” Kasper turned back around.

Elmer stood up straight and proud. “Alright, let's do it. The photo, and the terminal.”

Kasper pumped his fist. “Yes! There’s the Elmer we know!”

As they walked out, Elmer laid a hand on his shoulder, “Hey, thanks Kasper, for keeping my head on my shoulders.”

They both exited the tent to join the others for the group photo. They all got Cain to stand in the center since he was the one who orchestrated this whole thing, and the others gathered around him. Elmer kneeled down to get into frame and they snapped a photo of all of them together.

Then the time had come, Cain then gathered everyone at the entrance. There was a strange mixture of anticipation, excitement, and apprehension in the air. Cain gave a speech of some sort, but Elmer unfortunately didn’t hear it, he was still lost in his thoughts. The universe seemed to be silent, with only a faint ringing in his ears. He looked blankly with a thousand yard stare into nothing.

Then that sound snapped him out of it. The clang, and low squealing of the titanic doors being opened. Inside there looked to be nothing but an eternal abyss. Like a maw that was itching to swallow them whole, and they would readily feed themselves too. This is it, after these next few steps, there is no going back.

Elmer shut his eyes and shook his head. As if to fully wake himself out of his contemplation, you know what you have to do, you told everyone and yourself that you’ll go through with it. In that moment everyone began walking forward, and Elmer, now fully relaxed again, moved with everyone else, as if nothing was on his mind just a moment ago. As he walked through the entrance he couldn’t help himself but to look up and all around.

Elmer found it somewhat amusing that even though he was the tallest one here, the towering doors still far exceeded what was needed to fit his massive frame.

As they walk into the cavernous entrance, Elmer cannot be helped but be awestruck. The outside already was impressive, but inside, given that it was preserved from the elements far more effectively, it’s excellent craftsmanship shown through every inch of the structure. Intricate carvings adorned the walls depicting what looked like historical events, gold linings everywhere he looked, and glowing jewels adorned the ceiling that bathed the whole place in a soft blue light. Even though his travels had taken him all across the universe, he had never seen anything like this. Though it’s not like he made it a habit of entering buildings, he didn’t like cities after all.

It was in the middle of that thought when the door violently shut behind them, causing all of them to turn or jump. A frigid air blew into their faces that makes Elmer shiver to his spine. It was a cold that wasn’t like what was outside, it was if this air was concentrated malice, like

something was intentionally breathing on his face rather than a normal gust. As if the building itself was trying to scare him.

Then in a flash, a shadowed figure emerges from the darkness of the ceiling, floating and appearing in front of them, with two glowing eyes peering down at the newest victims of the terminal.

"The powers that be finally deigned to do something about us, huh? I should've figured when that idiot—" An arm-like wisp gestured in Cain's direction for emphasis, "—came in here whimpering about being here to help. Let me guess, they told you to get rid of us by any means necessary? That they would pay a king's ransom for your service. Hmph, typical. Now you're trapped in here with me. I'll tell you now: in the Bifrost Terminal, I am creator, judge, and jury. Nothing happens without me knowing.

"You are all still in one piece because I decided you should be. So, explore the terminal, ask questions. You are all here for a job, aren't you? Well then, allow me to assign you your work task: figure out how to free the souls trapped in this godsforsaken facility. And as incentive, the first among you to succeed in freeing all of the spirits here shall be allowed to leave The Bifrost Terminal. As for the rest of you... If you don't finish first? If you slack off or annoy me and your fellows instead of putting your nose to the grindstone? Well... I'll leave that to your imagination."

The Entity vanished like smoke, and they are all left stunned to some extent.

Elmer looked around and saw how some of them were scared, he thought to himself, then had an idea.

He stepped forward and shouted. "So this is the big spooky ghost everyone's afraid of? HAH! What a joke, I was expecting something with more guts to face us before flying off! Come on guys, this'll be easy, let's show these specter's that they messed with the wrong —." He turned to the rest and saw that they were mostly confused. He got another idea. Turning back towards the dark halls and takes in a deep breath.

"AAAAAHHHHHAAOAOAAAHAAA GGGHHHHHHGAAAAAH
AOAAAAOOOOOO HAAAAAHOOO UAAHGHGHGHGA
OAHHHAAAAAOOOOO!!!!!!!"

He unleashes an impossibly loud, howling call into the depths of the terminal, and its echo was heard repeated over and over again as it traveled through the halls.

They all looked around to see that nothing happened. Which seemed to loosen up a few of them.

Elmer turns back to them with a playful smile. "See, nothing to be afraid of! Let's get in there, and show this ghost who this terminal belongs to now!" While no one was roused to the

enthusiasm he portrayed, some of them did seem to feel a bit better, and continued to enter the terminal.

Cain however, cannot believe what he just saw, he looked at Elmer with his hand furiously massaging his face, with a potent mixture of disdain, confusion, and utter perplexedness. Elmer just shrugged it off and also continued with the others.

However, Elmer was absolutely scared as well. He was just pretending since he knew some of the others trusted him. Between the Entity, the enormity of the terminal, and looking brave for the others, it was starting to dawn on him just how out of his depth he truly was.