

Realis 18: Wooden Hospitality Pt. 2

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Recap

Austin: Realis is a science fiction and dark fantasy series that contains discussion of violence, injury, slavery, cannibalism, and disease. This campaign never depicts sexual violence, always shows you where the sword goes, but never what it does, and always errs on the side of maximalism.

[“[Sapryc](#)” by Jack de Quidt begins playing]

Austin: You basically traveled all night after the horror of last night. And so you’ve gotten here. You know, you can tell me how tired you are, but it has been a long journey. The sort of trick that we saw Sacea do to help get the cart out of the mud, that was probably more than a one-time thing. That was probably a thing that you had to rely on a few times. And so here you are in this weird, mysterious little town. I’d say there’s probably 10 to 12 of these kind of log cabins that are similar in some ways to the ones that were in the nightmare village that, except here, placed with a little more care. Things feel like they slot together more neatly. Right now, there’s no one else like walking around inside of this little village. So, it’s just y’all. It’s just the canopy of the trees, the gray skies above.

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Janine: I want to look for, I think it’s like a specific ingredient for incenses and stuff.

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Austin: As you get close to those potatoes on the ground, you realize that they're carved out of wood.

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Sylvi: I feel like I'm trying to survey for people. Like, not as actively as Mirador is, but, like, I'm, like, sitting by the cart probably as a form of guarding it.

Dre: Aw, thanks.

Sylvi: Not for you.

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Austin: Do you have anything that could beat the Sentence, I mean, now that you've done this actively, "Leo Suzerainty scouts can always remain hidden among trees."

Sylvi: You know, I actually, I don't have anything that could beat that. I don't have anything that really applies.

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Austin (as **Retainer**): To all who listen, to all who sleep, this is the domain of Lady Geretain Gorthgeier. You are her subjects now and eternity forward.

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Austin: They are doing what I can only call a pantomime of living. Someone, you know, begins making the visual motions of being a town crier, but no sound is coming out. Someone else comes over and begins to try to make the fire go. People begin to shuffle into rows and begin walking up and down the street as if they're going somewhere, but they reach the end of the town and they turn and start walking the other way. It's like you're in a sudden life-size diorama filled with wooden people.

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Dre (as **Flemming**): Let me look at your splint. Let me make sure there's not any weird, obvious curses on it.

Jack (as **Jud**): What are you doing?

Dre (as **Flemming**): I just want to check it out. Does your skin feel like wood at all?

Jack (as **Jud**): No.

Dre (as **Flemming**): Do you feel any more or less pain?

Jack (as **Jud**): What? No, the same amount. I mean, less.

Dre (as **Flemming**): Okay. Hmm. Does it feel any more difficult to move your arm?

Jack (as **Jud**): No, easier.

Dre (as **Flemming**): Hmm.

Jack (as **Jud**): What?

Dre (as **Flemming**): Does your bone feel like wood?

Jack (as **Jud**): What are you getting at?

Torrential Rain

Janine: I think the thing I want to do kind of applies to that, that I want it to just like start like torrentially raining.

Austin: Oh, sure.

Janine: And, you know, I was hung up on like, well, I'm inviting it, but, but people generally hate when it starts torrentially raining out of nowhere. That is a generally quite uninvited force.

Austin: Mm-hm. What's your intent with this?

Janine: To get the wood place all wet and hard to burn.

Austin: Okay, so you're trying to prevent the fire from spreading, effectively. Yeah, I think this makes sense. The thing that I'll offer you is that it can make the situation... It could be a token recharge here if it puts out the fire. Because then you're also in the dark. And if it's not so hard that it puts out the fire, then you're not going to get your token back. But I'll say that, yeah, sure, the uncertainty as to whether or not this place catches fire is addressed.

Janine: I think it should put the fire out.

Austin: I think so, too.

Janine: Like, I could take or leave the token. I mean, I'll take my token. But it does feel just like if it's raining that hard, the fire should be put out.

Austin: The fire should go out.

Janine: Yeah.

Austin: Yeah. But I do think that that leads you deeper into chaos, as now the only light is coming from the arrows that are on fire, which are no longer setting fire to things, at least. What's it look like when you summon this? What's the actual physical act of you using your talents to make it pour look like?

Janine: I think... I wonder. So, I think when Sacea gathered up the like mildewy material, it involved bringing a little pocketknife and like scraping as much as she could into like a little like a folded up piece of paper, like a little paper packet like they used to put old timey powdered medicines in. And I imagine it's like her sort of grudgingly pulling one of those paper packets out and just like, I just gathered this, and I have to use it. Like, what a fucking waste. It's just, she pulls out the little paper packet and like opens it up and then folds it so there's a little spout in the paper. And sort of feeds it into one of her existing pomanders with some existing like mix on it. And then I think she just like

throws it in the fire. Just like at the base of the fire where like, you know, the chain is still hanging out. She can like reel it out when she needs to, but for the moment, just like, eh, here. And then it just, there's just like a shit ton of smoke that just smells like probably like basement, like neglected basement. And it just is like a thick smoke that doesn't disperse as it goes into the sky. Like you'd think it should, but it just stays kind of the same. And then suddenly it's fucking pouring.

Austin: And then it's pouring rain. Yeah, great. Great. A voice yells out through the dark.

Janine: And also the fire is being extinguished, we have to say—

Austin: Yeah, the fire is extinguished, yeah, to be clear, 100%, yes. Through the dark, a noble voice yells,

Austin (as **Geretain Gorthgeier**): Oh, my little gourmand. Oh, my little pig. Give yourself over and we will not attack.

Janine: [laughs] Creepy.

Jack: Oh, my God.

Dre: Did he just call us pigs?

Jack: He called me a gourmand. Or she.

Austin: She, this is, yeah.

Jack: She called me a gourmand.

Austin: Mm-hm.

Dre: Oh, she's talking to you?

Jack: Hmm.

Dre: I don't think it's... Well, I don't like that she called you a pig.

Jack: [sighs] [laughs] Okay, Austin, I would like to Realize a Sentence.

Austin: [laughs] Oh, yeah?

Jack: I would like to Realize “I always fight my way to safety” into—okay, let’s talk about this.

Austin: Yeah, what’s Realization?

Jack: I know what I want to Realize it to, but yeah, you want to go ahead?

Austin: The Sentence gets increased by rank from +0 to +1. It gets a new limitation or qualification or a restriction of some sort. And if it had been Countered, it would become un-Countered, but it’s not Countered right now, so you don’t have to worry about that. That’s the short version. And there’s lots of ways to Realize a Sentence, as many ways as there are to add to a Sentence any sort of new restriction. The things that I generally suggest is that you’re looking at a change in terms of scale, of effect, the type of target, or some sort of prerequisite of context or circumstance, right? So, yeah.

Jack: “I always fight my way to safety in the dark.”

Austin: Now that’s a fucking context. There you go. That’s a prerequisite in context. “In the dark, you always fight your way to safety.” This Sentence means nothing to you anymore in the light of day. It truly cannot help you. You cannot call upon it anymore. But in the dark, it’s +1. Can you mark that it’s +1 at the end of the Sentence? Because we’re using these Excel sheets, you cannot mark it at the beginning of the Sentence because it will think that you’re trying to add +1 “I always fight my way to safety in the dark,” which is annoying.

Sylvi: Let me tell you, trying to add +Arial to a mech in *Armour Astir* in Google Sheets and it constantly coming back as a little code made me go crazy.

Austin: I’m sure there’s a way around it, I’m sure that there’s a like...

Sylvi: Oh, definitely.

Austin: An “ignore the pluses here” type thing, but I haven’t looked it up. So, what is your intent now that you’ve Realized this Sentence? I’m presuming you’re going to actually use it. Or are you just Realizing it in advance of what’s to come?

Jack: I don’t know if I’m going to use it right away. My first thought was, I am going to surrender to them. And then use the +1 Sentence to escape in the dark. Is this true to the character class Struggler?

Austin: Is it true to Jud? Realis is a game about archetypes becoming particular, right? This is not Dungeon World, there is the Ranger. The Ranger lasted for as long as you didn’t play them, right? Especially once you start Realizing, in this case, right? There is the Struggler, and now you are playing Jud, you know? So, you tell me, does Jud think I’ll turn myself over and then escape?

Jack: No, no. What Jud says is Jud turns to Gaje and says,

Jack (as **Jud**): I’m sorry, Gaje.

Jack: And then shouts something like,

Jack (as **Jud**): Come and get me, fucker.

Jack: And just makes off into the woods, perpendicular to where the voice was from. Being like, I’m not going to surrender. I’m going to lead you on a merry dance. And this is me using “I always fight my way to safety in the dark.”

Austin: Well, it’s not even you doing that yet, right? Or are you...

Jack: No, well, yeah, I’m trying to draw them away from...

Austin: Yep, okay. Your intent is, then, your dramatic intent is draw them away from this little village into the dark.

Jack: And, critically, find safety for myself in that darkness.

Austin: Right, sure. Yes, yes, yes. Do so successfully, yeah. And they are going to try to Counter you with the “Leo Suzerainty”—oh, no, they’re not, they’re gonna—because this is, the scouts have already fired, you know. The scouts are, at this point, it’s not so much that they’re hidden behind trees that matters so much. It is Lady Geretain Gorthgeier’s “I always campaign with my retinue” which fails. You succeed. What’s this look like? They cannot keep up with you, I guess, in the dark. But you tell me. What does it look like that you have fought your way to safety in the dark?

Jack: It’s great. It’s the car chase from *No Country for Old Men*, except it’s a boy and a bunch of soldiers carrying flaming torches running through the woods. You know, the light from these torches reaching far out, like the lights on top of that car in the desert, but not far enough that they can actually catch Jud as he moves in these like great pools of darkness. And I think we get, some of the soldiers are up to their waists in water, you know, waterlogged. It’s just all the ravages of the Velutines around this thing falling upon the retinue. And then it’s Jud up in a tree, high up in the canopy of a tree, looking—a woolly tree—looking down at the soldiers, you know, struggling to find him below, and seeing the glow in the distance of the... Well, the fire is out, so how do I know where the village is?

Austin: Uh-huh.

Jack: Yeah, nothing. Right now, I have no idea where the village is.

Austin: People—

Sylvi: Um.

Austin: Go ahead. Go ahead.

Sylvi: I was going to ask if I could follow behind them after they start chasing Jud.

Austin: Yeah, totally. You can definitely make out their sound in the wilderness, you know, chasing. They are not being quiet. They have armor on and it’s clanking.

Sylvi: They have torches, too, right?

Austin: They have torches, yeah, because they're shooting the fire. I think as you get further away from the village, the downpour probably lets up. You didn't make the entire Velutines the site of a giant storm, presumably, Sacea, right?

Janine: No, I think it's relatively localized.

Austin: Yeah. And so, yeah, I think you can follow them pretty easily. Now, do you have an aim here or are you just trying to stay close?

Sylvi: My aim is mostly like... One, it would be easier to get into a conflict with these guys further away from the village, so I don't have to worry about them setting on fire a bunch of flammable things surrounding me. The other is the last time Jud... Every time Jud runs off into the dark, things get stressful. And I'm not looking to injure the kid more having to rescue him. I figure take the initiative and fucking kill the danger before they get to him if I've gotta, you know?

Austin: Mm-hm. I get you. Yeah.

Sylvi: "His weakness is as clear as day," you know. So.

Austin: I've heard this.

Sylvi: "They'll die without me to protect them."

Austin: Yeah, well, and at this point they're not in threat, as far as—I mean, it's clear from what you're hearing that they've lost sight of Jud. Jud has made his way to safety in the dark.

Jack: I'm good at this, buddy. It didn't go well the last time. But the—last time I was trying to protect you. This time I'm trying to protect... I'm trying to protect myself.

Sylvi: Hm, interesting lesson to learn there. Jud being like, hmm, how can I be more selfish?

Back in the Village [14:20]

Austin: Back in the actual village, Lady Geretain simply rides into the middle of the storm with bright white torchlight, staying lit in the rain, seemingly, lit by this kind of single torch flame. And with her, you know, probably five, ten, let's say ten additional guards. She is up on a horse, a big white horse and is wearing silver armor along with some sort of colored tabard, but here it's just the deep black and white colors. And I think the people here, the kind of like wooden people, are all going on the def... Oh, actually, hmm. I think that there's confusion among them, because of who it is. I think some of them have run back inside and closed up the doors. We get a shot of Mirador looking through one of the windows. Mirador had been telling stories in the tavern, had been trying to make friends.

Sylvi: [laughs in delight]

Austin: We get him peeking up out through one of the windows, being like, what the fuck is going on out there?

Sylvi: Fucking perfect audience that can't interrupt him.

Austin: [laughs] Exactly, 100%. A lot of like, "so there I was" type stories. And then there are a handful of the wooden folks who come up and kneel in front of this woman on the horse. As if they owe loyalty. Not in a... They don't, like, they don't then stand up and turn their backs on the rest of the town or anything like that. It's more like "the lady has come back" type vibe, you know? Our lady is, I knew she would come back. I knew she hadn't left us. I knew the Leo Suzerainty hadn't turned its back on Sapryc. You know, one of them grabs the others by the shoulders, gives, like, a little, like, shake, like, a very excited, like, you know, "the lady has returned" type vibe.

Dre: Aw. Our new friends like the bad lady.

Austin: Some of them do. You know? Wooden people aren't a monolith, unless they're the big monolith wooden person.

Sylvi: [laughs] Unless they're carved into one.

Austin: Right, who seems like not, who's not moved or anything, by the way. That person didn't, like, that statue didn't come to life as far as you can tell. Or didn't start moving, certainly. Flemming and Sacea, are you avoiding this person? Are you, what are you doing? I think that at some point they say,

Austin (as **Geretain Gorthgeier**): Fan out. Find the little pig. If he isn't in the woods, he's here, probably in some little corner.

Janine: I think Sacea didn't move. I think Sacea's still hanging out by the fire with her cloak pulled over her.

Austin: Sure.

Janine: To keep the rain off, but I think she's still just there.

Austin: Yeah. Flemming, are you still, where were you last? You were out in the woods.

Dre: Yeah, yeah. I think if I saw Gaje go after Jud, then I'm good. I trust the two of them to take care of each other.

Austin: Right, sure.

Jack: Yeah, yeah. I got you, Gaje.

Sylvi: [laughs] Great track record of Gaje taking care of Jud.

Dre: But did you died? [laughs] No, so you're fine.

Sylvi: You make a great point.

Dre: So, I think the scene we get is that Flemming is like peering out from the woods, like, overlooking the scene, and is, like, trying to wave to get Sacea's attention.

Janine: [sighs] I think Sacea just looks. Like, yeah, I see you.

Dre: I'm trying to figure out how Flemming would hand sign "the pig is Jud."

Jack: [laughs]

Sylvi: Do you make, do you, like, pull your nose back to make it look like a pig's nose?

Janine: How do we know the pig is Jud? Are we positive, other than Jud...

Dre: Well, Jud told me that they were looking for him, right?

Jack: No, I was speaking out of character.

Dre: Oh, okay.

Austin: Jud, you did say, come and get me, fuckers.

Dre: That's true.

Janine: And then ran off. [laughs]

Jack: That bit I was speaking in character, yeah.

Austin: Yeah, uh-huh. Uh-huh, uh-huh.

Janine: Right.

Dre: And I think if you don't get it after like 15 seconds of this, Flemming gets exasperated and pulls out a magic wand and just writes in the air, "pig = Jud."

[laughter]

Jack: The walrus was Paul.

Janine: I think Sacea just shrugs because it's like, what do you want me to do about it now?

Dre: Oh, and I'm the rude one. Okay, okay!

Janine: He's not here. I guess as far as Sacea sees it, unless Jud is standing right here with a sword pointed at him, he's somewhere where he's better off than here. So, right now, it's good that he's not here. Let's just calmly resolve this situation and then we'll worry about the rest. [laughs slightly] There's nothing else for her to do with that information as far as she's concerned, right? It's just like, yeah, okay. You think Jud's a pig. That's good. Okay.

Austin: [laughs]

Jack: [giggles]

Sylvi: [laughs loudly]

Dre: So obtuse.

Austin: Someone runs up to Lady Geretain and hands her some sort of book, a pamphlet, I think a book that's been sort of hand-stitched together. And, you know,

Austin (as **Retainer**): Oh, it says... [murmuring] the carved... [murmuring] prophet... [murmuring]

Austin: And she laughs a little bit and turns her horse towards the bonfire, and I think now sees you. You know, the light from her seemingly magical torch is cast towards you, and you're not a wood person, Sacea. And she says,

Austin (as **Geretain Gorthgeier**): Ah, are you traveling with the boy I seek? Apologies, I didn't see you there.

Janine (as **Sacea**): Oh, not at all, my lady. I... My eyesight's not what it used to be. I'm traveling with a group, but I could not tell you much about them.

Austin (as **Geretain Gorthgeier**): Oh, traveling through the Velutines.

Janine (as **Sacea**): For all the good it's done me, that they left me here. Heh.

Janine: You know, like that kind of...

Austin: Uh-huh!

Janine: With the smoldering...

Sylvi: [laughs] Sacea's a Dark Souls NPC!

Janine: [laughs]

Dre: Yeah, I was gonna say, are we Sly Grandma chuckle, or are we *Dark Souls* NPC chuckle?

Austin: We're Dark Souls, yeah, 100%.

Janine: [laughs] Same thing sometimes.

Austin: Sometimes it's the same.

Dre: True.

Austin: Yeah, these pictures are the same.

Austin (as **Geretain Gorthgeier**): Now, what would bring someone like you to the depths of the Velutines? You wouldn't have anything to do with this icon in the woods, would you?

Austin: Nodding up to the carved figure.

Janine (as **Sacea**): I'm on the hunt for certain rare herbs and materials. There's a very rare cellar fungus that brought me here, specifically. Would you like to see it?

Janine: Fumbling through the little packets.

Austin: Uh-huh. And I think she is actually going to try to disarm you. Not physically. But her intent here is to make you feel at ease around her. That she has no harm intended to you or this village. And she is using the Sentence "I always welcome the useful or entertaining to my court." Do you have anything to Counter that with?

Janine: I mean, my gut says I could Counter it with, “I always exert my will over the atmosphere with my perfumes,” just in the sense of like, my will right now is often to protect Jud and to carry on with my journey and not get sucked into this weird bullshit from this lady who’s going around saying everyone is her subject. I’ve been approaching that whole thing with kind of like an eye roll, like, “yeah, we’ll see. We’ll see when we see,” kind of thing.

Austin: So, you would, you’re going to try to do it with that.

Janine: Yeah.

Austin: Okay. It fails. Go ahead and mark it.

Janine: Okay.

Austin: Fails against “I always welcome the useful or entertaining to my court.” And again, this doesn’t mean that you think that she’s good, necessarily, right? But she does impress upon you the feeling that she means you no harm, means these people no harm, is here to hunt a particular person. And I think, having communicated that, gets down off her horse and begins to make her way towards the bonfire and towards the big idol figure, holding this book, you know, maybe not under a sheet, but, like, inside of a little blanket or something to keep it from getting too wet. And she says,

Austin (as **Geretain Gorthgeier**): Do you know what this is, traveler?

Janine: Like, turns and kind of squints at it.

Janine (as **Sacea**): Book. Looks like a book.

Austin: Oh, she was gesturing at the icon, the statue.

Janine: Oh! [laughs]

Sylvi: [laughs] Book!

Janine (as **Sacea**): Some sort of, it’s a big fella. Decorative, I don’t know.

Austin (as **Geretain Gorthgeier**): Here's the—it isn't decorative. The people here were abandoned, and fled, and turned to what they knew. They call him the Carved Prophet. My understanding is, it's not a particular idol. It's a way of making an idol. And if you make it the right way, the spirit of the prophet possesses the body. I've heard about it from many sources. And this is the first time I've seen one so rudimentary. Soil and roots. It's so simple. Something must have gone wrong, though, because... Normally, the prophet doesn't turn people into little sticks of wood. You're not knowledgeable in the arts, though.

Janine (as **Sacea**): Knowledgeable in some arts.

Austin (as **Geretain Gorthgeier**): You're just a traveler.

Janine (as **Sacea**): I'm knowledgeable in the kind of arts that don't see roots as particularly simple things.

Austin (as **Geretain Gorthgeier**): Hmm. Interesting. Tell me more about the herbs you're looking for.

Austin: And she's, we don't have to zoom in on this necessarily, but she is now trying to learn from you what it is you do, basically. Entertaining herself with you while her people search for Jud.

Janine: Yeah, that's fine.

Austin: Yeah, you go through—yeah, totally.

Janine: I'll sit, and I'll talk her ear off.

Austin: Yeah, totally.

Janine: I'll tell her about all kinds of wall scum.

Austin: She is interested and listening. You get the sense that she is someone who enjoys new knowledge. We may know that she is that because of how she eats people to gain their knowledge.

Janine: [amused] Mm-hm.

Austin: And so...

Dre: Uh-oh.

Austin: I mean, only the certain people who've been prepared properly or who have already begun going down this path, like Jud, and all the extra knowledge Jud carries that Jud doesn't know that he carries or doesn't understand that he carries. In this case, in this case, she's just happy to hear about some herbs she's never heard of before. You know? Flemming, what are you doing while this conversation continues?

Studying the Statue [27:00]

Dre: [sighs] Well, now that I've heard that this big statue is supposed to be a summoning ritual, I'm kind of interested in that.

Sylvi: Oh, god.

Austin: Oh, yeah. Word?

Dre: Yeah.

Austin: Mm-hm. She seemed to have a book about it.

Janine: I was going to say, she pulled out a book and suddenly Flemm was like, oh, this is worth my time.

Austin: Uh-huh.

Dre: Uh-huh. Yeah. Boy, I don't want to start with the book. You know? There's a—hey. Anybody can write a book. You know?

Austin: That's true. Yeah.

Dre: I don't know how peer-reviewed that book is.

Austin: Probably not at all.

Dre: Yeah, maybe. So, you know, I'm gonna do some hands-on research. What does it take to get up to this thing?

Austin: Oh, it's not, it's walking distance, it's right near—the thing is, it's right near both of them, right?

Dre: Okay.

Austin: It's on the other side of this bonfire from where they are. The bonfire is out, so like, it's on the other—pile of this pile of wet sticks—on the other side of this pile of wet sticks, rather.

Dre: Gotcha. So, I guess the question more so then is like how hard would it be to get there without being noticed?

Austin: That's a good question, Dre. I think that's an intent you would have to declare and a Means you would have to explain. How would you do that?

Dre: Sure. Okay, yeah. I don't know if this is more "I always carry..." I'm going to go with a few showy tricks because this feels more, this is like bullshit magic than it is like grand magician magic.

Austin: Sure. What do you do? What's it look like?

Dre: Sure. I call upon the knowledge I have that I have gained today of what it sounds like for Jud to say, "come and get me, you fuckers." And I throw Jud's voice. Basically, this is the magic version of I'm throwing a stone to distract the guard and make their vision cone turn the other way.

Austin: Yeah, I got it. Yeah, totally. Yeah, I think Lady Geretain Gorthgeier apologizes to you, Sacea, and says,

Austin (as **Geretain Gorthgeier**): Oh, that boy again. I'll have to come back to this conversation in a bit. Men! And they all rush in and begin to chase the voice the other way because I don't think they have anything...

Janine: Can I just say, I... For the first time since we started playing this, I have wished we were playing a game with dice just because the idea of failing a roll and the thrown voice of Jed like says something like jumbled up with those words.

Austin: It's very funny.

Janine: Is just so, so funny. So funny.

Austin: Yeah. It's good. It's very funny.

Janine: There's so many good ways to combine those words. That is very weird in a partial success. Anyway.

Austin: Yeah. Unfortunately. That does not happen here. Fortunately for—

Janine: We've got other games for that.

Austin: We do, exactly. We have that game at home. And I don't think that there's, I just don't think that we have, I don't think that Geretain or Geretain's people, you know, it's like, I guess I could try to oppose it here with something else, but I think that given the situation, which is the scouts and the knights have all been, you know, scattered looking for Jud, they're not in a position to like pick up that this is a trick, you know. So yeah, they fall for it and begin to take off in a different direction in the woods, letting you approach. Really quick, I do think that this is a complication for our good friend Gaje, though, as it means that they start running back the other way, and Gaje you see about three of them, three of these armed figures chasing what they think is, and honestly, maybe what you think is Jud's voice, coming the other direction. And now they're running back towards you. What do you do?

Sylvi: Oh. I mean, if they're just coming towards me, it's going to be the last thing they do. [laughs] Yeah, no, this is when the stake comes out. They're just, you know. The

way you described it earlier is that a lot of them got like lost to the Velutines, like the wilderness of it and stuff.

Austin: Yeah. Yeah, I guess I should be declaring here because I think what they're going to try to do is get past you to try to get to where they think Jud is. They're not not acting on you, they are trying to act on you, so you are defending here. I will say that this is again "I always campaign with my retinue," trying to stomp you out or not stomp you out, but trying to get—oh, actually, you know, it can't be that because that was Countered by Jud. Um, right? Or did they try to defend? Jud? Did you try to, were you acting there? You were acting there.

Jack: I was acting to be "I always escape in the dark."

Austin: So, they were not Countered. So yes, they still have "I always campaign with my retinue." So yeah, they are trying to, or Geretain is trying to stomp her way through you via her people to try to find what they think is Jud. But it's just a thrown voice. What do you do?

Sylvi: And remind me, when, the defender wins ties...?

Austin: Ties go to the Counter. Yep.

Sylvi: Okay. I think I'd use "I always carry an unstoppable weapon" here for this one.

Austin: So, you're not "always killing your foe" in this case.

Sylvi: No, I don't even think I need to kill them because if I don't, the forest will. They just need to be taken... They just need to be left here.

Austin: Right. Uh-huh. What do you do? You succeed here. What do you do?

Sylvi: I think when they first start moving in my direction, I hide behind a tree for a moment. And then right when one passes, the other two, I—did you say three of them were coming my way? For some reason the three got...

Austin: Three of them. Yeah.

Sylvi: Yeah. Okay. The like one who's taking the lead just gets like pummeled by this. And then I come out from behind this tree, and we don't—what was it we said in the first episode? We don't we say where the spear is going but we don't show it?

Austin: I believe the exact thing is “our story always shows you where the sword goes but never what it does.”

Sylvi: Yeah.

Austin: So, where'd you say it goes?

Sylvi: I'm taking their legs off.

Hands-On Study [33:20]

Austin: I see. Yes, absolutely. Then yeah, they are done for here in the woods. And Jud, at this point, I think I'm saying that the trick that was just pulled on them has given you all enough time to maybe get back together at your will. I don't know if before we do that, though, Flemming, you want to take a look at this... idol?

Dre: Yeah, totally.

Austin: What are you doing? Talk to me about what this looks like. Unfortunately, she did leave with the book about what this thing is.

Dre: Sure, sure, sure.

Austin: But. You know.

Dre: I take out several books of my own, and I lay them out in, like, a semicircle in front of me. Like, basically between me and the statue.

Austin: Has the rain stopped, Sacea?

Janine: Have the fire arrows stopped?

Austin: Yeah. Because they're now hunting Jud elsewhere in the woods, basically.

Janine: Right. I think it's petering out.

Austin: Okay.

Dre: Okay.

Austin: Just painting that picture for you taking your books out, you know?

Dre: Yeah, that's fine. And so, I'm basically going through very systematically casting a series of spells that are basically like, is it this type of magic that is in this thing? Is it this type of magic that's in this thing?

Austin: And so, you're trying to figure out basically like kind of like what school of magic, more or less.

Dre: Yeah.

Austin: That's interesting. Yeah. Um, it is, you know, it is what, what I guess I would call folk magic, right? It is a sort of magic that does not have—it's not something taught in schools, you know? The universities did not teach this. You could not pick this up from neither the ReGnostica nor the Zvezd Lyceum, you know? It's none of the big kind of sects or camps. This is the sort of thing that people on a planet, or on a moon, rather, pass down from generation to generation for hundreds or thousands of years and someone knows someone who knows someone who knows how to carve the Carved Prophet, right?

Dre: Sure.

Austin: So, you know it doesn't fit into like a—I mean, I don't know. I don't know what your categories of magic are, I guess.

Dre: Sure, but I think like folk magic is like a... And maybe it's not that I ever get the declaration of like, bing, bing, bing. Yes, this is the folk magic. Maybe it's more of, well, shit, I've gone through all of them.

Austin: Yes, I think that's more like it. Yeah, exactly. You've been like well, okay, you're not summoning a demon. You went down your demon summoning spells. It's not elemental magic. It's not this. It's not that. Exactly.

Dre: So, the next thing I want to try to figure out is, because I overheard her say that this is what turned them into wooden people.

Austin: That's what she seems to think.

Dre: Yeah. So, I want to try and figure out if there is any truth to that.

Austin: How do you go about that?

Dre: [sighs] This might count as... hmm. You tell me if you feel like this counts as using a Sentence in pursuit of an impulse. "I always reject the use of unorthodox magic," and because of that, I do not show the level of like deference that this object deserves. And in order to try and figure out if it did cast some kind of spell on these people, I use the same spell I did earlier to chop down trees to cut out a chunk of the...

Jack: Wow!

Austin: Oh boy. Sorry. This is probably not the pursuit of an impulse. This is a Tragic Success.

Dre: [laughs] Okay, good, perfect.

Austin: This is taking you deeper into chaos, if that's what you want.

Sylvi: Oh, boy.

Austin: That's what you're doing?

Dre: Yeah, sure.

Austin: God, it's like, it truly is this simple. You chop it, and, yeah... The village begins to fall apart. The houses, which I keep talking about being like, oh, yeah, they're really well made and like put together. Like it feels like they're like—they are—they click

together in a really satisfying way. You know what I mean? One of them, the top log on it, comes loose and falls. Someone who is—who has—one of the people who came outside to kneel before Geretain, who then went to the edge of the woods to look for her in the distance, just falls to a knee. In fact, their knee comes off. The wood un-connects.

Dre: Oh no.

Janine: Can I do something to stop them? To stop Flemming?

Austin: You can sure do something. What happens? Tell me what happens.

Janine: I think this very, very directly interacts with my Bond with Flemming, which is “Flemming studies without interpretation. I must demonstrate the limits of his inflexibility.” Sorry, should that be their inflexibility?

Dre: No, it’s he/him. I just keep accidentally slipping into using they because of Palisade brain.

Janine: Yeah.

Austin: Yeah, fair.

Janine: Okay, “Flemming studies without,” yeah. So, what’s the best way? I really, I truly think Sacea would just like yell at him or like, huck something at him to get him to stop.

Austin: What’s she say? What’s she throw?

Janine: I wonder if she just walks up and grabs his arm and is just like,

Janine (as **Sacea**): What is wrong with you?

Jack: [laughs]

Dre (as **Flemming**): What do you mean—?

Dre: And I think that's the time when Flemming turns around and sees the house falling apart and goes,

Dre (as **Flemming**): Oh.

Austin (as **Mirador**): Hey, did somebody...

Austin: Mirador comes outside.

Austin (as **Mirador**): Did somebody dispel the... What are you two doing over there? Everyone inside is getting sick.

Dre: Trying to slide the piece back into where it was.

Austin: Oh, if only it works as simple as that, Flemming.

Dre: Just gotta unplug and plug it back in, right?

Janine: I think Sacea is looking for that potato farmer.

Austin: Ooh, that's good. That's good. Yeah, we get shots of you going from place to place looking for her.

Jack: Not a potato farmer. She was farming fingers.

Austin: They became potatoes.

Janine: Fingerling potatoes.

Dre: Yeah, fingerling potatoes. Come on.

Jack: Oh, I see...

Dre: We covered this.

Austin: They were planting their fingers and then they would become potatoes.

Jack: I thought it was like a tooth troll type situation, and she was in fact more of like a maternity farmer.

Austin: I see. That's fun. That's fun. No.

Jack: That they were planting fingers...

Austin: That's what they needed the trees you were cutting down for, Jack. That was the maternity ward.

Jack: Oh, I see. Jud was the maternity ward. Fuck.

Austin: Mm-hm. Yeah, I think that you can find her. She is not doing well. I think that the cuts that she made in herself earlier are deeper than they were before. As if like what had been a little splinter in her shoulder widened after Flemm hit the, cut through the idol. Looks up at you, recognizes you, and like reaches out to you like for aid.

Janine: Yeah, I'll reach out to her for aid, also—or not for aid, but like.

Austin: Yeah. I think just grips your hand. Like, this is a “thank you for supporting me while I am dying” hold, because she does not know how to deal with what's happening to her.

Janine: Can I like lead her out?

Austin: Yeah. Sure.

Janine: And show her the effigy situation?

Austin: Uh-huh. I think she, like, shakes her head as if to say, like, I don't know how to fix it.

Janine: Um, hmm.

Janine (as **Sacea**): But, but you did the good wood stuff before.

Austin: Hands, hands for, like, no. Shakes head. One finger, one finger, shake both fingers. Not the same, not the same.

Janine (as **Sacea**): Okay. Is there anyone? Is there anyone in town who could?

Austin: Thinking, thinking, thinking. Pointing to the smallest house in town.

Janine: Okay. Can I help her sit down and then go to the small house?

Austin: Yeah.

Janine: Okay.

The Smallest House [42:30]

Austin: And inside the small house is a collection, or is a small fire, a small, you know, like stove and a small chair and a small bed. And when I say small, I mean like they're like they're tiny, you know, like they're pretty—this is like an old, an old little person's house. You know what I mean? Like an old, they shrank as they got older. And in bed is someone who is, I don't know, four foot two, in a wooden bed and they are not moving. And their home is filled with wooden books and also with a few regular books. The way that their home is—in the windowsill, there's a bunch of little wooden figurines, little wooden animals. There is a—not a photo, but a sort of— a small painting on one of the walls of humans, of human people. It's like a mother holding a child. There are things here that make you feel like... On the stove, which there is, there is a metal—first of all, the stove is made of metal, and then there's like a metal kettle next to the stove. So, there are things here that are not made of wood, which suggests that maybe this person predates the wooden village in some way, or predated the wooden village in some way. But frankly, they were old, and they were already close to the end. And then Flemming cut the idol that was keeping this whole thing going.

Janine: Okay, but...

Austin: Mm-hmm.

Janine: [laughs] But... Would you say that someone being dead is a truth?

Austin: Is a truth?

Janine: That could perhaps be shifted?

Austin: Oh. I mean, you could try.

Janine: Like temporarily?

Austin: Yeah, could you temporarily shift someone dead to being back alive using the Sentence "I always shift the truth..."

Janine: I'll spend a token on it.

Austin: You don't have to. I mean, well, you do if it's being opposed, right? But I don't think anyone's opposing this use. Again, Sentences that are +0 are really powerful when they're unopposed, you know?

Janine: Well, great news.

Austin: Uh-huh. What's this temporary resurrection look like?

Janine: This will surely make Flemm feel way better. I think this should, given the imagery at play, look a little bit funerary. Like this, the action of the pomander here is very much like the sort of classic low swinging censer, full of incense and what have you. Although I think the incense, you would expect it to be kind of like a really overpowering floral or like herbal kind of thing, but it actually smells very like bright. Like, you know, when you unexpectedly like in the winter have—you know, you're at a restaurant or something and you order a dessert that you're not familiar with and you get it and it like tastes kind of like suntan lotion. And you like very briefly have this like, "oh, right. Summer exists," kind of feeling.

Austin: Yeah. Yeah.

Janine: I think it's like that. I think it's a smell that is like that where it's just like, oh, this is. Yeah, right. Sometimes areas are nice and there's fruit or whatever.

Austin: Yeah.

Janine: And sort of swings this around the room a little bit. And then before this person rises or does not rise or whatever, turns around and sort of walks out as if she is leading them out. Just sort of assuming that they will follow.

Austin: That they'll come with you. Yeah. And I think that they do. Again, nothing's opposing this. You know, the moon of Sapryc doesn't have a Sentence that is, you know, "the dead always stay dead" or something like that, you know? And so, yeah, I think that they do. They have a little—they come out with a little shovel. They, like, pick up a little shovel and follow you out as if they know intuitively what's happened here. Maybe at this point, Jud and Gaje, you can come back if that's where you want to be. I don't know where you want to be at this point.

Jack: Yeah, no. I'll be back if I could have reconvened with Gaje. That's an awkward walk back to the village.

Sylvi: Yeah, do you just climb out of a tree or something?

Austin: Yeah, I'd love to know what that reconnection is like. Please.

Jack: Oh, god... I think that after I've seen Gaje kill those guys, I make my presence known audibly and from a distance.

Sylvi: [laughs]

Jack: You know, I think I say, you know,

Jack (as **Jud**): It's Jud. I'm here. I'm all right. You got 'em. And yeah, don't kill me.

Sylvi (as **Gaje**): [snorts] Yeah, no shit, kid. You're like a full head shorter than everybody who's been looking for us.

Jack: Sulking.

Sylvi (as **Gaje**): Anyway, I'm glad you're okay.

Jack (as **Jud**): Yeah, yeah. Okay. You know how to get back to the village?

Sylvi: Shrug.

Sylvi (as **Gaje**): Time to find out.

Austin: You do. I think you can... Well, actually, I actually don't know. Do either of you know how to traverse the dark?

Jack: Um...

Austin: In the woods?

Sylvi: Well, someone has a Sentence about this.

Jack: I have a Sentence about "always fighting my way to safety in the dark."

Sylvi: Yeah. Fair.

Jack: So, I think we can get back to the village, but it will involve a fight.

Austin: [laughs] It would need that, wouldn't it?

Jack: It's not. You know, if we read, what's Gaje's Sentence? "I always learn through violence." That Sentence is not "I always learn."

Austin: No.

Jack: So, Jud's Sentence "I always fight my way to safety in the dark" is not "I always get to safety in the dark."

Austin: Correct. Yeah.

Janine: This is such a good game for a player like Jack.

Austin: But my point, I mean, this is kind of hurting Jack in this particular instance, right? Because...

Janine: Exactly, that's why it's so good.

Austin: Oh, that's why it's good for Jack. Yeah.

Jack: Yeah, you know.

Janine: Because, like, fascinating. Fantastic. Yes.

Jack: How fun to trap my character. And by extension, Gaje.

Sylvi: Oh, that's fine. I'm strong.

Jack: Oh.

Sylvi: The thing is, though, we're also in, like, a hostile forest.

Austin: Uh-huh.

Sylvi: So, like, you could very easily define fighting your way back to safety by, like, fighting your way like, fighting with the wilderness. I don't know if that's a little too... neat.

Jack: Oh, yeah, no, definitely.

Janine: Puma. Magic puma.

Austin: Magic puma shows up, you gotta fight a magic puma.

Sylvi: Oh. Gotta be careful.

Janine: Like that one from *Miasmata*, the like vine panther.

Austin: Oh yeah, uh-huh.

Jack: Oh my god, no, Janine. You must not speak of the *Miasmata* creature. If—please, *Miasmata* is simply a game about making a map on a deserted island.

Janine: And grinding up flowers, it's very...

Jack: Why is it deserted? Don't...

Austin: It's actually very Sacea-like. Don't worry about it.

Janine: Yeah.

Jack: Yeah, don't think too hard, and keep an eye on the tree line. Um. I keep coming back to this image of like following a river, but we have to follow it upstream.

Austin: Yeah.

Jack: And it has this like really tall embankment walls, meaning that, like, it's very hard for us to try and follow the river on the riverbank because the risk of tumbling down the embankment and into the river would be great. And if we stray far from the... If we stray far enough from the riverbank in order for it to be safe, we lose track of how it is turning in the dark too quickly. So we are, you know, knee-deep, waist-deep in this river, walking upstream, you know, wading upstream. And it sucks.

Austin: Sounds like it sucks. But I'll give it to you here, I think. I think that it's a struggle. I think that it is a bit of a fight. I suspect you maybe actually do need to actually...

Jack: Oh, I have a broken arm, is the other thing. It is, you know, you want me to actually fight somebody? I can fight a fish.

Austin: I think you have to fight a fish or a gator, perhaps.

Jack: Are there gators in the Velutines? No.

Austin: Probably not.

Jack: There are...

Austin: Bears?

Jack: Spiders. Spider webs have... Spiders have built their webs over the river to catch fish in the spider webs. These are the kind of spiders large enough to catch and eat fish, and we have to go through several of their webs.

Austin: Miserable.

Sylvi: Eugh.

Jack: It's bad. It's awful.

Austin: Yeah. I don't like it.. Yeah, great. Love it.

The Carved Prophet [52:00]

Austin: You've brought this old founder of this village to the icon. And they immediately set upon digging into the ground, which thankfully is nice and wet and damp from the rain. It's heavier, but it does mean that it does what they need it to do. They kneel down and begin to pack the wound. And they're not just packing it with the soil exactly as-is. They're also like adding new marks. You realize they're adding like veins, like the shape of veins. Sometimes they're pushing a little hole in. They at one point take a twig and push it all the way through a big clump of dirt, of like wet dirt, to make a hole through the clump. And then they just put the whole clump inside the empty recess where it had been cut away from, as if the hole was important to add for some reason. It's a very detailed, careful process. They seem a little upset based on the fact that they only have dirt to use. Somebody's donkey has been eating a lot of the grass nearby.

Janine: [laughs] Oh, no.

Austin: So, it's not quite what it was. But after about 30 minutes of work, it seems like it's back to where it was. The people are, you know, begin to, we get that, like, that coughing restart of the simulation, almost, you know. The person comes over and tries to relight the bonfire, right, as if it was the beginning of the day again. The beginning of for them, the day, that's the night for everybody else.

Janine: Finger farmer back at it?

Austin: Finger farmer goes back to working. I mean, it's a little bit later in the night so I think they're probably she's probably done with the finger farming for the day, I think gives you a big squeeze, Sacea. You know?

Janine: Aw.

Austin: And does like a big nod at you. And then says like, wait one second, one second, one second. And then runs away. And then comes back with an apron full of wooden potatoes.

Janine: [laughs]

Austin: They're her good ones. It's like her good potatoes. These are the good ones.

Janine: That's cute.

Austin: Uh-huh. And gives you like a little bag of them. A little burlap sack of these. These could be an Ephemera, but like. I don't know what they do yet, you know? "My bag of wooden potatoes always," blank.

Jack: "When I prepare a meal of a bag of wooden potatoes using the Spoon of the Exhale."

Janine: So, I actually have a point of potential reference for this if I can find it in my YouTube shorts recommendations.

Austin: Oh, okay, sure.

Janine: Ah... YouTube, it shouldn't be too hard.

Dre: Yeah, which episode of Skibidi Toilet are you...?

Austin: [loud laugh]

Janine: I have to find one where she's making the incense. YouTube Shorts is like really, really sure that what I want to see is a person making incense and burning incense. And it just shows me three or four of these videos every day. And they've all been different. I've never seen the same one twice. I don't understand how it's possible.

Austin: You've never seen the same one twice.

Janine: Some of them start with her scraping wood, and that's the one I'm looking for here. Here we go.

Austin: Okay.

Janine: All right, I found it.

Austin: She's just scraping wood, huh?

Janine: You scrape the wood, and you get wood powder.

Jack: Look at this!

Janine: And then you like put it on the other powder.

Jack: Yeah, I'd like to do this, I think.

Austin: Yeah, sure.

Janine: It seems like a really lovely little ritual, doesn't it? And all of these videos...

Jack: You want to do this to some potatoes?

Janine: Yeah, because they're wooden potatoes. It could be fancy wood. It could be like a wood that I recognize is useful. Yeah.

Austin: Yeah, think about what this is. We'll talk about it. I don't know that it's like important that we have it right this second. The little figure does come over to you, Flemming, and shakes their head at you, but then turns and looks at the Carved Prophet, which is the name of this thing, and then touches their chest and then does like

a little forward gesture, like a “talk to it,” or like a, you know, hands on chest and then give to the prophet. And then just nods at you as if to say like, now you get it, and then leaves. I don’t know that you got it, Flemming but that’s...

Dre: I don’t know either.

Austin: Yeah.

Dre: But I mean I’ll try talking to the statue.

Austin: Yeah.

Janine: I think you should apologize.

Dre: I’ll apologize. Yeah, no. I mean, listen. Flemming is a dumbass, but this is not—what he did is not intentionally malicious. It absolutely was, right, and I’m not trying to be like “well, but he’s still a good guy.”

Austin: Right.

Dre: But like.

Austin: Right. That definitely, definitely...

Dre: This is what a lot of academics do. But.

Janine: He understands the world in a certain framework, but also sometimes things are bigger than your framework.

Dre: Right, yes, and recognizes that he fucked up and shouldn’t have done this.

Austin: When Flemming apologizes, that’s the truth, though?

Dre: Yes.

Austin: Like, for instance, if something had the Sentence “when I am carved from something that once lived, I always separate lies from truth.”

Dre: Yes.

Austin: Okay.

Dre: Flemming is genuinely sorry.

Austin: Mm-hmm. I think that there is a, not even a rumbling. I think simply the bonfire behind you crackles in a pleasing way.

Dre: Is there anything I can do for it?

Austin: Ah...

Janine: [laughing] Cut down ten trees.

Dre: [laughs]

Austin: God, that's so funny. Cut down ten trees is kind of funny. It's like, that's definitely like the end of the episodic anime, you know?

Jack: Fix the five trees that were cut down before.

Austin: Uh-huh. No, they're pro-cutting down more trees here. Like, that is, that is, well, the Carved Prophet doesn't really have an opinion. The Carved Prophet is not the leader of this group, you know.

Dre: Can I add an addendum to cut down ten trees?

Austin: Sure.

Dre: Cut down ten trees, and you have to use an axe because using magic to cut the trees down ruins it.

Austin: Oh, this is fun. This is a fun one. Yeah, I don't mind that. That's kind of fun. And I think that actually you get the sense here that it is happy to have you... I guess I don't think that this triggers. I'm thinking about what other Sentences are. And I don't think that the... I don't think you're just going to intuit any of these other things that it can do,

you know? I think that just, it is what it is. And so, yes, I think that there is, like, the ten trees in the distance, we get small beams of light projected from the bonfire, you know?

Dre: Oh, it's such a good quest marking system.

Austin: It's very good, yeah. And this is probably around when Jud and Gaje come back, seemingly to safety.

Jack: Yeah, has Mirador... Mirador paid us to take them to—I mean, has Mirador come out of the tavern now? Things seem to have settled.

Austin: Yeah, I think things have settled. I think Mirador is packing up the wagon.

Jack: Is there a sense of like, all right, you've had your fun?

Austin: I think there is exactly, I think to the degree that Mirador is like,

Austin (as **Mirador**): All right. We went to the little village where everyone's made of wood, and they worship a wood god. And then the kid's weird... I don't even know why. I have some ideas why. Anyway, I'm glad everyone's okay. Go cut down your trees. And we got to keep moving. It's going to be sun up anyway soon and I don't want to see these people go back to sleep. I bet it's real freaky.

Dre: [laughs]

Jack: Poor Mirador. Poor Mirador wanted to hire four guides and accidentally became the guide and person with donkey for idiots.

Sylvi: Hey, listen. I'm not an idiot. I'm just... too strong for my own good.

Jack: Mm, mm-hm.

Sylvi: Very different. Name one stupid thing I've done. Wait, don't do that.

Jack: Ow, ow, ow. My arm.

Sylvi: [cackles] Wait a sec.

Jack: Okay, I think I am going to get on the cart. At this point.

Sylvi: I'm sitting on a stump watching Flemming chop all those trees before I do anything.

Austin: Oh, hell yeah.

Sylvi: In my mind, I'm eating an apple while I do it, but I don't know what our ration situation is like.

Dre: Yeah, sure.

Janine: How do you feel about wooden apples?

Dre: While Flemming is cutting down this tree, he is getting very hot. This is a level of manual labor he is not used to. And so, he takes off his jacket and his shirt. And boy, are there a lot of fucked up looking scars and stitch marks.

Austin: Hell yeah.

Dre: On this fussy wizard's back.

Sylvi: Damn, all right.

Austin: Love a shirtless wizard reveal. Love a, "oh shit, some stuff has happened here" reveal.

Jack: It's great to see a shirtless wizard because I feel, historically, shirtless witches are much more common.

Austin: Yeah, sure. Sure.

Dre: That's true.

Janine: Mm-hm.

Jack: And you're sort of broadening the magical palate.

Austin: You finish cutting down these trees. It takes a lot of effort. It is not easy.

Sylvi: I give some pointers on technique, but I don't actually do anything

Sylvi (as **Gaje**): You want to hold that a little straighter or you're going to...

Sylvi: A lot of you're going to hurt your wrist jokes.

Austin: I mean, the irony of "I always know a few showy tricks" is like, it doesn't say showy magic tricks, you know?

Janine: Mm-hmm. True.

Austin: You could be out there doing axe tricks.

Dre: Yeah. I don't think there's, I don't, I don't think axe tricks is... [laughs]

Austin: That's fair. That's fair.

Dre: Is the vibe.

Austin: Yeah. I think sometime towards the end of your thing, Mirador does go over to the big idol and whispers some words under their breath, and then nods and then says,

Austin (as **Mirador**): All right, we gotta get going. Sounds like things are bad outside the woods, and we're going outside the woods. So, we want to kind of beat the bad to up here, because it's mostly bad to the east and to the south, and we're going north, northeast. And so, if we go quick, we might beat the bad. Sound good?

Jack (as **Jud**): Yeah, yeah.

Jack: Jud is trying not to say lead the way, but just sort of shuts up.

Austin (as **Mirador**): Flemming's the one with the map.

Dre: Shot of Flemming's arm just sticking up from the bottom of the wagon with the map in hand.

Dre (as **Flemming**): Somebody take this. I am too tired to understand a map right now.

Austin: [laughs] All right. Who's leading the way?

Sylvi: I'll do it. I'll do this. I can read a map. I had my fun laughing at Flemming doing physical labor. And also, with the fact that there is a retinue of scouts out here looking for a member of our group, I feel like taking the lead as the sort of muscle of the situation is the least I could do.

Austin: Yeah. As the cart leaves the town behind and begins to head down the final pathway through the Velutines, at some point Mirador gets in the back of the wagon. And kind of leans over to talk to you, Flemm, and says,

Austin (as **Mirador**): Cutting down all those trees, you might think you're bought into this whole thing. That little talk we had sticks with you? You're on board.

Dre (as **Flemming**): I'm too tired to recall any conversation. But if it'll get you to let me go back to sleep, I am on board.

Austin (as **Mirador**): Yeah, if you don't remember the conversation, let me tell you, you agreed with everything I said.

Sylvi: [cackles]

Austin (as **Mirador**): Just get some rest.

Dre: Thumbs up, flops back down.

Austin: And, you know, Mirador leans back on the kind of left side of the cart. And I think we get a shot of the whole group kind of making their way to the edge of the woods, kind of beginning to poke through as the trees are thinning. There's a path again, a real path that leads you the rest of the way out. We kind of see this long shot,

this long take of Mirador leaning back, looking up as the canopy of trees gets thinner and thinner. And then we see on his face the sense of worry, the sense of fear, his nose and mouth crinkled up. Strange and afraid.

And we get the reverse shot from behind him, as looking east from the north of the Velutines, we see the city of Allant, this massive diamond-shaped city. You barely see it, but what you can definitely see is the Cathedral Omphalic, this sort of massive, twisting, almost umbilical cord-like space elevator, unfinished, lifting up into the atmosphere above, this thing that was supposed to give the Venerant Sea another way of getting materials and people onto the planet besides Krater. And it is on fire in the morning. Against the earliest, darkest dawn, there is yet again the fire of the Empest as they lay siege to another city on the Trunk of Sapryc, off in the distance.

Sylvi: All right.

End of Session [1:07:00]

Austin: Let's time.is. Actually, that's not true. Let's end of session. I always forget that we do end of session.

Dre: Oh, yeah.

Austin: Again, it's pretty easy, so I don't mind just knocking it out. All right. If you worked towards achieving your dream, mark a dot next to one Means of your choice. Be generous with yourself. Characters don't need to move the world in order to work towards their dream. The path is long and even stumbling steps move you further.

Jack: I know the name of one of the people that is hunting me.

Austin: This is true. I'll give it to you. Mark a Sentence.

Janine: I found some important scum.

Jack: [laughs]

Austin: You did. And you got some sort of wooden potatoes.

Janine: Yeah.

Austin: Which could be used to help get rid of the miasma that corrupts the Thousand Moons.

Janine: Yeah.

Sylvi: I got in a fight in the woods for reasons other than I usually have in fights.

Austin: Yeah, for sure. Take it.

Dre: I learned that I should be more specific when I'm doing my rigorously testing to craft my new majestic spell.

Austin: Yeah, you sure did. Choose a Means that's shaped how you played, but which you did not mark during play and mark it.

Dre: I think I'm gonna... I didn't... No, I didn't mark "a few showy tricks" during play, so I will mark it now.

Austin: You did not. You're allowed to have used it, you just can't have marked it.

Dre: Yeah, yeah.

Jack: I am marking "Sacea's methods are otherworldly and I'm afraid of her. I need to stay in my good books" because we had a conversation about bread.

Austin: Yeah. Love it.

Janine: I think I'm also going to mark my Jud Bond because that feels very... A lot of stuff happened there.

Austin: It did.

Sylvi: Could I mark my Flemming one after all the stuff went wrong with what he was doing?

Austin: Oh, yeah. I think so.

Sylvi: Yeah.

Austin: Sure.

Sylvi: Cool.

Dre: Um... I guess I'll mark my Sacea Bond.

Austin: Yeah?

Janine: Mm-hmm.

Austin: I think an important one there. For sure. Damn, we got a lot of primed Sentences. Flemming, you have "I always project an image of unerring wisdom" is primed. And Gaje, you have "I always learn through violence" primed. And, damn, Jud, you're failing stuff a lot. "I always protect those traveling with me."

Jack: Oh, I failed a lot of stuff in the early stages. I didn't fail much, I don't think I failed anything today.

Austin: Wait, then why is "I always protect those traveling with me" marked? Oh, is that what you just marked?

Jack: I marked that for learning Gorthgeier's name.

Austin: Right, correct. Gotcha.

Jack: And then I marked my Bond with Sacea.

Austin: Yep, got it. Cool. And then make sure your token is marked right. Make sure that Means and other stuff that were used were marked right. I don't think anyone used Ephemera. No one used Bonds. No one used Faction or Moon Sentences, et cetera. I

mean, I marked a bunch of Faction Sentences and a bunch of NPC Sentences. So, that's fun.

Sylvi: Hell yeah, you did. [laughs] Things happened.

Austin: Things happened. Cool.

Jack: Alright.

Austin: Easy. Time.is.

Jack: Out of the woods.

Austin: Out of the woods!

Jack: Literally. It's going to be very easy from now on.

Janine: Uh-huh.

Austin: You simply have to get to the Cloister of the Hollow Heart.

Janine: What could go wrong?

[["Sapryc"](#) by Jack de Quidt begins playing]