

Perpetua 26: In Too Deep 02

Transcriber: frog (fferaldogs)

Recap	1
Hexcloak Investigation [0:02:27]	3
On the Scent [0:13:10]	14
Counting Cloaks [0:26:20]	26
Into The Tunnels [0:33:28]	33
Breaking In [0:49:55]	50
Hexcloak Encounter [1:03:11]	61

Recap

Janine: Beachminton.

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

Austin: Ohh.

Janine: I’d go back to that Beachminton day, you know.

Austin: That sounds great.

Janine: It was nice, everything was different. It was victory.

Keith: That was a pre-mole’d world.

Janine: Yeah.

Keith: Pre-mole world.

Austin: Yeah, I was gonna—mold?

Janine: [chuckles]

Sylvi: Aw, the draconic mold battle is gonna suck.

Austin (as **Phoebe**): Some shields are for using, and some shields are for life.

Keith (as **Antistrophe**): If they're for life, they're also for using.

Austin (as **Phoebe**): No, these shields are gonna break one day. I can't tell you what day. I can see the cracks already forming. You didn't always used to be a shield wielder, huh?

Keith (as **Antistrophe**): No, I lost all my magic.

Austin (as **Phoebe**): You lost all your magic? What the hell is wrong with you?

Sylvi (as **Caoimhe**): We think the Hexcloaks have left the city. Specifically, we think Thereus Aegir, their leader, has left the city, but we cannot find any evidence of where they went. And we were hoping you guys could help us out, if, you know, if you're able to.

Austin (as **Dessert Brother**): What's it you'd be wanting with the Hexcloaks?

Sylvi (as **Caoimhe**): They took a friend of mine.

Austin (as **Dessert Brother**): Like, to the slammer.

Janine: Can we just rent a dog? Like find a dog that like, smells stuff?

Sylvi (as **Caoimhe**): What about the attack on the commander?

Austin (as **Hexcloak**): It's been dealt with. You have any questions, or are you involved? Is there an admission you want to make?

[“[Perpetua](#)” by Jack de Quidt plays until track ends]

Hexcloak Investigation [0:02:27]

Sylvi (as **Caoimhe**): I happened to be at the temple the same day that the accused was, and I was just curious if it was connected.

Austin (as **Hexcloak**): The accused? We were there. It was an assassination attempt.

Sylvi (as **Caoimhe**): [lightly] Uh huh.

Austin (as **Hexcloak**): There's no accusation about it. There's just the thing it was.

Sylvi (as **Caoimhe**): The attacker?

Austin (as **Hexcloak**): Yeah.

Sylvi: I'm trying to pretend that I don't know Kley. [**Austin**: I see.] so I'm not—I'm acting like I don't know the name.

Austin: Yeah, right. Yeah.

Sylvi: Like,

(as **Caoimhe**): How do you want me to refer to this person? I'm just curious.

Austin (as **Hexcloak**): You don't need to refer to this person at all. [enunciating] It's being dealt with. In fact, they're probably—

Sylvi (as **Caoimhe**): Yeah, just like the mole was, huh.

Austin (as **Hexcloak**): They're—[scoffs] You think you're funny.

Sylvi (as Caoimhe): Eh, I'm okay.

Austin (as Hexcloak): Well I think I'm busy. Have a good one.

Sylvi: Alright, I'm—now I need table talk with my friends to figure out how we can get more information out of this situation I've just blown.

Keith: You know, I don't know if you've blown it yet. This person is a real jackass, but you haven't made any rolls or asked—

Sylvi: That's true.

Keith: You know, haven't asked a question yet. I think the- you- I think the door is still open for you to [cross] make a move.

Sylvi: [cross] To blow it.

Keith: To blow it.

Sylvi: [laughs]

Keith: Yeah, you can still blow it, don't worry.

Sylvi: Thank you. Um...

Janine: We still have Cupcake, right?

Sylvi: Some verbal—oh my god we do have—

Austin: Yeah, did you bring Cupcake in? Yeah.

Sylvi: Cupcake, yeah.

Austin: I think Cupcake—

Janine: Where's Cupcake?

Sylvi: I was trying to think of like—

Austin: Great question.

Sylvi: Doing an information version of the like, “give me more change for this bill” trick to them, [**Austin:** laughs] but now I’m like, oh yeah we should just have something—

Keith: You’re trying to short—

Sylvi: I’m trying to short—

Keith: Trying to shortchange the—

Sylvi: Shortchange some information, yeah.

Keith: Yeah, okay.

Sylvi: But now I’m like, no, we should do a Cupcake based plan.

Janine: Mhm.

Sylvi: What if we accidentally let the dog loose [laughs] and then have to go find the dog in here.

Keith: That might be dangerous for the dog.

Sylvi: That might be too dangerous for the dog.

Janine: I- I also had that thought.

Keith: I think that—

Janine: My first thought was, how do we know Hexcloaks wouldn’t kill a dog? And then my second thought was, would Austin kill the dog?

Austin: [laughs] I will temporarily disable the dog, but I won’t permanently harm the dog.

Sylvi: [laughs]

Janine: Yeah, yeah.

Austin: In this season.

Keith: But I think the answer to the question “would Hexcloaks kill a dog” [**Sylvi:** Yeah.] is, absolutely.

Janine: Yeah.

Sylvi: It’s definitely yes.

Austin: The answer is a hundred percent, they would. I don’t think that I will do that today, unless you like—I don’t know what you would have to do to where the only thing that seems honest is a sort of fatal violence against a dog?

Keith: Yeah.

Sylvi: [laughs]

Austin: I think you’d have to like, put a bomb on its neck [laughs] and throw it at—

Sylvi and Janine: [laugh]

Keith: Right.

Austin: You know what I mean? It would have to be—

Sylvi: Yeah.

Keith: But as a character—

Janine: At that point we’re the ones killing the dog, though.

Austin: That’s right, that’s right.

Sylvi: Yeah.

Keith: As a character, as a character, Antistrophe believing that the Hexcloaks would kill a dog would prevent him from using the dog in the plan.

Janine: Yeah, that's a good way to look at it.

Austin: That's right. Mhm.

Janine: Yeah.

Sylvi: That's a good point.

Keith: But, I don't know, who—did we get an answer? Who is this person? They—

Austin: They're a Hexcloak!

Keith: They're acting like- they're acting like they're nineteen ranks above you—

Janine: But they're like, at the desk.

Sylvi: Yeah...

Keith: In the Hexcloak—this- they're at a desk. I think you can big time this person and get them to feel like they'll be in trouble for not giving you more information.

Janine: Well I don't know about that part, but. [laughs]

Sylvi: I could.

Keith: I think you could.

Austin: Give me the roll, the difficulty is 19.

Sylvi and Janine: [laugh]

Keith: Okay, that's too- that—

Sylvi: [laughing] I don't know if I could!

Keith: I don't think you could.

Sylvi: I'm like looking at my numbers, I don't think that's literal—I think that's literally impossible.

Austin: You could crit.

Keith: It was worth checking!

Austin: I mean, it depends on what you're trying to do.

Sylvi: Yeah, I could—

Austin: The technique that Keith just described, of trying to “big time” them, is—

Sylvi: Not gonna work.

Austin: Very hard to do. They were with Thereus Aegir when he was going to confront Castine, Living Metal, member of the Ennead.

Janine: Mhm.

Keith: That's fair.

Austin: So they're at least that tight with the leader of the Hexcloaks.

Keith: Uh—

Sylvi: Ooh! Here's an idea. Could I try and like smooth this over a bit and be like,

(as **Caoimhe**): Listen, can I at least- can we—you were there. Can we compare notes just to make sure I've got everything straight and you've got everything straight?

Austin: This is fun, yeah. Give me a persuade.

Sylvi: Okay, and that would be...

Austin: I think it's insight, willpower.

Sylvi: Okay, so 2d8. I can do that, I can do that! I hope. And it's...that's a 10?

Austin: Yeah, yeah.

(as **Hexcloak**): [sighs] We're all Hexcloaks here now, sure. Tell me what you know.

Sylvi: I think the way Caoimhe's gonna phrase it is like,

(as **Caoimhe**): From everything we could tell, Castine was actually minimizing the tremors that were happening due to the Draconic Mole. And as far as my investigation turned up, there's no connection there whatsoever to what has been happening in Cenn. In fact, it seems more like the opposite.

Sylvi: I'm trying to think of—I don't think there's any- I think that's probably about as specific as she gets with Castine stuff. She- I think if there's details that the- this Hexcloak—did I get a name for this Hexcloak?

Austin: This- you didn't. Maybe you get one here. They say [**Sylvi:** Yeah.] their name is Mercurion.

Sylvi: Okay. I think I'm more—I'm happy to answer any questions Mercurion has about the fight we had with the Draconic Mole, [**Austin:** Mhm.] less so about—

Austin: I see.

Sylvi: The stuff with Castine. And I think, given my reputation, I can kind of use my mole fervor as a smokescreen for some of this stuff? [laughs]

Austin: Sure, yeah.

Sylvi: Where it's like she—I've got like a diagram [**Austin:** chuckles] of what I think the tunnels looked like under the temple that I'm like showing. It's like, here, I sort of—

(as **Caoimhe**): This is theoretical until we can get a crew down there to actually map these out, but judging from—

Sylvi: Blah blah blah, and the rate of destruction of the city, and—

Austin: Yeah.

(as **Mercurion**): I have to admit, it's all very interesting. Yeah, it was a dissident, a known dissident, who came after our commander.

Sylvi (as **Caoimhe**): A known dissident?

Austin (as **Mercurion**): Name of Kley. Kley Kaina.

Sylvi (as **Caoimhe**): Mm.

Austin (as **Mercurion**): You don't have to play dumb. I know where you grew up. I know who you were on the train with.

Sylvi (as **Caoimhe**): Oh, that Kley Kaina!

Austin (as **Mercurion**): You got it. [sighs] I know that they didn't think too highly of you, which is a plus in my book.

Sylvi (as **Caoimhe**): [scoffs] Wow.

Austin (as **Mercurion**): A plus for you.

Sylvi (as **Caoimhe**): Oh, for me!

Austin (as **Mercurion**): Yeah. Apologies.

Sylvi (as **Caoimhe**): Okay, yeah. I misheard you.

Keith: [laughs] I also heard that the opposite way.

Austin (as **Mercurion**): I kind of passive voiced that one in some ways, I guess. In any case—

Keith: Gotta hand it to the assassin, at least they hated Caoimhe.

Austin: That's right. [laughs] Yeah, not the other way, yeah.

Keith: [laughs]

Austin (as **Mercurion**): We think it was gonna be some sort of uh, some sort of poison. They had some vials on them. We didn't give them a chance to use them. As to Castine's innocence, as you well know, there are many ways to be guilty. Yeah?

Sylvi (as **Caoimhe**): [laughs] So I've heard.

Austin (as **Mercurion**): Sometimes you're guilty of something malicious, but sometimes you're guilty of negligence.

Sylvi: I—god. Biting my lip to not say something about the recovery effort after the attack [**Austin:** Mhm.] with the Hexcloaks here. Just sort of nod at that, I guess.

Keith: Sorry, Mercurion's saying that Castine, even if he wasn't guilty of causing the tremors, was guilty of not stopping them?

Austin: Maybe. Was ambiguous.

Sylvi: Yeah. Negligence of what, then? That- I say that out loud, like,

(as **Caoimhe**): Negligent of what?

Austin (as **Mercurion**): Oh, well.

Sylvi (as **Caoimhe**): They were actively trying to stop the tremors from happening.

Austin (as **Mercurion**): Maybe. If the mole was the cause, then it sure didn't seem to be a target of Castine's. And maybe Castine opened the door. If not for the mole, then for someone else who brought the mole. We happen to know now that there are ways that people can get in and out of the city without uh, without going through the front door. So to speak.

Sylvi (as **Caoimhe**): Such as?

Austin (as **Mercurion**): Something in the temple.

Sylvi (as **Caoimhe**): Hm.

Austin: You get a flash, in your mind [**Sylvi**: Yes.] of the room with the other Ennead altars.

Sylvi: Mhm. Is there anything else—oh, actually there is another question I wanna ask.

(as **Caoimhe**): Was Kley working by themselves?

Austin (as **Mercurion**): As far as we can tell, though they have connections to groups—to a group in Elevana—

Austin: They wouldn't say in Elevana.

(as **Mercurion**): They have connections to a group with absurd and frankly disastrous goals. And they seem to think that our commander is in the way.

Sylvi (as **Caoimhe**): Hm.

Keith: Do we know what group they're talking about?

Austin: I don't think there's a—I don't think this name has been said.

Sylvi: Yeah, I don't think—I was also kinda wondering if there's a name we could get.

Austin: Ah, they'll name them.

(as **Mercurion**): They call themselves the Luminaries.

Sylvi (as **Caoimhe**): Hm.

Austin (as **Mercurion**): They believe—

Keith: Have I heard of the Luminaries? Have any of us heard of them?

Austin: None of you have heard of them, no.

Keith: Okay.

Austin: No.

(as **Mercurion**): They believe that the world is on its last days, that something must be done. They've invented an apocalypse to stop, justifying murder and terrorism along the way. Personally, I think maybe they're funded by the Valte.

Sylvi (as **Caoimhe**): Sure, why not. Pretty convenient.

Keith (as **Antistrophe**): [loudly] They sound deranged.

Keith: [laughs]

Austin: [laughs]

(as **Mercurion**): Now there's a voice of reason.

Keith (as **Antistrophe**): Yes, I don't believe any of that.

Austin: [laughs]

Sylvi: [laughs]

Austin (as **Mercurion**): Is there anything else?

Sylvi: No sir, not me! [laughs] Um, alright. I think I am good on questions I have for this guy? I don't think I'm gonna be getting anything out of where- like about where the Hexcloaks went, like where Aegir went. Oh actually! Yeah, I do wanna ask,

(as **Caoimhe**): Do you have—could you at least tell me anywhere- like where Kley is being held, so I can tell their mother I have at least some inkling of where they are.

Austin (as **Mercurion**): Oh, they're long gone now. Aegir took them back to Lumai for interrogation. Hopefully we can put this Luminaries business behind us.

Sylvi (as **Caoimhe**): Mm. Thank you, you've been really helpful.

Austin: Not clear how Aegir would have gotten to Lumai, by the way.

Sylvi: Mhm! Okay, are we good to leave this place?

Keith: I'm good.

Sylvi: Okay. The second I get outside, I'm like,

(as **Caoimhe**): Oh, I hate that guy!

Sylvi: [laughs]

On the Scent [0:13:10]

Austin: Um, Cupcake's still barking at the door. As soon as you come out, Cupcake starts barking at the door more.

Keith: Could that have been a lie?

Janine: Yes.

Sylvi: That might have been a lie.

Janine: Why—

Keith: Well they did say there's some way to get to—that there was some way to leave the city via the temple, and they were at the temple the last time they were anywhere.

Sylvi: I—see, I wanna come back and break into this place, is my thing.

Janine: Yeah.

Sylvi: Probably at night? Cause I think that there is more to find here, but we're not gonna be able to do it by going through the front door.

Keith: Is it—could we rewind for a second?

Sylvi: Sure, we—I suppose.

Keith: Is there- could I roll to see if I can tell if Mercurion was lying about that?

Austin: Mercurion was not lying about that. Well about what?

Keith: Oh, about that they're long gone and they're in Lumai.

Austin: They were not lying.

Keith: Okay.

Austin: There might be- there might be other information available.

Sylvi: Still. Yeah.

Austin: I mean, you got a 10, you didn't get a 13 or a 16 [**Keith:** Right.] on the gather information or the study roll. Or whatever—it was a convince roll.

Sylvi: This beautiful dog keeps barking and I feel like it's trying to tell us something.

Keith: You know, there's magic ways to travel.

Austin: Not that many!

Keith: Not that many, but if you're the head of the Hexcloaks—

Austin: That's right.

Keith: Or, what is it? What is this person

Austin: Hexcloaks. The head of the Hexcloaks.

Sylvi: He is the head of- he is the commander. He's in charge.

Austin: Yeah.

Keith: Commander, if you're the commander of the Hexcloaks, you have access to magical ways to travel.

Austin: Maybe. I mean truly there is—we have seen, in this game, how many ways of fast travel?

Keith: Paintings.

Austin: We've seen the paintings. And then we've talked about the Ennead being able to travel through- like transmit their consciousness into certain amounts of stuff, but that's it.

Keith: Where is Lumai?

Austin: I'll move us back over to that map. It's, you might remember, at a certain degree of angle.

Sylvi: Oh my goodness. Oh my goodness.

Keith: Oh yeah.

Austin: Give or take.

Sylvi: I think I know where we need to go. After we're done in Cenn.

Keith: Oh yeah, yep.

Austin: It is, for the listener, it is northwest of Cenn. There was that time that Brontë, you asked Castine about shooting an arrow, like where would you shoot an arrow, basically, to lead us- to like follow the Sourcerot maybe? To investigate further or like—

Janine: It was like, if I had to shoot one arrow and get as close as possible to solving this fucking shit—

Austin: Yeah, yeah. An angle—

Janine: Where would I shoot it? [laughs] Yeah.

Austin: An angle that runs northwest from Cenn, up past contingency station PSC; up past Parasolia, the kind of fire city, fire elf city; up past, or through-ish Lumai; up past Marl, bustling mountain pass, the earth elf city; up past frosted port town, Glaishora, which is the ice elf; and then up to the Grand Academy of the Collapse. It kind of cuts through all of those places, more or less. So, you know.

Keith: Mhm.

Austin: It's one of the things. For the listener, there is also a—on our big mega map, there is kind of a tiered ziggurat, step pyramid near or on Lumai that—on our map—that comes from the other side of the game, where Jack's character found a map with ancient Passikan ruins. The kind of prehistorical, or not prehistorical, but ancient historical people who built the megadungeon that Jack's character Elena is from. And these are- those are the other ones. And one of the places that those are, is in Lumai. One of the other ones is in Milsorce, the place where Sourcerot got its name.

Janine: I wanna just like, can I just like walk around the building with Cupcake?

Austin: Yeah.

Janine: Just to- just to—

Austin: Um, and—yeah.

Janine: My thinking just being like, okay, assuming they have left, [**Austin:** Yeah.] if there's no fresher scent, then it would've been either like an underground thing, or like a, you know. They traveled from this building in a more dramatic way than just walking off. You know?

Austin: Mhm.

Keith: Yeah.

Austin: Yeah.

Janine: So I just want to double check that there's no fresher scents around, like a back door.

Austin: There does not seem to be. Yeah, there's not- there's no back door. This place is like, pretty secure.

Janine: Yeah.

Austin: And, you know, give me a study roll. I would say probably not with the bonus from companion, because this is something you might notice, not something that the dog would know. Would pick up on.

Janine: Mhm. Uhh...here we go.

Austin: You're looking for a 10 here. Hey, there's a 12.

Keith: Nice.

Janine: Whee.

Sylvi: Hell yeah.

Austin: You note that every other building in this block that you can see, has basement windows. This building does not have basement windows.

Janine: Hm.

Austin: Which doesn't mean it doesn't have a basement, it means it does not have basement windows.

Janine: Yeah. That's kinda what I was thinking about.

Austin: Yeah. That maybe could be a mole hole, [laughs] who knows?

Keith: Maybe it could be a mole hole. I mean, I'm not- I'm not off of the conspiracy theory that the fucking Hexcloaks brought in the mole. That's where I am.

Sylvi: Hey, hey. Buddy, I'm right there with you.

Janine: Eh.

Sylvi: I don't—listen. I wouldn't put it past them.

Keith: Look, if they wanna go and try and arrest Castine for causing the earthquakes, you gotta cause some earthquakes first.

Janine: I feel—mm, personally my gut is that maybe there is more of a situation of like an existing mole getting provoked in some way.

Sylvi: Oh—

Keith: Mole holes don't crack steel walls.

Sylvi: [laughs]

Janine: God.

Austin: Jesus.

Keith: [laughs uproariously]

Janine: Mhm.

Sylvi: Ohh my lord.

Austin: Holy— [laughs]

Janine: Mm, mhm, mhm.

Keith: [laughing, gasping for breath]

Austin: Whew!

Janine: [chuckles]

Sylvi: Sorry, Antistrophe and I need to pivot and film our documentary "Loose Asta."

[All laugh]

Keith: Uh, I want- I feel like it would be barking up the wrong tree to try and further figure out if there's no basement. Like they—

Austin: I mean, I've basically given you that there is a basement and it's—

Keith: Yeah.

Sylvi: There's definitely a basement.

Austin: Yeah.

Keith: Yeah. I think we gotta get into the basement.

Sylvi: A hundred percent. A hundred percent. Well, like, I- my—that is a good idea. My other idea was like—

Keith: I don't know if that's a good idea, but.

Sylvi: I mean, my idea was genuinely looking for a mole hole nearby that we could use as a starter tunnel. [laughs]

Keith: Get yourself a new nice starter tunnel.

Austin: Mm.

Sylvi: Yeah.

Keith: Alright, how—

Sylvi: It's a lot easier to burrow into something when you don't have to start from the ground floor.

Austin: Right, yeah yeah yeah. Yeah.

Keith: Yeah.

Austin: I just think a Draconic Mole hole is like a real- real high level starter tunnel. You might not even know what you're doing with that.

Janine: Yeahh...

Sylvi: [chuckles]

Austin: You might want to start with a groundhog- **[Keith: But—]** regular groundhog tunnel, you know.

Sylvi: Mm, mhm.

Janine: Or like a lich groundhog at most.

Austin: Right, yeah yeah yeah. Exactly. But, you were saying, Keith.

Keith: Oh, just that if you're gonna get yourself into a hole, you know, I'm a sort of dig it for life mentality. You just want, you know, get the hole you want from the start.

Austin: Ah, I see.

Sylvi: [laughs]

Austin: Yeah. I think, yeah.

Sylvi: Yeah.

Keith: Dig once, cry once.

Sylvi: Mhm!

Austin: Dig once, cry once? Okay. [laughs] Yeah, okay!

Sylvi: No, I love it.

Austin: We all understand.

Keith: Mhm.

Austin: You could—you know, there is not- the mole has not dug explicit holes itself visibly from the surface here. There have been collapsed buildings that potentially lead down into, you know, the underground here. And it's a city filled with dig sites.

Sylvi: Yeah.

Keith: Yeah.

Austin: So you probably can find an old tunnel somewhere nearby. I don't think that that's a hard ask.

Keith: Yeah. What—

Austin: Nor is it, I think, the interesting part of what would happen, so like I don't want to make you roll to find the tunnel and then fail the roll. You found the tunnel, there's—you can find tunnels nearby.

Keith: Yeah.

Sylvi: Hell yeah.

Keith (as **Antistrophe**): So what, do you think they're lying to you? To get- throw you off the scent?

Sylvi (as **Caoimhe**): What—of course they are.

Keith (as **Antistrophe**): I mean, are they thinking that far ahead? About you?

Sylvi (as **Caoimhe**): I mean they knew who I was, clearly I'm important.

Sylvi: [laughs]

Keith: Okay, two different things.

Janine: Uhhh...

Keith: Two different thoughts. [laughs]

Sylvi: [laughs]

Janine (as **Brontë**): I mean, it's worth considering sometimes there is a difference between someone lying to you to throw you off the scent and someone lying to you to get you out of their hair for the moment.

Keith (as **Antistrophe**): So they're just like, "stop bothering me, they're in Lumai"?

Janine (as **Brontë**): Why not? People lie all the time just to get someone to leave them alone.

Janine: A thing that Brontë has no personal experience with whatsoever. [laughs]

Austin: [laughs] Awh.

Sylvi: [laughs] Buddy.

Keith: From either direction.

Janine: Mm mm, mm mm.

Austin: [laughs]

Sylvi: Uh huh.

Keith (as **Antistrophe**): Do you want to go into one of the tunnels and, what, like excavate?

Sylvi (as **Caoimhe**): I mean, yeah kinda?

Keith (as **Antistrophe**): Seems like a really easy way to get caught.

Sylvi (as **Caoimhe**): How else are we gonna get in there?

Keith (as **Antistrophe**): I guess so.

Sylvi (as **Caoimhe**): I mean listen, I'm open to other ideas! I'm just, you know. A little stumped.

Keith (as **Antistrophe**): I'm getting my smithereen shields back, I guess that would be good at bashing through a tunnel.

Sylvi (as **Caoimhe**): Oh yeah, no, that would be fantastic.

Janine: Here's—[sighs] maybe this is a difficult question.

Sylvi: What's up?

Janine: And this is nothing against Kley. I think Kley is troubled and lovely and deserves help, but also—so does Cenn, and Castine, and if we were to find a tunnel and leave, do you feel like we've done all we can here? Or would you regret—

Sylvi: Well this—

Janine: And want to come back?

Sylvi: I don't know if we're leaving quite yet.

Janine: Okay. I'm just—tunnel talk seems—

Sylvi: I do—

Janine: Tunnel and rescue- Lumai rescue [laughs] talk seems quite far away, is all.

Sylvi: Oh, yeah no, I just- the tunnel stuff is not to leave Cenn though, it's to get into the—

Janine: Ah okay, okay, I thought—

Sylvi: Lower levels of the Hexcloak base.

Janine: We were talking about getting into the tunnel with the tunnel [**Sylvi**: No.] and following their tunnel with our tunnel.

Keith: Yeah, no, getting into their basement [**Janine:** Okay.] within the- the Hexcloak basement.

Sylvi: Yeah.

Keith: Can we- can we back up to—what was going on with the temple and leaving the temple?

Sylvi: They said there was some way to travel out through the temple.

Austin: They said that one of the things that they now know is there are other ways that people could get in and out of the city besides the front gate, basically. Which is about the- that—Castine had a room that was filled with altars to each of the other eight members of the Ennead, with enough material that they could communicate, or perhaps more, through the material. Maybe becoming the material, et cetera.

And that that room was- was like, surrounded by pure metal in such a way, pure iron, in such a way that theoretically no one could get out of that room. But you saw the room because you managed to like, break into it, you might remember. And so that room exists, potentially other of the Ennead, you know, pantheon could enter or influence events here without anyone knowing that they ever arrived is what's being suggested there.

Keith: Okay.

Austin: Is the imagistic- the imagistic description that I gave to you, Caoimhe, when that was being said, as if to indicate that that's what they were talking about there.

Keith: Not that that was used to leave the city, [**Austin:** No.] but that something could come in from there.

Austin: You know, the leader of the Hexcloaks is a very powerful mage.

Keith: Right.

Austin: Who knows?

Keith: Who knows.

Austin: It's mysterious, it is actively mysterious.

Keith: It's mysterious, okay.

Austin: But as—you know, yeah. You know. There are truths—

Keith: I have—

Austin: You can have two things that are true. You know?

Keith: Okay so as players, what do we feel like our options are? Or should we be investigating more?

Sylvi: I mean to lay out what the options feel like right now, it's—

Keith: Dig tunnel.

Sylvi: Stay and investigate more, it's dig the tunnel and try and figure out what was setting the dog off in this Hexcloak base, which could be very funny and just end up being that they had a bunch of ice cream downstairs.

Austin: No, they—the dog succeeded at that roll.

Sylvi: Yeah, no it's not—

Austin: I just want to be clear, you know.

Janine: [chuckles]

Sylvi: I know, yeah.

Austin: Or you succeeded with the dog at that roll, you know. [**Sylvi:** Yeah.] The dog has the scent, the dog knows the last place—the dog knows where Kley has gone to inside of Cenn.

Keith: Right. I agree.

Sylvi: And then I guess the other big picture thing we could do is head to Lumai along our way—or because it's along the path of the bearing we were given by Castine.

Janine: Here's some—

Keith: I think we gotta dig the tunnel. I think the tunnel is the way.

Counting Cloaks [0:26:20]

Janine: Yeah, I had a question. Did we—okay. It—hm. So we know that some Hexcloaks have left. We know that the Dessert Brothers have not seen many Hexcloaks kicking around. We know that the Hexcloak office has three people in it. Why don't we do a little reconnaissance to find out how many Hexcloaks are actually in Cenn right now? Because if it's three? That's—[laughs]

Sylvi: Yeah. Yeah, that's—

Keith: We could take 'em.

Janine: If it's three, we can work around three people. [laughs]

Sylvi: Yeah.

Keith: That's true, I agree.

Janine: That's a different game than acting like there's someone around every corner.

Keith: If there's one Hexcloak per us...

Sylvi: Is it stakeout time?

Janine: Might be stakeout time.

Sylvi: That's fun.

Austin: Mhm.

Keith: There is a steak place near here.

Sylvi: [laughs]

Janine: Cause again the main thing is, even if we don't tackle those three, if we know there are three and we can account for where those three are—or you know, whatever number there are, if there's five or something—if we can account for their whereabouts, it's a lot easier to do whatever the hell we need to do.

Keith: Can we send the dog back to the Dessert Brothers and have them get the Whitecaps [**Austin:** Yeah.] to count- to count Hexcloaks?

Austin: Yeah.

Sylvi: Wow.

Austin: A hundred percent.

Sylvi: I love this.

Austin: Yeah, cause you don't—

Sylvi: I love the Dessert Brothers being our- [**Austin:** Yeah.] our underworld connection.

Austin: Yeah, I think we kinda, we can go into montage mode here. You know? It's like—

Keith: Yeah, yeah.

Austin: Doing the- Whitecaps are doing the—again, what I'm imagining, people who don't have this image in their minds, I'm imagining like a soda jerk hat? You know what I'm talking about?

Sylvi: Yeah.

Keith: Yeah. Totally, yeah yeah yeah.

Austin: Did you—

Keith: Like a guy would wear at a diner in the 60s.

Austin: This is exactly right.

Janine: Yeah.

Sylvi: These brothers run a gang the old fashioned way.

Austin: [laughs] That's- that's right.

Keith: Like watch Back to the Future, you'll see this hat.

Austin: That's right, exactly, [**Keith:** Yeah.] this kind of white cap.

Sylvi: Marty McFly wears it in the second one, it's the holographic one.

Austin: It's true, yeah. So yeah, [**Sylvi:** laughs] there's, you know, they're looking around, trying to see who they can see, we have the dog sniffing around, we have y'all doing—are you doing like a stakeout over the course of a day or two? Like what's the—

Sylvi: I feel like at least one day, right?

Keith: Yeah.

Austin: Yeah, Antistrophe goes and picks up the shields the day after the next. You know.

Keith: Mhm.

Austin: You have snacks while you're- while you're hanging out.

Sylvi: Yeah.

Austin: And pretty—

Sylvi: Posted up in a building across the street or something.

Austin: Totally. And maybe you're still doing something, you're taking turns still doing, you know, shifts—

Sylvi: Some like relief work?

Austin: Yeah, shifts at the infirmary and still doing some of that work, but your eyes are squinting on the lookout for Hexcloaks. You're like, "Hm, could that guy be a Hexcloak? Doesn't have a cloak on, but he's looking pretty mysterious."

Sylvi: Looking kinda hexy.

Austin: Looking kinda hexy...um and [**Sylvi:** laughs] the number comes back, as far as you can tell. It's zero. No Hexcloaks come in or out of that building. No Hexcloaks are walking the streets. No food is delivered, [**Keith:** Damn.] no supplies are delivered to the Hexcloak office. It- no one is—

Keith: So there's one Hexcloak that we've seen.

Austin: You've seen two. There was another one in the hallway and you heard one on the second floor. Or—on the second floor.

Janine: And we—yeah.

Austin: So you've heard three.

Keith: Oh okay, okay.

Austin: So you believe there are three.

Keith: So Janine, when you said three you meant—

Janine: We've heard, yes, yeah.

Keith: We already knew about three.

Austin: That's right, yeah.

Keith: Okay. I thought that was just a guess.

Janine: And they are presumably like, bunker mode or something at this point.

Austin: Hard to say.

Keith: They've gone- oh my god, they've gone bunker mode. [laughs]

Sylvi: [laughs]

Janine: Well this means we don't have to be—yeah.

Keith: I think we've gotta break in there.

Janine: Yeah, we don't have to be too stressed about fucking around outside. Um, there's also—I mean this is maybe less of a priority, but if they were occupying city hall and have left, they might've left something behind, but that feels like a bit less of a hot lead than- [**Austin:** Yeah.] than this. But I wanted to put it out there.

Austin: We can put that in that montage. You know, the mayor is back in his office, it seems like—what the Whitecaps have returned with is like, he sent a box of stuff back over to the Hexcloak base before y'all got there. Like, you know, that morning or something, but that was it. So then, there aren't Hexcloaks there. So as far as you can tell, as far as the mayor knows, anything the Hexcloaks left behind has been sent back to them. But who knows, maybe that's not—you know, he sent back the banners that they had put up, he'd sent back Aegir's, you know, desk toys and [laughs] pens and stuff.

Janine: Mm, okay.

Austin: But that's about it.

Sylvi: Can we—is there like a check or something I could do to see if there's any other ways into this place? Or is it just the one entrance?

Keith: We could do a group study.

Austin: As far as you can tell it's the one entrance. So you don't have- there's no-
[**Sylvi:** Okay.] I'm not gonna make you roll for a thing that is simply true.

Sylvi: Okay, cool.

Austin: Right now, there is not a second back up door, there's no secret basement into this place, or secret like—there is no established secret tunnel that you can see that goes right to the base, or the basement rather. Which matches, I should say—

Keith: I'm ready to dig.

Austin: Which matches your understanding of how places like this are built, Caoimhe. Right? They are—if in each of the major Elevana city-states, the Hexcloaks have a base of operations or at least a field office, and I think it's probably larger and smaller in different city-states according to what the people who run the city-state want. The fact that it's fairly small here, indicates that Cenn is not exactly a big Hexcloak base of operations, they're not always super friendly with the Hexcloaks.

However, at the same time, there are certain qualities that you know will be guaranteed. And those include things like, it's a place that has a great deal of defense, that it's, you know, hardened against attack from above and below. You know, all of that stuff, so. And that there's no like, there's no “we always need a back door to escape from” type, you know, quality on each of these. That's not like a rule of their construction. Which doesn't mean that none of them have it, but that's not like a thing you would know to expect.

Sylvi: Yeah. Okay yeah, is the dig plan the plan that we wanna go with? I had another possible idea where I put on like—

Keith: I'd love to hear a dig plan.

Sylvi: I put back on my cloak and pretend I got attacked [**Austin:** Oho.] while wearing it and need help from them? Which would probably involve one of you actually hurting me with something [laughs] to sell it?

Janine: Is that a plan or is that you wanting to be right? [laughs]

Sylvi: [quietly] I dunno...

Janine: [laughing] Just a question.

Keith: It can be both.

Sylvi: It could be both! I love—there- if there's one thing that Caoimhe loves more than anything else, it is being right.

Janine: How do you know- how do you know this person's not just—

Keith: It is being stabbed.

Janine: Gonna be like, "Wow you are shit at defending yourself, huh?"

Austin: [laughs]

Sylvi: That's...fucked up. That'd be rude. [laughs] We're brothers in arms!

Janine: They're rude!! [laughs] Hello?!

Keith: They are rude.

Austin: [chuckles] It's soo funny you say that.

Janine: [laughs]

Sylvi: Yeah. Yeah, okay. Fuck it, tunnel. I've just been thinking about this and trying to think of it especially from Caoimhe's perspective, and I think she's convinced that there's some sort of transportation or spell down there that they used to escape the city.

Austin: That seems like a potential- a potential thing worth investigating.

Sylvi: Yeah. So this is probably what she's yapping about when she's—while we're doing all this.

Into The Tunnels [0:33:28]

Austin: Yeah, what does all this look like? So now you've gone down into one of these dig sites, you've slipped into a little side tunnel, presumably you had to [**Sylvi:** Yeah.] hop a fence at some point, you know. Maybe not, you have- [laughs] you have these badges. So you're pitching this idea that maybe they have some sort of transportation system.

Sylvi: Yeah um,

(as **Caoimhe**): I'm just saying! The- you get a bunch of the most experienced and well resourced magicians, or magic users, of the Elevana League, they're gonna figure out how to do teleportation eventually. Who's to say they haven't done it? And set it up down here?

Keith (as **Antistrophe**): I agree.

Sylvi (as **Caoimhe**): Hell yeah, man. Thank you.

Keith (as **Antistrophe**): You're welcome.

Sylvi (as **Caoimhe**): You know how refreshing it is to hear that from somebody?
[sighs, relieved]

Keith (as **Antistrophe**): No.

Austin: [laughs softly]

Sylvi (as **Caoimhe**): Okay, well. Yeah, you—well you haven't been- [sighs] you haven't been working with the Hexcloaks long, that makes sense.

Austin: How are you going about trying to find this location?

Sylvi: So I think it's time for my favorite little buddy to—

Keith: Oh, you have your trinket.

Sylvi: My favorite trinket! [**Austin:** Mm.] My magical reagent to make a return.

Austin: It's been a while, but I think that's a good idea.

Sylvi: It has been a minute, but I remembered how back in the first arc, when we were in the estate of the w—I can't remember her name. The woman who passed away. The aunt who left um, that- who left- who—

Austin: Yes yes yes.

Sylvi: You know who I mean!

Austin: Uh, I do know—

Sylvi: I'm like, man, I don't remember any of these names. But I used it in there.

Austin: Uh, uh, M'Shalia.

Sylvi: M'Shalia, yes.

Keith: Yeah, M'Shalia!

Austin: Geriander M'Shalia. Ryn was her- her nibbling.

Sylvi: [quietly] I swore I wrote this stuff down somewhere, but it's fine.

Austin: Yeah. Yeah, it's fine.

Sylvi: Yeah. So back in Burzin, I did this where I sort of used it as a—sort of like a makeshift dowsing situation?

Austin: Yeah, I think that makes perfect sense.

Sylvi: And I think that would at least be how we figure out which direction to go?

Austin: Yeah, I think that that is probably a difficulty 13?

Sylvi: Okay.

Austin: But you get a plus two to this right?

Keith: Woah.

Sylvi: I do, yes.

Austin: And this is—

Sylvi: And it's insight, insight.

Austin: I think it is, [**Sylvi:** Cool.] I'm pretty sure in this case it is. Cause it's checks determining magical energy or something like that, right?

Sylvi: The strength and type of magic is what I've got written down here, yeah.

Keith: Right.

Austin: Yeah, totally.

Sylvi: Okay...ugh. I got a 10.

Austin: Oof, it's only a 10.

Keith: Oooh. Now I don't have a magical device, but I do have: used to be a magician and nice little bonus to insight plus insight myself, if I can also try to sense—

Austin: You can—at this point, you can- we can say that this was a group- you could do this as a group check. Which is, you could roll to support Caoimhe here, [**Keith:** Mm.] but this is one thing. This is one—

Keith: Okay.

Austin: Attempt. Right, so [**Keith:** Yeah.] you and Brontë can- could roll to—insight, insight, to try to help Caoimhe navigate, which I think is—

Keith: That would still only be a 12 though, right?

Austin: That would still only be a 12, but then—

Sylvi: I could use a Fabula.

Austin: But then Caoimhe could spend—

Sylvi: Right?

Austin: Could Fabula with a bond instead of a dice roll. Which would get a 13.

Sylvi: That's what I was looking at. I was like, oh man, if I had rolled one higher.

Keith: Do you have two bonds with someone?

Sylvi: I have level two bonds with you and Brontë. [laughs]

Keith: Oh, so that's great!

Sylvi: We're homies! [laughs]

Keith: So if even one of us succeeds—

Sylvi: Yeah!

Keith: A group roll, then you can—okay. And that's great.

Sylvi: Do we want to try that?

Austin: And the group roll's only a 10. The group roll is only a—like on the support side, it's only a 10. So yeah, I guess Brontë and Antistrophe, give me insight, insight as you're trying to [**Keith:** Alright.] navigate through the underground. I'm guessing Riant, the little flame spirit [**Sylvi:** Aw!] is giving you some light, the little lantern spirit.

Sylvi: [quietly] Yeah!

Keith: Yes, yeah.

Austin: And I'll say this is tough, even with—you know, you're picking up magic stuff, but it—there's a plus one from Brontë.

Keith: And this is- this- cause I—this is a check, so it does- my bonus does apply to this.

Austin: It is not a- it—mmm. [considering] It is a group check...hmm.

Keith: Yeah. I'll read you what the rule says.

Austin: What is the—read me what your thing says? Yeah.

Keith: It says um, “When you perform an open check using insight plus insight, you gain a bonus equal to SL on that check. This applies only to—“

Austin: This is not an open check.

Keith: Okay, it's not an open—okay.

Austin: Yeah, that is correct.

Keith: A group roll is not an open check.

Austin: Well, no. This particular—

Keith: Oh this—

Austin: Well yeah, you're right. A group roll is not an open check, [**Keith:** Okay.] cause a group roll has a hard difficulty which is 10.

Keith: Okay. Well Brontë did it, so I don't even need to do it.

Austin: You don't even need to do it! And you didn't, so. [laughs]

Keith: And I didn't. I saw, yeah, I saw that Brontë did it and I was like, okay well it doesn't matter then.

Janine: [laughs]

Austin: Let me give you a little extra detail so that you can maybe flavor this a little bit, Brontë. Which is just like, on top of: oh you're picking up on magical directions and

types and stuff down here, it's also just like, you're going through an underground tunnel system that you don't have a map for, that you've never gone through before. Trying to triangulate your way back to a building that you have your intuitive sense of where it would be, but it's not- you're not like one to one with the streets above. You know what I mean? So how are you helping, Brontë?

Janine: Um, is there like a smell?

Austin: [confused] Is there like a smell?

Janine: Also wait, can you describe the walls?

Austin: I think that these walls are close enough to—I described this dig site as being nearby, and I think that they have been like, they have the beams up and they have been like smoothed out. They're like smoothed out, tightly packed dirt and stone, so.

Janine: Mm, but they are dirt. Okay.

Austin: I think that's the vibe, yeah. At least at this level, you know? At least through this part of the tunnel.

Janine: Well you might recall that where I'm from, dirt is very important. [laughs]

Sylvi: [laughs]

Austin: I do remember this. You are from the dirt place.

Janine: So I wonder if it is a thing of like- [**Austin:** laughs] I wonder if it is a thing of, you know, the dirt over here was a little bit drier, but the dirt over here looked like it could have a slightly higher clay composite element and like, [laughs] is there just a thing that, you know, if you're a rich person— [laughs]

Austin: Mhm, mhm, keep going!

Janine: If you're a rich person in that society, do you just like, learn a lot about dirt? And like dirt st- and how to—it's just like, well the dirt here just feels more like the dirt that was over there. [laughs]

Austin: Love it. Honestly, I love making Brontë have to say that, so.

Janine: Dirt sommelier.

Austin: Uh huh. [laughs]

Janine: Maybe he tastes a little bit, like.

Austin: [hushed] Ohh good.

Keith: [laughs]

Sylvi: Holy shit.

Austin: Perfect. Caoimhe, I'm guessing you're spending your point on your Brontë bond?

Sylvi: I am, yes! Let me—

Austin: Which are what, again? What are your bonds with him?

Sylvi: [laughs] My bonds with Brontë—

Austin: The dirt eater? The dirt taster.

Sylvi: Watching him eat the dirt, are: loyalty and affection.

Keith: [laughs]

Janine: Not eating it! Just, you know—

Sylvi: Tasting it, sorry. Tasting dirt.

Janine: You like rub your fingers on it a little bit [**Austin:** Yeah!] and then you lick it off the fingers.

Austin: Mhm. Mm, yes like that, yeah. Great. Alright, um—

Janine: Still single, by the way.

Austin: [laughs] There is the wall, you've found your way through it. It is kind of like a difficult task of like going down different hallways and different half-finished tunnels down here, until finally you find one where you're like, I think if we started digging in this direction, we would have to get kind of far, but we would hit the basement of that- of the HQ from this angle. What do you do?

Sylvi: I mean the plan was to break in, so.

Austin: Yeah. I was asking what's that look like?

Sylvi: Uhh, I'm looking through my moveset to see if there's anything I can do other than like—oh! You know I could try and do a ritual of some kind here to open the—sort of similar to what I tried to do in Castine's home with the door, but did not go well. But this time I—

Keith: What is it? Sorry, it's just a locked door?

Austin: No, it's dirt and stone—

Sylvi: It's dirt and stone, but—

Keith: Oh okay.

Austin: Yeah.

Sylvi: What I was doing- the ritual I did was trying to, if I'm remembering right, make a passageway in the steel. But—

Keith: Oh right, I remember that.

Sylvi: Now—

Austin: Yeah, I remember this.

Sylvi: This would be instead of doing that, would be to move the dirt. Basically to shift the earth so there's a passageway? Without doing it in an **[Austin: Totally.]** explosive manner.

Austin: Yeah without it like yeah, causing a problem.

Keith: Right.

Austin: This is Ritual Elementalism?

Sylvi: I believe this is what would fall under that. I'm trying to find the—

Austin: Yeah, I think so.

Sylvi: If it sounded like I was half reading while speaking—

Austin: “Walk on water, shape—“

Sylvi: I'm trying to find the rules for that in the book.

Austin: Yeah. “Walk on water, shape rocks, snuff out fires, cause a rainstorm, or summon powerful cyclones.” That to me sounds like shape rock. **[Keith: Great.]** Insight, willpower. The process is on page 119 of the book. I don't think I've made a handout for this, I should make a rituals handout for this. I'll try to remember to do that.

Sylvi: It's really- it's a really useful skill to have, cause it opens up **[Austin: It is.]** the things you can do so much.

Austin: Big time, yeah.

Sylvi: Yeah.

Austin: I think that this is probably minor potency.

Sylvi: Okay.

Austin: But my—this is, “create a flash of light, block a passage, shatter a glass.” I think unblock a passage, it’s probably a little harder than block a passage, but you know. There’s nothing in the next, in medium, that reads like it’s more than that and it’s a small passage. We’re talking like a person-sized passage, you know.

Sylvi: Yeah.

Austin: Actually, I guess we’re actually talking about a couple person sized passage, huh?

Janine: PSPs.

Sylvi: It- it would, you know, we just need to make it wide enough that Antistrophe can get through with both shields. [laughs] That’s all.

Austin: With both shields, yeah. Yeah.

Janine: [laughs]

Keith: I can stack ‘em.

Sylvi: Oh okay!

Keith: I can stack ‘em.

Austin: I think- I’m thinking about length here as much as I’m thinking about width, [Sylvi: Oh, yeah.] which is like, you know. You have to dig a few- you have to get through enough earth that you’re actually getting to the wall of the building. [Sylvi: Mm.] Or the wall of the basement. You’re not at the wall of the basement, there is not a tunnel that runs right past the Hexcloak HQ, you know. [laughs]

Sylvi: Yeah, no, I think I misheard and thought we had already done the digging to get there, my bad.

Austin: No, what you had done was found the tunnel system and then in the tunnel system [**Sylvi:** Yeah.] you found like the closest possible way. That was what the insight, or what the study check, the search check with your doohickey. But now you are trying to clear the earth so you can get to the wall, basically. Which is minor, so that's difficulty level 7, and I think it's small so it's 40 MP. It's 20 MP for minor times two.

Sylvi: So that'd be 40 MP, yeah?

Austin: 40 MP.

Sylvi: I just wanna spend that before I click the roll button.

Austin: Yeah, that makes sense. And then it is insight, willpower?

Sylvi: Yep. 5.

Austin: What's this look like...what- did you just roll a 5? You rolled a 5.

Sylvi: I rolled a 5. It looks like a 5.

Austin: That's not enough...

Keith: Mmm.

Austin: That's not enough.

Keith: That's not enough.

Sylvi: I think the- what happens is—

Austin: It's funny, you only need a 7!

Sylvi: I- I mean if—

Austin: They can help you on this! It says specifically, "when a character attempts a ritual, other characters can help even if they have no ability to perform rituals themselves."

Sylvi: Oh that's- okay cool!

Keith: It's true and I canonically don't.

Austin: You canonically don't.

Sylvi: Um...

Austin: So let's see cause a 5 is close enough that if they both succeed, you'll succeed.

Sylvi: Yeah, I forgot it was a 7 and I- cause I just came off of this happening with the other roll, so I was like, [exasperated] oh my god.

Austin: Yeah.

Keith: And this is insight, willpower huh?

Austin: Insight, willpower. And tell me how you're helping. Tell me what the ritual looks like I guess, Caoimhe.

Sylvi: I think I—I like the idea of- I really like the imagery from Fullmetal Alchemist with a lot of this stuff. Of the like drawing [**Austin:** Mhm.] circles with the symbols and stuff in them and then that being something that [**Austin:** Mhm.] activates the magic. And I'm wonder- I feel like she- I feel like it could work where she's like drawing it on the wall of the- like against the dirt.

Austin: Like in the dirt? Yeah, yeah, yeah.

Sylvi: And it's, if it works, it just- it sort of starts—I'm trying to figure out how to describe this next thing. It just sort of like, starts sliding down out of the way. And she's—

Austin: Yeah, yeah. I love it. But I do need to see if you're [**Sylvi:** Yeah.] able to be helped by your friends. Is this like a, you're attendant nurses to Caoimhe's [**Janine:** Uhh.] magical surgeon situation? Where you're like- Caoimhe's like alright, now give me the next reagent to draw with. I'm just trying to think of—

Keith: That sounds like a great role for me.

Austin: Yeah. I'm just trying to think of a way to allow y'all to roll to help with this ritual. You know.

Keith: That's a great role for me because I can't do any of the magic stuff, so I'm like, let me—

Janine: But you would know what the stuff is.

Keith: I know what all the stuff is.

Austin: Mm, mhm.

Janine: Is there something I can stir to like keep it from settling or something? [laughs] I'd do that.

Austin: [laughs] Like it—

Janine: I don't really know from magic unfortunately. I'm more of a dirt eater, so.

Sylvi: [laughs quietly]

Austin: That's a- that's a fun image. Right, yeah of course. Where like—

Keith: Are your dances not magic?

Janine: Well, so no. Technically.

Austin: [sighs heavily]

Janine: I have—yeah, we had that conversation right?

Austin: They're not spells.

Janine: They're not spells.

Austin: Right? Yeah. They might be ma—hm.

Keith: They're not spells, but they're not mundane.

Austin: What is happening when you're doing a dance, I guess is the question right?

Janine: I mean, that's a question that mankind has been asking itself since the advent of creative physical expression, Austin.

Austin: [chuckles] You're right, you're right. You're right. And the book does not give—well this is us, though. We get to decide this one, I think. The book is not very clear. The book is clear, it's not a spell. I'm gonna—

Keith: Right. Which is not it saying that it's not magic.

Janine: But also we've—

Austin: The more—okay, here's what the book says.

Janine: We've also applied the spell thing a little bit selectively because we want the ability for me to teach someone a dance they can use in the next encounter right? We've had that conversation where I taught Caoimhe a dance once.

Austin: I think so. Yeah.

Janine: But it's like a single use, like.

Austin: I think that did happen. It's a single use, yeah.

Janine: Yeah.

Austin: "The more gifted dancers may direct the flow of spiritual force through repeated and precise motions, enhancing their physical abilities and manifesting magical effects. [Keith: Mhm.] They are surprisingly capable combatants and sometimes a little...overdramatic." Says the book.

Janine: Magic-al effects.

Keith: Fair.

Austin: Magical effects! I think that means you could dance to help the spell. [laughing] Which is a very funny image, but I don't know that you [**Janine:** Mm.] treat your dance that way.

Sylvi: [laughs quietly]

Janine: No, I don't think—yeah, I don't think he sees it that way. As like a thing of like, well if I dance, then the flow of spiritual—I don't think he sees it that- I think he sees it more in the way of like, well you know dance evokes...feelings.

Austin: Yeah, feelings like Nightmare and Hydra.

Janine: And intimidation, you can intimidate with your [**Austin:** True.] constant physical movements, you know.

Austin: Okay well then are we gonna talk ourselves into: could you be cheerleading for Caoimhe? [laughs]

Sylvi: Oh my god.

Janine: Uh...you need someone to like rub your shoulders? [laughs]

Sylvi: [bursts into laughter]

Janine: Are you getting stiff? Like is that—

Keith: [laughs loudly]

Austin: I mean!

Keith: I could give you a massage, do you want a nice massage?

Janine: Is it- oh—

Austin: You're really drawing the hell out of that rune, is your arm okay?

Sylvi: [laughs]

Janine: Is it- is it that um, is it that Brontë is trying to do the same kind of thing that Antistrophe is doing, but he has no idea what he's doing so Efta and Zolfta have stepped in—

Austin: [laughs] Aw!

Sylvi: Oh my god.

Janine: And are handing him the correct things so that he can then hand them over.

Austin: Right. That's very fun, that's great.

Keith: This is better than doing the pottery scene from Ghost but with [laughs] a ritual.

Austin: But—yeah, uh huh. Alright, both of you give me insight, willpower, difficulty 10.

Sylvi: While they're—I just loved the image though, of Brontë tasting dirt and then doing— [**Austin:** Yeah.] in my head it's Fortnite dances, which it's not, but in this specific instance it was?

[All laugh]

Austin: Ahhh.

Janine: Okay, nope.

Austin: Okay, well that's a miss by one.

Janine: It's a nope. I think a three person conveyor belt is a little much for what we're doing here.

Austin: Oh and that's way worse!

Sylvi: Cave in, everybody dies!

Keith: Yep.

Janine: Eugh.

Austin: I mean you've just—this isn't working. This is not working. Actually, what it is is I know—I have an idea of what probably happens here.

Sylvi: Oh boy.

Austin: This is a classic- this a you- this is a classic: yeah, it works perfect.

Sylvi: Oh no!

Austin: This is a classic. You—

Sylvi: [from a distance] Oh nooo.

Austin: It takes you a little longer than you thought it would. You do get handed the wrong ingredient a couple of times, by both. By everyone involved. Including Efta and Zolfta at one point giving you, Brontë, the wrong thing. Right after they give you- one of them gives you a look that is like, "I can't believe you don't know how to do this yourself" and then they fuck it up, so it's—

Janine: [laughs]

Keith: Woah. Wow.

Austin: It's a rough one.

Sylvi: It was the one time you got it right and then they fucked it up.

Austin: That's right, yeah.

Sylvi: That's my read.

Janine: Wow, wow.

Austin: Uh huh, yeah at a 9 that's actually- that sounds right.

Janine: It's not their fault. We're all in over our heads here.

Austin: That's right. And—

Sylvi: It's dark, it's hard to see! You know, [**Austin:** And—] we've only got the one lantern guy.

Austin and Janine: [laugh]

Breaking In [0:49:55]

Austin: At that moment, yes, you manage to peel the dirt away. It, like you said, it drops away in sheets. And I think it kind of like, it flows down the tunnel. You know, almost like little soil water. You know like only little pebbles, but if the pebbles were running water, and kind of just spreads out across the floor of the tunnel.

And behind it all is a stonework wall that you recognize as the same material that the Hexcloak HQ is made up of above. This is clearly like dug deep into the ground. You would bet that they have placed some sort of defensive wards on the building in general, but this is the wall that you need to breach to get inside.

Sylvi: [sighs] Okay.

Keith: Do we bash it?

Janine: Hooray, good job everyone.

Sylvi: I feel like—thank you. I feel like bashing it might not be the best idea. I'm worried that bashing it will result in bad things for us. But at the same time, [**Keith:** Mm.] I'm struggling to come up with ideas.

Janine: I mean, I think, how are we gonna get in? Cause—how were we going to get in before we were doing this? Because I think we have to do it the same way. [laughs]

Sylvi: Well—yeah, I was more thinking there was a step ahead of the bashing to make sure that there- we didn't set off anything.

Janine: Oh that's fair.

Sylvi: But I think that would just be me doing another ritual.

Keith: Right.

Sylvi: And I don't know if we want to do that again.

Janine: Uh...

Austin: You know!

Sylvi: Actually I don't know if I have the mana to do that again.

Austin: You could pop an elixir or whatever, right? Is that what those are called?

Keith: Yeah, just pop an elixir.

Sylvi: I don't think I refilled—

Austin: It's not called an elixir. Is it ether?

Sylvi: I only have two IP so I don't know if I can. Yeah, I never refilled that huh?

Austin: [sadly] Why didn't you refill it??

Sylvi: I forgot.

Austin: Okay...you— [laughs]

Sylvi: Oopsie? Cori in our discord emoji.

Austin: [laughing] Do you wanna leave the dungeon to run back to the- to the shops?

Sylvi: [chuckles] That- now that's playing an RPG!

Austin: It is.

Keith: Wait. Wait, you're saying you don't have an elixir.

Sylvi: No, I got- I only got two IP. It's fine.

Keith: I have full IP, do you want an elixir?

Austin: You can't- we- I don't believe—or I guess you could- you can spend IP on an elixir that you give to somebody else.

Keith: Yeah!

Austin: You can't give IP to each other. That- but you could, yes. You're right.

Sylvi: I think that's what Keith meant.

Keith: Well that's what I was saying. I would spend the—

Austin: Yes, yes yes.

Keith: I would spend to get an elixir and then hand it over.

Austin: Yes. I think that that is possible. Also I keep saying elixir, I don't know that it's called an elixir. It's called a tonic?

Sylvi: It's called an elixir for MP, yeah. You nailed it.

Keith: It is called an elixir.

Austin: It is called an elixir! Oh okay, good. Phew.

Keith: Yeah, elixir and remedy for mana and HP.

Sylvi: And then tonic is the status effect one.

Austin: I see it, yes.

Sylvi: Yeah.

Austin: Good.

Sylvi: Yeah no, that would be great cause even—you know, we could just go bash mode, but this way I'll be able to heal us if it goes really bad.

Austin: Totally.

Sylvi: Thank you.

Austin: Okay, and then this is unfortunately gonna be- it's gonna be easier in MP cost I think.

Sylvi: But harder in roll?

Austin: Actually it's—I think so, though actually that's not how it works. The roll- the roll in a ritual is not about—I'm trying to think about this. I think that the—if we said that it was opening a—actually I guess here's the thing. You could just open a hole in the wall as a minor effect, you can open a hole in the wall without the alarm going off, without the ward I mentioned triggering, for a medium effect. You know? The difference between like smashing the glass and carefully cutting it, making sure not to, you know, hit the pressure sensor, if that makes sense. So it's up to you if this is a smash and grab, or if this is a careful thing. And the difference in difficulty is 7 and 10.

Sylvi: [sighs] Ooh. I—

Austin: I know last time you rolled a 5, but your- your—

Sylvi: My insight's 8.

Austin: I guess your insight- yeah, your insight and willpower is 8. That's pretty good.

Sylvi: So like, I could pull this off.

Austin: Yeah. You could. It'd be easier if you had- if you had some additional Fabula Points, huh?

Sylvi: It sure would, Austin! Thank you for that. [laughs]

Austin: Hm.

Keith: I would give you my Fabula Point, but I don't- I'm not allowed.

Sylvi: That's okay.

Austin: Yeah, you're not allowed.

Sylvi: Hey buddy, that's okay. Um...okay, here's the thing. Are we—after we do this, are we just bolting out of Cenn? Is that the energy we've got?

Janine: Are we- have we decided there's nothing else we can do to like help the town and stuff? Are we like—I remember I asked—

Austin: You've done—yeah.

Janine: I've asked this before, [**Sylvi:** Yeah.] but I wanted to make sure, like have we wrapped up the help that we're gonna offer and we're ready to move out? Cause that feels like—

Sylvi: I could—

Austin: You know, I—

Janine: We might or might not, you know.

Austin: [cross] I will say—

Sylvi: [cross] I worry I got the—oh, go ahead, Austin.

Austin: No, you go ahead. Finish your thought.

Sylvi: I got the impression that we kinda—outside of like doing more healing work and doing the stuff that we described ourselves doing in the downtime, [**Austin:** Mhm.] I kinda got the vibe that there aren't a ton of hooks for us to make like big changes to the situation here right now.

Austin: I will say that I had a thought when I was prepping for this arc, where I was like, what if we do a whole arc of just rebuilding this town together? And you know, I built out something like the Ishgardian Restoration from Final Fantasy XIV, and then I started down that road a little bit and realized that like three people can't do that themselves even if they're heroes.

And I know that we're playing heroic fantasy right now, but I wanted to indicate that you have been helping. I wanted to make sure we have the space to say, you have been helping. You've been helping in all these various capacities, we had those scenes in the beginning of the last session that we recorded. And that's, like, meaningful that you did do that, but that's not where the story is.

And being in here, you can like—if your characters decide, hey what we want to do is stay and help, then I think I- it's on me to make that the- find the fun in that. And we can, right? We can find the ways in which that's getting undercut, and ways that that's—maybe your—or maybe you decide what we want to do is get strong enough here to go scare the mole away, or beat the mole forever, so that way we can take the dome down. We can go down that road if you want to. And you are facing the point of no return on that in a way, I guess depending on how this goes. Maybe you're not, actually.

Janine: Yes, that was why I was asking. [laughs]

Austin: But yes, I understand. It feels- there's a natural momentum that you're building toward leaving right now. Do you want to have this conversation in character?

Janine: I- I don't think that's a thing—

Austin: Because I'm curious where you're all at as characters.

Janine: I don't think that's a thing that I would even mention, because as you might recall, I asked which way do I shoot an arrow to fix this [**Austin:** Right.] and it was not towards the mole. [laughs]

Sylvi: Yeah.

Austin: That's right.

Janine: It was not—you know?

Austin: Yeah.

Janine: So I think, despite not necessarily being religious in that sense or placing—you know, I think there's a practical thing of like someone who knows a lot of shit said go over there [**Austin:** Yeah.] so I'm probably gonna want to go over there at some point.

Austin: Totally. And Antistrophe and Caoimhe, you're in the same place here?

Sylvi: Yeah, I'm—

Keith: Yeah, I'm in the same place.

Sylvi: My big thing is like, we're—my goal is trying to get to the bottom of this Sourcerot situation.

Austin: Yeah, that makes sense.

Sylvi: And like ignoring a sign from a deity of where to go next, [**Austin:** Yeah.] it would be negligent.

Austin: Yeah, that makes sense. Alright, then are you just gonna try to smash through these walls? This is not a ritual, this is just a smashing attack? A smashing maneuver?

Sylvi: I feel like we'll have—

Keith: Mhm.

Janine: Smash wall.

Sylvi: A better chance.

Janine: Eh.

Austin: I don't know. It's only a difficulty 7 for you, it's gonna be higher for—

Sylvi: I—I'm in my head. I can try—

Austin: I see, you're tilted.

Sylvi: Listen, I can roll this [**Austin:** Yeah.] and we can like see how it goes and then react afterwards [**Austin:** Mhm.] if we wanna go ritual route first, but I—my luck's been so bad ever since I fought that Fleggus.

Austin: [laughing] Awh! Yeah, I mean [**Keith:** laughs] I will say outright, that like I think trying to break through the walls, the Hexcloak reinforced, warded walls, with the shields is gonna be a 13.

Sylvi: Okay.

Austin: Right?

Keith: That's high.

Austin: And even that's low, I think I'm being kind for the idea of like all you would need is a 13 to break through those walls, whereas it's a 7 with the ritual.

Keith: I think we do the ritual.

Sylvi: I'll just do the ritual.

Austin: Okay.

Sylvi: Insight, willpower?

Austin: And if it fails, you just try to break your way through, you know?

Sylvi: Yeah, just everybody be—

Janine: Are we gonna like learn lessons from the last ritual? [laughs] Like can we spend a moment to have Caoimhe be like, okay I'm gonna place these in order and—

Sylvi: Let me check my notes. [laughs]

Janine: You know?

Austin: I think you're describing how you're—you know what, let's do the help rolls first cause that's what you're describing.

Keith: Yeah. It was, what is—insight, willpower?

Sylvi: Yes.

Janine: I guess we like—

Austin: Insight, willpower.

Janine: Don't technically know that the last one went wrong—

Austin: That's true.

Janine: But I think the sense of chaos would have been palpable.

Austin: That, I think makes a lot of sense, yes.

Janine: There was confusion.

Keith: 14, critical success.

Austin: You critted.

Janine: Woah!

Sylvi: Wait, could that just be the roll? [laughs]

Austin: [laughs] I don't—unfortunately!

Sylvi: No.

Austin: Unfortunately, no. Unfortunately...

Sylvi: This man has no magic.

Austin: [sighs]

Janine: 7.

Austin: Okay well the 7 doesn't help, but the 14 does. And unfortunately I don't think you can crit a group check, I think that that's— [**Keith:** Yeah.] because it's not an actual check.

Keith: Wasted crit.

Austin: It's a wasted crit.

Sylvi: Don't say that.

Austin: So plus one.

Sylvi: That's an 8! I did it!

Austin: That's an 8, you did it. You did it, you did it. That's with the plus one [**Sylvi:** Yeah] already. But yeah, you did it! The walls—what does this look like? You tell me, actually. Is it a similar thing?

Sylvi: I think- well it is similar, but it's a lot calmer. Like, I feel like the last time we did this, it felt like the ground kind of felt like a mini earthquake around us and everything [**Austin:** Right.] and with this, it's—oh this might be- I don't know if it's a weird comparison. It feels like the most, like, rumble we get out of this is the way it feels to be standing on a ferry when it pulls out of dock or something? [**Austin:** Yeah.] Like the ground's shifting underneath you, like you're moving, you can- but you're still steady and it feels weird. But it doesn't feel chaotic in that way.

Austin: Right. And you can see as it opens up, a dark—lit only by Riant, Riant's light, the little lantern elemental's light—a crowded, not crowded like with people, crowded with stuff, basement. There are chests that are locked all over the place. There are big bookcases with documents and, you know, folders and books.

It is tightly packed down here and there is actually like, a sort of like slow walkway around, you know like through the piles of books or the bookcases, or the piles of trunks

that are closed and locked and the—you know, there's armor that's been taken and placed down here. There is what looks like a little vault down here, in the wall, in the kind of the far wall you can see through the bookcases. And there's a kind of path you can walk kind of zig zagging through this place. There's also—I have a need. I need everyone to make an insight, insight check, I guess.

Sylvi: That's an 11.

Austin: An 11 from Caoimhe.

Janine: 14!

Austin: 14.

Keith: 10.

Austin: And 10! Alright, I think you've all passed. I'm gonna double check.

Sylvi: [laughs]

Austin: You might be, we'll see. I have to check the- check the tape, so to speak. [quietly] Uh oh, why is this—? That's not right, that should be this, one second. Is that fixed? That's fixed, okay.

Keith: That was a truly even contest because we all have the same insight. We all have 8 insight.

Austin: Oh you do all have 8 insight, that's very funny. Alright, who got above a 10?

Janine: Everyone.

Sylvi: Uh, me and Janine and then Keith hit a 10.

Keith: Yeah, I got a 10.

Austin: Oh, you got a 10, okay. Um, the—then yeah. I'm gonna—okay. There is a—an electrified dagger lands at your foot, Antistrophe, with the lowest here, [**Keith:** Yeah.]

sticking into the ground and when you trace up where it was thrown from, you see two Hexcloaks. You in fact see, I believe the two Hexcloaks you saw before, above. The really wide woman who was guarding the door and then the, I think it was the electric one who was behind the desk. I'm pretty sure that was right, it's been a while. But the electric one has thrown a dagger at you, missing, at your feet. That previous failure brought them here.

Sylvi: [clicks tongue] Yeah...

Austin: The ritual that you failed before.

Sylvi: This makes sense.

Austin: Actually, there was always gonna be one here. Each time that you failed here, another one was going to be here [laughs] and you only failed once. So, along with Mercurion, who's the one who threw the dagger at you, Maxi, the big wide earth elf is here as well. And if you had failed there, you would have- they would have gotten an ambush round on you, but instead [**Keith:** Oh.] y'all are in initiative, give me initiative.

Hexcloak Encounter [1:03:11]

[["Bar the Door! \(Indoor Combat Begins\)"](#) by Jack de Quidt plays]

Austin: The electrical light from the dagger is like lighting this place up—oooh!

Sylvi: I got a 14!

Keith: I got a 3.

Austin: Oh wait, who is actually the leader here? I guess maybe it's Caoimhe.

Keith: Oh it's never gonna be me cause my initiative is minus three.

Austin: Who has—yes. Right, right right right. Who has the highest initiative generally?

Sylvi: I think Janine and I have the same cause we have the same stat array.

Austin: Okay. That makes sense. Well Caoimhe, since you ran first, are you helping [chuckles] or are you—

Sylvi: I'm happy to be leader, yeah. That's a good roll. [laughs]

Austin: Lead, yeah, I think this is your mission, so.

Sylvi: I did the ritual too, I imagine that would lead me to being in front, right?

Austin: That makes sense, yeah. But for the record, Brontë, what's your initiative roll?

Janine: Uh, 4.

Austin: Okay so neither of you helped, 14 from Caoimhe is enough to go first. So we are in initiative order. I think Mercurion, the one who was rude to you before, says like,

(as **Mercurion**): [sneeringly] I knew you'd be back.

Austin: And then, you know, hand out, zips the lightning dagger back in hand and you know, kind of like flexes and the Hexcloak that Mercurion is wearing begins to like, you know, shimmer with electrical power.

Sylvi: Before we get started, I forgot to mark what the MP cost for that last ritual was? Was it the—

Austin: Oh, it's whatever the lowest was.

Sylvi: 20?

Austin: 20, yeah yeah yeah.

Sylvi: I just want to make sure before we get into combat, that I'm not doing too much.

Austin: Oh yeah. Totally.

Sylvi: I got a move to start this off if we wanna get going?

Janine: Uhh, I'm just checking...I have a bunch of weird stuff that like—you know. You know how it is. I'm checking my High Speed thing. "At the start of a conflict you may spend 10 mind points. If you do, choose one option, apply it before the start of the first round. Perform a free attack with a weapon you have equipped—"

Austin: Hm.

Sylvi: Oh okay.

Janine: "Perform a hinder or objective action. You also gain a bonus equal to SL on all checks you perform as part of the chosen option." I don't know what you had planned, but that's also an option we have.

Sylvi: No, you go first cause yours is free.

Austin: And this is free, right?

Sylvi: Yeah.

Janine: Well I have to spend 10 mind points, but other than that.

Austin: Right, but it's not a- you don't lose a round.

Janine: It's not a—yeah yeah yeah.

Austin: Yeah.

Sylvi: I was just gonna give us a defensive thing, so your- if you feel like doing yours, go ahead and then I can just do it right after.

Janine: I think maybe—this might be a good opportunity to do a hinder action. What is the one that I- that would be very helpful if they have it already?

Austin: Let's see...oh right, I see, for you. Cause you can play off of that.

Janine: Yeah, I got all the weird- I got all that shit. Yeah yeah yeah.

Austin: Yeah.

Janine: I need to make- I need to like make a flow chart.

Austin: [laughs] Yeah cause hinder's a thing that lets you give dazed, shaken, slow or weak if you can succeed at a DL 10 check. Which is useful for you because you have stuff that's like: when they're already blank, they get blank.

Janine: Yeah, exactly, exactly exactly. Okay let's go with shaken? I think is- I think is a—what does shaken do again, sorry?

Austin: Shaken...let me make sure if I remember this. Willpower die, by one, reduced.

Sylvi: If they're casters that would be pretty good.

Keith: I love the order that that sentence was in.

Austin: [laughs] Yeah.

Janine: [laughs]

Keith: Willpower die by one reduced!

Austin and Keith: [laugh]

Austin: You know, sometimes the information comes to your mind in strange ways.

Sylvi: Yeah, Yoda style.

Keith: Uh huh.

Janine: I mean I think that's—

Austin: What happened there is I got the information in that information, and I didn't—or I got that in that order, and I didn't reorder before putting it out, you know?
[laughs] I just—

Keith: Mhm, yeah.

Janine: Yeah.

Austin: I put it right across the conveyor belt out my mouth.

Janine: Yeah okay, which one of them looks more magicky? [laughs] To me.

Austin: Definitely—mm, you know they both have magical energies coursing through them as they're Hexcloaks, but definitely Mercurion, the one with the lightning dagger.

Janine: Okay. I would like to shake him up.

Austin: [laughs]

Janine: How to- how—what's the best way to shake up a weird lightning dagger guy?

Austin: Great question.

Janine: Is this just eye contact? I don't know, he's probably harder than that.

Austin: Oh maybe. Oh, Mercurion is they/them I just remembered, sorry.

Janine: Oh sorry. They're probably harder than that.

Austin: I don't think I said that to you. Yeah.

Janine: Then just like eye contact wise, might not be enough.

Austin: [chuckles] Maybe you get under their skin! I don't know.

Janine: Oh, oh! What—[laughs] what if- what if when that happens—Efta and Zolfta would have to, in uncommon- in an uncommon way, be close by here. There's not really a lot of hanging back when you're going through a tunnel.

Austin: Oh right, there's not really space, yeah. Yeah.

Janine: And we've already had them doing stuff so that's gonna be an awkward thing to kind of navigate here, but [**Austin:** Yeah.] that'll- that's okay. I wonder if—[sighs] I'm

gonna use them for this. I think like maybe Zolfta is the one who makes eye contact and then whispers something to Brontë and then Brontë laughs.

Austin: [chuckles] Ohh damn!

Janine: [laughs]

Austin: This is the Baldur's Gate—what is the actual name of that move? That rogues get, or bards get, where you shit talk somebody? But like [**Janine:** laughs] funnier cause you're just doing it in private, you know.

Janine: Uh huh, yeah.

Austin: It's good. Alright, that sounds like—

Sylvi: [stage whisper] He doesn't have that shit on.

Austin: Not like—[laughs] Exactly, he's not getting it off!

Janine: [laughs]

Austin: That sounds like maybe willpower to roll to me? Cause you're like—willpower is, in this game, our social-ish stat, right? Am I wrong about this?

Sylvi: Uhh.

Austin: “Willpower represents determination, charisma, and discipline. You use your willpower for diplomacy and persuasion, but it also directly influences your ability to cast spells and use special skills in the form of mind points.” I could imagine it being insight plus willpower, because insight represents observation, understanding, and reasoning, so.

Janine: Mhm.

Austin: So I think it's either willpower, willpower or insight, willpower, I will let you choose.

Janine: Those are both the same to me, so. [laughs] Like stats wise.

Austin: Okay, well. Difficulty 10.

Janine: I'm- yeah, I'm gonna call this insight, willpower cause persuading this person to be shaken.

Austin: Yeah, that sounds good.

Janine: 4! Didn't do it.

Austin: That is a 4. I think—

Janine: [sighs] Yeah.

Keith: Would you please be shaken?

Austin: [laughs] I really just think that they don't get it. I think they are like, they think you must be like, planning an attack or something. Or like [**Janine:** Yeah.] an unrelated joke? I don't know.

Janine: [laughs]

Austin: I think just- they're just locked in. They're a Hexcloak, you know? I don't wanna—

Janine: Mhm, yeah.

Austin: Undersell the fact that these are, you know, like Caoimhe, have been trained in doing stuff like this. In any case, Caoimhe, you're up.

Sylvi: Yeah, so y- I already put it out there, I'm doing Elemental Shroud to all three of us to give us resistance against bolt type damage.

Austin: Great.

Sylvi: Until the spell ends, each target gains resistance against the chosen damage type. This costs me 15 MP and everyone should mark that they are now resistant to bolt damage.

Austin: Yeah. Which you can, I believe, literally do in these sheets, I think you can go in and give yourself bolt protection.

Sylvi: You have to click the edit button, I believe, but you can do it yeah.

Austin: Yeah, yeah.

Janine: Yeah.

Austin: So you've—what's this shroud look like, Caoimhe?

Sylvi: I think that this looks like- I mean I've described it before as being the sort of, in the Playstation RPG in my mind, just sort of being like a colored, like, glow around us.

Austin: Yeah.

Sylvi: I guess would be—is this a “purple is the lightning element color” world that we're in? I know that's—

Austin: I—

Sylvi: That's me going off like Golden Sun stuff.

Austin: I've been imagining, I think because of the ga- because of the icons in this game, yellow?

Sylvi: Okay.

Austin: Because it's bolt, it's that sort lightning bolt, and I think purple is probably poison for us.

Sylvi: Okay, so then yeah, this—

Austin: I think we're that version of JRPG, you know.

Sylvi: I think it's a combination of that and then some crackling electricity around us. You know.

Austin: Alright. Well, let's see how it works.

Sylvi: Yeah.

Austin: As Mercurion, seeing you do that, regardless, you know lifts that lightning dagger, that electrified dagger into the air and then just points it at you. And three streaks of yellow, you know, yellow-gold lightning swarm out at you. What are your magic defenses?

Sylvi: Uh, 11.

Austin: Brontë and Antistrophe?

Keith: Sorry, I- what are our magic defenses?

Austin: Your magic defenses.

Keith: 12.

Janine: 9.

Austin: 11, 12, and 9.

Sylvi: Damn!

Austin: Okay, so everyone except Antistrophe takes 13 damage, cause it's 26. It's 20 plus the high roll which was 6, but you take 13 cause it's halved. Because of—

Janine: Hang on, the accuracy on that is 11, right?

Austin: The accuracy of that is 11, correct.

Janine: Okay.

Austin: Because it rolled an 11.

Janine: Can I—so I have a thing. Does it count as a ranged attack if it's magic?

Austin: It does not, it counts as a spell.

Janine: Aww okay, okay.

Keith: Yeah, this happened before.

Janine: Right yeah, this did happen before. Alright.

Austin: Yeah, yeah.

Janine: Oh wait, I can choose to half that also because I did some daydreaming.

Austin: You did do some daydreaming!

Sylvi: [laughs]

Austin: You can half that? What's that look like?

Keith: [laughs]

Sylvi: This game rules.

Austin: Yeah!

Janine: [laughs] Um, ooh that- what does that look like? I don't even remember what I was daydreaming about.

Austin: Damn. Ain't that the way.

Janine: That's daydreams, you know.

Austin: That's daydreams right there.

Janine: [chuckles] Yeah.

Austin: Is it just that daydreaming has meant that you're able to be more attentive now cause you've been treating yourself well and giving yourself time to rest—

Janine: That's kind of what I was thinking.

Austin: And be able to like, slip away.

Janine: It's so weird to narrativize taking half damage, cause you're still taking some damage.

Austin: Yeah.

Janine: Yeah, I think it is a thing of like being able to just brush it off a little more. Being able to kinda be hit, but not being startled by it? Kind of—

Austin: Yeah, that makes sense.

Janine: You're aware, you're anticipating it, like you know, it happened.

Austin: Yeah, you would have gotten hit more if you were less locked in. You know?

Janine: Yeah.

Austin: Yeah.

Janine: Now here's the real question: that's an uneven number, so. [chuckles]

Austin: Round down. 6. So it would be 13, 13 is split into 6 and a half, you always round down in this game so it becomes 6. Alright, back to y'all.

Sylvi: I think it's—

Keith: Um—

Sylvi: Oh no yeah, it's—cause Janine can go again. Cause that was a free action at the beginning, right?

Austin: That's right.

Sylvi: Okay.

Austin: Exactly. So it could be either Brontë or Antistrophe.

Keith: What is the- how are these two laid out?

Austin: Right now they are looking down at you from—you're in this basement, and I think like to your—you've come in.

Keith: Yeah.

Austin: Let's imagine it as a square. A rectangular shaped room.

Keith: Mhm.

Austin: To your left, are stairs coming down and they are standing at the top of the stairs [**Keith:** Okay.] looking down at you and the first one has just cast this Fulgur lightning spell at you.

Keith: Got it. Uh—

Austin: And the second one is like, is getting ready to charge down the stairs at you, very clearly.

Keith: Yeah. I would like to get them both at least off of the stairs, but especially the magic one who might want to be staying up there.

Austin: Sure.

Keith: And so are these stairs like basement stairs that I've seen before, where there's no backing to the stair? It's just the planks going sideways that are connected to like the platform?

Austin: I think so. That's fine, yeah.

Keith: I want to try to use my shield to like, knock their feet out from under them.

Austin: Mhm. [chuckles] Are you- is this just- are you describing an attack? Or are you trying to get an effect? If that makes sense.

Keith: That's a great question, and...so Janine, you h- you've shaken- shook one of them right?

Austin: Did not succeed at it.

Janine: No, no.

Keith: Did not succeed at shaking.

Austin: Yeah.

Janine: I gossiped at one of them and that's it.

Austin: [chuckles]

Keith: Right—oh right! Yes, yeah. And they didn't get what you were trying to do. [laughs]

Janine: Uh uh.

Keith (as **Hexcloak**, jokingly): What?

Austin: [chuckles] Yeah, exactly.

Keith: The—you know I'm gonna say that this is an attack, [**Austin:** Okay.] unless-unless my side goal of getting them off of the higher ground is in itself an effect.

Austin: No, I think it's a narrative effect in this game, but we're not- I'm not giving Mercurion- they didn't [**Keith:** Yeah.] get any bonuses on that roll because they had the high ground.

Keith: Right.

Austin: And it's like, it's kind of precarious high ground. It's not like—you know, if your goal was to get up through them to the upstairs, that would be really useful. But it's actually not your goal. [**Keith:** Yeah.] I don't think, so. But yeah, but I think it's a really fun visual.

Keith: I just want to knock them over to be fun, yeah.

Austin: Yeah. Exactly, yeah. Get 'em down here with you.

Keith: Yeah.

Austin: So this is a physical attack that you're gonna do?

Keith: Yes.

Austin: Just a classic, hit 'em with your shield.

Keith: Classic- classic these are my shields again. Knocking their feet out from under them.

Austin: Alright, your difficulty is 11. Unless this is- this rolls on physical defense, right?

Keith: This is—yeah.

Austin: Okay.

Keith: This is might plus might, physical defense.

Austin: Alright, let's see how it goes.

Keith: And I get—oh fuck, every time I have to re-remember what- what exactly I get a bonus to. Uh—

Austin: You get a damage bonus according to your defensive mastery.

Keith: I do, yeah. I have one damage bonus for shield bearer, I thought it maybe also gave me one to hit, but it does not?

Austin: No, there's like very little to hit bonuses in this game in that way.

Keith: Yeah, okay. Great, just making sure.

Austin: I'm pretty sure that you don't there. You actually get a plus—

Keith: I'm always thrown, whenever there's a mod thing I'm always like, ah should I be putting a mod in there?

Austin: Yeah. Well that is a 3, so that is gonna miss.

Keith: Damn.

Austin: You rolled a 2 and a 1. You do not hit their feet.

Keith: What- what did I need to hit?

Austin: An 11.

Keith: I'll use my Fabula Point on this.

Austin: Okay! Which—are you rerolling both?

Keith: Yeah, I'm gonna reroll both. It's a 2 and a 1.

Janine: [chuckles]

Austin: Okay. What trait are you pulling on?

Keith: I'm pulling on my identity of a troubled eccentric career pathfinder.

Austin: Uh huh. How so?

Keith: This is what I do now, I have to- I have to be good at it.

Sylvi: [laughs]

Austin: [skeptical] Okay, is this really pathfinding? I don't think hitting someone in the ankle is pathfinding.

Sylvi: Finding the path to their ankles.

Keith: Sorry, the path- the path is a career path.

Austin: [skeptical] Uh huh!

Janine: Oh.

Keith: And my career was magician and now it's "guy who bashes with shields." So I—

Janine: I thought your angle was gonna be that you were looking at their path and altering it.

Austin: [laughs] I also thought that, Janine. And that's not where he went.

Keith: No.

Janine: [laughs]

Austin: But I don't think— [**Keith:** No.] sorry, your identity is not: troubled eccentric career guardian, or like beat-em-upper. It's pathfinder. You're an explorer.

Keith: No, that's not what I meant by pathfinder.

Austin: Ohh. Okay.

Keith: Pathfinder as in someone who's trying to find their path.

Sylvi: Ohhkay.

Austin: Oh.

Janine: Oh.

Austin: So then—

Keith: Yes.

Austin: Okay Keith, but then that's not—

Janine: Is that a job?

Sylvi: [laughs quietly]

Austin: It's not a job, one. More importantly, two, it's non-falsifiable. It means that any time you ever want to use this trait, [**Janine:** laughs] you could say, oh I'm still trying to find my way. It needs to be falsifiable.

Sylvi: [laughing, gasping for breath]

Keith: Well it's this job. If I ever try to use it for another job, [**Sylvi:** splutters, laughs] other than being a shield guy—

Austin: Yeah well when you take your next level, you change your identity to make a better word there.

Keith: Okay.

Janine: [laughs]

Austin: Cause when you level up you can change your identity or theme. So in this case, let's do it.

Janine: At this point, it's like have you found your path, or you haven't. Like, [laughs] you have two shields, you upgraded your shields. That's a commitment.

Austin: You upgraded your shields! When you upgrade your shields, that's a commitment.

Janine: You bought in.

Austin: [laughs] That's right!

Keith: Yeah, sure.

Janine: That's your path.

Austin: Let's find a different word, because it needs to be- it needs to be able to feel like you made a choice that's rewarding you and that's limiting you in ways that narratively structure you. So let's find that next time. Alright, give me your- give me the—give it to me now, I understand what you mean.

Keith: Okay.

Austin: There's your Fabula Point, reroll "knocking the foe off stairs." That's our second Fabula Point spend, so we're getting towards our bonus.

Keith: Yeah, yeah. And that was might plus might...17.

Austin: There you go!

Sylvi: Nice!

Austin: There's a 17. That's the type of stuff you're used to seeing.

Keith: Yeah.

Austin: Alright, so then the damage on that is...read it to me again?

Keith: Uh, 13.

Austin: Cause it's high roll plus—no, it's more than that.

Keith: Oh wait no, it would be different damage, right? So it would be—

Austin: Yeah, way more.

Sylvi: I think it would be 20.

Keith: It would be 20.

Austin: 20, but I think it's actually more than that even. Go over to your- go over to your conflict page for me. Really quick.

Keith: Okay...conflict page...

Austin: Cause it's 11 plus high roll, which is 9 plus 11 is 20, [**Keith:** Uh huh.] but if you click on...if you scroll down to—is it not conflict? It's classes, it's classes, sorry.

Keith: Classes, okay.

Austin: It says, "Dual shield bearer deals extra damage equal to SL plus defensive mastery. You have a two in defensive mastery.

Keith: I've added that already, so I- because I have—

Austin: Ohhh, I see.

Keith: Yeah, that's already built into my "high roll plus 11."

Austin: I see, I see, okay.

Keith: I had high roll plus 5 by default, [**Austin:** Got you.] plus I got a new 5 for the new shields plus one for defensive mastery.

Austin: You've already built it in, I understand.

Keith: Oh! Two for defensive- defensive mastery. That's- I didn't add that, so it should be high roll plus 12.

Austin: That's what I was—yeah.

Keith: Is 21, okay.

Austin: You were saying plus one before, so I was like, I'm pretty sure it's plus two.

Keith: It is plus two now, I forgot about that.

Austin: So 9 plus 12, is 21 damage as you pull Mercurion's legs out from under them and they go tumbling down the stairs past Maxi, their buddy.

Keith: New shields are working!

Austin: New shields are working.

Janine: [laughs]

Keith: New shields are working.

Sylvi: Hell yeah, man.

Austin: Oh whoops, I almost edited your sheet just now. Whoops. Where did I put Mercurion?

Keith: Let me change that plus 11 to plus 12.

Austin: Yeah. Sounds good. Okay. Alright, back to them. As Mercurion tumbles down the stairs, I think Maxi, the big earth elf behind them, leaps down like a comic book character, wielding this giant stone maul. Which is like, you know, a big heavy physical hammer. And is gonna attack—

Janine: Oh, Maxi.

Austin: Maxi. Yeah big, exactly. And is gonna either target—I'm gonna do the dice roll thing, I'm gonna see who they target—either, 1 is Brontë, 2 is Antistrophe and 3 is Caoimhe. I'm going through the order that we are listed at the bottom of the page.

Janine: Oh you're gonna make me regret not elbowing in a turn before.

Austin: That is Brontë! [laughs]

Janine: Yeah...shit.

Austin: I am going to make you regret that. Uh huh. What is your defense?

Janine: My regular degular defense? That is 11.

Austin: Take 25 physical damage—

Sylvi: Holy fuck!

Keith: Oh my god.

Janine: Oh my god. Fuck.

Austin: As Maxi brings the fucking hammer down.

[["Perpetua"](#) by Jack de Quidt plays]