

Perpetua 06: The Flames of Burzin Pt 02

Transcriber: vesta

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Recap

Austin: You are headed to a town called Burzin. Burzin is almost a frontier town. It was— it has an old history, but it kind of boomed in the last century. And then in the last year, a bunch of fires have popped up.

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

Austin: And importantly, the fire seemed to just pop up. They're kind of flash fires, like, even on days that were not particularly hot or dry, even in places that did not seem like there were a particularly large amount of fuel.

Sylvi: Brow furrowed, turning around a map, like, why did we— did we have to go through the mountains for this? How did we end up here?

Keith: Trying to make tea on the fire— on the campfire? And had a very— has a very particular way of making tea, [**Sylvi** chuckles] and it is not loose in a pot over fire.

Austin: Sure.

Keith: So, he is trying his best.

Janine: He is reclining against a log or something, and he is eating an apple. But he is very carefully eating around, like, bruises and stuff.

Austin: And off in the distance, you see a classic wild westie stagecoach, and it's on fire. I'd say you are a little far away. What do you do?

Sylvi: I mean, we should help, right?

Keith: Yes, yeah, I think we should help.

Austin: Alright. You rush in to get closer, presumably?

Sylvi: Yeah. I mean—

Janine: Define “rush”.

[music ends]

Play Begins

Austin: Boom, HP 0, the Flarie is off the board. Again, that fire will continue for one more turn, but it won't be able to re-up it, and it won't stop it— the fire that's hurting you all, not the fire that's burning the caravan. Two different types of magical fire are happening right now, obviously?

Good news, that Flarie is off the board, so the Flarie can't act now. I guess bad news, the Embear can, the other Embear can. And it is going to go after... Antistrophe again. Antistrophe, you're under— you're under threat from this Embear.

Keith: I'm fine.

Austin: You are fine, you rolled a 13. Its claws again, bouncing off of your shield. And that, I think—

Keith: And the thing is it's a +3 to hit, which is like, good.

Austin: Yeah, yeah. Like, I think all of these hits would be hitting Caoimhe or, **[Keith:** Everyone else.] yeah, you were just tanking it for real, and you're not even using the tanking it action, so, **[Keith:** Yeah, I'm not.] I think this is a case for me to take over the reins and say, I gave the thing a shot where I rolled to see what they attacked, but it turns out it's more interesting if I just decide what the enemies attack, you know? So.

Keith: Mmm.

Sylvi: [chuckles] After putting Brontë through the face.

Austin: Right. I mean, yes, truly. Caoimhe, what do you do this turn?

Sylvi: So I think I'm going to start by using my elemental weapon technique, just to read that— because I don't think I've read that on air yet.

You imbue a weapon with elemental energy, choose a damage type— air, bolt, earth, fire or ice. Until this spell ends, all damage dealt by the weapon becomes of the chosen damage type. If you have that weapon equipped while you cast that spell, you may perform a free attack with it as part of the same action. The spell can only be cast on a weapon equipped by a willing creature.

Austin: Nice, mmm.

Sylvi: Presumably, to keep me from when we have elemental resistances to be like, “your weapon's fire now, that does nothing against us!” to opponents.

Austin: Yes, totally.

Sylvi: So what I'm going to do is I'm going to choose bolt [**Austin:** Okay!] as the element. The way this looks is basically— the reason I like the wavy sword is because [**Austin:** Oh, sure.] you can have little arcs of electricity jumping from them, and it looks really cool? And then I'm going to— which of these bears is in the worse shape?

Austin: They're frankly pretty close to even, but I would say the former— Embear number one is maybe a little worse for wear.

Sylvi: Alright. Embear number one, I'm smacking you.

Austin: Okay. Give me a roll to hit with your flamberge.

Sylvi: This is dex plus insight plus 2.

Austin: Hell yeah. And that is still attacking physical defense, right? Not—

Sylvi: Yes, but the damage type is—

Austin: Bolt instead of physical.

Sylvi: Yeah, yeah.

Austin: Alright. What's the— this hits, what's this attack look like, and where is it? Is the bolt in the blade, like it's electricity filled?

Sylvi: Yeah, the blade is like, it is charged with electricity.

Austin: Gotcha.

Sylvi: Like it kind of looks like— like I said, it looks like lightning is sort of like arcing off of it, there's probably like some sort of like degree of crackling in the air— there's some kind of like air around it because of it.

Austin: The Embear takes this hit, the electricity crackles through it. It doesn't seem like the electricity did much extra damage to it, unfortunately, not resistant to it.

Sylvi: Ehhh, you gotta try them.

Austin: A hundred percent. And yeah, you do 18 damage. It is in crisis. It does not seem to have any sort of special crisis effect. So that means you've knocked it under half health at this point.

Sylvi: Hell yeah.

Keith: So who's— who's left at this point?

Austin: Two Embears.

Keith: Two Embears, that's it.

Austin: That is it.

Keith: No, there's no other Flarie.

Austin: No other Flarie, yep.

Keith: Okay.

Austin: And I believe we're back around to y'all. As it is the start of the new turn, which means everyone takes five fire damage and that fire— that one is done, you've now taken the last of that fire.

Keith: I thought that we killed the Flarie and it wasn't going to do that anymore.

Austin: I explicitly said otherwise.

Sylvi: It can't re-up it.

Keith: Oh, yeah. I misunderstood.

Austin: Yeah. It's okay.

Sylvi: I'm at half health. I'm at 20.

Austin: So you are in crisis.

Janine: I am also in crisis again.

Austin: Whew.

Keith: Oh boy. [with a nasal voice] *Oh boy*.

Austin: *Oh boy*— is that how Antistrophe sounds?

Keith: No.

Austin: It would be funny. It would be funny for once.

Sylvi: That's how the bear sounds, though.

Keith: Oh boy.

Austin: Yeah. So who's up? We got one bear in crisis, we got one bear not in crisis. We got two turns left on the caravan before it burns down.

Keith: Alright, let me do some— let me do some potioning here.

Austin: Okay.

Keith: We're only two more D20— yeah two, yeah. It's a 9 and a 14?

Austin: Let's see.

Keith: This is good news, I think?

Austin: Ohh, it is good news.

Sylvi: I like that we've never rolled D20s and now we're just like, making up for lost time.

Janine: [chuckles]

Keith: Yeah, rolling tons of D20s.

Sylvi: Yeah.

Keith: So with a 9, I can target one enemy that I see. For 12 to 16, you and every ally present on the scene. And so that leaves 9, which is gain resistance to air and fire damage until the end of the scene.

Sylvi: Ooh!

Austin: That's pretty good.

Keith: That sounds great, but actually instead I'm going to heal us all by 30 hit points.

Austin: [chuckles] Yeah, fair.

Sylvi: Fair enough.

Janine: Yeah okay.

Sylvi: You know what? I think that is the right move.

Janine: No complaints.

Keith: Yeah, I think it's the right move. There's only one Embear left. We need that health back.

Austin: There's two Embear left.

Keith: Oh sorry, there's one and a half.

Sylvi: Yeah, but one is almost dead.

Austin: One is in crisis.

Sylvi: One and a half?

Austin: Half is very funny. It still gets a full turn, but. Something very funny about this character that I think people will— I have no idea if we're going to release these, if we're going to do the Hieron thing of bouncing back and forth, or if we're going to stick with the PARTIZAN thing of staying— and the Twilight Mirage thing of sticking with one side. But if people have heard the other side by now, they've run into a character who also like, makes and applies effects like this in combat?

But that one is— and that one also has a degree of randomness, but it's not random each time. Art's character kind of discovers recipes, but also needs particular ingredients instead of needing just inventory points. So there's like, a really fun trade-off there of like, if Art had just rolled this, Art would always be able to do these two effects going forward, but only if he had the right ingredients to do it. So it's a really fun comparison, I think, between the two. It's good.

Alright, Bear number one, it's just going to keep swinging on you— mmm, it's bouncing off of you, isn't it? I think it's going to turn around and try to swing on Caoimhe specifically.

Sylvi: Fair enough.

Austin: Caoimhe, you just swung on it. [**Sylvi:** I just swung on it.] Yeah, it's just going to follow up on that to be like, oh, you want to hit me with elemental damage? I'll hit you with elemental damage, or at least try to.

Janine: I think sometimes you should be willing to roll the die.

Austin: I did. I did it for the whole fight!

Janine: No no— no no I just mean you shouldn't have to do it all or nothing, either you choose or the dice choose. I think sometimes it's just like, sometimes it doesn't know.

Austin: Sometimes it doesn't know. Yeah— well yeah, it's like what is it— what is it— yes, I think especially at the beginning of the fight.

Janine: Keep yourself open, that's all I'm saying.

Austin: But when— the book has three suggestions of how to do it. And the other one is even weirder, if I remember right? But I don't remember what it is because I immediately was like, well, we're not doing that. So, so yeah. Alright, what is your defense?

Sylvi: Me? Physical defense is 11. Magic defense is 9.

Austin: Boom. There's a 13.

Sylvi: That's a hit.

Austin: So you take 12 fire damage as the Embear you know, takes your electric bolt sword hit. And then like, after recovering from the zap does a big jump at you. And I think it grabs you and bear hugs you actually. And then lets you go and steps back for some reason, even though if it just continued holding you, it probably would have done alright.

Sylvi: Just incinerated me.

Austin: Yeah exactly, exactly. What's your HP at?

Sylvi: I'm at 28 HP.

Austin: Okay. Back to y'all.

Keith: That's after gaining the 30? Okay.

Sylvi: Yes, you got me back to full to 40, and then—

Keith: Oh, you just have way less HP. [chuckles]

Austin: Antistrophe, you have I think, by far the most HP of anybody in this party and maybe in this entire— on both sides of this campaign at this point.

Keith: I would not be surprised.

Sylvi: You have built the most confident character.

Janine: Yeah. I would love to— to shoot bow, but also barrage for 10 MP?

Austin: Ooh, tell me, is that the ability— oh you just spent 10 MP.

Janine: Yeah, I spent 10 MP. When you perform a ranged attack, you may spend 10 mind points to choose one option. The attack gains multi two, or you increase the attack's multi property by one to a maximum of multi three.

Austin: There you go. Spend those 10 mind points and give me an attack roll.

Janine: Okay, and then here, and then longbow.

Austin: Mhm.

Janine: 13, 15.

Austin: 13, 15. 13 hits both of them. 15 damage is pretty good damage. Let me tell you, they're both still alive, but I do think Embear number two slips into crisis. It does, boom. Yeah, what's this look like?

Janine: Uhh, this is— I think this is, you know, it is just like a classic two-arrow split shot, but it is prefaced by Brontë being like— ooh, what would he say? Something like, “Hold strong, Lady Wake”, or you know, like some sort of like, I'm doing this for you kind of — kind of energy. [Sylvi chuckles] You know, hang in there, but like, fancy boy talk, you know?

Sylvi: Yeah.

Austin: Fantastic, yeah. So yeah, you managed to take both of these, hit them pretty hard. And I think this is the point at which Embear number two is sick of your shit and is gonna charge at you and try to deal with you.

And I think that that's a hit. Your defense is 11, 13— take 11 fire damage as this Embear closes the distance on you. Again, you thankfully—because you're ranged attacking— oh shit, sorry. You have to go— you have to take 10 more damage, Sylvi, Caoimhe, because yo—, oh no, because you, yeah, you still did a melee attack against it, right?

Sylvi: Yeah, I did.

Janine: Oh...

Austin: So you need 10 more damage for the burn back.

Sylvi: I'm in crisis again.

Austin: Okay.

Keith: Oh no!

Austin: Brontë, Brontë, you're able here though to not take that burn back as you're taking— you're doing melee damage, but it does just charge you and hit you for 11 fire damage, so.

Janine: Mhm. That'll happen.

Austin: And then it is Caoimhe's turn again to wrap up this round.

Sylvi: Okay. I don't want to get hit.

Austin: Sure.

Sylvi: When I do melee. Wait, is the caravan burning up at the end of this turn?

Austin: At the end of this next coming turn.

Sylvi: Okay. So not after I do this.

Austin: Correct. You'll still have another turn is what I said.

Sylvi: And we've got one bear in crisis?

Austin: You have one bear— it's such a funny thing.

Sylvi: It's a very funny thing to say.

Austin: You have one— both bears are in crisis, and one of them took a big hit after being in crisis. Embear number one just took that big 15 hit damage from Brontë in the time since the crisis. [**Sylvi:** Okay.] Plus it would be another hit before that if I'm remembering right.

Sylvi: I'll try, I'm going to try casting Ventus then on that weaker— mmm, if they're both bloodied or in crisis.

Austin: Wow, bloodied! Wow.

Sylvi: I'm sorry. I— I'm sorry.

Austin: D&D terms coming out! Damn!

Janine: [chuckles]

Sylvi: I— listen. I started with fourth edition, [**Austin:** I get it, I get it.] it's in there somewhere.

Austin: If we ever play a D&D edition, it might be fourth edition, that would be kind of fun, so. Anyway, mhm.

Sylvi: It's easy to make broken shit in that.

Austin: It's easy to make broken shit in that. So Ventus is—?

Sylvi: Damn, I was trying not to say it this whole time.

Austin: Ventus is an air spell. It does-

Sylvi: HR plus 15, and I can Spellblade it.

Austin: Okay, cool. So it's not Dex plus Willpower. You're going to roll Dex plus whatever else.

Sylvi: It's Dex plus Insight, yeah.

Austin: Yeah yeah yeah. Cool.

Sylvi: Do you think—? You know I think I might have— I might need to look at the numbers on that later, just to make sure that that is not supposed to be Insight/Willpower when it's not Spellblade, but— I haven't cast it when it's not Spellblade, so it doesn't matter?

Austin: Yeah. I think that that's— I think that you're right. I think that it is— I think that it is Insight/Willpower, [**Sylvi:** Insight/Willpower.] I'm pretty sure.

Sylvi: Anyway, Embear one, get Beybladed. Let it rip.

Austin: And this is not a melee attack, you're just casting with your thing.

Sylvi: Yes, you can— it's using the sword in place of a stave.

Austin: Right, exactly. And then also important— sorry, are you spending 10— are you spending 20 MP to target both of them, or are you just targeting one of them?

Sylvi: So this was something I wasn't sure about because Spellblade has this first line, *when you cast an offensive spell that targets a single creature.*

Austin: Oh, then you have to target just one when you do it with Spellblade. [**Sylvi:** Exactly, so. There are—] That's a fun limit. Yeah, the idea that you couldn't— you have to do the basic roll. And yes, you're right, it is Insight/Willpower if you're just casting the spell regular style, so.

Sylvi: Okay, cool. I'll fix that on my sheet. So for now, [**Austin:** Alright, so— 25 damage.] I did 25 damage.

Austin: God damn, and you're doing this to the weakened one. The— it just blows away, right? Like the wind picks up with enough speed that the—

Sylvi: I Team Rocketed it.

Austin: Yeah, a hundred— well no I think what's happening is like, [**Sylvi:** Bing!] it like— you know how a flame, like a candle, will get caught by the wind, like a candle flame, and then like flicker? I think it just flickers out in the wind. Like, there used to be a big bear shaped flame, and then bit by bit, it gets like, thin and wispy, and then the air just blows it away. It's like you've blown out the candle flame that was Embear number one.

Sylvi: Very tired, very triumphant little fist pump from Caoimhe.

Austin: Yeah.

Janine (as Brönte): Well done, Lady Wake!

Sylvi (as Caoimhe): Don't need to— Caoimhe— Caoimhe's fine.

Austin: And we're back around for your turn.

Janine (as Brönte): Well done, Lady Caoimhe!

Austin: [laughs]

Sylvi (as Caoimhe): [exasperated] Okay.

Austin: And we're back around to your turn, at the top of the turn order. One Embear left. It's not looking good for this Embear, you know?

Keith: I'm going to put out more— I'm going to do more shoveling.

Austin: Okay.

Keith: All I can do is hit this bear and take 10 damage. I might as well not take 10 damage.

Austin: Sure.

Keith: And I'm rolling—

Austin: Might/Might. Effort, what we did last time—?

Keith: Right right, effort. Yeah yeah.

Austin: Yeah yeah yeah. That is a nine. You rolled an eight and a one. That one is brutal.

Sylvi: That's brutal.

Austin: But you could— you still have a Fabula Point?

Keith: I do.

Austin: You could roll it— as long as you don't roll a one, you can spend it. Roll— re-roll that. We're sorry. We are playing too fast and loose with Fabula Points here, I haven't been doing the thing I'm supposed to be doing. It's been—it's been fine. You have to be evoking part of your— part of your who? What is it actually called? Your—

Sylvi: Identity?

Austin: No, because it's Identity, Theme and Origin. What are the three of those called together?

Sylvi: Oh, I think it's called your traits.

Austin: You have to be invoking one of your traits when you do this, so.

Keith: Oh that's easy. I can invoke a trait. No problem.

Austin: Please do.

Keith: I'm a troubled, eccentric career pathfinder. I've abandoned my calling not by choice, you know, later than is ideal. I've taken up these shields and like, the one thing that like, all of this martial training has gotten me is like being good at protecting things.

Austin: Right, sure.

Keith: You know, and this is a slightly less active version of that. I'm not blocking something with a shield, I'm not you know, putting someone behind me, but putting out a caravan that's under attack by monsters is pretty clear. Like, yeah, I'm doing it. **[Austin:** This is—] I'm doing guardian shit.

Austin: Totally, alright. Give me a 1d10. So, yeah, spend your Fabula Point and then do it.

Keith: Yeah.

Austin: Which brings us up to four— five Fabula Points spent so far?

Keith: One, two, three from me. One from everyone else?

Austin: Yeah so that's five, so one more. You'll get two XP at the end of this session.

Keith: Re-roll... effort... 10!

Austin: Look at— ooh! Oh, I thought for a second that you rolled two 10s, yes. 18—

Keith: Does two 10s do something on Fabula?

Austin: Two of anything above six is a crit in Fabula. [**Keith:** Right.] So double 6s, double 7s, etc. That is 18, 18 in fact clears the whole thing, [**Keith:** Sick.] because it was one tick per level of success starting at 10, so 10, 13 and 16. What does this look like as you put this caravan out?

Sylvia: It's burritoed.

Austin: Yeah.

Keith: Yeah— fair, yeah, I even think it's like, falling into a hole, which helps it get even faster covering up the side.

Austin: Okay. Yeah. You'll just dig it out later when it's time.

Keith: Yeah, It's not deep. [**Austin:** I get you.] It's not deep, but it just starts sinking into the loose soil.

Austin: Yes, okay. Alright, then this Embear— I'll random this one, kind of surrounded by people— oh.

Keith: [laughs] Hey, get what you paid for.

Austin: Brontë.

Sylvi: Whenever you say I'll random this one, should you just pick Brontë?

Janine: It's, fine.

Austin: [chuckles] Well, it fumbles.

Sylvi: Yooo.

Janine: Wow.

Sylvi: It's what you get.

Austin: It critically fumbles, it rolls two 1s. And I believe— I do believe that enemies can fumble. Is that true? It's the first time this has happened.

Keith: In history?

Austin: When player characters roll a fumble, they immediately earn 1 Fabula Point. When you roll a fumble, whoever controls your opposition in this turn gets an opportunity. So, if you look on the sidebar here, there is a handout called Opportunities.

Sylvi: Oooh.

Austin: Opportunities are unexpected twists in the story, sometimes good, sometimes bad. When you spend an opportunity, you may pick an option from the list below or come up with a different twist that fits the current scene. The game master has final say on whether an opportunity is appropriate to the current situation and some spells and skills will allow you to spend opportunities in new and powerful ways. So in this case, Brontë, you were the target. You get an opportunity here.

Janine: Interesting.

Austin: Yeah. A huge list of them here, that range from getting bonuses on your rolls, to the creature getting an affliction, like Dazed or Sshaken. You could get a bond with someone. You could make the— I think maybe we went over this before. You can make the creature have a faux pas, [chuckles] **[Janine and Sylvi chuckle]** making them make a comprising statement. You can gain someone's favor— we definitely got one before because I believe, Caoimhe, you got information before.

Keith: I think that was me.

Austin: It was you— it was you, Antistrophe, right. Yes.

Sylvi: Yeah, I think it was Keith who rolled the crit earlier.

Austin: Yes, that's what it was.

Janine: Is the— the caravan out, right? The fire is out?

Austin: The caravan seems— it's totally gone right now. This thing would have to survive this round for it to reignite, which seems unlikely at this rate, I guess, is what I would say.

Janine: Okay. How about the next check performed by you or an ally will receive a +4 bonus? Just to make sure that next attack lands.

Austin: Easy. Yeah, that's a good idea. So take the +4 on the next attack against this bear, who I think is just wildly over committed and maybe trips and falls as it sort of—

Janine: I was going to say, can it please trip and fall?

Austin: I think it just trips and falls. I think it tries to do a big overhead swing down with both hands, and it just trips and falls.

Janine: Can I— can I say that the advantage happens because I laugh at it?

Sylvi: [laughs]

Austin: Oh it's not that it fell, it's that it's embarrassed.

Janine: No— I mean, yeah, it fell and then I laughed at it.

Austin: Yeah, yeah, but that's what I'm saying— the +4 comes from, yeah, comes from it being embarrassed. Oh yeah, okay.

Janine: It sucks when someone hot laughs at you, you know?

Austin: Oh, it sure does. Yeah, Sylvi wrote em-bear-assed.

Sylvi: Yeah like, Embear. Assed.

Austin: Yeah. Embear-assed, yeah, exactly.

Sylvi: Yeah.

Janine: Embear ass up, fell down.

Austin: Embear ass up, right. It's your turn again. I guess— wait, who just went? Antistrophe went. So it's again, it's Caoimhe, and then Caoimhe or Brontë. In whatever order you want.

Sylvi: Do you want to use the advantage you just got?

Janine: [chuckling] I'm going to be honest. I kind of want Brontë to like, look at Caoimhe and give a flourishing bow [**Austin** laughs] and say something like,

Janine (as Brontë): The coup de grace is yours to deliver, Lady Caoimhe.

Sylvi: God.

Austin: Unbelievable.

Sylvi (as Caoimhe): [exasperated] Ffff- yeah, fine.

Sylvi: I lift the sword up. It's time to swing. [**Janine** chuckles] If I kill it with a melee, am I still taking 10 damage?

Austin: No, if you kill it with a melee, you will not take, it won't be around to do the reaction, is what I'll say.

Sylvi: That's what I thought.

Austin: And I hold my option to change that for future creatures. But I'll be explicit with it.

Sylvi: Yeah, this is just for the Embears.

Austin: Yeah, just for the Embears, exactly.

Janine: You know, fire can't burn you, you can put it out.

Austin: *Hooo!*

Sylvi: Fuck! God damn, I cut that thing's head off.

Austin: You don't, actually. Unfortunately, you take 10 damage. It was not so far under crisis.

Sylvi: Really?

Janine: *What?!*

Austin: No. You—

Sylvi: 20 damage?

Austin: Yeah, uh huh.

Janine: Wow.

Keith: Wow.

Sylvi: Wow.

Austin: Uh huh.

Keith: Wow wow wow.

Austin: Y'all are just very— they're big bears. They're like Antistrophe. Antistrophe, what's your crisis number?

Keith: 35? 32?

Janine: Oh. [laughs]

Austin: So. Antistrophe goes into crisis at 34. You know, we're at 35. So, yeah.

Janine: Did you take the +4 there?

Sylvi: I did, yeah. The +4 is not to damage.

Austin: The +4 is not to damage, unfortunately. Yeah. Which is why you crushed it with a 24.

Sylvi: I rolled the best damage I could. [**Austin:** You did. You rolled a 10.] I rolled a 10. Which is the highest— my highest die is a D10.

Keith: Is that not a crit?

Austin: No. A crit would be 10, 10.

Keith: It only happens on damage or the thing that—

Sylvi: Wow. Yeah. In another game, that would be a crit because I rolled the highest possible thing I could roll?

Keith: Oh right. It doesn't have to be— I understand.

Austin: It would have been better for you to roll an 8 on your first die than a 10 in this game, that's interesting. Anyway, you do 20 bolt damage, right, it stays bolt?

Sylvi: Yep.

Austin: So that's the other thing—

Sylvi: Until the end of the conflict.

Austin: Right.

Sylvi: Was it earth? Was it earth?

Austin: Well, we know it's not ice. We know it's not bolts. We guess it's not fire.

Sylvi: We know it's not air.

Austin: We know it's not air.

Keith: I buried the caravan, that worked.

Austin: That did. It did work, didn't it?

Sylvi: Yeah.

Austin: Caoimhe.

Sylvi: It should have been rocks.

Austin: It's your turn and unfortunately— sorry, I said Caoimhe. Caoimhe, you take 10 damage. Brontë, it's your turn. Unfortunately, Caoimhe did not deliver the coup de grace.

Janine: Coup de grace.

Austin: Yeah. Instead, got burnt. What's that look like, Caoimhe?

Sylvi: I think I like the idea of her thinking she delivers the coup de grace and then just gets clawed or something.

Austin: [makes a whooshing sound] Yeah I think that the fire just burned— I think it's like, it's so embarrassed, it stays down for a second, so you think it's done. And then it gets mad and goes, *RAAAAH!* and the fire blows up and blows you back, and you take 10 damage. Then it stands up ready to do damage.

Sylvi: I'm in a bad way. I have 8HP.

Janine: It doesn't have any status effects on it, right?

Austin: It has no status effects on it, unfortunately.

Janine: I'm going to shoot it with an arrow.

Austin: It goes *rooar* and then you take out your bow, and you aim your bow at it.

Janine: Yeah, it's going roar behind Lady Caoimhe and I'm going to shoot it with an arrow.

Austin: Yeah that's a good idea. That is a hit with a 12.

Sylvi: Okay, that's good.

Austin: Yeah, a 10 and a 1, that's a hit and another 1 from the bow. Then you do 18 damage, that is more than enough. It falls, it goes *roarr...* and then it fades away.

Keith: Classic bear death throe.

Austin: Yeah. And that means the caravan will not be set back on fire. You have succeeded at your first fight, congratulations. No one died, no one got knocked unconscious or had to surrender.

Janine: Can I say at the end of that—

Keith: Hmmm, that's oddly specific.

Janine: At the end of that fight, after firing the arrow that kills the Embear saying something to the effect of,

Janine (as Brontë): Lady Caoimhe, I'm sure that was the lingering effect of your strike, and I merely tipped it over the edge.

Keith: You loosened it for me.

Austin: Yes! [chuckles]

Sylvi: I— I don't even know what to say to that.

Janine: Another flourishing bow, but like a bow where he's still looking at you and smiling, like he's—

Sylvi (as Caoimhe): [disgusted noises]

Austin: Elfte and Zwölfte—

Sylvi: Those noises were in character.

Austin: Yeah. Elfte and Zwölfte say— or it's like maybe— which one's which? I have to look at my own notes here. Elfte is the-

Janine: The way to remember it is that Elfte is the simpler name and wears [Austin: Simpler—] slightly simpler clothing. Zwölfte is a fancier name and wears, you know, like a 'Z' is a bit, you know, imagine the 'Z' is like a big skirt.

Austin: Yeah.

Janine: It's like fluffy. There's, there's crinoline, there's ruffles.

Austin: And I've been playing Zwölfte as a little harsher and Elfte as a little kinder.

Janine: Yeah, I think that's true.

Austin: Yeah. Elfte is like,

Austin (as Elfte): Well-handed! Are you—

Austin: You're not your majesty, what are you? You're a highness.

Janine: That's probably highness, right? For princes?

Austin: Oh, for a prince. Yeah. Yeah.

Austin (as Elfte): Well-handled, your Highness. I knew you had it in you.

Austin: And Zulfda is just like quiet. If there were phones, Zulfda would be checking her phone.

Sylvi (as Caoimhe): Thanks for all the help, you two.

Janine: That's the thing is, like, I feel like they would be farther away.

Austin: Interesting. Well, I think that they've re-entered the scene.

Janine: Because otherwise it is— it is weird. Yeah, that makes sense.

Austin: You know what I mean? They have now come down from the hills. You know, they've been watching you from on high.

Keith: They started walking when Sylvi took that shot.

Austin: [laughs] Yeah, exactly.

Keith: This will end it for sure, let's head down there.

Austin: Then a little Lobble comes over to you. Lobbles, again, are round little guys made of— seemingly made of rubber. This one has like a, a very bouncy ball quality to him. It has spiral colored rubber skin? And then is wearing what is very quick to— you know what this is, this is a doctor's garb. It has like a lab coat on.

Janine: Wha—?

Austin: This is...

Sylvi: Hell yeah.

Austin: I mean what? What, a Lobble can't be a doctor?

Keith: [chuckles]

Janine: No, it can. It just—

Sylvi: Damn, Brontë.

Austin: Yeah, geez!

Keith: Yeah.

Austin: And It comes over to you and is like,

Austin (as Lobble): Oh, you saved my wagon! Oh, thank you so much!

Janine: I thought you were going to say save my wife.

Austin: No, this guy has a husband, not a wife.

Keith: Oh, Lobbles can't marry wagons?

Sylvi: Oh, Lobbles can't be gay?

Austin (as Kreb): I'm Kreb. Who are you?

Sylvi (as Caoimhe): I'm Caoimhe— Caoimhe Wake. Nice to meet you— you're good, right? No, none of you're—

Sylvi: I don't know if they're— out of character. Austin, are there other Lobbles here?

Austin: There's one Lobble here. As far as you— yeah.

Sylvi: Okay, it's just him? Yeah.

Sylvi (as Caoimhe): You're not hurt, right?

Austin: He checks himself, reaches under his arms, does a little bounce to make sure he's bouncing right.

Austin (as Kreb): I'm good!

Sylvi: Covered in my own blood,

Sylvi (as Caoimhe): Good, glad to hear it.

Janine: [chuckles]

Austin: We're Dragon Age Origins over here. We are— the after fight cut scene is just like, oh my god.

Janine: Yeah everyone's covered in blood, everyone's on fire.

Austin: This is your own, so it's fine. It's not a big deal. It's just it's—

Sylvi: Better than the Soul Caliber damage, where it's like, oh— I've lost my pants.

Austin: My clothes are all— yeah, uh huh.

Sylvi: Yeah.

Austin: Also like, peeks in the back of the truck, the wagon, what do you get? It's like a it's like a— I described this before as being almost like a wild west, what do you call those?

Keith: Caravan?

Austin: No, it's not a caravan because it's just the one cart. It's just the one— stagecoach, like a stagecoach. Like a—

Sylvi: Stagecoach, okay yeah yeah.

Austin: Is that the— is that the word that I want? Yeah!

Sylvi: I believe that is— like at the very least—

Keith: You're thinking about some Oregon Trail shit.

Sylvi: Yeah, that's immediately where I went—

Austin: No, I'm thinking about some post Oregon Trail shit. I'm thinking about some late 1800s. [**Keith:** Okay.] The wild west has some dirt roads that something like this could safely travel on.

Janine: Yeah, this isn't a covered wagon.

Austin: This is not a covered wagon. Exactly.

Keith: It's *not* a covered wagon, okay.

Austin: It's a stagecoach. It's the type of shit you robbed in Red Dead Redemption 2, Keith.

Sylvi: Like this type of thing?

Keith: Got it. Okay, yeah yeah yeah. I thought you were saying stagecoach, but it was more of—

Austin: No. It is exactly the thing Sylvi just linked, this [chuckles] Wells Fargo and Company stagecoach.

Sylvi: Yeah.

Janine: Eugh.

Austin: Except on the side, it says—

Keith: Fells Wargo.

Austin: [chuckles] No, it says— what it says is, Krieb's Potions and Poultices, and inside is filled with medical supplies. And also, there's no horse or anything here. This is a— seems to be a magically enchanted— huh?

Janine: An auto carriage.

Austin: An auto carriage. It seems to be a magically enchanted auto carriage, exactly. I think he turns to Antistrophe and Brontë looking for introductions and also your bodyguards. Though I think that there's a degree of like, even Crab from the middle of nowhere out here is like, clear that you have bodyguards, and maybe they won't necessarily introduce themselves here.

Keith (as Antistrophe): I'm glad you're okay, Kreb. Why were you being attacked?

Austin (as Kreb): Well, I'm not exactly sure, but I will say this makes me wonder about the fires.

Keith (as Antistrophe): The fires?

Austin: You know about the fires. You're being sent here.

Keith: The fires in the town.

Sylvi: My eyes lit up.

Sylvi (as Caoimhe): Yes, what do you know about those?

Austin (as Kreb): I know that they've turned Burzin into a damn near ghost town.

Keith (as Antistrophe): Yeah, Burn-zin more like now.

Austin (as Kreb): Why would— I guess...

Sylvi (as Caoimhe): Why would you do that?

Austin (as Kreb): That's kind of rude.

Sylvi (as Caoimhe): People are suffering. Why would you say that?

Austin (as Kreb): My neighbors have been run out of the town because of the fire.

Sylvi (as Caoimhe): It's really insensitive.

Keith (as Antistrophe): Seems fine. Seems well within reason to me.

Austin: Antistrophe is a— a “what, too soon?” guy.

Sylvi: [laughs]

Austin: Is like what, I'm not allowed to make jokes?

Keith: People never saw CSI Miami.

Austin: And then I think maybe looks at you also, Brontë, for some sort of introduction. And again, like, can tell just by what you're wearing that you seem to be some sort of— actually, I think probably says,

Austin (as Kreb): Are you Sonnerian?

Janine: [sighs] No you know what, I bet he would just say yes.

Austin: Yeah, that makes sense.

Janine: I have no reason to hide that. Yeah, I think he's like putting his bow back on his back and you know, being asked, “Are you Sonnerian?”, flashes a smile, kind of tosses his hair a little bit, and says,

Janine (as Brontë): Ah, you noticed.

Austin (as Kreb): [chuckles] I've done a little reading, and I've seen some sketches of Sonnerian fashion, and, you know, I'm not much of a seamster myself, but I do like a good outfit.

Janine (as Brontë): I'm very flattered, thank you, as do I.

Austin (as Kreb): Would you— are you headed towards Burzin?

Sylvi (as Caoimhe): Yes.

Austin (as Kreb): Would you like a ride?

Sylvi: Barely standing— keeping myself up, like leaning on my sword—

Sylvi (as Caoimhe): Very much so, thank you.

Austin: And I think, you know, are you wearing the uniform of a Hexblade?

Sylvi: I mean, I've got my cloak— Hexcloak.

Austin: Yeah, the Hexcloak is on. Sorry, I said Hexblade. Hexcloak? Hexcloak. I can say Hexblade, why do I say that? It's wrong.

Keith: I think because I said Hexblade two weeks ago.

Austin: There we go, that's our problem right there.

Sylvi: I kept calling them something-blade, but they're not.

Austin: Yes, okay. Yeah sees your Hexcloak and is like,

Austin (as Kreb): I'm sorry, Lady Hexcloak, are you here to investigate the fires?

Janine (as Brontë): She prefers Lady Caoimhe.

Austin (as Kreb): Lady Cao—? Oh, I could never.

Sylvi (as Caoimhe): Just Cao—

Austin (as Kreb): I guess it doesn't.

Sylvi (as Caoimhe): Just Caoimhe's fine.

Austin (as Kreb): Justicier Caoimhe then.

Janine: [chuckles]

Austin (as Kreb): Are you here to investigate the fires?

Sylvi (as Caoimhe): Well, yeah.

Austin: I'm unfortunately slipping closer and closer to... what's her name? From Hunter x Hunter. I almost developed a lisp there.

Sylvi: Komugi?

Austin: Yeah, this guy's not a Komugi. I gotta be careful.

Sylvi: Let's play some Gungi.

Austin: Let's play some Gungi. Yeah, so are you here to investigate the fires?

Sylvi (as Caoimhe): Yeah, we're looking into it.

Austin (as Kreb): We need your help, so I really appreciate it. Please hop aboard and we'll get you... my husband runs a little hotel. We'd be happy to put you up.

Sylvi (as Caoimhe): That would be lovely. I'm so tired of sleeping outside.

Janine (as Brontë): How little is the hotel?

Austin (as Kreb): Well, I'm being humble. I think it's the best hotel for probably a hundred, two hundred miles.

Janine (as Brontë): I meant the physical size.

Sylvi (as Caoimhe): Is that a height joke?

Austin (as Kreb): Big, you could, it's, I see, you haven't met my husband. My husband's really tall. You'll be fine.

Janine (as Brontë): Ah, okay. Glad to hear it.

Austin: Lobbles don't only marry Lobbles.

Sylvi: Yeah.

Keith: Sometimes they marry wagons.

Janine: [chuckles]

Austin: That's right, as we've been over. Alright, so yeah, you're able to hop aboard. And then, yes, the thing I was going to say is, even though it's only going one direction and even though it's in the safe zone of this town, I am going to quickly ask someone to roll for traveling because there's a chance that you get a great roll and end up getting something from it? So I'm going to let you do that. I would roll a D6 here. You're in the kind of— just on the exterior of this town, someone roll a D6. What you want is under that six. Anything under that 6 and a 1 would be great.

Keith: I could roll if nobody wants to. It was a D6, you said?

Austin: D6. Try not to hit that 6.

Keith: D6.

Austin: Boom.

Keith: 4.

Austin: 4. Nothing happens. For a little extra clarity on what exactly is happening here, the way that travel works—I think we went over this a little bit—is that every hex on the map has a difficulty associated with it, basically. And those difficulties go from D6 up to D20? And the— you roll whatever that D is, and you're trying to get a low roll, basically, so. So you've now done the D6 to get in to Burzin. And check this out, we got a little town map going on here.

You're coming in from the— I guess you're coming in from the north, actually, huh? If I'm thinking about the other map the way that we are. This is the town of Burzin. It has a little bit of a Wild West vibes going on here, as the auto carriage might have suggested.

You roll down from the south on the back of Kreb's auto wagon. And immediately to your right, to the west, you see the ashes— the ashen ruins of a bunch of burned down buildings. These generally look like shops, but also some larger structures. To your left, as you come into town, there's a mining supply store. We talked about this a little bit, but there is a— you're kind of at the edge of the desert that the town of Parasolia is in. And this is kind of— there is a— even out here, you can sometimes go out and dig up some Solium, which is a magical ore that is very valuable. And so there are lots of kind of— people who don't want to go be part of Parasolia, where it's kind of bad. Instead, we'll come to little frontier towns like this and try their hands at being independent miners.

There is a House of Benediction, which is the primary religion in the Elevana, kind of the city-states. I can talk a little bit more about that as it comes up. There's a town hall and a jail also, on the east side of town. And then there's like a little commercial district. There's a post office, and some weapon shops, and you know, an armor shop. There's a bank, there is a gambling hall. And eventually you can also see that there is a Kreb's Potions and Poultices, which is right up next to the Clean Water Lodge, which is where you are headed towards the kind of middle of the town on the western side.

There's also up on a hill to the east a handful of these bigger estates that look down over the town, these kind of larger manors. Imagine that they're like multi-leveled, because they're not actually that much bigger than what I've drawn in the residential district, but they're bigger— I'll make them bigger. And then there's more burned down buildings in the southeast. And there's also a burned down building in the kind of commercial district.

And finally, all the way southwest, there is a stable around which a sort of ad hoc campground has been created. It's kind of clear that that's not a long running campground. It's people who have had their houses burned down, along with some visitors who've shown up expecting perhaps not to have come into a place where everything's been burnt down. So those who survived the fires, but who lost their homes and who've stayed, have gone to this campground in the southwest.

But Kreb leads you to his potions and poultices shop and the adjoining Clean Water Lodge, parks the auto carriage and hops out. Your impression— your first impression of this town is what he said, which is it's a little bit— it's becoming a bit of a ghost town. It's quiet, there's not a ton of activity on these streets. It feels like it could be— you could imagine what it was like when it was jumping, and it just isn't at this point.

Even the residential district, it's very clear you know, for instance, there's a larger building that would have been a sort of boarding house that is completely shut down and abandoned. In fact, I'd say probably some of the— two of the estates up top are clearly abandoned, they are falling into disrepair. And then— they're probably not falling

into disrepair, but they are clearly abandoned, they have not been kept up. You can tell because they are covered in soot and kind of smoke damage from the fires from below, and no one has cleaned them off. Whereas the two other houses tied to the other rich families here have been kept up.

So yeah, that is the vibe. Let's you park, parks the auto carriage and leads you into the Clean Water Lodge where you are greeted by a tall, like, stork man? A stork bird man? Not only is a tall— is it big enough here for you, Brontë, it's actually the ceilings are even taller because of this giant tall bird man who says,

Austin (as Stork Man): Welcome to the lodge!

Austin: And he only welcomes you a second before he gets surrounded by his three little kids, Krank, Freb and Teletoo.

Sylvi: [howls with laughter]

Austin: And they're like,

Austin (as Krank, Freb and Teletoo): Dad, it's dinner time!

Austin: And he's like,

Austin (as Stork Man): Let me sort my— let's sort the guests and then I'll come and make dinner.

Austin: And it becomes pretty clear that the Clean Water Lodge is a hotel, but it's also just like, where this guy and his family live? It is a kind of a bed and breakfast style place—

Keith: Also a B&B.

Austin: But also just— it is, yeah, exactly. And so, yeah, he asks if you have luggage, and gets you situated in some rooms upstairs. It's a building made of— or it's like the, all of the accoutrements are like dark woods. There's like some really well-taken care of, but old carpets. You know, it's a kind of homey place here. It feels warm, but not warm as in hot, I'm in the desert, warm as in, ooh cozy. And kind of leaves you on your way to then head down and take care of his kids.

Sylvi: It's a very important distinction to make when we're investigating magical fires.

Austin: It is, yes. Yes. Yeah, at no point, I will say, do you feel, oh man, it's gonna— everything's gonna catch fire here any second now, you know?

Keith: So it's a relief.

Austin: Yeah, yeah, uh huh.

Keith: Cause a minute ago, that's how I felt.

Austin: Oh, okay phew. Well, now it's a relief. From the top floor where you're—it's only two floors—but from the second floor where you're looking out, where your rooms are, I'd say each of you probably has like a different view, let's say. One of you is looking out west to— there's like a little, like a hot spring, like a big outdoor like pool, the clean water of Clean Water Lodge is out back, you can see it to the west there.

To the east, one of you can see out into the residential district which is— I described this last time, but this town is feeling increasingly like a ghost town? There are a bunch of burned down buildings. There are a handful of structures that are— still have people there.

Then, the person to the south, you can see that where there used to just be stables, now you can see that the stables have also turned into campground, as people who are— who had their homes burned down are now living— either they've left or some of them are camping where the stables are, trying to decide whether they want to stay or leave.

There are also— you can see out east, up on the hill, where there used to be these big estates, there are a number of buildings that have been abandoned, you know, officially abandoned. There might be squatters in there now, who could say. And there are a couple of houses that still have some folks living there. You can see, you know, the House Burzin, the kind of northernmost one.

Keith: It's suspiciously named.

Austin: You don't know that it's called House Burzin, but it is in fact where the mayor of the town lives. And then there's another house that the for the listener, it's called House M'shalia, where maybe you even see a kind of, I don't know, youngish 20 something Elevana doing some— finishing up some chores as the sun sets and, you know, kind of finishing up some— I'd say it almost looks like she's doing like— sh has like a bucket, she has like a toolbox, she has some paint, like she's doing some like house repairs on this big estate that's looking down on the rest of the town.

And that's kind of the situation. Do y'all have a game plan for how you want to investigate? There's I guess other thing— there's a Burzin mystery clock I've put in the top right, you have two checks in it, it is an eight step clock. That the two steps that you have in it, you've learned.

One, the fire elementals, the the Embears and the Flaireys, or the Flairey seemed to be attacking the stagecoach, the Krebs stagecoach on purpose, like it didn't just seem like, oh, we're wild elementals, it seemed like a targeted attack? And then it also— when you were blocking it at one point, Antistrophe, you got the vibe that this was not just regular fire, and not just like regular elemental fire either. It glowed blue in a strange way, and it seemed like it was coming from sort of like a different— a different source than what most fire comes from, is what I would say.

Keith: Right. So, cause normally when a fire is blue, it's because whatever it's burning is at a different temperature at that part of the fire.

Austin: That's right. And this is just blue.

Keith: It wouldn't be true of magical fire, which is magical and has no source other than the magic that's—

Janine: It could also be like if you put a chemical on fire, sometimes it dilutes it.

Austin: It can also be that. Sure.

Keith: That's true.

Austin: In this case, in the world of Perpetua, where there is arcane magic and gods, it might be that it's coming from a different elemental source than what most fire comes from, or it's coming from— there's like a lot of— all of what you said, *plus* magic reasons, right? So— and it wasn't burning at the heat— it wasn't burning at the heat that blue fire seems to naturally occur in nature, nor in— you know, you used to be a mage, you could summon some blue fire back in the day, and it would be a certain heat.

This was not at that heat. It was at regular orange fire heat, but was blue. And as a reminder, at first, did not seem to be on fire at all, importantly. And I think this was a detail that I've said, but it's been seven weeks since we've— it's been nine weeks since we first started recording, and I don't remember how much of this I've said out loud. Does anybody remember what the special weird detail of this place was? About the stuff burning down overnight?

Keith: In Burzin, not the caravan.

Austin: In Burzin, yeah.

Keith: No.

Janine: Do the wealthy people live under a large parasol?

Austin: No, they don't, that's Parasolia. [chuckles] That's obviously a— yeah, obviously very different.

Janine: Oh, wait why did I put—? Okay, I put it under arrow, that confused me.

Austin: That is in another place that's nearby. If we switch over to the world map really quick, just to the north of Burzin, you can see Parasolia, sun-scorched mine. That is where the sort of giant parasol is in the mine, where Solium— is a special magical ore is dug. Burzin was founded in the Solium rush before Parasolia, or around the same time as Parasolia, I'm not exactly sure of the timing. And so there was some Solium mining that was happening here too.

But Parasolia became the place where that was like, really happening. Parasolia also has a second sun, don't worry about it. It's fine, normal stuff. I believe, and maybe— I'm not, I guess I'm not 100% sure I said this. I must have said this. Cause this is the thing that drew you to this town to begin with. Not only did these things burn overnight, but they seem to— they seem to be burning all at once from fire no one could see.

Keith: Hm.

Austin: The fire seemed to be invisible, is what the reports were.

Keith: I— this is a side note, but I remember, I can't remember, I asked this in the last one, or if we just— if I just thought it. Does Parasolia mean it's nearby the Solium, not that it's got a big parasol? But even though it also doesn't have that—

Austin: You have to go ask the people who founded Parasolia, Keith. [**Keith** chuckles] From the world that brought you Sourcerot.

Keith: It's very funny.

Austin: Not that the source of reality is rotting, but it's a disease from the town of Sourcefault— or whatever, Sourcemill.

Keith: Right. It's sort of like— it's like nominative determinism where you've called a place parasolium because it's nearby the solium, [**Austin:** Uh huh.] and then they're like, "You know what we should do? We should build a big parasol here."

Austin: It's in the name. Yeah! Uh huh!

Keith and Sylvi: [laughs]

Austin: It's right there. So yeah, so that is the big— that is the thing that I think made everyone feel like the town is not just burning, but is cursed, right? It's like, what the fuck

is— where is this fire coming from? Things are burning down. And yeah, so like not only have you now seen the weird blue fire, but there is this reports of invisible fire, which is terrifying because—

Keith: That is terrifying. And if it's targeted like the cart was, [**Austin:** Mhm.] then it seems like it's being— it's trying to kill people is what I would say. If it was invisible.

Austin: Sure. Yeah, that would—

Keith: If it was just trying to scare people, it would be very visible fire.

Austin: Right, yep. Mhm.

Sylvi: And both these burnt down— these burnt down buildings that we have marked on the map were burned down by this invisible fire?

Austin: That is correct, yeah.

Keith: At night.

Sylvi: I feel like we should check out the burned down buildings then.

Austin: Sure.

Sylvi: It's kind of my instinct. If you guys have other stuff you want to do first, we can do that too.

Janine: Is there somewhere that's not like, filthy, that I could go?

Austin: It has been— I mean, they're all filthy. They have not been cleaned.

Janine: Has it like rained on it or something, at least?

Austin: Maybe it's rained— it's rained enough to cool it at least once, but is— and maybe to wash away some of the soot. But it's whole districts of these town, you know? And it's— yeah, you might get your clothes a little dirty there, Brontë.

Sylvi: Oh no.

Austin: I know, it's very sad. Of course, Elfte and Zwölfte will have a change of clothes ready for you as soon as you come home. I guess I'll also say, other stuff happening again here— so the estates are on the east, there's a town hall and a jail, there's a place for mining supplies, there's a House of Benediction—which is the kind of Elevana primary faith, primary religion—and there's a little commercial district that you're in,

which includes a weapon shop, an armor shop, a post office, a bank, and a house of chance— a sort of gambling hall, Teribald's House of Chance.

But yeah, y'all are free to try to do what you want. You want to start in the morning, you can start in the morning. You know, I am not necessarily running a clock here, though of course, you know who I am.

Sylvi: [chuckles]

Austin: So I shouldn't even say it, you know?

Janine: Well, I have a sort of out there theory that I would like to put forth that perhaps, people are going to the House of Chance, and they are gambling things and then losing the bet, and they don't really realize that they're losing the bet in a way that would cause invisible fire to happen to their stuff?

Sylvi: You're right, that is out there.

Janine: [chuckling] So I would like to go look at that possibility.

Austin: Sure. Uh huh.

Keith: This sounds like someone who wants to gamble to me.

Janine: No.

Sylvi: [laughs]

Austin: You do have a lot of money.

Janine: Royals don't gamble.

Austin: No, of course not. They— they game.

Janine: We play— yes, it's sports. We are gamesters.

Keith: [stifling laughter] Gamesters—

Austin: That's right. Is this a— this is a theory you voiced to Caoimhe?

Janine: Yes.

Austin: Okay.

Janine: Yeah. Maybe I do it a little more elegantly than I did it personally, [**Austin:** Sure.] but yes, that's 100 percent Brontë's theory, is that maybe— maybe it's like— because you know, it's sometimes like, imps and magical things [**Austin:** Mhm, mhm, yeah sure.] will do a kind of kind of tricky business like this. It's possible.

Austin: That's definitely possible. You're not wrong.

Sylvi (as Caoimhe): You're— just to make sure, though, you're not going there to lose a bet and find out if our stuff gets set on fire invisibly, right.

Janine (as Brontë): Well, I tend not to lose, but that's— evidence is evidence. Would you like to come with me?

Keith: I go and I take my backpack, which is leaning up against our pile of things, and I move it away from his stuff.

Austin: [chuckles] Amazing. Are y'all going with Brontë to Teribald's House of Chance?

Sylvi: So I am actually headed that direction because there's the burned down building right below it, so [**Austin:** Sure] I might as well tag along.

Austin: The kind of western door of the Clean Water Lodge, past the beautiful hot spring.

Janine (as Brontë): Lady Luck herself accompanying me. Nothing could go wrong.

Sylvi (as Caoimhe): Do not make me regret this.

Austin: Antistrophe, are you going with?

Keith: I'm going to go to the burned down building.

Austin: Okay, so the three of you head out the same direction at the very least. And yeah, I will say, there are parts on this map that are marked “burned down buildings” that are all very big and that's a bunch of the whole district. This seems to have been one burnt down building? It is you know, on first blush, hard to tell what it is. You have to do a little studying, you have to do a little investigation.

Meanwhile, Brontë, you walk past them— I think we get at this point, Elfte and Zwölfte, looking on from the window of the Clean Water Lodge— maybe one of them is looking on from the clean Clean Water Lodge and the other one is with you. I have this image of—

Janine: No, they are always together. They have to always be together.

Austin: Always together. Okay, well then both of them staring out the window as you walk.

Janine: I insist. It has— or like if they separate, like it has to be for a big thing. [**Austin:** For a big thing, not just—] That's like, we're saving that for later in the season. They can't be doing that day one.

Austin: Okay, okay. I just need them to be looking out at— out the window at you with a dead stare, like I can't fucking believe it. [**Janine:** Yep.] And then like, turning and leaving the window to make sure they're within helping you distance, just in case you know?

Janine: They're professionals.

Keith: Is that an order you gave them or did they come like that?

Janine: What specifically do you mean?

Keith: That they won't be apart from each other. Did you say, "you can't be apart—"

Janine: Oh, I think it's like part of their like training, right? It's like—

Austin: Their training. Your whole line has these guards, right? Your whole family has a pair.

Keith: Okay, so it is your house—

Janine: Yeah. Except for the chief ruler will only have one.

Austin: Oh, fun. That's great.

Janine: Yeah.

Keith: Your house tells them, don't be apart.

Janine: I think it's like a hard— I think it's like a safety thing. It's like, they are the last line of defense, and if they are separated, they can't communicate, they— it's easier for them to lose track of stuff, like—

Keith: But they didn't interview as a pair.

Janine: They're accountability— accountabili-buddies or whatever.

Sylvi: Oh my god.

Austin: Accountabili-buddies— I was going to say that the Grand Sonnerie invented the buddy system, but accountabili-buddies is— hoo! That sounds like a real thing. That sounds like a thing I could have heard on TikTok, I guess.

Janine: It is a—

Austin: Is that a thing?

Janine: I think it's like a thing people use in school, but also there's like a religious tone to it? It's like—

Sylvi: I'm not going to lie, I heard that from South Park.

Austin: Wow, okay.

Janine: I know they got it from somewhere.

Austin: The TikTok of the mid 2000s.

Sylvi: Yeah. Just responsible for just as much brain rot. [**Austin:** Uh huh.] Possibly more.

Austin: Brontë, you are of course welcomed in immediately with open arms to Teribald House of Chance. Most of this town is dead in the things are quiet sense— not Teribald's House of Chance. As soon as the front door is open, you hear live music, you hear people arguing at card tables. You hear the spinning of roulette wheels. You hear dice rolling across hard surfaces. And the kind of hostess is like,

Austin (as hostess): Come in, come in! We'd love to entertain you!

Janine: Can you describe the hostess?

Sylvi: [laughs]

Austin: Can *you* describe the hostess?

Janine: [laughs] I mean, I can. You want me to just come up with a lady?

Austin: I would love for you to. Yeah, come up with a lady for me.

Janine: Okay. The immediate thing that came to mind was, you know in like, any anime from before 2000, probably, where there's a lady who has very small red lips and then a lot of blonde curly hair?

Austin: Yeah, mhm.

Janine: I think that's— I think that.

Austin: One of those, yeah. One of her. Oka yeah, sure.

Janine: I think she's jazz lady adjacent, but like she's, you know— in her youth, she was a jazz lady? That kind of thing, you know?

Austin: Right, and now she's the hostess of Teribald's House of Chance.

Janine: Now, she's got a kid at home and so she's, you know— she's, yeah.

Austin: Yeah exactly— I mean listen, how do you know this isn't Teribald?

Janine: Yeah, I don't know. How do you know?

Austin: I think this is Lady Teribald. I think you've met Lady Teribald. Her first name is Lady.

Sylvi and Janine: I love that.

Austin: Uh huh. And you know, shows you to—

Austin (as Lady Teribald): What's your— what's your poison? Cards? Dice? Word guessing?

Janine (as Brontë): Hmm. Word guessing?

Sylvi: Word guessing.

Janine (as Brontë): That sounds like school.

Austin (as Lady Teribald): No, it's not like school. The people here in Burzin have always loved a good game of word guessing.

Janine (as Brontë): Well, now you've piqued my curiosity. I wouldn't have normally picked that but, show me the word guessing.

Austin: The word guessing tables work like this.

Janine: [deadpan] Yay.

Austin: [chuckles] There are two dealers. And then, it's set up almost like a blackjack table where there's a row of— or like an arc of players sitting around a table, and then there are two dealers behind the table.

Dealer number one says a word out loud. Dealer number two writes the first thing that comes to mind down on a piece of paper. [**Sylvi:** Oh my god.] Then all of the other people around the table write their guess as to what person number two said.

Sylvi: I kind of wish I had come to the House of Chance now. That sounds great.

Austin: Well, good news because if Brontë is going to play this game, I need dealers.

Janine: [laughs]

Keith: [chuckles]

Sylvi: Oh my god.

Keith: Alright.

Austin (as Lady Teribald): Take a seat, take a seat. Sorry should we get your coat, or—

Janine (as Brontë): Do we get it dead on or is there any accounting for like who's closest?

Austin: Oh, there's different tables for different rates, but the good rates are dead on.

Janine (as Brontë): I would like to start slow, I think it's my first time. I'm a practical— I'm a practical gambler, you know.

Austin: Mhm.

Sylvi: A thing that famously exists.

Janine: Yup. Sorry, I'm a practical *gamester*. I'm a practical gamester.

Keith: Right, there we go.

Sylvi: Thank you, thank you.

Austin: Gameist, uh huh yeah. [**Sylvi** laughs] Okay, which one of you two chuckleheads is going to be the dealer and which one's going to be the wordist?

Sylvi: Wow!

Janine: [chuckles]

Keith: So the dealer says a word and the— well, what is the other thing?

Austin: The wordist, I guess, writes it down.

Keith: The wordist writes it down.

Austin: Yeah, uh huh.

Sylvi: Writes down the first word that they think of, right?

Austin: They say the first word that they think of. They say the first— yeah, it's like a classic, you know.

Janine: It's word association, but like closed book.

Austin: It's closed book word association (competitive). Yeah.

Keith: Ok.

Sylvi: Okay. This is the dumbest thing ever and I love it.

Austin: Yeah, uh huh.

Keith: So—

Austin: I'm going to take Cine2Nerdle off the map with this game, I'm coming for you.

Janine: [laughs]

Keith: Sylvi, you can choose. Who do you want to be?

Sylvi: I will be— I'll be the wordist, which is the second one, right?

Austin: Second one. Yeah.

Sylvi: Okay, cool.

Keith: Okay.

Austin: And then I need— the way this is going to work is Keith is going to say a word, and then we're going to have to type our words in, but not hit enter yet.

Sylvi: I was going to say, should I DM it to you?

Austin: You should not, because I have to play the field.

Sylvi: Oh right! Okay okay okay, yeah yeah yeah. Of course.

Austin: So Keith, you say your word and then we all type our word, and then the rest of us, meaning Sylvi, Janine, and me, will type our word. And then on a three, do a three, two, one, count, enter. Also, how much are you betting?

Janine: I mean, what's the ante?

Austin: It's a 50 minimum. It's a 50 minimum. You have to pay 50 Asta to sit, like per hand. But then when the word is said, you can up— you can, like poker, you can like make a larger bet. You can ante— ante up is the wrong word. What is it fucking called in poker? Why am I blanking on this?

Sylvi: Raise?

Austin: Raise. Thank you.

Sylvi: Raise or call? Yeah.

Austin: I have all the Fabula Ultima rules in my head, and now now I also have this *stupid game* [Janine chuckles] I just came up with in my head.

Janine: We're going to have to play this on its own stream at some point.

Austin: [chuckles] It's a good game!

Janine: This is fun. Okay, so I'm going to— listen. Brontë is a royal. He is a gamster—

Austin: [chuckles] Sorry, I'm laughing at the fact that we made a JRPG game and then immediately invented the mini game casino—

Sylvi: I know!

Janine: Yeah, we're going to the Golden Saucer. You— listen! You put the Golden Saucer on the map, we're going to go to the Golden Saucer.

Austin: You didn't even start the investigation!

Sylvi: Do not ask how much time I spent in the Dragon Quest XI Casino.

Austin: Yeah, uh huh. The Puff Puff ladies are upstairs.

Sylvi and Janine: [chuckles]

Janine: Anyway, I was going to say that Brontë you know, is a gamester, will gamble, but also is like, not the first, second or third child of the—

Austin: Right, yes.

Janine: You know, he's on a fixed income situation, so he's not going to be completely— he wants to have a good time, but so, take the normal sitting fee.

Austin: He's the guy who sits up with the fixed-income ads during The Price is Right, even though he's not a retiree. He's like, I'm on a fixed income.

Janine: He's a retired actor, and he's on a fixed-income receiving royalties [**Sylvi:** Oh my god.] for... Airplane Man 3.

Austin: Uh huh, yeah.

Janine: Anyway.

Austin: Fixed royalties, that's when royals who are like—

Janine: Yeah. [chuckles]

Sylvi: I was on three episodes of Law and Order, you know.

Austin: Exactly. [chuckles] God, okay. I mean, he's a dancer. Maybe he did have a little theater run, you know?

Janine: Maybe.

Austin: Anyway.

Janine: I think he does that for fun. I don't think he's a “commercialize your hobbies” kind of guy.

Austin: Gotcha, fair.

Sylvi: Good for him.

Austin: Couldn't be me.

Sylvi: Couldn't be me.

Janine: Brontë based king, question mark?

Austin: Uh huh, alright. In the Perpetua East chat, Keith, go ahead and type— sorry, how much did you end up betting? Sorry, how much did you end up betting?

Janine: Just 50. Just 50 out of the gate.

Austin: Just the 50, alright, sure.

Janine: For now, until I hear the word and feel very confident.

Austin: Yeah.

Keith: I can just— I can just say that you can just say the word, right?

Austin: You can say the word, and then the rest of us type it, but don't send it.

Keith: Okay.

Austin: Do you—

Keith (as dealer): [taps on mic]

Keith (as dealer): Are the players ready?

Austin (as opponent): Oh, I'm ready.

Sylvi: I think I just give like a— like I raise a pen, and like that's like their signal.

Austin: [chuckles] Yes.

Janine: [chuckles]

Keith (as dealer): [taps mic] Ambition. Ambition.

Austin (as opponent): Okay. Right.

Austin: Austin: Writing, writing.

Austin (as opponent): I'm going to raise by 50 Asta.

Keith (as dealer): Raise noted.

Austin: Says the other player. In poker rules, you would then have to ante up to meet that raise, Brontë.

Janine: Okay, and that'd be another 50?

Austin: Another 50.

Janine: Okay, I'll do that.

Austin (as opponent): Can I hear the word one more time?

Keith (as dealer): Ambition.

Austin (as opponent): Ambition. Yeah, yeah.

Janine: Alright.

Austin: Alright. Are we ready? Three, two, one, go.

Janine: Ohhh! [chuckles] This is actually, this is like amazing, like for a casino. It's like, it's just so—

[Everyone breaks out in laughter]

Austin: I wrote Money. Brontë?

Janine: I wrote Success.

Austin: And Sylvi, the wordist—

Sylvi: Hubris.

Austin: *Hubris*. Hubris. The house wins, I think, is what happens in the situation. I don't know that this is like close— I guess success is probably closer to hubris?

Janine: No, I think close in a word game— one, it has to be kind of like weird? [**Austin:** Yes.] By definition, it has to be weird. But hubris would be like, [**Austin:** Pride.] maybe greed, or pride, or something like that.

Austin: Yeah, it has to be something you could get to. Yeah, uh huh.

Sylvi: I typed it and just like immediately pictured the two people who work at this table. One of them has the super obvious like, happy, cheery disposition and the wordist is super depressed looking.

Austin: So good, great pair.

Sylvi: Death Note at a casino.

Austin: [chuckles] Let's do one more round and then let's hop— unless you're done here, Brontë.

Janine: I'll do one more.

Austin: Okay, one more.

Keith (as dealer): Are the players ready?

Janine (as Brontë): Mhm.

Austin (as opponent): Yeah, I'm getting a read on the wordist. I think I understand their psychology now.

Janine (as Brontë): Careful. They'll kick you out for that.

Austin (as opponent): I mean, I'm playing by my gut.

Keith (as dealer): The word is disaster.

Austin (as opponent): Alright, I'm ready.

Keith (as dealer): The word is disaster.

Austin (as opponent): I'm ready.

Janine: I'm not, I'm not.

Sylvi: I'm not. Sylvi is not. The wordist is assuming they wrote it down immediately.

Austin: The wordist— of course, is an instant, yeah. The wordist is doing a “Whose Line Is It Anyway?” bit and writing a really, really long answer, but then it's just going to be one word.

Austin (as opponent): I'll hear the word one more time.

Keith (as dealer): Disaster.

Sylvi: I should not have been the wordist. [laughs]

Janine: No, this is correct.

Austin: This is— you're right. You're good.

Janine: Are we ready?

Sylvi: Yeah.

Austin: Alright. Dealer, can you count us in?

Keith (as dealer): Three, two, one.

Janine: Oh. [laughs]

Sylvi: [laughs]

Austin: [makes playful frustrated noise] Oh no! Brontë?

Janine: I said fires.

Austin: I said wildfire.

Sylvi: I said relief.

Austin: Disaster relief.

Sylvi: My brain just said disaster relief.

Austin: Yes, good. Good. Good.

Janine: I think when two people guess a close thing they have to handshake.

Austin: I think that's exactly— yeah, exactly. Do a little handshake.

Austin (as opponent): Damn the house! They always win, it's just like they say!

Janine: [chuckles]

Sylvi: The wordist strikes a little pose with the other— the dealer. They have to, I feel like. That's just JRPG to me.

Keith: The dealer does like, one-eighth of the energy movement.

Austin: Amazing.

Sylvi: Yeah. perfect. Yeah wait, do we switch it? The wordist actually the peppy looking one.

Janine: [chuckles]

Austin: At this point, yes.

Keith: In the picture.

Janine: The wordist is the one who gets to fuck people, so.

Austin: That's true, yeah. The person next to you who I think is exactly the— maybe— I don't know how y'all are imagining the voice I'm doing, but broad-shouldered, big belly, maybe a cowboy hat.

Sylvi: I was picturing cowboy hat.

Janine: Yeah, you conveyed cowboy hat.

Austin: Shakes your hand and says,

Austin (as Umberto): I don't know that I've seen you around here before. I'm the sheriff Umberto. I'd like to buy you a drink as it is custom when two people tie and then lose in the word game that I already forget the name of.

Austin: What's the name of this game?

Keith: You called it Word Guessing.

Austin: Word Guessing—

[Everyone breaks out in laughter]

Sylvi: We just called it Word Guessing.

Austin: Ohhh... damn, I don't know that I am going to take on Cine2Nerdle with a name like Word Guessing. What about Wordle? Can we call it Wordle?

Sylvi: Oh, yeah! We can call it Wordle.

Austin: There it is.

Keith: Nobody here has ever heard the word Wordle.

Austin: That's right.

Janine: What if it's because it's Burzin, it's like Wurzin— Wurdzin.

Austin: Wurzin. Wurdzin.

Keith: Wurdzin.

Austin: Yeah, Wurdzin. Wurdzin in Burzin.

Janine: What are you doing? We're Wurdzin.

Austin: We're Wurdzin over here. Yeah, Wurdzin! Love it. Writing that down. Right under this other note I have, it just says, "oxes with beaks".

Janine: [laughs delightedly]

Austin: Real big plans for this season, folks. Alright. Meanwhile, in the burned down building, where the plot is supposed to be happening— though I guess you just let the sheriff, and maybe that could give you some clues.

Janine: Yeah, damn right.

Austin: Antistrophe and Caoimhe. What are you all up to as you look through the ruins of this large structure?

Sylvi: So here's my thinking, and also this can just be something Caoimhe is saying out loud to Antistrophe.

Sylvi (as Caoimhe): If this is— this is clearly a magical fire, right? And whoever is causing or casting the spell that is igniting it, has to have some way of targeting it. And while it could be something that they're able to do remotely, I was—

Sylvi: I wanted to check to see if there is any sort of reactant or any sort of markings, anything that could have led to these specific buildings being burned.

Austin: I love this. Give me a... this sounds like a study check to me, I think? I'll double check, it's been so long since we rolled dice in this system.

Sylvi: Is this Insight/Insight?

Austin: I believe it's Insight/Insight. Is that right? Yeah okay, that is correct. What is your Insight?

Sylvi: My Insight is an 8?

Austin: Okay, okay.

Sylvi: Does this— I have— so the magical reagent, [**Austin:** Yes, yes, right.] something that I stole from the Hexcloaks, it was a +2 to checks like this for determining the type/strength of magical energy in an area. Would this count, or—?

Austin: I think so, that seems right.

Sylvi: Okay, cool. Let me remember how to use rolls in this.

Austin: Yeah, let me— maybe just for us, re-read the basics of rolls here one more time.

So you— whenever you need to, you can make a check. There's a bunch of different reasons for doing that. Obviously, you don't want to over-check, but in a case like this, this is clearly one of those things. A check is presented as a formula indicating which two dice you have to roll. Checks always require you to add two dice. So, in this case, we're doing Insight plus Insight. And I believe I should tell you the difficulty ahead of time— let's double-check. Yeah, so you might declare the difficulty level for the check using the table on the next page as a reference.

What's the specific thing you're trying to learn here? What's your goal? What's your dramatic intent?

Sylvi: I'm trying— my dramatic intent is to find if something was used to target the fires here.

Austin: Okay.

Sylvi: Something that— what caused the fire to get to target this specific building?

Austin: Love it, perfect. Yeah give me a— this is a— I think this is just a normal difficulty, so 10 is the difficulty here. And your Insight again is?

Sylvi: 8.

Austin: Okay.

Sylvi: I'm getting a +2 from the reagent.

Austin: Hey, there's a 13, look at that. Ye, and that includes the +2, that's $8 + 3 + 2$, if you mouse over, you can see that.

Sylvi: Yeah.

Austin: I don't know why it broke as bad as it did with the custom one.

Sylvi: I think it is because I put in the +2 instead of just 2—

Austin: Oh, do you put in the +2 in the text?

Sylvi: No, in the modifier, [**Austin:** Ohhh, I see, I see.] because there's a little window that pops up in Roll20 that says modifier.

Austin: I'm just going to roll one of those to see.

Keith: Oh yours says plus plus-two

Sylvi: Yeah.

Austin: Oh, I see. Cause you put in literally +2, instead of 2. I see, yes. Okay cool. Alright, so you rolled a 13, that's a success. You're— you know, tell me what this looks like. What's your actual investigation action look like here?

Sylvi: I think there's a lot— so how much— I guess, a question for you is how much of this building is left here?

Austin: You know, there's not— there seems to actually be more of this building than some of the other buildings you burned— you walked by on your way in, you rode by on your way in, in the sort of residential district. There are big beams of wood. You make out a— remnants of what looked like a bar, like a long bar? There are some pieces of furniture, tables and chairs. There is— there are some pieces of glass that are pretty recognizable. A big broken, you know, a bunch of mirror shards that seem to have like exploded in the heat.

But there are recognizable things here. Much of what you drove by on the way in, you can still see like the big, you know, structural elements of some of the places that burned down, especially if they were not just made of wood? But *everything* was kind of soot and ash in that structure. You haven't done a close look at them, but that was the kind of your first impression.

Sylvi: Yeah.

Austin: Whereas, yeah, there's actually kind of— there's a lot to kind of pick over here, it seems. And I would also say, having succeeded with the 13 here, you can tell this was a while ago, is another thing? But sorry, tell me, tell me what it looks like. Because you were asking me that question to then describe what you did.

Sylvi: Yeah! So I have like this image of her digging through ash, wiping soot off things, trying to see if there's any identifying markings that could have been like, if someone drew like any sort of runic stuff around. I don't know if we've necessarily talked about magic working in that way.

Austin: There are different magic runes, yeah, that's a thing here.

Sylvi: Or if there is any sort of like material that wouldn't make sense to be here, the way that like, say, if digging through like— this is like a house made of wood and all of a sudden I find something crystalline in there, you know?

Austin: Right.

Sylvi: like that sort of thing.

Austin: So you find one thing here— I guess you find two things. First, you find the remnants of a sign that says— you see the word “Saloon”. The word “Saloon” was on that sign. And that sign seems like it was made of, or maybe treated in some way that made it a little bit more fire resistant?

Or you know, I think what is more fun, you find a big like, bronze metal letters that were from the saloon sign, you know, and they've been burnt and were so hot that they did kind of bend a little, but they didn't melt away, you know? So you find the remnants of the saloon sign. And you find— no, your little magical reagent tester does not respond. This was not a magical fire. There is nothing magical about this fire at all. And that is a clue.

Sylvi: Yeah, that is actually very— because this was one of the invisible fires, correct?

Austin: You don't know. You don't know.

Sylvi: Okay I'll ask somebody—

Keith: I actually— I almost said this earlier when we were talking, but this is the only house that burned down, not as a part of two big groups.

Austin: That is correct.

Keith: And so if someone was trying to burn down this house under cover of night, there's no better night than the night where everyone— everybody else's house was already burning.

Janine: Do you say that to me? Because that's like a thing where I'd be like,

Keith: Yes.

Sylvi (as Caoimhe): That's a good point.

Sylvi: And I write it down in a little notebook.

Austin: Antistrophe, are you looking for anything here?

Keith: Yes, I was going to— because I was thinking of that stuff already, I was going to check to see if the burned wood looks the same as the burned wood on the cart that we saw.

Austin: It doesn't, and I think this is the same clue effectively, you know? Which is, yeah, it's pretty clear that this is not that same fire, you know.

Keith: Can we figure out, like, whose house this was, or if there's anything left, or if there's signs of other people? That's what I want to do, I want to see if there's signs of other people having been in the wreckage of this house already.

Sylvi: Oooh.

Austin: Yeah, the— I can just tell you this, this is you know, you're looking through this. This was one building, and it was a saloon? I guess if you give me another study check, I can give you more on, like, whose saloon it was.

Keith: Sure, and then I also have the move, Flash of Insight— when I roll a 13 or higher, I get to ask extra questions.

Austin: Cool, great.

Keith: 8.

Austin: Ooh, only an 8. I did not say the thing out loud here, but again, this was 10, which is normal.

Yeah, you don't— you don't catch any specific— you know, what you do catch, I guess, is you don't find any remnants that make you think... you don't find any remnants that make you think that there were a bunch of people in the saloon when it burned down, which does mean it probably burned down after like, late in the night, early in the morning, at a time when no one was, you know, working there— or the bodies have been cleaned up. There aren't like, you know, you don't see the evidence of too much activity, I guess?

You do find a small shrine with the sketch of an older woman in a frame, like a drawing of an older woman in a frame with some flowers. But there's no name on it and there's no like, there's nothing like that. But someone has kind of put down like a little remembrance shrine and people have left some stuff there.

Brontë, how's Sheriff Umberto treating you? What are you drinking? What are you drinking at the bar? If you're drinking, I don't know what Brontë is drinking— I mean, Brontë drinks something, but I don't know what Brontë is drinking.

Janine: I was muted. I was just saying that Brontë is from a wine town, which doesn't necessarily mean that he drinks, but he does. [**Austin:** True, true.] I don't think he would drink the wine here though. [**Austin** chuckles] Well, it's going to be bad.

Austin: Right, yeah.

Keith: [chuckles] I identify with that.

Janine: So like, why would you bother? A thing I want so bad is not a ran— not a thing that will select a cocktail that exists randomly, but a thing that will just like pick some ingredients and be like— oh... Brontë is going to order a gin buck.

Austin: What is a gin buck?

Janine: So a gin buck is one and a half ounces of gin, a quarter ounce of lemon, and some ginger ale.

Austin: Okay. Yeah, yeah, sure!

Janine: That sounds refreshing to have in a fire town, right?

Austin: Yeah, totally.

Austin (as Umberto): Yeah, make it two gin bucks,

Austin: Says Umberto.

Austin (as Umberto): What brings you to town?

Janine (as Brontë): I'm part of a group, we're looking into some stuff. You're— we're concerned about the fires going on here. It seems bad, right?

Austin (as Umberto): Oh well, I looked into the fires. I was the sheriff, obviously, and as far as I can tell, nothing to be done.

Keith: Guilty.

Janine (as Brontë): Nothing— so just, it's just gonna, they just happen?

Austin (as Umberto): A terrible tragedy.

Janine (as Brontë): Like rain?

Austin (as Umberto): Well no, because rain happens pretty often, all said— not that often, but you know, fire like this never happened before in the town of Burzin, and then it happened twice, back to back.

Janine (as Brontë): What if it keeps happening?

Austin: Actually I think, does he say thrice?

Austin (as Umberto): It happened thrice, back to back to back! If it keeps happening, then I suspect— I suspect that's that for the town.

Janine (as Brontë): And that's just fine?

Austin (as Umberto): But I can't worry about that. I have to worry about crime. I have to worry about the stuff the sheriff's worried about.

Janine (as Brontë): What if it is a crime? It seems kind of crime-y.

Austin (as Umberto): Oh we looked into it. It didn't seem very crime-y.

Janine (as Brontë): Why didn't it seem crime-y?

Austin (as Umberto): Well, it seemed like something a regular person couldn't do. We only got regular people here in Burzin.

Janine (as Brontë): Well, that doesn't mean it's not crime-y. It means it's not like local crime-y. It could be some other kind of crime-y.

Austin (as Umberto): Well, the truth is, I thought we knew— I thought I knew what had happened, and then it was kind of proven wrong, so I can't really, you know.

Janine (as Brontë): Oh. You think it was a big mirror on a hill?

Austin (as Umberto): No.

Janine (as Brontë): Oh, I would have thought— that would have been my first assumption.

Austin (as Umberto): Big mirror— maybe it was— maybe it was a big mirror on a hill.

Janine (as Brontë): It's probably not— you would have seen the mirror.

Austin (as Umberto): We didn't check the hills.

Janine (as Brontë): It would have to be a big mirror.

Austin (as Umberto): I probably could see it from here.

Janine (as Brontë): Yeah. I don't want to lead you astray, a little bit of a red herring, you know.

Austin (as Umberto): Also, it happened at moon time, so you have to reflect the moon.

Janine (as Brontë): Oh, moon time, yeah.

Austin: [chuckles] I don't know why I said moon time, but it just came out that way.

Janine: [chuckles] That's what he calls night.

Sylvi and Keith: [laughs]

Austin: That's what he calls night. There's sun time, and there's moon time.

Keith: They each get a turn.

Janine (as Brontë): People get up to all kinds of business under cover of moon.

Austin (as Umberto): What's tall business?

Janine (as Brontë): All kinds of business.

Austin (as Umberto): Oh, I thought you said they got up to tall business under the moon.

Janine and Keith: [laughs]

Janine: I can see why this guy really likes the word game.

Austin and Keith: [laughs]

Austin: I just—

Austin (as Umberto): Words just come to me sometime when I feel like I should say them! I call that process thought.

Keith: [continues laughing]

Janine (as Brontë): Yeah. So— so wait. Sore, fires happened, three fires.

Austin (as Umberto): Thrice fires.

Janine (as Brontë): Are you including— there was a fire outside the town today.

Janine: Was that today or yesterday? We rested— it was probably today.

Austin: That was earlier today. Yeah, it's evening now cause the sun was setting, yeah.

Austin (as Umberto): Well, if it's outside of the town boundary, that doesn't count. It's thrice fires. Not fo—

Janine (as Brontë): It could be related. You could get info from that, right? Like it could be related.

Austin (as Umberto): Not a quartet. What's four for thrice? What's thrice for four? Fourthsies? It's probably fourthsies.

Janine (as Brontë): That's your wheelhouse, not mine.

Austin (as Umberto): Yeah anyway, where did it happen?

Janine (as Brontë): Think about it this way, like it could still— you know, I went to a school, right? And—

Austin (as Umberto): Well, la-dee-da!

Keith: [laughs]

Janine (as Brontë): [chuckles] Ha ha— and there was this girl at the school, right? And she had this like *amazing*, amazing red hair. But her sister, who went to a different school, because she was a little bit older.

Austin: Taking notes.

Austin (as Umberto): Sorry, I'm trying to— like, it's a word puzzle. Like, it's a essay.

Janine (as Brontë): Yeah. She had, she had really dark hair. So like, the thing that my father told me was, well, you can't marry either one of them because they have— they have inconsistent hair color. You need to— you need to pick a wife that has a consistent hair color through the family line. So it's— but it's evidence, right? She's— so the, you know the girl who's in my school, if I just look at the evidence there, red hair, what's the problem? But if you look *outside* of that, you

get other evidence that could contribute to the fact that not everyone in her family has red hair and therefore she's an unsuitable marriage candidate.

Austin (as Umberto): You weren't going to wed the woman because her sister had brown hair?

Janine (as Brontë): I was— I was 12. it was sort of an academic discussion anyway. It wasn't really material, but.

Austin (as Umberto): Academic. You do keep throwing that school thing right in my face.

Janine (as Brontë): Well, academic in this sense of, of at-arms, theoretical— it was, it was, you know, it was, it was just a hypothetical debate between father and son, about marriage.

Austin (as Umberto): Well, someone married that redhead's all I know, and it wasn't you.

Janine (as Brontë): You're telling me. Actually I don't know if she got married.

Austin (as Umberto): Want another gin buck?

Janine (as Brontë): Yeah, sure.

Austin: I— you know, it does seem like the sheriff has—

Janine: I got fucking nothing out of that! [chuckles]

Austin: Well, the sheriff does seem to have a little more information, did suggest that he had a theory that was proven wrong.

Janine: Yeah.

Austin: Does seem— you know, he's— where is the line between co-conspirator and doofus? Hard to tell, you know, so I don't— I don't want to overplay the idea that he's in on it, that was not what I was trying to give? But if— but that's a fair— that's a fair read to some degree, you know?

Janine: Yeah. Hiding something.

Austin: But yeah, he's trying to hide something— he's not trying to hide something. He has information he hasn't shared. You could roll to try to squeeze a little tighter. I think

that the evidence thing is a perfectly fine way to have— have gone about that. So give me a—

Janine: Yeah, I'll roll.

Austin: Okay, give me a, whatever that roll is, let's see. I think that's probably, if I remember right, willpower is our, is our talk to people in here? Let's see. Captivate— no, captivate would be like dancing, moving gracefully. [**Sylvi** chuckles] I don't think you're doing that so much. You might need to put in Willpower/Willpower. Interrogate, Insight/Willpower, I'll say it's that. Yeah, getting information from someone during a conversation, you get the old interrogate button. What is your insight? What is your willpower?

Janine: My insight is 8. My willpower is 8.

Austin: I think this is open-ended, but 10 is the minimum here.

Janine: I got a nine.

Austin: Oof, you could—I let's remind ourselves how this game works.

Janine: I can spend a Fabula Point.

Austin: Yes, you could spend a Fabula Point to invoke a trait, letting you reroll one of your dice, or you could invoke a bond, adding your bond strength to a check. I don't know that you have a bond that we've talked about that feels—

Janine: No.

Austin: I don't know that your bond with Caoimhe, your affection for Caoimhe is going to come up here, [Janine: Probably not.] but you could spend a Fabula Point to reroll.

Sylvi: I need to impress her!

Austin: I mean, yeah you could do that. That is, that's viable. You don't have to like—

Sylvi: [laughs]

Janine: Sorry, I didn't mean to—

Austin: Well, hit the button! I'm not going to hold you to that.

Janine: That's what I rolled— I wanted to see what my comment there was.

Austin: Yeah, I will— do you want to read it out loud?

Janine: “Caoimhe should smile more :) ”

Austin: [laughs]

Sylvi: Good god.

Austin: Unbelievable.

Keith: Oh, I should give myself a Fabula Point because I have zero.

Austin: You have zero and you started a new session, yes you should take one. If you have any, you don't get one just because, so.

Janine: Okay.

Austin: As a reminder, you also get XP every three that you spend, because there's three people in the party.

Keith: Oh, and I fumbled a check.

Austin: You did not fumble a check. You failed a check.

Keith: I failed—? Oh, okay.

Austin: Fumbling is getting the lowest possible roll.

Keith: Oh right, yeah.

Sylvi: It's like a rolling a one, right?

Austin: Yeah, it's a one— it's a two— it's two ones, yeah. So yeah, you could spend one Fabula Point if you'd like to, to reroll that 4 and try to make it an 8 instead, or make it— I guess, a 5 or above instead.

Janine: I mean, yes. Sorry, I was just checking— I was checking my other stuff. What trait would I be pulling on?

Austin: It's either your identity, your theme, or your origin. Which is interesting—
[**Janine:** Yeah.] that might be harder than I want to impress Caoimhe by coming back with information.

Sylvi: [chuckles]

Janine: I think— I mean, I think this might be pulling on identity as dissipated sixth scion, cause like, I've been at court.

Austin: That's true, yeah, you know how to talk people up.

Janine: I've been in rooms with people who aren't telling me everything. This isn't my first time fucking— yeah.

Austin: Alright, let's do it. Spend that point, give me a D8. You can just click on insight, I think.

Janine: That's a 6.

Austin: Eyyy, there we go! Boom. That's a— that is a—

Janine: 11.

Austin: 11 yep, and then can you hit this declare and spend Fabula Point just so we have the record in the chat?

Janine: Oh yeah yeah yeah.

Austin: Of you spending it? Great. He goes,

Austin (as Umberto): Well, we had a bunch of what you might call circumstantial evidence. For instance, the circumstance that—

Austin: Looks over his shoulder.

Austin (as Umberto): Lady Teribald did not much like lady M'shalia, and the business that the saloon was taken from the House of Chance. Now, but that's a circumstance. We had the circumstance that said someone saw some of the... you know folks who work here at the House of Chance near the saloon that night. But that's just a circumstance. And unfortunately, we had those same people along with Lady Teribald in the damn jail the night of the other fires. And so because of that circumstance, I threw the other circumstances out.

Janine (as Brontë): You're right. That does sound like it came to nothing.

Janine: Sorry, that was supposed to be kind of like, commiserate-y.

Austin: Yeah, uh huh. Yeah yeah yeha.

Janine: Of just like oh, I see why— I see why you dismissed that.

Austin: Yeah.

Austin (as Umberto): And you know, Lady Teribald is a— proven to be an important member of the community. You can't just lock someone up because you feel they killed someone for professional reasons. You got to have evidence, like you said. Like their hair has to be red and then brown or whatever it was.

Keith and Sylvi: [laughs]

Janine (as Brontë): Yeah. So you're here now on reconnaissance. Or no, you're just having a nice afternoon?

Austin (as Umberto): I was just here to play a little—

Austin: Burdzle or whatever we decided the name of it was.

Janine: Wurdzin.

Austin: Wurdzin—

Austin (as Umberto): I was just here to do a little Wurdzin. You don't play Wurdzin, you do Wurdzin.

Sylvi: You do Wurdzin. You are Wurdzin.

Austin: You are Wurdzin. That's right.

Sylvi: Yeah.

Austin: Yeah.

Janine (as Brontë): I'll drink to that.

Austin (as Umberto): Cheers.

Austin: I am going to give you a little clue here. I'll give you that successful roll, it's part of the Burzin Mystery Clock.

There's some sort of beef between Lady Teribald and whoever the lowercase L, or title L, lady M'shalia, seem to have been. And presumably, the burnt down building was owned by— which is to say, the picture that Antistrophe and Caoimhe just saw was, quote unquote, lady M'shalia.

Keith: “Emshalia”, one name or M letter—?

Austin: It's like it is on the right hand side, the house M'shalia, [**Keith:** Right. Oh, got it.] which is where you saw that younger woman doing stuff, cleaning up and trying to do some repair work on that house. Yeah, M apostrophe S-H-A-L-I-A, M'shalia.

Back outside. As you're picking through the remnants of the saloon, you hear someone, you know, kind of—

Austin (as familiar voice): Ahem. *What are you doing here?*

Austin: Says a familiar enough voice, Caoimhe. This is someone you went through Hexcloak training with.

Sylvi: Oh boy.

Austin: This is Aisling Revanj, who is...

Sylvi: Good name...

Austin: Who is the hexblade for this, like, this region, basically? You know, we, I think, I think we talked privately, maybe a little bit about how the Hexblades work. I don't remember if we actually came up with ranks.

Keith: Cloaks.

Sylvi: They're Hexcloaks.

Austin: Why do they keep saying blade? Hexcloaks? Why do I keep saying blade?

Sylvi: Because Hexblade sounds more like an RPG thing?

Keith: And— and it is—

Austin: I think it is. It's because it fucking is. It's cause it's the thing that they're finally adding to Baldur's Gate.

Sylvi: I see.

Austin: Yeah that's why. Hexcloaks— the Hexcloak ranks, I think we talked about is that you are a just— what are you, a justicar or justiciar? What did we end up? Just this year—

Sylvi: I think we went with justiciar.

Austin: Yeah justiciar. That's what you are, which are these kind of like, on your— you are able to like, under your own recognizance, go wherever you want to do your own investigations, et cetera.

But there are also kind of more traditional Hexcloak magistrates who are like, I am the Hexcloak for this region. And the person you have just met, her— she/her pronouns, Aisling, like the Irish name, A-I-S-L-I-N-G, Revanj, R-E-V-A-N-J, is the hexcloak for this kind of area between— kind of in between the three big cities that are near you? There is Parasolia to the north— I'll bring you back over here for the reference, on the right-hand side of the map here—

I wish I could do the thing that you can do in like Miro where you just like grab everyone's attention and be like, look over here. I guess I'll ping— this kind of region here in between Parasolia, Sun-scorched Mine, the Balming Willow, Salix, and Gen— or sorry, Cenn, the City of Iron Chains to the east. This kind of like slightly desert dry land, the hills, etc., the kind of southeastern region in between those three major cities.

And so Aisling is the Hexcloak for here. And again, you probably went through training around the same time. That she— you could help define this however you want, actually, I'll put this into your court. But is a— as you might suspect, being here, really specializes in fire magic and fire power, you know? [**Sylvi:** Yeah.] And again, has asked you what you're doing here.

Sylvi (as Caoimhe): Well, somebody's got to get to the bottom of these fires, right?

Austin (as Aisling): That's why *I'm* here.

Sylvi (as Caoimhe): The more the merrier, right? Hey, we're all on the same team.

Austin (as Aisling): Mmm.

Keith: I've put my, like, collar up when the Hexcloak shows?

Austin: Yeah? Is it because of one of the things that we have not talked about with your character this session yet— your quirk? Is that why? Are you just trying to keep your thing down, your notice down? You just don't want people to know that you're here at all?

Keith: Oh, um.

Austin: Or is it for some other reason that we've— that I have forgotten? I don't have my notes.

Keith: I think it's for some other reason that we've— we've maybe both forgotten.

Austin: Okay. Well, let's reestablish it.

Keith: Okay. So uhhh, I believe that it had to do— oh sorry, it does you know, obliquely have to do with the quirk.

Austin: Yeah.

Keith: It's, it's because I lost my magic. I was a magician or— I was like a mage, a working mage at a university. I lost my magic and I was investigating, why did I lose my magic? And I've— I've run afoul of the law in investigating.

Austin: Oh, *in* that investigation. I see. I see I see I see I see.

Keith: Now that— that investigation *will*, will eventually bring me to what my quirk is.

Austin: Well yeah, I think we've said your quirk out loud. [**Keith:** Yeah.] But just as a reminder, Keith, can you read us the title of your quirk again?

Keith: Yes, it's Ruinbringer.

Austin: Ah, right. Yes, of course. Of course.

Sylvi: Seems normal.

Austin: Yeah. Importantly, you— you basically are, you know, you believe via some dark omens that you are core to the ongoing ruin of the world, or an upcoming ruin of the world, I suppose, huh?

Keith: Yeah, I think we categorized this as that, that I don't quite know it? [**Austin:** Right.] Or that I've, I've seen evidence that it could be true and have dismissed it at this point.

Austin: Mhm, yeah. Aisling doesn't seem too concerned with you, much more concerned with why a potential rival is here?

Sylvi: Yeah.

Austin: The Hexcloaks are a, as we've established, a sort of, powerful and, kind of, a group of magic secret police with a great deal of autonomy. And as often the case in situations like this, there's a lot of internal rivalry and a lot of internal struggle for power, and a lot of opportunity for people to undermine each other. And in this case, the fact that you—

Sylvi: Sort of a Chimera Ant situation.

Austin: It's sort of like a Chimera Ant situation? [**Sylvi** chuckles] Or you know, or any number of real, secret police type organizations. There is a, you know, I think that it feels to her that you have stepped into her territory and are making a play of some sort— yeah go ahead.

Sylvi: I think I probably noticed that. [**Austin:** Oh yeah, a hundred percent.] And I kind of like after my last little barb, like put both hands up and like,

Sylvi (as Caoimhe): Listen, I was just passing through and on the way, one of this carriage was under attack, we helped out. And while we were staying in town, I figured it wouldn't hurt to help, help look at what's been going on here.

Austin: Glaring at you. Aisling is— I would say, pretty— you know, we haven't talked about like how tall elves are, I guess? But it's pretty tall, I'd say like 6, 6'1, something like that. Long red hair, you know, bright green eyes. This kind of archetype of big, tough anime lady, right?

Sylvi: Yeah.

Austin: Has on the Hexcloak with like the interior colors, this kind of a deep red. And otherwise I think is wearing probably you know, dark colors, maybe with a little gold or bronze trim or something, but is in the kind of traditional uniform of the Hexcloaks. And she's like,

Austin (as Aisling): [exhales] We don't need any help. Now that I'm here, I'm going to solve this. But if you want to be my attendant, that's acceptable.

Sylvi: I scoff at that a little bit. God, what would she— what would I say? What would I say in this situation? This is implying that she just got here to look into this, right?

Austin: That seems to be the case. You did beat her here is what it seems, yeah.

Sylvi: Yeah. Might as well point that out.

Sylvi (as Caoimhe): Is that typically how this works? The person who shows up second to an investigation gets to lead it? Because, in my experience—

Austin: Her eyes like glow red for a second, and then kind of like takes a deep breath out and says,

Austin (as Aisling): No, you're right. Of course, Caoimhe. This is your investigation. You got here first, even though it is my region. I'll let you know if I find anything.

Sylvi (as Caoimhe): I much appreciate the help.

Austin (as Aisling): But remember, if anything goes wrong, then it's on your name, and not mine.

Sylvi (as Caoimhe): Business as usual then, huh?

Austin (as Aisling): Enjoy the tinder box.

Sylvi (as Caoimhe): Yeah. Hey, I heard the casino is fun. You should check out the word game they got going on there while you're in town.

Austin (as Aisling): Oh, I'm very, *very* acquainted with Wurdzin. I do Wurdzin all the time.

Sylvi (as Caoimhe): Yeah?

Austin (as Aisling): Yeah.

Sylvi (as Caoimhe): Have much luck with it, or?

Austin: Just in a huff, walks away from you.

Sylvi: I'm pretty pleased with myself.

Austin: Yeah. The way that this does normally work is, it is the thing that she kind of relented on here, which is the first Hexcloak to show up gets the case effectively, you know? And also obviously overrides any local law enforcement, please, obviously.

Sylvi: I love that we've got the jurisdiction.

Austin: Oh, yeah.

Sylvi: The juris-my-diction situation already.

Austin: Oh it's happening, exactly. I also think the— you know, there is also like a sort of— this sort of rivalry is not rare between the two types, between the kind of justiciars and the kind of magistrates inside of the Hexcloaks? The magistrates see themselves as being important to the local, you know, structure of community, and of being part of the local culture, and being embedded in the world in a real way, whereas they see the

justiciars as being kind of flaky and, you know, unrooted, you know and like, and also like they see that as being a less prestigious role? You know, you don't have a place that's *yours*, you just kind of float from place to place, that's a bad way to live? And the justiciars culturally kind of look down at the magistrates, because they're provincial and they're stuck in the mud, and they often only see things— they're too close to the situation.

Sylvi: Too sentimental.

Austin: They're too sentimental, which means both that they don't have the perspective of an outsider, and also they're too connected and attached to the place, etc. So, real, you know, you can play with that feeling a lot as you think about the rest of how this part of the world works.

Sylvi: Yeah.

Austin: Yeah, I think—

Sylvi: That was so fun! [giggles]

Austin: Uh huh. Brontë, you do of course see Aisling come in with her stunning red hair and her extremely tall self.

Keith: Got to check her sister.

Sylvi: [laughs]

Austin: Uh huh.

Keith: What colour is her sister's hair?

Austin: Check the sister's hair— check the sister's hair! She immediately kind of locks eyes with the lady of the house, Lady Teribald, who walks over and the two of them have some sort of exchange. And you know, I think Teribald, you know, seats her at a booth by herself in the corner from which she looks at the rest, like, kind of scans the rest of the room.

Janine: Can I send her a drink?

Sylvi: [breathless] Oh my god [laughs]

Austin: Oh absolutely, what do you send in her?

Janine: Uhh, let me bust out the old cocktail generator again. [chuckles] Uhhh, hmm. You said she has red hair?

Austin: She has.

Keith: A gin doe.

Austin: [chuckles]

Janine: What?

Austin: Gin doe instead of a gin buck is where Keith just went.

Janine: Oh, ha ha ha!

Sylvi: Oh, that's good. I thought it was a murder investigation joke.

Keith, Austin, Janine: [laughs]

Austin: God. [chuckles] That's very funny.

Janine: I think I send her sangria. Just like—

Austin: [chuckles] Uh huh? Yeah, okay.

Janine: Just something like, you know, one, very red. Two, like, you know, sweet, fruity, very inoffensive.

Austin: Oh yeah, uh huh.

Keith: I wouldn't drink the wine here, but she would.

Austin: She absolutely would.

Janine: Yeah, she's provincial.

Austin: Well, or would she? She is provincial, yeah. Maybe it's the— it is the the famous Teribald sangria.

Janine: Also I mean, you know, once you're making sangria, like the kind of wine you're using, it starts to matter less and less than if you're just drinking it straight, like **[Austin:** This is true.] you're putting fruit in there, like, you know.

Sylvi: You'd know because you're from the wine place.

Janine: Yeah.

Austin: That's right, yeah.

Sylvi: Yeah.

Janine: You make sangria with wine in that town? You go to jail.

Sylvi: Oh boy. [laughs]

Keith: [laughs]

Janine: They put you in jail, not for a long time, but for a little bit.

Keith: Enough to scare you.

Austin: There's that megadungeon underneath the city. They put you right in there. They put you— [**Janine:** Yeah.] only the top levels, but oh, you're right there. I think that when it comes, the you know, server leans down and says, you know— sorry, did you ask the server to say that you sent it?

Janine: Yeah.

Austin: Okay. He does a little like whisper, whisper, and then points over at you. And you get, I think you call it a glare, maybe—

Janine: Enh.

Sylvi: [chuckles]

Austin: From Aisling.

Janine: Not the first one of those he's gotten.

Austin: No, of course not. But she does give you a come over here wave— not like a come hither finger, just like a— get, come here.

Janine: Mmm. I do, but I don't do it very fast. [**Sylvi** laughs] I finish my drink and then I—

Austin: And then you— yeah, uh huh.

Austin (as Aisling): We look down—

Janine: And then I don't sit, I like, lean on the table.

Austin: Oh my god. Eyes you up and down, not in a sexy way, in a “are you fucking—”

Janine: I disagree.

Austin: Okay.

Sylvi: It's up to interpretation.

Austin: Yeah, of course.

Janine: [chuckles]

Austin (as Aisling): We look down on bribery in my district.

Janine (as Brontë): It's not a bribe if I have no idea who you are.

Sylvi: [guffaws]

Keith: [chuckles]

Austin (as Aisling): You don't recognize the uniform of the Hexcloaks?

Janine (as Brontë): Oh, I wasn't looking at the uniform.

Austin (as Aisling): *Oh, and he's dumb too.*

Janine: [chuckles]

[slow claps sounds]

Austin (as Aisling): Who are you? Where are you from—? That's a Grand Sonnerian accent.

Janine (as Brontë): It is.

Austin (as Aisling): And a Grand Sonnerian “famously bad taste in fashion”.

Janine (as Brontë): Bad is in the eye of the beholder.

Sylvi: [wheezes]

Austin (as Aisling): It's the national motto out there, isn't it?

Janine (as Brontë): [chuckles]

Sylvi: Oh my god.

Janine (as Brontë): Depends on who you ask. My name's Brontë.

Austin (as Aisling): That's just the same thing as the motto! That's just— bad is in the eye of the beholder. Depends on who you ask. *That's just the motto again.*

Janine (as Brontë): Yeah, we like rephrasing things out there.

Austin (as Aisling): What are you doing in my town? How long have you been here?

Janine (as Brontë): I don't know, I— A few hours, probably. I wasn't really counting.

Austin (as Aisling): So these fires weren't you then?

Janine (as Brontë): Oh, no. Fire is so...

Austin (as Aisling): Scary?

Janine (as Brontë): It's too much to keep track of. It's very messy. I wear a lot of materials that go up just like that. Just—

Austin (as Aisling): I bet they do. Well, if you see anything suspicious, you let me know. Otherwise, I don't think I ever want to talk to you ever again.

Sylvi: [chuckles]

Janine (as Brontë): You don't think, though, so that means you might change your mind.

Austin (as Aisling): Well, as a Hexcloak, I always have to believe that anything is possible, I suppose.

Janine (as Brontë): Now that's the spirit, I love an optimistic redhead.

Sylvi: God!

Austin (as Aisling): Please scurry along now.

Janine (as Brontë): Enjoy the drink.

Austin (as Aisling): Mmm.

Janine: I think he's probably also gonna go and rejoin.

Austin: Yeah, this is the perfect time to, uh huh, yes.

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

[music ends]