

SECOND SHIFT

Episode #11: Retreat (v2.1)

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Scene One — The Secret

SFX knocking

KATHERINE

Coming!

SFX footsteps, door opening

KATHERINE

Oh, oli yuung Jareth.

JARETH

Oli yuung Kath.

KATHERINE

You're the first here. Come on in.

SFX door close

JARETH

I am first? I suspected I would be late.

KATHERINE

Yeah, well everyone else is later. Make yourself comfortable.

<pause>

JARETH

Well, did you enjoy last night's festival?

KATHERINE

Err... Not really. I've never been big into things like that. Actually I kind of hate them...

<beat>

Thanks for walking back with me to Zana's. I'm sorry I didn't, you know, say anything to you. I wasn't really in a talking mood.

JARETH

I, too, had much to consider. <tone change > Where is Zana?

KATHERINE

She's around. I think she's outside feeding the lizards.

JARETH

Ah, good.

KATHERINE

Where are you going?

JARETH

I have to retrieve certain things from Zana's cellar.

KATHERINE

Et tu, Jareth?

JARETH

What?

KATHERINE

Nevermind.

SFX door opening, down stairs

JARETH

Now where did I put that...

SFX: Rummaging through basement (continuous)

KATHERINE

So what is it with you guys hiding stuff in Zana's cellar?

JARETH

Unlike Fesmer, I obtained permission to store belongings down here. Certain... compounds are best stored at a cold temperature.

KATHERINE

<skeptical> Ah huh. Not enough room in your house?

JARETH

Hah! I live in one of University's faculty dormitories. Not only do I lack in space, there are things that I cannot keep. You lived in your University's dormitory, correct?

KATHERINE

Sure did. I was pretty sick of it though..

JARETH

And you lived with Shae?

KATHERINE

Last year. I got a single this year... And speaking of Shauna...?

JARETH

...Yes?

KATHERINE

Did the two of you have fun at the dance?

JARETH

I suppose so. <tense beat> She is a complicated person.

KATHERINE

Yeah. I know what you mean. Her facets are multifaceted...

JARETH

Did you and Fesmer enjoy yourselves?

KATHERINE

Err... Well. I think Fesmer had a little much to drink.

JARETH

<sigh> He must learn to heed his limits...

KATHERINE

He was being way overbearing. It's hard to have any sort of good time with someone trying to force alcohol on you.

JARETH

Well, at least Meek and Arkahn enjoyed themselves.

KATHERINE

Yeah...

SFX: Rummaging ceases

JARETH

Ah, here it is.

KATHERINE

What've you got there?

JARETH

<clever> It is a secret. Now, let us return to the kitchen. And quickly, lest we are sighted!

KATHERINE

Ohh kay...

SFX footsteps

JARETH

Ah ha. Undetected. <small mischievous chuckle> Hopefully the others do not take much longer to arrive. I am eager to reach the cabin.

KATHERINE

Eyeah. You ever been there before?

JARETH

No, but Zana tells me it is a beautiful location.

KATHERINE

I'm looking forward to a real day off. It'll be nice.

JARETH

It shall be quite a bit more than "nice." <small satisfied chortle>

KATHERINE

...Righto.

Scene Two — The Journey

ZANA

Are we all prepared? Kath?

KATHERINE

Jareth and I checked. Everything's locked up.

ZANA

Arkahn?

ARKAHN

Shae and I have finished loading the cart.

ZANA

Umbra?

SFX goat noise

SHAUNA

Hooked up and ready to go. And obstinate as ever.

ZANA

Meek, will Fesmer survive the journey?

FESMER

<weakly> Please, go on without me. Save yourselves...

MIKE

He'll survive. Won't you buddy?

FESMER

<weakly> No, no I will not.

MIKE

He's fine.

ZANA

And Meek, will you be ra-na?

MIKE

Yeah. Leg's doing better already. Won't even need the cane soon.

ZANA

Very well. Let us depart.

SFX walking sounds, etc.

FESMER

Oh *ainorem*... Why does the sun mock me with its brightness.

MIKE

It mocks you because you have the tolerance of a ten-year old girl.

FESMER

I am not a ten-year old girl. Getting crunk is taxing labor.

MIKE

Yeah. For a ten-year old girl.

FESMER

Nonsense, I had... I had... Well I do not recall precisely how many I had but I assure you it was a staggering quantity.

MIKE

Aww is you gwumpy because you forgot your dolly.

KATHERINE

Well it looks like Fesmer is reaping some of what he has sown.

ZANA

In what sense?

KATHERINE

He was totally out of line last night.

ZANA

I am certain Fesmer meant well, Kath.

KATHERINE

Well that's no excuse.

ZANA

No, I suppose not. But attempt to understand his view.

KATHERINE

He was being a jerk. I understand that.

ZANA

What did he do that was so egregious?

KATHERINE

He said I didn't know how to have fun.

ZANA

Well, do you?

KATHERINE

What?

ZANA

Did you attempt to enjoy yourself at all last night?

KATHERINE

...Maybe I would have if he wasn't being so forceful.

ZANA

So you did not attempt to enjoy yourself.

<pause>

KATHERINE

<quietly> No... I guess not.

SFX: FESMER moaning softly in background.

ZANA

Now, I will not deny that Fesmer's social skills are somewhat lacking. But was he the only reason you did not enjoy the festival?

KATHERINE

Huh. I guess I was being a bit of a jerk too...

ZANA

Regret helps nothing, Kath. Simply learn from your experience.

<pause>

JARETH

How are you this morning, Shae?

SHAUNA

I've been better.

ARKAHN

She still struggles to sleep.

JARETH

Is it the dream?

SHAUNA

Everything's a little too perfect to be just a dream. The more I learn... By this point I'm as scared of the Legion as the dream.

JARETH

Well, you may comfort yourself with the knowledge that Laundi has never fallen to those villains.

SHAUNA

Doesn't seem to keep them out though. I seem to recall being chased by Legionnaires on hover-bikes the first day we were here.

JARETH

True, there may be some hidden amongst us...

SHAUNA

Wasn't one of them Fesmer's friend? Caleb?

ARKAHN

Caileb. Fesmer's neighbor. Do not trouble yourself over them. In any case, they are no more a danger to you than University.

JARETH

The Legion no worse than University? The same Legion that marched armies across Baela? Even now they seek to infect our way of life—

ARKAHN

You are beginning to sound like Fesmer. In the past there may have been some threat. But now? At least they do not persecute those who simply use Odi differently.

JARETH

Differently and *dangerously*. But I tire of this argument.

SHAUNA

Yeah me too. You know, you guys really aren't helping here.

JARETH + ARKAHN

Apologies Shae...

SHAUNA

Anyway, since we're on the topic, I'm still fuzzy on this Legion conquers the world thing. Should we be worried?

JARETH

Long ago, their armies swept the world, conquering all. But they could not hold what they had obtained. Hundreds of years later, they appeared again as a militant religion. They called it the Crusade of Oren. But once again they overstepped their reach. It is believed—

ARKAHN

History lesson aside, no. Ill dreams notwithstanding, you have no cause for concern. The Legion will not be taking over the world in the next few days. And a few days is all you have left here.

SHAUNA

Yeah. Guess so.

MIKE

Gawd, your conversation is as boring to eavesdrop on as Katherine's. Lighten up. We've got the day off.

FESMER

Meek, could you slow down... I cannot maintain this pace.

MIKE

Could. Won't. You'll just have to pump those little girl legs a bit faster and burn off that hangover.

FESMER

<weakly> I hate you.

M+SJA

Laughter.

Scene Three — Arrival

SFX walking/cart for a few beats. Stops.

FESMER

Praise Ainorem! We have arrived!

KATHERINE

Wow. It's beautiful!

MIKE

Yeah. Targo's got himself some prime real estate.

ARKAHN

That is the truth. The view of the lake alone is stunning.

ZANA

Jareth, would you unhitch the cart? I am certain Umbra would enjoy the opportunity to run free.

JARETH

Yes Shi-schwa.

SFX cart wheels off

SFX: Gleeful goat noise and scampering away

ZANA

Kath, Arkahn, would you assist me in opening the cabin? If the rest of you would unload the cart, *senjen*.

MIKE

Sure thing.

SHAUNA

That's his "cabin?"

MIKE

It's bigger than Fesmer's house.

FESMER

Yes, that is true. But does it have the charm of my house?

MIKE

If you are referring to your... unique style of interior decorating then no. Probably not.

FESMER

What is wrong with my style?

MIKE

Well, it's not so much a style as the product of poor impulse control.

FESMER

You are hardly one to speak of poor impulse control.

MIKE

Touché.

SHAUNA

Alright you two. Stop bickering. Let's get unpacked.

MIKE

Yes, Mom.

SHAUNA

Don't be creepy Mike.

<beat>

SFX: unpacking groceries

SHAUNA

We're here to help, Jareth.

JARETH

Good. I was beginning to fear I had to unpack this myself.

FESMER

I am hungry...

MIKE

Of course you're hungry. You are always hungry.

FESMER

I cannot argue against the truth.

JARETH

Then—oomph—take this surprisingly heavy basket of food.

FESMER

It may be heavy to your noodly scholar's arms—uugh. Very well.
Heavy it is...

SHAUNA

I'll get this stuff.

JARETH

Meek, would you assist me with this trunk?

MIKE

Ooph! Man, what's in here? Rocks?

JARETH

I believe so, yes.

MIKE

Wait, seriously?

JARETH

No. Use caution on the stairs.

SFX: feet on wooden floor

JARETH

Where would you like this Zana?

ZANA

Over there is fine.

SFX: Setting down and rifling through groceries, etc

SHAUNA

Well that's the last of it.

FESMER

Then it is high time for lunch.

ZANA

There is plenty of food in that basket. Fesmer, would you...

FESMER

Sho'nuf.

MIKE

Ah, that never gets old.

KATHERINE

If it's so fun to teach him slang, why don't you learn theirs?

MIKE

I have. But it's not really appropriate for polite conversation.

KATHERINE

Really? Come on, let's hear it.

ARKAHN

Yes Meek, share your new abilities.

MIKE

Hey no fair tag-teaming me.

ZANA

Do not censor yourself on my account, Meek. We are all adults.

FESMER

The food is prepared!

MIKE

Good save buddy.

<food sounds, chatter, etc>

SHAUNA

So what's everyone going to do today?

ZANA

I plan to spend the day relaxing on the water.

KATHERINE

Yeah and Zana is going to teach me how to fish.

MIKE

That beach looked pretty tempting. An actual sandy beach. I think I'm gonna catch some rays. Maybe go swimming.

ARKAHN

It is somewhat cold.

MIKE

Not after lying in the sun for a while. Getting all nice and warm...

FESMER

That is a fine idea.

ARKAHN

Perhaps I shall attempt some of this ray-catching as well.

ZANA

What of you, Jareth?

JARETH

It is a secret.

<awkward pause>

SHAUNA

Okay...

<beat>

Well, I think I'm going to go for a walk. Explore a little.

ARKAHN

Would you care for company?

SHAUNA

Nah. I'm good. See you all in a bit.

SFX walking away

ARKAHN

Is she ra-na?

KATHEINE

She just needs some Shauna time. Alone.

ZANA

Kath, shall we gather our tackle?

KATHERINE

Lead on.

SFX walking away

MIKE

And then there were four.

FESMER

Jareth, you are welcome to join us on the beach.

JARETH

Perhaps... later.

MIKE

Well then, let's grab some snacks and hit the sand.

Scene Four — Chillin'...

SFX: Gentle waves, breeze

MIKE

Man, this is nice. Like the lake we'd go to when I was a kid.

ARKAHN

Now that I think of it, this is the most water I have ever seen.

MIKE

Never been to the ocean?

ARKAHN

I have scarcely left Laundi.

FESMER

When I was very young, my father brought Porec and myself all the way to the seaport of Toolan Bay. It was an amazing sight.

ARKAHN

So... what are we doing, precisely?

MIKE

Well, I am going to lay down on this beach and chill for a while.

SFX Sitting down on the beach

MIKE

Ahh. You are encouraged to join me in the doing of nothing.

ARKAHN

Nothing?

MIKE

Yep.

FESMER

A fine idea.

SFX Sitting down on the beach

ARKAHN

I do not know the last time I did nothing. I am always doing... something.

MIKE

All the more reason to join us. You gotta chill now and then. Relax.

ARKAHN

I suppose you are correct.

SFX Sitting down on the beach

<pause>

MIKE

Ahh... This is nice. You know, I haven't had a chance to relax since I got here. Comas don't count...

<beat>

I mean, what's the point in going all out so much that you never have a chance to just chill?

SFX footsteps approaching

JARETH

What are you three doing?

FESMER

We are chilling.

JARETH

Ah. Have any of you seen Shae?

MIKE

Nope.

ARKAHN

She is over in that direction. Roughly a hundred paces.

MIKE

Really?

ARKAHN

She is using Odi. I can feel it.

JARETH

I see. *Turen... cha grendi fai, Arkahn*. Enjoy your... chilling.

[Well... thank you Arkahn]

SFX: Jareth walking away

MIKE

Heh. Jareth just said chilling. That's funny.

ARKAHN

This *is* pleasant.

MIKE

Well yeah. Haven't you heard? I'm *always* right.

Scene Five — Work, Stupid Relationship

SHAUNA

<mumbling/concentrating> Come on... work stupid magic...

JARETH

Shae? Are you— ah, there you are.

SHAUNA

...work stupid magic...

JARETH

Apologies, I did not mean to interrupt.

SHAUNA

Huh? Oh, hey Jareth.

JARETH

How is your practice progressing?

SHAUNA

I'm just experimenting. I've almost got it all worked out, but this second half is harder than I thought.

JARETH

The array you have drawn... It is for Farsight.

SHAUNA

Yeah, I'm trying to contact Tyler.

JARETH

Your brother?

SHAUNA

Uh huh.

JARETH

Fascinating. I suppose with a strong emotional connection, distance should not matter at all.

SHAUNA

That's the idea, but I'm still having trouble. It's like he's just out of reach. Like there's something in the way.

JARETH

If you do not mind my asking, how does your brother factor into your spell?

SHAUNA

I guess you could call him my anchor. I've got sort of a teleport spell, but I can only send people as far as I can see.

JARETH

Teleport?

SHAUNA

Yeah, to move something instantly from one place to another.

JARETH

Is such a thing possible?

SHAUNA

Sure. I've even figured it out too. Want to see? You might not like it. It's not University-approved magic.

JARETH

Despite popular opinion, the scholar in me is stronger than the disciplinarian. Let us witness your spell.

SHAUNA

Okay. Prepare to be amazed as I move this big 'ole rock right out over the lake. Work Stupid Magic From Here To There!

SFX from here to there fx, big splash!

JARETH

Ainorem!

SHAUNA

It takes a bit of doing, but the odi surge is making it a lot easier.

JARETH

That... That was remarkable. I have never seen such a thing! And this is how you plan to go home?

SHAUNA

That and the Farsight. If I can see to Boston, I should be able to send to Boston. Like Draenmer said, both kinds of magic together.

JARETH

If I had not seen it, I would not have believed it. Incredible. But... A person is not a stone.

SHAUNA

Well I figure, what is a person, really. I mean, we're mostly just made up of water and minerals. Nothing fancy or anything

JARETH

What do you mean?

SHAUNA

I can't think too hard about it. I just need to think about it scientifically or I might mess things up.

JARETH

So you believe we are little more than... dirty water?

SHAUNA

Not really, but we're not so different from any other animal.

JARETH

Animals?

SHAUNA

Sure. We're all just blood and guts. And what do you think those are made out of? Cheese?

JARETH

I must say University teaches a very different story. In truth, our viscera and that of furred animals are not probably so different, but what of *Taagli*?

SHAUNA

Taagli?

JARETH

The sublime spark of humanity.

SHAUNA

Umm... Sure. No offense, but science on my world is way more advanced than yours. I'm not saying there's no sublime sparks or anything, Apparently there is *something* more, what with Draenmer and its awesome prophecies. But whatever it is, it's not our physical bodies. Trust me, I took a class on that last year.

JARETH

I... I am not so certain that I comprehend what you are saying. But if you believe your spell will transport a person...

SHAUNA

Well I haven't tried it on a person yet. But I'm pretty sure it will work. I don't know, maybe I'll do it on a bird or a fish or something first. Actually, that's a good idea...

<beat>

JARETH

Well if you need any further assistance...

SHAUNA

Nah. Sometimes you just have to say a thing out loud. Thanks for being my sounding board.

JARETH

Uhm, certainly, Shae.

<awkward pause>

SHAUNA

So did you just come over to check on my spell or...

JARETH

Ah, well, I was of a mind to discuss last night.

SHAUNA

Yeah... Look, Jareth, I want to apologize. I... I took advantage of you. I should have stopped things when I saw where they were headed but... but I guess I just had to blow off some steam.

JARETH

Oh.

SHAUNA

Jareth, I'm leaving here in a few days. Forever. I can't just... you know. It's not fair to either of us. I'll always treasure our friendship but for both our sakes we can't let this get out of hand. I mean. Maybe if stuff worked out differently... but I have to go home Jareth. I'm needed there. I can't abandon my family. I can't abandon Mike and Katherine. I... I'm sorry.

JARETH

<disappointed> I understand. *Boxen wo fai* [I'm sorry] *for* wasting your time, Shae. I shall leave you to return to your work.

SFX walking away through undergrowth

SHAUNA

Hey Jareth... Jareth? You're not a waste of time Jareth! Aww hell... Way to go, Brown. <deep sigh> Work stupid magic...

Scene Six—Acceptance

SFX: Gentle waves lapping against boat, sporadic swishing and plunking of fishing lines.

KATHERINE

You know, Zana... I never in a million years thought that I'd enjoy fishing.

ZANA

A million years is an abnormally long time to dislike a thing.

KATHERINE

Eh. I could do it.

ZANA

Yes, I suspect you could.

<beat>

KATHERINE

From anyone else, I suppose that would have been an insult.

ZANA

Consider it a compliment. I have met a great many people in my time, but never one with resolve to match yours.

KATHERINE

Not even Jareth?

ZANA

Jareth included, yes.

KATHERINE

Ouch.

ZANA

<laughs> You are so much like I was in my youth, Kath. Strong willed, but swift to judge. There was so much I did not know...

KATHERINE

But the decisions you make define who you are. And how can you possibly make those decisions without being at least a little judgemental? And—oh!—it's *so awful* to be a judgemental person, but is it better to just blindly accept everything? To just close your eyes and let the world walk all over you?

ZANA

I have found it best to accept everything, yes, but with eyes that are open, not closed. To deny yourself any of life's truths, even the difficult ones, is to deny yourself a full life.

KATHERINE

<sighs> I guess.

ZANA

Think of it in this way: seeking truth, like fishing, requires only stillness and patience.

KATHERINE

...Plus a barbed hook through the cheek?

ZANA

When necessary, yes.

<they laugh a little then there's a pause>

ZANA

So Kath. It appears that you will be returning home soon.

KATHERINE

Yeah...

ZANA

Are you prepared?

KATHERINE

Prepared?

ZANA

To leave. To resume your life in Boz-ton.

KATHERINE

I don't really know. On either count.

<beat>

I'm going to miss it here. <semi sarcastic> Even though I seem to be doing a good job of burning my bridges. This place has such... purity compared to my world.

ZANA

How so?

KATHERINE

Everything seems more innocent. Where I come from, nothing is new. There's no mystery to anything. Everyone's so cynical and jaded. Even me I guess. That's probably why I've gotten so upset over things like Mike's marketing plan and stuff. Part of me just doesn't want to see this place grow up and become like our country. Our world.

ZANA

And is this also why you are hesitant to return?

KATHERINE

Huh. Guess so. I... I don't know what I'm going to do. I can't tell anyone what happened. They'll think I'm crazy. And I don't know if I want to return to all the noise and traffic and everyone yelling at me to be someone else.

<beat>

I mean, what am I going to tell my parents? How can I even face them at this point? But it's not like I have anywhere else to go. Shauna's really my only friend and there's certainly not room in her house. And I suppose I could... nooo, I don't want to do that.

ZANA

What?

KATHERINE

David. My former boyfriend. Err... what's the word. *Dokiluna*.

<beat>

Have I told you about him?

ZANA

I do not believe so. The two of you had an unpleasant parting?

KATHERINE

And that's putting it mildly.

<pause>

I dropped everything to follow him to Boston. Of course, *then* I find out he's an awful person. But it was too late. I'd made my decision, and I wasn't going to go crawling back to my parents. They were so *smug* about the whole thing. So I enrolled last-minute at MSU, got a job at Antonio's, and here I am.

KATHERINE (cont)

I mean, he'd probably put me up for a while, but that's not really an option I want to explore.

<beat>

Whenever I think about what's going to happen next, I just freeze up. The path is dark and I have no idea where it leads...

ZANA

I have found that dark paths can lead to brighter ones. Prepare for tomorrow, yes, but do not destroy yourself for it.

KATHERINE

These past months have been wonderful, Zana. I've learned so much about myself. I almost don't want to leave.

ZANA

Accept all of it with open eyes, and in a way, you never will.

Scene Seven — ...Like Villains

MIKE

<relaxed> Now this is what it's all about. Chillin with my homies.

FESMER

<very relaxed> It is.

ARKAHN

<almost asleep> What is a homey?

FESMER

A friend.

ARKAHN

Then I agree.

FESMER

It is unfortunate that Jareth finds it so difficult to relax. He could use this.

MIKE

Yeah, even Katherine looks like she's relaxing out there on that boat. Can't say I would've imagined she'd like fishing.

ARKAHN

So Fesmer? What is between you and Kath?

FESMER

Apparently nothing. I was merely a bowman at night. What I am most curious about is Jareth and Shae. What do you think Meek?

MIKE

Dunno. We're probably leaving soon anyways.

FESMER

That is unfortunate.

MIKE

Yeah, I was just getting used to the place. But I need to get back home. It's where all my stuff is. Still though, this is two and a half weeks I'll never forget.

FESMER

I had almost forgotten how much time you missed...

<Awkward silence>

MIKE

Yeah. So... what do you guys think of Mister Ham?

ARKAHN

<meant as a compliment> I have come to dislike him slightly less this past week.

FESMER

I wonder who is Misterham's wife.

MIKE

Wife?

FESMER

Yes, from his name, I gather that he is married.

MIKE

Uhh... I might have missed this while I was out. What's the deal with names?

FESMER

The first part is given at birth. His parents named him "Mis."

ARKAHN

Upon entering society, you are granted the second part, usually by a mentor. So he was given "-ter."

FESMER

When you wed, the pair chooses a third part. So he and his wife added a "-ham" to their name.

ARKAHN

And if they had a child, they would add the name they give their firstborn to their own.

MIKE

But Mister Ham is two words.

FESMER

Really, what do they mean?

MIKE

Umm... *parna* [mister] the rear quarter of a pig. You know, this chunk.

SFX: Mike slaps his own flank

MIKE

Usually smoke it or cure it. We call it the ham.

ARKAHN

In truth?

MIKE

Yep.

ARKHN

That is quite funny.

MIKE

If we keep it, we could introduce a Misses Ham. That works, right?

FESMER

What does that mean?

MIKE

Aerna [lady] ham.

FESMER

That is perfect.

SFX approaching footsteps

ARKAHN

Bui bui, Jareth.

MIKE

Did you find Shauna.

JARETH

I did, she is practicing. She tells me she has nearly completed the elements of Shift.

MIKE
Really?!

JARETH
Indeed. It looks as if your time here may be drawing to a close.

MIKE
Huh.

FESMER
Would you care to join us Jareth?

JARETH
No, I still have much work.

ARKAHN
What are you doing?

JARETH
Oh, you will see...

FESMER
Come now Jareth, merely a hint?

JARETH
<good natured> Absolutely not. I will converse with you more later. Enjoy your beach.

SFX walking away

MIKE
Now what's that all about?

FESMER + ARKAHN
<noncommittal sounds similar to "Meh...">

MIKE
I think I'm gonna go find Shauna.

SFX: MIKE standing up, walking off

MIKE
Later, guys.

<long beat>

ARKAHN
Later... Meek...

FESMER
Hmm?

Scene Eight—Mike and Shauna

SFX: SHAUNA scuffing at dirt. MIKE walking through underbrush.

MIKE

Heya, Shauna.

SHAUNA

<emotional, but hiding it> Hey.

MIKE

You're ruining some kid's sand-circle.

SHAUNA

It's my farsight array. I'm done with it.

MIKE

Ah.

SHAUNA

Can't leave it here for the mysterious forces of darkness to find.

MIKE

Ah. <beat> So who were you farspying on?

SHAUNA

Tyler.

MIKE

<long beat> Ah. <beat> Wow. What'd he say?

SHAUNA

The spell was farsight, not –speak. Doing both at once would have knocked me out. Plus I have to save my energy for Silver Night. I can't waste any Odi until the moment I cast Shift.

MIKE

Ah. <small beat> Okay, I give. I have been paying no attention, and I'm sorry. The Silver Odi whaa?

SHAUNA

Don't worry about it. You can go back to working on your tan.

MIKE

I was not tanning. I was chilling. Under the sun. There's a difference.

SHAUNA

Ya got me there. This New Life Odi surge peaks during Silver Night. Apparently, it's the only time in the year when both moons are full. Night basically turns to day, and crazy things can happen.

MIKE

Crazy things like three mild-mannered college students being transported suddenly to another world?

SHAUNA

And you said you weren't paying attention...

MIKE

But it wasn't a Silver whosit when Fesmer summoned us, was it?

SHAUNA

No, that was something else, and we're not going to be around long enough to find out what.

MIKE

Huh.

SHAUNA

And Fesmer didn't summon us. He accidentally messed up someone else's spell.

MIKE

Huh. Yeah, I do remember that other voice, some awful chanting... So who cast it?

SHAUNA

Like I said. Don't know, don't care. We're running.

<beat>

MIKE

Look, Shauna... maybe we were brought here for a reason, to do something important.

SHAUNA

Mike. Don't. Just trust me on this.

MIKE

But—

SHAUNA

Don't! Just... <begins crying, softly>

MIKE

Shauna...

SHAUNA

Do you have any idea what it was like? Seeing Tyler, but not being able to reach him? He was like a stranger. He didn't even know I was there. He looked so sad, and I couldn't talk to him.

MIKE

Hey, Shauna... I didn't mean to...

SHAUNA

It's okay. I've been a basketcase lately, I know that. I don't expect you or anyone to understand this. I think I'm going crazy, y'know? And if I stay here any longer, that's the best case scenario. We have to leave. *I* have to leave. If you want to stay—

MIKE

No. I want to be with you. And I know Katherine does, too. We're on your side, Shauna.

SHAUNA

Okay. <composes herself> Okay. God, it's good to hear that. <small laugh> Some days, you have no idea how alone I've felt...

MIKE

I have some idea. You saved my life, remember? I'm with you 'till the bitter end, and that's a promise. <beat> Though I would prefer it if the end was not so bitter. Bland would be okay.

SHAUNA

Heh.

MIKE

What do you say we start heading back? I smell hot pig cuisine in the air.

SFX: Walking

SHAUNA

<singing> “...filled with flavor, lots of flavor...”

MIKE

That’s right. <small beat> So, Shauna. Our hero. What exactly is the plan for getting back to Boston?

SHAUNA

Well we just go to the clearing where we first crashed in, wait for the apex of Silver Night, and then I cast the spell.

MIKE

And you’re ready? You worked out all the nuts and bolts?

SHAUNA

<>false bravado> Absolutely. Every last one. Even the spares.

MIKE

Alright. So how long until the apex?

SHAUNA

Well, today’s New Hope. It happens in the wee morning hours of New Life day. So a little more than three days, I guess.

MIKE

Wow. So soon.

SHAUNA

Yeah.

MIKE

On the plus side, you won’t have to deal with Arkahn’s parents anymore.

SHAUNA

Y’know, lately they’ve been pretty nice. No weird looks or anything. They don’t seem to mind having me around.

MIKE

Huh. Arkahn probably said something to them.

SHAUNA

Probably. She’s been a great friend.

MIKE

Yeah.

SHAUNA

Soo... you and Ark—

MIKE

Tell me more about Boston, why don’tcha? What’s changed? I don’t suppose you happened to see how the MSU football team was doing?

SHAUNA

Y’know, it’s funny you should mention that.

MIKE

Yeah?

SHAUNA

Without you, they've lost every single game. They're even talking about disbanding. I saw a newspaper, and the headline read, "MSU Puritans Pray for 3rd String Archer's Return."

MIKE

Y'know, I'm not at all surprised...

<SHAUNA laughs>

Scene Nine — Zana is a Wino

SFX Night outdoor sounds, camp fire

JARETH

Mhm. My compliments, Shi-Schwa.

MIKE

Yeah. That was delicious Zana!

FESMER

Truly a wonderful dinner.

ZANA

Thank Kath. She caught the sovereign's portion of the *gwap* [fish].

KATHERINE

I never knew I was good at fishing. I'll have to do it more often.

SHAUNA

Well this is great. I haven't had a meal around a campfire since I was a girl scout.

KATHERINE

You were a girl scout?

SHAUNA

Only for a little while. I didn't have time for it.

ARKAHN

What is a girl scout?

SHAUNA

It's an organization where girls learn to go camping and stuff like that. But mostly we just did macramé.

MIKE

I was a Boy Scout for a while. Would have stayed in it too, but football took up too much time.

JARETH

I empathize. I would have stayed on the Brikka team as a student, but there were too many practices. I did not have enough time for study.

MIKE

Yeah I probably could have done more of that too...

ZANA

Would any of you care for more *gwap*?

ALL (except Zana)

No I'm full blah blah blah etc.

ZANA

Then it is time for dessert. Arkahn, would you retrieve those cups? The small clay ones?

ARKAHN

"No problem."

MIKE

That's it! High five!

SFX high five

SHAUNA

Oh man.

<beat>

ARKAHN

These ones?

ZANA

Pass them around *senjen*.

KATHERINE

So what's all this?

ZANA

This jar is a rare *sorena* [liqueur] from the Chall, far to the South by the Sea of Green Waters. The custom is to share it before a parting, to celebrate and preserve forever the bonds of eternal friendship.

KATHERINE

Really?

ZANA

No, I invented the last part. It seemed appropriate. In truth it just gets you drunk.

LAUGHTER

ZANA

In all seriousness though, I have been saving this for just an occasion as this one. The actual custom is to pour for the person

on your left and to never allow their cup to empty. Caution however, it is powerful. Kath?

KATHERINE

Oh... Well just this once, why not. *Cha grendi*.

ZANA

Now you pour for Jareth.

MIKE

So who knows some good drinking games?

JARETH

I know several. Here you are Fesmer.

MIKE

Really?

JARETH

You forget that I was a student not unlike yourself. Alas they all involve playing cards or *tixiren* or the like.
[Tixiren are dice. Pronounced TICKS-ee-ren.]

MIKE

Oh man, you're going to have to teach me some Laundian drinking games. Oh, thanks Shauna. Yeah, my favorite's got to be beer pong. Don't ask me to explain it. I wouldn't know where to start. Arkahn?

ARKAHN

Cha grendi, Meek.

<beat>

ZANA

Is everyone served? Then *yey endura* [a toast], to our friends Meek, Shae, and Kath. Though they leave us soon, they shall remain with us always. *Mazen-do!* [Cheers!]

ALL (with MSK being a little slower on the uptake)

Mazen-do!

SFX clinking cups

<beat>

KATHERINE

<Cough> Wow that's strong.

SHAUNA

This is delicious! It tastes like... I don't know, but it's good.

JARETH

Extraordinary Zana.

ZANA

There is plenty for all. So keep the jug moving!

MIKE

Well if no one has a game, then here's one. Whoever finishes first has to tell a story. When they are done, whoever has an empty cup has to go.

FESMER

What kind of story?

MIKE

Anything. It could just be something funny that happened to you the other day.

FESMER

I have just the thing and I believe I am the first to finish.

JARETH

That means more for you.

<begin fading out:>

FESMER

Indeed! So the other day, I was parading around town as Misterham. Zana had instructed me to remain in front of the store, but it occurred to me that more people were in the center of town, so...

Scene Ten — Zana's Story

MIKE

...and I looked around, and I was alone. But I could still hear that eerie voice, whispering like dry bones...

FESMER

<rapt> What did it say?

MIKE

It said... <creepy voice> "Fesmer is a ten year old girl."

FESMER

It did not!

ALL (except Fesmer)

Laughter

FESMER

That is not fair, I thought it had to be a true story.

MIKE

Hey, how do you know it's not?

FESMER

Please do suck it.

SHAUNA

Mike, stop being mean to Fesmer. And Fesmer, my cup is almost empty. Fill 'er up.

SFX: liquid pouring

MIKE

So that's my story. Whose turn is it now?

KATHERINE

Looks like it's Zana's turn.

ARKAHN

Yes Shi-Schwa. Tell us a story.

ZANA

But you have heard so many of them before.

FESMER

Yes, but they have not.

ZANA

Ah, I know one I have not told you. The Tale of the Hand of Fire. I suppose I will need to include some geography for our Boz-ton friends, so bear with me.

<beat>

This story begins with an ancient legend, the Madness of Dorro. This was before the Origin, when the use of Odi rested in the hands of precious few and was not well understood, long before The Seven gave us University and active items. As a powerful Natural Mage, Dorro must have seemed greater than human to the people he ruled. In a land far to the west, beyond the Mountains That Scrape the Stars, he formed a great army and swept the land, burning field and forest, town and city. In his path, he left naught but fine ash. In his madness, he had planted a seed that grew into the Wasting Plains, an endless expanse that is home to nothing but twisted trees covered in deadly thorns and the few tiny creatures able to survive off their poison fruit.

<beat>

ZANA (CONT)

The peoples he had ruined rose up against him and defeated him. He was condemned to die in a most horrible way. As he burned and blighted their lands, so too would he burn, only for all time. They created a magical fire that would burn until the end of the world and threw him in. Once he had caught alight, they pulled his still living body from the fire and chopped him to pieces and yet he did not die. The flaming pieces of Dorro were carried to the corners of the earth. Legend says they burn still, but their locations are lost to time.

MIKE

Cool...

ZANA

Now the legend of Dorro is rarely remembered and the truth of this eternal fire lost. For a long time, it was merely a story I read once as a child. When I was in the Seekers, I stumbled upon the diary of an explorer who had ventured west across the Wasting Plains. In it, he made a passing reference to seeing distant fires at night. But they were no mere wildfires. They did not waver nor spread. Fearing they were illusions, he stayed course, eventually reaching an ancient city of ruins before being forced to return to the east.

<beat>

I was reminded of the man's story years later, when Targo... *Targonane* and I discovered a secret library in the ruins of old Aerendi. Amongst the tomes, I happened upon a slim, worn book of notes and crude maps. I noticed something that reminded me of that explorer's illusionary fires. Upon deciphering the notes, I realized that this map led to an artifact called the Hand of Fire, which the previous owner of the notebook believed to be a hand of Dorro, locked in its eternal punishment.

ZANA (CONT)

Targonane and I both agreed that, whatever the truth of it was, this Hand of Fire was worth investigating. We returned to Laundi and searched the libraries of both University and Draenmer. Information was conflicting. I was certain that it was merely a metaphor for a hidden cache of knowledge. Targonane suspected it was a magical device, not unlike a hearth. When we were confident that there was likely truth in this map and the stories we were found, we gathered supplies and set off on a journey.

<beat>

We journeyed west on rivers and overland for days until we reached the Mountains that Scrape the Stars. We arrived at a mining town that was reputed to be near a pass through the Mountains. We traded for supplies and a team of *taerent* [burros, pronounced "TAE-er-ent"] to transport all the water and food we would need since there is none to be had on the plains.

<beat>

The journey through the pass, which barely deserved to be called such, was difficult, but largely without event.

<beat>

After two days of brutal rocks and treacherous paths, we descended to the gritty, blasted plains. Discerning our course by the moons and stars, we began our journey. It was most difficult. The heat in the day was crippling and in the nights there was a sharp chill. And it was so dry... Never have I known thirst such as that. We lost some of our *taerent* to poisonous insects and serpent, but fortunately the rest were hearty creatures and were able to weather the fierce environment better than us.

<beat>

At night we remained vigilant for the phantom fires. Finally we were rewarded with the sight of one on the horizon. For three days we followed the light, finally coming to its source.

<beat>

ZANA (CONT)

There, in the midst of a desolate wasteland untracked by man, sat a squat, crude, stone tower. It was of the same pale, ashen appearance as the land around it and produced a powerful heat that was dizzying in the day. We retreated some distance to an outcropping of rocks, likely once source for the tower's blocks, and waited for the night.

<beat>

When darkness fell, we found the source of the light we had seen. Through gaps in the stones: radiated light, as if from a fire. As the air grew colder my curiosity overpowered my reservations. I donned my heavy wool coat that I had obtained for crossing the mountains, reasoning correctly that it would shield me from the extreme heat as it had the cold.

<beat>

Entering the tower through its single, low archway was akin to entering a raging furnace. But I entered all the same. The interior was an open, empty space, maybe four paces across. The only feature was a stone dais rising in the center. A dais on which burned a steady, brilliant flame. I approached as close as I was able; the heat was dizzying and painful. There I saw, amidst the raging flames, a human hand, perfectly intact save for a spike driven through the palm and into the dais. And then I recoiled in terror, for I swear to ainorem that is was *moving*. I was overcome with a sensation of dread and suffering greater than even the heat. It was Dorro's pain that I felt, trapped in the world of the living, knowing only eternal agony...

<pause>

FESMER

What happened next?

ZANA

Targonane and I did what we could to understand what we had discovered, but we had little time to waste. Day came soon and it was too hot to approach the tower, even with Targonane's magics, and we did not have enough water to stay another night. We were forced to abandon our find. We shared our discovery with University, but those groups that set out to find the Hand returned with nothing or not at all. Targonane and I never returned to find it. I could not face that pain again as I had no solace to offer. So it is likely still there, protecting its ancient secrets to this day.

<pause>

MIKE

Wow...

KATHERINE

Wait... So this was *true*?

ZANA

As the stars and the stones.

KATHERINE

I thought you had simply traveled. I did not realize...

ZANA

This old lady has many surprises.

FESMER

A living hand?

ZANA

The world is broader and stranger than you can know.

ARKAHN

It seems to be my turn for a tale now, but there is no way by which I can surpass that.

SHAUNA

Yeah, it certainly blows my story out of the water...

MIKE

And we're out of booze. Guess that's a good stopping point

JARETH

Ah, wait! But I still have something!

FESMER

You already told the story. The serpents loosed in the dormitories.

JARETH

Not another story. Something else.

ARKAHN

Is this the great secret that has kept you occupied all day?

JARETH

Precisely. Though I am uncertain it can rival Zana's story, it is something I wanted to do to celebrate our new friends. To show my appreciation for them. Even you Meek. It is unfortunate that we were unable to become friends, but...

MIKE

Don't worry about it.

JARETH

If you would all look out over the lake *senjen*. <ahem> BEGIN!

SFX Single firework

MIKE

Woah! I didn't know you had fireworks here.

SFX Several fireworks

ALL

Ooooh...

SHAUNA

Jareth, they're beautiful.

SFX Fireworks continuing from here on.

FESMER

Do you have any of the ones that go—

SFX loud boom

FESMER

Ah, that is the one.

JARETH

You have been truly unique friends. Frustrating, confusing, certainly. But it is difficult to imagine going back to a life without you. You will be missed...

<beat>

Now, let us dispense with words, and watch. The spectacle is just beginning.

<Fade out as fireworks continue>