

SECOND SHIFT

Episode #14: Third Shift (v3.2)

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TEASER

SFX: In distance, cars pulling in and out, doors opening and closing. People chatting as they move away from the listener. We are in a movie theater parking lot.

ARKAHN is mumbling something ritual-sounding in Charendraen, haltingly. Piecing the steps together as she rehearses them.

MIKE

[after a moment, agitated]

She's not coming.

ARKAHN

[distracted]

As you say.

MIKE

But she has to! What if it won't work without her?

ARKAHN

Let be what will be, Meek.

ARKAHN continues chant.

SFX: Stylish echoes of Fesmer's voice, chanting one reality distant...

ARKAHN

There. It is near to—

SFX: Car horn. Echoey effect ceases.

MOVIEGOER

[has a thick Boston accent]

Hey! Mac!

MIKE

“Mike,” actually. But close enough.

MOVIEGOER

This is a parking lot!

MIKE

Yeah. Sure is.

MOVIEGOER

So tell your girlfriend to pack up the sidewalk chalk. What is this?

MIKE

Well, we're going to return to a magical fantasy land and save our friend, Shauna, from the clutches of an evil overlord, *obviously*.

Where have *you* been all year?

ARKAHN

[warning tone]

Meek...

MIKE

[innocently, to Arkahn]

What?

END OF TEASER

MOVIEGOER

For cryin' out loud. It's just a *movie*.

SFX: Car pulling around and zooming off.

MIKE

[calling after him]

Hey, enjoy the film! I was *this* close to seeing the third one last year, but... And no one cares.

ARKAHN

Meek, you are insane.

MIKE

[just correcting her, without humor]

Insanely awesome. Is it ready?

ARKAHN

[uncertain]

Yes. I believe so.

MIKE

[hard sigh]

C'mon, Katherine...

ARKAHN

Should we delay more?

MIKE

[making a hard decision]

...No. We can't. Start the ritual.

SFX: Shift effect, transitioning into the new theme music.

ACT ONE

Scene One — Sans Radio Serial

SFX: Phone ringing.

ARKAHN

Antonio Pizza's and Subs, Commonwealth Avenue, who is proudly to be serving the University vicinity since nineteen hundred and ninety four. I am called Connie. Is this for picking up or deliverance?

[beat]

Delivery, yes. "Sor-ry. I am from France." And which food will you eat?

[beat, confused:]

All of our foods are extremely special.

SFX: Door opens, bell rings

ARKAHN

Well, I enjoy the pig pizza much.

[beat]

Yes, it is for sale. All are for sale.

MIKE

Hey. You, uh, answered the phone. Everything okay?

ARKAHN

Yes, Meek. No, apologies sir. "I am from France." You wish a large pig pizza?

MIKE

[coaching]

Large ham. But the special is a two-topping.

ARKAHN

Ah. You will like your ham with two tops?

MIKE

Here, just let me—

ARKAHN

No Meek! Apologies sir. Our pizzas are only special for the second layer in addition.

[beat, then downcast:]

Yes, you may speak to my supervising.

MIKE

Hello. Yes, sorry about that. If you want the sale price, it's another topping besides the ham. Anchovies! Mmm. Okay then, \$9.95, expect it in 40-45. Thanks. Bye.

SFX: Phone is hung up

MIKE

[to the cooks]

Hey! Large anchovy and ham to go!

[to Arkahn]

Sorry. Looked like it was going badly. But hey, maybe next time...

ARKAHN

[near tears, compensating with anger]

I am trying.

MIKE

I know.

ARKAHN

I thought to answer the “fone” since no other persons did, but...

[frustrated sigh]

I am just too stupid-like, speaking in this way.

MIKE

Hey, English is a tough language. I barely understand it. You’re doing really well for only one year—

ARKAHN coughs a deep, bronchial cough

MIKE

[more concerned than he’s letting on]

You okay?

ARKAHN

[snapping]

Yes, I am perfectly *ra-na!*

MIKE

‘Cause if you’re not feeling well...

ARKAHN

I cannot be home-sick. I must depart shortly for the English class besides.

MIKE

Oh, I forgot it changed nights. You should really let the boss know so that he doesn’t schedule you over them.

ARKAHN

But... then I will be working without you on some times.

MIKE

Yeah, but that’s good.

ARKAHN makes a derisive sound.

MIKE

Trust me, you’ll do fine. You need to start meeting people and making friends. Can’t spend your entire life holed up in our overpriced one bedroom with video games and stale pizza. That’s my shtick.

ARKAHN

Perhaps it is of no point.

MIKE

It’s plenty of point! I really think you’ll be happier once you get out and—

ARKAHN

No. I am talking of the dream.

MIKE

[taken aback]

Oh.

ARKAHN

I am not certain, but... it may be for sure.

MIKE

You think it really was Fesmer?

ARKAHN

[struggling to explain]

Yes. He is telling me how. It is the same for each night. The ritual. Tomorrow will be one year past Shaena's Shift spell. Silver Night.

MIKE

You... think you can pull it off?

ARKAHN

With the aid of Fesmer, perhaps. I do not know. It is mad complex. Challengeful to do.

MIKE

But if there's a chance, then we have to try. We owe that to her.

ARKAHN

I do not know, Meek.

MIKE

I do. I know you can do it.

SPX: "Order up" bell dings

MIKE

Well, there's the stinkyfish and pig pizza. I've gotta deliver this. I'll see you at home, after your class?

ARKAHN

Meek...

MIKE

Yeah?

ARKAHN

What... if it is real? What if we do return?

MIKE

Honestly... what if we don't? That's what scares me.

SFX: Door opens, bell rings

MIKE

Have fun tonight! Make friends!

ARKAHN

No promising.

SFX: Door closes

ARKAHN sighs.

Scene Two — Venti Angst with Foam

SFX: ARKAHN's sigh artfully carries us into the next scene. We are now in a small coffee shop. Distinct from Antonio's in that it's much quieter. Maybe some kind of lounge music in the background.

CHRISTINA
What?

KATHERINE
Hmm?

CHRISTINA
The world-weary sigh. What's on your mind, Kath? [soft "a"]

KATHERINE
[allowing a small, social laugh]
Nothing, Christina. Just... anxious to leave.

CHRISTINA
Hey, don't give up on me now. Hours to go before close.

KATHERINE
Hoo-hah. Why are we even open? What kind of derelict drinks coffee at night?

CHRISTINA
The kind of derelict whose tips pay our tuition, five cents at a time. Large toffee nut vanilla non-fat wet cappuccino?

CUSTOMER
That's me. Derelict, huh?

CHRISTINA
[cheerfully]
Oh, not you, sir. You never tip.
[back to Katherine]
So you will not believe what my Psych Professor gave me on my final.

KATHERINE
...I dunno, what?

CHRISTINA
[playing this up for great dramatic effect]
A ninety.

KATHERINE
[feigning sympathy]
Geez...

CHRISTINA
I know, right?! You know how hard I worked on that. How many of my shifts did you have to cover just so I could get it done on time?

KATHERINE
[with a shrug] Hey, more tips for me.

CHRISTINA
I'm, like, sick about it. My GPA's going to dip another tenth of a point over this. I know it.

KATHERINE
Well, there are worse things.

CHRISTINA

Not really.

KATHERINE

Could have been an eighty.

CHRISTINA

Ugh, blasphemy! The only way I could've recovered from *that* would be to have extracurriculars with the professor! Oh, speaking of—

KATHERINE

Excuse me?

CHRISTINA

Oh, no! I was going to ask how your night classes are going. Done with them yet?

KATHERINE

[Without enthusiasm]

Yeah, last week. Hopefully the credits will transfer and I can go back to being a full-time student this fall.

CHRISTINA

Don't sound too excited. It's got to beat working *here* full time for another year.

KATHERINE

Hey, this place pays more than my last job did.

CHRISTINA

That's hard to imagine.

KATHERINE

You have no idea...

[beat]

Anyway, I've finally worked my GPA back up to where I might qualify for some scholarships, so—

SFX: Door opens, bell rings

CHRISTINA

[interrupting]

Ohhh. It's Shiftyeyes. Don't look.

KATHERINE

How am I supposed to know who you're talking about if I can't look?

CHRISTINA

Touché. Okay, look.

KATHERINE

Oh. That guy.

CHRISTINA

I know, right?! Almost never buys anything. Doesn't talk to anyone. Just limps around with the shiftyeyes and then leaves. Hence the name.

KATHERINE

He doesn't drink coffee.

CHRISTINA

Kind of cute in that lost, unshowered puppy way...

KATHERINE

Hey, I'm going to take a smoke break. Be back in five.

CHRISTINA

<calling after her in a teasing manner> It's a filthy habit.

KATHERINE

Yeah, yeah, you can have your turn when I come back.

CHRISTINA

It's a deal.

[volume fading as we move away]

Small soy extra-hot white chocolate mocha in a large cup?

SFX: Door opens and closes. Coffee house lounge music is replaced with the occasional car driving by. Sound of a cigarette being lit.

MIKE

You know, smoking is a disgusting habit.

KATHERINE

Why, it's shiftyeyes himself.

MIKE

What does that even mean?

KATHERINE

My coworkers came up with it.

MIKE

Clever. What's yours? Grossy McSmokestacks?

KATHERINE

Mature, Mike. I'm an adult. I can do what I want with my life.

MIKE

Really? And how *is* David?

KATHERINE

[nasty]

How's "Connie"?

MIKE

Look, she didn't ask to be in our world any more than we did in hers, so I'm just—

KATHERINE

Whatever. We've had this conversation before. Why are you here this time? I do have to work you know, so make it quick.

MIKE

Well, Arkahn's health hasn't so much improved.

KATHERINE

What do you mean?

MIKE

She still has that really deep cough, for one. Even after a year, she still hasn't adjusted to the city air. She always looks exhausted. Almost strung-out. She gets stiffed at Antonio's because she's an illegal immigrant, so between rent and her English classes, there isn't much left for antibiotics—

SFX: Cell phone rings.

KATHERINE

Sorry. Hold on.

[she sounds like a different person when speaking to David;
beaten, submissive]

Hey, I'm still at work. I'll call you back when I'm on break?

Okay? Okay. Bye.

[sighs]

MIKE

[noting this]

...But anyway, I'm here because she's been having the dreams
again. You know the ones.

KATHERINE

Oh here we go....

MIKE

Will you just listen! It's different this time!

KATHERINE

How? Did her dreams assure her they were really real this time?
Did you do the Klingon mind-meld with her, or something?

MIKE

Vulcan.

KATHERINE

Excuse me?

MIKE

It's the *Vulcan* mind-meld. If you're going to belittle me, at least
get your references right.

KATHERINE

Whatever.

MIKE

It's Fesmer. Has to be. He's been Farspeaking with Arkahn through
her dreams. They think they can do it if he's the anchor.

KATHERINE

HA! Why would Fesmer contact Arkahn after she betrayed his
friendship?

MIKE

Well, she is the only one of us with magical abilities. Plus a lot can
happen in a year. Maybe he's forgiven her...?

KATHERINE

Yuh. Sounds to me as if her guilt is still eating away at her.
Hope it swallows her whole.

MIKE

I don't know about that, but this is our chance, Katherine. I think
that we can go back to Laundi... tomorrow.

KATHERINE

[warning tone]

Mike...

MIKE

Just... listen. I know you miss being there. I know you miss the
person you were. I mean, look at you! The stint with your parents
back in California didn't work, and you've been back here
slumming it with David for how long? What do we have to lose? If
there's even the smallest chance that this might work, I think that—

KATHERINE

[he's touched a nerve]

You know what I think, Mike? I think that you're full of shit, and I want you to stay out of my personal life, ok? Do you see a trashcan around here?

MIKE

Look, I don't care what you say to me, I'm still your friend—

KATHERINE

[under her breath]

Really? Thought I was just your coworker.

MIKE

—and I want you to come back with us. We have a real chance to find out what happened to Shauna. Maybe even rescue her: bring her home, where she belongs. This isn't just wishful thinking. This could work. But it might not unless you're with us.

KATHERINE

Oh, is *that* the reason you want me there. I swear we had one of those smoker's posts or ash-can or whatever...

MIKE

That's not what I... do you see yourself, Katherine? You want to go back!

KATHERINE

I *want* you to leave me alone. This is over, okay?

MIKE

Look at how anxious you are—you can't even toss a butt on the ground, like normal smokers.

KATHERINE

Oh, so because I don't want to litter, that makes me uptight? Is that a trash receptacle?

MIKE

Now, it's because you're uptight. And that's a potted plant. Like... Hey, you're still living in J.P., right? Take the Orange Line and change to the Red at Downtown?

KATHERINE

Yeah.

MIKE

And I bet, when you wait, you stand in the same spot every time. Get on the same car and, if you can help it, at the same door so you can get off at just the right place. Every. Single. Time.

KATHERINE

Yeah, so? I beat the crowd and shave minutes off my commute. That's not uptight. It's common sense. Something that you clearly lack.

MIKE

Normal people our age don't care about that Katherine. If you were chronically late, maybe you'd have to do that, but I bet you haven't been late once.

KATHERINE

Only a couple times when the subway breaks down.

MIKE

And she proves my point.

KATHERINE

What is your point Mike?

MIKE

My point is you are stifling yourself here. You know you want to go back but you're terrified of breaking your routine!

KATHERINE

Look, let it go. We can't go back. We'll never get to go back. We're here *now*, so let's live in it instead of floating by on some pipe dream based on Arkahn's guilt ridden nightmares!

MIKE

Katherine...

KATHERINE

And even if we could, what is there to go back to? We lost.

[beat]

Here, find a place for this, take it back to Laundi for all I care. I have to go back to work.

SFX: A door opens and closes.

MIKE

Be seein' ya, Kath...

SFX: Cell phone dial tones are heard.

MIKE

Hey, Arkahn?

Scene Three — Lost in Translation

ARKAHN

[reading]

“...After an explosive confrontation during which one of their own is left behind, it appears that the gang has no choice but rely on Faith. But can she be trusted after betraying them all? 1999. Airs 8pm, eastern standard time.”

TEACHER

Exceptional reading, Connie. That was very good. And, uh, interesting choice of material.

ARKAHN

... Yes.

TEACHER

Okay everyone, we're out of time. Mauricio, you can wake up now. The rest of you, remember to watch your articles and prepositions! Next week, we'll review subject-verb agreement and syntax. I know you're all looking forward to that.

GROANS from several students

TEACHER

Have a great weekend everyone.

SFX: Students chatting, gathering things, etc.

STUDENT

Zdrastvujt'e, m'nja zavut Pavlik. At kuda vy iz Rasii?

ARKAHN

...*Parado fai?*

STUDENT

Oh. Sorry. I thought, from your accent... What is your first language?

ARKAHN

Um, it is no-sense. “I am from France.”

STUDENT

Really? Your accent seems more... Slavic. What part of France?

ARKAHN

I do not know how to say in English.

STUDENT

Oh. How long have you been in the U.S.?

ARKAHN

I am living in Boston one year.

STUDENT

I see. I have been here for three years, but English is very difficult to learn. Sometimes I forget what prepositions are, and why they should not dangle.

[beat]

STUDENT

Do you mind if I walk with you?

ARKAHN

Oh-kay...

STUDENT

So, allow me to ask: what is your name?

ARKAHN

I am called "Connie."

STUDENT

No, I mean the name you had in France.

ARKAHN

Arkahn.

STUDENT

It's a good name. Strong-sounding.

ARKAHN

[flustered]

Thank you?

STUDENT

Not at all. So, do you visit often? France?

ARKAHN

Um. It has been a long times since I am home?

STUDENT

Yes, for me as well. But I may visit soon.

ARKAHN

Me as well. But...

STUDENT

Airfare is very expensive.

ARKAHN

Yes.

STUDENT

So you have family there? In France?

ARKAHN

I do not know.

STUDENT

You do not know if your family is still living in France? Don't you keep in touch with them?

ARKAHN

I do not.

STUDENT

International calls aren't cheap, I know, but don't you send them postcards? Letters?

ARKAHN

My leaving them—it wasn't on bestest terms.

STUDENT

Ah.

[beat]

When I first left, my mother was furious with me. I was supposed to take up the family business, marry a homegrown Russian girl. Instead I left.

ARKAHN
What happened?

STUDENT
My mother, she stopped all communication. My letters returned, unopened. She changed our phone line. It was as if I had no family.

ARKAHN
It was challenging for you?

STUDENT
It was.

ARKAHN
[hopefully]
But you talk now?

STUDENT
Oh yes. My sister, she used her life's money to come visit me. Mother was furious, but to talk to my sister, she had to go through me. Eventually my sister's forgiveness earned me my mother's. I still do not see them as often as Mother would like.

ARKAHN
When had you seen them lately?

STUDENT
A year and a half ago. I went for three months, and it cost me my job. But you have to go back, you know?

ARKAHN
[reluctant acceptance]
Yes. I do.

SFX: Arkahn's phone rings

ARKAHN
Excuse. Hello? Meek. What? I meet you where?

STUDENT
Need a ride somewhere?

ARKAHN
[hesitant]
Perhaps. Yes. *Cha grendi*.

STUDENT
Nezshta.

ARKAHN
[to Mike on phone]
Meek? I do not understand. You are *where*?

Scene Four — No Promises

SFX: The sounds of crazed shoppers.

KATHERINE

[on the phone, exasperated]

...At the mall, David. Why? Because I have looked everywhere for swiffer wipes and disposable reach flossers, and God help me, if I can't find them here, I'm throwing in the towel.

[beat]

I should also pick up some more towels.

TYLER

Katherine? Katherine! Hey, Katherine!

KATHERINE

Tyler? Oh. Um, David? Yeah, I gotta go. [beat] Tyler is a friend's brother. [beat] Younger brother. He's like fifteen. Stop it.

TYLER

Sixteen.

KATHERINE

I'm hanging up now. I'm hanging up. Yes. Because—

[David has hung up; Katherine sighs, hard]

Hey, Tyler. What are you doing here?

SFX: A crinkling bag

TYLER

Birthday shopping.

KATHERINE

Neat. Whose birthday?

TYLER

Shauna's.

KATHERINE

Oh.

TYLER

Yeah.

[beat]

We still celebrate it. I don't know.

KATHERINE

No, that's... What'd you get for her?

TYLER

Newest Mario game. She won't mind if I borrow it until she gets back.

KATHERINE

[laughs a little]

She would have— I mean, I'm sure she'll love it, Ty.

TYLER

Yeah. So. What about you?

KATHERINE

Swiffer wipes and disposable reach flossers. Don't suppose you've seen any around?

TYLER

Nope.

KATHERINE

Ah well.

TYLER

[beat]

Have you talked to Mike at all? I mean, recently?

KATHERINE

I guess. I would say more that he talks *at* me. He skulks by the coffee shop at least once a week.

TYLER

So, he's told you too?

KATHERINE

About...

TYLER

That he thinks there's a chance to... you know... go back and find Shauna?

KATHERINE

Oh no, don't tell me he spurts that nonsense around you too!
Honestly, next time I see him, I'll tell him to—

TYLER

No, that's not what I... no. I haven't actually *talked* talked to him in a while. As you might imagine, my father has forbidden anyone in the Brown family to talk to Mike. He still thinks....

KATHERINE

It's not true, Tyler. Not about *Mike*, anyway.

TYLER

I think I know that. But my dad's convinced. It's gonna be a weak Christmas with all our money going toward "that guy."

KATHERINE

So, your dad's still having Mike watched?

TYLER

[Clearly embarrassed]

Well, not for awhile now, but... anyway, I've been thinking about it a lot, and if you guys do go back, I thought maybe I might, too? I mean, I *saw* you guys teleport or whatever into my room, but half the time, I still think you made the whole thing up. I know my dad wouldn't believe a word of it. Just feel so trapped here. But if there's a chance to go... Do you believe him?

KATHERINE

Your dad?

TYLER

No. Mike. Do you believe what Mike says is true? I mean, if you'd asked me a year ago, I would have laughed in your face, but that was before the strange dreams and all of you just appearing in my lap. So, *this* might be possible, right?

KATHERINE

[tenderly]

Tyler...anything's *possible*, but do I think it's *plausible*? No. No, I don't. I know hope is important, but I think we should hope that Shauna is still alive and well, not that we can somehow go back and find her after an entire year. It's just...it's just *fantasy*, and I think we...*all* of us...need to just move on with our lives.

TYLER

But... don't you—

KATHERINE

I'm sorry, Tyler. I just don't. I can't. I can't live every day under that particular specter.

[beat]

Hey, look. I have to go. But you know, you can stop by the coffee shop anytime, or whatever, you know? Caffeine's on me.

TYLER

Yeah, sure. Whatever. Bye, Katherine.

KATHERINE

[fading]

I'm sorry, Tyler. I'll see you when I see you, ok?

END OF ACT ONE

ACT TWO

Scene Five — Connie on the MTA

SFX: A subway platform. Generic MBTA announcements on aging speakers.

MIKE
So. How was class?

ARKAHN
We spoke of articles and propositions.

MIKE
Whoa now. Maybe I should start coming to these.

ARKAHN
Why?

MIKE
Sorry, I was... it was a joke.

ARKAHN
It is always jokes. Also, telling people the “I am from France”?

MIKE
[knows he’s lost]
Well, you had to tell them you were from somewhere...

ARKAHN
Meek.

MIKE
Yeah, okay. That was also kind of a joke. A very obscure one.

ARKAHN
I would prefer it you quit the jokes.

MIKE
Sorry. It’s pretty much the only way I know how to talk.

ARKAHN
You could attempt to just talk. Without the joking. Then we would be both learning a separate language.

MIKE
Heh. Fair enough. [beat] So. Just a classmate, huh?

ARKAHN
[exasperated]
Meek! He granted me use of his ride. This is all.

MIKE
Alright, alright. You two just seemed to be rockin’ the hot foreigner thing, is all...

SFX: Train screeches to a halt. (Stylized. *Suggestion* of a train screeching to a halt, not the actual 20 seconds of deafening torture that such a thing actually sounds like.)

ARKAHN
This one?

MIKE
[searching]
Hmmmmm nope. Not this one.

SFX: Ding ding! The train departs.

ARKAHN
Meek?

MIKE
Arkahn?

ARKAHN
Why will we not get on any train?

MIKE
Anxious to be somewhere?

ARKAHN
No! It is just non-pleasant, this subway. Stenchy. Loud.

MIKE
If this is your last night in Boston, you have to absorb *all* of the sights and sounds. Just breathe it in.

ARKAHN inhales and comes up with yet another bronchial cough.

MIKE
You see? Ahhh. “Gotta love that dirty”... air.

ARKAHN
No. I do not. [beat] I will, perhaps, miss the Moxie soda-drink.

MIKE
Eugh. I guess someone has to. So, hey...

ARKAHN
Hey what?

MIKE
Let’s talk. Ask me what I did after work.

ARKAHN
What have you did after work?

MIKE
Strangest thing. Spoke with Katherine.

ARKAHN
Kath?! You talk about what with Kath?

MIKE
About returning to Laundi tomorrow, naturally.

ARKAHN
Meek...

MIKE
Just hear me out. I know you two don’t see eye-to-eye on, well, anything, but if you’d just put your differences aside long enough to—

ARKAHN
It is not this. It is that I can not do this spell.

MIKE

What? Of course you can. Fesmer said—

ARKAHN

Perhaps it is not Fesmer. Perhaps... I am dreaming only. Or perhaps it is like Shaena's winged herald. An ill dream that will lead only—

MIKE

Stop it. If it doesn't work, then fine, it doesn't work. But we don't have anything to lose by trying.

ARKAHN

I am ill, Meek. Always sickened ever since I been here.

MIKE

I know.

ARKAHN

It is possible that I lack strength. Or it is possible, also, that I fail and something ill happens. That perhaps I hurt you. Or me.

MIKE

Have faith. I know you can do it.

ARKAHN

I do not know...

MIKE

[tenderly]

C'mere. Arkahn, you are the strongest person I know. To magically link up with another person several universes or realities or... whatever... away and transport anyone any kind of distance, even an inch—that's just not fiction in my world. But you're going to do it. I know that you're going to do it. And that makes you amazing.

ARKAHN

[touched, but trying not to show it]

I *am* fairly awe-some...

MIKE

Yeah you are.

SFX: Another train screeches to a halt.

ARKAHN

To speak truth, Meek, I am un-eager to return. I am sorrowful about Shaena, but—

MIKE

Okay, last car. Run!

ARKAHN

...What?

MIKE

C'mon!

SFX: MIKE and ARKAHN running. Ding-ding, and the doors slide shut. The train begins moving. ARKAHN coughs.

MIKE

Hoo. Made it.

KATHERINE

...Mike?

MIKE

Oh! Wow! Hey, Katherine! What are the chances!

KATHERINE

Oh, you... scheming son of a—

MIKE

Well hey, since we're all here, who wants to talk about magical fantasy worlds?

KATHERINE

How did—... Did you *follow me* from work? That's just creepy.

MIKE

What do you take me for, a stalker? I just waited here. Oh, yeah, I guess that's a bit creepy. But we had to talk.

ARKAHN

Builana, Kath.

KATHERINE

Not talking to you.

MIKE

Oops. You just did. C'mon ladies, we can be civil.

KATHERINE

Mike, your girlfriend is a backstabbing traitor. She left Shauna to die and came back in her place, for all we know.

MIKE

Hey hey hey now. One: not true. And two: there is the matter of an ongoing investigation. I'd appreciate you not saying such things in public, where anyone and their very expensive P.I. equipment could record it.

KATHERINE

Sorry.

MIKE

Just saying. So, any plans for tomorrow night?

KATHERINE

No.

MIKE

Wanna go back to Laundi with us?

KATHERINE

What makes you think Arkahn can do that, Mike? The translation pendants don't even work here. She's powerless.

MIKE

Maybe, but its not just Arkahn. From what she tells me, Fesmer's doing most of the heavy lifting. They're going to extend a bridge-thingie through the... something, and... um... how'd it go again?

ARKAHN

Fesmer intents to trace the path created during the first Shift.
Fesmer is to anchor and I am to propel at first.

KATHERINE

So Fesmer throws a rope and you catch it.

ARKAHN

Yes.

MIKE

Ohhhh. Sorry, yeah, I just got that.

KATHERINE

What?

MIKE

Oh, nothing. Just the rope thing. It makes a lot more sense now.
Yeah, that *would* work...

KATHERINE

You only just now understand the plan with which you have been
haranguing me for the past several months?!

MIKE

Sort of. Really solid analogy, Kath. You have such a way with
words.

KATHERINE

Hate you.

MIKE

Sorry, Arkahn. Go ahead.

ARKAHN

...And, um, there is more likeness of success if all three are return.
Resulting from the path we three created.

KATHERINE

Why? If Fesmer's using us to trace the original spell, not Shauna's,
wouldn't he need Shauna for it to work? And for that matter, you
weren't part of the original spell, Arkahn. Wouldn't you mess it up
by tagging along?

ARKAHN

I... do not know.

MIKE

Well, obviously because of our... y'know... magical signatures...
resonating far and wide across the... oh I don't know! I don't get
how this magic system works. I was in a coma during the tutorial,
remember? All I know is that Fesmer and Arkahn are working
together to bring us through, and that we need you with us.

KATHERINE scoffs.

MIKE

Katherine: we need you. Shauna needs you. And I think you need to
return more than you're willing to admit.

KATHERINE

[redirecting]

This... is just so full of holes! Arkahn, why on earth would Fesmer
contact you?

ARKAHN

He is without choice. Perhaps, because only I am attuned...

KATHERINE

Yuh-huh. Shauna spent months learning Shift, and we all saw how much it cost her. And by all accounts, the kind of power she had was unbelievable. Fesmer doesn't have that.

MIKE

He didn't at the time, but it has been a year...

KATHERINE

Oh, yeah. Once he recovered from that near-fatal Legionnaire wound, I'm sure the first thing he did was devote all his time to figuring out how to bring the person responsible for that back.

KATHERINE [cont.]

[beat]

Actually that kind of does make sense. Maybe he wants revenge.

ARKAHN

He would not make danger on you or Meek. If he intents revenge, I will be punished alone.

MIKE

There? See? [small beat] Wait, Fesmer wouldn't—

ARKAHN

It is not impossible. Fesmer was wrathful.

KATHERINE

And rightfully so.

SFX: Train screeching to a halt

KATHERINE

Well, this is my stop. But, since you've been stalking me, I guess you knew that. Good luck to both of you, tell Zana I said *Bui*, all of that.

MIKE

And what should we tell Shauna?

[beat]

Look, we'll be in the same movie theater parking lot if you change your mind. We don't know exactly when it'll happen, but we think maybe eight. Or nine.

KATHERINE

It was 8:14 last time. The stupid movie was at 8:15 and we were going to miss the previews.

MIKE

8:14 then. Don't be late!

SFX: Ding ding! The doors close. Train begins moving.

MIKE

[false bravado]

She'll be there.

ARKAHN

Yet we should plan for otherwise.

SFX: The train sound distorts and becomes ethereal-sounding. Fesmer's echoey chanting can be heard, and then we hear something that sounds like Shauna yelling "No!" a very great distance away. The Harpy's laughter reverberates, then fades away, into...

Scene Six — Katherine, Unleashed

SFX: The coffee shop. The murmur of quiet conversation.

CHRISTINA

Wait, Katherine—that guy asked for an espresso!

KATHERINE

What? Oh.

CHRISTINA

That's, like, the third time today.

KATHERINE

Sorry. I guess I need to reboot my brain. Bob! Espresso, no foam!

CHRISTINA

Are you OK?

KATHERINE

Yeah. I mean, I guess. It's just that I've had a lot of things on my mind.

CHRISTINA

Anything to do with that guy who keeps coming by?

KATHERINE

Well, not really. Not him, exactly, just something... y'know, it's really not that important.

CHRISTINA

Maya! Mozzarella Panini, cappuccino! Well, you know, if you want to blow off steam, a bunch of us are going out after work... I think you'd have a good time. You should come.

KATHERINE

Really? That'd be great! I could—well; I'll have to check with David first.

CHRISTINA

Katherine! Oh honestly. That guy keeps you on such a short leash, and he retracts it even further when he thinks you might have more fun without him.

KATHERINE

Christina! How can you—

CHRISTINA

Look, I'm just saying... you claim to be this self-sufficient independent person who can make all of her own decisions, but the minute anything comes up, you reach for your cell phone. Just because we're not best friends doesn't mean I can't see that you're unhappy. I'm not the only one who's noticed.

KATHERINE

Well... I... uh... look, I *do* want to go out later, but I should make sure David doesn't already have plans for us, ok?

CHRISTINA

Sure, Katherine.

SFX: Door opens and closes as Katherine goes outside. Cell phone ringing.

KATHERINE

Don't pick up, don't pick up, don't—David! Hey, I—no. No. I haven't gotten off work yet. I'm calling because—why not? Because my shift isn't over yet. I told you I was working until—

[beat]

Wait, look, that's why I'm calling. Some of my coworkers want me to come out with them after work, and I just wanted to let you know that—

[beat]

No. No! How could think that? David, I spend every night with you...

[beat]

Can't you just have some leftovers?

[beat]

I'm not avoiding the question! I just don't want to alienate the only people who want to be my friends since—Dave...*David*, I'm not trying to avoid you, I just want to hang out with other people. No! That's not what I said. You *know* that's not what I said!

[beat]

Oh c'mon! They're not better than you. That's not what I said.

Wait...David...I...wait...WAIT, will you just let me talk!

[beat]

What? How can you say that? David, I just...You're going WHERE?

[crying]

Baby, no...I...I just thought...no please! Can't you just—David?

David? Hello? Hello?

[exasperated crying]

OK, ok...deep breath. OK. Stop it. I fought Undying for Christsake, I can keep it together after....

[beat, then, realizing something:]

Oh. *Crap*.

SFX: Door opens and closes as Katherine goes inside. Coffee shop noises resume.

CHRISTINA

Katherine! Where's the fire?

KATHERINE

Quick, what time is it?

CHRISTINA

It's 6 o'clock.

KATHERINE

[to herself]

There's still time.

CHRISTINA

Katherine?

KATHERINE

Can you cover my shift? I mean, you have to cover my shift because I have to leave RIGHT NOW. So, sorry, but you can have my share of the tips.

CHRISTINA

Well, I could, but why—

KATHERINE

Oh, and this should cover the ground coffee and French press I'm grabbing.

CHRISTINA

Jeez Katherine, you can get more tomorrow!

KATHERINE

Not if I can help it!

[As she's leaving:]

Thanks for inviting me out, but I really have to be somewhere else!

Scene Seven — Tension!

SFX: Tires screeching to stop. The car idles as a car door slams.

KATHERINE
Tyler! Thank god!

TYLER
Cutting it a little close, aren't you? Wow. That's a lot of stuff. Let me help you with that.

KATHERINE
Thanks. Guilt-free shopping spree, financed by Visa.

SFX: A car door opens.

TYLER
I didn't think you camped.

KATHERINE
I don't.

SFX: Both car doors slam. Tyler's car squeals off. Katherine dials numbers into her phone.

TYLER
Who are you calling? Mike?

KATHERINE
No, I already tried him. His phone's off. I'm calling my parents.
Crud, answering machine.
[beat]

KATHERINE (cont.)
Hey Mom. Dad. It's me. Katherine. I was just calling to let you know that... that I need more time. Please don't worry about me. I know we don't always see eye to eye, but I know you love me, and I love both of you. This isn't about you. It's about me, and I need more time. I love you. Bye.

TYLER
Katherine—

KATHERINE
Can't you drive faster? I mean, this is Boston. The speed limit is just a suggestion.

TYLER
Yeah, because what we really need to get into right now is a high speed car chase with the Boston PD.

KATHERINE
Tyler?

TYLER
Yeah?

KATHERINE
Thank you. Especially after what I said at the mall.

TYLER
Well, sure. I knew some part of you believed, and if it didn't, well... then some part of you *hoped* you could still bring Shauna back.

KATHERINE

So, have you made *your* decision?

TYLER

I have. I—

KATHERINE

Pedestrian!

TYLER

Oh jeez!

SFX: The car swerving at a high speed.

TYLER

[Out the window]

HEY! Use the crosswalk!

[To Katherine]

Apparently crosswalks are also a suggestion.

KATHERINE

So?

TYLER

I would love to come. But you know I can't. If Shauna needed me to be an anchor the first time, she'll probably need me again when you all come back.

SFX: The car swerving.

TYLER

If I can get you there in time.

KATHERINE

[This is uncharacteristic for her]

Ooo! Ooo! There it is!

TYLER

Where?

KATHERINE

To the right!

TYLER

I can't go right!

KATHERINE

Didn't we just agree that traffic laws were actually suggestions?

TYLER

Katherine! I think a median is more concrete than a "no turn on red" sign.

KATHERINE

[With a little humor]

Did you just say the median was "concrete"?

TYLER

I see Mike *has* been talking to you. Hold on. I'm going over it.

KATHERINE

Omigod.

[SFX: The sound of a car going over a concrete median]

KATHERINE & TYLER

Ooof!

[SFX cell phone ringing]

KATHERINE

Oh that's me!

TYLER

Is it Mike?

KATHERINE

No. It's David.

[Beat, sighs, almost with regret:]

Goodbye, David.

SFX: The sound of a window being rolled down. Whoosh!
Doppler effect on the ring tone, and then the cell phone cracks
against something.

TYLER

Did you just...?

KATHERINE

I won't need it... or him... where I'm going

Scene Eight — Return

ARKAHN
Should we delay more?

MIKE
[making a hard decision]
...No. We can't. Start the ritual.

ARKAHN begins the chant. Echoey Fesmer effects.

SFX: The sound of a car being destroyed.

MIKE
Whoa. What the f—?

SFX: A car horn.

MIKE
[SFX: the car screeching to a halt]
Definitely will not miss the drivers here.
[To the car]
Hey, Grand Theft Auto! Are you trying to kill us?!

TYLER
[taken aback]
I was... I just thought that...

MIKE
Tyler?

SFX: The passenger side door slams.

KATHERINE
Mike!

ARKAHN
Kath!

KATHERINE
Arkahn.

MIKE
Katherine?

ARKAHN
You came. I will begin ritual. We cannot wait.

MIKE
Thank god you're here, Katherine! I was really starting to think I'd have to do this alone. What changed your mind?

KATHERINE
What do we have to lose, right?

MIKE
But, wait—

SFX: The driver's side door slams.

TYLER
Mike, aren't you listening? There isn't time to wait. You guys have to go.

KATHERINE
[in background]
Do you really think we have a chance?

MIKE
Thank you for believing me, Tyler.

ARKHAN
[in background]
More than a chance. Stand here.

TYLER
Yeah, well, don't misplace my trust. I'm counting on you to bring
back my sister. Alive. And in one piece.
[Beat]
I mean it, dude. If you don't, my dad'll be the least of your
worries.

ARKHAN
[In background, continuous]
[Magical mutterings]

MIKE
[Nervously]
Right. Gotcha. Ok. Heh.

KATHERINE
Mike, c'mon! Tyler... thanks!

TYLER
[To Katherine]
Anything for my sister! Hey, Mike.

MIKE
Yeah, Ty.

TYLER
Go find her.

ARKAHN
[The complete chant she was piecing together all episode.]

SFX: Shift effect. Music builds, then cuts out ominously at:

ARKAHN
Begin.

END OF SHOW