## Intro

Rhi**:** Welcome back to Duskwall. And welcome to Season Two. We have a lot of news and announcements to get through today, so stick with us. First, I am thrilled to announce that we have a Patreon. The Magpies is a project of love, but right now we’re limited in what we can do with the show by how much money I can invest in it. By supporting us on Patreon, you’ll be helping us to do even more, and get some pretty great rewards in the process.

For example, for just $2 a month, you get access to our secret archive, which currently contains the full, 33 minute Season One blooper reel. And later this month, we will be posting two full pre-series episodes. Higher tiers get to submit NPCs or Devil’s Bargains, get Magpies-inspired tabletop content for their home games, or, at the highest level of support, get a personal Blades in the Dark game with me as the GM. We have a lot of exciting goals, too. Livestreams, episode transcripts, better recording equipment, and so much more. Visit patreon.com/magpiespodcast and check it out. There will be a link in the show notes, as well as on literally every other Magpies website on the internet.

Second, as you can probably tell from my croaky voice, I am recording this the day after getting home from AcadeCon. I had an amazing time and met so many fans. I’m not sure I’ll ever get used to hearing people they recognise my voice from the podcast, but it’s pretty cool. And meeting fans in person is always awesome. I want to give a special shout out to Dakota, aka @punchvestigate, who made an incredible woodcut version of our logo that I am going to treasure forever. There’s a picture of it on our Twitter feed. Go check it out, it’s amazing.

Third, Iron Hides, the weird west monster-of-the-week podcast starring Minna and Madge, among other friends, premiers on the one-shot network this Thursday. Go give them some support, and a really kick-ass launch day.

A couple notes about today’s episode. First, it’s another roleplay-only episode. The players wanted to explore some of the scenes and conversations that happen in the aftermath of the riots and Phin’s arrest. So, rather than glossing over this time period, we recorded a lot of really great character interactions and moments.

Second, I do need to give a bit of warning for one of those scenes, and for an arc that will be playing out in the future. Blaire’s relationship with Setarra is going to become more and more toxic, getting into emotional abuse territory at times. This is a narrative that the group had discussed as a whole and that Kim wants to explore with Blaire. But I recognise that this could be difficult listening for someone who has dealt with, or it still dealing with, similar abuse. For that reason, I’ll include a content warning in front of all the episodes, which includes this one, that deal with the subject.

Next, Kim is going to tell us about this month’s featured charity.

Kim: Of the seven species of sea turtle that call our Earth home, all are either endangered or threatened. Things like pollution, climate change, overfishing and boat propellers put these beautiful animals at risk of disappearing for good. The South Carolina aquarium is home to the state’s only sea turtle hospital, where they rescue, rehabilitate, and then release sick and injured turtles. And the way they accept donations is pretty unique. The aquarium provides public access to the hospital’s Amazon wishlist, where you can shop for supplies that will aid their cause. Whether you gift be as humble as a pack of gauze, or as extravagant as a new water filter, I promise there is something there you can give that fits every budget. A link to the hospital’s wishlist will be provided in the show notes, and if you don’t wish to support the aquarium through Amazon, donations can be made directly through their website as well. Please consider helping sea turtles in need and being a part of giving these animals a fighting chance at survival.

Rhi: If you have a few dollars to spare, please consider donating. I’ve spent the last few months imploring our American listeners to vote out the Republicans in government. Last Tuesday was election night and while the results are still being counted and coming in, there were a lot of really strong gains. Over 100 women, including many queer women and women of colour, were elected to the House of Representatives, which the Democrats now control. There were significant Democratic gains in state governments as well. Now, we need to make sure that these newly elected officials do everything they can to curtail and investigate the Trump administration and the GOP agenda, as well as combat corruption and expand voting rights.

That last one is crucial. Democrats at the federal level are unlikely to achieve much on that front; they control only one chamber of Congress. But, as we saw in Michigan and Florida, significant gains can be made at the state level. So call your governors, your state reps and stare senators, do whatever you can. Volunteer, sign petitions, donate and protest. We need to ensure that more people can vote fairly and safely by 2020. And of course, continue to visit 5calls.org for tips on calling your representatives about immediate issues facing the country.

Now then. Let’s get started, shall we?

## Season One Recap [00:05:41]

Rhi: Welcome back to Duskwall. Over the last several months, The Magpies have become one of the more notorious gangs in the city. From their first job for a pair of investigative journalists at the North Hook Mirror, Phin, Blaire, Minx and Myra have tangled with the corrupt Bluecoats, the supposedly disbanded Umbra Hunters, and the secretive, powerful, Circle of Flame. They stole arcane artefacts from a halted cargo ship, robbed the Iruvian embassy, infiltrated a black market auction, survived The Deathlands, and through it all forged a bond of friendship and family that it seemed nothing could break. Their investigation of The Circle of Flame eventually brought them to the elite Centuralia Club, as they searched for information about missing servants. They uncovered dark rituals and human sacrifices, all in the name of bringing The Circle more power. Everything came to a head when Phin, aided by Myra, murdered Iruvian ambassador and Circle of Flame member Elstera Avrathi in retribution for the lives The Circle had taken.

In response, and to prevent the records and information The Magpies had stolen from going public, The Circle burned down the North Hook Mirror’s office, along with much of the surrounding district. Immediately after, Lord Alistair Mora and the Duskwall City Council put forth their plan to build a factory and worker tenements on the site, taking advantage of the tragedy. The Magpies vowed to stop this from happening. The rallied both the people displaced by the fire and the spirits killed by it and began a massive riot. With the help of questionable allies The Lampblacks and Setarra the sea demon, they drove back the Bluecoats and Spirit Wardens. But their victory was not without cost. The Lampblacks took over the refugee site, crushing any alliance between The Magpies and the people they’d helped, and Phin, already wanted for the murder of Avrathi, was arrested and sent to Iron Hook prison. The remaining Magpies must now survive a war with The Circle of Flame, while missing one of their founding members. Will their choice to become vigilantes, defenders of Duskwall’s poor and desperate, be their undoing? Or will they somehow be the ones to bring change and justice to the city? Let’s find out, shall we?

## Story Continues [00:08:27]

Rhi: We open up on The Nest. It is a rainy day in Duskwall. Streets seem darker and gloomier than normal, not a lot of people outside. Inside, though, it’s fairly warm and homey. The three of you are sitting around a table, having dinner, and there’s a notably empty fourth chair at a spot at the table where there’s a bunch of, like, you know, scratch marks and knife stabs in the wood. Just sort of a quiet, awkward day about three or four days after the riots and Phin’s arrest.

Josie (as Minx): So, um, Blaire, dear?

Kim (as Blaire): Mm-hmm?

Josie (as Minx): Um, what exactly-, who’s your friend that helped us out?

Kim (as Blaire): What friend?

Josie (as Minx): You know, the rather fiendish looking woman who took down a small squadron by herself?

Kim (as Blaire): Ohhh. That friend.

Josie (as Minx): I assume a friend, I hope a friend.

Kim (as Blaire): Um…well. Her name is Setarra.

Josie (as Minx): Uh huh.

Kim (as Blaire): Mm-hmm.

Josie (as Minx): Blaire, you know I was asking for a bit more than that.

Kim (as Blaire): Um…

Minna (as Myra): She isn’t human, is she?

Kim (as Blaire): No. She’s not human.

Josie (as Minx): So what is she? I thought your specialty was ghosts.

Kim (as Blaire): Well what do you think she is?

Josie (as Minx): Given her similar features, it seems… she’s very clearly a demon, Blaire.

Kim (as Blaire): Yes! Setarra is a demon.

Josie (as Minx): And why, pray tell, were you able to simply call a demon to our aid? Not that I’m not thankful–

Kim (as Blaire): Because I know her, okay, just…

Kim: And Blaire is like, Blaire’s starting to pout, she’s very visibly uncomfortable.

Josie and Minna: Aww.

Kim: This is a hot-button issue apparently.

Josie (as Minx): Blaire, I don’t mean to chastise you, I’m not your mother, but this does seem like the sort of thing that could put the crew in danger, potentially.

Kim (as Blaire): It’s not. I’ve got it under control.

Josie (as Minx): I mean, for the time being that seems to be the case, but, any particular reason you didn’t share this?

Kim (as Blaire): Because I knew you’d, like, people would think that. Setarra is the reason that I got expelled.

Minna (as Myra): Oh. What happened?

Kim (as Blaire): I just spent a long time in the library one night, and I brought it back to my room, and I don’t know, I just, I figured out how to summon her. And she- there’s so little out there written about demons, it’s just, I thought I’d be able to learn.

Minna (as Myra): And that’s an admirable thing. Have you been talking to Setarra all this time?

Kim (as Blaire): On and off.

Josie (as Minx): Has she been in The Nest?

Kim (as Blaire): No! No, I never summon her in The Nest. I go outside for that.

Josie (as Minx): All right, well, that’s responsible at the very least. I know, for myself, I’m not upset at your propensity to learn, but you saw what she is capable of, you understand our worry.

Kim (as Blaire): Well, yes, but that’s why I brought her. Like, we were going to lose otherwise. I had to do something; I thought she’d be able to help because we’re friends.

Josie (as Minx): Blaire, I don’t blame you for anything. I just care about all of you and want to make sure everyone’s safe.

Kim (as Blaire): I’m safe.

Josie: Can I give Blaire a hug? This is not how Minx was expecting it to go. She’s so precious.

Kim: I mean, you might want to roll for it. I don’t know if, not to backseat GM or anything, but I don’t know if she’s in the hugging mood.

Josie: Okay.

Rhi: Yeah, no, that’s, yeah. I mean, this is probably Consort.

Josie. Sure, all right. No. I got a three.

Rhi: Okay.

Josie: Yeah. I think Minx tries to, like, scoot closer for it. Minx is already feeling pretty guilty about, like, putting Blaire on the spot. But, I imagine Blaire is just, super pout mood.

Kim: She is ultra, über, pout mode right now. But as soon as she notices Minx scooting closer she is just gonna stiffen up, she squares her shoulders, her fists, like, tighten. They clench at her sides and she gives, just like, giving off very strong ‘do not touch me’ vibes.

Josie: Minx will back off then.

Josie (as Minx): Again, sorry for the interrogation but–

Kim (as Blaire): No, it’s fine. You wanted to know about her, so… surprise! I’m friends with a demon. Can we stop talking about it now?

Minna (as Myra): Has she asked anything of you?

Kim (as Blaire): What do you mean?

Minna (as Myra): Help from people who are more powerful usually comes at a price. I’m assuming that works with demons as much as humans.

Kim (as Blaire): No, she hasn’t asked me for anything. If anything, she’s been helping me.

Minna (as Myra): Do you know why?

Kim (as Blaire): No. I don’t. I know it’s like a complicated thing, demons are obviously very powerful and whatnot, but people are always so quick to dismiss them as being bad people. And it’s just, we don’t know if that’s the truth because everybody’s too afraid to study them or get to know them.

Josie (as Minx): Well, I suppose that could be true. But you understand that we worry, you doing that by yourself. We are a crew for the purposes of backing each other up, yes?

Kim (as Blaire): Mm-hmm.

Josie (as Minx): So, simply from our perspective, you’re talking to an unknown, powerful entity with unknown motives, who may very well be a good person, and who may very well be not, and is involved, however tangentially, in our business. And given the nature of your studies, it can be dangerous. Just, everything you do, really.

Kim (as Blaire): Yeah, I’m equipped to handle this kind of stuff though. Demons, like, I dunno, maybe a little less so, but I’m learning. I’m gonna figure out how to handle this. And I don’t know if she’s good good, I don’t think any demons are, like, quote unquote ‘good’, but…

Minna (as Myra): I mean, that’s all well and good, but people are-, there’s usually a price with them as well, you know, I’m not worrying just on the fact that she’s a demon. Although that is pretty worrying to me. Although I accept that you know more about this than I do.

Josie (as Minx): Indeed. It’s just, should she ever ask a price of you, that is something to talk with us about, I think.

Kim (as Blaire): Well, if it would make you two feel any better, next time I see her I can ask her what she wants from me.

Minna (as Myra): It would make me feel better. I would worry, I think.

Josie (as Minx): Yes. In fact, it might just simplify things if we all met Setarra in a not bloody flurry of chaos.

Kim (as Blaire): You guys want to meet her?

Minna: I think Myra looks at Minx with, like, an ‘are you sure about this’ look in her eyes.

Josie (as Minx): I think it’s less a matter of want, and more of a matter of quite literally the devil you know versus the devil you don’t.

Kim: Poor choice of words.

Rhi: No, I think absolutely deliberate, good use of words.

Kim: Yeah, but Blaire disagrees.

[laughter]

Kim: Anyway, um:

Kim (as Blaire): You promise you won’t freak out if you meet her?

Minna (as Myra): I can’t promise that. You’ve seen me in some situations. But I’ll do my best.

Josie (as Minx): I promise not to ‘freak out’, as you put it, though I will keep my kerchief upon me.

Minna (as Myra): I promise not to act against her unless you say so.

Kim (as Blaire): That’s probably for the best, because, I don’t know, I feel like if we did that, that would probably be bad? I’ve just been, kind of, doing–

Minna (as Myra): I agree with you. I just, I’m wondering what you’re asking of me when you ask me not to freak out. If you mean will I be cool with your friend, I will be cool with your friend.

Kim (as Blaire): Yeah, yeah, just be cool. I’m cool with her. If you want to meet her tonight, I could summon her tonight.

Josie (as Minx): I- I mean, are you ready for this?

Minna (as Myra): I mean, it’s as good a time as any, isn’t it?

Kim (as Blaire): Oh my gods, okay, then um–

Josie (as Minx): All right, let me compose myself a moment.

Kim (as Blaire): I guess I’m summoning her again tonight. Okay. Um, just be cool. And we’ll do that later.

Minna (as Myra): Blaire, are you cool?

Kim (as Blaire): Yeah.

Minna (as Myra): All right. You were sounding a little bit…

Kim (as Blaire): No, I’m excited. Like, I thought you guys would, like, freak out at me and tell me not to summon her again, or, you know, something like that. But, I don’t know, the fact that you guys are even willing to just hear her out, that’s pretty cool.

Josie (as Minx): I mean, I feel like were it any other person that would be our response, yes.

Kim (as Blaire): Yeah, most people are assholes, but not you guys. So, thanks.

Rhi: So from there do we want to go to this?

Josie: Yeah, why the fuck not?

Rhi: Yeah.

Minna: [sighs] We’re meeting a demon.

Josie: Yeah!

Rhi: Yeah, so where do you go to do this?

Josie: How about there’s a little basement that runs right up to the canal, or something? So, there’s like, a little bit of water run-off into there, because she’s a sea demon and all that?

Kim: I like that.

Rhi: So, you head over to this spot. There’s probably, you know, kind of, the chalky remains of when Blaire has drawn sigils there previously.

Kim: I, kind of, rub the spot with my sleeve to clean it off, and I draw the sigil again.

Rhi: How much salt water do you have? Like, a bowl?

Kim: You know what? Because it’s a special occasion and I’m meeting friends, I’m gonna bring a larger bowl than usual for this.

Rhi: Okay.

Kim And let’s see, maybe I brought in a pitcher from my room, or whatever, and I’m just gonna pour whatever stash I have in my room, not all of it, but like a good chunk of it, into the bowl and just give her an easier time of getting here.

Rhi: Okay. So you set up the summoning thing. While Blaire is setting this up, Minx and Myra, what are you two up to? What are you two doing?

Josie: Minx has almost done herself up like she’s trying to impress someone.

Kim: Oh my god, so gay.

Josie: Not romantically impress, like, almost like she’s going in to enquire about a job or something.

Kim: First impressions.

Rhi: It’s the way she dresses up when she’s, like, going to con information out of nobility.

Josie. Exactly. And she is visibly trying very hard to not look disconcerted by the room, but is obviously very disconcerted.

Rhi: [laughs] How about Myra?

Minna: I think, just, kind of like, standing with her arms crossed, like, at her most stoic. She’s not going to admit how nervous this makes her. Why would she do a thing like that?

Rhi: Feelings? Pssh. I don’t have those. So, Blaire finishes the ritual and there’s, like, a moment of silence. And then, sort of a rushing splashing sound, and the woman that you saw a few nights ago surges up out of the bowl. And she looks first at Blaire and smiles faintly, and says:

## [00:21:37] Content warning: emotional abuse. To skip, go to next timestamp.

Rhi (as Setarra): I will forgive you for troubling me again, given the amusements you provided me recently.

Kim (as Blaire): I know it’s a little soon, but nice to see ya.

Rhi: And then her gaze kind of slides off Blaire, over to Minx and Myra, and her eyes narrow. And, like, she’s clearly addressing Blaire, but she’s still looking at the two of them. She just goes:

Rhi (as Setarra): Who are these people?

Kim (as Blaire): Setarra–

Josie (as Minx): Er–

Kim (as Blaire): Oh, okay, um, hold on–

Josie (as Minx): Er, yes, um, we are Blaire’s associates. I am Minx and this is Myra. Um, it’s a pleasure to meet you. Setarra, was it?

Rhi (as Setarra): Why have you brought them?

Kim (as Blaire): They wanted to meet you. They’re part of my crew.

Rhi: She scowls. Whatever, like, good will she was feeling at the beginning of this conversation is just gone. And she very quickly, without moving from where she’s standing, she reaches out, grabs Blaire’s arm, pulls her in, there’s another, like, pillar of water, and then both Setarra and Blaire are gone.

Minna: [shrieking gasp] What?

Josie: What? Minx has a sword out and is fucking, like, trying to look for anything to stab, but there’s nothing.

Rhi: There’s just the now empty bowl, kind of like, rattling back and forth on the ground. So, we cut over to the docks, not anywhere near Ink Row, just like, out on one of the piers. And it’s just kind of quiet and still. The rain’s still falling. And there’s another surge of water up from the sea and Blaire and Setarra both appear standing on the pier, and she like, kind of, she pushes Blaire back at the same time as she is letting go of her arm so that there’s more distance between them.

Kim: It’s a forceful, kind of like, let go.

Rhi: Yeah. And is just like:

Rhi (as Setarra): What are you thinking?

Kim (as Blaire): I- I’m sorry, I didn’t know it’d make you upset, I–

Rhi (as Setarra): My arrangement is with you and you alone. You are the one that I have chosen. You are special. I do not care about whatever associates you use to accomplish our ends.

Kim (as Blaire): I’m sorry.

Rhi: She just sort of waves a hand dismissively.

Rhi (as Setarra): Did you only bring me here to meet them, or did you have some other purpose in mind?

Kim (as Blaire): I’m sorry, that is what I summoned you for. It’s just that they wanted to know, they wanted to meet you. Um, they’re my crew and last time I summoned you they saw you, and they wanted to know who you were and–

Rhi: She looks just, kind of like, disinterested, and doesn’t seem to find this to be a worthwhile reason for dragging her out here. And is like:

Rhi (as Setarra): If that is all you wanted, then I will return to my other business.

Kim (as Blaire): Wait.

Rhi: And she just sort of gives you a flat look.

Kim (as Blaire): Setarra, what is our arrangement exactly?

Rhi: She kind of studies you for a long moment, and says:

Rhi (as Setarra): As I said, you are special. You see things that others do not. I wish to help you see more. But, I need you to bring me knowledge, so that we can learn together. Grow together. Discover the unknown.

Kim (as Blaire): Together.

Rhi: She nods.

Rhi (as Setarra): But this is for you, Blaire. I’ve chosen you. Alone.

Kim (as Blaire): I know, and I’m grateful for that. I just, I guess I was just, curious to know what you wanted in return. But, you answered that. So, we’re good.

Rhi: She nods, and says:

Rhi (as Setarra): I will ask things of you in the future, but they will be things that will benefit us both.

Kim (as Blaire): Okay.

Rhi: She nods again, and then sort of, like, seems to turn to water and falls through the pier, down into the ocean.

Kim: Blaire is going to stand in silence for just a minute. She is going to want to catch her breath and just get her bearings, look around a bit. And after a moment she is just going to, like, very quickly slide down to sit down on the pier. She’s just going to bury her face in her hands and cry.

Rhi: Aww, no, and it’s raining!

## [00:26:34] End of content warning.

Kim: Oh it is, that’s right.

Minna: Baby!

Rhi: It’s raining, yeah, oh man. So, we’ll cut back to The Nest. I presume Minx and Myra have returned there.

Josie: Maybe? Minx is kind of like in obsessive ‘where the fuck did Blaire go’ mode. Where is she? Myra, our baby got kidnapped by a demon, we have to find her.

Minna and Kim: Aww.

Rhi: And like also, this is like, the last time somebody on your crew was out of your sight, she got sent to jail. So, like, okay, so then where are the two of you?

Josie: We’re fucking scouring the area just outside The Nest. Maybe we, like, call the Gondoliers and like–

Minna: God, yeah.

Josie: Yeah. Like get on one, and go on a fucking search party.

Rhi: Okay. So, I think that it’s Kay who shows up and like, how much of the situation do you explain?

Josie: Just that Blaire has been taken and we need to find her. Because Minx is too frantic to do much else.

Rhi: Yeah, Kay very quickly picks up on that the two of you are freaking out and is like:

Rhi (as Kay): Okay. Yeah, yeah. Let’s… do you have any idea which direction?

Josie (as Minx): I have no idea, but we could head towards the water? Her pursuers seem to have some sort of affinity to water, I don’t know. That’s why we called you.

Rhi: Kay gives you a look that’s like, just a little bit suspicious and is like:

Rhi (as Kay): All right. We’ll, I guess, head up to the docks then.

Rhi: So I think we see, you know, you guys heading in the gondola up through the canals, moving through the docks.

Josie (as Minx): We shouldn’t have asked her to do it. We shouldn’t have done that. We should have put our foot down; I need to get better about that.

Minna (as Myra): Minx, Minx, this isn’t helping anything.

Josie (as Minx): You’re right. You’re right, dear. You’re right.

Josie: She’s gonna smooth her hair back.

Josie (as Minx): We need to remain calm. We’ll be back with her before the end of the night.

Minna: Myra leans forward.

Minna (as Myra): Blaire has been dealing with Setarra for longer than we’ve known her. I think that if Setarra were going to harm her, I don’t think that at a first offence like this she would punish her too badly.

Josie (as Minx): I mean, yes, I suppose that must be the possibility we must go with in order to retain sanity. Mm-hmm.

Rhi: As you’re, like, moving through the canals, you pass some other gondoliers and Kay asks:

Rhi (as Kay): Hey, have you seen Blaire? The little one with the horns?

Rhi: And, you know, they pretty much all are shaking their heads, until after you’ve been out for a little bit, one of the gondoliers says:

Rhi (as Gondolier): Oh, yeah, yeah, I saw her walking.

Rhi: And he like, he gives, you know, a canal and a street area.

Rhi (as Gondolier): Just a few minutes ago over that way.

Rhi: And Kay, like, very quickly starts pulling in that direction. And I think that you all catch up with Blaire just as she’s going across one of the bridges towards the southern end of the docks.

Josie: I think you probably hear Minx’s heeled boots clacking before you see her, because she’s gonna basically just come run and grab you into her arms.

Kim (as Blaire): Minx? Oh!

Josie (as Minx): Thank the gods.

Minna: Myra’s not far behind, and she smiles at the two of them.

Josie (as Minx): You’re all right. We knew you would be. You’ve been dealing with this. But where were you?

Kim (as Blaire): She took me to the–

Josie (as Minx): You know what? It doesn’t matter. We’re going back to The Nest, right now.

Kim (as Blaire): Okay.

Rhi: I think Kay is just waiting there in the gondola to take the three of you back home. And when you get in, she just, kind of like, gives Blaire a smile and is like:

Rhi (as Kay): Good to see that you’re all right.

Kim (as Blaire): Thanks Kay.

Josie (as Minx): I think I’m going to, kind of like, shower Kay with praise and give her a hefty tip and just like, I’m not slowing down yet. Not until we’re back to The Nest.

Kim: I love Minx, oh my God.

Rhi: So, Kay brings you back to, kind of, your usual dock in Six Towers. You all head back upstairs and inside The Nest and all of you are, you know, I think Blaire is soaked to the skin.

Kim: Yeah, she’s dripping.

Rhi: Yeah. Minx and Myra are not exactly dry either. And what’s everybody doing?

Josie (as Minx): You know what? I need a moment. I’m gonna go freshen up for a moment.

Minna: Myra puts on the kettle. [laughs]

Rhi: Oh, yay.

Josie: Aww.

Kim: She’s just gonna go straight to her room and, like, not say a word. Just immediately change into something dry.

Rhi: The tea is poured and everybody’s back at the table again.

Josie: Minx has got her hair up in a towel bun.

Kim: Oh my God, yes.

Josie (as Minx): So. So, Blaire. What just happened?

Kim (as Blaire): She just took me to the docks. That’s all.

Josie (as Minx): Okay. You have to understand that this didn’t exactly settle our worries.

Kim (as Blaire): No. I know.

Minna (as Myra): Are you quite all right?

Kim (as Blaire): Yeah, I’m fine. It’s just, I thought that would go better. But she doesn’t want to meet you guys. So you just have to leave it at that.

Josie (as Minx): I must say I’m rather uncomfortable with that outcome.

Kim (as Blaire): It’s fine! It’s just, she only wants me.

Josie (as Minx): Wants you for what?

Kim (as Blaire): To know the world. That’s what she told me.

Josie (as Minx): So she’s undertaking your education?

Kim (as Blaire): No.

Josie (as Minx): Out of the kindness of–

Kim (as Blaire): No, I’m well educated enough. I don’t need to be educated any more. It’s trading knowledge for knowledge, it’s different than a book smarts thing.

Josie (as Minx): All right. So, you are exchanging information then, and that is the extent of it?

Kim (as Blaire): Mm-hmm.

Josie (as Minx): She has not put a price on your soul or the like?

Kim (as Blaire): No.

Josie (as Minx): I am honestly at a loss. I cannot claim that I trust Setarra at all, but I do trust Blaire.

Minna (as Myra): Yes, I think, Blaire, I think I trust you. But if you ever need help we are here.

Kim (as Blaire): Okay.

Minna (as Myra): And that’s as far as I’ll take it.

Kim (as Blaire): That’s all I ask.

Josie (as Minx): And should Setarra ever attempt to extract a terrible price from you, we must know immediately.

Kim (as Blaire): Okay.

Rhi: I there’s kind of an awkward silence as everybody is sipping their tea and the scene fades out. And there’s sort of a time lapse shot of the docks, of the former Ink Row area. Very fast, you know, we see some tents going up, some ramshackle huts, there’s a wave of Bluecoats that come in. They get repelled by a mix of Lampblacks and refugees. And about two weeks after the riots, we come back in on Nightmarket. Early afternoon, not that it’s terribly obvious. There’s a bit of fog rolling in, and we see Myra making her way down the street towards the café, and Jeren is sitting at their usual table, kind of, off against one wall with a clear view of the window, which he has his back towards. Because he knows that Myra likes to have a seat where she has a clear view of all windows and exits.

[laughter]

Kim: Wow.

Minna: I feel very attacked because I didn’t even specify that. Yeah, so Myra comes in and she spots him immediately and kind of settles in with like, a little smile.

Minna (as Myra): How are you doing?

Rhi: He looks tired and, because I think this is the first time you two have seen each other since the riots. He looks not exactly happy to see you.

Minna: Oh, she deflates, like, visibly.

Rhi (as Jeren): [sighs] If I were a better Bluecoat, I would be arresting you right now.

Minna (as Myra): You’re an archivist; you wouldn’t normally have responsibility for that.

Rhi (as Jeren): I still took oaths. I still have the authority to do so.

Minna (as Myra): If you don’t want to be my friend anymore, I would understand why.

Rhi (as Jeren): I don’t know, Myra. I just…

Rhi: And he kind of like, looks around, but there’s, you know, nobody really near your table, he’s just like:

Rhi (as Jeren): Why? I mean, what did you have to gain from the ambassador?

Minna (as Myra): We didn’t have anything to gain. She was… do you want to hear about it or would you rather not? Because...

Rhi (as Jeren): I need to know why so that I can decide if I am going to have you arrested.

Minna (as Myra): That club, The Centuralia Club. She and her friends there have been taking innocent people and… it’s hard to explain. They were taking the unseen people of Duskwall, people that nobody would care about, and they were giving them drugs and trying to use them for some arcane purposes, and it was killing them. And nobody cared, and nobody knew, and we found out, and things got out of hand. But I can understand why my friend was angry enough to kill. She took a parasite out of the world.

Rhi: Jeren is just giving you this incredulous look and is just like:

Rhi (as Jeren): Myra, that’s crazy. That’s not–

Minna (as Myra): It’s true. We saw the chamber. They captured my friend and tried to do it to… [sighs]

Rhi (as Jeren): Look, I know there’s a lot of, you know, corruption in this city, but that’s–

Minna (as Myra): Jeren, your father is a barrister. You have quite a cushy job with The Bluecoats. You have never seen the underbelly of this city. I have. I was born into it. And you know what? People do this to people like me all of the time. And it’s time it fucking changed.

Rhi (as Jeren): I just… why would they do something like that?

Minna (as Myra): Because they had a lot to gain. Because they would get power that a lot of people in this city don’t have.

Rhi (as Jeren): The ambassador already had power and wealth and prestige.

Minna (as Myra): You know what? I can’t tell you why she wanted more. But she did.

Rhi: He just kind of like, leans back in his chair and studies you for a few moments, and is like:

Rhi (as Jeren): You really believe all this, don’t you?

Minna (as Myra): I’ve read the papers. I’ve seen the places where this happened. And even if I hadn’t, it’s not that strange to me.

Rhi (as Jeren): I dunno, Myra, that’s a lot to swallow.

Minna (as Myra): I know it’s a lot to swallow, but you asked to hear it. And you’re the oldest friend that I have. But if this is going to keep working, I think you need to understand that I’m going to be finding things like this, and I’m going to be confronting them. Because I can’t do anything else if I see it, not anymore.

Rhi (as Jeren): I- I mean I believe that you believe it was justified. I just–

Minna (as Myra): Do you think The Bluecoats are protecting this city?

Rhi (as Jeren): Of course. I mean, could we be doing a better job? Yes. Is there a problem with corruption in the ranks? Yes. But, what’s the alternative?

Minna (as Myra): How would you fix it?

Rhi (as Jeren): I don’t know. I mean, we’d make reforms, have, you know, restrictions about not taking bribes and things like that, you know, enforced. The change would have to be coming from inside The Bluecoats though, you know? Nothing’s gonna get better if it comes from outside, people are going to feel like it’s being shoved down their throats, you know? You have to give these things time.

Minna (as Myra): In the meantime, people are being hurt and I can’t just sit and wait and hope that it’s going to get better.

Rhi (as Jeren): I don’t know, Myra. I mean, I want to stay your friend, but I don’t know how much I can help you with this. Not while I’m doing what I do. And I joined The Bluecoats because I wanted to help, I wanted to protect the city in some way, even if it’s just from behind a desk most of the time.

Minna (as Myra): I believe you want to help. I just, I won’t ask the same things of you that I have been, not if it’s gonna tear your loyalties the way that it has.

Rhi (as Jeren): They’re already pretty torn. But, thanks.

Minna (as Myra): I want to keep you as a friend, Jeren, I do. I just, I think I just needed you to understand where things are heading, because it’s not gonna get less like this. It’s probably going to get worse.

Rhi (as Jeren): I just wish you didn’t feel like you had to do this. There’s other ways.

Minna (as Myra): And what am I gonna do, Jeren? Join The Bluecoats myself?

Rhi (as Jeren): I don’t know.

Minna (as Myra): Can you see that?

Rhi: He kind of like, pauses for a second and, like, stares in the middle distance, and is like:

Rhi (as Jeren): [laughs] Yeah, I guess you’re right. I just, I don’t know. I feel like there has to be some other way besides attacking a club full of innocent people and killing an ambassador, you know?

Minna (as Myra): We didn’t attack anybody who didn’t deserve it.

Rhi: He just kind of shakes his head and is like:

Rhi (as Jeren): We should go and order our food.

Minna (as Myra): [laughs] Yeah, that sounds like a good idea. Turn to less heavy subjects.

Rhi (as Jeren): Yeah.

Rhi: We fade out on Myra and Jeren having their lunch and come back in on the same café a little while later. The fog has gotten thicker outside. We see Jeren, like, disappearing around the corner down at the far end of the street, just as Myra is leaving. The two of them don’t ever really leave together. Where is Myra headed towards? Is she heading home, is she heading to The Hound’s Paw, are there other places she’s going?

Minna: I think she’s heading home.

Rhi: Okay.

Minna: But winding her way through Nightmarket.

Rhi: So, Myra, you are heading, sort of, generally up towards Six Towers, but not taking a direct path there, and you notice after a little while that you’ve been hearing, kind of, the same set of footsteps behind you for a few blocks.

Minna: So, I think she hesitates for a moment and then keeps walking. But she has a hand, like, creeping towards her gun.

Rhi: As you do that, you look up and you see a figure in, like, a heavy, long coat that is hanging open. Which is kind of weird, because there’s sort of a midday chill with all the fog in the air. And he’s walking towards you, not really looking at you, but just sort of striding purposefully in your direction. And when he gets a few strides away, he slips a hand into his coat and you see him starting to pull out something, maybe it’s a pistol, maybe it’s a truncheon, it’s definitely some kind of weapon. And then his eyes finally go to you and you hear the footsteps behind you speed up.

Minna: Okay, I think I drop to the ground and am turning to look at the person following me. Kind of, like, turning sideway so that I can sort of glance between the two of them.

Rhi: Yeah. The guy who was behind you is running towards you now and has a truncheon in his hand.

Minna: I think she’s actually just gonna, like, bolt across the road.

Rhi: Okay. Yeah, so you book it across the street and how do you use your, kind of, knowledge of the city and your skills in conspiracy and planning to get away?

Mina: So, I think she ducks down an alley and like, knocks on a back door, and somebody she knows in one of the shops lets her through.

Rhi: I think the shot is, we see the two of them, like, you know, weapons out, looking around, running down the alley, and then it pans up through this shop, and I think it’s a shop that sells, like, it’s a clothing shop, so there’s scarves and hats and stuff, and we see Myra coming out the front door with a scarf kind of over her head and wrapped around her neck, and kind of like concealing her face a little bit.

Mina: Mm-hmm.

Rhi: And she just like heads off in a different direction, walking very briskly. You make it back to The Nest without any other trouble. Blaire, where are you hanging out right now?

Kim: Blaire is, yeah, she’s probably in her room. She’s, like, dissecting something right now.

Rhi: Oh my God.

Minna (as Myra): Minx? Blaire? Anyone home?

Kim (as Blaire): Mm?

Kim: Blaire’s gonna open her door.

Kim (as Blaire): Yeah, what’s up?

Minna (as Myra): Um, be cautious going out. Is Minx out?

Kim (as Blaire): I think so? I don’t know. I’ve been in here a couple hours.

Minna (as Myra): I just got attacked. Well, they tried to attack me in the street. I’m fine, but I–

Kim (as Blaire): Who’s they? What?

Minna (as Myra): I didn’t get a good-, I didn’t stop to ask, actually. I ducked through a shop, you know, and got away.

Rhi: I will say that, like, as you’re thinking back, you realise that underneath the big bulky coats that they were both wearing, they were wearing the uniform of the guards at The Centuralia Club.

Minna (as Myra): It was Umbra Hunter, Centuralia security, you know, our friends in Six Towers.

Kim (as Blaire): Oh. But you’re okay?

Minna (as Myra): I’m fine.

Kim (as Blaire): Okay. Well, I was planning on going out, you know, later this week. I have some trips to make.

Minna (as Myra): Oh, you mean…

Kim (as Blaire): Yeah, I’ve got a lot of people waiting on me to get where they need. So, I was hoping to, you know, empty my shelves a little.

Minna (as Myra): I’ve been meaning to ask you about that.

Kim (as Blaire): Hmm? Okay.

Minna (as Myra): So, you were telling me you’re not a huge fan of, I guess, the kind of cremation the Spirit Wardens do?

Kim (as Blaire): Yeah, no, fuck the Spirit Wardens.

Minna (as Myra): So, what’s your ideal?

Kim (as Blaire): What do you mean?

Minna (as Myra): I mean, in a just world, what happens to ghosts after people are dead.

Kim (as Blaire): I mean, you don’t disintegrate them on the spot. Like, because it’s obviously not what they want, and it’s obviously, it sounds painful. I don’t know if they can actually feel pain, but you don’t zap them until they’re nothing.

Minna (as Myra): You know they’re not like the people they were in life afterwards, right?

Kim (as Blaire): I know that. I know that. I’m not delusional about that. It’s just, listen. This is what we know. We know, right now, that there is some kind of life after death, okay? We know that. When we die, everybody turns into ghosts, for better or for worse, usually worse, it kinda sucks, it’s a bad deal, nobody really likes it. We turn into ghosts. But, like, after that? What’s after that? When a Spirit Warden just takes somebody out of the world, where do they go? What’s left of you?

Minna (as Myra): I’d always assumed that it’s nothing.

Kim (as Blaire): That doesn’t scare you?

Minna (as Myra): It scares me less than the alternative. It’s quite comforting to imagine that I won’t come back as that. That I’m disposed of properly, at least, please.

Kim (as Blaire): They shouldn’t be disposed of. It’s, I mean–

Minna (as Myra): Have you met an angry ghost? I know you’ve met angry ghosts, I’ve been with you.

Kim (as Blaire): Yes. Yes, I have.

Minna (as Myra): And you think that’s any way to exist?

Kim (as Blaire): I don’t know. I mean, every case is different. I guess it just depends on what each and every one of them want. Maybe they’ll want to die, die for real, maybe some of them want to stay on, I don’t know. But who are we to make that choice for them?

Minna: Myra is just kind of frowning sceptically. She cannot agree with Blaire on this.

Minna (as Myra): What about the ones who are dangerous? Which is, from what I understand, many of them.

Kim (as Blaire): Well, that’s what I’m trying to do with The Deathlands. Whether they’re dangerous or not, it’s where they can at least be left alone. You know? Nobody will come after them, or bother them, and they can just feed on whatever they can find without really hurting anyone that’s living.

Minna (as Myra): I just can’t imagine that being preferable.

Kim (as Blaire): You’d prefer to just-, I don’t know, I don’t know how to explain it, because there’s just… is there nothing? After being a ghost?

Minna (as Myra): I hope so.

Kim (as Blaire): I mean, okay, I can kinda get what you’re coming from. I can see how a living person would really want to not live on and angry forever and lose little bits of themselves day by day by day, and would rather prefer, you know, just to go to sleep forever. I get that sounds peaceful. The thing is that we don’t really have a way to do that in a non-violent way for other ghosts. Do you know what I mean? And every time I’ve seen a Spirit Warden go after someone, the process is obviously very traumatic.

Minna (as Myra): I don’t have a good answer for you. I just know what I’d want.

Kim (as Blaire): That’s fair. I get it. I do.

Minna (as Myra): And I don’t like the idea of, I don’t like them wandering around.

Kim (as Blaire): I know you don’t. I’m just trying to explain it.

Minna (as Myra): I understand.

Kim (as Blaire): Most ghosts don’t want what you want, is the thing.

Minna (as Myra): Most ghosts just want to feed.

Kim (as Blaire): Right. I’m trying to give that to them.

Minna (as Myra): Or to get revenge.

Kim (as Blaire): I mean, if that’s what they’ve gotta do, then they can do it. Like I said, case by case.

Minna (as Myra): But you know they’ll do it by preying on the living if they can, you know that right?

Kim (as Blaire): I know.

Minna (as Myra): I don’t know why I’m saying this like I expect you not to know, because you know more than I do about any of this, but, they’re a danger.

Kim (as Blaire): I mean, they were people once too.

Minna (as Myra): Once. Not anymore.

Rhi: I think we’ve got another sort of time lapse shot of Ink Row. There’s another, sort of, Bluecoat push that destroys a bunch of the tents and shacks that were built up. They’ve kind of occupied about half of the space and pushed the people living there back into the remaining space. And I think then we also see quick, sort of, montage shots of The Magpies in The Nest, you know, leaning over maps of the docks and, you know, then there’s like an addition of some papers that have names and maps of Brightstone and the three of them are in, like, animated discussion about things. And then, we fade over to a peaceful Brightstone street. There’s a few, kind of, large, fenced-in manors, there’s a high-end jewellery store, there is one of those art galleries that is by appointment only, there’s a small café. We kind of focus in on one of the manors that has a big wrought iron gate in the middle of the fence. And the, kind of, seal thing on the gates is a pair of crossed swords with a stylised elaborate ‘M’ overlaid over the top of them. So, where are the individual members of The Magpies camped out as they are casing Lord Mora’s estate?

Josie: I am probably gonna do my normal gather info by chatting up cafés and stuff like that.

Rhi: Yeah. Yeah, so you’re hanging out in the café?

Josie: Yeah.

Rhi: Okay. Myra, where are you to, sort of, watch this area?

Myra: I think probably towards, like, whatever the servant’s entrance is.

Rhi: Okay. So, around the back of the house, kind of in the alley. And Blaire, where are you hanging out?

Kim: I was thinking I am on the roof, or either scoping out the basement.

Rhi: Let’s go with on the roof.

Kim: Okay.

Rhi: Yeah, I like that. The first sign of trouble, Minx, you notice that the person you’re talking with, who has been chatting you up a lot and seems to be determined to, kind of, keep you in this conversation, you at first thought it was just her being kind of a chatty person who wanted attention. But then you notice that she keeps glancing towards the door as if, you know, she’s expecting someone. And then, the door does open and a man in the Centuralia Club guard uniform steps in, followed by three Bluecoats.

Josie: Oh dear.

Rhi: At which point the woman you’ve been talking with stands up and says:

Rhi (as Woman): She’s over here!

Josie: Okay, she doesn’t give me a chance. Um, I think I’m gonna, for like two seconds, try to keep up the ruse.

Josie (as Minx): What are you talking about? This is mightily rude–

Josie: And then just two seconds into my sentence, realise the jig is up, cast off my cloak and bolt for the back of the café. [laughs]

Rhi: Okay. So you go sprinting towards the back. We cut over to Myra, who’s about halfway down the alley, and then two figures kind of step into the alley in front of her. And you recognise them. It’s the same two who were chasing you a couple of weeks ago. And one of them says:

Rhi (as Umbra Hunter): You’re not getting away this time.

Rhi: And behind you another two, kind of, step in, so they’ve got both ends of the alley blocked off. What do you do?

Minna: Um… climbing gear. I go up the side.

Rhi: You just, like, throw a rope up a building and scramble up?

Minna: Yeah.

Rhi: Okay. And Blaire. You’re kind of sitting there, watching the house, and you hear the access door to this roof slam open. And you spin around to see, kinda like Minx, there’s a Centuralia club guard trailed by a few Bluecoats rushing towards you.

Kim: Can I hardcore Parkour out of there?

Rhi: Yeah.

Kim: Yeah, she’s just gonna, I don’t know, jump to another roof, just get away.

Rhi: So like, Blaire you run and you jump and you manage to grab the gutter on the next roof, and you’re hanging by your hands and you have that flash of the last time this happened.

Kim: Yeah, I was gonna say, come on, again?

Rhi: But you have that flash, and just like, you kind of start to turn your head to look down and then just, like, manage to push through it and pull yourself up and roll onto the roof and keep running.

Kim: Oh, thank God.

Rhi: Yeah, the three of you split and just kind of go running off into the city. And I think each of you is followed. So, none of you head back to, kind of like, your normal haunts. You don’t go to The Nest, you don’t go The Hound’s Paw. You all just sort of scatter into the city and have to go pretty far in order to lose everyone. And so, I think first we follow Minx, who makes her way, kind of, clear across the city over to Silkshore and then she reaches a four-storey, clearly kind of older, a little bit shabby, the paint is peeling, but it’s not like, in disrepair, type apartment building. And she lets herself inside and climbs up the stairs to the fourth floor, makes her way down the hall and knocks on one of the doors. And after a few moments, the door opens a crack and you see, like, a sliver of face peering out, and then the door opens and Nyryx is there, kind of looking a little confused, like:

Rhi (as Nyryx): Minx! I wasn’t expecting to see you, you said you were going to be busy for the next few days. Are you all right?

Josie (as Minx): Yes, well, we had to cut the business short. May I step in for a few moments?

Rhi (as Nyryx): Yeah, of course.

Rhi: And she ushers you in and does that thing where she, like, leans out the door and kind of looks up and down the hallway before closing the door.

Josie (as Minx): I apologise for not bringing any wine, and for the unannounced visit, but it’s–

Rhi (as Nyryx): It’s fine, it’s fine, you know I’m always happy to see you.

Josie (as Minx): Likewise.

Rhi: And she herds you over to a chair. Nyryx’s apartment, it’s small, it’s a studio apartment, but it’s very comfortable, it’s very homey. She has made this into undeniably her space. She has a big comfortable bed with a lot of, like, blankets and quilts and pillows on it, there are some small tapestries and, you know, little sketches and things. And Minx, you have a lot of art as well, but yours is, kind of, chosen largely for value and artistic significance. The stuff that Nyryx has, like, some of it isn’t very skilled, but there’s clearly, kind of, a theme of the people of the city. There’s a lot of sketches of just, sort of like, street scenes and things, you know, of people just out in the city, things like that. She has, you know, a couple, like, very comfortable big stuffed chairs near the window, there’s a little end table with a stack of books, the top one has a bookmark in it. And, yeah, it’s just a very warm a cosy space that she’s made for herself here. So she goes over to the little kitchen area and comes back with a glass of, like, watered-down wine. She hands it to you and then she sits down in the chair across from you and does that thing where she, like, tucks her legs up under her and is kind of curled in the chair and is like:

Multiple: Aww.

Rhi (as Nyryx): What happened? Or do I even wanna know?

Josie (as Minx): Uh, well, to make a long story short, thank you for the wine by the way, turns out when you come to blows, in a manner of fashion, with a gang’s leader, the rest of the gang gets very bad. Who knew?

Rhi (as Nyryx): You didn’t cross Bazso again, did you?

Josie (as Minx): No, no, no. We’ve been talking some, actually. It’s beneficial to at least one of us, I believe. So, no, no. It’s just, you probably haven’t heard of the gang name. But, one of our heists crossed with theirs, and violently, so now things are a little rough, it appears.

Rhi (as Nyryx): Oh. Are you- are you going to be all right? I mean, is this…

Josie (as Minx): I admit I came here a bit out of instinct. I will endeavour to fix this after just a few hours here, if that’s okay.

Rhi (as Nyryx): Of course, of course. It’s fine.

Rhi: She just kind of frowns a little bit, and is like:

Rhi (as Nyryx): Why… why do you keep doing this?

Josie: Minx is sipping her wine.

Josie (as Minx): Keep doing what, Nyryx?

Rhi: She just makes, sort of, a broad gesture out towards the city and is like:

Rhi (as Nyryx): All of this risking your life for, I don’t know, it doesn’t even seem to bring you very much money.

Josie (as Minx): [laughs] Yeah, I’ve noticed. You ask a very good question, and I’m not certain I can give you an answer at the moment. It was supposed to just eventually make living comfortable.

Rhi (as Nyryx): I mean, you could have that without risking your life like this all the time, you know? I mean, I’m comfortable. I’m content.

Josie (as Minx): That’s true. And I’m really, really happy you didn’t get wrapped up in this the way me and Bazso did.

Rhi (as Nyryx): I just, it feels like you’re never content. You’re always chasing after something else.

Josie (as Minx): I’m not, I don’t know what that feels like. Sure, I might be able to pull living together for myself, but will that be enough for the rest of us? Will that enough for you and Bazso and anyone else? I don’t want any of us to go to where we came from.

Rhi (as Nyryx): Bazso and I can take care of ourselves, Ellie.

Josie (as Minx): And do you not believe that I can?

Rhi (as Nyryx): Well… [laughs] You came running in here in a bit of a panic after another job went wrong, and the number of times you’ve gotten hurt, I mean, you have a lot more scars now, dear.

Josie (as Minx): Well, we are all, the four of us, possibly three of us, I do think we are moving a different direction. I got to go into The Centuralia Club not too long ago.

Rhi (as Nyryx): Oh gosh, you’ve wanted that for so long.

Josie (as Minx): Yeah. Yeah. It was… I’ll say it was enlightening.

Rhi (as Nyryx): It wasn’t what you were hoping, was it?

Josie (as Minx): No. No, it wasn’t, Nyryx. It was not.

Rhi (as Nyryx): I’m sorry.

Rhi: And she like, unfolds herself from the chair and walks over to yours and, like, does that thing where she sits down on your lap and kind of drapes an arm around your shoulders.

Kim: [delighted squeal]

Josie: Aww. I’ll nuzzle in a little bit.

Rhi: She kind of, like, pulls your head down to her shoulder and kisses your forehead and is like:

Rhi (as Nyryx): I’m sorry it wasn’t what you wanted, but maybe now you have a chance to figure out what you do want? Something that would make you happy?

Josie (as Minx): I suppose. I thought I had it pretty well in hand, but I suppose I don’t. Nyryx, I’m not… you’ve seen a lot of people come through. I’m not like the people at The Centuralia Club, am I?

Rhi: She kind of has to, like, think for a second about what kind of people you’re referring to, and then shakes her head, and is like:

Rhi (as Nyryx): No. You’re too much of a soft touch.

Rhi: And kind of, like, taps your nose.

Kim: [squeal]

Josie: Minx is blushing furiously.

Rhi: She’s had kind of like a little fond smile on her face this whole time, and I think when she sees you blushing, the smile turns a bit more to a smirk, and she’s like:

Rhi (as Nyryx): Well, if you’re going to be here for a few hours…

Rhi: Significant eyebrow raise.

Josie: Yep. I think I’m gonna move in for the kiss now.

Rhi: And we’ll fade out on that. So, where does Blaire run to when everything goes sideways?

Kim: Blaire is hardcore Parkour-ing over the roofs until she reaches the point where I think she feels far enough away and she can make her way to the ground, and it’s probably close to Six Towers, if not in Six Towers, this section of canals that she makes her way over to. Either way, she makes her way underground, probably, I can’t say, like, out of habit anymore, because I feel like she hasn’t done this in a while. It’s probably just because it’s the first thing that came to her mind and she was close to there anyway, and she’s like, ‘Oh, I know this way’, so she just goes that way. So, Blaire goes through an alleyway and then makes her way down these stairs that lead to the canals, and if she just turns, like, over to a sharp right, almost like a 360 behind herself, it leads to this very small tunnel. And it leads to these catacombs. And it’s probably some kind of underground system that she knows will take her close to The Nest, so she’s just gonna take the underground route.

Rhi: Okay. And I think, like, the catacombs under the city, because Duskwall was founded before the cataclysm, the catacombs are leftover from a time when it was still safe to bury the dead.

Kim: Damn. Cool.

Rhi: There’s not a ton left down here, a lot of the remains have just, kind of, been cleared out over the years by, you know, collectors or just scavengers. Whispers collecting bones to do rituals, things of that sort.

Minna: Oh God, bones would be a hot commodity these days, wouldn’t they?

Rhi: Yeah. But there’s very little left. And as Blaire is kind of making her way through the catacombs, all of a sudden a figure sort of slides out of the wall in front of her.

Kim (as Blaire): Ahh!

Rhi: And it comes to a stop, and it is the spirit Neera, who assisted her with the riots and she, when Blaire startles back, she puts up her hand and is like:

Rhi (as Neera): Um, I’m sorry, I didn’t mean to frighten you.

Kim (as Blaire): Don’t sneak up on me like that.

Rhi (as Neera): Sorry, I forget about, it’s sometimes hard to remember that you can’t see–

Kim (as Blaire): No, I–

Rhi (as Neera): Yes, yes.

Kim (as Blaire): I get it. I get it, you’re incorporeal. I’ll probably be the same way, it’s fine.

Rhi (as Neera): Well, hopefully not any time soon.

Kim (as Blaire): Oh, yeah, obviously.

Rhi (as Neera): I’ve been looking for you. I tried to return the place where you had us before when we were in the jars, but it seems to be very heavily warded.

Kim (as Blaire): Yeah, that wasn’t my decision, by the way. Sorry about that.

Rhi: She shrugs. She’s like:

Rhi (as Neera): I can understand. Many of the-, well, most of the spirits in the city are dangerous. It’s wise to take precautions.

Kim: Blaire shrugs.

Rhi (as Neera): I have been, as I told you, looking for that group that I’d heard rumours of. Spirits like myself, who have retained their minds. And I think I may have made a connection.

Kim (as Blaire): Really?

Rhi (as Neera): Actually, it was another spirit that you helped some time ago, who is like me.

Kim (as Blaire): Who is it?

Rhi (as Neera): Well, she has lost her own name. She was a young woman when she died, and you helped her get away from a spirit trafficker, but the name she uses now is that of her host, Nyryx.

Kim (as Blaire): [gasp]

Josie: [pained gasp]

Minna: [stifled scream]

Kim: Yes!

Rhi: [laughs]

Kim: Anyway, out of character aside, so she’s listening.

Kim (as Blaire): Wait, Nyryx is possessed?

Rhi (as Neera): Yes.

Kim (as Blaire): How did I not notice that?

Rhi: Neera just shrugs.

Kim (as Blaire): I’ve met her. The host I mean, I’ve met the host body. But–

Rhi (as Neera): Well, you’ve met both of them, it seems. The spirit, I spoke to her recently as I was in my search, and she says that there are a handful of spirits like us, who have maintained their minds, and she remembered you. We are trying to make contact with the others, but both she and I believe that they would be glad of your help. Most among the living don’t really distinguish amongst spirits; they wish to control or exterminate all of us.

Kim (as Blaire): I know.

Rhi (as Neera): And I think that with the aid of someone like you, perhaps there may be more like us than we realise.

Kim (as Blaire): I think so too. That’s what I’ve been trying to do this whole time. I was actually just trying to explain this to someone earlier and they, like, didn’t get it, you know? It was like, way over their head.

Rhi (as Neera): Well, you understand. And the other spirits that I’ve spoken to are a little less trusting. But Nyryx’s spirit and I will continue to talk to them, and if we can persuade them to meet with you, one of us will contact you and bring you there so you can meet with them.

Kim (as Blaire): Okay, yeah.

Rhi (as Neera): And perhaps they can find ways for you to help.

Rhi: And I think she, kind of like, looks down the hall and is like:

Rhi (as Neera): Would you like company as you’re returning to your home?

Kim (as Blaire): Oh. Yeah, sure. I can even bring you back to The Nest, if you want. Unless you have other work to do, still.

Rhi (as Neera): No, I’m enjoying my freedom.

Kim (as Blaire): Fair.

Rhi: And so, yeah, you and Neera go floating off, well, walking slash floating down the catacombs.

Kim: Ah, so cute.

Rhi: So we come back in inside The Nest. Blaire, I think, is up in her room. Again. Per usual. Doing spooky stuff.

Kim: Yep.

Rhi: What are Minx and Myra up to?

Josie: I think Minx is, like, in the midst of redecorating a little bit. Moving things around, finding a spot for Kevin, and sort of, periodically moving him.

Minna (as Myra): Glad you got away all right.

Josie (as Minx): Likewise. I knew we had angered The Circle of Flame quite a bit, but I wasn’t expecting it to go that bad that quickly.

Minna (as Myra): Neither was I. I suppose we were a little bit too ambitious so early after.

Josie (as Minx): Hmm. Perhaps.

Minna (as Myra): We’re going to have to be more careful.

Josie (as Minx): Mm-hmm. Is this what you had in mind when you first pulled The Magpies together?

Minna (as Myra): [laughs] You mean, vowing to save dock workers from a terrible fate? Starting riots? I don’t think any of us could have envisioned-, well I suppose Phin could have envisioned that.

Josie (as Minx): [laughs] Is that something you’re okay with us doing going forward? Because it seems like we can’t avoid it, especially not now.

Minna (as Myra): I don’t think that we should avoid, I mean, it’s really up to each of you I think. But, I know that working with you and seeing things that happen and seeing what we can do, for me at least, it’s made me realise that there’s something that can be done.

Josie (as Minx): I’m glad to hear that. I’m feeling somewhat the same. Although, I’m uncertain of how much we can actually affect in the grand scheme of things.

Minna (as Myra): We do what we can, right? I mean, look at Phin. She’s been doing this longer than any of us. And just even the small ways that she’s helped, I’ve seen how much, I mean, remember when we attacked that hospital? I know that she has helped that girl since.

Josie (as Minx): That’s very good to hear. Although, I must say saying that we attacked a hospital out of context is a bit worrisome.

Minna (as Myra): The clinic. The one with the–

Josie (as Minx): Apologies, just making a joke. But, is that enough? Just helping young people here and there?

Minna (as Myra): It’s not enough. But it’s what we can do.

Josie (as Minx): Surely we can do more eventually?

Minna (as Myra): Well, eventually, yes.

Josie (as Minx): The Centuralia Club kind of made me realise how ingrained some of this stuff is.

Minna (as Myra): Yes.

Josie (as Minx): Furthermore, we need to think of way to survive with less money.

Minna (as Myra): Ha. Yes, certainly that. I mean, I suppose it wouldn’t be completely strange, would it? You’re from Charhollow too, aren’t you?

Josie (as Minx): Indeed.

Minna (as Myra): We did what we could to get by.

Josie (as Minx): I was hoping this life would lead to a bit more than that.

Minna (as Myra): I have to admit, so was I. That was the original intent.

Josie (as Minx): But now it seems the course is to accept our lot as saviours of the innocent.

Minna (as Myra): Has a nice ring to it, doesn’t it?

Josie (as Minx): It does sound rather noble, and we’ve proven to not be terrible at that.

Minna (as Myra): Yes, I had been wondering if you would be okay with the change.

Josie (as Minx): Why’s that?

Minna (as Myra): I mean, it’s always seemed to me that the possible luxury that this lifestyle could eventually lead to, not luxury, but greater luxury than we have, it seemed to me that that was something that motivated you.

Josie (as Minx): Oh, make no mistake. I still intend to retire living high on the horse, as it were, but, I don’t know, I’m not willing to be like them to get there.

Minna (as Myra): I’m glad to hear that.

Josie (as Minx): Thank you, Myra.

Minna (as Myra): So, you spoke to Bazso, did you?

Josie (as Minx): Um, yes. Briefly. I figured we could use some amount of backup.

Minna (as Myra): Something that I don’t think you’ve been willing to do recently.

Josie (as Minx): Well, when we’re putting ourselves that much on the line, I find myself willing to consider things previously off-limits.

Minna (as Myra): Well, I’m glad you did.

Josie (as Minx): Indeed. Although it’s not coming without cost.

Minna (as Myra): Nothing comes without cost.

Josie (as Minx): And that’s the unfortunate truth, isn’t it? Well, at the very least, I hope you two can keep up a cordial relationship.

Minna (as Myra): [laughs] He’s not such a bad sort, as gang leaders go.

Josie (as Minx): He could be worse. Although, honestly, I must say, he’s worse than I thought he was.

Minna (as Myra): You’ve known him long?

 Josie (as Minx): We grew up together.

Minna (as Myra): Oh.

Josie (as Minx): Him, I and Nyryx.

Minna (as Myra): I don’t think I knew that.

Josie (as Minx): Yes, well I don’t bring up the topic much, but we all strove to get out of Charhollow in our own ways.

Minna (as Myra): Seems like you all did it, which is quite admirable.

Josie (as Minx): Well, I don’t know about admirable in I or his case, but Nyryx is happy, and that makes me happy.

Minna (as Myra): She’s your friend.

Josie (as Minx): Friend among other things, yes.

Minna (as Myra): Well, for the time being, at least, it’s good to have friends like them.

Josie (as Minx): Now, that’s the truth. And I must say, you’ve proven to be more than I could have hoped for as a friend and crewmate.

Minna (as Myra): I have to say the same.

Rhi: So, I think we have one last, sort of, time lapse. There’s a big clash between The Bluecoats and The Lampblacks and the people of the docks. They manage to push The Bluecoats back and start rebuilding again. The rebuilding seems to be going a little slower, though. There aren’t as many people there after that last push. We kinda move from that over across the city, people in the streets, Bluecoats on patrol, Spirit Wardens with their hauls, nobles walking to the somewhat recently reopened Centuralia Club, people of Charhollow and Coalridge on their way to the factories and the mines, and the merchants of Nightmarket making their way to their shops. And in Nightmarket we come to The Hound’s Paw, where the remaining Magpies are seated at their table, waiting for Rigney to bring over their drinks.

Josie (as Minx): I think if we’re considering a new direction, we might need one more person’s opinion, yes?

Kim (as Blaire): Yes.

Josie (as Minx): So, what do we intend to do about that?

Kim (as Blaire): There’s, I mean, there’s very little we can do about it right now. I mean, what are we gonna do, like, storm the gates, break in, into Ironhook? It’s, I dunno, a tall order for just the three of us, isn’t it?

Josie (as Minx): Perhaps. Maybe we need to make it not just the three of us.

Kim (as Blaire): What do you mean?

Josie (as Minx): I mean, we are in a certain amount of trouble regarding certain groups. We could use, at least, another friend to help us out in the meantime.

Rhi: Rigney comes over with a tray as you’re saying that and sets it down and is like:

Rhi (as Rigney): They’re gonna have to be one hell of a friend to help with that.

Rhi: And he kind of, you know, tucks the tray under his arm and is like:

Rhi (as Rigney): If I thought I could be of any use, I’d offer, but I don’t have a lot of skills beyond mixing drinks.

Josie (as Minx): I was about to say though, speaking of hell of a friend.

Kim (as Blaire): True.

Rhi (as Rigney): How have you all been holding up these last couple of months?

Minna (as Myra): It’s been strange, hasn’t it?

Kim (as Blaire): It’s been okay, I think.

Rhi (as Rigney): I haven’t seen you around as much.

Minna (as Myra): Didn’t want to put you at that kind of risk.

Rhi (as Rigney): Well, I have enough risk already, what’s one more, right?

Kim (as Blaire): No, this one’s like, really big risk.

Josie (as Minx): Indeed.

Rhi (as Rigney): I know what you’ve gotten yourselves into and, well, just don’t be too much of strangers.

Josie (as Minx): We shan’t.

Minna (as Myra): if we had any other friends like you, Rigney, I don’t know how we could fail to survive.

Rhi (as Rigney): Well, for what it’s worth, I’m a bit glad you don’t, because it means I get to see more of you.

Rhi: He’s kind of joking with you as normal, but he looks a little, still, kind of concerned or worried. There’s a little bit of tension around his eyes as he’s speaking.

Josie (as Minx): Rigney. I promise that once certain matters are taken care of, it’ll be one hell of a night in here the day that happens.

Rhi (as Rigney): [laughs] I am counting on it. I may have a special bottle stashed away for our wayward friend.

Josie (as Minx): Ooh, now there’s incentive.

[laughter]

Kim (as Blaire): You mean more incentive.

Minna: Myra gives a playful glare.

Josie: Minx just kinda shrugs back.

Rhi (as Rigney): Well, if there’s anything that I can do to help with, you know, I might not be able to break in anywhere, but I know people, got a lot of connections in the city.

Minna (as Myra): If you know anybody who’s particularly skilled with break-ins, we could use, perhaps, a contractor.

Rhi (as Rigney): I’ll see what I can come up with.

Minna (as Myra): Keep an ear out, don’t strain yourself too much.

Rhi: He just kinda shrugs. He’s like:

Rhi (as Rigney): I gotta get back to the bar.

Minna (as Myra): Thank you.

Rhi (as Rigney): He just nods and gives you, sort of, a two-finger salute, heads back.

Minna: Bless Rigney, he’s the best.

Kim: He’s so cute.

Josie: He’s such a good guy. I think one last thing, Minx is gonna hold up her glass and say:

Josie (as Minx): To Phin. To Rigney. To The Magpies.

Minna: I think they all clink.

Kim (as Blaire): Hear hear.

## Outro [01:19:35]

Rhi: Thanks for listening. The Magpies will be back in two weeks. In the meantime, follow us on Twitter, @magpies\_pod and check out our Patreon at patreon.com/magpiespodcast.

The Magpies podcast is hosted and produced by Rhi. Follow me on Twitter @rhiannon42.

Blaire Culhane is played by Kim Kogut. Follow her on Twitter @kimdianajones.

Minx is played by Josie. Follow her on Twitter @DragonGirlJosie and watch her art streams at picarto.tv/dragongirljosie.

And Myra Keel is played by Minna. Follow her on Twitter @mynaminnarr.

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The Blades in the Dark roleplay system is the creation of John Harper and is published by Evil Hat Productions.

## Blooper [01:20:41]

Josie (as Minx): We must be hip with the new trend of demon summoning, I suppose.

[laughter]

Kim (as Blaire): Do as the kids do. It’s the new hotness.

[snorts of laughter]

Josie: I almost feel we should end the scene on that.