The Magpies – Transcript
Season 2, Episode 4: The Lock and Key Score

Transcribed by Tyler (Twitter: @Tyler\_MoonSage)

## Intro

Rhi: Welcome back to Duskwall. Thank you for listening, and if you’re celebrating Christmas we hope that it’s a good one, or at least one you can make it through with a minimum of stress.

We have a special holiday treat for our Patreon backers: another bonus episode from the audio we recorded before the series began. It’s a solo adventure with Blaire, so if you’re backing us go check it out. If you’re not backing us on Patreon this is a great time to start. We’re so close to hitting our next goal, less than $10 away. Please consider backing us so that we can do even more awesome things and make the show even better.

We also have another transcript available. Tyler was kind enough to donate a transcript for Season 1, Episode 2. Again, they were incredibly generous to do this for us and next year I hope to have them, along with some others, help us get transcripts for all our episodes. My dream is to have same-day releases of new episodes and transcripts. Another good reason to back us on Patreon.

All three of our Blades in the Dark episodes of Character Creation Cast are posted. Josie, Minna and I had a blast building our characters and talking about the game. Go give it a listen if you haven’t already.

This is our final episode of 2018, and while I say it pretty much every episode, I want to again thank all of you for listening to and supporting the show. The past 10 months or so have exceeded my wildest expectations for what this podcast would be. Creating this show has been an amazing experience, and we have so much more planned for the future. Thank you all for being a part of this as we head into 2019.

Next, let me tell you about this month’s featured charity.

Howard Brown Health is a Chicago based organization that focuses on health care for queer people. They do research and education, as well as provide direct health services to the community including primary care, mental health care, and HIV/AIDS care, all available on a sliding scale for low income or uninsured patients. They have several clinics throughout Chicago as well as a youth center and three resale shops whose proceeds support the group’s mission. If you have a few dollars to spare, consider donating either to Howard Brown or to a local queer supporting charity in your area.

Now then, let’s get started. Shall we?

## Story Continues [0:02:45]

Rhi: We are going to start with Myra…

Minna: Yes.

Rhi: …who is out in the city somewhere on her own for some reason. What are you doing that has taken you out into Duskwall on some errand?

Minna: Ooh. Maybe I was planning to see Jeren or something, because I know I don’t take people to see him.

Rhi: You hear footsteps running towards you from behind.

Minna: Definitely gonna push my back against a wall and get my knives out.

Rhi: You spin into an alley, back against a wall, draw your knives, and look to see a now very startled looking and out of breath young woman who you quickly recognize as Una, one of Phin’s younger sisters.

Minna: Augh!

Josie: Oh no!

Kim: [gasps]

Minna: Oh no…

Rhi: …who has kind of skidded to a stop a couple feet away from you and is just looking from your face to the knives and back.

Minna: Myra slowly lowers the knives.

Minna (as Myra): Una. I’m sorry, I didn’t expect to see you.

Rhi (as Una): It’s okay. I probably should have said something. Um… I’ve been looking around for you. You weren’t at any of the places Phin had said to look for. Can I talk to you for a second?

Minna (as Myra): Yeah, of course. Let’s go somewhere a little bit off the street.

Rhi (as Una): Okay.

Minna: I think they duck into a café or something.

Rhi: Yeah. You’ve kind of calmed down from that initial scare, and looking at her you can tell that her being nervous was not just because you pulled knives. She seems very on edge and keeps glancing out the window towards the street.

Rhi (as Una): It’s kind of about Phin. Um… There’s been some Bluecoats, a couple squads of them have been coming around asking questions, asking for money, and they say if we don’t cooperate, you know, they talk about having connections in Ironhook and that wouldn’t it be terrible if something happened in there, and… We’ve tried not to give them too much information, you know, you all are Phin’s friends. It’s not like she really told us much anyway, but we’re kind of running out of money. Stev stood up to them last time they came by and they dragged him into a holding cell for the night, and he was beat half to death when he came back. We just don’t know what to do.

Minna (as Myra): [sighs] Okay. I’m not—We’re not gonna let this happen. You might have to give me a little bit to rally the gang and come up with some ideas. Are there good places to meet you?

Rhi (as Una): I mean, you can come by our shop in The Docks.

Minna (as Myra): You’re okay with that?

Rhi (as Una): Yeah, I mean, it’s not like they don’t know.

Minna (as Myra): I’m truly sorry that any of this is happening to you.

Rhi: She just kinda shrugs.

Rhi (as Una): We just don’t want anything to happen to her. You know? Anything else.

Minna (as Myra): I know. Neither do I.

Rhi (as Una): Okay… I should get back home.

Minna (as Myra): Okay. We’ll come by when we can, soon.

Rhi (as Una): Okay. Thanks.

Minna (as Myra): Wait, Una.

Rhi (as Una): Yeah?

Minna: I do have a coin and I’m gonna slip it into Una’s hand.

Rhi (as Una): You don’t—No, no, no. You don’t have to. We’re fine.

Minna (as Myra): It is the least I can do.

Rhi: She’s trying to give you the coin purse back.

Minna (as Myra): This is our fault, and Phin would have been doing it for you if she were out.

Rhi (as Una): It’s a loan. We’ll pay you back.

Minna (as Myra): Sure.

Rhi: She slips the coin purse under her coat and checks the street again before she heads out, darts off and disappears into the crowd. What do you want to do with this information?

Minna: I’m gonna put off seeing Jeren and go back to The nest.

Rhi: All right. What are Minx and Blaire up to?

Kim: I’m up to the usual.

Rhi: Weird, creepy shit in your room?

Kim: Mm-hmm!

Rhi: Okay.

Kim: [giggles]

Josie: I’m fussing over Kevin, because now I’m just sort of into the whole dressing up Kevin thing and moving Kevin around.

Minna: Oh my God!

Kim: She’s embraced it!

Josie: [laughs] Yep. Minx has Kevin in front of a mirror and is switching between two hats on Kevin as though Kevin could have an opinion on them.

Josie (as Minx): Oh, hello Myra. You’re back early.

Minna (as Myra): Yeah. I ran into something unexpected and decided not to meet with my friend after all.

Josie (as Minx): What happened?

Minna (as Myra): Phin’s sister caught up to me in the street and it seems like the family is having problems with The Bluecoats.

Josie (as Minx): What manner of issue?

Minna (as Myra): They’ve been receiving threats about what happened to Phin in Ironhook, Bluecoats asking for money, asking for information, they don’t have a lot to give them.

Josie (as Minx): That… Now, that is beyond despicable. They already have her in prison and they seek to use extortion? What… [sigh] Well, we’re gonna do something about this, correct?

Minna (as Myra): I told them we are going to make sure this doesn’t happen to them anymore as best we can. I didn’t put it in quite that strong of language, because I don't know what we can promise them, but it’s not something that I’m willing to let happen.

Josie (as Minx): Same feelings here, although to be frank a simple show of force might be enough.

Minna (as Myra): I think we’re gonna have to be a little bit more creative than a show of force. It’s a couple squads of Bluecoats against three of us, four if we get Needle in on it.

Josie (as Minx): A couple squads?

Kim: The doors to Blaire’s room open.

Kim (as Blaire): I heard the word creative?!

[giggling]

Minna (as Myra): Yes, perfect. Blaire, come talk to us.

Kim (as Blaire): Okay!

Kim: There’s some weird noises coming from her room, but they stop as soon as she shuts the door.

Minna: We’re just gonna pretend we heard nothing. [laughs]

Josie: Yeah.

Rhi: I feel like that’s a key to survival in The Nest with Blaire.

Kim: [laughs]

Rhi: Blaire gets filled in on the situation.

Kim (as Blaire): So, something creative… Do you think they would consider relocating, going into hiding for a little while?

Minna (as Myra): The thing is, they’re running out of money as it is. Their business and livelihood is there on The Docks.

Kim (as Blaire): I know. I knew it was kind of a stretch, I just thought I’d put it out there.

Minna (as Myra): It occurs to me that a better long term solution would be not to put another Magpie in The Bluecoats’ hands but to take one out of them.

Josie (as Minx): You’re proposing a jailbreak?

Kim (as Blaire): Out of Ironhook.

Minna (as Myra): I don’t want Phin to serve her full sentence. We have met somebody with clearly impressive breaking and entering skills. Maybe the timing isn’t perfect, but I don’t think the timing is gonna be great for a while. I’m just saying it’s an option. I don't know if it’s our best option, but it’s an option.

Kim (as Blaire): It seems like the fastest solution, doesn’t it? Get her out of jail, they’ll leave her family alone.

Minna (as Myra): It is a big gamble, so I just want us to keep that in mind, but I would love to if we can.

Kim (as Blaire): Why don’t we talk to Needle and see what she thinks?

Rhi: Star wipe to…

[giggling]

Madge (as Needle): Well, I certainly think it’s an impressive way of going about it. I particularly would be interested in joining in if you need an extra set of hands.

Josie (as Minx): We do.

Minna (as Myra): You’re interested in joining in?

Madge (as Needle): Extremely interested.

Minna (as Myra): Is it the thrill?

Madge (as Needle): We could say it’s a little bit of the thrill, a little bit of the… Well, a job like this would have a lot of clout as you say. It could be impressive.

Josie (as Minx): Not to mention the personal interest in our crew.

Madge (as Needle): Working with Blaire again would always be fun.

Kim (as Blaire): Um… Well- Okay, yes, I agree, but… Also, we’re doing this to help our friend, so—

Madge (as Needle): Oh, and of course helping your friend out of prison would be awesome.

Kim (as Blaire): Yeah, um, so… It’s really important that we stay focused for this one.

Madge (as Needle): I can stay focused. Can you stay focused?

Kim (as Blaire): [nervously] Mm-hmm!

[chuckling]

Kim: Blaire nods her head a little too vigorously.

Madge (as Needle): Well, then I am definitely in.

Josie (as Minx): Well then we have the crew, now it’s a matter of the plan, because Ironhook is not as simple as simply acquiring a key.

Madge (as Needle): Well, of course not, but there’s also public records we could look through. Same situation as our last little rendezvous together.

Kim (as Blaire): Mm-hmm.

Rhi: I will say, just in general, if you have been doing crime for long enough in the city, you’ve done at least a little time in Ironhook. Minx and Myra, you’ve probably both been in there at least once or twice, not for terribly long sentences, but like in your youth.

Josie: Except for the one time I sent Bazso instead of me.

Rhi: Right, and the reason he holds such a grudge is because he got put away for like a year. It’s pretty normal in the criminal underground for “oh, where’s so and so?” “Eh, he’s doing a couple months in Ironhook.” “Okay.” And then you just kind of wait for that person to come back. Being gone for a year is significant. People are not gonna wait on you, so Bazso, the reason that he holds that grudge—one of many reasons, but one of the reasons is because he lost a lot.

Minx, Myra, your knowledge… You are both younger, and you both probably got picked up for like a petty theft, so you were not held in any of the high security areas. You both know that Ironhook is not to be trifled with. The security is what you would expect for a prison in this city. It’s terrifying.

Madge (as Needle): Well, we could try to leverage some contacts from elsewhere in the city.

Josie (as Minx): We may need to call in quite a few.

## Blaire & Needle [0:13:29]

Rhi: Who do you want to go see first, your city clerk?

Madge: Yeah, let’s see Petra first.

Rhi: Tell me about Petra. Who is this person? Where do they work? How do you know them?

Madge: [laughs] Petra is the city clerk. I figure she’s pretty mousey looking, standard what you would expect from a clerk or a secretary.

Rhi: Mm-hmm. She’s got glasses.

Madge: Glasses, really thick glasses, hair tied back into a super tight bun. I met her initially through my family and then once I got kicked out I kept her as someone that I talk to, because it’s nice having people to talk to that aren’t directly involved with my family. And… Where would she work?

Rhi: Where would it be useful for her to work? [laughs]

Madge: A city clerk for the city recorder? She would be able to have info on like who did the locks for Ironhook and information on invoices that were used.

Rhi: OH, okay. Yeah! I think that’s basically—[smiling] You two are gonna be going back to the Hall of Records.

Madge: We won’t be breaking in this time.

Kim: Yeah!

Rhi: Yeah, this time you’re gonna be going in normally through the front door.

Kim (as Blaire): This is… kind of weird.

Madge (as Needle): Oh, you get used to it.

Kim (as Blaire): What? Going through—I’m used to going through doors. I’m just talking about, it’s weird, because, last time—

Madge: Because we broke in last time.

Kim (as Blaire): Right. Yeah. Last time we broke in.

Rhi: As you’re walking there you two walk past the wall that you climbed up and there’s fresh spackle over where you two were crawling up the wall with hooked things. [giggling] Give me some kind of roll, and we’ll see what you are able to get out of Petra.

Kim: Do you want to do a group action?

Madge: Yeah, let’s do a group action for this one.

Kim: Okay, 6.

Madge: Four.

Rhi: It will be a 6. You get exceptional details.

Madge: Nice.

Rhi: I think you make your way through the maze-like warren that is the offices deep in the Hall of Records where all of the clerks, lawyers and associates and such work, and you make your way back to Petra’s office. You ease open the door to her office and poke inside. There’s a lot of stuff in her office, but it is all very neatly organized. There’s papers on the desk, but they’re all in very neat piles. The bookshelves are all very nice and neatly organized. She is sitting at her desk. She’s got a book open and is looking back and forth between this book and something that she is filling out. When the door opens she glances up and does a double take.

Rhi (as Petra): [enthusiastic] Oh! Devin!

Madge (as Needle): Hi~

Rhi (as Petra): Hello! It’s been…

Madge (as Needle): It’s been a hot minute.

Rhi (as Petra): How long has it been?

Madge (as Needle): Two years? Probably.

Rhi (as Petra): Oh. How has it been that long? I need to get out of this office more. Come in, come in!

Madge (as Needle): Petra, this is my good friend Blaire. Blaire, this is Petra.

Kim (as Blaire): Hi!

Rhi (as Petra): Oh, hello.

Rhi: She puts her pen into the stand, puts a bookmark in the book and closes it, and then stands up and reaches across the desk to shake your hand.

Kim: I shake it.

Rhi (as Petra): Please, please, sit. Oh, this is such a pleasant surprise. What can I do for you?

Madge (as Needle): I actually have a few questions about Ironhook.

Rhi: Her sort of cheerful demeanor doesn’t entirely disappear but it fades considerably.

Rhi (as Petra): Why do you need to know about Ironhook?

Madge (as Needle): Oh, you know, I like researching things for a lock. Particularly, you know about the locks that they used?

Rhi (as Petra): [hesitantly] Yes…

Madge (as Needle): The folks who were contracted for it? Because my folks are planning on redoing their locks on the estate here in Duskwall.

Rhi: Understanding just blooms on her face and all of the suspicion just vanishes.

Rhi (as Petra): Oh, and your family wants to have the best. Of course.

Madge (as Needle): Absolutely The very best.

Rhi (as Petra): Oh, give me just a moment.

Rhi: She stands up, goes over to the bookshelf, and pulls down a book. What information is helpful for you to have here?

Madge: Locksmith, type of lock.

Rhi: Okay. So… I don't know enough about locks to talk about it intelligently, so she gives you information about the type of locks… [smiling]

Madge: Yeah. [laughs]

Rhi: …with a lot of detail, she writes out notes for you on, like, model numbers. The locksmith who did this is Ashlyn Helker, and Needle you probably recognize that name. She is one of the best if not the best locksmiths in the city.

Madge: Okay.

Kim: Do the locks in Ironhook have any unusual protections? Do they throw sparks or anything like that?

Rhi: I don’t think so, at least for a majority of the locks. There are so many people in there moving throughout the space that you don’t want to be poisoning or electrocuting your guards if they use the wrong key on their keyring.

Kim: Okay.

Rhi: Yeah. Any other follow-up questions?

Kim: I might be all set if you are, Madge.

Madge: I’m all set, too.

Rhi: Okay. Once you’re satisfied with the information she walks you out and tells Needle:

Rhi (as Petra): Don’t be a stranger~!

Madge (as Needle): Oh, of course not.

Rhi: She says it was so nice to meet Blaire and then kind of ushers the two of you out.

Madge (as Needle): Thanks. You’re a real treasure. Thank you.

Kim (as Blaire): She was really nice.

Madge (as Needle): Yeah, she’s great. There’s a reason I kept her around.

Rhi: She’s friendly and gullible.

[laughter]

Kim (as Blaire): Don’t you feel bad about…

Madge (as Needle): Lying?

Kim (as Blaire): I don't know. Do you feel bad?

Madge (as Needle): Used to, don’t anymore.

Kim (as Blaire): Wow.

Madge (as Needle): You kind of get used to it after you lie, a lot.

Kim (as Blaire): I kind of wish that for me.

Madge (as Needle): You just gotta practice. Tell me a lie, right now.

Kim (as Blaire): Uh…

Madge (as Needle): Like, what’s your favorite color?

Kim (as Blaire): [strained] Blue…?

Madge (as Needle): Is that really your favorite color?

Kim (as Blaire): [smiling] No?

Madge: I give her a look.

Rhi: [laughs]

Kim (as Blaire): It’s not! It’s not!

Madge (as Needle): Okay. What’s really your favorite color then?

Kim (as Blaire): Red.

Madge (as Needle): Good. See? First little lie. You start with the little ones and then you build up to the big ones.

Kim (as Blaire): Okay.

Rhi: I think we’ll cut over to Minx.

## Minx [0:20:34]

Josie: I think we’re actually taking a stroll towards a normal hangout spot which is a sort of quirky but not well-kept café somewhere. For some reason I’m kind of imagining Harker as also someone who appreciates the finer things in life, but it a little bit more of a slime ball about it.

Rhi: And is not nearly as good on the escape.

Josie: He’s kind of a Dickensian king of beggars sort of deal.

Rhi: Oh! What’s his name? [snaps]

Josie: Like, the artful dodger or whatever?

Minna: No. Mr. Fagin.

Rhi: Fagin, that’s it. Yeah. Was this somebody, is he old enough that you started off working for him a long time ago potentially?

Josie: Ohh…

Rhi: You don’t have to go that way, I’m just thinking.

Josie: Maybe. I don't know, that would be interesting, just add to my backstory right now.

Rhi: Yeah, sure.

Josie: [laughs] Spur of the moment. Let’s do it.

Rhi: Yeah. So, he’s probably in his late 40s, early 50s.

Josie: Well, if I worked for him for a little bit that probably meant the three of us worked for him for a little bit.

Rhi: Yes. I think he’s not possessive—It was a very different experience than Myra had with Salia where Salia was like you are mine, Harker was just sort of like, yeah, I’m gonna help you out, and if I’m helping you out you need to do some work for me, but if you wanna go your own way that’s fine. You do your own thing. Free spirit. So yeah, the two of you are strolling along, catching up.

Rhi (as Harker): Oh. That’s so good to hear that Nyryx is doing well. I always liked that girl.

Josie (as Minx): Indeed. Although, I suspect our interests in her are somewhat different.

Rhi (as Harker): Oh yes, yes.

Josie: [laughs]

Rhi (as Harker): So, I suppose now that we’ve gotten pleasantries out of the way I should ask why you bothered seeking me out after all this time.

Josie (as Minx): You don’t believe I can seek someone out merely to catch up?

Rhi: He just shoots you a sideways look and arches an eyebrow.

Josie (as Minx): yes, yes, well, okay down to business then. You are very familiar with the interior of a certain lovely establishment in our town, and I was wondering if there’s any interesting information that might assist a day trip inside.

Rhi: Go ahead and make your roll.

Josie: Yeah! Not good. I got a 3. I got double 3s.

Rhi: Ah, 3, okay. Harker is able to tell you about the entrance and prisoner processing, the low security areas, all of which is stuff that you have experienced. It’s not a ton of new information. he kind of refreshes some stuff that you had forgotten of oh right there’s that guard post between processing and uniforms… He doesn’t really provide you with a ton of new info. He gets picked up for theft on a regular basis and pays his way out on a regular basis, so they don’t bother locking him up in the higher security areas. They’re just like “Oh, hey Harker, you’re back for another stay? All right. We got your usual bunk ready for ya.”

Josie: Put in a revolving door.

Rhi: Yeah, basically. [laughs] He gives you some info but not a ton.

Josie (as Minx): I see, although I suppose it is a very good thing that you do not know the details of certain deeper recesses.

Rhi (as Harker): Yeah. No, I would not want to… I do not bother with anything that would land me in those areas. I have to say, I’m a little concerned that you are.

Josie (as Minx): Well, I myself am not, but I stand by some friends who are sometimes.

Rhi (as Harker): Huh… That’s very noble of you.

Rhi: He pats your shoulder approvingly.

Josie: [laughs]

Josie (as Minx): Drinks are on me, by the way. Thank you for helping a few months ago.

Rhi (as Harker): Ah, it’s nothing. It’s a formality mostly, but I will accept the drinks!

Rhi: He slings an arm around your shoulder and steers you off towards whatever tavern.

Josie: [laughs] Right. Yeah, so we have a fun evening, but I don’t really get anything.

Rhi: Yeah, catching up. We see Minx and Harker heading into the tavern, and then we’ll swing over to Myra.

## Myra [0:25:25]

Minna: Yes. I’m gonna go talk to Augus the master architect.

Rhi: Okay. Where do we think Augus…

Minna: Oh, he probably has offices in one of the nice areas. Charterhall maybe?

Rhi: Or possibly Brightstone I could see, if they’re a master architect.

Minna: Yeah. Either Charterhall or Brightstone.

Rhi: Let’s say Brightstone, just to mix it up a little. How do you know this person?

Minna: I feel like this is a contact from the Salia days. I think she did a lot of the nerdy research junk. She built up enough of a relationship with him that she was able to talk to him sometimes on her own afterwards.

Rhi: Yeah. You head to his offices, probably have to wait a little bit, he’s probably in a meeting with someone. Eventually the door opens and a pair of women who you’re assuming are probably nobility based on the clothes and the jewelry sweep out, don’t even look at you, and then his secretary steps inside and relays that you’re here. Augus steps out.

Rhi (as Augus): Ah, Myra. I wasn’t expecting to see you here. What can I do for you?

Rhi: He steps to the side and gestures for you to come into the office.

Minna (as Myra): I just had a few questions I wanted to run by you, pick your brain a bit about architecture.

Rhi (as Augus): Hmm. Of course.

Rhi: He sits down at the desk and gestures for you to sit across from him. Go ahead and make your roll here. We’ll see what he is willing to tell you.

Minna: That’s gonna be a Consort.

Rhi: Everybody’s so Consorty today. So much friendship.

Minna: That’s a 5.

Rhi: A standard amount of information. you can ask specifically what you’re looking for.

Minna (as Myra): I wanted to pick your brains about buildings built in the old Skovlan style, particularly the fortified ones.

Rhi (as Augus): Hmm.

Rhi: He raises his eyebrows at you.

Rhi (as Augus): There’s not terribly many buildings in that style around here.

Rhi: He kind of regards you for a long few moments.

Rhi (as Augus): [breathy] All right… I’m going to assume that I’m better off not knowing the details of why you’re asking such particular questions.

Rhi: He is able to tell you… There’s not a ton of weak points [laughs] in these sort of buildings.

Minna: It’s on the water…

Rhi: Is it?

Minna: It looks like it’s on the water. What if it has one of those grate thingies for like…

Rhi: It is on water! It is on the river. Yeah, you’re right.

Minna: You know the classic there’s a grate in the water, maybe like a waste thing feeding out into the water.

Rhi: Yeah. You are 100% right. For some reason I thought it was more inland. It is on The Dosk River. Yes. He would tell you that probably the weakest point would be going in through the sewers, the drainage system, but they still anticipate people trying to come in through the sewer so it’s not like it’s just gonna be an open grate you can pop off. It’s still gonna be locked down, it’s just they didn’t spend as much money on the sewer locks as they did on the front door. He answers your questions, and then as you’re wrapping up he stands up to shake your hand across the desk. You shake hands and then he does the thing where he just kind of holds onto your hand and meets your eyes.

Rhi (as Augus): I do expect that you will repay this kindness at some point.

Minna (as Myra): Of course. I never expect anything for free from you.

Rhi (as Augus): Smart girl.

Rhi: He lets you go and walks you to the door.

## The Locksmith [0:29:33]

Rhi: We move out of Brightstone to… Where in the city is the locksmith friend that Needle has?

Madge: Frake is the locksmith that we’re gonna be meeting with who lives in Silkshore. He’s a contact I made after I got kicked out.

Rhi: All right. Tell me about where Frake works. What kind of building?

Madge: The building itself is sort of nondescript. It’s tucked away at the end of a street. You know how they put up lights and lampposts and stuff, it’s like on the corner that’s not very well-lit so that people don’t pay all that much attention when they’re out visiting him. The inside of the building is not an organized mess, it’s just a straight out mess.

Rhi: [laughs] Okay. I think that you go into the shop and there’s just piles of bits of metal and stuff on every flat surface including the floor. You don’t see anyone, but you hear a muffled voice and clanging sounds from somewhere further back.

Madge (as Needle): Frake, are you in there?

Rhi: There’s a thud, and then a:

Rhi (as ???): Ah! Shit! Ow, my head. Yeah, yeah, hang on, hang on.

Madge (as Needle): There he is. … All right!

Rhi: There’s more clattering sounds, and then a Frake emerges from around a corner rubbing the back of his head.

Rhi (as Frake): Sorry. I was working on a big safe I had on the floor and I banged my head on the thing, and…

Madge (as Needle): Oh…

Rhi (as Frake): [winded] Hey, uh, how’s it going?

Madge (as Needle): It’s going real good. I have a little bit of a favor.

Rhi (as Frake): Yeah. I mean, you know, anything for you.

Madge (as Needle): [chuckles] Good.

Rhi (as Frake): Man, that really hurt. Hang on a second.

Rhi: He goes over to the counter and reaches underneath it and comes up with a bottle of something that he just takes a swig straight from.

Rhi (as Frake): You two want something?

Madge (as Needle): Oh. I’m good for right now. Thanks.

Kim (as Blaire): No thank you.

Rhi: He shoots Needle a slightly surprised look.

Rhi (as Frake): All right!

Rhi: He takes another swig and puts the bottle back.

Rhi (as Frake): Okay! I’m good. What can I do for you?

Madge (as Needle): I have a few questions for you. First of all, we’re gonna be talking about Ashlyn Helker.

Rhi (as Frake): Ooh…

Madge (as Needle): Yeah.

Rhi (as Frake): All right. You know how to pick ‘em.

Madge (as Needle): Yeah. So, I’ve got my friend Blaire here.

Kim (as Blaire): Hi.

Madge (as Needle): The two of us are gonna be doing some good work over in Ironhook helping those who were wrongfully imprisoned.

Rhi (as Frake): All right. You really do not fuck around with these jobs.

Madge (as Needle): I am ambitious~

Rhi (as Frake): I mean, there is ambitious and then there is…

Madge (as Needle): Death wish?

Rhi (as Frake): …whatever the hell this is. Uh… Okay. Helker. Ironhook.

Madge (as Needle): Mm-hmm. We don’t need exact schematics, but if you know anything about the type of locks they use, any weaknesses in the types of metal, that sort of thing.

Rhi (as Frake): I mean, the whole point of a Helker lock is that it doesn’t have weaknesses.

Madge (as Needle): But…

Rhi (as Frake): They do. There’s no such thing as a perfect lock.

Madge (as Needle): Of course.

Rhi (as Frake): I haven’t really ever gotten my hands on any of her stuff. If… Hmm.

Rhi: He looks at you very thoughtfully.

Rhi (as Frake): If you were to get me some of her models or prototypes…

Madge (as Needle): Bring you back a souvenir?

Rhi (as Frake): I might be able to just make you some keys.

Madge (as Needle): Oh really?

Rhi (as Frake): If I’ve got a lock I can make a key for it.

Kim (as Blaire): How much out of the way would it be to get a prototype?

Rhi (as Frake): Well, Helker keeps them locked up in her safe at her home. That’s where she has her workshop, and she makes the best locks in the city, so you can imagine what security on her place is like.

Madge (as Needle): Oh, it must be bonkers.

Rhi (as Frake): Mm-hmm. I mean, she uses her own locks on everything.

Madge (as Needle): Mm. A bit conceited?

Rhi (as Frake): You’re not gonna get a lot of business as a locksmith if you use somebody else’s locks. Right?

Madge (as Needle): That’s true. Now, tell me, is she sort of a narcissist, someone easily provoked?

Rhi (as Frake): I mean, she’s at the top of her game. She’s confident and wealthy and feels very secure in her house. I will say, if you do manage to get in there and take some stuff, [laughs] oh man, that would kind of ruin her actually. Now that… Wow, you would ruin her…

Madge (as Needle): It would give you a whole lot of business, wouldn’t it?

Rhi (as Frake): It would. I mean, if you bring me prototypes, I was just thinking that if you brought me prototypes of some Helker locks I could make a mint just selling keys and stuff off of those. I hadn’t even thought of…

Madge (as Needle): [softly] Yeah. Heheh.

Rhi (as Frake): Aw, Needle, you gotta do this. You gotta do this for me. Needle…

Rhi: [laughs]

Madge (as Needle): All right. I will get you a Helker lock, okay, if you answer me one more question.

Rhi (as Frake): Yeah.

Madge (as Needle): Would they be able to do business with the Farros family? Do you think that family is on that level?

Rhi: He thinks about it for a second.

Rhi (as Frake): Eh… I mean, if they’ve got the money to pay up for it, probably.

Madge (as Needle): Oh, they’ve definitely got the money to pay up for it.

Rhi: He just kind of shrugs.

Rhi (as Frake): I mean, yeah, she is not as concerned with reputation or family names, she just wants to get paid.

Madge (as Needle): Yeah. Money is money. Well, that is very informative. Thank you for helping us out today.

Rhi (as Frake): Oh, thank you, because you could potentially be changing my life here.

Madge (as Needle): Anything for a dear old friend.

Rhi: He just kind of leans his elbow on the table and puts his chin in his hand and is staring dreamily off into space. [laughter Just like, “Aw man, I’m gonna be rich~”

Minna: [smiling] I like him~

Josie: [laughs]

Madge: [smiling] He’s the best. I love him.

Madge (as Needle): All right, come on, Blaire. Let’s leave our friend here to his daydreaming.

Kim (as Blaire): Okay.

Rhi (as Frake): Bye~!

Kim (as Blaire): See ya.

Madge (as Needle): Bye~

Rhi (as Frake): Have… a good theft!

Minna: [cringing] Don’t yell that!

Madge: Heh.

Kim (as Blaire): Do you really think we have the time for this?

Madge (as Needle): Well, your buddy in Ironhook isn’t going anywhere, is she?

Kim (as Blaire): No, I guess not.

Madge (as Needle): I do understand there’s a bit of a time crunch, so… we could potentially get it done tonight.

Kim (as Blaire): Do you really think so?

Madge (as Needle): If we move fast. I’ve got some of my old clothes, we could bring along your friends, you’ve got a fancy-pants type that I could bum along with.

Kim (as Blaire): Uh… I mean, Minx could probably pull it off.

Madge (as Needle): So what’s stopping us? Aside from common sense.

Rhi: [laughs]

Kim (as Blaire): Yeah, but did we have that to begin with? Really.

Madge (as Needle): No.

Kim (as Blaire): [laughs]

Madge (as Needle): I always operate as if that’s not even a part of the equation.

Kim (as Blaire): Exactly! Okay, then I guess we’re doing this.

Madge (as Needle): Let’s just run it by your friends first.

Rhi: Yeah. What are you thinking the plan is gonna be?

Josie: Is there a party happening or something? Why is a fancy-pants needed?

Madge: Because one rich person showing up for an appointment would be kind of suspicious.

Josie: That’s true.

Madge: Mainly because Needle herself, as Devin, is kind of disgraced. [laughs]

Josie: Ah. Fair enough.

Madge: She needs another rich-looking person there to add credibility to her.

Josie: Right.

Rhi: You’re thinking that Needle and Minx go in to meet with her, acting like interested clients, and…

Madge: As a distraction, and then Myra and Blaire can actually get the locks. Only if you guys are cool with it, though.

Kim: Yeah. That works for me.

Minna: No, that works.

Rhi: Let’s do the engagement roll. Okay, the one that didn’t fly behind the speaker is a 1, so let’s see what we’ve got back here. Ah, a 4. Okay.

Josie: Hurray. [laughs]

Rhi: Okay, so, you will be starting in a risky position. What’s the entry point for Blaire and Myra? How are you two planning on getting in?

Kim: That’s a good question.

Minna: That is a good question. Did we come as assistants of some kind and got left behind in the waiting room?

Rhi: I’m good with that.

Madge: Yeah, that sounds good.

Kim: Okay.

Rhi: Yeah. You two are like body guards.

## Score [0:38:22]

Rhi: We start with Minx and Needle who are sitting in a very nice study that has a lot of nice wood paneling on the walls, a couple bookshelves with a nice mix of books and small sculptures. You two are sitting on a couch and then there’s a couple armchairs across from you. Sitting in one of the armchairs is Ashlyn Helker who is a Severosi woman in her 60s, so dark skin, she’s got short thick hair that has gone completely silver, and she’s wearing a very stylish and well-tailored suit basically. She’s just sitting there quietly listening to the two of you as you have just wrapped up your pitch.

Josie (as Minx): And not to make this too dry, but in conclusion, as we look at this subparagraph of the proposal I think it will turn out quite profitable for both of us.

Rhi: [laughing] Myra wrote up this massive legalese document.

Josie: [laughs] Uh-huh!

Rhi: She has some paper in her hand, and she’s just like:

Rhi (as Ashlyn): Well, profitable for… [exhales] one of us. I’m really not certain that you understand the value of the locks you’re asking after here.

Madge (as Needle): I think I understand perfectly. I think having your name attached to such an up-and-coming business would not only provide intrigue and profitability to your name but would also make you the envy of all sorts of new up-and-coming shipping magnates, and they would just be pounding at your door.

Rhi (as Ashlyn): They already are. I don’t need your family’s help with my reputation, dear.

Josie (as Minx): Well, understand we don’t come bearing ultimatums. I’m certain we can dig into the numbers a bit.

Madge (as Needle): Yeah. We have fairly deep coffers.

Rhi: All right. At this point, because she basically feels like you two didn’t come here with a serious offer, so you will need to make some kind of social roll to persuade her to keep this conversation going.

Josie: Okay. I think I want to try and hint that we’d be able to offer more things that we’d prefer not to have in the contract.

Rhi: Okay…

Josie (as Minx): A simple contract is not the complete descriptor of a relationship between the family and your business.

Madge (as Needle): Mm-hmm.

Rhi: All right. Go ahead and make a roll.

Josie: What does a Devil’s Bargain here look like?

Rhi: She is a very law and order type. Any implication that you would be offering her things illegally is not going to be met well.

Josie: Ah, that’s risky, but 4d6 has to be a success, right? [laughs] Yeah. I’m gonna take the Devil’s Bargain.

Rhi: All right!

Josie: Okay. I got a 4 and a 5.

Kim: Woo.

Rhi: Five… You do it, but there’s a consequence. I’m trying to think…

Josie: Maybe she needs to step out of the room to deliberate for a moment.

Rhi: Okay. I think I know what it is. She hears your offer and pages through the contract again and frowns a little bit.

Rhi (as Ashlyn): This is a fairly non-standard contract construction. I’m… Hmm. Give me a moment. I need to look up something, elsewhere. Please feel free to help yourselves to drink.

Rhi: She gestures at a side table that has a pitcher of water and a bottle of wine. She’s gonna step out.

Madge: [groans] Okay. Can I grab some of the wine?

Rhi: Yes.

Madge: Dope!

Rhi: We follow Helker out into the front hall where Blaire and Myra… Are you two still there or have you snuck off already?

Kim: I like to think we snuck off. What do you think?

Minna: Yeah.

Rhi: Okay. we follow her out into the hall, she looks around and frowns, and then just strides off somewhere. Where are Blaire and Myra right now?

Minna: I figure that we are sneaking off towards, as near as we can tell, where the safe will be?

Rhi: Yeah. Frake mentioned that it’s in her workshop. You’re not exactly sure where in the mansion her workshop is unless you would like to roll a flashback for somehow obtaining that information or trying to obtain it.

Kim: I’m trying to think. Where would we have obtained it?

Rhi: Blaire, you could do a flashback where you and Needle went up, because you were in the same place where all the blueprints were, so maybe you two just popped up there again if you wanted to do that as a flashback.

Kim: I will take that. How much? Is that 2 stress?

Rhi: One stress. That’s not super outlandish that you would’ve done that. So you two know that her workshop is in the basement, and it’s accessed through a door in one of the halls towards the back of the house. The two of you are creeping in that direction, and you get to the door, and it is very unsurprisingly locked.

Kim: We should try to pick it, right?

Minna: Yeah, might as well.

Kim: Okay. It would be Tinker, right?

Rhi: It would be Tinker. This is risky and you have zero effect. Zero effect means you can’t get through this. [laughs]

Minna: You could push yourself to increase your effect, or take a Devil’s Bargain.

Rhi: You can push yourself to get reduced effect. Basically, you have to push yourself if you want to make any impact on this lock at all.

Kim: I will push myself, but also, Devil’s Bargain?

Rhi: Nope. You can push yourself or you can get a Devil’s Bargain.

Kim: Sorry. I keep forgetting.

Rhi: That’s okay. [laughs] Myra, if she wants, can help you to get you another die.

Minna: Yeah. I’m gonna do that. Ooh, I gotta be careful about my stress on this. Heh.

Rhi: Yeah. Risky position, reduced effect, two dice.

Kim: Got it.

Rhi: You take 2 stress, Myra takes 1.

Kim: Four.

Rhi: Okay… There is a clock to get through this lock, because it is a very difficult lock. You, at reduced effect, are at 1 out of 6. That’s the successful part of this. The consequence is another clock which is Ashlyn Finds You, and that’s gonna be at 1 out of 4. Basically, now we kind of have a race here. You have to get through this lock and you’re gonna have to push yourself every time to get through it.

Minna: Ooh.

Kim: Oh fuck.

Josie: Oof. That’s a lot of stress.

Minna: How much stress would it cost for me to have come prepared with something that could eat through either the lock or the hinges, like an acid or something?

Rhi: Let me take a look at the gear to see…

Madge: Demolition tools… It could also fall under unusual weapon [laughs], or arcane influence.

Minna: I definitely think it’s something I would have got off Seeks. [laughs] Cool, so acid.

Rhi: Yes. You’re gonna need to roll something.

Minna: Can it be Finesse as I do that to try and avoid burning myself with it?

Rhi: Mm-hmm. I was gonna say, I think Finesse is probably the way to go here.

Minna: What does a Devil’s Bargain look like?

Rhi: Um? Let me think…

Kim: Can I suggest something?

Rhi: Oh, absolutely.

Kim: The acid has some kind of arcane implement. It’s not so much quote unquote “cursed,” but there is a cost to using it. Something like that?

Minna: I like that.

Rhi: It could be as simple as it just smells really bad and it’s gonna give you a headache, so you’re gonna take level 1 harm.

Minna: So I work at less effect?

Rhi: Yeah.

Minna: I’ll take that.

Rhi: Okay.

Minna: … Fuck me.

Kim: Oh no.

Minna: That’s a 3.

Rhi: All right. Yeah, so you know how you said you were gonna try really hard not to pour this on yourself? You kinda sorta got some acid on your arm.

Minna: How bad is it?

Rhi: It’s level 2 harm. It burns and it hurts real bad. Yeah.

Minna: The thing is I don’t have the stress to spare, so I’m just gonna have to take the level 2 harm.

Rhi: Okay, and the lock is not open. The lock is still very locked.

Minna (as Myra): [huffs in pain] Ooh. Hell. Oh… Okay, so that didn’t work. Blaire, can you try again?

Kim (as Blaire): Yeah! Absolutely. Are you okay?

Minna (as Myra): I’ll be fine. We’ll deal with it later.

Kim (as Blaire): Um… Okay. If you’re sure.

Minna (as Myra): Just get to work.

Kim (as Blaire): [nervously] Uh-huh! … Mm.

Rhi: Again, in order to make any impact on this you’re gonna have to push yourself.

Kim: Heheh, 3.

Josie: Oh dear.

Rhi: So, the two of you have been standing at this door for a while. You hear the click of a pistol being readied, and then you hear Ashlyn Helker say:

Rhi (as Ashlyn): Step away from the door, hands in the air, now.

Rhi: So you two are in a desperate position. Back in the study! Ashlyn’s been gone for a bit…

Madge: Yeah.

Rhi: You probably can hear her. You hear her talking in the hall.

Madge: Okay. I have the bottle of wine in my hand. I’m gonna head on out into the hall and sneak.

Rhi: Go ahead. It’s gonna be risky for you.

Madge: That’s a 3.

Josie: Oh no. [laughs]

Rhi: You are creeping towards her, the wine bottle I assume kind of ready to strike, and you step on a floorboard and it creaks really loud. She whips around… and fires.

Madge: [gasps]

Josie: Oh no!

Rhi: [laughs] It’s gonna be level 2 harm, and you’re gonna take a shot in the shoulder.

Kim: No!

Madge: Yup. I will take that.

Rhi: You don’t wanna roll to resist?

Madge: Oh. I will resist that.

Rhi: Okay.

Madge: Six.

Rhi: Okay, so you take no stress, and I think you twist out of the way and instead of it just going straight into your shoulder it grazes along your arm, so now instead of a horrible bullet wound through your shoulder you’ve got like a sexy bicep cut.

Kim: [gasps]

Madge: Nice!

Josie: Nice!

Rhi: [laughs] It still gives you level 1 harm, it still hurts…

Kim: But it looks cool.

Rhi: Yeah. Yeah. It’s a very cool injury.

Madge: Yeah.

Rhi: So, she fires at you.

Rhi (as Ashlyn): I knew this was a setup!

Madge (as Needle): This wasn’t any kind of setup. Can I explain first before you shoot my people? I don't know what they were doing.

Rhi (as Ashlyn): I found your bodyguards pouring acid on the lock to my workshop.

Madge (as Needle): It’s really hard to find good help these days. You know this.

Rhi: I will mention, for Blaire and Myra… The way she’s standing she doesn’t have her back to you. She just has kind of turned sideways. Her attention is currently focused on Needle.

Kim: Hmm…

Rhi: If you wanted to do something.

Kim: You’re putting very bad ideas in my head.

Rhi: Also, Minx, what are you up to?

Josie: I’m kind of thinking, because I kind of knew what I was gonna do, but then Needle started trying to talk her way out of it, so…

Madge: [giggles] I wasn’t planning to talk my way out of it and it just happened. I’m really sorry. [laughs]

Josie: I think I’m just gonna casually… no, not casually, but I’m gonna kind of flusteredly hurry out into the hall.

Josie (as Minx): Dear, what’s going on? What—Why is there a gunshot? What is happening?

Josie: I’m gonna start fussing over Needle a little bit.

Madge (as Needle): Miss Helker tried to shoot me.

Josie: Like, fussing over the wound and just trying to lend credence to this whole ignorance thing.

Rhi: We can say that you are aiding.

Josie: Yeah.

Rhi: Okay. Needle, you’re gonna need to make [laughs] a desperate roll.

Madge: Guess what! [laughs]

Rhi: Oh yeah. You have the special ability. It’s gonna be a desperate roll, you’re gonna get a bonus die from Minx helping you sell this, but like… [laughs] This is a tough sell that you had nothing to do with it.

Madge: I’m also pushing myself.

Rhi: Okay.

Madge: Six!

Kim: Woo!

[laughter and clapping]

Minna: Oh, this is a hell of a roll. I love this.

Josie: Perfect.

Kim: Excellent.

Rhi: [laughing] Un-fucking-believable.

Josie: Best bluff check.

Rhi: Okay. Okay. I gotta think about how this is gonna… Okay. So, she stares at the two of you for a second and then returns her attention over to Blaire and Myra, and points the gun at the two of you.

Rhi (as Ashlyn): All right. Both of you, into the study. I’m gonna hold you there until The Bluecoats arrive.

Kim: Can I fight her?

Rhi: [smiling] I mean, if you want, yeah.

Kim: I’m not—

Madge: Phin is so proud~ [laughs]

Minna: [smiling] Wouldn’t it have been smarter to fight her while she was focused on the others? [laughs]

Kim: I know! That was in my head, but…

Rhi: Okay, if we wanna roll this back slightly, I will say that the two of you while she is talking to Needle and Minx is distracted there, if you two would like to jump her then you can do it.

Kim: She shot Needle… and she got in the way of our plans.

Rhi: [laughs]

Kim: So yeah, I kinda want to attack her, as bad of an idea as that is.

Josie: The power of gayness.

Rhi: Do it. Yeah.

Kim: Narratively I know what I want this to look like but mechanically I just don’t have anything.

Rhi: Tell me narratively, and we’ll see what we can work out.

Kim: Okay. I want Blaire to take one of her jars and break it over the side of her head.

Madge: [gasps] Yeah! Wreck!

Kim: [giggles]

Rhi: I would say that’s Skirmish or Wreck.

Kim: Uh… I have 1 in Skirmish, so I guess I have to roll that.

Rhi: Do you still want a Devil’s Bargain?

Kim: Yeah. What does that look like?

Rhi: [exhales, hums]

Kim: Glass shards get everywhere?

Rhi: Oh yeah. Yeah. You cut the shit out of your hand on a broken glass jar.

Kim: Fuck it. Worth it. I accept.

Rhi: Yeah. You’re gonna take level 1 harm.

Kim: Okay. … [groans]

Rhi: What did you get?

Kim: Three.

Josie: The dice hate us today.

Kim: Fuck.

Rhi: You falter. You can either press on by seizing a risky opportunity, or withdraw and try a different approach, so you can basically—

Kim: Risky!

Rhi: Okay. Yeah. Go for it.

Josie: [laughs]

Kim: Should I just roll Skirmish again?

Rhi: Yeah, but the Devil’s Bargain does not continue to apply, so it’s just the one.

Kim: I’ll just roll the one. Oh fuck, 2.

Madge: No! This is bad~

Rhi: Oh my God…

Kim: [groans]

Rhi: I think you’re gonna end up in a desperate position. You lunge at her and kind of stumble. The glass shatters against the wall and cuts your hand. She whips around and you have a gun in your face right now. You’re in a desperate position. So, whoever else wants to do something can do something. Blaire is about to get shot.

Josie: Trance powder to the face!

Rhi: It’s gonna be… Yeah. I think that this is still desperate, because she has a loaded gun pointed at Blaire’s face.

Josie: I’m gonna push myself. I got a 5.

Rhi: You do it, but there’s a consequence: you suffer severe harm, a serious complication occurs, you have reduced effect. Okay.

Kim: I’m so stressed out you guys.

Madge: Me too.

Rhi: She is now trance powdered. You got her, but there is a:

Rhi (as ???): [repeated thudding] Bluecoats, open up! [repeated thudding]

Kim (as Blaire): Oh fuck.

Madge (as Needle): All right. We can roll with this. We can roll with this. Keep working on that door…

Kim (as Blaire): What?!

Madge (as Needle): Keep working on that door.

Kim (as Blaire): [nervously] Okay!

Madge (as Needle): I promise, it’ll be fine.

Madge: I’m gonna toss my fine lock picks to them.

Rhi: Okay.

Kim: Blaire catches them.

Madge: I’m also gonna hand over a silence potion vial so that they won’t be heard while they’re doing this.

Rhi: All right.

Madge: And then I am gonna head to the door.

Rhi: I think we’re gonna start with Blaire and Myra running back to the door to try and get this lock open. You’re gonna be able to basically get one attempt before Needle gets to the door, so you’ll be able to tick this clock up a little further.

Kim: What does a Devil’s Bargain look like on this?

Rhi: So, at present in the city, there’s a whole hell of a lot of ghosts that know Blaire because of the riot.

Kim: Right.

Rhi: Some of them still think on Blaire favorably, the ones that have more of their minds…

Kim: Yay.

Rhi: Some of them just remember Blaire and they’re not quite sure why, so sometime in this score a ghost who remembers Blaire is gonna show up.

Kim: Done.

Rhi: And I think actually right now, because the door isn’t open, and there are no immediate threats. This is actually gonna be controlled.

Kim: Six.

Rhi: Okay. You don’t have the lock open yet, however you just need one more success to do it. But while you’re doing that, Needle and Minx are opening a door!

Madge (as Needle): It is about time that you all got here.

Rhi: What I’m picturing is you open the door and for a second it looks like the Bluecoat on the other side is gonna hit you, because she’s got her fist up to keep pounding on it, and so she stops and is like:

Rhi (as Bluecoat): Who the hell are you? What is going on here?!

Madge (as Needle): I am Devin Farros. I was meeting with Helker for business reasons, and our business meeting got set upon by brigands and thieves and I was shot in the arm.

Josie (as Minx): Just dreadful.

Madge (as Needle): And then they threw trance powder at Miss Helker and just left. They jumped out the window, through the study, and now they are off doing God knows what.

Josie: In the meantime I’ve got a handkerchief to my cheeks like I’m crying and I’m resting a hand on her shoulder just looking distraught.

Rhi: This is again going to be desperate.

Madge: Woohoo!

Josie: I think a group action…

Madge: Can we please do it as a group action?

Rhi: Both of you roll however many dice you’re rolling.

Josie: Wow…

Rhi: She got 3, 2, 1.

Madge: Oh no. This is all on me then, isn’t it?

Josie: Push yourself, maybe?

Madge: Yeah, let’s push myself. Four.

Rhi: I think the complication is that they immediately push in to start searching. The Bluecoat in the lead, she steps in forcing the two of you to move back and she starts herding the two of you towards the study. A couple Bluecoats go to collect Helker who I think is just walking in circles in the front hall, and the Bluecoats are fanning out throughout the house. Blaire and Myra, you gotta get one success.

Minna: Do we wanna group action this maybe? Is that something we could do?

Kim: That would be great.

Rhi: Okay.

Kim: Oh, for fuck’s sake.

Minna: My lower one was 4, so…

Kim: My highest was a 2.

Rhi: So the result is a 4. The good news is you get the door open.

Minna: Yeah!

Madge: Bad news?

Rhi: The bad news… You get the lock open right as a pair of Bluecoats step into the hall and see the two of you.

Kim: Nooo~

Minna: You know what, fuck it. Close the door behind us. We’ll figure it out.

Josie: [laughs]

Kim: Yep. Yep. Nope, that’s fine.

Rhi: And I mean, you can lock it from the other side. [laughs]

Minna: That’s what I’m saying, I’m gonna lock them out.

Kim: yeah! Let’s lock ourselves in.

Rhi: You can hear shouting from the other side.

Rhi (as Bluecoat): They’re still here! Get this door open!

Kim (as Blaire): We’re so dead! We’re so dead!

Madge (as Needle): Ah! My heart! My heart!

Madge: I’m falling over.

[laughter]

Rhi: So Needle, you’re trying to just be distracting?

Madge: Yeah.

Josie: Uh-huh, and I’ll aid in that I guess.

Rhi: Or do you want to group action it again?

Madge: Let’s group action.

Josie: We just start freaking out, like “oh no they’re still here! Oh God!” [laughs]

Madge: “Oh no! Ah!” Yeah.

Rhi: Yeah. This is gonna be risky for the two of you.

Josie: I got a 6.

Madge: And I got a 4, so no stress!

Rhi: Some of the Bluecoats start to go towards the people who were calling them, but they move back towards you, so yeah, only a couple people actually respond to the shouting. Most of them are trying to calm the two of you down. So, Blaire and Myra, you two go rushing down the stairs. There’s a light switch at the bottom and a bunch of electroplasmic lights crackle and pop to life revealing a large machinist’s workshop. There’s bins of metal pieces, tons of metalworking equipment, there are some very large machines that have drills and stuff on them. it’s very high-end. Set into one of the walls is a very large safe.

Josie: Se? You’re safe in here.

[nervous laughter and groaning]

Minna: [laughs] The collective sigh!

Kim (as Blaire): Myra, do you wanna take a shot at this, or…?

Rhi: Did one of you say you brought demolition tools?

Minna: I brought the unusual weapon, but I can have brought demolition tools.

Kim: I have not used any of my load.

Minna: I guess we both saw Seeks, though.

Kim: Yeah. Okay, I’ll mark off demo tools and I’ll use 2 of my load. Yeah, I guess we just have to blow the safe even though that’s not gonna help our cause. Ugh. We’re in the fuck it stage, so…

Rhi: I will say, right now, this is controlled.

Kim: Two 1s.

Minna: Oh my God.

Rhi: On controlled, it is: You falter. Press on by seizing a risky opportunity or withdraw and try a different approach.

Kim: I think at this point we withdraw.

Rhi: Yeah, so you’re gonna try something else. I think you start setting up the charges and then are like “uh, you know, maybe this is a bad idea.”

Kim: All right. I guess we’re picking this.

Rhi: Because you’re withdrawing and trying a different approach it’s still controlled.

Kim: I got a 2.

Rhi: This is just, like, bonkers.

Kim: I’m buying dice right now.

Rhi: You can try it again, but it’ll be risky.

Kim: It’s worth it to try again I think.

Rhi: I mean, you need the locks.

Kim: We do, so that’s why I’m gonna try. Okay, that’s better. I got a 5.

Rhi: Blaire, you’re fighting with this lock, you get it open, you open the door, and you see several neatly stacked boxes that have labels on them and the screaming face of an angry ghost as it lunges for your head. It’s just kind of coming through the wall straight at you.

Josie: Oh dear.

Kim: [calmly] Oh? All right.

Josie: Blaire’s actual reaction. [laughs]

Kim (as Blaire): Yeah, I forgot about you. Hi.

Rhi: I mean, it’s not talking, it is lunging for you with the intent on eating your soul, so like…

Kim: Can I resist that in any way?

Rhi: Yeah. It will be Resolve, and you have Iron Will to resist ghostly shit.

Kim: Oh, that’s true.

Rhi: It would be level 3, because it’s trying to possess you.

Kim: [laughs] Oh, things got so much worse for me just now suddenly.

Rhi: What’s your highest?

Kim: My highest is a 6.

Rhi: Okay. You take no stress, and possession is kind of an either or, so I think you just managed to like… You’ve had this happen before. You’ve had angry ghost lunging at you, and you just sort of steel your mind against it and the ghost just passes through you without latching on.

Kim (as Blaire): Eh. No biggie.

Rhi: Myra, you’re now trapped in a room with Bluecoats outside the door and an angry ghosts, so you’re probably having a bit of a time. Actually, Myra, you’re gonna need to roll Resolve as well to keep from totally freaking out.

Minna: Ugh, 100% definitely gonna have to. At least I’m rolling four dice.

Rhi: That’s good.

Minna: I got a 6.

Rhi: Okay. So yeah, Myra, you’re also just like, “I will deal with this later. We’re just gonna pack all these bad feelings away.”

Minna: Yeah. That’s exactly what she does, clutching her spirit bane charm as she does.

Rhi: You’ve got a safe full of locks that I assume you want to grab. You have a list of the specific ones you need for Ironhook, but you could also just take however many.

Minna: I’d like to make sure that we at least get the ones.

Rhi: Oh yeah, yeah, but you can also grab some others.

Minna: I’ll definitely take some extras while we’re here.

Rhi: Okay. You’ve got the locks. There’s an angry ghost in the room and there’s Bluecoats trying to kick down the door upstairs. What is your plan?

Minna: There’s not any secret ways out that we could find with our underground maps?

Josie: I imagine if there was we would’ve just used them to get in. [laughs]

Rhi: Well, Madge I think it was did mention the ghost key that Blaire has.

Madge: I did. That is something I mentioned.

Rhi: Blaire, you could try to Attune and see if there’s any ghostly ways out of here.

Kim: Okay. Yeah, I can do that.

Rhi: It’s gonna be risky.

Kim: Heh. I got a 3.

Rhi: I think it’s gonna be you lose this opportunity. You attune to the ghost field, but the only thing you see in the ghost field is, again, screaming angry ghost that is kind of circling the two of you, because it can’t possess Blaire and Myra’s got a spirit bane charm that’s keeping it at bay, but it’s just seething. There isn’t a way out down here via the ghost key. The only way out is the way you came in and there’s a number of Bluecoats trying to kick that door down. Minx and Needle, are you two just still trying to be distracting?

Madge: I feel like that’s all we can do right now, because we don’t know that they’ve gotten in.

Josie: yeah. If the door breaks then we might be forced to do something, but until then we’re just gonna hold up the leader and keep asking her questions and freaking out and stuff.

Rhi: Okay. Yeah. We briefly cut to the two of you just overdramatically sobbing [laughing] while a Bluecoat has a notepad.

Rhi (as Bluecoat): I just… I just need your names.

Minna: [laughs]

Rhi (as Bluecoat): I’m just trying to get my report. I just… It’s gonna be okay. You’re fine.

Rhi: So back to the basement.

Minna: Okay. We’re gonna have to find another way out of here. Egh…

Rhi: Resources available to you: demolition tools, angry ghost, whatever else you might want to have magic into your pockets.

Minna: I don’t have another plan. [laughs]

Rhi: So, suggestion, with the angry ghost.

Minna: I was wondering if we could do something with the angry ghost.

Rhi: You could lure the angry ghost to the top of the stairs where it can get through the door to where the Bluecoats are.

Kim: I like that.

Minna: Cool. Make a deal with a ghost again.

Kim: I can do it.

Minna: Okay. let’s drop back into character maybe?

Kim (as Blaire): I could talk to the ghost. It’s fine.

Minna (as Myra): Do you think the ghost would help us?

Kim (as Blaire): Maybe, if I can calm it down.

Minna (as Myra): It’s worth a try.

Rhi: It’s still gonna be risky.

Kim: Woo, 6.

Rhi: What do you say to the ghost?

Kim: First I actually want to lure it with some ectoplasm. I feel like the offering of food would be the best way to calm it down.

Rhi: Yeah. You do that. It’s been circling you and as soon as you take that out it just stops right in front of you and is staring and vibrating a little.

Kim (as Blaire): Hey. I know you’re probably hungry. Have some of this.

Rhi: Here’s what I’m picturing. It’s a glowing sort of goo, glowing gooey liquid? So I think what happens is it doesn’t actually slurp it up, it just sort of reaches a hand out for it and the glow fades out of the ectoplasm and the ghost glows just a teeny bit brighter.

Kim: Ooh.

Rhi: You’re just left with inert grayish slime.

Kim (as Blaire): Okay? Better?

Rhi (as Ghost): More.

Kim (as Blaire): More? I can give you more, but I need you to do a favor for me first, if you’re cool with that.

Rhi (as Ghost): [growls]

Rhi: It’s listening, it’s just very angry.

Kim (as Blaire): I need you to take care of those Bluecoats upstairs at the door.

Rhi: It’s gaze flicks towards the stairs and this very upsetting, savage grin spreads across its face.

Kim: Heh.

Rhi (as Ghost): Finally. Food!

Rhi: And it surges up the stairs, and there’s a beat…

Kim: [laughs]

Rhi: …and then you just hear a lot of screaming. Upstairs, Minx and Needle, you hear screaming and commotion, and three of the Bluecoats who had gone over to the door come running back screaming.

Rhi (as Bluecoats): Oh God! He’s possessed! He’s possessed! Ahh! There’s ghosts!

Minna: Oh no…

Rhi: They’re totally losing their shit. The other Bluecoats start freaking out and drawing weapons and trying to very quickly load electroplasmic shot.

Madge: Needle is taking this as her cue to go.

Josie: Well, let’s just run screaming. I think they won’t blame us.

Rhi: Yeah. I think in the general chaos the two of you can just flee the house in terror. Blaire and Myra, do you two want to try and head upstairs?

Kim: Yeah, we should get out of here.

Rhi: The two of you are able to run upstairs and the recently possessed Bluecoat has just shot out the back window at the end of this hall and has jumped out and is running. You two can also go out that way. [laughs]

Minna: Myra winces.

Minna (as Myra): Can we… I mean, what are we gonna do about that?

Kim (as Blaire): I… I don't know.

Minna (as Myra): Better not to think about it right now. Let’s just run.

Kim (as Blaire): Okay! We’re running! That’s the thing we’re doing now.

Rhi: [smiling] All right. You all make it away, barely.

Josie: Phew.

Kim: Good God.

Madge: Oh, by the way, I still have the wine.

Rhi: [cackles]

Kim: What?

Madge: The wine, that I was offered, I have it still.

Kim: Oh my God.

[laughter]

Rhi: You’ve just been clutching a bottle of wine this entire time!

Madge: It’s expensive wine! I’m not giving it up.

Rhi: Fuck, that’s good.

Kim: You’re kidding me.

Minna: How much of Needle’s character is just hoarding fine alcohol?

Madge: More than I would like to admit.

Rhi: God, that’s good. All right. The four of you reconvene at The Hound’s Paw. Everyone is at the end of their rope, pretty beat up, but you got the stuff.

Madge (as Needle): Phew. That was messier than I thought it was going to be.

Minna (as Myra): That’s faster than they usually are.

Josie (as Minx): Indeed.

Kim (as Blaire): But, I mean, we got what we came for.

Madge (as Needle): At least we got that.

Kim (as Blaire): It’ll make Ironhook a little easier.

Josie (as Minx): Just so long as we take a few days to rest we should be fine for the next one.

Minna (as Myra): Oh yes, we should visit Seeks.

Josie (as Minx): Mm-hmm.

Kim (as Blaire): That would be good.

Rhi: Let’s head into downtime.

## Downtime [1:10:54]

Rhi: You all kind of immediately after the score dropped off the locks with Frake, were like these are the ones we need. He was effervescent with joy and showered money upon you and was talking gleefully about how he’s going to destroy Helker.

Josie: [laughs]

Rhi: A few days later, three or four days after this whole thing, you all show up at his shop again. He is working on some large metal press machine when you all come in.

Rhi (as Frake): Just a second. I’ll be there, just a second… Okay. Done.

Rhi: He comes over.

Rhi (as Frake): Oh! My favorite people, in the whole world. Oh, you’re just the best, you know that? Needle, you have the best taste in friends! I’m not just saying that because we’re friends… it’s part of it.

Madge (as Needle): Oh it’s a lot of it.

Rhi: He goes under his counter and you hear him unlocking a few things and he comes up with a keyring.

Rhi (as Frake): All right. These beautiful, beautiful babies right here will get you through every lock in Ironhook.

Madge (as Needle): Lovely.

Rhi: He kind of holds up one of the keys.

Rhi (as Frake): So, I engraved on the side of them what sort of locks they go with, so this is sort of the exterior stuff, this is the lower security stuff, this is the high security cells…

Rhi: He talks you through it and then he hands the ring of keys over.

Rhi (as Frake): Good luck, have fun, be safe, and I will buy you all drinks when you get out and tell me about it, because this is one of the most profitable and cool things I have ever been a part of.

Josie (as Minx): It’s a date.

## Outro [1:12:51]

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

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

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

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

Needle is played by Madge. Follow her on Twitter at @madgequips.

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

Minna: And now we’d like to thank our fantastic Patreon backers!

Rhi: Waning Gibbous Games, thank you.

Minna: Bea, thank you.

Josie: Christopher Nies, thank you. Sorry if I butchered that.

Kim: Waffles, AKA Mahaffay, thank you.

Rhi: Yay, Waffles!

Minna: Yay.

Kim: Yay.

Rhi: For our listeners, Waffles was a guest star as Seeks and will hopefully be returning as Seeks at some point in the future.

Kim: Very good friend of the show.

Rhi: Yes. Christopher Tate, thank you.

Minna: Landers, AKA The Mysterious Oneirotect, thank you.

## Blooper [1:14:39]

Minna (as Myra): …have met somebody with clearly impressive breaking and entering skills.

Kim (as Blaire): Mm…

Josie (as Minx): That is true…

[restrained giggling]

Minna (as Myra): It may not be the best time for this, but—

Kim: [giggling] Sorry!

Rhi: [giggling] Yeah! Sorry!

Minna (as Myra): But—

Minna: I love it.

Rhi: [laughing] That dreamy sigh was just perfect!

Minna: Awww!

Josie: Blaire! You’re adorable.

Rhi: Okay. Sorry.

Kim: Sorry.

Minna: No, it’s fine. We all had to have a giggle for that.

Rhi: Bringing it back.

Kim: I just have a really big crush you guys.