The Magpies – Transcript
Season 2, Episode 6: The Spiritual Blackmail Score

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## Intro

Rhi: Welcome back to Duskwall. As always, thank you for listening, and an extra special thanks to everyone backing us on Patreon. We have some pretty cool stuff planned for our upcoming one year anniversary including a patrons only bonus episode and a live stream hangout with some of the Magpies cast. If you want to get in on that fun and excitement head over to patreon.com/magpiespodcast.

It’s still very far away, but since badges are on sale I will mention that Minna and I will once again be at GenCon in August. If for some reason our presence is the deciding factor in whether or not you’ll be going, now you know.

Next, Josie is going to tell us about this month’s Featured Charity.

Josie: Hey folks, it’s Josie. We’re doing something a little different this time. Rather than suggest a single featured charity for you to go through, I’m going to ask that you check out the #TransCrowdFund hashtag on Twitter, Tumblr, and other social media sites. It’s hard for everyone right now, but trans people like me especially have a hard time staying afloat economically due to discrimination and other difficulties. A lot of us don’t really have direct access to the help of charities, and crowdfunding via GoFundMe and other sites is what we’ve got to work with. Please consider donating directly to a queer trans person this month. It’s the most direct way to help out and it means a lot to us. Once again, that’s #TransCrowdFund. Thank you.

Rhi: The government shutdown is now the longest in United States history. Please call your representatives and demand that the government reopen, pay its employees, and waste exactly no money on a racist border wall. If you’re able, donate, ideally cash, to your local food banks who are going to have more and more people turning to them in the coming days and weeks of the shutdown.

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

## Story Continues [0:02:00]

Rhi: We open up on The Nest more than a week after the Ironhook break-in. The Magpies have been keeping their heads down as The Bluecoats are on high alert looking for the intruders who caused such chaos, but you can’t stay hidden inside forever, so what are the three of you up to as you’re starting to make some plans?

Josie: I think Minx is in the middle of doing herself up, because she just got back from her obligation at The Weeping Lady.

Minna: Hnn.

Josie (as Minx): It would be nice to travel a bit more openly again, dears.

Rhi: [laughing] As she’s taking off some kind of dramatic disguise.

Josie: Yes, precisely. [laughs]

Minna (as Myra): Yes, I agree. I think we need to think seriously about, well, getting the heat off of us and probably onto somebody else.

Josie (as Minx): Right. Well, we do have some experience in that department, although we’d have to deal with it on two fronts this time. I suppose dealing with The Bluecoats will be easiest.

Minna (as Myra): Yes. I think The Bluecoats could be tricked more easily than The Circle.

Josie (as Minx): Right.

Rhi: Take that, Bluecoats.

Kim: Pew-pew-pew-pew. (minor air horn simulation)

[laughter]

Josie: Shots fired.

Josie (as Minx): Do we have any idea on who we can throw some of our heat onto?

Minna (as Myra): Actually, I’ve been thinking about that. You remember that report we found, the police report associated with The Gondoliers?

Josie (as Minx): Vaguely, yes.

Minna (as Myra): And how we dug into Harvale Brogan’s past and found that he had paid off the police and sold out his old crew members.

Josie (as Minx): Oh, the former Umbra Hunters man.

Minna (as Myra): Yes. So, he has a history of betraying those he works with for his own gain. I think we can work with that.

Josie (as Minx): Yes, I think we can as well. Set up some… Although, what should we pin on him?

Minna (as Myra): Avrathi’s death. Unquestionably we were the ones who actually did it, but I think we can frame him for being the one who ordered it, because why would a lowly crew from Six Towers kill Ambassador Avrathi?

Josie (as Minx): Ah. Hmm, no doubt they think of us this way no matter how incorrectly. I like your thinking.

Minna (as Myra): I’d prefer they think of us that way for a little while longer.

Josie (as Minx): Perhaps.

Minna (as Myra): Hmm. Where does his support come from? Does he have money of his own or do you think all of his money comes from The Circle? Because that’s gonna be pretty key as to whether or not he can convince The Bluecoats to let him off.

Josie (as Minx): Yes. Was he working at The Centuralia Club?

Minna (as Myra): He was in charge.

Josie (as Minx): Oh dear. Well, then his money comes from that, most assuredly.

Minna (as Myra): So he has money of his own these days.

Josie (as Minx): Indeed.

Minna (as Myra): I think if we want to go that angle we may have to trick his friends after all, because I think those connections are what’s keeping him clean.

Josie (as Minx): Right.

Minna (as Myra): Let’s talk to Lani and Roxanne.

Josie (as Minx): Yeah, I suppose we should decide afterwards. Let’s do that.

Rhi: Okay. Where do you want to go to meet up with them?

Josie: I’d love to buy them some drinks in The Hound’s Paw or something.

Rhi: Okay. Yeah, later that afternoon or evening you are at your table at The Hound’s Paw. It’s gotten fairly busy. Rigney has already brought you your drinks and he is taking care of some of his other customers. After you’ve been at The Hound’s Paw for 15 minutes or so the door opens and your old friends, Lani and Roxanne, come in. They are looking a lot better than the last time you saw them. I think the last time that you all were together in person was right after the fire when they were watching their life’s work go up in flames.

Josie: [sad groan]

Rhi: Lani looks like she’s maybe lost a little weight. Her cheek bones stand out a little more sharply. She still has a kind of heaviness about her. It’s clear that the loss of The Mirror is still very much weighing on her. Both she and Roxanne brighten up and smile when they see you and come over. Behind them you see Rigney note their entrance and he starts pulling some glasses down for them. Yeah, they come over to the table and Lani waves and signs hello, and Roxanne says:

Rhi (as Roxanne): It’s really good to see you all again.

Josie (as Minx): Likewise. We are still greatly sorry, but glad to see you together.

Rhi (as Roxanne): Yeah, yeah, we’re getting by. I found work keeping the books for a tailor in Charterhall. It’s… Well, it pays the rent. [chuckles]

Josie: [chuckles]

Rhi: They both sit. Rigney just quietly brings over their drinks and then pats Roxanne on the shoulder.

Rhi (as Rigney): They’re on the house.

Rhi: And then he heads back to the bar. Lani takes a sip of her drink and then sets the glass back down and signs.

Rhi (as Lani via Roxanne): So, what did you need?

Josie (as Minx): Well, it is unfortunately a bit of business. We are looking long-term to alleviate some of the fallout from what happened, and we need a refresher on certain details regarding one Harvale Brogan.

Rhi: Roxanne translates, and as she spells out the name Lani makes a face.

Rhi (as Lani via Roxanne): We don’t really have many of our notes left, but we’ve been recreating what we can remember, writing things down. So, what did you want to know?

Josie (as Minx): Well, we need to figure out any weak points he might have. He is step one in taking vengeance for what happened and alleviating strain on both of us. We are looking for perhaps more obvious means of putting him away.

Rhi: They both look a little surprised.

Rhi (as Roxanne): You want to send him to prison?

Minna (as Myra): We would like to make it look like he’s more responsible for this than we are.

Rhi: Roxanne pauses for a moment and glances at Lani who signs a question and looks back.

Rhi (as Roxanne): Um… We’re both wondering, when you say “make him look more responsible for this,” which of your many accomplishments are you referring to?

Minna: [laughs]

Minna (as Myra): The one that happened in his club under his watch.

Rhi (as Roxanne): Ah. That makes sense. [laughs]

Minna (as Myra): You know, through his much flaunted security.

Rhi (as Roxanne): That does make sense, but it was worth asking. You have been quite busy.

Minna (as Myra): No, I quite understand. Frankly, the fact that you never wrote the story about us rather than them is astonishing.

Rhi (as Roxanne): [chuckles] For as much chaos as you seem to rain down upon Duskwall, it does seem to be doing more good than harm. I can’t say the same for The Circle. So, Harvale’s connections to The Circle…

Rhi: They sign back and forth a little bit, and after a couple moments Roxanne says:

Rhi (as Roxanne): You probably know as much as we do about him right now. He’s got some kind of protection from The Bluecoats. He was the only one not arrested when his whole gang was taken down. He owns The Centuralia Club. He uses what’s left of his old gang as security, although I imagine he’s probably had to hire some new people. Yeah… We could look into some things for you.

Josie (as Minx): I’d hate to put you in any amount of harm’s way given the situation.

Rhi (as Roxanne): Honestly…

Rhi: She looks at Lani who nods vigorously as she’s talking and signing.

Rhi (as Roxanne): [exhales] We miss this. [chuckles] Keeping the books is not exactly mentally stimulating, and I’m starting to worry we’re gonna get rusty and lose our edge. We know how to ask questions carefully. We’ll see what we can turn up. Is there specific information? You’re looking for weaknesses and his connections to The Circle, sort of what he does for them?

Josie (as Minx): Correct.

Minna (as Myra): I think we’d be especially curious about the nature of the support he gets from them.

Rhi (as Roxanne): That may be a bit tricky, but…

Minna (as Myra): I understand if you cannot get that. Absolutely understandable.

Rhi (as Roxanne): We’ll see what we can find out.

Josie (as Minx): A thought occurs. He still has some amount of protection from The Bluecoats for selling out his old gang, correct?

Rhi (as Roxanne): Yes.

Josie (as Minx): Knowing the exact nature of their agreement might be useful. I see no reason why one who has exploited that before might not exploit it again, like specifically to The Bluecoats.

Minna (as Myra): Yeah.

Rhi (as Roxanne): Yes. That’s why I was a bit skeptical when you said you wanted to send him to prison. He’s paid them off before to avoid that exact fate and he’s far wealthier now. But whatever the nature of their arrangement is, we could try to find that out. It may be worth all of you pulling some strings as well. We can only cover so much ground.

Josie (as Minx): Of course.

Kim (as Blaire): Yeah. We can work on that.

Josie (as Minx): If we can play on that we might in fact be able to get The Circle to do our work for us.

Rhi (as Roxanne): That would be convenient. Heh.

Minna (as Myra): Yes.

Rhi (as Roxanne): All right. Yeah, we can do this. This will be good to sort of get back into the swing of things even if it’s just for a little bit.

Kim (as Blaire): Also, you two could never lose your edge. You two are too good.

Rhi: Lani gives you a big smile, reaches over and pats your hand, and then signs back.

Rhi (as Lani via Roxanne): Thank you. That’s very sweet.

Rhi: Yeah. The two of them are gonna head out, looking like they’ve got a little bit more of a spring in their steps. As they’re leaving they’re signing back and forth to each other very quickly and making plans.

The way that Experts work, since this is the first time we’re doing this, they are able to accomplish certain tasks for the crew independently, which basically means I roll their quality. An Expert is quality equal to your current crew tier +1. It’ll be 2d6. I’ll just roll 2d6 to see how well they do. It’s basically a fortune roll.

It’s gonna take them a little while before they get back to you with information. do you all want to try to do any Gather Information checks before they get back to you, or do you want to wait and see what they find out, and then base your Gather Info checks on that?

Minna: I’d say wait.

Kim: yeah. Maybe we should wait on them.

Rhi: Okay. It’s gonna be a couple days. Is there anything that you all want to do in that time?

Kim: I didn’t get a chance to say this earlier, because I was a dummy, but Blaire is still kind of lovesick so she’s kind of withdrawn.

Others: Aww…

Kim: She’s been kind of down. She’s been writing cheesy poetry in her journal.

Rhi: Oh nooo~!

Minna: [breathy] Oh my God…

Josie: Hnn…

Rhi: [whimpers]

Kim: [giggles]

Rhi: I am now 110% onboard with having a conversation about that.

Kim: Okay. [giggles]

Minna: Yesss.

Rhi: Set me the scene for where this happens. You’ve got two or three days between when you see Lani and Roxanne, between when they’re gonna come back.

Kim: Yeah. I think for once Blaire is in the common area. That’s the only way this is going to work, because no one’s allowed in her room, ever, ever-ever.

Rhi: It’s more for your safety than anything else.

[laughter]

Kim: Yeah. She is sitting at the common room table and she is kind of hunched over the table. Not hunched, she’s like laying over the table, very bent over it, and she’s scribbling in her journal very pathetic love poems and letters and stuff. She’s still very not over Needle disappearing.

Rhi: Yeah. All three of you are probably still feeling the aftereffects of Phin’s departure as well.

Minna: Mm-hmm. [sad groan]

Kim: Yeah.

Rhi: Blaire’s just kind of got it doubled.

Kim: Yeah. That’s pretty much what it is.

Josie: I think that as Blaire is super engrossed in something, suddenly Minx is kind of over her shoulder sipping on a wine glass.

Josie (as Minx): I didn’t know you were a poet, dear.

Kim: She immediately slams the book shut.

Kim (as Blaire): Don’t look! [whiney] Don’t look! I’m not… Shut up.

Josie (as Minx): [chuckling] It’s okay. I didn’t see anything specific.

Kim (as Blaire): [pouts]

Josie (as Minx): Besides, love makes artists of us all, I think.

Josie: She’ll take a seat.

Kim (as Blaire): I’m not an artist… and I’m sorry I told you to shut up.

Josie (as Minx): [smiling] It’s all right, dear.

Minna: I think Myra comes and settles next to them with an extra mug of tea for Blaire that she sets in front of her.

Kim (as Blaire): Oh, thanks… Wait. Am I in trouble?

Josie (as Minx): [laughs] No. Of course not.

Kim (as Blaire): It’s just… I don't know. Everyone’s staring at me and I don’t know why.

Minna (as Myra): Well, I’m not staring if it helps.

Kim (as Blaire): Okay, it’s just… I don't know. All of a sudden everyone’s here. I don't know what that means.

Minna (as Myra): If you would like to be left alone we can leave you alone. You just seemed a little sad.

Kim (as Blaire): Yes, and?

Josie (as Minx): You might need some company given that a certain amorous company is indisposed at the moment.

Kim (as Blaire): [grunts]

Josie (as Minx): Do you wanna talk about it at all?

Kim: Blaire kind of swings her feet as she thinks about it.

Kim (as Blaire): Mmm… No.

Josie (as Minx): That’s quite all right, dear. I have been in this spot many times myself. I’m sure that’s a surprise to you.

Josie: Flashback to what a Minx breakup looks like.

[laughter]

Minna: Seeing you in breakup mode—We’ve talked about this!

Rhi: Yeah. I was just gonna say, flashback to a montage of Minx returning to The Nest and just swanning about dramatically and flinging herself down on a fainting couch with a hand over her eyes.

Kim (as Blaire): Well, it’s not really a surprise. I mean, have you looked at me?

Minna (as Myra): Now what’s that supposed to mean?

Josie (as Minx): Yeah, I’m not sure.

Kim (as Blaire): Well… I don't know. I’m not exactly the most datable person. So, like, this is stupid. I should have seen this.

Josie (as Minx): Dear, what are you talking about? Needle was lucky to have you. Any girl would be lucky to have you.

Kim (as Blaire): [uncertain hum]

Josie (as Minx): You’re passionate. You have interesting hobbies. You’re certainly adorable in a way that brings things out of people… And you’re a poet.

Kim (as Blaire): [whining] No… I’m not~

[laughter]

Minna (as Myra): [smiling] Maybe you don’t want to share that part of you with other people, which is fair.

Kim (as Blaire): [stubbornly] I don’t… it’s bad. Don’t look at it.

Josie (as Minx): I’m not looking at it, dear. I’m just saying you have many talents and virtues, many of which have become very apparent to us and I think are more apparent than you think.

Minna (as Myra): We like you.

Kim (as Blaire): Thanks. I like you guys too.

Josie (as Minx): That warms my heart to hear. Indeed, I can hardly imagine this crew without you.

Kim (as Blaire): I can’t really imagine it without Phin either.

Minna (as Myra): I know, she’s always been here, but we’re gonna have to find a way to imagine it and sticking with each other seems like the best way to start.

Josie (as Minx): Indeed.

Kim (as Blaire): [softly] I miss her.

Minna (as Myra): Me too.

Josie (as Minx): Quite. She brought a certain something.

Minna (as Myra): I don't know how we’re gonna do with this new direction without her. She’s the one who showed me that it was possible.

Kim (as Blaire): Hmm.

Josie (as Minx): Well, I think her point may have been that it doesn’t necessarily take someone special to do this.

Minna (as Myra): Yes. It just takes a lot of determination.

Josie (as Minx): Correct, and we’re not doing it to be special or superior, we’re doing it for the people we care about.

Minna (as Myra): Like you.

Kim (as Blaire): Wait, me?

Minna: [laughs]

Minna (as Myra): Who was I looking at, Blaire?

Kim (as Blaire): -I don’t know. I wasn’t looking.

Josie (as Minx): Besides, this is hardly a permanent situation, I think. I think Needle will show up at some point again.

Kim (as Blaire): Yeah…

Josie: Does Blaire allow me to ruffle her hair?

Kim: You know what… Sure.

Rhi & Josie: [giggles]

Kim: She’s not too happy about it, but she’ll let you.

Josie: I think at that point Minx is gonna stand up to go get herself some more wine.

Josie (as Minx): In the meantime, there are other leviathans in the sea as Phin might say, and you have time to hone your craft.

Kim (as Blaire): [grumbling] I don’t want a leviathan, I want a Needle-fish.

Minna: Hnn!

Josie: Hnn!

Rhi: [laughs] smiling] Oh my God…

Kim: Oh, I’m proud of that.

Josie: That’s adorable!

Kim: hee-hee-hee.

Minna: [smiling] You didn’t even throw anything at her for the pun.

Rhi: [smiling] No. it was too pure.

Kim: [giggles]

Rhi: Ah… So, a few days pass while you all are still laying low, but starting to mentally prepare at least for this upcoming score. You check in at The Hound’s Paw and get a message from Lani and Roxanne. The message is a couple sentences. It says that they suspect Brogan provides most of the funding for The Circle, that a lot of the money comes through him, via the club.

Minna: Oh, so he’s the money. Okay. [giggles]

Rhi: They found some people who remembered that Brogan used to pass evidence to a chief inspector named Gilbert Severin, and that might be a person to investigate in some more detail. That was the inspector who led the takedown of The Umbra Hunters. After the takedown the two of them spent a lot of time working together shoring up the case as Harvale was handing over evidence.

Josie: Interesting.

Rhi: Yeah. So, that is the information that they are able to provide you. That’s the lead. What do you want to do with it?

Minna: [through hands] I know someone I can ask about that.

Rhi: Yeah, you do know somebody you could ask some questions.

Minna: That could be a fun conversation, because this guy is clearly crooked, so like… Hey Jeren, maybe you could help me with this.

Rhi: Yeah. Let’s start with Minx.

Josie: Okie-dokie.

Rhi: What is your plan? What’s your approach?

Josie: I just want to talk to people who I know go to the club, and just sort of drop in conversation the weird connection Brogan might have and see if that reveals anything. I’ll talk about it like it’s common knowledge.

Rhi: Just some hot goss’.

Josie: Yeah, exactly.

Rhi: Gotcha. Yeah, go ahead and make a roll for that.

Josie: I feel like Consort is the deal.

Rhi: Probably Consort or Sway.

Josie: Are you saying I could use Sway for this one?

Rhi: Yeah. I think you could do either one.

Josie: Yes! And I get an extra d6 on Gather Information. I got a 5.

Rhi: So standard amount of info. I think since Minx’s various noble personas have been missing for a few months, when you return people are very happy to see you, they were wondering where you were, they were so worried.

Josie: Yay.

Rhi: Basically you end up in one of these fine cafes up in Brightstone holding court at a table with a bunch of young nobles or young up-and-coming merchants, people with a lot of money. You’re spending a couple hours talking and telling all of these stories about your fantastic trip around the continent and how glad you are to be back here and how you’ve missed the club, and people start telling you about all of the drama you missed at the club. Eventually you weave it around to mentioning this connection between Harvale Brogan and this Chief Inspector Severin.

Most of the people at the table don’t really seem to know what you’re talking about or just don’t find it very interesting, but there’s a young noble who kind of leans over to you as the conversation drifts in another direction and says that a friend of their cousin’s is fairly high up in The Bluecoats and has heard some rumors that Brogan came on the scene very suddenly about six or seven years ago but seemed to already be not quite friends with Severin but they worked together. Brogan seemed to have a lot of underworld contacts and had apparently seen the light of law, and had started handing over evidence and was acting as a double agent, it was all very dramatic. Severin was the person who was kind of his handler, and then Brogan came into all kinds of money and bought The Centuralia Club and took over, but it seems like they’ve maintained some kind of connection and relationship even though presumably Brogan isn’t feeding him information anymore.

Josie (as Minx): Interesting. That is a more intricate history than I expected. I thought it might be merely a secret dalliance.

Rhi (as Noble): Well, who’s to say? It could be multiple things.

Josie (as Minx): [chuckling] Quite.

Minna: Ehh…

Josie: Yeah. I think I want to know if they are still connected or rather if they actively spend time around each other, you know, digging further into the juicy secrets here.

Rhi: Sort of digging for gossip? Yeah. They don’t spend a lot of time together, but whenever they do it’s always because Brogan has gone seeking out Severin, and it’s usually once or twice a year. It’s not very frequent that they have contact, but you know, Brogan will turn up at the Bluecoat station where Severin works every now and then and they’ll have fairly brief chats, then Brogan will go on his way. Most people just assume it’s some kind of bribe thing, because that’s a fairly common thing for The Bluecoats.

Josie: Right.

Rhi: You show up, you pay your bribes, you go back to whatever your business is. So it could be bribery, it could be maybe he’s still feeding Severin information.

Josie (as Minx): Indeed. That raises the question of what has he to bribe for. Surely he is of upstanding station.

Rhi (as Noble): Well, you’ve been to the club…

Josie (as Minx): True enough. True enough.

Rhi: [laughs]

Josie (as Minx): Although, speaking of, I’ve heard that…

Josie: …and then I’m just gonna spit off into some other made up gossip. [laughs]

Rhi: Some other scandal. Yeah. I think that’s about the information that Minx is able to get. Meanwhile, I assume at a familiar Nightmarket café?

Minna: Yes. We are meeting in that familiar café.

Rhi: We’ve got Myra and Jeren.

Minna: I think a much more private table than usual. [laughs]

Rhi: Yeah, more towards the back, in a corner. Jeren looks concerned as he has pretty much every time you’ve met up with him recently. Oh man, you all left your name on the Ironhook thing, didn’t you?

Minna: Did we…? Ohh, we left a pin~!

Rhi: During your badass cool walk you flipped a pin to one of the prisoners, so he does know that you were involved in that.

Minna: I think when she sits down she just kind of does so in silence and waits for the inevitable. [laughing]

Rhi: Yeah. He’s just pinching the bridge of his nose.

Rhi (as Jeren): Ironhook…? Really?

Minna (as Myra): It was for one of my dearest friends.

Rhi (as Jeren): Would this happen to be the friend who, you know…?

Rhi: And he mimes a pistol firing with his hand.

Minna (as Myra): [sighs] I don’t expect you to approve, but she’s gone, so… No need to worry.

Rhi: The concern goes from an expression that you now recognize as “Myra, what have you done” to more of an expression of actually being concerned for you.

Rhi (as Jeren): Gone? Do you mean, like, she—

Minna (as Myra): No, she’s not dead. She left town, because it was safer for her family, because it is in fact very dangerous to live in this city.

Rhi (as Jeren): What did her family have to do with it?

Minna (as Myra): Actually, and I know you don’t want to hear this, but it was the local Bluecoats who were targeting her family. They couldn’t get at Phin so they got at the people who were more vulnerable. That’s how it works in this city.

Rhi: He sighs and shakes his head.

Rhi (as Jeren): I know. A lot of the individual squads, some of them have problems particularly in rougher areas like The Docks…

Minna (as Myra): You understand, these are people who have been given power over other people and they just use it to be petty tyrants.

Rhi (as Jeren): I know that some of The Bluecoats do abuse it, and…

Minna (as Myra): I’m not trying to have this argument right now. Don’t worry about Ironhook. That’s done now.

Rhi: [smiling] He makes a face at you but doesn’t press the subject any further.

Minna (as Myra): Speaking of Bluecoats gone rogue…

Rhi (as Jeren): Mm-hmm?

Minna (as Myra): We have some information about someone quite high up in The Bluecoats who has a connection to a criminal and we are trying to determine what that criminal has on him.

Rhi (as Jeren): You think there’s some kind of blackmail?

Minna (as Myra): Maybe. We’re not really sure. This guy stayed free and easy for years now when he really shouldn’t be.

Rhi (as Jeren): Who’s the Bluecoat?

Minna (as Myra): The Bluecoat is Gilbert Severin. The criminal would be Harvale Brogan, owner of The Centuralia Club.

Rhi (as Jeren): Um…

Minna (as Myra): Chief Inspector.

Rhi (as Jeren): [anxiously] I am aware of who Chief Inspector Severin is.

Minna (as Myra): We’re not going after Severin, if it helps.

Rhi (as Jeren): It does, actually. It helps a lot.

Rhi: At this point you’ll need to make a roll to see what Jeren knows.

Minna: Yes. [laughing] Oh my God… Conversations with Jeren are so stressful.

Rhi: He just wants you to have a nice, quiet life not making waves.

Minna: Listen. I’ve told him that’s not possible.

Rhi: I know. He’s just having a hard time.

Minna: Ha-ha! It’s a 6.

Rhi: Okay!

Rhi (as Jeren): Yes. I know who Chief Inspector Severin is. He worked in my station for several years before he just got transferred over to the headquarters in Six Towers just a year or two ago. I do remember Brogan showing up every now and then to see him, but I never really thought much of it. Severin is a very accomplished inspector. He’s taken down some pretty serious criminals. He kind of got his start with taking out The Umbra Hunters a while back.

Minna (as Myra): Mm-hmm. Brogan’s old gang.

Rhi (as Jeren): What?

Minna (as Myra): Oh! You didn’t know about that. Oh, this is some juicy gossip. Do you wanna know?

Rhi (as Jeren): Uhh… I mean, you kind of already said it.

Minna: [laughs]

Minna (as Myra): Brogan gave up his old gang to Severin. He was Severin’s agent, turned on the old gang, got all of them turned in and got the gang in return. Rather, he turned in the fellow leaders and he got leadership of the gang in return. And safety, and freedom. But we don’t know why he’s still out there and nobody’s touched him, since six or seven years is a long time.

Rhi (as Jeren): Oh… Yeah… Inspector Severin is a… I mean, I’m sure you know about the inspectors. They’re not like the rank and file that apparently harass families on The Docks. They’re dedicated and committed and basically immune to corruption.

Minna (as Myra): Yeah, supposedly “unbribable” and “detached” and “good judges.”

Rhi (as Jeren): Yes.

Minna (as Myra): Wouldn’t it be lovely if that were the case?

Rhi (as Jeren): [sighs] Well, there must be something then. If Severin… If he knew about that connection he wouldn’t just let Brogan go free for no reason. There must be something there.

Minna (as Myra): That’s what I’m saying. I was wondering if you knew anything. You’re the only one I know who might have anything on Severin. Any strange habits? Any, I don't know, weird little routines?

Rhi (as Jeren): I mean, he’s dedicated to the work. When he was at my office he always worked very long hours. He had this weird habit of when he was thinking or listening he would sort of tap his fingers on the side of his head. I think he moved to Six Towers, I think he has an apartment over there now.

Minna (as Myra): So, anything you’ve got, anything about where he might be, if there’s anything he might have left behind in the office? Anything you can get me on him, basically, we’re trying to figure this out.

Rhi (as Jeren): Yeah… Yeah. I’ll see what I can come up with. I’ll drop anything off at The Hound’s Paw for you.

Minna (as Myra): Yeah, you know where to find me.

Rhi: What he’s able to get you is, like I said, Severin’s address in Six Towers and the station that he works at now. I’m trying to think of something that he might have left behind.

Minna: Maybe something that doesn’t mean anything mundanely but might still have this weird echo in the ghost field.

Rhi: Ooh, yeah, that’s a good one.

Minna: Maybe just some notes that don’t end up meaning anything.

Rhi: I was gonna say he had a pen and ink well set that he always used when he was there, that he left that, and Jeren is just like “I don't know if you can get anything off of this but you asked me for things he left behind so here.” There might just be some random papers that are just like to-do lists and stuff like that which don’t have any notes that are super relevant to things but it’s stuff that he worked with a lot.

Minna: Mm-hmm.

Rhi: That might be a fun thing for Blaire to investigate.

Minna: Yeah~

Josie: Ooh.

Kim: Yeah. I was just thinking about that.

Minna (as Myra): Hey Blaire…

Kim (as Blaire): Mm-hmm?

Minna (as Myra): This is probably nothing, but I was just talking to a friend in The Bluecoats about Severin.

Kim (as Blaire): Okay?

Minna (as Myra): Something kind of stuck out to me and I don't know if it means anything, but noticeably the guy seems to have, like, fidgets? He’ll tap the side of his head when he’s thinking. I mean, everyone fidgets, but if it sticks out that much, you know, it seems like it might be something.

Kim (as Blaire): I mean, it’s hard to tell just based on description. It depends on, like, does it look natural for this person or not. Do they suddenly look very mechanical, or is it just a natural fidget? Do you know what I mean?

Minna (as Myra): So, when I was younger I used to twist my fingers together quite a lot in stressful situations. I don’t do that anymore, but…

Kim (as Blaire): Mm-hmm. You have a point, yeah. If it looked weird to him, it’s a possibility that it’s a sign of possession, but again it’s not 100% a foolproof method of proving whether or not someone is or isn’t possessed.

Minna (as Myra): Yeah. Actually, I wanted you to take a look at some of these things. You have better eyes than I do.

Kim (as Blaire): [gasps] Ooh! Uh-huh?

Minna (as Myra): I have some objects from his old office.

Kim (as Blaire): Ooh. Okay.

Minna: She takes out the ink well and the papers and hands them over.

Kim (as Blaire): What do you want me to do with them?

MYRA: I don't know. You know more about this stuff than I do. Would there be some kind of way of telling if the person they belonged to…

Kim (as Blaire): Uh… I don't know! Let’s find out!

Kim: Blaire is gonna put on her spirit mask. I would like to roll Attune for my Gather Information.

Rhi: All right.

Kim: I get +1 because it’s Gather Information. First roll with the new dice, people!

Rhi: Woohoo.

Josie: Woo!

Minna: Yeah~!

Josie: They’re all 1s.

Kim: Nope! No. I got two 1s and a 6, so we’re going with that.

Rhi: Okay. So… Blaire, you pick up a couple of the things and concentrate on them in the ghost field, and you start to see… It’s difficult to do object reading where you can look at an object and see its history, and it’s easier and works best if you’re seeing the object in the place where it was used.

Kim: I see. Yeah.

Rhi: So here in The Nest it’s detached, but you are able to see with the ink well and pen the ghostly movements of a pair of floating hands moving as if writing with the pen and using the ink well and whatnot. You can tell with the hands, you’ve done this before occasionally, been able to see these sort of echoes, and if it’s just a regular living person it just looks like a faded out, translucent hand. There is that, but then overlaid on it is a bright, glowing, ghostly hand that seems to be intertwined with the regular hand. So you’re like, huh, okay, well… [chuckles]

Kim: Okay. Yeah. Blaire is gonna take her mask off and look at Myra.

Kim (as Blaire): Yeah, no dude, this guy was totally possessed.

Minna (as Myra): Do you think that could be it?

Kim (as Blaire): A hundred percent.

Minna (as Myra): That’s big. A chief inspector possessed?

Kim (as Blaire): A big sign of corruption. It wouldn’t be very good publicity for The Bluecoats.

Minna (as Myra): Not at all… We have to find a way to prove it. If somebody else has proof, if that’s indeed what Harvale has, then…

Kim (as Blaire): Hmm.

Minna (as Myra): Or maybe we find Harvale’s proof if that’s what he’s got. I don't know. This might be our in.

Kim (as Blaire): I think this is definitely our in.

Josie: It sounds like we might have enough to start planning something.

Kim: I think so.

Rhi: Okay. What are you all thinking?

Josie: Well, Myra was right that Brogan’s gotta have some sort of proof to hold over Severin, so finding that would be pretty imperative.

Rhi: Yes.

Kim: Do we find Brogan?

Minna: I think we figure out where the heck we think Brogan would keep his valuables.

Josie: right, because Brogan himself is gonna be pretty hard to get at.

Kim: Yeah. Would The Gondoliers know by any chance?

Josie: Hmm. Maybe?

Rhi: You could ask.

Josie: I would… I don't know. Would I feel really bad about just blackmailing him back? Like we steal the proof, and then it’s like no, we’re your blackmailers now. [laughs]

Minna: I feel like that’s exactly what we do.

Kim: Yeah. That’s kind of what we have to do, though.

Josie: Oh, okay. All right. That’s fine. Let’s do that.

Rhi: Okay. I think the last piece of information you need is figuring out…

Minna: Where he hides it.

Kim: Hmm.

Josie: Yeah. I mean, we could just ask The Gondoliers.

Rhi: All right. Are the three of you gonna troop on down there?

Minna: Mm-hmm!

Josie: Yep.

Rhi: Who are you gonna go talk to? Are you gonna talk to Kay or are you gonna talk to some of the higher ups?

Josie: I want to talk to some of the higher ups, although I would like to say hi to Kay.

Rhi: You head to The Gondoliers headquarters down in the canals. Most of them give you a wave as you arrive. Kay is there doing some work on her boat. She’s doing some repair work on it and is just in like a sleeveless top and is all muscly and slightly glistening with sweat.

Josie: … Fuck, I’m gay. Thank you, Rhi.

Rhi: [smiling] I gotcha.

Josie: You got me. [laughs]

Rhi: [laughs]

Josie: I will come up behind and just gently rest a hand on her shoulder.

Josie (as Minx): Hello dear.

Rhi (as Kay): Oh. Hey. Good to see you all in one piece after last time.

Josie (as Minx): Yes. Well, it wasn’t the worst rough and tumble we’ve been through.

Rhi (as Kay): That’s very true. I wasn’t rowing you away with you being gut-shot again, so that’s an improvement.

Josie (as Minx): [chuckles]

Kim (as Blaire): One time!

Josie (as Minx): Although that evening did lead to certain better times.

Rhi (as Kay): [chuckles] True. Did you all need me for something? I’m afraid I can’t give you a ride anywhere just now.

Josie (as Minx): Oh. I was just coming by to say hi. Us as a group were hoping to talk to your boss.

Rhi (as Kay): Oh, yeah. Eisele’s in her office. You can probably just head on in.

Josie (as Minx): Thank you, dear.

Josie: Out of character, are we in a place where a peck on the cheek would be untoward or welcomed?

Rhi: No, it would be fine. She gave you a kiss on the cheek when you were heading into Ironhook.

Kim: [squeaks]

Josie: Oh right, yes. Yeah, so I’ll give her a peck back and then head into the office.

Rhi: Okay. So, Eisele is at her desk looking over a map of the city and muttering to herself. She looks up when you come in.

Rhi (as Eisele): Ah, Duskwall’s biggest troublemakers. What can I do for you?

Josie: Minx makes to open her mouth but then quickly shuts it and steps back, gesturing Myra forward.

Rhi: [laughs]

Kim: She’s learning~!

Minna: [laughing] Is this the one that didn’t like Minx?

Rhi: Bless. Yeah.

Minna (as Myra): We were looking for some information.

Rhi (as Eisele): Mm-hmm?

Minna (as Myra): Harvale Brogan, former Umbra Hunters leader, current owner of The Centuralia Club. We’re hoping to find something secret he has stashed away.

Rhi (as Eisele): Huh. All right.

Rhi: Go ahead and give me a roll to see what she knows.

Minna: Five.

Rhi (as Eisele): Well, anything to take that piece of canal scum down. There’s the club. He’s got a nice swank place up in Brightstone. Umbra Hunters, they used to work out of Coalridge in the old rail yard. I don't know if that would be worth checking out.

Minna (as Myra): I know the place. I wonder… Maybe we can start there at least. It would be easier to get into than The Centuralia Club.

Rhi (as Eisele): Or his house, probably.

Minna (as Myra): Oh, I mean, The Centuralia Club would be easier than the house.

Rhi (as Eisele): But yeah, those are the only places I can think of.

Minna (as Myra): That’s helpful information. Thank you.

Rhi (as Eisele): Yeah, well anything else we can do to help…

Minna (as Myra): Of course.

Minna: Myra holds out a hand to shake.

Rhi: Yeah, she shakes.

Rhi (as Eisele): Good luck, and uh, if you happen to send Brogan to his demise…

Rhi: She looks to Blaire and smirks.

Rhi (as Eisele): …pop him in one of those jars and I’ll pay you for it. I wouldn’t mind keeping him on my desk.

Kim (as Blaire): [gasps] yeah!

[laughter]

Minna: Really, Blaire?

Josie: Oh dear.

Rhi: So, it sounds like you’re gonna try the rail yard first?

Josie: Yes.

Rhi: All right. Engagement roll. One for luck… This operation is not particularly bold or daring in my estimation.

Minna: Yeah, no. It is the least bold option of the ones that we had.

Rhi: [reading] Plans … detail … expose a vulnerability … Friends and contacts have provided aid or insight…

Josie: Mm-hmm.

Rhi: You’re taking a one die penalty for secrets, so it’s one die.

Kim: What kind of secrets, GM?

Rhi: GM secrets, for the GM to know.

Kim: [squirms]

Josie: [laughs]

Rhi: [reluctantly] I rolled a 6…

Kim: Woohoo!

Josie: Nice!

## Rail Yard [0:44:35]

Rhi: The three of you pack up your gear. For certain members of the group you dress down appropriate for Coalridge. You make your way into the district, through the residential areas, past the factories that are constantly billowing smoke. There’s the constant clanging sound coming from the mine. You make your way to the old rail yard. It used to be where the trains would come in to collect coal to ship it out across the empire, but after electroplasmic technology was discovered and developed and electroplasmic trains became the norm everything moved over to Gaddoc Rail Station.

There’s dozens upon dozens of abandoned trains here that were just left to rust on their tracks. As you start making your way through you can see a lot of them are just left empty and abandoned, but in a number you can see movement inside, people peering out at you, it looks like some people are living in there. You make your way over to the area where Eisele said The Umbra Hunters had been. It’s a number of train cars that were what looks like decommissioned and piled up on top of each other, so it’s like three cars high, sort of a big train car honeycomb.

Josie: That’s pretty cool.

Rhi: It’s all very rusted and seemingly unoccupied. You make your way over and start poking around looking for an entrance, and as you are doing so you hear some footsteps coming in your direction. This is a heavier gate, booted feet, several people. You hear what sounds like a young woman’s voice say:

Rhi (as Young Woman): According to Brogan it’s over here, up around the next bend. We’ll just setup there and wait.

Minna (as Myra): [quietly] Who tipped him off?!

Rhi: Myra, you recognize that voice.

Minna: Uhh… What? Who?

Josie: Ooh~

Rhi: One of the other apprentices that you worked with. It’s not Clave.

Minna: It’s Ojal?

Rhi: It’s Ojal.

Minna: [yelps] … [covers mouth] Sorry. [giggles] That was Minna having feels.

Rhi: [laughs]

Josie: [laughs] I can’t wait to figure out what that means.

Minna: Minna knows the personalities of THREE apprentices! [laughs]

Rhi: They’re still a little ways away. You know they’re coming. They seem to think that they beat you here. They are incorrect.

Minna: Okay. Myra reaches out and grabs the nearest person’s arm.

Rhi: Okay. Who is nearest?

Josie: Agh…?

Rhi: Okay. Apparently Minx has been grabbed. [chuckles]

Josie: [laughs]

Minna (as Myra): Okay. We need to get inside before they get here.

Josie (as Minx): Very well. Around the back?

Minna (as Myra): Sounds good. Blaire.

Kim (as Blaire): Yeah?

Minna (as Myra): We need to move.

Kim (as Blaire): Uh, okay! I’m coming.

Rhi: You’re starting to figure out that maybe the reason not many people, or the reason no one has moved in here, is because there’s not really an obvious entrance. For as rusted as this is no holes have formed. The doors to all of the cars are welded shut. It still seems pretty secure, so somebody will need to make some kind of roll to find a way in.

Josie: I have Survey.

Rhi: Yeah, that would work. Because I rolled a 6 for the engagement roll you’re in a controlled position.

Kim: Would you like an assist?

Josie: Yes please. Eh, two 3s.

Rhi: The two of you are looking over this train car pile looking for an entrance, and Myra you’re keeping watch for this approaching group. It’s taking a lot of time, or you suspect that you’re going to need to take a lot of time, so you can either try again but it will be risky or you can withdraw and try a different approach.

Josie: I kind of just want to go in on it again.

Minna: Yeah.

Josie: Six!

Rhi: So, you stand up, looking-looking-looking, and then you see, it’s kind of hidden by a metal lip coming up off of the train cars, but there is a ladder that leads up. It doesn’t seem to lead to an opening, but as you squint up at it you can see that maybe there’s a door you can push aside or slide out of the way. It looks like an entrance.

Josie: Mm-hmm. Let’s get in there.

Rhi: Yep. You all scramble up the ladder. You’re trying to go fast and quiet and the ladder is not really on board with either of those things. There is some creaking of metal. Once all three of you are on it starts to drift back and forth in a really disconcerting way, but it holds. You make it to the top. Minx, you’re able to slide the little hatch aside and climb in.

It is very dark, it smells like rust and stale air, but all three of you manage to scramble inside. You close the little hatch behind you. You’re basically up inside, like I said, an empty train car, but it was clearly repurposed at one point to be an entry point into this hideout.

There’s a wall that’s been put up about half way through the train car with a door set in it and some slits in the sides where you could fit a pistol through.

Josie: Hmm. Interesting.

Kim: Yeah. How dark is it?

Minna: I think we have to carry lanterns with us all the time anyway to survive in this city.

Kim: Yeah, I was gonna say, let’s mark off a lantern on our load.

Rhi: Yeah. If somebody’s got a lantern you’re fine, you’ll be able to see.

Josie: I’ll take it.

Rhi: Okay. Minx, you have a lantern so you’re able to see everything in here. It’s very quiet in here. You can still hear the muffled noise of the factories and the mines, but there’s just that stillness to the air in here that says nothing has been in here for a long time.

Josie: Mm-hmm. Can we get through the door?

Rhi: When you get up to the door and try it it’s locked.

Josie: Does someone want to try and Tinker that?

Kim: I would be happy to.

Rhi: The lock is a lot newer than everything else around it.

Kim: Hmm!

Rhi: It’s cleaner, brighter, unrusted metal.

Kim: Harder, better, faster, stronger?

Rhi: Yes, exactly. It is that. It is all of those things.

Kim: Okay. I got two 3s.

Rhi: I gotta grab a note card~…

Kim: Why…?

Rhi: Because it’s—

Minna: Clock time~!

Kim: [shrieks] No!

Rhi: It is! Yeah, you start working at the lock. Because it’s newer it’s tougher and it kind of sticks a little bit. This is not a lock that’s opened very often. You’re still struggling with it, and then while you’re working all three of you hear lower in this hideout there’s a loud, muffled thud that then repeats, and repeats… It sounds like they’re just trying to bust their way through.

Josie: Uh-oh.

Kim: Don’t like that.

Rhi: Rather than looking for an entrance, they’re just like eh, we’ll make our own. So, the clock is Ojal’s Team Breaks In, 1 out of 4.

Josie: I’m gonna go out on a limb here and guess that none of us have dots in Wreck.

Kim: [weakly] That was Phin’s job.

Minna: [loudly laugh-sobs]

Josie: Yeah…

Kim: Yeah, no, I have nothing in Wreck.

Minna: Yeah…

Josie: Because I was thinking we might just want to bust through the door, but honestly we probably have better odds trying the lock again.

Kim: Yeah. I don’t mind trying again.

Josie: I’ll assist you this time.

Kim: My highest was a 3.

Rhi: Okay. Yeah. I’m ticking the clock up again. You’re just stuck at this door.

Josie: If someone’s breaking in, if it’s a small group, we might be able to just follow them in.

Kim: Hmm. Interesting strategy.

Josie: But if there ends up being six of them then we are in a tight spot.

Kim: What if we had someone try and circle back and peek outside and try to count how many there are, and then based on how many there are we can figure out from there what our strategy will be, whether we continue here or if we follow them in?

Josie: Yes. How about Blaire and I will keep at this lock, Myra do you wanna go around and take a scouting run?

Minna: Yeah, I can do that.

Rhi: Okay. We’ll have Myra take that roll first. Myra, you scramble back down the ladder. It’s a little less terrifying with only one person on it but still not the most fun you’ve ever had. You’ll need to make some kind of roll to do this sneaking and scouting without being seen.

Minna: Oh, so this is a Prowl roll.

Rhi: Probably, yeah.

Minna: That’s a 5.

Rhi: You sneak over and you are able to see that there’s five people clustered around one of the train cars. Four of them have what looks like a portable battering ram that they’re just slamming into the side over and over. Those four are in a mix of clothes, nothing that immediately jumps out as a uniform, but as you’re looking you can see pieces of like, oh that’s the black jacket that The Umbra Hunters wear when they’re working at The Centuralia Club, and those two have on the standard issue Bluecoat boots.

Minna: [nervous, emphatically] Uh…?

Rhi: It’s a bit of a mixed group. It looks like it’s a couple Umbra Hunters and a couple Bluecoats. Then, standing behind them, seemingly the one in charge, is Ojal.

Minna: Have I kept up on them at all? Would I know if she’s still with Salia or if she might have switched allegiances?

Rhi: I don't know. You tell me.

Minna: Hmm… I don't know! Okay, so backstory, Ojal is the one that Myra probably liked the most although you can’t really trust anybody among the apprentices, and she’s pretty sure that Ojal would be really pissed at her now because she was all about loyalty. So, I think she would have a strong suspicion that she wouldn’t leave Salia.

Rhi: Okay. Yeah. You know, make of this situation what you will.

Minna: Myra’s going to assume that Salia’s involved in this somehow as well as Bluecoats and Umbra Hunters.

Rhi: Yeah, so that’s a fun thing to think about.

Minna: Which sounds like an actual nightmare.

Rhi: Ojal glances over and meets your eyes.

Minna: [loud nervous exhale]

Rhi: So we’re gonna cut away from that back up to where Minx and Blaire are trying to get through a door.

Kim: I’ll roll Tinker again.

Josie: Yeah. Do you want another assistance on that?

Kim: That would be fabulous.

Rhi: Do you want a Devil’s Bargain to get that up to three?

Kim: Mmm. What would it look like?

Rhi: Your lock picks are gonna break.

Kim: Ah, classic Skyrim. Okay. I accept.

Rhi: Mm-hmm. [giggles]

Kim: Okay, 6.

Josie: Sweet.

Rhi: You keep working at this lock, you’re working at this lock, and it opens but as it does one of your lock picks just snaps off and half of it is stuck inside the lock.

Kim (as Blaire): Oh well.

Rhi: Door’s open. You’re in. Hurray. Myra has still not come back.

Kim (as Blaire): We should go get her.

Josie (as Minx): Yes. You know what, you continue forward and search, I will go grab our compatriot.

Kim (as Blaire): Are you sure?

Josie (as Minx): Yes. If she’s in trouble she is likely outnumbered, but we also need to get this done.

Kim (as Blaire): [exhales] Okay, but if she is in trouble, holler and I’ll come and help, okay?

Josie (as Minx): I will do that.

Kim (as Blaire): Okay. I’m gonna go search.

Rhi: We see Blaire head deeper into the train cars and we follow Minx out to the ladder. Cutting back to Myra, you and Ojal are staring at each other in shock. What does Ojal look like?

Minna: Ojal is a wiry woman, dark skinned, her head is shaved. She has this kind of coiled energy. She always looks like if you launched yourself at her she would immediately be able to counter it.

Rhi: There’s a beat of mutual shock, and then Ojal goes:

Rhi (as Ojal): She’s over there! Move! Now!

Rhi: And the guards, for lack of a better description, look over, drop their portable battering ram, and start coming towards you as they are drawing weapons. Myra, what would you like to do?

Minna: Hmm. I think I’d like to continue to draw their attention frankly, so I think I’ll engage in this out here.

Josie: [laughing] Oh no, Myra!

Rhi: Okay. What does that look like?

Minna: Gonna draw a pistol myself and shoot at one of the people who is not Ojal.

Rhi: Go for it.

Minna: I’m using Hunt.

Rhi: This is desperate so mark xp, because you are vastly outnumbered.

Minna: Oh my God. [laughs] It’s desperate and I rolled a 1.

Josie: No! Myra!

Kim: What the fuck?!

Minna: This is gonna be bad~!

Rhi: It’s gonna be very bad.

Kim: Don’t get shot~

Minna: I think I’m 100% gonna get shot.

Rhi: You’re gonna get shot. You draw a pistol and two of them shoot you. You’re taking level 3 harm.

Minna: Level 3 harm… I would like to resist.

Rhi: Mm-hmm. That’s with Prowess.

Minna: I did actually roll a 6 on that, so I take 0 stress to resist.

Rhi: Okay, it’s down to 2. You are able to dodge one of the shots but you still get hit.

Minna: Where do I take it?

Rhi: I think it’s gonna be a leg shot. I think it hits you in the thigh right above your knee. Your leg gives out and you manage to catch yourself on something nearby, but basically anything where you would be…

Minna: Everything that I’m trying to do. [laughs]

Rhi: Yeah, you’re gonna be at -1, and things that you were previously able to do freely like climb a ladder are now gonna require rolls.

Minna: Yep~

Rhi: Minx, you come out in time to hear shouting and I think you get to the ground just in time for the gunshots. What do you do?

Josie: I’m thinking Minx came with a heavier artillery this time, because there’s less of us and we need crowd control. What I kind of want to do is run around until I see Myra and then maybe try and pull her back and just lay down a spray at the people who are out there.

Rhi: Yeah, you can do that. What are you gonna roll?

Josie: I would like to roll Skirmish or Hunt, whichever is most fitting.

Rhi: I think that because of the range, and a blunderbuss is kind of a shotgun, it’s gonna be closer. I would allow Skirmish if you wanted, but Hunt or Skirmish would be fine. You can pick either one.

Josie: I will Skirmish.

Rhi: This is gonna be risky.

Josie: But I’ve got 3d6 in Skirmish, so I’m pretty all right… except I’m not, because I rolled a 3.

Rhi: Oof.

Minna: We’re not good at gunfights. We need to stop getting in gunfights.

Rhi: [laughs] I’m gonna say it’s reduced effect. You’re so busy getting Myra clear and trying to keep yourself in cover that you take a wild shot. Some of it hits them, but it’s not really enough to slow them down.

Josie: Right.

Rhi: They’re still very much coming. Blaire, I think that you are probably able to hear the shooting that has started. It is up to you.

Kim: Okay. Have I found anything in the meantime, or no?

Rhi: Go ahead and make some kind of roll for your searching of this place to see if you found anything.

Kim: I’m feeling Survey. I’m gonna try that.

Rhi: Yeah. That makes sense.

Kim: I got a 5.

Rhi: You are just tearing through this place. Fortunately it’s been mostly cleared out so you’re able to search fairly quickly. There’s entire train cars that are just totally empty. You shove open the door that had been left unlocked and as you do so your hand catches on some rusted metal and you cut your hand, so it’s level 1 harm, and this looks like it’s another entry way space where there’s some barricade type things where it looks like a security setup would have been, and there’s another door on the opposite side of this little entry way, and there is carved with what looks like a knife into the metal “HB, boss.”

Minna: [smiling] Succinct.

Rhi: Well, you know, they were thugs, they were bravos. This is also giving you a little bit of insight into Brogan’s history if he was originally operating out of the rail yards in Coalridge.

Kim: I need to get back to the group.

Rhi: Yeah. You note this location, you know how to get back here, but you’re gonna try to run up and rejoin the others?

Kim: Yeah.

Rhi: Okay. You take off to catch up to the rest of the group. Rest of the group… [laughs] You have ducked around a corner for cover, but there are still several people coming. Myra is pretty badly hurt.

Josie: I want to try and get her back around to the entrance. I don’t want to stand and fight.

Minna (as Myra): Box ourselves in and let them come after us?

Josie (as Minx): Yeah, but I mean, we won’t have to deal with them out in the open with all their numbers that way.

Minna (as Myra): So you think we can funnel them, take them down one by one?

Josie (as Minx): Exactly.

Minna (as Myra): Okay. You’re gonna have to help me.

Josie (as Minx): No issue, dear.

Rhi: The two of you hustle for the ladder. I’m imagining that Minx has an arm around Myra to help her limp along.

Josie: Mm-hmm.

Kim: Aw.

Rhi: Myra, you are gonna have to make probably a Prowl roll to get up this ladder.

Josie: But I am assisting you.

Minna: Oh good.

Rhi: You’re at -1 die on this roll because of your injury, but you get that one die back because Minx is helping.

Minna: Phew. It’s a 4.

Rhi: Okay. The two of you climb back up, but when you get back to that little hatch it sticks and it won’t close, so now it’s very obvious where you went in.

Josie: Ick. All right. I’m not gonna stick around to fix it, so we should try to get further in.

Rhi: Okay. Minx and Myra, you guys run into Blaire as Blaire is coming back in your direction.

Josie (as Minx): Yes, well they know we’re here now.

Minna (as Myra): Did you find anything?

Kim (as Blaire): Oh—What happened to you?!

Minna (as Myra): Ran into an old friend. Let’s get further back into the car. Anything useful back there?

Kim (as Blaire): I did, but come on, let’s move.

Minna (as Myra): Yes.

Josie (as Minx): Yes.

Rhi: Blaire, you’re able to lead them back down to the office that you found. The door into Harvale’s office has another one of those newer locks, and this door is locked, and your lock picks are busted.

Josie: I have a blunderbuss.

Rhi: You gonna try and Wreck it?

Kim: Go for it.

Josie: Yeah, I guess I’m gonna try and Wreck it, with my no dots in that. What’s a Devil’s Bargain look like?

Rhi: Myra’s left a trail of blood that’s gonna lead them right to you.

Kim: Once we’re in we can probably try and bar the door.

Josie: Yeah. They’re gonna know where we’re at anyway, so I’ll take that bargain. Six!

Kim: Woo!

Rhi: [laughs] So, Minx, you just take aim and just shoot the lock clean off.

Josie: Boom!

Rhi: I think it’s enough that the door actually swings inward a little bit. There isn’t much left in this office like the rest of this base. It seems to have been stripped pretty bare. The back half of this office is elevated up by about six inches, there’s a couple steps you have to go up to get to that area, and based on the scuff marks and things you’re guessing that’s probably where a desk was at one point. Looking at the floor there you can see that set into the floor there’s a safe. It looks like it would have been under the desk.

Josie: All right. We should try to get into that.

Rhi: No lock picks.

Josie: No lock picks. Um… Shoot. Does anyone have acid to burn through with, or…?

Minna: [laughs] Last time Myra had acid she burned herself.

Josie: [smiling] I know, but we can try again.

Kim: I can have acid. What would that be?

Rhi: We’ve put it as part of demolition tools in the past.

Kim: Okay. Let me just mark that…

Josie: I’m gonna keep watch and keep cover, perhaps bar the door in the meantime.

Kim: What would I be rolling for this?

Rhi: I think last time we did an acid thing I allowed Finesse, or you could do Wreck depending on what you have.

Kim: I’m gonna do Finesse.

Minna: There are ripping sounds as Myra’s taking bits off her skirt and wrapping them around her leg to stop the bleeding.

Kim: That would be a 2.

Rhi: Okay. You pour the acid onto the safe…

Minna: [grunts]

Rhi: …and it works. It starts eating through the metal. It’s actually working surprisingly well…

Minna: No! Is it working too well?

Rhi: …and the acid is starting to drip down, and you can hear some stuff inside this thing starting to sizzle.

Kim (as Blaire): Oh no. Oh no! Oh no-no-no. Guys!

Josie (as Minx): What’s wrong, dear?

Kim (as Blaire): Uh… Acid~!

Minna (as Myra): W-What? How can we help you?

Kim (as Blaire): I-I don't know! How do I get it to stop? I didn’t bring any bases with me.

Minna: [pained] I don't know. You know more about this than I do.

Kim (as Blaire): No- I- Uh…

Minna (as Myra): Okay. Okay. Just wrap something around your hand and try to get the thing off.

Kim (as Blaire): Really?!

Josie (as Minx): Wrap it nice and tight, nice and thick.

Kim (as Blaire): I- Ugh. I don’t have anything!

Josie: Minx is also gonna be down a sleeve or two at this point, just rip, rip. I’m dressing down. I don’t care about this outfit.

Kim (as Blaire): [groans]

Kim: Okay. She’s gonna cover her hands with it.

Kim (as Blaire): Okay. Okay… Mmm—Okay!

Kim: And she’s gonna reach in.

Rhi: Yeah. You’ll need to make a roll.

Kim: What do you think, Finesse again?

Rhi: I think you could try and do Finesse, because you’re trying to do this very carefully. Do you want to push yourself or anything?

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

Rhi: Hmm. The evidence is going to be somewhat damaged no matter what.

Kim: I’ll take it. Three.

Rhi: Uhh-kay. Um… Yeah. I think you reach in there and grab around but you just aren’t able to grab anything.

Minna: Can I try?

Rhi: Yes. Myra, you’re welcome to try.

Minna: I think what happens is Myra crawls across the floor, has been crawling across the floor to help Blaire and she finally gently pushes Blaire’s hands aside. Fuck me… I got a 3. I got two 3s, in fact.

Josie: God damn it.

Minna: You know what, we can scrape something out of this.

Rhi: Okay, so… I think I have mentioned it, but I will perhaps remind you that you can resist any consequence, not just harm.

Minna: Oh shit! I forgot about that.

Josie: Oh! Neat.

Minna: Can I resist the evidence being destroyed?

Rhi: Yeah, because that’s definitely gonna happen.

Minna: Would that be Prowess?

Rhi: Yeah.

Minna: I got a 4, so I’m marking 2 stress.

Rhi: Yeah, you’ll take 2 stress, but you manage to pull it out. It’s something that you probably haven’t seen a lot of before. This is a fairly new technology, photography. It’s just starting to enter the general public. In here is a photograph. It is of a man in his late 30s, early 40s, Akorosian, light skin, dark hair, big bushy mustache, sober faced staring directly at the camera. Overlaid on that image is… Myra—All of you have looked into the ghost field before, so Myra and Blaire as you’re looking at this it’s a very disconcerting feeling to see the color of the ghost field overlaid on this image. Normally you don’t see these colors and mists unless you are deliberately attuning.

Josie: Even though it’s going to be in black and white?

Rhi: Yeah. Well, most of the photograph is in black and white, but then there’s this sort of… What color do we think it is if you look into the ghost field? I’ve been picturing it as green or blue.

Josie: I’ve been picturing blue.

Minna: Yeah, blue, like light blue.

Kim: I’ve been picturing it like greens and blues and whites.

Minna: I picture it as photographic negatives, maybe slightly tinted with blue.

Kim: Ooh.

Rhi: Mm-hmm. Yeah. It has this weird blueish tint overlaid on it, and then overlaying the man is another face. It’s another man, darker skin, hard to pin down exactly where they’re from, could be Severos, could be Iruvia. They’re also staring straight ahead towards the camera. There’s a look of curiosity to their face.

Josie (as Minx): Do we have it, dears?

Minna (as Myra): Yes, we have it.

Rhi: The edges are a little bit spattered with acid, but the central part is clear.

Minna (as Myra): Why don’t one of you carry it?

Josie (as Minx): I’ll carry it if you wish.

Rhi: Yeah. Minx, you take a look at this photograph and it’s unsettling. [laughs]

Josie: Yep! Especially for me, so I’m not gonna look at it, I’m just gonna keep it.

Rhi: [laughs] You got the thing! Good job.

Josie: Yes. Now, they were trying to bash their way in from the exterior…

Rhi: But they saw where you climbed up, so you can hear footsteps stomping overhead.

Josie: I know, but I imagine it might be apparent from the inside where they were attempting to do this.

Rhi: Yes.

Josie: I suggest we try to do the same but from this side.

Rhi: Yeah. You can give that a shot.

Josie: Yes, let’s head down.

Rhi: Peeking into rooms you can see where the wall is dented inward from where they were trying to break through.

Josie: Did we see what they were using?

Rhi: They had a handheld battering ram that they dropped outside. Blaire did bring demolition tools, which is not limited to just the acid, you can have other explosives.

Josie: Yes, let’s explode it, because that always goes well for us.

Kim: Let’s do it. What would I be rolling, Wreck?

Rhi: Yeah. If you want to do this as a group action or… anything.

Kim: A group action would be good.

Josie: Although none of us have dots in Wreck, so we’d all have to push ourselves on a group action.

Kim: Not necessarily. If all three of us roll that’s three chances.

Josie: I got a 1.

Kim: I got a 4.

Minna: I got a 1.

Josie: All right, well we got a 4.

Rhi: Whoever was leading takes 2 stress. The consequence is that the blast works, it blows out the side of this train car, but the cars overhead start collapsing downward.

Josie: Oh God.

Rhi: Everybody’s gonna have to make some kind of roll to get out before… It’s probably gonna be Prowl, which Myra is at a -1 on.

Minna: Oh, so I’m at no dice. [laughs] Oh, fuck yes! I rolled two 5s.

Josie: All right then. I got a 1.

Kim: I got a 3.

Rhi: Okay, so… Oh God. I think what happens is Minx and Blaire both grab Myra and shove her out because she’s hurt.

Others: Aww.

Rhi: Myra makes it out okay, but I think the collective complication for everyone is that the thing caves in, and—

Kim: [gasps]

Rhi: Not entirely, they’re not crushed, but Blaire and Minx are stuck and are gonna have to find another way out.

Josie: Oh dear.

Rhi: Fortunately, based on the yelling that you hear above you, it sounds like that destabilized things upstairs as well, but yeah, you’re gonna have to find an alternate exit.

Kim (as Blaire): You got any ideas?

Josie (as Minx): They can’t have had that one entrance/exit. They must have had some way to bail out should things go wrong.

Kim: Would looking into the ghost field reveal anything to me as far as exits go, or no?

Rhi: Yeah, you could try it.

Kim: I would like to. Let me roll Attune, because I am good at one thing. I am not good at one thing.

Josie: Agh.

Kim: Three. That’s fine though.

Rhi: This is just another “you lose this opportunity” like the last time. You look into the ghost field and you don’t see any sort of lingering ghost doors.

Josie: What other rooms are down here on this floor?

Rhi: It’s hard to tell what any of them used to be because they’ve all been stripped bare, but there are a number of other rooms and stuff. A lot of the walls are now damaged what with the collapse, so searching around you might be able to just find a place you can crawl out but you’re gonna have to do some looking.

Josie: I’m gonna Survey to do that.

Rhi: Okay.

Josie: Fuck!

Rhi: Guys. [laughs]

Minna: Can I do a Survey from the outside?

Rhi: [exasperated] Yeah.

Minna: Well… [laughs] A 1.

Rhi: Oh my God.

Kim: What is going on?

Minna: Okay. Let’s resolve these.

Rhi: So both of you are unable to find anything initially. You can either withdraw and try a different approach or you can continue by seizing a risky opportunity.

Josie: I’m gonna seize a risky opportunity.

Rhi: Okay.

Josie: God damn it! Fuck me. That’s a 1.

Kim: Let me roll Survey. Let me try something… One! What the fuck?!

Rhi: Oh my God!

Minna: [laughs] Okay, I’m gonna take a long step back and do a Study, do a good Study, good hard study, look systematically over all of the windows and possible doors and joints. Fuck yes, I got a 6.

Rhi: [relieved] Okay. Myra, you limp around circling and you are able to find a spot where there was a door on one of the train cars that had been welded shut that under the pressure the welding has snapped and it’s opened up, it’s buckled open a hole.

Minna (as Myra): Minx! Blaire! Down here!

Josie (as Minx): all right, dears. Let’s go.

Kim (as Blaire): Where are you?!

Minna (as Myra): Follow my voice!

Kim (as Blaire): Okay!

Rhi: Yeah. The two of you are able to find your way to where Myra is and clamber out and stagger away as this pile of train cars keeps creaking ominously behind you… but you are able to make it away.

Josie: Hurray.

Rhi: Let’s go into our downtime scenes.

## Downtime [1:17:30]

Josie: Okay. Minx is practicing with her sword. She’s hacking at something, and she looks down at it and says:

Josie (as Minx): No, this won’t do.

Josie: And then just takes up increasingly vulgar weapons to beat at it with, and then eventually just sort of says:

Josie (as Minx): Ah, fuck it.

Josie: Lets down her hair and punches the crap out of it for a little while.

Rhi: [laughs] At some point in there she’s definitely got a board with nails sticking out of it.

Josie: Yup. [laughs]

Rhi: All right. Yeah. Just sort of training and getting back to her roots.

Josie: Right. [laughs] Exactly.

Rhi: Myra?

Minna: I think what happens is she knocks on Minx’s door.

Josie (as Minx): Hmm? Yes dear?

Minna (as Myra): Hey. I need to make an outing, but I’m not really in good shape to defend myself if anybody comes after me, which is not an odd proposition at this point. Do you mind, just, like stand outside and keep watch?

Josie (as Minx): I would not mind that at all. In fact, I’ve been practicing.

Minna (as Myra): [breathes] Yeah, I just…

Josie (as Minx): I’ll accompany you.

Minna (as Myra): Thank you.

Rhi: You’re heading to The Devil’s Tooth?

Minna: Yeah, and I think outside the door of the room she usually takes she says:

Minna (as Myra): Don’t… come in?

Josie (as Minx): Of course not, dear.

Minna (as Myra): Thanks.

Josie: I think Minx is just gonna chill out there with maybe a book or something.

Minna: I think that’s it, just having to lean on your teammates. Yay.

Josie: Yay, feelings.

Rhi: Yeah, that’s good. I think while Minx and Myra are out at The Devil’s Tooth, Blaire, you’re on your way back from visiting Seeks to get your hand bandaged up and Seeks mostly was fussing about you getting some kind of horrible diseases because you cut your hand on rusty metal.

Kim: Eh.

Rhi: There’s some kind of kelp paste smeared on your hand and you’re all wrapped up with bandages.

Kim: Mm-hmm.

Rhi: You’re walking home and as you’re making your way through the streets you hear a somewhat familiar voice say from behind you:

Rhi (as ???): Oh, there you are.

Rhi: You turn, and Nyryx is standing there.

Kim (as Blaire): Nyryx!

Josie: Oh no.

Kim (as Blaire): Hi~

Rhi: She’s dressed… When you’ve seen her, Nyryx is usually wearing fairly nice clothes. She’s just wearing sturdy boots and pants and kind of a bulky sweater, kind of a fisherman sweater type thing.

Kim: Cute.

Rhi (as Nyryx): Um… I think Neera told you that…

Kim (as Blaire): Yeah. She did.

Rhi (as Nyryx): Well, would you like to meet some people?

Kim (as Blaire): Right now?

Rhi (as Nyryx): Well, this is kind of when I’m available, and I’m not—

BLAIRE: I mean yeah, yeah, for sure.

Rhi (as Nyryx): Yeah. It’s up this way.

Rhi: The two of you start walking, heading into Crow’s Foot. She seems kind of nervous, which again when you’ve seen her previously she’s been pretty smooth and calm and collected.

Kim: Right.

Rhi: Yeah. She’s acting very unusual from what you’ve seen of Nyryx previously.

Kim (as Blaire): Is everything okay? You good?

Rhi (as Nyryx): Y-Yes. I’m sorry. I don’t… Do you know much about my, um, situation?

Kim (as Blaire): Your situation… No. No, I barely know you. Sorry.

Rhi (as Nyryx): Heh. It’s all right. I just wasn’t sure how much Neera had told you. Minx has told you a bit about where we grew up, right?

Kim (as Blaire): Um… Not much, no.

Rhi (as Nyryx): From Coalridge, me and Minx and Bazso didn’t really have much, but we had each other. Well, I’d like to say that we made it as far as we did because we were clever and fast, but I think a lot of it was just luck and the fact that none of us were facing it alone. So we got out, but a lot of people don’t…

Rhi: As she finishes that sentence and moves into the next, something just shifts in her face and in her eyes. There’s a weird light behind her eyes that you recognize as the look of somebody who is possessed. It’s still Nyryx’s body, it’s still Nyryx’s voice, but you’re talking to somebody else.

Rhi (as Nyryx): I was 16 I think, it’s hard to keep track in a place like that. The days all sort of run together into hunger and pain and misery. I didn’t make it out, and you Blaire, I don’t even know if you remember. There were some spirit traffickers looking for those of us who had died in the coal heaps, and you got there first, you found me and helped me get away. I found someone that understood what I was and understood that I wasn’t going to lose myself the way that most spirits do, and Nyryx was generous enough to let me stay, to let me see what life is like when it’s not just pain.

Josie & Minna: [whimpers]

Kim: Blaire’s not even gonna say anything. She’s just gonna throw her arms around Nyryx.

Others: Aww.

Rhi: [laughs] She kind of stumbles a little bit and doesn’t react right away, because that’s not at all what she was expecting. After a second she tentatively returns the hug. After a minute she steps back and when she steps back that possessor look has faded and Nyryx gives you a little hesitant smile.

Rhi (as Nyryx): Um, well, I’m glad you understand. Heh.

Kim (as Blaire): Thank you.

Rhi (as Nyryx): I should be thanking you.

Kim (as Blaire): No. What you’re doing is really good. You’re giving someone half way, about half way, a life that they should have deserved. That’s a lot. Not a lot of people in Duskwall would do that.

Rhi (as Nyryx): I just… It could have been me, you know? It could have been Minx.

Kim (as Blaire): Yeah…

Rhi (as Nyryx): Uh… about Minx. She doesn’t… know.

Kim (as Blaire): Okay.

Rhi (as Nyryx): I haven’t figured out a way to tell her.

Kim (as Blaire): Yeah. That’s between you and her. I won’t get between that. I understand.

Rhi (as Nyryx): Okay. Thank you.

Kim (as Blaire): I know, not too many people would be as understanding. I get it.

Rhi: She leads you up through Crow’s Foot to a tavern hotel type setup and doesn’t lead you inside but takes you around the back and down into the basement. As she’s opening up the door, she’s like:

Rhi (as Nyryx): All right. Well, um, welcome to The Reconciled, I suppose.

Rhi: And we’ll pick up on that scene next time, on how that plays out.

Kim & Josie: [play shouting]

Josie: So much feels.

Rhi: Yay! I’ve been wanting to do that scene for a while. So, eventually the three of you come back together having taken care of your wounds, both physical and mental. Who is writing the letter?

Josie: I am taking care of the penmanship at the very least.

Rhi: [laughs]

Josie: It will open “Dear Chief Inspector and tenant, You may be pleased to know that one Mr. Brogan has been liberated of certain evidence of indiscretion. You may also wish to know that we have come into possession of similar items. But never fear, as a token of our good will, we give to you the information that Harvale Brogan is the mastermind behind the assassination of a certain ambassador of our fair city. Now, I am certain you have the acumen of your position to follow up on this information as you choose, and simply keep us in mind.” And I’m not gonna sign it.

## Outro [1:26:30]

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.

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

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.

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

Josie: And now we’d like to thank our lovely Patreon backers.

Rhi: Olivia de la Cruz, thank you.

Minna: Zoey Weinstein, thank you.

Josie: Sarah Vianne, thank you. [small] Hi Sarah.

Kim: Tom Fritchman, thank you.

Rhi: Tyler Nikolich, thank you.

## Blooper [1:27:50}

Rhi: Um… Huh. I’m trying to think of what might be some weird habits that a possessor ghost might develop in a body that’s not theirs.

Josie: Going into an old abandoned house and moaning very loudly.

[laughter]

Rhi: I just- I just have to haunt something!