The Magpies – Transcript
Season 2, Episode 8: The Langdon Imports Score, Part 1

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## Intro

Rhi: Welcome back to Duskwall. As always, thank you so much for joining us, and apologies for how croaky I sound in this intro. I’m either losing my voice after a long volunteer shift yesterday or I’m getting sick. Either way, I was perfectly fine when we recorded this episode, so I won’t sound like this the whole time, don’t worry.

Today’s episode is a special one because it marks the one year anniversary of The magpies. February 20, 2018 I launched the first episode of this show out into the world. I figured we’d get 20 listeners if we were lucky. Now, a year later, we have over 61,000 downloads, nearly 700 Twitter followers, and over 60 Patreon supporters. This podcast has been so much more than I ever could have dreamed and I’m still blown away by the support and love we get from our fans. Thank you all so much from all of us on the cast. We love creating this show and sharing this story with you all.

One quick announcement, the transcript for Season 1, Episode 4 is up on the site. We’re slowly chipping away at our backlog of episodes that need transcripts, but if you’d like to help us reach that goal faster please back us on Patreon. When we hit $300 per month I’ll be able to hire more transcribers and start getting transcripts up a lot faster.

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

Kim: McLean Hospital is a psychiatric hospital in Massachusetts that is committed to helping adults, adolescents, and their families struggling with mental illness and addiction, and on a personal note it was their inpatient program that I attended when I was in crisis back in the fall of 2017. The people and the staff at McLean are so incredibly compassionate and respectful of everyone who comes through their doors, and I feel so lucky that I was able to receive their quality care. If you’d like to donate, visit them at givemclean.partners.org.

Rhi: As always, please continue to visit 5calls.org and call your representatives. On a personal local note, if you’re in Chicago make sure to get out and vote. We have the opportunity to make some big changes in our city’s leadership, and with early voting and same-day registration you’ve got plenty of time to get to the polls.

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

## Story Continues [0:02:40]

Rhi: We open up with a wide shot over Coalridge. There’s smoke pouring out of the factories, the constant clanging sounds from the ironworks and the coal mine. We move down into the factory area over to what is clearly a very new construction tenement building, and there is a ring of Bluecoats around the front of the building. Back by the door are a number of workers who are clamoring and shouting. You can hear things like you can’t keep us prisoner here, we have families, we have homes, you know, those sorts of shouting. Then there’s a man standing back with the Bluecoats with his arms folded.

Rhi (as Man): These are your new lodgings. We are paying for them out of the company coffers. This is where you will stay and you will follow our curfew.

Rhi: Then a bottle throws out of the crowd, misses the guy who was talking, but hits one of the Bluecoats, and the Bluecoats surge forward, and we just pan back up as there’s shouting and the sounds of people being hit with truncheons, and just the general altercation happening there.

We fade back in on The Hound’s Paw where The magpies find themselves as usual. What are you all up to?

Josie: I think Minx is sketching something. It looks like she’s designing an outfit, but she’s focusing on veils and stuff. She wants to find a veil that actually works against ghosts, kind of.

Josie (as Minx): I need this fashion statement, but it needs to actually do it.

Kim: I’m going to say that Blaire brought a book with her this time. I think she’s probably taking notes along in her journal as she reads.

Rhi: Oh, are she and Minx—Is this a collaborative project? Are you both-? Is she researching ways that you could make fabric that is resistant to being seen through the ghost field?

Josie: [laughs]

Kim: I did not consider it, but I like it. May I add something?

Rhi: [laughs] Yes.

Kim: She is not researching ways to make the veil ghost proof, rather she is trying to configure a way to have the veil act as a spirit mask.

Rhi: Hmm. So the opposite of what Minx wants.

Kim & Josie: Yes.

[laughter]

Kim (as Blaire): Because what you’re doing is like super impractical.

Minna: [laughs]

Josie (as Minx): Impractical? Sometimes our identities need to remain a secret, and if there’s an entire population you communicate with that can simply see through the disguise that’s no good.

Kim (as Blaire): Yeah, but who’s gonna believe a ghost? Who’s gonna rat you out? I mean, come on.

Josie (as Minx): I mean, there are other ghosts to rat us out to.

Kim (as Blaire): Yeah, but…

Minna (as Myra): And there are ghosts who take possession of people who would be believed.

Kim (as Blaire): Yeah… I mean, yes, there is that, but there are other protections you can use and the veil is not it.

Minna (as Myra): What kind of protections can you use?

Kim (as Blaire): You know, the usual, like spirit bane charms, stuff like that.

Josie (as Minx): Yes, but it is my understanding that doesn’t prevent them from seeing you.

Kim (as Blaire): Yeah, no, but it keeps them away.

Minna (as Myra): Only to a certain extent, and only to a certain power level.

Kim (as Blaire): Right. But you know, willpower has a lot to do with it too. You see, if you’re not a chicken…

Minna: [chuckles]

Josie (as Minx): I—I am not a chicken.

Kim (as Blaire): [giggles]

Josie (as Minx): They just make me uncomfortable. Besides, if we are dealing with ghosts the fashion must match; veils, the more supernatural paraphernalia we put into it, the more black lace must be included. It’s a direct correlation.

Kim (as Blaire): Uh… I mean, I’m just speaking for myself, but if I were a ghost I wouldn’t want everyone around me to act and dress like they were still at my funeral, like get over it.

Josie (as Minx): … Did you just tell me to get over fashion?

Rhi & Minna: [fighting giggles throughout]

Kim (as Blaire): No, no. What I’m saying is that if people around me, as a ghost, still dressed and acted like they were at my funeral, I would want them to move on with their lives.

Josie (as Minx): Mm-hmm. I suppose it might conjure poor memories.

Minna (as Myra): So you’re against mourning fashion?

Kim (as Blaire): To an extent. It has its uses, and its time and place, but don’t dress like that all the time around me. Like that’s a bummer. Being a ghost is already bummer enough.

Josie (as Minx): So what you’re saying is I should instead go for some sort of wide brimmed hat?

Kim (as Blaire): [gasps] yeah!

Josie: I don’t think people in this universe would call it a sun hat, maybe a moon hat instead.

Rhi: No.

Kim (as Blaire): No-no-no! It would be like you would wear on opening day of a race at a dog race.

Josie (as Minx): Precisely. Let’s make it a day at the races rather than a funeral date.

Kim (as Blaire): Yeah! Yes. See, you got it.

Minna (as Myra): So celebrate the life that you had.

Kim (as Blaire): Yes! See, you guys got it.

Josie (as Minx): And this will go with more outfits.

Kim (as Blaire): [quietly] Eh, I may have created a monster.

Rhi: [laughs]

Josie (as Minx): Although, the truism still stands that the more ghostified it is the more goth it must be.

Kim (as Blaire): Ehh… not necessarily.

Minna (as Myra): Blaire, when do you wear bright colors?

Kim (as Blaire): [flatly] Never. [abruptly] Also, there’s a very—

[laughter]

Minna (as Myra): A point to Minx.

Rhi: At this point in the conversation the door of the bar swings open and a young woman comes in. Myra, you probably recognize her but I don't know if you would necessarily be able to place her. She looks familiar to Myra. Blaire, Minx, I don't think either of you have met her before. She is skinny in the way that says she doesn’t get enough to eat on a regular basis, has kind of a sickly pallor to her skin. She glances around and spots your table and hurries over.

Minna (as Myra): Hello.

Rhi (as Woman): [meekly] Hi. Um… I’m sorry. I don’t think I’ve met most of you. Is Phin here?

Minna (as Myra): Phin is not, but we are quite able to help you with whatever matter she would have helped with.

Rhi (as Woman): Oh, um… My name’s Teagan. Phin and I think you, Myra—

Minna (as Myra): Oh, Teagan. How wonderful to see you again.

Rhi (as Teagan): Yeah… You helped me at the clinic a few months ago. Phin had told me that anytime that I needed help that I could ask you, ask The magpies.

Minna (as Myra): That is still true.

Rhi (as Teagan): [sighs in relief] Okay. Good. [coughs]

Kim (as Blaire): Are you okay?

Rhi (as Teagan): Yeah, it’s just, uh, everybody that lives in Coalridge ends up with this cough after a while. Heh. I um… The situation is a little complicated, but there is someone in Charhollow who my dads work with sometimes. He kind of passes around information and things like that. He’s run into some trouble, and needs some help, and I thought this seemed like maybe the kind of thing that you could help with?

Josie (as Minx): Well, yes, I suppose it depends on the task, and I wouldn’t lie to say that it sounds as though they also provide useful services.

Rhi (as Teagan): Yeah. I think that you might be able to help each other. It’s a complicated situation. I don’t… Honestly, I’m not sure I even understand the whole thing.

Minna (as Myra): Is there somebody you would like to put us in contact with instead?

Rhi: She nods.

Rhi (as Teagan): His name is Briggs. He runs a clothing stall over in the Charhollow market. If you go there tell him that Teagan sent you and he’ll fill you in. I don’t know how much this is going to be able to pay, we can try to scrape something together…

Kim (as Blaire): You don’t have to worry about that.

Minna (as Myra): Yes.

Rhi (as Teagan): Okay…

Josie (as Minx): Yes. In fact, in the meantime, you may wish to spend lunch time here. I’m sure Rigney can accommodate a meal for you.

Kim (as Blaire): Yeah. It’s on us.

Minna: Myra actually reaches out a hand to Teagan.

Minna (as Myra): Have you been all right? I know that Phin was helping you for a little bit there.

Rhi (as Teagan): Um… Yeah. I’ve still been cleaning houses and things. I haven’t gone back to the clinic. [coughs] We’re getting by. It’s…

Rhi: She shrugs and shakes her head.

Rhi (as Teagan): Are you sure about the lunch? I mean, I don’t want to take advantage…

Josie (as Minx): Yes, absolutely certain, in fact I insist.

Rhi (as Teagan): All right.

Rhi: She’ll sit down and Rigney will put her meal on your tab. If you ask about her situation, both of her fathers work in one of the factories in Coalridge and she does housecleaning. She’s a little bit younger than Blaire even, but there’s still some of the community fixtures from those neighborhoods that, Minx and Myra, you might recognize from your time growing up in those areas that she can tell you about.

Minna: Is Briggs one of those features?

Rhi: Possibly. I will leave it up to you if either of you recognize the name.

Minna: I mean, he runs a clothing stall, I can think of somebody who might recognize that.

Josie: Yeah. I might be interested. [laughs]

Rhi: Yeah. You know, it’s Charhollow, it’s not fine clothing.

Josie: Right, but still.

Rhi: Yeah. I can see a young Minx…

Minna: Way back in the day she bought secondhand clothing from Briggs.

Josie: Yeah!

Rhi: And Minx, if you ask a few questions there, Teagan will tell you that aside from this latest incident he’s doing well, he’s been able to expand his wares a little bit.

Josie (as Minx): I assume there’s somewhat less gray involved.

Rhi (as Teagan): No. I mean, everything in Coalridge and that area just kind of ends up grayish anyway. All the coal dust…

Josie (as Minx): True, but at least branch out into black. Black is classic.

Rhi (as Teagan): Oh, yeah, there’s that. A lot of beige that ends up grayish after a while too. Anyway, I have a house that I have to get to, but thank you so much for lunch and for helping with this.

Josie (as Minx): It’s no issue, dear.

Kim (as Blaire): Yeah, and here, take this.

Kim: Blaire is gonna hand her a little pouch of tea leaves.

Kim (as Blaire): If your throat starts getting a little bit sore…

Rhi (as Teagan): [unsure] Oh. Um, okay… Thank you. That’s very kind.

Rhi: She tucks the little pouch away, and then she heads out.

Kim (as Blaire): Poor kid.

Rhi: Rigney leans over the bar.

Rhi (as Rigney): I don’t have any more open positions. I’m sorry.

Minna (as Myra): Oh…

Josie (as Minx): It’s quite all right, Rigney.

Rhi (as Rigney): Just, you all have a type in your strays.

Minna (as Myra): We’re not going to fob off all of our strays on you.

Rhi (as Rigney): I would help if I could, but I’ve only got so much in the budget.

Josie (as Minx): And her situation like many in Charhollow is not uncommon. To think though, if The Hound’s Paw were that big.

Rhi (as Rigney): [laughs] Yeah. Well, I’d probably have to move to different digs, and I like this place.

Kim (as Blaire): You never thought of franchising?

Rhi (as Rigney): No, because then I… The people that I’ve got working for me I feel good about managing, but then I’d have to hire more people to manage other people, and then it just starts getting a lot less direct oversight, and then somebody’s embezzling your funds, and then a building burns down for insurance fraud, and…

Josie (as Minx): This is quite a thorough series of unfortunate events you’ve imagined for yourself.

Minna (as Myra): Very specific.

Kim (as Blaire): Yeah. Is there something you want to tell us?

Rhi (as Rigney): What? I was a server at another bar that had management problems.

Kim (as Blaire): Okay!

Josie (as Minx): I see.

Minna (as Myra): [smiling] Sounds like you’re well out of it.

Rhi (as Rigney): Yeah. Oh, there’s a reason that I own my own place now.

Rhi: So, the three of you gonna head off to Charhollow?

Kim & Josie: Yep!

## Charhollow [0:16:40]

Rhi: A lot of people in Nightmarket are heading back to work, heading inside. There’s an early afternoon fog rolling in. It’s getting a bit chillier. As you pass into Coalridge on your way to Charhollow there’s not as many people out in the streets, but there’s still that constant noise that you’re all familiar with having been through this area for a while. You make your way up to the Charhollow Market. The last time you were here actually was after the fire in The Docks. This is where the refugees were moved to. There’s really not a lot of signs of those refugees here now, it seems like they’ve all moved on in one way or another. The market is a bustling center of activity. There are people with stalls selling all kinds of wares. You kind of have to fend off a few people who are fairly aggressive about trying to get you to try their pickled eel.

Josie: “Fresh fish!”

Rhi: [laughs] yeah.

Kim: I’ll try a pickled eel.

Rhi: [laughing] Blaire is actually taking all of the samples that people are offering.

Kim: [smiling] yes, she is.

Rhi: Minx, you more or less remember where Briggs had his stall setup. You probably get turned around a couple times, but you manage to find your way over to it. A lot of the stalls in the center of the market are clearly very temporary. In some cases it’s just a rug rolled out on the ground or a wagon that has been parked there for the day. Around the outer edges where Briggs is setup, things are a little more permanent. Everything can still be taken down and packed away, but they are large tents. The one that Briggs is in is a 10 by 10 tent that has cloth hanging down on three sides enclosing it. As you step in you see there’s a couple tables and some crates that are stacked with worn but clean and very neatly folded clothes. Most of it does look secondhand, you can see where things have been patched or darned, but it’s all the kind of stuff that Minx would wear when she’s dressing down. It is sturdy working clothes, all of it in various shades of gray and brown and black.

Sitting towards the back of the tent are two figures. The first is an older man, looks like he’s in his 50s, shaved head, a lot of scars on the top of his head and around his face, and one eye is that sort of milky white and the other is blue. He raises his head when the three of you come in, as does the enormous dog sitting on the ground next to him.

Josie: [gasps]

Kim & Minna: [dreamy noises]

Rhi: It looks like a cross between an Irish Wolfhound and just a wolf. This dog is GIANT and very shaggy.

Kim (as Blaire): Puppy~

Josie: A good boof.

Kim: Blaire leans down to pet it.

Minna: [smiling] I think it’s a working dog. I don’t think you should touch it.

Rhi: Yeah.

Kim: Oh! Oh, never mind. I do not touch it.

Rhi: yeah, the dog does not… She stays sitting next to him. She just kind of raises her head.

Rhi (as Man): Oh. Come on in. What can I get for you?

Josie (as Minx): Evening. I don’t suppose you’d have this in black, now would you?

Josie: Minx gestures to her clothes.

Rhi (as Man): Heh. You’re gonna have to tell me what you’re pointing at. Can tell where the three of you are, can’t really see what you’re gesturing at there.

Josie (as Minx): I was thinking my blue cloak.

Rhi (as Man): Well, we have a few cloaks over on the right hand side here.

Rhi: He points to where some cloaks are.

Josie (as Minx): Briggs, it’s me, Ellie.

 Rhi (as Briggs): [long gasp] I thought I recognized your voice! Ah.

Josie (as Minx): [laughs] It’s been a long time, hasn’t it?

Rhi (as Briggs): It has! That’s very rude of you to not introduce yourself to an old friend.

Josie & Minna: [giggles]

Rhi: He holds out a hand to you.

Josie: She shakes.

Rhi (as Briggs): Wow, it’s been… It’s been quite a while since you’ve been around these parts.

Josie (as Minx): Yes, well it’s hard for me to stay away when there’s a friend in need.

Rhi: He cocks his head to the side.

Rhi (as Briggs): What are you talking about?

Josie (as Minx): Teagan said you may need our assistance.

Rhi (as Briggs): Ah.

Rhi: He pauses for a second.

Rhi (as Briggs): I didn’t realize that was you. All right. Whichever one of you is closest to the front, there’s a curtain tied up. Can you pull it across?

Minna: I’ll go do it.

Rhi: As you pull the curtain there’s a little bell that jangles. He waits until it’s stopped ringing, that the curtain is closed.

Rhi (as Briggs): [exhales] All right. I guess I feel a little bit better knowing that you’re a part of this, Ellie. [sighs] Right. So, how much did Teagan tell you? I’m guessing not much. She was just sort of carrying the message.

Josie (as Minx): No. Just that you were in need of aid and services might be exchanged.

Rhi (as Briggs): You were probably a little too young to be wrapped up in this when you were around here. I handle a lot of information, people tell me things that they hear. Some of it is just gossip, but gossip has its uses. I collect that information, sell it to folks who need it, pass on some of the pay to the people who tell me things. It’s been a pretty reliable system, but I’ve lost contact with part of my network. We had a lot of folks over in Coalridge who were passing on information for union organizers over there trying to get around the strike breakers and the scabs. A couple weeks ago one of the factory owners, a guy by the name of Tomasz Wott, got a bug up his ass about from what I heard it was inspired by what that Mora fellow was trying to do up on The Docks, have the factory and the tenements together. So, Wott had a tenement built and moved all of his workers in there, told them they could live there rent free, which sounds great.

Josie (as Minx): But…?

 Rhi (as Briggs): Except it’s just the workers, it’s not their families, and Wott cut their pay to accommodate for the fact that they’re not paying rent, except they are paying rent for their families. There’s also real strict curfews. If they’re not at the factory they’re supposed to be in the tenement. I think it’s Wott’s way of trying to keep people from making it to the organizing meetings, but who knows.

Josie (as Minx): Sounds a bit more like a prison than a boarding house.

Rhi (as Briggs): Yeah. Well, that was the reaction of a lot of the workers. They, well, I think it was over too quick to call it a riot. They pushed back, it got beaten down as those things usually do around here, and I’ve got a lot of people who can’t get me information and more importantly can’t see their families.

Josie (as Minx): Well, the good news, we are especially inclined to assist with matters as these.

Rhi (as Briggs): [laughs] Well, that’s good to hear.

Josie (as Minx): Is there any more you can tell us about this Wott fellow?

Rhi (as Briggs): Not much. Kind of a typical factory owner. He comes from money. I think his brother is some magistrate up in Brightstone. Selfish, greedy, cruel, what you’d expect from somebody who runs one of these places.

Josie (as Minx): Indeed. To be clear, we are ridding the place of the tenement situation not simply taking your folks away from it?

Rhi (as Briggs): That would be ideal. A lot of the other factory workers are kind of watching this experiment of Wott’s, and if it’s profitable…

Minna (as Myra): They’re gonna do it everywhere.

Rhi (as Briggs): Mm-hmm.

Rhi: He points in Myra’s direction and nods.

Minna (as Myra): [sighs] I should have known we wouldn’t have killed it with that riot.

Josie (as Minx): Yes. Well, there’s always time for more riots, I believe.

Rhi (as Briggs): However you do it, I’m not real particular, just try not to get too many of our people hurt. I don’t really care what happens to Wott, although if he does die they’re gonna take it out on the workers.

Josie (as Minx): Right. Hmm. And then with everyone back on the street and with us reacquainted, I imagine information can be shared both ways?

Rhi (as Briggs): Indeed, yeah. I know people that work all over the city. They could pass you all kinds of tips.

Josie (as Minx): In that case, not to cut a reunion short, but I do believe we have a war room of sorts to conduct.

Rhi (as Briggs): Yep, although you should probably buy something while you’re here. Usually I only close the curtain if people are trying stuff on.

Minna: [laughs]

Josie (as Minx): Oh yes! It has been quite a while.

Josie: Minx is gonna immediately go off to the shirt section and look for high-collared shirts and come away with a couple, or maybe a fashionable turtleneck.

Rhi: Uh, no. There is nothing in this place that would really qualify as fashionable.

Josie: Aw. [laughs] Well yeah, but a turtleneck would be practical, right? Because it protects your neck from exposure and damage and all that, what with a lot of manual labor going on.

Rhi: You do find… [laughs]

Kim: Oh my God.

Rhi: I rolled a partial success, so you are able to find a mock turtleneck.

Josie: [laughing] What is a mock turtleneck?

Minna: It’s the thing that you wore in the 90s as a child.

Rhi: I was gonna say, it’s very 90s.

Josie: Mm-hmm. She pulls it out, sort of screws up her nose at it, and says:

Josie (as Minx): It will have to do. I can work on it.

Josie: Then she’ll buy that. [laughs]

Rhi: When you take out the small amount of coins you need to pay for this, he points at the dog.

Rhi (as Briggs): Come on, Mallory. You know the drill.

Rhi: The dog stands up, which puts her head at your stomach…

Josie: Oh dear.

Rhi: …and pads forward a couple steps and leans forward to sniff at the hand with the money in it.

Josie: Aww.

Rhi: As she’s sniffing at the coins, Briggs just goes:

Rhi (as Briggs): Yeah, I trained her how to smell silver. A couple years ago a guy tried to pay me with pewter coins, thought that he could get away with it since I couldn’t see him.

Josie (as Minx): That is utterly brilliant.

Rhi (as Briggs): She took his whole hand off.

Josie (as Minx): What a good dog.

Kim (as Blaire): What a good dog…

[giggling]

Rhi: After she finishes sniffing at the coins for a couple seconds she raises her head and lets out a happy bark and pants at you and wags her tail.

Josie & Minna: Aww!

Rhi (as Briggs): Excellent!

Rhi: And he holds out his hand for the money.

Josie: I’ll pay him. What an extremely good dog. She’s so big!

Kim: I want to pet her so bad, but she’s working and I can’t distract her.

Rhi: [laughs] After you pay, he’s like:

Rhi (as Briggs): When you head out, can you slide the curtain back for me?

Minna (as Myra): Will do.

Rhi (as Briggs): Thanks, and good luck. If there’s anything else you wanna know feel free to stop back in. I’ll see what I can come up with. I haven’t lost contact with everybody.

Josie (as Minx): Thank you, Briggs.

Rhi: He waves as the three of you head out.

Josie: All right. Sounds like some Gather Information times?

Rhi: Yes.

Josie: I think Minx is not gonna do her usual. She does have this new turtleneck.

Rhi: [snickers] Mock turtleneck.

Josie: So she is gonna dress down a little bit, and I think she’s gonna hit up a bar or something. Well, she is kind of doing her usual, but in the working class sense not the snooty café sense.

Rhi: Minx, you head off to a pub called Kellen’s, and this is a place that you are very familiar with. Everybody who lives in Charhollow knows Kellen’s. It’s one of the oldest pubs in the city. It is rumored to have a history that dates back to the founding of the city which would make it pre-cataclysmic…

Josie: Oh geez.

Rhi: ...which is unlikely.

Josie: [laughs]

Rhi: But it has always been a Skovlan institution, it’s always been owned by Skovlanders. They have a wide selection of Skovlan whiskeys and ales, and it’s actually the kind of place where if you’re a rich person who wants to slum it you go to Kellen’s because then you can feel like you’re brushing elbows with the working class, but there’s also really good quality drinks, so you don’t actually have to slum it.

Josie: Right. Fitting.

Rhi: Minx, you would also know this. In the years since the Unity war ended and Skovlan was forced into the Empire, the bar has been the target of a lot of anti-Skovlander activity, people graffiti-ing the place, there have been a few windows broken, but most people don’t think that the bar is actually in any kind of danger, it’s just such a permanent institution of the city.

Josie: Yeah. This does sound like Minx’s kind of bar.

Rhi: Yeah. I imagine when you were younger you and Bazso and Nyryx probably hung around here picking pockets or running cons on some of the rich people who would come down here.

Josie: Right, and maybe once we were actually old enough, maybe drinking here sometimes.

Rhi: yes. Oh, for sure. You absolutely did, probably before you were old enough, truth be told.

Josie: Fair. [laughs]

Rhi: All right. What are you looking to do here?

Josie: I’m looking to go more the Consort route. I do need to put up a bit of a façade here, but I actually kind of want to legitimately reconnect with my roots a little bit. I don't know if the bartender is someone I know… Hold on. I have, on my shrewd friends list as a neutral contact, I have Klyra, a tavern owner.

Rhi: There we go. Done. [laughs] Perfect. I think Klyra is seven or eight years older than you, and when Minx was a young tween just discovering what crushes were you were desperately in love with her.

Josie: Aww. Yes!

Minna: Augh~!

Rhi: Just head over heels infatuated.

Kim: Gayyy.

Josie: Good old gayby.

Rhi: She was 19. She helped her mom out at the bar. There were probably a couple cons or pickpocketing lifts that you screwed up because you were just staring at her all heart eyes.

Josie: [smiling] Rhi… That’s so good.

Rhi: [laughs]

Josie: That’s so good. Thank you for this gift, this gift of sweet baby gays.

Rhi: yes! So, she is at the bar, it seems like she is running the place now. She glances up when you come in and does a double-take, and is giving you that look of I know you from somewhere but hell if I know from where.

Josie (as Minx): [laughs] Don’t worry dear, I’ll help you out. It’s Ellie.

Rhi (as Klyra): No shit! Ellie?! Wow!

Josie (as Minx): Indeed.

Rhi (as Klyra): You… Wow. What the- It has been, God, it’s been like a decade since I’ve seen you.

Josie (as Minx): Oh. I suppose it must have been, huh. I’m very glad to see you exactly where I expected you to be.

Rhi (as Klyra): Yeah. Mom retired a couple years ago and let me take over.

Josie (as Minx): Oh really? How is she doing?

Rhi (as Klyra): OH, she’s doing good. She honestly is spending most of her retirement up in Silkshore, which I can’t blame her, she earned it.

Josie (as Minx): Quite.

Rhi (as Klyra): I just wish she wouldn’t share quite so many details with me.

Josie (as Minx): [laughs]

Minna: [laughs]

Rhi (as Klyra): Anyway! Sit down, sit down! Let me get you a drink. What brings you here?

Josie (as Minx): Well, it’s been too long, frankly, and I just needed to check around the old stomping grounds and make sure everyone is all right.

Rhi (as Klyra): Hmm? All right.

Rhi: She gives you a glass of some kind of whiskey.

Josie: Minx nods and smiles appreciatively.

Josie (as Minx): Also, I couldn’t help but notice certain current events and I wanted to make sure everyone is able to see their families.

Rhi (as Klyra): Oh yeah. [sighs] That’s a fucking mess, and likely to get worse if something doesn’t change. I’m worried they’re gonna have everybody locked up in there and that’s my whole business.

Josie (as Minx): Right. Well, I can’t imagine, what with the discontent, it is actually profitable. It must end at some point, yes?

Rhi: I think at this point we’ll need a roll to figure out how much she actually knows about the situation.

Josie: I can do that. I’ve got a 3d6 Consort coming down the line… Six.

Rhi: Nice! She shrugs.

Rhi (as Klyra): I don't know, I mean, Wott, the guy who runs the place, cut wages. It’s hard to hear much reliable, but from the rumors that I’ve heard he cut wages at least in half, since he figures his people don’t have to pay rent anymore.

Josie (as Minx): Except now they have two places of dwelling. That makes no sense.

Rhi (as Klyra): Yeah. He’s at least saving money there. They’re able to enforce people getting to work on time, so I don't know how much of an impact that’s actually having on the bottom line, but it might. Honestly, I think it’s less about the profits, I think the real reason is to keep people from getting involved with Mrs. Brogan’s work, her rallying, trying to organize people. I mean, I support her ,but…

Josie (as Minx): Ah. That’s despicable, although I’m glad that taking a stand is somewhat more feasible now around these parts.

Rhi (as Klyra): I mean, honestly I don't know which way it’s gonna break. You get these charismatic up and comers who seem like they’re gonna change everything, and then nothing does, things get worse. We’ll see.

Josie (as Minx): Right. Although the fact that they are existing means the boot on the neck must have loosened somewhat.

Rhi (as Klyra): Eh. It might be more that the cornered animal fights back. You box people in, grind them down so much that they don’t have anything to lose, they’re gonna fight like they don’t have anything to lose. You know?

Josie (as Minx): I suppose that is true.

Rhi (as Klyra): Yeah. My general impression of it is it’s more about breaking the union than making more money, but building that tenement also wasn’t a cheap expense, so I think a lot of the other owners are waiting to see if it’s actually effective before they follow suit.

Josie (as Minx): I see.

Rhi (as Klyra): Hopefully they won’t, because that’s gonna ruin this neighborhood.

Josie (as Minx): Yes, although it is almost depressingly typical of his lot.

Rhi (as Klyra): Oh yeah.

Josie (as Minx): Although speaking of family, is there anyone more in your life now?

[laughter]

Kim: What the fuck?

Josie: I’m generally asking, but I might flirt.

Minna: How obvious was Minx’s crush when she was 11?

Josie: I mean, it was a kid crush, so probably not subtle.

Rhi: Are you kidding me? Yeah, it was very obvious. For a second she looks a little surprised and then she just kind of grins at you.

Rhi (as Klyra): Don’t tell me you’re still carrying that torch, Ellie.

Josie (as Minx): Perhaps not that torch, but I must say you are capable of lighting many, in many people.

Rhi (as Klyra): You grew up into quite the charmer. I’m actually seeing a couple people.

Josie (as Minx): Oh, good for you.

Rhi (as Klyra): Yeah. We’ve been talking about the three of us moving in together. I have the space for it.

Josie (as Minx): Oh, that’s delightful. It’s so rare to see a complete triad.

Rhi (as Klyra): Yeah, yeah. It wasn’t for a while. I was seeing the two of them, and they met and hit it off, which was a surprise but a very welcome one. It certainly made arranging things a bit easier.

Josie (as Minx): I am genuinely and utterly happy for you.

Rhi (as Klyra): Thank you. And how about you? You have anybody special?

Josie (as Minx): Well, Nyryx and I have shared some time together, off and on, over the past while. You remember Nyryx, yes?

Rhi (as Klyra): Oh, yeah, Nyryx! She’s doing well?

Josie (as Minx): Indeed. She’s stable and happy as far as I can tell.

Rhi (as Klyra): Oh, that’s good. Who was, uh… [snaps] the other one you used to run with?

Josie (as Minx): Bazso?

Rhi (as Klyra): Yeah! He’s in charge of some gang up in Crow’s Foot now, right? The Lampblacks?

Josie (as Minx): Yeah… Indeed.

Josie: Minx will sip.

Rhi: She kind of looks at Minx.

Rhi (as Klyra): Ah… All right. Well, I’m glad to hear that you and Nyryx are doing well.

Josie (as Minx): Yes. We’ll see where it goes. We can’t seem to stay together but we can’t seem to stay apart either.

Rhi: She just kind of reaches out and pats your hand.

Rhi (as Klyra): I’m sure you two will figure it out.

Josie: You two crazy kids.

Rhi: Basically. I guess if there’s any other follow-up questions you wanted to ask, that ended up mostly being about… [laughs]

Josie: Yeah. I mean, you can’t drop that stuff and expect me not to go for it.

Rhi: It was very good.

Josie: I’m trying to figure out if there’s any personal quirks about Wott that we can exploit, or if he is just so dreadfully typical of a factory owner.

Rhi: I think what you get… You spend a while chatting with Klyra. You also learn, when you do manage to steal the conversation back around to Wott, he’s a bit of a risk-taker in terms of his business. He’s made some gambles with investments and things. He has had some pretty substantial losses, but he generally feels like he can take those risks and do okay. This has made him fairly arrogant. He tries to spend as little time in Coalridge as possible. He doesn’t like it. He thinks it is dirty and beneath him. He tends to spend most of his time either at his home in Nightmarket or at his brother’s estate in Brightstone.

Josie: I see. Although Nightmarket, that might be something we can use. All right. Yeah, I think that’s what I wanted out of this.

Rhi: Okay. Blaire and Myra, what do you two want to investigate ,either together or separately?

Kim: Hmm. Do you want to do it together, Minna?

Minna: We could do it together.

Kim: Okay. We just gotta figure out what to do.

Minna: Yeah. I don't know why I’m so lost all of a sudden. I fucking came up with this idea. [laughs]

Kim: Well I’m lost all the time, so welcome to the club, buddy.

Rhi: [laughs] You could follow up with some of the union folks.

Kim: I was thinking about that. Yeah.

Minna: Yes, and see what might help them.

Rhi: Okay. The current leader of the unionization movement is a Skovlan factory worker named Belle Brogan.

Kim: Any relation to Harvale?

Rhi: You’re not sure.

Kim: Huh. Okay.

Rhi: You don't know that Harvale’s from these parts though.

Minna: Huh.

Kim: Possible.

Rhi: Yeah, you’re not sure if they’re related, maybe it’s just a more common last name, who knows.

Kim: I was just curious.

Rhi: I mean, maybe you’ll find out.

Minna: Yeah, I think going to her might not be a bad idea.

Rhi: Or at least trying to. She’s not the… [laughs]

Minna: Yeah, trying to find her.

Rhi: Yeah. A lot of people try to make attempts on her life.

Minna: We have met somebody that might low-key be friends with her. I don't know. Ulf? We had that one two-scores night with him.

Josie: Wow, going way back.

Minna: Fellow Skovlan rabble-rouser.

Rhi: Yeah, well… If you’ll recall, that night didn’t go super well for him.

Minna: Oh, it didn’t go well for him? Oh, you’re right.

Rhi: It did not go great.

Minna: Okay. So, gotta think about it…

Rhi: You could go back to Briggs and see if he can put you in contact. You could talk to Teagan and see if she knows somebody who could get you a meeting.

Minna: I’m sure Briggs would also know her, because I’m sure she would buy info from him.

Rhi: Yeah. That was kind of one of the things that he said, the reason this is impacting his work is…

Minna: I think we could get him to get us a meeting.

Kim: Yeah, he might have more reach as well. Let’s use him.

Rhi: Okay. I’m gonna do a fortune roll to see how much success he has in getting in contact with her. Okay, 6, after I rerolled the die because it fell off my desk. If the two of you go back and say hey, we would like to talk to Belle Brogan, he is immediately like okay, yeah, give me a few hours, and is able to arrange a meeting. Briggs manages to arrange this meeting and it’s in the area of Coalridge known as Brickston, which is kind of the residential area. It’s this very densely packed tangled maze of buildings that have had additions tacked onto the sides and the top, and things are leaning over, and then there are the remnants of rail lines, and there’s junk piled up everywhere. You are given a specific alleyway to go to.

Kim: Oh good.

Rhi: The two of you walk into this alley, and it looks like it’s the setup for an ambush.

Kim: Oh…

Rhi: Somewhat unsurprisingly, after the two of you have been there for a couple minutes, both ends of the alley are blocked off by three people on each side, and then from one side a fourth figure steps past and walks up to the two of you. She is indeed a Skovlan woman, early 40s, short and stocky, very muscular. She’s got a lot of scars on her hands and her forearms, and she has one hand resting on the grip of her pistol as she walks up to the two of you.

Rhi (as Belle): All right. Who the hell are you two?

Kim (as Blaire): Uh…

Minna (as Myra): We’re people who would like to help you.

Kim (as Blaire): Mm-hmm!

Rhi (as Belle): Do you have names?

Minna (as Myra): Myra.

Kim (as Blaire): Blaire.

Minna (as Myra): We’re with The Magpies.

Rhi: Her eyes widen a little bit.

Rhi (as Belle): All right. Well… That rather changes the tenor of this conversation.

Minna (as Myra): Would you like to tell us which way it changes that tenor?

Rhi (as Belle): Well, I don’t doubt that you’re genuine, you seem pretty impressive, but you also seem to be lacking in subtlety. Right now with a lot of my people held hostage I sort of need subtle.

Minna (as Myra): We can do subtle.

Rhi: She raises an eyebrow.

Rhi (as Belle): What are you looking to do?

Minna (as Myra): We’re looking to find out, I suppose, what kind of help would benefit you in terms of helping out those hostages? Because that’s what we’re here to do.

Rhi (as Belle): Huh, all right.

Rhi: I feel like you’re gonna need a roll at this point.

Minna: I now have three in Consort.

Rhi: Ooh.

Minna: That is a 6.

Kim: Ooh!

Rhi (as Belle): I’ve been trying to figure out an angle on Wott, the factory owner. He borrowed his money from someone. He didn’t have the funding to pay for the tenement himself. Finding out who he got that money from could be a potential in. They’ve done a number on a lot of my people, my resources are fairly limited right now.

Minna (as Myra): And you have no idea where he got the money?

Rhi (as Belle): I can tell you where he didn’t get it from. it wasn’t from his brother. The last few times that his brother financed his gambles things have not gone terribly well, so I don’t think that it is a legitimate line of credit. I suspect that he is borrowing from some of the well-to-do criminal organizations in the city, I’m just not sure who.

Minna (as Myra): One last question. Brogan is an interesting last name. I think I heard some buzz about that related to an Ironhook case recently. Any relation?

Rhi: [loudly rolls a die]

Josie & Minna: [laughs]

Rhi: She rolls her eyes.

Rhi (as Belle): Egh… Distant cousin. He came over around the same time, but we were never really close. He went his way and I went mine, and so far mine’s kept me out of prison.

Minna (as Myra): So far.

Rhi (as Belle): Let’s hope it stays that way. Well, if you can figure out any way of breaking Wott and getting this tenement prison broken up, that would be for the best.

Minna (as Myra): Yes. I think we’d better let everybody know what a bad investment this was.

Rhi (as Belle): Indeed.

Rhi: All right. Let me open up my book to the factions page and figure out where he would have gotten money from. Hmm… Hmm! Oh, okay, yep. I know where his money’s from.

Minna: [nervously] Oh… So how do we find this out? Hmm. We can go to The Gondoliers.

Rhi: That is a possibility.

Minna: I guess we could also ask… There’s a contact who’s a deal broker somewhere.

Rhi: Amancio!

Minna: Amancio, the deal broker. He might have heard some buzz about this. Actually, he’s more likely than The Gondoliers, because he runs in those kinds of circles.

Rhi: Yeah! We haven’t seen Amancio in a bit. All right, are the three of you gonna head over to see Amancio together?

Josie: Sure.

Minna: What ungodly tea do we drink this time? [laughs]

Rhi: I don't know, man…

## Amancio [0:48:57]

Rhi: So you make your way up to Charterhall to Amancio’s home, and again you’re greeted at the door by a servant who rather than taking you back to the greenhouse ushers you into a sitting room area.

Rhi (as Servant): Mr. Amancio is meeting with another client right now, but he should be with you shortly.

Rhi: You’re hanging out there for about ten minutes in this nice sitting room. There’s a lot of paintings of plants and stuff on the walls and some nice sculptures. You hear footsteps in the hall and you see Amancio walking out with a person who is carrying a small satchel in their hands.

Rhi (as Amancio): So, steep it into hot water, into a tea, and you should start to notice changes in, [inhales], usually a couple months.

Rhi: The person nods and heads on out, and Amancio turns on his heel and looks at the three of you.

Rhi (as Amancio): Ah! It’s so wonderful to see you again. How have you been? It’s been so long.

Josie (as Minx): Likewise, Amancio. We’ve been well, and we’re hoping you could say the same of yourself.

Rhi (as Amancio): Oh yes! Yes, quite well, quite well indeed. Can I interest any of you in some tea?

Kim (as Blaire): No thank you.

Josie (as Minx): Absolutely.

Minna: [giggles]

Minna (as Myra): Please.

Kim: Oh. Now I’m gonna look like the rude bitch.

Minna: [laughing] Myra was the only one who enjoyed it last time.

Rhi: He gestures to the servant who heads off.

Rhi (as Amancio): I had mixed responses to the basil tea, so going with a bit more traditional…

Josie (as Minx): Yes, not everyone can have a refined pallet.

Rhi (as Amancio): [chuckles] Ah, indeed, indeed. So! What brings you here?

Josie (as Minx): It has come to our attention that a friend of ours in Charhollow may have made some investments with some other people, and he may not have known what he was getting into, and we were hoping you might know more about these potentially, potentially I say, dangerous dealers so that we might inform our friend of his bad investment.

Rhi: Give me a roll.

Josie: I’ve got some Consort going on?

Rhi: Probably.

Josie: Four.

Rhi: He kinda frowns at you for a little bit.

Rhi (as Amancio): Charhollow? Charhollow…? Bad investment… Oh. Oh… Why are you friends with Tomasz Wott?!

Minna: [bursts into laughter]

Rhi (as Amancio): When did that—That does not seem like the sort of person that you would keep company.

Josie (as Minx): Oh thank goodness. That charade does not need to be kept up. All right. Phew. No, indeed not.

Minna (as Myra): Friend was sarcasm.

Rhi (as Amancio): Ah. Oh, good. [breathes] I wasn’t involved in that deal directly, but you know how it is, people talk, rumors spread, all sorts of delicious, juicy gossip. After more reputable lenders were unwilling to help him out he turned to some of the various elicit organizations in the city and from what I understand he managed to snag a loan from those Severosi mercenaries over in Six Towers.

Minna (as Myra): The Silver Nails?

## Outro [0:52:40]

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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Minna: And now we’d like to thank our splendid Patreon backers. Alex deJesus, thank you!

Josie: Lady Ana, Enchantress of Numbers, thank you.

Kim: Marc-Alexandre Rheault, thank you.

Rhi: StephChomp, thank you Steph!

Minna: Matthew Pollack, thank you!

## Blooper [0:54:03]

Rhi: [laughing] I think—

Kim: [flustered] No- What I-

Rhi: I think at this point in the conversation…

Kim: Oh no~! I was gonna go into a really great point about how some ghosts are emo and some are punk rock and some are pop punk and some are ska and…

[laughter]

Minna: You realize Rhi would have to cut that for the blooper reel anyway.

Kim: There’s more than just goth!

Rhi: Yeah! It—[words dissolve to laughter]

Josie: Just a fucking checkerboard pattern ghost, a ska ghost.

Minna: Oh no~!

Kim: With a trumpet.