

Stepping Into the Shadows (S4, E1)

SFX:

INTRO MUSIC

Rev: Hi, everybody.

Tass: Oh, hello.

Megan: Hello.

Kim: Hi there.

Rev: Welcome to the first episode of Season Four.

Tass: We did it!

Kim: I'm so happy to be here.

Rev: So I have a little something for all of us to celebrate the beginning of Season Four. But before we get to that, I want to take a second to thank all of the patrons who joined us in the month of July.

Tass: Right off the bat.

Jake: Hot start.

Rev: I remember him saying his name pronunciation. It's like the antivirus.

Megan: Norton.

All: [laugh]

Rev: Tony McAfee, Daniel Lopez Rovira, Kat Calderwood, David Shutt, Emma The Neko Queen, Curt C, Kraken, SoZettaSlow, Alicia Parker, Sterling James, Madison Harrell, Mike Gear, John Lee, Cynthia Bernell. Mmm ... Cynthia Brunelle. Brunelli? Mmm ...

Tass: [laughs]

Rev: There it was. And CuppyCup. So thank you to everyone who joined us on Patreon in the month of July, and thank you to all our patrons who join us every month. You can find all of the information about our Patreon over at Patreon.com/TheCritshow. We have all kinds of content over there, including a superhero RPG, a pirate RPG ... Oh gosh. A series of one shots similar to The Omniverse Chronicles where we go to Neverland, and we go to a world filled with gunslingers, and places where we're dogs. And the list could go on and on.

Jake: And will grow and grow.

Rev: And will grow and grow. It could go on so much that I can't even think of clear, accurate descriptions.

All: [laugh]

Jake: It could go on so much that I should just abandon it right now.

Rev: [laughs] I have to say, I got doughnuttled this weekend.

Tass: Oh my god.

Jake: I'm so sorry.

Megan: Congratulations.

Rev: Yeah. Thank you, thank you.

Kim: This podcast is rated explicit, so ...

Rev: I went to Ohio to visit Mike, our community manager, and a couple of the crew showed up as well. And we went and did the Cincinnati Doughnut Trail. I'm a good mix of like hyped up on sugar and also lacking sleep. So I'm that jittery energetic.

Tass: [laughs] That's the best kind.

Rev: So not all of my ... I almost had synopsisises. Not all of my synapses are firing correctly, as displayed by that malapropism.

Kim: How many doughnut shops did you go to? How many doughnuts did you eat yesterday?

Rev: OK. So those are two very different questions. So ...

Kim: Oh, no.

Rev: The number of doughnut shops on the tour are twelve, technically thirteen. But you only have to go to twelve of them to finish it. And if you finish it, you send it in to the visitors' bureau, they give you a T-shirt, they give you a discount card that gives you a discount to a ton of places in Cincinnati. It's very cool. And the doughnuts are super cheap. Like the most expensive doughnut was like two dollars. The bulk of them was like 75, 90 cents.

Megan: I like that it's a baker's dozen, is the amount that you're supposed to do.

Rev: Yeah.

Megan: That's ... I like that.

Rev: I think that we all ate maybe two in the actual outing of collecting them all. Because like you would eat ... Like the first one, we all like the full one. And then it was like, "Oh, I'm gonna eat part of this one and save it." And, "I'm gonna try part of this one." And then like after the third or fourth trying part of one, it was like, "OK, what might I want to eat later? Because I can't do this right now."

Tass: Yeah. God, I bet.

Rev: Yeah. But there were some great donuts. There was a banana cream pie one, there was a pineapple upside down cake.

Tass: Oh ...

Rev: Mike got one that was Reese's Puffs.

Tass: Oh!

Rev: All kinds of good stuff.

Megan: What was the most wild flavor you saw?

Rev: I'm trying to think if there was anything like wildly out of place. Oh, there was an orange juice one, which I thought was kind of strange.

Jake: That sounds excellent, actually.

Kim: Interesting.

Tass: Just don't brush your teeth and then eat it.

Rev: Right?

Jake: It pairs well with the mint doughnut.

Rev: Yeah.

Megan: Oh, no.

Rev: There was a key lime pie doughnut that a lot of people got.

Megan: [gasps] Oh, that sounds amazing.

Rev: Yeah.

Jake: I need to go get more of that key lime soda that I was drinking on stream.

Rev: Oh, nice.

Tass: Can I shift back real quick and just talk about something very cool that we got to do, now that we're starting Season Four and we have Kim here. Something cool that we got to do when Kim was here. Now that we're talking about — we mentioned all of the bonus content and the stuff that we have in the Patreon and all of these different games, that When we had Kim here, we all got down under the table that we play at, and we wrote the names of all of the characters that we have played for The Critshow. And all told, it's gotta be just about over a hundred characters. At least, actually. Just ... Isn't that wild, that in this time we've got to do that much content?

Rev: Yeah.

Jake: You know, I just got a weird — as you were explaining that, a weird anxiety and dread filled me, like as if we were on a ship sailing through waters full of corpses. Like just underneath ...

Megan: [laughs]

Jake: Directly underneath my hands right now are the names ...

Rev: All your dead characters.

Jake: The names of all these characters who exist in a limbo state now. And I was just like, oh, they're just ... They're right there.

Rev: You just anchored them there, now.

Jake: They're right here. Oh, god.

Rev: They're judging you.

Megan: Everybody, what is your favorite name of all of the ones that you wrote under the table? What's your most just like, man, that's an excellent name.

Rev: I think maybe Grey Shifting Wind.

Jake: It's a good one. I liked Applesauce. Applesauce was a name I was very pleased with.

Tass: That's a good one. I think I'm going to go with Varan the Musky.

Rev: Mmm.

Jake: Nice.

Kim: From Sexy Battle Wizards! Mine is also going to be from Sexy Battle Wizards. I played a character named Scarlotta Fandango and I don't think I'll ever top that.

Rev: What about you, Megan?

Megan: I think it's a tie between Tulip Tropical Blast and Michael Ceratops.

All: [laugh]

Tass: Very good.

Rev: Yeah. We led into all of this because of the Patreon.

Tass: Yeah.

Rev: Yeah, so join us on Patreon. It's a good time. We have got a great Discord server that you can get on for just a dollar. It is the most aggressively welcoming Discord on the Internet. And there are hours and hours of content, both for players and for game masters, depending on the tier that you join. So that is over at Patreon.com/TheCritshow.

As I said before, I have something for all of you. While I was getting doughnuttled, I did find these misfortune cookies.

Tass: These what?

Kim: I'm sorry, what?

Rev: Misfortune cookies. Let me give these to all of you. Pick your poison. And I thought that would be a good way to start off Season Four. Like, find out what misfortune you're going to have. Kim, since you are not here, I'm going to set out a couple for you to choose from. And you tell me which one you want, and who you would like to open it for you.

Kim: Let's do that one in the middle there, because it has a cat on the top.

Rev: OK. Yeah, so everybody open your misfortune cookie.

Jake: All right. Kim, who's your champion?

Kim: I would like to elect Tass as my champion.

Tass: Nice. I will do it.

Rev: This is a black fortune cookie.

Tass: This is!

Megan: It's completely black. It's gorgeous.

Tass: OK, I'm gonna crack mine open.

Rev: OK. So yeah, you go first.

Tass: Ooh, they're surprisingly like more firm, more brittle than I would have guessed.

Rev: Nice. What is your — what is your misfortune?

Tass: Oh my god!

Kim: Oh no.

Tass: It says simply, get yourself a lawyer.

Megan: But that's like a ... That's like a dating advice thing.

Tass: Oh, god!

Megan: Get yourself a lawyer.

Rev: In bed.

Tass: Oh, I see. I see.

Kim: Settle down with a nice lawyer.

Tass: Yeah. I gotta get a sugar mama. OK. Cool, cool, cool.

Jake: [mouth full] Everybody knows you gotta eat the cookie before you read the fortune, or else it's not gonna come true. Wait, I should have read it first. Fuck.

Rev: Yep.

Jake: I should have read it first so it doesn't come true.

Rev: Yeah.

Jake: Wow. OK. Very cool, cookie. Sometimes not even crying helps.

Tass: [laughs] Oh my god!

Kim: [laughs]

Jake: Yeah, OK. I know that, cookie. Thank you.

Megan: True friends and wealth: two things you don't have.

Rev: Oh my god!

Tass: God!

Megan: Well. All right.

Rev: I thought these were gonna be more like predictors of death or something, for your characters.

Megan: Why is that preferable? I mean, it is.

Rev: Well, for your characters.

Megan: No, yeah.

Rev: Mine says: don't worry, sooner or later you'll stop noticing it.

Tass: Wow!

Kim: All right, Tass. Open mine, please.

Jake: Everybody give me a big smile here, real quick.

Rev: Are we — do we have ...

Jake: Everybody's teeth are turning ... Well, no. Tass's look fine. Yours are kinda black, yours are kinda black ...

Rev: Yeah.

Jake: Huh.

Rev: What does Kim's say?

Tass: You're like the raisins in my cereal. I don't like raisins in my cereal.

All: [laugh]

Rev: This, uh ... This took a turn. Thanks.

Jake: Thanks for coming to the Season Four opener roast, and ...

Rev: Where we get roasted by baked goods.

Megan: I was gonna say, I'm gonna go cry really quick before we can record this episode. But apparently that doesn't even help all the time, so ... Cool.

Rev: Oh, boy. Well, I think with that, it's time to get into the episode.

SFX: CRITSHOW STINGER

Rev: The three of you have just clattered to the ground inside of this underground castle. The lights have turned on and you see in front of you a woman in a black dress with white hair, and James Francis Tinch. As you try to get your bearings and collect yourself to stand up, Tass you feel unlike you've ever felt in any of the other worlds that you've gone to. You feel this heat inside of you. And it doesn't just read as heat. On some level, it reads as anger and power. Jake, as you start to rise up, you can feel the energy in the air around you just waiting to draw to you at your whim. And Megan, after a lifetime of hearing other people, their thoughts, their feelings, their emotions pressing in on you. As you start to stand up, for the first time in your life, you hear nothing in your head but your own thoughts. No connection being forced upon you by the people around you. Your mind is calm and silent.

Megan: "Whoa. Where are we?"

Tass: "I think it's when. I think we did it." Like I'm looking around. Does this look just like the room we left?

Rev: It is exactly the room that you left, with the exception of a few layers of dust in areas, and footprints that you can see coming in and out.

Tass: "James?"

Rev: JAMES FRANCIS TINCHER: Yes.

Jake: I want to run over and give him a hug.

Rev: JAMES FRANCIS TINCHER: It's good to see you again.

Jake: "It's good to see you, too. I can't believe this worked."

Rev: JAMES FRANCIS TINCHER: Yes, it was quite an ordeal — wait, you getting here or me getting here? Because both of them were a bit tricky.

Jake: "Oh, yeah."

Tass: "Yeah, for sure."

Rev: JAMES FRANCIS TINCHER: Fascinating. And who is your friend here? Are you all right?

Megan: I think I am very, very much trying to open a chat room with the boys.

Rev: You don't hear anything.

Kim: "Hey. Megan, right? Are you OK?"

Megan: "I don't know."

Tass: "What's up, bub?"

Megan: I pull out my salt shaker. I try to use my telekinesis to do anything.

Rev: Nothing happens.

Megan: "You can't hear me in your head right now, can you?"

Tass: "No."

Megan: "I can't — I can't do anything."

Rev: JAMES FRANCIS TINCHER: What do you mean?

Megan: I think I look at the boys. "I don't know who this is. Are we OK?"

Jake: "Oh, yeah. He's good."

Rev: JAMES FRANCIS TINCHER: Oh, I'm sorry. I — you said Megan. My name is James Francis Tincher. I am the grandfather of one of the boy's friends.

Megan: "OK. Nice to meet you. I suppose it's good that we have a familiar face here. I usually can ... I guess, move things and hear people's thoughts in my head and put my thoughts in their head. And that's kind of ... That's kind of my thing. And I can't do any of that right now."

Rev: JAMES FRANCIS TINCHER: Oh. Do you know what gave you your power previously? Like, was it something ... Some entity you had a bargain with, or some internal power, or ...

Megan: "Bargain? No. No, no, no. I ... I just could ... I guess I was born with it? I could always do it. It didn't really start happening until I was a little older. I didn't realize that's what was going on, but it wasn't ... Like I didn't make it happen."

Rev: JAMES FRANCIS TINCHER: Interesting. What age do you recall when it first started happening?

Megan: "I mean, kind of young. I was a teenager."

Rev: JAMES FRANCIS TINCHER: Well, that's something I suppose we can try to figure out as we go.

Kim: "We —" and I look at James. "We don't have a lot of time. We have about ten minutes."

Rev: JAMES FRANCIS TINCHER: Yes.

Kim: And I'm flipping through a couple brown envelopes.

Rev: JAMES FRANCIS TINCHER: Ah, yes. This is my associate, Kim.

Kim: "Hi. Tass and Jake, James told me a little bit about what you all did in Fanarin. And Megan. It's so nice to meet all of you. I don't know how much all that you know, but we will talk so much once we sort all this out. But you," and I point to Jake, "you and I gotta drive back to Chicago. And you," I point at Tass. "You have a flight to catch. How good are all of you at memorizing?"

Jake: "I have a pretty bad memory. Famously, I think. Why?"

Kim: "Oh, OK. You're gonna have to get really good, really fast." And I'm passing out brown envelopes. "OK. Tass, you are Raguel of Primus Daemonium Familia."

Tass: "OK."

Kim: "Jake, you are Brizack from the Order of the Ley Line.

Jake: "OK."

Kim: "And Megan, you are now Fiona Vega of The Red Line."

Megan: "Red line. OK."

Kim: "OK. So these are your new identities. Your names, IDs, legal documents, histories, your connections, anything that James and I could find."

Rev: JAMES FRANCIS TINCHER: Yes.

Kim: "These are rock solid. No one will know who you actually are unless they met you in your present, our past."

Rev: JAMES FRANCIS TINCHER: Yes. Before you came through. These were people that were either living and no longer are, or have gone missing."

Tass: "Shit. OK. Keep going, please."

Kim: "Read. You, just read."

Tass: "Tass."

Kim: "You read. Read. All of you, read."

Megan: "Why are we splitting up?"

Jake: "And why can't we be us?"

Rev: JAMES FRANCIS TINCHER: Because Nash knows who you are.

Kim: "Yeah."

Jake: "Oh. Yeah, yeah, yeah. OK. No, you're right. Good — good point." I'm reading, I'm reading.

Kim: "Yeah. I mean Anastacia and Margaret kept pretty great logs. Most of those got destroyed once Nash came to power. But, uh ..."

Rev: JAMES FRANCIS TINCHER: Yes.

Kim: "We found some ... Some stray copies."

Rev: JAMES FRANCIS TINCHER: Yes. And I was able to get in here at one point and examine this ritual space. And I had a feeling that this is what it was. I'm so happy to see you, because ...

Kim: "James. James, we don't have time."

Rev: JAMES FRANCIS TINCHER: Yes, of course.

Kim: "All right. So, Brizack, you need to drive me back to Chicago, back to The Vault. And then tonight, you're expected at the Rookery Building — that's the base of The Order of the Ley Line. Tass, Megan and James are going to drop you off at the Indianapolis

airport, and then you're going to be picked up in Chicago by someone from Primus Daemonium Familia. You got it?"

Tass: "Got it."

Kim: "Megan, once you and James drop Tass off at the airport, you're good. Just lay low, and then all four — five? James, are you coming with us?"

Rev: JAMES FRANCIS TINCHER: Yes.

Kim: "All right. All five of us are gonna meet tonight at The 606 in Chicago. OK?"

Jake: "What's that?"

Kim: "It's a park."

Jake: "Oh, OK."

Kim: "I'll show you where it is. You and I are gonna drive together."

Jake: "OK."

Kim: "OK."

Rev: JAMES FRANCIS TINCHER: The landscape has changed drastically since you have all been gone. Sorry for — this is so abrupt, but we are on a bit of a time crunch here.

Kim: "How are you on the bios? You guys good?"

Tass: "Yeah."

Kim: "OK. Are you good?"

Jake: "As good as I'm gonna be."

Kim: "Excellent." I pull out a lighter. "All right. Throw it down. I'm gonna set them on fire."

Jake: "Oh, fuck me. OK."

Kim: And I do. I gather it all up into a pile and then I set ...

Rev: JAMES FRANCIS TINCHER: I mean unless you need more time with it. Just — it needs to be destroyed before you encounter anyone else. Because if they were to find that, obviously it would give up the goose.

Megan: "Can I take a picture with my phone and read it on the way to the airport?"

Rev: JAMES FRANCIS TINCHER: Well, as long as you delete the picture.

Megan: "Yeah, I'll delete it. I'll delete it."

Kim: "You gotta delete it."

Rev: JAMES FRANCIS TINCHER: Make sure it doesn't save to the cloud.

Megan: "I don't have that. Does it still work in the future?"

Jake: [laughs]

Rev: JAMES FRANCIS TINCHER: Obviously. I said it.

Kim: "Oh, yeah."

Megan: "Oh, yeah." [laughs]

Rev: JAMES FRANCIS TINCHER: I know what it is.

Kim: I pull out my phone. "Yeah. We still have — what do you think we're doing? Yes."

Jake: Yeah. In fact, I just got the iPhone 31 and it's ... Enormous.

Megan: Technology changes drastically. I don't know what you guys are working with.

Kim: "OK, we all need to go." And I'm grabbing Jake's arm. "We need to get out of here. So you and I are going to drive to Chicago. James and Megan, you guys drop Tass off at the airport, OK?"

Tass: "Yep. Got it."

Megan: "All right."

Tass: "Oh my god, if this is some sort of long con, you have got me ..."

Jake: "So hooked!"

Tass: "Wholesale."

Rev: So as Kim starts to rush all of you out of the teleportation room, James grabs your arm for a minute, Megan, and lets the three of them exit the room.

Rev: JAMES FRANCIS TINCHER: Just one moment. There was someone who wanted to say hello to you before we left that Kim doesn't exactly know about.

Rev: And he points down the hallway to a closed door.

Megan: "Thank you."

Rev: JAMES FRANCIS TINCHER: Yes, of course. I'll see you in just a minute. Literally, a minute.

Megan: I rush down there.

Rev: Yeah. You rush down and you open the door. And sitting inside on a very plush couch, reading a book, is your grandpa.

Megan: "Oh my god. I hoped it was you. Oh, my gosh. You're — you're OK. You're here."

Rev: GEOFFREY NASH: Yes.

Megan: And I go up and hug him.

Rev: And he hugs you back.

Rev: GEOFFREY NASH: [sighs] I realize that you have to go, but I just ... I wanted to say hello. And James found his way here somehow and found me, and knew the boys. He didn't seem to freak out at the existence of two of us. But Kim, with her position, we weren't sure if we should tell her yet.

Megan: "Who is she? Who are either of them?"

Rev: GEOFFREY NASH: The world has broken into very strong factions. Um, James is the leader of one of the human groups, and Kim is kind of the ... I don't know, the second in command or the favorite child of the leader of one of the other groups: The House of Strohm.

Megan: "Why do I know that name? Oh, she's the scary person with all the cool stuff!"

Rev: GEOFFREY NASH: Yes. And she has been around for longer than anyone I know.

Megan: "OK. Well I mean, that's good. I don't think she's a friend, but the boys know her."

Rev: GEOFFREY NASH: Yes. Which is dangerous.

Megan: "Oh."

Rev: GEOFFREY NASH: The boys know her. So make sure they know that.

Megan: "OK. Oh, I think I have to go, but ..."

Rev: GEOFFREY NASH: Yes. We'll talk soon.

Megan: "OK. I love you."

Rev: GEOFFREY NASH: I love you too.

Megan: I give him another hug and I leave.

Rev: As the five of you come out of this tunnel, everything here looks almost exactly the same. It is still old abandoned mine shafts. But parked next to the entrance of this mine shaft are two cars: one that James gets into the driver's seat of, and one that looks very familiar to you, Jake.

Jake: Yes! I go get the keys from the visor and get ready to go.

Rev: So the three of you divide up into the two cars: Kim and Jake in Jake's car, and Tass and Megan and Grandpa Tincher in his car. The camera starts to pull back as we see the two cars peel off, one headed towards Indianapolis and the other headed for Chicago. The camera speeds up and passes the one headed towards Chicago. And in the blink of an eye, we are there, this enormous glimmering city. The camera dives down, and on the streets we see people, transparent, walking to buildings and going inside. We see men with long fangs playing basketball. We see a number of people with wings and catcher's mitts playing catch in the air above one of the streets. As the camera dips down even further, we see a woman who looks human, and someone steps out of the shadows and holds a gun to her back and says, "Give me your wallet." And before the camera can capture the moment, she has turned around and she has the full shape of a werewolf and she has clawed this man to the ground and knocked the gun away. All throughout the city, we see similar scenes. Supernatural creatures living daily lives. Some of them monstrous, some of them humanoid. The city is awake and alive with activity, the hustle and bustle of daily life. Welcome to Urban Shadows.

SFX: CRITSHOW STINGER

Rev: All right, everybody. Well, welcome to Urban Shadows. And welcome to Season Four. And Kim, welcome to the table.

All: [cheer]

Kim: Oh, thank you.

Rev: So let's take a moment to talk about who these folks are, the identities that you have been handed and then given the bum's rush to out of the castle. Let's talk about the playbooks that you all are for Urban Shadows.

Tass: I'll go first.

Tass: OK. So I am playing The Tainted. I love the kind of the playbook blurb for this. "Most Tainted remember a time before all this, before their souls ended up in the hands of demons and devils. Now they're something more than just human, working jobs for patrons who are never satisfied, never finished demanding obedience. But a contract is a contract ..." So yeah, this is a very kind of demonic form. My stats are 3 Blood, 1 Heart, -1 Mind, and 0 Spirit. And I have three moves that I'm starting with. I automatically get The Devil Inside: when you assume your demon form, roll with Blood. On a 10+ pick three, 7 to 9 pick two, and on a miss, I pick one and give my patron a debt, or I just go without my form. And then there's a big list of different things that I can get for that, including like making my harm really high, healing harm, very cool stuff there. If I'm working a job specifically for my patron, I get to pick one more and I can mark a corruption to also pick one more. Then I get to choose from a list I have chosen Tongued and Silver: when you figure someone out by tempting them with power, I roll with Heart instead of Mind. And Cold as Ice: I take a +1 Blood. So that's what bumped my Blood up to a 3 at the start.

Rev: OK.

Jake: I am playing The Wizard. "Mages are among the deadliest and most powerful of all humans. Their ability to reshape the world around them grants them tremendous powers, but nothing corrupts quite like power." I have 0 Blood, -1 Heart, 1 Mind, and 2 Spirit. My moves are Channeling, which is like very similar to the move I had as The Spellsworn in Dungeon World. I roll and get some hold that I can use to deploy my magical effects. On misses and mixed successes, I have to choose some penalties as well. Sanctum Sanctorum: I have my special magic lair that I can roll and get some benefits out of. I choose some features for the sanctum, so I choose four features. I went with a library of old tomes, magical wards, a portal to another dimension, and a focus circle. Because many of those were pre-established.

Rev: Yeah.

Jake: And then two downsides. It's tough for you to access, and it contains secrets unfamiliar even to you. And then I choose three spells to use the hold from Channeling with. So I have gone with Elementalism, where I can conjure the elements to strike out at my enemies. Shielding — I can spend some hold to provide armor to myself and others. And Teleport — I can spend a hold to teleport a short distance within the scene.

Rev: So as we can see with these two, jumping into the future, something is different here. The magic is much more powerful, and it made them even more of what they previously were. Tass had just being given some power from Damien, Jake was just jumping into being a Spell-slinger, and the power that flowed into them turned them into even more of that. On the other hand, Megan, what are you playing as?

Megan: I am playing as The Hunter. So, "Determined and fearless, The Hunter is a mortal who has taken up a cause against the darkness around them, joining the fight alongside other hunters in the night. They carry a heavy burden, one that would eventually crush anyone. How long can they keep from becoming what they hunt?" So, yeah, coming into this and not knowing why I can't do what I've been able to do this entire time.

Rev: Yeah. Something about whatever it was that Megan can do doesn't seem to exist 100 years in the future. And so she is going to lean into the training that she had with Anastacia.

Megan: My stats are Blood 2, Heart 0, Mind 1, and Spirit -1. And then I have three hunter moves. I have Slayer: when you Keep Your Cool and Let It Out on a hunt, roll with Blood instead of Spirit. I have Deadly: when you inflict harm, inflict harm +1. You cannot choose to reduce this harm. And the last one I have is called This Way! When you lead people out of danger, roll with Blood. On 10+, you all get away safely. On a 7 to 9, you get hurt or one of them gets hurt, you choose. On a miss, everyone's safe but you. You're left behind, and the way out is closed to you.

Rev: And what about Kim?

Kim: I am playing The Oracle. "The future is always in motion, like a great river dragging us all to our inevitable ends. There are some who can raise themselves above the surface to see what awaits us, looking into a future both unclear and terrifying. The Oracles are blessed with the sight, and cursed by what they see. So my stats are 0

Blood, -1 Heart, 1 Mind, and 2 Spirit, and I have three moves. I have Foretellings: before each faction turn or at the start of the game, roll with Spirit. On a hit, pick one of the options below. The MC will tell you whose future you see. On a 10+, you instead choose the character the vision concerns. On a miss, you instead receive a terrifying premonition about someone close to you. Take -1 ongoing to efforts you make to stop it from coming to pass. And then I have Soothsayer: when you turn to your prophetic tools to read someone's future, roll with Spirit. On a hit, the MC will tell you something new and interesting about their destiny. On a 10+, you may ask a follow up question. The MC will answer honestly. On a miss, you see vague shapes of what is to come, but something is obscuring your prophetic powers. The future you try to read is beyond your sight until you resolve the interference. And then my last move is called Dual Loyalty: you are known as an ally to the mortal world. Take Mortalis as a second circle. You can earn up to Status 2 in Mortalis, and assuming you have at least Status 1, make one city move each faction turn using your new status. When time passes, the MC will tell you what mortal trouble lands on your doorstep, looking to you for help. But we'll get into circles and faction turns a little later.

Rev: Yes. And one of the other things that was mentioned was corruption. Corruption is another path of leveling up. There are different powers attached to corruption. And so I had everybody start with one of their corruption moves already unlocked. So everyone, let me know what your corruption move is.

Tass: I took Just Below the Surface. So with that, I can mark corruption to assume my demon form without a roll, and I gain all of the options listed. So full demon Hulk mode.

Jake: I took The Dark Arts: when I Turn to Violence with magic or psychic energies, I can mark corruption to roll with Spirit instead of Blood.

Megan: I have Hard to Kill: mark corruption to gain armor +1 until the end of the scene.

Kim: I have I, All-Seeing: mark corruption and suffer 1 harm, armor defeating, to have a vision about the situation at hand. Ask the MC a question, they will answer it honestly. Take +1 ongoing to act on the information provided.

Rev: Kim, can you tell us about your benefactor? What it means to be an Oracle, and what all that gets you.

Kim: Sure. So a benefactor is a unique part of the Oracle playbook. So, you have a benefactor, a powerful NPC whose fate is intertwined with your own. You came into their service as a result of your prophetic visions, but now they demand more and more from you and your powers. Name their Circle, and choose the prophecy that binds you together, as well as two strengths and two flaws. So my benefactor is Strohm, of course, from the Circle of Power. The prophecy that I have about Strohm is they alone can guide you to your true destiny and purpose. The two strengths: they are a Status 3 member of their circle, of course. And they speak truthfully and honor their word. Their two flaws are they are terrifyingly violent and cruel, and they have defenses against your sight. Ask the MC what life your benefactor has provided for you after you make your choices. Their continued largesse depends on how well you serve their interests. When you go to your benefactor for help or resources, roll with your Status. So for me, that would be +1. On a hit, they get you what you need, provided you offer prophetic insight into a problem they have right now. On a 10+, the support they give is abnormally useful. On a miss, they reveal you overlooked something that greatly injured their status. They are determined to remind you of their power over you before they even consider your request.

Rev: And now we will get into Circles and factions. So, as I said before, the world of Urban Shadows is very broken up into groups that hold power. Those circles are Mortalis, Night, Power, and Wild. So in our world, in our Chicago of the future, the groups that run Chicago. And I actually have a handout for all of you to keep track of this, because in this game, knowledge is power.

Everyone knows the Circles and they know the factions, but you may not necessarily know who the leader of that faction is or where they have their base of operations. Some of them are very blatant about it and everyone knows, but some of them keep that information hidden.

So we're gonna start with the most powerful faction in the city: Night. So the faction of Night that is vampires is known as New Canterbury. The faction leader is unknown, the ambassador is Dr. Vance Benson, and the location is the former Willis Tower, now called the Nash Tower. We have the werewolves, who are The Monarchs. Their alpha is Grayson Winters. Their pack leader is unknown at the time, and that's because the pack leader changes from month to month based off of a round robin fight that happens within the group. And then their location is in the former Wrigley building, now turned into a

casino. And then the last faction of Night, which is ghosts, known as Tranquil Silence. Their faction leader is Father O'Hanna, and their lieutenant is Seamus. And their location is in the Congress Hotel, one of the most haunted places in the United States.

Next, we have the Circle of Power. The Oracles is The House of Strohm. The faction leader is Strohm, and the location is the same location that you've known all along, but now she owns the whole building and it is known as The Vault. The Wizards are the Order of the Ley Line. The faction leaders are the Council of the Three. The speaker of this group is The Lore Merchant, and the location is inside the Rookery Building. And the last faction in power is the immortals, Clan Ozymandias. Faction leader unknown, the speaker is Maxwell, and the location is the Carbide and Carbon building. Those are the two largest circles that are vying for power with each other all the time.

Next, we have Wild. The demon faction: Primus Daemonium Familia. The faction leader is Lady Jencie, the lieutenant is unknown, and their location is the Archbishop's Residence. The fey faction is the Court of the Silver Wing. The faction leaders are Imlbryk and Bonnibel, and their knight is Zui. Their base of operations is unknown, but they do have a point of contact. It is in Lincoln Park, at the lily pool. And lastly for Wild is the outsiders. Their group is known as The Lost Ones. Their faction leader is Mother. Identity is unknown of Mother. Their envoy is also unknown, because this person cycles out as the seasons change. And the point of contact is the Union Stockyards Gate.

And then lastly, we have Mortalis, which is the hidden and underground circle. The hunters faction is called The Red Line. The faction leader is Fiona Vega. The second in command is unknown, and the location is also unknown. The Veterans faction, called The 606. The faction leader you all know is James Francis Tincher, but it is unknown to the world at large. And as of right now, you know that the meeting place is in the 606, the park in Chicago. And then lastly in Mortalis, the awoken faction, called Cloud Gate. The faction leader is unknown, and the location is unknown.

So let me talk to just a little bit about the history of this world, so that you all and the listeners have a sense of what has happened in the last 100 years, and why the world is broke up this way. Nash was successful, obviously, without your presence, in accomplishing his goal. There was about 50 years of cloak and dagger fighting between Nash and the various groups. Then there was 10 years of what spilled out onto the streets. Everybody on the planet knowing what is going on. An all out fight between

humans and otherworldly creatures. Nash and his group were able to win that fight, and the next 10 years was spent rebuilding cities and populations. The 10 years after that was 10 years of peace. It was the closest thing to a utopic society that the world had ever seen. But then what always happens, happens. Nash had placed certain groups in power, giving them honors for the work that they had done for him, both in the wars and in the rebuilding efforts. And those people started to get hungry for more power and other people's power. It has been about 20 years of just everything kind of returning back to normal. People working jobs, people wanting money, people wanting power, people finding ways to undercut each other to get more of one or the other.

So the energy in Chicago is very much the energy that's there if you were to go today, with the exception of almost everybody is a little bit monstrous in some way. Humans are still able to hide. The transformation is not totally complete yet. And there are some just humans left, and they're able to hide because not all of the monstrous appear monstrous. They only look that way when they use their powers. The idea is that they're kind of ignored for now, because the thought is that ultimately, as the spell gets stronger and humans are changed and no new humans are born, it will all eventually be this monstrous population. So the humans, for the most part, are ignored. Because you can't spot them with your naked eye, and they don't really cause that much of a problem anyway.

Does anybody have any questions? This was a whole lot of information. Some of these gaps you're going to fill in right away when you start talking to people. Once we have some, you know, actual scenes. Even on your traveling to the airport, to Chicago, and things like that. But are there any things right off the bat that you have questions about?

Megan: So eventually there won't be any humans, because this spell will complete and they'll be all monstrous. Is there a way ... Yeah, I don't know if this would be any idea of how we might know this, but like, is there a timetable on that? It was in my head of just a whether or not this spell was going to be able to be achieved, not that it would, you know, be an ongoing process.

Rev: Yeah. No, that's something that you could research to find out, I'm sure.

Megan: Cool.

Rev: So with knowing what the Circles are, that they are Night, Power, Wild, and Mortalis, why don't you let me know which Circle you belong to?

Tass: I have been dumped into the Wild.

Rev: And what is your faction?

Tass: That would be Primus Daemonium Familia.

Rev: So what are your standings with the Circles?

Tass: Oh, I have 1 with Mortalis, -1 with Night, 1 with Power, 1 with Wild.

Rev: And then each Circle has a power level. How well connected you are, how far up you are on the ladder, which is Status. What is your Status in those Circles?

Tass: I just have 1 with Wild right now, and nothing with anybody else.

Rev: OK. Jake, what is your Circle and faction?

Jake: I belong to the Circle of Power. So my circles are Mortalis 1, Night -1, Power 1, and Wild 1. And I have my 1 Status in Power.

Rev: And what's your faction?

Jake: Order of the Ley Line.

Rev: What about you, Megan?

Megan: My Circle is with Mortalis, and I am the leader of the faction The Red Line. My stats with that are Mortalis 1, Night 1, Power 1, -1 Wild. And my Status is 1 with Mortalis.

Rev: Congratulations, you've been given a promotion. You're a faction leader now. Welcome to the world.

Megan: Here's an identity. You're now in charge of a faction of powerful beings.

Rev: Is there a worse nightmare than like waking up, being thrown in to a door, and someone going, "Hey, welcome, you're in charge."

Kim: "You're the boss, now."

Megan: Yeah. There's like that nightmare you always have of like, "Oh, I'm late for school," or, "I had a test today and I didn't study." And it's like, "Oh, no, you have to teach the class, actually."

All: [laugh]

Kim: No, Megan, you're the new Margaret. Look at you.

Megan: Oh, no.

All: [laugh]

Rev: All right, Kim, what about you?

Kim: I am part of the Circle of Power. And as mentioned by Grandpa Nash as the quote unquote "favorite child" of Strohm, my faction is naturally The House of Strohm. For my Circle stats, I have 1 in Mortalis, -1 Night, 1 Power, 1 Wild. And due to my Dual Loyalty move, I start with 1 Status in both Mortalis and Power.

Rev: In Urban Shadows, there is a debt system. That is a big part of the game, is calling in debts, collecting debts, offering a debt to someone for them to give you something. And there are a couple of moves connected to those. We know that Tass and Jake and Megan all owe Kim a debt because she has given you these new identities. That is an example of the kind of thing you would owe someone a debt for. So mark that on your sheet that you have a debt towards Kim. Now, Jake and Tass and Megan will get some debts and owe some debts, based off of their identities. So these things would have all been in the packets you were given. So what debts do you have, or what debts are you owed?

Tass: So I start out owing my patron 3 debts, just by virtue of them being my patron.

Rev: Mmhmm.

Tass: And I owe Seamus, who is a lieutenant of the Tranquil Silence, a debt because of an interaction Raguel had with someone that's important to them that he hurt.

Jake: I owe Inzobius Cadabra 2 debts, because they are my go-to, or Brizack's go-to, when he gets into trouble, and provide information or muscle to get things done.

Megan: I owe the second in command of The Red Line a debt, because they help me unwind and keep me sane despite the horrors of my hunt.

Kim: So I owe 1 debt to Strohm. And I also 1 debt to James Francis Tincher. Though James also owes me a debt, due to our working relationship.

Rev: Yeah. So those are the debts that you all start with. And you'll earn favors and offer up more debts as we get further into your time here.

Rev: CRITSHOW STINGER

Rev: We are back inside of Grandpa Tincher's car, with Tass and Megan. He is tooling down the highway, taking you all towards Indianapolis.

Rev: JAMES FRANCIS TINCHER: So I suppose I should ask. I got so excited to see you all. Why are you here? Like, what are you ... What are you trying to do?

Tass: "Oh. Yeah, right. So the sum up is we're trying to find the location of the other dimensions that Nash used for this grand spell. Finding it back in our time was gonna be the next best thing to impossible, so the thought was if we came here, it might be a little easier to find. That way, we can go back to our time and stop it before it completes."

Rev: JAMES FRANCIS TINCHER: So he wasn't doing ... He wasn't doing his magic on this plane?

Tass: "Correct."

Rev: JAMES FRANCIS TINCHER: Oh, very sneaky.

Tass: "Yeah, right?"

Rev: JAMES FRANCIS TINCHER: So you need to find the three dimensions that he used in his larger spell.

Megan: "Yeah. They're basically like the batteries. So then if we can go back and take away his access to those, he can't do what he planned."

Rev: JAMES FRANCIS TINCHER: Yes. I might have something. It will take me a while to figure it out, but I still have ...

Rev: And he looks over at you, Tass, and he rolls his sleeve up on the metal arm. And you can see that the bracer that had all of the components that measured information in other dimensions that TJ had built has been reconstructed back into his forearm.

Tass: "Oh, wow."

Rev: JAMES FRANCIS TINCHER: Yes, this was very useful.

Tass: "God, I bet you have a story about how you got back here."

Rev: JAMES FRANCIS TINCHER: [chuckles] Yes.

Tass: "What are the chances that our paths cross like this? Of course it took that amount of time for you."

Rev: JAMES FRANCIS TINCHER: Yes. It was quite a long journey, but an interesting one.

Tass: "I gotta ask, how exactly did you know we were coming through that portal?"

Rev: JAMES FRANCIS TINCHER: Kim. She can see the future. She gets glimpses of it. And one day she knocked on my door. Which was horrifying, because I knew who she was and who she worked for. And there she was, standing outside of my door. And I thought I was done. I thought that was the end for me. But she apparently had had a

vision of Strohm — an assassination attempt on her. And she said that I was the one who saved her in this vision. And so she felt that we needed to talk. And we did. We started to talk and meet up every now and then. And I was able to change a couple of things about what was happening to prevent the assassination attempt before it happened. And then as we were saying goodbye, we shook hands, and I saw her have another vision. And it was of the three of you coming here, in a place just filled with dirt and rocks and rubble. And she had that same vision a few more times and was able to get a clear enough sense of it that I was able to track it down. And that's when I met your grandfather, Megan. He was ... To say surprised to see me, is probably a drastic understatement.

Megan: "Yeah, I can ... I can imagine. We left him there, and the assumption was that he was gonna be secure and safe. And I didn't think that there would be any way for anyone to find him."

Rev: JAMES FRANCIS TINCHER: Yes. The magic in this world, especially from when I initially left it, it's so dense in the air. You can almost cut it with a knife, as they say. I think something about that, whatever it is that Kim can do, let her see that moment because it was, I don't know, connected to me? Because I'm kind of ... Untethered isn't the right word, but I don't necessarily belong here, even though I am.

Tass: "Yeah, fair. And she's, at least for her part, on our side. I mean, I guess I can't ask if we can trust her, because if she wanted to do us wrong and knew we were coming, she could have just lobbed a grenade at us the second we walked through."

Rev: JAMES FRANCIS TINCHER: Yes. I don't know that she's telling me everything that she's seen, but she's told me enough to know that whatever you're doing here matters to her and obviously to me. So there is some trust to be formed, yet. But we certainly are in each other's favor.

Tass: "That's all we can ask for. God, I feel weird here."

Rev: JAMES FRANCIS TINCHER: You look a little different than the last time I saw you. Well, a lot different, I guess. Last time I saw you, you were about yay high.

Tass: "Oh, yeah. Hey, but I technically kept the horns, eh?"

Rev: JAMES FRANCIS TINCHER: That's true. A mite smaller than I remember, and definitely curled a different way.

Tass: Oh, god. I didn't even really think, like ... And I'm like touching the horns now. Because I mean, they were fairly small when I came through the portal, and now I'm realizing that they're quite a bit larger, and I just literally physically feel different.

Rev: Yeah. He reaches across and he pulls down the little vanity mirror, and you can see that they are larger. Your skin has a gray tone to it that it did not before, and your eyes are almost completely black.

Tass: "Yeah, I guess they're certainly smaller than the ram horns I had, but they're a lot bigger than the horns I had walking through the portal."

Rev: JAMES FRANCIS TINCHER: You had horns walking through the portal?

Tass: "Yeah. Kinda the last thing I had to do coming through to make sure that all of this worked correctly, because obviously it has to work correctly for us to be able to investigate the spell. I had to give up my Chosen energy that he was looking for."

Rev: JAMES FRANCIS TINCHER: Yes, of course, that makes sense. You would want to make sure that your ideal future you're stepping into is the one most likely to happen. So you ... Interesting. You set dominoes in motion so that when you got here ... That's forward thinking.

Tass: "Thanks. I hope it paid off. But I needed a little extra and we had a friend, so I got sort of demon magic, and, uh ... Yeah, holy shit, look at this. This is more than what I had."

Megan: "Guess I should have done something like that too, huh?"

Tass: "God, there's no way you could have known. I mean, what does this mean? Do we know?"

Megan: "No. I mean, I guess I never figured it out, why I could do all of this. But I guess I wasn't born this way? Or something caused me to be able to do all of it. And there must have been a tether. There must have been something. Something that gave me these

abilities, because I've just always thought that it was a part of me. But now, whatever that is, whatever that was, must not, I don't know, exist here? Or have power here? I don't — I don't know. But I'm just me, I guess."

Tass: "Well yeah, OK. First of all, fair. That must be it. Something about skipping ahead in time. Whatever it was was destroyed, broken, gone, died. We don't know. But after all the time that we've spent with you, by far the strongest thing that you have going for you is you thinking out of the box, and nobody's taken that away. So we've got the important part of you we need."

Megan: "Thanks. I guess it's a good thing I did some of that training with Anastacia because, man, this cover story ..." And I'm like looking through my phone and reading over Fiona's file. "I think she's like a leader of some fighters or something?"

Tass: [chuckles]

Rev: JAMES FRANCIS TINCHER: Yes. The Red Line is the fighters, those who are actively going out, dealing with things. And she is their ... Was — well, now is again — their leader. And The 606 are the folks like me. The veterans, the retired ones who still have something to offer. But we don't necessarily want to be out at night. And then Cloud Gate is one I don't even know. Somehow new people are found — humans — and pointed in our direction. I don't have any idea who's doing it, but we always find them standing next to the Cloud Gate at midnight.

Tass: "What's the Cloud Gate?"

Rev: JAMES FRANCIS TINCHER: You probably know it as The Bean.

Tass: [laughs] "Oh my god."

Rev: JAMES FRANCIS TINCHER: Yes. And anyone that we ask, they don't seem to remember, like, how they got there. Like they know who we are and what we do, and they know they're human, but they're missing a little piece of time. They don't know how they got there.

Tass: "Weird."

Rev: JAMES FRANCIS TINCHER: Yes.

Tass: "Man, it's real goddamn good to see you."

Rev: JAMES FRANCIS TINCHER: Yes, you too.

Megan: "So what did you guys do to make it a possibility that we can become these people? I mean, you said that this Fiona is the leader of The Red Line? Obviously people are gonna know what she looks like, but they won't think that I'm not her, right?"

Rev: JAMES FRANCIS TINCHER: Correct.

Megan: "How did you do that?"

Rev: JAMES FRANCIS TINCHER: It's a mix of technology and magic in perfect harmony. It's hacking the Internet and the brain and the memory at the same time.

Tass: "That is some Tincher shit right there."

Megan: "Yeah, it's really cool."

Rev: JAMES FRANCIS TINCHER: Thank you. I was very proud of it.

Megan: "So I — you know, I've kind of met a lot of the people you guys know here. You said you're the grandpa of one of your friends? Is a somebody ... Somebody I've met so far?"

Tass: "No. No. He's TJ's grandpa."

Megan: "Oh."

Rev: JAMES FRANCIS TINCHER: Yes.

Megan: "I'm sorry."

Rev: JAMES FRANCIS TINCHER: The proverbial elephant in the room. Don't worry, I know. I've read back through the history that Margaret and Anastacia kept, and it was quite a shock to find that he was gone and I was here. But he did a damn good thing."

Tass: "He did. And I'm sorry."

Rev: JAMES FRANCIS TINCHER: Thank you.

Rev: And about this time, we pull up to the airport. And Tass, they let you off for your connecting flight from Louisiana to Chicago.

Inside of Jake's car with Kim. How's the drive going?

Jake: Real good. Windows up, just full of smoke. We are 420 hotboxing this car, all the way to Chi-Town.

Rev: Time travel has changed Jake in a big way.

Jake: In a major way. I just came out and I was like, I'm really into drugs now.

All: [laugh]

Tass: Something about wizards and having, you know, pipe leaf.

Jake: Yeah.

Rev: Yeah.

Tass: We saw him stacking the trunk with these plastic bricks of green and were like, "What is that?" "Wizard stuff, wizard stuff."

Jake: Wizard stuff. Shut up. Shut up, narc.

Tass: [laughs]

Jake: I feel like I would be quiet in my confusion for a very long time, but I don't know if that would be overpowered by Kim.

Kim: I'm quiet for a few minutes, but then once we start solidly getting into the drive, I turn to Jake. "Is it true that you were a robot in a chef's hat for like a little bit?"

Jake: "Not a robot. Like an enchanted suit of armor, almost."

Kim: "What was that like?"

Jake: "It was cool. It was pretty cool. I mean, I had to die first. So that was ... That part wasn't cool."

Kim: "Yeah, yeah."

Jake: "Waking back up after dying, though, that was a pleasant surprise."

Kim: [laughs] "Yeah. James told me a little bit about Fanarin, so I'll be honest, when I was describing what you all looked like, it took a little bit for James to connect that I was talking about Jake and Tass. Because he definitely described you as a metal man wearing a chef's hat, and Tass with ram horns?"

Jake: "Yeah, yeah. Tass was a very small, but with quite big horns. You are awfully well informed."

Kim: "Yeah."

Jake: "About all this. How ... How?"

Kim: "Margaret and Anastacia kept pretty good records of what the three of you — I guess four of you, with TJ — had done with the IPT. Most of those records got destroyed in the last 40 or so years. But my boss, I guess, managed to hold on to one of the last remaining complete files. So when I first got a vision of the three of you coming through that portal, I started just trying to read what she had about all of you, kind of a page at a time, as surreptitiously as I could."

Jake: "OK. Who's your boss?"

Kim: "Strohm."

Jake: "Oh."

Kim: "Yeah."

Jake: "How's she doing?"

Kim: "Oh, she's great."

Jake: "Good. Does she believe we're dead?"

Kim: "Oh, yes."

Jake: "OK. Hmm, do you get the impression that we'd be on good terms?"

Kim: "Oh ... I mean, I don't know exactly why the three of you are here or what you're planning to do. But from reading your files, I have a pretty good guess, and I imagine she would not be happy to see you, no."

Jake: "I think that's where we landed in our assumptions, yeah. Well, yeah. You seem to know a lot about us. I don't know anything about you, though. I don't have your file. So tell me about Kim."

Kim: "Uh ... OK, hi. It's nice to meet you. I was born in Scottsdale, Arizona. Went to school there. And then I moved to Chicago. And then that's where I met Strohm, and she helped me — she paid for me, actually, to go to Northwestern. And also, I can see the future."

Jake: "All right. Very cool. How does seeing the future work? Have you always been able to do that?"

Kim: "Oh, yeah. Ever since I was a kid. Or I guess younger than that — before I can even remember. Yeah, I just — I get these, uh ... I get these visions. Sometimes I can kind of fish for one, but a lot of the time they just happen unexpectedly. When I'm around certain

people or touching certain things, I'll just get ... My eyes will just go white and a bunch of wind blow around, and I see the future. That's how I saw all of you, actually."

Rev: Speaking of. Kim, I believe you have a beginning of play move.

Kim: I do.

Rev: Why don't you roll that?

Kim: Sure. That is a ten.

Rev: All right. And remind us what your beginning of play move is.

Kim: So before each faction turn or at the start of the game, roll with Spirit. On a hit, pick one of the options below. On a 10+, you choose the character the vision concerns. So my options for vision are a dangerous threat is closing in; the MC will tell you why it stalks them, an ally is plotting a betrayal; the MC will tell you when the hammer will fall, a tragedy lurks in the shadows; the MC will tell you how they can avoid it. OK, so since we're sitting here in the car and I just mentioned that sometimes I get visions depending on who I'm talking to, I think my vision is about Jake right now.

Rev: OK. And what kind of vision are you having about Jake?

Kim: A dangerous threat is closing in; the MC will tell you why it stalks them.

Rev: So the danger that is coming after Jake is Zui, the knight of the Court of the Silver Wing. And he is after Jake. Well, he's not after Jake. He's after Brizack. And he is after him because he has heard rumor of Brizack's arrival in town. And many years ago, they had a competition against one another, using shows of power. And after the fact, it was revealed that Brizack had a hidden object of power. And so all of the display he had done was not purely his power. But he had greatly shamed Zui in this, essentially, power duel. And now he wants revenge. And the specific vision that you get is of Zui in his armor, with a large blade held in two hands, flying down the highway. And as he goes, he passes cars and road signs and mile markers.

Kim: Yeah. So Jake, literally as I was explaining how my visions work, I stopped talking entirely and my eyes go white and fill with this bright, bright, white light. Wind start spinning around the car, blowing my hair around.

Jake: "Uh-oh."

Kim: And my eyes open back to the normal color, and I pull out a deck of tarot cards out of my pocket and start flipping through them quietly. And this deck seems hodgepodge and makeshift. None of the backs match, and some of them seem partially burned, or like I've written little notes on them or drawn things on them. And it seems a lot bigger than a normal stack of tarot cards, like I've added extra ones. And I start flipping through them and settle on a spread, and then look back up at you. "Yeah. So it's like that. That happens."

Jake: "Are you OK?"

Kim: "Yeah. Yeah." And I'm like smoothing my hair back and fixing my headband. "Yeah. That's why I don't wear lip gloss anymore, because like my hair just gets like, blegh, all stuck right there."

Jake: [laughs]

"What ... What did you see?"

Kim: "Oof. If I had known about this, I would have put this in Brizack's packet. OK, so I had a vision about you. Or really, about Brizack. There's this person named Zui. They're part of the Court of the Silver Wings. That's the group of fey that's in Chicago. I guess once upon a time, Brizack and Zui, the two of you had this like battle of magical powers. And you won, so congrats. But also ..."

Jake: "Hell yeah."

Kim: "No, but you cheated, so ..."

Jake: "Well, it wasn't me."

Kim: "Yeah, that's true. So you had an ace up your sleeve. You had a magical artifact that you weren't forthcoming about. And so you won under false pretenses, and Zui found out about that and held a grudge. And now Zui knows that you're coming into Chicago, and they have not forgotten about what Brizack did."

Rev: And Kim, as you explain this to Jake, you turn your head a little bit and look out the window, and you see a mile marker, and have the sudden realization that the mile marker you saw in the vision is just five miles ahead.

SFX:

OUTRO MUSIC

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