

SECOND SHIFT

Episode #2.08: How the Other Half Lives

FINAL RECORDING DRAFT

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Cast (in order of appearance):

Garvin – a male Zana (with fewer scruples)

Stochani – evil Fesmer (Waa-Fesmer?)

Thakon – a stronger but dumbled-down Mike

Lazlor – was once an aspiring Brother of Oren

Jaed – Cheanti's lover and partner in crime

Cheanti – from 1.08

Mike

Arkahn

Katherine

Jareth

Fesmer

Zana

Shagren

University Guard 1

University Guard 2

Legionnaire

Teaser

• Garvin, Stochani, Thackon, Lazlor, Jaed, Cheanti, Mike, Arkahn, Katherine, Jareth, Fesmer, and Zana

Scene One

• Arkahn, Zana, Jareth, Mike, Katherine, Fesmer

Scene Two

• Mike, Jareth, Fesmer, Zana

Scene Three

• Zana, Garvin, Jareth, Mike, Thackon, Lazlor, Stochani, Fesmer

Scene Four

• Arkahn, Katherine, Cheanti

Scene Five

• Jareth, Thackon, Lazlor, Mike, Stochani

Scene Six

• Cheanti, Arkahn, Katherine, Jaed

Scene Seven:

• Fesmer, Shagren

Scene Eight

• Mike, Lazlor, Stochani, Jareth, Thackon

Scene Nine

• University Guard 1, Jareth, University Guard 2, Mike, Thackon, Stochani, Lazlor

Scene Ten

• Cheanti, Katherine, Jaed, Arkahn

Scene Eleven

• Mike, Lazlor, Arkahn, Katherine, Cheanti, Jaed, Jareth, Thackon, Legionnaire, Stochani

Scene Twelve

• Zana, Garvin

Scene Thirteen

• Stochani, Lazlor, Arkahn, Mike, Jaed, Jareth, Katherine, Cheanti, Fesmer, Garvin, Zana

Teaser

• Garvin, Stochani, Thackon, Lazlor, Jaed, Cheanti, Mike, Arkahn, Katherine, Jareth, Fesmer, and Zana
—Kaltarok. Int. Garvin's tavern. Night. Day One.

GARVIN (*ZANA*)

The time for action is nigh. It is *laerele*, the Day of Rest, so most are in their homes, tucking in their children. Have you readied the devices?

STOCHANI (*FESMER*)

I have, *shi-schwa*. All they require now is activation.

THACKON (*MIKE*)

And placement, Stochani. They will do us no good without that.

LAZLOR (*JARETH*)

Thackon, I believe I know of some discreet areas.

THACKON

What of the areas I have chosen, Lazlor?

LAZLOR

No. Yours were too obvious. I have chosen more subtle hiding places.

THACKON

I do not see what was indiscreet about my chosen—

JAED (*KATHERINE*)

Be silenced, Thackon. Lazlor is correct. With sabotage, we must be as clandestine as possible.

CHEANTI (*ARKAHN*)

Yes, Lazlor's placements are most likely best this occurrence.

THACKON

It seems Jaed always thinks Lazlor's schemes are best.

STOCHANI

I agree. We do seem to favor Lazlor's plans.

LAZLOR

Turncoat.

THACKON

Ha.

STOCHANI

...But in this case I concur with Lazlor.

THACKON

Ow.

LAZLOR

"Ha."

STOCHANI

Thackon, we need to send a message. And if one of our devices were to be sighted....

GARVIN

My children, we should be finalizing our plans, not squabbling amongst ourselves. A house is only as strong as the nails holding it together.

LAZLOR & THACKON

Yes, *shi-schwa*.

SFX: Door opening and people filing in.

JAED

Shh.

MIKE
(concluding his argument)
...is west!

ARKAHN
It has been months of your west, Meek. There is nothing proving Shaena passed through here.

CHEANTI
(gasps)

MIKE
What is it with you lately, always questioning my—

KATHERINE
Lay off her, Mike. She's only saying what we are all thinking.

JARETH
This is true, Mike. Why are we here?

FESMER
Several leads indicated we should be elsewhere weeks ago.

ZANA
They are not incorrect, Mike. Perhaps you should revise your theory: the best course of action may not always be to “go west.”

(The cast's conversation fades out under the “bizzaro cast's”)

MIKE
Zana, even you're against me?

ZANA

I am against your plan, Mike, not you. Perhaps together we can conceive a more appropriate one.

JAED
(quietly)
Cheanti, *voluna*, you had something to say?

CHEANTI
It only now occurred to me, but I believe I have just formulated a brilliant annex to our plan.

End of Teaser

ACT ONE

Scene One

• Arkahn, Zana, Jareth, Mike, Katherine, Fesmer
— Kaltarok. Int. Garvin's tavern. Same night.

ARKAHN

Do not take your frustrations out on Zana, Meek.

ZANA

It is *ra-na*, Arkahn.

JARETH

I agree with Zana, as do we all. There is nothing in Kaltarok but active item factories and *tae-oden* disposal facilities.

MIKE

But this is just a pit stop—

ARKAHN

I have had it “up to here” with your pit stops, Meek. We have had nothing but pit stops for months.

MIKE

Arkahn, seriously, the last thing I need right now is—

KATHERINE

Mike, it isn't Arkahn's fault that you've been leading us nowhere for over two months.

MIKE

I'm leading us west. Well, technically, due west was through that forest a few miles back....

FESMER

There was nothing in that forest, Mike. There is nothing here, either. We should have gone to Velia at that fork last week.

MIKE

Oh awesome, this again! Look, it's bad enough the “Great Westerly Road” veers off course, but we're not going any more south than we absolutely have to.

JARETH

It follows western civilization, Mike. Not the exact direction.

ZANA

That is enough. Jareth, Arkahn, and the rest—cease goading Mike. Mike, a good leader listens to his team; often its members can see a better solution to a recurrent problem.

(beat)

Jareth, tell us your thoughts, as I see you are bursting to share.

JARETH

There was evidence back in Shokagne that a “maimed Brother of the Voice” and his “Mage Aid” were headed to Velia, where the Legion resistance to University is strongest. How can they be any other than Porec and Shaena?

ZANA

Mike, *senjen*, tell us why you chose to ignore such relevant information? And let your answer not be that Velia is southwest.

MIKE

Well, it is.

(beat)

Out of curiosity, what city will we hit if we keep going west, through that forest?

ZANA

(reluctant to say this)

Well—

FESMER

(cutting her off)

Nothing but the Hermetic Mountain Range.

JARETH

(taking Fesmer's lead)

Dense, impenetrable mountains. To risk passage through them would be suicidal. I have not heard of any who have successfully made it through, due to the perilous nature of the—

MIKE

OK, OK, I get it! They're the Misty Mountains of Amirand..

ZANA

(letting the conversation proceed in this way, despite misgivings)

Now, allow me to ask, who wishes to continue west?

(Silence)

ZANA (cont)

And who believes we should begin to make our way to Velia?

ALL BUT MIKE

[Affirmative responses]

MIKE

Fine. FINE. We'll start backtracking tomorrow even though that means another week on those damn uncomfortable horses. Happy?

ARKAHN

Yes, Meek. That is the best decision you have made this rotation of the moons.

KATHERINE

(snorts)

That's because it wasn't his!

SFX: Arkahn and Katherine laugh

ZANA

Girls, some sense of propriety, *senjen*. Do not contribute to Mike's troubles.

ARKAHN & KATHERINE

Yes, *shi-schwa*.

MIKE

Yeah, you won, now stop.

ZANA

I will acquire rooms for us. Two? Or...?

ARKAHN

(quickly)

Two.

JARETH

Yes, Zana. No need to waste our funds on that extravagance.

SFX: Walking away.

KATHERINE

Calling "not it" to room with Mike!

ARKAHN

Not it!

FESMER
Oh! Not it!

JARETH
(with mirth)
Then we shall have one room for the women and one for the men—

FESMER
But I just said—hey...wait a moment—

MIKE
Not funny.

JARETH
Actually it was.

KATHERINE
Oh, c'mon, Mike. We're just trying to make light of the situation.

MIKE
Well, I'm tired of it.

ARKAHN
It was just joking, Meek. Remember the joking?

MIKE
I recall someone saying, "some things are not meant for joking."

KATHERINE
Good God, Mike. Stop being so uptight!

ZANA
Two rooms as requested, though I was tempted to acquire for

three—

MIKE
Ha, ha.

ZANA
Kath, Arkahn. I will be up in just a moment.

(The boys' dialogue fading)

JARETH
Let us gather our belongings.

FESMER
And let us hope we do not have to share one bed this time.

MIKE
There's one thing we can agree on...

SFX: Walking up wooden stairs.

ARKAHN
I used to wish he would be more serious. Now that he is...

KATHERINE
Eh, he's just under a lot of pressure. He thinks he needs to do it all. We probably shouldn't goad him so much, but he makes it so easy. We should try harder.

ARKAHN
I am pleased we are no longer acting in such ways toward each other.

KATHERINE
Oh, I know, right? And thank God for Zana. She's better than valium.

ARKAHN

(pause)

It is not getting better.

KATHERINE

You mean...? Zana's...?

ARKAHN

Yes. She must know by now that....

KATHERINE

That we know about her nightmares?

ARKAHN

Yes, Kath. Perhaps we should ...?

SFX: Metal key in lock.

KATHERINE

...No. It's her business. If she wanted to talk about, she would.

SFX: Door opened.

ARKAHN

That is—

KATHERINE

Ah—!

SFX: The two being hit over the head, then caught as they fall.

Scene Two

• Mike, Jareth, Fesmer, Zana

— Garvin’s tavern. Int. Room. Same night.

MIKE

Damn it, Jareth! Why do you always take the bed closest to the door?

JARETH

What, is this bed farther west then yours?

MIKE

You know what, Jareth? Bad time to push me. Why is it that every time I have an idea, you’re ready with an objection? What do you do? Stay up at night and think of ways to undermine me?

JARETH

They were foolish ideas, Meek!

MIKE

MY NAME IS MIKE AND I'M NOT “FOOLISH.”

(beat)

Actually let’s review here: Who was foolish enough to have based his entire life around an organization that—oops!—turns out to be corrupt and murderous towards the very people that it’s supposed to protect and enlighten? It’s not me. It’s not Fesmer. Oh wait—that’s you.

FESMER

(in the distance)

I am taking no part of this.

JARETH

I stand for the ideals of University. I fail to see how that is foolish.

MIKE

Whatever, Jareth. You won. We're turning around tomorrow and going against *Ainorem*. We'll take a huge step in the wrong direction, but hey—no one seems to care.

JARETH

Why do you think that is, Mike? Might it be that we are at last following a promising lead instead of blindly following your “west”?

MIKE

Don’t you care that we're going to be traveling in the wrong direction and wasting time we don't have? I don't understand how you people can just dismiss *Ainorem*.

JARETH

We are not dismissing *Ainorem*! We are dismissing you. It seems clear you botched the ritual from the start, or perhaps *Ainorem* told you to go west just to get you as far away from them as possible.

MIKE

Look, I did the ceremony right. *Ainorem* told me how to get Shauna back: go west.

JARETH

This is going nowhere. You desire this bed? Fine, but this is just more proof that you are an abysmal leader. A leader should be admired and trusted—you are neither!

MIKE

So I’m an abysmal leader, huh? Jareth with your vast leadership experience, consisting of what? Telling students what to do? You think you're a more qualified candidate?

JARETH

In fact, Mike, you forget I led the *Lowatuen*. Admittedly, I did make a mistake: you asked me once why I did not let you die. Trust me, I ask myself that—

FESMER

You go too far, Jareth! Both of you cease this bickering.

JARETH

I do go too far...extremely too far. WEST.

FESMER

He at least has taken action, however ill-advised. What would we have done under your leadership? With a friend missing, we would let the trail go cold while you crawled under University's skirt. Mike may not have made the wisest decisions, but he has at least tried.

JARETH

Once again you accuse me of doing nothing, which is far from true. Who returned to the site of our battle? Was it you? No, it was me. And I looked for a trail. There was no trail. How does one let nothing become cold? Here you are accusing me, but let me ask you this: what did you do to find Shaena?

FESMER

Your efforts are laughable! You hardly walked a mile. I traveled far, and I searched.

JARETH

To no avail. Just as mine was.

MIKE

So let me get this straight: the only one of us who actually

caught Shauna's trail is me.

FESMER

By mere chance, and you have led us straight away from that. Your achievements here do not shine.

SFX: Zana crashes into the room and silence falls

ZANA

Arkahn and Kath have been taken! This place appears to have been compromised. We must hasten to—

JARETH

(to Mike)

You! This is your fault! If you had not led us to this *Ainorem* forsaken place this would not have happened!

MIKE

Quick, Jareth, your friends are missing—find a place to hide, you coward!

FESMER

Meek, your endless foolishness now has risked the others—

ZANA

Children, *senjen*.

MIKE

My name is Mike damn it! Why can't you remember that?

FESMER

Who cares what your name is? It might as well be *rercor*. You have led us all into a trap!

MIKE

Rerc-wha—?

ZANA
(roars)
BE SILENCED!

(a stunned pause)

ZANA
You are fighting? Now? Your friends are in danger and you waste time assigning blame? You three are no longer children, yet you disappoint me by acting as such. I am going downstairs and I am going to find Arkahn and Kath. Should this foolishness cease and your sensibilities return then your presence downstairs is expected.

SFX: Zana exits

SFX: door slam

(long pause)

MIKE
Well. Let's go.

Scene Three

• Zana, Garvin, Jareth, Mike, Thackon, Lazlor, Stochani, Fesmer

—Int. Garvin's Tavern. Same night.

ZANA

...will accept responsibility, Garvin. This is your establishment.

GARVIN

[I am sorry] *Boxen wo fai* about the disappearance, but I cannot control everything that occurs in my tavern.

ZANA

Are you telling me that you have witnessed nothing while sitting here all night?

GARVIN

Again, *boxen wo fai*. I have not.

ZANA

I demand that you make yourself helpful to me.

GARVIN

There is nothing I can do.

ZANA

No Garvin, there is nothing you want to do. Yet you will assist me.

SFX: Footsteps.

JARETH

What have you learned, Zana?

ZANA

This man is about to assist us.

MIKE

Good. Which way did they take the girls?

GARVIN

I did not see what happened, and I do not know who abducted your friends!

ZANA

With every passing moment the chances that you played a significant role in this kidnapping increase. So, for the last time, where are they?

GARVIN

I know nothing...but I will lend you what assistance I can.
(to the backroom)

LAZLOR, THACKON, STOCHANI: TO THE FRONT!

(to Zana)

My employees are at your disposal this evening. This is all I can do.

SFX: Footsteps

THACKON

You called?

LAZLOR

(out of breath)

Shi-schwa. What do you require?

GARVIN

(speaking deliberately)

These special visitors require your assistance. See to it that you are helpful to them in finding their lost companions.

STOCHANI

(also speaking deliberately)

Ah. How long should we search? We must prepare for that big dinner.

GARVIN

I am certain for someone with your talents, Stochani, will find the lost ones before it is time, so this should not interfere with your cooking.

ZANA

Do these three know the area?

GARVIN

They were reared in this area, so they know it well.

MIKE

Great, so they'll know who to talk to.

LAZLOR

Should we guide them through town?

GARVIN

Yes Lazlor, that way they are likely to find what they seek.

FESMER

(hushed to Zana)

Find what they seek?

ZANA

(hushed back to Fesmer)

You must go and seek for yourself.

FESMER

Yes, *shi-schwa*.

(to the group)

Parado fai, but I have something that requires my urgent attention.

SFX: Fesmer leaving the Tavern.

JARETH

Zana, where is Fesmer...?

ZANA

Jareth, Mike. Accompany Garvin's employees, *senjen*. Fesmer will join you later.

THACKON

We should depart now.

SFX: Walking away.

MIKE

'Bout time. Zana?

ZANA

You boys go. I shall remain. It seems I have need to discuss other...details with Garvin.

MIKE

Zana...?

(pause)

Okay. We'll find them.

ZANA

I know.

SFX: The boys leave the tavern.

ZANA

It seems we have much in common.

GARVIN

I strongly disagree.

ZANA

I operate a "kitchen." You operate a "kitchen."

GARVIN

That is hardly uncom—

ZANA

You have employees who “cook” for you. I also have employees who “cook” for me.

GARVIN

(pause)

My employees deal with a very specialized type of cooking. One only I can teach them.

ZANA

I have been an accomplished cook for many Silver Nights. Yet however skilled a...chef I am, I have found that only a select few of my employees can become even the lowest of cooks.

GARVIN

An expert chef never shares his secrets with a competitor.

ZANA

Yet even an expert chef must learn from a master.

GARVIN

(his breath catches)

ZANA

Would you share your secrets with such a person?

Scene Four

• Arkahn, Katherine, Cheanti

— Kaltarok. Int. Tae-oden Refinery. Same night.

ARKAHN

Psst, Kath...wake up, Kath... recover your senses...Kath wake up.

KATHERINE

(half-sleeping)

...But why does this spaceship run on ravioli?

ARKAHN

What?

KATHERINE

Wait—what's going on? I can't see. Hey where are we!?

ARKAHN

I do not know, but we are not alone.

CHEANTI

Very good. I am glad you are awake and able to participate. Do not attempt to remove your blindfold, *senjen*.

KATHERINE

What's going on...?

CHEANTI

That is a question to which I would beg answer as well. Yet, let us begin with an easier one: what town is this?

ARKAHN

We are in Kaltarok.

CHEANTI

Yes, good. And your names?

KATHERINE

I'm Kath, and this is Arkahn. Who are—

SFX: CHEANTI smacks Katherine with the rod

KATHERINE

(wimpers)

CHEANTI

Oh—*boxen wo fai*. I am asking the questions, and you are supplying the answers. Follow these rules and we shall proceed advantageously.

SFX: Katherine grumbles.

CHEANTI (cont)

Oh, I know that hurt. Yet if you were attuned...

SFX: She swings the rod into Arkahn.

ARKAHN

(screams)

CHEANTI

...then this *tae-od* would dispatch a much nastier blow. Though I suppose the fact that it is attached to an iron rod does no harm... oh, perhaps it does!
(chuckles)

Why are you two not laughing? That is rude.

SFX: Cheanti smacks them both with the rod.
(simultaneously)

KATHERINE

Ahh!

ARKAHN
(screams)
CHEANTI

I cannot tolerate rude people. I still do not hear laughter.

ARKAHN + KATHERINE
(weak laughter)

CHEANTI
There now—do we not feel better? Now, Arkahn, are you prepared answer a question or two?

ARKAHN
Yes.

CHEANTI
What are you doing in Kaltarok?

ARKAHN
I—I search for a lost friend...*senjen*, keep that far from me.

CHEANTI
Yes, it does hurt to lose someone. Yet do not fret—you have found me, and I am the only friend you will ever need.

ARKAHN
(whimpers)
Senjen, senjen....

CHEANTI
Arkahn, you know I will not accept that. I know you are involved with the Legion, so merely acknowledge it.

ARKAHN
I am not of the Legion. I am here to find a friend.

CHEANTI

Cease lying you miserable *baxo*! [Bitch!]
(pronounce BAX-oh)

SFX: rod strike
ARKAHN
(screams)

CHEANTI
If anyone knows who you work for it would be me. Friends tell each other things. Secret things. Are you keeping such a thing from me?

ARKAHN
(cries)

KATH
Friends...oh. OH GOD.

CHEANTI
Ah, friend-of-my-friend—you begin to understand. You who stood idly by, and watched. You have an equal hand in this!

KATHERINE
Oh Cheanti....

ARKAHN
(panting)
You!

CHEANTI
Yes, I recall making two friends one afternoon—

SFX: She strikes Arkahn

ARKAHN
(cries out)

CHEANTI

—Two new friends who had a Velian pain stick.

SFX: strikes Arkahn

ARKAHN

(moans)

CHEANTI

These new friends stole from me—

SFX: strikes Arkahn

ARKAHN

(whimpers)

CHEANTI

—They left me and my husband to the mercy of the Red Circle.

SFX: heavy blow to Arkahn.

ARKAHN

(whimpers weakly and passes out)

(pause)

KATH

Arkahn? Arkahn!

CHEANTI

Ah—oh well. I did not intend for her to lose consciousness—
but in a way, Kath, this is best! See, I have desired to speak
with you for some time now.

KATHERINE

Cheanti, *minem boxen wo fai*. I—

CHEANTI

(strikes Katherine)

Not “*boxen*” enough!

KATHERINE

(screams in pain)

Ino minem boxen wo fai!

CHEANTI

That is the notion. Now, I do have a few questions for you.
Here is the first: are you with the Legion?

KATHERINE

No. They are the ones who took my friend.

CHEANTI

Am I to believe this? When you travel with a Legionnaire?
When you stand idly by and watch her efforts?

KATHERINE

I was deceived. She tricked all those close to her—but that
was practically two years ago! She has left the Legion and
now seeks to repent for her actions.

CHEANTI

How nice for her. Tell me though, how will you repent?

KATHERINE

What would you have me do?

CHEANTI

I desire an explanation! Explain how...how you could stand
by and let her use that device on me?!

KATHERINE

I didn't know she was armed! Or that she was a Legionna—

SFX: She strikes Katherine

KATHERINE
(cries out)

CHEANTI

I asked how you stood idly by once you did know what was happening. How could anyone allow use of a Velian painstick on a pregnant woman?

KATHERINE
I—*Ino minem boxen wo fai.*

CHEANTI

Then I assume you have no reason. You are just as guilty. Perhaps moreso.

KATHERINE
...I am.

CHEANTI

Put out your hand—the one that has my baby's blood on it.

KATHERINE
Your baby's...you lost the baby?

(Katherine is crying from this point on)

CHEANTI

Yes, Kath. You are a baby slayer. Your hand, *senjen*.

SFX: Short pause; Katherine's hand is smashed by Cheanti

KATHERINE
Aahhh!!!

CHEANTI

You want to begin to earn my forgiveness?

KATHERINE
YES!

CHEANTI

Then put out your other hand. The one soaked with the blood of my husband! You murdered him as well.

(beat)

Good.

SFX: Katherine's other hand is smashed

KATHERINE
AHHH!!

CHEANTI

Now then—tell me, tell me why I should not spend your lives to pay for those of my husband and my baby?

KATHERINE

(panting)

It wouldn't bring them back.

ARKAHN

(waking up)

Kath... Are you *ra-na*?

CHEANTI

I believe I may have another way for you to atone.

KATHERINE

(panting)

Anything...

CHEANTI

Unlike University or the Legion, the Hunters of
Truth...no...let us first speak of what was, so that you may
better understand what will be.

Scene Five

• Jareth, Thackon, Lazlor, Mike, Stochani
— Kaltarok. Ext. The town. Same night.

SFX: Walking on dry, destroyed ground.

JARETH

Thackon, have you any notion where to begin? We are most anxious to find our friends.

THACKON

Despite its outward appearance, ours is a very small town.

LAZLOR

Thackon means to say that chances of finding someone who has seen your girls are considerable.

MIKE

Huh. I didn't get a chance to really look at this place before.

LAZLOR

It is not an ideal place to live, no.

JARETH

That is an underestimation, Lazlor. Everything is dry and brown here. There is no foliage, merely husks.

STOCHANI

(bitter)

Some places do not thrive. Some places are designated as acceptable sacrifices to the greater good.

MIKE

This place kinda reminds me of Philly. I went there once on a family trip. It's mostly old abandoned factories.

LAZLOR

Fill-ee? What is...?

JARETH

(fumbling)

Mike is from a place very far from here, a small mining village—

MIKE

Geez, look out!

THACKON

Do you see Legionnaires?

MIKE

No, Undying. Look!

LAZLOR

Where?

MIKE

Right in front of you! See, those people over there? The ones shambling around?

JARETH

Mike is correct, I—

LAZLOR

Those are not Undying. They are townspeople.

MIKE

People? God. They... look really awful. And hollow....

JARETH

Their eyes sunken, their pallor...ashen. Why?

LAZLOR

They work at the tae-oden refinery.

JARETH

Refinery? Lazlor, the only factory here is a University-run disposal facility...

STOCHANI

(snorts)

THACKON

No. There is only a Legion run refinery.

JARETH

You...you are mistaken. Tae-oden are evil, poisonous things—

STOCHANI

Exactly! Take a look around you. As you yourselves have said, the land and people here are nothing more than mere husks.

MIKE

Is that true, Stochani? Is this what tae-oden do to people?

JARETH

Yes, Mike. Why did you think University's stance on their disposal is so strict?

MIKE

Didn't the *sundjae* close Arkahn's trial after she mentioned them?

JARETH

I do not believe the two are related, Mike. I—

LAZLOR

Let me assure you that it is as Thackon said: this town's only

purpose is to refine tae-oden for Legion technology.

JARETH

I am not convinced. How are we ignorant of this in Laundi?

THACKON

The Legion pays well for silence.

JARETH

I am certain it does, yet I find it unlikely University would be ignorant of this. I just cannot see how a *tae-oden* refinery would go unnoticed on University-owned land.

STOCHANI

Then let me tell you a story: This began when The Eight became The Seven, by forsaking their brother—

JARETH

We have all heard this child's tale.

MIKE

I haven't.

LAZLOR

Allow Stochani to finish. This tale varies from the one you heard at your mother's knee.

STOCHANI

Now Oren, the forsaken one, his spite was so strong that he willed himself to live until his revenge upon the other seven had been fulfilled. Thus, the Brotherhood was born. But the Brotherhood spread Oren's word, not his spite, and thus the Legion was created to satisfy Oren's terrible promise. At this time the University directive was still a great force in the world...

Scene Six

• Cheanti, Arkahn, Katherine, Jaed

— Kaltarok. Int. Tae-oden Refinery. Same night.

CHEANTI

(fade in from Stochani's line)

"...and Father fox said to his cubs, 'My brothers have taken what is rightfully yours. I would have shared the sacred land with all who sought its fruit. They keep out all save whom they deem worthy. You have not been deemed worthy. You must excel where they do not.'"

LISTEN—this is important.

"Now, the cubs grew into father foxes themselves. They grew in cunning as the wits of their cousins diminished. So, they went forth and demanded access to the sacred land. They were refused.

"And the Father fox said to his offspring, 'My brothers have taken what is rightfully yours. I would have shared the sacred land with all who sought its fruit. They keep out all save whom they deem worthy. You have not been deemed worthy. You must explore where they do not.'"

(whacks Arkahn)

DO NOT FALL ASLEEP, this story is for your benefit, to make you understand!

"The foxes met Mother woodpecker and Brother rooster, who taught them to not limit themselves to paradise's bounty. They grew shrewd as the savvy of their cousins diminished. So, they went forth and demanded access to the sacred land. Still they were refused."

Sit up straight!

"And Father fox spoke as he had before, telling his brood, 'You must do what they will not.' It had been long since Father fox remembered his purpose. Full of anger at eternal exclusion, he imparted, 'If all cannot have it, then none shall have it.' Father fox asked his children to go forth from his fold and to take the sacred land back by any means. Now, Father fox's descendants had grown numerous indeed. His

brethrens' litters had long since been surpassed.

CHEANTI (cont.)

Their litters had not grown clever; their litters had not learned from Mother woodpecker or Brother rooster; their litters had not learned sacrifice."

(whacks Katherine)

You, however, WILL learn sacrifice!

"Father fox's children learned Sacrifice as their cousins learned only Possess. His children planted toxins deep into the land and whispered encouragements to the venom, which spread its poisonous tendrils throughout the whole of the world. The blight was not refused."

Pay close attention to this part.

"Soon, but not too soon, the earth began to die. When the earth died, the plants then died. When the water became naught but noxious liquid, the fox tribes perished. As did Mother woodpecker, as did Brother cock. Father fox perished last of all. He had just enough life left to regret. And so Regret lingered ever so briefly in this ruined land before even it perished. And then, there was nothing left at all."

(pause)

ARKAHN

(moans)

CHEANTI

Now then, what have you learned from this?

KATHRINE

(carefully, with thought behind it)

That...tae-oden are...poisoning the land?

CHEANTI

(strikes Katherine)

NO!...Arkahn?

ARKAHN

(not trying)

That University's people are miserly and Legionnaires are worldly, yet misguided?

CHEANTI

(strikes Arkahn)

NO!

CHEANTI (cont)

(sighs)

Let me start at the beginning. You are of the Legion, yet have defected. And you are of nothing, yet you aid and keep company with a Legion—forgive me, Ex-Legionnaire—to find a lost friend, one who is also victim of the Legion—of which neither of you are a part. Now, let me parallel: Father fox's story teaches us REGRET. It teaches us that some actions cannot be taken back once executed.

KATHERINE

(scared)

Look, we're really, really sorry. That was at a time when she was a different person, I was a different person. Please. "Sorry" is too empty of a word to convey the true regret and guilt we both feel, right?

ARKAHN

(not entirely sincere)

Cha own-terapena ruth fai.

[I am full of regret].

CHEANTI

Are you? Are you really? Really, truly, full of regret?

KATHERINE

How could we not be?

CHEANTI

Father fox was also filled with regret, but his came too late. Convince me it is not too late for you. Convince me you are worth "saving."

ARKAHN

I have much to regret, yet I could have much more were I not blindfolded and tied to a chair.

SFX: Cheanti strikes Arkahn.

ARKAHN

(cries out)

JAED

People are capable of many atrocities. But what separates us from the animals is our capacity for regret, and therefore, our capacity for redemption.

CHEANTI

Jaed, *voluna*.

JAED

Voluna.

(beat)

Prove to Cheanti—to The Hunters of Truth—that you are sincerely filled with regret by performing an act of...unconditional redemption.

Scene Seven

• Fesmer, Shagren
— Kaltarok. Ext. Same night.

SFX: chiming noise

FESMER

Yes, I hear you, but you are quite certain?

SFX: chiming noise

FESMER

But, I assure you we have found some Hunters right here in Kaltarok.

SFX: chime

FESMER

Perhaps you do not have the permission required to attain the information—

SFX: chime

FESMER

No, *boxen wo fai*, that is not what I intended. Perhaps you are correct. Something may be amiss.

SFX: chime

FESMER

You take care of yourself as well.

SFX: chime

FESMER

Where are staying tonight? Where are you?

SFX: interrupted chime

SHAGREN

(laughing)

Behind you, Fesmer.

Scene Eight

• Mike, Lazlor, Stochani, Jareth, Thackon
— Kaltarok. Int. Deserted shed. Same night.

MIKE

...The shed will probably be guarded if the girls really are in there. So. What's the best way to bust in?

LAZLOR

I strongly recommend caution—*Ainorem* only knows what awaits us in there. We should scout it first.

STOCHANI

I agree with Lazlor.

JARETH

No, our friends are within, and there is no knowing what has happened to them. We must extricate them immediately...I will create a distraction by assaulting the front. Stochani, Mike: sidle around back and attempt to locate another entrance.

MIKE

Jareth, that's too dangerous. I agree with the others; we need to see what's going on in there.

JARETH

You seem to think I am unwilling to take the required risks to aid a friend. You are incorrect. I refuse to sit back while a friend is endangered.

STOCHANI

If you are so set on this course of action, then let us not bar your way.

THACKON

[Affirmative grunt]

MIKE

Jareth...please...*senjen*...don't do this. Things could get ugly in there. I'm really sorry about calling you a coward—you're not. It was just easier to call you one than to face my own failings. Don't do this to prove anything.

JARETH

I—*boxen wo fai* as well. Fesmer was not wrong when he said I had gone too far. I too was trying to harm you, and, in truth, I have never regretted saving you. We have faced much adversity within many turns of the moons.

MIKE

You got that right.

STOCHANI

If you two are quite finished—

JARETH

I will assault the front regardless; it must be done. Lazlor, Thackon, will you aid me in this?

LAZLOR + THACKON

affirmative responses.

MIKE

Be careful.

SFX: Mike and Stochani walk away on scorched earth.

JARETH

(fade out)

Nai nai. Begin!

SFX: small explosions.

JARETH
(distant)
Begin!

(out back)

MIKE
This looks like a door.

STOCHANI
Let us hope we can gain entry.

SFX: small explosions fainter.

MIKE
That's our cue!

SFX: door bursting open.

MIKE
Hands in the air you... huh? There's no one here....

STOCHANI
Perhaps they have departed already?

JARETH
(from outside)
Begin!

SFX: wood breaking inwards.

MIKE
Ow! Geez. You could have just used the door, Jareth.

JARETH

Yes, but after I put all that effort into studying explosives, I thought, why not use them? So what have we found?

MIKE
Nothing yet. There was practically no light until you blew the door open.

JARETH
Why did you not use your flashlig—

MIKE
Because you had to be Mr. Wizard and take it apart! I don't suppose you've figured out how to put it back together. Or my alarm clock. Or my—

JARETH
(with urgency)
[Wait] *Graem*, what is this?

MIKE
Just some papers....

JARETH
Let me see them...

SFX: Rustling through papers

JARETH (cont.)
These are schematics of the large tae-oden factory...huh. I know these names. They are University officials. The Governing Council of University should have no authority here.

MIKE
Uh guys, this is bad, look: here's a necklace I gave Arkahn.

LAZLOR

Someone certainly is plotting something...

JARETH

Ainorem...a bomb of this size could do severe damage.

STOCHANI

Yes. They do seem to have all the plans necessary to make an impressive bomb indeed.

JARETH

They must be targeting the factory!

MIKE

So the same people who have Katherine and Arkahn are also plotting to bomb the factory? Why?

JARETH

I cannot comprehend the reason, but I believe we should try to ascertain it.

LAZLOR

Agreed. And I have just the plan...

END OF ACT ONE (AD BREAK)

ACT TWO

Scene Nine

• University Guard 1, Jareth, University Guard 2, Mike, Thackon, Stochani, Lazlor
—Int./Ext. Tae-oden Refinery. Same Night.

UNIVERSITY GUARD 1

Parado fai, but we will require some verification.

JARETH

I am Jareth, [Instructor of] *Nagamec own*-Prolau wo Tarentenodi, under *Aindel* Targonone. I am here on official University business.

UNIVERSITY GUARD 2

And who accompanies you?

MIKE

Uh....

JARETH

This is Meek. My task mage.

MIKE

Valo, yes, *valo*!

UG1

...And what official business are you on?

JARETH

Unannounced inspection of these factories.

UG2

Parado fai, entry requires more than name and rank.

JARETH

Certainly.

SFX: Rustling.

JARETH (cont)

My emblem here clearly shows I am of University. If you do not desire the harassment of a ranking University official in my report then you will let us through. Now, *senjen*.

(pause)

UG1

You have one hour. That is all I can allow without further identification.

SFX: Metal door opening and closing.

MIKE

I can't believe you got us in. That really an official emblem?

JARETH

It is. But any seamstress in Laundi can create one. Parents of students find pleasure in sewing them into their cloaks.

SFX: Walking on metal floor

MIKE

Jareth?

JARETH

Mmm?

MIKE

How come you broke us in here? Isn't that against your personal code of conduct, or something?

JARETH

I needed to witness this with my own eyes. I have strangers telling me truths I know to be false, but they say them with

such conviction. And the people of this town...their appearance alone is enough to shake anyone's belief.

MIKE

Gotcha. Oh, I think this is the door that led out back.

SFX: Two raps on a metal door. Three raps in response.

JARETH

That is them.

SFX: Rusty metal door opens.

THACKON

I am impressed.

STOCAHNI

Well that is no task—but I too am impressed. We were expecting to wait much longer.

LAZLOR

Stochani, I would not provoke Thackon; I recall a time when even you required aid to lower a simple ward.

(to Jareth and Mike)

I expected you two to meet with no success. It is fortunate that your results allow us to begin our search so quickly.

MIKE

...Thank you?

LAZLOR

Thackon—Stochani and I will begin our search over there. You remain here and assist these two in surveying this area.

SFX: Walking away.

(Jareth's dialogue is distant; under Thackon's)

THACKON

I shall look over here. You and Mike start over there.

JARETH

I must say, all seems in order here. For a disposery.

THACKON

Nonetheless, it is a refinery.

(quietly, into a communication device)

We have progressed to Point two.

SFX: Quiet chime (this chime should sound different than Fesmer's. Cheaper, maybe? It's not the real thing, but rather a poor man's substitute)

JARETH

I see nothing to indicate that. There are University guards outside...

(fade out)

...demanding proper identification, and nothing in here amiss.

THACKON

(quietly, into a communication device, fade in over Jareth) Stochani and Lazlor are setting theirs now.

SFX: Chime

THACKON (cont.)

(to Jareth)

Look closer. Do you not see the tae-oden?

(quietly, into a communication device)

Yes. They are here.

SFX: Chime

JARETH

I see tae-oden around—we all feel their presence—but that is consistent with a disposery. May I inquire: How long have these factories been in existence?

THACKON

Thirteen Silver Nights.
(quietly, into a communication device)
Shall we leave them here?

SFX: Chime

JARETH

More than enough time for word of a “refinery” to reach us; if these are not University factories I demand to see proof...
(fade out)
...otherwise, we have no business being in here. I find it unlikely this is where we shall find our friends.

THACKON

(quietly, into a communication device, fade in over Jareth)
I understand. We will remain at Point two. Will you be bringing the girls? Then we will wait for you.

SFX: Chime

JARETH

Are you even listening to me!? Turn and face me so that I may be sure you are—

SFX: Stealthy approach of two men

STOCHANI

[Now, now]. *Tahna, tahna*. There is no need for harsh words.

JARETH

You. I demand answers. Why are we in a University-

owned—

LAZLOR

Jareth, are your ears filled with wool? Your eyes clouded over? Listen to us, look with your eyes—this is not a University-run factory! It does not dispose of anything. Those officials you spoke of—they are really of the Legion. They are using University’s name as a cover in order to enable the stealthy processes of creating refined tae-oden.

JARETH

(enraged)
Are you insinuating that University is run BY THE LEGION?!

MIKE

Hey now, let’s just take a step back and—

THACKON

SHH!

MIKE

Did you just—?

THACKON

I head something; be silenced!

SFX: After a beat, the sound of distant Legion armor uncloaking, and the familiar revving of several *waa-loren*.

STOCHANI

(venomous)
Legionnaires!

MIKE

Why are we always screwed...?

Scene Ten

• Cheanti, Katherine, Jaed, Arkahn
—Int. Tae-od Refinery. Same Night.

CHEANTI

Very good. That is the last of them. You have done remarkably well.

KATHERINE

Once again I'm allowing something to happen when I know it's wrong. Unbelievable.

CHEANTI

The cause is right, and that makes the difference. Moreover, just as before, you did naught but watch.

KATHERINE

It's not like I—

CHEANTI

Fear not, friend: if we see success tonight I will consider your debt paid. How are your hands feeling?

KATHERINE

Like they've been fractured.

CHEANTI

I could have my friend heal them, to grant you a notion of my mercy. Something you never granted me.

JAED

Nai-nai. We should work our way back to the front door.

ARKAHN

Why is razing this place as important to you as your husband and your baby?

CHEANTI

It is reason to continue. I subsist by undermining the corrupt powers that failed to protect me from persons like you. You know, I thought it would take many Silver Nights to overtake you on your path. Imagine the wonderful surprise of you falling directly into my lap! Yet it does not do to linger here..

KATHERINE

Why is this such an important facility? What's its function?

JEAD

Look down there—you see the vats?

KATHERINE

Yeah, they're filled with coal or something.

ARKAHN

Ainorem. No wonder I feel so sickened.

KATHERINE

They're...tae-oden?

CHEANTI

Yes. This plant processes them for use in Legion technology.

KATHERINE

Wait—I thought this place was run by University.

CHEANTI

It is.

KATHERINE

But why would University be refining tae-oden? I thought they destroyed the things.

JAED

(chuckles)

ARKAHN

Well there are high-level University officials who are operatives for the Legion. The Legion uses the Universities to gather the tae-oden and then they transport them—

SFX: distant explosions

JAED

What was that?

CHEANTI

From that direction. Come.

Scene Eleven

• Mike, Lazlor, Arkahn, Katherine, Cheanti, Jaed, Jareth, Thackon, Legionnaire, Stochani
—Int. Tae-oden Refinery. Same Night.

SFX: sounds of muffled fighting

MIKE
(distant)
RRRAAHHHHGGG!

SFX: muffled smashing sound

LAZLOR
(distant screams of pain)

ARKAHN
One of those was Meek!

KATHERINE
We need to get in there and—

SFX: Cheanti pulls out her tae-od pipe

CHEANTI
Halt! Your friends must be attacking the rest of our group!
Not one of you possesses good *taagli!*
(OR: There is not one of you a good *taagli!*)

KATHERINE
The rest of your...? Wait—there're more of you?

JAED
I will see what is happening. Keep them here. We may need collateral.

CHEANTI

Yes, *voluna.*

CHEANTI (cont.)
(to Katherine)
Of course there are more of us, and you had better hope that your friends surrender easily. You may have aided us, but thoughts of my former life flash before me. Dispatching you would be no hardship for me.

(pause)

JAED
(fading in)
Legionnaires! Help us!

CHEANTI
Ben-sa wei! Come!

SFX: Cheanti, Arkahn, and Katherine running into the fray.

CHEANTI
THACKON LOOK OUT!

JARETH
(fade in)
Begin!

SFX: explosion followed by *waa-lor* crashing into Thackon; a meaty squish.

THACKON
Arggh!

CHEANTI
Thackon, nooo!

SFX: Legionnaire 1 on *waa-lor*

LEGIONNAIRE
The fallen shall have vengeance!

JARETH
Ahh!

MIKE
Yes they will! Bring IT!

SFX: Mike tackles L1 on *waa-lor* and they fall.

JARETH
Mike, nooo! The tae-oden!

SFX: Mike and L1 fall down into giant vats of tae-ods.
Should sound like rocks being displaced.

LEGIONNAIRE
(screams in agony then falls silent)

CHEANTI
Stochani, Lazlor requires aid!

STOCHANI
The tae-oden—my healing spells....

JAED
Lazlor is merely wounded. We must get him outside!

KATHERINE
We have to get to Mike! He fell into that trough with the Legionnaire!

JARETH
It may already be too late! That trough is filled with tae-oden!

KATHERINE
Well, if you won't, I will!

JARETH
No! I cannot allow it!
SFX: Jareth pushing Katherine

KATHERINE
Ommph!

JARETH
Mike—take my hand!
(straining)
(screams but keeps straining)
(pause)
Almost...have...you....

SFX: Rocks being pushed out of the way.

MIKE
(grunts)

SFX: Mike is pulled up out of the vat and onto Jareth.

JARETH
Omph!

KATHERINE
Mike, are you okay?

MIKE
Uh yeah...I'm good.

JARETH
“Good”? Those are tae-oden. With so much exposure...you should be dead!

MIKE

Sorry to disappoint.

JARTH

I am not disappointed. I am relieved.

MIKE

Thanks for pulling me out. I couldn't move. What happened to your hands, Katherine?

KATHERINE

I—earned this.

JARETH

Kath...your hands! Stochani—heal her!

CHEANTI

Do not! It is not my will.

JARETH

What does your will—

STOCHANI

Cheanti, this has gone far enough.

JARETH

By *Ainorem*! You know her?

JAED

You are all imbeciles.

MIKE

Okay, maybe it was the fall into the giant vat of tae-oden, but who-did-what-now?

Scene Twelve

• Zana, Garvin

—Int. Garvin's Tavern. Same Night.

ZANA

Now you know the complete truth.

GARVIN

Fai deanteo faiona cha.

[I humble myself to you].

ZANA

Now, I demand you tell me what is going on and where my girls are. I am quite certain you know.

GARVIN

But to speak now...?

ZANA

Do you wish to bring down the aforementioned consequence on yourself? On your children?

GARVIN

I do not—

ZANA

I will have the truth from you.

GARVIN

(a difficult confession)

... We are not of the Hunters of Truth. We aspire to be included, but have yet to prove our dedication. This night's work was supposed to accomplish that. My children, as you call them, do not know this. They think we are a sanctioned faction, carrying out justice for the meek.

ZANA

Explain.

GARVIN

As you may have surmised, this is not truly a University-run town. Rather, the Legion operates certain aspects of the industry here. The factories you see are not disposal places for tae-oden, but refineries. Our plan... you must understand: my children are very talented. I only wanted them to put their gifts to use, lest they squander them. I am little but an aging innkeeper, yet my past holds its share of dishonors. Among these, I possess a contact in Prolau wo Veliaodi who is a University official, sympathetic to the mission of the Hunters of Truth.

ZANA

Do not make me ask again: what is your "mission"?

GARVIN

I desired to change the world. To make it better. All of my *sabinae* [dear ones] have come from tragic backgrounds. I thought to provide them the opportunity to do something with their gifts that would lessen the chance of others suffering through—

ZANA

We have all suffered great injustices, yet to take action against them is to risk further injustice. What have you done?

GARVIN

My contact told me that this town's refinery is most important to both the Legion and University. To destroy it would be a great blow against both. That is our scheme, then. To raze the refinery using active item explosives.

ZANA

My girls are to be a part of this!?

GARVIN

They were to be lure for your boys! Cheanti recognized your party from Laundi. She proposed we shift the blame from the Hunters of Truth to a University official. What would you have done in my place? This is an opportunity to—

ZANA

Enough. I am disgusted by you. The Hunters of Truth I founded so long ago were to be aggressive where the Seekers of Truth could not, yet violence and explosives were to have no place in it. It is little wonder why most now think of us as terrorists. I am certain your contact was counting on this act to discredit all Hunters of Truth. Did you allow in your plans that this might be a trap?

GARVIN

A trap? Why would—

ZANA

Then everyone is in immediate danger. I am assuming control of this mock group of yours. You are to take me to the site immediately. And you should pray to *Ainorem* that none of my children have been harmed.

Scene Thirteen

• Stochani, Lazlor, Arkahn, Mike, Jaed, Jareth, Katherine, Cheanti, Fesmer, Garvin, Zana
—Int. Refinery. Same Night.

STOCHANI

Lazlor? Lazlor?

LAZLOR

(groans)

STOCHANI

Cheanti, what have you done?!

(background; match to Jaed and Stochani dialogue:)

ARKAHN

Meek, are you certain you are *ra-na*?

MIKE

Yeah. Really, I'm fine.

(background dialogue end)

JAED

Do not yell at her!

STOCHANI

Do not yell at me!

(background; match to Cheanti and Stochani dialogue:)

JARETH

Kath, what is occurring?

KATHERINE

Well, they all know each other....

(background dialogue end)

CHEANTI

What I have done?

STOCHANI

Lazlor is injured. Thackon is dead!

(background; match to Cheanti and Stochani dialogue:)

MIKE

I still don't know what's going on. Arkahn, where were you guys?

ARKAHN

Those women captured us and forced me to plant bombs. And Che...she smashed....

(background dialogue end)

CHEANTI

That was not my doing, Stochani! It was not I who attracted the notice of those Legionnaires.

STOCHANI

But if we had stayed together—

(background; match to Jaed and Stochani dialogue:)

JARETH

These men were supposed to be aiding us in recovering you! Yet it seems that—

MIKE

They all were working together. But I guess they weren't expecting those Legionnaires.

(background dialogue end)

JAED

Then more than one of us might have died. They already knew we were coming.

STOCHANI

How could they have known? We should have cleaved to the original plan! “We should include the Laundians, they will be the perfect diversion,” and now look where we are, Cheanti.

JARETH

...How did she know where we are from?

SFX: footsteps.

FESMER

Yes, how did you know where we were from prior to all of this?

KATHERINE

Fesmer, thank God.

STOCHANI

From this stupid *parao* [slag].
(pronounce: pah-RAO)

JAED

Stochani, I am warning you.

STOCHANI

Just be silenced, Jaed!

FESMER

And those explosives I sighted? Are they...active?

STOCHANI

There are. What pleases me most is that I activated the charge when the Legionnaires ambushed us! Cheanti wanted you to take the blame for this! Our own University official entering the factory only minutes before it went up in flames. You were to be the only ones to have died this evening, but it seems we shall all perish together!

MIKE

We should be running. Now.

KATHERINE

Oh God.

STOCHANI

Too late! There are mere minutes, and it would take much longer to escape! At least you were still seen entering this facility. Proolau wo Tarentenodi and the Legion will soon be at war. The Hunters of Truth will finally have their justice!

FESMER

Hunters of Truth? Is that what you think you are?

CHEANTI

Who do you think you are? We have been operating in this town for months, attempting to improve the pitiful conditions of these people's lives!

MIKE

Less talking more running.

FESMER

I must insist you deactivate these charges.

JAED

You should be honored to die for a worthy cause!

ARKAHN

This would not be a worthy—

CHEANTI

You are not allowed to speak!

KATHERINE

I refuse to die here, like this! Deactivate them. NOW.

SFX: Garvin and Zana running in.

CHEANTI

Garvin!

GARVIN

(winded)

Stochani! Deactivate those charges. That is an order.

STOCHANI

For what reason should I do that?

GARVIN

The orders came down from high. From a founding member.
Deranin.

ZANA

Deactivate those items. I am Cosaden, highest-ranking
member of the Hunters of Truth, and I command it.

JARETH

Shi-schwa!

KATHERINE

Omigod.

STOCHANI

...Of course. Jaed, Cheanti. Assist me with these.

SFX: Fumbling with explosive devices.

STOCHANI (cont)

Disconnect the coil from this point here.

ZANA

Oh, my children. Are none of you injured? Kath, your—

KATHERINE

We're alive. You're a terrorist?

MIKE

Figures. It's always the quiet ones.

ARKAHN

I could use a glass of *usen* [booze].

STOCHANI

You must remove the core—but exercise caution, the edges
must not touch...

JAED

Do not lecture me, Stochani. I know what I am doing.

GARVIN

Cease your bickering immediately.

JAED & STOCHANI

Yes shi-schwa.

GARVIN

Only by aiding one another can we hope to—

SFX: Metallic ding

JAED
Ben-sa—!

SFX: Medium-sized explosion.

STOCHANI, JAED, GARVIN, & CHEANTI
(screaming in pain)

KATHERINE
Omigod—Cheanti...?

CHEANTI
(moaning)
Jaed? Jaed? JAED!

ARKAHN
Your *voluna* is dead.

CHEANTI
(not hearing Arkahn)
JAED?!

JARETH
Mike, take that woman with us! She is in no state to see to herself! Run!

MIKE
Got her!

SFX: running and dragging

FESMER
(talking into something)

Shagren?

SFX: Chime?

FESMER
Evacuate who you can NOW. Warn everyone else. Run!

JARETH
There! An overturned tae-oden vat! We will use it as cover!

MIKE
Will that be enough?

CHEANTI
Where is everyone? I require aid! Stochani...?

ARKAHN
He is dead. They all are.

CHEANTI
(crying; continuous)
[You bitches] *Cha baxoa*. You have ruined everything. You have destroyed anything and everything I have ever loved.

JARETH
NOW.

SFX: People running into the overturned, empty vat

JARETH
We need to create a ward! I have only a few stones with me—

SFX: Rummaging, then stones being rolled across metal.

JARETH (cont)

BEGIN!

SFX: Spell fizzles

JARETH (cont)
Ben-sa wei! The tae-oden....

FESMER
(rushed)
Fai cthloll odi: Dawan! [Ward]!

SFX:
Spell fizzles

KATHERINE
What are we going to do?!

ARKAHN
On my cue, Fesmer, Jareth, cast your ward spells! Ready?
One, two three...
(all three simultaneously)

ARKAHN (cont)
Ainorem, ronta pin aeif. Nay pin den wanlo. Aeif wanlo prek charen. Ronta turo aeif. Turo den jat. Jat curen nay dawan.
[Grant us the power. The power to protect. Protect us from harm. Grant us the strength. Strength to hold. Hold the ward fast.]

FESMER
Fai cthollol odi: Dawan! [Ward]!

JARETH
BEGIN!

FESMER & ARKAHN
(continuous until explosion) (Fesmer just a beat behind on his first go round)
Ainorem, ronta pin aeif. Nay pin den wanlo. Aeif wanlo prek charen. Ronta turo aeif. Turo den jat. Jat curen nay dawan.
[Grant us the power. The power to protect. Protect us from harm. Grant us the strength. Strength to hold. Hold the ward fast.]

JARETH
(straining)

KATHERINE
OmigodOmigodOmigod....

ZANA
[There, there], *Manatero*, Kath.

CHEANTI
(dying)
I promise I will bear this grudge into the afterlife. Even as *Ainorem* I will remember you, Arkahn. Kath.

KATHERINE
Cheanti, I—Cheanti? Cheanti?
(beat)
Damn. Zana, how's the ward?

ZANA
(pause)
Kath....

KATHERINE
Oh no.

MIKE
Not good. Very not good.

ZANA

If there was anything ever left unsaid, now would be the time to say it. We reach to you, wise *Ainorem*: send our hearts to Odi, our knowledge to Draenmer, our strength to those who walk after...

MIKE

This can't be happening.

ZANA

...welcome us among you, even those who have only just begun to walk your paths...

KATHERINE

(crying)

Mike, look, I...

MIKE

(scared shitless himself)

Shh, c'mere. Hey, it's okay. We're—we're gonna be okay.

KATHERINE

Mike, I...just always wanted you to know that—

SFX: Deafening, fiery explosion.

(A very long pause. Enough to make people squirm.)

SFX: Crackling. Debris being shifted.

MIKE

(coughing)

Is...

(coughs)

Guys, who's....

(starting to cry)

Is anyone alive?

END OF SHOW