

SECOND SHIFT

Episode #4: "Come Down"
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Scene One – Fesmer Has Issues

AMBIENT: Zana's kitchen, midday

SFX: Door opening and closing

KATHERINE

Order up for, um, whatever this says... Well hello, Jareth. Come to help out?

JARETH grunts.

SFX: Door opening and closing

FESMER

Jareth, *senjen ma-ra* (please, friend).

JARETH

"*Ma-ra?*" Do not "*ma-ra*" me, Fesmer. This has been long in coming. Your abuse of Odi is criminal. You should be held captive in University with the Legionnaire we dispatched two days ago.

KATHERINE

Hoo boy. Guys—

FESMER

The Legionnaire that Mike dispatched, you mean.

JARETH

Teku Aryan (fair enough), the Legionnaire that Mike dispatched... with uncommon ease. How do you know that Mike does not dabble in magicks worse than yours?

KATHERINE

Hey! All this testosterone is making me dizzy! Could you guys keep it down?

FESMER

Mike does not dabble in magic at all. He plays a militaristic game called "Foot-ball." He is merely stronger and faster than most. His abilities are hardly unnatural. Surely you can see that.

KATHERINE

<Talking to herself over Fesmer> Okay. Ignore me. I'll just keep working.

JARETH

My point, Fesmer, is that we cannot know that these people are everything they say. We should not risk ourselves any more than duty requires. Look to your work here at Zana's. You have been neglecting it since they arrived. And keep your illegal spellcasting to yourself, as you once did. Surely you recall your first spell?

FESMER

Of course, Jareth. How could I forget?

JARETH

You killed the neighbor's cat by turning its blood to poison.

FESMER

I thought it was a different spell. I meant no malice.

JARETH

Of course you did not, but still, the cat died. And even then, I shielded you from suspicion, as I continue to do. If my friendship means anything to you, please, Fesmer, do not teach any more of your magic to Shauna. Ancestors only know the trouble you've wrought for us already...

FESMER

But she is attuned, Jareth. Moreso than Arkahn. More than I have ever seen. She could be a great ally.

JARETH

Or a powerful foe. There is no knowing!

FESMER

University has made you cold, *ma-ra*. These are good folk. They do not sneak around or intend us harm.

SFX: Door opening and closing

KATHERINE

Mike, where have you—

MIKE

They fighting?

KATHERINE

Keep it down... Hey, I'm doing all I can to hold things together in here. Don't just stand there.

MIKE

Naw, it's between them. There's nothing we can—

KATHERINE

I meant in the kitchen. Remember how we're working here now?

MIKE

Oh. Eh, yeah. My bad.

JARETH

I do not object to their being here. I object to how quickly you have taken to them, specifically Mike. He is reckless, not to be trusted.

FESMER

He is a capable warrior, as you have witnessed!

JARETH

He is unpredictable, rash, and, to be honest, I am not sure he is entirely sane. His careless actions endanger us!

MIKE

Hey—!

KATHERINE

--Shh!

FESMER

Yes, ancestors forbid that we take *action*. Let us simply sit around and *complain* about Oren's injustices.

JARETH

That is not what I—

FESMER

Someone needs to act. If you will not help me avenge the ones who have fallen—

JARETH

You cannot bring them back, Fesmer—

FESMER

<very upset> I know this, Jareth! Of course I know this! Do not patronize me!

JARETH

It was never my intent to do so, Fesmer. *Boxen wo fai, ma-ra (I'm sorry, friend)*. I would urge more caution, is all. The Legion has been extremely active these past few weeks, and there are rumors of Undying on the move. Something is happening and I am certain our new friends have a role in it, willing or not. Caution, *senjen*, until we know the lay of the land. It is all I ask. No one has forgotten about your father and brother. In due time, we will deliver vengeance upon Oren's Legion.

FESMER

I believe that the time is due. When I cast Summon, I asked Odi for the means to—

SFX

Dropping pan.

MIKE

Oops...

JARETH

Oh. *Biu-Biu (hello)* Mike.

MIKE

Yo... J-dawg.

JARETH

How long have you been standing there?

KATHERINE

Oh, um, he just got here.

MIKE

Yeah, just got here not very long ago at all. From outside. Where I was before. What's up?

FESMER

Nothing is up.

MIKE

Just talking, huh? That's cool. Anyway, I was just heading back outside, to, um... enjoy the outside.

KATHERINE

What! But—

JARETH

Do not trouble yourself. I am leaving. The midday deliveries are late already.

FESMER

Zurem (crap), the deliveries.

JARETH

Look to your tasks, Fesmer.

MIKE

I could help.

FESMER

Cha tra-am fai (thank you) Mike, but Zana wished for Jareth and I to—

MIKE

Have to start pulling my weight around here at some point.

<A short, derisive laugh from **KATHERINE**.>

MIKE

I'll come with you guys.

JARETH

If you have Mike's aid, then you do not need mine. Finals approach at University, and I might as well be preparing reviews for Targonne's students.

FESMER

But—

JARETH

Do not forget our new client: Folstropos at the windmills. Six pies.

FESMER

Plus nine to the fiber mill, as usual. I remember. <*sighs*>
Come then, Mike. Let us hitch up the goat cart.

MIKE

Goats. Heh.

SFX: Door opening and closing.

FESMER

<*leaving, voices fading*>

You must promise not to speak to anyone while on delivery, Mike. It would only bring confusion and possibly trouble.

MIKE

Okie doke.

<They're gone.>

JARETH

You possess a keen intellect, Katherine.

KATHERINE

...Thanks, Jareth.

JARETH

But you are an awful liar.

KATHERINE

I'm really sorry about that. Mike heard most of it, but I'm not sure how much of it he *heard*, if you get my meaning...

JARETH

Fesmer and I should not have had our discussion in Zana's kitchen, where anyone could hear. It is entirely my fault.

KATHERINE

You're right, though, about Mike. He can be a bit of a child sometimes.

JARETH

I am not certain that it is Mike I object to, exactly. I cannot say. It is just... everything is changing with such speed. And not for the better.

KATHERINE

<*with ulterior purpose*> We'll be gone soon.

JARETH

I am sorry, I did not mean—

KATHERINE

No, it's okay. We're anxious to leave, too. The thing is, the only way that's possible is if Shauna learns magic. Both kinds.

JARETH

Yes, so Fesmer tells me. *<beat> Graem (wait)*, are you implying that *I* must teach—

KATHERINE

I'm not necessarily implying anything. Just give it some thought. Good luck with your classes.

JARETH

...Thank you. I will see you tomorrow, most likely.

SFX: Door opening and closing.

KATHERINE

Sure. Later.

JARETH

...yes, "later." Oh, hello Zana.

ZANA

Ah, Jareth. Help me carry these— Wait, you are leaving?

JARETH

Yes.

ZANA

You only just arrived. Have you and Fesmer completed your deliveries so soon?

JARETH

Mike is aiding Fesmer today. I must deliver my mind to University's general education requirements.

ZANA

Well, I suppose. But do not expect to be paid for today's labors.

JARETH

I am never paid for my labors.

ZANA

And that is only because you never allow me to pay you.

JARETH

Absolutely not. Therefore, you cannot chide me for shirking my duties. Victory is mine. Good day, ladies.

SFX: Door opening and closing.

KATHERINE

Jareth works here for free?

ZANA

I am an old friend of Jareth's family. He possesses a very strong sense of duty and honor.

KATHERINE

Plus you helped Fesmer out after his father and brother were...?

ZANA

Yes, there is that, as well. They have been great friends for many years. Help me lift these pails, Kath.

KATHERINE

<uneasy> What's in them? It looks like... milk?

ZANA

And it is, of course. What did you expect?

KATHERINE

<small laugh> One never knows around here. Frog mucous?

ZANA

<laughs> Kath! That is disgusting! It is ordinary sow's milk, for my pig pies.

KATHERINE

<queasy> Sow's milk? Ugh, it's official. I'm going back to being a vegetarian.

SFX: Door opening and closing.

ZANA

That is your choice, but you would be depriving yourself of a Laundrean delicacy. *Biu-Biu (hello)*, Arkahn.

ARKAHN

Fesmer has departed?

ZANA

Yes, to his deliveries. Would you watch the counter? Kath and I will return shortly.

ARKAHN

Yes, shi-schwa. When will you return?

ZANA

Soon enough, Arkahn.
After we carry these to the cellar, Kath, I want to show you something.

KATHERINE

<still queasy> Sure thing... <lifts, begins walking, to self:> Oh God... it's sloshing... smells funny... pig milk... unghhh...

ZANA

<good natured> Come, Kath! Keep up! You are being outpaced by an old woman.

KATHERINE

Yes, shi-schwa...

Scene Two – Katherine, Live-Action Dweeb

AMBIENT: Outside noises, midday

FESMER

I am serious about what I said before, Mike. You cannot speak at all while we are making deliveries.

MIKE

I guess. I don't see what the big deal is.

FESMER

We must not draw undue attention to you, Shauna, or Katherine. Unless I cast another Translate spell, no one will be able to understand a word you say.

MIKE

Well, that could be interesting...

FESMER

Mike, no.

SFX: Irate goat sound.

FESMER

And hold this goat still, please. I need to attach the harness.

MIKE

Yup. *<holds the goat>* He looks more like an overgrown—

SFX: Goat bucking, more irate sounds.

MIKE

—whoa! Hold still!—overgrown possum with a spiky head than a goat. Funny that we have the same words for things that are completely different.

FESMER

Are goats extremely bad-tempered in your land?

MIKE

Yeah, I guess so.

FESMER

Then they are not so different.

SFX: Surly goat sound.

FESMER

You shall remain near the cart while I deliver the pies. Your job is to keep Umbra here happy. Or, at least, “not angry.”

MIKE

Umbra, huh? How am I supposed to do that, exactly?

FESMER

She enjoys having her nose tickled.

MIKE

...Seriously?

FESMER

Is that strange?

MIKE

Nope. Not at all. I'll just pick her nose when she's upset. Ooo-wee!

FESMER

If that is what you call it. Let me just load these pig pies into the cart, and we will be ready to go.

<in this next bit, FESMER is walking back and forth with pies>

MIKE

Cool. I used to work for a delivery service, you know. In Boston?

FESMER

Yes. Antonopo's?

MIKE

"Antonio's Pizza and Subs, Commonwealth Ave, proudly serving the MSU area since 1995, this is Mike speaking, will this be pickup or delivery?" We were supposed to say that crap whenever we answered the phone. Or, what did Zana call it? *Char-pu-fai (magiphone)*.

FESMER

I see. So you did not answer the *charepuenofai* in that way?

MIKE

Naw, it was more like "Antonio's, holla' back," or "Antonio's, you kill 'em we grill 'em." Kind of amazing I never got fired, actually.

FESMER

You do seem to thwart expectation somewhat.

MIKE

<*proudly*> And how! There was this one time, I had an afternoon shift by myself, so I decided to bake a football-sized calzone. I tossed it into the oven and, um, kind of forgot about it. Some kid thought he smelled something burning, and without thinking, I screamed "Oh crap, my football!" <*laughing*> Shauna really covered my ass on that one. I had to call the fire department and everything, and the boss never found out. But the best part was that the kid thought I was cooking a football in a pizza restaurant. Hoo-boy.

FESMER

Yes, well, none of that here, please?

MIKE

Obviously not. I rarely make the same mistake more than twice.

FESMER

I am ready. Let us go.

MIKE

Hi-ho Umbra, away! Hyah!

SFX: Mike slapping goat's flank, goat surprised and takes off with cart.

MIKE

Crap. Sorry, Fes! Come back, Umbra! I didn't mean it...

FESMER

<*calling*> *Oli trao (good day)*, Katherine, Zana.

ZANA

<*calling back*> *Rex broh-unta (happy trails)*, Fesmer, Mike.

MIKE

<*in distance*> Umbra, honey, don't hold a grudge. It was a love tap!

KATHERINE

Mike is sweet-talking a hairy creature strapped to a cart, and the creature is running away. Maybe I *could* be happy here.

ZANA

I suspect perhaps you could, Kath. Ah, here is my archery range. It is nothing too impressive, I fear, but it should suit our purpose.

KATHERINE

What purpose is that?

ZANA

Kath, I thought you might have guessed by now. I desire to see your skill with the bow.

KATHERINE

Oh, well, it's been a long time since—

ZANA

This bow was a gift to me from Targonone, long ago. It is *zac-waen* with the strength of Odi.

KATHERINE

Targonone? Where have I heard that name...?

ZANA

He is Jareth's mentor at University, and an old friend of mine. A very old friend. *<a wistful beat>*

KATHERINE

Oh. So it's magical?

ZANA

Yes, but unlike our Active Items, which are fueled by Hearths, Odi is within the bow itself. It is a stronger magic, and I must bind it to you before you can use it.

KATHERINE

But, wouldn't that interfere with asking a question at Draenmer? I mean, if that's something I decide to do someday...

ZANA

No, it does not interfere. You will not be accessing Odi, the weapon will.

KATHERINE

Isn't that a pretty fine distinction?

ZANA

It is. But using magical objects has not prevented people from asking their question before.

KATHERINE

If you say so...

ZANA

This will only take a moment. Give me your hand, *senjen*.

KATHERINE

Will this hurt?

ZANA

It never has before. Are you ready?

KATHERINE

<tense> Yes.

ZANA

Kureña (allow) Katherine. *<beat>* And there. It is bound to you.

KATHERINE

<expels breath> That's it?

ZANA

Well, yes. What were you expecting?

KATHERINE

Hard to say, lately. So, what now?

ZANA

Now: nock an arrow, take aim at the target, and release.

KATHERINE

Okay. What's the magic part do? Is something going to blow up?

ZANA

Nothing like that. You will see.

KATHERINE

Okay. Here goes.

SFX: Bow is drawn, a beat, and then released. Sound of an arrow sinking into a hay-filled target.

ZANA

Ah! I had a feeling about you, Kath. A perfect star's heart! Exceptional!

KATHERINE

Well, yeah. You can't really miss with magic bows, can you?

ZANA

You certainly can. The magic within your bow merely guides the skill you already possess. Think of it as a dear friend who gives you good advice. It is up to you how to use that advice, if you do at all.

KATHERINE

Huh.

ZANA

You may practice for a while longer, if you wish. With all of your hard work in my kitchen, you have earned a break today. Treasure your bow, and it will not fail you, Kath.

KATHERINE

"My" bow? Zana—

ZANA

I will not hear any protests, Kath. It is my gift to you, one Seeker of Truth to another. Use it well.

KATHERINE

<very moved> Thank you, Zana.

ZANA

Cha lyona fai (You are welcome). Now I must help Arkahn in the kitchen, provided, of course, that it has not already gone up in flames without me.

Scene Three – The Opposite of a Fetch Quest

AMBIENT: Goat cart and walking.

MIKE

And so then I was all like, “Oh no you didn’t just try to sack me. Hope you like eating grass suckah!” And Voom! Like a rocket all the way down to the endzone. If the receiver had caught it we would have totally won the game...

FESMER

<Not really caring> Fascinating. *Turen (OK)*, next we have the windmills, where Folstropos requested the remaining six pies.

MIKE

<bored> Hoo-hah.

Hey Fes. Question.

Why do I have to goat-sit Umbra while you make deliveries? I mean, can’t I at least come up to the house with you? NPC’s mostly blather on about whatever, but sometimes talking to them is key to finding secret stuff.

FESMER

What is not to understand? You are from another world, and your presence here in Laundi is a secret. And must remain so.

MIKE

Yeah, but why?

FESMER

Because reckless actions have consequences, that is why.

MIKE

Geez, Jareth got you good, huh? Look, Fes, I won’t say a thing. <small beat> And even if I did, what would it matter?

FESMER

Much would matter. Many in positions of power would want to know how you arrived here, which would lead them to me, and that would lead to Zana’s.

MIKE

So?

FESMER

Qin-Mike (Look, Mike), whatever you believe that this is, there is real danger here. I will not see harm come to my friends.

MIKE

Neither would I. But c’mon, Fes! Did you see what I did to that Legion dude?

FESMER

Yes, and we are fortunate that no one else witnessed that.

MIKE

But they’re the bad guys! Everyone would be congratulating me.

FESMER

I fear that things are not so simple, Mike.

MIKE

But you hate the Legionnaires.

FESMER

Very much so, yes.

MIKE

...sooo, beating them up is a good thing. Yes?

FESMER

Let me attempt to explain this. Though Oren's Legion is not the army it once was, their power still derives from a pervasive network of extortion and crime. Those who wish to live do not cross them.

MIKE

What about the cops?

FESMER

Cops?

MIKE

Um, the po-po? The law? The town militia?

FESMER

Ah, you mean *lowatuen* (town militia).

MIKE

...Sure. What about them?

FESMER

Legionnaires have their *waa-loaren* and strange weapons. Mere townsfolk cannot hope to stop armored men who fly about on forbidden machines. And if they dared, the Legion has more dire tools...

MIKE

Like what?

FESMER

Well, Undying for one.

MIKE

They use Undying as a weapon? How's that work?

FESMER

They... herd large numbers of them into a town. When this happens in Laundi, University helps protect us somewhat, but... There are complicated alliances. You must understand that there is an uneasy peace with the many forces of Oren. *<thinking to self>* But there must be something. Some key to undoing the whole thing...

MIKE

Right, that's why you called us here. With your spell.

FESMER

<busted!> Erm, I do not understand what you—

MIKE

It's kind of obvious, Fes. You want revenge, so you called for someone who would help you, since Jareth won't.

FESMER

Mike, that is not—

MIKE

Dude, don't lie to me. You summoned help and you got us. Well, you got me, anyway. But I'm plenty. Let's pop magical caps into this Oren guy and then this weird dream game thing will be over.

FESMER

I would not lie to you. This is the absolute truth, Mike. I believe that I am partially responsible for your presence here, yes. But I alone do not have the ability to pull three people, against their will, to Laundi from another world. I believe that my spell disrupted another; a much greater one.

MIKE

So who cast it?

FESMER

Someone with vast, terrible power; beyond anything I have seen. Someone who will not be pleased to learn that I interfered with their plans. If my friends or any of you are hurt as a result of my actions, I will never forgive myself. *That* is why we must practice caution, Mike.

MIKE

Okay, alright. But I hope you know that this is basically the same thing as being offered a quest and saying no to it over and over again. The story is not going to start unless we start saying yes.

FESMER

We are on a quest right now. We are delivering pies.

MIKE

Oh right. A fetch quest. Or the opposite of a fetch quest, whatever that's called. I guess this is in line with our level. And being on goat duty sure is a blast.

FESMER

As you say. Here we are, at the windmills. *< sigh. A beat >*
Would you like to help me carry these pies?

MIKE

Serious?

FESMER

Remember that you are "Meek," a mute friend of the family who is now under Zana's employ. *<beat>* "Mute" means that you cannot speak.

MIKE

Yes, I know what mute means.

FESMER

I truly hope that you do. Let us go.

Scene Four – Arkahn Has Issues, Too

AMBIENT: Zana’s customer counter.

SFX: Door opening and closing.

SHAUNA

Hey, Arkahn.

ARKAHN

Oli trao (Good day), Shae.

SHAUNA

Um, where is everyone?

ARKAHN

Everyone? What do you mean?

SHAUNA

Um, everyone else? Zana, Katherine, Mike, all of them?

ARKAHN

Ah, you mean everyone who should be working alongside me right now, yes?

SHAUNA

...Suppose so.

ARKAHN

Fesmer and Mike are making deliveries. This typically falls to Fesmer and Jareth, but Jareth has decided to take the day for himself. He is at University. As for Zana and Katherine, they are practicing archery behind the shop. Everyone is elsewhere.

SHAUNA

Oh, okay. Well I was looking for you, anyway.

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ARKAHN

For me? Whatever for?

SHAUNA

I know how to use magic!

<a pause>

ARKAHN

Closer to me, please. <quieted voice> You only began learning this morning, Shae. That... is not possible.

SHAUNA

Sure it is. Isn’t that hard, actually, once you click into the right mindset. I mean, it did take me a couple of hours of sitting in one place, but I figured it out pretty quickly from there.

ARKAHN

A couple of hours. Really. And what spell did you cast?

SHAUNA

Push. I sent a rock flying across the pond out back. It was awesome, Arkahn!

ARKAHN

There may not be many customers here, but all of them can hear you. Less with the shouting, please.

SHAUNA

<quieter> Oh, sorry, I’m just so excited! I mean, I’ve always been able to sense little things before they happened, but I’ve never been able to turn that around and actually *make* things happen! But, I guess I never tried, either. Maybe I always could... huh...

ARKAHN

Shae... it took me two years of study to cast my first spell. And I am considered to be quite talented.

SHAUNA

I thought you said you didn't know very much magic.

ARKAHN

<*quickly*> And I do not. Everyone knows some little things. Luck spells and the like. Remember Shae, I tried to enter Univeristy. I was eight when I cast my first spell, which is an exceptional feat, and still they did not accept me...

SHAUNA

That makes sense. I'm nineteen, so maybe that's why it's easier for me.

ARKAHN

If anything, it takes longer for one your age to begin the process of learning such things. This is absurd.

SHAUNA

Dunno what to tell ya, boss.

ARKAHN

Prove this to me. Show me your magic.

SHAUNA

Well, I only know Push, and I sent that rock pretty far. I wouldn't want to break anything here.

ARKAHN

Break any--... foolish girl, even if what you say is true, I refuse to believe that you can move anything farther than a knuckle's width. Lift this *aequish fruit (Laundi fruit)* into the air.

SHAUNA

I don't know Lift...

ARKAHN

Precisely.

SHAUNA

...but it couldn't be too different from Push.

SFX: Door opening and closing.

ARKAHN

<*nearly sputtering*> It is extremely differ—

ZANA

Oli runa (Good afternoon) you two.

ARKAHN

Oli runa Zana. Shae believes that she has already learned to access Odi, Shi-Schwa.

ZANA

So soon?

SHAUNA

Well, yeah, but it was a very small rock...

ZANA

<*enthusiastic*> You moved a rock on your first day?

SHAUNA

<*proud, despite herself*> All the way across the pond.

ZANA

You are *truly* gifted, Shae. We must celebrate this tonight. You two girls are astonishing! Kath is more skilled than myself with the bow, and you learned to cast magic in hours! What will Meek do, I wonder?

SHAUNA

Re-invent the Playstation?

ARKAHN

May I speak with you for a moment, Shi-Schwa?

ZANA

Certainly, Arkahn.

ARKAHN

Alone.

<*awkward beat*>

SHAUNA

I'll... be in the kitchen.

SFX: Swinging door.

ZANA

What is the trouble, Arkahn?

ARKAHN

It is difficult to see what is *not* the trouble, Shi-Schwa.

ZANA

The lunch rush is ended and all customers have departed, so that cannot be the trouble. You do not share Jareth's concerns about recklessness, so neither is that the trouble. Surely you are not envious of Kath and Shae's achievements?

ARKAHN

How can I be envious of what is truly impossible? It has been a mere three days, and already they are a part of things.

ZANA

Well, yes. They are no longer guests, Arkahn. They are under my employ.

ARKAHN

Moreover, they barely understand the fundamentals of our way, and yet they have excelled beyond comprehension in all matters.

ZANA

Yes, they have. Should we not celebrate this?

ARKAHN

No, we should not! They- they are a danger to us. Too much power in novice hands--...

ZANA

Arkahn, *voluna* (*love*), this is Jareth's way, not yours. What is the trouble?

ARKAHN

I cannot say...

ZANA

Surely it is not that they are a part of things?

ARKAHN

<emotional> No, Shi-Schwa. They are *everything!* They are your employees and disciples, they are Fesmer's closest friend, they are Jareth's *dokiluna (heartthrob)*, they are even the chosen of Odi. Tell me, *senjen*, what they are *not*.

ZANA

They are not you, Arkahn.

ARKAHN

But what I am is no longer of use. I am attuned, but Shae is moreso. I am Fesmer's close friend, but Meek is closer, and it is the same for Jareth and Kath. There is no longer a place for me.

ZANA

I do understand your discontent, Arkahn. Since University rejected your application, I feel that you have remained here because you do not know where else to go.

ARKAHN

No, Shi-Schwa, I have remained because I have chosen to.

ZANA

But why?

ARKAHN

I do not know. All of my friends are in Laundi.

ZANA

As are your parents.

ARKAHN

<a touchy issue> ...Yes.

ZANA

To become all that we can, we must seek far beyond what we know. University is not your path, so you must find another.

ARKAHN

What if this is my path?

ZANA

Arkahn, *voluna*, I bake and deliver pig pies. This is not your path.

ARKAHN

But I am content here.

ZANA

No, you are not. It could be that Meek, Shae and Kath will direct you to your path. Do not despair simply because they can do certain things better than you are able. Just now, I gifted my bow to Kath.

ARKAHN

What? The bow Targonane gifted to you? Your most treasured possession? That bow?

ZANA

Possessions are not what I treasure, Arkahn; and yes, that bow. She is a more competent archer than I. Why should she not also have a superior bow?

ARKAHN

But Shi-Schwa, you are the best shot in Laundi.

ZANA

Nearly the best in all Baela, in fact. I once competed professionally, long, I suspect, before Kath was born.

ARKAHN

And still Kath is a more competent archer?

ZANA

Indeed. After only several lessons, which she attended reluctantly.

ARKAHN

Does that not vex you?

ZANA

She is quickly discovering her way with us, and it is a privilege to behold. I am content to give up my bow, and guide her though this. For you, it may not be so simple, but that is my best advice to you, Arkahn. Dispense with pride. You will find no satisfaction in it.

ARKAHN

I will try, Shi-Schwa.

ZANA

<fierce> And do not again think that you have been replaced. You are as a daughter to me.

ARKAHN

<emotional> Thank you, Shi-Schwa.

ZANA

<calling> Shae, have you yet discovered the Lift spell?

SFX: Swinging door.

SHAUNA

Well, yeah, but I don't think it's working right.

ZANA

Show Arkahn and me anyway. Perhaps we can advise you.

SHAUNA

Okay... Ahem. Work stupid magic: Lift!

SFX: Whish! Splat!

SHAUNA

Yeah, you're going to run out of fruit. I keep splatting them against the ceiling. Your kitchen is a bit of a mess. Sorry.

ZANA

Still, that is very impressive, Shae.

ARKAHN

<with an edge, still> You are too powerful.

SHAUNA

...What do you mean?

ARKAHN

That is why you are lifting them too much without effort. The tone of your mantra channels the force with which you draw upon Odi. You are channeling as much as you can, every time. Try again, but softer, more measured.

SHAUNA

Okay. *<softer, but not whispered>* Work stupid magic: Lift. Whoa. Hey, cool!

ARKAHN

And you may want to select a different mantra.

SHAUNA

I dunno, I kinda like this one.

ARKAHN

<carefully choosing her words> There are some who might think it disrespectful, that is all.

SHAUNA

Oh. Huh. I guess I hadn't thought about that.

ZANA

There is much you could learn from Arkahn, Shae. Fesmer will be able to instruct you in ways that are creative and spontaneous, but if you seek to channel Odi with subtlety and finesse, you will find no better teacher than Arkahn.

SHAUNA

Great, I'd like that.

ARKAHN

As would I.

ZANA

Wonderful! Now let us prepare for our dinner rush. Fesmer and Meek ought to be returning shortly, yes?

Scene Five – The Fighter Who Cried “Undying”

AMBIENT: Goat cart rolling along.

<a few moments of walking sounds and nothing else, and then:>

MIKE

Look, I said I was sorry!

FESMER

I am choosing not to speak to you at this moment.

MIKE

C'mon, Fes! It's not even a big deal.

FESMER

I distinctly remember explaining to you exactly *why* it is a great deal of big, Mike!

MIKE

Folstropos totally mentioned a quest! You heard him! And he was even dressed differently, like important NPC's always are.

FESMER

He mentioned no such thing. And he was dressed differently because he is disgustingly rich.

MIKE

Well whatever, but he did mention a quest! He told you that there were rumors of Undying on the move. And Jareth said the same thing earlier, when I... um... wasn't in the kitchen.

FESMER

What matter is it? Undying move about. That is a condition of their not remaining dead. They *move*, Mike.

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MIKE

Yeah, but he wouldn't just say that unless it was foreshadowing of some kind.

FESMER

And though you knew he could not understand you, though I cautioned you about being discovered, you hoped to accomplish *what* by speaking directly to Folstropos?

MIKE

Well, you clearly weren't going to follow up on the adventure hook, so I spoke up. I mean, sometimes, when nothing else works, you just have to mash some buttons, you know? See what happens?

FESMER

I dearly hope that nothing happens. *<quietly>* Perhaps Jareth was right about you...

MIKE

What?

FESMER

Nothing, Mike. Please, just cease your talking. I desire silence for the remainder of the journey.

MIKE

Fine, man. But I am sorry.

<beat>

I just, y'know, got carried away. I've seen nothing but woods, Zana's shop, and the outside of a magical ghost-cave the entire time I've been here. I just got excited.

<beat>

Which is no excuse, I know.

<beat>

But still. Can you really blame me?

FESMER

Yes I can. Now silence. For once in your life. *Sen-jen*.

MIKE

I'm just going to assume that *senjen* isn't a bad word.

<long beat>

It isn't, right?

<a longer beat>

Right?

<the walking sounds continue. **MIKE** sighs, then starts sniffing suspiciously>

MIKE

Hey, Fes, do you smell that?

FESMER

My name has not been Fes for many years. It is Fesmer.

MIKE

Hey, FesMER, do you smell that.

FESMER

I do not smell anything.

MIKE

It's like... rotting something.

FESMER

I am not in the mood for jests concerning flatulence.

SFX: Goat startled.

MIKE

See, Umbra smells it too. God, that's nasty. I'm gonna go see what it is. Be right back.

SFX: MIKE trotting away.

FESMER

Mike, no! Stay on the path! *Ben-sa wai!* (*Dammit!*) Idiot boy. Mike!

SFX: Goat very uneasy, snorting and bucking.

FESMER

I have a bad feeling regarding this...

MIKE

<from a distance> Fes, there's like a whole army of zombies just over this hill! They look totally real! You've gotta see this!

FESMER

Undying. Merciful *ainorem*--... Mike! Return immediately! MIKE!

MIKE

<distance> Whoa. Uh-oh. Coming!

SFX: MIKE running back.

MIKE

Dude, there's hundreds of them; looks like they're heading back towards town. Beef us up with some of that magic and we can hold them off! Is that sword magical?

FESMER

No, it is not magical.

MIKE

Well make it magical! C'mon, man! Combat! Experience points!

FESMER

If there are as many as you say, we cannot hope to fight them. We must run and warn others.

MIKE

Steve Archer's boy doesn't run away! What about that is so hard to understand?

FESMER

All of it!

MIKE

Zombies are slow as hell. We can take 'em. You've got your sword and magic and I've got... umm... this big stick.

FESMER

Even with a whole tree, Mike, you could not stand against Undying.

MIKE

Give me your sword, then. You can take 'em out with ranged spells and I'll fend off any that get too close.

FESMER

That sword is not for fighting. We must run, Mike.

MIKE

What's wrong with the sword?

FESMER

There is nothing wrong with my sword.

MIKE

Then what does it do?

FESMER

It doesn't *do* anything. It is... more for... erm, appearances, than—

MIKE

Is it a fashion statement?? It is, isn't it? *<laughing>* Oh man, that's too funny.

FESMER

If ever you are going take a thing seriously, let it be now, I beg of you. We are the only ones who have sighted Undying. We have to warn everybody! Our friends are in danger, Mike. Will you help me?

MIKE

Okay. But how?

FESMER

The army is nearly between the town and us. In the distance, there, do you see that bell tower?

MIKE

Yeah.

FESMER

We must alert the *watun (guardsman)* inside, and he will begin ringing the bell. There are other towers, and the warning will pass to each until it reaches University, where, I pray, they have adequate forces for a defensive strike. Our wards cannot hold out forever.

MIKE

Okay, so we get the bell ringing, and then we attack?

FESMER

No, then we run, and hope that we make it back to Zana's before she raises her ward. I cannot risk safeguarding you anywhere else because you are determined to betray your disguise.

MIKE

Ehh, I'd rather try to pick a few off, maybe stall them for awhile.

FESMER

Your sacrifice would not be noble, Mike; it would be idiotic.

MIKE

Who said anything about sacrifice? I'm like a demi-god here. I beat that Legionnaire—

FESMER

<sharply> With surprise and good fortune, nothing else. You will meet no such victory against Undying. Forget what you think you know, and trust what I am telling you.

MIKE

What about your goat, Umbra?

FESMER

Undying have no interest in animals. She will not encounter harm.

MIKE

Huh. That's strange.

FESMER

Ben-sa wai, they are coming over the hill! They must have sensed you. With haste, Mike!

SFX: They begin running. In the distance, a mournful goat sound.

MIKE

Okay, okay. But, Fes... Folstropos? The quest? Undying on the move? Oh man, I totally called it...

Scene Seven – Look Behind You!

AMBIENT: Outside Zana’s, late afternoon.

SFX: **KATHERINE** shooting at targets with her new bow. Door opening and closing.

SHAUNA

Lo, it is Kath, Live-Action Dweeb!

KATHERINE

Har har har.

SHAUNA

Things going well?

KATHERINE

“Well”? You would not believe how phenomenal I am with Zana’s bow. I’ve shot nothing but 9 and 10 rings since I came out here. Well, approximately 9 and 10. It’s hard to tell, since this target has stars instead of rings. Weirdly.

SHAUNA

Yeah, I heard a bit about your crazy skills. Overheard, I should say.

KATHERINE

Oh yeah?

SHAUNA

Apparently, you’re “finding your way.”

KATHERINE

Y’know, I kind of am. I never liked archery before, but I think that’s because it was my parents’ thing for me. Now it’s just mine, and I love it.

SFX: A shot.

KATHERINE

And it loves me. Another 10 ring. Olympic archers don’t do this well.

SHAUNA

Crazy dream world. We’re all superstars here.

KATHERINE

Thought you were over the dream stuff?

SFX: A shot.

SHAUNA

Well, as it turns out, I can move things. With my mind. You tell me what’s real.

KATHERINE

You’ve already learned magic?

SHAUNA

Observe. Work stupid magic: pull. *<a beat>* And here are your arrows.

KATHERINE

Huh. “Work stupid magic”?

SHAUNA

First thing I thought of. Apparently it’s a big deal that I can do this so soon.

KATHERINE

Wow. Superstars.

SHAUNA
Superstars.

SFX: A shot. In distance, a bell tolling.

KATHERINE
Yeah, but, “work stupid magic”? Seriously?

SHAUNA
<laughing> I know, right?
It’s just a mantra to help me focus, so I guess it could be anything. It’s just something I felt very strongly about when I first tried, and now it’s hard to imagine doing it any other way.

SFX: Another bell tolling, closer. There are now two.

KATHERINE
Try something else.

SHAUNA
Like what?

KATHERINE
Hmm. Something else you feel strongly about?

SHAUNA
<a beat> I call on you sweet, caffeinated coffee: Push!
Nothing.

KATHERINE
<laughing> Summon a pint of Ben & Jerry’s.

SFX: Another bell, much closer. There are now three.

SHAUNA

Oh, shut up! Look at you. You haven’t touched a spoonful of ice cream in your life.

KATHERINE
It’s called “high metabolism.” Look it up, sorceress.

SHAUNA
It’s called “full of crap.” By Katherine’s skinny lies: I summon a fattening pint! And nothing.

KATHERINE
Ah well. “Work stupid magic” it is. Does have a certain ring to it.

SFX: A large, loud bell; now totaling four.

KATHERINE
Huh. What’s with all the bells? Some kind of holiday we weren’t told about?

SHAUNA
Dunno. If it is, doesn’t sound like a happy holi—

KATHERINE
<cutting off> Ugh, God. What’s that *smell*? Do you smell that?

SHAUNA
Wasn’t me.

KATHERINE
I certainly hope not!

SHAUNA
What is it?

KATHERINE
I don’t know; just got a whiff of something really foul.

SHAUNA

Maybe someone's burning pig pies.

KATHERINE

Someone ought to.

SFX: Another bell; nearer.

SHAUNA

Oh, *man*. I smell it, too. Like death warmed over.

ARKAHN

<*from a short distance*> Shae! Kath! There you are. Into the cold cellar! Now!

SHAUNA

What's wrong?

ARKAHN

Undying! Come! We are putting up the ward!

KATHERINE

She just said "Undying," didn't she?

SHAUNA

Wait, ward? Mike and Fesmer are still out there. Hey! No! Not yet!

SFX: **SHAUNA** and **KATHERINE** running. Door opening and closing.

AMBIENT: Bells still tolling loudly, but muted a little, as we are now indoors.

ARKAHN

They are in, Shi-Schwa.

ZANA

Thank *ainorem*. Fesmer and Mike?

SHAUNA

I don't know! They're not here!

ZANA

The ward barrier takes time to activate, and as University's emergency bell is already ringing, time is not something we have. We cannot wait for them.

KATHERINE

But we have to!

ZANA

Nuum waxen pla Undying veremin.

SHAUNA

What??

ARKAHN

Every child is taught this: "When the worst happens, go into any house." They will find a safe place. They must.

ZANA

Key-na! (Activate!) There. Now we must hurry to the cold cellar, and hope that no Undying saw you two outside. Come!

SFX: Hurried footsteps across the floor and then downstairs as they talk:

KATHERINE

How secure is your ward thing?

ZANA

It will repel several Undying, but if any sensed you, more than several will attempt entry. My hearth only contains so much power. You have your bow, Kath?

KATHERINE

<nervous> Yeah.

ZANA

And Shae, you are not exhausted from today's magic use?

SHAUNA

No, I—... I guess not. I don't know.

ZANA

Are you in, Arkahn?

ARKAHN

Yes; I am bolting the door.

SFX: Door being bolted, **ARKAHN** coming downstairs.

AMBIENT: Muted bells. Strangely quiet. A lot of tense breathing.

KATHERINE

So there's two entrances?

ZANA

Yes. But we will be warded in, and the magic that keeps the cellar cold should sufficiently mask our presence. You see, Undying must have cause to attempt violent entry, and we have done nothing to give them cause.

SHAUNA

Hopefully.

ZANA

Yes, hopefully.

<a moment of tense silence>

SHAUNA

God, I hope Mike and Fesmer are okay...

Scene Eight – Insanely Awesome

AMBIENT: Bells, full blast. We are in town, and Undying are everywhere.

SFX: **MIKE** and **FESMER** running.

FESMER

<significantly winded> Oh *ainorem*, oh *ainorem*, I cannot run any longer...

MIKE

<barely winded> Ya got little to no choice in the matter, Fes. Left or right?

FESMER

Zana's is this way.

SFX: More running.

MIKE

Whoops, living dead straight ahead. Detour!

FESMER

Mike... I must... slow down...

MIKE

Nothin' doing. Crap, rotting hombies up here, too. U-turn!

FESMER

Mike... please...

MIKE

We can't let ourselves get surrounded. As my father used to say, "You can rest when you're dead."

<beat>

MIKE (cont.)

Huh. Or maybe you can't...

<beat>

Zombie Christ, this way's blocked, too.

SFX: They have stopped. Undying moans all around.

MIKE

Now I'm all turned around. Can we climb someone's roof?

FESMER

Ward... would prevent...

MIKE

No, huh? Well, when all else fails, pick a random direction. C'mon!

SFX: Running again, but **FESMER** is stumbling.

FESMER

Nuum waxen... pla... I must... rest... Mike...

MIKE

What about impressing the ladies with your ripped bod? Casting crazy savage magic spells with your new, unlimited stamina?

FESMER

Not... "savage"... is called... natural... magic...

MIKE

Caught not a word of that. Gah, we're cornered! Frig!

SFX: They stop. **FESMER** is wheezing.

AMBIENT: Undying moaning closing in.

MIKE

Well, Fes, I got bad news and... well, I just got bad news.

FESMER

I apolo... gize... Mike...

MIKE

Apologize? For what?

FESMER

That I... did... not believe...

MIKE

Oh hell, half the time, I don't believe me either. Ain't a thang.

FESMER

Are you really... so unafraid... of death?

MIKE

Death? You crazy sonofabitch, we're just gathering our strength.

FESMER

...strength...?

MIKE

Yeah. We're going to attack in a couple of seconds. Let me know when you're ready.

FESMER

Attack?? Impossible... odds, Mike.

MIKE

<sounding very suave and heroic> "Yeah, they usually are."
<beat> Naw, actually, this is pretty much the worse thing I've ever faced. But if you can't laugh, then what's the point?

FESMER

<laughs a little> Mike, you are truly insane.

MIKE

Insanely *awesome*.

FESMER

Yes, of course that is... what I meant. *<deep breath>* I am ready. What is the plan?

MIKE

Well, you know what they say about the best defense...

Scene Nine – CRASH!

AMBIENT: Zana’s cellar. Muted bells.

SHAUNA

How do we know when they’re gone?

ZANA

University’s bell will cease ringing, as will the others.

<a pause>

SHAUNA

How long has it been?

ARKAHN

It is impossible to know. Moments like this... tend to stretch on...

<a pause>

KATHERINE

Well, Shauna, I guess it’s safe to assume that they didn’t notice you or—

SFX: Boom! A tremendous force buffets the cellar door from outside.

SHAUNA

Oh my God, oh my God...

ZANA

Ready your bow, Kath.

SFX: Boom!!

KATHERINE

That was the entrance that leads directly outside, right?

ZANA

Yes, Kath. They must have penetrated my ward barrier. Oh, *ainorem*...

SHAUNA

Oh, God...

SFX: BOOM!

ARKAHN

They are about to break through! Shae, focus! We will require your magic.

SHAUNA

I don’t think I can...

ARKAHN

You must! I will do what I can, but it will not be enough. We are depending on you, Shae!

SHAUNA

<pulling it together> Okay, okay...

SFX: CRASH! Splintering wood! Undying moans!

KATHERINE

What should I even aim for! Their head?

ZANA

It matters not. You can only hope to turn them away.

KATHERINE

What! You mean I can’t kill them!

ARKAHN

They are called “Undying” for a reason, Kath.

KATHERINE

Oh fuc—

SFX: Enormous crashing sound as the door is destroyed and knocked off its hinges.

MIKE

Raaaaagh! Whew, finally. Hello, ladies!

ALL

Mike!

MIKE

No time for heroic lovin’ now, I gots me some Zombies to kill. Here, someone take Fesmer. Where’d his box o’ Spellbombs go...

ARKAHN

Fesmer! He is unconscious.

MIKE

He’ll be fine; took a clobbering, though. Ah, here they are!

SHAUNA

Mike, how did you get here? Were you outside this whole time?

MIKE

I can answer any and all questions later. Clear the door! Pull and – hike! Hot tamale!

SFX: Spellbomb exploding. Bodies knocked backwards. Moaning.

MIKE

Sweeeet. Spellbomb! And another for good measure—

SFX: Spellbomb exploding.

MIKE

That should keep ‘em away long enough for me to get to the roof... *and rain death upon them!* God, I love this game. Back in a bit!

SFX: Mike running upstairs, door opening and slamming shut.

KATHERINE

<fading> Mike, you idiot! Mike! Get back here! Oh, I hate you so much.

Scene Ten – Come Down

SFX

Running on hardwood floors

MIKE

Let's see, around the corner, up the stairs... ooh, Zombie outside! Pull and – go deep! Six feet—

SFX: Spellbomb exploding close by, windows also exploding.

MIKE

Yow! Oh, great, as if Zana didn't already own me...

KATHERINE

Mike, you are the biggest idiot in the world. Both worlds.

MIKE

Katherine? Why'd you follow me?

KATHERINE

To make sure you don't do something stupid.

MIKE

Wouldn't dream of it. So how do we get to the roof?

KATHERINE

My room has a roof window. Why do we need to get to the roof?

MIKE

For purposes of smiting the unholy from above, obviously. Hey, you brought a bow. Any good with it?

KATHERINE

You could say that.

MIKE

Here we go.

SFX: Window opening, **MIKE** climbing onto roof.

AMBIENT: Outside winds and louder bells.

MIKE

Whoa mama, steep roof. And where are my little friends... Ah ha!

KATHERINE

Mike, this is not one of your best ideas... and even your best ideas are pretty awful...

MIKE

Pull and – hike!

SFX: Spellbomb exploding, two stories down.

MIKE

Nice, that took out, like, six. Let's try for seven.

KATHERINE

I think maybe this qualifies as "something stupid," Mike. Why don't you come down?

MIKE

Crazy-talk. Hike!

SFX: Distant impact; no explosion.

MIKE

What? Man, a dud. Fes did say these things are pretty old... Hey, careful Katherine!

KATHERINE

Woah! There are so many of them!

MIKE

Yeah, they followed us here. I think they wanted to eat Fesmer. Now less talking and more Zombie busting. Pull and – hike!

SFX: Distant spellbomb exploding.

MIKE

Well now, that is more like it, except for only nailing two of them. Weak.

KATHERINE

One of these days, Mike...

SFX

Bow firing.

MIKE

Hey, nice shot, actually...

KATHERINE

What do you mean, “actually”?

MIKE

Nothing. My turn! Pull and – hike!

SFX: Distant spellbomb exploding. Arrows flying.

MIKE

Wow Katherine, you’re doing awesome!

KATHERINE

Well... thanks. But I think we’re only drawing their attention.

MIKE

Yes, like zombie moths unto my spellbomb flame!

KATHERINE

That... that makes no sense at all.

MIKE

Heh. Sure it does. Look, more over this way! I got ‘em...

KATHERINE

Mike, hey, you’re too close to the edge!

MIKE

Closer to the edge, closer to the action! Pull and—

KATHERINE

Mike, be care—

SFX: Spellbomb exploding in Mike’s face.

MIKE

Urgh--!!

KATHERINE

<falling away from her> MIKE!! MIKE!!

SFX: Wind whistling rapidly, MIKE’s clothes flapping in the wind, distant bells, and then – CRACK!