

SECOND SHIFT

Episode #7: Wake Up
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Scene One – Benched

SFX

Weird, distorted echoes.

SHAUNA

Mike. Mike!

SFX

The echoes become less distorted. They are starting to become louder; more clear.

SHAUNA

Mike! It's Shauna! I'm here to take you home. Mike? Hello?

SFX

The sounds shape into a football game; the "mic" is in the field as football players stampede by it, shouting and shoving and whatever else football players do when playing football.

SHAUNA

Ahh! Geez! Hey, watch it! Oof!

SFX

A ref whistle.

STEVE ARCHER

Pathetic! Totally pathetic! I've never seen a team give up so many yards with so little resistance. What is wrong with you maggots! And who is that on the field?

JOCK 1

Dunno coach, some whiny bitch.

SHAUNA

Excuse me?

JOCK 2

No way, man. She's like our co-worker.

JOCK 3

She looks more like some unrequited freshman crush. Er, I mean, a good friend. Just a good friend, in the platonic sense.

SHAUNA

Mike? Is that you?

JOCK 3

You don't even know?

SHAUNA

You don't have faces beneath your helmets; how am I supposed to know which of you—

STEVE ARCHER

What in the clammy calmness of hell is going on over here?!

JOCK 1

She won't put out and now she's ruining the game, coach!

SHAUNA

Are you supposed to be some aspect of Mike, 'cause if so—

JOCK 2

Mike? I thought he was called "Meek" now?

SHAUNA

Well, he is, to certain people, but—

JOCK 3

Certain people who expect him to be certain things, but he can't be those things all the time, you know.

SHAUNA

Uh. Okay.

JOCK 3

He has emotions.

JOCK 1

And needs. If you know what I'm talkin' 'bout.

JOCK 2

Yes, I think we do.

JOCK 1

Y'know. The unce unce. The bow chica-bow-wow. The—

SHAUNA

I seek Mike Archer, and I will not endure one-dimensional shadows of him. Where is he?

STEVE ARCHER

Ohh, big words. Must be one a' them east-coasters. You're looking for Michael Archer? Michael Robert Archer?

SHAUNA

...Yeah. Where is he?

STEVE ARCHER

Where else? On the bench, Shauna.

SHAUNA

Right. Thanks.

STEVE ARCHER

Anytime, darlin'. Alright you pansies, <fading> let's see some defense! Let's see some pressure!

SFX

In distance, continuous football sounds.

SHAUNA

Mike? Hello? Gah, can't see anything in this fog...

WATERGIRL

Hey, I didn't see you there! Need something to drink? Water? Colored beverage that supposedly hydrates better than water?

SHAUNA

Uh. Are you supposed to be me?

WATERGIRL

I'm the watergirl!

SHAUNA

Cute. And what are you—am I wearing?

WATERGIRL

This is the watergirl uniform!

SHAUNA

Well, you're not so much wearing it as *not* wearing it. And does the T-shirt have to be so wet?

WATERGIRL

Of course, I'm the water girl! But I'm not exploited or interested in a long-term relationship because I'm spunky and independent! Hee hee!

SHAUNA

Wow. I'm gonna kill him...

WATERGIRL

Oh, don't do that! I love Mike! Even though I refuse to be icky with him or see him as more than a big, dumb younger brother, he's so cute!

SHAUNA

Where is he? I can't deal with you anymore.

WATERGIRL

Well, okay, but don't try to cheer him up. <mock confidential whisper> He's being moody. It's that b-i-t-c-h in the stands. She's always putting him down.

SHAUNA

Let me guess. Katherine?

WATERGIRL

<hisses>

SHAUNA

Um. Did you just hiss at me?

WATERGIRL

Never speak the name of the Evil One aloud!

SHAUNA

<testing> Katherine?

WATERGIRL

<weird moan of pain> She's always taunting and tormenting him! It isn't fair when he tries so hard to make people like him! I always feel so bad that I brought her into his life...

SHAUNA

Righto. Please show me where he is now.

WATERGIRL

Oh my goodness! She's right behind you! Hide!

SFX poof!

EVIL KATHERINE

All of this is so ridiculous! What is this cliché crap, anyway? Standard issue Freudian representations and some kinky bondage watergirl outfit—

SHAUNA

I'd rather not think about that. Hi Katherine.

EVIL KATHERINE

Shauna, you're here? Wow. Congratulations. Now I think even less of you, if that's possible, for condescending to be a part of this tripe. I mean, granted, it is Mike's inner-world, so of course the whole thing is every bit as stupid and unimaginative as the man-child himself. And it's appropriate that he's benched. This place is better for it. Although I guess that's not saying much...

SHAUNA

Katherine?

KATHERINE

What?

SHAUNA
SHUT UP!

SFX
Whoosh! Breezy kind of sound.

SHAUNA
Whew! Hello, Mike.

MIKE
<sounding vague, despondent> Hey Shauna.

SHAUNA
Long time no see. Mind if I sit down?

MIKE
Whatever.

SHAUNA
Thanks, I will.
<beat>
So. What's up?

MIKE
Not much.

SHAUNA
...Cool. What, uh, have you been up to?

MIKE
Dunno.

SHAUNA
"Dunno"?

MIKE
Stuff.

SHAUNA
Ahhh. Yes, I see.
<beat>
Y'know, I really would have expected dancing medieval armies or whacked out cartoon animals or something. This is your subconscious? A grey football game, some weirdness on the sidelines, and a jerk coach?

MIKE
That's my dad.

SHAUNA
Oh. He coached your high school football games?

MIKE
No. He wasn't around much.

SHAUNA
Then why is he here?

MIKE
Dunno.

<a beat>

SHAUNA
I mean this in the nicest way possible, but... what the hell?

MIKE
What?

SHAUNA

What happened to you?

MIKE

I dunno.

SHAUNA

Well, okay, you were blasted off Zana's roof and nearly died. But... what happened? This isn't you.

MIKE

Nothing happened. This is me.

SHAUNA

No, it isn't. It's not the Mike I know and love.

MIKE

Love, huh? That's interesting.

SHAUNA

<beat>

We're not here to talk about that.

MIKE

Whatever.

<a beat>

SHAUNA

Okay, fine, is that what this is all about? That kiss freshman year?

MIKE

Relax. I just don't feel the need to entertain you, that's all.

SHAUNA

So this is "real Mike," and the other Mike, who is one of my closest friends by the way, was just an act?

MIKE

We're all just acting, Shauna. You most of all.

SHAUNA

I'm choosing not to take that personally, because you've been in a coma for six weeks and have no way of knowing that you're actually talking to me.

MIKE

Whatever.

SHAUNA

Am I going to have to drag you out of here?

MIKE

That's not the Shauna I remember. You're going to force me out of my own mind?

SHAUNA

You're right. You have to come out willingly.

<beat>

You do realize that you're benched during your own imaginary football game, right?

MIKE

Yeah. It sucks.

SHAUNA

Like you don't know it's a dream, so you act the same way you would in real life?

MIKE

Something like that.

SHAUNA

Do you want to join the game?

MIKE

I don't know. I mean, I've been sitting here for so long.

SHAUNA

Are you afraid that you'd mess up?

MIKE

No. It's more like... football is other people playing it, and me watching them.

SHAUNA

It doesn't have to be.

MIKE

I'm just...

SHAUNA

What?

MIKE

...Tired. Really tired.

SHAUNA

I'll brew you a steaming cup of hoj if you wake up.

MIKE

Is that like coffee?

SHAUNA

Like tea. On speed.

MIKE

I don't drink caffeine. Never have.

SHAUNA

What?? Then how are you always so...

STEVE ARCHER

It's the ADD. Or the ADHD. Whichever's worse.

SHAUNA

Hello Mike's dad. I wasn't talking to you.

STEVE ARCHER

The boy's hopeless. He's got no sense and no guts. A man can make it in this world with only one or the other, but he's dead in the water without both.

SHAUNA

Not so much interested in your opinion. Or Mike's perception of your opinion. Or whatever.

STEVE ARCHER

I don't care how many Legionnaires he tackles, or Undying he explodes. Boy's a first-string screw-up.

SHAUNA

That's not true.

STEVE ARCHER

And I think it's great that y'all are calling him "Meek." 'Cause he is a coward, and always has been.

MIKE

<quietly> I am not.

STEVE ARCHER

What's that, boy?

MIKE

I'm not a coward.

STEVE ARCHER

I made you. You are what I say you are. Know what else? You're also an idiot, which is not the same as havin' guts. Morons ain't brave, they're just morons.

MIKE

I am not a moron.

STEVE ARCHER

You just play one on TV? You're also arguing with yourself, ya know. Want me to call you crazy, too?

SHAUNA

That's enough. Mike's going to join the game now.

STEVE ARCHER

Hell he is Just screw it all up again. Hey, sit down, boy.

MIKE

No.

STEVE ARCHER

I just told you to sit down. Why do I see you standing?

MIKE

Maybe because... I'm standing? You always did have a firm grasp of the obvious.

STEVE ARCHER

Oh, har har. Where'd you find that gem, smartass? In your Dungeon Master's Guide?

MIKE

You can find a lot in books. I found something that wasn't already yours.

STEVE ARCHER

Oh, and that's all it takes to "escape" me? Read some sissy books and mouth off a bit? Then why am I here, Michael?

MIKE

<realizing this> Because... I allow you to be.

STEVE ARCHER

That's right. And you always will...

SFX

All of the background football noises distort and then cease completely. Utter silence.

<after a moment:>

SHAUNA

I'm proud of you, Mike.

MIKE

Well thanks, Shauna. I'm proud of me too.

SHAUNA
Shall we go?

MIKE
Where are we going?

SHAUNA
Back into the game, of course. You've got some catching up to do.

MIKE
Oh.
<beat>
Wait, hold on. Shauna?

SHAUNA
Yes?

MIKE
Now that I know that this is a dream...

SHAUNA
Mike, what are you mmmh!

SFX
Mike kisses Shauna.

SHAUNA
You kissed me.

MIKE
I sure did. Now I can wake up.

SHAUNA
Just for that, I'm leaving you here.

MIKE
You liked it.

SHAUNA
You'll never know. Now wake up. Wake up.

SFX
Katherine's voice, whispery and distorted.

SHAUNA
Wake up. Wake...

KATHERINE
...up. Guys, c'mon, wake up!

SFX
We're back in Mike's convalescent room.

SHAUNA
Ugh. Katherine...

KATHERINE
Shauna, thank God. Did it work? What happened?

SHAUNA
I... don't know. I don't remember anything. Just... grey, and sadness. Mike?
<beat>
Mike?

<a long beat>

MIKE
Shauna.

Scene Two – And I Said, What About Breakfast at Zana’s

SFX

Chopping sounds.

KATHERINE

Arkahn, could you chop some more fraunti? Fesmer, since you’re not doing anything, could you set the table, *senjen*. [please].

FESMER

<annoyed> Yes *pzona*. (*PUH-zone-ah*) [ma’am]

SFX

Plate and utensil sounds.

KATHERINE

Jareth, could you go to the well and get some more water?

JARETH

Certainly, Kath.

SHAUNA

Wow, you’re on fire this morning Katherine.

KATHERINE

I just want breakfast to be ready when Mike comes downstairs. And you look like a wreck, Shauna.

SHAUNA

I feel like one too. No sleep, remember? I’m going to check on Mike.

ARKAHN

Kath, the fraunti are entirely chopped. Shall I begin arranging them while you scramble the eggs?

KATHERINE

Oh, of course. *Cha grendi fai*, [Thank you] Arkahn.

ARKAHN

Cha lyona fai. [You are welcome.]

SFX

Sizzling sounds

KATHERINE

<to self> This is not going to be ready in time...

ARKAHN

Meek will understand.

KATHERINE

I know, Arkahn. I just want him to feel comfortable. Pre-breakfast chaos is not exactly soothing to the post-coma mind.

ARKAHN

Knowing Meek, he is likely anxious to jump headlong into the thick of it.

KATHERINE

I’m not so sure...

ARKAHN

What do you mean?

KATHERINE

I don’t know. Nothing.

FESMER

The table is set, O Mistress of the Kitchen. Jareth and I await further orders.

KATHERINE

You're both filthy from your pickup Brikka game this morning. You could wash up.

FESMER

We could indeed. But will we?

JARETH

Come, Fesmer.

FESMER

Meek would want us to be filthy at breakfast.

JARETH

Perhaps, but Meek is not Mistress of the Kitchen.

FESMER

That is true enough, Jareth, for several reasons.

KATHERINE

Wash up, you [clowns]! Go!

ARKAHN

It is good to see them in such light moods again. This is how they always were, before... oh.

SFX

Sizzling sounds cease.

KATHERINE

Before we arrived?

ARKAHN

Well, yes, but truly I mean no offense, Kath. It was a more simple time. Your arrival brought us... complications.

KATHERINE

And likewise, believe me. Eggs are scrambled.

SFX

Halting steps down stairs.

ARKAHN

With no time to squander. Shae and Meek approach.

KATHERINE

Shhh! Quickly, help me set these!

MIKE

<from a short distance, but getting closer; in obvious pain or discomfort>

I can do this alone, Shauna.

SHAUNA

I know, but I don't mind helping.

MIKE

I do mind.

SHAUNA

Okay, okay. Just... take it slowly.

SFX

Step, step... rumpa rumpa rumpa!

SHAUNA

Mike!

MIKE

<a beat> I'm fine!

<beat>

Ouch.

SHAUNA

At least hold my arm.

MIKE

No.

SHAUNA

Mike...

MIKE

I said I can do this alone!

SFX

Step. Step. Step. Step. Step.

ARKAHN

Oli yuung, Meek.

KATHERINE

Hey there.

SHAUNA

Wow, guys. Breakfast looks great! I bet you're hungry, Mike.

MIKE

Not really.

SHAUNA

You say that now, but just wait until you see what Zana made for you.

MIKE

<unenthused> Pig pie?

ARKAHN

So much for surprises...

KATHERINE

Mike... I... are you...

MIKE

"I.. we... it..." Complete sentences would help.

SHAUNA

Mike!

MIKE

What? The girl has never done anything but put me down, and I'm sick of it!

KATHERINE

Mike—

MIKE

There are going to be some changes around here. I don't like you and you don't like me. Fine. But I'm not going to put up with your crap anymore.

SHAUNA

Mike, Katherine took care of you!

MIKE

Bull.

ARKAHN

It is true, Meek. Kath barely left your side these past six weeks. She would not abandon you except to work. Though it may not always appear so, she cares for you deeply.
<a beat>

MIKE

Pfffft HA HA HA H—ow ow ow ow, oh god, hurts to laugh...

KATHERINE

Well anyway, I'm glad you're alive, Mike. Now I can stop busting my ass to work off your debt. Breakfast is on the table, everyone. I'm taking the day off.

SFX

Katherine stomps out, slams door.

MIKE

Reow. She can dish it out, but she can't—

SHAUNA

<interrupting> Why don't you sit down and eat something, Mike?

MIKE

Yeah, sitting would be good... ah!

ARKAHN

How do you feel, Meek?

MIKE

Hmm. Sore. Like I haven't moved in six weeks. Back aches a lot, too. And my left leg is all messed up.

ARKAHN

You are strong. Your body will heal.

MIKE

Well... that's the plan. <change of tone> Look at all this. Sure is a lot of fruit. You guys trying to tell me something?

SHAUNA

Um. We thought that lighter foods would go down easier?

MIKE

Suuure. Just don't think that I'm out of the game. If Undying marched through that door right now, I could still deal out massive quantities of hurt better than any of you cou—

FESMER

MIKE!!!

MIKE

OW OW ow ow no hugs, crushing me, ow ow...

FESMER

Apologies Mike, but it is good to see you. Uh, "soup, doug?"

<ALL laugh except for MIKE>

SHAUNA

Oh wow, I remember when you used to say that, Fesmer.

FESMER

It is actually pronounced "sup, dog," is it not, Mike?

MIKE

Uh, yeah.

FESMER

Why did you not ever correct me? I was eager to learn about your world and its customs. I still am.

MIKE

Well, um, we'll do that, then. Is that a goatee on your face?

FESMER

Sho' nuff.

MIKE

I didn't know people had those anymore. And did you just say—

JARETH

It is called a *own-raopl* [goatee], and they are just now becoming fashionable.

FESMER

I am not wearing the *own-raopl* [goatee] because it is fashionable, Jareth. The *own-raopl* [goatee] is fashionable because I am wearing it.

JARETH

Oh yes, like last month—

FESMER

No, that is not—

JARETH

—when you insisted that you brought the phrase—

FESMER

—Jareth, you misinterpreted—

JARETH

—the phrase *iil ne-ay mitahn* (EEL ne-AY MEET-ahn) [shake the foundations] back into circulation.

<ALL laugh except for MIKE>

FESMER

Well, I did! I at least had a hand in it.

<ALL continue laughing>

JARETH

Yes, Fesmer. Of course you did.

MIKE

Eeee yeah. Good times.

<beat>

Come to think of it, why don't I have a beard? I mean, six weeks is a long time. Should at least have some stubble...

SHAUNA

As Arkahn said, Katherine barely left your side. Although Arkahn left out the part about how she was there almost as much...

MIKE

Wait, you guys were serious? She really did?

ARKAHN

Yes.

MIKE

Huh.

<beat>

Did she, like, empty my... um...?

ARKAHN

Yes, she even emptied your “um.”

MIKE

Gross.

SHAUNA

You should thank her at some point in the very, very near future. And also apologize.

MIKE

Yeah, I’ll probably do that.

SFX walking and thump of plate.

ZANA

Order up for Meek! One pig pie, extra pig!

<ALL laugh, again, except for MIKE>

MIKE

Yeah, y’know, that’s nice of you, but...

ZANA

We must fatten you up, bony one. Eat! Where is Kath?

ARKAHN

She finished her duties and has taken the day off, Shi-Schwa.

ZANA

More nourishment for Meek, then. Why are you not eating, *lio*? Consume!

MIKE

Look, all of you, this is great, but... I...

SHAUNA

What is it, Mike?

MIKE

I’m not hungry at all. Really. Just, not right now.

SHAUNA

But—

MIKE

Just save some for me later, okay? I’ll get my appetite back soon enough.

SHAUNA

Okay...

MIKE

Sorry, I... yeah. I need some fresh air. Sorry.

SFX

MIKE attempting to stand, falling back into his seat. Dishware rattles.

MIKE

Oof! Ow.

SHAUNA

Mike, let me help you—

MIKE

I DON’T NEED YOUR GODDAMN HELP!

SFX

Silence. MIKE stands, pushes chair away, hobbles off.

MIKE

I can do this alone. That's all. I'm sorry... just, leave me alone.

SFX

Hobbles off, door slams.

<long pause>

SHAUNA

...Wow.

ZANA

Shae, are you *ra-na*?

SHAUNA

I'm fine. I've just never seen him like this. He reminds me of someone... can't remember...

FESMER

I am certain that he will, em, "snap out of it."

SHAUNA

I'm not so certain.

JARETH

Perhaps I should speak with him—

ALL

<ad lib> No! Bad idea! Perhaps that is not the best course, Jareth... etc etc.

JARETH

Right then.

ARKAHN

I have a notion. Fesmer, is there not a Brikka game tomorrow?

FESMER

Of course! The Reavers of Musqueten are scheduled to destroy the Terrors of Terentenodi for the league title. I completely forgot.

JARETH

Ah, I believe you mean it is the Terrors of Terentenodi who shall send the Reavers of Musqueten home, Fes.

FESMER

And when was Univeristy's last victory?

JARETH

Oh ho! I cannot believe that I am hearing this! The Terrors have suffered setbacks, it is true, but—

FESMER

Ninety years without a title victory is slightly more than a setback, Jareth.

JARETH

They are not to blame! It is the Curse of the—

SHAUNA

ANYway, so this Brikka thing is something that Mike would enjoy?

FESMER

Oh yes. It is much like his football.

SHAUNA

Great, let's go. Zana, your shop is closed tomorrow anyway, right?

ZANA

Yes Shae, but now that Meek is better, I have vital matters to which I must attend.

ARKAHN

Fishing, Shi-Schwa?

ZANA

Of course, Arkahn. The pond is more fish than water by now. Any day now, they will gather their forces and attack. I am the only one who can stop them.

SHAUNA

I didn't know you fished, Zana.

ZANA

Since I was a child. I am full of surprises, *voluna* [love].

SHAUNA

Arkahn, are you coming tomorrow?

ARKAHN

Regretfully, I cannot. I must complete several tasks for my parents.

SHAUNA

Oh. Okay. Everything alright?

ARKAHN

Of course, Shae. Why do you ask?

SHAUNA

No reason. Fesmer? Jareth?

JARETH

You need not ask. I must witness for myself the moment that the Terrors triumph and Fesmer swallows his offending tongue.

FESMER

And I am always ready to see University prove again that they are the most laughable team in all of Baela.

SHAUNA

Good lord. Alright then: it's a plan. You guys really think that this game will cheer Mike up?

FESMER

If it does not, I am unsure that anything will.

Scene Three – Walking to the Game

AMBIENT

Outdoor daytime noises

SFX

Goat cart wheeling along

MIKE

So they were right at me—like leaping through the air—and I saw an opening and bam! Touchdown!

FESMER

Very impressive, Mike. I wish I could have seen that.

MIKE

What's with the past tense? I'll be fine in a few days.

FESMER

You do seem healthier already. Is the walking staff helpful?

MIKE

Yeah, nice crutch. Thanks for the loan.

FESMER

You are welcome. But do not hesitate to rest in the goat cart. We did not bring it merely to carry lunch.

MIKE

Goat cart tailgating. Classy. Anyways, I'm not going to get better by sitting around all day. Though it is great to see fair Umbra again. Howssit goin', girl?

SFX

Goat snort.

MIKE

She missed me with all her goatish heart. I can tell.

FESMER

After... that day, I returned to the spot where we abandoned Umbra and the cart. They were both untouched, as I predicted.

MIKE

Good thing Zombies are picky about what brains they eat.

FESMER

It is a mystery what Undying do with their victims, or how Undying are even created, but I do not think they eat brains. We only know that they have no interest in animals, nor, we have discovered, in heroic football players.

MIKE

Um, yeah, let's not talk about that. I feel more like an idiot than a hero.

FESMER

Throwing spellbombs off Zana's roof was a little foolish, I will admit, but your actions that day were heroic, Mike. You saved me from an army of Undying. You destroyed some of Zana's property in the process, but...

MIKE

And speaking of which, she wants to have a long talk with me when we get back from the game. I think I owe Zana a lot of money. And also my soul. And my firstborn child. And half of the secondborn.

FESMER

Zana is fair. I am certain that you will be able to work something out. Still, I want to thank you for saving me that day. I am in debt to you.

MIKE

Great. Just go ahead and apply it to my balance at Zana's.

FESMER

Joking aside, Mike...

MIKE

Who's joking??

<pause>

SHAUNA

I wish he'd ride in the cart. He shouldn't be straining himself like this.

JARETH

Well, at least his temperament seems much improved.

SHAUNA

I think he needed a day to process everything and get some real sleep. Still...

JARETH

He is not the same.

SHAUNA

No, he isn't.

JARETH

You look like you also need real sleep. Are you unwell?

SHAUNA

No, I'm fine. I just have not been sleeping well lately.

JARETH

You have been practicing intently the past week or two. You must be careful not to exhaust yourself.

SHAUNA

Yeah. I guess so.

<beat>

JARETH

Has Kath forgiven Meek for yesterday morning?

SHAUNA

Nooooo no no no. I think he tried to apologize this morning, and she told him to keep walking. "Keep walking, gimpy," were her exact words.

JARETH

I see.

SHAUNA

A gimpy person is someone who limps. I think.

JARETH

I was not going to ask.

<both chuckle>

JARETH

It would seem that Kath does not forgive easily.

SHAUNA

I think there's a reason for that.

JARETH

...Oh?

SHAUNA

Jareth, are you prying?

JARETH

Absolutely not!

<beat>

I am inquiring.

SHAUNA

Well, all I know is that a big relationship ended badly just before we moved in together at our University. This guy kept calling for her that first month, really upset, but she refused to speak with him. Eventually, he stopped calling her.

JARETH

He must have done something very terrible to warrant Kath's wrath.

SHAUNA

Dunno, never got the full story.

JARETH

I think that she has still not forgiven me for the way I acted during the day that... Meek fell.

SHAUNA

She might, some day. It's a good sign that she talks to you.

JARETH

I only did what I thought right.

SHAUNA

I think everyone does what they think is right. It's just that her "right" and your "right" were two very different things.

JARETH

I suppose so. There was once a time when one path was right and the other clearly wrong. I miss those days.

SHAUNA

Heh. You and me both.

MIKE

Well they've really hit it off.

FESMER

It does seem that way. Jareth has been tutoring Shae in the fundamentals of ritual magic. There is more conversation and much less yelling now.

MIKE

Wait, aren't you going to say "hit it off of what, Mike?"

FESMER

Why would I?

MIKE

But... how could you possibly know what "hit it off" means?

FESMER

Shae and Kath have been teaching me colloquialisms, in anticipation of when you woke up.

MIKE

Well. Bully for them.

FESMER

Did you prefer me when I did not know what I was saying?

MIKE

It was funnier...

FESMER

You jerk. Please do suck it.

MIKE

Pffffff HA HA HA H— ow ow ow ow...!

FESMER

What? What?

SHAUNA

Looks like they're back to their old goofball selves.

JARETH

<terse> Indeed.

SHAUNA

What?

JARETH

What do you mean, "What?"

SHAUNA

You became "uncharacteristically" terse for a moment there.

JARETH

Surely you are not prying, Shae?

SHAUNA

Why would I need to pry? I could just read your mind.

JARETH

You could not possibly have the ability to—

SHAUNA

No, of course not. That's far more advanced stuff than you've taught me.

JARETH

You were joking, then?

SHAUNA

Yup. That's me all over. Regular prankster.

JARETH

Good. You worried me for a moment, Shae. Seeing through the eyes of another is one thing, but entering into the mind of another is highly dangerous, for both persons. I trust that you would never attempt such a thing.

SHAUNA

Of course not, but, uh, what... could happen?

JARETH

Well, anything. Either or both persons could have their minds lost. Parts of one person can be left in another, false memories created, certain things forgotten forever...

SHAUNA

Oh.

JARETH

Not to mention the drastic pull on Odi that such a spell would require. Anyone in Laundi who is remotely attuned would sense such a pull. Including Legionnaires. Possibly even the Red Circle. Anyone.

SHAUNA

Wait, the Red who now? I think you mentioned them a few weeks ago...

JARETH

They are probably not a matter for concern. They are involved in various criminal activity around Laundi. They are a nuisance, but I suppose they are better than the Legion.

SHAUNA

Wouldn't *neither* be better?

JARETH

Indeed. But the Red Circle has successfully remained hidden for a long time. One day perhaps we will be rid of them. And hopefully we can prevent the Legion from replacing them.

<beat>

Until then, it would be best if we avoided them. I fear they would see you as a source of profit. Many would be interested in a person of your potential.

SHAUNA

<kind of weak> Well, eh, good thing I'd never give them such an easy way to find me...

JARETH

Yes, a very good thing. Speaking of your ability with magic, how have your studies progressed?

SHAUNA

Slowly. Arkahn was helping me for a while, but now she's always busy doing something for her parents.

JARETH

Ah.

<a beat>

SHAUNA

Alright, now I'm prying. What's with Arkahn's parents? She doesn't seem to have a good relationship with them.

JARETH

That is an apt assessment.

SHAUNA

Plus she had bruises this one time, a couple of weeks ago. She said it was from a fight, but since when does Arkahn get into fights? Although, she has been acting different since her parents returned from their trip...

JARETH

I have only met Alexalark and Lorenalark once, very briefly, years ago, when Arkahn first began working at Zana's. She does not seem to have a good relationship with them.

SHAUNA

What was your impression of them?

JARETH

They did not seem eager to earn my friendship, but neither did they appear to be bad people. As I said, that is the only time I have conversed with them. It is not enough basis for judgment. Arkahn is a good friend, and they are her parents.

SHAUNA

I just wish there was something I could do.

JARETH

You cannot be all things to all people, Shae.

<a beat>

SHAUNA

What did you just say?

FESMER

Aernae lo parnae [Ladies and gentlemen], we have arrived!
Ready the price of four tickets and prepare to leave all
aspirations of victory for the Terentenodi Terrors at the door.

JARETH

A traitor through and through! I trust that you will choke on
Terenenodi's title victory this day.

FESMER

I thought it was my tongue I will choke on.

JARETH

No, Fesmer. You will eat your tongue, and then you will choke
on our victory.

FESMER

Ah. At least I will not be hungry. Mike, remember what I told
you?

MIKE

Yeah, yeah, no talking. I've learned my lesson, believe me.

FESMER

No, not that. Your translation pendant will allow anyone to
understand you.

MIKE

Reeeeeeally, now...

FESMER

But still, do not act without caution. But you do remember what
I told you earlier today?

MIKE

Oh, right, um... <clears throat> "Ninety more years! Brikka is
University's in-active item! Boo!"

<ALL others laugh>

FESMER

Eh, close enough.

MIKE

I don't get it...

JARETH

Let us enter.

Scene Four – Brikka

SFX

Crowd roaring swells.

JARETH

Ha! Seven to three, Fesmer! Three more points and University will have the title victory.

FESMER

Yes Jareth, and only one point more until the break, when University's team will drink themselves spoiled on *borsen* [beer], and lose the game because they cannot see straight.

JARETH

That only occurred once.

FESMER

And today shall be twice!

SHAUNA

I still don't get this.

MIKE

You're not even trying. Look, one more time: the Threat carries the ball from one end of the field to the other. The Rivers and Bulls make way for the Threat, the Wings are like wide receivers, and the... um...

FESMER

Pivot, Mike.

MIKE

I know that! The Pivot stays in the middle and works defense or offense as needed.

SHAUNA

Okay...

MIKE

Once the Threat is on the opposing side of the field, he can be tagged.

SHAUNA

Tagged? That's it? Then why have they been knocking each other to the ground for the past hour?

FESMER

No one said it must be a gentle tag, Shae.

MIKE

Okay, watch: the home team's Threat has crossed the midfield line. Now he's fair game. He can try to throw the ball through the target—

SFX

Crowd noise swells.

FESMER

Oh! Ouch!

SHAUNA

So what's happening now?

MIKE

The wings are—

SFX crowd cheer

MIKE

Oh man! Woo!

SHAUNA

Ah, right. So it's like soccer with more hitting?

MIKE

No, you can use your hands. It's more like water polo without the water, plus little bit of football strategy.

FESMER

And much violence!

SHAUNA

Men.

FESMER

Women play Brikka, as well. You will notice that the Reaver's Pivot is a woman.

JARETH

As is one of University's Sentries. Kasha..

FESMER

Kasha, eh? A new *dokiluna* [heartthrob], Jareth?

JARETH

She has a... superior student record, that is all.

FESMER

Have you asked her to the New Life Festival yet?

JARETH

Fesmer! She is a student!

FESMER

You and your rules...

SFX

Crowd noise.

JARETH

No!

FESMER

HA! Your Threat has been tagged!

SHAUNA

So then—

SFX

Crowd swells. Angry sounds.

FESMER

Interference! Interference!

SHAUNA

Uh. What now...?

FESMER

University's Threat just pushed a player on the way back to his Wall. A major penalty!

JARETH

He did not! The Bull pushed him!

FESMER

Jareth, blind as you are to anything outside University, surely even you can see...

SHAUNA

Guh. I give up.

MIKE

Whatever. I'm enjoying this.

SHAUNA

That's good, Mike. I'm glad. It's good to see you getting back to the old you.

MIKE

Yup. Okay, so the opposing team has the Brikka ball now, so—

SHAUNA

Mike, can we talk about something?

MIKE

Depends what "something" is.

SHAUNA

Do you... remember anything?

MIKE

Depends what "anything" is. Oh! Nice tag!

FESMER

A fine tag, indeed!

SHAUNA

I mean... <very quietly> from your coma.

SFX

Crowd cheers.

MIKE

What?

SHAUNA

Your coma. Your coma!

MIKE

Okay, fine, I'm not deaf. I dunno. Not really.

SHAUNA

How about just before you woke up?

MIKE

It was... I dunno... like sleeping for a long time, and not realizing how long I slept until I woke up.

SHAUNA

But do you remember—

MIKE

Oh and also like discovering that my body was broken in three different places while I was asleep.

SHAUNA

Yeah.

MIKE

And like knowing that I'll probably never play football again, in addition to still being trapped in magical fantasy world. One that is clearly not a video game, I suppose.

SHAUNA

Right, but—

MIKE

And also seeing that life went on without me. Everyone even seems happier.

SHAUNA

We're happy because you're awake now!

MIKE

That's not it.

SFX

Crowd goes wild.

MIKE

Oh!

FESMER

Oh no!

JARETH

Ha! Ha ha ha! A superb advance! 8 to 3, and now we are in break.

FESMER

Time for University's team to drink themselves ignorant. And speaking of which... Shae, Mike, would you like anything from the vendors?

MIKE

<meaning this> I could really use a beer, or seven. I'll come with.

FESMER

Erm, Mike, are you certain that—

MIKE

Yes I'm certain! Goddamnit all of you, I'm not a cripple! My joints are just a little stiff, okay?

<a beat>

FESMER

Okay, Mike. Let us go.

<a moment>

JARETH

He did seem to be enjoying the game before.

SHAUNA

Yeah. I don't know. He seems fine, joking around and everything, but then he suddenly turns and snaps at us. I've never seen Mike do that before, and now he does it at least as much as he jokes around. <a beat> I'm worried about him.

JARETH

Would you like me to go with them?

SHAUNA

Mike and Fesmer?

JARETH

Yes, to be certain that nothing... Meek-like happens?

SHAUNA

Yeah, I'd appreciate that. Just be sure that he doesn't know why you came.

JARETH

I will be subtle as a brook.

SHAUNA

Brooks aren't very subtle. They're kind of loud.

JARETH

Alas. Protect our seats, Shae. I will return shortly.

SHAUNA

Cha grendi fai [Thank you], Jareth.

JARETH

You are most welcome, Shae.

Scene Five – Fight!

AMBIENT

Crowded area.

FESMER

Here you are, Mike: this is called *borsen* [beer]. It is most potent when consumed in great quantities.

MIKE

Sounds like a plan. Cheers, Fesmer! To getting our crunk on.

FESMER

What is a crunk?

MIKE

Ah ha! Something the girls didn't teach ya, eh? It's crazy and drunk, man! It's also a kind of rap.

FESMER

Ah. *Mazen-do* (*MAY-zen--dough*) [Cheers], then.

<a beat>

MIKE

What's with the dainty sips, man? Chug!

FESMER

Chug?

MIKE

Like this!

SFX

Glug, glug, glug...

MIKE

Ahh! Like so.

FESMER

Oh, you mean *reg* [chug].

MIKE

Yeah! *Reg reg reg!* [Chug] [Chug] [Chug]!

FESMER

Fine, fine, but you are carrying me home.

MIKE

Not me. You're going in the goat cart, buddy. Had about enough of carrying you.

FESMER

Ahh.

MIKE

Huh. Seems like pretty weak stuff.

FESMER

Weak? I am already crunking.

MIKE

Heh. More?

FESMER

Yes! I will return, laden with *borsen* [beer].

MIKE

All right!

<a moment; another conversation draws near>

JERK 1

...plagued with these brutish Reavers. We wait ninety years, only to take the title from them? Pathetic.

JERK 2

Terentenodi deserves better.

JERK 3

I am of a temper to reave them myself.

JERK 1

Agreed! Good one!

<MIKE snickers to himself>

JERK 2

Hey, that fellow is laughing at us.

JERK 1

You! Boy!

MIKE

Did you just call me boy?

JERK 1

And what if I did?

MIKE

Don't make me angry. You wouldn't like me when I'm angry.

JERK 1

I do not think we like you as you are now, *boy*. Do we, men?

JERK 2

I think we do not.

JERK 3

Which team do you support?

MIKE

Well, before I didn't really care. But now that I've met you guys, I think I'm a Reaver's fan.

JERK 3

I thought so. He smells like a *huntoluna own*-Reavers [fan of].

<THE JERKS laugh>

JERK 2

Of course he is a *Reaverluna* [fan]. Just look at that lifeless haze in his eyes, the slope of his brow.

JERK 1

And to make matters worse, he is a stupid foreigner.

MIKE

A stupid—

JERK 3

I for one was not going to mention that. I thought from his stilted manner of speech that he might be brain deadened.

JERK 2

Where do you call home, stupid foreign *Reaverluna* [fan]?

MIKE

You've never heard of it. Now buzz off. You don't want to make me get up out of this chair.

<THE JERKS laugh again>

FESMER

<slurring a little> Ah, Mi—... Meek. I had difficulty finding you in this crowd.

MIKE

Wow, big cups!

FESMER

The crunkiest ones they had. Here you are; I have begun without you.

MIKE

Wow, you certainly have...

FESMER

Oli wan [Good evening], I am called Fesmer.

JERK 1

You know this stupid foreigner?

FESMER

What? Who is a stupid foreigner?

MIKE

They're talking about me.

FESMER

Come now *paer—parnae* [gen- gentlemen], no need to argue. Get crunky with us. Mmm, very strong brew.

JERK 2

I am sorry, but University's finest do not drink with *Reaverlunae* [fans].

FESMER

<with great relish> University! I once attempted entrance to University, but was denied.

JERK 3

Ah...

FESMER

And rightfully so! For I am very much lacking in all strengths that University requires. Strengths that you three, of course, must surely possess. In abundance. Like strong body odors and rancid *deck own-cerip* [donkey testicles].
(Pronunciation note: cerip begins the same way serendipity does.)

JERK 1

What did you say?

MIKE

He said you smelled bad and... something else. Now back off or we'll have to step outside.

FESMER

Mike—

JERK 2

Was that a threat?

FESMER

Mike—

MIKE

Maybe it was.

FESMER

Mike—

MIKE

What Fesmer?

FESMER

We are outside Mike.

<beat>

MIKE

Well I guess we don't have to go anywhere then, do we?

JERK 3

What of it, foreigner? Do all people from your homeland make a habit of issuing empty threats?

MIKE

Look. For the sake of my friend here, I'm trying not to get violent, but you're making it very difficult.

JERK 1

Oh no. He got out of his chair.

JERK 2

Hey, look at that staff! He's a cripple and a stupid foreigner. What do you think you can poss—

SFX

Whoosh! Crack!

JERK 2

My nose! Oh, *ainorem*...!

MIKE

Who else wants some? Huh?!

JERK 1

You broke his nose!

MIKE

Want one to match, Malfoy?

FESMER

Hey...

JERK 3

Sit back down, drunk.

SFX Thud!

FESMER

Ow!

MIKE

Hey, ass hat!

JERK 3

What did you—

SFX Whiff!

JERK 3

Ho! Not swift enough, savage.

MIKE

Then how 'bout some of this!

SFX punch!

JERK 3

Ooof.

MIKE

Come on! Bring it! Call me gutless! I dare you! Call me a pansy! C'mon! I'm ready for you! I will beat the everlovin' crap out of every single one of you friggin'—

JERK 1

Begin!

SFX

Spell effect.

MIKE

<unable to speak properly> --eh? Ha huk?

JERK 1

Ha! He is paralyzed! Strike him!

SFX

Mike getting the shit kicked out of him for a few seconds.

FESMER

<weakly> Mike! Mike!

JARETH

<loudly> What is this?!

JERK 1

Oh. Jareth?

JERK 3

Ah, greetings Jareth. I did not know that you would be in attendance.

JARETH

Even Task Mages attend Brikka tournaments. What in the name of *ainorem* are you doing to this man?

JERK 2

We were just teaching this *sendai* [assface] some manners.

JERK 3

He insulted and attacked us.

JARETH

Regardless, this is unacceptable. Are you injured Meek?

MIKE

Eesh.

JARETH

Did you paralyze him?

<beat>

You have exactly three seconds to leave or you will have much more than the inquest board to worry about.

JERK 2

What will you do, call upon the useless [town guard]?

JERK 1

Come *parnae* [gentlemen] Fortunate trails with the promotion you will never see, Master Task Mage. That is a promise.

JARETH

You. Hold.

JERK 1

Yes, Jareth?

JARETH

While we are on University property, you will address me as "Yen-schwa." "[sir]".

JERK 1

Yes... "yen-schwa"

JARETH

Now end your spell, or I will end it for you.

JERK 1

But—

JARETH

End it!

JERK 1

...End.

SFX

Ritual magic spell ending.

MIKE

Merguhhh...

JERK 1

Come, men! We have wasted enough time already with these commoners. Farewell, "yen-schwa"

JARETH

<to self> Monied hendenaminae (hen-DEN-a-min-ay) [brats].

FESMER

Jareth...

JARETH

Fesmer. Are you injured?

FESMER

Noooo friend.

JARETH

Are you... spoiled on drink?!

FESMER

I am crunk, Jareth. Speak it with me. "Crunk." It means—

JARETH

I care not. Meek, can you move?

MIKE

<in great pain> Those motherfu—

JARETH

Enough, Meek. It is finished.

MIKE

The hell it is!

JARETH

Apologies, but it is.

MIKE

Says you. I'm going to find them and beat the—ughhh—

JARETH

Can you stand?

MIKE

So. Much. Pain.

JARETH

I will assist you.

MIKE

No. You won't. I'm doing this alone.

JARETH

But—

MIKE

What is so hard to understand about this? Back off, man! I can stand up on my— <a pause, then MIKE hauls himself painfully to his feet> There. See?

JARETH

Indeed.

MIKE

I don't need your help, Jareth. Quit trying to save me.

JARETH

To be completely honest, Meek, I have never much cared for you.

MIKE

Big surprise.

JARETH

You are reckless and untrustworthy. Your presence, and yours alone, has brought nothing but trouble and heartache these past months.

MIKE

Jareth, shut your mouth or I'm gonna shut it for—

JARETH

<interrupting> But for the sake of those whom I do care about very much, I have and will continue to safeguard your welfare. I will not stand by and do nothing as you continue to destroy yourself.

MIKE

<small bitter laugh> “Destroy myself?” Are you joking? Nothing touches me here. I plow through zombie armies. My body breaks, and I don't die.

JARETH

You must go home, then. You do not belong here.

MIKE

What's the point? All I wanted was to play football professionally, and now I never will. Even if I do get home, I can barely walk.

<beat>

I almost died, Jareth. I should have died. Why didn't you let me?

JARETH

I nearly did. Kath convinced me otherwise.

MIKE

Katherine? Katherine hates me.

JARETH

No, Meek. She cares for you a great deal. What more evidence do you require?

<a long pause>

MIKE

Huh.

SFX

Snoring.

MIKE

Well, Fesmer's out.

JARETH

How much did he imbibe?

MIKE

Too much.

JARETH

That does sound like Fesmer.

SHAUNA

Hey guys, where have you— Oh my God, Mike!

MIKE

Howdy.

SHAUNA

Were you... in a fight?

MIKE

Maybe. Long story.

SHAUNA

And Fesmer...?

JARETH

Let us go. We will tell you about it on the way.

SHAUNA

This settles it. I am never leaving you guys alone again. If you're going to behave like children, I'll have to baby-sit you like children.

<a beat>

On second thought, that's kinda weird. Nevermind. You're on your own.

<THEY ALL laugh>

MIKE

Ow ow ow ow...