

## FAST TIMES AT D&D HIGH, Episode 2: Classroom Chaos

### Content Warnings:

Swearing, Bullying, Class Shaming, Loud Noise Warning (from 29:50 to 30:15 and 1:00:40 to 1:01:35), Homophobia, Sexual Innuendo

PERSEPHONE: Welcome to Fast Times at D&D High, a podcast where a bunch of adults pretend to be teenagers because that's where our emotional development stopped.

*[FIRST GOOD BOUNCE, by Derrick B Perry and Ashley Abbott]*

PERSEPHONE: I'm your DM Persephone and I'm joined by our players, Nuance.

NUANCE: Hi, I'm Nuance, (she/her) and I play Surissisah (she/her), a Yuan-Ti cleric.

PERSEPHONE: Wren.

WREN: Hi, I'm Wren (they/them) and I play Cecil (also they/them), half-orc druid.

PERSEPHONE: Elise.

ELISE: Hi, I'm Elise (she/her). I play Hudson (he/him), an elven barbarian.

PERSEPHONE: Caro.

CARO: Hi, I'm Caro (they/them) and I play Ollie (he/him), a human rogue.

PERSEPHONE: Now, let's begin.

OLLIE: So in case you're hiding under a rock and didn't know, it's not exactly a privilege to go to Varnam Correctional. It's the place they send misfits and miscreants, you get me? So, I've been going to Varnam since the start of the school year. Don't ask. It's a long story. And then this week, there's these new transfer kids. There's Hudson, who looks like he just walked off the set of a teen heartthrob drama show. And Cecil who's so nervous, they make me nervous and that takes some doing. And then there's Suri, who I've seen at the library before now, but I, like, didn't want to bother her, you know. She's really cool and smart and...stuff.

Well, anyway, we're all in the same homeroom together. And I've got to tell you, none of these newbies seems like the criminal type. So I'm keeping my eye on them. Not that I care. I just. Whatever. Don't worry about it.

*[APERIO HOUR, Kevin MacLeod]*

*[School bell rings for class]*

PERSEPHONE: The bell has rung. You all have realized that you're in the same class and you are hurrying to Locksley's classroom, following Ollie.

OLLIE: Alright, so it's gonna be, uh, best if, uh, all you go in first? And, uh, it's gonna be a lot better. For everyone. Yeah, you. You! Yeah, uh, Hudson, yeah? You should go in first. You're the, uh, the most trustworthy looking.

HUDSON: Okay!

ELISE: Hudson goes into the classroom.

PERSEPHONE: Hudson, you see Locksley at the front of the classroom behind his desk and he's stopped mid-sentence look over here. You see him look past you, through the door, and look at Ollie.

CARO: No, no! I stealth. I'm gonna stealth.

PERSEPHONE: Roll a stealth check.

CARO: *[die roll]* Nat 20!

PERSEPHONE: Describe how you hide, Ollie.

CARO: I really just go completely vertical behind Hudson and completely disappear.

PERSEPHONE: Okay. So Locksley does not look at Ollie, because Locksley cannot see Ollie. Locksley looks at Hudson, who is the tallest, so all the other people can't be seen behind him. And he frowns. Hudson, you look at the classroom and you see that there's, like, twenty people all staring at you. Twenty teenagers just looking at you. You see a few of the girls and one or two of the guys are like, 'Who's this? Mmm! Who's this walking in late?' And you see Locksley turns to you and says,

LOCKSLEY: Can I help you?

HUDSON: Uh, yeah, I think I'm supposed to be in this homeroom.

LOCKSLEY: Uhh, what's your name?

HUDSON: I'm Hudson Eilauver.

PERSEPHONE: You see that he pulls out his attendance sheet and scrolls down and says,

LOCKSLEY: Yah, you're totally in this class. Um, why are you late?

HUDSON: Um, I couldn't get my locker open and then I ran into some old friends and then I didn't realize what time it was. And I was just like our 'Oh shoot! Like, the bell rang, gotta go!"

LOCKSLEY: Uh uh uh. All - all right. That's fine. Um, it says here that you're, like, new? So why don't you come in front of the class and introduce yourself.

HUDSON: Okay.

PERSEPHONE: So you walk up to the front of the class. And at that point, Locksley notices the rest of you are behind Hudson.

CARO: I'm going to try to just get around. Like, while people are distracted by Hudson's prettiness. I'm just gonna try to whoosh! Get into the classroom within.

PERSEPHONE: With a nat 20, I'll allow it. You can pretend you were there the whole time.

CARO: Yes! Totally. I'm already sitting down, feet up on a desk

PERSEPHONE: Cecil and Surississah, you are not so lucky. So I'm imagining that you're staring, owl-eyed, at Locksley who's staring at you.

LOCKSLEY: Uh, hello?

SURI: Um. I-I am also new? And wasn't sure where...I can just go sit down right now...

LOCKSLEY: That's fine. What's your name?

SURI: Surississah? Theszkazi?

LOCKSLEY: All right. You're on the list. Who's the person next to you? Like, what's your name? Are you new, too?

CECIL: ...Technically? I'm Cecil Oleander. And I'm h-here. For now.

LOCKSLEY: All right, well, you're on the list, too! Why don't you all come in and introduce yourselves?

HUDSON: Hey, uh, I'm Hudson. I'm new. This is my first day. Uh, it's sure nice to meet everybody. Everyone's so nice here.

PERSEPHONE: You hear a few catcalls.

HUDSON: Heyyyyyy.

PERSEPHONE: And as a few people in the class wink at you. You see, though, that in the back of the room, there's this burly sort of jousting-type, sort of built like a football player. And he looks at you and says,

RANDOM STUDENT: You're wearing a Bollywog's jacket at Varnum? We're the fucking Drakes, man.

HUDSON: Well, I don't have a Varnum jacket.

RANDOM STUDENT: Yeah, cuz you're not on the team.

HUDSON: Well, yeah. I'm not. Yet!

PERSEPHONE: You see this guy gets up. He's like six foot five.

RANDOM STUDENT: Take it off. Take it off right now. Take it off. [*chanting*] Take it off! Take it off! Take it off!

OLLIE: [*also chanting*] Take it off! Take it off!

PERSEPHONE: You hear that a few people are joining in and chanting, but it's not because of the jacket.

OLLIE: Take it off!

ELISE: Hudson shrugs and takes his whole shirt off. Like, the shirt and the jacket.

OLLIE: Woo!

ELISE: He's just like--

LOCKSLEY: All right. All right. What? Hudson. Hudson! Hudson. Uh, please, like, please like just--

PERSEPHONE: Locksley's just like,

LOCKSLEY: --Just put. Just put that away. Like, uh, just put it away, please. Um, just not appropriate for school. Oh, god. Hudson, just, like, sit over there. By the window. Just just just--and please put your shirt back on.

HUDSON: Okay!

LOCKSLEY: Like, I can't.

ELISE: Hudson puts his clothes back on.

LOCKSLEY: You other two. Like, please, do not take off your clothing when you introduce yourselves. All right, introduce yourselves.

WREN: Cecil's just kind of extra wrapped up in themselves. Just pulls the blazer tighter.

NUANCE: So I feel like Suri and Cecil are gonna look at each other and kind of a, 'no, you go first. No, you go first.' For, like, a few seconds. Does that track?

WREN: Yes.

CECIL: Uh...h-hello? I...

WREN: And Cecil will turn to the whole class and attempt to sort of stand up straight.

CECIL: I, uh, just said it to...uh, this..but I am Cecil Oleander and--

LOUIS: Nerd!

CECIL: Well, well technically, I-I-I prefer geek. I-I think it's a little bit more accurate to my particular--

LOUIS: Oh look! The nerd's picky about being a nerd! Nerd!

CECIL: I'll take nerd. Nerd's fine.

LOUIS: Damn right you will!

HUDSON: Hey, that's not very nice.

LOUIS: Well I'm not very nice.

HUDSON: Clearly!

PERSEPHONE: You see that there's this like greasy-looking kid with like dark hair in front of his eyes in the back row. Looks like he hasn't bathed in a few days. Pretty scrawny and he's making these rude noises.

LOUIS: Yeah, well, no one likes you pretty boy.

PERSEPHONE: You see a few girls in the classroom go,

RANDOM GIRLS: Um. *[giggle]* We beg to differ.

HUDSON: Yeah, thanks.

GIRLS: Heyyyyy.

HUDSON: Hey.

LOCKSLEY: Um, if you're done causing problems, Louis, why don't you just sit your ass down?

PERSEPHONE: And you see Louis frowns and sits back down.

LOCKSLEY: All right. All right, Hudson. You can go to the row by the windows. And, uh, Surl and Cecil, you can go right behind--Ollie, when did you get here?

OLLIE: I been here!

LOCKSLEY: You didn't answer your name when I called attendance!

OLLIE: I did! You didn't hear me because I was using a-an illusion to see if I could make it seem, uh, like I wasn't here? And it worked! So, uh, I'm very talented.

PERSEPHONE: Role a deception check.

NUANCE: That's some amazing bullshit.

CARO: *[die rolling]* I've got an 11?

LOCKSLEY: Um, you're lying.

OLLIE: Pfft, nooo! I never lie!

LOCKSLEY: But I don't actually know how you got to your seat, so I'm just gonna mark you present.

OLLIE: Yup, there we go.

LOCKSLEY: And pretend like I know better. How's that?

OLLIE: That's fine.

LOCKSLEY: All right. All right, Surississah, was it? Did you introduce yourself? I can't actually remember.

SURI: Umm...uh, er, ah...technically?

LOCKSLEY: Class, did she introduce herself?

OLLIE: No!

NUANCE: Suri's just kind of like,

SURI: I sorta did, at the...okay...

NUANCE: ...and then she goes back up, in front of the room. She's as red as she can get? She's not a pretty blusher. It's not like attractive roses in her cheeks. No, she's just kind of blotchy and red.

SURI: I? Am? Surississah Theszkaizi?

LOUIS: Speak up!

SURI: I am Surississah.

LOCKSLEY: *[yelling]* Louis, stop yelling!

SURI: Sssurississah Theszkaizi

NUANCE: She's nervous. So she's hissing over her S's and looks incredibly embarrassed about it.

SURI: I am alssso new. Um, thank you for having me in classss?

NUANCE: And then she scurries, straight up scurries.

LOCKSLEY: Uhh, well, I hope all of you in the front row heard that. Um. All right. Say hello to your new classmates.

OLLIE: Hello new classmates!

HUDSON: Hello new classmates!

LOCKSLEY: Wait till I'm--wait till I'm done speaking. All right, we got some announcements to go over. It looks like there are club tryouts and sports tryouts coming next week. So if you want to get on the jousting team, the wrestling team, the soccer team, stuff like that. Or like an archery club or anything like that. We don't get many clubs here, um, but we do have some.

WREN: Cecil's gonna raise their hand.

CECIL: Is there a uh, uh, uh, list of clubs written--written out somewhere that can be accessed?

LOCKSLEY: Uh, yeah, you should be able to find on the bulletin board the front of the main hallway.

CECIL: Is it on digital format? I-I mean, my old school had a--had a roster in the crystal phone app.

PERSEPHONE: So Locksley goes on with the announcements.

CECIL: All right.

PERSEPHONE: Surississah, you sit down behind Hudson, and then there's Cecil behind you. Ollie is in the next row, beside where Cecil is, because Cecil is in the last seat in the row. And Surississa, you hear a tap, and you see like a little pencil tapping on your desk next to you.

NUANCE: I will glance over to whoever is tapping on my desk.

NED: Hi!

PERSEPHONE: You see a very small boy. He's human, but he has very dark brown skin and short black dreadlocks that sort of hang to his chin. He is wearing a red hoodie, and very loose baggy pants with red sneakers. He looks like he could easily pass for thirteen or fourteen. He looks very young. And he smiles at you. He has a gap in his front teeth. And he has one of those smiles that's all teeth, very bright.

NED: Hi, I'm Ned.

SURI: Hi. I-I-I'm Suri, but you probably...I'm Surissisah, but you know--Hi. Um.

NED: Hi, I heard. Um, so I want to ask you about one of the pins on your bag.

SURI: I've got a--yes? Wh-wh-which--?

NED: I just want to ask about the, umm, pin on your backpack. Is that a limited edition, first-run, Pierced Heart pin? From the original release of the movie two years ago?

SURI: Yeah! Yes! It is!

NED: Oh. My god. I am so jealous. I only have second edition! And it makes me so sad! But you're so lucky!

SURI: Thanks! Oh my god, I didn't--I didn't think anyone would even...I mean, so I-I have to admit, I actually like the design on the second edition a little bit better? But--I mean...I mean...

NED: The beta is always better than the alpha, right?

SURI: Yeah...

NED: But, I mean, it's the original for a reason. It's a reason there's the first design. I just love the way that they look on the front, like-- Just looking at them. Looking at Havisham and Harkin just... They're so dreamy, right?

SURI: They were so in love and it was so perfect.

NED: Yeah.

SURI: Oh...!

NED: I love hearing the stories about them. And the movie was just incredible when it came out.

SURI: Oh my... It was so good and the fanfic--!

NED: The fanfic rules.

SURI: Yes!

NED: But, uh, we should probably shouldn't talk about that...

SURI: Yeah, no, you're right. Uh, it was nice to meet you.

NED: Shhh...

SURI: *[whispering]* Sorry. Yeah.

NED: *[Also whispering]* Nice to meet you, too.

PERSEPHONE: Okay. Class continues. Locksley goes on with more announcements. And at the end of it, the bell rings. *[school bell rings]* Homeroom is only about twenty minutes long. And you then work your way to your next classes.

The classes after homeroom are specifically tied to certain abilities that you have in your PC classes. Now, the classes at Varnum are not necessarily like a fighter class, a rogue class. In fact, there is no rogue class. Why would a school teach you how to steal? But there are classes like Arcane Spellwork 101, Bladework 101, Knife Skills. Basically, there's a curriculum and you choose these classes outside of your normal classes like math, history, science, and so on. So you will still go to those. However, because those are boring, we're not going to show those. We're going to do the fun ones! So, you go to your first period class, it's math or science or English, or whatever. And then you go to your specialized class.

*[INSPIRATION, Kevin MacLeod]*

So first we're going to go with the arcane casters, Spellwork 101, with Telluh Banes. This class specifically has Ollie and Surississah. After that, we will go to the Bladework class, which will have Ollie and Hudson. Following that we'll have Botany with Cecil. First up, Ollie and Suri... Surississa, you know that you need to get to the upstairs hallway. But you don't know where the stairs are. And Ollie, you're sort of just like starting to go off, when you see Surississah walking past you in the hallway, looking very confused.

OLLIE: Uh, hey. Do you, ah--You need help?

SURI: Yeah, I'm heading to Spellwork 101 but I can't-- Someone told me that the stairs were over here, but I'm not seeing them. At all.

OLLIE: I'm going to that class, too. Just follow me.

SURI: Oh! Thank you.

OLLIE: Yeah, the stairs are actually, uh, there's a door that only opens on, uh, Tuesdays and if you go down it, uh, th-the wrong way, you will actually end up in a hell dimension. Really awful, nasty business. So, you got to be careful where you go. Stick with me!

SURI: Th-thank you?

NUANCE: Suri is not sure if she believes it? But at the same time, this is Varnum, so that's entirely legitimate. It could be that.

PERSEPHONE: So you lead Surississah up to the second floor hallway, and you get to a large pair of double doors at the end of the hallway. Opening them up, you walk into a sort of auditorium-style classroom. There looks to be about forty students, walking around, getting to their seats. And you see at the front, there's rows and rows of desks that are sort of on an incline, on the top and then at the middle. At the bottom is a podium and in front of it is a very old man, possibly the oldest man you've ever seen that wasn't in a coffin. He has a short gray beard and long, long, thin white hair, balding at the pate. He is wearing purple robes. And every time he moves, it's sort of like the robes move and his wrinkles move with it. So it's sort of like he has curtains for jowly cheeks, which he's trying to cover up with the beard. Unsuccessfully.

TELLUH: Hello, are you new students? Please take a seat. There's no assigned seating, but you can choose where you go every day.

OLLIE: You can sit with me. As long as you don't mind the smell.

SURI: Of...what?

OLLIE: Of me! I-I-I don't believe in deodorant, so I just, uh, rub a crystal under my arms.

SURI: Okay? Thank you for...

OLLIE: I'm just kid--I'm joking! God, you take everything so seriously, don't you? I have to be more careful about joking with you.

MONETTE: Well, I for one, definitely don't think it's a joke because I can still smell you.

PERSEPHONE: And you see Monette walks into the classroom. She is wearing a white dress that sort of has lace at the top and over it has these robes signifying that she's a wizardry student, mainly. And she looks at you, Ollie, up and down, and just, ugh, sighs.

OLLIE: Hey Monette! The 90s popstars called. They want that fashion back.

MONETTE: Listen. Listen. Ollie. There's this thing you do, and it's called speaking, you should really get that checked and stop doing it.

OLLIE: *[mimicking]* You should really get that checked and stop doing it.

MONETTE: You know what, Ollie?

OLLIE: *[mimicking]* You know what, Ollie?

MONETTE: I can't imagine a fate worse than death than having to speak to you with the way your breath smells. It's like a wave of sour cream and onion...

OLLIE: *[mimicking]* Oh my god, then why do you talk to me so much? It's amazing how much you talk to me if you hate me so much.

MONETTE: Listen--

OLLIE: *[mimicking]* Listen!

MONETTE: Listen.

OLLIE: *[mimicking]* Listen!

PERSEPHONE: You see that walking in behind her, there are two girls. And Ollie, you know that these are Claudette and Marinette. One, Claudette, is a human with medium dark skin and straight hair. And the other is a dwarf with blonde hair. And you know that these are basically Monette's seconds. They follow her around wherever she goes and basically imitate her as much as possible. And they come up behind Monette and lean on a hip to her side and say,

CLAUDETTE: Why are you talking to this riffraff?

MARINETTE: Yeah. Why are you talking to this, like, garbage person? Umm...

OLLIE: Oh, she's in love with me. Yeah, she's, uh, asking me out. Ta, I've had to turn her down three times this week already. It's really embarrassing.

PERSEPHONE: They look at each other and then look at you.

MONETTE: As if.

CLAUDETTE: As if.

MARINETTE: As if.

OLLIE: Oh, I like how you say that, though. Say it again.

NUANCE: During all of this Suri has sidled away and has gone to sit down, kind of medium back. Like, normally in other classes, she would sit up front, as a proper nerd. But terrifying new school and her worst class, so she's kind of sitting in the back in the middle, hunched over with her hood over her head, hoping no one notices.

PERSEPHONE: So Monette and Claudette and Marinette, like, rip into you for a moment. But Surississa, you hear a loud thump as someone rushes to sit down next to you. And you see Ned practically vibrating with hyperactivity. Just like,

NED: *[gasps]* We're in the same class! We're in the same class! What kind of spellcaster are you? Are you a bard?

SURI: Noooo. Oh no, no, no. Then I would have to perform in front of people and then I would never have any magic at all. Ever. In my whole life.

NED: Oh. O-okay, well, I'm really glad we get to have class together. Now we can talk about things!

SURI: That-that's so great. Um, I'm--

NED: No one will hear us over this sound of Telluh talking. He...he, like, really drones on a lot.

MONETTE: And, like, another thing can you wear some footwear without holes in it? Like Are you really that poor?

OLLIE: Yeah, I am actually. Thanks for asking. Very insensitive of you. Hey, everyone I'm poor! Monette's making fun of me for it! What a bitch!

MONETTE: Claudette, Marinette. Let's just sit down and get away from this...thing.

OLLIE: Yeah, look out, I got fleas. They might catch.

MONETTE: Ew. Take a bath.

MARINETTE: Yeah, like take a bath.

OLLIE: I'm too poor to have a bath. Thanks for pointing it out! Again, insensitive!

NUANCE: When the mean girls go to sit down, Suri will lean over beyond Ned and kind of wave. Because Ollie is terrifying in his own special way, but they met at the library and he's actually been nice to her. So that's two points in his favor, so she's still okay with the,

SURI: If you want to, you can come sit down. But it's okay if you didn't want to do that and had other people sit down with...And oh look. It's a textbook.

ELISE: *[softly, in the background]* Oh. Must protect.

CARO: Ollie goes and sits in the row directly behind and adjacent to Suri, so that they're next to each other. But that he's still being cool.

PERSEPHONE: You see Monette, Marinette and Claudette sit in the second row. And the rest of the students filter in.

TELLUH BANES: All right, I shall begin the lecture. Today, we will be discussing the properties of a commonly used defensive magic. Magic Missile. Would anyone like to volunteer to be part of the demonstration?

CARO: I'm going to cast Minor Illusion and have the three mean girls make it look like their hands are raised. *[sound of a spell failing]*

TELLUH BANES: Oliver, there is no ambient magic allowed in my classroom.

OLLIE: Ahh, fuck.

TELLUH BANES: You know that I am alerted by the spell defenses I've placed here, whenever you cast an unauthorized spell.

OLLIE: I know, but I gotta try.

TELLUH BANES: Please see to it that you do not do so again.

MONETTE: This is fine. I'm totally gonna volunteer anyway. Thanks Ollie.

PERSEPHONE: And Monette stands up.

TELLUH BANES: Thank you, Miss Frost. Now I need two more participants. And since Mr. Oliver has been using magic already, I assume he wishes to participate. So Oliver, please come down.

CARO: Ollie stands up and goes to the front.

MONETTE: Ew.

TELLUH BANES: Now Could I please get a third practitioner?

NUANCE: Wow, the amount that Suri is looking down is just...just...Look, her desk is fascinating, what with the whole no eye contact. Mmm mmm. No.

NED: Suri, should I do it?

SURI: Yeah, sure! Yeah, you, uhh, you...

NED: I'll do it!

PERSEPHONE: Ned gets up and stands up, raises his hand.

TELLUH BANES. Very good, Ned, if you would please come down.

PERSEPHONE: Right, and Ned goes down. Okay, so here's how this is gonna work. Even if you don't have Magic Missile, it's an arcane spell, and this is practicum. So what we're doing here is basically having Telluh go through the mechanics of the spell and having you attempt to cast it. We are going to treat this as a roll. What I'm going to have each of you do is roll and arcane check. And few of you will roll with disadvantage - Surississah - because some of you are not an arcane caster. Even if their parents think that you are. And we will see what the results are. We'll start with Ollie.

CARO: *[die roll]* So I've got a 19.

PERSEPHONE: Cool. So Telluh positions you, sort of guides you through the steps using his prowess as a mage to help you along with the spell. And you pass with flying colors and you send a Magic Missile out. *[sound of an arcane blast of magic]* It hits the spell barrier on the edge of the classroom. *[sound of magic impacting a ringing barrier]* And everyone's sort of like, 'Huh. Ollie did it.' And Monette's hand's on her hip, just looking at you, and rolls her eyes,

Monette: Whatever.

OLLIE: Try not to fall in love with me, luv. It's not going to go well.

MONETTE: Listen, I'm more likely to fall in love with a pile of shit than you.

OLLIE: I've been called a pile of shit actually! So never say never.

MONETTE: Ughhhh. Professor, Is it my turn?

TELLUH BANES: Yes

PERSEPHONE: Telluh Banes walks over to Monette and does the same thing for her. Let's see what she gets. She rolled a nat 20. You see Monette, even before he starts trying to position her, just rolls her eyes, casts the spell. *[Magical aura noises]* You see this waving aura of energy around her feet and she casts a perfect Magic Missile. *[sound of an arcane blast of energy]* She actually sends out more than you would averagely expect, and they twist and circle around the room, looking like rockets, before hitting the spell barrier. *[sound of magic impacting a ringing barrier]* She puts her hand on her hip again, looks at Ollie and says,

MONETTE: Try not to fall in love with me. Bitch.

OLLIE: Too late. I'm mad about you.

MONETTE: Ew. Ugh.

OLLIE: *[mimicking]* Ew. Ugh.

NED: Alright, is it my turn? Is it my turn?

TELLUH BANES: Yes, it's your turn.

PERSEPHONE: Oh, I'm sorry. Did I say that Surississa was casting a spell?

NUANCE: Yes.

PERSEPHONE: I apologize to our podcast viewers. Surississah is not casting a spell. Surississah did not volunteer. Ned did.

NUANCE: Oh thank god.. I got double fours, so like...

PERSEPHONE: Ned goes up to cast the spell. Telluh puts him in position. And before he can finish, you see this aura. This red, dark aura bursts into life around his feet. *[dark, creepifying aura noises]* You see, Ned gets wide-eyed and says,

NED: Oh no! Not now.

PERSEPHONE: *[barrage of magic missile noises]* And a burst of Magic Missiles flood the room. *[barrage continues]* There's about a hundred of them, spiraling out of control of the room. *[barrage continues]* You see they hit the barrier and shatter it. *[magical barrier destruction]* It falls in glittery pieces to the ground. Telluh's like

TELLUH BANES: Oh no! What's happening?

PERSEPHONE: You see Monette is about to get slammed with one, as is Suri. Everyone is to roll initiative who's in the room.

*[PRELUDE AND ACTION, Kevin MacLeod]*

PERSEPHONE: Ollie you're up first. You see a lot happening as these rockets flood out of Ned's feet and in to fill the room. They do look like rockets, each one with a magical metal base and just this flare of energy at the bottom. You see that they are shooting off in all directions. But you see two are coming directly for Monette and are about to slam her against the wall. She has her back turn to it and has not noticed them.

CARO: I'm going to run at her and try to push her down. Acrobatics slide. Like take her feet out, so she doesn't get hit by them.

PERSEPHONE: Okay, roll an acrobatics check.

CARO: I've got a 10 total.

PERSEPHONE: So you go to try and get Monette out of the way. And you stumble over in the process, failing your roll completely and you fall on top of Monette, slamming her into the ground as rockets go over your head.

MONETTE: Like what are you doing?

OLLIE: Sorry. Uh?

MONETTE: Ugh!

PERSEPHONE: Now, Surississah's turn. Suri, on your turn, you see that three rockets are coming for you and the two people next to you. You also see that there are two rockets going for Marinette and Claudette, down below.

NUANCE: Question: so I know Magic Missile is usually targeted, but I know that this one is different and weird. Does it count as a targeted spell as for the rules of Sanctuary?

PERSEPHONE: Yes.

NUANCE: I unfortunately don't know the other girls' names, so I can't just yell, 'look out!' I don't even know Monette's name so I can't even be like, 'Monette's friends, watch out!' But I can try to move in front of the other two people that the rockets are coming towards. I will try to fling myself over toward where they are, where the rockets are coming from, and then I'm gonna cast Sanctuary. *[angelic music]*

PERSEPHONE: Okay, so the rocket... You throw yourself in front of these two people. And are pushed away and into the crumbling spell barrier. You see that two rockets hit a window and blast it open. [*shattering glass*] The two people behind you are a green haired Earth Genasi and an Elven girl with brown hair, kind of mousy-looking.

ELVEN GIRL: Oh my god, did you just save us?

EARTH GENASI: Yeah, did you...did you just?

SURI: Umm..I?

ELVEN GIRL: What was that spell? That didn't look... that was - that was not arcane magic, was it?

SURI: I just--Umm really. I didn't really even--

EARTH GENASI: I didn't really care she saved our lives like...

PERSEPHONE: it's now Monette's turn. Monette is completely under Ollie.

OLLIE: I'm so sorry!

MONETTE: Ollie, what the fuck? Oh my god, why did you do that? Why are you on top of me? Why are you still on top of me?

OLLIE: I'm - I'm getting off! I mean! No no, I mean--

MONETTE: WHAT?

OLLIE: Goodbye!

MONETTE: Oh my god, what are you doing? What are you doing?

CARO: I push myself off her and roll away.

PERSEPHONE: Okay, so with that, combat is over. A bunch of the rockets have managed to narrowly miss most of the students, but a few get blasted back into the wall and sort of slide down it, cartoon style. And groan, 'Uhhhhh...' You see that Ned is in front of the class still; the aura around his feet starts to go away. You see that Telluh has launched himself behind a desk and sort of peeks his head, his little balding head, above the desk.

TELLUH BANES: Is it over? Is everything... is over?

OLLIE: Yes! You're- you're hiding?

TELLUH BANES: Um...

OLLIE: How is it that I'm braver than you? That's awful!

MONETTE: Braver? You're braver?! You were on top of me.

OLLIE: Yeah, cause I saved you from two rockets. You're welcome.

MONETTE: Oh, you saved me from two rockets? Yeah right. Like you actually saved me from two rockets.

PERSEPHONE: You see Claudette and Marinette come over. And they're just..they look at each other and go,

CLAUDETTE: Actually, he did.

MARINETTE: Yeah, like he kinda did.

CLAUDETTE: Not gonna lie.

MONETTE: Excuse me?

OLLIE: Well, I don't care what you think, Ricky and I know what happened and that's all that's important. Right Ricky?

MONETTE: I just can't even right now. I just - I just--ugh.

OLLIE: Alright, goodbye.

CARO: I walk away.

PERSEPHONE: Do you walk out of the classroom?

CARO: No, I just walked to the back of where I was sitting before.

PERSEPHONE: Telluh gets up. Finally. And he looks around to check that there aren't more rockets.

TELLUH BANES: Maybe I should call the nurse.

PERSEPHONE: And you see that there's, like, ten students that have been blasted all over the room, looking in various states of being singed. You see that Ned, at the front of the room, is just like,

NED: Oh my god, what happened? What did I do? What did I do? That doesn't usually happen!

PERSEPHONE: And Ned looks sort of shifty-eyed. Could Surississah and Ollie, if you're paying attention, roll insight?

CARO: *[die roll]* Nat 1.

PERSEPHONE: You think he's telling the truth?

OLLIE: Yeah. Yeah, he's telling the truth.

NUANCE: *[die roll]* 17.

PERSEPHONE: He is lying through his teeth. Badly.

NUANCE: Suri is not about to call him out on it. Not in front of the class.

TELLUH BANES: Well, perhaps something was wrong with the barrier and protective spells. It shouldn't have shattered like that. All of you, please turn your textbooks to page two hundred, while I see about getting the nurse up here to take care of your fellow students.

RANDOM STUDENT: I think my hair's on fire.

PERSEPHONE: You see one dude has like this Alfalfa point of hair on top of his head and there's just like a little flame and his friend just puts it out with his fingers.

TELLUH BANES: Ned, if you could please go back to your seat.

PERSEPHONE: You see that people in the classroom are staring at him, like, looking really wary. And he sort of shuffles back. He goes up to Surississah and stands next to her by his chair. He's like,

NED: You don't mind if I sit here do you?

SURI: That's your chair. Where else would you sit?

NUANCE: And then Suri, gives him a small - just a small smile. Like she's kind of out of practice at it? But just like, you know...

NED: O-okay. Thank you?

PERSEPHONE: And sits back down. The school nurse comes in, you know her name is Madame Palmeria. She is a half-orc with snow white hair, older woman, very kindly looking, with very long tusks. She comes over and starts doing healing magic on the students that are hurt. Telluh eventually tries to get control of the class, the students that are remaining because Palmeria takes most of them down to the infirmary on the first floor. But you see that no one's paying attention. Everyone's too freaked out and people keep staring at Ned. A few people are glaring, like they're about to do something.

OLLIE: Uhh...hey. Uh..

CARO: I lean over the chairs right where Ned and Suri are, in front of me.

OLLIE: Hey. Uh, I-I don't - I don't think you should stay here. I think you should--

NED: What?

OLLIE: You should - you should get out of here.

NED: You think I should - I should leave?

OLLIE: Yeah. I think you--It's - You know, what I can do? I can cause a distraction, and then you can get out here.

NED: You'd do that for me?

OLLIE: Yeah, course.

NED: Please?

OLLIE: You bet.

CARO: And I cast Minor Illusion [*magical strings and gong*] to make a bunch of fireworks go off in the front of the room. That spell out...it's gonna say 'Cuck Funt!'.

PERSEPHONE: Cool, it says Cuck Funt. You see that the sound of fireworks, Telluh's like,

TELLUH BANES: Oh no, it's happening again!

PERSEPHONE: And ducks down. You see a bunch of other students are like, 'oh no!' And Ned looks at Surissisah and he's like,

NED: I guess I'll see you later. Umm...bye?

SURI: I hope we have more classes together.

NED: Me too.

PERSEPHONE: And he runs off, out of the class.

*[INSPIRATION, Kevin MacLeod]*

PERSEPHONE: And with that, we leave Spellcasting 101 for the arcane casters. And we move to Bladework 102 with Ollie and Hudson. This takes place immediately after the last class gets out. Ollie, you notice that a few people are mumbling about Ned, sounding really awful. You see that Monette gives you, like, a glance back as she's leaving the classroom and looks like she's about to say something but just leaves instead.

CARO: I blow her a kiss.

PERSEPHONE: So the class is over. And you're going out to the field where you know the next class is taught by Jane Wrixley, who is a Soren. You know that Soren are a race of humanoids from the mountains; they have wings and clawed feet, but otherwise look completely humanoid, although their hair is usually made out of feathers. You know that Jane is a PE teacher. And he is also the student advisor for the jousting team and the wrestling team. Jane has tan skin, mixed white and brown pinions for hair and wings. His eyes are entirely sky blue, they have no pupil, and his coloring looks a bit like an eagle. And he has sort of a sharp, hawkish face. Gathered around you are a few other students. It looks like this is a mixed-level class. So there are students from other grades there. You recognize that Kenneth, who's a junior, is in this class, You also recognize that Grange is there, as well as the Goliath he was with in the hallway.

ELISE: Do I...How do I know Kenneth?

PERSEPHONE: You saw Kenneth in the hallway, talking to a dwarf that was dressed flamboyantly. But you don't know him by name. Ollie does.

ELISE: I wave-- or, Hudson waves at Ollie.

HUDSON: Hey!

OLLIE: *[under his breath]* Oh god. *[louder]* Heeeey.

HUDSON: How's it going, buddy?

OLLIE: I'm not your buddy.

HUDSON: Ahhh, you're funny!

OLLIE: ...Yeah.

JANE: Right, is everyone here? We're going to take attendance soon.

PERSEPHONE: You see Jane jogs up to the front of the class You're sort of gathered in a semi-circle at the front of the field.

JANE: Right. So if you haven't met me before, I'm Jane Wrixley. I am the coach for the jousting team and the wrestling team. Hopefully some of you will come out to tryouts next week.

ELISE: Hudson lights up.

JANE: So we're going to be covering bladework.

PERSEPHONE: You see that he holds out his hand and summons a blade to his fist. It just appears there. Sort of waves it around.

JANE: This is a sword. I hope you all know that. If you don't? Well, I wouldn't be surprised; it wouldn't be the first time. Anyway. Today we're going to be practicing with sword work. You're going to be using dull blades to spar with after we run through some basic steps.

PERSEPHONE: You see he turns around and summons a pile of swords [metal clangs] that line up in a row, point down and hover in the air.

JANE: These will be your weapons. They're already dulled magically. If you would, please select one. They're all the same. It doesn't matter. Just pick one.

CARO: I look for the most rapier-like one, even though they're all the same.

PERSEPHONE: None of them are rapier-like.

OLLIE: Dammit.

CARO: Okay. Ollie really reluctantly takes one.

ELISE: Hudson grabs one.

PERSEPHONE: So Hudson, as you grab one you realize that someone else has reached for the same sword. You turn around and you see Grange, minus the leather coat, just in the muscle shirt and torn pants.

GRANGE: That's mine.

HUDSON: Oh, sorry. Here you go.

GRANGE: Thanks.

ELISE: Hudson grabs another one.

GRANGE: That's also mine.

HUDSON: Oh, you use two swords? It's so cool!

GRANGE: Yup.

ELISE: Hudson hands him the other one. And then Hudson grabs the next one.

GRANGE: That's also mine.

HUDSON: Where does the third sword go?

PERSEPHONE: You see the Goliath walks over. He's tall and has blue tattooing across half of his face. He has light brown hair, green eyes. Looks very intimidating.

BUSTER: Grange, stop messing with the underclassmen. We got shit to do.

GRANGE: I know, but. Look at that face. I can't not mess with him. I just want to sort of, like, fucking pound him into the dirt or something.

OLLIE: You just really want to pound him, right?

HUDSON: Sorry, I don't - I don't go that way. But I'm sure you're a really nice guy!

GRANGE: The fuck? What do you mean? Listen, I have a handful - I have an armful of swords and I will run you through with them.

BUSTER: Uh, Grange, those are dull.

GRANGE: Well, it'll be a slow process then!

OLLIE: Everything you're saying is just making this better.

HUDSON: I'm sorry.

GRANGE: Ollie, who the fuck asked you? Who told you you could talk?

OLLIE: Oh Ricky. Oh, he's actually in charge. He gave me permission.

RICKY: *[small animal noises that sound like nyah nyah nyah nyah]*

GRANGE: Did your-did your fucking ferret just sass me?

OLLIE: Oh yeah. Oh, uh, oh, you should hear what he's saying about you. It's really, uh, really unpleasant

PERSEPHONE: Grange licks his lips and walks over to you. He's taller than you by maybe a foot and sort of sort of tries to look intimidating.

GRANGE: You trying to fuck with me?

OLLIE: Well, I mean. I wasn't before but see, when you put it that way. Absolutely. We gonna go? You can bust up my teeth! I've already got really messed up teeth, you really probably are doing me a favor.

PERSEPHONE: Roll a dexterity saving throw.

CARO: *[die roll]* Nat 1.

PERSEPHONE: You start mouthing off and mid-sentence, Grange drops two of the swords. Instead of hitting with the blade, hits you with this elbow and smashes you in the face. *[heavy punch]*

GRANGE: How's that feel?

OLLIE: Ooof! Ooof. *[coughs and laughs]*

CARO: I cast Tasha's Hideous Laughter on him.

PERSEPHONE: Okay, that's a Charisma saving throw, right? Wisdom?

CARO: Wisdom. Wisdom saving throw. 12 DC.

GRANGE: Ha ha ha. Fancy spellwork won't help you here.

OLLIE: Ugh. Fuck.

HUDSON: Hey, that's not very nice!

ELISE: Hudson goes in to defend Ollie.

GRANGE: What are you, like, his boyfriend or something, pretty boy?

ELISE: He just tries to punch him. Does not respond.

PERSEPHONE: Roll to attack.

ELISE: All right, that's an Unarmed attack right? Okay, that's a...23.

PERSEPHONE: You hit. Unarmed is 1 damage, so...

ELISE: So mine is Unarmed: 1 damage plus 2.

PERSEPHONE: Okay.

ELISE: Because I add my strength, so it's 3. So, Hudson just snaps from, like, sweet, bubbly Hudson when he sees Ollie get knocked down by a much, much larger man. And he just goes,

HUDSON: Hey, that's not very nice!

ELISE: And then just cold clocks him in the face. *[heavy punch]*

GRANGE: Ahhh!

PERSEPHONE: You see that Grange stumbles back. His lip is now bleeding; he spits up blood.

GRANGE: that's gonna be the end of you!

PERSEPHONE: The Goliath next to him grabs him.

BUSTER: Dude, dude, the teacher's literally looking at us right now.

GRANGE: I don't care. I'm gonna take this fucking pretty boy's face and rip it off and put it on my fucking mantle.

JANE: That's enough.

PERSEPHONE: You see that Jane comes over. There are swords hovering around him, just following him in an aura.

JANE: I didn't give the okay to start sparring. Grange, did you start this?

OLLIE: He did! Yup, he did!

GRANGE: No, they did!

HUDSON: No! He just knocked that little guy down! That's totally not fair. He's so small!

OLLIE: Hey, I have feelings.

JANE: Buster. Did Grange start this?

PERSEPHONE: You see Buster, the Goliath, looks between Grange and you. And back the Grange

BUSTER: No. It was them.

GRANGE: See, I told you so.

HUDSON: What?

JANE: Huh.

OLLIE: Two against two, then. I guess we'll never know.

JANE: You two, come with me. You're going to the principal's office.

OLLIE: What? That's not fair!

JANE: Grange, go get checked out at the infirmary. Did I ask what was fair? Follow me. Class is on hold while I'm gone. Actually, Kenneth, you know what you're running through. Take them through the basic exercises.

PERSEPHONE: Kenneth, the blonde human wearing a varsity jacket, looks up, sees a lot of the blood, frowns, but nods.

JANE: Come with me, you two.

HUDSON: That kid is a bully!

ELISE: He comes with him but he's like, fuming about Grange.

PERSEPHONE: As Jane turns his back, you see that Grange looks at you, makes a V with his fingers and licks between it, and then flips you off.

HUDSON: Does he have a crush on me? Ohh...okay, yeah. *[crickets]*

OLLIE: Who are you talking to? Oh, do you have familiar, also?

HUDSON: WHAT?

OLLIE: Is-is yours invisible?

HUDSON: Who?

OLLIE: You. You were just talking to someone.

HUDSON: No, I was just talking to myself. Did I say that out loud?

OLLIE: Yeah. Yeah you did.

HUDSON: Oh.

OLLIE: You're kind of weird, aren't you?

HUDSON: Noooo, I'm not weird!

OLLIE: Oh, okay. All right.

PERSEPHONE: You two follow Jane to the principal's office. And we're going to take a step back to the beginning of the same fourth period class. And we go to Botany. Cecil, Varnum is a correctional facility and thus does not have much in the way of outside facilities. So in lieu of a greenhouse, there is an open garden that's maintained on the east side of the grounds. There's only a few students around you, maybe like ten or fifteen. And they're all starting to sit at outdoor desks that look like work benches that have sort of overhanging flaps. At the front, kneeling at the garden is a Water Genasi. In place of hair, she has rippling waves of water that sort of flow behind her and down. Part of it's tied up in a ponytail. She has bright, bright blue eyes and medium-tan skin. She's covered in dirt stains and barefoot and her feet are dirty. And wears overalls over bare legs, and a sun hat.

GEL: Hello, welcome to Botany. I am, Gel, here to be your teacher in the ways of the foliage. Please take a seat. The plants for today's vibe already been provided

PERSEPHONE: Cecil, do you go to a seat?

WREN: Yup. Cecil...Cecil will just look honestly kind of put off by this. and will go and sit in like the back corner if possible.

PERSEPHONE: So you go sit in the back corner. You sit next to a dwarf with a short, well-kempt beard. They have medium-length brown hair, and they are wearing a peasant skirt. They seem to be looking at the plant after they've opened their desks and sort of trimming at it, with small scissors cutting out dead bits.

CECIL: Do you know if this class is sort of a paired thing? Or are we independent?

UNK: Are you talking to me?

CECIL: Am I not supposed to be?

UNK: Oh, uh, no. It's fine. Um, hi. Um, what's your name?

CECIL: I'm Cecil.

UNK: Hi, Cecil. I'm Unk. Uh, they/them pronouns. Uh, that's cool right?

WREN: Cecil's face just like...looks stunned for a moment. And actually points to their blazer where, there's this little like silver pin that says they-slash-them

UNK: Very cool. Yeah, okay. I'm glad you sat next to me. So are you new to Varnum?

CECIL: Really really really? Total-- Y-y-yes.

UNK: I only asked because you know you're in a Lothmorin uniform, uh.

CECIL: Yes, It's it's it's a it's a it's. It's a big mix up. I--

UNK: Is it a fashion statement? Are you like, protesting the sort of individuality that Varnum allows you to have because they don't care about us? Is that what you're doing? Is it a political statement?

CECIL: I-I hate to ask this because we really did just meet. Are you *[whispers]* under the influence?

UNK: No, I'm straight-edge man.

CECIL: Oh. So you're just...

UNK: Hardcore. No, that's just--I'm just very laid back. I try to go with the flow. Yeah, just feel the wave and vibe.

CECIL: There's not a lot of flow here. I don't.

UNK: Yeah, you're totally right. You should see what my friends...Ben is totally, like, uptight as hell and Top Hat's, just, like... y'know, manic energy all the time. I like to balance things out, you know.

GEL: Riiiiight. So does everyone have their plant in front of them?

WREN: Do I have a plant in front of me?

PERSEPHONE: You do. In the desk, yeah.

GEL: Everyone please take your trimmers and then bow to the plant. Show respect to the plant. Embrace the energy emanating from the plant. As you bring yourself to the plant's wavelength.

WREN: Cecil is gonna, kind of like try to side-eye Unk and see if Unk is, like, responding to this in a positive way.

PERSEPHONE: Unk looks at you, shakes their head, and just whispers to you,

UNK: Just like. Pretend to do it? The textbook, Gel's a little... I don't like to use harsh terms...but she's a little off... avant garde.

NUANCE: That was nearly a spit take onto my laptop.

ELISE: Those are the words we would use.

CARO: Harsh terms. Harsh terms.

NUANCE: I was not prepared for that kind of language. This is a family friendly podcast.

ELISE: Are we allowed to have that on air?

GEL: Now that you're on the wavelength of the plant, you must address it. Say 'hello' to the plant, massage its lovely, fuzzy leaves. And then you must indulge the plant's pride. You must address it as sir or madam. Whatever you think the gender of the plant is in your heart. And then feel the trimming happening. Feel the parts that it wants removed. Feel the bits of its soul that have grown out and are just holding back. its true form. Allow it to be as glorious as it wants to be. Help it on its journey of life. Yasss.

WREN: Cecil is just holding the trimmers and just...looking at the teacher. Just, like, their head is cocked. They have never witnessed anything like this before? You know, coming from Lothmorin, I feel like all the classes were very like rigid theory. And they don't know how to deal with this. This doesn't make any sense.

NUANCE: I'm still over here getting topped by the plant and having to refer to it as 'sir.' I'm sorry.

WREN: Cecil's gonna kind of elbow Unk.

CECIL: So I don't really...I'm not that kind of Druid. I don't know how to talk to plants?

UNK: Neither am I, dude. Do you mind 'dude'?

CECIL: No.

UNK: I don't usually.

CECIL: Dude's-dude's-dude's fine.

UNK: Okay, dude's chill? Uh, this is like all they have.

CECIL: Like, I could talk to animals if I have to, but?

UNK: Oh, yeah. For sure, for sure. Me too.

CECIL: But but not plants? And I'm really I'm just--

UNK: I like to think of it as, like, learning to help a different part of nature that's not usually my purview? Sort of like broadening my horizons? Because if I don't, I might sort of cry in this class. Because it's painful.

CECIL: Are-are we going to be able to, you know... Okay, fine, no. This is fine.

UNK: Well, there used to be more, but like. Not a lot of Druids do a lot of things that get them here. You know?

CECIL: I-I was - I was pretty disappointed that this was the only Druid class. Do you think that that if I asked really nicely, I could do a geology independent study?

UNK: I think that would be fine? You'd have to talk to Gel about it though.

CECIL: Oh, do I have to?

UNK: And she would actually probably tell you... forgive me my impression but you probably tell you to like, "feel whatever's in your heart and then, like, try to submit it for a grade, but then award yourself the grade you feel your work deserves..." Or something like that? Not bad impression right?

WREN: All right, there's cogs turning in Cecil's head right now? Because Cecil wasn't doing so hot in the old school.

CECIL: I think you're right. Huh

UNK: Did you have, like, an epiphany or something?

CECIL: I think I did.

UNK: You know, you're pretty chill. I'm glad we're in the same class. Maybe with you, it'll be a little less boring. I'll introduce you to my friends later, you know?

CECIL: Alright.

UNK: You free for lunch?

CECIL: Yeah.

UNK: Cool. Okay, you can sit with us.

CECIL: Yeah, I usually sit by myself at lunch.

WREN: Which is probably the first time anyone's ever said that to Cecil. And so they are trying really hard. They've got one hand kind of covering their mouth, to cover up the fact that they're trying really hard not to smile, and then they're going to try to trim-- to feel the trim of...this...bush.

ELISE: Feel the trim!

NUANCE: Trim that bush.

PERSEPHONE: You see at the front of the class that Gel has completely bowed and has raised her butt in the air, full prostrating.

GEL: Prostrate yourself before the plant gods...

UNK: This is getting even weird for Gel.

PERSEPHONE: You see Unk reaches into their bag and pulls out their cysphone, and they have a pair of headphones with earbuds and they offer you one.

UNK: Wanna listen to some tunes?

CECIL: That sounds so much better than what's happening in front of my eyes.

UNK: Cool.

*[SUMMON THE ROCK, Kevin MacLeod]*

PERSEPHONE: It's like really high energy rock music. Completely opposite of Unk's vibe.

UNK: Yeah, let's just...let's just pretend we're not here.

CECIL: Alright, yeah, let's just...

UNK: Yeah. Vibe with the music instead of the plant. Yah.

GEL: Oh no, I prostrated myself too far and I've landed in some poisonous wilderness ivy...Oh no...Oh no.... this is not the plant I meant to beseech....Woe... Woe is me...

PERSEPHONE: And as you listen to music with Unk, we're going to switch gears yet again as we move to the first floor hallway. Jane is leading Ollie and Hudson down the hallway towards the principal's office. You come to a door that looks much like the other doors at Varnum: very shabby, poorly-maintained. But there is golden lettering that seems to be fairly recent, over this sort of grid pattern on the window, that has a light blocking white sheet in front of it. And it says, 'Principal.' Jane looks at both of you.

JANE: I don't have time to listen to what you--what happened and I know that Granger is a--

HUDSON: A bully?!

JANE: --prone to lying.

HUDSON: He's a jerk!

OLLIE: I think the words you're looking for is, 'Cuck Funt.'

JANE: All right, I'm just gonna go in and I'm gonna pretend I didn't see that because I do not have time to deal with whatever's on your hand. Just go in the door.

OLLIE: It's not a swear. It's not.

CARO: Ollie goes in. Ollie, uh, for the record, Ollie looks actually stricken. Like, Ollie looks afraid.

HUDSON: You okay, little buddy?

OLLIE: Yeah, I will be as soon as we're out of here.

HUDSON: You okay, man? That kid really clocked you.

OLLIE: I am less worried about my nose and teeth than I am about having to talk to Principal Forscythe and you're going to see why in just a few seconds.

HUDSON: Is he going to hurt you?

OLLIE: So 'she' and, uh, I hope not.

HUDSON: Is she gonna hurt you?

OLLIE: ...Just worry about yourself, mate.

*[Comfortable Mystery, Kevin MacLeod]*

PERSEPHONE: You walk into the door and though the outside door was shabby, the inside of the office is better kept. There's still worn wood around the edges, but it seems that someone has done some work to make it seem more professional. There's a purple carpet on the floor and a well-made wooden desk at the back of the room. There are bookshelves with educational texts built into the walls that have been painted dark.

There is a light piece, above the desk, that is made of woven glass and it reflects purple, then blue, then green light in the room. And behind the desk, you see a woman. She has long, long, silky straight black hair, and two horns that are a purplish red, that curl back from her hairline. She is, even sitting down, extremely tall. She has broad shoulders and seems powerfully-built. And she looks emotionless. She stares at you with a flat, judgmental stare you can detect no

emotion from.

LACUNA: Jane. You brought students to me?

JANE: Principal Forscythe. These students were fighting and I would hope they would tell you what's going on.

LACUNA: You may go, Jane.

PERSEPHONE: Jane leaves, shutting the door behind him. Lacuna Forscythe, the Principal of Varnum, gets up and she walks in from the desk. She has digitized legs with cloven feet. She's very clearly a Tiefling. She leans on the desk and crosses her arms, looking at both of you impassively.

LACUNA: Now, would care to tell me why you were fighting?

HUDSON: Oh, well. We were in class and we're supposed to be picking swords. And then this guy, what's his name? Spange?

OLLIE: Grange.

HUDSON: Grange starts trying to take all the swords! And then for some reason, like, he hits Ollie! Which is totally unfair, because Ollie is like, half his size! So I get mad because I don't like when people pick on little people.

OLLIE: Hey! I'm right here, man!

LACUNA: I'm going to cut you off right there. One at a time. You were saying, Hudson?

HUDSON: Well, Ollie gets hit because Grange punched him so that I just wanted to make sure that he knew that wasn't okay. So...I hit him back.

LACUNA: And Oliver, is that where you got that bloody nose of yours?

OLLIE: Yep.

LACUNA: Do you agree with everything Mr. Eilauver has said here?

OLLIE: Yep.

LACUNA: Hmm. Both of you. You need to understand something. Oliver, this is not the first time you've been brought in front of me.

OLLIE: [weak laugh]

LACUNA: Varnum is a place where things that are wrong, come to be corrected. Or, things that are misunderstood, come to be understood. I would appreciate it, if whatever path you're on, whatever pain you're dealing, with did not affect other students. Very clearly you both have your own things going on, as everyone here does. No one comes to Varnum without a story or a struggle. Now, Grange has been known to be difficult, and I will speak to him. However, you must not indulge base notions of fighting, Have I made myself clear?

HUDSON: Yes, ma'am.

OLLIE: Yes, ma'am.

LACUNA: Very good. Now, since you were affronted by Grange, supposedly, I will not yet give you any punishment. We will have to see what Mr. Lox has to say. We don't tolerate bullies here. Both of you may return to the class.

PERSEPHONE: You exit the principal's office and Lacuna sits back at her desk and watches you go, purple eyes following you both as you leave the room. And we speed up. Fourth period has ended. And now it's time for lunch.

*[INSPIRATION, Kevin MacLeod]*

PERSEPHONE: You all exit your classes. Cecil, you walk out of the classroom and Unk catches up to you.

UNK: Uh, so I need to go to my locker, but I will be in the cafeteria when you want to meet up? And me and my friends will just sort of sit with you. That cool?

CECIL: Yeah, yeah. I'm uh. I have to--I have to make a couple...texts anyway, so...

UNK: Cool. Well, it was really chill meeting you, Cecil.

PERSEPHONE: And they walk away

WREN: Cecil is gonna find a quiet corner and turn to their crystal phone. And first they're going to text their mother.

CECIL: Sorry, mom. I'll be late tonight. Something came up at school.

WREN: ...Detention.

PERSEPHONE: Oh right... You get a text back within a minute that says,

CECILIA: What do you have to do that's so important?

WREN: Cecil's going to ignore that text. And my second text is,

CECIL: Hi, Jenny. First day was all right. How's life at Lothmorin?

PERSEPHONE: You get a text back a minute later. And it says,

JENNY: Oh. Cecil. You finally texted.

PERSEPHONE: There's dots on the screen.

JENNY: Is everything okay with you? I know I should have texted you, but I didn't really know what to do. It was kind of my fault that you were in the park.

WREN: Cecil will just think about it for a moment and then text back,

CECIL: ...It's fine. Head injury. No worries.

JENNY: Are you coming back to school soon? What do you mean your first day?

WREN: Cecil's gonna sit on that and decide to text back later. Cause I mean, like, Cecil's like me. Get a text and think on it and maybe wait a few days and maybe don't ever actually respond...and you know, it's fine. It's fine!

PERSEPHONE: So where did you want-- you went to the side to text right? Okay. So you're in the main hallway at the center of Varnum. And at this point you see coming through big double doors are Hudson and Ollie, having grabbed the rest of their stuff from the field.

OLLIE: So all I'm saying is that you could probably do more push ups if you carried my books.

HUDSON: If they're too heavy for you, buddy, just let me know. I'll carry them for you.

OLLIE: Oh, yeah. Too heavy for me. There you go!

HUDSON: Hey, I got you.

OLLIE: Appreciate it.

PERSEPHONE: Surissisah, you'll be coming out of your history class. So you're all in the hallway. Can I have everyone roll a perception check?

*[die rolls]*

PERSEPHONE: Ollie what'd you get?

CARO: I got a 4.

PERSEPHONE: You know nothing. Hudson what you get?

ELISE: 7!

PERSEPHONE: You're so pretty, Hudson. Surissisah, what you get?

NUANCE: I also got a 4.

ELISE: What the fuck, guys?

PERSEPHONE: So very pretty. Cecil? Are you paying attention?

WREN: I got a 21.

PERSEPHONE: So you are all in the same hallway. You haven't necessarily talked to everyone or each other yet, but Cecil. You see out of the corner of your eye, rounding the corner of a hallway, is a black cat. It pauses, looks up at you, sits on its hind legs. And with very, very, very bright green eyes looks up at you and says,

WREN: Speak With Animals.

CAT: Mrow. Mrow

WREN: Cat talk.

ELISE: It's just saying, 'Meow.'

WREN: Are you somebody's...

CAT: Meow.

WREN: Cat talk or whatever.

PERSEPHONE: You don't hear anything but 'meow' even though you've cast the spell.

CECIL: Are you somebody's familiar?

PERSEPHONE: The cat looks at you, frowns,

CAT: The fuck you looking at? You gotta starin' problem?

CECIL: I've been told that before. I apologize.

CAT: Usually when I 'meow meow' at y'all fuckers, you don't care much and you just go away. But you keep staring at me. That something you like?

CECIL: *[stammers]*

CAT: Like, take a picture, it'll last longer.

CECIL: I-I just thought that maybe you were lost or something.

CAT: So you can see me?

WREN: I'm looking at the floor by the way. Cecil is not looking at the cat anymore.

CECIL: Yes?

PERSEPHONE: The cat gets right up under your gaze and climbs onto your leg like with his front paws.

CAT: Yo. You can see me even though I didn't want you to see me. That's a good thing. Okay, I can work with this.

CECIL: Yes, you are--

CAT: Why don't you follow me? Let's have a little journey.

CECIL: All right.

CAT: Ready for some fun, kiddo? Too bad. Come along.

PERSEPHONE: And the cat starts hopping...Well, not hopping. The cat starts strolling down the corridor.

WREN: Cecil will give a sort of, like, resigned look over the direction of the cafeteria. And then follow the cat.

PERSEPHONE: You three notice Cecil walking past you and you see that, some reason, they are following a cat.

HUDSON: Oh hey, Cecil!

OLLIE: Oi! New kid! Uh, Cecil!

SURI: Where did you find the cat?

OLLIE: Where you going, mate?

CECIL: What? It's a--I'm sure it's somebody's f-familiar something. Later.

WREN: And I'm just gonna keep going. I'm not friends with any of these people.

PERSEPHONE: Okay, Cecil--

HUDSON: Bye, Cecil!

SURI: Bye?

WREN: I figured somebody would follow me to be obnoxious, maybe I misread all of you.

ELISE: "So I'm following a cat in the school, I dunno!"

SURI: Excuse me, umm. Cecil? Are you--I'm--?

NUANCE: Suri is just going to keep trailing after you slightly? Just asking tiny half-questions.

SURI: Um, excuse me, did you? Ahh!

NUANCE: But will keep going!

PERSEPHONE: Hudson and Ollie. Please give me a wisdom saving throw.

NUANCE: Ah Hudson, that's your stat ain't it?

ELISE: Intelligence is my stat as it were. *[die rolling]*

PERSEPHONE: Really?

ELISE: I have an 8 intelligence.

PERSEPHONE: Oh my god. Okay. *[die rolling]* Good thing intelligence checks are rare.

CARO: I rolled a 12 for the saving throw.

ELISE: I have 4.

PERSEPHONE: You two begin to hear a melody.

*[LOST FRONTIER, Kevin MacLeod]*

PERSEPHONE: This high, lilting sound that that sort of twists around your ears and calls and beckons to you. Begging you to find its source.

HUDSON: What?

OLLIE: You hear that, too?

HUDSON: Yeah...

OLLIE: You know what I know about spooky music? You go to it.

CARO: I start trying to find it.

HUDSON: Yeah!

PERSEPHONE: You follow the source of sound down the hallway. Surissisah and Cecil. You see the cat goes up the stairs to the second level hallway. When you go up there, when you follow the cat up, you look around in the hallway, but you don't see the cat anywhere. What you do see, is in the hall with the arcane spellcasting classroom, is that there is another door to the side. Surissisah, you did not see that door before. This hallway is short and ends at the classroom which takes up most of the space. There's more rooms on the other side, it sort of hooks around like a square 'U'? But there are no other doors here. And you would remember this door. It is a mirrored glass door. The edges of it are glowing with lights, and there's mist pouring out of the bottom. It has carved edges engraved into the inlay with rune designs along the edge of the door.

ELISE: Wait, is it Tuesday?

NUANCE: No. Is it Tuesday? It's important!

WREN: I think it's Monday.

PERSEPHONE: It's Tuesday.

WREN: Oh shit.

SURI: Oh my god, this is the hell door! Oh my god! Don't open it! This door goes to Hell!  
That's what Ollie said!

CECIL: That doesn't make any sense.

SURI: Okay, I don't think much about this place makes sense, but Ollie definitely said that on Tuesdays a door opens up and leads to Hell. And I thought that he was just, like, being a jokester.

*[COME PLAY WITH ME, Kevin MacLeod]*

SURI: But this door wasn't here before and it certainly was not glowing or had rooms or had fog creeping out from the bottom or maybe hellsmoke? I don't know!

CECIL: Okay, Sara, um.

SURI: That. Um. ...That's fine.

CECIL: So you. You've seen Ollie. Ollie is very clearly a punk. And punks just want to lie to nerds. I-I'm not saying that you're a nerd because I'm a geek or nerd or whatever, but you seem like a bit of a kindred spirit and I feel like. You know people like Hudson and Oliver, they-they're not like us. They don't--

SURI: No, no, I know--

CECIL: They don't see us as...

PERSEPHONE: At this point, you both are in the hallway. And you're behind them you see them talking.

SURI: No, I know. But like I said, I didn't believe it. But this door is not-- was not here. I was just your second period for--for our arcane magic class. And this didn't exist! And believe me, it's kind of noticeable! Do you think that a door with this much mirrored glass in it would survive? Look at everywhere else! This door looks like it's-it-this is--This door looks like it could be in Havisham!

CARO: As an aside to Hudson, I cast Minor Illusion. to make little Suri and Cecil puppets with my hands. And as they're talking, I'm just puppeting it like a show for Hudson.

HUDSON: *[laughs]* It's funny.

PERSEPHONE: You hear Hudson laughing.

HUDSON: Hey, do you all hear that music?

SURI: Do you see a door?

HUDSON: Oh hey!

PERSEPHONE: You see the door. Both you and Ollie see the door and you know immediately that's where the music is coming from and you want in.

HUDSON: I gotta go in there!

SURI: No, I think it's a hell door.

OLLIE: Hey, I was totally making that up. I was kidding. But uh...Alright, let's go!

SURI: I don't follow the-- I don't-- that-- there wasn't a--

ELISE: Hudson's already at the door.

WREN: Cecil is rolling their eyes.

ELISE: Is there a knob?

PERSEPHONE: There is no knob. But do you touch it?

ELISE: Yeah, he's not even gonna...

PERSEPHONE: You place your hand on door and a glowing handprint forms underneath yours and as you pull it back, there's a click, and the door unlocks.

HUDSON: Whooooooa.

PERSEPHONE: You see a burst of white light that sort of curls around your features. All of you see it, and the world goes completely blank.

And that's where we'll end our session.

PERSEPHONE: This has been Fast Times at D&D High. I'm Persephone and you can find me at @Persephiroth everywhere online. Twitter, Instagram, everywhere.

CARO: I'm Caro and you can find me on all the things at @car0mur, spelled with a zero.

NUANCE: I'm Nuance and you can follow me @shadowravyn on Twitter and booksomewench on Twitch. Check out Dun-gyms and Dratinis, my Pokemon homebrew.

WREN: I'm Wren and I live on Twitter at @AtomicFirebird! I am also at @Make\_Believe\_ on Twitch where I run indie system one-shots and do a weekly interview show.

ELISE: I am Elise, several sentient otters, and I'm not on the internet, don't @ me.

PERSEPHONE: You can also find all of us on Twitter at @FastTimesDnD! If you want to support us, please visit us at [Patreon.com/FastTimesDnD](https://Patreon.com/FastTimesDnD).

CARO: If you want to know more about the world, the players, or the characters, check us out at [FastTimesDnD.com](https://FastTimesDnD.com)!

NUANCE: Transcripts of our episode audio are provided by Zee Bowditch @FandomjunkieZee on Twitter

WREN: Fast Times at D&D high is an ArcanaCast production, copyright 2020 all rights reserved. Our editor is Derrick B Perry. Our theme song was produced by Derrick B Perry and Ashley Abbott. Our background music is courtesy of Kevin MacLeod. Licensed under Creative Commons, find individual track listings in our show notes.

ELISE: That's everything... still don't @ me.