

FAST TIMES AT D&D HIGH, Episode 6: The Train Graves

CONTENT WARNINGS

Player Swearing - Mention of Fantasy Narcotics - Bullying - Alcohol

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

PERSEPHONE: Welcome to Fast Times at D&D High, where the only thing stickier than Ollie's fingers is the meat served in the cafeteria. I'm your DM Persephone, and I'm joined by our players, Nuance;

NUANCE: I play Suri, the girl one!

PERSEPHONE: Wren;

WREN: I play Cecil, the druid one who probably doesn't eat the cafeteria meat; brings their own, you know, tofu or something.

PERSEPHONE: Hudson, who might be the cafeteria meat.

ELISE: What?

CAST: [laughing]

PERSEPHONE: Oh, I'm sorry. Elise;

CAST: [laughing]

WREN: Also...

PERSEPHONE: Elise;

ELISE: [laughing] I think you just introduced me. I play Hudson, the meat.

PERSEPHONE: [laughing] Sorry. Caro;

CARO: And I play Ollie, who is recently converting to a vegetarian.

PERSEPHONE: [laughing] Wow. Okay, let's get started.

OLLIE: Last time on Fast Times at D&D High, after getting invited to a cool inter-school party, we each went about our weeks. Cecil caught up with their friend Unk while asking to do an independent study, and Suri managed her anxiety about the party by chatting with one of her

oldest friends from online, Ch1nch1llax. Hudson and I took very different approaches on researching what happened to us. He's really confused and thinks that the porn industry is involved? And I went to the library to see what I could turn up.

With some help from the librarians, I figured out that whatever happened to us seemed to be connected to the legends of the schools' founders, nine legendary heroes, and I checked a book out about it. Also, managed to convince my dealer not to cut me off from distribution, thank fucking gods, and got enough drugs to hopefully make some decent cash at the party. So Friday rolled around and we all headed to Hudson's house to do research and get ready and yeah, to say that I was uncomfortable with how wealthy Hudson is would be putting it very mildly.

Suri got dragged off by his mother for like, a makeover? Not that she needs to change; she's already pretty perfect the way she is. But we're all waiting for her to come downstairs so we can go to the party and search for "what lies below" like that voice in the mirror room told us.

[VERANA SENSUAL, Kevin MacLeod]

TYPHESEA: Surississah!

SURI: Uh-oh.

TYPHESEA: Are you ready to learn the dark secret of making...an...entrance?

SURI: Um, uh, uh...

TYPHESEA: Are you prepared mind, body and soul?

SURI: Probably not, no, I don't know...

TYPHESEA: And booty!

SURI: Is my... gonna.. Is that going to be involved?

TYPHESEA: All parts of the body are involved in making an entrance, Surississah. You must project grace, elegance and above all else: that you're better than everyone else in the room, honey!

SURI: Ohh, but that's not true.

TYPHESEA: You have to work! Come on, let's go!

SURI: What? Um.

TYPHESEA: Shoulders back!

SURI: Okay...!

TYPHESEA: Head up high!

SURI: *[distressed]* Um!

TYPHESEA: Lift your chest.

SURI: *[strangled noises of uncertainty and distress]*

TYPHESEA: Balance on your toes!

SURI: Okay?

TYPHESEA: I'm just kidding. You don't have to do that part.

SURI: *[Sigh of relief]*

TYPHESEA: Now, clench your butt cheeks.

SURI: Um...

TYPHESEA: Clench them firmly.

SURI: Okay? This is...

TYPHESEA: And now, strut, as I do.

SURI: Um...

NUANCE: Suri is definitely looking to Cecil for help or solidarity or something, not in an "I don't want to be doing this" but "I feel like an idiot, I don't know how to do any of this stuff. Please tell me it's not just me." Cecil, are you on my wavelength?

WREN: Cecil looks concerned. But also, with every instruction that she yells out, Cecil is doing the opposite. So when she says "lift your chest," Cecil like, hunches and bad-postures more. So, it doesn't look like Cecil is about to like nervously pop into turtle or lizard form right now, but they kind of look a little like a turtle. Just like... an awkward, concerned turtle.

SURI: How do...strut? I mean, I just--how bout just can I--uh, er, if I--if I walk... that's like a strut, right?

TYPHESEA: No, it's not right.

PERSEPHONE: Brian leans on his hip next to Cecil.

BRIAN: It's a work of art, isn't it?

TYPHESEA: Now! Bend over from the front and rise up to the top. Feel the power within your thighs.

SURI: I don't know if I... I just have thighs...

TYPHESEA: Do it!

SURI: Okay! Okay!

TYPHESEA: And now...

SURI: Uh-huh?

TYPHESEA: We walk! Follow me, Surississah, to your destiny!

PERSEPHONE: Typhesea struts out of the room.

NUANCE: Suri's gonna attempt the strut.

CECIL: Good luck...

NUANCE: I have no idea.

PERSEPHONE: Yeah, okay. Surississah, give me a Performance check.

NUANCE: [*die roll*] Okay, with 15 showing on the die, that is 17.

PERSEPHONE: Surississah, you walk out following Typhesea through the hallway and to the balcony that overlooks the spiral staircase. And Typhesea moves aside and gestures to you to make your entrance.

TYPHESEA: You can do it, honey, I believe in you.

NUANCE: I actually had the number wrong. That's actually an 18 because I forgot what my modifier was. So yeah. 18.

TYPHESEA: Even better.

ELISE: Yeah bitch!

NUANCE: Fortunately for Suri, she's so used to following orders that her body is doing things while her brain is like, "I'm not... what do I even... how... am I strutting? Is this what strutting is like? I don't move like that. She moves like the waves. I move like, I don't know what I'm moving like, what am I even moving like?" But she has instructions so she will follow them to the letter.

[*ANGEL SHARE, Kevin MacLeod*]

PERSEPHONE: You walk down the staircase. And I believe at this point, Ollie and Hudson would probably be coming into the main hall to go check on Cecil, because Cecil's been gone for a long time.

NUANCE: We all vanish one by one upstairs and never are seen again.

PERSEPHONE: So, I assume that you would be in the entrance hall when this is happening.

CARO: Yeah, Ollie's face is just completely stricken. He looks first amazed. Then he goes inside himself and makes a value judgment and then looks really, really sad.

PERSEPHONE: Surississah comes down the stairs moving as best as she can following Typhesea's instructions, and nails it. All you see first are legs, and then hip, and then chest, and then face.

NUANCE: The face is what kind of does kill it a little bit. Because the expression is very much deep concentration with maybe a little fear at the end.

PERSEPHONE: So that's what Surississah is feeling. But to everyone else, it looks like she's smizing.

ELISE: Hudson is beaming. He looks so happy, like you told him it was Christmas again and he believed you. And he's like,

HUDSON: Oh my god! Suri, you look amazing!

SURI: Thank you. Um, your mother is very kind and Brian is very skilled. Umm, so it's all-all on them. I'm just following instructions.

HUDSON: Nah fam. I think that you got something real special here, you know? Like, I know I work really hard at being pretty? But like I was also born pretty you know?

SURI: I definitely know you were born pretty. Uh...

NUANCE: So, Suri looks at Ollie, and I don't know, do you think she just catches like the sadness, or the stricken?

CARO: I don't know. Ollie is watching Hudson and Suri, and he just is taking a step back, he's like "I don't belong here."

HUDSON: Hang on, you guys hang out. I gotta get dressed because Suri can't walk into a party like that and have me look like this.

ELISE: And he looks totally fine, and perfect, and great. And he's just gonna run off to his room to change and leave you guys.

SURI: Uh...

[*VERANO SENSUAL, Kevin MacLeod*]

HUDSON: [yelling] Oh, if you need anything just uh, just call for Dougie! He'll come. He's good.

ELISE: And he runs off. Somewhere you can hear his footsteps echoing down the marble halls.

NUANCE: Suri has no idea what to do with her hands. She has finished coming down the stairs. What do you now do with your hands? God, hands...

PERSEPHONE: Cecil, what are you doing right now?

WREN: Cecil is awkwardly kind of lingering in the upstairs sort of doorway, and then kind of coughs out.

CECIL: B-brian?

BRIAN: Yes?

CECIL: Can I talk to you for a minute?

BRIAN: Certainly. What do you need?

WREN: I beckon him back into the room.

BRIAN: Mm hmm.

CECIL: You said something a few minutes ago... about sort of... I forget the wording you used, but I was wondering... There's stuff you can do with... paint to... I guess....

WREN: And then, really low, Cecil just kind of whispers.

CECIL: Could you just maybe... give me a better jawline?

PERSEPHONE: You see Brian is taken aback for a second.

BRIAN: Typhesea said that you might not be comfortable with that. Are you? I can. I absolutely can.

CECIL: I mean... like a... like a... dude.

BRIAN: Cecil, was it?

CECIL: Yes.

BRIAN: I'll let you in on a little secret. Come here. Come here. Come closer, closer.

WREN: Cecil scooches closer.

[*EASY LEMON, Kevin MacLeod*]

BRIAN: I was exactly the same at your age. We can definitely work something out.

WREN: ANIME SPARKLE EYES

BRIAN: Maybe not the same situation. I don't know what your pronouns are, but I can definitely help you, if a more masculine look is what you're looking for.

WREN: Cecil points at that they/them pin which is on their shirt.

BRIAN: I see. Do you have a good binder?

WREN: Cecil hunches in on themselves. Cecil is wearing a big poofy utility vest that has a lot of pockets and a lot of patches and pins and stuff on them. Not punky like Ollie's, like nerdy patches: spaceships and gender shit.

BRIAN: I see. Come with me, Cecil, I'm going to teach you a few things.

PERSEPHONE: And Brian walks over to the door, closes it, and you're in there.

NUANCE: *[Singing, to the tune of "Pure Imagination"]* Come with me and you'll be in a world of gender affirmation.

[music swells]

CAST: *[laughs and cheers]*

ELISE: Yes!

WREN: I just realized I'm not wearing--

PERSEPHONE: Oh my god. I just got so excited.

CARO: So good. So good.

PERSEPHONE: Okay.

CARO: So after Hudson goes off, and Cecil goes off, Ollie finally makes eye contact with Suri.

OLLIE: You look really good.

SURI: Th-thank you. Umm--

CARO: And then he walks away.

SURI: ...Oh. Okay.

[DOOBLY DOO, Kevin MacLeod]

PERSEPHONE: Okay, so at this point Hudson comes back down and what does Hudson look like?

ELISE: Hudson looks, to a casual eye, largely the same, but he's wearing a different shirt. It's a button-up, navy blue thing because blue is his favorite color, now. He's found out. And it does look good on him; it's a great color! And it's all buttoned up. He's wearing, like, really nice, slim-cut, like almost-black blue denim jeans, and then nicer shoes. And his hair instead of just being, like, down and kind of swept back a little bit. Hard to tell if he also has put on makeup. If he did, it looks very natural, like he's just sort of like, glowing in the skin. And as he walks down, he just walks down like a normal person. He's not making an entrance. But when he makes it to everybody, he puts his hands on his hips and then his top button sort of pops open *[sproing!]* and the shoulders go back. He goes,

HUDSON: Alright guys, we ready to go? Does anyone else need to get changed?

SURI: I-I think, uh, Cecil is still upstairs. Um,

HUDSON: Oh!

SURI: And...

PERSEPHONE: At that second that you say that, you hear,

BRIAN: Yeah, just-just-just--I'll turn around. It'll be fine. Just-just, I promise it's not uncomfortable.

[*EASY LEMON, Kevin MacLeod*]

WREN: Oh, wait, was that at Cecil?

PERSEPHONE: Yeah, that was Brian.

WREN: I did not pick up on that because I am dense at nine o'clock in the morning.

NUANCE: I feel that. I feel that so much.

CECIL: Right.

PERSEPHONE: So it takes about ten more minutes. It's much faster than with Suri. Brian sits you in the vanity after you put on the binder. Obviously with privacy, there are screens and Brian also turned around to make sure you were comfortable. And he looks at you, examines your face,

BRIAN: Right, there are several things you have going for you here. Uh, let's see.

PERSEPHONE: Picks up a contouring brush,

BRIAN: Let's get started, shall we?

CECIL: Okay.

PERSEPHONE: And just starts going to town on your face. It's a much faster transformation. But when he's finished, you look into the mirror and you see that he has managed to carve out your jawline with concealer and contour, as well as somehow widen the shape of your nose and give you a stronger brow at the same time. And when you look at yourself in the binder, which has managed to slim you down a lot, he turns to you and says,

BRIAN: Now, I do believe that Typhesea has a stockpile of left-behind items from former lovers that might fit you. How do you feel about purple? Blue? Green?

WREN: At green, Cecil makes enough of a pause that I think Brian should take that as encouragement. Because there has been just like, shaking, shaking, shaking.

BRIAN: Green, we have that.

PERSEPHONE: So Brian goes over to the side and moves back a screen, and you see like an entire rack, like, ten-foot wide filled with shirts and dress pants and men's shoes.

BRIAN: I don't know why they keep leaving this stuff here. It's almost as if they think they'll come back to get them.

PERSEPHONE: And pulls off a green dress shirt, tosses at you.

BRIAN: Right. And, uhh, let's see...black pants. Oh! What shoe size are you? Oh, I'll just eyeball it.

PERSEPHONE: And grabs a pair of knee-high leather boots and just throws them at you, into your arms.

BRIAN: Annnnnnnnnnnnnnnnnnnnnnd watch!

PERSEPHONE: And picks up a watch from one of the display counters, throws it at you.

BRIAN: Put all that on! And now we need to fix your hair.

CECIL: Uh, hmm. Are there any--are there any vests?

BRIAN: Oh. Hmm. I'll see.

PERSEPHONE: And digs around again, and is like,

BRIAN: Um, several. Several. Um, what goes green? Burgundy? Black? Um.

CARO: Brown leather.

CECIL: Well, s-so that--I mean, th--cause I'm green and the shirt's green. I don't want to look like a-a tree. [*nervous chuckle*] Like...

BRIAN: Oh, that's fair.

ELISE: Or it could be, like, a silk? A dark silk. Contrast.

NUANCE: A nice dove gray?

PERSEPHONE: Well, so I'm imagining that the shirt was a dark forest green. So it's slightly off your skin tone.

WREN: Yeah. And I'm like a light green.

BRIAN: How about...

ELISE: Or like a steel gray, steel blue.

NUANCE: Yeah, like the nice gray.

ELISE: Or suspenders! That's gonna happen.

WREN: That's just Wren.

ELISE: Yeah. It's fucking precious.

BRIAN: Steel gray? Steel gray. We've got steel gray. See if this fits.

CECIL: Wha? Ahh.

PERSEPHONE: He tosses it at you, it hits you in the face.

BRIAN: Get dressed.

WREN: Cecil no longer objects, just throws things on.

NUANCE: That's how they get you.

PERSEPHONE: Okay, you put on the full outfit and Brian puts you in front of the mirror. Sort of frowns.

BRIAN: Well the cut's impeccable. Uh, m-make sure you tuck in the shirt, you're-you're not gonna look sloppy here. Boots fit...what is--what is wrong? I can't place my finger on...*Ohh*. Please don't take offense to this, but give me those glasses.

PERSEPHONE: And Brian takes the glasses, turns around, and you see like this glow of magic from his hands. [*Magical aura*] And then he hands him back.

BRIAN: There. They're invisible now.

CECIL: I. I-I. I like them.

BRIAN: Mmm. Oh, you like them, mmm? Mmm. Right.

PERSEPHONE: Takes them back, does more magic [*quicker magical aura*], hands them back to you,

BRIAN: They're slimmer now. And more square. How do you feel about that?

WREN: Cecil assesses in the mirror to make sure that they can still hide behind them

CECIL: Th-thank you.

BRIAN: You're welcome. You look impeccable. Oh, and be sure to just keep those; don't return them. Periodically Typhesea just donates this to, you know, shelters and thrift stores. This is only within the last month that that's been filled. In fact, if you want to raid it, just go right ahead.

CECIL: A-Are you sure?

BRIAN: Have at it. I'm sure they'll go to better use with you than they would here.

WREN: Cecil's just looking at Brian. Wide-eyed. And doesn't say anything but just kind of sidles over and you can tell Cecil's been, like, actually looking and without even really doing too much perusal, reaches in, and grabs like two vests and pulls. Like they have already been looking.

BRIAN: Also.

PERSEPHONE: You see he reaches into his wallet and pulls out his card again.

BRIAN: If you ever need to find a support group, my email address is on here and I can put you in touch with some people.

CECIL: I...

BRIAN: All your age of course! I'm--I'm not s-sugg...You know.

CECIL: Right. Yeah. Uh, thank you.

BRIAN: You're welcome. Just send me an email and I'll send you some resources. Oh, and take all that makeup with you.

CECIL: Oh.

BRIAN: Did I stutter?

CECIL: No.

BRIAN: You have a party to go to, don't you? Hurry up!

CECIL: [*deep sigh*] Yeah, firs--okay, thank you.

BRIAN: Okay, get going. I'm-I'm not going to teach you how to make an entrance just yet. Uh, I think...think once is enough.

CECIL: I-I don't want--I don't--I don't--I don't want...

BRIAN: To be fair, I don't know how to do it either. That's--that's Typhesea's own brand of magic. Um. Have fun!

WREN: Slinks out of the room.

PERSEPHONE: And you see Cecil come down the stairs, looking dapper as hell in newly-reformed glasses, a steel gray vest, a tucked-in forest green shirt, black pants tucked into knee high, shiny leather boots.

ELISE: Hudson's expression is entirely indistinguishable from the one that he had for Suri. Same exact thing, where he was just like, "Oh my god, two Christmases in one day?!" Like that kind of facial expression? He just looks pleased as punch.

PERSEPHONE: You see that Typhesea, who came down the stairs after Suri came down, wanders back into the room from the kitchen, see Cecil and just goes,

TYPHESEA: Well, this certainly does put a new spin on dress-up from when you were a kid, hmm.

HUDSON: Cecil, you look amazing!

TYPHESEA: You look incredible, sweetie.

WREN: Cecil just awkward-turtles somewhere and does not vocally or verbally respond to any of this.

HUDSON: See, the box was right! Green is totally your color.

TYPHESEA: When is your party, sweetie?

HUDSON: I think it's at eight.

TYPHESEA: Oh, it's 7:30.

HUDSON: Oh, yeah! Uh, we should get going, guys.

SURI: It's a really short party.

HUDSON: Suri, we'll fill you in on the book when we--when we're on the way.

SURI: Oh! Aw, I missed the book discussion? Ohhh. I me-- thank you. M-mi--uh...Miz Eilauver. I cannot thank you enough for this.

TYPHESEA: Oh, think nothing of it, honey. This is a great way to spend my afternoon. If only every day of my retirement was so fun.

HUDSON: Yeah, my mom's great!

TYPHESEA: And remember...you better *work*, darling!

SURI: I will work very hard.

TYPHESEA: Go get 'em, tiger!

HUDSON: Alright mom, I'll be back, uh...

TYPHESEA: Have fun, sweetie!

HUDSON: I'll be back!

TYPHESEA: Make good choices, hmmkay?

HUDSON: Love you, ma.

TYPHESEA: Don't cause any trouble. And don't do anything that I wouldn't do--under the watchful eyes of cameras anyway. Love you, sweetie. Mwah!

SURI: I'm gonna go get Ollie. Just to make sure that he knows.

HUDSON: Well, we can't leave without him.

NUANCE: Suri's also having some slight, like, mom feels right now.

ELISE: *[laughing]* Oh no! Ollie doesn't want that!

NUANCE: It's just hard not to be jealous-- Like, you know, the house? That's fine. Like, the grounds, they're great. But she has felt more cared about, and seen by this woman she has met possibly one other time, than in her entire life.

ELISE: Doesn't Suri live here?

NUANCE: Still no. Still does not. So yeah, so Suri is just gonna kind of scurry awkwardly into the room where she saw Ollie kinda sidle into.

SURI: Um. O-Ollie?

OLLIE: ...What?

SURI: Are you okay?

OLLIE: Yeah, I'm fine.

SURI: Did I do something wrong? Are-are you mad at me?

OLLIE: No, uh, it's--it's Ricky. He's-he's, uh, he's having a bad day and I am just talking to him and it's fine. Uh, let's just go, okay?

SURI: O-okay. I just wanted to let you know that I guess everybody else is ready.

OLLIE: Yeah, everyone looks great! *[sighs]* Let's go.

SURI: O-okay. Um.

PERSEPHONE: You go out the front door and you see that Hudson's car's already been brought out for him; the valet standing next to it looking all to the world very happy and content with his life and job. And you pile into the car *[car engine starting]* and start driving.

[SHAVING MIRROR, Kevin McLeod]

PERSEPHONE: Ollie, since you know where you're going, you direct them past the Heaven Deluxe Apartments towards the west side of town. And you have them park in a parking lot not too far away from where you live.

NUANCE: Suri has never been to this part of town in her entire life.

OLLIE: Uh, you probably won't get a ticket here. So, um, it's this way.

HUDSON: Aw, thanks, buddy.

SURI: A-are--are we close to the train graveyard? That is a really ominous--that feels a lot more ominous right now, right?

OLLIE: Train graves?

HUDSON: Can you walk in those shoes, Suri? You gonna be okay?

SURI: I-I...hope so? I've only--

HUDSON: Well, if you get tired, let me know, I'll carry you, okay?

SURI: Thank you, Hudson, that's super sweet.

OLLIE: So I've got some stuff to do, I've got some people I'm meeting at the party. I'll see you all later.

CARO: And Ollie heads off.

HUDSON: What? Wait!

SURI: Oi-Ollie, you're going? I thought we were all gonna go together.

PERSEPHONE: Ollie, roll an Insight check, please.

CARO: [*die rolls*] 5.

PERSEPHONE: Okay! You obviously walk forward, wandering towards the subway tracks. You know that the Train Graves are hidden beneath what is now the subway in an abandoned trainyard that was destroyed in an accident a long time ago. So you walk past these columns made of steel with massive bolts. And you feel the subway go by like clockwork [*subway train noises*] every 10 minutes that you're walking, shaking the columns all the way into the ground as you walk across gravel. You come to a chain link fence. There's a sign across it in big, red font that says *No trespassers by order of Town Hall. Violators will be prosecuted.* But you, being the only person who has been here before, know that there is a hidden cutout in the fence to the side that allows you entrance to the tunnel behind it, which looms, set into a cliff face above

which you see the slope of the subway going up. And you know, from being on it before, that it goes down later.

OLLIE: [*groans*]

CARO: I pull Ricky out of my shirt.

OLLIE: Oh, hey, buddy, I just realized that they don't know how to get in here. Would you go get them?

RICKY: [*weasel noises*]

CARO: Set Ricky down.

PERSEPHONE: Ricky does like a semicircle then looks up at you with this disapproving look.

RICKY: [*disapproving weasel noise*]

OLLIE: What?

RICKY: [*mocking weasel noises*]

OLLIE: I don't want to talk about it.

RICKY: [*insistent weasel noises*]

OLLIE: No! I-uh--Listen, just go them, okay?

RICKY: [*further weasel disapproval*]

OLLIE: Uh-- [*sighs*] I know I'm--

RICKY: [*sharp noise*]

OLLIE: I kn--I know! I know. Okay, just--

RICKY: [*snippy weasel noises*]

OLLIE: I don't want to talk about my feelings! Go away!

RICKY: [*huffy weasel noises*]

OLLIE: Go! Go!

RICKY: [*resigned weasel noises*]

PERSEPHONE: And Ricky wanders off. At this point you three probably are realizing you have no idea where you are, or where you're going, and the only person who did just walked away.

HUDSON: Uhh...is Ollie...okay?

SURI: I don't...think so.

HUDSON: Do you think he's embarrassed by us?

SURI: Oh, maybe.

HUDSON: Cause he's got, like, his cool punk friends and, like, we're not.

SURI: Are we overdressed? Oh, no.

HUDSON: No! Suri, you look great!

SURI: Thank you. I just--This is--

ELISE: So they're just standing around his car like, "Uh, now what?"

CECIL: Maybe, I m-mean, maybe. I don't want--I don't want to make assumptions about. [*clears throat*] You know, un-untoward sort of things, but maybe... You know, because they have to do... They have, you know, connections that are. Maybe they're just protecting us from, you know the...you know, the druggies and things.

HUDSON: What?

SURI: Are there going to be drugs here?

HUDSON: Ollie's not a druggie!

CECIL: No! I didn't--I didn't mean that Ol--. I meant. I don't know what I meant.

SURI: I think you're right, maybe, Hudson,

NUANCE: Which I feel is not a thing Hudson gets told a lot.

ELISE: Probably not.

SURI: I-I. Um. He's cool, and Cecil and I aren't, at least. And I think you're a different kind of cool.

HUDSON: What? I think you guys are great!

SURI: Thank you, Hudson. You're really nice. I hope people tell you that.

HUDSON: Yeah, my mom does!

PERSEPHONE: So around this point, you hear the scurrying across the gravel. And you see that Ollie's weasel, Ricky, jumps on top of the car, looks at all of you, and stands on his hind legs, crossing his little paws in front of him.

[PINBALL SPRING, Kevin MacLeod]

RICKY: [*exasperated weasel noises*]

HUDSON: Aww, it's Ricky! What's wrong? Is Ollie hurt?

RICKY: [*aggravated weasel noises*]

HUDSON: Did Ollie--Did Ollie fall down a well?

RICKY: [*firm weasel noise*]

PERSEPHONE: You see that Ricky stands up straighter, puts his paws in his hair and sort of like tufts it up into a mohawk, crosses his arms, and just does,

RICKY: [*mocking weasel noises*]

PERSEPHONE: Kicks the top of the car as if kicking a wall,

RICKY: [*weasel mockery continues*]

ELISE: Hudson laughs, and it's just like,

HUDSON: Huh huh huh, that's a great impression. Ollie sounds just like that.

NUANCE: Suri does not mean to laugh but she does at least giggle.

PERSEPHONE: You see Ricky turns to Cecil and looks at Cecil expectantly.

RICKY: [*impatient weasel noises*]

WREN: Cecil sighs, rolls their eyes kind of back in their head like they're thinking real hard, and then shifts down into--not a weasel, but a, let's see, a marten. I mean, it's in the weasel family. Because they don't shift into mammals that often. So it took them a second to kind of remember how. [*magic poof*]

RICKY: Yo, wassup wassup, fam? It's Ricky! So listen, Ollie's being a little bitchass and we need to get to the Train Graves. You know, just like, get it on the up and up. You feel me? I know you feel me

ELISE: Oh my fucking god. Is Ricky voice by Kevin Hart?

CAST: [*laughter*]

RICKY: So let's get moving! Let's get amped! Let's get ready to paaaaartay! Come on!

WREN: In marten, you all just hear [*put-upon marten sigh*], but what Cecil says is,

CECIL: That. That's. That's...Sure.

RICKY: Ricky in the hizouse. [*Rhythmically*] Uh uh uh uh-uh uh-uh

ELISE: Oh my god, Ricky fuckin' rocks.

PERSEPHONE: Rock Ricky starts dancing side to side

RICKY: Uh-ah uh-ah-ah! Come on, let's go, follow me!

CARO: There's a reason why he's my best friend. He's cooler than everyone.

WREN: Marten-Cecil turns back to everyone and kind of gestures like a come here gesture and a little bit of a little weasel shrug.

HUDSON: I am so jealous right now

NUANCE: I like that Ricky is actually more prepared for this party than at least two, possibly three of us. Yeah, I'm gonna follow Cecil.

ELISE: Hudson holds out an arm for Suri in case she has a hard time walking in her shoes.

NUANCE: Suri adores Hudson and definitely takes him up on it.

SURI: Whoa! Umm, okay. So I've had, uh like, seven minutes of practice in these shoes and it was all on carpet. So thank you.

HUDSON: I gotchu.

PERSEPHONE: So you walk down the same path that Ollie went, following Ricky the weasel. And he guides you through the tall steel columns, and back to the fence and you see Ollie there, standing by the fence.

CARO: As you see Ollie, he takes something that's in his hands, quickly shoves it into his pockets, and puts his hand out for Ricky.

PERSEPHONE: Ricky walks up to you and sort of slows his pace and looks up at you, rolls his eyes, and climbs up onto your shoulder.

RICKY: [*snarky weasel noises*]

OLLIE: Oh Ricky. If only everyone could hear you talk, they would know how cool you were.

RICKY: [*mollified weasel noises*]

SURI: Thank you for sending Ricky back for us.

OLLIE: Yeah, sorry about that.

SURI: We should've been faster to follow you.

PERSEPHONE: So all of you see the chain link fence in front of this yawning cave. You see that there used to be stones marking it as an entrance for the train and that underneath it, there are broken train tracks that are rusted and torn from side to side. Some of the stones have fallen to the ground.

SURI: Are--are we sure this is where the party's gonna be?

OLLIE: Yeah, you got to go under the fence, here. Um, I'll go first.

SURI: The one--It's the one with the sign that says that, *No Trespassing*?

OLLIE: Yeah. Don't worry, no one ever comes down here. Nothing's gonna happen.

ELISE: Famous last words.

PERSEPHONE: So Ollie moves back the cut part of the fence and slips in to the other side.

ELISE: Hudson lets Suri go, and if she is struggling or whatever, he helps her get through the fence.

NUANCE: Oh yeah. It is not graceful. It is not elegant. It is very much just like everything about this is clearly out of Suri's wheelhouse, but in a very different way than everything about Hudson's house and mom was clearly out of her wheelhouse. She's just not in her wheelhouse at all tonight.

HUDSON: Ollie, you gotta--

NUANCE: Left that behind.

HUDSON: You gotta help her up on the other side, buddy.

CARO: Ollie is reacting to every single touch between the two of them with unmitigated jealousy. That he is trying really hard to mitigate and failing.

WREN: Cecil is just scrambling in little weasel form, observing everything.

PERSEPHONE: You see Ricky looks at you from over Ollie's shoulder and says,

RICKY: You goin' to the party like that? Wow, I'm gonna have people to talk to that actually understand me, yo! It's gonna be great.

CECIL: See, I-I wasn't going to, but I think that--I think that I am now.

RICKY: Are you sure? Because, like, we can have a good time, I'm just saying. Like I was gonna cause some havoc, you know, maybe shit in one of the bowls...

[musical chimes]

NED: Hi, Ned here with a brief commercial break! Have you heard about the Fast Times Patreon?

SURI: It's the place on the Crysnet where you can support all of our adventures... antics...

OLLIE: And thievery.

SURI: Hey! We don't steal! ...Right?

OLLIE: Riiiiight.

[*INSPIRED, Kevin MacLeod*]

CECIL: And anyway, heh, you can get early access! Plus, there's all sorts of other content on there, like character sheets and texts between all of us, and more. I even hear you can get a personalized shout-out during the show!

HUDSON: Yeah! Stop by in between searching for where the third sword goes! ...I'm still looking.

OLLIE: So run off to patreon.com/FastTimesDND.

NED: I hope we see you all there!

HUDSON: Okay, no, but really? Where does the third sword go?

CECIL: Umm...

SURI: ...No.

OLLIE: Hudson, you're so pretty.

TELLUH BANES: Are you all skipping classes again?

OLLIE: Shit! Time to go!

SURI: Back to the episode! Bye!

TELLUH BANES: Detention! Detention!

[*musical chimes*]

WREN: Yeah, so weasel-Cecil is just a little stressed now, realizing that they have to keep an eye on mischief-weasel. But that's fine.

CARO: All right. So when we get up to the dark part of the cave, Ollie turns around to everyone says,

OLLIE: Okay, uh, we're just about here, so, uh, be cool. Uh, I do have some business I need to take care of, ah, so I'll catch up with you all later.

CARO: And he walks straight out into the darkness.

[KILLING TIME, Kevin MacLeod]

PERSEPHONE: So, you follow Ollie, who's speeding away from you, walking just a little too fast. And those of you with dark vision can see about twenty feet ahead that there is a cave-in. There are massive boulders right in front of the middle of the path. There's no path left or right and Ollie just keeps going and going and eventually you don't see him anymore.

HUDSON: Ollie? Ollie.

SURI: I think he just vanished.

PERSEPHONE: Everyone besides Ollie, please make a Perception check.

[die rolls]

NUANCE: And unfortunately it's the Arcane Trickster who vanished? [die rolls] So whether that's a him thing, or a...

CARO: I specifically told you all to be cool!

[die rolls]

NUANCE: I'm sorry, I don't have that ability.

WREN: Cecil is gonna try to follow Ollie. In weasel form.

PERSEPHONE: Okay, so we'll get to the rolls in a second. Cecil, you just sort of tried to follow after Ollie without any care?

WREN: I mean, with a little bit of care.

PERSEPHONE: Okay. So you get up to the boulders. Please make an Intelligence check.

WREN: Okay, I got my weasel stats. Ew. Not good. Well, I got a 5.

PERSEPHONE: And you stopped because there's big old rocks and you're very small. And they don't look stable. What did you two get on your Perception checks?

NUANCE: 18.

ELISE: It was 5.

PERSEPHONE: Hudson, you see a bunch of big rocks. Surissisah, you notice that the edges of this are not exactly the best put-together illusion. They're sort of flickering; sort of like when you get a texture in a video game that's too close to the edge and it's just sort of going in and out. So you know that this is fake. And that Ollie probably walked right through.

ELISE: Ouch.

NUANCE: Did Bethesda make this illusion?

WREN: Ohhhhhhh! Ohhh!

CAST: Whoooooa!

PERSEPHONE: There's no horses on the ceiling!

ELISE: Okay...

NUANCE: No, but I think there's a plant that's just like, halfway through the edge.

SURI: Oh! I--

PERSEPHONE: Ollie actually is on the ceiling, flying away.

SURI: Oh! I see, it's an illusion! Look, look look! Over here!

HUDSON: Whoa!

NUANCE: Suri, like, actually kind of forgets herself for like 30 seconds to,

SURI: Wow, look at this illus--this is actually--okay, so this part of the illusion is actually really good. Uh, they kind of dropped the ball over here. But I mean, I figure this is probably a difficult illusion to just keep and maintain. But yeah, we should be able to go right in!

NUANCE: And she just, like, sticks her arm through the boulders and kind of wags it around [*portal noise*]. Again forgetting to be cool.

HUDSON: Whoa.

PERSEPHONE: So when you stick your hand in, you hear music come out and you see a pulse of light where your hand is.

[*PYRO FLOW, Kevin MacLeod*]

SURI: Oh! Oh! Th-the--yeah, the party is just right through here.

HUDSON: That is so cool. All right.

SURI: Cecil, we should--Cecil?

[KILLING TIME, Kevin MacLeod]

WREN: Cecil's just on the ground, looking up at the rocks in confusion.

SURI: Oh, Cecil, is it okay if I pick you up? I don't want to offend your bodily autonomy, but...we could also--you could come back to being Cecil-Cecil.

WREN: There's a little weasel sigh, [*heavy sigh*], and Cecil pops into [*poofs*] half-orc form.

SURI: I really like that vest on you.

HUDSON: Yeah, it looks dope.

WREN: Cecil's kind of shaking their head.

CECIL: Mammals are very unintelligent. Oof.

WREN: Just shaking their head like they're getting their brain back.

HUDSON: But *we're* mammals.

NUANCE: Is Suri a mammal?

ELISE: ...Huh.

PERSEPHONE: Okay, we're not getting into this conversation with D&D species tropes because I don't even...Let's just not.

WREN: When Hudson asks that, Cecil looks at him and then just shakes their head more. Like that just hurts their newly-formed, back-to-12-Intelligence-brain again.

ELISE: He's validating! He's validating your assertion.

PERSEPHONE: All right--

WREN: Oh no, I have a 14 Int, whoops!

ELISE: There you go.

WREN: But the weasel stats are 2 Int.

CARO: [*groans*]

NUANCE: Oooh. Wow.

PERSEPHONE: All right. Do you walk into the party?

ELISE: Yeah.

PERSEPHONE: You walk through the illusion and come into a large cavern. The train tracks here spread out, and you can see rows and rows of them across the room. But they are riddled with rust and parts of them have been curled up or pulled entirely off the track and set vertically into the ground in spikes. They have holes where rust has eaten away at them like a beetle biting into a leaf, and some of them have blue and green magical lanterns that cast light onto the dirt-packed ground. All around are abandoned train cars. The few still upright have shattered glass windows and are covered and spray painted graffiti. The others have been turned on the sides and a few teenagers are sitting on them, kicking her heels in the air while holding red Solo cups. [*crowd noises, distant chatter*] A few of them jump into the windows of abandoned cars and somewhere you can hear a pulsing beat of music playing low.

[*PYRO FLOW, Kevin MacLeod*]

PERSEPHONE: At the center of the cavern, there is a large magical bonfire that shifts in color from blue, to green, to purple. People dance in slow gyration, moving with the music and the flicker of the lamp light. You see a large teenager with deep red-brown skin and curling black horns that is using one of them to pierce the keg to the applause of several others. There's about fifty people in the room, and some of them still have uniforms on, though most have abandoned their robes and blazers, and you see a pile of them set on a rock not too far from the back.

Suri and Cecil, you both recognize your former school uniforms; the black and purple of Havisham, with the red eye of the school symbol pinned to the front of black dress shirts, and the one from Lothmorin, with blue plaid skirts and jackets, white dress shirts pulled out or unbuttoned, and some tied into makeshift crop tops.

Ollie, you were here first. So roll a Perception check to read the room.

[*die rolls*]

CARO: Fuckin' A. Nat 1.

PERSEPHONE: With a Nat 1, you look around the room and take stock of it. It has been a difficult night for you that you weren't expecting; you were sort of shocked by the reality of Hudson's life and money and a loving parent that adores him. Something that you haven't really had in your life, which is stability, to say the least, and money, to say the most. So you're trying to read the room like you usually do, looking around for people that might be clients, but you still have these circular thoughts in your head and every time you look at a person, especially the ones from the other school, you start thinking, *What's their life like? Am I really the worst off person that I know? Am I really this far gone from what everyone else has?*

CARO: Ollie takes out some of the drugs and like, looks at them for a very long time. He puts them back in his pocket, then he goes over to one of the train cars that has graffiti on it, and using Minor Illusion, he's going to write in graffiti, in thieves cant, *If you're looking for Doubloons or Lycis Root, ask for Ollie.* And he's writing that in thieves cant, so only people who would know that would know it.

PERSEPHONE: You use Minor Illusion and paint the front of this train car with thieves cant. And you see that there are a few people interested, but you also noticed that one person in particular starts walking up to you, and you recognize Elmer.

[*GAME FUNK LOOP, Kevin MacLeod*]

PERSEPHONE: Whereas he was dressed flashy during the day' now all gloves are off. He's wearing a kimono robe over his bare chest. He has a little bit of. like, artisanally-crafted body hair that goes across his chest and into his stomach. His hair, which is dark blonde, is slicked back and pushed away from his forehead. He's wearing eyeliner around his eyes. And he looks over at you, looks at the Minor Illusion, and then grins.

ELMER: Well, looks like someone's here to do business. It's good to see you here, Ollie.

OLLIE: [*relieved sigh*] It's good to see a friendly face. How you doing?

ELMER: Where are your pals?

OLLIE: They're on the way.

ELMER: Oh, good. Now, you're selling Lycis Root?

OLLIE: Yeah.

ELMER: Doubloons?

OLLIE: Mmhmm.

ELMER: Hit me up.

OLLIE: All right.

CARO: Ollie starts taking out Lycis Root and Doubloons.

CARO: I've got a limited quantity that I can sell each person, so. If you want more than this, then, uh, you're gonna have to get a friend.

ELMER: You know what? I think it'd be more interesting if we just buy the lot and distribute it. What do you think?

PERSEPHONE: Winks at you.

OLLIE: Just distribute it? Like, to everyone.

ELMER: Everyone who wants to partake anyway; not everyone will. It's Lycis Root and Doubloons. It's not like it's anything hard.

OLLIE: Yeah, if you're buying in quantity, I can cut you a discount.

ELMER: I would not complain about that.

OLLIE: All right.

CARO: Ollie pulls out more.

OLLIE: But you're--

ELMER: Good doing business with you.

OLLIE: --going to be responsible about it, right?

ELMER: Oooh. Do I look irresponsible to you, Ollie? This, this darling cherubic face? How can anyone not trust me with a jawline this sharp?

OLLIE: I can't argue with that! Uh, that's just logic. All right. Sounds good.

CARO: And we do the transaction.

PERSEPHONE: Yes, so you do the transaction. He hands you four hundred gold.

CARO: Great. Ollie's instantly mood improves.

PERSEPHONE: You start handing them over and Elmer waves you off.

ELMER: No, no, no. We're going to do this together.

OLLIE: Ah--

ELMER: Plus it allows us to assess who shouldn't have any.

OLLIE: I gave it up.

ELMER: Oh, oh, Ollie, you misunderstand me. Distribute in pairs.

OLLIE: Oh, got you. Okay.

ELMER: Not partake in pairs. Besides I don't plan on taking anything; I need to remember every detail tonight.

OLLIE: All right.

ELMER: All right, let's go.

PERSEPHONE: Roll another Perception check, and since your mood has improved, I'll say roll with advantage.

[die rolls]

CARO: Four hundred gold pieces will make you--

[die rolls]

CARO: Ohh! Nat 20!

CAST: *[laughter]*

PERSEPHONE: Nat 20!

CARO: I have a 20 and a 19 on that roll.

ELISE: I mean, you did give him four hundred gold pieces.

PERSEPHONE: So...

NUANCE: Wow...

PERSEPHONE: Your mood instantly brightens, and you finally take a look around the room and you recognize several faces. You see that over by the bonfire, just outside of the area where the flame is, you see Monette and Kenneth arguing. They're arguing quietly, but you can tell that things are getting heated. You're not sure why they're fighting, but you do know, since you've been at Varnum a little bit longer than others, that they were dating at some point, but you've heard they broke up. You also see the tiefling that was mentioned at the beginning of the party, the one that opened the keg with his horns, is standing over by one of the train cars talking to a group of people. And you see an elf with very, very, very dark skin, almost jet black, with moon markings and stars across his cheeks and across his chest. He's wearing a cut off crop top that's white with black leather pants. You also see, not too far from them, surrounded by people, playing with the guitar, is a half-elf with light brown, blondish hair that hangs down to his waist. He's wearing a muscle shirt with a leather jacket on top and shorts that are cut to mid-thigh. You see that a few of the people around him are students from Varnum that you recognize, people from Lothmorin you don't. And you see that there's a lot going on at the party.

And at this point, you start going around. And Elmer starts taking you to different people that he knows that will be good, and you start assessing them. And we return to our other three. You walk in and you see this party.

[*OUROBOROS, Kevin MacLeod*]

PERSEPHONE: Roll Perception please.

NUANCE: I got an 11. Clearly Suri is just very distracted by the everything of the party.

ELISE: 14.

WREN: 12.

PERSEPHONE: [*crowd noises; distant chatter*] Okay, Suri and Cecil. You look around and are instantaneously overwhelmed both by the amount of people, the sort of shenanigans that are going on. Your eyes are just drawn from one place to another; from the lights, to the lanterns, to the bonfire, to the people that are clearly doing some sort of substances, people drinking. You hear this loud, booming "Hahahahaha!" from the tiefling who is massive, about six feet tall and almost brought across as he is tall, in the back corner with the people around him. And it's just a lot of stimuli at one time. Hudson you, on the other hand, notice more for once. And you see Monette is there and that you notice all the same things that Ollie did, but you also notice that as you walk in, three people walk in behind you. You see a stone genasi with marble skin and green hair. You see a tall, lean-bodied person with long, wavy blond hair with vines wrapped into it. They are wearing no shirt whatsoever and are wearing this long skirt that's sort of cut in the center where they're wearing these tight-fitting leggings underneath. You see the girl in front

was very glamorous. She has gold markings around her eyes and all the way down her arms and her eyes themselves are blue but the core of it, where the pupil would be, are bright, burnished gold. She's very clearly an Aasimar. She looks around the room and any sort of beauty that she had a second ago turns into disgust as she raises her hand and gestures to the two behind her. And doesn't even look at them and says,

PENNY: Go assess the room. See if there's anyone worth speaking to.

PERSEPHONE: The stone genasi girl sort of sidles up to her.

JENNY: Do we have to this time? I was hoping that we could sort of just have fun.

PENNY: This is having fun, Jenny. We have a certain look to upkeep. You must play part if you want to get what you want. What do I always say?

PERSEPHONE: The other person, the human, sighs.

MERRY: Do you always have to be so serious? You know, we got what we want because we're pretty.

PENNY: There's nothing wrong with a little bit of effort, Merry. You should know that. Now go. Work the room.

PERSEPHONE: You see the other two look at each other, roll their eyes, and wander away. The leader looks at you three, examines each of you up and down. Stops at Hudson. Puts her hand on her hip.

PENNY: Who are you?

HUDSON: Hey. I'm Hudson.

CECIL: [*nervous squeal*]

PENNY: Good to meet you, Hudson. You can be my eye candy for a moment. Come with me.

HUDSON: Oh, well, I got my friends here. I can't--

PENNY: Who?

HUDSON: Oh, these are my friends.

CECIL: [*slight wail*]

PENNY: I don't see anyone else. It's just you. Listen, darling. When you're of a--

PERSEPHONE: Looks at Surissisah up and down. Glares.

PENNY: --certain quality--

PERSEPHONE: Looks at Cecil.

PENNY: --and taste? Other people just don't exist. Come with me.

HUDSON: If they don't exist, where do they go?

PENNY: Who cares?

ELISE: Hudson looks back at Suri and Cecil and is just, like, so confused.

SURI: It's okay, Hudson; if you want to go, uh, talk to her, w-we understand.

ELISE: Hudson will allow himself to be led off. But he keeps looking back. He's just like,

HUDSON: Uh, uh, but my friends....

PERSEPHONE: So this woman takes your hand and starts wandering off. But before she goes, she looks over his shoulder, looks at Surissisah, and says,

PENNY: Love the makeup by the way. Real cute.

PERSEPHONE: And walks away.

HUDSON: Doesn't she look great?

PENNY: Be quiet. It's better when you don't speak.

HUDSON: Oh.

PENNY: Now if you must use my name, I'm Penny. Penny Frost.

HUDSON: Nice to meet you, Penny.

PENNY: Of course it is.

PERSEPHONE: And you wander off into the party.

NUANCE: So I feel that Suri and Cecil are going to stand awkwardly just off to the side because wow. [*party noises; distant chatter*] You know, whatever confidence Suri has managed to build up from the dressing room to the party is gone. Ah, and yeah, no, she's just gonna stand there awkwardly being like, "I didn't...Why did I think this was a good idea? This is clearly a terrible idea. Ollie's mad at us for some reason. Hudson is gone. I look stupid. This was a terrible idea."

WREN: Cecil is just standing next to Suri. Didn't say a word throughout that entire thing. And there's a little bit of twitching which at this juncture, you can tell is an indicator that probably with any additional stimulus, Cecil will pop into some sort of turtle or something, but is just standing there ultimately.

PERSEPHONE: So as you two are processing what just happened, you hear from the tunnel you came from--

NED: AHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHH!

PERSEPHONE: --and out from the tunnel shoots Ned, who has jumped through like he's dive bombing, and lands on the ground next to you on all fours. Looks around like,

NED: [*out of breath panting*] Oh. I made it? I'm here! I did it! Oh, hi, Suri! Hi. Cecil!

[*OURABOROS, Kevin MacLeod*]

SURI: Ned, hi!

NED: I made it!

PERSEPHONE: You see that Ned has changed for the party. His dreadlocks have been dipped-dyed pink at the ends. He's wearing this sweatshirt vest, that's a little too big for him that's red, and wearing baggy camo pants. And he looks even smaller while clearly trying to look bigger

NED: I'm so glad that you're actually here; I would have been so sad if I had come here all alone. ...And I would have been scared. Wow, there's a lot going on here!

NUANCE: Is your first party, too?

NED: Yeah. Wow, Surississah, you look--! Cecil! Wow, you--you--! Oh, I feel underdressed now. Um.

CECIL: You're not, like, you know...

NED: You look so pretty!

SURI: No...

NED: And you look--wow. You--you look really good. Like, really good. Like, wow. Umm. Ooo. Hi.

SURI: Don't they look dapper?

WREN: Turtle. [*poof*]

NED: Yeah. [*impressed babbling noises*] Oh! Uh, uh...Cecil? Cecil? Cecil? Is--Is everything okay?

WREN: Just shrinks down to a little rocky-shelled tortoise.

PERSEPHONE: Ned crouches down in front of you.

NED: Why are you--why-why are you turtling? Did I do something wrong?

WREN: Cecil's eyes are closed.

SURI: I think it's just a little bit much. Um, this is our first party, too. At least, I think. I mean, maybe I'm-I'm just assuming for Cecil, so. I think this is just their way of-of taking a-a few? Minutes? Um. But no, I don't--I don't think you're underdressed. I think we're overdressed. Um, I think Hudson's mom went a little, uh, overboard? So, we're just a whole lot.

NED: Hudson's mom did this to you? Wow. She must be really nice.

SURI: Really nice. And pretty...

NED: You look so good, both of you. Well, I mean, Cecil's a turtle now, but I guess-I guess that's still good. Um, so, I-I know what we can do. My friend Satina, she gave me some advice online, about how to process parties. And, like, apparently the first thing you need to do to get over your social anxiety is to have a drink!

SURI: Oh, are there refreshments? Oh, maybe there's punch.

NED: Maybe there is punch! Let's go find it. Um, um, Cecil? Can I pick you up?

WREN: Cecil's tortoise eyes open and there's just a slow nod.

PERSEPHONE: Ned picks you up. It's clearly a struggle for him because you're very heavy. And he tries to hold you in his arms like a teddy bear, and it's just not working. And Ned topples over onto his back.

NED: This-this is-this is-this is-this is not good.

PERSEPHONE: Turtle legs just in the air above.

NED: Um. Uh, can--S-suri, can you, um, help?

SURI: Yeah, wha-- O-of course. Yeah. Here. Hold on.

NUANCE: I'm going to reach down and pick up turtle-Cecil and set them down for a moment and then help Ned up.

NED: Thanks. Thanks. I've-I've been on the ground a lot already today.

SURI: Here.

NUANCE: And she moves to around to help dust off his back.

NED: Okay.

NUANCE: But just his back. I know there's dirt that extends past his waistline, but Suri is not yet capable of processing that...

PERSEPHONE: Stuff.

NUANCE: He's just gonna have to handle that on his own.

NED: Thanks so much.

PERSEPHONE: Ned pats off his backside.

NED: Cecil, I think it'd be easier if you were, like, in your real form. I mean...we'll be all together, so it'll be great!

WREN: So Cecil's tortoise eyes scrunch together again, and there's a little bit of a shimmer and [poofs] Cecil's back.

NED: Yay, you're back! Now we can all go together. There's strength in numbers. Uh, Sa-Satina also said that, like, all failing, I should find the pet here. I don't think there's gonna be one, so you're as close as I get. So I should stay with you.

WREN: They're kind of sweating a little bit. Like, visibly.

SURI: I also got some advice from my friend online.

NED: Oh, really?

SURI: Yeah.

NED: Who?

SURI: Uh, I only know their, uh, internet handle.

NED: What's their internet handle?

SURI: Ch1nch1llax?

NED: The fan artist?!

SURI: [*gasp of happiness*] You know Ch1nny?!

NED: Yeah, of course I d--! Well, I don't-I don't know them personally, but, like, I follow them. On Crystagram.

SURI: They're so good. Oh my gosh, I just love... They do some of the best work.

NED: Their digital work is amazing. I could-I could never, um.

SURI: I can't draw, either. Like, at all.

NED: My-my friend Satina? She, um, she's, um, one of those artists too, and I think they've done a collab before?

SURI: [*gasp of surprise*] Wait a minute! It-- [*gasp of recognition*] That Satina?! They--

NED: Yeah, SatinKnights--

SURI: Yeah!

NED: --on Crystagram.

SURI: Oh my gosh, their mural was amazing!

NED: That mural took forever. Um.

SURI: Yeah.

NED: Hopefully you get to meet them someday!

SURI: [*gasp of anticipation*]

NED: They. They don't live in the area, but, um, hopefully, uh, I can bring them up sometime, um. Hopefully I'll see them this summer again.

SURI: I would love-- Oh, if, like, I mean, obv-- If, if that's ever a thing that you could--I would love, cause I just--

NED: You know what? We should exchange Crystagram and fan-love accounts.

SURI: Yeah!

NED: What's yours?

SURI: ...S-scalesOfSilence?

PERSEPHONE: You see Ned's eyes go wide.

NED: ...Oh.

SURI: O-oh.

NED: Oh.

PERSEPHONE: And then Ned turns red.

NED: Oh, um.

SURI: ...Oh.

NED: Oh.

SURI: Oh.

NED: Um. You, um.

WREN: About five minutes ago, I rolled a 21 Stealth check to leave. So I didn't hear any of this.

PERSEPHONE: What's your passive Perception, Suri?

NUANCE: A 12.

PERSEPHONE: Okay. You and Ned don't notice. And Cecil you start to sneak out. We'll come back to that.

NED: I've read, um, way too much of your work, um. Ranging from, like, your normal pairings to the slash pairings that you did, um, and uh. You, um. Yeah, you're...you're really good at writing, um, stuff. And, um, yeah. Uh, let's go get a drink now. Wait, where's Cecil?

SURI: I...don't know where they are.

NUANCE: Yeah, Suri, dropped her cry-handle, just not thinking about it. And now is convinced that Ned hates all of her work, clearly it's terrible, and Cecil is gone, and Ollie is gone, and Hudson is gone. And parties are literally the worst thing ever. Just so in case anybody was wondering how her internal landscape is looking: the answer is barren.

PERSEPHONE: So while you're internally panicking, thinking that Ned hates you and all your friends have abandoned you, Cecil, you sneak out back through the illusion and you get back into the dark of the tunnel that leads up to there. Your thoughts are sort of spinning, you're probably having a little bit of an anxiety attack.

WREN: Yeah. Cecil's just kind of getting out there into the hallway, just to kind of breathe. Because for a moment, there was a little bit of respite in the fact that Suri was as awkward as they are. But then Suri found a friend, and they had all this shared connection, and Cecil realized, "Yep, alone again."

PERSEPHONE: Roll Perception check.

[die rolls]

WREN: And rolls and 19 on the Perception.

PERSEPHONE: So you might be lost in your thoughts, but you're not lost enough not to see this. Since you have dark vision and you're not completely lost - possibly because your anxiety is making you hyper-aware of your surroundings - you see, coming into the tunnel, are Grange, Buster, and Matilda, walking straight for you.

[DISTRICT FOUR, Kevin MacLeod]

PERSEPHONE: You don't think they've seen you yet? But they're definitely coming right where you are.

WREN: There's a deep sigh. A realization that they are too exhausted to turn into anything useful. And they cast Pass Without a Trace on themselves, and try to sneak back into the party.

PERSEPHONE: So you attempt to cast a spell and you hear them stop in the hallway. You see Buster looks around.

BUSTER: Did you hear something?

GRANGE: I didn't hear shit.

MATILDA: I think I heard something? Is someone here? Hold on, maybe I should cast, like, a detection spell.

WREN: Fucking hell.

MATILDA: Like...

GRANGE: I mean, the party's right through there.

MATILDA: Yeah, but you never know. Like, we haven't exactly made a lot of friends recently.

GRANGE: That's not my problem, I'm fuckin' awesome.

BUSTER: Uh huh. Cast the spell, Matilda.

GRANGE: You're such a buzzkill, Buster.

PERSEPHONE: What do you do?

WREN: Back up against the outside of the hallway and look in fear at them.

PERSEPHONE: Okay. Matilda casts Detect Magic. Your spell still goes through, but let's see. So how I'm gonna roll this, despite the way that Detect Magic works, which would detect your presence, I'm going to be a bit more fair. Because, for those at home, I make the rules ultimately when I'm writing my own campaign, and I've decided that this is how it's going to work. If you do not like it, come argue with me on the internet. I'll ignore you.

CARO: [*cheers*] Rule of Cool.

PERSEPHONE: Anyway. [*dice roll*] Roll a Stealth check. I'll make it contested. And add the 10 bonus from Pass Without A Trace.

[*die rolls*]

WREN: I'll take a picture of this, but I think this is my first nat 20.

CAST: [*cheering*]

PERSEPHONE: You roll a nat 20 and she casts out her Detect Magic spell and looks around.

MATILDA: No, there's just the illusion.

PERSEPHONE: And you realize that you're close enough to the illusion with your spell that you're not detected.

MATILDA: All right, let's just go in.

GRANGE: Good. I was getting bored; I need to go drink.

PERSEPHONE: And they walk right past you.

WREN: Cecil is holding their breath. And then when they walk past, they let it out. And then they try to go find Hudson.

PERSEPHONE: Okay, you come back through. Surississah, what were you and Ned doing in this time? It's been about five minutes.

[*OURABOROUS, Kevin MacLeod*]

NUANCE: Suri and Ned were going to go get a drink. Very awkwardly. Especially since, again, now Suri is convinced that he has read her fic and finds it terrible. So, she's just very quiet and kind of, you know, sidles over to where the beverages are. Is there anything that marks the stuff that's that's spiked from the stuff that isn't? Is everybody just spiking their own stuff? Because she wouldn't know.

SURI: Oh. Oh no.

PERSEPHONE: Roll an Insight check.

ELISE: She might be able to smell it if she rolls high enough, you know?

NUANCE: That's true. [*die roll*] 14.

PERSEPHONE: You can very easily tell what is alcoholic from what is not by smell. And you realize that almost everything is spiked except for some juice that someone is actually pouring into the punchbowl.

NUANCE: So not the punchbowl itself, but the juice that is pouring into it.

PERSEPHONE: Mmmhmm.

NUANCE: Um, and just to clarify; my innate Protection From Poison, does that extend to alcohol? Or is drunk different than poison?

PERSEPHONE: Drunkenness is standardly poison in most of the things that I've seen in d&d. But because I think it's funny, let's just say that you have advantage on rolls to be inebriated.

NUANCE: That's fair.

PERSEPHONE: Because I think it'd be funny to see Surissisah drunk. So!

NUANCE: All right.

SURI: Oh, uh, can I get some of that juice?

PERSEPHONE: You look up at the person pouring juice and you see that it's Kenneth, who stops, looks at you for a second, then does a double take.

KENNETH: Uh, uh...*Suri*?

SURI: Oh, um, hi? Kenneth, right?

KENNETH: W-w-we met earlier, yeah.

SURI: Yeah.

KENNETH: Um. You look different. Good! But wow, different.

SURI: Oh. Um. Thank you.

KENNETH: D-did, um. Uh. I'm--

PERSEPHONE: You see that he looks at the punch, then looks at you, and then looks at the juice in his hand and he starts like, putting it to the side.

KENNETH: Um, I wasn't doing anything.

SURI: Oh, I was j--

KENNETH: I definitely wasn't diluting the punch. For safety reasons.

SURI: I was just--

KENNETH: Um.

SURI: --hoping to actually just have some juice. The juice you were pouring, not the punch.

KENNETH: Oh. Oh. Oh! Oh! Um, okay. Here! Um, have at it.

SURI: Thanks! Uh...

NED: Wait, should I not drink the punch?

PERSEPHONE: You see that Kenneth finally notices Ned.

KENNETH: Oh, uh. Hi. Um, I'm sorry, I-I-I didn't see you.

NED: That's fine. I know I'm very small.

PERSEPHONE: Kenneth just looks between Suri and Ned, both of whom are very small and he is very big, and you can see the protecc instinct going off in his brain.

KENNETH: Uh, uh. Are you two here by yourselves? Uh. Uh.

SURI: Uh. Well, I-I

NED: No, we have each other!

SURI: [*awkward chuckle*] I came kind of with the group? but they all, um, left. So... But I mean, uh, yeah. Um, uh, Ned is, uh--I've got Ned, and...and...and...juice?

PERSEPHONE: Ken's face goes through a range of emotions from worried, to guilt, to must protecc these two. And he's like,

KENNETH: All right. Um, you're, um, you're with me now. Both of you. Yeah, that's-that's the thing that's happening.

MONETTE: Ew.

PERSEPHONE: And you see Monette walks over, puts her hands on her hip. Monette looks a little bit different. So, she's not wearing the robes or the white dress that she was wearing before. She's wearing a white crop top and blue denim shorts. And with her midriff bared and her shoulders bare, you can see that there are swirling gold markings across her skin and that there are more gold markings around her collarbone. And she's definitely not just human, she is also an Aasimar.

MONETTE: Kenneth, do you really have time to be playing hero right now? Uh, we were talking, and you just walked off?

KENNETH: Monette, I told you, we-we're done. In fact, you broke up with me.

PERSEPHONE: And Monette sighs.

MONETTE: [*sighs*] I mean, it doesn't count if no one knows about it. So, like, as far as I'm concerned, we're still together. You know how my moods are.

KENNETH: Monette, I-I'm done. I-I-I'm-I'm done. We dated freshman year, and we were sorta together soph--. I'm not doing this again. Li-Like, just blatantly.

MONETTE: Look. Ken. Kenny. Baby. Let me tell you about how something works in high school. We're pretty and we look good together. And that's really all that matters. It's about being seen together. You don't really have to like me.

KENNETH: I-I-I I think that's actually how it works. Monette, that-th--you're supposed to like the person you're dating.

MONETTE: I mean...why? Why? Why bother? It's all about image anyway.

PERSEPHONE: You see, Kenneth turns to both of you, Ned and Surississah, and says,

KENNETH: Let's go elsewhere. Let's find Elmer. That-that's a thing we can do.

MONETTE: Um, but I'm right--

KENNETH: We're not talking right now. And I'm done. Go find someone else to be your bitch. Let's go!

SURI: O-o-okay?

NUANCE: Suri's content to be led around. Again, much like a duckling.

PERSEPHONE: At this point Cecil, you enter the party and you are by yourself; you do not see Suri or Ned. Okay, so you start inching your way into the party through the train tracks, looking and peering around train cars, and there's a lot of people here. You don't see Hudson, but you managed to catch sight of Ollie and Elmer, who are standing by one of the train cars. And they approach the tiefling with the gaggle of people around them and the elf, who're both leaning against the train, talking casually.

ELMER: So, are you two interested in having some fun?

PERSEPHONE: You see the tiefling looks down at both of you, Elmer and Ollie, and is in the middle of raising this giant mug of beer to his lips.

BOOMER: What are you offering? Uh, er, do you want to play a game or something?

OLLIE: Uh, no, we're just--we're trying to give you, ah, jus--do you want some Lychis Root? Or are Doubloons more your thing?

BOOMER: Oh! Oh oh oh! You're-you're-you're, uh, you're selling drugs?

OLLIE: Uh, no, we're *sponsoring* a party. Elmer's sponsoring a party. It's, uh, it's for free.

BOOMER: Sponsoring. Um, I'm sorry, I-I-I don't really take things that like, affects my brain chemistry. I like to have all my sort of thoughts in my head.

CARO: I, like, point at the beer.

BOOMER: Oh, this doesn't even affect me. I'm like 250 pounds, man.

OLLIE: Okay.

BOOMER: Plus I'll nurse this baby all night and everyone won't have a problem with me as long as I act fun.

OLLIE: All right, uh.

BOOMER: You know how it is, right?

OLLIE: Hey, you know, to each their own. Ah, thanks for being straight up.

BOOMER: Uh, maybe Kelt would?

PERSEPHONE: The elf with the dark skin and the moon and star markings around his face turns to Ollie over his shoulder.

KELT: Hello. Is there something you want?

OLLIE: Hi.

[*ALMOST BLISS, Kevin MacLeod*]

OLLIE: [*lovelorn sigh*] Uh. Uh.

KELT: Something--

OLLIE: I...was doing...something, but, um...Oh! Do y-uhh, do you wanna--do you want, do you want, do you want drugs?

PERSEPHONE: You see Kelt, who has this long, long white hair that's partially braided back, turns completely to you and flips his hair over his shoulder.

KELT: What kind of drugs? What're you offering?

OLLIE: Uh. [*small sigh*] I've got, uh, uh, um, Doubloons and, uh, Lychis Root.

KELT: Are you feeling okay? You look a little...sweaty.

OLLIE: Yeah, I'm just, uh, I'm just--I'm-I'm-I'm fine.

KELT: You're fine?

OLLIE: Yeah.

PERSEPHONE: You see, Elmer gives you two the sideeye and elbows Ollie.

ELMER: [*quietly*] Get it. Go.

OLLIE: What?

ELMER: Go.

BOOMER: What are you two whispering about? Oh, um, I'm sorry, I didn't introduce myself or my friend. This is Kelt.

OLLIE: Oh, h-hi. Hi, Kel--hi, Kelt.

KELT: Hi. I'm Kelt. That's my name. This is Boomer. And you are?

OLLIE: I'm Ollie. Uh, yeah, I'm Ollie! Oliver.

KELT: Ollie. Ollie. W-well, it's-it's nice to meet you.

BOOMER: Yeah, it's really good to meet you.

ELMER: Aren't you going to introduce me, Ollie?

OLLIE: Oh, yeah, this is Elmer. Sorry.

ELMER: Hi.

BOOMER: Well, it's nice to meet you two. But, um, if you're gonna do, like, substances um, I'm gonna...go. Uh, Kelt, you'll, uh, catch up with me and Asher later, right?

KELT: Oh yeah. Course. Be fine. Now what do you got?

OLLIE: Uh, I've got Doubloons and Lychis Root, and, um, I do have some Dragon's Blood, but I'm saving that.

KELT: Dragon's Blood, hmm. What exactly are you saving for?

OLLIE: Um, I'm anticipating that if things get bad at this party, because I have a friend who, uh, who Grange really hates, uh then I'm going to pretend to drop it and calm everyone down.

KELT: What's a Grange?

OLLIE: Oh, he's a--he's a--Honestly, he's just a dick. He's just kind of a dick.

KELT: I mean, it sounds like something you don't want on your dick. Bit of like an STD

OLLIE: *[laughs]* You're funny.

KELT: What do you suggest I take, the Lychis Root or the Doubloons?

OLLIE: Oh, I'd say a Doubloon for a party like this. It's a pretty easy up, pretty easy down.

KELT: Right. Good. Then I'll take the Lychis Root.
PERSEPHONE: Winks at you.

OLLIE: [*nervously*] Uh...

KELT: Not in the habit of listening to strangers, am I?

OLLIE: I guess not, uhh.

CARO: Ollie gives him Lychis Root.

KELT: Now. Those markings on your hands. You don't partake, do you?

OLLIE: Oh no, not anymore.

KELT: So you 'sponsor' others doing drugs, but you don't do them yourself.

OLLIE: Um, I have a...

KELT: Bit hypocritical, huh?

OLLIE: W--um. I've a--I've a-- Ah. Let's talk about you, not me, heh. [*nervous laugh*]

KELT: Talk about me, hmm.

OLLIE: Yeah, where you from?

KELT: [*chuckles*] You know, around.

OLLIE: Like, uh, do go to school here?

KELT: Maybe.

OLLIE: Which school do you go to?

KELT: Wouldn't you like to know?

OLLIE: I would, that's why I'm using my words to ask you, uh, but maybe I shouldn't. Uh, I need to distribute the rest of this stuff, but, uh, maybe I'll see you around.

KELT: Wait, w-w-wait, wait, wait. Just because I don't want to give you too much information doesn't mean, well...

PERSEPHONE: Winks at you.

KELT: Hypocrisy or not, a cute face is a cute face.

OLLIE: Ahhhh... [*awkward chuckle*] So I-I wrote, uh, 'home' and 'work' on my hands because, uh, that's three things I hate.

CAST: [*laughing*]

PERSEPHONE: Kelt sort of pauses and reassesses everything that he said up until this point.

CAST: [*still laughing*]

KELT: Um. Right!

ELISE: Well done.

KELT: Uh, have a good time with that, then. Um. Maybe I'll see you around.

OLLIE: Yeah. Okay. Bye.

KELT: Bye!

PERSEPHONE: And Kelt zooms away.

NUANCE: [*laughing*] Ollie! Ollie, you precious, precious...

ELISE: I love that Ollie ostensibly like the cool guy in the group and, like, also cannot, *cannot* flirt.

NUANCE: Oh, well, Ollie, I did not realize you had no game at all.

CAST: [*continues laughing*]

ELISE: None.

CARO: None whatsoever.

PERSEPHONE: Cecil, you notice now that Ollie is alone.

[*OUROBOROS, Kevin MacLeod*]

WREN: I....

OLLIE: [*whispering*] Why do I do this?

CECIL: [*clears their throat*]

OLLIE: Cecil...

CECIL: U-uh.

OLLIE: Cecil. I-I-- I wrote 'home' and 'work' on my hands because it's three things I hate.

CECIL: ...

OLLIE: That's funny, right? It's funny?

CECIL: Well I-I

OLLIE: Home. Work.

CECIL: That's only two--

OLLIE: Homework.

CECIL: --things...

OLLIE: See, right?

CECIL: Ohhhhhhhh...

OLLIE: Right? It's funny! Damn!

CECIL: Yes, it's funny. Umm. Grange is here. I need to find Hudson. We need to find Hudson. Maybe.

OLLIE: Oh shit. Okay. Yeah, let's go find him.

CECIL: Yeah. Uh, I just don't know where-where-where the, uh, the-the really cool people would go at a party like this?

OLLIE: Wha? It's a party. People just walk around.

CECIL: ...Oh.

OLLIE: There's no, like, right place to be. Wait, who'd he go off with?

CECIL: A girl from my old school.

OLLIE: Okay. Uhhh... Well, can you, like, you know what they look like and things, right? So let's, uh... Oh, should we find Suri?

CECIL: Oh, Suri? Suri has a-has a friend. They're talking about the internet.

OLLIE: Oh. Uh, all right.

CECIL: Do you have a Crystagram account? I've never really got my head around any of--any of that.

OLLIE: Yeah, I do, but I only take pictures of, like, cool graffiti that I see. You know, it's like...Yeah, you can't put too much on there? Like, cause otherwise it's weird.

CECIL: Is it? All right.

OLLIE: Yeah, you just have to, like, have a *thing*. That you just post about, right?

CECIL: I-I tried to sign up once, but somebody already had the name 'Cecil'. So...I stopped.

OLLIE: Oh. That, like, that was enough to stop you?

CECIL: ...Anyway, we gotta--we have to find Hudson?

PERSEPHONE: Okay, roll Investigation, please.

[*die rolls*]

WREN: Jesus H. Christ.

PERSEPHONE: One of you can roll and the other one can give the Help action if you wanna roll with advantage.

CARO: Yeah, I'll give the help action.

[*die rolls*]

WREN: Okay.

CARO: So you can roll with advantage.

WREN: 14.

PERSEPHONE: You look around and you manage to get sight of Hudson. You see that Hudson is playing beer pong. And that Penny is standing off to the side, looking annoyed.

PENNY: Do you really have to play that right now?

HUDSON: Well, yeah, they asked.

PENNY: Do you do everything someone asks you?

HUDSON: Well, yeah.

PENNY: Actually that might be beneficial. You might be worth my time.

HUDSON: I mean, I came with you.

RANDOM STUDENT: Focus on the gaaaaaame!

HUDSON: Oh! Oh yeah!

ELISE: Hudson plays beer pong.

PERSEPHONE: Roll Athletics.

ELISE: Oh, wow. Okay. I'm gonna regret this. It's a 22. *[laughing]* I don't need to be good at beer pong, why!

WREN: Wow.

HUDSON: He shoots! He scores! Whoaaa!

PERSEPHONE: So Penny looks at you.

PENNY: Can you just, like, hurry this up?

PERSEPHONE: And you look at her and then you're like, "sure" and you just obliterate them. Instantaneously.

PENNY: Oh, you-you *are* good at listening. And you're really stupid. It's great.

HUDSON: Hey, we should probably look for my friends because, like, I came here with them and, you know, they're new to parties.

PENNY: I keep telling you. They're not important.

HUDSON: Well, that's not a very nice thing to say.

PENNY: You're here with me, now.

HUDSON: I guess that's true?

PENNY: Yeah.

HUDSON: Huh. Oh, okay?

PENNY: God, you're so indecisive. I mean, look at me.

ELISE: Hudson clearly does appreciate how attractive Penny is. But then he also looks very confused and conflicted, like he's trying to remember something that he was supposed to do. Just like,

HUDSON: Oh, okay. Yeah, I guess that's true. Huh. Okay.

PERSEPHONE: At this point, Ollie and Cecil are within speaking distance.

OLLIE: Hey, Hudson. Uh.

HUDSON: Cecil! Ollie! Aw, do you want to meet my new friend?

OLLIE: Sure.

HUDSON: This is Penny. Penny, these are my very good friends. This is Ollie. And this is Cecil.

PERSEPHONE: Penny glances at both of you.

PENNY: We have got to do something about your taste in people.

HUDSON: But like--

OLLIE: Wow.

PENNY: We're gonna have to work on that.

OLLIE: Are you so insecure that you can't even, like, be nice to people who are not as pretty as you? Must be awful, right?

Penny: Oh. Wait, wait.

HUDSON: Hey. I'm nice.

PENNY: I'm sorry. I thought I heard a buzzing fly. It's so weird that it is so far underground. But...

HUDSON: Wait, where is it?

PENNY: ...Clearly someone just needs to smash it.

OLLIE: Wow, violent and insecure. You really have a lot going for you don't you?

ELISE: Hudson is looking around for the fly.

WREN: Cecil--

PENNY: Judging from your clothing, I have a lot more going on than you.

WREN: Cecil has gone on a little bit of a face journey. There was some sheepishness, and then she was bitchy which, you know, they're used to. And then was really excited when Ollie said something back to her. Has not seen anybody ever do that to Penny. And then, when she got bitchy at him, Cecil looks angry for the first time that I think probably any of you have genuinely seen Cecil look angry.

CARO: Awwww! [*squee*]

OLLIE: Oh, so you're making fun of me for being poor? Oh, you know, you remind me a lot of someone. [*scoffs*] It's funny.

PENNY: You're really quick on the uptake, surprisingly.

HUDSON: Well, Ollie's, like, so smart.

PENNY: Can't be because of your education.

HUDSON: Ollie's, like, really smart. He's probably one of the smartest people I know. Except for, like, Suri, who's the other smartest person I know. And... Wait! Cecil's really smart too. I know a lot of smart people.

OLLIE: [*chuckling*] Oh, Hudson, everyone you meet is smart, aren't they?

HUDSON: Yeah!

PENNY: Honestly, honey, having met and looked at you, I don't think your intelligence is a measure by which other people can, you know, be judged by. Because you set the bar really low, sweetie. As for you, walking fashion disaster, poor person, greaseball...

OLLIE: Keep it coming. I'm just drinking it up.

PENNY: Ugh. I'm sorry, I'm not in the habit of taking orders for my lessers.

HUDSON: Hey!

OLLIE: Wow.

WREN: Cecil just walks right up to her and slaps her across the face. [*S L A P*]

CAST: [*freaking out*]

PERSEPHONE: She doubles back.

HUDSON: Cecil!

PERSEPHONE: And when she looks up, her eyes have gone entirely black.

[*BABA YAGA, Kevin MacLeod*]

PENNY: Did you just lay a hand on me?

CECIL: We don't go to the same school anymore, so...

PENNY: Oh! You don't get to talk now. I know who you are, you little pest. The one who was always slinking around, creepy crawling around the edges of Lothmorin. And, you know, the property value really went up when you disappeared, because there were no more cockroaches to lower the value. Quite frankly, I was getting tired of watching you stare at Jenny anyway.

HUDSON: Hey! That's not very nice!

PENNY: As if you could be good enough to even lick her shoes clean.

OLLIE: You know what, Penny? Enjoy the next two years of your life because after that it's all downhill for you. The rest of us have futures.

PERSEPHONE: Ollie and Hudson roll a Wisdom saving throw, please.

CARO: Okay.

[two dice roll simultaneously]

CARO: Oh yes. I have a 19 plus my Wisdom, which is a plus one...

PERSEPHONE: Cool, you pass.

ELISE: ...15?

PERSEPHONE: You fail.

ELISE: Haaaa!

PERSEPHONE: So you feel a wash of electrical energy *[zapping electricity]* pass over you. Ollie, you shrug it off. Hudson, you freeze in place, you're under the effects of Hold Person and are paralyzed for a minute.

PENNY: Now that we have a rapt audience...

WREN: So when Cecil slapped her it was open-handed, but now Cecil is standing there with closed hands and there is just a faint vibration to the ground. *[low rumbling]*

PERSEPHONE: Penny gets up in your face and looks up at you. She's shorter than you but she definitely doesn't feel it.

PENNY: Now you've laid your hands on me. Do you know what happens when you put your grubby little hands on a priceless artifact? You pay the price.

WREN: A little bit more vibration. *[rumbling intensifies]*

PENNY: Believe me, I'm built to last, but you're not.

PERSEPHONE: She raises her hand and backhands you across the face. *[punch]*

WREN: All right. Cecil stumbles backwards slightly and they had been you know clenching their fists. And as they kind of recover from the stumbling, they look up at her and kind of let go of this angry energy that they have been bottling up and cast Earth Tremor and the ground that had been sort of vibrating a little bit actively thuds and shakes. [*loud rumbling*] And she needs to pass a Dex 12 check.

PERSEPHONE: So, okay. So Earth Tremor is a 10-foot radius around you. Everyone except you in that radius needs to make a saving throw. A Dexterity saving throw.

WREN: Oh shit, yep. Sorry. Sorry everyone.

PERSEPHONE: I believe that Hudson automatically fails it because of paralysis. Ollie, the people that were playing beer pong, because they're still here, watching with rapt attention, and Penny needs to roll Dexterity saving throws.

[*die rolls*]

CARO: Sorry, I have a 15.

WREN: You pass.

CARO: Which I think passes; 12 is the DC?

WREN: Yeah.

ELISE: Hudson's on his back.

PERSEPHONE: You see Penny fails.

WREN: Ha! Ha! Ha! Okay, well, this is bad, but ha!

PERSEPHONE: Describe what happens.

WREN: Um, I do max damage, that's six damage on this. So, unfortunately, when this tremor energy erupts out of angry-Cecil, Hudson is caught in it and falls prone. But Penny is also blasted back, from the ground just sort of rising up from her feet, and also falls backwards prone.

PERSEPHONE: So you cast a spell, the energy bolts out of you and into the ground. The ground shakes in a 10-foot radius around you. Ollie manages to just jump back and stay stable, and the spell doesn't affect you, Cecil. But you see Hudson topples over because Hudson is paralyzed, and that Penny is thrown backwards, and that little bits of rock have scratched into her skin and she falls to the ground. You also notice that there is a cry from outside the

gathering group of people that have seen this happen. And you see that coming through the crowd is Jenny, who runs over to Penny and looks down at her and starts pulling her up off the ground.

PENNY: I am going to kill that little--

JENNY: Penny, calm down. Just-just calm down.

PENNY: [*panting with rage*] I am not calm right now.

PERSEPHONE: You see that the black of her eyes has started to spread outside of it and there's this radiant aura of black that's swirling around her eyes.

JENNY: Penny, just-just-just-just calm down. Just take deep breaths. Remember what the doctor said, you can't keep having these moments

PENNY: [*still panting*] I do not tolerate things like this.

JENNY: Just breathe, just breathe, just breathe, just breathe.

PERSEPHONE: You see that another person walks over. And it's Merry, the human with the braids in their hair. And without doing anything else, Merry just walks over, puts out a hand, closes their eyes. You see that Penny collapses into their arms.

MERRY: [*sighs*] This happens way too often. What did you do to my friend?

WREN: Cecil, after the release of that little, you know, pent-up anger is now standing there with their hand that they cast the spell with just open, and their other hand over their mouth, horrified at what they just did.

PERSEPHONE: Jenny looks up from Penny's prone body and then looks at Cecil and then does a double-take.

JENNY: Cecil? Cecil, did you do this to Penny?

CARO: Ollie walks over to Cecil and just stands, like, shoulder-to-shoulder with them.

OLLIE: Your friend was being a real bitch and it's not Cecil's fault that they lost their temper.

JENNY: You...uh. [*forlorn sigh*] Cecil. I...I know-- [*frustrated sigh*]

PERSEPHONE: Merry sighs.

MERRY: It's not worth it to engage. We have to make sure that when Penny wakes up, she is calm.

JENNY: I-I know, but--

MERRY: That's what we need to do now.

PERSEPHONE: Mary looks at Cecil.

MERRY: But I'll remember you. And you.

PERSEPHONE: Looks at Ollie.

CARO: Ollie's just chin up.

MERRY: Let's go, Jenny.

PERSEPHONE: And Merry gathers Penny up in their arms and starts walking off. Jenny hesitates, looks at Cecil--

WREN: Who does not meet her eyes.

PERSEPHONE: --Looks very upset, and goes off.

CARO: Ollie kind of just, like, shoulder-checks Cecil.

OLLIE: Hey, you okay?

CECIL: [*deep sigh*]

ELISE: Does Hudson get released from the paralysis after?

PERSEPHONE: Yes, it's only a minute so you're out.

HUDSON: That's not very nice. Oh. What happened? Uh.

CARO: Ollie walks over and puts a hand out to help Hudson up.

ELISE: Hudson takes the hand and gets up. Brushes himself off. [*brushing noises*]

OLLIE: All right, uh.

HUDSON: Are you guys okay?

OLLIE: Everyone's fine. Everyone, just try to be cool. Um. You know, just, ah, let's get a drink? Oh, Hudson, we came to tell you that Grange's here. And--

HUDSON: Ugh, what?

CECIL: Right. I came to tell you that, so that we didn't get into fights here.

PERSEPHONE: As you three are processing the aftermath of what just happened, we are going to move back to Surississah, Ned, and Ken. Surississah, Ken has made sure that you both got non-alcoholic drinks. Both out of concern and out of feeling responsible for you now, since his friend is partially responsible for why you're here.

[PYRO FLOW, Kevin MacLeod]

KENNETH: Okay, um, look. Y-y-you two just need to, um, just stay safe. So just stay with me and I will take care of you. And everything will be fine.

PERSEPHONE: From behind him, Monette is approaching again and taps on his shoulder.

MONETTE: Ken.

KENNETH: Monette, how many times do I have to tell you?

MONETTE: I-I just want to talk. [*sighs*] I think it's a little more important than you taking care of two--

PERSEPHONE: She finally seems to notice Surississah.

MONETTE: Have we met?

SURI: W-we have.

MONETTE: Is there--

SURI: We have class together.

MONETTE: No, no, no. You-you-you-you are *not* the girl with the braids.

SURI: I...I am?

MONETTE: Wow. I-I-I. That is, like, some magical bullshit. What the?

KENNETH: Okay, okay. Monette, every time you open your mouth something insulting comes out. You know how fucking sick I am of that? You know how hard it is to date someone who constantly judges, and pokes at, and picks at every single thing you do?

MONETTE: I'm just trying to make sure I'm helping--

KENNETH: You only care about image! That's all you care about! I used to feel bad for you, because I've met your fucking sister, but. I don't know what kind of complex you have, but I'm not dealing with it anymore.

MONETTE: I-I just--

KENNETH: No, no. Go! Just fucking go. [*deep sigh*]

MONETTE: Alright, I-I I'll just--I'll go. Fine.

KENNETH: Good!

PERSEPHONE: Monette sulks off. And you see, Ken takes a deep breath,

KENNETH: How harsh was I just now?

SURI: Pretty? But it sounded like there's a lot that you've been kind of bottling up? Um. But maybe i-it wouldn't hurt to, um, apologize if you feel that way later on. When you're a little less upset.

PERSEPHONE: So you see Ken sighs, but Ned watches Monette go and then looks back.

NED: Um, I'm gonna go. Uh, that was-that was-yeah, harsh is a... I'm-I'm just gonna go see that she's okay.

PERSEPHONE: And Ned runs off.

KENNETH: Uh, wait, you! Uh. I don't lose my temper often. I-I just. Way to go, Ken. [*sighs*] Sorry. This has been a great night for you, I'm sure.

SURI: It's...[*small hiss*] For all I know, this is how parties are supposed to go. [*nervous laugh*]

KENNETH: They're. They're not. They're-th-th-They're supposed to be fun. For someone.

SURI: Well...

KENNETH: I guess.

SURI: Well, um. There's, uh...

KENNETH: Why don't we, um, you know, um. I think--I think we're both out of it. Um, I think maybe what's best is that we find your friends and we, uh, then get Ned and we all just. Go.

SURI: I, uh, I-I could go. Sure. Yeah. Um.

NUANCE: Suri kind of picks up her hand to wave to her friends? But then feels awkward about it. Because everything about this night has been awkward. Plus they also look a little weird?

ELISE: Hudson looks happy to see Suri and he waves.

SURI: I-I, um. Is...I could go if you're all having a...Would it be better if I went?

HUDSON: What? No, Suri! It would *not* be better if you went. We're here. And I'm sorry I left you guys. Uh, I got mixed up. And that-that girl was like a real jerk. I'm sorry she was so mean to you.

SURI: It's [*sad laugh*] it's okay. It's kind of--it's. It's nothing, I-I...

HUDSON: She was, like, really rude to Cecil and really mean to Ollie, like...

SURI: Oh no.

HUDSON: I don't-I don't get it.

OLLIE: Hey. Uh, it's alright, everyone. Let's just, you know, try and have a good night, maybe? Let's get out of here.

HUDSON: Wait, weren't we here to look for something?

OLLIE: Yeah. Why don't we just, uh, go find a-a-a deeper part of the caves and we could just, um, hang out. Just all of us.

PERSEPHONE: Ken leans on one hip.

KEN: Uh, sorry to interrupt. Um. I, uh, um, I really think that we should go find Ned and Monette. I know that I'm not who she wants to see right now, but this is probably the last place that a girl needs to be upset and alone and--

OLLIE: What happened with Monette?

HUDSON: Who's Monette?

KENNETH: [*sighs*]

OLLIE: She's a blonde, uh, pretty girl from-from class.

SURI: She's in our Arcane class, so you wouldn't have...

HUDSON: Oh, okay. Uh, does she need help? Was somebody mean to her?

KENNETH: We, uh. Um.

PERSEPHONE: You see Ken awkwardly scratches at his temple.

KENNETH: Uh. In a matter of speaking? Yeah. Um, but Ned wandered off to go comfort her and I'm worried. And uh.

HUDSON: Yeah, Ned's real little.

KENNETH: Yeah.

OLLIE: Yeah, they could come with us? Why-why don't we go get them?

KENNETH: Let's look around.

SURI: Cecil, are you okay?

CECIL: Yeah.

HUDSON: Cecil was so badass. So that girl was just like, [*falsetto*] "Oh, like, I'm really pretty, but I'm also mean for some reason and I don't know why." And then, uh, and then, like, she was, like, super mean to Ollie. And then Cecil was all like, "You can't be mean to my friend!" and then, like, the whole ground shook! And I didn't do anything because I was frozen? And it was really embarrassing, but, like, I'm so glad Cecil was there to save the day. It was super rad.

OLLIE: It was super-rad.

CECIL: That's a very generous paraphrase. About what happened. There.

HUDSON: I'm pretty sure that's exactly how it happened.

CECIL: Paraphrase.

OLLIE: It is! Well, it's exactly how it happened.

CECIL: I...

HUDSON: I don't know why she is so mean. I don't. I don't get why people are mean! It just makes me so mad!

OLLIE: [*deep sigh*] I know you don't, Hudson, you sweet, sweet summer child.

SURI: And just...it's the way people are. And you just kind of have to...

PERSEPHONE: You hear a shout. And you all turn around and you see that Monette is running through the crowd towards you

MONETTE: Ken! Ken! Ken! Ken! KenKenKenKen! Please!

[*DECISIONS, Kevin MacLeod*]

PERSEPHONE: And she runs up to Ken and does not stop. Crashes right into him.

KENNETH: Uh, Monette, what--?

MONETTE: [*nervous exhale*] Listen. Um. [*huffs*] Uh, that little-that little kid, that boy that-that. He-he came after me and, um, [*hudds*] we were talking in one of the side--

KENNETH: Calm down. I-I can't understand when you're talking that fast.

MONETTE: I...[*sighs, distressed noises*]

PERSEPHONE: She, like, looks at all of you.

MONETTE: Ollie, you kn--you know him. [*sputters*] Edward? Ned?

OLLIE: Ned?

MONETTE: Ned, that's it! Uh, he came over and he tried to comfort me. And we were talking in one of the side caves, and Grange came up, with his other two lackeys. And, and, like--

HUDSON: Is Ned okay?

MONETTE: Matilda cast Hold Person on me and I couldn't do anything about it. They just grabbed Ned and took him deeper into the tunnels! I don't know what's going on.

HUDSON: What?

MONETTE: Like, they just kidnapped him!

OLLIE: What?

MONETTE: We have to help him!

OLLIE: Let's go!

SURI: Yeah.

MONETTE: This is totally my fault. I shouldn't--I knew I shouldn't have come.

ELISE: Hudson immediately, like, storms off, but probably not in the right direction.

MONETTE: You're not going the right way!

HUDSON: Oh!

MONETTE: Follow me. Follow me. Follow me. W-we gotta go! We have to go.

OLLIE: Alright, let's go.

NUANCE: Yeah. Suri...yeah.

PERSEPHONE: And you all run off through the crowd, following Monette. And that's where we'll end our session.

[PINBALL SPRING, Kevin MacLeod]

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

CARO: I'm Caro and you can find me on all the things @Car0mur, spelled with zero.

NUANCE: I'm Nuance and you can follow me @shadowravyn, that's -ravyn (don't make fun of me, I was 16) on Twitter and booksomewench on Twitch. Check out Dun-gyms and Dratinis, my Pokemon homebrew.

WREN: I'm Wren and I live on Twitter @AtomicFird--

CAST: [*cracks up*]

CARO: Atomicfird!

CAST: [*more laughing*]

CARO: Yo, you gotta get that right now. You gotta go get that now.

ELISE: Lord Cencil!

CARO: Atomicfird!

ELISE: Lord Cencil!

PERSEPHONE: Atomicfird.

CARO: Someone see if it's available.

PERSEPHONE: Atomicfird!

CAST: [*STILL laughing*]

PERSEPHONE: Ferdy ferdy ferdy fird.

WREN: I'm serious, I can't breathe.

CARO: Atomicfird!

PERSEPHONE: Atomicfirebird, the boom-boom bird!

CARO: This is yours now.

ELISE: I have fetched for you for you the Atomicfird, Lord Cencil!

CAST: [*renewed bouts of laughter*]

ELISE: At your behest.

CAST: [*there is no end to our laughter*]

ELISE: Release the birds!

WREN: [*almost in tears laughing so hard*] ...fuckin'...

CAST: [*we're hysterical at this point*]

WREN: I'm fuckin' crying.

PERSEPHONE: Oh my god, oh my god, Atomicbird...

CARO: Go get it!

PERSEPHONE: You have to finish this!

WREN: I'm trying!

PERSEPHONE: We have to use this now.

CARO: Oh no!

ELISE: Oh no, what's happened?

PERSEPHONE: I think we broke Wren.

WREN: Okay. Okay, we're good. Um.

Persephone: Are you sure about that?

WREN: Uh-huh. Okay, I'm... [*snorts more laughter*] Fuck!

Persephone: Breathe!

WREN: I'm trying!

PERSEPHONE: Breathe, breathe.

WREN: I'm sorry. I just got the stupids. [*clears throat*] I'm Wren... am I?

CAST: [*starts dying again*]

ELISE: So sure of themselves.

WREN: I'm sorry!

NUANCE: I'm Wren, I'm having an existential crisis.

WREN: Okay. I'm Wren and I live on Twitter @atomic...fuck!

CAST: [*and we're set off again*]

PERSEPHONE: Derrick you have to edit in this into something useable. Too funny not to.

NUANCE: Who are you on Twitter?

PERSEPHONE: Yeah, who are you? Who are you, really?

WREN: I'm Wren, I live on Twitter at @AtomicFirebird. I'm also @make_believe_ on Twitch where I run an indie system one-shots, and do a weekly interview show.

[*long pause*]

PERSEPHONE: Elise!

CAST: [*oh you know what happens at this point*]

ELISE: Oh, I didn't think we were ever gonna get there. I'm Elise, several otters piloting a human meatsuit and I am not on the internet. Don't @-me.

PERSEPHONE: You can also find all of us on Twitter @FastTimesDND. That's Fast Times, the letter--fuck.

ELISE: Wow.

PERSEPHONE: You can also find all of us on Twitter @FastTimesDND that's Fast Times, D, the letter N, D. If you want to support us, please visit us at patreon.com...fuck my life.

ELISE: Patreon.com/fuckmylife.

CARO: It's a big D, the little n, and another big D.

NUANCE: A *really* big D.

PERSEPHONE: I don't know if I can handle that, Caro! Might be too many Ds.

CARO: Mmm, no, we have to try.

PERSEPHONE: Okay. I think I can do it. I think I can take it. If you want to support us, please visit us patreon.com/FastTimesD, the letter N, D. Oh my god. I did it. I took it! I did!

CARO: Oh noo...

NUANCE: Except there's, oh my god.

PERSEPHONE: Did I not say it right?

WREN: Except there's two?

PERSEPHONE: If you want to support us, please visit us at patreon.com/FastTimesDND. That's Fast Times D, the letter N, D. There. I did it. I did it.

NUANCE: Isn't there a whole 'nother line?

WREN: No, it's your turn.

PERSEPHONE: Nuance!

NUANCE: Okay, sorry! Um, um, I-- [*clears throat*] If you want to know more about the world, the players, the characters...shut up.

PERSEPHONE: Okay, okay, we have the sillies.

NUANCE: If you want to know more about the world, the disaster players, or the characters, check us out at FastTimesDND.com. That's Fast Times D, the letter N, D.com.

CARO: Written transcripts of our episodes are provided by Nuance Vivian. If you want to help us out, leave us a review on iTunes, or comments on Podbean.

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 and David Fesliyan, licensed under Creative Commons. Find individual track listings in our show notes.

ELISE: And that's all the things, folks. Still don't @-me.

PERSEPHONE: Tune in next time to hear all of us be complete and utter disasters once again. Bye all!