

THE HIDDEN PEOPLE

Episode 3.02

"Court of Cards"

Written by

Alexa Fett Fisher

TEASER

13. The bottom of the mountain. Mackenna's panting breaths.

LEE

The fall would have killed anyone else.
But contrary to the saying, what
doesn't kill Mackenna Thorne leaves her
with broken bones and internal bleeding
instead of stronger.

MACKENNA

Ow. Fuck.

LEE

Our hero survives, but it takes time
for wounds to heal, even for a powerful
halfling. It's a pop-quiz from the
universe to see if anything would kill
Mackenna Thorne--a fifty meter fall
down a rocky mountain side? Not this
time. Hunger?

Stomach growling.

LEE (CONT'D)

No. Exposure?

Teeth chattering.

LEE (CONT'D)

Nope. There's enough snow that
dehydration isn't a threat, but that
probably wouldn't end her either. The
real threat is in her head--hours lying
there, watching the sun and light
disappear beyond the horizon. No
distractions from the pain of bone and
tissue knitting themselves back
together. Nothing to do but lie there
and replay the battle over and over and
realize just how in over her head she
really is.

MACKENNA

Mother fucker.

LEE

Mackenna recognizes her mistake as she gains the strength to sit up and watch the sun rise over the opposite horizon. The flaw in her otherwise perfect plan of rushing in to face an evil god alone. She did the one thing you cannot do with the world, humanity, and all of existence in the balance, the one thing true leaders never do. She fell.

END TEASER

14. The Thorne house. Stepping sideways arrival.

ALFIE

Well, look what the cat dragged--holy shit, you look awful.

THOMAS

Mackenna, what happened?

MACKENNA

I fell down. Is there breakfast?

SHAYLEE

You've been gone for a day and a half, broke the circle behind you so we couldn't come find you, and that's all you have to say for yourself? We were worried sick!

MACKENNA

I'm hungry. Thomas, did you stress bake during the "worried sick" bit? I could really go for a muffin or six.

THOMAS

Will croissants do?

MACKENNA

Wow, fancy French pastry. Must have really been concerned.

THOMAS

Of course I was. We all were.

NISSA

I'm assuming your cavalier attitude means we have nothing more to worry about?

(beat)

You defeated Wodan and there's no more imminent threat hanging over our heads?

MACKENNA

What, do you wanna hear me say you were fucking right? That I couldn't hold my own one-on-one against a god? Because, no surprise to you all, I couldn't.

SHAYLEE

Mack, what happened?

MACKENNA

I got my ass kicked.

ALFIE

Please don't take this as me being negative about the outcome, but if you got beat by a deity, how are you still alive?

MACKENNA

The same reason he didn't kill me in Arcadia. He wants me alive.

SHAYLEE

Why? You did the thing he wanted you to do. He killed Niamh after she played her part.

MACKENNA

I don't know. Maybe he likes the audience--someone knowing how strong he is and what's coming but who can't stop it.

THOMAS

You know what? I don't care about the why. I'm just glad you're back here with us.

MACKENNA

Thanks, Thomas.

ALFIE

Great, now that we've gotten the "run recklessly into danger" bit out of the way, time to discuss the actual plan of attack.

A beat of silence. Everyone looks to Mackenna.

MACKENNA

Why are you all looking at me?

ALFIE

You're our fearless leader. You come up with the plans.

MACKENNA

Yeah, and then you shoot me down because they won't work.

NISSA

And then we do them anyway. We've been through this enough times to know how it goes.

THOMAS

Although, I think we're better off with a more logical, thought-out plan, considering the results of the first attempt. So, what do you have for plan B?

LEE

Maybe there are two things a leader should never do: leaders should never fall, and leaders should never say...

MACKENNA

I don't know.

MUSICAL TRANSITION

15. The mountain top. Wodan waits with Robin and Black Annis.

VOICE

You'll have to tell them to be patient.

BLACK ANNIS

Where are those ones?

ROBIN

Perhaps they won't heed the call.
Cowards.

WODAN

Patience is a virtue. Not one of mine,
but you should be patient nonetheless.

BLACK ANNIS

Those ones should have appeared the
moment the mighty Wodan performed the
ritual. Black Annis appeared. Even the
Puck came straight away.

ROBIN

My charred cousin, you can't expect the
remaining Old Ones to be as loyal as
us. We are, after all, capable of so
much more than those silly-billies:
tying our shoes, jumping rope, bringing
about the fall of the usurper and the
return of the one true god.

BLACK ANNIS

Hmph. This one did nothing to fell the
usurper. Black Annis honed the weapon
that wrought the traitor's doom. This
one merely made silly potions.

VOICE

They'll keep arguing if you don't
interrupt. Not enough to kill each
other, but close. They need to have a
rivalry, not a blood feud.

WODAN

You're right.

ROBIN

You're not seriously taking her side--

WODAN

I wasn't talking to you. You each had a role to play in my return, and you each did your duties exactly as I had prophesied.

BLACK ANNIS / ROBIN

So spake Wodan.

WODAN

The remaining Old Ones are right to be cautious. I need a Court that is loyal enough to heed the summons, but not so dumb as to rush in without hesitation.

VOICE

Unlike the halfling.

WODAN

Unlike the halfling. On the attack, half-cocked, and playing right into my hands. I don't need fools like her on my Court. Those that would harbor no suspicion at a summons not heard in millennia. Those that would believe without proof the return of the true ruler of the Hidden People, when they were once so earnestly hunted down by the rebellious younglings? A Court made up of the reckless, the impulsive, the naive?

ROBIN

No, Wodan.

BLACK ANNIS

Only the worthy shall be honored with a place on the true god's Court!

WODAN

Yes. The worthy.

VOICE

Quality over quantity.

WODAN

But you are not the only Old Ones of quality, surely. No, there must be others. You serve me with your entire beings, but a Court of two will not suffice for a god. The true god. I demand absolute devotion from my followers, and I demand to be worshipped by the multitudes.

VOICE

And you shall be.

BLACK ANNIS / ROBIN

So spake Wodan.

WODAN

You say quality over quantity.

ROBIN

(whispered)

I didn't say that. Did you?

BLACK ANNIS

(vocal shrug)

WODAN

I say: why not both?

(evil chuckle)

So we will wait for the cream to rise to the top. And we will lay waste to all those unworthy.

MUSICAL TRANSITION

16. The Thorne house.

SAM

Christ, Mackenna. You fell down a mountain?

MACKENNA

It was more pushed, but there was falling involved. I think I might have

broken my neck. I couldn't move for a while after I stopped rolling.

SHAYLEE

You know, I think you may have finally surpassed me on the injuries tally. Impressive.

MACKENNA

Yeah, well, I haven't come back from the dead yet--

SHAYLEE

Twice.

MACKENNA

--so I think those should be weighted higher.

RILEY

Okay, so I'm going to add "mountain surfing with my face" to the list of things that potentially might not kill me. Potentially, because I'm just a run-of-the-mill changeling, not the full blown halfling with royal faerie blood.

ALFIE

Please do my heart a favor and don't test any of those potentialities. Potentialnesses? Po-to-tentail... just don't die, 'kay?

RILEY

Not on the bucket list.

ALFIE

On the subject of lists, I have a few columns of Wodan's superpowers, both known and suspected.

NISSA

Of course you have a list.

ALFIE

Obviously, "magical" is known. And "super strong," if he could beat Mackenna.

SAM

"Magical spear" should be an item. If he can pull it out of nowhere, he'll always be armed.

ALFIE

Good point. What else?

SHAYLEE

Mack, you said he was talking to himself?

MACKENNA

Yeah. It was like a conversation I could only hear one side of. Is schizophrenia a superpower?

RILEY

Some form of telepathy?

ALFIE

I'm going to put "talking to self" in the suspected column. With a question mark.

SAM

Is he invulnerable? I've seen you fight, and I can't imagine he did this to you without you getting in a few shots of your own.

MACKENNA

I couldn't hit him. Every swing, strike, or kick, he either dodged or blocked. His reflexes are so fast; it's like he knew the moves I was going to make before I did.

RILEY

I'm gonna pitch telepathy again and see if it sticks this time.

NISSA

Wait, what if Wodan did know your moves before you did?

ALFIE

What are you thinking, Niss?

NISSA

It's something from Dane's notes I read. He had compiled human legends of Wodan, thought maybe some of them applied to upper level Hidden People.

SAM

What were the details?

NISSA

In the Prose Edda, Wodan has crows that fly all over the world and then whisper what they see to him.

MACKENNA

So he's a nosy bastard that likes birds. And those are things that would have already happened, not will happen. We have the internet, which is basically the same thing.

NISSA

He's supposed to be the god of a lot of things: healing, death, battle, war, victory, the runic alphabet--

ALFIE

Sounds greedy.

RILEY

Definitely. Greek and Roman gods have one or two specialties, tops.

NISSA

--knowledge and wisdom. Shit, he hanged himself on a tree to learn magical runes that could perform all sorts of miracles.

SAM

Hanged and didn't die. Great. Another line in the powers column.

NISSA

What I'm saying is that there are multiple stories that imply that Wodan has at least some future knowledge. If the stories are right, or even based in some truth, he probably knew what was going to happen when you went to fight him.

SHAYLEE

Not just with the fight but with bringing the Eye to the courtroom. Probably even defeating the Magister. If he knows everything that has happened, or will happen...

RILEY

He's omniscient? He's omniscient! He knows everything!

MACKENNA

Of course he fucking does.

RILEY

So, we're up against someone who is magical, always armed, super strong, and omniscient. Anything else?

SAM

Isn't that enough?

MACKENNA

He might as well be omnipotent. All those events: killing the Magister, Niamh, the Eye...hell, my very existence. It wasn't all just chance. If he knows the future and has magic, he has the power to influence things to go any way he wants.

SHAYLEE

Mack, if he were truly omnipotent, he never would have been overthrown in the

first place. Never been imprisoned. He must have some weakness.

MACKENNA

Unless that was part of his plan, too.

ALFIE

But, hey, there's a thought: a weakness list. Let's start with what we know: he was locked up for thousands of years, right?

(beat)

Probably has a vitamin D deficiency. Can we work with that?

Sam's cell phone rings.

SAM

Sorry, I have to take this.
(fading as she walks away)
Hello? Yes, this is Samantha.

MACKENNA

Alfie, he has no weaknesses. Just plans and scheming and the source of basically all magic. What's the point of even pretending we can come up with a list?

ALFIE

Well, I thought it would be helpful to forming a plan. Maybe shove some values at Nissa's algorithm and see if it spits anything out?

NISSA

I updated it after we found out that magic is real, supplemented with info and potential formulas from Dane's notes.

RILEY

I want the Cliffs Notes on how you did that.

NISSA

Still not enough time in the world to properly explain it.

MACKENNA

Are you not getting it? Anything we come up with, anything that a computer suggests, Wodan is going to know. He's going to be prepared for it.

RILEY

Then what should we do, Mack?

MACKENNA

Whatever he fucking wants, I guess.

Mackenna walks away.

SHAYLEE

(calling after her)

Mackenna!

17. Mackenna's room. Shaylee follows Mackenna.

MACKENNA

Whatever you're going to say, don't.

SHAYLEE

Mack--

MACKENNA

I get it, okay? You were right about me not being able to fight Wodan. Maybe the Magister, and Cygnus, and Niamh were all just flukes, or I won because Wodan pulled some magic voodoo.

SHAYLEE

That's not--

MACKENNA

But I did win! All those times, I thought I was strong, I was smart, that I knew what I was doing. How was I supposed to know that this was the one time where it wouldn't work out?

SHAYLEE

You couldn't.

MACKENNA

Except you said so. You all tried to tell me, and of course I didn't listen because I had to just run off on my own and prove you all wrong.

SHAYLEE

I wish you hadn't.

MACKENNA

So just say it, then. Say "I told you so," and "you should have listened to me," because you're right. I fucked up, and I made things worse and I have no idea what to do now to fix this.

SHAYLEE

I'm not going to say any of that.

MACKENNA

Well, you should. You have every right to. Shaylee, come out and say what you're really thinking. I can take it. I deserve--

Mackenna's cut off by Shaylee kissing her.

SHAYLEE

I'm so fucking grateful that you're alive.

MACKENNA

That's not what I was expecting.

SHAYLEE

No, but it's what I was really thinking. And you're right about some things. All those feckless, half-arsed plans of yours? None of them should have worked. Countless times I've told you that you were running straight into danger and right set to get yourself killed. But they did work.

MACKENNA

Until now.

SHAYLEE

Even now. Every plan you've had would have killed someone else if they tried it, but you...you somehow waltz around danger like you've been dancing your whole life. Going against Wodan may not have gone the way you'd liked, but you walked away. That's more than anyone else could have done.

MACKENNA

But it wasn't enough. He's still out there, planning whatever it is that he's going to do next, and the world is in danger. And I don't know if I can stop it.

SHAYLEE

I know you're not looking to me for answers here, but any advice I have is the same as I've always said: you can't fight the Hidden People, and certainly not the god of the Hidden People.

MACKENNA

I can't just do nothing. He's a bad guy. Like, capital "B" bad. Big Bad.

SHAYLEE

I'm not disputing that.

MACKENNA

And if I do nothing, things get worse. For everyone. But when I do act, he turns it around into exactly what he wants. I'm damned if I do and damned if I don't.

SHAYLEE

I didn't think you would ever be hit by analysis paralysis. You jump first and plan later.

MACKENNA

Because it works! And, honestly, if I could just keep throwing myself at the problem until something sticks, I would.

SHAYLEE

I appreciate your willingness to not break your neck again, no matter how fast you heal.

MACKENNA

I don't care about that.

SHAYLEE

I do!

MACKENNA

I'll heal. And given Wodan's had the chance to kill me twice now and hasn't done the deed, I think he's not going to off me outright. But he could go after you. As much as I hate watching you die, I can at least bring you back. But if he goes after you, he can go after Thomas, or Nissa, or Alfie...and I can't bring them back. I can't live with that, knowing there's nothing I can do to keep you safe.

SHAYLEE

None of us are asking you to keep us safe, Mack.

MACKENNA

I can at least not put you in danger. But I don't know how to do that anymore. I can't trust any decision I make to not get you all killed.

SHAYLEE

This isn't a dictatorship, Mack. We can have input, too, you know. And if we vote to put ourselves in danger...well, that's on us.

MACKENNA

I'm still responsible for you.

SHAYLEE

Stop the paternalistic bullshit.
Either we're responsible for our own
mistakes, or we're not free at all.

MACKENNA

I'm not being paternalistic, I just
care!

SHAYLEE

You're discounting our whole agency in
this! Yes, we listen to your plans and
follow your lead, but we do it because
we choose to! We trust you! And we call
you out when you're being a feckin'
gobshite.

MACKENNA

Don't you call me a...whatever that
means.

SHAYLEE

It means you may be our de-facto
leader, but you're not alone. Not in
your successes, and not in your
mistakes.

MACKENNA

That doesn't matter if it's the end of
the world. Alone or not, it's my fault.

QUICK TRANSITION

18. Thorne backyard. Thomas exits the house, and the screen
door doesn't quite slam behind him.

THOMAS

Hey Sam, everything alright? You've
been gone a while.

SAM

Yeah, sorry...just...important phone
call.

THOMAS

You want to talk about it?

SAM

I don't know. I mean, yes, but I'm not sure how to say it.

THOMAS

You know you can tell me anything.

SAM

I know. I just want to tell you without hurting you.

THOMAS

Are you okay? You're not sick or anything?

SAM

No, it's not like that.

THOMAS

And you're not in danger? Or is anyone else in danger? We can--

SAM

It's emotional hurt, Thomas, not physical.

THOMAS

Oh. Well.

(beat)

Whatever it is, I just want the truth, if you're comfortable sharing with me. Don't hold back just because of how you think I'll react. I can handle it.

SAM

It's...it's not a bad thing, if that helps. At least, I don't think it's bad.

THOMAS

Yeah, actually, that helps a lot. And if it's not bad, maybe it might be good.

SAM

It feels good. Feels right.

THOMAS

Then, I'd be grateful to be a part of whatever good news you have. I love you and want to support you no matter what.

SAM

Thank you, Thomas.

(kisses cheek)

I should tell you first, anyway. I--

Screen door opens.

FETCH

Thomas. The three idiots are still arguing, and it's starting to get ugly, while the trainer and the thief are still hiding from their problems.

THOMAS

Mackenna, you should really start calling people by their names.

FETCH

Why?

THOMAS

It's polite.

FETCH

Fine. That is happening, and the only logical huma--and Thomas Thorne and Samantha Mulligan are out here. Thomas Thorne and Samantha Mulligan should return before things continue to escalate between Nissa Sifsdottir, Riley Gallagher, and Alfred O'T--

THOMAS

(long suffering)

Just first names are fine. We'll be back in a few minutes, okay?

FETCH

Do not take too long. I am not used to the commercial breaks between fighting since Riley showed me the Netflix.

Fetch leaves and the door closes.

THOMAS

Is it something you can tell me in five minutes, or should we wait?

SAM

No, I'll explain now.

MUSICAL TRANSITION

19. The mountain top.

VOICE

Robin sees them coming.

ROBIN

They're coming.

VOICE

Well, now Robin sees just one.

ROBIN

Well, just one.

WODAN

That's enough. I get the point.

BLACK ANNIS

Good that one is coming. Black Annis is starting to get cold.

ROBIN

Only starting, dear cousin? Your poor lips are practically blue! Oh, wait...

VOICE

He will be watching from a distance.

WODAN

I've felt him.

VOICE

He will suspect a trap, or a ruse.

WODAN

Now, he'll decide I might be the genuine article.

VOICE

Yes. But little more than a shadow.

The wind quiets.

VOICE (CONT'D)

He will come from the trees, quickly pass by, to see if you'll attack or if he can see a flaw in your supposed disguise.

Trees rustling.

VOICE (CONT'D)

But so close to you, he'll feel the call in his very being. The pull to his leader, his god.

A fleeting shadow rushes over rocks and mountain grass.

VOICE (CONT'D)

He'll rise from his shadowy form, reveal himself to you, to your mercy if he is wrong. But he'll know in his soul now that you are returned.

MASTER OF SHADOW

(gasps)

VOICE

And soon, they'll all know.

Magical sound as the shadow rises, going from a flat shape to a humanoid figure, kneeling before Wodan.

WODAN

Finally, you deign to meet your master. No, no. Your excuses are not necessary. I know your reasons. Your motives. Your every thought. And really, it's

pathetic. That you would doubt me, my return, my power.

(shouting)

Did I give you permission to look at me?

(normal)

You are where you should be. Bowed head. On your knees. The first of many to plead for my forgiveness, beg for my mercy, and begin worshipping me anew. Now, you may speak. Do you need help remembering the words?

BLACK ANNIS / ROBIN

So spake Wodan!

MASTER OF SHADOW

(groveling)

So spake Wodan.

Ominous whisper on the wind.

WODAN

The first of many. Now, my Master of Shadow, tell me where the other Old Ones are waiting.

MUSICAL TRANSITION

20. The Thorne House.

NISSA

Don't be an idiot. We need to do more research before we even start to form a plan.

ALFIE

But we did do research! There are lists and everything.

NISSA

Half formed theories in column format are not research, Alfie.

RILEY

Some of the theories are at least three-quarters formed. And they're not going to be anymore formed than that because there is no peer-reviewed data on a freaking faerie god! There's nothing to research after a certain point.

ALFIE

Yeah, we've got to work with what we have.

THOMAS

I still really don't like the idea of making a move against an invincible being right now. Maybe we should work on making more effective change. What about all the fetches still in Arcadia? It should be possible to help them, right?

NISSA

You were there Thomas. They don't want our help.

THOMAS

That was only two, and under extenuating circumstances with the other Mackenna being there. Do we really know how the other fetches would feel?

NISSA

We need to focus on the big picture, which is a huge fucking portrait of Wodan.

RILEY

Yeah! We need to help come up with a plan to take him down!

ALFIE

A plan, but no actual action. We should leave that to Mack and Shaylee.

RILEY

What? I can magic, too!

ALFIE

You're kind of limited to stepping sideways.

RILEY

Yeah, we can lure Wodan to a hula hoop factory. I'll keep stepping, be a distraction!

NISSA

Lure him with what? We don't know what his motivations are, what his plans are. I need to keep going through Dane's notes and videos.

THOMAS

While you're at the computer, do the rest of us do nothing? What about the infants at the school? Would Wodan go after them?

FETCH

This is amusing. Much like the arguments on Friends. But there is no disembodied laughter.

NISSA

Did you have to bring her?

FETCH

I have finished the binging of Everybody but me Loves Raymond. My brother doesn't want me unsupervised.

RILEY

You know there are other shows on Netflix, right? Better ones?

FETCH

Worse ones would be an impossibility.

RILEY

We should have you watch Firefly next.

ALFIE

Oh no, she's not going to like how that ends.

FETCH

Why would I want to watch an insect?

ALFIE

Maybe Mack's fascination with the ant farm wasn't genetic.

Shaylee and Mackenna return.

MACKENNA

Still weird to see myself when I walk into the room.

FETCH

Hello, usurper.

THOMAS

We talked about this.

FETCH

Hello, Mack. Are you done running from your failure, Mack?

THOMAS

(sighs)

Baby steps.

SHAYLEE

What was with the loud voices? We could hear you in the basement.

ALFIE

Nissa wants to sit at her computer until the world ends.

NISSA

And Alfie expects us to run blind into disaster. Again.

FETCH

Our brother's plans are the most achievable, if not the least beneficial.

THOMAS

Um, thank you?

FETCH

I did not say they were good plans.

MACKENNA

Look, I get that not knowing what to do next is a shit feeling, but arguing with each other won't solve the problem.

NISSA

Mack, you've been doing a lot of the big decision making and leading since...well, since you found out you had magic. And we've always followed your plans--

MACKENNA

Because they worked!

ALFIE

Yeah, but what we're trying to say is that that's a lot of pressure to put on someone.

THOMAS

We just want to help.

RILEY

Take some of the load off!

SHAYLEE

But your bickering is just making it worse for her! Can't you see that?

NISSA

We haven't heard any better solutions from you, Shaylee.

Argument fades as audio focuses on Mackenna and Fack.

FETCH

If you had not stolen my life, I would be leading them.

MACKENNA

Yeah, you got any ideas?

FETCH

Fetches are trained to obey, not to lead.

MACKENNA

Typical.

FETCH

Now is the time in Friends when Phoebe would say something to get everyone to reconcile and work together.

MACKENNA

I guess that's the goal, huh?

FETCH

I agree with the trainer. All my life, I was taught how strong the Hidden People were, how powerless and weak humans are in comparison.

MACKENNA

You think we should do nothing, too?

SHAYLEE

Just because I haven't said any better ideas doesn't mean there aren't any!

ALFIE

Well go ahead then! We're all ears!

SHAYLEE

Why does it have to all be on me?

THOMAS

It's not; that's what we're saying. You've just got to hear us out.

NISSA

Oh, you're one to talk Thomas. Even the traumatized stolen child thinks your plan is stupid.

THOMAS

Don't talk about her like that.

SHAYLEE

Was anything about that not true?

THOMAS

That's not what this is about, and bullying her won't solve any problems.

RILEY

Dude, we have so many problems, though.

NISSA

Great, someone else with no solutions.

FETCH

I was also taught that the Magister was as a god: invincible. I was taught that only one of us could live as Mackenna Thorne. You have been shattering all the truths I had as my foundation. I think you should not stop until every false pillar is razed to the ground.

MACKENNA

You're the last person I expected a motivational pep-talk from.

FETCH

Yet another way in which I am better than you.

MACKENNA

Wanna bet?

MACKENNA

(louder, to everyone)

Hey, listen!

The argument stops.

MACKENNA (CONT'D)

That's enough. I don't know what we're going to do, but I know for a fact we aren't going to win by infighting and tearing each other down. If we win, we have to be together. All of us. As long as we have that, we stand a chance.

RILEY

That was almost a Braveheart-level inspirational speech. Just need to add in a line about freedom.

NISSA

Thomas, Sam, why do you look uncomfortable?

RILEY

Hey, I have ideas! Good ones!

SHAYLEE

Hula-hoops? Really? You think that's how we're going to beat a god?

ALFIE

She's doing the best she can with the training she was given.

THOMAS

No, no, really good speech. Great message, just, um...

SAM

It's okay, Thomas, I'll tell them.

(beat)

I'm leaving Conley.

MUSICAL TRANSITION

21. Mountain top.

WODAN

Where are the rest of the Old Ones?

VOICE

This is the only one you will see today.

MASTER OF SHADOW

I do not know, Wodan. I have been in darkness since your light left the realm of the Hidden.

ROBIN

I hate to bring up an awkward topic, but most Old Ones were hunted to extinction by order of the Magis--uh, the other, less handsome leader of the Hidden People.

BLACK ANNIS

Only the smartest, cleverest of the Old Ones survived.

ROBIN

And yet you're still here, cousin. What I'm trying to put delicately, oh Lord of lords, is that this might be all that's left.

WODAN

No. This cannot be it. You said there were multitudes!

BLACK ANNIS
The Puck's exaggeration--

WODAN
Not you!

VOICE
I said "worshipped by," not leading.

WODAN
How, in my name, am I supposed to ride
the night sky and grind lesser mortals
and immortals to dust beneath my heel
with only three followers?

VOICE
A few more will follow.

WODAN
Oh? Perhaps four riders?
(laughs)
A bit too parallel to another post-
pagan end times prophecy, but it will
have to do.

ROBIN
(whispered)
Why does he think there will be four?

MASTER OF SHADOW
(whispered)
Perhaps he is including himself?

WODAN
And how many on her side?

VOICE
Present at the end? All of them save
one.

BLACK ANNIS
On which one's side?

WODAN
Enough! Who else could there be? Who
else might have survived the genocide?

BLACK ANNIS

Many of those ones that bowed only to
Wodan have gone and shall never return.

VOICE

That's what she thinks.

MASTER OF SHADOW

There might be others, like me. In
hiding for millennia, doubting every
rumor and whisper as a snare of the
false gods.

WODAN

In my name, seek them out! Tell them
the truth of my return, how your
loyalty was rewarded with a place in
the new Court! Prepare them for what I
have prophesied: the resumption of the
Wild Hunt! Now, go forth in my name!

ROBIN / BLACK ANNIS / MASTER OF SHADOW

So spake Wodan!

A cacophonous sound as multiple Old Ones step sideways.

MUSICAL TRANSITION

22. Thorne House.

MACKENNA

What do you mean you're leaving?

SAM

The call earlier was from a police
department in Richmond.

NISSA

You got a new job offer?

SAM

Not quite. I put a few calls out based
on some information I gathered from...
well, from Ron.

ALFIE

It's too soon to reference dead men
telling no tales, isn't it?

RILEY

Way too soon.

ALFIE

Good thing I didn't make the joke,
then.

SAM

After the fight in the junkyard, but
before he died, Ron was suspicious
about the differences he saw between
Mack and--

ALFIE

Fack.

FETCH

Do not call me that.

SAM

Um, the other Mackenna. Anyway, he knew
something was different, and he started
looking into other, similar cases:
children just snapping and killing
their families.

SHAYLEE

And we used one of those old cases to
figure out when the next reaping would
take place.

SAM

Well, I may have found some newer
trails...and some that didn't end in
death.

FETCH

Other fetches.

RILEY

And changelings.

SAM

Yes, to both. I want to finish what Ron started, even if he didn't know the Hidden People connection. I think I can do some real good this way.

NISSA

You could do some real good here, too.

SAM

Could I? I don't have magic, or hacking skills, or an eidetic memory.

ALFIE

Neither do I.

SAM

I don't have more than a superficial connection to anyone here other than Thomas.

MACKENNA

Isn't that enough?

SAM

It is.

THOMAS

But Sam talked to me after she got the call, and I don't want to hold her back. She has a lot of skills that aren't being fully utilized here with us.

SAM

I can't just keep standing on the sidelines. I don't need to be the quarterback calling the shots, but I was never the cheerleading type. I need action. And I think this is what's best for me.

SHAYLEE

I understand. And while I could make plenty of arguments for why we need you to stay, I doubt they'd do much good, would they?

SAM

They wouldn't.

THOMAS

As much as I want you with me always,
your well-being comes first.

RILEY

And you don't have to be a stranger!
Anytime you're missing our smiling
faces, you just need to find a circle
and poof! Paging Riley's chauffeur
express. You have a coupon for free
rides for life.

SHAYLEE

One of the benefits of knowing three
magical beings: you'll never have to
pay for a plane ticket again.

SAM

Thank you all. You're taking this well.

NISSA

(whispered)

Say something nice, Mack!

MACKENNA

I don't know what we'll do without you.

SAM

I still want to help, whenever I can. I
just don't like desk warming when I
could be useful elsewhere. But I
thought this might be a good start for
you while I'm away.

Sam hands over a file.

MACKENNA

What is this?

SAM

The file of a very odd fetch. What I
think is a fetch, anyway.

SHAYLEE

They fit the M.O.? Killed their family,
unsociable, traumatized?

FETCH

I would be offended if I cared what you
thought.

RILEY

And yet, you brought it up, so maybe
the fetch doth protest too much.

SAM

Yes to the M.O., but with a bonus. That
call from Richmond? The fetch is held
in a high security mental ward for the
foreseeable future, but they just put
her in isolation.

NISSA

Why now?

SAM

Because she was disturbing the other
residents...and staff. Since this
morning, over and over, she's been
chanting the phrase "so spake Wodan."

THE END