

THE HIDDEN PEOPLE

Episode 2.21

“The Stone of the Sun”

Written by

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238. Thorne house. Kitchen.

NISSA

Thomas, what is that glorious smell?

THOMAS

Scones. They're just coming out of the oven.

(calls out)

Alfie, your scones await.

NISSA

God, can you just leave your recipe book on my kitchen table? I think that alone might make my place smell better.

THOMAS

I don't really have a book. I just look up base recipes and modify them with what I have on hand. I prefer creativity with baked goods. These are lemon-lavender.

NISSA

If I didn't get to reap the benefits of your baking, I would be consumed with envy.

(beat)

All right, Mack, why'd you call this team meeting?

THOMAS

Yeah, I want to hear this.

Sam, Alfie, and Riley join the room.

ALFIE

Sweet!

(mouth full)

This is delicious.

SAM

Jesus, Alfie. They're not bite sized.

RILEY

Anything is bite sized if you set your mind to it. I'm proud of you, Alfie.

MACKENNA

Listen up. Shaylee and I have been talking.

SHAYLEE

Arguing. We've been arguing. Mackenna's latest fixation is obtaining the complete surrender of the Unseelie Court.

RILEY

Didn't we just totally pwn the Court with a masterful plan of leafy deception?

MACKENNA

No, we only stopped the Reaping. If anything, we pissed them off. I'm talking defeat the Court. Like, for good.

SAM

Why do I get the feeling that's impossible?

SHAYLEE

Because, like most of Mackenna's scheme's, it is impossible.

THOMAS

Mackenna, I'm so glad and relieved that we saved those kids and survived to talk about it. But that was one time. It was a matter of tricking and delaying them enough so that they missed their window. We wouldn't have the advantage of surprise anymore. We're safer if we leave it alone, lay low.

ALFIE

Yeah, quit while we're ahead.

MACKENNA

Thomas, we just ruined one of the Court's sacred traditions. They're not going to let that slide. They'll be coming for us. We need to act. Now.

ALFIE

Yeah, Thomas. What's wrong with you? We need to fight.

THOMAS

There's too much risk. We won't catch them off guard this time. Someone's gonna get hurt or worse.

ALFIE

We've got to keep everyone safe!

MACKENNA

The damage is already done, Thomas. They're coming after us one way or another. They won't stop just because we mind our own business. We need to bring the fight to them and finish it.

ALFIE

Yeah, fight to the last man! Er, woman!
Uh, person?

THOMAS

I'm not a fighter.

MACKENNA

What's your black belt for then?

THOMAS

It's for defense and discipline. You're asking for the opposite. Sam, can you back me up a little bit?

SAM

Thomas is right. Five out of the seven of us don't stand a chance against them.

SHAYLEE

Six of the seven. I'm no match for the Hidden.

RILEY

I think she was counting me. I can step sideways, you know.

SAM

We're just people. Normal people. We don't belong in the world of magic.

ALFIE

Yeah, we're outmatched.

NISSA

Enough, Alfie.

SHAYLEE

We need a weapon.

THOMAS

You mean like a scythe, a flintlock pistol, iron shrapnel grenades? We have weapons. It's not a matter of weapons. We can't take them on.

SHAYLEE

Not weapons, Thomas. Weapon.

RILEY

(whispered to Alfie)

Excalibur.

ALFIE

(whispered to Riley)

The Elder Wand.

RILEY

(whispered to Alfie)

Proton pack.

ALFIE

(whispered to Riley)

The Tesseract.

RILEY
(whispered to Alfie)
The one ring.

ALFIE
(whispered to Riley)
Okay, you win. I can't beat that.

MACKENNA
What kind of weapon could we use?

SHAYLEE
A power source. Something they would
fear.
(remembering)
Something powerful enough to give
Cygnus a body.

MACKENNA
You're talking about the sunstone.

SHAYLEE
Aye.
(reciting)
You may be a powerful force, but you're
no match for the unified might of the
Court. Not on your own, anyway. And if
you aren't properly prepared, they will
kill you.

NARRATOR
Good girl.

MACKENNA
Thanks for the confidence.

SHAYLEE
Sorry. I...I don't know why I said it
like that. But we need the stone of the
sun. I know it. Somehow. If Mack can
wield the power of the sun, any Hidden
People that don't run from her would be
obliterated. There's a reason they
feared the sun millennia ago.

SAM

When Cygnus was in my body, it was going somewhere deliberate. It knew how to find the sunstone.

ALFIE

And Cygnus's power McGuffin was in South Carolina, right? What's powerful about South Carolina?

RILEY

Myrtle Beach. Hilton Head. Other pedestrian honeymoon locations.

NISSA

No. No, we never knew that. We just followed the line all the way to the coast. What if it kept following its path? What was Cygnus's actual destination? I need to see its trajectory again.

Nissa types on her computer.

SAM

I didn't know. I don't think it knew, either. It just had the direction.

NISSA

Here. This is the line Cygnus was following. If we had never captured it, Cygnus would've kept going.

THOMAS

Into the Atlantic Ocean?

NISSA

If it just knew the direction but not the distance, it wouldn't know that the ocean would be in the way.

SAM

The horn!

RILEY

Say what now?

SAM

I--I mean, Cygnus--had a horn. It was using the horn from its severed head to lead it.

NISSA

So Dane's divining rod theory was right. Do you still have it?

SAM

No. I had it up until Cygnus left my body. I guess I probably just dropped it then.

MACKENNA

Which means it's still in a ghost town.

SAM

And anyone could have picked it up.

ALFIE

Anyone didn't pick it up.

SHAYLEE

I can step over there and see.

ALFIE

I mean, anyone didn't pick it up because I did.

NISSA

You picked up a horn from a rotten monster head? Gross.

ALFIE

So I'm either an idiot for not picking it up or gross because I did pick it up?

NISSA

Pretty much.

ALFIE

I just can't win.

MACKENNA

Why would you pick that up?

ALFIE

Because it was significant. Would you rather Joe Shmo picked it up and divined with it?

RILEY

Aww, how do you know Joe?

ALFIE

It's part of our story. It's evidence that we slayed a monster.

MACKENNA

Sam slayed the monster.

ALFIE

Right, and so I thought Sam might want to keep--

SAM

Nope. Thanks, Alfie, but no thanks.

THOMAS

I think it was really thoughtful, Alfie. I'm glad you got it. You're right, everything we do, it's all a part of us now. So where is it?

ALFIE

It's on a bookshelf in my room at my parents' house. Right next to where I keep--

NISSA

Hey. Look at this. Look at what I just found in Brazil.

THOMAS

The Carajás Mine?

RILEY

What is that?

NISSA

It's the largest iron ore mine in the world. And it sits directly on Cygnus's trajectory.

SHAYLEE

Seems like the perfect place to keep a magical item protected from the Hidden People.

SAM

It looks huge. That's gotta be several square miles.

NISSA

Seven billion tons of ore needs a lot of space, it turns out.

ALFIE

How do we find a needle in a haystack? No, wait....a weapon in an iron quarry? There's got to be a pun here.

NISSA

By sticking to the Cygnus trajectory and using the horn.

RILEY

Well, let's go unearth a weapon.

ALFIE

There it is.

General voiced agreement.

MACKENNA

I'm not going with you.

THOMAS

What?

MACKENNA

There's something else that I have to do.

ALFIE

We're a team. We're supposed to be together. Why do we always split up?

RILEY

Seriously: rule number one of surviving horror movies. Is this a horror movie?

ALFIE

I think we decided it's an action movie without the car chase at the climax. And more fantasy, obviously.

MACKENNA

I won't be much help in an iron mine, obviously. Neither will Shaylee and Riley. This is strictly a human mission.

SHAYLEE

That's true. So I should go with you.

MACKENNA

No. That would...complicate things. I won't be long. I'll be waiting for you when you get back, and then we'll storm Arcadia with the sunstone.

Stepping sideways departure.

RILEY

(to nothing)

Bye, Mack. Don't get eaten by monsters!

239. The English countryside. Stepping sideways arrival.

NARRATOR

Returning to the lair of Black Annis for a third time? Truly, there are no limits to how brave and stupid you are, Mackenna. For the future of your friends and, well, everyone in this story, I sure hope you know what you're doing.

MACKENNA

Okay, Mack. Don't think; just act. You can do this.

A twig snaps.

MACKENNA (CONT'D)

What the fu--Jesus, doll, you scared the shit out of me.

NARRATOR

Hello again, Winston. My favorite of Black Annis' little pets, but too forgiving by far. Instead of taking out vengeance on Mackenna Thorne for the last bloody time they met, Winston offers her a tiny hand to guide her forward.

MACKENNA

Sorry, doll, you look a little young for me...or is this how I don't die? Maybe Black Annis won't eat me if her dolls like me. All right, whichever one you are, lead the way.

NARRATOR

The eyeless doll quietly takes Mackenna's hand and leads her through the countryside to his master. Now where have we seen that before?

240. Thorne house

NISSA

Great, now we're missing our most powerful team member.

SHAYLEE

Mackenna was right: you'll have to count Riley and me out, as well. Too much iron in one place.

NISSA

Well, now we're missing all of our powerful team members.

RILEY

The Justice League can still save the day without Batman or Superman. Or Wonder Woman. If Mackenna's not here, I'm totally Wonder Woman.

SAM

It's okay. We don't need power this time. I've had my fill of fighting monsters, but if magic and constructs

can't function near the mine, we're just dealing with people. And I can handle people. Shaylee, can you get us to the nearest town?

SHAYLEE

Aye, I could do that.

SAM

Good. Thomas, how's your Portuguese?

THOMAS

Um, nonexistent.

SAM

Great.

ALFIE

I noticed that you didn't ask me. I also don't speak Portuguese.

RILEY

I'm sure our lack of Portuguese will be of use.

SAM

Okay, so I have the workings of a plan. But Thomas and I need to go first and check things out.

THOMAS

Won't it be dangerous if they find us?

SAM

Oh we're not hiding. We're taking a tour. With the horn. Shaylee, can you get Thomas and me to...Nissa, what's the nearest town?

NISSA

Carajas. Convenient naming conventions. It's a tiny thing, but there's a zoo. If I can find you a circle...how's that, Shaylee? Could this one work?

SHAYLEE

If it's still there.

SAM
Excellent. Let's go.

SHAYLEE
All right, Sam, hold on.

Stepping sideways departure.

NISSA
Her optimism has me worried.

THOMAS
Yeah, I know what you mean. She's got
that determined look.

RILEY
The eye of the tiger.

ALFIE
Finally, someone else to carry the
weight of making references!
(humming song, Riley joins in)
Duh, duh duh duh, duh duh duh.

NISSA
Please stop. I don't need dork in
surround sound.

Stepping sideways arrival.

SHAYLEE
All clear. Thomas, you're next.

THOMAS
Bye, guys. We'll see you later.

Stepping sideways departure.

ALFIE
Since they're just scouting, I actually
have to sign some paperwork at St.
Xavier's school. Nissa, can I have a
ride...wait, Riley, can you step me
there?

RILEY

Abs-itively pos-olutely. Any excuse to avoid iron. It makes me feel drunk without the giggles.

ALFIE

I love having a teleporting girlfriend.

RILEY

We'll be back before they're done scouting. Beam me up, Scotty!

Stepping sideways departure.

NISSA

No, really, it's fine, everybody. I got this...by myself. I'll just pack up my laptops, my equipment, spare batteries...does this town even have Internet? I'm bringing my pocket wi-fi.

MUSICAL TRANSITION

241. Carajás mine in Brazil. Later that day. A Jeep rumbles over a dirt road.

GUIDE

So now, the mining is run by a company called Vale, but it used to be partially owned by US Steel.

THOMAS

That's why your team speaks English?

GUIDE

Only the few I've taught. My family moved down here from Chicago when my father transferred from the South Works steel mill in the seventies. They decided they preferred the Amazon heat to lake effect snow and never looked back.

SAM

Thanks for giving us this driving tour.

GUIDE

Not a problem. Things have been a bit slow recently with some of the weather we had, but that just means you get a private tour today instead of a group one.

SAM

Hey, who are those soldiers over there? I noticed they're wearing different uniforms. Are they your military escort or something?

THOMAS

(urgent whisper to Sam)

Sam, the horn. It's vibrating.

GUIDE

No, that's something different. So technically there's a sliver of land that's owned by some private company. We've never had a problem with them. They've been in that same spot ever since I started here. Figuratively, of course.

THOMAS

They don't ever come onto your property?

GUIDE

No, we forget they're even there half the time. Of course, they're not the friendliest bunch. Whenever I see them, I wave or say hi. Nothin'.

THOMAS

Maybe they're really reserved.

SAM

Could just be the serious nature of their job. I never once saw my police chief smile, and trust me, Ron tried.

GUIDE

Don't know what they're so somber about. It's not healthy to go through life without smiling a bit.

THOMAS

Cheers to that.

GUIDE

It's not part of the official tour, but there's a nice vista overlooking the western quarry. Why don't I drive by so you can get a few good pictures?

SAM

That's generous of you, but we should probably get going. Our friends are waiting for us back in town.

GUIDE

Suit yourself. I hope you found the tour fulfilling.

THOMAS

Of course. Very informative.

MUSICAL TRANSITION

242. O'Toole residence. A pen scratches on paper.

RILEY

Did your notary get lost? She's been gone for a long time.

ALFIE

No, the bathroom's just really far away...and in the center of a labyrinth.

The pen again scratches on paper.

RILEY

Doesn't it defeat the purpose of having a notary if you sign while she's gone?

ALFIE

I'm not signing. I'm taking notes on all the legal lingo I don't get.

RILEY

I hope it includes directions to the bathroom so she can roll her eyes and loudly exclaim "now he tells me!"

ALFIE

Yeah, I probably should have given more details than "it's to the left," but then I started singing Beyonce in my head and got distracted.

RILEY

But you didn't sing it out loud.

ALFIE

Progress, I know.

RILEY

Whatcha gonna do with your list of legal lingo?

ALFIE

Nissa read a few law textbooks when she was considering opening her own business. I was going to ask her to ELI-five it for me.

RILEY

Smart. And, it's only one page of unknown words! That's pretty good.

Cell phone vibrates.

ALFIE

I'm only halfway done, though. Geez, and I thought there was a lot of paperwork when I submitted my Box Tops points for an Xbox.

RILEY

Yeah. Or like when I signed up to work for a cruise line. The fine print is so shady, it's like making a deal with Rumpelstiltskin.

(beat)

Oh my god, do you think I made an actual deal with Rumpelstiltskin?

ALFIE

Maybe he's one of the Old Ones.

RILEY

The CEO was really short.

Cell phone vibrates.

ALFIE

I still can't believe Mack and Shaylee went on a cruise without me.

RILEY

Hellooo, we could go on a cruise whenever we want. We have the technology. And by technology, I mean me.

ALFIE

You had me at hellooo.

Cell phone vibrates.

RILEY

Man, someone is really needy. Oh, it's Nissa. Oops.

(beat)

Hello?

NISSA

(through phone)

Where the hell have you two been? I've been trying to reach you.

RILEY

(Monty Python style)

What is your name?

NISSA
(through phone)
Seriously? It's me, Nissa.

RILEY
(Monty Python)
What is your quest?

NISSA
(through phone)
Get back here now. Thomas and Sam are
waiting for us in Brazil.

RILEY
What...Alfie, we gotta go. Nissa said
they're ready for us.

ALFIE
Aw, man. Now I've got to come back and
sign them all again.

RILEY
I know. We can come back together.
Let's go.

ALFIE
You had me at "we."

MUSICAL TRANSITION

243. Black Annis' lair. Mackenna's footsteps echo.

BLACK ANNIS
And what treat has Winston brought for
Black Annis this time?

MACKENNA
Hello, Black Annis. I mean, hail, or
whatever. It's me, Mackenna.

BLACK ANNIS
Ah, the "changeling." The halfling. The
spawn of Liliana. Black Annis has been
expecting this one.

MACKENNA

Really? Why? Did you forget the shit
show we had last time?

BLACK ANNIS

Nay, Black Annis never forgets. Black
Annis remembers this one's visit, when
it fired upon poor Black Annis with
iron.

MACKENNA

Actually, that was Shaylee. I had
nothing to do with it. In fact, I
vouched for you.

BLACK ANNIS

Bah. None vouch for Black Annis. None
care that she's banished here all
alone.

MACKENNA

But you're so...likeable? What about
your doll friends? You have them.

BLACK ANNIS

None care for poor, lonely Black Annis.

MACKENNA

I do. I totally care. Ugh, I did not
plan on having this kind of
conversation. Look, you're a precious,
unique little blue snowflake. The world
just doesn't get you.

BLACK ANNIS

Black Annis will make them understand.

MACKENNA

You tell that world.

BLACK ANNIS

Black Annis will reveal her worth. She
has not fallen so far so as to be
forgotten. For Black Annis remembers.
Her memory is sharp like her claws.

MACKENNA
Go get 'em, slugger.

BLACK ANNIS
Black Annis shall rise up to destroy
all enemies. So spake Wodan.

MACKENNA
You bet he did. Listen, Black Annis: I
want to make a proposal.

BLACK ANNIS
A proposal? And what could this one
possibly want from Black Annis?

MACKENNA
I want to form an alliance.

MUSICAL TRANSITION

244. Carajas town. Outside.

SAM
The sunstone is definitely there.

SHAYLEE
How do you know? We have to be certain.

THOMAS
The horn started vibrating when we got
close.

SAM
The guide told us that there's a little
section of land that's privately owned.

NISSA
I can track that down. Give me two
minutes and I'll find the owner.

SAM
The armed guards had different
uniforms, their guns were different,
the security cameras were different,
and even the guide said he had no idea
what they were there for.

ALFIE

You got all that from a driving tour?

SAM

Former detective. I can't turn it off.

RILEY

"Maybe that's your power. Seeing.
Knowing."

NISSA

It's definitely them.

THOMAS

You found the land owner?

NISSA

No, I didn't, which is how I know it's definitely them. The deeds go back and forth between companies and then it all just goes dark.

SAM

It was that way with Arcadia, too.

SHAYLEE

It fits their pattern. Whatever building you saw with the guards, that's where you want to go.

ALFIE

But you said there were guards with weapons. Without the Super Friends, how are we supposed to fight them?

SAM

We won't.

245. Carajas Mine. Outside the private facility.

NARRATOR

And so the human fools enact their human plan. With Shaylee and Riley barred by iron and Mackenna very much unavailable, the future of this quest rests on the shoulders of four feeble mortals. And your great plan, Samantha, was to lead with Alfred?

Alfie approaches guard on duty.

ALFIE

Hello!

NARRATOR

This quest should end before it begins.

ALFIE

Hi, Mr. Guard. Excuse me. My name is Inigo Montoya. I'm a technician with the local IT and electric company. We do work on the main facility over there and they're testing a new security system. I just wanted you to know you might experience some--

Cut to Nissa on her computer.

NISSA

Technical difficulties due to the OS refresh.

ALFIE

Technical difficulties due to the OS refresh.

Silence.

ALFIE (CONT'D)

(slower, louder)

Keep looking at me. Uh, your security cameras are on the fritz. I need to access your security feed to fix the problem.

Gun cocks.

ALFIE (CONT'D)

Whoa whoa whoa, don't shoot! I'm not
doing anything!

NISSA

Okay, Alfie, they're in.

Alfie begins to back away.

ALFIE

Okay, I'm going. I'm going. Suit
yourself. But just so we're clear, I
totally warned you.

Cut to inside.

SAM

All right, Thomas, pull out the horn.
Let's find this thing and get outta
here.

THOMAS

Here we go.

Thomas pulls the horn out of his bag. The horn hums with
power.

THOMAS

It's vibrating more than it was
earlier.

SAM

Yeah. Unfortunately, it's also louder
than it was earlier. Let's try and make
this quick. Which way does it want to
go?

THOMAS

I don't know. Right...left...nope,
definitely right.

SAM

Your sense of direction worries me.

THOMAS

I was testing the vibrations.

SAM

Come on.

NISSA

(through earpiece)

Okay, according to the blueprints,
there's an elevator up ahead to your
left.

THOMAS

Can't we take the stairs instead?

NISSA

(through earpiece)

It's a long way down.

THOMAS

I guess I'm skipping leg day.

NISSA

(through earpiece)

I'm still trying to get into their
system. Maybe I can set off a
diversion.

Elevator dings. Doors open.

SAM

It's clear. Let's go.

Elevator descends. Awkward silence.

THOMAS

You, uh, you look nice.

SAM

If I knew you liked all black outfits,
I'd have gone goth in high school with
Mackenna.

THOMAS

(beat)

Pretty nice weather in Brazil.

SAM
We're inside, Thomas.

THOMAS
I know. But it was nice during our driving tour. It's like a good omen or something.

SAM
I assume you're talking about the weather to alleviate the incredible stress of this potential suicide mission.

THOMAS
You're right. What should we talk about?

Elevator dings.

SAM
Guess we'll never know.

Elevator doors open. Distant heavy footsteps.

SAM (CONT'D)
(whispered)
Thomas, wait. Not yet.

Footsteps grow more faint.

SAM (CONT'D)
Okay, now.

THOMAS
Did we lose Nissa?

NISSA
(through earpiece)
No, I'm still here. Alfie got lost, so I was giving him directions. Okay, it looks like you have two sets of double doors ahead. But I would find somewhere to hide for a second. This should draw some of them away.

A fire alarm goes off in another part of the building. Double doors open and a few guards run towards the sound.

SAM
Great work, Nissa. Thanks.

Sam and Thomas push open double doors.

THOMAS
It was one more set of doors, right?

SAM
Right. Hey, Nissa? This is a security door. How do we get past it?

NISSA
(through earpiece)
Let me see if I can disengage it.

Beat. Security door unlocks. Thomas pulls it open. Horn vibrates more and more fiercely.

THOMAS
Nicely done. The horn is going nuts. We have to be close.

SAM
I can see a metal box on a table in the middle of the room. That's got to be it. Uh-oh. Nissa, how do you feel about motion sensors?

NISSA
(through earpiece)
I hate them. Honestly, the best way to deal with this much security is to cut power to the building.

THOMAS
Okay, so let's do that.

NISSA
(through earpiece)
My vocal feed is plugged into their system like an Ethernet cord. That's why I haven't cut out yet. But if I cut power to the building--

THOMAS
We lose communication.

SAM
We'll have to risk it. Nissa, cut it.

NISSA
You'll only have until the backup generator comes on, so be quick. Good luck.

Grid powers down.

THOMAS
It's so dark.

Something bangs in the air duct.

THOMAS (CONT'D)
What was that?

Grate of the air duct pops off.

ALFIE
Hi, guys!

SAM / THOMAS
Alfie!

ALFIE
For this mission, I go by Inigo Montoya. Thomas, watch out, you're about to walk into a chair.

THOMAS
How can you see anything?

ALFIE
Oh I've been in pitch black this whole time. My eyes are totally adjusted.

SAM
How did you get here? You were supposed to meet us by the exit.

ALFIE

The guard kept watching me, so I tried to act like I was doing my job, but then I got lost. Nissa gave me directions, but I think I went my right when she meant her right. And then I found this air duct.

THOMAS

You dropped the whole way down here?

ALFIE

No, just like a level. But I kept crawling until I heard the horn vibrating and you guys talking through the vents, and here you are! Those vents are much more spacious than spy movies would have you believe.

THOMAS

Maybe they need to move more air to maintain the oxygen levels this far underground?

Backup generator powers on.

ALFIE

Uh-oh. We are smack in the middle of these--

Motion sensor alarm blares.

ALFIE (CONT'D)

Sensors.

From hallway, footsteps and shouting.

THOMAS

(from security door)

It locked behind us. We're trapped.

ALFIE

You know what they say: when they go low--

SAM

We go high. Air vents it is.

246. Black Annis's lair.

BLACK ANNIS

An alliance? Why would Black Annis want such a thing?

MACKENNA

You just told me about how the world doesn't want you and...other really sad stuff. We have a common enemy. The Unseelie Court banished you. And they shit on my life once or twice. The enemy of my enemy and all that. We can take them down.

BLACK ANNIS

Or maybe Black Annis is what this one needs. We must bind this pact with magic. Would this one be willing to make the ancient oath?

MACKENNA

Um, I mean, I don't know the words, but sure. I'm apparently indebted to all of you.

BLACK ANNIS

No words. A touch is all Black Annis needs.

MACKENNA

Sure, we've touched before, I guess. For the alliance.

NARRATOR

Mackenna holds out her foolish hand. And as Black Annis's fingers close around Mackenna's wrist, with her other hand, the Old One puts a palm to Mackenna's forehead.

MACKENNA

(sharp gasp)

NARRATOR

And Mackenna finds herself completely paralyzed, frozen in her own mind.

BLACK ANNIS

Did this one forget? Black Annis demands payment. She needs her skins, and this one brought nothing but words. This one has nothing Black Annis wants. Black Annis will not bargain. She has something better in store for this one.

(beat)

Winston. Go and find the alder called Niamh.

NARRATOR

What's that they say about Old Ones in wolves' clothing?

247. Carajás mine. Inside private facility. Sam, Thomas, and Alfie shuffle through the tight quarters of the air duct.

THOMAS

(whisper)

Seriously, this is bigger than I thought it would be.

ALFIE

(whisper)

I know, right?!

SAM

(whisper)

Shh! Keep moving. Alfie, you have to lead us out.

ALFIE

(whisper)

Right. Um, this way. Just keep moving up.

Sounds as they move through the metal vents. Footsteps and shouting muffled by the vents but coming closer. They stop moving. The only sounds we hear are panting breaths, and the humming of the horn in its proximity to the Sunstone.

NARRATOR

Unfortunately for our adventurers, the horn of Cygnus does not stop locating objects of power simply because they

now have one in their possession. And that humming, echoed a dozen times over in the confined space of the air vents, will surely give them away to the well-armed guardians of the sunstone.

Quiet shuffling as Thomas moves the horn away from the stone, further away from the group.

SAM
(whisper)
Thomas! No!

THOMAS
(whisper)
I just have to get it far enough away.

NARRATOR
Poor, self-sacrificing Thomas. There's no way he can move the horn far enough away to cease its noisy vibration. Only use it as a beacon to draw their enemies away from his friends and allow them to escape. At his own expense.

As quietly as he can, Thomas pitches the horn far away. It hits the walls of the vent distantly and rolls even further away, its humming fading. The muffled guards shout, and move away from the group, towards where Thomas pitched the horn. We wait a few moments until there is no more noise outside the vent. All clear.

SAM
(whisper)
Nice throw.

THOMAS
(whispered)
Varsity quarterback. I've still got it.

NISSA
(through earpiece)
I'm back online. You all clear?

ALFIE

(whisper)

So, your directions suck, and now we're in an air vent. Get us out of here!

NISSA

(through earpiece)

Shit. All right...there's still one guard on the other end of the hall. Do you see the grates on the left?

ALFIE

(whisper)

My left or your left?

THOMAS

(whisper)

We see them, Nissa.

NISSA

(through earpiece)

Okay, you're going to knock that down as hard as you can and run through the fire doors to your right. Slam them shut behind you, and I should get the lock down protocol in place before the guard can get to you. But you'll have to be fast.

ALFIE

(whisper)

Life's a marathon, not a sprint, Nissa.

NISSA

(through earpiece)

Yeah, well you'll have to sprint this bit or your life will only be a half-marathon. Got it?

SAM

(whisper)

Everyone ready?

THOMAS

(whisper)

On the count of three, I'm kicking it down.

SAM
(whisper)
One, two...
(shout)
Three!

Loud clang as the grate comes free and clatters to the floor. Alfie, Sam, and Thomas rush out of the hole created and make a break for the fire door. Down the hall, the guard yells and fires a few rounds that embed in the walls.

NISSA
(through earpiece)
Shit, shit, go-go-go!

Heavy running footfalls as Sam pushes open the fire door and pulls Alfie in behind her. Thomas slides in, and Alfie and Sam slam the door shut. The locking mechanism engages.

NISSA (CONT'D)
(through earpiece)
You need to keep moving. Down the hall, to the left. I've already called the elevator to your floor. Keep running!

ALFIE
(panting)
I thought this was a sprint, not a marathon, Niss?

THOMAS
Come on, Alfie. We're almost there.

Shouting and banging as the door slams open behind them.

ALFIE
I've got my second wind! Let's book it!

Faster running. Elevator dings distantly and the doors slide open. The car shifts as first Sam, then Thomas and Alfie, hit the back wall at full speed. The doors close behind them and the shouts fade.

NISSA
(through earpiece)
Going up?

Elevator ascends.

SAM

(panting)

Well, I've got my cardio in for the week.

Beat.

THOMAS

(panting)

I wonder if it started raining yet.

SAM

Again with the weather!

ALFIE

I get it. There's something about elevators.

Elevator dings, and the doors slide open.

SAM

All right, let's go.

248. They open the front doors. An engine revs. It's the Guide's Jeep.

SHAYLEE

Sam! Thomas!

RILEY

Alfie! Over here! Hop in!

SAM

Riley, did you hotwire this Jeep?

RILEY

Nope. They left the keys in the ignition.

SAM

There are no keys in the ignition.

SHAYLEE

I hotwired it. Rebellious youth.

RILEY

Let's GTFO. Even this far from the iron, I feel like I have a bad case of IBS.

THOMAS

Do we have everything?

ALFIE

Affirmative. The stone, the horn, and our attractive get away driver. Thanks for asking. Riley, punch it!

RILEY

All right. Let's go home.

They drive off.

MUSICAL TRANSITION

NARRATOR

So quick to celebrate their very mortal victory.

Thorne house. Stepping sideways arrival.

NISSA

Ah, blessed air conditioning.

NARRATOR

As though every plan of theirs will succeed.

Stepping sideways arrival.

ALFIE

Home sweet home! Well, Thorne home, sweet home! Aw, yeah: leftover scones!

RILEY

Save some for me! I need to step Thomas over first.

Stepping sideways departure.

NARRATOR

Feeling like their rag-tag band of mortals and misfits truly are invincible.

SAM

I'm going to go put this in a safe place.

SHAYLEE

Let me come with you. I'd never thought I'd be seeing the sunstone with my own, well, eyes.

NARRATOR

So resilient. So hopeful.

Stepping sideways arrival.

THOMAS

We did it! Wow, what a rush.

(calling out)

Mackenna, we did it! We got the sunstone!

NARRATOR

They have no idea what's in store.

THOMAS

(calling downstairs)

Mackenna? Where are you?

(beat)

Does anyone see Mackenna?

SHAYLEE

She wouldn't have gone to confront the Court without the sunstone. She needs it.

NARRATOR

But they soon will. We've reached the end.

THE END