

Episode 2 – How to Make a Motley, Part 2

[Opening Theme music]

VJ: Previously on Hedged In: A Changeling Story:

VJ: And you see what they're fighting. And it's a dragon.

[Dragon roaring]

VJ: And with deftness, plunges their bare hand deep into the dragon's chest, ripping the heart from the creature.

VJ: And then you see...the only person you can really think this is, is Ant.

Crunch:

Oh, by the way, um, I'm Crunch.

Kit:

Hi, Crunch; you can call me Kit:

Kat: He's studying...

Gill:

Gill.

VJ: You see the beginnings of white tendrils sort of connect you to the other two, and back as sort of a triangle. And it briefly is bright, and then fades out, again.

Dan: That's...that's also not ominously vague.

[Introduction music takes over]

Dan: Hi, I'm Dan and I play Kit, and we both use he/him.

Vida: Hello, my name is Vida, he/him pronouns, and I will be playing Crunch, they/them, the Elemental Manikin.

Kat: Hey, I'm Kathryn. My pronouns are she and her. I play an Ogre Farwalker named Gill, who uses he and him.

VJ: And I'm VJ, she/her, your Storyteller for Hedged In.

[music changes – drums, string instruments, and techno voices]

VJ:

Entry: Arcadia and the Hedge

Entry: Changeling Biology

Entry: The Needs of Eating and Sleep while in the Fae Realm

The shortest explanation is...is that you don't. Something about the Wyrd keeps those normal biological functions from being necessary, instead making them an optional choice in the day-to-day. No amount of physical exertions triggers those rest responses. My personal observations conclude that since Arcadia isn't a safe place, our Changeling physiology has adapted and absorbs the Wyrd and its magics to make due. This does have an unusual side benefit: if you are feeling hungry or the need to sleep, that means that something perhaps is at play. This also saves most people from the more negative aspects of eating various kinds of Goblin Fruit. It's not to say that partaking in these functions do not have their uses. For example, resting an average of two REM cycles does give the benefit of a fresher outlook on life and a faster absorption of Glamour. Those who have practiced Harvesting Glamour will get this added benefit as well. Conclusion: To Be Determined

[Music ends]

VJ: Last time, we saw our intrepid protagonists – I'm not sure I can call you guys heroes quite yet, but I'll go with protagonists – you were, I believe heading toward Crossing? Or attempting to head towards Crossing?

Vida: We have vague instructions.

Kat: No, from what I remember, we were aiming for Crossing, but we were headed back in the direction Gill had come.

VJ: Right. Gill coming from...well, let's just call it, uh, not a pleasant experience. Is there anything that you guys wanted to say to, perhaps, each other, while you are making your way through the brambles until, uh, the ST inserts herself back into the conversation?

Kat: How long have we been walking?

VJ: Time is a narrative structure in the Hedge. It is nearly impossible to tell how much time you're going. This is one of those weird idiosyncrasies of Arcadia.

Kat: I assume we have not walked long enough to have to stop and rest? I don't remember having to rest on the way to the clearing.

VJ: That goes back to the interesting piece of the setting of you have to choose to stop. Like, there's no, like nothing about your body will tell you "oh you're tired now, take a nap".

Vida: A different way of perhaps wording the question is “has Gill finished telling his story?”, ‘cause Gill was gonna tell us a story.

Dan: Yes, I was going to bring that up.

Kat: Oh yeah.

VJ: That’s up to Gill’s player, not...not me. *[laughter]*

Kat: Um...yes. Gill has told at least one story. Let’s say one and a half. Like, halfway through.

[ambient nature sounds]

Vida: Oh, so you’re halfway through another story?

Kat: Yes.

Vida: What’s the story about?

Kat: They would be...they’d be, like, morality tales. They would be tales about children who did things that they got in trouble. Like, the first one was kind of a rambling narrative of two little boys who were trying to...steal...cookies out of the kitchen. But they decided, because Grandma was in the kitchen, that they had to go in through the window, which meant trying to get passed the sink and over the...stove, which is hot because the oven’s underneath it. In the end, they get in trouble because they should have just gone in and asked. And...the second story...is...about a little girl who’s trying to make friends with the neighborhood stray dog.

Crunch:
Wait, what’s a dog?

Gill:
Uh...it’s, em...an animal that comes up to, uh, a little above my knees, walks on...it looks like, um, a Briar Wolf? But much smaller and friendly.

Crunch:
Hm.

Kit:
Dogs are no good.

Crunch:
Oh?

Gill:

Perhaps we will leave this story for another day.

Kit:

[laughter]

[sounds stop]

VJ: So, as you are walking through this particular section of Hedge: Gill, you're starting to recognize where the battlefield was, or is, and unlike before where it was very dark, very dusky, this is definitely more sort of...the late...the sun in the sky is definitely higher. It's much more like late evening, sort of all tinged in reds and oranges and gold. That's the first thing you notice. The second thing all of you notice, is a stench of decaying meat and acid.

Crunch:

Oh no.

Kit:

[gagging sounds]

Kat: Can I roll Perception to see if I notice anybody still around? Like sound, or...or some scent other than the overwhelming scent of death?

VJ: Oh, that's not going to be necessary, because very soon after the smell hits you, you hear...all of you will be able to perceive that there's a large amount of human, well, changeling movement ahead of you. There's quite a lot of activity. There's shouts. Sounds of action - not like battle, more like...construction, is the best way I can put it?

Kat: Hm. OK, so, Gill would grab the backs of Crunch and Kit, right?

Vida: Yup.

Kat: Their shirts and, like, pull everybody to the ground.

[sounds of impact with the ground]

Crunch:

Oh.

Kat: And say:

Gill:

Earlier, when I passed, there was an small army of our kind, following...one of the big ones. The ones that hurt people. And appeared to be fighting a, uh...how to say? Dragon, is the word? Big, breaths fire, has wings.

Crunch:

Oh.

Kit:

Hm. Why?

Gill:

I do not know, but it sounds like they may still be here.

VJ: Uh, everyone go ahead and make me a Perception Check.

[sounds of dice rolling]

Vida: Uh, 2 Successes.

Kat: 1 Success.

Dan: OK, I've only done this like a million times, but it's, uh, what? Wisdom and...

VJ: It's Wits/Composure, and just let me know if you're blowing Glamour for either for 11 dice, or if you're just doing it normal, reflexively to 7.

Dan: Not, not...not this time. OK, so just...

VJ: Seven dice.

Vida: Dang.

VJ: Well, he also has Kith Blessing that gives him +2.

Vida: Ah, OK.

Dan: Uh, 4 Successes.

Kat: Damn.

VJ: Kit, you're the first one who really understands what's going on, especially with your background in how your Durance was, you might not get the Survival aspect that Gill is really gonna pick up on, but you definitely notice a patrol...coming through. You understand, uh, sort of the security aspects of this, where there's like this, oh no, you're about to sort of hit a perimeter of where, like, a patrol is going to

come through, and you...actually, probably do see the first hints of a patrol coming toward you.

[footsteps approaching]

Dan: All right, I, one: relay that information, that a patrol may be on its way, and then I'll ask:

Kit:

Do you think they're friendly?

Gill:

No?

Crunch:

Come, let's hide!

Vida: I start, like, jerking...motioning everyone towards....

Kit:

Do you know something about them that makes you think they would no be friendly?

Crunch:

No.

Kit:

So, you just have a hunch?

[music starts – ominous music box melody]

Vida: I look at Gill.

Gill:

The ones who...obey the...the more, the uh, what is the word? The powerful ones, the ones that are tall. They tend to, uh...to round up some of us and...I do not, I do not like large crowds that wear uniforms.

[music stops]

Kit:

Aw, some of the best things happen in large crowds, though.

Gill:

You can go *[laughter]* you can go ask their intentions, if you like. I am staying here.

Kit:

Well, I would love to.

Crunch:

We should hide!

Kit:

I just don't want to, one, be separated, and two, give away your position and capacity. Because, let's be honest, I probably would. I get excited.

VJ: Kit, with your 4 Successes, and with the patrol heading towards you, it's still far enough away that you don't think...unless they rolled as well as you do, that they would notice you, yet. But you recognize the uniforms, or you recognize the symbolism on those uniforms, as they have jackets made of gold with red lances on their shoulder pads.

Kit:

Oh...I know these assholes. Alright, real quick summary. I guess I don't know them personally, but they like to stir up trouble. They like to send people to stir up trouble. Uh, I'm...not...a fan of them. So...I'm on Team Hide, now, but we should also attempt to observe and...I don't know, learn something from this.

Crunch:

Yeah, yeah.

VJ: All right, everybody make me a Dex/Athletics Check.

Vida: Wait, this isn't a Stealth Check?

VJ: Or, a Dex/Stealth Check. Yes, sorry. I'm so used to Dex/Athletics being like, for everything. Dex/Stealth.

Vida: I...I was feeling really confident until you said Dex/Athletics!

[sounds of dice rolling]

VJ: No, Dex/Stealth. Dex/Stealth. OK, Successes?

Vida: I had 3.

VJ: OK.

Kat: I had 4.

VJ: Mm-hmm.

Dan: A whooping 0.

Vida: Oh no!

VJ: Uh....

Kat: But not a Botch, so...

VJ: Not a Botch. Did you Botch, Dan? Or just no...no Successes?

Dan: Not, there were no 1s. There were no 1s. I didn't Botch anything.

VJ: OK. *[sounds of dice rolling]* Well, the patrol is going to make their...*[sounds of dice rolling]* Perception Check. I almost went "their Notice Things Roll", and I'm like that's not the correct term. I'll give you...I'll take a die out for concealment. *[sounds of dice rolling]* And they do not succeed, so...

Vida: *[sigh]*

VJ: ...you're good, at least in this...moment. So, there are...we'll call it, hold on...let's see, we'll call it four dudes. Four randos. One of the interesting things about these particular changelings, is they don't seem to follow any particular theme. Both Crunch and Kit probably know this information: a lot of times, when changelings are brought under a Keeper or a Gentry, they will follow a theme underneath that particular Gentry.

Vida: Mm-hmm.

VJ: However, these don't seem to follow any particular pattern. They all however do wear the...the raiments of, what Kit would know as, The Radiance's Army.

Vida: Can I try and look them up in the Book?

VJ: Certainly. It's only gonna be a +1 for this one.

Vida: OK, so that's a Occult + Intelligence?

VJ: Yes.

Vida: *[sounds of dice rolling]* 2 Successes.

VJ: OK. The information that you're going to get from the book is... So, are you looking The Radiance themselves, as a Fae? Is that the specific question?

Vida: I'm looking for any sort of similar description to their uniform, because that's what's unifying them.

[music starts – string and woodwind instruments]

VJ:

Entry: Keeper

Entry: The Radiance

The Radiance's colors are red on gold, specifically a red javelin on a gold field. They follow the iconography of light, violence, and the sun. The Radiance has very few changelings of their own, opting instead to steal or purchase other changelings from other Keepers, incorporating them into their army.

[music stops]

Vida: I whisper to the other two:

Crunch:

So, the Book says theses guys are, like...they follow The Radiance, and The Radiance likes to take other changelings and...bring them...make them be part of them, and they do lots of violence.

Kit:

Yeah, I...kinda had a hunch on that. Just, in the effort of full disclosure, I assume I'm not very high on their Friendship List, uh, either. So that might also...cause a problem.

[footsteps]

VJ: The patrol seems to go passed you. You overhear a discussion where at least one of the guys is complaining about the stench. And the other is commenting that:

Patrol Changeling:

The patrols are remarkably necessary. The lieutenant has real, true concerns about Briar Wolf attacks. We are not done taking apart the carcass, and so, of course we have to make patrols because we can't...we can't afford to have a...a...a Briar Wolf, you know, just charging through the camp. That's not a good thing.

VJ: They're bitching about their boss as they continue on through the pass. And they go passed you.

Kit:

Guys. Guys, guys, guys, guys.

Crunch:

Yeah?

Kit:

I have an idea. It's a bad idea, though, I recognize this right off the bat. What if we go back and we lure that Briar Wolf here.

Gill:

At least we're all on the same page.

Crunch:

I... was thinking exactly that. Um. But, before that, I was thinking "do we need to go through here"? Like...like, do we need to get passed here? Or can we go around?

Kat: Oh.

Vida: I just sort of...remember how walking in the Hedge works, and wondered if going "around" is an actual concept relevant to my life.

VJ: *[evil laughter]* Sorry.

[music starts – string instruments]

Gill:

You're the one leading us –

Crunch:

Oh, right.

Gill:

- how did you plan to get to Crossing?

Vida: Uh...I, I check the book, and the instructions. Do, uh, do we need to go through here?

VJ: So, technically both you, uh, both Crunch, with the directions in the book, and Gill, because you're the only who has Survival through the Hedge, are...are sort of doing it, working on it together, in sort of a generalized path. Gill, your background in the knowledge of this specific area is: going across this battlefield is going to be the most efficient route, and...and really the only route that isn't...isn't...like, it's...it's, unfortunately, the least dangerous route.

Gill:

The other, perhaps option, would be to...uh, relieve the gentlemen of their clothing, and try to sneak through the camp.

[music stops]

Kit:
Oh.

Gill:
I don't know that's any safer than playing with Briar Wolves.

Kit:
Oh, man, but though that's an excellent...oh, now I'm torn.

Gill:
¿Porque no los dos? Bring the Briar Wolves and then run through the camp, in uniform?

Kit:
That's...honestly, that's the best prank I think I'd ever pulled on them. That might one up my shenanigans back at the Casino, honestly. I'm in.

Crunch:
Uh...sure. OK. So, we've got...kinda...we need to first get the uniform. And...then, lure a Briar Wolf. Um. And then run. Right?

Kit:
That...yes, that sounds like an excellent...excellent, if not horribly dangerous, plan, but I am so on board for this. Uh, OK, how do we want to relieve these gentlemen of their clothing?

Kat: There were four of them?

VJ: Yup.

Gill:
Crunch, you had a plan for capturing a Briar Wolf; do you think it would work on people?

Crunch:
It would probably be easier on people, because people get hurt by the Thorns. Um, we also...yeah, I could...I could see about making a trap.

[ambient nature sounds start]

Vida: I wanna also look around and see, like, is there any sort of, like, big watch tower that could see the patrols? Like, is there a blind spot where if, say, a patrol went missing right there, no one would notice? Like a dip in the land. Something like that.

VJ: So, where the three of you are at, you actually haven't seen...you just sort of saw the patrol go, sort of crest the hill, and sort of been walking around. You haven't actually gotten, Gill probably has an idea of what's the other side of this hill, but the two of you haven't actually, like, poked your heads over to see the full devastation of what has happened on the other side of this hill.

Vida: Awesome, so what I'm getting is that we are in the blind spot I'm looking for.

VJ: Precisely.

Vida: OK. So, um...

Kat: So, we need to bring them back here?

Vida: Well, don't, I...uh, hm...I was about to say "don't patrols repeat", but why would I know that? So, somebody else will have to have that little piece of information.

VJ: Yeah, let's, let's see here. Um...oh, we've moved all of your Points out of Streetwise, Kit. Um...let's see, what about Kathryn's Character Sheet? What do we have on Kathryn's Character Sheet? Kathryn, roll me...

Vida: I have Animal Ken!

VJ: Yeah, that'll be useful later, but not right this second.

Vida: *[laughter]*

VJ: Uh, Kathryn -

Kat: I'm also...um, and I don't know that this would affect Dots, but it might affect justification for the Roll. In...prior to the Hedge, Gill would have known about patrols, and...how much of his memory am I allowed to access? 'Cause I know it's supposed to be fuzzy, but I don't if it's all off limits. I don't remember...how Changeling works that way.

VJ: OK, so what I'm going to say is...I'm gonna roll a d10. Evens, it's gonna be Gill who remembers how patrols work; odds, it'll be Kit who knows how patrols work, 'cause Kit has a background in the Casino.

Kat: OK.

VJ: So... *[sounds of die rolling]* Ah...Evens. So, Kat, you remember in your bartending days, hey, you know, security's like, you...you recheck things, 'cause if you just leave

it there...or, you...you discuss it in Fiction. I'm gonna sit on my hands and not do things.

Kat: Alrighty. Crunch's last line was, what? "We need to find a place to jump these guys?"

Vida: Uh.

Kat: Just so that there's...

Vida: No, I believe Kit was saying something about trying to get them back here? Because this was a good spot.

Gill:

All right, so. We have the option of trying to get them to backtrack their, uh, their patrol, to come investigate us. We, or we can wait for another patrol to come by, because they're going to continually patrol the area, and there's probably more than one group patrolling that area.

Kit:

Um, personal opinion. I'm a little bored.

Gill:

Mm?

Kit:

I would like to not have to wait around. Also, I'm unsure of how many people may be in the next patrol group – it might be larger.

Gill:

Mm-hmm.

Crunch:

Uh, problem...problem. We need to...I need to actually build the trap.

Kit:

Yeah, but that –

Gill:

How long does it take you to build the trap?

Crunch:

Uh... I think I could do it pretty fast. Um. There's a lot of...I mean, there's like Thorny Hedge stuff and stakes...and um, that's...and tent poles. Like, those things are really, like...like, you bend them and they just snap back, but like, if I could use the Thorn...Hedge...like, it shouldn't take too long. Um.

VJ: You're missing a little bit of rope, though.

Crunch:

Oh, well I got clothing!

Gill:

Clothing? Why is clothing necessary to a trap?

Crunch:

Uh, well, to tie things together. 'Cause I don't have rope.

Gill:

How much rope do you need?

Crunch:

Uh...I mean, just a...a, like...it's hard...I've, um...I've never tried to like talk to someone about this before. Uh, but, if...I just need, like, to tie things together.

Kat: OK, so, Gill's gonna crouch down and start pulling on his shoelace, which just continues to pull out of his shoe.

Crunch:

What?!

Kat: Um. And, while doing this, he'll say:

Gill:

I propose that Crunch stays here and sets the trap. I'll go ahead and...convince the patrol to follow back to this area. Kit, where would you like to be in this plan?

Kit:

Whatever gets me within earshot of them so I can hail insults. I'm perfectly willing to be the one to go get them back, if you'd prefer to stay here.

Gill:

Crunch, thoughts?

Crunch:

Uh...

Gill:

And is this enough rope?

Crunch:

[nervous laughter] Yeah, I think so. Um.

VJ: Um, how many yard, how many yards did you pull out?

Kat: I'm gonna say...three yards? Unless Crunch wants more?

VJ: OK.

Crunch:
Um. I mean.

Gill:
¿Más?

Crunch:
The thing is, uh...that thing is, uh, this trap...I can see it, like, entangling them. Um, and it would hurt them. But I don't know...it's hard to... I don't know if I, um, it would, um -

Vida: Crunch is looking very uncomfortable.

Crunch:
Like, if it would kill?

Kit:
Aw.

Gill:
It doesn't...I do not know if we could beat them in a fair fight without drawing attention. So, if we could put them at a disadvantage before we assault them, in whichever way we choose, then perhaps we can steal their clothes.

Vida: I kind of look at Gill, who is larger than Kit, and I'm just like

Crunch:
It, we'll, we'll be...oh wait, who's ever distracting will be back. But like, we will...I can make it so they can't move, and that they're hurt, but that they're...they're...yeah, I don't think it would take them out. That would be...I'd need, I'd need, like, a big rock.

Gill:
And then we shall knock out and tie them up. No killing.

Crunch:
But that might make the clothes...hm... Anyway.

VJ: We will go with...go ahead and make me... Let's make a Crafts roll...for Crunch.

Vida: Crafts/Jury-rigging?

VJ: Crafts/Jury-rigging!

Vida: Yes!

VJ: And you can, can do either Wits, with you being clever, or Dexterity, with you being clever with your fingers.

Vida: Oh, I'm doing Dexterity, as that is one pip bigger. OK.

VJ: Yup. Dex is 4, Crafts is 4, plus Jury-rigging, so you have 9 dice on this roll.

Vida: Mm-hmm.

[sounds of dice rolling]

Vida: Oh my God! I did not get a single Success.

VJ: Did you Botch?

Vida: Nope.

VJ: OK, so let's make this an Extended Action.

Vida: *[laughter]* How long do I have to make this? So, I have a pretty bad start. I'm just, I guess maybe right away I'm just like "oo, ow". Like, on the Thorns.

VJ: Are you going to take a short or...uh, a short is a ten minute action.

Vida: Mm-hmm.

VJ: And then that gives you...

Vida: Oh, hey, should I have rolled for my...Complication?

VJ: What we'll do for that is, you'll get the Extended Action, but you'll be at a -1 Penalty for your Complication. How about that? Since you didn't succeed your first roll.

Vida: OK, I did...right, I didn't succeed the first one.

VJ: So we'll, so we'll go ahead keep making rolls until you get 5 Successes.

Vida: Mm-hmm.

VJ: But subtract 1 die out of you Pool.

Vida: Mm-hmm.

VJ: And...each roll is going to be about a minute. How does that sound?

Vida: OK. So, and in those ten minutes, or I guess ten minutes maximum, are Kit and...are Kit...

VJ: And....and Gill gonna go start kiting the, uh...kiting the patrol? Yes.

Vida: OK.

Dan: Oh, yeah.

[sounds of dice rolling]

VJ: So, for the Gill and Kit Show, if you guys will go ahead and make me another Dex/Stealth Check. Gill, looking at your Character Sheet, your Stealth Bonus in Wilderness will apply.

Kat: Yay! You said Dex/Stealth, right?

VJ: Yes.

[sounds of dice]

VJ: Hahaha. Kit, you don't have any Stealth.

[sounds of dice rolling]

Dan: No.

VJ: I forgot we took that off your Sheet.

Dan: Yeah.

VJ: Oops.

Dan: That's all right. I...at least this time, I got another 0.

VJ: OK.

Dan: Uh, but not a Botch.

VJ: OK.

Kat: I got a 1. Kind of embarrassing.

VJ: OK. Vida, please tell me how many rolls it's taken you to get to 5 Successes.

Vida: Oh, I haven't gotten there yet, 'cause I was listen, I was waiting. On my second roll I got 4 Successes. So, it took me...so, counting that first roll with the 9 dice, it's taken me three rolls, to get those Successes.

VJ: OK, so it takes you about two...two minutes, and uh...make me one last roll.

[sounds of dice rolling]

Vida: OK, 3 Successes.

VJ: OK, cool. All right, we will come back to that. Kit and Gill, how do you approach the patrol?

Dan: Uh, well, I guess I'm following Gill's lead, waiting until, uh, we get within earshot. And at that point, I've...a few clever insults up my sleeve.

[laughter]

Kat: I thinking...so, the patrol's on some kind of path? Some cleared section of the Thorns, I assume?

VJ: Yeah, so, it is, it is sort of a muddy path. It definitely looks like, since you've left here, this has been a patrol route that multiple patrols have gone through.

Kat: Mm-hmm. OK. So, I'm thinking start on the path, for simplicities sake, and then when we get close enough to detect them – earshot or visual, whichever comes first – Gill would, assuming it's possible, duck off the path and track through the Thorns. And, on the way, he would say:

Gill:

I am thinking it's best if they track us by sound, as opposed to sight? If we can do so

Kit:

Oh, believe me, I can project much louder than my parents would have preferred back in the day. So, I am all set for that.

VJ: Kit, you haven't seen this before, as you sort of both crouch and scope up the hill. But you finally know...what that stench is coming from, as you see a huge, like, size of a small apartment building, carcass of...uh that's a dragon? That's a dragon. That's a dead dragon, that an army is taking apart, like, butchering it.

Dan: And do I know what a dragon is?

VJ: In all of your time in the Casino, you have never seen one. But, like, that, this is...this is what a dragon would look like, you think.

Dan: OK, well then, in that case I'm gonna go:

Kit:

Psst. Is...is that a dragon?

Gill:

Sí. Yes.

Kit:

Brutal. Oh God, it's...it's...oh, that smell. Let's get their attention.

Gill:

Hm, at least they are not taking you apart?

Kit:

Oh, they couldn't if they tried. That's, that's a lie. They absolutely could, so we should be very careful. Uh, are we close enough yet for me to start shouting?

[sounds of dice]

VJ: You are indeed close enough for them to make their Perception Check. *[sounds of dice rolling]* The one guy in the back that was bitching about patrols and the need for patrols and that Briar Wolves are, well, we could handle a fucking Briar Wolf, sorta just turns around, like, and just looks, like, directly at Kit. Doesn't see Gill, but looks, like, directly at Kit.

Patrol Changeling:

Oi! What are you doing over there?

Dan: Oh, I wanna try this 'cause I wanna mimic shouting, but I don't want to actually shout into the microphone, so I'm gonna move it away from my face. Let me know if this still comes through clearly, OK?

VJ: OK.

Kit:

Nothing, you... reeky, dog-hearted clot pole! I can smell you from over here, you infectious, full-gorged haggard!

VJ: Well, OK, you officially have the, uh, the attention of the patrol! Gill and uh, Gill and Kit, roll me Initiative!

[sounds of dice]

Kat: Yay! That's just: roll the number of dice, yeah? No! You roll one and then you add! My bad, my bad.

[sounds of dice rolling]

Kat: OK, I got 13.

[music starts (softly) – energetic, aggressive techno]

Dan: I'm...still...trying to remember how to do this. Is Initiative just, what? Dex?

Vida: You roll one d10 and then add your Initiative Modifier.

Dan: I'm looking for it.

VJ: Which, uh, Initiative is Dex/Composure.

Dan: OK.

VJ: So, for you that's 5.

Dan: In that case, I have a 13.

VJ: Gill, what was yours, again?

Kat: 13.

VJ: Kit has the higher Dex. All right. So, Kit, you are...you are first up in the Initiative.

Dan: All right. I'm going to turn around and shoot a glance over to Gill. Am I aware they don't see Gill, or do I have no concept for that?

VJ: Uh, no, with your Clear Eyes, I will just, I will go ahead and give you that. You know that they saw you, but not Gill.

Dan: All right. So, I'm going to, I guess, side-eye Gill a little here and kind of mumble, so Gill can hear, but they clearly can't, as I'm turning around:

Kit:

I don't think they see you. You staying or running?

Kat: I mean, Gill wouldn't say anything. His plan is just disappear into the...the Thorns or the bushes or whatever's next to it. For his Action. So, I guess Kit...Kit would see that.

Dan: I guess, I'll...I'll delay until that, I'll delay until that actions happens, then.

VJ: All right. All...all four of them take out their, basically their clubs, and start running for ya.

[hurried footsteps]

Dan: Wait, hold on. Uh. It was my Initiative, I delayed, so did they act before Gill?

VJ: No...uh, no. All four of them rolled really shitty. All...all four of them are after Gill's action. So, both of you basically get a Surprise Round.

Dan: So, so, did Gill do the thing, then? Did Gill fade into the...did that action happen?

Kat: I think so?

VJ: Uh, OK.

Dan: I just-

VJ: Yeah, that's fine. I'm OK with that.

Dan: I was unclear if that had happened. Because if it did, I would start running before they would, then, because as soon as Gill did the thing, I would start sprinting.

[footsteps]

VJ: OK, cool. Um. Victoria has to check to see how...how you figure out Speed. Uh. Speed is Strength + Dexterity + 5, so that is...10 Speed for you. Oh, and you have Fleet of Foot, which gives you a +1. So, your Speed is 11, so you can well and truly keep ahead of these guys.

Dan: I also have Athletics: Running, if there's something to roll for it, too.

VJ: That's true, that's true. So, what...what I'm looking at right now, is that your, so your Speed is 11. Uh. Only one of, 'cause basically I'm just rolling a d10 for each of these guys. Whatever comes up on the die is their Speed. Like, there's only one guy that got a 10 on that. There's only one random person who can actually somewhat keep up with you.

Dan: OK. 'Cause I'm also not trying to outrun them. So, if I'm pulling away, I'll obviously slow myself down a little bit.

VJ: Right. You're trying to kite them.

Dan: Right.

VJ: Which is fair. Point is, none of them are fast enough to actually catch you without-

Dan: Beautiful.

VJ: -like, them doing something crazy. So, they all run to chase you, that's their action. Uh. Kit, it is, you're top of the Initiative.

[running footsteps]

VJ: It's gonna take two rounds for you guys to sort of run into Crunch's trap.

Dan: Yeah. So, yeah, I guess it's the same thing: run, but not too fast; keep a healthy pace ahead of them; make them...maybe make them think they're gaining on me, a little.

VJ: Mm-hmm.

Dan: You know, one of those speeds? But not, nothing that I can't handle as I just keep running toward the trap.

VJ: OK, I want you to make me a Stamina/Athletics/Running.

Dan: Hm, Athletics/Running. So, that's 2...not great.

[sounds of dice]

Dan: Um. So, no Successes, but not a Botch.

VJ: OK. You're like "I...I'm pretty sure I can keep up to...to Crunch's trap", but you really hope that you don't have to run for super long. You're very dexterous, but like, long-distance running is probably not your favorite. Uh, Gill - your turn.

Kat: I'm assuming, given Gill's Durance, that, uh, he's...um, aware of the different kinds of sounds creatures make in the Hedge? 'Cause...his plan is to...ideally imitate, kind of, ish, a Briar Wolf. Or...or something that would split the party's attention, as he...potentially crashes through the Thorns. Um.

VJ: Mmm... That's neat.

Kat: Does that make sense?

VJ: Yeah, hold on.

Kat: This could go horribly wrong.

VJ: Let me check on something. Let me check on something, 'cause...I'm trying to remember what Mirror 1 does.

Kat: Mirror 1 allows you to come across as a Changeling of a different Kith.

VJ: Ah.

Kat: So, I could wander up to them, and they wouldn't recognize me when they saw me tomorrow, but I can't change what I look like with Mirror 1.

VJ: Right. OK. So, that is going to be...a Presence/Expression roll...to mimic the sounds of a Briar Wolf.

[sounds of dice]

Kat: Ah, no. I don't have... So, I'm not howling, I'm just...the difference: heavy footsteps or...the amount of crashing that needs to happen. There's no audio, 'cause he can't howl.

VJ: Well, right, but you're still trying to, you're still trying to express...you're trying to act, basically, like a Briar Wolf, so that's still Expression.

Kat: I don't remember- can I...can I blow Glamour to make my roll better?

VJ: Uh...

Kat: No, I don't think I can.

VJ: I...I

Kat: OK.

VJ: Hold on, let me double check, to see which...uh, your Seeming Blessing is –

Vida: Doesn't Willpower do that?

VJ: Willpower is –

Kat: Oh, yeah. Willpower – anything? ‘Cause it’s...

VJ: Uh, but, the Ogre Seeming Blessing: if you blow a Glamour, you can up 1-for-1 die for Strength, Brawl, and Intimidate.

Kat: Yeah, but this isn’t Intimidate. This is Expression.

VJ: Yeah, this...yeah, yeah you would need to be a Fairest to do that one.

Kat: Ugh, fine, OK, crappy roll it is.

[sounds of dice rolling]

Kat: Hey! I got 1 Success. On one die. Go team! *[laughter]*

VJ: You hear at least one of them go:

Patrol Changeling:

Fuck! Is that...is that a Briar Wolf? I told you! The lieutenant had a point!

[laughter]

VJ: Uh...now they’re gonna...now they’re gonna...now we’re gonna do some rolls for these guys.

[sounds of dice rolling]

VJ: The one that is, sort of, panicking about Briar Wolves, is uh...trips. The one that is hot on Kit’s heels, sort of stays on Kit’s heels. At least one other of them is like “should I...should I go get help? I...I really think I should go get help”. And the other is like “nah, man, you are fucking not leaving us out here with a Briar Wolf by ourselves. You owe me. You owe me”. Kit, it is your turn, again. This is the last round you need to succeed before...they will run into Crunch’s trap.

Dan: All right. So, I will...is it still three chasing, or is it just the one? ‘Cause one tripped.

VJ: It’s, it’s...it’s three chasing you instead of four. Um.

Dan: OK. OK.

VJ: This time what you’re going to do is, you’re just gonna do a Dex/Athletics Check, no Running. So, you sort of jump over, or you know, Parkour – however you wanna do it in Fiction – around Crunch’s trap, but still gets them into the trap.

Dan: Is there...uh, what...what do I... 'Cause I know it's being set up, I know the general location. Looking at it as a trap, is there anyway I can...do I need to completely clear it? Or can I deftly step within it without triggering it? That way it doesn't look like I'm trying to avoid something.

Vida: Yeah, Crunch has, like, laid out...like, they're subtle... You know what, actually, can I have opened up the Cheese Puffs, and have used little Cheese Puffs as markers for where it's safe to step?

VJ: [*raucous laughter*]

Dan: Please. Please do.

Vida: OK. OK, I've done that. [*laughter*]

VJ: Sure. Sure, that's....oh my God, I'm gonna die. You guys...I love you guys so much. [*more laughter*] Yes, yes you can.

Vida: Nice.

Dan: All right. So, I can see the Cheese Puffs. I'm gonna to go ahead and assume I have a concept for what those are, and also I know. I'm going to try stepping next to them, and I'm also going to do –

Vida: You know, maybe...maybe you see Crunch, just like, holding up a Cheese Puff...Cheese Puff with a thumb's up, being like “this is the good one”.

Dan: Yeah.

Vida: Like.

Dan: So, I know what I need to do. I think my plan now, though, is as I'm stepping, I'm gonna try to very subtly reach down and grab one to eat.

Kat: [*laughter*]

Dan: Uh, let's do the roll here. So, it's Dex...Athletics, you said?

VJ: Yes, Dex/Athletics.

Dan: OK.

VJ: I love you guys so much.

[*laughter*]

Dan: OK, so here's the fun news about this: is it's 0...and it's a Botch.

Vida: Oh no!

Kat: *[gasps]* You twit.

Dan: I have...no, I rolled a 1 and I rolled five 6s and 7s.

Kat: Ugh.

Dan: But no 8s and Up. On six dice.

VJ: So, normally how Willpower works is that, when you want to Succeed in a roll, you blow Willpower *before* you roll. But, because Dan is a new player, and this is the first time he's used Willpower, I will in fact invoke the "Maybe You Wanted To Blow Willpower On That?"

Dan: What would Willpower gain me?

VJ: Three dice. Roll it. Hope to God you make a Success.

Dan: Yup.

[sounds of dice rolling]

Dan: We're OK. One.

Vida: *[happy noises]*

VJ: OK, OK. You...

Vida: OK.

VJ: Please explain to me in fiction how that looks.

Dan: All right, so as I, uh, basically what happens is, 'cause this is me barely passing it, right?

VJ: Yeah.

[hurried footsteps]

Dan: Yeah, so basically, as I'm running, I'm running towards it, and right before I get to the trap, I...trip on what is very possibly nothing, and I'm falling into it, and at the last second I actually reach down, and I have to step over it with my hands instead of my feet. So, I'm catching myself with my hands right where the Cheese Puffs are, not

only allowing me to then flip over the rest of it, but also grabbing two handfuls of Cheese Puffs on the way, which is what I wanted anyway. So.

VJ: *[laughter]*

Vida: You...you'd have grabbed, like, two single Cheese Puffs.

Dan: Good enough.

Vida: I marked it, the spots with single Cheese Puffs.

Dan: Good enough, good enough. 'Cause I'm going to go ahead and eat those ground Cheese Puffs as I continue running, too.

VJ: *[laughter]*

Vida: Meanwhile, Crunch nearly dies of a heart attack.

VJ: Yeah. Yeah, you see your...you see your....I don't know, do you consider you all friends, yet? I don't think you guys consider yourselves Motley Mates, yet. That's the eventual goal.

[sounds of dice]

Dan: Uh, Kit...Kit...everyone Kit meets is either a friend or an enemy, and there is no in between. So...Kit considers them friends already.

[sounds of dice rolling]

Vida: Crunch isn't sure what "friend" means.

Dan: *[laughter]*

[sounds of die rolling]

Dan: These ominous dice rolls are worrying me.

Vida: Yeah.

VJ: Yeah, no, they are good rolls. I just rolled for the trap.

Dan: Oh, good.

VJ: They catch the three dudes...that were running after Kit. However, the one guy that tripped is still on the path behind them.

Vida: Also, wasn't it Gill's turn before that?

Dan: Yup, Gill would have gone before that.

VJ: Oh, Gill would have gone before that. It's up to Gill what he wants to do.

Kat: What Gill would have seen was Kit, heh, surviving the trap.

Dan: *[laughter]*

Kat: And the three guys headed straight for the trap, yes?

VJ: Mm-hmm.

Kat: Since they haven't actually been snapped. Gill would like to...pop out of the Thorns *[aggravated rustling sounds, hurried footsteps]* and...knock this guy out, if he can. Or, at the very least, hit him. *[contact]* But the idea is to render him unconscious, as opposed to beat him to a pulp.

VJ: Do you want to...do an All Out Attack, like Brawl? And since you're coming up behind him, he wouldn't get his Defense?

Kat: Yeah, let's do that

[sounds of dice]

VJ: OK, so how this works is: Kathryn is going to roll her Strength/Brawl - she's going to roll Gill's Strength/Brawl - and is going to do what's called an All Out Attack. Now, what this does is this gives Kathryn two extra dice on the roll, with the...side effect of it nixes Gill's Defense.

Kat: Mm-hmm.

VJ: But since, the trap's already going to go off, it's a useful, you know, adjustment. And since he is unawares, he has no Defense.

Kat: Yay! So, I roll?

VJ: Yup.

[sounds of dice rolling]

Kat: I got 1 Success! *[contact]* What is this?!

VJ: OK, so I'm going go ahead and roll for this guy's Strength, uh, 'cause you guys are gonna go into... *[sounds of dice rolling]* He has a shitty 1 Strength; do you have more than 1 Strength?

Dan: *[laughter]*

Kat: Yes, I have...yeah, I have more than 1.

VJ: OK. We'll Rule of Cool this, since...since I want you guys to succeed in the early game sessions.

Vida: How nice of you.

VJ: Yeah, I thought that would be nice. I thought that would be nice.

Vida: *[laughter]*

VJ: I...I might torture you guys later, so I want you to like me now. It's, it's not...you know.

[musics stops]

Vida: Ah. So we won't see it coming.

VJ: Yeah. You know. So you manage to tackle this guy to the ground. The others don't notice as they're too busy getting caught in a trap. And...you're out of Initiative Rounds! You have three dudes in a trap, and Gill, you have one dude that you have pinned under you on the trail. What would you like to do?

Kat: Make him unconscious, so he can't yell. Unless someone else is going first.

VJ: Are you doing this safely? Are we making a...Dex/Medicine Check? Or are we doing a Strength/Brawl Check?

Kat: Hm. Hm..... I think Strength/Brawl.

VJ: All right. So, you're gonna...you're gonna. OK. Do it.

[sounds of dice rolling]

Kat: Ah! I only got 1 Success. He's fine.

VJ: Uh, he takes a Bashing. But we'll call that...he's, he's a little weakling. He's...he's the small guy who was complaining about the Briar Wolves. So, we'll call that a K.O. for now.

Kat: OK. Well, the plan is, is just to kind of, like, punch him in his head.

[laughter]

Kat: It's not elegant, it's just "damnit" –smack- *[contact]*

VJ: Fair enough.

Kat: So, hopefully he stays down.

VJ: So, now you have three guys tied up in a rope trap, being kinda noise about it, and one guy K.O-ed.

Vida: It's less of a rope trap and more of a Thorny vine trap.

VJ: Mmm....I like it. And Kit's eating Cheese...Kit, are you eating ground Cheese Puffs?

Dan: Yes. Also, my mic was muted. I was trying to say something and realized that was a problem. Yes, they're the ground Cheese Puffs, and I've already consumed them. And I'm gonna look back at Crunch now, and just, uh, trying to look cool and probably not pulling it off, I'm gonna nod and go:

Kit:

Hey, kid, wanna learn how to knock a dude out?

Crunch:

Ah?!

VJ: *[laughter]*

Vida: That's the answer you're getting.

VJ: Sorry, sorry! Your ST is sitting here going "please say yes". I want this character interaction so bad!

Vida: *[laughter]* The character interaction you're getting is kind of a scared shriek.

Dan: Oh, that was the full response?

Vida: Yeah, that...that, that was the response.

Dan: OK. I was gonna say:

Kit:

Don't worry, just watch me do it. It's easy.

Dan: Also, keep in mind, Kit personally does not know how to do this.

Vida: *[laughter]*

Dan: So, Kit is literally just going to take a...take a fist, and just aim for the back of the head of one of the ones in the trap. And swing.

Kit:

They're making too much noise anyway, so...

VJ: Make me...uh, 'cause you have Fighting Finesse, so you get to use your Dex instead of your Strength on this.

Dan: Mm-hmm.

VJ: You get...Brawl. I'm assuming you're not actually going to claw this poor guy?

Dan: No, I'll be kind, unless they give me a funny look.

VJ: OK. They are certainly unhappy with you right now.

Dan: Yeah, but I can understand it's because of the trap, not because of a personal slight in my way. So.

VJ: Yeah.

Dan: So, the claws are in at the moment.

VJ: Go ahead and, and technically I should be making you guys do Called Shots, but I'm not going to bother. Go ahead and roll that Dex/Brawl for me.

Dan: All right.

[sounds of dice]

Dan: All right, reroll 10s...3.

VJ: Much cleaner than Gill did, it's just, like, right in the back of the head.

Dan: All right, so I'm gonna look back at Crunch:

Kit:

See how I did that. Just a nice, quick stroke to the back of the temple there.

Dan: I'm choosing that word on purpose. I know it is not correct, 'cause I think the temple is in the front.

Vida: Is all of that in character?

Dan: Yeah. Uh, no. The...in character, it ends at the "temple". It's like:

Kit:

Right in the back of the temple. Uh. You wanna give it a try?

Crunch:

Uh, sure.

Vida: Crunch sorta just bounces...on their heels, and makes a fist, and just runs headlong, with a fist raised, um...

VJ: *[laughter]*

Vida: I...I...I'm still taking -1 to this. So, it's Brawl and what?

VJ: Brawl and Strength.

Vida: OK.

[laughter]

Vida: I'm so glad I'm doing...OK.

[sounds of dice rolling]

Vida: Yeah, OK, no Successes. Didn't Botch it, though.

VJ: You...just sort of "thwap" him, and the guy just goes:

Patrol Changeling:

Oi!

Vida: I, I like, run up, and then get really nervous before doing it, and like, lose all of my momentum.

Kat: Uh, heh, while this is going on: Gill has walked up, and he's gonna hit the third guy. Hopefully, for better than he did before. Is that OK?

Dan: Yeah, that, no that's fine.

Vida: Please help.

[sounds of dice rolling]

Dan: I'm just curious what this player character is gonna say. Er, this NPC.

Kat: Alrighty, so Gill got 3 Successes to nail the last one.

VJ: OK, there's, there's one guy still...you have the guy on the ground, two guys knocked out in the ropes, and then this third guy is like:

Patrol Changeling:

You assholes are gonna get it when the lieutenant gets you!

Kit:

Hey, hey, hey! Hey! Hey, hey! Excuse me.

Dan: And I'm just gonna slowly pull out my claws, right in front of his face.

Kit:

We're gonna give this nice kid another try at that, and you are gonna be quiet. Otherwise I'm gonna do it, and I'm not puttin' these away. All right?

Crunch:

Wait, what?

VJ: Kit! Kit, make me a Manipulation/Intimidation. I know it's Unskilled for you, but with the claws, we'll just nix that Penalty. So, straight up Manipulation roll. No, Presence roll. Presence roll.

Dan: All right.

[sounds of dice rolling]

Dan: Uh...that's a Botch.

VJ: That's OK; he Botched, too.

Dan: That's...

VJ: He Botched on his Composure roll, so you guys are, like, you manage...

[laughter]

Dan: Let me, let me do the speech again, now knowing I Botched it, OK?

VJ: OK.

Dan: All right, so I'll be like:

Kit:

Hey! Hey, hey, hey! *[claws]* You see these claws, here? I, You're gonna...I...just don't...I. Crunch, just hit him again.

Kat: While Kit is giving his impressive speech, Gill is gonna reach over and rearrange Crunch's fist into, like, proper form. Yeah, just reach over and rearrange it so *[they've]* got a good fist, and just sort of hold *[their]* hand out.

VJ: Since, since Gill is helping you, Crunch, you can go ahead and take away your Inferiority Complex disadvantage.

Vida: Cool.

[sounds of dice rolling]

VJ: 'Cause you're getting, you're getting help!

Vida: Oh! Oh my gosh!

[sound of die rolling]

Vida: OK, that's 2 Successes. Wait, no, 3 Successes. I can read. 3 Successes!

Dan: Ooooo.

Kat: Poor guy.

VJ: And with two, somewhat experts, helping you, you manage to knock the fourth guy out. *[contact]* Congratulations.

Vida: *[laughter]*

Kit:

Feels good, huh?

Crunch:

.....yes.

[laughter]

Crunch:

Yes.

Vida: I...Crunch is just grinning. Like, their mouth open as wide as it can go, and you notice that, even though their lips - or they don't really have lips, they're made out of metal - their teeth are still, like, human teeth.

Dan: *[laughter]*

Vida: And is just grinning, really wide.

VJ: I am assuming we're just gonna quickly montage through the, uh, stripping of these fine folks of their army uniforms, and...and tying them up in a tree?

Kat: Yes.

Vida: Sure.

Kat: And fetching the one from slightly down the path who did not get caught in the trap?

VJ: Yup, yup. You have successfully won my Patrol Puzzle.

Kat: *[laughter]*

Vida: Oh my gosh, I just realized, with how my backpack works, the Cheese Puffs aren't gonna go stale, even though I've opened the package.

VJ: Yup.

Vida: Yes.

VJ: They're actually fresh Cheese Puffs.

Vida: Well, they were...previously the bag hadn't been opened. And I was just, Vida was thinking "oh no, now they're all going to be stale because I'm not going to eat 'em right now and not gonna bother sealing them because Crunch doesn't know how Cheese Puffs work". But - doesn't matter!

VJ: I could say that Crunch is clever enough that they could figure it out - I would love for Crunch to have that mental math, all out loud, in character.

Vida: Something I've been thinking about these past couple of weeks, is that Crunch is not actually aware that Cheese Puffs are food.

Dan: That's wonderful.

[laughter]

Dan: So, wait, wait – what’s your reaction when you see Kit shovel two of them into his mouth as he almost falls into the trap?

Vida: Honestly? Complete and utter confusion, but also, like, already almost though Kit was about to get tangled, so that was not the biggest thing on their mind.

[laughter]

Vida: The biggest thing on their mind was “oh thank goodness, Kit did not just get tangled up in the trap, causing everyone to aware it was a trap” with just a little side note of “Kit ate the orange things”.

Kit:

Well, now you should try one.

Crunch:

Uh.

Kit:

There’s like six more of these on the ground. It’d be a shame to let them go to waste.

Crunch:

What?

Kit:

What?

Crunch:

What?

Kit:

There’s like six more of them on the ground. Is anyone else going to eat these?

Gill:

I’m good.

Crunch:

You...eat them?

Kit:

Oh, yeah, they’re –

Dan: Do we have a sense of taste in here?

VJ: Oh, yeah, you still have a sense of taste, you just have not desire...like, you have no inherent need to eat.

Dan: Right. OK. So.

Kit:

Yeah, no, they're actually...weirdly not terrible. And uh, they get, the coolest part is your hand. Look: I mean I've only eaten two, and my hands, my paws are just stained orange. It's...it's horrible...and wonderful. Try one.

Vida: I pick on up off the ground and eat it, and just sort of...I'm like:

Crunch:

Oh! These are, like, really salty!

Kit:

Yeah. Ain't it great?

Crunch:

Yeah!

Kit:

Yeah. Teachin' ya all kinds of new things tonight.

Crunch:

I was just - they were bright orange.

Kit:

Yeah, they don't look like food, but damnit if they also don't really taste like food.

[laughter]

Vida: Anyway, we also now have clothes.

VJ: Yeah, congratulations. Ah, you can add that to your inventory lists. You each have a jacket that belongs to The Radiance's Army, and, uh, you have a spare jacket that belonged to some poor schmuck from The Radiance's Army.

Gill:

I suggest we put the jackets on. When we find the Wolf, things will move very quickly from that point on.

Crunch:

OK.

Kit:

Sounds like a plan. It's just my size - small

Vida: *[laughter]*

VJ: Kit, because you have the highest Perception, and I'm just gonna give it to ya outright – your ears perk up. Actually, and Gill...Gill, actually all of you would hear this, 'cause Gill's gonna probably have a...a Not Happy reaction to this. You actually do here a Briar Wolf, *[techno wolf howl]* but it's coming from the other side. It's coming from where the dragon is, towards the camp.

Kat: Like it's on the other side of the camp, or like it's coming at us from the camp?

VJ: So, the way I have this mental picture is that, there's basically this hill, and all of you guys have been doing this on the opposite side of the hill where, when you go over, there's like this big divot in the ground, where there's the big field? The howl seems to be coming toward, or like, it's also not as healthy of a howling sound, if that's something you would think of, and shouts from the army camp going on. If anyone wants to make me...a Check of some sort, I can give them more information.

Dan: I'm first just going to look them in the eye and go:

Kit:
Well, shall we?

Crunch:
I mean...

Kat: Yeah, can I - Gill just roll a straight Perception Check? I know what I want to do, but I don't wanna...

VJ: OK, yeah. Go ahead and roll a Perception Check for me.

Kat: Wits/Composure, right?

[sounds of dice rolling]

VJ: Yup.

Kat: Nothing. Mm, OK, just sounds like it. Well:

Gill:
It sounds like the party started without us. It would be rude to be late.

Crunch:
So, do we just, like, do we try and sneak around? Or do we just walk right through like we belong?

Kit:

I mean, look at our jackets: we do belong.

Crunch:

But if we belong, then we have to fight the Briar Wolf.

Kit:

But if there's a Briar Wolf fight going on, no one's going to be paying attention to the effort we put into it. They're going to be more focused on: their own lives. We can actually take advantage of this chaos and, I don't know.

VJ: And cross the field.

Kit:

Is that what we're trying to accomplish? Oh my goodness.

VJ: Yeah, yeah, you're trying to go... 'cause, you really need to go through then camp and across the field to get -

Dan: Yeah, yeah, yeah, I thought, I thought. Sorry, I thought that was an in player reaction. That was Kit going "wait, is THAT what we're doing?".

Vida: *[laughter]*

Gill:

That was the plan, Kit. Did you want to ride the Wolf across the field?

Kit:

I mean, yeah, hell yeah, but I feel like...

Crunch:

That seems dangerous.

Kit:

Yeah, I've got this voice in my head that just says "Kit, no" every now and then, and it kinda popped up with that one. So...

Crunch:

We're already doing something dangerous.

Gill:

All right, so run across the field in the chaos is Plan A.

Kit:

Yes.

VJ: OK, so you...you guys manage to cross the field. Finally, Crunch also now figures out what the stench is. The “oh look! They’re butchering a giant dragon carcass!”

Vida: Mm-hmm.

VJ: That’s...lovely. Like, it’s huge. It’s like the size of a small apartment building.

Vida: Yeah, and I would know what a dragon is because I’ve you know, made – machined parts to make...dragon clocks, or whatever.

VJ: That’s...there’s no doubt in anyone’s mind: that’s a very dead dragon. You guys cross into the field, and actually manage to walk into the camp remarkably unbothered. The Briar Wolf howl [*techno wolf howl*] is actually coming from a pit inside the camp. There seems to be sort of jeering and shouting; they seem to have trapped one.

Crunch:
Let’s, let’s just –

Vida: I like lean toward them and whisper:

Crunch:
Let’s just...go around that. Let’s just...go around.

[music starts – energetic/playful piano/drums/string]

VJ: You do, however, hear a shout come from one of the tents. Something small, something...let’s say cat sized - small cat sized - just sort of bursts out of one of the army tents and runs up one of ya’ll’s legs. Who is getting cat attacked?

Dan: I love cats. It’s definitely Kit, ‘cause also Kit can – I have something on Kit’s Character Sheet related to cats, so...

Vida: There are so many cats in this party.

Dan: I love cats.

VJ: Yeah, it’s not specifically a cat. Very quickly, a small, sort of actually scaly, cat, crawls up and sort of hides on the inside of your jacket, and a snout sort of just comes out of the jacket.

Kat: [*excited noises*]

VJ: And you see, you have a small hatchling that is trying to hide inside your jacket, Kit. And its scales are flashing, very, very quickly, through colors. What color does the dragon hatchling become?

Dan: Uh...green.

VJ: The dragon hatchling curls up and hides in your jacket, and if you bother to check – I don't know if you will – it will stay the same color green whether or not you have your glasses on or off.

Dan: Yeah, I haven't looked outside of my sunglasses since the moment I put them on, so.

[music stops]

VJ: I didn't think you did.

[laughter]

Dan: Like, we're gonna go into, like, a dark bar at some point and they're still staying on.

[laughter]

VJ: Two guards, sort of, stomp out of the tent, and one turns to you two and goes:

Guard Changeling:

The lieutenant is gonna have our hide; did you see where that thing went?

Dan: I'm gonna immediately break into some persuasion fast talk here, and be like:

Kit:

Oh, that little thing that was scampering? With the different colors and the...the, dude no. It was –

Dan: And I'm gonna just point in a direction.

Kit:

That thing just bolted, man. It scared me. And, wha- OK, you don't know this about me, but when I was a child, I would scare super easy –

Guard Changeling:

OK, God! New recruits are so fucking annoying.

VJ: And they, uh, they...they go in the direction that you pointed.

Dan: Nice.

VJ: The small dragon hatchling just sort of, like, is warm against your chest. And Crunch: a map catches your eye in the tent that those two guards just walked through.

Vida: Mm-hmm. What's the map of?

VJ: It's a map of Crossing.

Vida: *[gasps]*

VJ: And the tent flaps close. What does Crunch do?

Vida: I...wanna try and steal it.

VJ: OK. So, you go into the army's tent. There is a cage, where probably this hatchling was before, and there's a nice chewed out hole where that is. And then, on the wall is a map of Crossing.

[Ending Theme fades in]

VJ: It's clearly labeled as such, and you can see the layout of the town, tucked up against a shaded piece called "Wall". A list of names are on the page, under a heading Suspected Residents. There's about twenty names or so, but it's not until you actually read the names on the bottom that a feeling in your chest, that isn't a feeling that belongs to you, starts to bubble up.

Vida: Yeah, I'm gonna grab that quickly, shove it in my backpack, and walk out.

VJ: The three names that you see on the bottom of the sheet are: B. Bright, H. O'Conner, and Dr. A. Rossi. And somewhere, in the back of your mind, you hear Christoff's voice, in a pained but also proud sound, and he whispers:

Christoff:

Ant.

[Ending Theme plays in earnest]

VJ: Thank you for listening to [Hedge In: A Changeling Story](#). Local tornado resident Dan can be found on Twitter @unrealgiraffe; our cryptid Kat does not have social media, we apologize; the wonderful "neat!" Vida can be found on Twitter @greenbeanspirit; VJ can be found most places, including Twitter, as nwfairly. You can find us on Twitter and Tumblr @hedgeinasc. Check out our website www.hedgeinasc.com for character sheets, future releases, and more.

A special "thank you" to Dragon Scale Patron: wolfganganderson, for your lovely contributions every month.

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And remember: Stay Wyrd

[music swells, then stops]