

This transcript is colour coded for ease of use. Please download the PDF.

Tobe as played by Liz

Myx as played by Nina

Mhurren as played by Vinny

Erbak as played by Tom

Narrator/Scraw/GM/Everything else as played by Ray

[Audio Description]

{Tone Guide/Sarcasm etc}

[Cello march]

Ray: Hello travelers and welcome to Tails From the Dark Dragons Inn Season 2, Episode 1: A Dire Journey. I hope you've enjoyed our side quests as these are just a hint of things to come. In July, we'll be releasing new content every other week in addition to our campaign, featuring a broad variety of casts from across the tabletop RPG community. For this season we have new artwork supplied by Pearlesqued and our very own music composed and recorded by Simon Pho, to whom we owe a great debt of thanks.

This week, we have everyone onboard as our heroes make their way to Elturel. We have Vinny as Mhurren, the half-orc monk. Nina as Myx, the aasimar warlock of the fey. Tom as Erbak, the lizardfolk wizard. Liz as Tobe, the Raven Queen warlock tiefling. We also have The Doomsinger, the mysteriously masked elven bard and Scraw, the bugbear barbarian, played by me, Ray, your host and Gamemaster, and I also play, well ... Just about everyone else.

[Tavern banter background noise]

Usher: "Hey there! It's good to see you back. Busy night tonight. Everyone's looking forward to hearing what happened after they left Greenest . Oh! I see you've noticed our new placard. Mister Vistirion tells me it's where we list our ongoing patrons? See, right there. It says Matt Nutt, thank you! And Sarah Millman , thank you! She was our first patron, you know, or so I'm told. I hear she's an author. Right. Let me take your coat and we can get you seated, eh? There's space for you right over here. Come on, this way."

[Tavern banter subsides]

Doomsinger: "Travelers, one and all, I welcome you on this night to the humble hole of The Dark Dragons Inn, to tell the tale of Baldur's Gate, a city filled with sin. But

first, your heroes, The Scales of Justice, must travel to Elturel. What awaits them there, do not despair, for surely time will tell."

GM: Mhurren, Erbak, Tobe and Myx, and Scraw and the Doomsinger, are all riding in the back of a wagon.

[Music fades; Horse and wagon noises begin]

The wagon is being pulled by six finely bred horses and is being driven by two young tiefling men. Sitting up with the riders, and facing back towards you lot is a lizard woman named Ixal.

You've come to know her for a few days. She's a bit brusque, but she's pleasant enough for the kind of business that she clearly is used to doing. You guys have been on the road, I say road very loosely, for two and a half days now. The journey has thus far been uneventful and even though you technically are all taking watches to keep watch over the wagon, you've all gotten to the point where, eh, if something happens, we'll probably see it coming. You're in the Green Fields. You're riding over open plains. It's very, very hard for things to sneak up on you, and the likelihood is that nothing's going to. It would be impractical for anything to try. So, as you journey to Elturel, what are you doing with your time?

Mhurren: I have a box of 250 gold. Did I ever give that to Doomsinger? Yeah, I'll just give it over to him.

Doomsinger: "Why, um, why thank you, Mhurren. Um, it's very kind of you. Perhaps I could donate some of this to an orphanage."

Myx: "That's awfully generous."

Mhurren: "It is."

Doomsinger: "Yes. I'm a ... I feel like a changed man since I survived the attack by that beastly dragon. I-I value the time that I have now. I just think that, you know, there are probably children out there who could benefit from this."

Myx: "Mm-hmm {skeptical/curious}."

Mhurren: It warmed my heart.

GM:Doomsinger: He looks at Myx. He says, "You're not a child."

Myx: "{stammers} I-I implied no such thing, sir."

Tobe: "I don't think she was after your money."

GM: He takes the box from Mhurren and he narrows his eyes at you and he puts it in his bag and closes it flippantly.

Myx: I'm just holding up Darconius. "I'm not the child, but look, I have such a little one to take care of."

Doomsinger: "That thing is barely even ... no."

Myx: "Go on. Say it."

Doomsinger: "He's an eldritch creature."

Myx: "{growls}." Myx is just glaring at him.

Darconius: "He's right you know. I'm really old!"

Myx: "{sighs} You're not helping."

Darconius: "Well, he's not wrong."

Myx: "That's not the point! J-j-just shush and look cute."

Darconius: So, you've got him cradled so that all of his paws are in the air in front of him and his tail's pointing forward, so he just turns his head over backwards at you. "Am I doing it?"

Myx: {squealing}"Oh my god! Yes. Yes."

Mhurren: "Hmph." I am turning the other way. Uncomfortable.

Myx: "But his belly is so soft. Murren! Feel it." I pick up Darconius's, carry him carefully over to Mhurren so he can marvel at Darconius's belly.

{laughs}

Myx: {hushed}"It's soft."

Erbak: "Isn't that thing technically a part of you, so it's like it's your belly?"

Myx: "Not at the moment. I am here and Darconius is here, so technically at this moment, we are two separate individuals."

Mhurren: "Um, d-do you want me to poke it?"

Myx: {hushed}"No, not poke it. Pet it. Soft."

Mhurren: "Oh. Um," I stroke it on the belly.

GM: As you stroke it on the belly, you feel relaxed suddenly. You feel a little wave of empathetic comfort.

Mhurren: "I feel all peculiar now. Wait, is this magic?"

GM: You feel warm and cozy.

Mhurren: "Um ... Thank you, Myx."

Myx: "It's okay!"

Mhurren: I just nod to the psuedodragon, just kind of weird nod.

GM: He does a little wave with one his claws.

Mhurren: "Okay."

Darconius: "Okay!"

Myx: "You did very well."

GM: So, for the first two days, you guys spent a lengthy period of time grilling the Doomsinger, trying to get as much information as possible out of him about what he had learned about the cult. Turns out, he didn't learn as much as it seemed like he learned, but what he did learn is probably still something that would be valuable to Leosin and Co. Every now and again, Ixal checks on you.

Mhurren: Yeah. Can I, can I make some darts?

Myx: Next time we stop over for the night, I want to persuade nicely one of the carriage drivers to teach me how to mount a horse.

GM: There are two tiefling men that travel with you. They are Xan and Corva. They are twins. So, they look fairly similar.

Myx: Is there any like specific identifying marker between the two?

GM: Not really. They're both very slim, very pale tieflings, and generally speaking, the way to identify between them is how they're wearing their hair that day, but they both have their hair cut the same way and often wear each other's hairstyles. After traveling with them for a couple of days, you get the impression they do it to fuck with people. They intentionally set up opportunities for you to get wrong who you're talking to. Which one do you approach?

Myx: Corva.

GM: You approach Corva, as far as you know. He is sitting by one of the horses. He's actually just checking the shoes, make sure that any small rocks, picking out of the shoes and making sure that they're attended to so that they don't lame themselves on the rest of the journey.

Myx: "Corva?"

Corva?: The tiefling by the horse looks up, smiles. "Yes?"

Myx: "Are you busy?"

Corva?: "Why do you ask?"

Myx: "I had a favor to ask, I guess?"

Corva?: "Mmm?"

Myx: "I want to know if you can teach me how to mount a horse, because eventually, I would like to learn how to ride a horse. I think it's a useful skill to have, and I'm not very good at it."

Corva?: "I can certainly try. I {laughs}, I promise nothing."

Myx: "That's okay."

Corva?: He unbridles them. So, he disconnects them from the wagon and he leads it around away from the camp into a more open area. And, he's like, "This is how you mount a horse." And he grabs hold of the saddle from one side and does a spinning flourish as he leaps sideways onto the horse, whips one hand off in front of him in the air and goes, "Ah hah {triumphant}!"

Myx: "Fancy pants."

Corva?: "Well, you asked how to mount a horse and that's how you do it."

Myx: So, Myx is going to try and imitate what Corva's just done.

GM: He gets down. He holds the reign of the horse. How are you going to approach this?

Myx: I'm gonna stand up tall and confident, puff my chest out a little bit, waltz up to the horse and take hold of the reigns and try to whoosh up onto the horse.
{laughs}

GM: Before you do, the moment you take the reigns, you see the horse start and rear its head back.

Tobe: Tobe is watching this and sensing some broken bones in Myx's future.

Myx: Thanks for the confidence.

GM: It starts. It rears its head back. You look at it in the eye. "No puffed chest, puff." It seems to calm down. You stand there, you stare the horse down, you calm it down and then you try your best to leap up. And, what ends up happening is you basically do a roundhouse kick into the back of the horse. You're pretty feeble. So, it doesn't actually hurt the horse but it does startle it and it pulls away and backs off.

Myx: "I'm so sorry, horse! I'm so sorry."

Xan: Your arm is yanked and Xan laughs loudly and walks over to the horse whistling and takes hold of the reigns and he walks back towards the wagon and says, "Perhaps you can start with people before you try with horses, hmm?"

Myx: "{groans}" Myx just feels very silly right now and very defeated at this particular point in time, but she tried.

Tobe: During some downtime, I do try to figure out the rust colored bag.

GM: But how do you experiment with this?

Tobe: Well, going by the first time someone randomly threw one of the fluffy balls, it turned into an owl. Tobe's not exactly gonna tip it up and see what happens {laughs}. I fish around inside the bag and pick out just a ball at random and toss it into the grass to see what happens.

GM: You stick your hand into the bag. You feel around. Once more, you feel your hands land on some furry balls. You pull out one. It looks about the same as the last one did, from what you remember. You throw it out ahead of you. It lands on the ground and in a puff of smoke, a large bull mastiff appears.

Tobe: Holy shit. {laughs}

GM: Turns around and walks towards you.

Tobe: "Sit."

GM: It sits.

Tobe: I crouch down. "Paw," and I hold out my hand.

GM: It turns its head sideways and holds out its paw.

Tobe: I then want to try and figure out if words to I can get it to turn back into a ball? We could try, "Turn back?"

GM: It turns around and looks the other way.

Tobe: "Can you turn back into a ball?"

GM: It turns around and looks at you and turns his head slowly and then slowly lowers its head down in front of it and rolls forwards to the best of its ability, which results in it falling sideways and turns over and looks up at you from the ground.

Tobe: Try the word, "Return."

GM: It gets up and walks closer to you and cocks its head like, "Is this what you wanted?" How long do you think Tobe spends trying to get this dog to turn back into a ball? {laughs}

Tobe: Tobe's quite determined. Between 20 to 40 minutes before he just gets frustrated {laughs}.

GM: You spend all that time doing just that and every time you come up with a new word the dog does its absolute best to try and interpret the weird commands you're giving it, but it appears to just be a dog that's doing its best to please you. {laughs} Do you do anything else with the bag in the meantime?

Tobe: Well, I'm not exactly encouraged to throw more balls {laughs} because I don't want a herd of animals following me everywhere.

GM: The next morning, when you come to, you look around for the dog and it is nowhere to be seen.

Tobe: Can I find a random fluffy ball? Has it turned back into a ball or has it just disappeared?

GM: It's just gone.

Tobe: "Huh, huh." Okay, so they clearly only last for a certain amount of time. Throw another one out.

GM: You pull out the ball, you toss it in front of you, and seconds later. "{whooshing roar}" There is a huge lion in front of you just roaring out into the forest. And the horses fucking shit themselves.

Tobe: {laughs} Oh shit.

Erbak: Can we all here this as well?

GM: Yeah, I think they probably actually bolt or try to because they're still tethered to the wagon. It takes Ixal, Xan and Corva probably the best part of an hour and a half to catch up with them, find them all and bring them back. And Ixal is extremely unimpressed at you sitting with your lion.

Tobe: I am not meeting her eyes {laughs} as I apologize because I clearly have no idea what I'm doing {laughs}.

Erbak: "Why do you have lion?"

Tobe: I'm sorry {laughs}.

Ixal: The lion stares her down for you and, "Perhaps you want to, um, do that at a distance from the camp, just in case?"

Tobe: "Uh, in future, yeah. I didn't know it was going to turn into that. I'll be honest."

Ixal: She looks at you like, "What the fuck are you doing experimenting with something that's going to turn into a goddamned lion. That could have eaten you. You don't know."

Tobe: Well, I feel like at this point Tobe's fairly confident after the whole thing with the owl and the mastiff.

GM: Absolutely. Every time you summon one, regardless of what it is, they are always friendly towards you and people traveling with you. Once you leave them alone for awhile, if they're not given any specific orders, they will act in a fashion within their nature, but for the lion, that just means he sleeps a lot. They're not hostile any way to you and they're not dangerous to anyone. The horses have no way of knowing that though.

Mhurren: Would I be able to get a little bit of wood and try to start carving out a little dragon?

GM: You find an old stump that looks like the core of it could potentially be used for salvageable wood if you were to spend the whole night hacking at it with the appropriate tools, you could potentially salvage enough to build this.

Mhurren: Okay.

GM: You spend the night hacking away at this thing and you manage to get a chunk of wood that is approximately six inches cubic. So, it's a pretty sizeable chunk. You really hammer it out. It's quite soft wood, so you gather that a lot of it will be lost during the carving.

Mhurren: Mm-hmm {affirmative}. I carve out an immaculate square.

GM: For the next day or so, during the journey, you spend time whittling away on this piece of wood. I'd say you get about halfway done by the end of day four. Erbak, is there anything you're doing?

Erbak: Yeah, whenever we turn up near anywhere that's a bit less open grassland, either near a copse of trees or upon, you know, anything like that. I'd like to just have a wander around and just see if I can spot any of the local wildlife and just see if there's anything interesting around.

GM: We'll say on the fourth night, you do actually make camp in some woods. After the fiasco with Tobe's lion, Ixal wants somewhere to tie the horses to so they can't just run off. You find yourself with a bit of free time. Erbak, you are walking through the woods. You walk through the area. The camp is in a fairly, reasonably thickly wooded area. There's quite a few large trees because Ixal was specifically looking for somewhere to tie the horses up.

You make your way through the thickest part of the foliage behind your camp. You're probably walking for the best part of an hour or so when you do actually come upon a source of running water. A large stream. It's about three foot across, but it's about a foot deep. It's quite a thick stream. And you can see that it runs quite heavily through this area.

Erbak: Ermm. What sort of grassland around the side of the stream looking like? Is it muddy or quite firm?

GM: From where you stand, it looks quite firm, because there's quite a few trees that are planted in the area.

Erbak: Okay. I'm gonna carefully and gently walk up to the edge of the river. I'm aware that the leaves are probably going to be a bit crackly, but at this point, I'm probably not going to be able to avoid that.

GM: As you approach the river, are you going to fill up a flask?

Erbak: How clear does the water look?

GM: Looks pretty clear.

Erbak: Hmm. Let's just check me backpack a second. I want to use one of my specimen jars and I'm going to just hold a bit in the water and then take it out and see if I've got anything.

GM: You crouch down by the streamside and you get yourself comfortable and you look down in your bag and you're taking out, ah get your specimen jar. You're like, "Ah, there it is." And you reach down with the specimen jar into the water, and you're just letting it flow in, when you catch some movement out of the side of your eye, which, further down the stream, you notice what looks like a wolf. And it's crouched down and it's just lapping gently from the stream. And that's not too unusual, given that you're in the woods. But, the fur on this wolf is very coarse. It's very thick. And it's varying shades of black and grey and there's even touches of silver in it.

And the more you pay attention to this wolf, the more you notice details. As it's long tongue is lapping at the stream, it seems exceptionally large. And as it opens its mouth to pull it's tongue back in, you notice that the size of its canines are very big. And as you pay more attention to the size of the skull of this creature, you think, "That- that's really large for a wolf." At some point, it sits back and it sits up and stretches and you realize it's not just the skull, that whole wolf is really large for a wolf. Really large for a wolf. You recognize that down the stream is a direwolf.

Erbak: Hmm.

GM: It doesn't appear to be paying any attention to you right now. It is just minding its own business and taking a drink, but it is fucking massive. And the signs that you noticed of the silver in its hair, you get the impression that those are distinct signs of age and for a creature this large to be old probably means that it is a survivor.

Erbak: Hmm. He's curious. Okay. That's, um, that's disconcerting.

GM: You found a direwolf, but you get the impression that even if it has noticed you, which it probably has, because you weren't trying to be stealthy. The only reason that it's not doing anything is it knows you're not a threat, because it owns this forest. This forest is its home and it has been here far longer than you. And it will continue to be here when you are gone.

Erbak: Old, old direwolf. Hmm. I'll wait for a bit. I want to see what it does. I'll just observe it for awhile.

GM: How long do you think you spend observing it?

Erbak: Honestly, this is Erbak. He will forget and lose track of time.

GM: That's fair. For the most part, for probably the next, say half hour, it spends time intermittently either drinking from the stream or sitting back and scratching itself, resting in a spot of the dying light of the day, because obviously you were setting up camp. As the sun sets below the trees and it no longer becomes plausible for it to sunbathe, it just gets up, leaves.

Erbak: Go to the spot where it stood and see if it's left anything there.

GM: You walk over, you cross the stream carefully and the size of these prints alone give you an idea of how large this creature really was. Its paw prints are almost larger than your hands outstretched. This thing was huge. And I don't think, even from as close as you were, I don't think you really have a full realization of how large this thing truly was. You don't find anything that you could take with you, unfortunately. It does leave a distinct trail through the wood copse but it is also getting dark at this point.

Erbak: I'm pretty self-absorbed. I'm gonna put the hat on and wait for an hour, because I'm an idiot.

GM: As the sun continues to set, it starts to get dimmer and dimmer until it gets really dark in the woods, and then all of a sudden, it's actually quite light. Everything's in grayscale, but it's fairly passable. You can't see too far, but ...

Erbak: Well, I'm going to be very, very careful. I'm going to try and follow the trail, but I'm also going to try and be careful and keep wits about me.

GM: The track is still there and it's still pretty apparent. You follow it as long as you can while the paw prints are visible. But those start to disappear. However, with the size of this creature, it is pretty easy to follow.

You make your way through the forest until you find what appears to be a den, a small mound that is dug out and had you not been following this wolf, as a traveler, you might have thought, "Oh, a convenient place to rest for the night," because the hole that is dug out from this mound is easily large enough for a person to enter. And that is clearly where the tracks lead to.

Erbak: Hmmmm. {sighs} Okay. Are there trees near this? Am I still in a heavily wooded area?

GM: Probably still hidden in the tree line, and then it leads to a 20, 30 foot across clearing in which this mound exists, and the hole is dug out of the mound and into the ground.

Erbak: Hmmmm. Because are they quite chunky trees? Are they thick enough and tall enough to support my weight?

GM: I'd say you can probably find one to climb.

Erbak: Now, can I find one that's high enough to climb that would be high up enough for, erm, say, direwolf height.

GM: Depends on how high you climb.

Erbak: Well, let's go find out. Let's find one. Let's have a look around and find one that looks easy that gives me a good view of the den and isn't going to leave me, you know, get my feet bitten off.

GM: You find one easily enough. How far up do you want to climb? This tree that you've found appears to reach up to the top of the boughs. If you were way up in them, you might not be able to get a clear view but ...

Erbak: High enough that will still keep me, be able to see the entrance to the den, because my night vision's only 30 feet.

GM: That's true.

Erbak: All right. Let's go with 28 feet and try and get into a position where I have a hand free.

GM: You manage it. You scramble up the tree. As you do so, you grab various handholds and as you're pulling your way up, the branches are making loud cracking noises. They're supporting your weight, but this is not a quiet process. You manage to get up 25-28 feet there, thereabouts. High enough that you feel safe. And by the time {laughs} you get to this point, you turn around, you get yourself comfortable, and looking directly at you from the entrance to the den is a direwolf. Not the direwolf that you saw before.

Erbak: Oh, that's interesting.

GM: This one is slightly smaller and generally lighter all over. It's mostly grey tones and the silvers are more whites. It looks very, very similar, but much smaller.

Erbak: Okie Doke. I'm gonna wait this thing out until it moves or ... Because it's obviously just stood there watching me.

GM: It is just stood there watching you. Yes.

{laughs}

GM: And it doesn't give you any indication that it's going anywhere.

Erbak: Ermm, huh. This is complicated. I-I was hoping there was only one. No. Sod it. This isn't going to work out at all. I'm going to use the spell misty step and I'm just going to teleport down behind the tree and bugger off because I am clearly not going anywhere with this.

GM: You do that. You appear behind the tree and you hear a sudden wolfy "Awuh? {growls}" And then you remember that wolves have noses and it's kind of something they're good at. How far away does misty step get you?

Erbak: 30 feet. I was just using it to puff out the tree.

GM: Do you just start running?

Erbak: Yes, but carefully. I'm also going to prep to lob a spell at it, anything that suddenly gets way too close.

GM: That absolutely happens very quickly, because it's a direwolf and you only got out of the tree.

Erbak: Going off the impression that this would freak it the fuck out in the middle of the night, I'm gonna chuck a basic cantrip of firebolt in its face.

Tobe: Oh god. {laughs}

Myx: {sighs} Pray for Erbak, guys.

Tobe: Hey! I'm the cynical one.

GM: The firebolt you shot actually connects with your target as you're running. And you hear a yelp. Moments later, a chorus of howls.

Tobe: Ooooh {laughs}. Are we too far away to hear all the howling?

GM: You probably hear the howls, but it sounds like it's pretty goddamn far away.

Myx: Me and Tobe and Mhurren are sitting by a fire when we're hearing ...

GM: Yeah, you're just chilling out by the campfire, having a conversation.

Mhurren: Mm-hmm {affirmative}.

Myx: "Geez, can you hear? Are-aren't you glad we're not in the forest right now."

[wolf howls]

Tobe: "Damn, I-I'm glad that's far away."

Mhurren: "Wouldn't want to be surrounded by wolves, eh?"

Myx: "But imagine how soft they are."

Tobe: "Uh, Myx, I don't ..."

Myx: "I mean, I wouldn't pet them but just, they'd be so nice to pet."

Tobe: I'm thinking about the rats. {laughs}

Erbak: Where does the howling come from? All around?

GM: Directly behind you.

Erbak: Okay.

GM: You can still hear the wolf that you shot in the face panicking, but there is a much louder howl immediately from that same direction and there is a couple more spread out from different directions.

The one immediately behind you howled and then, the others chorused in from a distance.

Erbak: Do I've got a rough idea of how far away the stream was?

GM: 20 minutes, maybe? You were tracking this thing for awhile. Well, 20 minutes at steady, slow pace. So, probably not that far at a run.

Erbak: Hmm. That's not too bad then. I'm going to keep running, best as I can. And if anything starts to get close, I'm going to use misty step and poof myself ahead another whopping 30 feet.

GM: You are running through the trees. You're using your survival instincts to zig and zag and dash around and doing everything that you can to confuse your trail. It takes a couple of minutes, but it doesn't take that long before the sound of crashing through woods as a large creature is definitely gaining on you.

Erbak: How far am I looking from the stream now?

GM: I'd say you've been running for about three minutes. You're probably at least another two minutes away.

Erbak: I'm not going to just keep running, until I get to that stream. I'm going to start flinging cantrips behind me, just firebolts at the ground. Annoyingly everything's kind of wet, but if I hit anything that's dry, it might ignite a little bit. And, obviously, slightly wet stuff is gonna give a whole lot of smoke if it gets hit and that will annoy any kind of scent.

GM: I buy that. As you're running, you fire a couple of different firebolts, chucking them behind you, not really paying too much attention to where they're going. And, as you're running, you begin to hear the crackle and it seems like you got lucky and one of your firebolts caught something that despite the soggy nature of the area, actually did manage to catch. It sounds like it's spreading pretty quickly, but you can still hear the creature chasing down behind you, crashing through the woods.

It's not necessarily afraid of the fire, but it is put off briefly and you gather you've bought yourself a little more time.

Another couple of minutes of pure outright running definitely gets you to the streamside.

Erbak: Well that stream is three feet wide, one foot deep isn't it? I take my rucksack off. Can I get into the river and completely fit myself into the water? Oh, I just want to be able to crawl in it and be submerged.

GM: You plunge headfirst into the river. What do you do with your backpack?

Erbak: I am going to have to drag it with my tail, which is going to be awkward.

GM: So you take off your backpack. You dive into the water and you begin dragging yourself along the bed of the stream. Do you drag yourself upstream or downstream?

Erbak: I'm gonna go downstream. Poke my nose out to get a bit of fresh air every 15 minutes.

GM: You manage to drag yourself the full length of this stream. You come up a couple of time and eventually you find yourself in a small basin, which the stream actually leads to. You can see that it's fed from multiple sources. It does not look like you have been pursued at this point, however, you have no idea where you are in relation to your party.

{laughs}

GM: But, there does not appear to be any sign of the direwolf.

Erbak: That's the important thing. All right then, well, {sighs} I hop out. I am probably a bit hungry at this point, so I'm going to eat a ration. Is there anything that looks like it's wide enough within the tree itself, like I climb up it and sleep in it?

GM: You find one that looks like it's probably doable.

Erbak: All right, then. I'm not even going to bother climbing, because that's just a terrible idea. I'm going to poof up there with another misty step, wrap myself up in my riding cloak, prop myself and I'm just gonna take a kip.

GM: Myx, Mhurren.

Myx: Myx has noticed Mhurren's carving and watching it progress. And maybe getting some tips from him as to how she can carve into wood.

Mhurren: If Myx wants to learn, I'd be happy to attempt to show her.

Myx: Myx thinks that learning to carve would be much easier than riding a horse.

GM: You manage to find a small branch, two and a half inches thick in diameter. It's pretty small. But, it seems sturdy. Maybe you could whittle it or something. So, you go back and you head over to Mhurren.

Myx: "Uh, is this one any good? It's the best I could find. All the other ones look to soggy."

Mhurren: "Yeah, it looks pretty sturdy."

Myx: "Okay! So, where should I start?"

Mhurren: "Well, what do you want to make?"

Myx: "Well, as much as I'd love to make a dragon like you can, thought I realize that's probably a little too ambitious for now. So, um ..."

Mhurren: "How about a dart?"

Myx: "Oooh, yes."

GM: You are watching what Mhurren is doing and you're carving away your little tree branch. What does Myx's dart look like when she's done?

Myx: If someone had taken a wooden pencil and snapped it in half.

GM: Myx finishes up her dart and shows you.

Mhurren: "It's a good start."

Myx: "Yeah! I have a good teacher, so it has to be a good start. How did you learn to carve?"

Mhurren: "Um, well, we were taught this back at the monastery."

Myx: "Whoa, monks learn to carve?"

Mhurren: "Um, I wouldn't say all of us."

Myx: "Is there some kind of significance to the carving? Is it a ritual or?"

Mhurren: "No, I wouldn't say so. For practicality, you know, you make simple things, tables, chairs, darts."

Myx: "Okay. I get that much. I've seen you make darts before, but what-what's with the dragon you've been working on? It looks like some pretty fine wood, but any reason you've chosen to make one?"

Mhurren: "{laughs} Well, I'm, I'm glad you asked. Well, after that little interaction with your little friend, I supposed it inspired me a little bit. I don't know if you can tell right now. It's only about halfway done, but it's, uh, supposed to be a dragon. I don't know. What do you think?"

GM: Darconius rushes down Myx's shoulder over her arm.

Mhurren: I'm a little startled.

Darconius: Looks at the statuette in your hand and looks up at you and goes, "Darconius!"

Myx: "You know what, Darconius? I, yeah, I mean it definitely looks like a dragon. I wasn't sure which dragon you were carving, but, like side by side, I-I, yeah." Myx feels a little wave of pride that Mhurren chose to draw her dragon out of all the dragons.

Mhurren: "I mean, right now it doesn't look like anything, but it-it'll look better once it's finished."

Myx: "I think it looks fine the way it is, but I can't wait to see what it looks like finished."

Mhurren: Can I carefully just reach out, poke it's little tummy?

GM: It looks at you and rolls over on her hand.

Mhurren: "So, Myx?"

Myx: "Yes?"

Mhurren: "You have wings?"

Myx: "Oh, uh, well, kind of. I mean, I guess I have them, but I can't always use them. They're not really good wings yet."

Mhurren: "Are they of a magical nature? Or is this like just part of you?"

Myx: "Well, I guess you could say it. I guess, it's just a trait I have. I mean, most assimars get wings at some point, but some of them have really big wings. Mine are still just really small."

Mhurren: "They're certainly impressive."

Myx: "Oh, thank you. If you want, I-I'll, I'll take them out and you can get a proper look at them."

Mhurren: "Oh, no. It-it's fine. It's fine, but thank you."

Myx: "Oh, no, no, no, no, no. Allow me."

Mhurren: "Wait! {stammers}, agh!"

Myx: Just sprouting the one, using my one a day deal and just sprouting my wings.

Mhurren: "{strained} Uh!"

Myx: "See, I can float." Just hovering off the ground a little bit.

Mhurren: "Hmph. Well, yep, they're definitely wings."

GM: Myx sprouts these big, blue, glowing wings ...

{laughs}

GM: ... made of energy. They're not physical, somehow, but they're clearly capable of supporting her weight despite that.

Mhurren: "They'll probably be handy in getting you out of a tight spot."

Myx: "Or getting you out of a tight spot. Or Tobe. Tobe gets into trouble a lot. I don't know if you've noticed."

Tobe: "Or getting herself into a tight spot."

Myx: I fly over really quickly and mess up Tobe's hair and then fly out of reach.

Tobe: {laughs} What's left of it. {laughs}

Myx: Yeah, {laughs} what's left of it.

GM: Let's go back to Erbak. It is the next morning. You made it through the night in the tree.

Erbak: Yay! Not dead!

GM: You pop down. You snap your fingers and you arrive at the bottom of the tree.

Erbak: Erm, so I'll follow that river a little bit up the stream, keeping an eye out for any more wolf-related shenanigans or anything that could eat me, because it could be like owlbears or something here.

GM: Absolutely, yeah.

Erbak: God only knows. Let's see if I can get to the spot where I can recognize where I was the other day.

GM: You follow the stream, but no matter how far you walk or for how long, you just cannot remember where you were. Nothing seems familiar. You're just wandering up and down, but there doesn't seem to be any signs of anything that stands out. You don't even see signs of the direwolf.

The rest of the party all wake up the next day and Erbak has not returned.

Tobe: "Um, guys? We're, uh, still missing our, uh, wizard friend."

Ixal: "We are not waiting long. Where is he?" Ixal the lizardfolk woman is frowning.

Myx: "Maybe he got hungry and got up for breakfast early."

Tobe: "I don't think he came back, Myx."

Ixal: "I've been up for hours. He is not back."

Mhurren: "He's not usually gone this long, is he?"

Myx: "No, not this long, I don't think. Hmm?"

Tobe: I turn to Oz, I'm like ...

Ixal: "{growls}"

Tobe: "Oz, I need another favor."

Oz: "Hmm?! I've only just woken up."

Tobe: "I-I know buddy. But, can you, uh ..."

Oz: "Breakfast!"

Tobe: Take a ration out of my {laughs} bag and just hold it out for him to take.

{laughs}

GM:Oz: Birds can't sneer, but he sneers. "Ugh!"

Tobe: "It's this or nothing."

Oz: "Just keep it."

Tobe: "Right. Well, I need you to have a look around, see if you can find Erbak."

Oz: "All right. Where am I going?"

Tobe: Did any of us actually see him leave?

GM: I doubt it.

Tobe: Dude just disappeared. "Uh, if you just, I don't know, go out. Circle around for a couple of miles maybe, maybe towards the forest?"

Oz: "Gee. That seems real specific. A couple of miles is a long time. That's a lot of energy."

Tobe: "I don't know where he's gone!" {laughs}

Oz: "Well, neither do I."

Tobe: "That's why I'm asking you to look for him."

Oz: "Why don't you look for him?" And he gets off and he flies away {laughs} to do your bidding, because he is your familiar. He just doesn't have to be happy about it. Oz is gone awhile. What about the rest of you?

Myx: I am going to ask Darconius if it would be okay if I borrowed his body for a little bit. "Uh, Mhurren, c-could you do me a favor?"

Mhurren: "Yes."

Myx: "And, uh, I-I just need you to watch my body."

Mhurren: "Of course."

Myx: "I'm gonna try and find Erbak through, uh, Darconius."

Mhurren: "Oh, {stammers} you're going to do th-the thing?"

Myx: "Yeah, the thing. The weird thing."

Mhurren: "Riiiiiiiiight. I-I suppose I could."

Myx: "Thank you."

Mhurren: I take a look at Darconius and, "Okay."

Darconius: Darconius waves. So you sit down for a minute. You transport your sight into Darconius. "Where are we going?"

Myx: "We're trying to find my lizardman friend."

Darconius: "Okay, this shouldn't be too hard."

Myx: "Hopefully. I mean, hopefully he's nearby and nothing's happened."

Darconius: It's a very odd sensation tasting Erbak, but as you inhabit the body of Darconius, he guides you through the process of tasting the air and he's looking around and you're seeing the world through his eyes and suddenly, "Green."

Myx: "Green?"

Darconius: "Tastes green. I think, I think Erbak tastes like green. Yeah, yeah. I think that's him. Mm-hmm {affirmative}. We, we should, we should follow that."

Myx: "Okay! Let's, let, let's try, yeah."

GM: And you go zooming off through the woods. I assume you fly to pursue this.

Myx: "Yes."

GM: You get up from the air and Mhurren, you watch as Myx slumps against a tree.

Mhurren: Mm-hmm {affirmative}.

Darconius: Darconius looks around furtively and leaps off the ground and flies away. It doesn't take you that long, flying at your full speed, 15 minutes or so, to get to the site of the streambed. You come to the area that Erbak clearly arrived at the stream and Darconius looks around. He's like, "He was definitely here. {contemplative sigh} This, the scent doesn't lead anywhere, but I think he's down that way." And he takes over again. He goes soaring down the stream. And it's not long before you find Erbak wandering around and scratching his chin and looking very perplexed.

Myx: "You're here!"

GM: And obviously Darconius arrives, Erbak and is speaking with Myx's voice.

Erbak: "Ah, Darconius. Myx. I don't know what to call you when you're in this form."

Myx: "Myxconius."

Erbak: "Myx, um, yes. Sorry about the delay. Went for a stroll and, uh, do you know there are direwolves in this forest?"

Myx: "No!"

Erbak: "Well, there definitely are."

Myx: "I was wondering. We heard some howling and I, wow."

Erbak: "Yeah. I have to admit, this is rather embarrassing. Do you happen to know the way, um, back? It's, uh, something I lost track of when I had to hide in the tree for a night."

Myx: "You, in a for ... Uh, you were in a tree?"

Erbak: "Direwolves can't climb trees. At least a whole pack of them, anyway."

Myx: "That's, that's a fair argument. Um, but yeah! No. We, we can take you back. I mean, I can't fly you there 'cause you're a little big, but if you follow us we can lead you back."

Erbak: "Ah, certainly so!"

GM: It's a little tricky to keep with Darconius, because he's pretty quick, but you do it well enough, make it back to the camp. It takes you the best part of an hour and a half. Erbak and Myx, within Darconius, returns. Oz returns also, looking extremely grumpy.

{laughs}

GM: And he sees Darconius leading Erbak back to the camp and he just looks at you Tobe, lands on one of your horns.

Tobe: I do nothing to stop him.

Ixal: Makes no attempt to communicate. "Right, now that you're all here. Let's go."

Erbak: "Yes. Yes. Sorry about all that. We probably should go. There are direwolves out in that forest. Magnificent specimens."

Ixal: "Yes."

Erbak: "Absolutely enormous."

Ixal: "Get on the cart."

[cello march]

Ray: Hey, I see you reaching for the skip button, but listen. There are a ton of fantastic shows out there. Here's one you could be missing out on right now.

[upbeat music]

Jeff Stormer: Hi, Jeff Stormer and I host Party of One, an actual play podcast focused on two player role playing experiences. Every week, I sit down with my friends, we play a two player game, we share a few laughs, maybe a few tears and a really good time. We aim to explore a variety of games, playstyles and emotional experiences that are often overlooked in the tabletop hobby. New episodes drop every Tuesday. Check us out at <https://partyofonepodcast.com>.

Ray: See now, was that so bad? And now, on with the show.

[cello march]

GM: Back on the road, you are all riding the cart and as your day starts out, you think initially that Ixal has woken you at dawn, but as you're riding in the back of the wagon, you see that the sun begins to rise. And, it occurs to you that despite this, it was really bright out when you woke up. An hour or so passes. You begin to approach the outskirts of Elturel. Elturel is now within viewing distance. And its most striking feature is that directly above this rather ordinary looking city there is a huge, brilliant light that is floating in the air. And the light from whatever this is extends well beyond the reach of the city and you gather that Ixal just got you up when she wanted to and the light that you saw was actually the radiating light from this light source.

Ixal is driving the cart towards a high rising hill that falls away in a rocky cliff where the Chionthar river flows. Here, at its peak lies the city of Elturel. Ixal looks over her shoulder

Ixal: "Once, millennia ago, this was a farming village, founded by people seeking refuge from the curse of the undead which roamed the lands. That is until the settlement was blessed by Amaunator, the people set upon from all sides, prayed in desperation to anyone who would listen. It was Amaunator who took pity upon them. It is their light and gift which you see and all undead are pained to look upon it. People came from all across the lands to seek shelter beneath its radiance and it is now the largest city and indeed, the capital of Elturgard, ruled personally by the High Observer of Torm."

Erbak: I'd like to do an insight check on Ixal. Erbak is surprised by this sudden burst of knowledge, simply put.

GM: She seems like she's being quite up front. She's bringing you to Elturel. She knows that your journey is coming to an end very soon. She's soon going to be rid of ... I mean ... Uh, moving on.

{laughs}

GM: She thought you might like to know a little bit about the place you're going to, what with the six fine horses that you have furnished her with, and some meager riding skills you have learned.

Erbak: I accept this.

Tobe: "Is it, uh, bright like that all the time? Like, even at night?"

Ixal: "Yes."

Tobe: "Oh, how do people sleep?"

Ixal: "You get used to it after awhile. It stops being a nuisance before long."

Tobe: "{groans}"

Erbak: "I'm curious. Is it the kind of light that would sustain a plant of their nourishment?"

Ixal: "You know, I don't know if they've ever tested that. Well, I'm not entirely sure, but I don't believe it works the same as sunlight. It, it's holy. That's why the undead are hurt by it."

Tobe: "Makes sense."

Erbak: "Fascinating."

Ixal: "I mean, maybe plants can grow from holy light. I-I'm not really sure. It's not something I've ever heard of."

Tobe: "Is there anything else, uh, pertinent about the city that we should know?"

Ixal: She shrugs, "Not especially. It depends on what sort of thing you're looking for. There's a few taverns and inns in town. There's the Wizard's Harlot. There's a place called A Pair of Black Antlers, The Bent Helm. There's Gallowgar's Inn is quite, well, if you've not got the coin to stay somewhere else, Gallowgar's Inn will suit. Phontyr's Unicorn, that one's very well known. It's a little on the expensive side, though, I'm not sure how far your budget stretches, but it may suit. There's also the Oar and Wagon Wheel Inn, Blazing Books. Other than that, you probably want to stay on the right side of the law there. It's run by the Paladins of Torm and they can be very fervent in their pursuit of justice."

Tobe: "Well, you know, justice is in our name."

Ixal: "Yes, you may not want to be seen associating with me and my ilk. Perhaps we should leave you on the border."

Mhurren: "You say, paladins guard this city?"

Ixal: "Yes, the Paladins of Torm."

Erbak: "Well, it is understandable you would want to avoid that kind of attention, I suppose. Do you happen to happen to know ..."

Ixal: "In my line of work, we try to avoid as much attention as possible, yes."

Erbak: "I am curious. Do you know of anywhere or anything to do with the name Frume?"

Ixal: "Quite frankly, I'm not particularly well versed in Elturel. It's not my usual place of business. The Tormites, {laughs}, tend to interfere with the kind of work that I do. So, they leave us alone, we leave them alone and I stay well clear of Elturel. But, I'm sure if you ask a local, they may be able to assist you."

Tobe: "Mm, if it's a place that you usually steer well clear of, then you probably are best just letting us make our way from the border. I'm sure we can at least manage to find our way into a city without getting lost."

Ixal: "I appreciate the discretion. Yes. I'm, uh, familiar with the taverns and the inns and so forth as I mentioned, but those were from my younger years. Some of those places may not even be standing anymore."

Erbak: "Well, we greatly appreciate your help so far. {groans} This light."

Ixal: "Yes, well, uh, there is only one entrance to the city from land and it's just over there."

GM: And you notice as she's been driving you up the hill that you are getting close to the walls of the city and the walls of the city are extremely large. They are thick, sturdily built, stone walls that range several dozen feet high. And she is leading you towards a large intersecting gate in the walls. And the gate itself doesn't actually appear to be open.

Tobe: Is it guarded at all?

GM: Yeah, there are guards.

Tobe: Not that I plan on starting trouble or anything.

GM: There's a guard either side, standing watch. You do see that one of them notices the cart and acknowledges you from a distance. Makes it known that you're

being watched, but not in a necessarily a hostile way. 'Yeah, we see you. You came up the hill towards where we are. This is a very defensible city. Hi there.'

{laughs}

Ixal: But you're still a few hundred feet away. She stops the cart and the train of horses. "Well, uh, this is where we part."

Tobe: "Thanks for, uh, getting us this far. Sorry about the lion."

Ixal: She shrugs. "Thank you for the horses and not allowing the lion to maim them. That was appreciated. It would have soured our deal somewhat."

Erbak: "Indeed. And thank you Xan and Corva as well."

GM: They just smile, turn, give you a little mini salute.

Mhurren: I mirror their salute.

Tobe: I get down from the wagon. {laughs}

Doomsinger: Yes, well, um, Ixal, I appreciate your assistance in getting us to Elturel and I look forward to meeting you again and perhaps traveling with you in the future." Doomsinger steps down from the cart, collects his belongings, shoulders his bag. "Well, shall we?"

Tobe: "We should get moving." I start walking towards the gate.

Scraw: "Wow. I've never been to this city before." Scraw is enthusiastically strolling towards the guardsmen at the city. And he waves. "Hail friends!"

Tobe: "Oh, why does he have to be so loud about it?"

Erbak: I'm gonna pootle up alongside Scraw, heading on up to the city, looking quite jovial. It's only 'cause I'm quite interested in that giant light.

Tobe: "Yeah, I'm just heading towards the gate."

GM: Yeah, Myx jumps out of the cart as well and follows along with you guys. As you head up towards the gate, the guards salute and the way they salute here, because they are Paladins of Torm, they put their fists up on their chests, a quick, brief tap and then they lower their arms.

Guard: "State your business." They're two Triton Guards, so they're wearing heavy plate mail.

Tobe: "We're here to meet a friend."

Erbak: "Travelers?"

Guard: "Welcome to the city of Elturel. Please do not cause trouble. May you travel in Torm's light." And they wave their hands over you in a conciliatory gesture and then go back to relaxing at their posts.

Tobe: "Uh, thanks." I just walk on through.

GM: They just nod.

Mhurren: Can I see any kind of crests on their armor?

GM: They do have the crest of Torm. It is a white gauntlet and that is emblazoned on the chest of their plate mail. Once you've said your piece, they don't pay too much attention to you after that, actually. As you guys are walking through, they notice a couple of you carrying weapons.

Guard: "Uh, please keep those holstered or strapped in place within the city walls. Once you have residence, please, do what you can to keep your weapons there. We understand the need for personal security, but large weapons of war are best left in your place of residence until you are ready to leave the city. Thank you."

Tobe: "We'll keep that in mind."

Mhurren: "Of course."

GM: You walk past the guards, through the gates and enter the city proper. You find yourself on a cobbled market street. Lots of various buildings. It's a fairly plain looking city, but there's a giant glowing orb of light in the sky, so that's neat. And that is really the most distinguishing feature. There isn't ... Without the giant light over the city, there isn't a lot that would stand out. The city looks like, there's no consistency in the architecture. You get the sense that the buildings you're looking at at the moment that are on the edges of the city are probably the ones that have been built most recently. This isn't a city that's necessarily expanding, though. And there are signs of wear and tear.

Erbak: Okay. I'm going to turn to the rest of the party. "Well, it's early morning, but I think it may be best for us to try and secure lodgings, just for the time being."

Tobe: "Yeah, having a place to stay would, and to use as a base of operations would be a good idea."

Mhurren: "It's early morning? I seem to be losing track of time."

GM: Despite the fact that it is early, the marketplace appears to be bustling already. And what you gather, based on the fact that you've just come into the city, after you follow down a few of the roads, is this market appears to travel well through a good chunk of the city. You gather quite quickly you're only really touching the edges of it.

Erbak: "Hmm. We'll probably need to find someone who knows what on earth, well, a Frume is, I suppose."

Mhurren: "Should we go find a tavern? Ask around?"

Tobe: "Well, we were given a list of quite of few."

Mhurren: "But first we'll probably need to ask around to find a tavern." {laughs}

Erbak: "I'm going to suggest the Oar and Wagon Wheel Inn. It sounds like a, well, relatively innocuous place. I definitely do not like the sound of Gallowgar's Inn."

Tobe: "Agreed."

GM: From the tone with Ixal, you basically got the impression that Gallowgar's Inn is a shithole.

{laughs}

GM: That you will stay in when you need a place to sleep and you have no other choice.

{laughs}

GM: It's like the .5 star rated hostel in the bad part of London. "Yeah, we could stay there. It will cost us a Fiver for the night, but the problem is, are the people who want to pay a Fiver for a room also stay there?"

Tobe: No security. {laughs} No safety.

GM: There's no nothing. Shared bathroom.

{laughs}

Tobe: Yeah, community bathroom.

{laughs}

Tobe: It's not clean.

GM: There's one toilet. There are 40 beds.

Tobe: "Well, why don't we stop someone and ask them where it is and if it's a decent place to sleep and eat."

Mhurren: "It's a good idea."

Tobe: Are there any guards around the streets to ask?

GM: This early on in the day, it looks like the guards aren't really used to seeing any kind of trouble. There's probably one or two, but most of them are either occupied with specific duties like guarding the markets as they set up or are resolving disputes.

Dwarf Merchant: You know, "Ah, this guy backed this cart into mine and he ... This is my spot! I'm here every week. He's here on first day and third day. I take second day and fourth. It's third day. It's mine."

Guard: He said, "No, sir. It's fourth day. It's fourth day, seventh. That means it's his day."

Dwarf Merchant: "Aw, have you got ... I've going to bloody kill my wife. She's told me the wrong date so many times this week." You see the look of this dwarf, he's quite clearly trying to lie his way out of the situation. He was hoping to pull a fast one. But ...

Tobe: Maybe stopping a random pedestrian would be for the best.

GM: At this time of the morning, you wouldn't have shoppers, but there's probably some stalls set up.

Erbak: Is there any stalls that look fairly reputable?

GM: What sort of thing would catch Erbak's interest?

Erbak: I'm gonna look for what he considers reputable, which probably isn't that great. He's not really got the best idea about it. But he's going to look for something, say, a pastry stall, something like that that doesn't look like the food was made out of things that they caught in the sewer.

GM: You folks are walking down the market streets, dodging around various carts, trying not to step in anything left behind by the horses that are used to pull in the day's loads. And, you find yourself coming upon a relatively small looking cart. It's staffed by a busy looking halfling who looks like they're just about finished, and the pastries on this particular cart look nothing short of divine. The croissants are buttery and flakey and gold looking. You see a couple of meat based pastries that the smell coming from them just immediately hits you and it smells of rich cuts of pork and beef.

Erbak: "I'm imaging this gentleman will probably know the best place. We should buy something from him first. That will make him more inclined to give us a good answer."

Tobe: "I'm not gonna disagree with that. It smells really good."

Halfling Pastry Seller: As you're muttering to one another, he turns away from his stall, looks up and you see him do the final steps of his preparation. Looks up and realizes there are people paying attention to his wares and goes, "Three for a, three for a silver. Uh, morning. Morning folks."

Tobe: "Morning."

Mhurren: "Good day."

Halfling Pastry Seller: "Looking for some breakfast are we?"

Tobe: "I wouldn't say no."

Halfling Pastry Seller: "Well, I've got an offer on, on the pastries. Uh, it's three for one silver. Um, the meat pies are fresh out the oven this morning. And they come at a silver each, actually."

Tobe: "Hmm. Uh, tell you what. I'll, uh, take one of those meat pies and three of your pasties, please."

Halfling Pastry Seller: "Oh, thank you very much, sir. You've got an appetite I see." And he reaches into his cart and sorts out the equivalent of his change box, and pulls out some paper bag and he says, "Uh, w-would you like these wrapped or?"

Tobe: "Uh, yes please."

Mhurren: I also hand over a, a silver for a meat pie.

Halfling Pastry Seller: "Ooh, is it, uh, w-which pastries would you like?" And there's croissants, there's a little filo pastry buns. There's iced buns. You've got cinnamon buns. You got little cakelets.

Tobe: Tobe probably isn't used to eating like this in general so {laughs}. "I'll take two croissants and an iced bun, please."

Halfling Pastry Seller:GM:Scraw: "Right you are, sir." And he just tosses them into a bag, spins it and wraps it up, seals it shut with an almost magical level of finesse. Hands you over the bag. He says, "Now, let me get those meat pies." He gets out these small containers made out of vegetation almost that seem to be perfectly shaped for holding a meat pie. He takes one out and he hands you both one each. "That'll be three silver between the two of you, I think? Yep, yeah, three silver. Can I get anything for the rest of you?" And Scraw's like, "EVERYTHING!"

Tobe: And I immediately facepalm. {laughs}

Mhurren: I pay my one silver for the pie.

GM:Scraw: Scraw takes out a gold. "As long as they're talking, I plan on eating. Here." He just gives him the gold. The baker looks at him.

Halfling Pastry Seller: "Um, I mean, sure, okay." And Scraw starts tucking in. He helps himself to a meat pie. He looks at you as though, "Yeah, well. I figure we're going to be here awhile, so ..."

Tobe: I mean, at this point, I'm not really surprised. He did try to order a whole boar.

Erbak: Erbak immediately wolfs down the pie, because he is starving.

Tobe: Tear a bit off and hold it out for Oz.

Oz: He greedily gobbles it. "{approving yum} Wow. This is ... It's not quite eyeballs, but it's pretty goddamn good."

Tobe: "Why must you compare everything to eyeballs?"

Oz: "Because they're a delicacy, obviously."

Tobe: "Oh, Christ. Now that we've got our, uh, breakfast out of the way, we just, we were wondering, um, we're new in town, you see, if you knew where the Oar and Wagon Wheel is? And if it's, you know, at least a semi-decent place to stay."

Halfling Pastry Seller: "{inhales sharply} Ah, the Oar and Wagon Wheel, you say? Um, yeah, the Oar and Wagon Wheel's, uh, it's quite a nice place. It's very popular."

Tobe: "Expensive?"

Halfling Pastry Seller: "Ah, it's middle of the road, I'd say. It's okay. Its prices are reasonable for what it is. It's very ... As, as, as I said, it's very popular, so you might be hard pressed to get a room there, but it's a nice place to stay if you can."

Tobe: Tobe turns to the others. "So, what do you think?"

Mhurren: "Well, if there are beds, I'm good with that."

Erbak: "Sounds all right to me."

Halfling Pastry Seller: "Well, as you're new in town, is there anywhere else that I can tell you about? Direct you to? More than happy to help!" And he finishes putting the money he's received away. And you get the impression that he's a little bit concerned that Scraw gave him a gold and if he doesn't keep you talking, Scraw might feel shortchanged.

{laughs}

Mhurren: Oh.

Erbak: "Would you happen to know of a location of a useful apothecaries in town?"

Halfling Pastry Seller: "There's quite a few in town. Uh, what sort of thing are you looking for?"

Erbak: "Oh, all sorts. I'm a doctor by trade. So, anything to keep the ol' stock up."

Halfling Pastry Seller: "Right, right."

Erbak: "Medic kit, potion materials. Anything really. I'm a bit of a connoisseur."

Halfling Pastry Seller: "Well, there is Benson's Phylactery right in the middle of town, in the main square. There's also Thompson's. They're quite good, or so I'm told. There's also Charlie's Horse and Wares and I think it's Mag's Herbs and Spices."

Erbak: "Hmm."

Halfling Pastry Seller: "I'm sure there are others, those are the only ones I know off the top of my head."

Erbak: "Oh, that's more than enough. I think that's all ..."

Tobe: "What about a place called Frume?"

Halfling Pastry Seller:GM: He laughs. "Frume. F-f-frume's not place, dear. He's, he, he's, he's a man."

Tobe: "Right. Where could we find the man then?"

Halfling Pastry Seller: "Well, if you're looking for Frume and his boys, uh, you'll be wanting to head to A Pair of Black Antlers. It's a, well, it's the best tavern in the city. Bang smack in the middle of town, in the main square, cannot miss it. It's absolutely huge. And, it- it's well loved. Trust me."

Tobe: "Expensive?"

Halfling Pastry Seller: "It's not especially, really. It is the best tavern in the city, though, so ..." He shrugs. "So not expensive for what it is."

Mhurren: "Um, my good friend, d-d-do you know this Frume?"

Halfling Pastry Seller: "Everybody knows Frume. Not, not personally, of course {laughs}." He looks at his, "Well, know, I'm just a baker. No. He, he's one of the Paladins. He's, uh, Frum. Y-you've probably saw some of his boys out front."

Tobe: "Can you tell us what he looks like at all? Aside from, I'm assuming, Paladin armor."

Halfling Pastry Seller: "Oh, uh, sure, yeah. Well, he's a bugbear. Uh, he's about, oh, 8" tall. He's very broad. He's a big, big stone of a man. And, uh, yeah, he-he's always wearing his armor. He's, he wears one white gauntlet on his right hand and

he also has a, a different gauntlet on his chest than the others, but got, uh, brown and black fur around his face. He's, he's got black fur, around his mouth in a way that sort of makes like a beard shape, but I didn't think bugbears had beards, but, you know, I-I-I don't like to question these things. Yes, Ontharr Frume is, is who you're looking for, is his full name. I've never met him personally, but, um, seen him around, you know. He-he's got a very bold presence."

Tobe: "Hmm. Thanks very much for the information."

Halfling Pastry Seller: "Sure!" Scraw is merrily burying his fifth pie. "Well, uh, is-is that everything you need? Or? The city of Elturel's got all sorts of wonder. While you're in the main square you probably want to check out the, uh, the main armory there. They've got some incredible weapons. If that is your sort of thing," and he looks between those of you that are carrying weapons openly. He says, "You can get something to replace those old dusty things."

Mhurren: "Be sure to check it out. Um, well, thank you for your time."

Halfling Pastry Seller: "Thank you for your, for your patronage."

Mhurren: And I pass an extra gold over.

Halfling Pastry Seller: "Oh." He take the gold. "That's, that's very kind of you." And he turns and takes the first pastry he can get a hand on that Scraw doesn't seem to have touched. "Here, sir. Make sure y-you get something to eat, too."

Mhurren: {laughs} "Thank you." I pass it over to Doomsinger. {laughs} "Uh, pastry?"

GM: The baker looks affronted.

Mhurren: "Oh!"

Tobe: " {laughs} He just gave you a gift and you gave it away right in front of him {laughs}."

Mhurren: "I figured Doom might be a {laughs} little hungry."

Tobe: Even Tobe's not that bad at socializing. {laughs}

Mhurren: I turn around and I-I just look at him. "Oh, that ... I've already eaten, but thank you."

Halfling Pastry Seller: {politely}"Very well, sir, um, well you, you have a nice day then."

Mhurren: "You too."

Halfling Pastry Seller: And he steps behind his cart and tries to look prepared for the next customer. And he looks at Scraw enjoying the food. "At least somebody appreciates art."

{laughs}

Tobe: I just turn to Mhurren and say, "I don't want to be someone to teach other people about their manners, but you probably should have waited until you were further away to do that."

Mhurren: "Um, sure."

Tobe: {hushed whisper}"That was a little bit rude."

Erbak: "Anyway! We should go and find those apothecaries."

Tobe: "Um, shouldn't we find somewhere to stay first?"

Erbak: "Well, I-I suppose."

Tobe: "I mean, I guess you've got your own priorities, but at the end of the day we're still gonna need a place to sleep and if, I don't know, do you guys want to try the Oar and Wagon Wheel, or do you want to try A Pair of Black Antlers?"

Erbak: "Hmmm."

Mhurren: "Um."

Erbak: "It could be worth investigating the Black Antlers first, but then retreating to the Oar and Wagon just to sleep."

Mhurren: "I mean, correct me if I'm wrong, is that not where Frume is? Is that what the Shopkeeper said?"

Erbak: "We could certainly take a look. Maybe too early for the shops to be open anyway."

Tobe: "I don't know, the market's already..."

Erbak: "Just because the market's open."

Tobe: "The market's already busy, so the shops are probably setting up too."

GM: You folks follow the market roads, because generally speaking, as strangers in the town, nothing's particularly well sign posted, but every now and again, you get to the end of a path and a crossroads, and there will be a center pole which directs you. Market Square, Town Hall, Inns, the main things of importance are written on big signposts pointed around town.

You follow the pass and you come out into an extremely large town center. I say extremely large. Imagine the size of the keep that you stayed in, in Greenest. It's two of those. It's an extremely large spaced out center. In the absolute pinpoint middle is a spacious garden space in a circular fashion. And, it's mostly greenery but in the very, very middle there is a large fountain and in the fountain is a statue of what appears to be a very plain looking elf. And they are standing with their arms outstretched above them with their hands spread wide. And if you follow the line of sight up from that fountain, you see the orb that is Amaunator's gift.

[cello music]

Ray: And that's all we have time for this week. Join us on Sunday next week for our next episode, The Party Paladin. Thanks once more to everyone who has supported our show, Simon, our composer and musician, Nina, Lauren and Anna, artists who are working on art for our show, Layne and Fry, our professional transcribers, our patrons on Patreon and, of course, you all, our listeners.

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[Outro music continues to finish]