

# The Sprouting

## Chapter 01 The Meeting of Souls - Part 02

[Vee]

What do the four of you want to do?

[Eyþór]

You said one of the corpses was twitching.

[Vee]

Yes.

[Kessir]

Yes. Lark is going to take steps back, trying to get behind the tall dudes.

[Vee]

Like you notice that Aster kind of immediately takes a step as he notices that you're coming back towards him. Like, yeah, he kind of instinctively like pulls out his gun and like takes half a step in front of you just to like begin to like shield you from whatever ahead because he notices that you're backing up. Like, okay, all right, well, I guess I'll step in.

[Eyþór]

From where Sully is standing can he... Do they just look like corpses or do they look like something?

[Vee]

Are you guys getting any closer?

[Eyþór]

You said it was already moving.

[Vee]

Yeah, you saw like a foot twitch like a couple of times.

[Eyþór]

But it's just twitching.

[Vee]

Yeah, just a twitch. Like sporadic movement.

[Eyþór]

Sorry, you ended the episode on and then a foot twitch.

[Kessir]

Related rigor mortis.

[Eyþór]

So I was assuming next episode was going to be zombies.

[Vee]

Plants versus zombies, start one.

[Eyþór]

If the foot is only twitching and there's no actual real movement or shuffling going on then I think Sully with a raised shotgun is gonna like move to get a better angle at the bodies. But Sully is not a dumb man. He looks around before he starts moving, making sure he doesn't step on or into something that would kill him.

[Vee]

Sure, take a spot hidden. Any of you are welcome to do these checks. Since there's only three of you as main, you're all welcome to take any checks.

If we end up having an expanded party, then it will only be one.

[Eyþór]

All right.

[Vee]

Can I write the success from last episode? Sorry, Aether.

[Eyþór]

No problem.

[Vee]

Absolutely not, I'm afraid, Lark.

[Eyþór]

So I got a 28 and a 50, so that's a success. I just succeeded in a skill check. Do I mark it as progressible or whatever it's called?

[Vee]

Yes. So if you ever get any successes, you are supposed to be marking them for improvement, which we would do during the improvement phase. All right.

So Sully, with your spot hidden success, you begin to make your way up towards where the gates are and you begin to spot that there are kind of six people that are laying hidden amongst all the stuff. The pathway is quite clear and you focus in on the body that seems to have twitched. And there is definitely something different about them compared to the rest.

The rest are clearly very obviously dead. They've been torn to pieces. You can see that one of them is missing a leg.

You can see that some of them have weapons that they are holding onto, but obviously was not successful. The body that you end up seeing has begun to twitch as you kind of get to the gate itself. You notice that it is this younger woman.

She has very shortly cropped blonde hair. You can see that there's like blood spatters all over her body. She's wearing very tight fitting clothes and she has what's like a very big machete

in one of her hands.

And it looks like she has been torn to shreds across her chest, across her stomach, across her legs. But yeah, she looks a mess. For Lark, who managed to get an extreme success on their spot hidden, you notice that this person is definitely breathing.

You can just see the rise and fall of the chest, even though it's quite shallow. You notice that. You also notice that the other bodies here are definitely not moving.

There doesn't seem to be any signs of life about them at all. And you can see that the two large iron doors that are kind of in that kind of like tunnel within the mountainside, you can see that they're slightly ajar. And you think you see objects moving in the darkness beyond, but it's like maybe a person, maybe a creature, even though you had an extreme success.

The fact that you can see there's anything moving in there at all, being it's quite a distance off, you know that there is something going on in there.

[Kessir]

Lark is going to pull out their handsickle from their backpack. Just for clarification, was the woman who was still breathing, was that the same person that was also where the foot was twitching?

[Vee]

Yes. It's the one that you kind of pointed out.

[Eyþór]

She is the owner of twitchy foot.

[Vee]

Yes. She's the owner of the twitching foot. Ralph, is there anything that you're doing?

[Neil]

I want to figure out what killed them basically, or if I've seen anything like this before. Because this seems very extreme.

[Eyþór]

I guess the first obvious question is, this is clearly an animal attack. Like these are not machete slices or gunshot wounds.

[Vee]

These are quite clearly creature attack. You cannot tell whether it's a biological animal or a biological plant or a mixture of the two.

[Eyþór]

Was it fauna or flora?

[Vee]

Yeah, I'd say, Ralph, it's either going to be a natural world or it'll be a medicine check or a mythos check.

[Kessir]

Library use.

[Eyþór]

I'm sorry, mythos check?

[Vee]

Yeah. We have Yimel mythos, which is our equivalent of eldritch knowledge.

[Eyþór]

Ahh, okay, yes.

[Neil]

You said library use, Yimel mythos.

[Vee]

No, it's mythos, medicine, or natural world.

[Neil]

Medicine and natural world. This is going to sound really stupid, but it's the higher of the three.

[Eyþór]

Oh, yeah. You want a high skill, a skill with a high ability.

[Neil]

Yeah, I know.

[Vee]

But I do need to know what you're rolling.

[Neil]

It's a 59 versus 15, so it's a failure.

[Vee]

Yeah, but what's sticking?

[Neil]

Mythos roll.

[Vee]

Okay. Yeah. Nothing.

Nothing is coming to mind at all. You probably could guess that it is some sort of plant attack. These don't look massively like bears, which aren't massively common in the area, which would be you're like, oh, it's a bear attack.

We don't have bears here.

[Kessir]

Polar bears in the Alps.

[Vee]

Yeah. Like, you don't think this area is renowned for its bears. So this is probably some sort of plant attack.

But anything beyond that, you've got nothing, Buddy.

[Kessir]

The body's still breathing.

[Eyþór]

She's alive. Oh, Sully starts moving closer to the lady. He's scanning around with his gun and looks back at the party.

And just from a quick glance, does any of them look like they might be in any way medicine trained? Anything that would hint that they would be any good? I'm okay at first aid, which is what we need right now.

But I'm basically asking the group, like, does anybody want to take a step forward and go, I'll do the first aid or medicine?

[Neil]

I just rolled the Yimel mythos instead of rolling medicine. So if that tells you.

[Kessir]

Lark isn't going close to that person that looks vile, whatever the fuck happened there.

[Eyþór]

Looks vile.

[Kessir]

The floor is covered in blood.

[Vee]

You could probably guess. I'm going to say, like, because you managed to get like a bit of a glance at Aster's stuff and Aster, before you interacted with him properly.

You would recognize what looks like healers herbs here and there. Like you recognize like they're not good, but obviously material that has been like broken down into what could be used as bandages. Like maybe he has some sort of really good first aid, but maybe he's more inclined in different manners.

Like, it's hard to tell.

[Eyþór]

Yeah, I think Sully's going to make an, oh, what's it called? A negative assumption and assume it's some kind of magical mumbo jumbo. And yeah, so he's...

[Kessir]

Reverse deduction.

[Eyþór]

So yeah, he looks over at the crew and just like, all right, cover me, please. And he's going to throw his shotgun to the ground to the side, takes off his backpack and he goes into like one of the easier access.

No, yeah, he throws off his backpack and just goes into a pocket and grabs out some bandages and he's going to start tending to the lady.

[Kessir]

Didn't you say that she looked like she was ripped apart or something?

[Vee]

Yeah, it looks like she has like really deep cuts and gashes in her that are not clean in any way, shape or form.

[Kessir]

Okay.

I guess like as soon as Lark sees that Sully is like attempting to assist the person, like Lark puts the handsickle back in the slot where it goes and approaches from behind and like looks over his shoulder.

[Vee]

Aster would definitely come with and Aster is kind of like aiming and pointing the gun and just doing a really good visual check of the area to make sure that you two are safe. Yeah, I think that's probably what Aster is up to. Yeah, as you approach the girl, you can see her eyes are beginning to like, she is like focusing, you can see that there's like tears streaming down her face and she occasionally just like coughs and like she's trying to speak.

You can see that she's trying to move, but that's just making everything so much worse.

[Eyþór]

Yeah, I think Sully gets out probably some kind of pocket knife and cuts away the cloth that's like covering up the wounds and he starts assessing the damage and doing his best to stop the bleeding. And I'm pretty sure he would also say something along the lines of like, stop trying to talk, focus on your breathing, focus on your breathing. That's all you need to do right now.

[Vee]

Take a first aid check for me.

[Eyþór]

Don't fuck me, don't fuck me, don't fuck me.

[Vee]

Can this be assisted?

[Vee]

Yeah, if you assist, then that gives him a bonus die, which in this system basically lets you re-roll or lets you roll the 10s dice twice and you take the higher result.

[Eyþór]

Yeah, all right, lower result.

[Vee]

Better result. Yeah.

[Eyþór]

All right. I rolled an 82, so I really do appreciate it. What does help look like from Lark?

I'm genuinely just curious.

[Kessir]

I think like, Lark doesn't have a lot of first aid training, but they will try to help you, like probably like while you are focusing on the wound, focus on her face, like make sure that the airway is open and everything and stuff like that. And maybe try to position her kind of like, I don't know what the position is called, the one that's like where you're on the side that you can breathe better.

[Vee]

Recovery.

Yeah, that one.

[Eyþór]

All right. Love it. All right.

Rolling that extra dice. That's a zero. So I rolled a...

[Kessir]

It says 10.

[Eyþór]

Yeah, it's a... I can't roll a D100 by itself.

So I rolled a 82 and a 2.

[Vee]

Damn. A 2 is an extreme success, so you can mark that as a 2 in proof. On an extreme success with the help of Lark, who kind of like helps tip the head back a little bit, make sure that the kind of whatever blood is in the chest, in the throat has been like taken out.

And like, yeah, you begin to like wrap some of these things. You remember that, oh crap, I actually have some sort of disinfectant. And you kind of like begin to take care and wrap and

bind some of these wounds up.

Between the two of you, you roll her onto her side and she doesn't seem to be letting go of her machete at all. It's like her knuckles are like bone white clasped on it and she's still like breathing exceptionally ragged, but she's doing much better. I won't have you roll a D4 for healing at this point because her health is kind of irrelevant.

So yeah, she just begins to take some very like ragged breaths and she says.

Seluna, she's alone.

[Eyþór]

Where is she?

[Vee]

You see the woman like lifts her head and she kind of like nods in the direction of the complex inside the mountain.

[Eyþór]

What attacked you?

[Vee]

There were things that came out the vents. We had been here a little while and we thought it was safe. But they, it came out the vents and it started attacking us.

Some of us ran out, but it came after us. It went back in after Seluna. You have to help her.

[Eyþór]

We're going to help her. We're going to help her. I just have to ask you a couple more questions.

So I'm just going to look around. Does it look like the people were moved or dragged here or does it look like this is where they made their stand?

[Vee]

Spot hidden?

[Neil]

All I can think when you're like, but wait.

[Kessir]

But wait, there's more.

[Neil]

We've been trying to contact you about your car's extended warranty.

[Eyþór]

Well, well, well. And another extreme success.

[Neil]



I'm just waiting to have a success. I haven't had one yet. I don't know what it's like. It must be nice.

[Eyþór]

Just start shooting your gun at things. Eventually you'll get a success.

[Vee]

It looks like some of them tried a last stand. Like you can see that the way that some of them have been like thrown backwards, they have like guns pointed roughly in the direction. You can see that there are clearly like spent cases all around.

You can see that there's impacts on the wall and on the door and on the floor from weapon shots that were fired at that kind of like entrance way. So, yes, some of them at least tried to make a last stand here.

[Eyþór]

OK, but nobody was dragged or moved around like this creature was not trying to hide them.

[Vee]

Not as far as you can tell. No. Like maybe some of them were kind of like, no, yeah, no, there would be none of them dragged at all.

[Eyþór]

Basically just establishing if the creature is smart, because that changes how you have to deal with that thing. You said there was like a little guard outpost kind of thing.

[Vee]

Yeah, it's just like big enough for a person to sit or stand in.

[Eyþór]

Yeah. Sully's going to point to that thing and say, we should probably move her over there, away from the grass and the plants. It will give her a better place to recover.

The intention is just to give her a place to kind of sit so that she can defend herself if something comes.

[Vee]

You can absolutely like move her. I mean, she's either going to croak right now or she's not. Like you moving her is going to have absolutely no difference on this.

But yeah, like you're able to like lift and carry her and get her over to the hut. There's no way that she's walking. And yeah, you can like not like she's not going to lay down in there.

Like the sitting is more like a really big slouch, where like half of her is propped up and she has like, you know, she has like a machete in her hand. So it's not going to be a good defense, but maybe something.

[Eyþór]

It's also just like getting her away from plants, because I'm imagining there's a lot of

hyperactive plants that will just attack like unconscious humans.

[Vee]

They smell blood and they're coming for you.

[Kessir]

They're drinking right now.

[Eyþór]

Yeah, I don't know if this is anything we'll establish later, but like I definitely imagine like, yeah, if a human is just like killed, they will be devoured by plants by the end of the day. Like I always imagine they were just wrapped up like instantly. But again, this is just my head.

I'll write a short story.

[Vee]

Wandering around the world in paranoia is a smart idea. Yeah, you'll be able to get her settled down.

[Kessir]

Did she mention how long ago this was? I think not, right?

[Vee]

You can ask her.

[Kessir]

When was this? When did this happen?

[Vee]

Maybe 15, 20 minutes.

[Eyþór]

All right. What do you mean, uh-oh?

[Kessir]

That was out of character.

[Eyþór]

Okay. Just like, oh, wait, 15, 20 minutes ago? That's when I turned into a werewolf and attacked all those people.

[Vee]

Wait a minute.

[Eyþór]

Yeah. Sully looks back over the group and he kind of like, without, he's asking, but with like a kind of a commanding tone. You guys can definitely tell that Sully has like, when we were talking at the gas station, he had a little bit of a chip on his shoulder, kind of like, he was trying to be friendly, but he definitely like didn't come off like super friendly, especially after the gunshots and all that stuff.

But he's definitely like kind of changed gears now. Like he's definitely in a different gear. And he kind of asks, but is kind of semi-commanding.

He's just like, all right, so does somebody want to stay here with her? Or are we all intending to go in together?

[Kessir]

The door was slightly open and it looked like there were things moving. I think. I don't, I don't think I want to go in there.

I think I would stay here.

[Eyþór]

I understand. I understand. I don't want to put you in any danger.

Are you handy with that? He looks at your blade. Sickle.

[Kessir]

Well, I survived until now.

[Eyþór]

Like you can see Sully's like digesting that answer. It's just like, do you mean alone? I mean, we're all alive and I think most of us are older than you.

So I don't know what you're...

[Vee]

Are you trying to dab on us?

[Eyþór]

But yeah, like he's definitely like digesting the sentence. And I'm like, all right. Oh, damn it.

What was his name?

[Vee]

Aster.

[Eyþór]

All right, Ralph. Aster. Do you want to cover the rear or are you coming in?

[Neil]

I'll be right behind you, eh?

[Eyþór]

Fantastic.

Sully's going to take off his backpack and he's going to put it in the like little room that the lady's in. I'm assuming there's space for it. If not, he just...

[Vee]

I don't think so. It really is only big enough for someone to stand or maybe sit in and like her legs are poking up there. And if you put the bag in there, it's going to take up like half the room.

[Eyþór]

He basically takes off his backpack and leans it against the shed.

[Kessir]

Oh, is it like a night guard thingy? Little hut?

[Eyþór]

Yeah, he leans it against the shed and night guard thingy and he looks over at Lark. Please keep that very, very safe. But I do not want this on my back if something's attacking us.

[Kessir]

Lark nods, yeah.

[Eyþór]

He has a lot of stuff in his pockets and he does like a pat down, just making sure like, yeah, I've got extra shells. I take the rifle with me in case that becomes important. It's like doing like a little bit of inventory before he starts heading out.

[Vee]

You see Aster, like, he looks at what you've done and just kind of like shrugs and rolls his eyes like he has a feeling. He takes like the side bag he has off and he puts it next to yours and he says to Lark.

Lark, if anything happens to me, there's a place not far from here. It's called Diablera. It's one of them collective places.

I've got a friend there. Can you make sure it gets there?

[Eyþór]

Did he say a name to who to give it to in Diablera?

[Faeranya]

Yeah, his name's Henry. He came from the same place that I came from.

[Eyþór]

Just taking notes, because I'm imagining Sully has a much better memory than Eyþór. All right, Sully with his shotgun ready starts moving forward.

[Faeranya]

Do you not need to leave anything, Ralf?

[Neil]

No, I'm going to put my VR headset down and begin recording.

[Vee]

Very smart.

[Eyþór]

This video is going straight to liveLeak.

[Vee]

VidVox. Immediately, it's the only thing that's still streaming is Vidvox. Yeah, absolutely. The three of you make your way forward.

I'm assuming, Sully, you're in the lead?

[Eyþór]

Unfortunately, yes.

[Neil]

I'm more beside you than behind you.

[Eyþór]

I'm hoping you have some...

[Vee]

Aster will take the rear then. Aster will take the rear.

[Eyþór]

I'm hoping you have some VR night vision bullshit in your goggles.

[Neil]

So, yes, kind of, but not an extreme amount, like you're thinking. It's not like military night vision. This is like, you know how VR headsets can see infrared light.

It's just basically a flashlight that no one else can see except the goggles. It's the distance of a short range flashlight. I don't have insane night vision, but to a minor degree, yes.

He uses his headset for night vision stuff.

[Vee]

So the pair of you make your way up to the doors. Aster is behind you with a rifle, which he obviously has aimed a little bit high. He's quite tall himself, but he still needs to aim over your heads.

And he's definitely ready. As you get to the doors, I'd like you to either make a listen check or a spot hidden check. Ralph, you may do the spot hidden with a bonus die because you do have that little extra something in your VRs.

[Neil]

10 versus 50

[Kessir]

Now you can mark it off too.

[Vee]  
Yay!

[Neil]  
Extreme success.

[Vee]  
That's your first success. Woo! I did it.

Yep. Don't forget to mark off your spot hidden. So, Sully, you got a what kind of success?

[Eyþór]  
I got a hard success.

[Vee]  
And Ralph got an extreme. As you look into the darkness, you can see what looks like a very long corridor that like begins to dip down. You can see that there are pipes and electrical conduits that seem to be running the length of this.

You can see that off to the right hand side, there seems to be this room which was not evident at all from where you were originally standing. But now you're here, you can look right. And as you're looking around, you can see that there is just what looks like blood is smeared along the walls and along the ground.

You can see lots of footprints in the blood as people have obviously been running through. On the right hand side in that room that you saw, you see this kind of older looking lady. She has like lots and lots of grey hair that's tied back into a braid that's kind of like tucked into her shirt.

And you can see it because of your extreme and really good successes. She's wearing what looks like a very tight shirt. And you can see that she is like holding two machetes, like one very defensively and one kind of in front of her.

You can see that she obviously has a stance as somebody who knows what the fuck she's doing. You can tell that she's obviously spotted and heard you come in because her hearing isn't trash. She heard the sounds behind her.

She kind of tips her head a little bit, but begins to focus again on the vent that's right in front of her. And then as you kind of take a few steps in, look down the corridor and see literally nothing there. And you look into this room that has a table and a couple of chairs and what looks like a couple of lockers with like clothes hanging there.

You see movement in that vent. The vent cover itself has fallen off long since. And you can see that there is this creature that is long and tendril like.

It's very pale. You can see that it has this like big flower on it that is kind of this dark pinkish kind of color. And you can see that it has like glowing blue veins all across it.

You can see that it kind of like begins to slowly make its way out. And you see the woman kind of jump up and slash forward with her machete. You can see that it kind of as she jumps up and slashes forward, it kind of like knocks against the side of the venting.

And you can see the vent kind of dent a little bit. But she kind of drops down and lands perfectly well on her feet. And she kind of like, you see the plant kind of like fall back a little bit, but then begin to like again, like creep its way forward.

What do you want to do?

[Eypór]

If I, Sully has a much better experience with shotguns than Eypór does, do I feel like it would be safe to shoot one of my, we had a conversation about this, I don't know how much you remember about it, his improvised shotgun shells?

[Vee]

Yeah.

[Eypór]

Yeah. Would he feel safe shooting that above her head through the vent?

[Vee]

Like, you would probably want to ask her to duck and get much closer.

[Eypór]

Yeah. All right. Then like, Sully, okay.

Let's then first just say Sully looks to what the other two are doing.

[Vee]

Aster is behind you. He probably hasn't even seen what you're doing.

[Neil]

I don't have any game saving ideas at the moment. So still assessing the situation.

[Eypór]

I just, just wanted to make sure I wasn't.

[Neil]

Yeah, no, go ahead.

[Eypór]

He moves like shockingly quickly and surely like the gun trained at the vent. He starts moving forward and he just quickly says just, "Miss, duck!" as he like starts moving into the room.

[Vee]

She kind of crouches down and rolls to the side and still ends up in like a fighter stance. Yeah.

[Eypór]

He like, as soon as he's like, he feels like she's out of the way. He's just kind of blast a single

shotgun shell at the vent and rack another one as soon as he's done.

[Vee]

Okay. Yep. Go ahead and make your attack roll.

[Eyþór]

All right. That would be a firearms, a rifle or shotgun. And that is an extreme success.

Jesus.

[Vee]

All right. All right. Who did you pay?

So why are you getting all these successes? Who did you pay?

[Eyþór]

So I happen to know the guys who made Quest Portal.

[Kessir]

Insert ad spot here.

[Vee]

Oh, God, no. Save it for the end. Save it for the end.

[Eyþór]

No, no. I rolled a 15 on a 75, so that's an extreme success.

[Vee]

Okay. Yeah, absolutely. You blap the shit out of it.

It kind of like as you kind of like lift and aim and get it like kind of as it was like really the whole petal face, sorry, the whole face of the flower was kind of like beginning to make its way out of the vent. You kind of put your shotgun up. One good shot.

You see like the whole thing just like shatter into pieces is like these small pieces of shell, sorry, of your shots just going to kind of spray out. And you see it kind of like being pushed back. You see that there's a lot of like dinks and tinkers as it kind of bounces off the metal of the vent.

And you hear this kind of like. **Sigh** And you see this kind of dark yellow pollen that begins to just like eat out, sorry, begin to like seep out of the flower that you have just destroyed. The woman grabs you by the shoulder and runs out of the room and throws closed the door.

[Eyþór]

Oh, she's pulling me out.

[Vee]

Yeah.

[Eyþór]



Okay. Yeah.

[Kessir]

But not the other two.

[Vee]

I'm assuming she's just like, get the fuck out of here. Yeah, she kind of like closes the door behind her and like she kind of like leans forward like her hands on her knees, like just kind of like trying to breathe.

Both machetes still clutched in her hands.

Oh, fuck.

Thanks.

[Eyþór]

I'm assuming you're Siluna.

[Vee]

Guilty as charged. Pleasure to meet you all.

[Eyþór]

Unfortunate circumstances. Do you believe there are anybody else inside the burrow?

[Vee]

She shakes her head and she says no.

[Eyþór]

Then Sully is already retreating out of the door when she says no. No reason to stay here any longer.

[Vee]

Where are you going?

[Eyþór]

I'm getting away from this plant thing.

[Vee]

Do you know how much shit is in here? There's so much stuff we need to rescue. We can't just leave it.

[Eyþór]

Yes, but your friend is outside. You might want to give them a pep talk. They are very hurt.

[Vee]

Shit.

All right. All right. And she kind of like follows you guys outside.

[Eyþór]

Yeah. Once we're outside, Sully re-racks the shotgun. He's already in setup mode as they

start walking towards the shed.

[Vee]

Yeah. You see that...

[Neil]

I'm going to stay behind

[Vee]

...she kind of puts a hand over her mouth as she sees the carnage in full daylight out here. You can see that she just is taking it in.

But she sees her friend who's in the guardhouse and she just kind of bolts her way across. Moving at surprising speed for one who's quite old. And she kind of drops to one knee next to the girl and they begin to speak very quietly.

As soon as the girl tries to speak, she's just kind of like, the older woman shakes her head. Like, no, no, it's OK. You did the one thing you needed to do.

You survived. It's OK. Just breathe.

And she kind of like takes off whatever jacket she's wearing. She lays it over the girl. You can see that her hair is like definitely quite long and quite thick.

And she kind of like turns to look at you and she looks at Lark and she's like.

Thank you for taking care of my friend.

[Kessir]

Lark just nods and then leaves them be. Just steps out of the way. Not part of this.

[Vee]

It wasn't me.

[Eyþór]

You were trying to say something, Neil?

[Neil]

I was saying that I stay behind in the vault. In the burrow.

[Vee]

Then Aster will stay with you. He doesn't think you guys splitting up is a smart idea.

[Eyþór]

All right. Once she has had her like a little like reunion with a girl, Sully, like, all right, you say the there's a lot of things to rescue from this place.

[Vee]

Of course. That's why we're here.

[Eyþór]

How long have you guys been here before we arrived? And Sully says this as they start moving back to the group.

Assuming the rest of the group can hear it.

[Vee]

Yeah, yeah. I won't make you roll a listen check for this. Everyone can hear.

[Eyþór]

My intention is not to interrogate her without Ralph there is what I'm trying to hint at.

[Vee]

Yeah, she says, yeah, we've been here three or four weeks now, I think. Which kind of does tie up with what Ralph or what, you know?

[Eyþór]

Would you have, did you guys see any seed storages while you were looking around?

[Vee]

Yeah, there wasn't much. A few basics, a couple of different types of potatoes, carrots, sort of root vegetables, really.

[Eyþór]

Did it look like somebody had taken or was it just a small storage?

[Vee]

She shakes her head. She says, when we got here is well, kind of accidentally busted the lock getting in, but it's perfect. No one had set foot in here for however long this place has been.

[Eyþór]

Sully is definitely thinking to himself, like, and that in three weeks, something's already in there. You guys fucked up. But yeah, he does not say that out loud.

Yeah, once the group is together again. Sully, like, gets in front again, I guess. Fucking shotguns, they are the breacher weapon.

[Vee]

Um, Aster says, one of your scouts found me. I was working at a local farm. They said you had magics here.

And she nods and she says, yeah, this place, it's been on our radar for a little while. Someone had a feeling, an inclination. Some of us have blessings and like an ancestral memory is how they described it.

They knew this place was here. And we looked around and yeah, this place used to belong to a group. They were called Veil Lake and they were preparing for The Sprouting.

Apparently they knew it was coming. There's seeds in here, there's magical tomes and books,

there's relics that can hold back some of the plants. And we were studying it and then everything went wrong.

But maybe that's a story for another day. We can just get in. There's some very specific things in here that we need.

And once we have them, we can abandon this place to the plants.

[Eyþór]

Do you have any idea what that thing in the vent is? Would Sully have recognized it in any way?

[Vee]

You can take a history check or you can take a natural world check. And Ralph, you can do the same. Seriously, dude.

[Eyþór]

I got an eight. That's a hard success.

[Neil]

Ninety one versus thirty.

[Kessir]

I swear Eyþór is rigged.

[Vee]

Eyþór, seriously. It's just what it is.

Quest Portal saw, oh, that person is Icelandic. And they were just like, yes, bump his numbers up. Fuck him.

Fuck everyone else.

[Eyþór]

Let's give that guy a bump.

[Kessir]

Time to set my VPN to Iceland.

[Vee]

Hann er með Islenska.

Hann er góð, já. I'm like, fuck you guys. We love you.

Unfortunately, Ralph, this is nothing that you've ever come across or anything you've really heard of. And Sully, yeah, this is a Pollen Cloud Devourer. It's known to hide in small, confined spaces like pipes or vents.

You know that usually they're kind of like pink or blue. They'll either have pink petals with like blue veins that glow or they'll have blue petals with pink veins that glow. But either way, you know, often when they are destroyed or when they have like a perfect face on view at

somebody's face, they would just and spray them down with pollen, which will eventually just give the person breathing problems and end up killing them and slowing them down.

So, yeah, it's a pretty bad plant to to tangle with.

[Kessir]

Go into the person's air vents.

[Vee]

So in the air vents to get into your own vents, baby.

[Eyþór]

Vent to vent action. Would Sully know if there is any known medicine to help deal with pollen if you get hit?

[Vee]

Yeah, but it's something you would have to take within a day or so. And you'd usually you would probably find them at collectives. It's just, yeah, like kind of like this like white powder that you just put a little bit of water in and then like drink it back and try not to spit it out.

It's quite bitter. Yeah. You've seen people take it.

Yeah. They usually end up still having breathing problems throughout their life that come and go. But if you can get it within a day, they usually be OK.

[Eyþór]

I just would like to know how fucked I am when I get hit with the pollen attack. Let's give my character asthma in the first session.

[Kessir]

Covid.

[Vee]

No.

[Eyþór]

It's magical pollen, lads. It's not.

[Vee]

God damn it.

On your extreme success. It was on your hard success. You would know that the wounds sustained by the people on the outside don't match with the MO of this plant.

[Eyþór]

I know.

Like when you were describing the vent creature, I'm like, that does not sound like something that would chase them out of the place

[Kessir]

and rip open the doors, the bar doors or whatever the fuck that was.

[Vee]

Yeah. Yeah.

[Eyþór]

Yeah. As we start advancing into the burrow, Sully is just going to real quick ask, Saluna, the things in the vents, it doesn't really chase people outside. Do you know what it was that got outside?

[Vee]

She shakes her head and she says, nope. I managed to take down most of these vent creatures. I saw lots of people running outside and had gunshots, but I was a little too busy not being killed by that other thing.

[Eyþór]

Alright.

[Kessir]

And Lark is all by myself.

[Eyþór]

**unintelligable**

[Vee]

Don't worry, I had plans for people who decided to leave themselves outside.

[Eyþór]

Yeah, and I think we're just advancing inside unless Ralph wants to send his drone ahead.

[Neil]

Where? To outside?

[Eyþór]

No, to inside.

[Neil]

To inside? I am inside. I didn't leave the inside.

[Vee]

So the other thing that's left inside is that there was a long corridor that kind of dipped down, but you couldn't see the end of it.

[Neil]

Oh, yeah. Okay.

[Vee]

And that's where she's trying to go because the vault wouldn't just be like one small room.

Sorry, the dwelling wouldn't be one small room. It's like definitely something further in.

[Eybór]

It's just one big, what do they call it? Anti-chamber or something like that. That's the entrance.

[Vee]

It's just one big... There's only the anti-chamber.

[Neil]

I'm going to hold on to my batteries. I'm not going to send the vault out just now.

[Vee]

Smart.

[Neil]

What would you choose, eh? If you could choose to preserve anything in here? What would you prioritize?

[Vee]

There's a book. It's called... It was written by a woman in the early 1800s.

Came from a place called Lien. Her name was Seraphine. She...

She seemed to know about all the weird stuff that was coming before it happened. Yeah, it happened 80 years ago, but she was alive more than 200 years ago. 300 years ago, almost.

Blimey. She has magical knowledge that's spread the globe. If there's anything in here...

Anything at all that could maybe save our world... Maybe even get it slightly back so that we don't have to fear for the life of our kids... Yeah.

It's that book I want to see.

[Neil]

All right, let's find it then, I guess.

[Vee]

Aster nods as he's following you all in, and he says...

That's good. That's the sort of thing I hoped you would have, like your scout said.

And as you're walking down this corridor, as you make that steep descent down, you see that there is a door ahead of you, and it's open, and it leads to this big, empty chamber ahead of you that seems to have a series of doors right in front of you, these massive metal doors that look very difficult to open. You can see buttons everywhere. Strangely enough, the lights are all still on.

You can tell that there's still power going on. And the further in and the further down you go,

it seems to be getting much, much colder. There's a giant door ahead of you, there's a giant door off to your left-hand side, and another one off to the right.

You can see that the one to the left is open, but the other two aren't. I'm going to hold you guys here.

[Vee]

Lark, what are you doing outside?

[Kessir]

I think Lark is mostly... Definitely the first thing they did was look around the little hut for spots where they can hide that isn't necessarily a bush.

[Vee]

So the hut is so small, it literally is you could stand in it or sit in it.

[Kessir]

No, no, around. On the premise. Basically just get a mental image of what the place looks like in case they need to yield.

[Vee]

Yeah, so you kind of have the chain link fence, which kind of goes around. Some of it is broken off to one side. It's a bit of a run, but you could definitely get through it.

But there's forest over there. You can see that the gate, which has been kind of torn open, that's definitely an exit. And it's right next to that little hut where the woman is currently sitting, slouching, slaying, probably still dying.

So there's that. You can see there's a few cars around that are clearly quite rusted, but you could definitely hide behind some of those. There's lots of pieces of broken concrete.

Some of them are up at like a really big angle, and you probably couldn't 100% hide behind it, but you could probably buy yourself enough time by like scooting to it and then jotting off to somewhere else.

[Kessir]

Yeah, so they're definitely keeping a mental image of everything that is there and making sure that in case they need to get into the vault really quick to warn the others, they have a pathway open and that they always try to stay, quote unquote, hidden behind something, a shadow. Just make sure they're not in plain view, you know?

[Vee]

Yeah, yeah.

You notice that coming through the gate is what looks like a vine of Zlata's Grace. Its blue kind of vine is like quite thin and then rapidly gets thicker and thicker until it's about the thickness of a human arm. It's probably much bigger than you've seen one, actually.

[Kessir]



The gate, is that the entrance to the premise or the gate that the guys went into to borrow?

[Vee]

So into the premise itself, because the entrance to the mountain complex are just definitely doors. They're like solid doors. Yeah, like you see the vine just kind of making its way through.

You can see that the leaves get thicker and thicker and you can suddenly see that there is what looks like a really big flower on top of it, and it seems to be snaking its way through the gate and then abruptly turns and starts heading towards you.

[Kessir]

Oh, they're definitely trying to back away in a way that they can get out of the way of the thing, either behind the little hut or if they can find something like a water pipe, like a drainage pipe, climb up a little bit. Climb on...

[Vee]

You could definitely roll a climb check to get on top of this tiny little security hut thingy to get yourself off the ground. But yeah, that's probably the best you get. If you're going to try and get high, that's your best option.

[Kessir]

I'm going to try that.

[Vee]

Go ahead and roll a climb for me. It's fairly easy.

[Kessir]

64... Hang on. Nope, I failed.

You can use luck if you want to or you can just experience what's about to happen. It is a lot of luck, though.

[Eybór]

You can push yourself.

[Kessir]

Lark has probably seen the purple ones before, but I don't think they've ever seen what they do. So they're definitely going to take out the sickle.

Be prepared.

[Vee]

You've definitely come across the Zlata's Grace before. It's never been aggressive towards anyone that you have ever seen or ever heard of. And you know that it often does move and it does try and do stuff.

You know that it is often indicated that something really weird is happening in an area, be it good or bad. You can choose to have it as a good omen or a bad omen or neither, it is

entirely up to you. But it's never known to be aggressive.

[Kessir]

Yeah, that's what I'm thinking. That's why I think I wouldn't push the luck.

[Vee]

As you think about climbing up, you kind of do a precursory climb and just decide it's just not worth it. It's a little bit unstable. You're worried about maybe falling through the roof itself and you just come down.

And Zalata's Grace kind of stops and curls up very, very close to you until the plant is very, very, very close. And then it does something that you've never seen before. You see the leaves pop open until you can see that very, very centre of the plant, what looks like half a sphere that has lots and lots and lots and lots and lots of little holes in it.

And it starts to make noise. Every time that kind of bassy noise comes in, you can see this kind of half sphere kind of like vibrate and shift and point out and come back in again. For those of us in the real world, this looks a lot like a speaker.

[Kessir]

Oh, I was thinking of a colander.

[Vee]

Not quite, but very close. And you hear noise come out. And you hear,

"Are we sure they're even coming here? I can't feel my feet, man.

If the plant says they sent Aster this way, then they'll be here. You could get your first A-pop or reconsidering your life choices.

The fuck is an A-pop?

It's apoptosis, it's programmed cell death, ridding the body of parts that aren't needed anymore. It's what the sickles call it anyway.

Helps.

Helps to cope?

Nah, to understand why we're doing what we're doing.

Oh, fuck, he's here. That's Aster, right? If you trust that you planted the root, then it's time.

Nazir, I call upon... You hear nothing but static. And then suddenly it cuts back.

So what's next?

There's just one more diablera, and then the Aubage of Light can begin.

And then the petals close around the speaker.

And you suddenly see that the whole limb that came out to reach you slowly begins to turn brown, and black, and disappear into, like, this fine dust. Could I have you make a sanity roll, please?

[Neil]

Don't stare straight at the anomalies.

[Kessir]

61. That's a success.

[Vee]

A success? Then you only take one point of sanity damage.

[Kessir]

Lark isn't sure what exactly that was, but they heard the name of Aster, and so they're going to look around to the gate. Is the entire vine completely gone? Disintegrated?

[Vee]

Yeah, you can't see where it originally came from. You just noticed it was coming through the gate. But there's this fine black powder that is beginning to be blown away in the cold wind.

[Kessir]

So Lark is going to take their sickle and look into the hut and tell the woman inside, I need to go inside.

[Vee]

She nods. Like, she's trying to save her energy, but she nods.

[Kessir]

Yeah. And I think Lark is going to close the door and go inside as quietly as they can and try to sneak after the people. Well, not sneak, but...

[Vee]

I was going to say, that requires a stealth check, my friend.

[Kessir]

You know, just be quiet and make sure that their own noises don't overshadow the noises of the people that are in front of them so they can find them in case this is splitting up or whatever. They don't know what they're expecting on the inside to look like.

[Vee]

Yeah, I'll still make you make a stealth check. It's just the difference between how well you've managed to hide your sounds so that you don't alert and can still hear versus to them just absolutely not knowing here.

[Kessir]

90. That's a fail.

[Vee]

Goddamn it. I'm trying to help you all get improvement rolls that aren't Eyþór.

Yeah, absolutely. You managed to make your way down there. It's not quite as stealthy as you'd want it to be, but you can definitely still hear the four of them ahead.

You can basically see, as you kind of creep up, you definitely see Aster turn around to look at you, sees that you're coming and returns his attention to what's happening in front of him. So, yeah, the five of you are very, very close to this big open area where, yeah, there's a giant metal door off to the left which seems to be open and ajar. You can see there is a giant metal door in front of you, which is still closed and the same to the one to the right.

You can see in this area that there is evidence of very, very, very, very dead plant devourer creatures that have obviously some of them leaning out of vents, some of them are just laying dead on the floor. Can you all take a listen check for me, please?

[Kessir]

Ooh, a success.

[Vee]

Woohoo! You can mark an improvement. So, the young'un amongst us manages to pass their listen check.

How about the two slightly older ones?

[Eyþór]

Nah, my ears are full of grut.

[Neil]

Yeah. We did.

[Kessir]

You wrote the exact same thing against the exact same threshold.

[Vee]

Yeah, yeah, you two don't hear shit.

[Eyþór]

We're just so in sync.

[Vee]

But that's okay.

Lark, as you're headed down and you're trying to listen to intently what's going ahead of you so you know where they are and you managed to catch them fairly quickly anyway, you listen... Sorry.

[Neil]

God, our stupid old people ears, Eyþór.

[Vee]

Back in Martha's day, I could hear.

[Eyþór]

What?

[Neil]

The man who just blasted a shotgun indoors. Can't hear anything.

[Vee]

I guess, yeah, you two can blame that.

[Kessir]

For reference, I'm still a little bit away, right? I'm not already...

[Vee]

Yeah, you're not right behind them. At least Aster knows that you're here, even if the others don't. Yeah, you hear, like...

Kind of like this shuffling, moving sound, like... What kind of success... Is it just the normal success you got?

[Kessir]

Yeah.

[Vee]

Yeah, you hear the sound of, like, something big, like, moving, kind of, like, scraping or, like, sliding across, like, metal or floor. You hear the sound of what looks...

What sounds like... Kind of, like, scraping, screeching noises, as if someone has, like, pushed a table and it hasn't got, like, proper protection on the floor and it does, like, noise. You hear a little bit of that.

It's a little distance off, but it feels like it's directly ahead of you.

[Kessir]

And this was behind a door, right? You said there was another door?

[Vee]

Yep.

[Kessir]

Lark is going to hurriedly run up to the group and they're going to poke Sully and they're going to signal them if they can talk, like, for a second off to the side.

[Eyþór]

Yeah, Sully looks at you, like, a hint of surprise. Like, it's not, like, a, what? But it's just, like, a, okay, okay.

Like, a small scrunch of the eyebrows. And then he, like, just kind of leans in and, like...

[Kessir]

Yeah, off to the side. And Lark is going to say, I saw one of the purple plants outside and it... I don't know what...

It made that sound that, you know, those little machines make, that the little... Whatever. It made a sound and it sounded like...

I heard voices on it and the voices were talking that Aster was leading people here and it was a plan. That he was planning to bring them here, I think. Something is wrong.

[Eyþór]

A plant told you this?

[Kessir]

Yeah, one of the purple ones. The ones that are harmless.

[Eyþór]

Oh, Zlata's Grace?

[Kessir]

Yeah. Well, I think this is... I think this is a trap.

And, like, they're trying to repeat as best as they can what they heard because I do not have it verbatim.

[Vee]

We're going to go on the assumption, and we're going to put this out now, that if you hear recordings from Zlata's Grace, that you are able to repeat them perfectly.

It might be magic.

Verbatim. Every goddamn word. It might be magic.

It might be that you all have extremely good memories. Or it might be that this is how we're going to cope with sharing information.

[Eyþór]

Thank you.

[Vee]

And this is how we're going to cope. You're welcome.

[Eyþór]

I appreciate it.

[Vee]

So, in world, you all have fantastic memories when it comes to Zlata's Grace recordings.

[Eyþór]

It sounds to me like somebody was trying to ambush Aster. If I'm understanding correctly.

[Kessir]

You think?

It might even be... It says that... It says...

[Kessir]

I said... My words. Lark said.

[Eyþór]

You said.

[Kessir]

And... There were voices... There were...

I just heard... Before I came here, there were noises behind that door. There's definitely something behind it.

Like chairs being moved backwards.

[Vee]

I'm going to say that Aster and Siluna... Nailed it. That the pair of them have gone to that open door.

And kind of like... As you two are talking, Siluna just kind of turns to Ralph and says... Maybe you guys want to try and check out some of the other doors.

We'll clear this out as soon as we can. And once you... Yeah, whatever.

And the pair of them kind of like begin to make their way to try and open this door a bit wider and go and search what's inside that part.

[Kessir]

Quick, Neil, the NPCs are distracted. Get in here.

[Vee]

That's what I'm doing.

[Kessir]

Yeah, and Lark is going to repeat the same thing to Ralf as well. Or maybe he joined earlier. Who knows?

[Eyþór]

Maybe we said this before we had our conversation.

[Kessir]

Yeah.

[Neil]

Okay, so you're thinking something strange is going on with Aster then?

[Kessir]

I think so.

[Neil]

I couldn't see him when we first showed up. I just... I couldn't tell something was really weird about it.

[Eyþór]

You couldn't see him?

[Kessir]

Was he around the corner?

[Neil]

Just couldn't focus on him. Couldn't see him even. Hard to explain.

[Kessir]

Too fast?

[Neil]

It didn't seem right.

[Eyþór]

He did say that he used to practice magic. Could be that he was doing something, but I don't know why that would affect you, but not the rest of us.

[Neil]

All right, well, let's just be really careful, eh? I don't... I don't know who to trust.

This seems weird, so...

[Eyþór]

Vee, quick question. Yeah. What Lark described from Zlata's Grace talking to it, has Lark ever experienced this? Sully!

[Vee]

Lark? No.

[Kessir]

I was like, what? Are you asking for me?

[Eyþór]

Has Sully ever experienced this?

[Vee]

No, Sully would never have experienced this before.



[Eyþór]

Would he have heard of other people experiencing this?

[Vee]

I'm going to say yeah, but it's more kind of like rumors. Like, you know a person who says they know a person that this happened to. Like, it's only like one degree of separation away.

It's not like Kevin Bacon levels away, but like, you know someone who says that they know someone for sure. Yeah. You've heard of it, but never seen it.

[Eyþór]

And I'm assuming the rumors are basically like, yeah, when Zlata's Grace talks to you, it's like it's whispering truths kind of thing.

[Vee]

Yeah, yeah.

[Eyþór]

Even if they're unfun truths, it's usually like whatever it was saying is usually kind of factual. I'm trying to establish if Sully...

[Vee]

I am going to say that that is what you can believe. I will neither confirm 100% if that is true.

[Eyþór]

Got you, got you. All right. Just I'm trying to figure out where Sully stands on the whispers from Zlata's Grace.

Because yeah, Sully's not a fan of magic. So like...

[Neil]

It's all propaganda.

[Eyþór]

Yeah.

[Neil]

Birds aren't real.

[Eyþór]

It's fucking fake news.

[Vee]

They're making humans turn against each other.

[Eyþór]

The whole sprouting is a cover up because they're changing the batteries in the birds. Have you seen any birds recently?

[Vee]

They always seem to have Appelsin stamped on their ass.

[Eyþór]

Okay, sorry. Yeah, I'm just trying to figure out like what Sully stands on Zlata's Grace is. Fuck me.

I have to kind of make a decision here. And one of them, meta-wise, I know is a very beneficial decision.

[Kessir]

Maybe make like a history thingy or whatever if you have ever interacted with Zlata's Grace. A fuse check.

[Vee]

No, like he would have like, again, like the same as basically everyone else. What Lark just experienced is not something that many other people have experienced at all. It's definitely nothing that Sully would have experienced.

[Eyþór]

Yeah, then I think Sully is gonna say something along the lines of.

I've heard of Zlata's Grace. Whispering to people, talking to people before. And...

People tell me that it tells you the truth. But it is a plant. And it is part of the whole weird world.

So let's not put too much stock in it. But if we were to give it the benefit of the doubt, it sounds to me like whatever is going on here is to do with Aster. Or this thing you heard was way back in the day and Aster isn't Aster anymore.

He just says he is.

[Neil]

Here's where my... Here's where my stance on this whole thing is. I have heard there's books down here that are very...

I wouldn't say valuable, but you know, important, right? I catalog information. I'm not saying that I want this book.

Whoever can have it can have it. But if it's important, I just think we should focus on getting whatever's in here that's important away from whoever may or may not be... named by plants at us, you know.

[Eyþór]

Fair.

[Vee]

Can I have the three of you please make a spot hidden check?

[Eyþór]  
That's a fail.

[Kessir]  
Oh, Neil!

[Vee]  
That's rough, buddy.

[Neil]  
93. Man, if 90s were good.

[Vee]  
Lark coming in strong once again. Sully and Ralph, as you're kind of like really getting into this conversation, you fail to notice, but Lark does, that it appears as if Aster has been standing at the door for a while listening to you guys.

[Kessir]  
Lark's going to look over to Aster and... I guess in the middle of the conversation, they're doing this thing where they're like, oh, I've been overheard. Wait, wait, just stop talking.

[Eyþór]  
Speak of the devil.

[Kessir]  
And you do intensive eye contact with the person until the others turn around to notice it.

[Eyþór]  
Speaking of the foul plants.

[Neil]  
Unless he has some kind of issue with us cataloging the information.

[Eyþór]  
Yeah, I think Sully's looking over at Aster at this point.

[Vee]  
I like the idea that Ralph has his back to him and doesn't understand what's going on.

[Kessir]  
He's behind me. Isn't he?

[Neil]  
Oh no, he says that after he notices. Yeah. He says that to Aster.

[Eyþór]  
Oh, yeah, good point, good point.

[Vee]  
Nice.

[Neil]

Unless he notices, you know. He's saying that to the person he's talking about at this point. Like, unless he notices.

Or unless he doesn't... Whatever I said. Unless he doesn't want us...

Unless he doesn't want us cataloging that information.

[Vee]

Yeah. Aster takes a few steps forward and he definitely still has his rifle in hand. He hasn't, like, become un-tense.

And he definitely takes a few steps towards you all. He doesn't seem to be raising his gun. For those of you who are astutely aware of how guns work, he still has the safety on.

You can see Siluna, who is, like, rapidly, like, gathering things together that seem to be important to her and, like, you see weird little trinkets. You see, like, an old horseshoe. You see, like, what looks like a small bracelet with a little bell on it.

Like, you see lots of weird little things going in here.

[Eyþór]

Fucking magic people

[Vee]

So she's kind of, like, busy packing what she thinks are, like, essential weird things from this place. But Aster, like, takes a few steps forward and he says...

[Vee]

So, Salata's Grace mentioned me.

[Kessir]

Larke is not going to say anything.

[Neil]

Are you surprised by that?

[Vee]

He looks down and shakes his head. Looks back up. No.

[Eyþór]

Who told you about this place?

[Vee]

She tells me she's a scout for places like this. She could tell there was something weird about me. She had an awful lot of trouble seeing me to start with.

I put it down to the wind as a situation, you know. What did Zlata's Grace say about me?

[Eyþór]

It said you were being set up.

[Vee]

He, like, closes his eyes and just mouths the word, fuck.

[Eyþór]

Did a woman really tell you to come here?

[Faeranya]

He nods. Fuck. I've got a friend.

He's based in Diableria. We escaped from this cult when we were younger. There were weird things that had been haunting and following us for a real long time.

What did the plant say?

[Eyþór]

They're coming after you. And... name, goddammit.

[Neil]

You seemed to be the trigger to... whatever they were. They did something.

But they were waiting for you. That's about all we know.

[Eyþór]

And then they were going to go after Diableria. Diableria

[Vee]

Oh, fuck. They were after my friend.

[Eyþór]

Do you think this whole situation is because they were trying to ambush you?

[Vee]

Yeah.

[Eyþór]

Then let's get everything out of here as soon as we can so no more people have to get hurt. And you can go into details when we're done. Because whatever killed those people out there is probably still in here.

[Vee]

Right, but I'm not leaving until we find that book, though. Help me open this. And he, like, puts the gun on his back, he rushes over and he tries to open the door that's directly ahead of where you came in, where you heard the chairs and everything being moved.

And, yeah, he kind of smashes the button and it kind of, like... Big flashy lights, lots of noise. And the door kind of, like...

very loudly and slowly begins to open.

[Eyþór]

Gun trained on the doorway.

[Vee]

You train your gun on the doorway and Aster also, like, re-gets his gun ready, so he takes it off of safety very quickly. You hear that Siluna has kind of, like, rushed in, like, both machetes ready to go, just kind of like, what the hell are you doing? And you see before you what looks like a very large containment room.

You can see that there is kind of, like, tables directly ahead of you and there looks like to be, like, light shades and, like, little lamps that are on them. You can see there are books and you can see that there are papers and writing implements. And you can see that directly ahead of you there seems to be, like, this large cage area that has the door that has been opened to it.

And there are stacks and stacks of shelves that go all the way back so far that you can't see and there's a couple of blinking lights that are coming on. You can see that there are these boxes and weird items. But the thing that really quickly draws your attention is that almost directly ahead of you there is this small, like, lectern.

And on top of this lectern there is this small, green, very, very old-looking book. And you can see that there is some words written on the front. Could I have Sully and Ralph roll a language own, please?

In this situation, Lark, I'm sorry. Written language is not...

[Kessir]

Can I have a check on what a lectern is?

[Vee]

Oh, yes, of course. So, it's basically like a podium that has, like, a slanted top so that you can put books and music sheets and, like, Bibles and stuff on them so that you can stand there and read and do your research.

[Kessir]

When a president has a talk, for example.

[Vee]

Yes, exactly. It's like that.

[Eyþór]

Another word for it is podium.

[Vee]

Yeah. Yes. That looks nice that much.

Sorry. I just didn't want you to think it's, like, something where if you're at one side you'd be

able to see what's on the thing. Like, no, no, no, it's not like that.

OK, how did we do, chaps?

[Eyþór]

Oh, boy. I got a 90 and a 76, so that's a fail. I did nicely.

[Neil]

I rolled a 69. Nice.

[Vee]

Oh, nice. Alas, still a fail. You failed, nonetheless.

You can tell that there is, like, something written on the front in a very, very old, like, cursive handwriting. But you don't really get enough time to absorb it. And the reason you don't have time to absorb it is because you notice that kind of just behind it that you can see that there are some of the shelves that have been pushed and slid around.

It's as if someone has been walking in here in the dark, just accidentally pushing and knocking things over. And what you see before you, about 20 foot in height, is a creature that is kind of made from this grey root-looking thing. Its arms and legs are both the thicknesses of tree trunks.

Its head is huge and has, like, this very reflective, mirror-looking face. And as the lights come on and the door opens, this creature has its arms on top of two of these stacks and lifts itself up so it's standing more upright, and its entire head only turns around to look at everyone on the other side.