

Worlds Beyond Number

Fireside Chat: Episode 010 - Episode 10 "Of The Reaching Green"

Final Version

[Crickets chirp, and a campfire crackles. A bright and sweet song is plucked on an acoustic guitar.]

Erika Ishii

Hello, everybody, and welcome to the Fireside for Episode Eleven, The Reaching Green. Now our heroes really are in a bit of a pickle now, aren't they? I'm your host, Erika Ishii.

Brennan Lee Mulligan

I'm here with a Brennan Lee Mulligan. Is this episode eleven or episode ten?

Aabria Iyengar

I think it's ten.

Erika Ishii

God dammit!

Aabria Iyengar

[Cackle]

Erika Ishii

Episode Ten, The Reaching Green. Our heroes sure are in a bit of a pickle, aren't they? We—he'll fix it later.

Aabria Iyengar

Fix it in post, Taylor!

Brennan Lee Mulligan

I think it's "Of The Reaching Green."

Aabria Iyengar

Hey, you know what?

Erika Ishii

Hey, guess what? We're in the same room.

Aabria Iyengar

Hit him!

Erika Ishii

I could reach out and SMACK you!

Lou Wilson

Yeah, this is different than normal.

Brennan Lee Mulligan

[Laugh]

Aabria Iyengar

Yeah.

Erika Ishii

You know that?

Aabria Iyengar

Interesting.

Brennan Lee Mulligan

We're all in a room together! Hooray!

Aabria Iyengar

He's kind of spiced up today.

Lou Wilson

What a thrill.

Erika Ishii

Oohhhhh hohoho!

Aabria Iyengar

You think just because you're in the room, you're the boss of us? You're not the boss of this part.

Erika Ishii

Yeah.

Brennan Lee Mulligan

I actually think it's not "Boss—"

[Everyone laughs]

Aabria Iyengar

Hey, bud?

Brennan Lee Mulligan

Sorry, I couldn't get through it. I couldn't get through it.

Erika Ishii

You're not the dungeon master of the—of the talkback.

Brennan Lee Mulligan

That's true. You're the dungeon master of the talkback!

Erika Ishii

I'm the dungeon master of the talkback!

Lou Wilson

There you go.

Aabria Iyengar

You're the king of the fireside!

Erika Ishii

Episode Ten. "Of The Reaching Green."

[Light applause]

Aabria Iyengar

[Cackle]

Erika Ishii

Introduce yourself.

Lou Wilson

[Laugh] Congratulations. Congratulations, maestro.

Brennan Lee Mulligan

Uh, actually, my name is Brennan Lee Mulligan.

[Everyone laughs]

Aabria Iyengar

It's bad in the club, hi I'm Aabria!

Dan Choyne [Lou Wilson]

My name is Dan Choyne [Pronounced "cone"].

Erika Ishii

Dan Choyne.

Brennan Lee Mulligan
Hi Dan!

Aabria Iyengar
Hey Dan!

Erika Ishii
Is it C-O-H-N or C-O-N-E?

Dan Choyne [Lou Wilson]
C-H-O-Y-N-E.

Brennan Lee Mulligan
C-H-O-Y-N-E.

Dan Choyne [Lou Wilson]
Choyne.

Erika Ishii
Choyne.

Aabria Iyengar
Okay.

Brennan Lee Mulligan
Okay.

Dan Choyne [Lou Wilson]
Now you're saying that like—

Aabria Iyengar
What's "Dan?"

Brennan Lee Mulligan
No no no.

Dan Choyne [Lou Wilson]
You're hitting me with an energy that is, kinda like—

Brennan Lee Mulligan
I've just never had a word spelled, and have—I feel like I'm shaking in my body—

Dan Choyne [Lou Wilson]
You're shaking—

Brennan Lee Mulligan
Wanting to say Choin.

Dan Choyne [Lou Wilson]
Oh!

Aabria Iyengar
Choiny!

Dan Choyne [Lou Wilson]
I get that a lot at the DMV and like, you know.

Aabria Iyengar
Oh.

Brennan Lee Mulligan
Yeah yeah yeah yeah yeah.

Dan Choyne [Lou Wilson]
Yeah. But no, it's Choyne.

Aabria Iyengar
Choyne.

Erika Ishii
Is that Estonian?

Dan Choyne [Lou Wilson]
Yes, it is Estonian.

Erika Ishii
Oh!

Brennan Lee Mulligan
Wow! Stone cold SNIPE from Erika!

Dan Choyne [Lou Wilson]
Stone cold. Absolute snipe!

Erika Ishii
I've traveled!

Brennan Lee Mulligan
You've traveled!

Aabria Iyengar
You've traveled to Estonia?!

Erika Ishii
Not to Estonia.

Aabria Iyengar
Any Baltic state?

Erika Ishii
Never.

Aabria Iyengar
Haha! Okay.

Erika Ishii
So in this episode. Yeah, we end on a terrifying cliffhanger, mid-conversation—

Aabria Iyengar
No!

Erika Ishii
Yes. But at the beginning, we all—well, at least two of the party members reunite, in such an incredible way. Suvi comes back to see her door kicked open.

Aabria Iyengar
[Laugh]

Dan Choyne [Lou Wilson]
[Laugh] By Buff Ame.

Erika Ishii
Yeah.

Aabria Iyengar
Ah! Brolita, let's go!

Dan Choyne [Lou Wilson]
Absolutely unstoppable brolita.

Erika Ishii

And I have the little note that I had scrawled onto an index card here. "My butthole of a fox is on the other side of the wall finding Orima, gone to get him, rough coordinates. Love, Ame." And it's on the book.

Aabria Iyengar

The love!

Erika Ishii

Yeah.

Dan Choyne [Lou Wilson]

Love! And there's a little heart.

Erika Ishii

Little heart.

Dan Choyne [Lou Wilson]

There's a little heart.

Aabria Iyengar

[Laugh]

Dan Choyne [Lou Wilson]

Ame, in crisis, always has time for a little heart.

Aabria Iyengar

But apparently the world's worst handwriting?

Erika Ishii

It's very bad. It's chicken scratch. But as I said, as I said, sometimes there's little rebuses! The love is a little heart!

Aabria Iyengar

Yay!

Erika Ishii

So that you read it as "love," love Ame. And Suvi.

Aabria Iyengar

Sorry?

Dan Choyne [Lou Wilson]

I'll tell you, being in the same room together, it's a whole different—

Brennan Lee Mulligan

Being in the same room, people are getting notifications, it's wild.

Dan Choyné [Lou Wilson]

Exactly.

Aabria Iyengar

[Cackle]

Erika Ishii

I appreciate Suvi's reaction, which was "Ame went and did her own thing she lied to us!" But then she still goes and wakes up Eursulon, and leaves in the middle of the night. And it's very sweet, is all I'm saying.

Aabria Iyengar

Look, we know the fox is just you puppeting—okay, I don't really know what the relationship between a witch and her familiar is, so I assume this was just an elaborate stunt, to make me do something.

[Everyone laughs]

Brennan Lee Mulligan

There's just something, as Brennan listening, because, listen, I love Suvi, but I also know the flaws—

Aabria Iyengar

[Cackle]

Brennan Lee Mulligan

—that Aabria has given to Suvi? So, there's something—every once in a while, a character who has that degree of... Let's call it "social—"

Aabria Iyengar

[Laugh]

Erika Ishii

Cunning! Cunning.

Brennan Lee Mulligan

Social cunning. You know—

Aabria Iyengar

This is so kind.

Brennan Lee Mulligan

You know those people who...

Erika Ishii

[Laugh]

Brennan Lee Mulligan

[Choosing words carefully] Find ways to make social dynamics into the shapes they like?

Aabria Iyengar

[Cackle]

Brennan Lee Mulligan

And to hear Suvi say—there's very few—everything Suvi says, I'm like, "I get it. I know her backstory. I know her trauma. I know what she's dealing with." When Suvi went, "I guess Ame decided to do whatever SHE wants rather than the thing we AGREED to do!"

[Aabria and Erika laugh]

Brennan Lee Mulligan

And then I—my whole spine went [Wacky sound effect] And I was just like, "Yeah, that thing we all 'agreed' to do."

[Aabria and Brennan laugh]

Brennan Lee Mulligan

It's like, "I can't believe you didn't keep that promise to me, that I fuckin' wrung outta you like a washcloth!"

Aabria Iyengar

Yes!

Erika Ishii

[Laugh]

Aabria Iyengar

My relationships are all good and normal, thank you VERY much for asking.

Brennan Lee Mulligan

[Laugh]

Erika Ishii

But the moment of—just like, "Okay, we have to do the thing. We gotta use the sword—what? I'm sorry?"

Dan Choyne [Lou Wilson]

We had it. We had the sword.

Aabria Iyengar

Look, if you—she's a steamroller. She was like, "I had a whole—oh, hold on, new information I have to process in real time!"

Dan Choyne [Lou Wilson]

Well it's that thing of, like, in the space between Ame's room and Eursulon's room, you've already written—

Aabria Iyengar

Yes!

Dan Choyne [Lou Wilson]

—the entire story.

Aabria Iyengar

100%

Dan Choyne [Lou Wilson]

You're like, "Ame looked in the mirror, and Ame said, 'I'm going to do my own thing. Fuck me. Fuck Suvi.'"

[Aabria and Erika laugh]

Dan Choyne [Lou Wilson]

"And she said it! She said it out loud, she said, 'Fuck Suvi!' And then, honestly, she got a snack!"

[Aabria and Erika laugh]

Dan Choyne [Lou Wilson]

"And then she told the person she got the snack from, she was like, 'Hey, by the way? Fuck Suvi!' And then she walked out the door." Like, you know, you were cookin'!

Aabria Iyengar

[Laughing] 100%!

Dan Choyne [Lou Wilson]

But then, we had the sword, so.

Erika Ishii

[Crying laughing]

Aabria Iyengar

[Laughing] Yeah! That "I did it" is one of the funniest things.

Erika Ishii

"I did it!"

Aabria Iyengar

Just, the rip of laughter it pulls from me, every time I hear it.

Dan Choyne [Lou Wilson]

It was definitely like a big energy—[Laughing] It's a fun thing to play a moment like that, at the top of an episode, where you're like, "Wow, okay. I thought maybe we were—" I didn't know when you were going to come? At what point in the drunkenness, it's like, "Are we going to do it next morning when I'm hungover? Are, we going to do it—" It's like, "No, we're going to do it right now, kind of at your most, like, half asleep, mostly drunk—"

Aabria Iyengar

[Laughing] Yes!

Dan Choyne [Lou Wilson]

"—And, yeah, what's up?" We're still celebrating as far as I'm concerned.

Erika Ishii

We're celebrating of, like, lifting the sword and the bottle of wine into the air. "Yay, I did it," And all of us going, "Awwww."

Aabria Iyengar

[Laugh]

Brennan Lee Mulligan

We never get a chance in the episode to actually talk about how meaning—it's not just—like, it's established that Eursulon wants to get out of Port Talon and feels that Wavebreaker's—but the thing that Eursulon doesn't voice, that it really, on a relisten to the episode, crossed my mind, is Eursulon gave the sword away. Like, left the sword—and how much it's of reflection—when he says, "I did it," it's like he got the sword back, and how significant that—I don't know, it was very beautiful.

Aabria Iyengar

Yeah!

Brennan Lee Mulligan

Very very sweet.

Erika Ishii

Yeah, but it was also sad, because he's still in this sort of drunken stupor.

Aabria Iyengar

Yeah!

Erika Ishii

And Lou trying to assure us, ASSURE us, that it was you know—

Dan Choyne [Lou Wilson]

It's always funny.

Erika Ishii

—not sad.

Dan Choyne [Lou Wilson]

It's always funny.

Aabria Iyengar

It's not sad!

Dan Choyne [Lou Wilson]

It was funny when I did the show.

Aabria Iyengar

[Unconvinced] Uh huh.

Dan Choyne [Lou Wilson]

It was funny—

Erika Ishii

Uh huh. Uh huh.

Dan Choyne [Lou Wilson]

—when I lifted the bottle of wine and the sword over my head. It is funny, always!

[Everyone laughs]

Erika Ishii

Oh god, but speaking of funny, I just—I still remember, day of, when you did the "get help" bit, only it was "I'm pregnant!"

Dan Choyne [Lou Wilson]

Oh my god.

Aabria Iyengar

What a cursed bit!

Erika Ishii

"Don't you DARE tell me to calm down."

Dan Choyne [Lou Wilson]

Unreal. "Don't you dare tell me to calm down."

Erika Ishii

And it's like, "I do it. Don't do it."

Dan Choyne [Lou Wilson]

Just like a hard gear shift from, like, "Fantasy! Wavebreaker! Naram's sword!" To just, like, a screaming pregnant woman at the airport, being like, "Let me through security! I'm not—"

Erika Ishii

"This isn't hormones!"

Dan Choyne [Lou Wilson]

Yeah.

Erika Ishii

"I wanna go NOW!"

Aabria Iyengar

I just remember the look on Brennan's face, which was just "No, and how dare—what!?"

Erika Ishii

"How dare you!"

Aabria Iyengar

Yeah!

Brennan Lee Mulligan

But it was just—

Aabria Iyengar

Confusion. Anger.

Brennan Lee Mulligan

Listen, I follow—first of all, number one thing is this. In these instances, right, of this and like, later persuasion checks as well. It was me AND the dice.

Aabria Iyengar

[Laugh]

Brennan Lee Mulligan

Like sometimes the Dungeon Master AND the dice aren't on the same page, but occasionally it's like, not only do I think this is nuts, the dice clearly agree with me! They didn't back you up!

Dan Choyne [Lou Wilson]

Yeah.

Erika Ishii

They got an 18!

Aabria Iyengar

Yeah, I did good!

Brennan Lee Mulligan

No, that's a DC 25 to be like—

Aabria Iyengar

Disagree!

Erika Ishii

Okay, okay.

Brennan Lee Mulligan

That's a high—it's a high, high DC. Because, again, to do you one better, it's not a woman at the airport being like, "Let me through security." It's a woman at the airport being like, "Let me walk off of the gate platform, when there's no plane attached."

[Everyone laughs]

Brennan Lee Mulligan

It's like, let me walk—

Aabria Iyengar

As is my right as an American.

Brennan Lee Mulligan

As an American. Let me out of the emergency hatch, in mid flight.

Aabria Iyengar

One of my favorite facts is that, within like, 15 or—I think it's like 15 years of the Chernobyl incident, a bunch of old women that lived in Pripyat like, just moved back. And everyone's like you can't. And they're like, you have—get away from me.

Erika Ishii

That's such a classic old woman thing.

Aabria Iyengar

Yeah! They're just like "Actually, I do whatever I want, and fuck off entirely." And they were just like, "Yeah, we're not going to send soldiers. Please don't—please don't—okay, well, they did. They did it." And that's just the energy I want to have.

Dan Choyne [Lou Wilson]

See, that was our mistake. We went young pregnant woman, we should have gone OLD ass woman.

Aabria Iyengar

We shoulda gone old!

Dan Choyne [Lou Wilson]

"My mother says, she has—she says she's going home."

[Aabria and Erika laugh]

Aabria Iyengar

Next time.

Dan Choyne [Lou Wilson]

"She says she's going home!"

Aabria Iyengar

Next time.

Dan Choyne [Lou Wilson]

Next time, we'll know, next time—

Aabria Iyengar

Next time we'll know!

Dan Choyne [Lou Wilson]

—we'll run the old woman play.

Aabria Iyengar

[Laugh]

Erika Ishii

And so then the death march began and—

Aabria Iyengar
Yeah!

Erika Ishii
—oh god, the moment that Brennan said "It's a day and a half's march under better circumstances."

Dan Choyne [Lou Wilson]
Jesus Christ.

Erika Ishii
Which was like, "Oh! The timeline."

Aabria Iyengar
My timeline asshole puckered immediately, I was like, "Oh, I'm fucked again. Nooo!"

Erika Ishii
It is worth noting that, Suvi was cooking, "Ame's doing the thing, Ame's—fuck me I guess, I'm gonna go get her. Get in trouble." Agh. Very cute.

Dan Choyne [Lou Wilson]
I do feel like when a day and a half got dropped, I feel like even Eursulon was like, "Well we'll fuckin' go get her, we'll come back, we'll fucking leave." And when it was like, "You travel for a day and a half," it's like, "Oh! Okay!"

[Aabria and Erika laugh]

Aabria Iyengar
And having to do that under the worst circumstances. I can't imagine doing anything when I'm even a little bit hungover.

Dan Choyne [Lou Wilson]
Of course, I want to stay in bed all day!

Aabria Iyengar
Ugh!

Dan Choyne [Lou Wilson]
But now we're death marching.

[Aabria and Erika laugh]

Brennan Lee Mulligan
Through kudzu, where the easiest path is, it's 3ft of foliage, at your waist walking through plant matter.

Aabria Iyengar

[Whispered] Oh god.

Dan Choyne [Lou Wilson]

After this woman who I was hoping I'd be like, "What's up, Auntie?"

Aabria Iyengar

Oh my god!

Dan Choyne [Lou Wilson]

"We're good, right?"

Aabria Iyengar

Can we talk about that scene?

Dan Choyne [Lou Wilson]

And was just like, "No, I am not your Auntie, I'm a stranger, and I'm scary!"

[Everyone laughs]

Brennan Lee Mulligan

Well, I think there was a huge—that, and again, maybe that goes very differently, on a different roll, right? I think it was a 12 persuasion there.

Dan Choyne [Lou Wilson]

Mhm.

Brennan Lee Mulligan

But to me, it felt perfect for Eursulon, who has spent—who became an adult, experienced adolescence, in the mortal world. So the idea of like—I don't know, you grow up as like a castaway on an island, but you know the country that you come from, and you see its flag coming over the horizon on a ship, and you are like "My countrymen!" And it's like "You are a fuckin' stranger, man. We don't all relate to each other in that way."

Dan Choyne [Lou Wilson]

Like that.

Brennan Lee Mulligan

Like that. Like, yeah.

Dan Choyne [Lou Wilson]

It was jarring as hell

Aabria Iyengar

Yeah how did you feel inside?

Dan Choyne [Lou Wilson]

Well, even me was, I was like, "Ah!" Because I think, I had rolled pretty well with Ghost, so I was like—

Aabria Iyengar

Yeah!

Dan Choyne [Lou Wilson]

—"Ah! Spirit to Spirit, what's up? We all—different parts of the same cloth!" And then it was just like, "No." And it was like, "Wait!" Then it's like, I feel like the intensity of the moment was not like, "Ah, pull back, adjust, like re-angle, and approach again." It was like, "Well, what if I just keep calling you Sister?"

Aabria Iyengar

[Cackling]

Dan Choyne [Lou Wilson]

[Laughing] "If I just—what if you understand? How many times do I have to say it, for you to start believing it?" And the answer is not—there isn't a number.

Brennan Lee Mulligan

There isn't a number

Aabria Iyengar

The limit does not exist.

Erika Ishii

The lim—[Cackle]

Dan Choyne [Lou Wilson]

"Sister!"

Brennan Lee Mulligan

I remember playing through that moment, because I knew where Orima's head was at—

Aabria Iyengar

Yeah.

Brennan Lee Mulligan

—and I knew that there was—but again, it all—like, Ghost, as someone who has lineage of the Spirits, right, is part Spirit, is in her own way, kind of wayshadowed, like having a connection to the Spirit in the material world. So, I think there's ALWAYS going to be a huge advantage if Eursulon is talking to another Spirit trapped in the mortal world. There's a huge—of like, again, like, when you meet an American

overseas, you're like, somewhere you're, like, traveling, you're like, "[Frantically] Hey! It's us! Hamburgers, french fries! You get it!"

[Everyone laughs]

Dan Choyne [Lou Wilson]

"I've got two Coors Light back in my house, you want one?"

Brennan Lee Mulligan

"Do you want one?"

Dan Choyne [Lou Wilson]

"Come over! Come over! Like I—you know!"

Brennan Lee Mulligan

"Yeah! Road trips, right? Cities are far apart, right? You get it!"

Aabria Iyengar

[Laugh]

Brennan Lee Mulligan

But you do that—but again, it's the idea of, like, to Orima who is a Great Spirit, and who has her own vision of the World of Spirits and is not trapped in the mortal world, is, in fact, kind of fucked over by how not trapped in the mortal—she is, like, very much trapped on the other side of it. You know, Eursulon—I remember what Eursulon's pitch was, essentially, was like, "Sister, my friend, a witch is—" very much like, "Let me tell you some stuff you don't know." And the number one high status thing is "Talk to me exclusively about shit I care about." And I think that was Orima's main thing of like—

Aabria Iyengar

Sorry, hold on, let me write that down for Suvi.

Brennan Lee Mulligan

[Laugh] Like, Orima being like, "Sorry, what's this? You're like, invoking my name, and speaking to the kudzu, and we're NOT talking about my captured husband? I cannot describe how much I—I wouldn't care about this under the best of circumstances."

Dan Choyne [Lou Wilson]

Yeah.

Aabria Iyengar

Yeah.

Brennan Lee Mulligan

And the circumstances as they are right now, are—which is, you know, I'd also feel like there's a weird part of Orima and Naram, which are just like, a married couple? Which is like, the guy that—you know, the little, like the—the fuckin'—who's in Alice in Wonderland, the King of Hearts.

Aabria Iyengar

Oh, yeah.

Erika Ishii

Yeah.

Brennan Lee Mulligan

Who's like "[Cartoonish voice] Don't worry dear!" She doesn't have that right now.

Aabria Iyengar

[Cackle] Yeah!

Brennan Lee Mulligan

That guy, is fuckin' trapped, at the bottom of the sea!

Erika Ishii

As I said, almost all of my friend couples—

Aabria Iyengar

Yep.

Erika Ishii

—fit this archetype of the sweet, gentle, cinnamon bun of a man who can do no wrong in the world, and his bulldog wife—

Aabria Iyengar

Yes!

Erika Ishii

—who will protect him from the world.

[Aabria and Brennan laugh]

Erika Ishii

So it's fun seeing that play out with incredible powers. And Orima says, when they make it to the temple, that "I have a feeling that the one that I dragged here on her knees, came here of her own free will, and the one that walked here was dragged here against his will?"

Aabria Iyengar
Oof!

Erika Ishii
AUGH!

Aabria Iyengar
So good.

Dan Choyne [Lou Wilson]
Truth! Ain't nothin' but truth.

Aabria Iyengar
Can we talk, about Ame, and Orima?

Erika Ishii
[Squeak]

Aabria Iyengar
That scene is so good. Like, for those—all of you Ame enjoyers out there, waiting for this Witches absolute smoke, that was the moment where you had that polish and precision, like you were so dialed into, like, "Oh yeah, this is exactly what I do."

Dan Choyne [Lou Wilson]
Yeah.

Aabria Iyengar
"Everyone chill the fuck out for a second." And, yeah, it's that idea of like, knowing to ask before you even begin to speak to someone, it makes Ame make so much sense, contextually, while also just being such a badass moment.

Erika Ishii
[Squeak]

Aabria Iyengar
So cool. You're so cool!

Erika Ishii
You're so cool!

Aabria Iyengar
[Whispered] You're so cool!

Erika Ishii

What's the deal with Suvi? She got put on mute?!

Aabria Iyengar

Whatcha talking about? I got put on mute.

Erika Ishii

[Laugh]

Aabria Iyengar

I got put on mute?

Erika Ishii

Bitch.

Aabria Iyengar

I was saying a lot of truly psychotic shit, and then just daring Brennan to kill my character.

Erika Ishii

[Laugh]

Aabria Iyengar

Like, "I don't know, maybe I'll burn it all down if she's mean to you even a little bit." So, probably a good mute button.

Brennan Lee Mulligan

There's an energy from playing bad guys in LARPs, when I was a camp counselor, and you have teenagers playing who—the whole point of teenagers, is they are growing into an understanding of their own adult world, and there were a lot of times of using LARP, to teach some very intense lessons. I remember one time showing up as the villain somewhere, and I was like, facing down this group of heroes, and I was all monstrified, I had like, whiteout lenses, my face was burned, I had this huge, great sword. And I was like, "[Low growl] I have come here, seeking those treasures which were ROBBED from my—" and a kid was like, "You have no power to treat—" and I cut his head off right away.

Aabria Iyengar

[Laugh]

Brennan Lee Mulligan

And I was like, literally being like, "Oh, sorry. There's 80 people in this scene. If all 80 of you think that we're going to do a scene, right now like this, that's going to be chaos right away." And I'm SURE for that one kid who thought like, "Oh, I'm going to say something heroic!" It might have been disappointing, but when you look at the dynamics of the verisimilitude of the world, you make these hard decisions where you go like, "Oh, this villain cannot be talked to like this."

Aabria Iyengar
Yeah.

Brennan Lee Mulligan
Or actually the whole game falls—like, the final battle won't work. The game will be ruined.

Aabria Iyengar
Yeah.

Brennan Lee Mulligan
I need to strike fear into all of you right now, and this kid's going to pay the price, and that's tough, but that's what it is. And the—with Orima in that scene, like Suvi being on mute or whatever—

Erika Ishii
[Wail]

Aabria Iyengar
[Laugh]

Brennan Lee Mulligan
Like, if Suvi had said the things she was trying to say—

Aabria Iyengar
[Laugh]

Brennan Lee Mulligan
If Suvi was like, "If you do that, I'll—" it would have been—truly, the other scene without that, is a lance of vine through the brain, dead.

Aabria Iyengar
100%! 100%.

Erika Ishii
[Wailing]

Dan Choyne [Lou Wilson]
And we don't have revivify yet because again, we are First Level!

Aabria Iyengar
Level one!

Erika Ishii

Let me tell you too, god, I so appreciate the amount of trust I'm able to put on you, in the scene in which I hear—oh my god, it was so terrifying, even at the table—you all had the benefit of hearing Taylor Moore's UNBELIEVABLE stereoscopic work—

Aabria Iyengar

Yes! Ugh!

Erika Ishii

—for Orima of the Reaching Green, but it was—even here in a small little studio, with just Brennan's voice—scary as hell.

Aabria Iyengar

Truly.

Erika Ishii

Hearing that [scuttling noise]

Aabria Iyengar

UGH!

Erika Ishii

Like the scuttling, he was doing that with his mouth!

Aabria Iyengar

Yeah!

Erika Ishii

And the gasping, and the screeching, of the—what did we—

Brennan Lee Mulligan

Plant creatures?

Erika Ishii

The plant creatures? What did we decide to call them?

Brennan Lee Mulligan

Their name doesn't—I think their name appears in the next episode. But we—hey, we're Patreon, so if Taylor doesn't want it in he can cut it out, but—

Aabria Iyengar

Yeah!

Brennan Lee Mulligan
—they are the Undre, which are—

Erika Ishii
Yes.

Brennan Lee Mulligan
—which is a word that means stranglers.

Dan Choyne [Lou Wilson]
Mm.

Erika Ishii
Aaaaaaagh!

Aabria Iyengar
Totally normal and good.

Dan Choyne [Lou Wilson]
Totally normal.

Erika Ishii
But hearing those, and then being like, "Well, it's just my level one self out here, with a torch." And I'm like, "Well, I guess I have to do the roleplay thing instead!"

Aabria Iyengar
[Laugh]

Dan Choyne [Lou Wilson]
And a bunch of—and like, two broken ankles? Or wrists?

Aabria Iyengar
Yeah!

Brennan Lee Mulligan
Yeah, broken wrists.

Aabria Iyengar
Yeah.

Erika Ishii
Yeah.

Brennan Lee Mulligan

I will say the—Ame's interactions with Orima—for anyone that was listening, because I saw some—I think there were some people who, like—in the reaction to the episode, I think people were like, "Oh, like, Ame—" because they see her getting, like, shouted down by Orima, or that Ame seems in a low status position. Ame RAN those social interactions.

Aabria Iyengar

Hell yeah. Hell yeah.

Brennan Lee Mulligan

Ame shined SO fuckin' hard. Because I think what everyone's looking at is like, "Oh! Like, Ame—like, wheres—" There's a thing of, like, what was a slam dunk gonna look like? And for me when I think of witches and Ame, I think of people who handle, like, feral animals? And the idea of people that have a cat that's, like, hissing and spitting and it's gonna—it's like, you don't—the victory is NOT that the cat calms down. It cannot. In that circumstance, it cannot. The victory is, can I get it from here, to a place where it's not going to hurt itself? Can I move it from this thing? And both with the plant creatures, there was that moment of—they were coming to kill you, and Ame made the Naram salute and said, Naram, and they did it in return, and then dragged her to the shrine.

Erika Ishii

Ahh!

Aabria Iyengar

Yes!

Brennan Lee Mulligan

That is an unequivocal capital V victory.

Aabria Iyengar

Hell yes.

Brennan Lee Mulligan

That is a huge—and then getting to Orima of like, "Can I entreat—" The amount of times that you said something as Ame, that I had—like, if you—if you re-listen to that scene, I was trying as hard as I could, to find a way for Orima to kill everybody in the shrine.

Aabria Iyengar

[Laugh]

Brennan Lee Mulligan

That's who she is. And every time Ame said the perfect thing, that kept the conversation going. Making it through that encounter alive—

Erika Ishii

[Crying]

Brennan Lee Mulligan

—was victory.

Dan Choyne [Lou Wilson]

We did it!

Aabria Iyengar

Let's go!

Brennan Lee Mulligan

Like, making it through it alive was victory, and it was a huge win for Ame, it was awesome.

Erika Ishii

Awww!

Aabria Iyengar

Yeah!

Erika Ishii

That feels nice!

Dan Choyne [Lou Wilson]

Look at that, thanks to Ame, we still have a podcast.

Aabria Iyengar

There we go.

[Aabria and Erika laugh]

Erika Ishii

We would have a podcast, if we just—

Aabria Iyengar

Nope. We'd shutter.

Dan Choyne [Lou Wilson]

No, we'd shutter. That would be it.

Aabria Iyengar

Yeah, Dan's correct.

Erika Ishii

Aww!

Brennan Lee Mulligan

We'd just get the next GM up faster than I typically do.

Erika Ishii

Oh, god!

Aabria Iyengar

Ok, uh, uh uh. We are all... Skittles?

[Everyone laughs]

Dan Choyne [Lou Wilson]

Yeah, we could do 150 episodes of Skittles. Take Skittles from 1 to 20.

Aabria Iyengar

[Laugh]

Erika Ishii

Aw man, Aabria's campaign, taste the rainbow!

Aabria Iyengar

[Laugh] Happy pride.

Erika Ishii

Oh, man. So you guys have questions?

Aabria Iyengar

Yeah!

Erika Ishii

You all have questions. We have some questions. I have no idea how long we've been talking about this, I could talk about this all day. Also, the fox, by the way!!

Aabria Iyengar

Oh my god!

Erika Ishii

Oh god, being like, "Hey, how ya doing, I got stepped on!" And Ame being like, "Hey, I'm gettin' dragged away, I don't want to worry you."

Aabria Iyengar
So chill! Motherfucker!

Erika Ishii
Motherfuckers!!

Aabria Iyengar
So good.

Brennan Lee Mulligan
The fox would be interested in curse words right away.

Aabria Iyengar
Yes!

Erika Ishii
Yeah!

Aabria Iyengar
Obviously!

Brennan Lee Mulligan
Obviously.

Aabria Iyengar
So good.

Brennan Lee Mulligan
I also loved Suvi saying, like, "I want to kill you."

[Aabria and Erika laugh]

Brennan Lee Mulligan
"I wanna kill you," which is so intense. And in that moment, I was so caught off guard by it as a performer, but there's just a weird little place I have to go to, to do what the fox—it's often a surprise, even to me, because it's very, like, go to pure intuition and just be like, "Okay."

Erika Ishii
[Cackle]

Aabria Iyengar
He perfectly diffuses the bomb that is Suvi every time, and it's SO funny, I'm just like, "yeah, I'm gon—what?"

Brennan Lee Mulligan

Well, especially listening to it encompass of, like, the last episode, too. I was like, "Why—" that reaction surprised me, when I did it at the recording. And then I listened to the fox saying before the thing about like—of like "I only care what people think if they can catch me." And I realized the fox literally does not care if people WANT to kill him. He only cares if they are TRYING to kill him.

Aabria Iyengar

Yes! Ugh.

Erika Ishii

[Cackle]

Aabria Iyengar

So good.

Brennan Lee Mulligan

"Okay, you wanting to kill me has literally nothing to do with me."

Aabria Iyengar

[Laugh]

Brennan Lee Mulligan

"It only is my business when you start trying."

Erika Ishii

I wanna be the fox so bad!

Aabria Iyengar

I want to be the fox when I grow up!

Erika Ishii

I wanna be the fox so bad!

Aabria Iyengar

Ugh! He's just healed! Just so well therapized!

Brennan Lee Mulligan

[Laugh]

Aabria Iyengar

How is he like this? [Whispered] I just wanna be the fox.

Erika Ishii

Yeah.

Aabria Iyengar

Okay sure! Let's do this one! This one's from Simon, who asks, "When you all imagine the scenes you're playing in, how is it rendered in your mind? You do, like, a TV show, an anime, Wes Anderson film, et cetera?"

Erika Ishii

[Cackling] You better not pretending to be at a cottage, living a little idyllic life when I get there! [Musical noises]

Aabria Iyengar

No, the fox is for sure Wes Anderson Fox.

Erika Ishii

Oh my god, yeah. He's Fantastic Mr. Fox, yeah.

Aabria Iyengar

Yep.

Erika Ishii

It's funny also, because I've learned, recently, that people don't always—when they imagine things, sometimes they just imagine the words, sometimes they imagine, like, a fully rendered out thing.

Aabria Iyengar

Yeah.

Erika Ishii

Sometimes they imagine just, like, shapes? I think I see it all very cinematically like, fully played out?

Aabria Iyengar

Same.

Erika Ishii

Yeah.

Aabria Iyengar

Mine's always a Denis Villeneuve movie.

Erika Ishii

Oh my god.

Aabria Iyengar

Just very—

Dan Choyne [Lou Wilson]

Super dark, yeah.

Aabria Iyengar

—wide, and atmospheric sounds like I can hear the kudzu whenever—

Erika Ishii

Yeah, same.

Aabria Iyengar

—whenever I think about those scenes, like, it is so empty and green, and sky with nothing in between. And you just hear that rustle that goes on for too long, and that's the thing that gets to me, you're like, there is only this, like, the bits of her fury that can be in the world. And that's terrifying.

Erika Ishii

Wow.

Aabria Iyengar

I like it. I love Orima so much!

Erika Ishii

Yeah.

Aabria Iyengar

As a bulldog wife. She's Gold.

Erika Ishii

[Cackling]

Lou Wilson

As a bulldog wife.

Aabria Iyengar

Yes. [Laugh]

Dan Choyne [Lou Wilson]

Yeah. For me, I think when I'm not talking, it's pretty cinematic, and very Games of Thrones-y, very intimate, and like lots of—Brennan, I think, is so good at detail, and so I think it's very easy to imagine the spaces, that we're playing in, but then I think once I start talking, it all kind of, like, disappears.

Aabria Iyengar

Mm.

Dan Choyne [Lou Wilson]

And it becomes very—once I actually have to engage with it, I think all of that is fun scene-setting that I do in my head while Brennan talks. And then once I start talking, that all goes away, and I'm just trying to make eye contact, or not make eye contact if that's the moment, and engage with the kind of intuitive, kind of personal aspect of it.

Aabria Iyengar

Yeah.

Brennan Lee Mulligan

Yeah, I think there's a very broad palette for envisioning this stuff? For me, there's sort of like a—I have a very—how would I put it, like... The internal set design team, like—

Aabria Iyengar

[Laugh]

Brennan Lee Mulligan

—the set design and camera work of my own internal imagination, I feel like, really changes moment to moment. Sometimes we're in you know—for this world, it's a lot of Miyazaki, there's—sometimes—but for some reason, in my imagination, it's not like it's live action versus animated, it's like, it's just seeing it with the mind's eye, in the way that you sort of always do, when you're daydreaming, or imagining something or whatever. But I think that, like—I see it very richly in my head.

Dan Choyne [Lou Wilson]

Mm.

Brennan Lee Mulligan

I only mention—like, you're talking about details, I only mention a few details of what I am imagining—

Aabria Iyengar

Ooh!

Brennan Lee Mulligan

—in my head, but it's rendered fully, anytime we're in a physical location. To me, it really is all—it's all there. But I think one of this—a good DMing skill is, picking the couple of things you can imagine, that allow everybody else to auto-populate the world correctly. Like, we described Suvi's bedroom in the governor's mansion. And it's like, well if you think of a 15 foot tall mirror, and you think of murals, and gilded columns, and a canopy bed, I don't need to tell you that there's a side table with a silver wash basin on it.

Dan Choyne [Lou Wilson]

Yeah.

Brennan Lee Mulligan
You already—

Aabria Iyengar
Yeah.

Brennan Lee Mulligan
You made that.

Erika Ishii
Yeah.

Brennan Lee Mulligan
When I told you the other details of the room, I trust everybody's interior set decorator, to populate the space with other stuff in it.

Aabria Iyengar
Wow, that's so good.

Dan Choyne [Lou Wilson]
I think you also use scent really well.

Aabria Iyengar
Yeah.

Erika Ishii
Yeah.

Aabria Iyengar
Hundo-P

Dan Choyne [Lou Wilson]
I feel like you'll mention scent a lot, which I think is, I think, underrated as a descriptor, in terms of giving you—doing the auto-populate. I think when you give scent, immediately that's like, "Well, if you smell this, then these things are going on in the space." And then you fill it with your own versions of those things.

Brennan Lee Mulligan
I also have a desire—first of all, thank you. I appreciate that.

Dan Choyne [Lou Wilson]
Whatever, dude.

Aabria Iyengar
[Laugh] Wow, Dan!

Erika Ishii

[Cackle]

Brennan Lee Mulligan

Hey Dan?

Dan Choyne [Lou Wilson]

What.

Brennan Lee Mulligan

Hey Dan? Relax, okay? I don't know you like that.

Dan Choyne [Lou Wilson]

Whatever, dude. Whatever.

Brennan Lee Mulligan

I don't know you like that.

Dan Choyne [Lou Wilson]

I gave you a compliment. Just take it!

[Everyone laughs]

Brennan Lee Mulligan

I love to describe the parts of adventures that suck. Like, going through the kudzu and being like, "It is HOT."

Aabria Iyengar

Yeah.

Brennan Lee Mulligan

"And there are bugs fuckin' everywhere." That's like the big critical thing, like—when it gets too fairy tale, when you just collapse down, you're like, "Yeah, you travel for a month and a half and you're like "What the fuck are you talking about!"

Aabria Iyengar

[Laugh]

Brennan Lee Mulligan

"You travelled for a month and a half? You're destroyed, your body—fuckin', people die on trips like that!"
You get dysentery. That shit is crazy.

Dan Choyne [Lou Wilson]
Dysentery is WILD.

Erika Ishii
Wizard dysentery.

Aabria Iyengar
Wizard dysentery. Oof.

Brennan Lee Mulligan
But, so the idea of being like, what does it mean for a Nature Spirit to be conquering this pastoral place, with just magical plant life? And it being hot, and freaky, and there's dead animals that are rotting in the woods, but it's like—but also the idea of those weird details where you're like, it's really hot, it's really scary, but also the plant life would smell. It's not a bad smell, but you've ever been in a place that has lots of sunlight, on too much plant matter?

Aabria Iyengar
Yeah.

Brennan Lee Mulligan
And there's, like, rotting plant matter underneath, and now there's fresh—so it's like chlorophyll and musk—it almost makes you—

Aabria Iyengar
It's heady.

Brennan Lee Mulligan
Yeah, it makes you like, loopy.

Erika Ishii
[Whispered] God I love that yeah. [Normal volume] Some of my favorite books pay a lot of attention to the description of smells. Erin Morgenstern's "The Night Circus" is like, this really beautiful book, and there's like a whole section specifically about smells. And she ended up sort of partnering with a scent company—

Aabria Iyengar
Ooh!

Erika Ishii
—for it? And yeah, that's something—also in immersive experiences in theaters—like Sleep No More pays close attention to the smells—

Aabria Iyengar
Yeah!

Dan Choyne [Lou Wilson]

Mm.

Erika Ishii

—in the different rooms, and for the different experiences. That's something I think about a lot.

Dan Choyne [Lou Wilson]

Now, what's a scent company make?

Erika Ishii

Do you want the—fragrances, they make fragrances.

Dan Choyne [Lou Wilson]

Like perfumes?

Erika Ishii

Yeah, perfumes, or but like—

Dan Choyne [Lou Wilson]

Okay, got it.

Aabria Iyengar

Like pumpable scents.

Erika Ishii

Yeah, pumpable scents.

Dan Choyne [Lou Wilson]

Pumpable?

Aabria Iyengar

Yeah!

Dan Choyne [Lou Wilson]

Pumpable scent?

Erika Ishii

A pumpable scent.

Dan Choyne [Lou Wilson]

Alright. We're saying—we're talking—

Aabria Iyengar
Hey Dan?

Dan Choyne [Lou Wilson]
Yeah?

Aabria Iyengar
You can't have this many enemies at the table.

Dan Choyne [Lou Wilson]
Pumpable scents?! I'm just imagining one of those things that—

Aabria Iyengar
[Laughing] A bellows!

Dan Choyne [Lou Wilson]
—Revolutionary War people had, to keep their fires going.

Erika Ishii
A bellows, yes.

Dan Choyne [Lou Wilson]
Yeah, just a guy who's like, we pay this dude minimum wage to just fucking smash lavender.

[Aabria and Erika laughs]

Aabria Iyengar
Disney does. Like, the next time you go to Disneyland—

Erika Ishii
Yeah.

Aabria Iyengar
—clock—

Dan Choyne [Lou Wilson]
Clock the pumpable scents?

Aabria Iyengar
—how many scents are getting pumped to ya.

Dan Choyne [Lou Wilson]
Okay!

Erika Ishii
Yeah. Yeah.

Aabria Iyengar
But I also think there's something interesting because like—in a way that maybe sight and sound truly isn't, everyone's got an immediate strong opinion about a smell.

Brennan Lee Mulligan
Yep. Yes.

Aabria Iyengar
You feel a way about it, so you're just like, "Oh, you've said the exact thing that makes me go, 'Great. I'm having a terrible time.'"

Brennan Lee Mulligan
Yeah, I—this was also very fun, too, because I think this episode—Port Talon, has been so much fun. And this little dip out of Port Talon has, I was—first of all, again, Taylor's sound design, the music, the creeping of the stranglers coming in, the noise of, like—whether it's the fires, or the forest, or all this stuff. It was just so intense. Orima's fuckin'—

Aabria Iyengar
Ah! So good.

Brennan Lee Mulligan
—the sound design on Orima's voice, and the idea—and also it's very interesting because I feel like, I tend to play high status—for me, I think there is a very high status thing in being, like, unbothered. Like, good villains are unbothered, but Orima is a Primal, Wild Spirit. So it's like, no, she's bothered!

[Aabria and Erika laugh]

Brennan Lee Mulligan
And it's like, in a weird way, I was like, okay, so how does that—like, she's—how do yo—you have to really be a fucking storm on top of people, if you're that upset, to stay in control of an interaction is very, I feel like, it's very challenging. But this felt like a new type of D&D play for us, after a lot of "Social, and stuff, and goals, and we're getting stuff done!" This was just like, we're out in the woods, and it's scary.

Dan Choyne [Lou Wilson]
[Chuckle]

Aabria Iyengar
Yeah.

Erika Ishii
Yeah.

Brennan Lee Mulligan

And it was, I think, our first time in the campaign getting to a situation like that, right? I mean, you guys—Ame and Suvi were wandering around Akham looking for Eursulon, but that was mostly in downtime.

Dan Choyne [Lou Wilson]

Yeah.

Brennan Lee Mulligan

This was our first, like, "We're leaving to go to a very scary place!"

Aabria Iyengar

[Laugh]

Erika Ishii

Yeah!

Dan Choyne [Lou Wilson]

And we almost got killed! Real quick!

Aabria Iyengar

Real quick!

Dan Choyne [Lou Wilson]

On both sides! I almost got strangled.

Erika Ishii

Ame—

Dan Choyne [Lou Wilson]

Luckily, Ame is out here Naram-in' it up and—

Aabria Iyengar

Yeah.

Brennan Lee Mulligan

—staying safe.

Brennan Lee Mulligan

Yeah. There's a big part of me, too, that was like, in terms of world building stuff, where you have—it's like a desire to have things—we're going to be here for so long, that there's a desire for this world to make sense, even when it makes a weird, unexpected story beat, like when I throw you guys for a loop—like

talking to Orima and being like, this is going to throw Eursulon for a loop. Like, that this doesn't go well. Or like, there's guards being like, "Don't go out there, it's dangerous."

[Aabria and Erika laugh]

Brennan Lee Mulligan
That HAS to be true!

Aabria Iyengar
Yeah!

Brennan Lee Mulligan
It has to be a thing where you go out, and they're like, "No, we're not burning—not even as good guys, you know how expensive these fucking fires are?? I promise you it's bad out there, I fuckin' promise!"

Aabria Iyengar
But I need my mother's? Blanket?

Dan Choyne [Lou Wilson]
[In unison] Blanket.

Erika Ishii
That was SO funny.

Brennan Lee Mulligan
But also in my head, there was a bit of world building, even around you guys getting out of the city that was, they're not guarding that hard, because why would you?

Aabria Iyengar
Yeah.

Brennan Lee Mulligan
You know, where it's like there is some formal presence of like, "Sorry, that's closed to the—you can't go out there," but, they don't have a fuckin' squadron ready to stop you. Everyone important is focused on keeping people from coming in, you know?

Dan Choyne [Lou Wilson]
I'm also remembering now, Suvi made a big part of being like, "We're done with the—hitting your staff on the ground and being like, let me through."

Erika Ishii
Yeah, Eursulon was like "Well can't we just—"

Dan Choyne [Lou Wilson]

Yeah, let's just run the play! And you were like, "We can't run the play anymore." So, ya know, default to plan B.

Aabria Iyengar

Yup. To a bitch that's done half of one improv class like, I got this. Wrong energy!!

Erika Ishii

[Laugh]

Dan Choyne [Lou Wilson]

"Yes And' me Eursulon, let's go!"

Erika Ishii

"Do not run out into the kudzu sister!"

Brennan Lee Mulligan

You were so mad at me, for, when. You asked me for information. Like, what's the village that I would know outside of here? Lamry.

Aabria Iyengar

That was great!

Dan Choyne [Lou Wilson]

That was rude. That was so rude.

Erika Ishii

And you were like "Fuck you dude I knew you were gonna say that!"

Aabria Iyengar

"Fuck you, of course it's gonna be gone!"

Brennan Lee Mulligan

I did say—!

Erika Ishii

Interrupting your own sentences just like, "Don't make that face at me, Brennan."

Dan Choyne [Lou Wilson]

No, because I—as soon as I was saying it, I was like you were like, "Yes," the face was: "You fool!"

Brennan Lee Mulligan

[Indignantly] What information had I not already given?

[Aabria and Erika laugh]

Brennan Lee Mulligan
The countryside is overtaken by kudzu!

Dan Choyne [Lou Wilson]
Give me the village that it makes sense to go to! Not just A Village!

Aabria Iyengar
I have a question.

Dan Choyne [Lou Wilson]
Help me defeat you!

Brennan Lee Mulligan
"Help me defeat you!"

Aabria Iyengar
If we had gone over land instead of taking the boat up, would we have encountered all of this on the land.

Brennan Lee Mulligan
Yes.

Aabria Iyengar
[Gasp]

Brennan Lee Mulligan
So, if you guys—when you guys were in Joras—first of all, there was almost no world where you guys decide to wander Akham by foot, right?

Aabria Iyengar
Yeah.

Brennan Lee Mulligan
Like, in other words, I honestly think what would have happened if, in leaving Joras, you had decided to go by land and be stealthier—you didn't trust Captain Emliss or whatever it was. And it would have been—

Aabria Iyengar
So trustworthy!

Brennan Lee Mulligan
It would have been WAY longer, too. Like, think about how long that travel—you had been traveling all the way from the southeastern point—

[Something in the room gets hit and makes a "BONG" noise.]

Brennan Lee Mulligan

—of Akham, all the way to the northern—

Aabria Iyengar

[Laugh]

Brennan Lee Mulligan

Erika is surrounded by 100 jugs.

Aabria Iyengar

[Laugh]

Brennan Lee Mulligan

You can't see it, it's—

Aabria Iyengar

Erika's got a keg of—

Erika Ishii

All filled with La Croix. And I pump it. Pump it every time.

Dan Choyne [Lou Wilson]

We got it shipped from Wisconsin.

Brennan Lee Mulligan

Yes, exactly.

Aabria Iyengar

[Laugh]

Dan Choyne [Lou Wilson]

Straight from the source.

Brennan Lee Mulligan

But I think what would have happened is you guys would have gotten to the edge of the kudzu, and you would have started to see towns that were like, "Oh, don't head to Lambry." Like, people would have warned you. Villages would have warned you.

Aabria Iyengar

Ooh.

Brennan Lee Mulligan
And probably would have warned—

Dan Choyne [Lou Wilson]
They would have warned us not to go to Lamry, specifically?

Brennan Lee Mulligan
Don't go to Lamry.

Aabria Iyengar
[Laugh]

Dan Choyne [Lou Wilson]
Oh my god, Brennan!

Brennan Lee Mulligan
Lamry is where the shrine is!

Aabria Iyengar
[Laugh]

Brennan Lee Mulligan
It's the first town outside of Port Talon! But the—yeah they would have been like—and they probably would have sent you to the water.

Aabria Iyengar
Okay.

Brennan Lee Mulligan
And they would have said, "Go to this port town and you can get a fishing— you can charter a fishing ship that'll take you to Port Talon."

Aabria Iyengar
Vibes.

Erika Ishii
That's good game design.

Aabria Iyengar
That's good game design.

Dan Choyne [Lou Wilson]
That is—nice walls. Those little walls that you don't feel, ya know.

Brennan Lee Mulligan

Yeah. But it also just makes sense, it's what would be happening. But I think what's interesting is, it would have changed a lot of our interactions because, in Port Talon, an Imperial power center, we have seen Suvi's connections come to the fore. Probably, we would have seen Ame's relationship to the towns, and townsfolk—

Aabria Iyengar

Yeah.

Brennan Lee Mulligan

—of Akham, if you had been going up the land route.

Erika Ishii

Awww.

Aabria Iyengar

Sorry, buddy!

[Aabria and Erika laugh]

Aabria Iyengar

That's on me. That's on your girl. That's on me.

Erika Ishii

So many babies to hold!

Brennan Lee Mulligan

So many babies to hold! Doing laundry for people.

Aabria Iyengar

Yeah. We're running out of gold and laundry.

Dan Choyne [Lou Wilson]

Would have taken us an extra couple weeks to get up, yeah.

Aabria Iyengar

My mom would have been so mad.

Erika Ishii

[Laugh]

Aabria Iyengar

She'd be like "You've just been doing laundry, and nothing bad's happening? And you couldn't send a text?"

Brennan Lee Mulligan

I'll answer this one from mguin. It's just a short one. "How did you develop the mythos of these powerful Spirits of Wave and Green? What were some inspirations? Great job, Taylor! Nightmare tree sounds!"

Aabria Iyengar

Yeah.

Brennan Lee Mulligan

Good job Taylor.

Aabria Iyengar

They're so good.

Dan Choyne [Lou Wilson]

Really good job.

Brennan Lee Mulligan

They are fucking great nightmare tree sounds.

Erika Ishii

God, so good.

Brennan Lee Mulligan

This is literally a one sentence answer. It's based on a lot of world mythology, I've been reading some great old Celtic folklore, Irish Celtic folklore. Erika, when we were preparing for this, gave me a ton of awesome Shinto and Japanese fairy tales.

Aabria Iyengar

Yeah!

Brennan Lee Mulligan

It's a big lot of—pantheistic, and the idea of kind of the Spirit being present in everything, and all things having a Spiritual component to them. And so, I think for the mythology, that we can get more into later in the campaign, there is a really porous spectrum of magical creatures within this world, and the boundaries between them are kind of categories created for use of the people making the categories, less so than definitive things. So a Great Spirit like Naram or Orima is different in SCALE but not in kind. They're just very powerful.

Brennan Lee Mulligan

Like, Naram and Orima are more powerful than Mr. Soup, but they're not a different kind of being. They are just great. And the term Great Spirit just refers to their greatness. They are large, they are potent, they have domain over a very vast thing, and are very old, and to the degree that they are wise, or benevolent, or cruel, or cunning, is just sort of dependent on the individual Spirit.

Erika Ishii

Yeah. In Japan, it's—you know. All the Spirits, ghost, gods, things like, there's kami, which are like gods-ish, and then bakemono, like that are monsters, and yokai that are ghosts, but they're all sort of grouped into the spiritual realm, so yeah. It's cool seeing the different types for this world, for Akham, I love—oh my god, yeah. The stranglers, who are made from decomposing bodies? Like, it's the memory of the bodies that have nourished their roots?

Aabria Iyengar

Agh! Love it.

Brennan Lee Mulligan

To me, yeah the stranglers are—they are fully plants, right? So they're not—

Erika Ishii

Yeah.

Brennan Lee Mulligan

—but it's the—the reason they form those humanoid shapes is, it's the plants who fed on that human body.

Aabria Iyengar

That's so fucked up.

Erika Ishii

So good!

Aabria Iyengar

That's so good.

Dan Choyne [Lou Wilson]

Mm!

Aabria Iyengar

What's the word for the dopamine of a cool thing, but mingled with the horror of it? Like, oh, that's fun. And terrible.

Brennan Lee Mulligan

Fun and terrible, that's the name of the game.

Aabria Iyengar

I have a question. Um. Why Suvi on mute?

Brennan Lee Mulligan

We will just have to wait until the next episode—

Aabria Iyengar

AH!

Brennan Lee Mulligan

—to find out, won't we?

Dan Choyne [Lou Wilson]

Ah!

Aabria Iyengar

Rude. Rude.

Brennan Lee Mulligan

Won't we?

Erika Ishii

Mm.

Aabria Iyengar

I mean, I like— look, I love Orima, so I'm going to ask... Where is this? This is Nairi's question. "Hi, everyone! Unbelievably amazing episode last week. Where did you all draw inspiration from, to create the figure of Orima?"

Brennan Lee Mulligan

Well, nature has its fury, and—

Aabria Iyengar

I don't think that's true!

Brennan Lee Mulligan

You don't?

Aabria Iyengar

Nah.

Brennan Lee Mulligan

Okay!

Aabria Iyengar

No. That doesn't sound right.

Erika Ishii

[Cackle]

Aabria Iyengar

[Laugh]

Brennan Lee Mulligan

I think Orima is based on a lot of other kind of, like, Great Spirit deity figures, there's a little bit of the Morrigan in her—

Aabria Iyengar

Ey!

Brennan Lee Mulligan

—from Celtic stuff. There's a little—

Erika Ishii

Angy.

Brennan Lee Mulligan

Angy. Really angy! There's a—it's not something that's true 100% of the time, but there is a commonality in a lot of great world polytheistic religions that have male and female war gods, or war divinities? That the female divinity tends to be dedicated to ferocity and rage.

Aabria Iyengar

Yeah!

Erika Ishii

Mmm.

Brennan Lee Mulligan

And that the male one is almost always about like, discipline or control? And then the female one is like the battle fury, like blood lust, et cetera. Which is cool.

Aabria Iyengar

Hell yeah.

Brennan Lee Mulligan

I love that.

Aabria Iyengar

Nice. That is very cool.

Dan Choyne [Lou Wilson]

Pit bull wife.

Aabria Iyengar
Pit bull wife!

Brennan Lee Mulligan
Pit bull wife.

Erika Ishii
Pit. Bull. Wife.

Aabria Iyengar
We love an archetype.

Dan Choyne [Lou Wilson]
We love an archetype!

Aabria Iyengar
Do you think if maybe her husband was chillin', we'd all be friends?

Brennan Lee Mulligan
Yes. I actually do think that.

Aabria Iyengar
Aww yay!

Brennan Lee Mulligan
But that's the thing, right?

Erika Ishii
Ahh!

Brennan Lee Mulligan
Orima has a temper, that—in the statue you see of them, I think, Orima's legends of real slaughter and dismay, come from before the marriage of Naram and Orima, and that there is a joy and happiness to her, when life is good and everything in her interaction stems—it's just the idea of—

Aabria Iyengar
The Taming of the Shrub! [Laugh]

Brennan Lee Mulligan
Yeah, it's the Taming of the Shrub!

Erika Ishii
[Cackling, screaming] Oh my god I love you I love you so much ohmygodohmygodohmygodohmygod.
That joke was for meee!

Aabria Iyengar

[Laugh] All for you.

Erika Ishii

[Squeal]

Brennan Lee Mulligan

Unbelievable. The—I have a question. This one's this one's from Spencer from Canada. Spencer, thank you for disclosing your nation.

Aabria Iyengar

Ha!

Erika Ishii

Mhm mhm.

Brennan Lee Mulligan

Thank you for the question Spencer. "How does it feel to explore the concept of leadership for everyone?"

Aabria Iyengar

Ooh.

Brennan Lee Mulligan

"Ame and Suvi feel, to be very opposite, and Eursulon is a natural middle ground to them."

Dan Choyne [Lou Wilson]

Mm.

Erika Ishii

Mmm.

Aabria Iyengar

Ooh.

Brennan Lee Mulligan

I have my own thoughts about this, there might even be a little bone I have to pick with this question.

Aabria Iyengar

Oooh!

Erika Ishii

Oooh!

Brennan Lee Mulligan

It's a great question, but this might be a premise here I disagree with.

Dan Choyne [Lou Wilson]

HaHA!

Aabria Iyengar

Yeah. I think for Suvi, leadership as a duty, and a thing that you will always inherit, means that she has a lot to learn about what you owe to other people, and what that means, instead of just what it means to you. I mean, we see that PLENTY in all of her interactions, especially with Ame, who is the one that will give ANY amount of pushback, and it makes Suvi's—it makes her crumble.

Erika Ishii

[Laugh]

Aabria Iyengar

She does not enjoy it! So I think there's a lot of, like—leadership means that my divine right to rule has been handed down so I shouldn't have to do anything to get you on my side, you should naturally listen to me—

Erika Ishii

Ohhh!

Aabria Iyengar

—because that is the way it's supposed to be. It's why Suvi constantly status checks herself against everyone else like, who should fall into line, and who do I have to supplicate to is like, the sort of dichotomy that she approaches the world with, so.

Erika Ishii

There is a distinct chain o' command.

Aabria Iyengar

Exactly.

Erika Ishii

Wow, yeah.

Aabria Iyengar

If we need one more reminder that she's fully a soldier, and fully like, a team player, in a very strange way. When you're on the team, you know where you're supposed to be, and everyone sort of follows chain of command, because things fall apart if you don't. And also, she's 20, so a lot of that—

Erika Ishii

[Cackle] Yeah!

Aabria Iyengar

—comes with the extra context of, she's not good at any of this yet!

Erika Ishii

Yeah, yeah. [Whispered] Oh god it's so good.

Dan Choyne [Lou Wilson]

I think Eursulon is—I mean when you're a fish out of water, I think it feels crazy to start running around pointing at people, being like, "What's up? I know how this fuckin' works, dude!" I think there's just, like any—I mean, I'm not sure Eursulon has been in a particular moment of being like, "This is what we are doing!" I think often because he has looked to the two people who are either, FROM the people who run everything, or of the land that we're in, I think Eursulon has been very comfortable, not stepping into any sort of position of leadership yet.

Erika Ishii

Hmm.

Aabria Iyengar

Yeah.

Erika Ishii

I think for Ame, leadership is not something that she would think, or say she has? I think it's more about guidance and responsibility? And there's things in the arc, that sort of show that—I think it's less about leadership, and more about stepping up, and taking responsibility—

Aabria Iyengar

[Laugh]

Erika Ishii

—whatever that means, and I think that's something that anybody can do in Ame's mind. It's like, "Oh, whoever happens to be the best at this one particular thing, or who has the best insight to it, or has the most familiarity, or—" You know, I think that's what leadership is like for Ame. It's like she is very—yeah, this is her first time out in the wider world, and she knows where things are—sort of not as much chain o' command—

Aabria Iyengar

Yeah.

Erika Ishii

—in Toma, but specifically the relationship, the interpersonal relationships between everybody and everything in Toma, and in sort of the natural order of things. And so she doesn't—she has no idea about chain o' command, I think is the whole deal, is that she just doesn't KNOW the hierarchies out there. And I'm sure that there are a lot of things, to that—because it's like, even though she is from this little village,

and—there's no way that she wouldn't have some sort of knowledge of, you know, bureaucracy, and politics, and you know, the Spirits and how they relate to the Empire and government, I'm thinking.

Erika Ishii

But like she DOESN'T know any of those things, are those part of the things that she's forgotten or just because she hasn't experienced them yet? Because she hasn't left Toma herself? Because like, we know that Grandmother Wren has a very good idea of natural order of things—

Aabria Iyengar

Yeah.

Erika Ishii

—and of leadership, and responsibility, and chain o' command. But why does not Ame not know that?

Aabria Iyengar

Ooh!

Erika Ishii

Yeah!

Brennan Lee Mulligan

Ooh, ooh!

Aabria Iyengar

I am going to say really quick before you jump in with your very good points. The reason I laughed is because I cannot hear the phrase step up without going "She's not the step witch, she's the witch that stepped up!" And that made me laugh.

Erika Ishii

[Cackling] What!?

Aabria Iyengar

And I just wanted to say you were saying a very good point, and I will always make that joke like "He's not a stepdad, he's the dad that stepped up."

Dan Choyne [Lou Wilson]

Ah, yeah.

Aabria Iyengar

It's my favorite phrase and anytime I hear it—sorry, sorry. Taylor, cut this out.

Taylor Moore

[Yelling, way in the distance] No!

[Everyone laughs]

Erika Ishii

Aw, I missed this!

Brennan Lee Mulligan

I don't know if you heard that on the podcast, but Taylor just yelled no very loudly from the other room.

Erika Ishii

From the living room, I love it.

Brennan Lee Mulligan

I think it's very—I think it's all very interesting in terms of these different kinds of... Relationships of status, which is not the exact same thing as leadership, which is not the exact same thing as hierarchy or authority. And I think it's very interesting to watch how the different characters relate to these different concepts. Suvi has the hardest row to hoe, with relationship, to all of these things, because for her, it's a group project, and it's all tied into family, is tied to institution, is tied to legacy, is tied to order, with formal chain of command, with a group of people that have set it upon themselves to provide order to the entire world, in opposition to orders that are also being imposed by other institutions of the world, that they are willing to spend blood and treasure combating.

Brennan Lee Mulligan

And that's a big fuckin' task and so, from moment to moment—the idea of leadership within a colossal global institution, is always going to be outrageously absurd, because you're being given initiative and authority, with tons of accountability, and I can make a mistake, that I don't know is a mistake, until I've made it, and then it's a huge problem, and I feel like, again, for Suvi, the idea of—her conceptions of leadership and what grants authority and what doesn't, are really skewed because she's a 20 year old, who's given this enormous task, and is trying to take initiative on her own. And I don't know, it seems impossible.

Brennan Lee Mulligan

Whereas you see—I mean it's the things—it's the absurdities of Empire, right? It's like, how the hell is this supposed to work? And then you see—but you also see her applying that rubric to everything else, and applying it to Ame, and being like, "Well Grandmother Wren, who has the respect of Steel, and transitive properties of respect, if Steel is the boss of the Citadel and she thinks Grandmother Wren matters, ipso facto, this is a fucking math problem!"

[Aabria and Erika laugh]

Brennan Lee Mulligan

You dork!

Aabria Iyengar

100%! Oof.

Erika Ishii

[Squealing, muffled] Aah I love it!

Brennan Lee Mulligan

And also being like, "Grandmother Wren is the boss of Toma," and you're like, "Well, she is respected, and heeded by the people of Toma," and you're like, "Yeah, that means she could step on those people, and they couldn't do anything!"

Erika Ishii

[Cackle]

Aabria Iyengar

Yes! And they'll love it!

Brennan Lee Mulligan

And you're like, "I guess?"

[Aabria and Erika laugh]

Brennan Lee Mulligan

"But that would never happen." "But it could!"

Aabria Iyengar

The paradigm holds!

[Aabria and Erika laugh]

Brennan Lee Mulligan

But it's this weird thing where, of course, Grandmother Wren has status in Toma, because if all you've done your whole life is help everybody, and always have good solutions to problems, like, and you go like—but it's a very funny form of Suvi's whataboutism where it's like—

[Aabria and Erika laugh]

Brennan Lee Mulligan

—"Ha ha ha! So you're telling me, Grandmother Wren always helping people for 50 years wasn't a long con to gain power and authority?"

Aabria Iyengar

Yes. Yes. And she has it! She did it!

Brennan Lee Mulligan

She did it! She has power and authority, for sure! But the point of Eursulon being a middle ground, that's the premise that I would disagree with. I think seeing Eursulon's... Eursulon's motives and desires are such that, it seems like he is a neutral party, when what I REALLY think it is, is that Eursulon's goals ambitions and desires do not fall within the realm of the ideological gap between Suvi and Ame.

Aabria Iyengar

Yeah.

Brennan Lee Mulligan

That's my—my take on that would be like—you know it's like, if Ame is, like, in direction—like, Ame and Suvi have parts of them that are opposed along the X axis and Eursulon is on the Y axis, it's a 3 dimensional—

[Aabria and Erika laugh]

Brennan Lee Mulligan

—there's another thing going on here—

Erika Ishii

Yeah.

Brennan Lee Mulligan

—and doesn't see—like, when Eursulon has a problem, he solves it himself.

Aabria Iyengar

Yeah.

Erika Ishii

[Softly] Awwww.

Brennan Lee Mulligan

He goes to get the sword. When—I really thought about the interaction with Ghost, when it was about selling the cloak, and you being like, "I'm not giving Finley fuckin' money," and Ame being like, "but you have—" and Ame squared up like—

Erika Ishii

"But you HAVE to!"

Brennan Lee Mulligan

"But you have to!"

Aabria Iyengar

"That's my mom's cloak!"

[Aabria and Erika laugh]

Brennan Lee Mulligan

Yeah, and morals—and I think if you—to me, the reason I would say Eursulon is not a middle ground, or neutral, or peacemaker character, is Eursulon didn't step in and go, "Now now, you disagree, but can we not see that here we have the same goal?"

Aabria Iyengar

[Cackle]

Erika Ishii

Yeah.

Brennan Lee Mulligan

What Eursulon did was he said, "Can you loan me some money?"

Erika Ishii

AGH!!!

Brennan Lee Mulligan

And did a total—I think Eursulon is not a neutral party, Eursulon has an ideology, that sees himself as being separate from all institutions—

Aabria Iyengar

Ooh!

Erika Ishii

[Gasp] Oh my god!

Brennan Lee Mulligan

—and is not an institutionalist, he is, "I am on my own. Even when I'm with friends, it's still up to me to do the things I need to do," which is both a very heroic, knightly impulse—

Aabria Iyengar

[Whispered] Oh it's so sad.

Brennan Lee Mulligan

—and also, a very wild animal impulse.

Dan Choyne [Lou Wilson]

Mm.

Aabria Iyengar
Yeah.

Brennan Lee Mulligan
Of like, "I'm relying on myself, and if things are outside of my ability to—" which is wild, what's the one thing that—that Eursulon has ever pushed back on the party on? Was the implication that you could change the world. That's the one time he's ever gotten loud—

Aabria Iyengar
FUCK.

Erika Ishii
[Moaning]

Brennan Lee Mulligan
—and the one time he's ever said, like, "I'm not fuckin' doing it. It's the fuckin' Empire. Get it together." And so that was a moment of NOT being a neutral party.

Aabria Iyengar
Yeah.

Brennan Lee Mulligan
So I think Eursulon's ideology is about the self and about knowing his limits.

Erika Ishii
Well, Mr. Choyne, you came here on a very illuminating episode.

Dan Choyne [Lou Wilson]
How about it!

Erika Ishii
Yeah.

Aabria Iyengar
Woo!

Dan Choyne [Lou Wilson]
I'm sorry about yelling at you guys. The "whatever" was—it was over the line and I'm sorry.

Aabria Iyengar
Oh my gosh!

Dan Choyne [Lou Wilson]

And you know what? Pumpable scents, that's totally a thing. And I'm sorry that I ever called it out, or tried to make it weird, and Erika, I'm just sorry. Just a big ol' sorry. And you can—ya know, it's like a get out of jail free card, you could hold on to that until I do something wrong.

Aabria Iyengar

I love Mr. Choyne.

Erika Ishii

Thank you. Well, we'll be sure to have you back again next week.

Aabria Iyengar

We have to.

Dan Choyne [Lou Wilson]

Great.

Erika Ishii

Uhh, you know, next week—

Brennan Lee Mulligan

Sorry, we're going to have Dan Coin back next week?

Dan Choyne [Lou Wilson]

Choyne!

Aabria Iyengar

Choyne.

Erika Ishii

Choyne.

Brennan Lee Mulligan

Whatever.

[Aabria and Erika laugh]

Brennan Lee Mulligan

[Vindictively] See, doesn't feel very nice!

Dan Choyne [Lou Wilson]

I'm gonna kill you. I'm gonna kill you, dude. When you walk outside—I was going to ask you to run—

Brennan Lee Mulligan

[Exaggerated] With THIS... Ray gun!? Taylor, put in the sounds of the ray gun!

[Taylor does not put in the sounds of the ray gun.]

Brennan Lee Mulligan

[Mouth noises] "Pew pew pew!"

Dan Choyne [Lou Wilson]

Ah! Aah!

Aabria Iyengar

Oh NO!!!

Dan Choyne [Lou Wilson]

I'm being irradiated!

Erika Ishii

Ohhh boy!

Aabria Iyengar

Dan!

Erika Ishii

Well! Shoot.

Aabria Iyengar

[Weeping] Daaaaan!

Erika Ishii

Alright, we'll find somebody else for next week, I guess.

Brennan Lee Mulligan

[Laughs]

Erika Ishii

Alright. Okay. Okay. Thank you so much for joining us for this Fireside.

[Aabria and Erika laugh]

Erika Ishii

It's been so fun to actually be here, at this Fireside, in person, seeing your beautiful faces.

Aabria Iyengar
Yeah!

Erika Ishii
Alright, everybody, thank you so much. I'm Erika Ishii!

Brennan Lee Mulligan
I'm Brennan Lee Mulligan!

Aabria Iyengar
[Weeping] Daaan! I'm Aabria Iyengar!

Lou Wilson
Dan Coin is dead—Choyne. Choyne.

Brennan Lee Mulligan
SEE??

Lou Wilson
Fuck you, dude!

Aabria Iyengar
[Laugh]

Erika Ishii
Alright, goodbye everybody!

[Lilting pipe flute flutters above drum beats and choral tones as the song of the Spirit Realm from the Children's Adventure starts]

Lou Wilson
Ah hoo hoo!

All In Unison
Ah hoo hoo! Crackle crackle!