

# Worlds Beyond Number

## The Wizard, the Witch, and the Wild One: Episode 13 “Of the Gentle Sea” Final Version

[World's Beyond Number intro music rises urgently with orchestral strings and flute.]

Aabria Iyengar

This is the sound of Worlds Beyond Number.

[The other instruments fade into a lone flute and violin pluck.]

Brennan Lee Mulligan

You raise the sword high. You feel pure emotion rippling, the blood, still flowing in your own veins, of this Great Spirit. Describe for me what happens, as Eursulon touches his Breath, for the first time in years. You can feel the edge of it again, finally. There is a part of you that has been hidden away, for years and years and years, because you have been trying to hide in the world of mortals. You're not trying to hide in this moment, and you feel that you can access something of yours, which is from a realm that is eternal and infinite.

Lou Wilson

The feeling starts in Eursulon's hands, right at the fingertips.

[Mystical horns slowly building to a crescendo.]

Lou Wilson

It is, I think a mixture of life, and joy, it is an energy, an enthusiasm, an excitement. I think Eursulon has spent so much of the last, some odd years since he found himself in the mortal world, hiding, Glamoured. And it is in this moment, this feeling, is, I think, very much attached to being in his body again, and knowing that his body, and his being, and who he is, is not of this world. And so I think it's a consciousness, almost like a body scan in meditation, of feeling his fingers again, and them feeling alive and more of that feeling progressing into his hands, feeling the sword, really feeling the sword, feeling that it is not of THIS world, but of HIS world, where HE comes from.

Lou Wilson

That is the energy, that is of him, that is coursing through him, that HE wields, up the arms, into the shoulders, filling his chest with the warmth, the feelings of play, the feelings of community and family, that were shared amongst his brothers and sisters, and the Great Bear, the feeling of his home, where he is from, I think, resonates deeply in his chest, as he brings the sword down against the spear.

Brennan Lee Mulligan

You bring the sword high overhead. It cuts through water swifter than through air, this sword was made for a Great One of the Sea, and nothing of the water can slow the swiftness of its blade. It comes ringing down.

[Swell of horns, a low explosion, ringing steel.]

Brennan Lee Mulligan

You immediately become a level 2 Paladin.

[Aabria and Erika shriek. Triumphant music.]

Brennan Lee Mulligan

You are a Spirit, which means that for you, the the flesh and the spirit are one, your body is of the supernal realm, you are here in this world as living, breathing Spirit made manifest. You immediately access your ability to cast spells for the first time. Had you lived to adulthood in the world of Spirits, you would have learned this from your father, or from Kalaya, or even from your nasty brother Anarion. But, it comes to you. After years of being asleep,

you are awake again. After years of holding your breath, you breathe again, and you feel these powers flood your body.

Brennan Lee Mulligan

For those listening at home, on a mechanical level, you immediately gain access to a new fighting style, you immediately gain access to the ability to cast spells, you may cast two first level spells per long rest and you immediately gain access to Divine Smite.

[A gong rings.]

Brennan Lee Mulligan

As you smite, what is the—is there any visible energy when you access that Spirit, is there a visible magical effect that can be seen or felt, or is it invisible, as the sword Divine Smites?

Lou Wilson

There is no visible magical effect, but there is a sensory one, that, I think if there were any humans down here, I think wouldn't be as intense, but between Spirits, I think there is, in this moment, a scent that comes rushing back to Eursulon, and it is that of honey with song. It is a moment, in striking, that there is a deep and intense connection with the Spirit World and its beauty, that Eursulon brings into this mortal world with his strike.

Brennan Lee Mulligan

Even underwater, breathing as you are here, the smell of honey, of sweet and salt, in the mixing of the briny deep, with the smell of honey. And there is a note, almost of song. Perhaps only wild things can hear it, past the register of what humans could hear, although maybe some wild part of even a human would hear beneath their consciousness, and know to be afraid.

[A low grumbling of some sort of beast.]

Brennan Lee Mulligan

[Shattering noise.]

Aabria Iyengar

[Excited cry.]

Brennan Lee Mulligan

With that choral note—and I mean choral here, not of the sea, but choral with an h—of that—

Lou Wilson

It can be both!

Brennan Lee Mulligan

It can be both. It can be both!

[Explosion.]

Brennan Lee Mulligan

The spear is shattered. [WOOSH!] You see, as you shatter the coral, that the spar of coral actually within it does contain, you see, just the butt of the spear, like a beautiful piece of wrought Spirit metal, in the coral that breaks free, and suddenly Naram— [Whoom!]

[Mystical reverberation, ethereal music.]

Brennan Lee Mulligan

—is gone! [Whoosh] You see this massive form—you are a creature of the forest, and you are here in the sea, so seeing a creature this big move this swiftly, and with this much agility, is frightening. Naram swims, with the mass

and force of a beast greater than the size of the tall ships in the harbor, with all of the effortless of a dancer. And you, in this moment, have bought exactly what you wished. You have kept your word and seen your quest through. And now the hour comes to pay the price. Your choice to expose yourself in this way comes due. I'm going to need you to pick three ability scores to give me saving throws with. And, I would say, you may pick any you wish, but if you choose your two strongest, the third one must be your weakest.

[Sinister music]

Lou Wilson

We'll do charisma, constitution—no. Dexterity. You said if I pick my two strongest yes, I have to pick my weakest. We're not going to do that, so we're going to do charisma, constitution, and dexterity.

Brennan Lee Mulligan

You stand in a trap made to catch a god. The difficulty for these saving throws will be 23.

Aabria Iyengar

Oh my gosh.

Lou Wilson

Guys, don't worry. I add plus 1 to saves!

Aabria Iyengar

[Laugh]

Lou Wilson

I add plus 1 to saves!

Brennan Lee Mulligan

It's possible that for at least one of these, you will need to roll a Nat 20 on the die.

Lou Wilson

I can get away with an 18.

Lou Wilson

Okay.

Lou Wilson

Everybody relax, I can get away with an 18.

[Brennan and Aabria laugh.]

Lou Wilson

Okay. [Sigh] This is terrifying.

Aabria Iyengar

[Laugh.]

Lou Wilson

Okay. We'll begin with charisma.

Brennan Lee Mulligan

Here we go.

Lou Wilson

That's a failure.

Brennan Lee Mulligan  
Okay. Let's go ahead and do the other two.

Lou Wilson  
That's a failure.

Brennan Lee Mulligan  
Dexterity fails.

Lou Wilson  
That. Is a failure.

[Aabria and Erika gasp.]

Brennan Lee Mulligan  
Failing the Charisma saving throw, you are placed in a cylinder of antimagic.

[Reverberating boom, electrical buzzing.]

Brennan Lee Mulligan  
No magic will avail you, whether cast from yourself or from outside this place. On your dexterity failure, you are also restrained. Within the cone of antimagic, a helix of wizardry, of pure runic light—

[Discordant tones.]

Brennan Lee Mulligan  
—begins to cross the meridians of your body, and as the projected light of words touches your wrists and your ankles, you are fixed to the sea floor.

[Harsh ringing.]

Brennan Lee Mulligan  
As you fail your constitution saving throw, you are given three levels of exhaustion.

[Another ringing sound.]

Brennan Lee Mulligan  
For these game terms, "Restrained" means your speed is zero. "Antimagic" means no magic, external or internal, can be availed to you in this moment. The sword Wavebreaker falls to your side completely—or, is within your hand, but similarly restrained. And with that constitution saving throw to go through the effects of three levels of exhaustion simultaneously. Just so that people know the game information, you have disadvantage on ability checks, your speed is halved even if you were able to get away from the restrained condition, you have disadvantage on attack rolls and saving throws.

Brennan Lee Mulligan  
What happens in the moment that Naram leaves? There's a reason you've been hiding your joy. You weren't a fool to hide it. There's a joy from your world that is greater than anything that can be expressed here, and it lets people know who and what you are. The smell of honey, the note of song, is supernal. And, as you invoke it and assume the mantle of a true Spirit, which is what you are, a Wild One. You come out of hiding to do something heroic, and the cost you pay for revealing yourselves, is that the great machine above you knows what you are.

[Harsh ringing, reverberation, the sound of a wave traveling through water. Harsh buzzing.]

Brennan Lee Mulligan

Magic comes rocketing down. As Naram leaves, you are transfixed under this column of sickly green light. The green of it illuminates and catches currents and motes of sea debris overhead. [Bwoom] And then, the silvery bright, almost like, lasers, concentrated beams, that project words—wrists, ankles, across your midsection, over your solar plexus, and you feel yourself rooted to the ground in a way that you can't fight. You could try to break a chain, but it's almost as though these words have been put on you and, in some way, the universe believes these words more than it believes you.

Brennan Lee Mulligan

And, in that final moment, you can feel that the constitution effect, is ongoing. On top of the words, on top of the green light sapping magic from this place, this tower is killing you. You can feel it driving the spirit away from you. But, perhaps these wizards don't know that if you drive the spirit away from a Spirit, there is nothing left. It is here to try to sanitize something, which cannot be cleaned without disappearing. And, you can feel that Naram was so vast, that this effect would—he healed from this faster than it could hurt him. That is not true for you.

Brennan Lee Mulligan

You are a cub of the Great Bear, who has come into your full adult power in this moment, but compared to Naram, who has seen the boundless oceans and ruled over them for countless aeons, this tower will... Unmake you. Pressed to the bottom of the sea floor, what is Eursulon feeling in this moment?

[Building suspenseful horror music.]

Lou Wilson

I think, having touched that, that—his breath, again. I think there is a moment of terror, I think especially as the constitution save has failed, and Eursulon feels the—feels the weight of the magic that has bound him, and the energy and will leaves his body. I think there's a moment of terror and fear, that is, I think quickly replaced by hope, and an image of Port Talon where the witchfires do not burn.

[Horror music fades away, replaced by reverent pan flutes.]

Lou Wilson

And where the derrick does not cast its strange glow over the city. And that THAT. If that—if I must feel this way for that, then that is a good thing.

Brennan Lee Mulligan

Acceptance. Bright fire burns in your heart. There have been many years of fear, and at long last you've found something worth being afraid for.

[Music fades out. Creaking wood, lapping waves, a seagull cries overhead. Nautical music.]

Brennan Lee Mulligan

In the harbor, the Imperial warship sails behind a tiny rowboat.

Erika Ishii

[Laugh]

Brennan Lee Mulligan

Ame, you head back to the harbor, the fox looking hither and yon. You're maybe like another 15 yards from the harbor, you know, you're scooting back slowly in the rowboat. The wind shifts over the bay. Whitecaps from small waves crisscross at an unfamiliar angle. On the far horizon, a little bit of sunlight breaks through, just enough to illuminate the white wing of a gull, as it suddenly shifts direction. You know something has happened, under the waves. Eursulon is in trouble. But Naram is not. A moment of great tension. You see the wind, the ocean is receding.

Erika Ishii

I feel it, as almost... A ripple through the tides, that shift in the wind. Something smells wrong, like electricity, like that smell before a thunderstorm. I have my tiny boat, pursued by the might of the Empire. But I close my eyes, let one hand trail through the water. I switch, almost, to a different kind of vision, to a different kind of understanding.

[Music swells]

Erika Ishii

And I speak to the creatures of the deep, whoever might be listening, the barnacles on the hull, the plankton permeating every inch of the seawater, and I beg them for help.

Brennan Lee Mulligan

I'm going to ask for an insight check, and you see, as you reach your hand in and begin to work this magic, the fox leans over, and for a moment, for all of his glibness and trickery, does something I don't think you necessarily have seen him do before, which is he can tell you're doing some great magic. And you see that he pops his two little paws up on the side of the boat, and sniffs the water around your hand, as though adding his keen hearing, to whatever spell you are attempting to cast. Give me insight with advantage. If you can get a 25 you will have perfect knowledge of the events happening underneath, but at least a 15 will give you some.

Erika Ishii

That's a dirty 20.

Brennan Lee Mulligan

The following events unfold: your hand touches the water. You hear, and as you hear it, you can almost see it in your mind's eye. You open yourself to the secret movements of the world. The fish in the harbor, swimming through the rocky shoals. Herring, crabs, barnacles, small minnows, a great deep saltwater pike swims nearby, and out past that, past the derrick, a Great One.

[Low tuba noise.]

Brennan Lee Mulligan

Naram vanishes into the inky depths. And as soon as he is gone, the great creature—the Great Wild One—[Whoosh]—turns around, scintillating eyes hidden under fathoms of dark seawater, but with enough to turn and see, your friend, Eursulon pinned to the seafloor under the derrick, and you see, and hear, Naram. And suddenly you hear the voice of that man dancing with his wife in the fountain.

Naram, the Wavelord (Brennan)

Oh no... Little brother.

Brennan Lee Mulligan

As he beholds Eursulon beneath the derrick. On a 20, you do not have perfect knowledge of this. So, you are going to gain some knowledge of Naram's mental state here, either way. Do you—but on a 20, I'm going to make you choose. Do you want perfect knowledge of what is going on with Naram in this moment, or do you want to split your knowledge so that you understand SOME of what Naram is thinking and feeling, and also understand some of what Eursulon is thinking and feeling.

Erika Ishii

In some ways, I've always been asked to choose the greater good and, my role as the communicator between Spirits. Every part of my training, has been geared towards focusing on this Great One, this is my first time as an adult, awake and feeling a Great Spirit. This is what I've been trained for. But. Eursulon is my brother. I spend—I give up—a portion of that understanding, and of my training, to focus also on my brother.

Brennan Lee Mulligan

Splitting your focus, you can hear and feel Eursulon, and I think, exactly as Lou described it. You feel Eursulon, envisioning a world—envisioning Port Talon without the sickly glow of the derrick, in the nighttime harbor, or

without the choking smoke and ash of the witchfires. You see that that was the quest BEHIND this quest, that there was a dream Eursulon had for this place. You have an imperfect vision—but still something—of Naram. And on a 20 you can connect to him. You feel the ability that he—it is not that you have cast some spell that allows you to speak with a Great Spirit almost like, a mile away from you, but you understand that Naram can hear everything, and will have his focus trained on the words of a witch.

Brennan Lee Mulligan

Imperfectly. His mind is so vast and powerful, but you can feel it rippling through the sea, and you also think that Naram is particularly an unguarded Spirit. He is deeply honest, and open. He is frozen in a moment of crisis, between two impossible choices. He cannot let, what he now knows to be the little cub he saved in the world of Spirits, now a full grown warrior, who has SAVED him from entrapment, and horror, at the hands of this derrick. He CANNOT let Eursulon befall this fate.

Brennan Lee Mulligan

But in this moment of crisis, where he must act quickly, Eursulon may well die before anything or anyone can reach him. The only two choices that come to him in this moment are... Destruction. There is a path of destruction, in which Naram can make sure that Eursulon is saved. You do not think it is a path of INDISCRIMINATE destruction, but you cannot see perfectly what Naram's plan is. But on a 20 insight you know that Naram has dedicated his entire life to helping the people of Port Talon. But there is a path of destruction, in which he can save your brother.

Brennan Lee Mulligan

The other path that occurs to him, and is maybe in his nature to always consider first, is a path of tremendous, and permanent sacrifice. Ame. He is frozen in a moment of crisis, between one in which the wrath of the Spirit must be meted out, even by a gentle Wavelord, in order to see that Eursulon is saved. Or, perhaps, a sacrifice, that will see the magic of the world reduced by some great measure forevermore. He must choose one of these, and he must choose it now lest everything be lost. You feel the fox's presence, and suddenly this great thing is made simple. Primal. Animalistic. You almost hear the fox's voice in your own mind, truly doing the work of your familiar.

The Fox (Brennan)

[Echoing mystically] Eursulon will be safe either way. Naram will see to that. Does Naram pay the price, or the wizards?

Erika Ishii

I pluck a leaf, a kudzu leaf, from my bag, and I gently let it float down to the waves.

Ame (Erika)

In all things, there must be balance... And those that do not abide by the balance of the universe must pay the price.

Brennan Lee Mulligan

Some part of you, that has been blocked by a curse, remembers suddenly the words of Grandmother Wren.

Grandma Wren (Brennan)

[Echoing whisper] It's not a witch's job to make perfect choices, just right ones.

Brennan Lee Mulligan

You reach out, and in this moment do exactly what witches, for generations before you have done. Mediate the eternal ebb and flow, between the world of Spirits and the mortal world. The sea explodes.

[Rumbling that builds to an explosion. A beastly roar. Wailing singers.]

Brennan Lee Mulligan

Screams erupt from all over Port Talon, as a beast of the sea, visible even from the heights of the wall, surges from the deep. [Roar.] Tendrils of a lionfish [Whoosing] move, as a spar of bone, held in one tendril, erupting from the front of the creature, like the massive tusk of a narwhal, strike and shatter the green gem at the top of the tower—

[Clash sound effect, rumbling]

Brennan Lee Mulligan

—and tendrils grasp the derrick, and with a mighty [Roar.] The noise of screaming steel, being bent by a God of the Waves echoes over the harbor. Eursulon, deep beneath the ocean floor, the light pinning you to the seabed suddenly shifts, drowned out by every one of Naram's white and pupiless eyes, suddenly shifting into iridescent indigo, red, orange, yellow, green [Roar] as the iridescent landscape of light, shifts over the sea, in incandescent rage. In a moment, a dozen wizards aboard the various decks of the derrick go flying into the sea as the entire structure is warped and bent.

[Rumbling, screaming]

Brennan Lee Mulligan

And we're going to cut to Suvi.

[Aabria and Erika scream]

Brennan Lee Mulligan

[Laugh]

Lou Wilson

Perfect timing.

Aabria Iyengar

[Screaming] Holy shit that's so cool! I've been sitting here not screaming for so long.

Brennan Lee Mulligan

In the room of Eursulon in the Kalabel Chantry, a bed, that you know Eursulon cannot sleep in, is perfectly mended. The sheets crisp and folded. The quilt once again restored. The struts of wood underneath, and the posts of the bed, all in their place flush, to the window, perfectly centered, the pillows even, slightly, fluffed. Suvi, as you complete this task, what's going on in your mind, knowing that Eursulon and Ame have sprinted away from this place?

Aabria Iyengar

I think Suvi is just, lost in a couple of very big realizations today. The first, sort of facing down. I think there's nothing more harrowing than being faced with like, an irrefutable truth about yourself. And, after seeing Galani, and having that realization of what her actual status is, and the way she is protected, by Steel, by her parents, even after her death, what she is to the Citadel, and what she is to them, is sort of... Kind of blanking her out. And I think, even trying to process that, the moment her friends took off, she had that secondary realization of, "I am a human, I'm a wizard, this is who I am."

Aabria Iyengar

And I—I remember so many times in lectures, even though there was never a lot of information about Spirits, about Wild Ones, that they are deeply unknowable, and do what they will. Just having Eursulon run out the door, and Ame immediately run after, after everything they've seen, Suvi can't justify it in her mind, and she has sort of released them too. Wizards are unknowable, and witches cannot be understood, or corralled, or controlled, so she has let them go away, and is trying to find herself again, fingers tapping, restoring order, because that's what she knows, and that's where she's safe.

Brennan Lee Mulligan

Defining the boundaries is a really helpful thing, to soothe a mind that tries to create systems, and make meaning, and provide order. And by setting the boundaries of, "This bed. I can bring this bed to order. I can restore, and mend, and make right." And looking at it completed in front of you, whatever else has happened in these past weeks since leaving the Citadel on your first big adventure as an adult, who knows what can be made of all this great mess, and I think you think of Steel, and the fact that her bed seems like the entire world. At the door, you hear

[Knocking, door opening]

Guild Mage Morrow (Brennan)

Apprentice Archmage. Once again, may I just say, so delighted that you were recovered, my goodness!

Suvi (Aabria)

[Chuckle]

Guild Mage Morrow (Brennan)

We were in a tizzy! I've managed to hear, that it's possible that, um, the Sword of the Citadel is en route?

Suvi (Aabria)

She will be here soon, yes.

Guild Mage Morrow (Brennan)

[Delighted.] In-credible. I cannot believe that our little far flung hamlet is receiving such honored company! Is she—and forgive me for being forward—is she on her way because you mentioned the project?

Suvi (Aabria)

I did mention it to her, yes.

Guild Mage Morrow (Brennan)

[Laugh.] I am—oh! I'm tickled pink! I'm simply delighted! Well! I expected—you know, the reason—I showed you for pure academic interest, so I have no—but. If there's any—what am I trying to say? I'm so sorry. I'm just so delighted that the Sword of the Citadel is going to be here!

Suvi (Aabria)

I'm sure there's a lot of preparations you need to see to.

Guild Mage Morrow (Brennan)

Actually, at this point—

Suvi (Aabria)

[Sigh.] Oh no...

Guild Mage Morrow (Brennan)

—everything sort of just—

[Aabria and Erika laugh.]

Guild Mage Morrow (Brennan)

Actually, at this point, everything is just sort of running itself, there's sort of—there's a tremendous number of fail safes, and—so it's really just whenever she—

[Explosion.]

Brennan Lee Mulligan

Through the window—

[Blaring Imperial horns. Mystical chanting.]

Brennan Lee Mulligan

—no perception check required. Each of you sees a monster of the sea, rise up. You watch the ocean shift. All currents—the water recedes from the bay, to flow towards Naram. His massive form erupts. You hear screams from the streets and towers around you.

[Distant screams]

Brennan Lee Mulligan

This place is—literally it's like, the tower is like a speck, but everyone knows that they're seeing something vaster and taller than a building—even though it's like, smaller in their vision, they're watching a monster tear a fortress apart. Naram's glow, the scintillating begins to move into those frequencies of red, yellow, orange, almost like a flickering flame across his eyes, matching that kind of like, lionfish coloration. The tower shifts, and you see Morrow, who's sort of always a shiny, waxy, red—

[Laugh]

Brennan Lee Mulligan

—of just sort of like splotchy, blushing, and fawning, go as white as a ghost. And he goes

[Tense, terrifying horn music.]

Guild Mage Morrow (Brennan)

No, no! The creature!!

Brennan Lee Mulligan

He runs to the window.

[Creaking hinges, footsteps break into a run.]

Brennan Lee Mulligan

Leaps off the balcony and, moving his hands, casts fly on himself, summoning a staff into his hand. His voice bellows out over the courtyards.

Guild Mage Morrow (Brennan)

[Echoing magically.] Wizards of the Scepter's Chorus! Make for the derrick at once, the creature has escaped!

Brennan Lee Mulligan

And begins to fly out towards the harbor.

[Everyone laughs]

Erika Ishii

[Laughing] That was—the look on Suvi's face!

Aabria Iyengar

There is a moment where Suvi puts things together. Eursulon sprinting. Ame following. Naram free. The wizards disheveled. And Suvi has found her new paradigm, and it has been proven incredibly correct. Wild Ones will do what they will. Orima threatened our lives a day ago. And even in her most angry—like, in her great fury of the like, "maybe the wild ones get what they get," I think that flows in both directions, and it seems right, and fitting. And Suvi will watch, quietly, as the wizards of the Scepter's Chorus flow out towards the sea, and I'm going to go back to my room, and open the book, and read quietly.

[Door shuts]

Erika Ishii

[Excited grunting]

Brennan Lee Mulligan

You go to your room, and literally as you sit and open the book to start reading your parents' spells in the window past you, literally picture the flying monkeys from the Wizard of Oz.

[Aabria and Erika laugh]

Brennan Lee Mulligan

It's just cream robes, shaven headed wizards, summoning staves, flying as fast as possible out over the harbor as you just read. And gray clouds just start to whip up in the sky overhead.

Aabria Iyengar

What am I going to do? Go and die with the bad wizards? No, it's fine. We'll stay here.

Lou Wilson

Keep it on ice.

Aabria Iyengar

Yeah, she said keep it on ice. Read your book.

Brennan Lee Mulligan

Ame you are in your rowboat. You feel the feeling of going over a bump in the road in your stomach, as Naram's wrath just draws the ocean to him. All of the—you hear the cracking of wood. About half the boats in the harbor break their keels as the harbor just recedes about 50ft. Just [Woosh sound] bam. Your rowboat's fine because it's only a couple of feet, but the whole harbor just drops. You're looking at kelp and seaweed and barnacles. People are screaming, cargo floods out of like, broken ships.

Brennan Lee Mulligan

Just, the water moves to him. He just wants more volume to work with. So the whole sea shifts and suddenly boats are broken, people are screaming. And you see the boat that was following you miraculously avoids some of these new spars of stone whips around and goes "Open Fire!" And a wave of cannons moves out from this ship to fire on Naram across the harbor. It's the edge of their longest distance. Most of their guns, you know, or most of their spell weaponry won't even work. Scintillating spirals of angry green and orange light erupt from these massive glowing gems at the side of the ship.

Brennan Lee Mulligan

You can feel wizards inside directing the ship's weaponry out towards Naram. The magic spirals with all of the lethal force of the entire Imperium. And as it touches the softness of Naram's body, pushes it inwards like a finger gently touching a child's cheek, before it is repelled completely harmlessly. You see the ship sort of looking in horror. Ame, what do you do in this moment? The top of the pier is now like 40ft up. It's like your rowboat is kind of at the edge of the water. You'd have to climb up the pier now to get to land. You see the fox looks around and goes,

The Fox (Brennan)

Whooooaaa!

Erika Ishii

Wow. Yeah, I just hang on to the fox and pet him. I watch.

Brennan Lee Mulligan

Hell yeah.

Erika Ishii

My team's doing great.

Brennan Lee Mulligan

My team's doing great! Okay, Suvi, give me an arcana check just to see how much you can read before—

Aabria Iyengar

[Whispering] Unfortunate. We're back, baby. Eleven.

Brennan Lee Mulligan

Cool. You open the book just ever so briefly and a small helix of spiraling magic—it literally looks like the kind of thing where the light in the room just spirals so this is almost like a filter effect on the room, where everything just twists inward in a spiral. And as it twists back, Galani is standing in the room, and she looks at you and says,

Galani (Brennan)

Suvi, are you all right?

Aabria Iyengar

I'm fine.

Galani (Brennan)

You are safe here. Alright, remain here in the chantry. I need to keep you safe, but that creature must be dealt with.

Suvi (Aabria)

What do you think you're going to do?

Galani (Brennan)

[Tersely] Whatever I can.

Brennan Lee Mulligan

And you see that she walks, opens the window of your room, and she begins to fly out across the harbor.

Lou Wilson

Everybody's Supermaning out these windows, man.

Brennan Lee Mulligan

As she heads over the harbor, Ame, you see her overhead. That entire canonnade from that ship does nothing. Galani raises her staff, touches her tongue with the ring finger of her left hand, and pulls a rune off of her tongue that moves from sound into visible writing, releases it from her finger, and the two dimensional square becomes a three dimensional cube, becomes a four dimensional something else, rotating through space. It strikes one of the eyes of Naram. He is going to roll a saving throw. He rolls a natural one and uses a legendary resistance. So dice be damned, he goes, "I'm a god, and I'm going to resist a number of things every day." But Galani burns through some limited resource of Naram. You see, she says,

Galani (Brennan)

[Yelling, echoing] I am Galani, Abjuror of the Citadel, Shield of the Imperium. [Audio fades out slowly] Creature, you will not threaten—

Brennan Lee Mulligan

Eursulon. Deep under the waves, you see the base of Naram's form move, from the scintillating tendrils of a creature of the deep, of this lionfish leviathan. Suddenly, you see beautiful bare feet and the edge of a blue robe. And the entire city, for a flicker of a moment, sees this monster as a 150 foot tall, beautiful man. Just for a moment. And, Ame, you can catch it, and you wonder if everyone else can. As he sees Galani flying at him, the expression he wears on his face in this moment, where he shows his glamour, right, the form he wears so that humans can read his expression, is a look at Galani, of deep paternal disappointment, and of frustration at the lack of decency being shown.

Brennan Lee Mulligan

He looks at her, having resisted her incredibly powerful spell, at some cost. The gods of Umora are great, but they are not omnipotent. If there were a hundred Galanis here, this battle would go to their favor. Absolutely. And it still

may, even with just one Abjuror of the Citadel. However, Naram's disappointment is not ineffectual. As Galani flies towards him, he raises a hand. A spear longer than ships stretches from his hand as Sea Calmer is pointed at the horizon. He begins to move the point of the spear, tracing the horizon.

Brennan Lee Mulligan

And Ame, you see, miles away, the horizon is shifting as you realize that the water of the ocean is being risen hundreds of feet in the air. Beautiful muscles of his shoulder ripple, the seawater moving down his face is joined by sweat as a god concentrates. And you see Galani look at him, knowing deep in her bones that her death is at hand. He brings the spear across and moves it and it begins to cross Port Talon as it must to connect with Galani. And as Galani puts up every ward she can in front of it, which, I think, Suvi, even as a glimpse through the window you can tell when a wizard doesn't fully believe that a spell is going to work.

Aabria Iyengar

Yeah, oof.

Brennan Lee Mulligan

She brings it up. She is in a sudden scintillating gyroscope of spinning rings of magic. And Ame, you are still connected to Naram's voice and I think, Eursulon, even deep underneath you feel in your blood still Naram look, as Galani is certain that her doom is at hand and Naram goes,

Naram, the Wavelord (Brennan)

Not you, child.

Brennan Lee Mulligan

A wave hundreds of feet tall crashes into the cliffs just beyond Port Talon. [A loud waves crashes against stone] A thundering tidal wave floods the Witchfire plane.

Aabria Iyengar

[Yelling off-mic] Shoot!

Brennan Lee Mulligan

You know, in this moment, hundreds—I mean you know, probably, maybe not hundreds, but maybe a hundred soldiers are killed instantly. Drowned, the fire is put out, everyone in that plane. And you are faced with the sudden contradiction that this god is being as surgical as possible, and a hundred people whose names you do not know are dead. [Brennan makes chaotic sounds of water crashing and people screaming] People's faces are rent asunder. The water comes crashing down. People are smothered. The coals swept up in the water stay just hot enough to go down the throat with seawater of soldiers being blasted across the plane.

Brennan Lee Mulligan

Their bodies are flushed off the other side of the peninsula into the shallows of the bay where they will never be found by anything except crabs and the creatures of the deep that will feed on them. And all of a sudden you hear, unmistakably throughout the city the groan and screams of wood and vine racing. It hurts green things to grow this fast and they welcome the pain, greedily. Naram, standing there in that form looks at Galani who was—a moment ago believed that she was dead. And quietly, the city cannot hear this, but Naram speaks in a moment as his glamour begins to fade away.

Galani (Brennan)

I wish you nothing but the best. I cannot say the same for my wife. Protect your city, wizard.

Brennan Lee Mulligan

And Galani—

Lou Wilson

I thought we were making good choices.

Aabria Iyengar  
[Laughing] Big L's for the wizard community.

Brennan Lee Mulligan  
Suvi, in your room—

Aabria Iyengar  
Yes, please!

Brennan Lee Mulligan  
You hear the wave and you know immediately what has just happened. Galani telepathically is in your mind and goes,

Galani (Brennan)  
The fish has a wife?

Suvi (Aabria)  
[Yelling] Fucking run!

Brennan Lee Mulligan  
So Galani—

Lou Wilson  
[Chuckling] Fish has a wife.

Brennan Lee Mulligan  
And you see that Galani looks as Morrow and his battalion come because she sort of teleported out. And Morrow goes,

Guild Mage Morrow (Brennan)  
[Raggedly] The creature! We must capture—

Brennan Lee Mulligan  
And you see that Galani says,

Galani (Brennan)  
The walls, the walls! The Archmage Apprentice said there's another Spirit, another Great One coming in from the walls!

Brennan Lee Mulligan  
And you see that Morrow kind of commits treason, stops listening to Galani and goes for Naram. Is like, I have to recapture the creature. Galani starts barking orders at other people and there's just chaos over the harbor. There's warships headed there. Galani's trying to command them to turn their guns to the wall. And Suvi you behold chaos and you immediately tell, tactically in this movement, that Naram—you don't know what Ame knows about Eursulon but basically you know that Naram is doing something to the derrick, knows that the entire might of the empire would recapture him. Like these ships and Morrow and Galani and everything like that. And has basically just given them a bigger problem to deal with.

Aabria Iyengar  
Yeah.

Brennan Lee Mulligan  
And Ame, you see all of this unfold as well. I think at this point it's time to roll initiative.

Aabria Iyengar  
Yeah!

Brennan Lee Mulligan

Ame, we're going to start with you. Once again, you're in your boat. You can only hear it, but you just hear the thundering pounding of a mountain of the ocean called up to drown an entire plane of fires. And immediately all of these defenses of the Imperium are rent meaningless. A hundred soldiers dead in moments, from several seconds of Naram's concentration.

Erika Ishii

I can hear the screams of groaning wood structures, of men, of beasts. I can smell the extinguish, that fetid stench when the waves hit the fires. I know what he's done. I knew this would happen. I still feel for the humans, who I am also supposed to speak for. I scrawl an image, crude, of Orima into the side of the boat. The clawed feet, the tendrils of vine.

Ame (Erika)

Orima. Eursulon kept his promise. At this point, anything beyond this is vengeance and not justice.

Brennan Lee Mulligan

This is going to be a persuasion check. You are rolling with disadvantage, but once again, the Fox concentrates on helping you, so that's going to cancel out. You are going to roll a straight persuasion roll. The DC is going to be very high.

Erika Ishii

That's a seven on the die for a total of 13.

Brennan Lee Mulligan

You reach out to speak to Orima in this moment. On a 13, you know that speech works if listened to, and there is nothing within the vastness of Orima's Spirit that is being listened to. But you also know that that offering is still on that shrine in Lamri. She cannot be here in physical form. So you know that whatever is coming is a work of magic on her behalf and not her form itself. The fox looks up at you and goes,

The Fox (Brennan)

Boss, what are we going to do?

Ame (Erika)

I don't know that there's anything we can do, Fox.

The Fox (Brennan)

Alright. I'm going to jump out of the boat and grab some of these fish.

Ame (Erika)

We have fish at home, Fox.

The Fox (Brennan)

Yeah. And we have fish here!

Brennan Lee Mulligan

As your little rowboat just sort of bounces. There are some fish just strewn on the rocks around as like the ocean has receded. You do your best to speak to Orima. Give me an insight check, if you would.

Erika Ishii

17.

Brennan Lee Mulligan

I think you know Orima is not going to rest. It's not Naram being free, it's Naram being back, like she knows that he's in danger if he's here in Port Talon. And so that's what's happening in this moment. Eursulon, you hear the warping and shattering of the tower. We are going to reroll these saving throws. You have disadvantage from your check there, but that's going to cancel out with the advantage being given to you by Naram. The DC has also been lowered to 17 because of the breaking magic in the derrick. So let's roll. Charisma, Dexterity, constitution.

Aabria Iyengar  
you got this.

Lou Wilson  
Hey, thanks, Charisma. Only a 14. Still fail.

Brennan Lee Mulligan  
Okay, so you're still in the anti-magic.

Lou Wilson  
Dexterity, 15. Still fail.

Brennan Lee Mulligan  
Still fail. Okay. And this is the important one. This is constitution here.

Lou Wilson  
19.

[The whole cast cheers]

Brennan Lee Mulligan  
Hell yes.

Lou Wilson  
The chattering of the derrick shakes Eursulon from the place of acceptance to a place of desperately desiring. And then seeing Naram's feet, just two giant feet in the ocean, I think there's now a confusion and a fight that re-enters his body, especially kind of being in this space of touching his breath again and is going to start, I think, taking deeper breaths and trying to find some of that will again.

Brennan Lee Mulligan  
Incredible. Your will comes back to you and you can feel again in your body, you feel the exertion of Naram. And even here under the waves, you can feel that a god who has only ever wanted to direct schools of fish into the nets of fishermen, you can feel him go "Enough" and call upon a mountain of water to wash clean a plane of the Empire soldiers. And again, I think maybe in this moment to Eursulon as a Spirit, from the human perspective, this god is like indiscriminately killing a hundred soldiers dead in a plane and he's destroying this structure to save one life, which is your life. But I think you feel in Naram's heart, from this Spirit, this sorrow he never wants to take these actions.

Brennan Lee Mulligan  
He almost chose to give his—you can feel in this moment that he was deeply considering giving his life just to save you, that he was going to just have him never exist again in this world or the world of Spirits just to set you free. And maybe on that insight check, you can tell that something guided him to make a different choice. Under the waves you feel a twist. The glamour fades once again and you just see clawing tendrils of this thing. You actually see that Naram grows like additional limbs and roots down and his tendrils hit the seafloor and momentarily give him a solid base of coral.

Brennan Lee Mulligan

He like, roots himself to the seafloor to position himself. And Ame looking out on the harbor, you see that there are the last probably like 20 wizards on the deck of the derrick. Many of them just like casting mending cantrips to try to keep the derrick safe. And some of them throwing spells at this god. You see, Suvi, the spells they're throwing, you know, that just automatically, without even having to make a saving throw, spells of below a certain level just won't affect Naram.

Aabria Iyengar  
Yeah

Brennan Lee Mulligan

So just literally...It's just, there's nothing right. Naram roots to the seafloor. And I think Eursulon, you're waiting for the moment where the tower will come down, which is why you are very alarmed when the entire—the four posts of the derrick come straight up and you watch the derrick just disappear. It goes [Whoosh] up around you. There's a momentary blocking of light as just like stones slowly fall through the water and you are immediately released from all three of your conditions. Go ahead and give me a dexterity saving throw. This is just a DC—you're still doing this with disadvantage, but this is just a DC 11 dexterity saving throw.

Lou Wilson  
14 on the die.

Brennan Lee Mulligan

Okay. Even exhausted as you are, the stones fall so slowly, but some big fucking boulders are come—like, looming out of the dark sea as you roll to one side, grab Wavebreaker. In the harbor, the entire derrick comes up out of the water, as this enormous Wild One moves it in a single fluid movement, as this lionfish sea cucumber deity, [Brennan roars] you hear whale song moving through air, reverberating as it does through water. The derrick goes sideways. Every one of the wizards still aboard falls to their death, falling more than 100ft and hitting the water. And the creature flings the entire structure off into the deep sea. And with a final enormous explosion, Naram breaches, and [Splash] a tower of white seawater, as Naram disappears under the waves. Suvi, that is your turn

Aabria Iyengar

Okay. Uh. Oh, my God. It's happened again. Suvi is in her room with a book watching the actions of witches out the window. I'm not a child anymore. I want to get to the highest point I can. Are there still wizards in the air trying to do anything?

Brennan Lee Mulligan

Yes. You see a lot of chaos. Galani is trying to fly back to the city, but you see she's attempting to command some ships out there. And Morrow has confused everything.

Aabria Iyengar

Yeah, okay. That's the thing I can help with. I'm going to try to do something kind of tricky here, which is using—look, we were all trained as soldiers and can communicate as soldiers because that was part of our training, which means there has to be a way to communicate messages over a long distance without having to burn magic.

Brennan Lee Mulligan

Absolutely. I think you get to the top of the Kalabel Chantry and see that there is a command dais. There's a platform up there for you to do exactly this kind of action. The magic is going to take care of distance. Go ahead and give me persuasion, if you are trying to convince people it is a good idea, deception if you are trying to claim rank, or intimidation if you just want to scare the shit out of people.

Aabria Iyengar

No, I've learned. It's just persuasion. Total of 14.

Brennan Lee Mulligan

The noise goes out. Full retreat, full retreat. You see the forces begin to fall back. Your words are going to give Galani a help action. She is attempting to gather people there. I will say this on a 14, the entire Azure Battalion is also sort of in the city. And you see Laplow, that sergeant from before who arrested you, look up at you and because Galani is dealing with the nightmare out in the harbor, and also the ocean had just receded, although I will say Ame actually out in the harbor. Now, once Naram goes back, [Brennan "whoops"] suddenly you see the Fox with a big old bass in his mouth go,

The Fox (Brennan)

[Yelling quickly] Oh, no!

Brennan Lee Mulligan

And had jump back in the boat as the sea comes rising back in to lift all of the boats back up. Suvi, for you looking down at the sergeant, he looks up at you and you can see there is a moment here. A 14 persuasion is definitely enough for like the Azure Battalion to all look to you for answers and that's the thing they're lacking. They don't have context. He looks at you and message cantrips. Laplow says,

Brennan Lee Mulligan

Apprentice Archmage, where are we needed? What's going on?

Aabria Iyengar

Protect the city. His wife is coming. She's the mean one.

[The cast laughs]

Brennan Lee Mulligan

You see Laplow look at you and

Sargeant Laplow (Brennan)

Wha-Where...wha, his wife? Who is she? Where is she coming from?

Suvi (Aabria)

[Yelling] The green my guy, the green

Lou Wilson

Official commands, "My Guy".

Brennan Lee Mulligan

You see he looks at you and says,

Sargeant Laplow (Brennan)

Everyone's in the harbor, we don't have any wizards. Can you come help us?

Suvi (Aabria)

Of course.

Brennan Lee Mulligan

You descend to the courtyard and he pulls up a snow white steed with an Imperial saddle on it, and you see all of the Azure Battalion just tap small cantrips on the side of their saddle. All of their horses have basically, an expeditious retreat cast on them. And the force of wind, all of your cloaks and robes are like horizontal streaming from this fleet of horses as the Azure Battalion draw their war staves and gallop towards the walls of the city as fast as possible. We are going to flash a little bit forward into—time is strange as the sort of battle erupts across the city. But you see that as the derrick disappears, Ame, you look and see Morrow, Guild mage Morrow look as his derrick vanishes and the creature goes back underneath the waves. And you see him go.

Guild Mage Morrow (Brennan)  
[Quivering, desperate] No. No, no no no! I'll see you destroyed.

Brennan Lee Mulligan  
And raises his staff aloft and lightning strikes it.

Guild Mage Morrow (Brennan)  
Follow me!

Brennan Lee Mulligan  
As some incredibly powerful spell hits the surface of the waves and begins to create a whirlpool, digging down into the sea as he begins to fly into a whirlpool of his own creation, and his flying mages follow. I'm going to do a roll off, this one I'll do in front of the board to see whether people feel like following the extremely reasonable, obviously more powerful woman or the unhinged screaming man trying to kill a god.

Aabria Iyengar  
Follow this party planner to hell!

Brennan Lee Mulligan  
Okay, Galani gets a 19! Let's see what Morrow gets. [Cast gasps and laughs] Morrow gets a 21.

[Loud ding]

Aabria Iyengar  
Yes. Good. Yes. Good.

Brennan Lee Mulligan  
So you see a good portion of people that are basically closer to the harbor do follow the Abjurer Galani, but you see that it's compartmentalization, it's empire, it's bureaucracy. Morrow is the guildmaster of the Scepter's chorus. And that's who's in Port Talon. So, a man screaming and crying, who's digging a hole into the ocean with magic has most of the flying wizards follow behind him. And you see Galani just sort of throws up her hands and goes,

Brennan Lee Mulligan  
I can't—I can't believe it.

Aabria Iyengar  
You hate to see it.

Brennan Lee Mulligan  
You hate to see it

Erika Ishii  
Hate to see it!

Brennan Lee Mulligan  
Ame, that is going to be your turn.

Erika Ishii  
Is my boat back up to dock level?

Brennan Lee Mulligan  
Yes, it is back up to dock level.

Erika Ishii  
Okay. I scramble out of the boat. I take stock. What does the port look like? What are the civilians doing?

Brennan Lee Mulligan

You hear screams of fear, rather than of dismay and obstruction. You would be very surprised if there were not many injured people here. Like the sudden receding of the ocean probably threw people against walls. It cracked boats, like, cargo may have shifted and hurt somebody. But you do not think that there is mass death within the city of Port Talon. I should—wait, hold on, let me take that again. You do not think there is mass death within the city of Port Talon, yet.

Aabria Iyengar

Oop!

Erika Ishii

Seeing these wizards follow a screaming... Baby of a man to their inglorious doom is a side of humanity that I have not ever witnessed before. And I remember back to first coming here, and realizing that nobody needed community here. They didn't need each other, but they'd need each other now. I step into the town square and I try to rally the folk of Port Talon.

Brennan Lee Mulligan

Go ahead and give Ame a persuasion check.

Erika Ishii

That's a 23.

Brennan Lee Mulligan

You step onto the dock. Your familiar leaps out with you as you begin to call out to the people here. What do you say? As you see confused people on the dockside here?

Erika Ishii

I call out to the gathering crowd.

Ame (Erika)

The power of the Great Spirits is undeniable. It cannot be harnessed. It cannot be fought against. But if we work with them and treat them in the old ways, which I can teach you, perhaps, perhaps we can save Port Talon.

Erika Ishii

And I clap my hands and I open myself up the way that I've been taught how. I pull out a little bowl, an offering bowl from my pouch. I place a little meal in it. I take out the incense and I light it. I offer it to Orima and to Naram to celebrate their upcoming reunion.

Brennan Lee Mulligan

You kneel. The passersby hear your words and I think that they are affected by them in this moment. But watching you begin this ritual, I think they just give you space. I think they look around and go, "okay, there is a witch doing witch things." And looking out, you see them sort of fall back from this moment unsure or unclear about the nature of the magic that is being invoked in this moment. You see the Fox looks down as you put the little meal out and drops the fish from its jaws.

Ame (Erika)

Thanks, fox.

The Fox (Brennan)

I told you. There's good fish down there.

Erika Ishii

If any of you have offerings for the Spirits, please bring them now.

Brennan Lee Mulligan

Given this call to action, you see that the people look around. You see some old sailor says,

Old Sailor (Brennan)

Yeah, well, a bunch of rice spilled out when those barrels broke.

Brennan Lee Mulligan

And you see, truly, there's, like, a lot of cargo on the docks that people just start bringing food. And a heaping cornucopia begins to pile up with your little bowl and burning incense at the center. Eursulon, you are free at the bottom of the ocean. [Brennan makes a splash sound] Naram fills the space with light, and the light vanishes. And by your side, of approximately your height, wearing his glamour, is Naram.

Naram, the Wavelord (Brennan)

Little brother, are you all right?

Eursulon (Lou)

I am well, brother. You did not need to—you did not have to do all this.

Eursulon (Lou)

Nor did you. This wild world is filled with many things we needn't have done. But you chose to.

Brennan Lee Mulligan

And he puts a soft hand along your neck and the back of your head and touches his forehead to yours. And you feel a gratitude wider and more profound than the vast sea.

Naram, the Wavelord (Brennan)

Their trap is undone, their cage shattered. Would you—You are way-shadowed.

Eursulon (Lou)

I am.

Naram, the Wavelord (Brennan)

Would that I have the power to change such a thing that would bring you home. What can I do to keep you safe in this world?

Eursulon (Lou)

I would only ask that you allow me to keep this sword that is yours.

Naram, the Wavelord (Brennan)

My father's blade. You wield it well. Let us say then, forevermore a gift from me to you. I owe you my life. But let my sword serve as some small token of the debt that is owed.

Brennan Lee Mulligan

And he smiles, reaching out once more and still embracing you. Here in this moment, he is going to cast a greater restoration. Remove all of your exhaustion levels. And in addition to that, he seals the wounds on your arm from the bed and in doing so, permanently imparts the gift of his blood to you. From this point on, Eursulon can breathe underwater and has a swim speed equal to his walking speed. You are a Spirit of the Wild and of many beasts. There's like, parts of you that are ursine and feline and avian. And you just feel this gift of suddenly, almost under your fur, just this little thing of...along your throat that should you call on them like the sea is your home as well. Now, as you breathe through gills like, the effect of the potion fades away. This is a part of you now.

Eursulon (Lou)

What is happening above the waves? To my friends, to Ame?

Brennan Lee Mulligan  
He looks and says,

Naram, the Wavelord (Brennan)  
Above the waves... What?

Brennan Lee Mulligan  
[Thunderclap] A spiraling tendril of whirlpool, racing towards the bottom of the sea comes into view, and a massive lightning bolt comes thundering out of the sky, strikes Naram in the chest for maximum damage. The whirlpool comes down and the lightning travels through the water, strikes him in a moment of pain and anguish as Morrow and his wizards come surging down through this massive whirlpool. The whirlpool is still—the tip, the point of the whirlpool is still like 40ft above, but close enough for this powerful spell to be cast through from the sky overhead, before Naram can even answer your question

Lou Wilson  
How bad does Naram—I mean, I know Naram's a god, but...

Brennan Lee Mulligan  
This is the first thing you've seen hurt him. He's not bloodied, he is not on death door, but he was just harmed by this spell.

Lou Wilson  
Okay. [Laughs, self-satisfied] Hey, I'm a level two paladin, now. Eursulon is going to see that, immediately move to put himself between Naram and whatever is coming and begin to swim up, sword out.

Aabria Iyengar  
Let's go water bear!

Brennan Lee Mulligan  
Let's go Water Bear. So you start swimming up as Naram looks up and you can see even Naram, for all of his gentleness and wisdom, looks up and has a moment. He's very humble for a Great Spirit, but sees you fucking full secret service like, get down, Mr. President. And he has a look on his face of like, "kid, no!" But fuck it. You're going, baby! Are you going up to just put yourself in the path or are you going up to see who the fuck is responsible for that?

Lou Wilson  
Both.

Brennan Lee Mulligan  
We're going to cut to the wall now. Suvi, it is your turn. Horses arrive at the wall, ascending quickly to the top of the wall. The Azure Battalion begins to man the parapets. As they begin to run up, you see Laplow rushing ahead of you to the wall saying

Sargeant Laplow (Brennan)  
Azure Battalion, take the parapets. Whatever you see coming over the side—

[Whip noise, Sounds of Laplow struggling continues behind Brennan's words]

Brennan Lee Mulligan  
A lancing spur of green vine snakes over the top of the wall and grasps Laplow, whips around his neck and squeezes so hard that you can hear bone snap on his neck. You look over and see Stranglers, Undre. The field beyond of Witchfire is already thick with kudzu and you can see that the plants—you can hear the whining snap of rock splintering as the kudzu sinks into the outer edge of the wall, and it's just gotten to the point where it is breaking over the tops of the parapets in multiple places. Suvi, what do you do?

Aabria Iyengar

[Laughs nervously] Level one wizard, here we go! But this... you said it earlier. Suvi can see that this isn't like—I just saw Naram. I saw a Great Spirit.

Brennan Lee Mulligan

Yes.

Aabria Iyengar

This isn't. Orima this is a spell.

Brennan Lee Mulligan

Correct.

Aabria Iyengar

Okay. The witch handles Great Spirits. My friend is an Honored Friend. I know magic. As I pull up, can I use my disguise self to appear as close to what I think, you know, full color, not the stone statue version, of Naram's human guise? And I just want to yell out over the field,

Suvi (Aabria)

You made a promise to a witch. Keep it.

Brennan Lee Mulligan

Give me a deception roll with advantage.

Aabria Iyengar

Okay. Please. Please, dice. Ten.

Brennan Lee Mulligan

This thing wants to fight you, and giving it a fight is not the height of cleverness. Yes. There's got to be some other way. Calling out I think, on that ten deception roll, you just become aware, much like Ame did, that people can turn themselves into forces. Humans or Spirits. If you get to a point of rage where the blood pounds in your ears past the point of listening, then no words of counsel can hit you. As you call out, you look, you think you see something for a moment in the Kudzu, there's something in the green coming. Suvi, you take five points of damage as one of the Stranglers leaps over the wall. One of the Undre. And a wooden viny hand closes over your throat, dealing five points of damage. Suvi, how many hit points do you have left?

Aabria Iyengar

Three. Can I do something as a reaction?

Brennan Lee Mulligan

Yes, you can.

Aabria Iyengar

As a reaction, I think there's another battalion member next to me. I'll take the damage, but I want to shield the person closest to me.

Brennan Lee Mulligan

Give me—as a reaction, give me either arcana, if you are trying to do something that is purely technically proficient. If you want this to continue to tell the story you are trying to tell you give me a persuasion roll with advantage.

Aabria Iyengar

Okay. Let's try persuasion. Oh, my God. I didn't know my dice could go that high, thank god. 21.

Erika Ishii

[Yelling roar] Yeeaaaaa-hahaaaa!

Brennan Lee Mulligan

As you take a spell only intended to protect yourself, leave yourself open to harm to protect another. The Undre in front of you loosens its grip for a moment.

Undre (Brennan)

[Hoarse, breathy voice gasps in] Naram...

Suvi (Aabria)

He is free in the ocean. The wizards, if they are attacking him, they are there. But no one here has any hope or intent to harm you.

Brennan Lee Mulligan

The Undre turned to look to the harbor. A wave of rage and green choking vines is coming for Port Talon. And you realize the dam will break. You have one chance to determine where. Awe, give me one more nature roll. The difficulty is a 20 to complete this offering as you direct the people of Port Talon to build this extemporaneous shrine trying to solve this massive assault on the city. Give me one last nature check.

Erika Ishii

That's a six on the die.

Brennan Lee Mulligan

The food piles on, you attempt to speak the prayers. But the fear and shouting of the townsfolk around begin to confuse and addle your mind. There are so many emotions here to try and manage in this moment. There is so much being asked of you, and you are trying to unite two forces that seem intent on not understanding one another. Eursulon, you erupt from the depths. At the head of the spear surging down is the Guild Mage Morrow. He sees you and readies to absolutely obliterate you with magic beyond what you can understand. But it is your action. What do you do in this moment, as you breach like a creature of the sea erupting from the water into the whirlpool?

Lou Wilson

As I crest...as I crest and see Morrow, I think I immediately have flashes of the utter glee on his face as he showed us Naram trapped beneath the ocean. And I just want to grapple him and take him into the water. Like, essentially to use the force of leaving the water and then essentially come right back into it, but hopefully with him and bury him beneath the waves

Guild Mage Morrow (Brennan)

No, no! [Oof]

Brennan Lee Mulligan

We are going to make an opposed grapple check here. So you're going to use your attack to make a grapple check. His athletics is not very high. He rolls a natural one.

[The cast gasps]

Brennan Lee Mulligan

Go ahead and roll your opposed athletics check.

Lou Wilson

That's... Not a natural one. [Laughter] It's a 19.

Brennan Lee Mulligan

He is very caught off guard. I'm going to roll a concentration check for him. Atop the walls of Port Talon with a Spirit's viney hands around her throat. Suvi sees the inevitable meeting of great forces. At the harbor, Awe, overwhelmed by the fear and panic of beings that will not, or even more horrifying, perhaps cannot truly understand each other. Eursulon bursting from the water. The man who gleefully captured a great Wild One of the

sea. You feel his robes and his arms enveloped in your massive embrace and hit the wall of water. [Splash sounds] Morrow's concentration breaks. And a hundred wizards, flying through a whirlpool to the bottom of the sea, watch as cliffs of water stop spinning and come to the middle to welcome them.

[Screams begin as a thunderous clap of water drowns the wizards. A waltz of strings, bowed and plucked, can be heard muted as though the listener were underwater.]

Taylor Moore

[from underwater] That was Lou Wilson as Eursulon, Erika ishii as Ame, [A splash as you can hear him clearly] Aabria Iyengar as Suvi, and Brennan Lee Mulligan as everyone [The sound of a dunk and uh oh everything's muted again!] and everything else. Worlds Beyond Numbered is [Splash, and it's clear!] Edited, designed and scored [Ope, there you go, under again] by Taylor Moore—

Taylor Moore

[The rest fades under the sound of water]