

Harbor Season 2
Episode 6: Barter

Written by
Faraday Roke

TITLE SEQUENCE

SCENE 1: INT. BT, LIVING ROOM. NIGHT.

Right where we left off.

ENFYS:
You can sit, if you like.-

Heavy footfalls across the carpet. Enfys exhales a sharp "oof" as Al grabs them and pulls them into a hug.

AL:
(Muffled into their
jacket)
I thought you *died*.

ENFYS:
No such luck.

AL:
For fuck's sake, dramatic ass-

Enfys chuckles.

FRANKLIN:
-Ah-ah, children's ears.

KILN:
(Groaning)
Dad...

AL:
-Sorry. God, it's good to see you.

They squeeze hard.

ENFYS:
You too. I'm sorry it's taken this long.

AL:
What are you doing here? (A hollow laugh) This is... what is this? I'm confused.

ENFYS:
(A little nervous in their joke)
Hi confused, I'm-

FRANKLIN:
No dad jokes, that's my territory.

AL:
Yeah, so about shackin' up with your boss?-

FRANKLIN:
-Ex-boss.-

AL:
-In a living house, and he's also the Pyre, and there's the kid- Your kid? His? What... *happened*, Enfys?

ENFYS:
Well "shacking up" isn't entirely... Oh. Your wrists are bleeding.

AL:
(Sighs)
Mm. Good... knots. Good knots, kid.

KILN:
Thanks! I can braid your hair, too!

AL:
I'm alright, thanks.

KILN:
(Disappointed)
Ok... maybe later.

She slinks off, but not out of "sight". A cabinet opens and some rustling sounds.

AL:
Yeah, maybe later-

FRANKLIN:
Here's some gauze.

AL:
First aid in the coffee table?

FRANKLIN:
There's been a few burns lately.

NARRATOR:
The two's attention shifted to the raised scars on her hands.

AL:
Right. Thanks...

She's unwinding it over her damaged wrists.

ENFYS:
You can sit down.

NARRATOR:
They nodded at the slightly singed
built-in couch behind her.

AL:
Uh... yeah, ok.

She sits.

ENFYS:
Your first question... You answered
yourself. I live here. Since... well,
since before I left. June last year,
was it?

FRANKLIN:
Yeah, before she was born.

AL:
This place alive?

FRANKLIN:
In a way. The Breathing Trailers are
responsive, I made it to be-

AL:
You made this?

ENFYS:
Impressive, right?

FRANKLIN:
It gets the job done. The job of
being warm and dry. It's a symbiotic
relationship that everyone benefits
from, as most should be.

AL:
How's it benefit the trailers...?

FRANKLIN:
It gets to experience life. And we
take very good care of it.

AL:
Well ... Big commute for you Enfys,
while you were workin'. Should'a
asked for a ride more often.

ENFYS:
Not without you getting suspicious.

AL:
What's really impressive is that I
wasn't before now... No offense to the
uh "Breathing Trailers".

ENFYS:
It wasn't your fault, there wasn't
any way to... let you in without
compromising.

AL:
Yeah. Evidently.

ENFYS:
(Rearranges their
thoughts, clearing
their throat)
... Moving on; Franklin isn't the only
aspect of the Pyre. It's a
partnership between us both.

Al laughs, trying to process.

ENFYS: (cont'd)
Convolutd but it helps when you
create a mythos of a singular entity.

NARRATOR:
Al drug her hands through her hair,
breaking away from the two looming
over her.

AL:
Ah... wow. Sorry, before we go any
further, just, both of you, please
sit, I feel like I'm about to get
skinned or somethin'...

Both murmur small apologies/affirmations and sit.

FRANKLIN:
Oh! Aha, sorry about that- where are
my manners...

NARRATOR:

The most unlikely of pairs took their seats- Franklin in a rocking chair, Enfys back in the leather recliner. Al spied Kiln, just behind the corner of the hallway, playing aimlessly with ragged dolls and action figures. Her green eyes kept darting up to the stranger on her couch.

AL:

Why? For all of it, why?

ENFYS:

That's broad.

AL:

I'm not sure how to narrow it down.

ENFYS:

... Do you usually get a... neat explanation to your "whys"?

AL:

I'm not in the mood for a thought-experiment.

ENFYS:

I feel like you're asking for an excuse to suit you and I'm not sure if I can give you that.

AL:

I'm asking for anything except a game.

ENFYS:

But really, are motives ever so cut and dry as to not leave a mess; to have the reasoning be clean? Isn't there always an amount of... detritus? I... I need you to see, it's more complicated than a single "good" reason, Al.

AL:

(She brings her
voice lower when she
curses)

God... You're making this fuckin' hard.

ENFYs:

I'm sorry, but this encompasses more than a satisfying excuse for you. I've made peace with that.

AL:

Why did you destroy the Eaton gun factory?

FRANKLIN:

Mhm- Because the town didn't want it.

AL:

Oh, do you speak for Harbor?

ENFYs:

We'll speak when no one else can. Whether because they can't open their mouths or because they don't know how.

AL:

That's a big weight no one asked you to carry.

ENFYs:

You would know the feeling.

AL:

(Shaking her head, a slight laugh)

You're gonna have to explain that leap.

FRANKLIN:

What I think Enfys is trying to say is that we're essentially (barring some ideological differences) doing the same thing as you.

ENFYs:

But yours is better because you get a salary. Right?

AL:

The DoCA has oversight. What you're doing is unchecked vigilantism.

NARRATOR:

Franklin and Enfys exchanged a glance. A smile flitted over the latter's lips.

ENFYS:
And who's oversight do you have?

AL:
(Sighs)
Before the shuffle-

ENFYS:
-Of course.-

AL:
-We had Cryptids leading-

FRANKLIN:
But when your boss answers to someone else, who's actually making the decisions? If it had just been Valen and Sedum- Things might've been different. I might not have left, who knows, they might've listened to me- but it was never allowed to be a homegrown service, not for long. Not the one we planned for, anyway.

AL:
We've had outside funding, I'll grant you that, but we've been our own system for a long time.

FRANKLIN:
(A small chuckle)
Ah, I forget, you were too young to understand what was happening at the start there. When someone like the State Director, what's his name, Stone-?

AL:
Brick Becker.

FRANKLIN:
Mm, him; when he heard what we were trying to do- when he heard about Harbor the opportunity here- As soon as he caught word, we were ripe for him. We had his escapee and two unqualified hicks with Valen and I. There was never a choice to be "our own system", not without being wrapped up in collusion charges.

AL:

You're saying this has been going on for 15 years? Actively, not just in the background?

FRANKLIN:

Oh yeah! Why do you think they're the way they are? Sedum always looks over his shoulder, even with nothing there- Valen locks things down- We were dogged with phone calls and emails and threats and withholding... I guess he decided to do what he always wanted and finally come up here. Glad I got out before it all came down.

AL:

We get good things done despite all that- We help people with food, phones! We're there for the community.

FRANKLIN:

Speaking from experience, no amount of effort can make up for having your hands tied behind your back. And a knife to your throat.

AL:

Well, there we go, lore for the evening, full circle... Conveniently, none of this answers why.

ENFYS:

We want to help, same as you. Nothing's changed. It's just gotten to where helping means taking stronger action, revealing hypocrisy and corruption. How often did we talk about those very ideas?

AL:

I understand, Enfys, but... (A light attempt at a diffusing laugh) You don't have to answer for it like the folks in town do. I... try my damndest to subvert those slimy little things the State implements and I have to own up to it. And it's not pretty.-

FRANKLIN:

(Almost angry)

-I lost my home. Exile isn't enough punishment?

NARRATOR:

Kiln gently tapped her dolls against the floor, her feathers smoothed against her scales, apparently having tuned out the adult talk. Al ran her tongue along her teeth.

AL:

(Exhales, settling in)

... Ok, that's... a big one. I understand. I'm sorry. There's issues that need action, you're right.

ENFYS:

Back to the broad statements.

AL:

Please, give me the pinpoints.

ENFYS:

Touche.

AL:

What's your end goal?

ENFYS:

Harbor is sick. We're here to heal. What about you, Al?

NARRATOR:

She stared into her friend's full eyes.

...

AL:

(Inhales, deciding to herself)

Ok...

NARRATOR:

She reached back into her waistband and to the little mic folded under her lapel. She unwound them from her body.

She slaps it down on the table. There's a moment.

FRANKLIN:
 You're bugged? (Calling out to Kiln,
 this fades into the bg as Enfys'
 words take over) Sweetie, you didn't
 check them for wires?

KILN:
 (From the other
 room)
 Huh? Oh, I forgot!

FRANKLIN:
 (Back to her)
 It's ok, just remember if this
 happens again.

ENFYS:
 (Lower, concerned
 for their friend)
 You should keep your blackmail.

Al shuts off the recorder.

AL:
 And y'all shouldn't put this much
 trust in outsiders. We're all makin'
 choices tonight.

SCENE 2: INT. CRAFT ROOM, BT, NIGHT.

Back in the craft room. The pips against the window, against
 the walls of the trailer. Exhalation of metal breath.

SAM:
 Crux? Are you-

CRUX:
 (Sleepily, like
 they've been in
 quiet for a while)
 Mmm?

SAM:
 So you can sleep...

CRUX:
 It's that or stare at the meat hook.

SAM:
 But it's so absorbing...

Crux gives a halfhearted "Ha."

NARRATOR:

The chair to the right of Sam was empty... Al still away, somewhere, anywhere by now. Sam's hands clasped in his lap. He turned back to his partner on his left, Crux's head nodding down. ... His hands itched layers deep, into the sinews.

NARRATOR AND SAM:

It's not wrong to want touch...

SAM:

(Softly)

Is it...?

CRUX:

Hm?

SAM:

Nothing. Go back to sleep.

Crux sighs and readjusts in his seat, with the creaking of the chair.

SAM: (cont'd)

What's up? Oh, do I have something stuck in my teeth-

CRUX:

-It's ok to want me, Sam.

SAM:

(Flushing hard)

Come again?

CRUX:

(Wry smile)

That'd be hard, seeing as how neither of us have yet.

SAM:

(Sudden shocked
spluttering,
morphing into a
laugh)

Oh, ah, uhhh, hahaha uuuugh- why do you do this to me...

CRUX:

(Happy he's made Sam
laugh a little)

Because it's very easy.

SAM:

(Being vulnerable,
quiet)

I wish you'd stop. You just... keep
toying with me. We're tied to chairs
and-and I can't even keep my
embarrassment to myself.

CRUX:

I'm sorry. Being with you is fun... I
want to keep it that way.

SAM:

So talking plainly is off the table.

CRUX:

No. I do mean it, it's ok to desire.
You don't have to stifle it on my
account, I won't judge you. Except
for the inappropriately timed bondage
thing.

SAM:

Yeah, don't worry it's... wrapped up.
Pun intended. When the adrenaline's
going and you're not sure if you're
gonna die... Body does weird things...

CRUX:

Hmh. It does.

Crux's chair scoots closer.

NARRATOR:

Crux maneuvered his chair close.
Their arms brushed, Crux's knee
shifting to rub against Sam's.

SAM:

Please, don't- I can't- I don't want
your pity-

CRUX:

-I want to comfort you. And I
wouldn't mind if... you did the same
for me. It might surprise you, but
I'm not feeling entirely secure in
all this.

SAM:

... Will you pull away?

CRUX:
No. ... Do you mind if I keep my leg
against your's? You're warm.

Sam exhales a little curious laugh.

SAM:
You know the answer to that.

CRUX:
Asking is good manners.

SAM:
Then, yeah. Keep it there.

CRUX:
Alright.

NARRATOR:
Sam shifted his hands. He hesitantly
grazed Crux's thigh with his pinky
finger. The little that they could
touch with Crux's arms behind him.

SAM:
Is that...?

CRUX:
Yes, yeah. You're ok.

SAM:
Thank you.

CRUX:
Thank *you*.

SCENE 3: EXT. CARCOGUS'S CABIN, FOREST, NIGHT

Pounding knocks on a rattling door. There's a voice coming
muffled from the inside.

CRACOGUS:
Coming, coming-

The door creeeeaks open.

CRACOGUS: (cont'd)
Righto, what do we-

ROOSE:
-What do you know about Franklin
Deco?!

CRACOGUS:

(Startled)

AH!

SEDUM:

Hullo, Cracogus, do you have a minute?

ROOSE:

What loyalties do you have to him?!

CRACOGUS:

That's a personal matter. Leave, Bone Snake, it's late.

VALEN:

Thanks, let's go, 'another option-

ROOSE:

Huh! Surprising, from how high and mighty you behaved three days ago, I'd have thought you cared about the fate of our little fractured community.

CRACOGUS:

What the hell you talking about?

NARRATOR:

Cracogus narrowed her sharp eyes at the three-person caravan on her mossy, dilapidated porch.

SEDUM:

The Pyre has absconded with three of our people. It puts all of Harbor at risk- (rushed) in a very roundabout way, trust me, it isn't good.

CRACOGUS:

(Warily)

And what does that have to do with my doorstep?

VALEN:

You're not the only one who's curious.

ROOSE:

The way you bent over Deco at Perdition, how you circled him- The way he threatens, the way he *reeks of change*- The Pyre is connected to him, this I know.

VALEN:

The facts are 1 Cryptid and 2 Humans have gone missing over four hours ago. We're running down the clock before Human authorities get involved.

SEDUM:

On the off-chance you know anything, please, just tell us where we can start.-

CRACOGUS:

(Maneuvering quickly)

-Swear you won't hurt any of them. *Franklin* and his folk. Swear now, no harm to them.

VALEN:

(Aside)

Well, I'll be.

ROOSE:

In exchange for what?

CRACOGUS:

I'll take you on the path they started. They move. I can't guarantee anything but you must swear-

ROOSE:

Oh (laughs low, dangerous) No, no, you were going to do that *anyway*. What will you give me?

SEDUM:

Roose, stop, that's more than enough-

There's a sudden rip of flesh and a hissing groan from Cracogus.

NARRATOR:

Cracogus held an agate-looking growth torn from her back.

(MORE)

NARRATOR: (cont'd)
The warmth from inside the shack
glimmered over the liquid welling
from her shoulder.

SEDUM:
O-oh. You mean business.

CRACOGUS:
You can have *that*.

ROOSE:
Ooh, don't mind if I do...!

She takes it with a slight wet splat.

CRACOGUS:
I have your word, no harm comes to
Franklin or his family- you let them
go once you have your people.

VALEN:
His family?

ROOSE:
For tonight. Agreed?

CRACOGUS:
I'll take you as close as I know.

SCENE 4: INT. LIVING ROOM, BT, NIGHT.

AL:
... The library break in?

ENFYs:
She's gotta get an education. I left
money.

AL:
Hm... How often y'all have eggs?

ENFYs:
Heh... they're her favorite. We've
eased off a bit since... Well, it was a
shock seeing you that night, but,
yes, we did pilfer from Corwil Farm
on occasion over the summer. We've
made arrangements elsewhere now.

AL:
And Finnick's? Was there a purpose to
that?

FRANKLIN:

(Slight sigh)

I already answered that, no. We don't have a lot for a growing kid... She just wanted a toy or two and decided to do something about it...

KILN:

I can *hear* you talking about me.

FRANKLIN:

Well it's true, sweetheart, you definitely led the charge on that one.

KILN:

(Embarrassed) Daaaad! (A hissing gloop of her dolls melting) Agh! My dolls melted again... (Sighs, frustrated) I'm gonna wash... Stop talking about me, please!

She tromps away, a bit pouty.

AL:

What was with the message at Eaton- "Alight your shame"?

ENFYs:

The place itself was a shame. A shame on the town, on us all. A public servant profiting off of land that was never her's-

FRANKLIN:

-And honestly- Your Directors knew that the town wouldn't be happy about it and did nothing, so, I hope it was taken as a pointed criticism, because it was.

AL:

Anything else?

FRANKLIN:

Anything else you suspect?

AL:

Not that I can think of...

FRANKLIN:

Then I'm good with ending it there.

AL:
What's the next step for y'all?

FRANKLIN:
That's for you to find out.

ENFYS:
Unless...

AL:
What?

ENFYS:
Maybe... If we could be sure you had
our back...?

FRANKLIN:
Enfys, she's too close to them, she
won't.

ENFYS:
You thought the same about me.

FRANKLIN:
I had confirmation before I made the
move.

ENFYS:
(Brushing that
aside)
How helpful do you want to be?

AL:
(Carefully)
I want to do what's right.

ENFYS:
Which can be entirely dependent on
perspective!

AL:
What are you offering?

ENFYS:
Insight into the Pyre. "A cord of
three strands is not easily broken".

FRANKLIN:
We're not bringing her into the *work-*
(Franklin stops)

AL:
... You ok?

ENFYS:
 (Jumping to calm
 action)
 Let's go to the floor, Franklin. Come
 on, I've got you...

NARRATOR:
 Franklin's mouth opened, his
 expression... lost. Enfys deftly moved
 him down in front of the coffee
 table, shifting him onto his side,
 taking and pocketing his glasses.
 Franklin's eyes rolled back suddenly.
 He convulsed.

We hear Franklin spasming.

AL:
 (Soft inhale)
 How can I help?

ENFYS:
 It'll just be a coupla seconds.
 (Soothing) You're ok, you're ok, man...
 Can you grab a tissue?

AL:
 Yeah-

She scrambles up, pulls a few tissues from a box and hands
 them over.

ENFYS:
 (Lightly)
 Thank you...

NARRATOR:
 Enfys dabbed a tissue at the corner
 of Franklin's mouth. His twitching
 slowed... until it ceased altogether.

ENFYS:
 ... You still with us?

Deep slow breaths from Franklin.

ENFYS: (cont'd)
 (A sigh of
 recognition)
 He'll be a while, yet.

NARRATOR:
They patted him softly on the
shoulder and returned to their seat.

ENFYS:
(Their intonation
has changed. They
don't seem too
thrilled)
Don't mind him if he gets up and does
things...

AL:
He's ok?

ENFYS:
Mhm.

AL:
... Well, that's new. Right? I never
was aware of... a condition.

ENFYS:
It's newer...

AL:
Is it epilepsy?

ENFYS:
... Yes. As I was saying, though he may
be skittish, I'd appreciate your
support.

AL:
What exactly are you asking me to do...
?

NARRATOR:
Franklin's eyes opened, staring up at
the ceiling. Or at least... where he
might be staring if he had any
discernible pupils. Cloudy white
obscured his doe-like irises.

AL:
(Disturbed)
That's not ok- Franklin, hey-

NARRATOR:
His head tilted to her. Like being
seen through, being seen into.

Al has a little reaction, an inhale, a slight revulsion.

ENFYS:
 (A little subdued,
 almost curt)
 He's just out of it. It'll be a
 minute.

AL:
 ... Ok...

ENFYS:
 I'm not asking that you leave the
 DoCA, or your home, nothing like
 that, but... I am asking... that you be
 our eyes. I trust you. You know what
 needs done and we have a unique
 opportunity to collaborate. That's
 what I want to offer.

NARRATOR:
 Franklin sat himself up, painfully
 slow, as Enfys talked. He kept his
 attention fixed on Al.

He starts to grab the mic from the tabletop.

AL:
 Unique, for sure. Ah- hey, he alright
 to be messing with that-?

NARRATOR:
 His hands ran assuredly over the mic-
 pack, as he still stared through her.

ENFYS:
 (A bit tighter)
 Yes, he's fine.-

A low-toned beeping. Mechanical "Accessing Files... Do you
 wish to delete?" chiming out, with an approving twinkle.

AL:
 ... Cool. Gonna get my ass handed to me
 for sure. 'Least I didn't have to do
 it.

Franklin places it back on the table and gets up.

ENFYS:
 Tell them we were forceful. They
 should understand.

AL:
 (Wry smile)
 Kidnapper's aren't known to get
 sentimental with their hostages.

ENFYS:
 We set trends 'round these parts.

AL:
 (Light chuckle)
 Rough treatment isn't a good excuse
 anymore. Thanks though.

Franklin heads out, down the hall.

AL: (cont'd)
 Where's he going?

ENFYS:
 (Slightly tongue-in-
 cheek)
 Somewhere important, probably.

SCENE 5: INT. CRAFT ROOM, BT, NIGHT

SAM:
 Purple.

CRUX:
 You weren't even trying.

SAM:
 (Switching tactics)
 Orange, I adore orange, it's the best
 color there's ever been. The color of
 sunsets and-

CRUX:
 Oh, glimmer of sincerity there.

SAM:
 (Playfully painfully
 serious, hushed)
 I... I truly... can't get enough... of the
 color orange... oranges... are the best
 fruit-

CRUX:
 -Cry and I'll believe you.

The door opens. Franklin walks in.

NARRATOR:
Sam pulled away his fingers from
Crux's pant leg.

CRUX:
Ah, Deco, we were wondering- *Good
Lord.*

SAM:
(Gasps)
What happened to your eyes?? Are you
ok??

NARRATOR:
Franklin knelt down to Crux's level
and buried his hands in his jacket.

Fabric rustling.

CRUX:
Woah, woah- ah, what-

SAM:
Hey-!

NARRATOR:
He uncoiled the wire and body of the
mic pack, snowy eyes staring.

He straightens up and walks away.

CRUX:
(Exhaling long)
Never thought you'd be the type to
cop a feel, glad I was... somewhat
right...

The same process as Al's mic sounds from the corner.

SAM:
(Low)
So, they found her mic... (Louder to
Franklin) How's it going? With uh,
Al? Is it going good?

Franklin sets it down on the counter. He walks over to Sam.

SAM: (cont'd)
Oh, my turn...

NARRATOR:

Franklin bent to Sam's face. Staring, studying, drinking him in with gut-chilling eyes.

SAM:

Sir, are you ok?

Franklin makes as though he'll say something.. and stops himself.

NARRATOR:

His hands rummaged for Sam's recorder.

SAM:

A-ah, ah, ok, just... warming up, I guess? (Nervous laughing, very uncomfortable, reacting as Franklin brushes his bruise) Ah, careful, I fell on that side..

He gets what he needs and walks back, going through the deleting process again.

CRUX:

Definitely was curious when you'd come for those. Might want to go over that with the kidlet for future abductions.

He sets down the mic and walks back to the door.

NARRATOR:

He headed for the door again.

SAM:

Franklin, before you go- is my sister ok?

The door opens, he stops.

NARRATOR:

He took one last direct look over his shoulder, pinpointing Sam. His lips parted..

SAM:

... Mr. Deco?

NARRATOR:

He nodded, and left.

The door closes.

SAM:
It's like he wasn't there.

CRUX:
Most likely because he wasn't. I...
don't know who was, but that wasn't
Franklin Deco, not all of him.

SAM:
... Spooky! (Crux is quiet, Sam fills
the silence) ... What else do you want
me to say, it was fuckin' weird...

SCENE 6: INT. LIVING ROOM, BT, NIGHT.

AL:
Enfys if you keep on- If you don't go
quiet, Becker won't leave. He can't
stay around forever if it's just an
obsession grudge with Sedum- but the
Pyre? Y'all, you're his cover. I
can't... perpetuate that fucker's
presence here. I need you to stop, we
all do.

NARRATOR:
Enfys leaned forward in their chair,
breaching the distance between them
and Al.

ENFYs:
A bit narrow-sighted, don't you
think?

AL:
It's reality. He's a threat, he can
change everything here, and he knows
it- You... (Sighs) You're playing with
fire you can't control-

Franklin enters again, soft padding on the carpet.

NARRATOR:
Franklin made his way back, settling
in softly, still blank-eyed.

AL:
Good adventuring?

NARRATOR:

He fixed her with a stare. A hint of a smile flitted over the corners of his lips. He sat back, saying nothing, merely... absorbing. Enfys' face soured slightly at the proximity, but they kept their focus on Al.

ENFYS:

Let me put it in plain terms: The town is crumbling, corruption runs red, and we are dying as a community- Be honest, how many people have been ejected from the town itself- (They stop themselves, with a side sigh from Franklin) ... Harbor is choking on it's own vomit and needs intervention. Besides, I've never seen you scared of a single man before.

AL:

I ain't scared of him. I am scared of what he can make happen to the people I love.

ENFYS:

(Directly)

Would you say that the DoCA serves the community or him now?

AL:

We're doing what we can.-

ENFYS:

Who does it serve, Al?

AL:

(Irritated)

It serves Harb-

ENFYS:

(Enfys never raises their voice, it's all cool and calm)

Who do you serve, Al?

AL:

(A snap)

I serve myself. I'm just trying to get through the day, *this* goddamn day for fuck's sake.

(MORE)

AL: (cont'd)

You grilling me- You leave, you give me *nothing*, you let us think you're dead or *worse*, and who did *that* serve, Enfys? Who?

NARRATOR:

Enfys licked their bottom lip, the same neutral expression bordering on severity.

AL:

Did it serve you?

ENFYS:

... Well, there we are.

AL:

Build back up *that* trust before you ask me to fall again. ... Just as a favor.

A shuffling of fabric as Franklin goes limp.

NARRATOR:

Franklin relaxed in the chair, his head drooping over his right shoulder, now unconscious. Enfys turned to him, edge disappearing from their countenance.

AL:

Is he ok?

ENFYS:

(Relief)

Mhm... He's better now, resting... (Slightly pained) I... I'm sorry... I'm sorry, Al. (For the hurt?... they switch) The rot inside Harbor can't stand, and the DoCA only acts to hide it. One day... I hope you'll see that.

AL:

I do see that.

ENFYS:

But you stay?

AL:

I need to hear what Sedum and Valen have to say. I need to see what I can do with what I have.

ENFYS:
 (Slight huff of
 laughter)
 Good luck, then. Really. I hope
 they're honest with you. They might
 be now. *Might*.

AL:
 Fingers crossed. Good luck to you
 too.

ENFYS:
 I appreciate it.

FRANKLIN:
 (Stirring)
 Mmmf, agh... (Breathing out) Sorry
 about that...

ENFYS:
 Didn't pull anything this time?

FRANKLIN:
 Mhm, no.

ENFYS:
 Good. Your glasses-

Franklin takes them back.

FRANKLIN:
 Thanks...

ENFYS:
 I'm grateful for talking.

AL:
 Yeah...

ENFYS:
 I missed you.

AL:
 I missed you too.

Enfys gets up from the leather seat.

ENFYS:
 (Sighs)
 For what it's worth... I will still ask
 that you don't betray us. So we won't
 be entirely at odds.

AL:
I'm not your enemy.

ENFYS:
I hope not. (To Franklin) ... I'll be back.

FRANKLIN:
Be safe.

Enfys strides out of the room, down the halls... a door opens, letting the rain in from outside for a split second, before shutting again.

NARRATOR:
Al's blood hummed in her ears, in the heat of the ache in her stomach. She rubbed her hands over her chin, thinking, digesting, sorting-

FRANKLIN:
Will you come back without a fuss? No hitting?

NARRATOR:
She snapped back up, finding Franklin standing gently massaging his temple, looking slightly... disappointed.

AL:
... Y... Yeah.

Thunder ROLLS. A tear rips through.

NARRATOR:
A chill blossomed at the arm of the couch, leaning over her. Viscous blood only she could feel dripped down her shoulder.

MIA:
Ohhh, I know that feeling. Stuck in a pickle jar, sweetheart?

AL:
... Yeah...

SCENE 7: INT. KITCHEN, LEAH'S CONDO, NIGHT.

Rain is lashing against the windows of a new environment-Leah's Condo. A phone is ringing, ringing, ringing- a click, a beep-

SAM:

Hi, this is Samson, I can't get to the phone right now- leave your name and number and I'll catch you later!

BEEP of the machine.

LEAH:

(She's been upset, possibly crying.)
Sweets... pick up. Please... (Gathers her breath and calm) I need to know you're ok. Baby... Call me as soon as you get this. Ok... I love you. I love you... Ok... Bye...

She ends the call.

LEAH: (cont'd)

(a soft prayer)
If you're there, God, if you can hear me... Please keep them safe. Please, bring them home. Please, God, please... Please don't make me kick your ass...

A THUMP against the screen door, Leah jolts.

NARRATOR:

Leah peered down the hallway to her front door. ... A bubble of hope rose in her throat.

LEAH:

(Seeing hope, getting excited)
Do they have a key- Did they lose their keys... ??

She jogs down to the front door, unbolting it, swinging it open while she talks.

LEAH: (cont'd)

Kids, I'm here- I'm here-!

There's a squeaking of wet against the screen door, slight grunting, accompanied by the rain and low rumbles of thunder outside.

LEAH: (cont'd)

Oh... just you.

NARRATOR:

A window-licker slobbered over the glass, chasing droplets from the storm. It's worm-like body writhed on her porch, draped in stolen jewelry, reveling in the gift of water.

LEAH:

(Sighs)

... Wonder if you'd make a good sacrifice in exchange for 'em...

The window licker responds only with "bleh, bleaaaaahhhs" of drinking.

LEAH: (cont'd)

They would've told me... if I wasn't enough for them. They would've (Quiet reflection) ... Have I just been delusional? All this time?

Snuffling bleeegrhhhs.

LEAH: (cont'd)

"There's no competing with the father that left" ... (a slight chuckle) Well... at least one of us is having a good time, eh?... There's gotta be some divinity that would take you for an offerin' ...

Blergh! Bleaaaaaaauugh...

She pulls out her phone and starts texting.

LEAH: (cont'd)

Bring them straight home, Sedum. If- (to herself) No, (Back to texting) When you find them... you stay too. I'm done hiding.

SCENE 8: EXT. FOREST, NIGHT.

It's torrential here, splatting all over the leaves. A creek gurgles. All four, the Directors and Cracogus are walking through the forest.

VALEN:

(Loud, over the rain)

This it?

CRACOGUS:
They were here a week ago.

NARRATOR:
The Directors, Sedum, and Cracogus lingered next to a swollen creek, buried in the bowels of the forest. Valen shivered underneath Sedum's oddly contorted wing acting as her umbrella.

CRACOGUS:
There. I said I could take you to where they had been- They contact me, I don't keep tabs.

ROOSE:
A week's head start... Mmmerrrgh...

NARRATOR:
Roose crawled over the slick ground, head down, touching everything within reach. Rocks spilled from their age-old guard posts.

Rocks are cascading from under her hands.

SEDUM:
Do you see anything?

ROOSE:
Fur and leaves and parasites and... -
Oil... Rubber, metal and... (She stops)

A SNAP of a branch distant, but not distant enough.

NARRATOR:
Roose craned her neck up. Sedum's many eyes flashed for any sign in the dark. Nothing more than a crack of a branch... back the way they'd come.

ROOSE:
(Low growl)
We aren't alone.

CRACOGUS:
... This is where I leave you.

ROOSE:
Did you set us up?

CRACOGUS:
 (Tense, honest)
 No, I wouldn't have had time.

ROOSE:
 Mmmeh- Then by all means, run if you
 want to risk more off your back...

Cracogus shifts, then settles on an anxious sigh.

NARRATOR:
 Cracogus hunkered down on all fours.
 Rain soaked the lichen and ancient
 cloth around her.

A sliding cascade through the leaves.

VALEN:
 (Low, to only him)
 What's out there, what can you see?

SEDUM:
 (Low)
 Rain. And trees.

NARRATOR:
 His arm encircled her, clamping her
 close. Valen planted her boots deep
 into the mud, straining to hear.

A low rumble, not quite a growl, but something alien and wet
 sounding. A step. A step, another, through the forest.

ENFYs:
 (In their "Were"-
 form, gurgling husky
 and brutish)
 The Pyre is opening the floor for an
 exchange, good Directors.

VALEN:
 (To herself)
 Enfys...?

CRACOGUS:
 Hah... now, I'll leave you in good
 hands.

SEDUM:
 Where are you go-

Cracogus runs off into the night.

VALEN:

(Loud)

Enfys, is that you?! What do you mean "Pyre"?! O'Cuinn! Answer me!

SEDUM:

I can't see them.-

ROOSE:

-HA!

NARRATOR:

They turned to Roose, who pointed two hands at Valen.

ROOSE:

HAHAHA, So I'm not the only one who's hire's radicalized!! Hahaha, ahhhh-

VALEN:

(Withering)

Go suck a cactus, Roose...

SEDUM:

If that really is you, Enfys...-

ENFYS:

In the flesh, a little older, a bit wiser...

ROOSE:

Come out where we can verify that.

ENFYS:

I repeat wiser, Director.

SEDUM:

(Almost a choke of emotion- half a sigh, before he gets himself together)

Ah- well... Well... What kind of exchange is the... Pyre offering?

ENFYS:

One thing only. One gesture for three unharmed people. Generous, considering the attack on-

VALEN:

Is that all they are to you? Just hostages?

ENFYS:

(Irked slightly at
the interruption,
they're trying very
hard with the act)

-Considering the attack on our
territory. So, for your three people...
Roose?

ROOSE:

Ungh?

NARRATOR:

A shape peeled through the trees
circling them.

Rustling, a grunt.

VALEN:

(Whispered)

They're over us. I still can't see-

ROOSE:

What are your terms, beast?

ENFYS:

One Franklin Deco's barrier dropped
from this day forth. His banishment
is burned and the playing field is
levelled.

ROOSE:

... Ha! (Laughs again) Come on, come
on, ask what it is you really want.

ENFYS:

The Bone Snake is afraid?

ROOSE:

What is your loyalty to him?

ENFYS:

The contract, made void, now, and all
three are returned safe. Sound
reasonable?

VALEN:

(Half to herself)

Just let it go, we're here for the
crew.

ENFYS:
Your pride or their well-being. Oh,
our *choices*...

Another leap to another tree. Then another slightly further
away.

ENFYS: (cont'd)
It's late, Directors...!

SEDUM:
(Anxiously)
I'm begging you, Roose-

ROOSE:
(Carefully calling
the bluff)
Enfys wouldn't hurt them...

ENFYS:
I assume you've forgotten the last
time your Rangers danced with the
Pyre? Skin is hard to come by once
lost.

SEDUM:
(Dad instincts
kicking in hard)
Please, Roose! Please, we don't have
time.

ENFYS:
Oh, 2 am isn't a good time for you
either? I agree, in fact, I'm getting
impatient-

VALEN:
-Roose. We need you. Please.

ROOSE:
(Huffing breath,
realizing she's
backed into a
corner)
Mmmgh... ! The things I do for you
people... Consider it done.

ENFYS:
Show me.

Roose vocally rolls her eyes.

NARRATOR:

Roose hung her head in an irritated sigh.

ROOSE:

Really, O'Cuinn?

NARRATOR:

Then... she dug a blade-thin arm down her throat, unhinging her jaw-searching- A flash dazzled them. And out she pulled... a throbbing, dripping red light, clutched delicately in her hand.

The red light emits a whirl of energy, including whispers of both Franklin and Roose: "I am exiled in exchange for my choice" "You are exiled in exchange for your choice" swirling together.

NARRATOR: (cont'd)

Her lidless eyes sank in disgust... with a hint of reminiscence in the bloody light. She clenched her fist, nails striking into the heart of the contract.

She grunts in a little bit of pain, and the thing shatters.

ROOSE:

There.

ENFYS:

(A real joy, barely held back)

Yes!

A rustling from above... then a whistle through the rain and a heavy THUD as Enfys smacks the earth. Sedum reacts, Valen slightly less so, Roose not at all.

NARRATOR:

A beast landed ten feet away on the crest of a berm. A tightly muscled form, dark fur slicked with rain. Something like a boar and a canid molded with a humanoid. Enfys' devilish silhouette motioned them to follow.

ENFYS:

Shall we?

SCENE 9: INT. CRAFT ROOM, BT, NIGHT

It's after 2 am, they are all devastatingly tired.

SAM:

(Like he is
continuing to
ramble)

... and to that extent, if two people have left the DoCA to be vigilantes, what does that mean about the system in place? Does it mean we're effecting any good change, does it mean we're swimming upstream, does it mean this job attracts violence? Does this mean any of us could become political dissents- Oh GOD does this mean we'll be lumped in with them once everyone finds out- How much treason are we committing just by being here?

MIA:

God, he really doesn't shut up once he gets going, does he?

NARRATOR:

Al stared at the floor, Sam processing what she'd told them after Franklin tied her back to her chair. Mia loomed unimpressed at her shoulder, cold hands mindlessly skittering over Al's throat.

MIA:

Al? Can you hear me? Tell him to shut up. I don't think you can hear me. He just keeps going. Shut uuup. Shut uuuuup!

SAM:

They have to know, all of this was just-just a misunderstanding, and we're not condoning terrorism- But what if they don't... Oh God, what if Becker like gets it in his head this is like a slight against him or something-

CRUX:

Sam? How about we slow down. Everyone's working through this.

SAM:

Wha- Oh.

NARRATOR:

Crux inclined his head to Al, who stayed slumped, unmoving except for a deep, concentrated breath swelling her back.

SAM:

Oh. ... Sorry. I'm sorry. It's... a lot.

AL:

I know.

MIA:

(Small laugh)

Wouldn't it be just my luck if you ended up going to prison for this stupid reason and not for murdering me? Wouldn't that just be, AH, so choice? (Laughs) Don't worry, I won't let that happen. You'd probably kill yourself before you got to half your sentence, what fun is that?

AL:

No fun...

SAM:

(Knowing somethings
off)

That's for sure...

CRUX:

Are you alright, Al?

MIA:

(Whispers)

Answer honest. See their reaction.

AL:

Considering present circumstances.
You?

MIA:

Coward.

CRUX:

Better than you, assuredly.

AL:

That's good.

NARRATOR:
Mia's hand tilted Al's chin up and
traced circles over her trachea.

Al reacts, stifled.

SAM:
Hm?

AL:
(A little forced in
her neutrality)
What?

SAM:
Oh, I thought... you were... doing
something.

AL:
Just trying to get comfortable.

SAM:
Yeah... yeah...

MIA:
(Chuckling)
Ohhh, I've missed this. Those damn
breathing exercises have been ruining
all our good times. Ooo, you should
pilfer your mom's liquor cabinet
after this, just like old times!

A hesitant knock-knock on the door to the Craft Room.
Someone shifts in their chair.

CRUX:
... Yes?

The door shifts open.

KILN:
Can... Can I come in?

SAM:
Yeah. I mean, it's your house.

KILN:
Kay!

A tinkling of a tray, she comes in with three waters and
some nuts.

KILN: (cont'd)
It's really late, but I thought
y'all'd be thirsty. And I brought
nuts. And a fruit snack. You'll have
to share it.

NARRATOR:
Al felt the hands stop toying with
her neck. Mia stood transfixed by
Kiln.

MIA:
Who's that?

AL:
Hey Kiln, that's sweet of you.

KILN:
I always get peckish in the middle of
the night.

MIA:
She sounds young... How old?

NARRATOR:
Mia left Al's side, and took to
slowly circling Kiln, inspecting her,
no other eyes in the room registering
the spectre dripping invisible ichor
over the tiles.

AL:
That's really considerate for a kid.

KILN:
Pfft, come on. I almost shot y'all.

CRUX:
That you did.

KILN:
Heh... Don't follow me home next time.
Just ask. Ok, Sammm? Here's your's.

NARRATOR:
She handed him a tall glass. A crazy
straw wobbled up high, high enough
that he could hold the cup in his lap
and bend (at an uncomfortable angle)
to drink.

SAM:
Oh thank you.

CRUX:
 (Smugly)
 Yes, he's been dying of thirst all night.

SAM:
 (Drinking)
 Quiet...

KILN:
 Al? Here's-

AL:
 I'm good, thank you.

KILN:
 (A bit disappointed)
 Oh... Really?

MIA:
 She... She's a monster... But... Doesn't she remind you of Harper...? In the eyes. I feel like it's in the eyes...

NARRATOR:
 Mia's ghostly hands hovered inches from Kiln's scales, the child unaware. Al swallowed back nausea.

KILN:
 Are you sure? I didn't spit in it or anything.

AL:
 ... O-oh, ok, actually, I-I'll take some.

NARRATOR:
 Al spread her fingers in her lap to grab the same manner of rig Sam drank from. Kiln's face lit up.

KILN:
 Ok! Here- you got the pink straw.

AL:
 Thanks...

KILN:
 Heh... Do you like pink?

AL:
 It's fine.

KILN:
Yeah, I agree. (She yawns) 'xcuse me.
Crux?

CRUX:
I will pass, thank you, and I am
sure.

KILN:
But it's been hours?

CRUX:
I promise, I'm not that parched.

NARRATOR:
Kiln eyed his mask curiously.

KILN:
Are you self conscious? I am too, but
there's no reason to be, I won't be
rude.

CRUX:
(Keeping it light,
but he's a bit
nervous)
It's not that, it's- I'd rather not.

KILN:
(Deciding, against
her curiosity)
Ok. "A yes is yes and a no is no".
Even when I'm being nice.

CRUX:
Right. Good philosophy.

SAM:
(Genuine, making
conversation)
Where'd you pick that up?

KILN:
Dad and Oppy. Ms. Cracogus. My
friends, everyone says "consent is
key". It's honorable. It's why I
don't like being chased. But I'll
forgive you.

NARRATOR:

Mia stayed close to Kiln, absorbing the radiance from her glowing veins... But Al spied the edges of her being dissolving. Her strength ebbing away from the mortal coil.

SAM:

They're right. Consent is key.

AL:

You know Cracogus?

KILN:

Mhm. She's really cool. She helped Dad alot, she helped me be born. She's my godmom but... She's not around a ton. Just with... everything. You know. Can't be implicated!

MIA:

Are you gonna try harder for her? Cause she's a nightmare, Al? Are you going to fight for her? Little monster...

NARRATOR:

Mia locked eyes with Al across the room. Her visage flicked out, then back, but still she reached her hand to the scales of Kiln's cheek.

MIA:

(A huff of a laugh)
Be seein' you.

NARRATOR:

Her fingers brushed Kiln's face.

KILN:

Hm?

NARRATOR:

Kiln turned as Mia disappeared. She blinked. A weight lifted from Al's shoulders.

CRUX:

Quite the eclectic family you have.

KILN:

I don't know what that means.

CRUX:
Uh, "interesting".

KILN:
Oh! Well, maybe to you.

A distant, muffled howling yowl from outside.

KILN: (cont'd)
(yawning wide)
Oppy's home!

SAM:
(Low)
Where'd they go again?

AL:
(Low)
They didn't say.

Footsteps and the door swings open.

FRANKLIN:
It's time. Pumpkin? Stay inside.

SCENE 10: EXT. BT, NIGHT

The rain is slowing down. The door swings open and they all tromp down to the ground.

SAM:
Ah- Who is-

Enfys huffs and snorts, prowling before them.

CRUX:
It's Enfys, that's... also what they look like.

NARRATOR:
Sam's mouth hung open as he took in the beast that prowled before them. A second, only a moment, until he realized-

SAM:
I gave you cookies! At Perdition!

ENFYs:
(Purring growl)
And imagine my surprise to find the little baker in my house.
(MORE)

ENFYS: (cont'd)
 It was good, by the way. (Moving on)
 They're right behind, Franklin. (Half
 a sparkle of joy) Do you feel any
 different?

FRANKLIN:
 No...? Why... (Realizing) Did you do it?

ENFYS:
 I saw it myself. It's a new chapter,
 my friend.

FRANKLIN:
 (Hushed)
 Oh thank God, oh my God...

NARRATOR:
 Enfys slid past Franklin, brushing
 him with their coarse fur, to flank
 them all at the front door.

They hum happily as they shift past.

FRANKLIN:
 (Gathering himself
 back)
 Right, ok- ahem, well, I can't say it
 was a *tremendously* enjoyable evening.

A great flapping as Sedum lands, a hissing woosh as Roose
 arrives.

VALEN:
 (Loud)
 Are y'all alright?-

ROOSE:
 (Loud)
 Happy, Franklin? Only took the
 incompetence of our people to get
 what you've always wanted, you must
 feel so proud, so clever.

FRANKLIN:
 (Calling back)
 I think it says something for
 resourcefulness, don't you? You want
 them, or are we settling for trading
 ego blows?

SEDUM:
 No, send them over, please. We'll go.

FRANKLIN:

Sensible. No decorum rules out here,
not now. Get out while you got a
chance.

ROOSE:

Let's see you get cocky without your
own head affixed to your shoulders,
eh?

ENFYs:

(Low)

They could do this forever, go on.

CRUX:

Thanks. By the way, what you've got
going on suits you, Enfys.

ENFYs:

(A little tense)

... Thank you.

CRUX:

Always thought you'd make a good
cultist. Toodles.

Crux starts off.

CRUX: (cont'd)

(growing distant)

Anyone care to get me out of these
ropes?

AL:

(Quiet)

Enfys...

ENFYs:

What is it?

AL:

Franklin, you too.

FRANKLIN:

Ah?

NARRATOR:

Sam hesitated for his sibling,
watching her blink as rain slipped
down her nose.

AL:

Thank you.

FRANKLIN:
It'd be nice if this had been under
better circumstances.

ROOSE:
Get over here, imbeciles.

ENFYs:
(Barely above a
whisper)
Consider it... I don't want us to
remain on opposing sides...

NARRATOR:
Sam caught Enfy's eyes over Al's
shoulder. They pulled back their
hackles over tusks and teeth.

ENFYs:
What are you waiting for, rabbit?-

AL:
-Don't talk to him like that.

ENFYs:
(A moment's
hesitation)
... Make sure to keep him away from
snares. He's got innocence about him.

SAM:
(Squeaking a little)
I-I, I know where to step, with my
feet, thank you.

ENFYs:
(Slight huff of a
laugh)
Let's hope so.

VALEN:
(Distant)
Greers! Come on!

ENFYs:
Take care, Al.

AL:
Let's go.

They shuffle forward, deeper into the rain.

SEDUM:
 (A nervous chant to
 himself)
 Come here, come here, come here, come
 here-

They're at him. He gathers them into a hug.

SEDUM: (cont'd)
 (out in a rush)
 Did they hurt you?

SAM:
 We're ok.

AL:
 We're fine. The ropes-

A slice and the ropes fall in a heap.

SAM:
 Ha... convenient claws.

SEDUM:
 Can you move your hands?-

FRANKLIN:
 (Distant now, crying
 out into the night)
 Don't follow us! Don't look for us!-
 Cross us... and you'll regret it.
 You'll regret whose hand you hold,
 Valen...

NARRATOR:
 Valen tensed suddenly, her eyes gone
 wide.

VALEN:
 What the fuck...?

FRANKLIN:
 What deals you make with politicians,
 Sedum.

SEDUM:
 (Half to himself)
 How do you know-

FRANKLIN:
 And... well, you'll regret, in general,
 everything you do, Roose.

ROOSE:
Heuh, like there's anything to
regret.-

FRANKLIN:
I promise you. I promise each of you...
Stay away from us. Take the north,
Enfys.

Enfys' crashes off into the brush.

NARRATOR:
Franklin's hand slid up the side of
the trailers.

He whistles sharp and long.

NARRATOR: (cont'd)
The limbs of junk shuddered and
grabbed frantically for footholds,
mechanical hands grasping great piles
of soaked leaves. Franklin lifted
himself onto the side of the
structure and whispered to the body
itself. Not a second passed before
the amalgamation leapt forward, a
horrible train of appendages and
boxes, scuttling.

A window pops open, and Kiln pokes her head out.

KILN:
Bye!! See you later!!

FRANKLIN:
(Distant)
Sweetie- we're not saying goodbye,
we're serious.

KILN:
(Distant)
Oh, ok- LEAVE!! NOW!! (Tacked on)
Heh, ok, see you later!!

The Breathing Trailers disappear into the night.

SCENE 11: EXT./INT. LEAH'S CONDO, NIGHT

On Leah's porch, Sam, Al, and Sedum are huddled together,
talking low.

AL:
It's too late for this, Sedum, just head out.

SAM:
He can pop in for a minute and we'll, we'll come up with some reason- Just go all Nuller.

Sedum sighs and a twinkle shifts over him.

NARRATOR:
Sedum's corvid-esque figure melted into his human face, entirely exhausted. All three dripped in half dried rainwater over the porch, splattering the jack o'lanterns.

AL:
Ok, well, maybe mama won't even be up so we can just slip in-

NARRATOR:
Sedum reached past both their noses and pressed firm on the doorbell.

A muffled buzzing of the ringer from inside.

AL:
Stop it! What's all that?!

SEDUM:
She's awake, Spirit. She's been calling me every half hour.

SAM:
I didn't know you called each other.-

The door wrenches open, the screen door as well. Leah scoops them both into a huge hug, both Sam and Al surprised by the vicious, rib breaking love.

NARRATOR:
Leah buried her face between the shoulders of her children, squeezing, rocking, breathing them in.

LEAH:
Oh, GOD, get in here, all of you, get in here!!

AL:
Ah, mama, even Nuller-?

They all trip over their feet getting inside.

NARRATOR:
Too late. Leah drug her children
inside, Sedum following with sluggish
feet.

The door closes and locks.

LEAH:
Are you hurt? What happened? What...
Come here.

She pulls them in for another hug.

SAM:
Agch, mom, we're ok! Just got a
little turned around in the woods is
all!-

LEAH:
No. Just stop.

AL:
Mama, what?

LEAH:
I'm done with this charade.

SAM:
(Still trying)
Charade?

LEAH:
Sedum, will ya...

SEDUM:
(Shifting back)
Yes... Alright.

AL:
Wait-!

NARRATOR:
His feathered head scraped the light
fixture in the foyer. Leah seemed
deflated, rubbing her children's
backs. He placed a hand on Al's
shoulder, his golden eyes bloodshot
to match Leah's.

LEAH:
You two... are beyond smart. So clever.
But very stupid sometimes. I'm sorry,
but honest to God, we all had *bets*.-

SAM:
You knew the whole time?

LEAH:
(A flustered, almost
tearful laugh)
Sweets, I was *born* here. Goddamn-
sorry- fifty years ago. I managed to
perceive the world between then and
now. Just a coupla times.

SAM:
Why didn't you say?

LEAH:
I knew you'd... I *trusted* you'd tell me
when you needed to, like... when either
of you first started dating! I gave
you the concepts, everyone's a person
no matter how different- but then
some things you need to figure out on
your own...

SAM:
This is just a bit different than
first kisses, mom!

LEAH:
It is. But... well... you caught on quick
to the quirks when you were kids,
especially you, Sam, and then...
clammed up. You need breathing room
to be your own person. If you wanted
to reject this and go somewhere that
fit you better, I... I always wanted
you to make your own decisions.

SAM:
We, we thought you just didn't see-
we didn't want to scare you!

AL:
I didn't want to make the world more
complicated, with dad, with...
everything we came from.

LEAH:
 You two are so sweet and again... a
 little naive, if it's ok to say. I
 love you. I'm sorry I didn't explain
 it well, at all...

SAM:
 (Frazzled, but
 emotionally struck)
 Mama-

AL:
 You in on it too, Sedum?

SEDUM:
 It was never mine to speak for Leah.
 I made sure she was aware from day
 one. Every step.

LEAH:
 I swear, I would've been fine if he
 hadn't just moved here and been such
 a stranger, but then Valen spoke for
 him, and strangers become neighbors
 and neighbors become friends and
 friends-

AL:
 Ah...

Al leans back onto Leah.

AL: (cont'd)
 (quiet)
 I'm sorry, Mama... I'm sorry I didn't
 trust you...

LEAH:
 Don't disappear again! Don't! Please...
 I... I thought I lost you...

NARRATOR:
 Sedum gently rested a hand on Sam's
 shoulder. Sam closed the distance
 between them all, pulling them into a
 web of limbs and exhaustion.

SAM:
 We're here... We're all still here.

END

Cast

Enfys - Tom Catt
Al - Faraday Roke
Franklin Deco - Paul Greene-Dennis
Kiln - Carla Brown
Narrator - Kiarra Osakue
Samson - Z Reklaw
Crux - John Peacock
Cracogus - D.L. Cordero
Roose - Jacque Reiman
Sedum - Marcus Cannello
Valen - Samantha Weiler
Leah - M. Kate McCulloch
Mia - Erin M. Banta

CREW

Script Editor, Jacque Reiman.
Assistant Director and Script Editor, Joseph Rothorn.
Written, Directed, and Edited by Faraday Roke.
Harbor is a production of Tartarus Jenny Studios.

Thanks so much for listening to the show. Wanna help us out?
Write a review! We also have some spiffy merch at our
website, harborpodcast.com, as well as a donation link. And
of course, please tell your friends, family, good-natured
weirdos, and local cryptids about us- each new ear is a
great gift. Stay kind!