

TRANSCRIPT – Smoke & Mirrors Vol. 1 – Chapter 2 – *The Closer You Look*

RECAP

LILLIAN: Previously on Smoke and Mirrors...

ALL: Removere potentiam et illustrationem a mundo. Non est tibi ad participes in hoc mundo.

FX: A low bass-hum and electrical sparking during the 3rd iteration

FX: All sound stops

LILLIAN: Guys. (long pause) I've a feeling we're not in Kansas anymore.

CITY GUARD: What do I mean? You just had a house dropped on your heads.

CITY GUARD: Put them on the wagon and take them to the stockade, at least until we can figure out what's going on.

CITY GUARD #2: Yes, sergeant.

FX: Shackles closing.

LILLIAN: Wait, we're going to jail?

CITY GUARD #2: Your majesty! Annanon's army is approaching the gate!

ROWAN: Another time then. Quickly, to the front bulwark.

OCTAVIUS: (whispering) Who's Annanon?

LILLIAN: (whispering) I don't know!

CITY GUARD: An unholy wizard. Honest-to-God, I'm not lying to you. Every year he marches up here with his army of monsters, demanding a tribute.

CITY GUARD #2: He's demanding that we hand over Princess Mackenzie or... and I don't know what this means, your majesty... but he said he's heard we have outlanders as well and will take them in her stead.

ROWAN: Annanon draws an army of the undead to our doorsteps.

NERO: It's a trick.

ROWAN: Excuse me?

NERO: They are just men. They're wearing a morph suit, er... black cloth on their legs, hands and faces. The bones of those they killed strapped to their legs, their skulls worn like masks.

NERO: How interested are you in making a statement?

OCTAVIUS: I can't believe you actually managed to talk them into this crazy plan.

NERO: We'll need the palm torches and the purple sparklers.

OCTAVIUS: Why the purple ones?

ED: Because necromancy is always purple. Haven't you ever played Skyrim?

ALL: Arise! Arise!

FX: The soldiers run past them, heading off to the battle

FX: Cannons fire for the bulwark

FX: The skeleton army in front of them shrieks as they move into battle

FX: A great battle

CITY GUARD: This is a real skeleton army guys!

CITY GUARD #2: Too late to stop now!

FX: A skeleton shrieking

CITY GUARD: It's over Annanon! Put down your staff and surrender!

ANNANON: Your arrogance knows no boundaries, General.

FX: Plume of flame

CITY GUARD #2: Where'd he go?

FX: Music – *Impenitent* by Jason Luka

OCTAVIUS: We're Smoke & Mirrors...

NERO: A troupe of stage magicians...

ED: Lost in another world...

LILLIAN: Trying to stay alive...

OCTAVIUS: With an evil wizard chasing us...

ED: We have to use our wits in order to survive...

NERO: When all we want is to find our way home.

OCTAVIUS: Home.

ED: Home

LILLIAN: Home.

FX: Music fades

NARRATOR: Smoke and Mirrors, volume 1. Chapter two – The Closer You Look

SCENE 1

INT. THEATER. DAYTIME

Octavius and Lillian are sitting at a desk

OCTAVIUS: Hey, Lillian?

LILLIAN: What's up?

FX: Shuffling of papers

OCTAVIUS: Okay, judging by the amount of money we're being sent, this is obviously not supposed to be a volunteer community theater.

LILLIAN: We'll need to find directors, scripts, actors, set designers, make a schedule, hold auditions.

OCTAVIUS: How did actors even survive before Facebook?

LILLIAN: There is news print. I think.

OCTAVIUS: I don't have any better ideas.

LILLIAN: Do you think they'll want us to do any American plays?

OCTAVIUS: It's possible but I'm not sure I can piece any of them together from memory. I'm not a playwright, though it would be funny to see the phrase "Death of a Salesman by Octavius Blackwater" on paper. It almost feels like theft just thinking about it.

LILLIAN: I don't remember the first thing about *Death of a Salesman*.

OCTAVIUS: Me neither.

LILLIAN: I saw a copy of *Masque of the Red Death* in the green room. I think the city school theater group was rehearsing for it.

OCTAVIUS: That's kind of a morbid, and short, introduction to American theater.

LILLIAN: Any better ideas?

OCTAVIUS: Nope. Ed and Nero are going to be busy installing the fireplace in the common room for a while, so I think this all on us.

LILLIAN: I still like that. "Common room." Especially, since we're... magicians... ya know... and... okay, I'll shut up now. Well, at the very least we won't freeze to death.

OCTAVIUS: Yeah, freeze to death sitting right underneath the central heating unit that we can't use because Soleil doesn't have any gas lines or electricity.

LILLIAN: Bright side. We at least we have running water. Somewhat.

OCTAVIUS: Yeah, well, gravity-fed is the best we can do without spending a boatload of money. And, hey, it only takes 10 minutes to flush a toilet. So, what else is on the to-do list?

LILLIAN: We need a bunch of lanterns and lantern hooks pretty much everywhere. Then there's converting the storage room in the back into a bathroom.

OCTAVIUS: I thought we were putting that in the upstairs green room.

LILLIAN: Oh the plumber said it'd be cheaper plus we wouldn't have to move Nero.

OCTAVIUS: Ah. That makes sense.

FX: Door slams

LILLIAN: (screams) (angrily) Do NOT sneak up on me like that!

MESSENGER: Sorry. I have a sealed letter for the owners of the theater.

OCTAVIUS: Okay. Who's it from?

MESSENGER: It has the signet of the House d'Arda. (unnecessarily long pause) That means you should probably open it sooner, rather than later.

LILLIAN: Ooh, a red wax seal. Fancy. Nero! Ed! Come here.

ED: Coming

NERO: Yeah, what's up?

FX: Footsteps on concrete

FX: Paper unfolding

LILLIAN: Ah, it's from Mackenzie. I hope this finds you well. I'm sorry we started off on the wrong foot. I like to believe I am not the monster you probably think I am. In light of the fact that I owe you an apology and you are new here to Soleil City, I have decided to offer up the olive branch. Be dressed for dinner and drinks when the stagecoach arrives at the seventh bell. See you soon. Mackenzie d'Arda.

(Awkward pause)

ED: Yes! I didn't scare her off!

LILLIAN: Welp, time to hit the costume closet.

NERO: Hold on, Ed.

ED: What's up?

NERO: First of all, Mackenzie's royalty. I don't want to tell you she's off-limits—

OCTAVIUS: I do.

NERO: --but don't get your hopes up. Second of all, she's now the boss's daughter, and while, yes, there are a good number of pornos that start that way, what I don't want is a story that ends with the theater getting defunded and all of us out on the streets.

ED: I'll be careful. I promise.

NERO: Good. Now c'mon. We need to go out and find the tools for all the projects we're doing.

SCENE 2

INT. COSTUME ROOM. EARLY EVENING

OCTAVIUS: (yelling downstairs) Hey Lillian, can you let me know when you're done with the costume closet?

LILLIAN: Sure. Hey Ock, can you come down here for a moment?

OCTAVIUS: Sure thing.

FX: Shoes on concrete stairs

OCTAVIUS: What's up?

LILLIAN: Yeah, can you tie this up in the back?

OCTAVIUS: Oh sure, turn around. How tight do you want it?

LILLIAN: (knowing she might regret saying it) Try to close it.

OCTAVIUS: Alright.

LILLIAN: Jesus!

OCTAVIUS: Sorry.

LILLIAN: No, no. It's okay. That's how this thing is built. Apparently, I don't need to breathe.

OCTAVIUS: Hey, I have a question I want to ask you.

LILLIAN: Alright, shoot.

OCTAVIUS: Could we maybe, I dunno, make a date out of this whole thing tonight? If that's okay...

LILLIAN: Okay, um... we can't really make it a uh... date if uh Ed and Nero are coming along.

OCTAVIUS: (starts to say something)

LILLIAN: But... I'll be glad to take a rain-check on it.

OCTAVIUS: Okay, maybe next weekend then?

LILLIAN: I can do that.

OCTAVIUS: Great.

LILLIAN: Great.

OCTAVIUS: (awkwardly) Well...um... let me know when you're finished here.

LILLIAN: I will.

FX: Shoes on concrete

(pause)

LILLIAN: Finally! And... dammit (to herself) boots before corset, idiot. Ed!

SCENE 3
EXT. THEATER. 7PM

5/31/2019 2:39 AM

FX: Seven bells from the tower

ED: That's seven o'clock right?

NERO: Yeah. They're late and it's cold.

OCTAVIUS: Cut them some slack. It's literally just 7 o'clock and 1 second.

FX: Footsteps on snow

OCTAVIUS: Besides, with all this snow lying around...

FX: Thud

LILLIAN: (laughs in the background)

OCTAVIUS: Oh you are so dead.

FX: Thud

LILLIAN: (yelps)

FX: Thud

ED: Hey, hey. I don't remember signing up for this!

FX: Thud

NERO: C'mon! This is completely unfair. I'm the only one not wearing gloves.

(Improvised snowball fight)

FX: Hoofsteps on cobblestone

OCTAVIUS: And there they are.

FX: Thud

OCTAVIUS: Okay, okay. Cease fire!

FX: The stagecoach stops

FX: Coach door opening

STAGER: Well, you four seem to be enjoying yourselves. Welcome aboard!

LILLIAN: Thank you, sir.

OCTAVIUS: Thank you.

NERO: Thank you.

ED: Thanks.

FX: Coach door closing

FX: Hoofsteps on cobblestone

OCTAVIUS: Well, this is a new experience.

LILLIAN: I've never been on a stagecoach ride before.

ED: Anyone have any idea where we're going?

OCTAVIUS: No idea, Ed. You know, I think we need to add a map to our list of things to buy for the common room.

NERO: Oh, it's called the common room now?

LILLIAN: I like it. It sounds very... Hogwartsy.

ED: How do we even find a map? It's not like we can just stop in at a Stuckey's and pick one up.

OCTAVIUS: If they have to hand-draw them it'll probably be pretty expensive. But, to answer your question, no, I have no idea where we're going.

ED: I just want the tub to hurry up. I don't like washing up in the sink.

NERO: Oh dude!

OCTAVIUS: What?

NERO: We just passed a 'cartography' shop. I'm serious! It wasn't three blocks away from the theater!

LILLIAN: Oh sweet.

NERO: We'll have to drop by there in morning. (pause) Alright, so... stupid question. Did anyone bring their props?

LILLIAN: You mean like... tarot cards... (plop) ropes... (plop)?

ED: A whole pocketful of seemingly innocuous knick-nacks?

OCTAVIUS: I mean I only brought 4 trick decks this time. I'm packing light.

NERO: I was wondering why we were ALL wearing sleeves.

OCTAVIUS: Coincidence. Totally coincidence.

SCENE 4
EXT. PHRENIC GROTESQUE. EVENING

STAGER: Alright, here ya are.

FX: Lively music coming from inside (muffled with slight reverb due to proximity)

FX: Stepping down from the stagecoach onto the snow

LILLIAN: The Phrenic Grotesque

OCTAVIUS: The one moment in my life I ever needed a thesaurus.

ED: Yet another thing we'll have to buy because we can't charge our cellphones

NERO: It's definitely a conversation-starter though. C'mon.

FX: Shoes on snow

LILLIAN: Yeah, let's not freeze to death before we even get there.

FX: Swinging door

FX: Background music becomes unmuffled

SCENE 5
INT. PHRENIC GROTESQUE. EVENING

OCTAVIUS: You see her?

NERO: Nope.

ED: There they are. In the corner booth.

LILLIAN: And immediately he runs off to sit next to her, just like we warned him not to.

OCTAVIUS: (groans concernedly) Well, let's sit down and say hello.

Nero freezes up when he gets to the table.

NERO: Am I supposed to bow or something?

YOURIE: If you want a beating from the people who actually know how to keep a low-profile, yes. Be our guest. Sit.

OSWALD: Hi, I'm Oswald. This is my wife Yourie. Of course, you've met my sister Mackenzie. Um...what are you doing?

OCTAVIUS: Oh it's called a handshake. It's like... so. It's an American thing.

Oswald is a little thrown by the custom of handshakes vs saluting but plays along.

YOURIE: Ozzy, they're not from here, remember?

OSWALD: Right. My apologies.

ALL: (overlapping introductions)

OSWALD: So Ed, I heard you and Mackenzie got off a rough start.

MACKENZIE: Yes, yes we did.

ED: (trying to deflect the subject) Yeah, well, um, so what's good on the menu here?

OSWALD: Oh, no. You're not getting off that easy. I wanna hear this story.

ED: I really don't...

NERO: Oh you don't wanna tell the story of how, when in the presence of royalty, you valiantly and defiantly stood there and popped a boner?

ED: I'd really rather not.

YOURIE: Oh hold on, something's kicking me under the table. Okay, just had to make sure it wasn't Ed's meat.

ED: I can't believe you told them about this.

MACKENZIE: (Trying to keep a straight face) I have no idea what you're talking about.

ED: Really?

MACKENZIE: (busts out laughing)

ALL: (bust out laughing as soon as Mackenzie lose it)

ED: Really guys?

YOURIE: But to answer your question, I would recommend the chicken. And apparently Mackenzie will have the beef.

MACKENZIE: Oh shut up!

OSWALD: So, how did the four of you meet?

LILLIAN: Well, Octavius and I have known each other since grade school. Nero and I met at a speed dating event.

YOURIE: What is a speed dating event?

Lillian is a bit awkward here because it's not something she thought she would ever have to explain.

LILLIAN: Oh, um... strangers meeting strangers for five minutes at a time and you decide who you want to see again and they arrange it afterwards.

YOURIE: Oh.

SCENE 6

INT. QUIET CAFÉ. EVENING

FX: Quiet café ambience, bell ringing

NERO: It was a pleasure meeting you, Maria.

FX: Chair scooting twice

LILLIAN: Hi! I'm Kaitlyn.

NERO: Hi, I'm Tyler, it's a pleasure meeting you. This your first time speed dating?

LILLIAN: Yeah, I'm a little nervous since it's uncharted territory for me but I thought it'd be a good idea to just, ya know, write out a list of dealbreakers so I wouldn't be wasting anyone's time.

FX: Paper being passed

NERO: That's efficient. You know it's a numbers game.

LILLIAN: While you're checking that out, I'm just... musing. Am I the only one who didn't get the memo that all the women have to wear red?

NERO: Got something against red?

LILLIAN: It's not my color.

NERO: I suppose it's some psychological thing. Blue looks good on you though. (reading the paper) Well, I'm certainly not a Republican, not a smoker either. You don't have to worry about that. "Doesn't want children?" Well, I'm afraid that leaves me disqualified then.

LILLIAN: Aww... okay. So what are you supposed to do for the extra two-an-a-half minutes if it kinda goes down this way?

NERO: They really should do separate events for people, ya know, looking for long-term, but I guess you can pretty much talk about whatever you want. I dunno. Do a magic trick?

LILLIAN: Do you know a magic trick?

NERO: I can... pull a quarter out of your ear.

FX: Two more coins dropping on the table

LILLIAN: No way! You didn't put your hands in your pocket the whole time! You've seriously had that prepped since before I sat down?

NERO: Or perhaps you need a little more change for the vending machine?

FX: Two more coins dropping on the table

LILLIAN: Unbelievable.

NERO: I've got a few better ones but nothing I can do in the spur-of-the-moment.

LILLIAN: Okay, I got one. Can I see your uh... silverware thingy?

NERO: Alright.

LILLIAN: Okay. Now, I have two spoons, so I'm gonna show you that this isn't a trick spoon or anything.

NERO: I mean, I literally just saw you pull it out of the wrapping, but sure.

LILLIAN: I'm going to bend the spoon with my mind.

NERO: Alright.

(Small pause)

NERO: Oh, wow. That's some Uri Gellar stuff right there.

LILLIAN: Yeah?

NERO: You could work on the presentation a little and yeah, I saw you bend the other spoon because you didn't really have a sleeve to cover it, but considering what you have, that's pretty good.

LILLIAN: So, I have a question and you're totally free to say no but... you wanna join a team?

NERO: Doing magic tricks?

LILLIAN: Yeah.

NERO: Why not?

LILLIAN: Okay, um, I can't give you my contact information because that's against the rules but... before the bell rings, just write in 'YES' and I'll get back to you later.

FX: Bell rings.

NERO: I will do that. It was a pleasure to meet you... and Kaitlyn?

LILLIAN: Yes?

NERO: You might want to bend that spoon back into shape.

LILLIAN: Oh right. Sorry.

FX: Chairs scooting, 3-4 heel/wood footsteps, chair scooting again

LILLIAN: Hi, I'm Kaitlyn.

CONNOR: Hello Kaitlyn, my name is Connor.

SCENE 7
INT. PHRENIC GROTESQUE. EVENING

FX: Band playing in the background

MACKENZIE: Why'd you stop the story there?

FX: The bands music suddenly turns minor key

NERO: We... we don't talk about Connor.

MACKENZIE: (realizing she brought up an awkward subject) Oh. Well. So, what about Ed?

ED: Um...

LILLIAN: When Ed, Ock and I were in junior high, well, we all became single parent households right at about the same time.

OCTAVIUS: So our moms all formed a pact that if things ever got bad, they could drop us off with any of the others.

LILLIAN: Even Ed's stubborn Mom had to give in once.

ED: To be fair, she did have cancer.

LILLIAN: My Mom was so afraid we'd have to adopt you. Seriously, that's one person feeding herself and three others.

ED: I know.

Mackenzie assumes this is a cover for an embarrassing story, not an actual crime.

MACKENZIE: Well, I guess as long as everyone came out okay, that's what counts, right?

ED: Yeah and we did.

NERO: Totally.

OCTAVIUS: Well, not everyone.

NERO: Hush!

ED: And what does your day-to-day look like?

YOURIE: Mine? Usually pretty boring but today was actually interesting.

SCENE 8

INT. KING'S COURT. DAYTIME

CARGO: If we revoke the rights of Sunkan immigrants to own land, it'll create a land glut in the city, driving down prices, which should alleviate some of the housing cost issues.

Yourie is storming towards the court

YOURIE: Out of my way!

ROGER: Your highness, you can't go in there. Barging in on the King's courtroom can be an executable offense, even for a Princess.

FX: The courtroom door getting kicked down

OSWALD: Hold up. Hold up. This is the part where you need to tell them you're from Sunka.

YOURIE: Oh. Right. Yes. I guess that is an important detail.

OSWALD: It's not universal knowledge.

YOURIE: Um, anyway, where was I? Oh, right.

ROGER: ...even for a Princess.

FX: The courtroom door getting kicked down

YOURIE: (yelling angrily) You insufferable little weasel!

FX: Heels on marble

FX: Yourie hits marble with a large book (continuous)

CARGO: Ow! Ow!

YOURIE: (one word between hits) Did. You. Think. I. Wouldn't. Notice. This? This. Is. An. Insult!

ROWAN: Guards, stand down. Visceroy Cargo, I was thinking more along the lines of funding for new housing developments and expanding the wall to match them, unless you want this to be your life every time you pass a Sunkan on the streets. That's enough, Yourie.

YOURIE: He should be executed!

ROWAN: No, no, we're not executing anyone today. Visceroy Cargo, you may however wish to find another Lord to serve. Should something unfortunate happen to me, I'm afraid I wouldn't be able to stop QUEEN Yourie from doing... terrible things to you.

SCENE 9

INT. PHRENIC GROTESQUE. EVENING

(awkward pause)

YOURIE: I never said I was nice.

OSWALD: Well, I never liked Viceroy Cargo anyway. We should send him a going-away present.

YOURIE: Where's he going?

OSWALD: I heard Palesoo's nice this time of year.

YOURIE: Yeah, if you like drinking downstream from the Bintsao sewer line.

OSWALD: It's like fertilizer. In your stomach.

YOURIE: Still, no thanks.

ED: So... if we got up and danced, how badly would I embarrass myself?

MACKENZIE: You? Dancing? Okay, well fine then. As long as you can control your feet better than you can your...

ED: (interrupts) C'mon then. If we're to entertain you tonight, it won't do any good just sitting around in a booth.

Ed and Mackenzie leave the table together. Throughout the dialogue, Mackenzie can occasionally be heard laughing in the background.

LILLIAN: Okay, so... too early to tell but they actually look like they're enjoying each other's company.

OCTAVIUS: You think she likes him?

NERO: (groans with concern)

LILLIAN: The signs are subtle but... they're there.

OCTAVIUS: If you say so.

OSWALD: If you're worried about your funding, don't. It's safe. Yourie, I think perhaps we should join them.

YOURIE: Well lead the way then, twinkle-toes.

OCTAVIUS: Lillian, would you care for a dance?

LILLIAN: (in mock formality) I'd love to.

NERO: Wait. How am I the only one at the table alone? (to himself) Well, let's get this party started.

FX: Music changes

NERO: Alright, who wants to see a magic trick? Maybe place a wager?

ALL: (general cheers)

STAGER: What's the bet?

NERO: I'm glad you asked, sir. One round of shots all around, is the wager.

LILLIAN: (whispering) How's he going to do this trick without the banana?

OCTAVIUS: I don't know.

This dialogue may overlap to keep Nero from an awkward silence.

NERO: Now normally, the bet is that I can't decapitate a banana from 15 feet away with a playing card. However, this doesn't look like one of those establishments that serves those wussy fruity drinks, so here's the bet: A round of shots that from 15 feet away, that's about 3 of these tables wide, that I can't draw blood by the tenth card.

FX: Coins on the bar

STAGER: Alright. I'll put down for it.

NERO: We have a bet. Now we need a victim, I mean, volunteer. Anyone?

CLARA: Why not? I'll do it.

NERO: We have a volunteer! Okay, come over by me, young lady. What's your name?

CLARA: Clara, the bartender.

NERO: Alright, Clara the bartender. Stand over here. Nope. Nope. Right here. No, actually, I like you better where you were before.

CLARA: Oh okay.

FX: Footsteps on hardwood

NERO: You have quite a pretty face.

CLARA: Why, thank you.

NERO: It's a shame what I'm going to have to do it now.

CLARA: (laughs) Only if you're lucky.

NERO: Or skilled with my hands. You ready?

CLARA: Ready.

NERO: On the count of 3. 1...2...3 days ago I was doing this trick...

CLARA: Oh c'mon! Get on with it!

NERO: Alright, alright. Ready? 1...2...3

FX: Card flying through air

CLARA: Was that supposed to hit me?

NERO: Always have to start with a warm-up.

CLARA: Oh okay.

NERO: 1...2...3...

FX: Card flying through air

CLARA: Ow! (scoffs in disbelief)

NERO: 1...2...3...

FX: Card flying through air

CLARA: (obviously enjoying the pain a little TOO much) Oh!

NERO: (amused but unphased) Well, that's not the response I normally get for that.
1...2...3...

FX: Card flying through air

CLARA: Ow! Hey that was a little close to my eye!

NERO: Sorry about that. I could put a blindfold on you if you want..

CLARA: You'd like that, wouldn't you?

NERO: Maybe later... 1...2...3...

FX: Card flying through air

CLARA: (amused) Oh!

LILLIAN: Careful Nero, she might take you to bed before you can even get to the tenth card.

CLARA: You take me for some kind of harlot?

NERO: Of course not.

FX: Card flying through air

CLARA: (her scream of pain is entirely too sexual) Oh!

(awkward pause)

NERO: I'm not saying a thing. Which card am I on now?

OCTAVIUS: Next one would be 7.

NERO: Right.

FX: Card flying through air

CLARA: (her scream of pain is entirely too sexual) Oh!

OCTAVIUS: Damn. Save some for later.

LILLIAN: We have blood!

STAGER: Damn it!

NERO: Shots are up for everyone!

ALL: (cheering) Yeah!

OCTAVIUS: Alright. My turn. So, I need a volunteer from the audience, preferably someone who works security, city watch... oh okay, I see one of you coming up front. Can you tell me your name, good sir?

ROGER: M'name's Roger.

OCTAVIUS: Okay, Roger. What do you do for a living?

ROGER: I'm the King's Bailiff.

OCTAVIUS: The King's Bailiff. So, you're the guy who makes sure no one slips a knife, a musket, a small warhorse, et cetera et cetera into the King's court?

ROGER: That would be correct.

OCTAVIUS: So, here's the bet. This game is called "Find the Fool."

Find the Fool means Lillian has to search through her tarot deck for her "The Fool" card.

LILLIAN: Find the Fool? Oh, okay.

OCTAVIUS: You have that card on you?

LILLIAN: One sec, I'm looking for it. Here ya go.

OCTAVIUS: Thank you, Lillian. The bet is, you have to find this tarot card on my person, within 60 seconds. The winner gets off scot-free. The loser has to buy a round of shots for the entire bar.

AUDIENCE: (cheers)

ROGER: Well, considering that's my job, I guess I can't refuse..

OCTAVIUS: Alright, Lillian, you have the timer ready?

LILLIAN: Ready!

FX: Card flipping

OCTAVIUS: Begin.

AUDIENCE: C'mon Roger! You got this! Go Roger!
FX: Audience noise

OCTAVIUS: Starting down the arm, okay. Pretty standard procedure. Getting warmer. Getting warmer. Nope. I lied. You're ice cold now. Oh, nope, there aren't any hidden pockets in the sleeves. I promise. Good try though. I'm flattered you actually think I got it over to the other hand already. Yes, I work out. Whoah, whoah!. Careful, Roger. You might have to buy me a drink first if you're gonna keep that up.

ROGER: Oh, shut it! Keep your arms up!

OCTAVIUS: Alright. Alright.

ROGER: Shoes.

OCTAVIUS: Seriously?

ROGER: Yes.

OCTAVIUS: Alright.

ROGER: (groans)

NERO: Oh are we starting over? Okay. Okay.

ROGER: I still have a few seconds left...

LILLIAN: Time!

ROGER: Alright. You got me. Where'd it end up?

AUDIENCE: Back pocket!

ROGER: What?

OCTAVIUS: No, not... mine. It's in uh...

ROGER: Motherfucker!

OCTAVIUS: Alright, you've been a great sport, Roger. Who's up for shots?

AUDIENCE: Yeah!

LILLIAN: I swear this is all an elaborate plan for you two to get me obliterated.

FX: Chair scooting

NERO: Oh, so... Clara just gave me her room key. Lillian, I may need to borrow your handcuffs.

LILLIAN: (can almost audibly hear her rolling her eyes) They come back in one piece, with the key.

FX: Shot glasses clinking

FX: Music indicates transition

OZZY: Well, Ed, you seem to pick up Soleilan dancing pretty fast. Why don't you show us an American style of dance?

ED: Well, alright, then. Um... wow not to put me on the spot or anything. Alright, let's have the guys together in one line and the ladies across from them. Ladies, put your hands out like so, guys hold them like so. Now, a lot of music is done with a 4-count, so this is going to be a really difficult thing for some people. I need you to be able to count to 3. Now, the ladies will mirror what the guys do. So, on the one-count, you step to the left, which means the ladies step to their right. Why?

AUDIENCE: Because women are always right.

ED: You guys are gonna go far tonight. Back to the other foot on the 2-count, then the left foot rock-steps back on 3, then back where we started. Let's give it a try. 1-2-3-and, 1-2-3and. Spin, spin, 3and. Wow, you guys really are naturals at this. How about some music to go with this? Something pretty upbeat.

FX: Upbeat music

FX: Cheering

FX: Music change

FX: Silverware clinking

LILLIAN: I have got to get the recipe for this chicken. This is just amazing.

OCTAVIUS: This has been quite the night.

LILLIAN: You know, I'm going to have to start writing down what everything we do. Maybe publish a book about it when we get back.

OCTAVIUS: A book? Really?

LILLIAN: Yeah. You know. Just a memoir of everything we do, keeping it clean so kids can read it.

FX: Mattress thumping from upstairs.

LILLIAN: Or... maybe young adults instead.

BLACKSMITH: Excuse me. (no one responds audibly) Are you the wizards that ran off Anannon the other day?

OCTAVIUS: Yes, that would be us.

BLACKSMITH: Myself and my boy would like to buy you a round shots.

LILLIAN: Oh. (concerned)

ED: Well, I'm never one to turn down free alcohol.

BLACKSMITH: You don't understand. The past two days have been the busiest I've ever been. Seems we were fighting with swords against an enemy that doesn't have any guts to pierce. The King ordered all the guards to train on warhammers. It's a little different from smithing a sword but I tell you, it's been keeping us busy. Myself and all the blacksmiths in town owe you one, so it's the least I can do.

ED: Well, we're glad we can help. And we'll happily take your alcohol.

MACKENZIE: (ahems)

BLACKSMITH: And your friends too.

MACKENZIE: (in mock surprise) Oh! Thank you!

FX: Tray of glasses getting set on the table

OCTAVIUS: Well. no excuses to be the designated driver tonight.

LILLIAN: (gulps) Bleh!

FX: Music change

SCENE 10
EXT. PHRENIC GROTESQUE. EVENING

FX: Crickets

FX: Shoes on snow

Mackenzie should sound quite tipsy and giggly

MACKENZIE: I had a lot of fun tonight.

ED: Yeah? Well, maybe we can do it again sometime.

MACKENZIE: Don't get too presumptuous, nitwit!

ED: Of course not. Sorry.

OCTAVIUS: Nero, you alright?

NERO: (talking to Octavius) I'm still worried about him getting that close to her.

MACKENZIE: Well, perhaps then you should worry more about whether I'm happy than anything else.

NERO: I... apologize. I didn't mean to intrude. I'll be returning to our coach now.

MACKENZIE: Good. Perhaps that's for the best.

OCTAVIUS: Nero, I think we might need to rethink our strategy.

NERO: Make sure he sends her flowers in the morning.

OCTAVIUS: (scoffs) Ho boy.

FX: Door swinging open and latching

FX: Crickets fade, as they enter the interior

LILLIAN: (slurred) Everything alright?

NERO: Well, yeah. I think loverboy got himself a girlfriend.

LILLIAN: That's... concerning. Hold on.

FX: Lillian opens the door and throws up over the side.

LILLIAN: Okay, I'm good now. Any chance one of you has a mint?

NERO: No, sorry.

FX: Lillian closes the door

LILLIAN: Seriously though, I mean, it might not be all that bad.

OCTAVIUS: What do you mean?

LILLIAN: She seems kinda pushy, yes, but maybe that's what he needs. I mean, I can understand that without his mom around, it's like, he gets to let his guard down a little, but... he's been oversleeping, he's rushing through whatever chores we decide on, and just lounging around the rest of the time. Maybe he needs someone to tell him what to do.

OCTAVIUS: Or a hobby.

LILLIAN: We're already stage magicians.

NERO: I mean, I guess I'm okay with it as long as this doesn't turn into Candice Part II.

LILLIAN: Oh god, no. I hope not.

FX: Crickets volume up, doors open, doors close, crickets volume down

ED: Sorry that took so long.

FX: Drawn out silence, hoofsteps on snow

ED: What?

NERO: Well, apparently "keep a respectable distance" has given way to "get all your friends to play wingman for you or they could lose their job."

ED: Yeah, sorry about that... kinda, though I'm not sure how much of a choice I really had.

OCTAVIUS: Dude, we know she's pushy. We were there all night.

LILLIAN: Oh and... details. We wanna know what she said.

ED: (a little reluctantly) She said she would call for me. We didn't kiss or anything. Geez. Nothing like that. Also, do any of you know how to take care of a beard? I haven't had one, like, ever and she's asking.

LILLIAN: Wow, that was fast.

ED: It's not like she's asking for the world!

OCTAVIUS: No, no. That's a good thing. She's grooming you. As long as her list of demands doesn't become endless and everchanging...

ED: (interrupting) She's not Candice, okay?

LILLIAN: Alright, alright. Calm down.

ED: Sorry.

NERO: You're alright. This is just a lot of things happening really fast. And, who knows? We may find our (crossfade) way home tomorrow...

(Switch to other stagecoach)

OSWALD: ...their way home tomorrow. Then where would that get you?

MACKENZIE: Don't shame me for this, Oswald!

OSWALD: You can't expect me to abdicate for you when you show a complete lack of impulse-control.

MACKENZIE: I have to start somewhere! You can't just expect me to lock myself in the upper tower!

OSWALD: Everything Ed has is because Mother and Father willed it.

MACKENZIE: As compared to what? The provincial Lords? It's exactly the same. I don't know why you even think I'm invested in this yet. (groans)

SCENE 11
EXT. COURT SQUARE. EVENING

FX: Crickets, stagecoach stopping

LILLIAN: Hey! Thanks for the ride!

FX: Shoes and heels on snow

OCTAVIUS: Have a good night!

FX: Stagecoaches leave

NERO: Well, that was an experience.

OCTAVIUS: Yeah.

ED: How come *our* stagecoach doesn't come with a 6-man escort?

NERO: Apparently, we're not that important.

FX: Stagecoach growing fainter

FX: Suspenseful music

OCTAVIUS: Did you see that guy with the scars around his face speedwalking behind the train?

ED: Something doesn't feel right. C'mon.

FX: Hoofsteps on cobblestone, faintly

MACKENZIE: So what's on the agenda for tomorrow morning?

OSWALD: Just court and I think one military advisor in the early afternoon.

YOURIE: As much as I'm sure we'd all love to sleep in late, that's probably not happening.

FX: Hoofsteps slowing to a halt

YOURIE: Why's the carriage stopping?

FX: Swords being drawn, sounds of people being stabbed.

YOURIE: Shit!

FX: Crickets louder, shoes on snow

FX: Carriage door unlocks

CULTIST #1: Out! Out!

CULTIST #2: Everybody out!

CULTIST #1: Where are the rest of them?

MACKENZIE: I was riding home by myself! I swear!

CULTIST #2: She's not lying. There's no one else in there.

CULTIST #3: Doesn't matter. That's the one Anannon is looking for. Get on the ground!

FX: Mackenzie is thrown onto the ground

MACKENZIE: (screams)

END

NARRATOR: You have been listening to the Smoke & Mirrors audio program. With Kirsten Kraus as Lillian Carlisle, Ryo Kimball as Octavius Blackwater, Mike Kooistra as Nero Chamberlain, Jason Winstead as Ed Dushane, James Blaisdell as Rowan II, Kim Nelson as Queen Tambri, Marianne Orendorff as Princess Mackenzie, Jason Luka as Prince Oswald and Sarah Hood as Princess Yourie. Additional voices by Karen Heimdall, James Hicks, Jay Langejans, Rufio Waddell and Kai Winterpaw. Written and directed by Jason Luka. Special thanks also to Melinda Murphy for script-editing. Support for Smoke & Mirrors is made possible by listeners like you. You can help keep the show going, access episodes a full week before everyone else, along with exclusive bonus content like maps and sheet music for as little as \$3/mo when you become a patron on Patreon. Visit patreon.com/smokeandmirrors, all one word, to check out exclusive awards for patrons and make your pledge. For credits, a full transcript of this episode and other episodes of Smoke & Mirrors, please visit smokeandmirrorsaudio.com. Thank you so much for listening and we hope to see you again soon.

Featuring:
Kirsten Kraus as Lillian Carlisle

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26

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Karin Heimdall as Clara

Additional voices by James Hicks, Jay Langejans, Rufio Waddell, Kai Winterpaw

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