

ORB QUEST: THE QUEST FOR THE ORB

By Sawyer Quinn Brown

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ORB QUEST: THE QUEST FOR THE ORB

GNU Terry Pratchett

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CAST: 2F, 2M, 4 Any

WYN (F)

A “wizard”

HILDA (F)

A dwarf. May be played by an actor of any gender (or height) but must have a full beard.

ACETAMINOPHEN

An elf, wearing a long and beautiful wig. Goes by “CETA”, pronounced “SEE-tuh”.

(M)

ACTOR 1 (M)

Aldir Sharpshire/Tavern Workers/Mags Guffin

ACTOR 2 (Any)

Moldun, Crowd, Bobgoblin 1

ACTOR 3 (Any)

Chad, Tree, Ceta’s Mom’s voice, Nozid

ACTOR 4 (Any)

Queen, Townsperson 1, Uwnol the Hand Piercer, Lion

ACTOR 5 (Any)

Dragon, Palace Guard, Townsperson 2, Bobgoblin 2, Cacklin’ Jack

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ACT 1 SCENE 1

Lights up on a stage bare of anything but a single block to one side of the stage. A TAVERN WORKER shoves WYN onto the stage in front of him. The TAVERN WORKER wears an apron and a mustache. WYN is dressed as a wizard with a homemade-looking star badge on the left breast of her cloak. She wears glasses.

TAVERN WORKER. *(As he pushes Wyn.)* Out, out! You've been here all day nursing the same wretched drink!

WYN. Hey, no! *(Shaking him off.)* I need to be here to answer my ad!

TAVERN WORKER. Not my problem.

WYN. I'll buy another drink!

TAVERN WORKER. No coming back in. *(HILDA enters. She wears a full beard and standard dwarven-wear, including a skirt. As Hilda enters, the Tavern Worker shoves Wyn again.)*

HILDA. Hey, you! Leave that witch alone!

WYN. I'm not a witch!

TAVERN WORKER. Witch or not, you'll have to do your business out here. This tavern's for hard drinkers, not sissies drinking goats' milk all day.

WYN. Joke's on you, I didn't take a single sip of that goats' milk. *(To Hilda.)* It was green and had hairs in it.

TAVERN WORKER. The hairs add texture!

WYN. And the green?

TAVERN WORKER. It's...mint?

WYN. Try again.

TAVERN WORKER. Look, you, just...stay out! *(He shoves Wyn one last time and exits. Hilda catches Wyn.)*

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HILDA. You okay, witch?

WYN. (*Brushing herself off.*) I told you, I'm not a witch. Look, see this star? (*She points at the homemade star patch on her cloak.*) I'm a wizard.

HILDA. Is this written on in pencil?

WYN. Anyway, thanks for trying to help me, but I had it handled.

HILDA. Clearly.

WYN. I don't know what I'm going to do, though. My flyers all said to meet me here.

HILDA. (*Pulling out a flyer/banana.*) Is it this one?

WYN. Wow, yeah!, how'd you know?

HILDA. It is also written in pencil. So this is you? Wyn the Wizard, offering a quest for untold riches and glory?

WYN. Yes! Hi, that's me, I'm Wyn, nice to meet you. (*They shake hands.*)

HILDA. Hilda Stormcleaver. The dwarf.

WYN. You're a...? Sorry, I don't mean to be rude, but aren't you...?

HILDA. I know, I'm tall for a dwarf.

WYN. I've never heard of a dwarf named 'Hilda' before.

HILDA. Neither had my father until I told him it was my name.

WYN. If you're a dwarf, where's your axe?

HILDA. Don't need an axe.

WYN. I thought a dwarf wasn't a dwarf unless they had an axe.

HILDA. Look, if this is your quest, where do I sign up?

WYN. Hold on, I think I'm supposed to interview you, first.

HILDA. I have some questions. Just how many riches come with 'untold'?

WYN. The untold kind. Lots of riches. So many riches. You wouldn't even believe it. What are your qualifications for questing?

HILDA. What are we questing for?

WYN. Well— (*Suddenly, ACETAMINOPHEN, an elf wearing a long, lustrous wig, hereafter known as 'CETA', comes running on. He wears a banana strapped to his back by a strap that crosses his chest and carries a banana in his belt.*)

BOBGOBLINS 1 & 2. (*Off-stage, menacingly and variously.*)

Bob...Bob...Bob!

CETA. (*Reaching Wyn and Hilda and putting himself behind them.*) Here, excuse me ladies, may I just—?

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HILDA. (*Offended.*) Are you using us as cover?

CETA. They've just started chasing me. Don't worry, I plan to stop them before they reach you. (*The BOBGOBLINS are still yelling "Bob! Bob!" from backstage. Their voices are getting louder.*)

WYN. Are those bobgoblins? Why are they following you?

CETA. To...I assume they mean to eat me. I seem to, oh, I seem to have put you in the line of fire, apologies, I— (*The Bobgoblins enter, waving bananas that are weapons, probably swords or something.*)

BOBGOBLINS 1 & 2. (*Variously.*) Bob! Bob! Bob!

CETA. (*Stepping out from behind Hilda and Wyn, pulling his bow/banana from his back and fitting his arrow/banana to it.*) Hold it right there, gentlemen! I have a bow and I will not hesitate to use it.

BOBGOBLIN 1. (*To Bobgoblin 2.*) Bob?

BOBGOBLIN 2. (*To Bobgoblin 1.*) Bob. Bob Bob...Bob.

BOBGOBLIN 1. (*Shaking their head 'No'.*) Bob, Bob, Bob. Bob Bob Bob Bob Bob.

BOBGOBLIN 2. Bob.

HILDA. Can't you say anything but 'Bob'? (*A pause.*)

BOBGOBLIN 1. ...Robert? (*Another brief pause.*)

BOBGOBLIN 2. (*Re-directing to threatening again, waving their banana.*) Bob!

CETA. That does it! ...I suppose. I have no choice but to loose an arrow at you! (*Ceta draws back his arrow/banana and throws it at the BOBGOBLINS. It hits one of the Bobgoblins and then falls down on the floor. All stare for a moment, then Hilda rolls up her sleeves.*)

HILDA. Right. (*Hilda starts to charge at the Bobgoblins, who quickly turn and scamper off the stage, terrified. Hilda follows them offstage, looking scary. There is the sound of fighting. Wyn and Ceta watch, wincing as they see blows hitting. There are two final thuds, and after a beat Hilda re-enters, dusting off her hands. To Wyn.*) Does that qualify me, or do I need to show you my resumé?

WYN. No, that uh...that works. You're hired.

HILDA. Not before I have more information about this quest.

CETA. (*Retrieving his banana/arrow and tucking it back into his belt.*)
Quest? What quest?

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HILDA. The one for untold riches and glory. (*Ceta pulls out a flyer/banana.*)

CETA. Is it this one? I found this flyer, I was headed towards this tavern before I ran into the robertgoblins. (*To Wyn.*) You must be the wizard, then.

WYN. (*To Hilda.*) See, *he* can tell I'm a wizard.

CETA. (*Tossing his hair.*) Well, of course. You're wearing a wizard badge.

HILDA. All right, *wizard*. Maybe now you'll answer my question. What exactly are we questing for?

WYN. We...probably shouldn't discuss it out in the open, actually.

HILDA. (*Unamused.*) I'll keep it quiet.

CETA. Whatever the quest is, I would like to join it. Acetaminophen, at your service, ladies. (*He bows, then flicks his hair back as he stands.*) 'Ceta' for short.

WYN. I had heard that elves had complicated names, but...

CETA. Ancient names! Mine, for instance, is 500 years old.

HILDA. 500? Looking good for it.

CETA. Yes, well.

WYN. So, the quest. (*She gestures for them to huddle up and they do so.*) We shall quest to defeat the evil queen by retrieving our secret weapon...the orb of Mags Guffin! (*Beat.*)

HILDA. And what's that?

WYN. It's—it's legendary! Mags Guffin was a famous wizard, he made all kinds of secret magical objects that held untold power—

HILDA. 'Untold' again—

WYN. *Unimaginable* power, and the orb is the only thing to have survived.

HILDA. So why doesn't Mags Guffin have this orb?

WYN. He doesn't need it anymore. It's said that he knows how to cast...the Grand Whammy.

HILDA. What's the Grand Whammy?

CETA. Oh! I know this one. The Grand Whammy is the ultimate spell that every wizard hopes to achieve, through years of training and study. Very few have mastered it, and no currently-licensed wizard is able to cast it.

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HILDA. So, wait, what happened to Mags Guffin.

WYN. (*With jazz fingers, mysteriously.*) Nobody knows.

HILDA. Right...and why are we defeating the evil queen?

WYN. Because she's...evil!

HILDA. Not because of her poor socio-economic policy and resistance to positive foreign relations?

WYN. I mean, I guess, but—there's a prophecy, and it says— (*Climbing up onto the block.*) —that I am the Chosen One! So it has to be me to take her down. With the orb of Mags Guffin, I'll have the power to—

HILDA. All right, there's no need to stand on a barrel about it, you've made your point. (*Wyn climbs down. In the background, Tavern Worker has re-entered and is watching them.*)

TAVERN WORKER. (*To the group.*) So it's the orb of Mags Guffin you're questing for.

WYN. Yes? So?

TAVERN WORKER. There was someone in the tavern last week talking about it. Said the orb is powerful.

WYN. Well, I know *that*.

TAVERN WORKER. *Too* powerful, they said. I've heard that Mags Guffin hid it away because all the wizards were fighting over it. And you don't want wizards fighting.

CETA. We don't?

TAVERN WORKER. Oh, no. Don't want stray spells flying around. Could cause all kinds of accidents. Friend of mine got turned into a chair once during a bar fight.

CETA. Are they okay now?

TAVERN WORKER. Well, he's a chair. He was always a supportive fellow, so I suppose it works out. Anyhow, that's why Mags Guffin hid the orb away.

HILDA. (*To Wyn.*) And finding this orb and defeating the evil queen will reward us with untold riches?

CETA. And glory!

WYN. Yes. Untold.

TAVERN WORKER. I do wish you luck. I think you'll need it. (*He laughs. It's a little creepy. Tavern Worker exits.*)

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WYN. Hunh.

HILDA. *(To Wyn.)* So how do we find this orb?

WYN. First we must locate the Map of Finding. There is a ferocious orc guarding the map.

CETA. Oh yes, I have heard that orcs are ferocious.

WYN. We'll need to be crafty. *(A brief pause.)*

HILDA. *(Sighing.)* All right, let's stock up. We'll find this orc.

WYN. So you're in? You're both in?

HILDA. Yes.

CETA. I am! *(Wyn holds up her hand for a high-five from Ceta, who obliges. She holds her hand up for Hilda, who just stares at her for a moment.)*

WYN. Let's go!

CETA. *(As they all exit.)* This journey will be amazing, I just know it. I can feel it down to my toes. *(They exit. Blackout.)*

SCENE 2

Lights up on UWNOL HAND PIERCER, an orc, 'smithing' a banana/sword with a banana/hammer on the block. Wyn, Hilda, and Ceta enter on the other side of the stage and stay there to converse with each other where Uwnol won't overhear them.

WYN. That's her. That's the orc. Over there. *(The other two turn to look.)* Don't look! She'll see us watching. Her name is Uwnol the Hand Piercer. She's rumored to be a berserker.

HILDA. She seems pretty peaceful to me.

CETA. She does seem to be just an ordinary smith, Wyn.

WYN. No. Any minute now she'll snap and come after us with that red-hot sword she's hammering on. *(Uwnol looks up and Wyn, Hilda, and Ceta all gasp and jump to 'hide' behind an invisible bush. Uwnol goes back to hammering.)* Lucky this bush here is big enough to hide all three of us.

CETA. It's a topiary, actually.

WYN. Thank you, Ceta.

HILDA. So what's the plan? *(Beat.)* Wyn?

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WYN. Oh, me? Uh...

CETA. I could shoot her with my arrow.

HILDA. That seems needlessly aggressive.

WYN. I can freeze her with a spell?

CETA. No, wait, I know! Roll for seduction!

WYN. Hunh?

CETA. I read about it in an ancient text! You can...seduce her!

HILDA. *(To Ceta.)* Why not you?

CETA. *(In a high-pitched voice.)* Me?! *(Deepening his voice.)* Uh, I mean. I'm an elf, and I'm 500 years old. I don't really think it would be *appropriate*—

HILDA. Well, I'm not going. *(Hilda and Ceta look at Wyn.)*

WYN. Fine. Fine. I guess I'll...roll for seduction. Glasses on or off, do you think?

HILDA & CETA. On.

WYN. You're right, I should probably take them off. Hold these? *(WYN hands her glasses to HILDA.)* Okay. *(Wyn steps out from behind the 'bush' and starts swaggering in the general direction of Uwnol. Once she gets about halfway across the stage, she drops to the floor and starts rolling. Uwnol looks up and is very surprised. Wyn stops at Uwnol's feet.)* Well hello there, beautiful. Come here often?

UWNOL. I, uh, I work here. Do you need help up? From the ground?

WYN. *(Rolling more.)* I saw you and I just couldn't hold myself up any longer.

UWNOL. Your cloak is getting really dirty...

WYN. *(Stopping, squinting up at Uwnol.)* I'm Wyn. I'm a wizard. And you are?

UWNOL. Uwnol the Hand Piercer. Blacksmith. Are you sure you don't need a hand?

WYN. *(Staggering up and getting into Uwnol's space.)* I think what I need is to be closer to you. Did I tell you that you're beautiful?

UWNOL. You did.

WYN. You're... *(Squinting.)* You really are. I mean.

UWNOL. You've run out of lines.

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HILDA. (*Calling from behind the 'topiary'.*) I don't think she had any to begin with!

UWNOL. Who's that?

WYN. Oh, that? That's my...assistant, um—glasses-holder.

HILDA. Oh, give it up, Wyn, it's not working. (*She hands Wyn her glasses. To Uwnol.*) I'm Hilda, and that's Ceta. (*Ceta stumbles out from behind the 'topiary' and tosses his hair.*) We heard you had a map that we're looking for.

WYN. (*Reminding Hilda.*) The Map of Finding.

HILDA. The Map of Finding.

UWNOL. (*To Hilda.*) Oh. Yes, I do have that. Is your friend all right?

HILDA. I don't know. (*To Wyn.*) Are you all right?

WYN. Dusty.

HILDA. (*To Uwnol.*) She's fine. So what will you need from us to give us this map?

UWNOL. I actually have a few copies; I can get you one. Thank you for asking so nicely, usually people try to fight me, it's hard to get any work done.

CETA. If I may ask...why would you keep copies of it?

UWNOL. Well, no one's found the treasure the Map of Finding leads them to, yet.

CETA. Oh?

UWNOL. Yeah, mostly they die.

CETA. Oh.

UWNOL. Here, I'll go get you that copy. (*Uwnol exits and Ceta scoots over to Wyn.*)

CETA. My Aunt Lunesta warned me about map quests. She said they're awfully dangerous. Are we going to die, Wyn?

WYN. Not with my magic on our side. Plus, Hilda seems like she's—more than capable. Despite not carrying an axe. And you—you're—

CETA. I'm the best shot on the bow in my age class at home in Huge Oak Forest.

HILDA. The best, eh?

CETA. And this is my great-grandfather Xanax's bow. Best bow in my forest. (*Uwnol re-enters with the Map of Finding, which is a banana, and*

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holds it out for the other three to crowd around. She gestures at various parts of the map as she speaks.)

UWNOL. So some people die at this first place, in the Soggy Moss Swamp. There are sinkholes, they drown in mud, very tragic. Then, here, the Road of Carnage—

WYN. Carnage?

UWNOL. Oh, yeah, named after Kiran Carnage, he was crushed by a rockslide. At the end of that is the lair of Nozid, who will kill you if you don't answer their questions right.

HILDA. Dare I ask what Nozid is?

UWNOL. Probably better if you don't know yet. Then the Dread Wood of Doom—

CETA. The forest that was named by Pralayah Doom, correct?

UWNOL. Yes, right before the spiders got her. Most people don't make it past there to the final obstacle: Fraymreon, Champion of the Green.

WYN. Is that a...a troll or something?

CETA. No, um. It's a dragon. Big dragon. *(Hilda and Ceta are looking dubious about this whole journey thing.)*

UWNOL. Anyway, best of luck to you! *(Uwnol claps Hilda and Ceta on the shoulders, then exits.)*

WYN. *(Weakly.)* Untold riches and glory!

HILDA. I notice you failed to tell us about the doom, Wyn.

WYN. It's a quest! Of course, there are going to be—perils, and—you know, if you want the big reward you have to do the big deed, et cetera. Are you saying you're not up to the challenge, Hilda?

CETA. Well I am! I say between the three of us, we can accomplish anything!

HILDA. You don't know anything about us.

CETA. Yes, but...she's a wizard, and you beat the *(Hushed.) poo (Normal.)* out of those robertgoblins before.

HILDA. And you?

CETA. I told you, I'm good with a bow.

HILDA. You have one arrow.

CETA. I only need one!

WYN. You said you would come!

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HILDA. I don't remember signing a contract. (*Stalemate. Wyn and Hilda have a stare-off. Finally, Hilda sighs heavily and nods. All exit. Blackout.*)

SCENE 3

Lights up as Wyn and Hilda enter, looking exhausted.

HILDA. (*Mid-conversation.*) So I told my father I'm a woman (which he knew!), he said that all dwarves are men, I told him I was keeping the beard, I was still a real dwarf. Then he started going on about how I won't use my axe, at which point I stormed out and I haven't been back since.

WYN. Wow.

HILDA. He was totally unreasonable about all my suggestions for re-organizing the infrastructure of the mine, too. For one thing, we should have had taller ceilings.

WYN. What a jerk.

HILDA. And he was completely unsympathetic when this dwarf—when he—well, it was humiliating, and public, and I don't know why I'm telling you this, I barely know you.

WYN. I just have one of those faces.

HILDA. Anyway the point is that you can't trust anyone. And now you forget everything I just told you.

WYN. Will do.

CETA. (*Entering.*) We have been walking through mud *all day*, and my trousers are going to be *stained!* Look!

WYN. We'll camp here, it's at least somewhat dry. Calm down, Ceta.

CETA. I'll not be calmed!

HILDA. You'll be calmed or you'll talk to my fist about it.

CETA. I'll be calmed, yes, apologies Hilda. (*All sit on the stage.*)

HILDA. Someone should start a fire.

WYN. Oh. Yeah. Hold on. (*Wyn stands again and casts a spell, waving her arms a bit and muttering under her breath. ACTOR 3 comes onstage holding a ton of bananas and dumps them on the floor at center. This is the 'fire.' As Actor 3 exits, Wyn, Hilda, and Ceta move closer to the fire to warm their hands.*)

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CETA. Thank you, Wyn. Toasty. Mm.

HILDA. Yes, uh. Thank you.

WYN. I don't wear this badge for nothing, you know. I think I'll dry my feet. (*Wyn takes off her shoes and moves her feet closer to the 'fire.'*)

CETA. Everything I own is damp.

HILDA. We're all crying for you, Ceta.

CETA. Well, I hope you are. My grandfather Tinactin said to avoid swamps. I'm not used to this sort of terrain. I'm a forest elf.

WYN. You're 500 years old and you've never left the forest?

CETA. (*Defensively.*) I like it there. Anyway, have either of *you* been in a swamp before?

HILDA. Can't say I have.

WYN. There's a bog near my parents' house where I grew up.

CETA. A bog is not the same as a swamp. Bogs have peat and swamps have muddy soil. Swamps are low wetlands and bogs tend to be higher than the surrounding—

WYN. Yes, thank you, Ceta, point taken.

CETA. Anyway, it smells terrible.

HILDA. So Wyn, you haven't traveled before, either?

WYN. No, I—well I spent the last seven years studying how to be a wizard. I've only ever lived with my parents.

HILDA. I've only ever lived in a mine before. Not sure if all this fresh air and sunlight is good for me.

CETA. It takes seven years to go to wizard school?

WYN. Usually it takes six, but...I wanted to have a, a well-rounded education, you know...then at the end you take the final wizard exam. (*Proud.*) Passed with flying colors.

HILDA. And when was that?

WYN. Eight days ago.

HILDA. I see.

WYN. What? You said you'd never left the mine before!

HILDA. That's different.

WYN. How is that different?!

CETA. So...Hilda, what are you going to do with the untold riches and glory?

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HILDA. I'm just here for the riches. I want to open a mixed martial arts gym.

CETA. Will you teach me?

HILDA. You look like you'd fall over in a stiff breeze. What'll you do with your share of the riches?

CETA. Oh, me? I'm here for the untold glory.

HILDA. Why's that?

CETA. Um, you know, glory. It's good to have. What about you, Wyn?

WYN. I told you, the prophecy. I have to defeat the evil queen. Because I— *(She stands, steps on the block.)* —am the Chosen One! Once we've found the orb of Mags Guffin, I'll have the power to do it. And I'll be ready. I've been training for years. I'm going to—

HILDA. Would you mind moving off the log? I want to sit somewhere that isn't the dirt.

WYN. *(With a sigh.)* Sure. *(Hilda and Wyn trade places, and Wyn returns to warming her feet. There's a sudden roar from offstage.)*

HILDA. What was that? *(All jump to their feet. Wyn starts struggling to get her shoes back on. Ceta draws his bow/banana and nocks his arrow/banana. Another roar offstage and then a LION enters slowly and menacingly. Wyn is still hopping around trying to put on her shoes.)*

WYN. A lion?! We're in a swamp!

CETA. It's a swamp lion, don't you know anything? *(The Lion growls at them.)*

HILDA. *(Quietly.)* Wyn. You might want to give up on your shoes for now.

CETA. *(Also quietly.)* Not to worry, ladies, I have this handled. *(Ceta steps forward and 'looses' his arrow/banana. The Lion catches it and throws it to the ground.)*

HILDA. Ceta, stand back.

CETA. I won't! *(Ceta grabs the arrow/banana off the ground and charges the Lion with it. There is a silly fight. The Lion scratches Ceta on the arm.)*

Ow! Why, you—! *(Ceta charges back at the Lion and chases it offstage. There's some shouting and roaring and then a big thump.)*

HILDA. Ceta, are you all right?! *(Hilda exits and comes back on with Ceta, who is cradling his arm and whining.)*

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CETA. Ow, ow, ow. I got an ouchie. (*Wyn, having finally gotten her shoes on, goes to him and inspects his arm. She mumbles under her breath and waves her hands over Ceta's arm.*) Oh. Oh, that feels much better. Thank you.

WYN. Where's your arrow?

CETA. Oh, my arrow! (*Ceta runs back offstage and comes back with his arrow/banana.*) Got it!

HILDA. Good job. (*To Wyn.*) You're good at this magic stuff.

WYN. Yeah, I'm okay I guess. (*Wyn takes out the Map of Finding/banana.*) So, according to the Map of Finding, our next stop is a town called Youngishville. If we're lucky, we might be able to make it by end of day tomorrow. Let's get some rest. (*All lay down to get ready to sleep.*)

CETA. Tomorrow will be better, I imagine.

HILDA. Uh-huh.

CETA. Maybe we'll have to fight something else.

WYN. Hopefully not.

CETA. I beat a lion, you know.

WYN. Good job, Ceta.

HILDA. Good *night*, Ceta.

WYN. We just have to make it to Youngishville. (*Blackout.*)

SCENE 4

Lights up on Wyn, Hilda, and Ceta standing at center.

WYN. Well, we made it to Youngishville.

HILDA. Yup. I'm going to the tavern.

CETA. Ooh, me, too! (*The Tavern Worker from before enters, pretending to sweep. He is wearing the same apron but a different mustache. Hilda spots him and eyes him with suspicion.*)

HILDA. (*To Tavern Worker.*) You look familiar.

TAVERN WORKER. I get that a lot.

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HILDA. Wyn, doesn't he look familiar? (*Wyn shrugs. She is consulting the Map of Finding/banana.*) How did you get here so fast through the swamp?

TAVERN WORKER. I...live here?

CETA. Maybe he has a brother!

TAVERN WORKER. (*Hastily.*) I do have a brother. (*Hilda is still suspicious but gives up.*)

HILDA. I want ale.

TAVERN WORKER. Ale I can do. Follow me.

WYN. I'll get us more supplies, go ahead. (*Hilda, Ceta, and Tavern Worker exit. Wyn is still studying the Map/banana. MOLDUN and CHAD, two Official Wizards with Official Wizard Badges™ enter. Moldun spots Wyn and points. Chad and Moldun chuckle and approach Wyn.*)

MOLDUN. Hey. Don't I recognize you from school? (*To Chad.*) What was her name?

CHAD. Lose.

WYN. It's Wyn. Actually. (*Knowing full well who they are.*) Who are you, again?

CHAD. You don't remember us? I think I'm offended, Wizard Moldun.

MOLDUN. Yeah, me too, Wizard Chad.

WYN. Chad? Your name is Chad?

CHAD. (*Defensive.*) Well, your name is Lose!

WYN. Wyn. With a 'y'.

MOLDUN. (*To Chad.*) Can't expect someone who isn't a *real* wizard to remember something simple like a name, can we, Chad?

CHAD. Sure can't. I mean, come on. Do you even conjure, bruh? (*Chad and Moldun bump fists. In the background, Ceta enters, holding a bottle of ale/banana. He sees Wyn talking to Moldun and Chad and watches their exchange.*)

MOLDUN. (*To Chad.*) We remember her from the test, don't we, Chad?

CHAD. Uh, yeah. Got kicked out, didn't she?

WYN. Not before I passed. Which I did on the first try. Unlike some. (*Chad starts towards Wyn as if to attack, but Moldun holds him back.*)

ORB QUEST: THE QUEST FOR THE ORB

MOLDUN. *(To Chad.)* Don't waste your time, bro. Save your fights for real wizards. *(To Wyn.)* We just got our job offers from the queen's palace. We're gonna be *(He pokes Wyn in the chest.)* Official. Royal. Wizards.

CHAD. Official.

MOLDUN. Yeah. Hey, Lose-with-a-'y', nice wizard badge. Is that pencil?

CHAD. Yeah, did your mommy sew that on for you?

WYN. ...Yes? Didn't your moms sew yours on, too? *(Pause.)*

CHAD. Shut up! *(To Moldun.)* Gah! I wanna dump her books so bad.

MOLDUN. She hasn't got books, dude.

CHAD. I know, I know! Ugh! Something else, then!

MOLDUN. Gotchoo, bro. *(Moldun mutters under his breath and makes a gesture. ACTOR 4 comes out and grabs the Map/banana from Wyn and throws it to the ground. Actor 4 exits, and Moldun kicks the Map/banana over to Chad, who picks it up.)*

WYN. Give it back!

MOLDUN. Don't forget your place, Lose. You'll never be a Royal Wizard.

WYN. So what?! I don't *want* to be a royal wizard! I've got my *own* quest!

CHAD. Aww, her *own* quest! *(Chad plays keepaway with Wyn with the Map/banana for a minute, then drops it on the ground. Chad and Moldun exit, laughing meanly. Wyn picks up the Map/banana and dusts it off.)*

CETA. You okay, Wyn?

WYN. Oh! Uh, yeah. Just...dropped the Map. How much of that did you see?

CETA. *(Helping her save face.)* Just came out. Can you help me with my ale? I can't get it open.

HILDA. *(Entering, holding an open ale/banana.)* Here, I'll help. *(Hilda 'pops the top' of Ceta's ale/banana, i.e. opens it. They both start eating their bananas.)*

WYN. Can I have a sip?

HILDA. Get your own.

WYN. Nice. Very nice. Everyone is just—being very *nice* today.

HILDA. *(To Ceta.)* She's cranky 'cause her socks are still damp. *(To Wyn.)* So what's next on our quest, oh wondrous leader?

ORB QUEST: THE QUEST FOR THE ORB

WYN. *(Pulling out the map/banana.)* The Road of Carnage.

TAVERN WORKER. *(Entering.)* Road of Carnage? You wouldn't happen to be questing, would you?

HILDA. Yes. For the orb of Mags Guffin. We told you this before.

TAVERN WORKER. I've just met you.

HILDA. Hmm...

TAVERN WORKER. I've heard stories about the orb of Mags Guffin. Lady was in here last week talking about it. Heard tell it's tremendously powerful.

WYN. We know. That's why we're questing for it.

TAVERN WORKER. The orb is supposed to amplify the power of whichever wizard uses it. Gives their spells more oomph.

HILDA. Oomph?

TAVERN WORKER. A *lot* of oomph.

CETA. *(To Wyn.)* That'll help you defeat the queen, for sure!

TAVERN WORKER. What's this about the queen?

WYN. Uh, nothing. Nothing about the queen. Never mind.

CETA. Thank you for the information!

HILDA. *(To Wyn.)* So, road of carnage...?

WYN. Then Nozid.

HILDA. The same Nozid that we don't know what they are?

WYN. That Nozid.

HILDA. Great. *(CACKLIN' JACK enters, cackling—as his name implies.)*

CACKLIN' JACK. *(To the trio, in between bouts of laughter.)* Oh, that Nozid! They're a tricky one, a tricky one! You won't even see them! No! Road of carnage! No one makes it out aliiiiiiiive! *(Cacklin' Jack laughs uproariously. The Tavern Worker shoos Cacklin' Jack away.)*

TAVERN WORKER. Go on, leave them alone! *(Cacklin' Jack exits. To Wyn, Hilda, and Ceta.)* That's Cacklin' Jack, don't worry about him, he's got the laughing sickness. Great patron on open mic comedy nights.

WYN. Is that he said true? About Nozid?

TAVERN WORKER. Oh. Probably.

HILDA. Great.

TAVERN WORKER. Enjoy your ales! *(He exits. Wyn, Hilda, and Ceta exchange looks. Blackout.)*

ORB QUEST: THE QUEST FOR THE ORB

SCENE 5

Lights up on Wyn, Hilda, and Ceta entering.

CETA. I don't see why they call that the 'Road of Carnage', I didn't see any carnage, did you?

HILDA. Ceta, there were rockslides every hour we went through there!

WYN. And skeletons, don't forget the skeletons.

HILDA. And rockslides that killed walking skeletons! The only reason we got through was because of Wyn's magic! Thank you, Wyn.

WYN. Aw, shucks.

CETA. I suppose. Well, this area is relatively clear, at least. What does it say is next on the Map of Finding?

WYN. (*Consulting the map/banana.*) It just says...lair of Nozid.

HILDA. What's a Nozid? (*NOZID enters, spots the party, and immediately squeals in excitement. Nozid is a cat person.*)

NOZID. Oh, you're here, you're here, you're here! Someone came to visit meeeeeee! (*They run up and hug each of the adventurers in turn.*) You lived! You should be so proud of yourselves. I haven't had visitors in...

WYN. How long?

NOZID. ...a very long time! Welcome, welcome! Oh, sit, sit, I'll get refreshments, wait here. (*The party sits. Nozid runs offstage and returns with three bananas.*) I always keep some around, just in case. Here. (*They hand the bananas out.*)

CETA. Um...what are they?

NOZID. Dead mice! Killed fresh this morning. I stuffed them with berries.

WYN. That is...so kind of you. Uh, sorry, I can't eat these, though, due to...religious reasons.

NOZID. Oh, no.

HILDA. I'm allergic. (*Nozid turns away briefly and Ceta tosses his dead mouse/banana offstage. When Nozid turns back, Ceta mimes chewing and swallowing.*)

CETA. Delicious, thank you! Yum, yum!

ORB QUEST: THE QUEST FOR THE ORB

NOZID. I'm so glad! (*They hug CETA again.*) Oh, I'm being so rude, I haven't introduced myself. I'm Nozid, I'm the cat person who guards this path.

WYN. I'm Wyn the wizard, this is Hilda the dwarf, and that's Ceta the elf.

CETA. Forest elf.

WYN. That's what I said.

NOZID. It's a pleasure, it's really a pleasure, thank you so much for coming. (*Awkward pause.*) You're welcome to stay the night if you like, or...I mean, I only have one bed, but I'm always up for cuddles!

WYN. We actually need to get going...we're on a quest.

NOZID. Oh, phooey. Everyone's always on a quest.

WYN. It's been so nice to meet you, though!

HILDA. Very nice.

CETA. So nice! (*The party stands and starts to move across the stage.*)

NOZID. (*Suddenly serious and intimidating.*) Wait. (*One of the party bumps into Nozid when they don't stand aside.*) You must know the rules. Uwnol must have told you.

HILDA. Is this about—?

NOZID. The three riddles. Yes.

HILDA. Is there any chance we could negotiate with you? I'm sure we can come to an agreement.

WYN. (*Sotto voce, to Hilda.*) You're trying diplomacy on a vicious cat person?

HILDA. (*Sotto voce.*) It's worth a try, isn't it?

CETA. (*Sotto voce.*) Why are we whispering?

NOZID. I don't really do...negotiation. (*They bare their claws.*) You can either enjoy my hospitality, answer my riddles, or face me in battle.

CETA. (*Hiding behind Wyn.*) Wyn, they got scary.

HILDA. (*To Nozid.*) What happens if we answer a riddle wrong?

NOZID. I send you on your way. *Back* on the Road of Carnage. If you get *one* riddle wrong.

WYN. What happens if we get two riddles wrong?

NOZID. I send *parts* of you on your way on the Road of Carnage.

WYN. Ceta, don't ask them—

CETA. (*Petrified.*) Three riddles?

ORB QUEST: THE QUEST FOR THE ORB

NOZID. Haven't done a murder in a while.

HILDA. You were nice a minute ago. (*Ceta steps out from behind Wyn, full of bravado, and tosses his hair.*)

CETA. Ha! What are we afraid of? (*Nozid snarls. The party all jump.*) It's just some riddles! I'm the riddle master back in my home forest!

HILDA. Is that an official title?

CETA. My uncle Valium said it could be if I wanted it to!

NOZID. *The first riddle.* What is so fragile that saying its name breaks it?

HILDA. (*To Wyn and Ceta.*) Huddle. (*The adventurers huddle. Nozid comes over and joins them. To Nozid.*) No, not you!

NOZID. (*Leaving the huddle.*) Rats.

WYN. (*To the group.*) I say we just magic them.

HILDA. Would that work?

CETA. No, wait! I know this one!

HILDA. Be sure, Ceta.

CETA. I am so sure. I am the most sure. (*Standing from the huddle, tossing his hair. To Nozid.*) Silence.

WYN. Ceta, you can't just tell them to be quiet!

NOZID. No, he's right. Silence is so fragile that saying its name breaks it. *The second riddle.* What can fill up a room but takes up no space?

CETA. Light! Ha!

NOZID. Damn. He's good. *The third riddle.* With pointed fangs I sit and wait; with piercing force I crunch out fate; grabbing victims, proclaiming might; physically joining with a single bite. What am I? (*Pause.*)

WYN. Ceta?

CETA. Huddle? (*The adventurers huddle again.*)

HILDA. I thought you were the riddle master.

CETA. I am, I am! I've never heard this one before!

WYN. I wanna cast magic missile.

HILDA. No. We can figure this out.

NOZID. (*Loudly.*) I'm bored, can I kill you yet?

HILDA. No!

WYN. Ceta?

CETA. I'm thinking, I'm thinking!

HILDA. Think faster.

ORB QUEST: THE QUEST FOR THE ORB

CETA. It feels like it's on the tip of my tongue. It's just going to kill me if I don't figure out the answer.

HILDA. *They're going to kill you if you don't figure out the answer.*

WYN. I'm gonna cast magic missile.

HILDA. We don't know that it'll work on them!

WYN. I'm gonna do it.

HILDA & CETA. No! *(Wyn stands from the huddle and mumbles something under her breath, moving her arms in a pushing motion towards Nozid. ACTOR 2 comes out with a banana. This is the missile. All have gone into slow motion. Hilda and Ceta call out "Nooooooooo" and Nozid yowls—slowly—and braces herself. As Actor 2 crosses the stage with the banana/missile, they peel the banana and, reaching Nozid, mash the peeled banana in Nozid's face. Normal speed again, Nozid falls to the ground. Actor 2 exits. Nozid makes some complaining cat noises, tries to get up, and can't.)*

HILDA. Why did that work?

WYN. I mean, I did study for seven years.

HILDA. *(Reluctantly impressed.)* Whatever.

NOZID. *(From the floor.)* You are all...very rude! After I served you refreshments!

WYN. You were going to kill us!

NOZID. Still! *(Ceta crosses to Nozid and shakes them.)*

CETA. What was the answer? What was the answer??

NOZID. Ack! A stapler!

CETA. *What?!* Those haven't even been invented yet!

WYN. Ceta, let's go, before they can get up!

CETA. *(To Wyn and Hilda.)* But this wasn't a fair contest!

HILDA. We're going! *(The adventurers run off. Nozid wipes banana off their face. Blackout.)*

SCENE 6

Lights up on Wyn, Ceta, and Hilda sitting around a fire/pile of bananas. Each of them has a banana on a stick that they're holding over the 'fire'—Wyn and Hilda's are peeled, Ceta's is not.

ORB QUEST: THE QUEST FOR THE ORB

CETA. It's so late.

HILDA. Well *someone* only has one arrow to hunt with.

CETA. Wyn could've helped with her magic!

WYN. Nah. It makes the meat taste all...fizzy.

HILDA. (*To Ceta.*) The meat on that jackalope is not going to be fully cooked.

CETA. How was I supposed to know that you're supposed to skin them before cooking them?

HILDA. Could've watched us.

CETA. Hmmph. (*He tosses his hair.*)

WYN. Should feel right at home here, right, Ceta?

CETA. I don't really know these trees. Not like the ones in Huge Oak Forest. Not that the trees in this forest haven't been perfectly polite.

HILDA. You can talk to trees?

CETA. I'm a *forest elf*.

HILDA. Right.

WYN. (*Consulting the Map of Finding/banana.*) We're two-thirds of the way to the Orb. Let's just try not to bicker on the way.

HILDA. Who's bickering?

WYN. You're bickering.

HILDA. I am not!

CETA. You're bickering with Wyn right now.

WYN. Oh, now *I'm* bickering?

HILDA. Enough! Enough! Just...cook your jackalope. (*Beat.*) Wyn, you must be feeling really accomplished right about now.

WYN. We're almost there. I can almost *taste* the orb of Mags Guffin at this point.

CETA. Euw.

WYN. We've braved great trials, but we've come through. (*She shoves her banana-on-a-stick into Ceta's hand and steps up on the block.*) This is my destiny! The prophecy has spoken! We'll face the evil queen and come out the other side! Because I—am the Chosen One!

HILDA. You might want to get down off that stump. Your jackalope's on fire.

WYN. Ceta!

ORB QUEST: THE QUEST FOR THE ORB

CETA. Whoops. (*He waves Wyn's banana-on-a-stick around and blows on it. Handing it to Wyn.*) I've heard blackened jackalope is a delicacy in some places.

WYN. Not in these places. Thanks anyway, Ceta.

CETA. Sorry. You'd think I'd be better at this sort of thing. I'm something of a cook back home. (*Ceta goes to toss his hair—but his wig falls to the ground. Brief pause. Ceta scrambles for the wig, dropping his banana-on-a-stick.*)

HILDA. Was that a wig? Have you been wearing a wig?

CETA. You saw nothing! (*He's put the wig on wrong.*)

WYN. Ceta—why do you have short hair? I thought all elves had long hair.

CETA. (*Pulling off the wig.*) My mom cut my hair when I went to the 1,000-year-plus training area.

HILDA. Your mom did?

WYN. (*Realizing something.*) Ceta, you're 500...how long do elves live? (*Ceta mumbles something.*)

HILDA. How long, Ceta.

CETA. 5,000 years. (*Beat.*)

WYN. You're *ten*?!

HILDA. (*Appalled.*) Acetaminophen!

CETA. Argh, don't full-name me!

WYN. Everything makes so much sense now.

HILDA. How could you keep something like that a secret?!

CETA. I—I—well—Wyn isn't even a real wizard! (*Pause.*)

WYN. What? Don't be ridiculous. Of course I am.

CETA. I heard you talking to those rude wizards in Youngishville. They said you're not a real wizard.

WYN. I have a badge.

HILDA. A badge that's written in pencil.

WYN. I passed the exam! (*Pause.*) Okay, I—I may have audited a few of...or all of...the courses at wizard school. My parents are poor, okay? I couldn't afford to go. And I did pass the exam, it's just that when they went to write my results down...they found out that I hadn't paid.

HILDA. So we have a 10-year-old elf and a fake wizard. Great.

ORB QUEST: THE QUEST FOR THE ORB

WYN. Well, you're—your dad says you're not even a real dwarf!

HILDA. Yes. I. Am.

CETA. Wyn's got a point. How many dwarfs know about politics? About diplomacy? You don't even have an axe.

HILDA. Shut up, kid. (*To Wyn.*) I want to know what other secrets you've been keeping from us, Wyn. What about this quest?

WYN. What about it?

HILDA. I want to know about these untold riches.

WYN. I—

HILDA. Why are they untold? Huh? Is it that you—don't want to tell us? Were there *ever* going to be any riches?

WYN. I thought—there should be a reward, right?! For defeating the queen!

HILDA. That's another thing. You keep telling us we're going to defeat the queen. What happens then? Who takes over? You're planning a coup and you don't even have another government lined up! Do you?!

CETA. Oh, there should really be a government, you don't want a power vacuum—

HILDA & WYN. Shut up, Ceta!

CETA. (*On the verge of tears.*) You don't have to be mean about it.

HILDA. Well, what else, Wyn?! Wyn the fake wizard! Let's have it all out! No riches! No glory! Was there ever even a prophecy?!

WYN. Of course there was!

HILDA. Please enlighten us. Who told this prophecy?

WYN. It was...this man in the marketplace. He said (*Weakly.*) "Someone ought to do something...about that queen..."

CETA. Wyn...

HILDA. I didn't hear anything about a Chosen One in there.

WYN. Listen, Hilda—

HILDA. I should have learned by now. I couldn't trust my father, who told me I couldn't be a girl and a dwarf. I couldn't trust my boyfriend, who dumped me in the middle of the mine because I wouldn't carry an axe. I should know that no one can be trusted. But I trusted you, Wyn. We both trusted you. And look at us now. Look at *you* now. I'm going.

WYN. No, don't—

ORB QUEST: THE QUEST FOR THE ORB

HILDA. I'm going to go get a job like a normal person. Goodbye, Wyn. Ceta. (*Hilda exits. A brief pause.*)

WYN. Ceta, you—there's still a chance, we can still get glory, this doesn't mean anything— (*Ceta, crying, runs offstage. To herself.*) I'll just. It's fine. It's fine. I can do this—alone. I don't need them. Because I— (*She stands on the block.*) am the Chosen— (*She collapses and bursts into tears. Blackout.*)

END OF ACT 1

THE PLAY IS NOT OVER!! TO FIND OUT HOW IT ENDS—

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