

Worlds Beyond Number

Fireside Chat: Episode 27 - "The Agenda"

Final Version

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

Erika Ishii

Hello everybody, and welcome to the Fireside Chat for Episode 27, *The Agenda*. I am your host, Erika Ishii, and with me, as always, is my dear friend Aabria Iyengar

Aabria Iyengar

Ahoohoo, crackle crackle! Welcome to WitchCon baby! *Brap!*

Erika Ishii

Okay, everybody line up for your lanyard and your swag bag—

Aabria Iyengar

[Laugh]

Erika Ishii

—and get in line for the panel on certain death. I'm here with Brennan Lee Mulligan!

Aabria Iyengar

Hall H is for hexes!

Brennan Lee Mulligan

Ahoohoo! Crackle crackle! I'm staying at the Days Inn, I don't think anyone else is here. I think that I'm the only person they put up at the Days Inn. I don't think—

Erika Ishii

Yeah, I think all the rest of us are—

Aabria Iyengar

I think you're with all the transpo guys.

Erika Ishii

Yeah, we've got—

Brennan Lee Mulligan

That's what it is, I asked—I saw some guys with lanyards and I said "Are you guys going to WitchCon?" And they said "[Brooklyn accent] Whaddya talkin' about?" And I went "Oh. Uh, okay, I'm sorry, I didn't mean to—" they didn't seem to know. But, they had lanyards, so.

Aabria Iyengar

Yeah.

Brennan Lee Mulligan
Ya know.

Erika Ishii
Well, uh, at least—

Brennan Lee Mulligan
But, a pleasure, and honor, a privilege.

Erika Ishii
—you get complimentary breakfast.

Aabria Iyengar
Ope!

Erika Ishii
Yuh.

Brennan Lee Mulligan
[Fancy voice] A continental breakfast.

Erika Ishii
The continental breakfast, which if you take pieces of fruit from there and you stick it in your bag, then you have a little snack for when you're on the con floor, so you don't crash. Mhm.

Aabria Iyengar
I feel like an elder con geek, and we're just passing on wisdom, this is great.

Erika Ishii
It's true, it's true.

Brennan Lee Mulligan
The biggest—here's a big life hack, for having a snack for later. Big life hack for having a snack for later: don't eat it as soon as you get it, because then you won't have it.

[Aabria and Erika laugh]

Brennan Lee Mulligan
Then you won't have it later. This me as the Fox, this is where the Fox and Brennan—

Aabria Iyengar
Yeah!

Brennan Lee Mulligan
—perfectly overlap.

[Aabria and Erika laugh]

Brennan Lee Mulligan

If you want food later, you can't eat the food you have now.

Aabria Iyengar

You would think your stomach would hold it for you like a little pocket, but that's not how it works.

Brennan Lee Mulligan

Yeah, and probably some part of you goes "You need to eat the food now, because what if you die in between now and later, and then you didn't have that snack? What then?" The ultimate tragedy.

Aabria Iyengar

Laugh

Erika Ishii

Mm.

Aabria Iyengar

The dream is to die full.

Brennan Lee Mulligan

[Laughing] Yes. It is. That is the dream.

Aabria Iyengar

[Laugh]

Erika Ishii

And, finally, rounding out this lovely panel, we have the special featured guest of WitchCon.

Lou Wilson

Hey, what's up, it's your boy, Yodah, out here.

[Aabria and Brennan choke on laughter]

Yodah (Lou)

I'm selling fortune cookies in Hall C, come by.

Aabria Iyengar

[Laugh]

Erika Ishii

Mr. Yodah, thank you so much for being here, it's really an honor.

Yodah (Lou)

It's just Yodah. Just Yodah.

Erika Ishii

Oh!

Aabria Iyengar
[Laugh]

Yodah (Lou)
We don't need to get formal.

Erika Ishii
Okay, okay, okay!

[Aabria and Brennan wheezing with laughter]

Erika Ishii
Yodah, I hope that the—

Aabria Iyengar
You have to—no no no, I'm so sorry Erika, we have to let them know that that introduction *destroyed* Brennan, he is yet to recover, he is not on the mic.

Erika Ishii
[Laugh] This is true.

Aabria Iyengar
And all of our—

Brennan Lee Mulligan
[Loud wheeze]

Aabria Iyengar
Thank you for joining us by the Fireside, all you sweet friends! Brennan is dead. He is a laughing ghost.

Brennan Lee Mulligan
[Catching breath] Oh god.

Erika Ishii
[Laughing] Laughing ghost!

Aabria Iyengar
That got him.

[Everyone laughs]

Erika Ishii
[Laughing] Yes it's true. Yodah, I hope that your handler has been able to get you around the hall in a very efficient—

Yodah (Lou)
It's been great.

Erika Ishii
—and safe fashion.

Yodah (Lou)
And fluid and easy. WitchCon's one of my favorites, I'm here every year. It's a thrill.

Erika Ishii
Excellent.

Brennan Lee Mulligan
[Deep sigh]

Erika Ishii
What a fucking episode, guys.

Aabria Iyengar
[Laugh]

Erika Ishii
That was—I just need to say—

Aabria Iyengar
Honestly pretty easy for some of us, so what are you talking about?

Erika Ishii
[Laugh]

Yodah (Lou)
Yeah. A lot of us had, like, a good time.

Aabria Iyengar
Hey, this is Suvi's first time not having to have a bad time, while someone's having a bad time.

Erika Ishii
[Cackle]

Aabria Iyengar
Great day for Suvi.

Brennan Lee Mulligan
Suvi was in the Great Hall having some snacks, helping herself to some charcuterie!

Aabria Iyengar
Yeah. No one asked her a question, no one called her anything, she just stood until she was called on, and that was a little nerd's best life, like “Mm. Don't acknowledge me.”

Brennan Lee Mulligan
[Laugh]

Erika Ishii

Yeah. And Eursulon, also, seems that he had a pretty good time, making new friends, with Heinrul and Badze.

Yodah (Lou)

Exactly, we're out here meeting the folks, ya know?

Erika Ishii

Yeah, yeah.

Yodah (Lou)

We're out here making connections, ya know, that's what WitchCon's about, it's about extending hands, making new friends, getting contacts, sending emails afterwards asking if people had a good con.

Aabria Iyengar

[Laugh] Oh, you do a lot of follow up after the con?

Yodah (Lou)

Oh, got to, got to. So.

Aabria Iyengar

Amazing!

Yodah (Lou)

I mean, me and Heinrul are gonna work together down the road, we'll find some reason to collab. If we don't—assuming we wake up from drinking ourselves until we're sick.

Aabria Iyengar

[Laugh]

Yodah (Lou)

Which is just a great name for an activity, ya know? Everyone can get excited about “drink until we're sick.”

[Aabria and Brennan laugh]

Erika Ishii

Well, it's specifically “Drink until there is no more liquor left.”

Brennan Lee Mulligan

And then later he said—

[Everyone talks at once]

Brennan Lee Mulligan

Yeah, and then later he said “We will drink until we are sick,” which, assuming you have enough liquor, both of those are possible to do.

Aabria Iyengar

Aww!

Yodah (Lou)

Exactly.

Brennan Lee Mulligan

You do one and then the other.

Aabria Iyengar

Here's the thing though—

Erika Ishii

Another WitchCon tip is that you go to Costco, or Kirkland in some parts of the country, and then you buy the big handles of alky-hol, and you have that in your room so you don't have to use the minibar or go out to the expensive bars that have long waits on them.

Aabria Iyengar

[Clapping] Kirkland vodka is god's strongest soldier.

Erika Ishii

[Cackle]

Aabria Iyengar

It's too tall to go anywhere but on the ground in your house. I love it.

Erika Ishii

[Laugh]

Aabria Iyengar

It's huge. It's just too big.

Yodah (Lou)

It's a gorgeous bottle. It truly is. That's what they should bring out at the club, I don't know what all this sparklers and champagne, just get four Strongmen to bring out a single Costco bottle—

Aabria Iyengar

I was gonna say, the traps—the traps on the VIP girls, to lift that up.

Yodah (Lou)

Yes.

Aabria Iyengar

It's a triangle. It's head, chin, into shoulder.

Yodah (Lou)

Yeah.

Aabria Iyengar

Just to full press a ninety eight pound bottle of vodka over your head. Hey Brennan, are you having a good time with this cuz you drink so much and you get what we're talking about?

Brennan Lee Mulligan

Yes, I love it. The thing about alcohol is you—is—is—it's good to drink.

Aabria Iyengar

[Laugh]

Yodah (Lou)

My god. Brennan, will you tell us all of your favorite things about alcohol?

Aabria Iyengar

[Cackle]

Yodah (Lou)

Just kinda walk 'em down.

Aabria Iyengar

Yeah.

Yodah (Lou)

Give me Brennan's Six Tips for a Sick Night in the Big City.

Brennan Lee Mulligan

Okay. If you want a *Big Night* in the *Big City*, here's what you gotta do. Number one: Have an older lady who's at your improv theater invite you out on the town.

Yodah (Lou)

Ooooooh!

Brennan Lee Mulligan

Number Two: She takes you to Big Daddy's Diner, where you get two milkshakes, and then say "Let's go on a long walk cuz I don't feel that good!"

Aabria Iyengar

[Laugh]

Yodah (Lou)

Yagaduh yagaduh yagaduh yagaduh!

Aabria Iyengar

[Laughing] Yodah!

Brennan Lee Mulligan

Number Three: She says "How you feel like goin' bowling?" And you're like "That sounds pretty sick!" And then you go bowling, and then you get chicken tenders even though you just ate and had two milkshakes!

Aabria Iyengar

[Cackle] Yes.

Yodah (Lou)
[Train whistle noise]

Brennan Lee Mulligan
And then, you go back to her place, and you hang out for a bit, and then you feel pretty sick and go home!

Yodah (Lou)
Grah, grah, byah byah, byah byah, byah byah byah, byah!

Aabria Iyengar
[Laughing]

Yodah (Lou)
Are we at six yet? What are we at?

Aabria Iyengar
Wait, that woman—

Yodah (Lou)
How many was that? Was that four?

Aabria Iyengar
That was like four. That was four max.
Brennan Lee Mulligan
That was four. Do you want one more?

Aabria Iyengar
Yeah, two more.

Yodah (Lou)
[Laughing] I need two more baby, I need six tips!

Aabria Iyengar
Let's go, Yodah.

Brennan Lee Mulligan
Okay! On the ride home, pull Howard Zinn out of your backpack and read it on the 1 Train!

Yodah (Lou)
[Machine gun mouth sound]

Brennan Lee Mulligan
And then two, get back to your apartment and talk with your brother and your two close friends about different Feats that someone could use for a build where they have a Wizard that possesses inanimate objects and grants them magic item properties.

Yodah (Lou)
[Airhorn noise]

Aabria Iyengar
[Laugh]

Yodah (Lou)
[Announcer hype voice] That was Brennan's Six Tips to Have a Big Night in the BIIIIIIIG City!!!

Aabria Iyengar
Sponsored by Kirkland Vodka.

Brennan Lee Mulligan
[Singing] Kirkland! Vodka! It gets you druuuuunk cheap!

Aabria Iyengar
[Laugh]

Erika Ishii
Thank you everyone for coming to our panel!

Aabria Iyengar
Yaaay!
[People clap]

Aabria Iyengar
There will not be a Q&A portion.

Brennan Lee Mulligan
There will not. We have a—speaking of drinking yourself sick with Heinrul, we have a question here from Justice for the 13th brook.

Aabria Iyengar
Ah!

Brennan Lee Mulligan
Thank you Justice for the 13th brook.

Aabria Iyengar
Shout out.

Brennan Lee Mulligan
Shout out to Twelve Brooks, and justice for that thirteenth brook. Justice asks, "Which of the spirits in the other Witch's retinue are your favorite?" Follow up question, "Is Eursulon actually interested in wolf daddy?" By which I *assume* Justice means Heinrul.

Erika Ishii
Heinrul.

Brennan Lee Mulligan
Who is part of Gramore's retinue. Yeah, we saw a bunch of Spirits here. We had Ara, who is the Ice Spirit, sort of the consigliere to the Witch Indri. You saw Heinrul as the Wolf King and consort of Gramore.

Aabria Iyengar
King!?

Brennan Lee Mulligan
Yes!

Aabria Iyengar
I'm so sorry, king??

Brennan Lee Mulligan
Yes!

Aabria Iyengar
Eursulon, get on that.

Yodah (Lou)
What, you think I associate with a prince?

Aabria Iyengar
My bad.

Yodah (Lou)
Hell no. I don't wrestle a prince, I wrestle a king.

Aabria Iyengar
[Laughing] I don't wrestle a prince!

Erika Ishii
[Laugh]

Aabria Iyengar
We gotta get shirts made.

Erika Ishii
We love a Wolf King.

Brennan Lee Mulligan
And then we, of course, we had Badze and Secoro as Spirits in Hakea's retinue, and then of course the Spirit in Ame's retinue, Eursulon. And then of course, Mirara came with no retinue at all.

Yodah (Lou)
Mmm.

Aabria Iyengar
A lonely bitch.

Brennan Lee Mulligan
[Laugh]

Yodah (Lou)
She got that crow.

Aabria Iyengar
[Laughing] She got that crow!

Brennan Lee Mulligan
She got that crow in her.

Aabria Iyengar
What that crow do!

Erika Ishii
What that crow do—dammit!

Aabria Iyengar
[Cackling] Aah! Sorry Erika, I'm sorry I take it back!

Erika Ishii
[Cackle]

Aabria Iyengar
Taylor, edit me out.

Erika Ishii
[Laugh]

Brennan Lee Mulligan
Yeah, what do we think of the Spirits traveling with these various Witches, and I guess like, for Yodah and—[Deep sigh] For Yodah and—

Yodah (Lou)
If it makes you feel any better it's Y-O-D-A-H, if that helps at all.

Aabria Iyengar
Oh!

Brennan Lee Mulligan
[Laughing] It helps tremendously.

Aabria Iyengar
[Laugh]

Yodah (Lou)
[Laughing] Okay good, I can tell, I can tell. The relief on your face is palpable.

Brennan Lee Mulligan

Yeah. Unbelievable. For Yodah and Aabria, who were listening in to—who were out with the rest of the retinue, interacting with these other Spirits, what was your take on them? Were there any of them that you had a more positive reaction to?

Aabria Iyengar

The difference between me and Suvi, is Suvi was stressed by every interaction.

Erika Ishii

[Giggle]

Aabria Iyengar

And was screaming and crying and was like “Wh—they’re wrestling, I don’t understand, is this murder, are we fighting now, i’m gonna lose my ring.” But me, Aabria, I love Badze coming in with the cute little river riddle, it was the sweetest thing in the world, so right now Badze is my favorite. A full cutie.

Brennan Lee Mulligan

Love Badze. Badze was also kind of teasing Heinrul. You know what I mean, she was the one—

Aabria Iyengar

Okay, they were all throwing off crazy fuck energy, and I do need to just say that up top, I’m sorry Yodah, I didn’t mean to step on—

Erika Ishii

“Me and my retinue saw you from across the Great Hall” energy.

Aabria Iyengar

Bro! Bruh.

Brennan Lee Mulligan

I—relistening to the episode, even I was like, “Brennan, you’re laying it on pretty thick here man.”

Erika Ishii

[Laugh, shriek]

Aabria Iyengar

I don’t think I’ve ever been prouder of you.

Brennan Lee Mulligan

This is some thick mustard on this sandwich, you know what I mean?

Aabria Iyengar

[Laugh]

Yodah (Lou)

It’s still got the seeds in it, ya know. It’s got those like, brown little—

[Everyone laughs]

Brennan Lee Mulligan
It's got full—

Aabria Iyengar
Yeah.

Yodah (Lou)
This ain't yellow, alright?

Aabria Iyengar
It's sort of a stone ground mustard.

Brennan Lee Mulligan
Yeah, it's like, is this ground? Cuz there's whole seeds all in there.

Yodah (Lou)
What the hell is—

Erika Ishii
Yeah, yeah.

Aabria Iyengar
Oh you don't like a chunky mustard?

Brennan Lee Mulligan
This was a—

Yodah (Lou)
You gotta chew this mustard.

Erika Ishii
This is some—

Brennan Lee Mulligan
Yeah, this is mustard you need to chew, and—

Erika Ishii
—spicy dijon.

Brennan Lee Mulligan
Yes, precisely. But I also—I stand by it, because I do think that the—

Yodah (Lou)
[Laugh]

Brennan Lee Mulligan
I stand by it. Because the—

Aabria Iyengar
[Laugh]

Brennan Lee Mulligan
—the main thing that I wanted to communicate in these Witches and their retinues—

Aabria Iyengar
Yeah?

Brennan Lee Mulligan
Was like, hey, this is where—we’ve seen the Citadel, we’ve seen where it gets the most like “[Old timey announcer voice] Choo choo! The engines of progress, the world of tomorrow!”

Aabria Iyengar
[Cackling] No!

Brennan Lee Mulligan
And the kind of Ghibli feel of it—

Erika Ishii
[Laughing]

Aabria Iyengar
No you made my home stupid!

[Everyone laughs]

Erika Ishii
[Singing *Great Big Beautiful Tomorrow*]

Brennan Lee Mulligan
“[Old timey voice] Welcome, a magic man with a moustache who bakes bread! The wonders of the Citadel never cease!” And then you get to here, and you’re like “What other kinds of magic are there in Umora?” And you’re like, “Well, this is sort of a newer magic, do you wanna see one of our older flavors of magic?” And you open a door, and it’s just a tree-man rubbing himself in a glade with fireflies—

Aabria Iyengar
Yeah.

Erika Ishii
[Cackle]

Brennan Lee Mulligan
—being like, “Wouldst thou know the secrets of the ancient forest?” And you’re like “Oh it’s gotten *really* sexual in a kinda Twin Peaks way out here.”

[Everyone laughs]

Aabria Iyengar
You're not wrong. Man.

Yodah (Lou)
What else they got to do, ya know?

Brennan Lee Mulligan
Yeah.

Yodah (Lou)
When they're done eating, what's left, ya know?

Brennan Lee Mulligan
What's left, man, what's left.

Aabria Iyengar
Every Spirit we have interacted with has been at least a little down, and that's really important to note.

Erika Ishii
Which brings me to—

Aabria Iyengar
[Cackle]

Erika Ishii
—the first section—[Laughing]

Aabria Iyengar
[Screaming] Ship it!

Erika Ishii
Erika and Aabria's "Horner Corner," name pending.

Aabria Iyengar
[Singing] Horner corner!

Erika Ishii
Horner Corner! We'll commission a theme song for it at a later date, but I would like to introduce you boys to, if you don't already know, the omegaverse. Are either of you—

Aabria Iyengar
[Screaming] YEAH!

Erika Ishii
—familiar with the omegaverse?

Yodah (Lou)
Uh.

Brennan Lee Mulligan
Is this—yeah, go for it Lou.

Yodah (Lou)
No, I don't—I don't know it. I was just gonna compare it to things I *do* know, but I know they won't—

Brennan Lee Mulligan
[Laugh]

Yodah (Lou)
I know it won't be any close.

Erika Ishii
No, no no, please!

Aabria Iyengar
No, go ahead. Go ahead and try, bud.

Erika Ishii
We want your best guess.

Aabria Iyengar
We want it.

Yodah (Lou)
Omega makes me think about, um—I feel like, uh. I mean the first thing that comes to mind is Omegle, the website—

Aabria Iyengar
Okay.

Erika Ishii
Mhm.

Yodah (Lou)
—where you chat with strangers.

Aabria Iyengar
Okay.

Erika Ishii
Oh. Okay.

Yodah (Lou)
So perhaps this is a universe in which people who meet on Omegle kind of have more—more fully thought out lives? Is it some sort of kind of like Second Life space? Somebody else talk, I feel like—[Stammering]

Erika Ishii

Well that's a good—that's a good—

Aabria Iyengar

Erika sidebar. Erika sidebar over here.

Erika Ishii

Yes yes, uh-huh.

Aabria Iyengar

Did you hear that? That was the sweetest thing I've ever heard, we can't tell them.

Erika Ishii

I know!

Aabria Iyengar

We can't tell them what it really is.

Erika Ishii

We have to, they gotta know. They gotta know, if they don't hear it from us, they'll hear it out in the world, and we don't want that. I'd rather them—

Aabria Iyengar

Yodah is so sweet, I don't wanna corrupt him.

Erika Ishii

I'd rather Yodah hear it from us, from people who love him and care about him, rather than just out in the wilds of Tumblr. Brennan are you—

Aabria Iyengar

You're right, you're right.

Erika Ishii

You look like you may be reading something, are you—

Aabria Iyengar

[Cackle]

Erika Ishii

[Laughing] Are you looking this up, perhaps?

Aabria Iyengar

He's now trying to read without eye-scanning. Yeah. Zero saccade reading, go.

Brennan Lee Mulligan

So, when I hear omegaverse, I think of the Alpha *and* the Omega, which makes me think of our Lord.

Erika Ishii

[Laugh]

Aabria Iyengar

Yeah, sure.

Brennan Lee Mulligan

So, if you—but knowing it's a part of Horner Corner, is the omegaverse a place where—[Laugh]—Christ has like, a harem manga?

[Aabria and Erika laugh]

Yodah (Lou)

Is it crazy to say that I hope it's not that?

[Aabria and Erika cackle]

Yodah (Lou)

Like I hope there's not a section of the internet that's like, "Jesus Christ lovingly rubs his hands along her—her open blouse," and you're like "Wait, what!?"

Aabria Iyengar

Hold on I have to check—I have to check AO3 for Jesus.

[Everyone talking at once]

Erika Ishii

—Mary Magdalene fanfic! RPF.

Brennan Lee Mulligan

It's like—

Aabria Iyengar

[Laughing] Is it RPF?

Erika Ishii

[Cackle]

Brennan Lee Mulligan

What if the twelve original disciples were smokin' hot babes, and a couple of them were aliens? That would be—

Yodah (Lou)

Yeah. Is it crazy that I've gone 32 years and never thought that anyone would write Christ erotica? Like I was like—I mean who loves Christ *that* much, ya know? I feel like at some point, if you—

Erika Ishii

There's a whole testament about it!

Aabria Iyengar

There's a whole testament!

Yodah (Lou)

Well—but if you love Christ you love him in that way, like you're like “Oh I worship him.” Now I'm trying to imagine someone going “I *worship* him,” and *that* is hard for me.

Aabria Iyengar

Oh my god.

Erika Ishii

There's a guy—why do you think they portray him with such rippling abs in every cathedral!?

Brennan Lee Mulligan

Why you think he's always trying to touch people's feet, huh?

Erika Ishii

[Laugh]

Yodah (Lou)

Damn, you sayin' Jesus a freak?

Aabria Iyengar

He doesn't wanna touch people's feet, he wants to have *his* feet washed.

Yodah (Lou)

Damn, even *worse*!

Brennan Lee Mulligan

He's got it comin' and goin', he's washin' feet, he's gettin'—

Aabria Iyengar

He's got it comin' and goin', no!!

Brennan Lee Mulligan

He's gettin' his feet washed, it's a madhouse in there. Read the bible and try not to sweat, I mean it is a fuckin'—

[Aabria and Erika laugh]

Yodah (Lou)

Jesus out here grabbin' feet, he gettin' his feet grabbed, it—a foot in every hand, a toe in every mouth!

Brennan Lee Mulligan

[Laughing] A chicken in every pot, and a foot in every hand, man!

Erika Ishii

[Cackle]

Brennan Lee Mulligan

That is the kingdom of God!

Erika Ishii

Amen.

Yodah (Lou)

Okay so what is the omegaverse? Is it this?

Aabria Iyengar

Hold on, hold on. No, fuck. You guys? I found so much Jesus fanfic.

Erika Ishii

[Laugh]

Yodah (Lou)

[Mournful sigh]

Aabria Iyengar

This one has a trigger warning for “Major character death: Jesus.”

[Everyone shrieks with laughter]

Yodah (Lou)

Damn. Damn that’s good.

Erika Ishii

No! No! No! No!

Yodah (Lou)

Straight up, that’s good.

Brennan Lee Mulligan

Oh man. The idea of someone—the idea of someone having a crucifix with Christ on it around their neck, and someone coming up and being like, “Scenes like that can actually be—” [Wheezes laughter] I would love—

Erika Ishii

Content warning: Torture!

Aabria Iyengar

Yeah.

Brennan Lee Mulligan

Yeah.

Aabria Iyengar

You put like a little content warning medallion over the crucifix.

Erika Ishii

Mhm mhm.

Brennan Lee Mulligan
Ah, god. What's the omegaverse?

[Aabria and Erika laugh]

Yodah (Lou)
And is it worse than what we—

Aabria Iyengar
You're gonna wish you stayed where I was.

Brennan Lee Mulligan
[Cackle]

Erika Ishii
Yeah, yeah.

Yodah (Lou)
That's *crazy*.

Erika Ishii
Okay. So.

Aabria Iyengar
Good luck!

Erika Ishii
The omegaverse hails back to the days of—eh, even possibly predating, some might think—SuperWhoLock on tumblr. It is—

Aabria Iyengar
Gone but never forgotten.

Erika Ishii
—an Alternative Universe, or “AU,” usually of Supernatural, and it is about humans having—following the social cues—that have now since been debunked—of Alpha, Beta, and Omega wolves. So, they—these people—*humans*—

Aabria Iyengar
Mhm.

Erika Ishii
Humans have different traits, depending on if they are an alpha, beta, or omega. Alphas are larger, they are dominant and aggressive, they—[Laugh]

Aabria Iyengar
Mhm! You're doing great sweetie.

Erika Ishii

[Laugh]

Aabria Iyengar

I'm not gonna help you with this part.

Erika Ishii

[Laughing] They go into—they go into—

Yodah (Lou)

Please, go on. I'm quite curious.

Erika Ishii

Much like the supposed alphas of wolf packs, they go into rut, and they do something—

Aabria Iyengar

Yeah.

Erika Ishii

—they have a knot. Now, Brennan, as the animal facts guy—

Aabria Iyengar

OH NO!

Erika Ishii

—do you know about [Laughing] knotting?

Brennan Lee Mulligan

Ya know, you know—you know full well that I know of what you speak, okay? You know full well.

Yodah (Lou)

[Laughing] "I know of what you speak."

Brennan Lee Mulligan

I know of what you speak.

Yodah (Lou)

How dare thee.

Aabria Iyengar

[Laugh]

Brennan Lee Mulligan

I know full well of what you speak. Don't cite the deep magic to me.

Aabria Iyengar

Bro were you there when it was written, cuz I do have follow up questions.

Brennan Lee Mulligan

The—is that actually—I thought that was—is that part of the same theory that's been disproved?

Erika Ishii

Yes, it is disproven.

Brennan Lee Mulligan

Go ahead and explain to our listeners what knotting is, Erika.

Aabria Iyengar

Mm!

Erika Ishii

It's uh, it's something that you can look up in your own time, because there's gonna be a lot. A lot, especially in the context of the omegaverse, and it's important to note that—

Aabria Iyengar

It's a dog physiological thing.

Erika Ishii

It's a dog physiological thing. Yeah, don't—also this is not safe for work, so do not be lookin' this up on the company time. Or do, but don't get caught.

Aabria Iyengar

Mm. There we go.

Erika Ishii

Betas are kind of nothing, they're more—not submissive, they're shy—they're just normal. They're just normal.

Aabria Iyengar

Betas just get to live.

Erika Ishii

They get to live as normal people.

Aabria Iyengar

They're the people in the back of porn that are just—they're just at—they're just doing yoga—

Erika Ishii

Yes.

Aabria Iyengar

—they're just at a yoga studio doing normal yoga.

Erika Ishii

Yeah.

Aabria Iyengar
The porn's not about them.

Erika Ishii
But the omegas.

Aabria Iyengar
Yeah.

Erika Ishii
Omegas are the submissives, and so usually they're more nurturing, and gentle, and all they do—well except for when they—when they—gosh what is this one—

Aabria Iyengar
Go into heat?

Erika Ishii
They go into heat.

Aabria Iyengar
They go into heat.

Erika Ishii
And they need to have sex—
Aabria Iyengar
And then they nest.

Erika Ishii
—or they go crazy, and then they nest.

Aabria Iyengar
There's a lot of sex—yeah.

Erika Ishii
And they can be impregnated by the alphas.

Aabria Iyengar
Mhm.

Erika Ishii
And alphas and omegas could be male, female, other, whatever, and alphas can knock up omegas, again could be any gender, all along the spectrum.

Aabria Iyengar
Yeah.

Erika Ishii
So, yes.

Aabria Iyengar

This is gender and junk agnostic. [Weary sigh]

Erika Ishii

Mhm, mhm. It's more about attitude.

Yodah (Lou)

And to clarify.

Erika Ishii

Yes.

Aabria Iyengar

Yeah bud.

Yodah (Lou)

And to clarify, everyone in this omegaverse, of which you speak—that does not exist on Omegle and is following the kind of more expanded lives of those people using the platform—this sexually driven wolf inspired one.

Aabria Iyengar

Mhm.

Yodah (Lou)

It's all people, though. It's people.

Erika Ishii

It's people.

Yodah (Lou)

We are taking wolf stuff, and in the omegaverse certain people—certain human beings are alphas and omegas and betas, and they interact in these ways with their human parts, not wolf parts.

Erika Ishii

Correct.

Aabria Iyengar

With whole societies dedicated to the managing of heats and ruts, there are suppressants—

Erika Ishii

And scenting.

Aabria Iyengar

And scenting—oh yeah, you can get marked? There's like a little gland that omegas can get bitten in—

Erika Ishii

Yes, a scent gland.

Aabria Iyengar
And then they are claimed by their alphas? And your scent—

Erika Ishii
And that's the equivalent of getting sort of wolf married.

Aabria Iyengar
Yeah. Yeah. Yeah.

Erika Ishii
[Laughing] I can't tell if Brennan's connection dropped or if he's just—

Aabria Iyengar
I don't know. No.

Erika Ishii
—sitting like that

Aabria Iyengar
Brennan got tired. Brennan got hit with Hakea's—Lou left—ope. Yodah left.

Erika Ishii
[Laughing] Yodah fully left.

Aabria Iyengar
Yodah went home.

Erika Ishii
[Laughing] Oh no.

Brennan Lee Mulligan
Is Yodah in—

Aabria Iyengar
We lost him.

Brennan Lee Mulligan
Is Yodah still in the Zencastr?

Erika Ishii
[Laughing] I don't know!

Aabria Iyengar
Yeah. Yeah.

Erika Ishii
[Crying laughing] Hello?

Aabria Iyengar

Hi.

Yodah (Lou)

[Smacks lips] You talkin' to me?

Aabria Iyengar

[Laugh]

Erika Ishii

Yes.

Yodah (Lou)

Yeah, my computer was not about kinda everything that you were explaining, and so it shut down. Oh I—you lost me everywhere.

Aabria Iyengar

Ah, beans.

Erika Ishii

Okay, get back in there before I continue. There's some other terms in the glossary that are very [Laughing] important to know.

Aabria Iyengar

[Laugh]

Yodah (Lou)

[Under breath] Okay...

Erika Ishii

[Laugh]

Aabria Iyengar

This is the darkest day. It's so funny that you came out with what is, arguably, the biggest heat rock in like, our Horner Corner arsenal, and you were like great, episode 1. Let's talk about omegaverse.

Erika Ishii

You gotta—you gotta—

Brennan Lee Mulligan

Here we go.

Erika Ishii

Ya know, first taste is free.

Aabria Iyengar

You gotta.

Yodah (Lou)

Well I just—half of my brain is processing it, and the other half is trying to be present, and it's—

Aabria Iyengar

[Laugh]

Yodah (Lou)

The part that's processing it needs a lot more juice, this isn't enough. I need to go lay down if I'm ever going to understand the omegaverse.

Erika Ishii

So the omegaverse has also been referred to as ABO or A/B/O—alpha beta omega—and it started out, again, as an alternate universe, and so there would be fandoms where there's an alternate universe where all the characters would take on these traits of alpha, omega, or beta. But it has escaped fandom containment, and now there are full novels, or full series in an omegaverse, with original characters.

Brennan Lee Mulligan

Is this—is the genesis of this in a piece of intellectual property?

Erika Ishii

No, this has nothing—this was in the fandom of an intellectual property, which was Supernatural.

Brennan Lee Mulligan

An intellectual property which did not reference—so like, in like a Bob Vila “This Old Home” subreddit, someone was like, “What if everybody was a different kind of wolf and they fucked?” And it just took off.

Aabria Iyengar

It was SuperWhoLock, so Supernatural, Doctor Who, and Sherlock.

Erika Ishii

Mhm.

Brennan Lee Mulligan

Do any of those—

Aabria Iyengar

None of them have knots.

Brennan Lee Mulligan

Yeah.

Aabria Iyengar

But now they do.

Erika Ishii

To our knowledge.

Brennan Lee Mulligan

But someone was like “I am making everyone from these three unrelated shows related, and also werewolves.”

Aabria Iyengar

Yeah.

Erika Ishii

Mhm.

Brennan Lee Mulligan

Gotcha. I’m caught up.

Aabria Iyengar

A lotta male preg.

Erika Ishii

Ah ha, yeah, mpreg is a term that you’ll see frequently because as I said, agnostic of genitals or gender identification, an alpha can knock up an omega, so.

Aabria Iyengar

You’re gonna see the word “slick” a lot.

Erika Ishii

Slick is—

Yodah (Lou)

I’m sorry, which word am I gonna see?

Aabria Iyengar

Slick.

Erika Ishii

Slick, which is—

Brennan Lee Mulligan

What is—

Erika Ishii

All omegas are self lubricating, again, agnostic of genitals or gender identification.

Aabria Iyengar

[Laugh] I’m watching my friends die in real time in front of me, and I don’t know what to do.

Yodah (Lou)

Well, cuz—

Aabria Iyengar

I cannot tell if I want to speed up the kill, or somehow save you by changing the subject.

Yodah (Lou)

Well I just don't know what I'm gonna say when it's my turn to talk.

[Everyone laughs]

Yodah (Lou)

I don't know if I'm supposed to—

Aabria Iyengar

[Laughing] That's so real!

Yodah (Lou)

I don't know if I'm supposed to say "Yeah!"

Aabria Iyengar

[Laugh]

Yodah (Lou)

Or if I'm supposed to go "Weird!" I—

Brennan Lee Mulligan

With each passing sentence, I become more and more like a—on an emotional level, a World War 2 veteran in a rocking chair—

Aabria Iyengar

[Laugh]

Yodah (Lou)

I would say—

Brennan Lee Mulligan

—looking at a world rapidly passing me by.

Yodah (Lou)

That's how I feel as well, I'd say I'm right next to you. [Laugh]

Brennan Lee Mulligan

Just looking out and being like "[Grizzled old man voice] My friends didn't die in the muck so that you could get Benedict Cumberbatch pregnant!"

[Aabria and Erika cackle]

Yodah (Lou)

Now is that true, is Benedict Cumberbatch the—

Erika Ishii

No, generally—

Aabria Iyengar
He's the alpha.

Erika Ishii
—Benedict Cumberbatch Sherlock would be an alpha.

Yodah (Lou)
That's what I thought.

Aabria Iyengar
Unless there's like a really good Moriarty fic, and then—

Erika Ishii
Ohhh, yes, actually, ya know if it's him and Watson, then generally Sherlock would be the alpha. If it's Moriarty, frequently he would be the omega.

Aabria Iyengar
Mhm.

Erika Ishii
Mhm.

Brennan Lee Mulligan
It's like that thing where snails can make each other pregnant, and have their—

Erika Ishii
Yeah, like nudibranches! Penis fencing.

Brennan Lee Mulligan
And they have a love dart, so snails shoot a dart with genetic material in it, and as their mating they're like "We should mate," and then they're like, "Yeah, but you be pregnant, not me," and then like, "Maybe you be pregnant," and then they each shoot a dart of material and are trying to impregnate the other one, so it's like a quick draw old west—

Aabria Iyengar
Brennan you don't have to explain the end of Hamilton to me, I was there.

Brennan Lee Mulligan
[Shrieking laugh]

Erika Ishii
[Cackle] So, speaking—so this ties back into number 1.) How people loooove to categorize themselves.

Aabria Iyengar
Oh!

Erika Ishii
Yeah. [Laugh] Cuz you can take an omegaverse test, just so you know.

Aabria Iyengar
Oh, yeah.

Erika Ishii
Yah.

Aabria Iyengar
Oh, unfortunately, I think we all exist in a world—there's gotta be—people have made a declaration, sort of—where does everyone think... they are... on the sort of a/b/o—

Yodah (Lou)
I will be abstaining from the question.

Erika Ishii
[Laugh]

Aabria Iyengar
Yeah! I didn't wanna finish asking it as I started!

Yodah (Lou)
I plead the fifth! I plead the fifth!

Aabria Iyengar
Correct!

Yodah (Lou)
Or I'm a beta! I would like to choose—

Aabria Iyengar
That's my answer! I want to not be a part of it.

Yodah (Lou)
Yes, is there a thing where alphas slash omegas desperately attempt to hide as betas cuz they don't want any part of this insane world they've been born into?

Aabria Iyengar
Actually? Yes.

Yodah (Lou)
[Wavering sigh]

Brennan Lee Mulligan
Which of the wolf branches eats too many chicken tenders and has to go home?

[Aabria and Erika cackle]

Erika Ishii
That could be an alpha?

Brennan Lee Mulligan
[Frenzied laughter]

Aabria Iyengar
I would give it to an alpha.

Erika Ishii
Yeah!

Aabria Iyengar
I think you can go into chickie tendie rut.

Erika Ishii
[Laugh]

Aabria Iyengar
You're like "I know I don't need it."

Brennan Lee Mulligan
I would be the community of crows that works in symbiosis with the wolf pack by locating and making noise near deer.

Erika Ishii
Mhm. Mhm.

Aabria Iyengar
Omega deer.

Brennan Lee Mulligan
And be like "Caw caw! Come kill these guys!"

Aabria Iyengar
[Laugh]

Erika Ishii
Yes, and then get to do the carrion feasting afterwards.

Brennan Lee Mulligan
[To the tune *Carry On My Wayward Son* by Kansas] "Carry on my wayward—" Okay.

Yodah (Lou)
That's the carrion we're talking about, right?

Brennan Lee Mulligan
That's the carrion we're talking about.

Erika Ishii
Which also brings us back to the reason that we had the Horner Corner—

Aabria Iyengar
[Strained] Yeah.

Erika Ishii
—in the first place, which is Heinrul and Eursulon, and their very obvious connection—

Aabria Iyengar
Mhm.

Erika Ishii
—that apparently was not a date, but could be something! Thank you for joining us for the Horner Corner.

Aabria Iyengar
[Clapping] Woo!

Brennan Lee Mulligan
Truly haunting, I hope every visit to the Horner Corner is this unsettling.

[Aabria and Erika laugh]

Aabria Iyengar
You just have to know that that's information that Erika and I have walked around—like, years of our friendship, we have known this, and, like, just, can pretend to be normal. So I think, if you know anything now, it's don't trust us. We hold terrible secrets in our heart.

Erika Ishii
Yeah. And actually, I only had the term “omegaverse” introduced to me more recently, I was in Australia and thank you to my lil sis Jenny Yokobori for introducing the term to me, but all of those years of seeing the mpreg and the a/b/o and I didn't know it was referred to as the omegaverse.

Aabria Iyengar
Yeah.

Brennan Lee Mulligan
Damn.

Yodah (Lou)
I just had to look up this test, I swear and then we'll move on.

Aabria Iyengar
Sure!

Yodah (Lou)
And I will say, the first question is, “How would you describe yourself prior to turning into a werewolf?”

[Aabria and Erika laugh]

Yodah (Lou)
So, you know, I think I thought that would be—

Aabria Iyengar

You got Brennan back in on that one.

Erika Ishii

[Laughing] You got Brennan!

Aabria Iyengar

He was like, "Hold on, I have an opinion."

Erika Ishii

Hey!

Yodah (Lou)

I really thought it would be like—I thought it would be like, ya know, "You're in a cave, what do you do?" I thought it would be more general, and it's very specific. "Nah nah nah, you a wolf now. But before, what were you?" We're caught up.

Brennan Lee Mulligan

I think, moments before I turn into a werewolf, I would probably be telling people about how 1-4 weeks ago I was attacked by a wolf and it was crazy.

[Aabria and Lou laugh]

Aabria Iyengar

You're really making sure everyone has like, really strong eyes on what's happening.

Brennan Lee Mulligan

I'm there with my arm in a splint being like, "You don't fucking get it man! A wolf—I live in Los Angeles. A full grown wolf sprinted down the highway and *leapt* into the back of the Prius, and it bit me!"

Aabria Iyengar

[Laugh] Do you think there's like, werecoyotes, and do you think those are sadder?

Brennan Lee Mulligan

I, one time, was jogging in Los Feliz, and I turned a corner and almost ran into a coyote that was just standing on a corner being visibly hot.

Aabria Iyengar

[Laughing] Yeah

Brennan Lee Mulligan

Just like—[Labored panting]—and I went "Yah!!" and like, jumped over it and kept running, and it did not make any motion like I had disturbed it at all. And I think about him a lot.

Aabria Iyengar

Aww!

Erika Ishii
That's L.A. baby.

Brennan Lee Mulligan
That's L.A.

Aabria Iyengar
I'm sure he's doin' good.

Brennan Lee Mulligan
I love them long boys, them dusty old boys.

Aabria Iyengar
Them dusty old boys!

Erika Ishii
Yeah.

Brennan Lee Mulligan
Um.

Yodah (Lou)
Um. Eursulon and Heinrul's relationship is purely platonic. I hate to crush dreams, but I think Eursulon—I do think it's a fun element of Camp, that like—I like—Brennan mentions Heinrul and Eursulon's moment *before*, at the end of the last episode, and so I think, I was just picking up a thread from the last one, and it *was* like a—I think I went over to make a friend.

Aabria Iyengar
Yeah!

Yodah (Lou)
And then things got *primal*. [Laugh]

Aabria Iyengar
[Laugh]

Yodah (Lou)
And I did my best to keep it in the friend space. Ya know! Who knows what happens when you drink 'til you're sick, or until all the liquor is gone? Only one way to find out!

Erika Ishii
Mm-hmm!

Brennan Lee Mulligan
I think the—

Aabria Iyengar
I—

Brennan Lee Mulligan
Oh sorry, what's that Aabria?

Aabria Iyengar
Oh no, I was just gonna say, I wasn't even—I remember being in the room and not having the like, “Oh, is this horny?” Until Secoro started talking. There was something about the vibe that the tree brought in that I was like, “Hold on. Are they gonna fuck? What's Suvi gonna do?”

Erika Ishii
[Laugh]

Aabria Iyengar
“I guess just watch!”

Brennan Lee Mulligan
I think that the—I think that what I want, for those truly like, wild Nature Spirits, is a feeling—*especially* for like, the Wild Hunt, and the Woodland Green—that there is an attitude of, these are the Spirits of living things, and Wild Ones are not named so for no reason, right? The Great Bear has hundreds of kids! In a parade!

Aabria Iyengar
Yeah.

Brennan Lee Mulligan
It's a lotta work that Bear's puttin' in!

Aabria Iyengar
[Laugh]

Brennan Lee Mulligan
And—ya know—and I think the idea is—

Erika Ishii
Well he eats some of them sometimes when they get big enough.

Aabria Iyengar
That Bear is out there blowin' backs out, let's go.

Erika Ishii
[Laugh]

Brennan Lee Mulligan
Yeah, this Bear is fuckin' gettin' to work, man.

Erika Ishii
[Laugh]

Aabria Iyengar
[Laugh] Oh! I'm sorry Yodah. Do you not like me talking about your fictional character's dad? Gettin' it in?

Brennan Lee Mulligan

But!

Yodah (Lou)

Mixed feelings. Mixed feelings.

Aabria Iyengar

[Laugh] Fair.

Brennan Lee Mulligan

Mixed feelings. But, I think the point is, there are certain kinds of Nature Spirits in this setting that, I think, I would always want them to have a proximity to something deeply life-affirming, like drinking, eating, mating, fighting. And it should feel—all of those activities should feel very close. Even with a Spirit that you're like, "Oh, this is like, this person is a friend, and we're asking them for a favor, and we're moving through this landscape, duh duh duh duh duh." but it's just that, every force of primal living wild thing. And [Laugh] Every primal living thing is closer at hand, and should feel closer at hand, when you're talking to those kinds of Nature Spirits. But—so those are the Spirits we interacted with. *Inside* the council chamber, we got to see Ame, for the first time, interacting with the Coven of Elders! And was asked to give her report. Erika, what was that scene like for you!

Aabria Iyengar

[Laugh]

Erika Ishii

It was a half hour of Regina George doing the "Oh, so you agree, you think you're pretty."

[Aabria and Brennan laugh]

Erika Ishii

And—no, I mean it's—it was so fun to have the dice backin' me up for that. Also, storytime cleanup—tiny little storytime cleanup—is that, I did forget that History Checks would have—were not with a Disadvantage, because Intelligence check—because the lovely little—I really love the exchange, the moment between Ame and Suvi, of the—

Brennan Lee Mulligan

Yes.

Erika Ishii

—breathing in for the two—breathing in and the breathing exercise—

Aabria Iyengar

Ah! The Calm Emotions was—

Erika Ishii

—that became Calm Emotions, which is—

Aabria Iyengar

—so good.

Erika Ishii

—actually funny, because it's sort of also tied to the breath, in that Wizards have the Calm Emotions cigarettes?

Aabria Iyengar

[Laugh] Yeah.

Erika Ishii

[Laughing] it's just the different version of—

Aabria Iyengar

That's called weed. There was a part of me that didn't realize that I had just sort of described weed with too many steps.

Erika Ishii

Yeah. [Laugh]

Aabria Iyengar

I was like “It's a Calm Emotions cigarette.”

Brennan Lee Mulligan

I love that.

Aabria Iyengar

Hey dog, that exists.

Brennan Lee Mulligan

It was really fun, and quite a treat, to have those level of stakes, and Ame being so, you know, put on the spot in that moment—

Erika Ishii

Yeah.

Brennan Lee Mulligan

—with those other Witches there, who I really really enjoyed. Oh, little story janitor thing here too, I mistakenly used the word “predecessor” when I meant the opposite of a predecessor.

Aabria Iyengar

Oh.

Brennan Lee Mulligan

So I mentioned Wren's predecessor, when what I meant was Ame, which is the opposite of a predecessor.

Aabria Iyengar

Oh, we all know—ech.

Erika Ishii

Yeah.

Aabria Iyengar

If anyone said anything about that out loud, quiet.

Brennan Lee Mulligan

I used the wrong word!

Erika Ishii

Also Mirara—

Brennan Lee Mulligan

I used the wrong word! Ahhhh!!! I'm being thrown in the pit, I used the wrong word!

Erika Ishii

—Mirara is—her domain is the Waning Moon, not like, the Words of—w—w—Grammer.

Brennan Lee Mulligan

W—Grammer.

Aabria Iyengar

W—Grammer. [Laugh]

Erika Ishii

Yeah, not w—Grammer.

Brennan Lee Mulligan

Huge shout out to Taylor Moore by the way, the sound design of the Coven.

Aabria Iyengar

Oh my god.

Erika Ishii

Ah, it was unbelievable.

Brennan Lee Mulligan

Unbelievable, the echo, the coldness, and there was this really—there was some—let me be clear. I was sweatin' in this episode. The fuckin'—

Aabria Iyengar

[Laugh]

Brennan Lee Mulligan

I was—ya know, suddenly you're pullin' like an Eddy Murphy *Meet the Clumps*, like, playing—

Aabria Iyengar

[Cackle]

Brennan Lee Mulligan

—everybody at the table, like—

Erika Ishii

Well it's so wild, cuz I've played characters in voice over things that talk to themselves, and you can handle that a couple of ways, sometimes you record all of the lines for one character once, and then they play it back and you do the second character responding to that, or you can kind of go down the line, and have the characters talk to each other and just keep track of, in your head, the different intentions and the different vocal prints for each one, but Brennan was doing that second one, which is significantly harder, while also having it be five—or four different characters, and improvised all of it, and having to just keep track of who would have specific motivations. Brennan had to keep track of multiple agendas.

Brennan Lee Mulligan

I'll tell ya—

Aabria Iyengar

Look, I wanna give it up to both of you guys, that scene was *crazy*, and I've never been more grateful to not be in it. Erika, you went four rounds with four Brennans coming for you absolute fucking throat.

Erika Ishii

[Laugh]

Aabria Iyengar

And Brennan, playing four characters, with different intentionality, and having each one of them come through really clearly, like, that's all intel for the rest of the table and for the audience, and to have a conversation that doesn't feel like a lore dump, while giving—you were giving good landmarks for where this coven was, cuz this was our first time meeting them.

Erika Ishii

Yeah.

Aabria Iyengar

Incredibly difficult, I just want to piggy back on what Erika was already saying. The thing that you both did in that scene was unreal, and everyone should know how hard and cool it was.

Erika Ishii

[Laughing] Thank you.

Brennan Lee Mulligan

You're very very very nice, thank you. And I think Taylor did an exceptional job as well of just editing around, like—so that as these Witches are speaking—Like, the effect of Mirara's mask slightly muffling her voice—

Aabria Iyengar

Yeah!

Brennan Lee Mulligan

—is like—it was very very cool, and—I remember, it was a lot of work in that scene, and trying to give voice to all the Witches, who—was your experience in that—like, listening to the episode, the Witches *seemed* really unified, it seemed like *everyone's* coming for Ame's ass. But my experience of *playing* them was actually thinking of the difference in their perspectives and voices and what matters to them, did that—did it feel like a wall hitting you, where all the four characters were united, or were you clocking differences in the four other Witches as the scene was unfolding?

Erika Ishii

It was so crazy, because I was clocking the differences, in that each of them had their own motivations, but the end result was the same, of them *really* nailing Ame, like WitchCon—Ame’s first day at WitchCon, she doesn’t know any of the rules, and when asked leading questions—and like, the different levels of—we have manipulative, and just like really good at words and twisting words, we had intimidation tactics—so, Indri and then Gramore—and then Mirara just sort of—the—ya know—the subtle aggression, but as Indri points out, very quick to bring up the topic of the vote to kill Ame. And Hakea, who categorically condemns this, but is also—[sigh]—is like scolding, it’s like, I—it was every moment—it just dredged up every moment of having to navigate social situations in middle school, or like, your relatives ganging up on you.

Brennan Lee Mulligan

It’s very—

Aabria Iyengar

Yeah.

Erika Ishii

And it’s all so different, but still put Ame—and *me*—just so much on the back foot, and then the dice backing that up and informing that, was also just so crazy.

Brennan Lee Mulligan

Listening back to it, I definitely come away with it being like, Indri is the scariest one to me, of the four of them, because Indri is the one who—the first thing she says in the Council is she like, reaches an arm to you—cuz she’s next to your throne—being like, “Can I help, I wanna try to clarify what you’re saying.” And like, repeats what you’re saying—it’s like—in other words, she kind of sticks up for you, she’s like “You’re trying to give a report, and you’ve mentioned something that’s in Mirara’s domain, technically, are you trying to say that *that* part of her domain is impinging on your domain?” And you were like “Yes!” And she was like “Okay great.” So like, she kind of—

Aabria Iyengar

[Exasperated sigh]

Erika Ishii

[Laugh]

Brennan Lee Mulligan

She kind of suckers you into a thing of like, “Well Indri’s sticking up for me, she’s trying to help me actually communicate what I’m trying to say, whereas Mirara is just *obviously* antagonistic.”

Erika Ishii

Yeah.

Brennan Lee Mulligan

And then Gramore—Gramore is at her angriest when she’s just like—I’m trying to remember—I could be misremembering, but she’s kind of just like, “We don’t fuckin’ care about—why do you keep talking about Grandma Wren?”

Erika Ishii

Yeah.

Aabria Iyengar
[Laugh]

Brennan Lee Mulligan
She's just sort of like—it's not that she's pushing the agenda—episode title—

Aabria Iyengar
Ha!

Brennan Lee Mulligan
Also, great title from Taylor, that simultaneously confirms that it's about this—you're dealing with this *Robert's Rules of Order* of like how this Conclave is supposed to run, but also [Menacing voice] there's a hidden agenda!

Aabria Iyengar
What? Hide where?

Brennan Lee Mulligan
Hide where? What hidden agenda! They kinda just say it!

Aabria Iyengar
[Laugh] So quickly!

Brennan Lee Mulligan
But then Hakea, too, being rude—I feel like, weirdly, the thing, listening back, that I was like, that's probably the biggest source of comfort for Ame—I don't know if Ame experienced it this way—but when Hakea dunks on Mirara, she's like “How could anyone tell with that mask on your face.” There's just a moment where you see that Hakea is doing to Mirara, also what she's doing to you. Which is being like—

Erika Ishii
Yeah.

Brennan Lee Mulligan
—kind of scolding, and chiding, and being a little bit like, “I'm the oldest one here, I'm going to rude and there's not shit you can do about it! This doesn't even break our magic laws!”

Erika Ishii
Classic aunty behavior. But—

Aabria Iyengar
Brennan, you made my full—no! That was fully every time I'm with like, my dad's sisters and grandma, just the gauntlet of evil women and my tiny grandma as the ringleader?

[Brennan and Erika laugh]

Aabria Iyengar
That's the secret. Hakea's not your biggest ally. She is the threat to *everyone*!

Brennan Lee Mulligan

[Laugh]

Erika Ishii

Yeah.

Aabria Iyengar

And her—if she's looking out for you, watch out. That just means you're close, and you're gonna just take a full blast later. It's not safe. Don't be safe.

Erika Ishii

Yeah. And this brings up Hippity dippity's question—thank you Hippity dippity—who says “I'm a big fan of clever, wise and cunning old women, and this podcast has some of the best I've ever seen. What went into creating all these great ladies?”

Brennan Lee Mulligan

[Sigh] Oh man. First of all—and you know what, if you're listening to this it means you've joined us by the Fireside, and you're one of our patrons, and thanks so much for joining us over here on our Patreon. So I'm gonna go ahead and lay out some lore that I *think* we establish later in canon? But I think is good for people to know. In creating the Coven of Elders, these are not Olympian Gods, there is not a force of destiny that is here, the Coven of Elders is sort of like, self created—in other words, it's not like all Witches in the world have a vote and elect these Witches. These are incredibly powerful Witches that *may* be the most powerful Witches in the world. They may not be, but they *may* be the most powerful Witches in the world. They are certainly about as powerful as Witches *can* get, right?

Brennan Lee Mulligan

And their Coven is dedicated to—and people sort of wondering, nothing happens to a Witch's station when that Witch is killed. Like if Ame is killed, people still have hearts and work together, they just don't have a powerful Witch looking out for them, right? If Hakea were to die, there just wouldn't be this powerful Witch tending the bridge between the Spirit and the Real in the ways in which the Spirits of forests and growing things interact with the forests and growing things of the Real World, right? And then secondarily, I think the Coven—so in *making* it, I wanted to kind of also delineate that there are—so the Coven is the second institution we've seen, other than the Citadel. The Citadel is *really* analogous to a modern institution in structure.

Erika Ishii

Mhm.

Brennan Lee Mulligan

It has hierarchy. It has bureaucracy. It has projects. It has things it's trying to do. And I think that for—the analogous thing for the Witches is it is a little bit of like a U.N., or it is a little bit of something where these Witches are not working together towards an end, the Coven solves a problem, which is “How do we not have powerful Witches destroy each other, or go to war, or do something where they tear the world apart.” So it's very much a thing where the difference in domains of these Witches was supposed to represent *really* diametrically opposed forces, forces that are not close to each other, to sort of underline that the role of the Coven of Elders is “Hey, our distance from each other in terms of our concerns, and in terms of the facet of Reality and the Spirit that we speak to and for, on occasion, the distinctness and distance between them is the point, so that when we come together in Conclave, we are representing as much truth in the world as possible, as much of a vision as possible.”

Brennan Lee Mulligan

Which is why the limiting of the number of Witches, the slow dwindling of the Coven of Elders is something to be sad about, cuz it's like oh, there were other important facets of Umora and the Spirit and the World and Reality that deserve to be spoken for that just aren't anymore. That's just not represented on the Coven. Because, again, the Coven was not ordained by some divinity, it is not a cog at the center of the world that keeps it working, it's just an institution of those that were magically powerful and chose to try to make something work, and to have a situation where, instead of letting the chips fall where they may, they would have this institution to come and not kill each other, and talk things through, and take votes, and try to arrange themselves in that way.

Brennan Lee Mulligan

That's a big verbal spill, but that's why so many of the Witches seem hostile—there's not like another Witch of Humanity who's a pal who's helping out. It's like, "Niceness is your thing, right? We got niceness covered. We can't have two Witches on niceness. You figure out niceness." You know, like—

Aabria Iyengar

[Laugh]

Brennan Lee Mulligan

"I'm doin' trees!" You know like, "You know how many fuckin' trees there are? There are so many trees! You just be nice!" You know like—

Erika Ishii

Yeah, and I think—I think people—

Brennan Lee Mulligan

And I think that that—*that's* the vision for the Coven.

Aabria Iyengar

[Laugh] That's very funny.

Erika Ishii

I think also people—we kind of assume—not assume, but we were like, "Oh, there's a Council of Witches," there is like—there are specific rules, and you know, they're like a governing body or something, I think I saw people speculating about that. And I think we find out, especially in this episode, that it's not, really. [Laugh] It's just a bunch of really mean women—

Aabria Iyengar

[Cackle]

Brennan Lee Mulligan

I think it's a governing body—

Erika Ishii

—that have their own agendas. I mean—[Sigh] well—

Brennan Lee Mulligan

Without—yeah. Without getting too far into it, I think other witches in the World of Umora would *respect* the Coven of Elders, and *know* about them, but it's not a formal hierarchy, it's like—

Erika Ishii

Yeah.

Brennan Lee Mulligan

“Oh the Coven of Elders, you mean five of the most powerful Witches in existence? Yeah, if they something I'm going to heed it.” Like—and especially because Witches power *does* correlate to their understanding of the world, right? So, yeah, I think that there's—it's not hierarchical, but they are important to Witches throughout the world, but they are, yeah, not a governing body.

Erika Ishii

Yeah. Not a governing body.

Aabria Iyengar

Tight.

Erika Ishii

And we cannot—thank you so much, also, by the way, like this is—that scene was real treat, and it requires so much attention.

Aabria Iyengar

[Laugh]

Erika Ishii

But, we truly cannot finish this episode without talking about the squad's debrief, and the scarf. Of Yodah absolutely—

Aabria Iyengar

The fuckin' scarf dog.

Brennan Lee Mulligan

The scarf!!

Aabria Iyengar

Yodah!!

Erika Ishii

—calling that shot. Wrecking Brennan's shit. There's the question, from Penguins in a Trench Coat—which is a fantastic name—“What gave away to you that the scarf was what was being used to spy on Suvi?”

Yodah (Lou)

I can say that there—it's not so much that the scarf gave it away, but I think in the mind palace where I imagine the story we are telling together, I realized that the only thing that was different from when we walked in here the very first time, was that Suvi was wearing a scarf.

[Aabria and Erika laugh]

Yodah (Lou)

[Laughing] And so I said—I think that’s also why I frame it the way I do, which is like, if I—and I think I was ready to like, play it off as a goof if it didn’t work?

Aabria Iyengar

[Laugh] Smart.

Yodah (Lou)

Like it would be funny that Eursulon just ripped off some of your clothing and threw it out the window and was like “I’m helping!” And so I just—

[Aabria and Erika laugh]

Yodah (Lou)

I dunno, I was right! But I think, yeah, when I visualized the moment, and I was seeing it in my head, there was only one difference in the room. And it was that Suvi was wearing a scarf. So I said let’s give it a shot, and sometimes? Ya hit.

Aabria Iyengar

It was so good. Now, I wish I could have had Eursulon roll another Insight Check, like when we talked to Will Gallows, cuz I think it would be important for him to clock that, in that moment, Suvi went “Oh Nif is going to die.”

Erika Ishii

[Gasp]

Aabria Iyengar

“I loved that little waif, and that waif is a fucking snitch.”

Erika Ishii

Oh!!

Aabria Iyengar

Oh yeah! Oh yeah! Absolutely done with the little matchstick girl.

Erika Ishii

[Squeaking] Nooo!!

Yodah (Lou)

Damn.

Aabria Iyengar

All of my—I didn’t trust her, and now I trust her *LESS!*

Yodah (Lou)

Spoiler for next episode, Suvi corners Nif!

Erika Ishii
[Sad gasp]

Aabria Iyengar
Snaps her neck.

Yodah (Lou)
Dark alley—yeah, full ninja style, comes down from the ceiling.

Aabria Iyengar
[Laugh] Yeah! “Shh, shh shh shh.” I’m just gonna Ghost Protocol her.

Brennan Lee Mulligan
Perfect, truly perfect.

Yodah (Lou)
Yeah, just kinda Assassin’s Creed moment.

Aabria Iyengar
[Laughing] Yeah!

Erika Ishii
[Laughing] Yeah, yeah! Blade comes out. [Stabbing noise]

Brennan Lee Mulligan
Lou, I loved it, man. I loved you grabbin’ that scarf so fuckin’ much.

Aabria Iyengar
So good.

Brennan Lee Mulligan
It was so great. It was so great. It’s also so great, cuz—I don’t know. I love every time Eursulon—there’s a big theme in the Wizard, the Witch, and the Wild One, which I think has to do with the—the ways in which intellect, emotion, and instinct—as represented, to me, by the Wizard, the Witch, and the Wild One—all interact and dance together, and each have moments where they come in and contribute something that only they could. Cuz I think a big—you know, in a younger chapter of my life, I was like “[Nerdy voice] I’m studying philosophy! Logic is the best of all! Why can’t everyone be logical! That’s where the problems in the world come from is a lack of logic!” And then very quickly you realize like, “Nooooo!”

Aabria Iyengar
[Laugh]

Brennan Lee Mulligan
“Some people are very logical, [Sing-song] and just don’t like other humans! That’s their premise and if you start from a bad premise there’s not much you can dooo!”

Aabria Iyengar
[Laugh]

Brennan Lee Mulligan

And the—you know, there's a—so like, watching moments where it's like, Suvi goes to Wizardry, casts Detect Magic, finds this thing, analyzes the meeting, goes in and is like “Okay Mirara and Gramore are opposed to you, the other Witches are on either side of you, there appears to be an elemental thing going on here,” talking a little bit about like, what does it mean for them to get rid of your station, how do we find out what's going on, and there's still sort of an open question there, too, of like do we understand this fully in this moment.

Erika Ishii

Yeah.

Brennan Lee Mulligan

And then when you use that magic to be like, “Something's wrong,” the fact that Eursulon doesn't opine, he just acts.

Aabria Iyengar

Yeah.

Erika Ishii

Yeah.

Brennan Lee Mulligan

He's like “I grab the scarf and toss it.” And you're like “Nailed it!” And you go “Great!”

Aabria Iyengar

[Laugh]

Brennan Lee Mulligan

It's like, it just feels like the perfect—I dunno, I love Eursulon, I love how often Eursulon's contributions are a decisive action—

Erika Ishii

Yeah.

Brennan Lee Mulligan

And how, often, it's correct. And what's great about it, too, is that Eursulon is not an impetuous character, he doesn't pop off all the time, his batting average is actually pretty fuckin' crazy! It's really good!

Aabria Iyengar

[Laugh]

Brennan Lee Mulligan

Of like, “Yeah, mostly I'm hanging out, and supporting my friends, and like, ya know, challenging a wolf to a drinking game, or I'm hanging out at the Citadel training with Steel. Maybe I'll paint a shield! Oh! My sister lived here and here's some magic!”

Aabria Iyengar

[Laugh]

Brennan Lee Mulligan

“I’m gonna save these four guys. Hey! I go down the burrow and I find my sister and my lost family! Huh, I’m not gonna go down that weird road. Hey, Orima with a magic horse!”

Erika Ishii

Yeah!

Aabria Iyengar

[Laugh]

Brennan Lee Mulligan

“What’s this? Something’s spying on us? Is it this fucking scarf? Oh it absolutely is! Blam!” It’s just banger after banger!

Erika Ishii

Forrest Gumping his way through Umora.

Aabria Iyengar

[Laugh]

Brennan Lee Mulligan

Forrest—[Laugh]

Yodah (Lou)

There it is, dude.

Brennan Lee Mulligan

[Laughing] The Forrest Gump of Umora.

Aabria Iyengar

Amazing.

Yodah (Lou)

That’s all I wanna be, all I wanna be is the Forrest Gump of Umora.

[Aabria and Erika giggle]

Brennan Lee Mulligan

Wait can we—I know we’re almost at time, but I wanted to, also—not only do we have this incredible moment here of triumph, but also, you send your little fox out!

Erika Ishii

[Gasp, whisper] Oh yeah!

Brennan Lee Mulligan

I think I really enjoyed Fox.

Aabria Iyengar

[Laugh]

Brennan Lee Mulligan

I really liked playing Fox in this episode.

Erika Ishii

[Crying] I love Fox so much.

Brennan Lee Mulligan

It was a good Foxy episode for me.

Aabria Iyengar

Yeah.

Brennan Lee Mulligan

But you find Indri and Mirara, and the conspiracy is unveiled.

Aabria Iyengar

So good.

Brennan Lee Mulligan

Where you see that Indri has, *in fact*, been in on it. There was a moment of foreshadowing, where I foreshadowed how *in it* Indri was gonna be, in the council chamber. I don't know—

Erika Ishii

Oh yeah.

Brennan Lee Mulligan

I mean other than her just, you know, making a vote—you know weird sickly sweet, like—

Erika Ishii

Yeah, of her being like “Ah, so hasty.”

Brennan Lee Mulligan

Yes. Where she sort of says that to Mirara and is like “You fucked up.” But there was actually a moment where, of the criticisms of Ame in the Council Hall, Indri's—that was delivered very sweetly—is actually, I think, the most philosophically cutting. Like, you see Indri's problem with the World Heart, to me, is *way* stronger—like, what's Gramores problem with Ame? “You're sweet. We're in danger. You'll slow us down.” Pure primal.

Erika Ishii

Mhm.

Brennan Lee Mulligan

Hakea doesn't appear to have a problem with Ame, but is just being like “That's not how we do these meetings, I'm tired!” And goes away.

Aabria Iyengar

[Laugh]

Erika Ishii
[Laughing] Yep.

Brennan Lee Mulligan
And then Mirara, obviously, has some intense thing based on Grandmother Wren and the Man in Black. Indri—I think the thing that I was like—my piece of foreshadowing of *how much* Indri is opposed to Ame, was her—the thing she says where she’s like, “How often, in the cause of togetherness, are all the needs of all the other things brought together, put to the side for the sake of the cause of togetherness.” Which, if you’re the Witch of the Self, is fundamentally what it is. Where it’s like, “Oh the nice little cottage Witch wants us all to work together? How much bile are we gonna all be asked to swallow for the cause of all working together, and how much will the Witch of Working Together get *her* way, above all else, because after all, isn’t her cause—isn’t *HER* cause, the *selfless* one.”

Aabria Iyengar
AGH!

Erika Ishii
[Giggle]

Aabria Iyengar
So good.

Brennan Lee Mulligan
So that to me was a real foreshadowing of Indri’s—

Erika Ishii
Yeah.

Brennan Lee Mulligan
—opposition to Ame there.

Aabria Iyengar
That was very good.

Erika Ishii
[Groan]

Aabria Iyengar
It was very fun to be at the table and hear and see that—and also shout out to Observant, the best Feat, I think we can all agree! Reading lips.

Erika Ishii
Oh yes.

Yodah (Lou)
It’s up there. It’s up there.

Erika Ishii
A little lip read.

Aabria Iyengar
So good.

Brennan Lee Mulligan
It rules.

Aabria Iyengar
So good so useful. But that moment of like, “[Gasp] Indri’s behind it! Why am I shocked! I did kind of already know that!” Like—[Laugh]

Erika Ishii
[Laughing] Yeah!

Aabria Iyengar
There was that moment of like “[Gasp] I mean, yeah. But also [Gasp]” [Laugh]

Yodah (Lou)
It’s really disappointing though, because I really wanted to date her.

Aabria Iyengar
Agh!

Brennan Lee Mulligan
[Laugh]

Yodah (Lou)
And now that just feels like it would be, ya know, ya can’t.

Aabria Iyengar
I’m sorry.

Yodah (Lou)
She wants to kill your best friend!

Brennan Lee Mulligan
That’s so sad.

Aabria Iyengar
I mean, there’s no wilder hunt than—

Erika Ishii
[Cackle]

Aabria Iyengar
—trying to run down your friend—the woman trying to murder your frie—I don’t know. I’m just saying. Keep hope alive Eursulon, you can do whatever you put your mind to.

Yodah (Lou)
Keep hope alive.

Erika Ishii
I've done more for less.

Aabria Iyengar
[Laugh] Yeah!

Erika Ishii
Less for more—yeah, yeah.

Brennan Lee Mulligan
Gotta keep hope alive.

Erika Ishii
Yeah. Well thank you so much to our wonderful panelists for this episode of the Fireside Chat, aka WitchCon 2024.

Aabria Iyengar
Yes.

Erika Ishii
Thank you so much to Aabria!

Aabria Iyengar
Ahoohoo, crackle crackle, I'll be at booth 42069 doing signings for the next two hours, thank you so much.

Brennan Lee Mulligan
[Laugh]

Erika Ishii
Nice

Yodah (Lou)
[Chuckle]

Erika Ishii
To Brennan Lee Mulligan.

Brennan Lee Mulligan
Ahoohoo, crackle crackle, if anyone has an extra badge for the Man in Black—

[Aabria and Erika laugh]

Brennan Lee Mulligan
—the Pilgrim Under Stars, the King of Night, He has held His Breath since the dawning of the World, He missed the lottery, He didn't get one, He had it in His cart, and He didn't get it! Oooh, I'm sorry! He really wants to come to a panel Wil Wheaton is doing on curses!

[Aabria and Erika laugh]

Erika Ishii

Excellent, well people can approach you after the panel for that. And, to our friend Yodah, thank you so much for making the time to come out to WitchCon.

Yodah (Lou)

Of course, ahoohoo, crackle crackle. If anybody needs me, I'm gonna be high on mushrooms at the Red Bull® After Party over at the Radisson.

[Aabria and Brennan laugh]

Yodah (Lou)

Don't talk to me, but if you wanna look at me while I'm high on mushrooms you can—I'll be there doin' that.

Aabria Iyengar

Hey Yodah, I didn't get an invite, can I go with you to that?

Yodah (Lou)

Of course, just don't look at me or talk to me.

Aabria Iyengar

Done.

Yodah (Lou)

Cuz when I'm high on mushrooms I'm invisible.

Aabria Iyengar

[Laugh]

Brennan Lee Mulligan

Oh! Hey, I had a question I wanted to ask. Hey Yodah, are you named after Yoda? Is that from Yoda?

Yodah (Lou)

No, I'm named after soda.

Aabria Iyengar

[Laugh]

Yodah (Lou)

You know soda? The liquid? The sweet liquid?

Brennan Lee Mulligan

I'm trying to leave the zoom, hold on.

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