

**THE HIDDEN PEOPLE**

Episode 1.13

"All in Favor?"

Written by

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137.

NARRATOR

Mackenna Thorne. Your life turned upside-down. Moving past the performance and finally seeing backstage. Little wonder that sleeping soundly isn't in your future.

MACKENNA

(screaming in sleep)

Thomas, behind you!

SHAYLEE

Dúisigh. Good morning.

THWACK. TUMBLING to ground.

MACKENNA

(groan)

Why? Where the...?

(yawn)

DANE

Yep. So sad. Her reflexes not so much cat-like. Yet.

MACKENNA

I was asleep. Isn't there any rest for the weary world's-been-turned-upside-downer?

DANE

Oh, isn't she cute? Little coming-of-age changeling.

SHAYLEE

So much angst and room for growth.

DANE

And my favorite part is yet to come: the makeover--where she becomes the person who she is meant to be by taking off her glasses and putting on a power suit.

SHAYLEE

Tear.

MACKENNA

It's too early for mockery. Coffee.  
Must. Have.

DANE

It's 1 in the afternoon, you slacker.  
And if we don't have a little fun, the  
crushing despair of the truth will,  
well, crush us. Come on; your training  
awaits.

**MUSICAL TRANSITION**

138. KNOCK on door. Nissa's doorbell RINGS.

THOMAS

Do you need some help, Alfie?

ALFIE

Nope. I'm fine. I have everything  
balanced just right.

Door UNLOCKS: deadbolt, regular lock, chain. Door OPENS.  
Nissa's interior has some kind of new age MUSIC playing.

Just as the door opens, various objects (some soft, some  
metal, etc.) FALL and CLATTER to the ground.

NISSA

Alfie! What the hell?

ALFIE

I come bringing equal parts snacks and  
supplies for our detecting.

THOMAS

Here. Let me help.

ALFIE

Okay, take the donuts. That box. Yep.  
Be careful. Icing. Yeah. Uh...

NISSA

Did icing just get on my carpet?!  
Alfie, I'm going to kill you.

THOMAS

No, I think my shirt sleeve came to the rescue just in time.

ALFIE

Oh, thank god. I mean...I'm sorry?

THOMAS

I always thought this shirt would be more tasteful in chocolate.

ALFIE

Thanks, Thomas.

(beat)

Anyway, I have donuts. Candy. Lots of caffeine in neon colors. More importantly, I have supplies!

NISSA

You're lucky that Thomas saved you this time.

THOMAS

Nissa, is this new age? Huh. I would have expected punk rock or electronica or some I-hate-the-world kind of music.

NISSA

Ah. You see, I naturally hate the world and that is a drag on one's psyche. I need to get my chill on to continue hating the world. Namaste out of my way. You know?

THOMAS

Riiight.

(beat)

So where do we start? I'm still reeling. My sister has an evil twin and has teleported away from her fight with said evil twin. How can any of this make sense? Tell me that this is the world's longest nightmare. Am I going crazy?

ALFIE

Ah-ha! This is precisely where we begin. Crazy.

NISSA

You are already there.

ALFIE

No, not just crazy. Crazy board some may call it, but I don't like that term. There's nothing crazy about a giant, wall-covering board that displays all your theories in perfect controlled chaos. Instead, I like to call it a yarn-overlapping-linked-objects board. Or a YOLO board.

NISSA

An evidence board? Really? Pshhh. That is so pedestrian, Alfie. I prefer algorithms. Fancy ones. Of the digital variety.

ALFIE

Okay, smarty pants, but we have to brainstorm on the YOLO. So, here's how. Paper. Markers. Nylon cord. Tacks...be careful where you step, I may not have picked every one of them up off the floor. We put all of our known evidence up on the wall. We connect the evidence dots. Then, I guess you can drop it into your rhythm.

NISSA

Algorithm, moron. And don't even think about hurting my wall--with those tacks or markers. I would never forgive you and never get my deposit back.

ALFIE

Ahhh. Yes. I know you, dear Nissa. This is why I brought...

(dramatic beat)

...a corkboard. So, are we all in? If you're all in to uncovering what happened to Mackenna, say "aye."

ALFIE  
Aye.

NISSA  
Ugh.

THOMAS  
Yes.

ALFIE

Close enough. So, I will be your DM today. The rules of the game: One: we want to identify anything or everything that could be a clue for what the hell is going on with Mackenna--quantity here over quality, people. Two: there is no judgement on the ideas or people with the ideas...Nissa, I'm looking at you. Three: every person and idea has equal weight. Still looking. Four: let's build off each other's ideas with and not ors. Five: extra credit for creativity.

NISSA

I plan to ignore rules two and three. And this is my place, so my rules go: feet off the furniture, glasses on coasters, and no one else's sticky drinks or crumbs near my keyboard.

THOMAS

Alfie and Nissa, I think both of your rules are great. We've seen some unfathomable shit, pardon my French. How could any idea really be that bad?

ALFIE

Like the shrinking? Not so bad, right?

THOMAS

Well...

NISSA

I miss Mack and her assistance with the tormenting of Alfie.

THOMAS

I miss her, too.

**MUSICAL TRANSITION**

139. Light ACTIVITY at police station.

RON

We must be missing something. Did you ever see plane tickets lying around the Thorne house? While you were canoodling?

SAM

Ron, seriously.

(beat)

Do you think she ran for the border or hopped on a flight? No, that would require too much effort. I bet she doesn't even have a passport. Maybe she's just lying low.

RON

Do you think she's hiding with her friends or holed up in a secret room at her house? You don't think she got tipped off by someone, do you?

SAM

Who would tip her off? Are you trying to say something, Ron? I want to find Mackenna as much as you do.

RON

Of course. I know you do. So why don't you reach out to Thomas again. He's Mr. Perfect, right? See if he can give us a lead to find her. For the good of Mackenna. And our jobs.

SAM

Wow, Ron. You're like a cross between an actual cop who cares and our boss.

#### **MUSICAL TRANSITION**

140.

DANE

And now, what every superheroine story needs: a training montage.

MACKENNA

I'm a superheroine?

SHAYLEE

He was referring to me. Pick up a sparring staff.

MACKENNA

You're going to teach me how to fight with a staff?

SHAYLEE

We don't have that kind of time. I'm going to teach you to survive. For now, just focus on not letting me hit you.

Shaylee and Mackenna SPAR. Staffs HITTING each other. Several OOMPHs from Mackenna as she is clearly getting her ass handed to her.

NARRATOR

The montage is a series of fumbles and awkwardly timed moves from Mackenna. Improvising with weapons is not her strength. Will this training really help to keep those pesky black beasts away, let alone take down the other, far-superior Mackenna?

Staffs HITTING each other. OOMPH, THWACK, CRASH. Mackenna FALLS to the floor.

NARRATOR

Ouch. That one definitely hurt her...well, at least her ego.

MACKENNA

Y'know, I'm really beginning to appreciate the craftsmanship of the flooring.

SHAYLEE

Your fetch is not going to go easy on you, so neither am I. Back up.

DANE

Mackenna, everyone has a hard time at first. The last changeling we brought here was all "Bring it--" and then bam.

Knocked out cold. Shaylee is ruthless,  
but she'll get you there.

**MUSICAL TRANSITION**

141. Nissa's apartment. Her MUSIC plays.

Thomas's phone BUZZES.

THOMAS

Oh geez. Sam is texting me.

SAM

Hey. Thomas. I'm worried. You left  
without saying anything. I still  
haven't heard back from you.

Phone BUZZES.

SAM (CONT'D)

How are you? Have you spoken with  
Mackenna?

Phone BUZZES.

SAM (CONT'D)

Please give me a call. Or we could meet  
up?

NARRATOR

That's right, Thomas. Keep Sam at arm's  
length one minute and then in your arms  
another. Tease.

NISSA

Alfie, isn't this the cord you brought  
to the dog trainer's house?

ALFIE

Yes. Reduce. Reuse. Recycle. We can all  
do our part, Nissa.

NISSA

But that's not even yarn. How can it be  
a YOLO board?

ALFIE

Close enough. NOLO sounds so dismissive.

THOMAS

Focus, people. Focus. So far, all we have is teleportation, disappearing...  
(beat)  
shrinking...but many pieces of paper and tacks to use. Maybe we think back to what else happened the night Mackenna disappeared?

NISSA

I say we start with: how the hell can there be two Macks? Twin sister? Thomas, do you have evidence that Mack was a single instead of double?

THOMAS

Yes, we have video evidence of the birth of a single Mackenna.

ALFIE

Okay, yes, long-lost twins happen in real life. Pushing past the news into tabloids and entertainment, we have doppelgangers, skinwalkers...oh! Robots! Maybe Fack was sent from the future?

NISSA

I veto robot. The technology is not there. And from the future?

ALFIE

Rules three and four, Nissa.

NISSA

Rule shut up, Alfie.

THOMAS

And the dogs! Those big, black monsters. They're definitely not normal.

ALFIE

Yes. Many possibilities for the dogs.  
Monster or demon dogs. Robot  
dogs...evil robot dogs...

142. Shaylee's warehouse. SPARRING continues.

MACKENNA

So do I fight the bar-ghosts with a  
staff? If they're made of sticks and  
leaves, can a larger stick even hurt  
them?

SHAYLEE

You kill barghests how you can get  
killed. With iron.

MACKENNA

I can get killed with iron?

SHAYLEE

Only iron can kill a construct, so as a  
construct, only iron can kill you.

MACKENNA

Don't call me a construct.

143. Nissa's apartment. MUSIC.

THOMAS

The monster dogs weren't bothered by  
Sam's bullets. Didn't even flinch. But  
they didn't like it when I hit the one  
with the fence post.

NISSA

A fence post? Right, dogs are terrified  
of picket fences.

ALFIE

Would one post just be a picket?

THOMAS

No, my fence post was metal--wrought  
iron.

144. Shaylee's warehouse. SPARRING.

MACKENNA

Hence the weird weapon choice. The fetch had a sickle. I'm assuming the metal was iron?

SHAYLEE

Scythe. A very dangerous iron scythe. See, a bullet to your chest or point-blank at a barghest? Nothing. You'll heal; the barghest will shake it off. A piercing of iron, though? Even the smallest iron needle to your finger, and you'll burst into a puff of leaves.

MACKENNA

Like the black dogs when you stabbed them.

(beat)

Hey. Is that why the church bells hurt? I always hated those bells. I felt the dongs reverberating throughout my bones.

DANE

Dongs? This conversation took a turn.

MACKENNA

Don't be dirty. I meant that I could feel each ring of the bell as if I was vibrating myself.

DANE

Ahem. Too easy.

SHAYLEE

You're right. Iron church bells are uncommon, but they're out there. It was excruciating. And that was from street level. If we were too close, the vibrating iron would kill us.

145. Nissa's apartment. MUSIC.

ALFIE

Okay, team. We've wrapped on the "night-of." Twenty points for everyone. Minus five for Nissa breaking rules three & four.

NISSA

Wait. Is this a game? How do I win?

ALFIE

You play by the rules and come up with some good ideas.

NISSA

I see your good idea and raise you a great one. Worth at least ten points: Shaylee.

THOMAS

Shaylee? What?

NISSA

Yes. Shaylee. She came to Conley. I mean Conley of all places! And we met her just after your parents' deaths, and she is way too cool to be hanging out with Mack and Alfie. And her job was always super vague, no concrete life details. Also, Mack actually liked her?

(beat)

And, she wore her clothes inside out. I think that puts me in the lead.

ALFIE

Impressive skills, Nissa. Someone buffed their perception stat. Keep 'em coming.

Rapid TYPING.

ALFIE (CONT'D)

Nissa, what are you doing? I thought we were ideating?

NISSA

I'm leveling up by taking your ideation and adding the bonus feat of hacking.

ALFIE

Nissa, you're bringing a tear to my eye. You have been listening to me all these years.

NISSA

What you keep forgetting is that I hear and remember everything. A blessing and a curse. Also fodder for some really great blackmail.

ALFIE

Use your powers wisely, Nissa.

TYPING stops.

NISSA

Hey, here's something else we don't know about Shaylee. Her last name. None of these social media profiles for Shaylee look like her. I can't dig up anything on her without a last name.

ALFIE

Okay, two points.

THOMAS

And the inside-out clothes?

ALFIE

Yes! So strange. Plus five points.

NISSA

What?! I suggested that first.

ALFIE

Minus five points to Nissa for poor gamesmanship. Again.

NISSA

Gameswomanship.

146. Shaylee's warehouse. Sparring.

MACKENNA

Okay. Okay. I need a break. It's like five o'clock. Food and ice packs, please. No. Make it an ice blanket. Every inch of me is sore.

SHAYLEE

Fine. You can take a few minutes to nosh. I'm heading out back to get some fresh air. Dane, can you get her some food?

Mackenna and Dane WALK. Chair PULLS OUT and IN. Cabinet OPENS.

MACKENNA

So why are you here, Dane?

DANE

Uh, I'm getting you some food.

MACKENNA

No. I mean like here in the broader sense. Training newbies and being on the edge of danger doesn't sound fun.

DANE

Fun? Fuck, no. I don't do this for fun. I do this because it's the right thing to do. The Hidden People are monsters who steal babies and enslave them. That blood runs in my blood. Do you know how horrible that is? How horrible to know that I am a descendent of...

(sigh)

This is how I can take back my life. My legacy. I rise up to stand against them. I just wish that I had powers like you. To do more than be Shaylee's tech guy. To be...I don't know. Something.

MACKENNA

I'm sorry. I didn't mean to make light of this. Of your role in standing up to the Hidden People. Without Shaylee and you to back her up, I'd, well...not be here. Not feel somewhat safe. Ugh. Let's change the subject, okay?

DANE

Shit yes. So, cheese sandwich? A pint?

MACKENNA

God, you read my mind. To both.

Sandwich MAKING.

MACKENNA (CONT'D)

So I have to ask. I don't want this to be judgy or anything, but why do you and Shaylee wear your clothes inside-out?

DANE

Are you questioning my fashion sense?

MACKENNA

No. I just thought Shaylee was eccentric, but two makes a pattern, right?

DANE

I think two makes a coincidence, but we are both wearing our clothes inside-out for a reason. To make it harder for the Hidden People to find us.

MACKENNA

That is so weird. Do they make a new changeling handbook? Cuz I need one.

DANE

It took me years and a few mentors to get it all down, so I get it. But there are a few things you need to know right away.

MACKENNA

Suspense much?

DANE

Remember how we said the hidden people are not the faeries we see in cartoons?

MACKENNA

Yes. Not Tinker Bell. Check.

DANE

The Hidden People do not view us as anything more than pawns in their game of life. They could kill any of us with a blink. And in the case of the most powerful Hidden People, that would be literal.

MACKENNA

Okay. So how do I keep them from finding me?

DANE

That, my dear, is why we wear our clothes inside-out. It is a subtle trick to disguise our touch of faerie essence. So they overlook us.

MACKENNA

My clothes are on outside-out. Am I safe here? Now? I should change.

DANE

You should be fine here, but make it a habit now to style yourself differently. If you do get close to the Hidden People, though, they will notice you regardless of your clothes.

MACKENNA

And un-hidden people will notice us when all of our shit is on inside-out.

Shaylee WALKS in.

SHAYLEE

What did I miss?

MACKENNA

Nothing other than you didn't tell me how to hide from the Hidden People. Geez, Shaylee. What kind of trainer are you?

SHAYLEE

Ah, the inside-out clothes? But did you teach her the second and more important rule, Dane?

DANE

Mackenna, if you find yourself near the Hidden People: you don't face off. You get away from them as fast as you can. Polite as fuck. Head down. Eyes averted. And then you run.

SHAYLEE

You run. You evade. You hide.

MACKENNA

Okay. I'm suitably scared now. How do I know who they are?

SHAYLEE

Well, Mack, you've already met one, and a powerful one at that. She came to visit you at work often.

MACKENNA

Who? And how do you know? You never really came by SoundScapes.

SHAYLEE

The woman who played the piano.

MACKENNA

I thought she was just a customer. She never tried to attack me.

SHAYLEE

Her name is Liliana. She is the wife of the Magister, sort of a queen of the Hidden People. She put my heart crossways the first time I saw her there.

DANE

Liliana? As in the Liliana? Fuck.

MACKENNA

What the hell? I have a stalker? Is she spying on me?

SHAYLEE

The Hidden People don't care about their creations. They don't really care about their fetches, either, not in a human way, but the fetches are like investments to them. They might choose their fetches for a reason, but we are just the byproduct of the exchange. No reason to spy on someone insignificant.

MACKENNA

So why does she always visit a stupid music store? Was she just waiting to pounce?

SHAYLEE

I'm not sure. But it certainly wasn't to attack you. If she had wanted to kill you, you'd be--

147. Nissa's apartment. MUSIC.

NISSA

Dead. You're a dead man, Alfie. Look at these crumbs. And I see a sticky fingerprint on my keyboard.

Air canister BLOWING on the keyboard. WIPING the keyboard.

ALFIE

(mouth full)

It wasn't me. I'm not eating tasty cakes.

NISSA

Ha! Here comes another five points to Nissa. You know what was really odd? That cake.

ALFIE

Cake? How can cake be anything but  
tasty?

(licks fingers)

Ohhh...

THOMAS

You mean my birthday cake? From dad's  
famous recipe? It was so tasty...except  
when it wasn't.

NISSA

I can count exactly zero times that  
Mackenna has baked anything outside of  
home-ec, and what she baked then? You  
couldn't pay me to eat it again.

ALFIE

How could something be so good one  
second, then so bad the next, then back  
to good?

THOMAS

Could it just be that it wasn't mixed  
properly? I did have a crazy stomach  
ache later that night. I thought I  
might have eaten too much, but...

ALFIE

So do you think she baked something  
"special" in the cake? Or some mind  
control voodoo?

NISSA

I was thinking collective hallucination  
or--

148. Shaylee's warehouse.

MACKENNA

--the power of suggestion?

SHAYLEE

All the Hidden People are tricksters.  
As changelings, we have a little of our  
creators' power. Like you tricked your

friends into thinking that shite cake  
you baked was good.

MACKENNA

My cake was bad?

SHAYLEE

Never bake anything for me, please.

DANE

The Hidden People are much stronger  
than that. Some can tell if you're  
lying, even if you think what you're  
saying is true. Some can read your  
emotional state. Some can even vanish  
from sight right in front of you.

MACKENNA

I did that, too.

SHAYLEE

No, you didn't.

MACKENNA

I did so. When the cops came to get me.  
They looked right through me.

SHAYLEE

You're mistaken.

MACKENNA

You were on the phone with me when it  
happened.

DANE

I've never met a changeling who could  
vanish from sight. You must have a very  
powerful creator.

MACKENNA

So all of this is magical trickery? How  
does trickery help you move so fast  
when we spar?

SHAYLEE

It doesn't. I trick your eyes into  
seeing slower.

MACKENNA

Like an illusion? That's how you fit that huge gun in your pocket?

SHAYLEE

No. Illusions aren't real. I didn't trick you into thinking the gun was in my pocket. I tricked my pocket into thinking the gun would fit.

MACKENNA

How do you trick a pocket?

SHAYLEE

Um...here, this butter knife.

DANE

That's a cheese slicing knife, thank you. I don't buy pre-sliced bullshit cheese.

SHAYLEE

Watch. This is how far it goes in normally. But a bit of manipulation...

MACKENNA

I know I watched you fight four monster dogs, but somehow hiding a butter knife--

DANE

--cheese knife--

MACKENNA

--in your pocket is way cooler.

SHAYLEE

You try.

MACKENNA

How?

SHAYLEE

Think about your pocket. Think about how small it is. Now, think about it growing deeper. Deep enough to hold the knife. Then just slide it in.

Fabric TEARS.

MACKENNA

Nope. Nope. That didn't work, and now I'm down a pair of jeans. Because I tried to trick an inanimate object.

SHAYLEE

The physical world has connections that are unseen by the human eye. But there is a permeability that changelings can manipulate with training. You need to start thinking past what you have known as true and into what could be. Have you ever experienced anything that felt like pure luck or impossible? Like rolling dice and getting a 6 ten times in a row?

MACKENNA

That day you told me about the power of positive thinking, I hit every green light on my way home. You're saying I did that? With my mind?

SHAYLEE

Mayhap.

MACKENNA

(under breath)

Take that, Alfie and Nissa. I have superpowers.

SHAYLEE

Don't get cocky. You can't even trick your pockets.

MACKENNA

I can turn invisible. Let's see you do it.

SHAYLEE

Let's see you do it.

MACKENNA

I...already did. When I needed to.

DANE

Maybe you're just accessing your power instinctively when you need it most.

SHAYLEE

That gives me an idea.

**MUSICAL TRANSITION**

149. Police station. Light ACTIVITY.

SAM

So very frustrating.

RON

What?

SAM

We didn't solve the case. She solved it for us. And then got away.

(beat)

I'm a failure. Back to square one.

RON

I know. It is kind of embarrassing.

SAM

Thanks for the pep talk, Ron.

RON

Haven't you been keeping up with the news? Madison Kepler talks about our precinct like we're bumbling idiots. It's really getting under the chief's skin.

SAM

It cannot be that bad.

RON

In her last segment of Five on the Drive, she said that we were better at finding donuts than leads.

SAM

She did not.

RON

Okay, no, but there were definite implications. When she shared that we lost our prime suspect, she was reporting from outside a donut shop.

SAM

How clever, Madison Kepler. We see you.

NARRATOR

But you don't see Mackenna, do you? You cannot see past your beau Thomas. Oh, simple Sam. What is really going to keep you up at night is when you turn on Thomas. When you turn on Ron. And then...well, that's a story for another time. For now, eat a donut, fulfill Madison Kepler's vision of the incompetent policewoman you are. Or start to connect the dots.

#### **MUSICAL TRANSITION**

150. Door OPENS to rooftop exterior.

MACKENNA

Hold up, you said we were going up to the third floor.

SHAYLEE

We did.

MACKENNA

This is the roof.

DANE

But since there are only two floors below us...

MACKENNA

I don't do roofs.

SHAYLEE

You climbed over three times as high at the water tower.

MACKENNA

That was different.

DANE

Yeah. It was over three times as high.

SHAYLEE

Come on. I want to show you something.

MACKENNA

Uh-uh. I'm not an idiot. Alfie has made me watch way too many hero's journey movies. You want me to jump off.

SHAYLEE

It's easy. I jumped from the water tower no problem. That was--

MACKENNA

--yeah, yeah, over three times as high. I had a ladder that time. I didn't jump.

SHAYLEE

I'm not going to make you jump. I promise.

MACKENNA

So what, then?

SHAYLEE

I'll show you how easy it is. And even if you hit full impact, you'd heal quickly. Ever wonder why you've never broken a bone in your life?

MACKENNA

Dumb luck?

SHAYLEE

Come on. Just walk to the edge with me. I won't make you jump if you don't want to.

All three WALK across the roof.

SHAYLEE (CONT'D)

Picture landing safely in your mind. As you fall, ask the ground to not hit back.

MACKENNA

I can't even look down at the ground.

SHAYLEE

I'm going. Watch me.

Shaylee JUMPS and LANDS softly in the distance.

SHAYLEE (CONT'D)

(calling up)

See? It's easy.

MACKENNA

(calling down)

Tell that to my pocket.

DANE

That didn't work because your instincts didn't kick in. You weren't in real danger.

MACKENNA

Look, she said I didn't have to jump, so I'm not jumping.

DANE

Nope. You aren't jumping.

Dane STEPS forward.

MACKENNA

Oh you bastard.

NARRATOR

Technically, they were right. Getting pushed is very different from jumping.

Mackenna FALLS. She LANDS softly.

MACKENNA

Holy shit.

NARRATOR

Well, well, Mackenna. Falling softly  
and quietly all that way. Maybe you  
aren't completely useless.

DANE

(calling down, distant)  
You did it!

MACKENNA

(calling up)  
I still hate you.

SHAYLEE

You have a lot of power, Mack. You just  
need to learn to access it.

**MUSICAL TRANSITION**

151. Nissa's apartment. MUSIC.

ALFIE

And now, the moment of truth. Let's  
connect the dots.

Much nylon cord STRETCHING, WALKING back and forth.

NISSA

Wow, Alfie. I didn't know you were a  
crazy board artist. Modern or post-  
modern?

ALFIE

I can see now that the nylon cord might  
not have been the right choice. But  
wait...ah-ha!

THOMAS

Ah-ha what?

NISSA

Yes, Alfie. You're killing me.

NARRATOR

No, he's not going to kill you.

ALFIE

The wrought-iron fence post connects to the ringing church bell, which might also be made of iron! The dogs hated the fence post, and Shaylee and Mackenna swore that the bell hurt them. That has to mean something, right?

NISSA

Leave the advanced analytics to me.

Nissa TYPES rapidly.

NISSA (CONT'D)

If I add all of these variables and apply them to my existing set of data that I have been feeding my machine to learn about connections across the web and news, we should be able to...

Nissa TYPES rapidly.

NISSA (CONT'D)

Well. It's not what I expected. It's a little out there, but it connects all of our pieces of evidence based on reference points and...

THOMAS / ALFIE

Nissa!

NISSA

Okay. It's fairies? Okay? Shit. This is ridiculous. What a waste.

THOMAS

What?! All of this work to get to fairy tales?

ALFIE

Why didn't I see this earlier? It all makes sense!

THOMAS

How can this possibly make sense?

ALFIE

Did your algo-awesome turn up the word changeling?

NISSA

Yes.

ALFIE

I knew that my countless hours of consuming nerdy fantasy tales would pay off.

NISSA

My algorithm is a thing of beauty and my machine...she's so smart. How did we wind up with fairies? I'm dead. My life is all a lie. I thought I was a hacker goddess. And now this. I turn up nonsense. Why, algorithm?! Why?!

ALFIE

No. No. It does make sense. Fairies aren't all sweet or silly tricksters like the cartoony stories my little jerk of a brother would read. Fairies of the old tales are cold-hearted and cruel. The changelings that I mentioned... well, the legend goes that fairies would come and replace babies with imposters so that they could torture and use the human babies for their own will. Now, the theory on my Irish folklore discussion board is that these stories were first created to explain post-partum depression. But what if they're real? I mean, we have a situation with two identical Mackennas.

THOMAS

So, you're saying that the thing wearing my sister's face is a changeling? I'm confused.

ALFIE

Actually, I'm saying that Fack is your real sister. Well, at least the one birthed by your mom.

THOMAS

No. No, no, no, no. You're saying that Mackenna--my Mackenna--is not real? That she was made by some evil fairies? That is absurd. Impossible.

ALFIE

But people just disappearing right from thin air is possible?

THOMAS

No. No, maybe we missed something. I like the collective hallucination idea that you had, Nissa.

Rapid TYPING.

NISSA

Yes. Let me do some tweaking...search. Shit. Maybe the equal weighting of the ideas on the crazy board--

ALFIE

The YOLO board.

NISSA

Maybe if I give more weight to...ugh. No. Why, love? Why are you broken?

ALFIE

Your computer is not broken. It is brilliant.

THOMAS

So you're saying that the horrible monster who killed my parents and tried to kill me is my REAL sister? And that Mackenna is a fake replacement for her?

NISSA

I can't believe we spent the entire evening on this.

ALFIE

This explanation actually connects so many pieces: Iron. Trickery. Identical twins. Vanishing into thin air.

THOMAS

Alfie, no. This is not happening. This is not real. Look, I think I need to get out of here.

NISSA

We'll figure this out. We'll find Mack.

ALFIE

Bye?

Thomas WALKS. Door OPENS and SHUTS.

NISSA

Way to go, Alfie.

ALFIE

What? Does your data analysis fail you often?

NISSA

My data analysis is impeccable, but there is no way that Mackenna is not Mackenna.

ALFIE

We only know this Mackenna. What do we know about the other Mackenna? Nothing. I mean, other than she's a cold-blooded murderer--

NISSA

Alfie...

ALFIE

Okay. Give me time to prove the theory. Fairy movie marathon tonight? *Peter Pan*? *Labyrinth*? *Pan's Labyrinth*?

#### MUSICAL TRANSITION

152.

SHAYLEE

I'm knackered, so one final lesson for the night. When you need to get out of somewhere quickly, the easiest way is to step sideways.

MACKENNA

Is that how we escaped the fetch?

SHAYLEE

Exactly.

MACKENNA

That seemed easy enough.

SHAYLEE

Would we call it easy?

DANE

Nope. Definitely not. Most changelings who try to step sideways just step sideways into the wall beside them.

SHAYLEE

Yes. Much practice. Clear mind. Perfect circles.

MACKENNA

Well, I did just fall like a feather, so I think I can step sideways.

DANE

Such confidence, Mack. Be careful. Pride cometh before the face plant.

SHAYLEE

Let's start small. First, you need to be prepared with a safe place to go that just so happens to also have a perfect circle.

MACKENNA

Okay, how do I know where I can find circles?

SHAYLEE

First, start paying attention to the circles naturally occurring all around you. Look around this room. What circles do you see, besides the platform we stepped into earlier?

MACKENNA

Uh...the table?

DANE

Yes! You're a quick learner.

MACKENNA

I knew my shapes at two. I was a prodigy.

SHAYLEE

Okay, prodigy. Now come over to the platform. We're going to travel from the platform to the table. Watch me closely. I'm going to close my eyes, step sideways, and will myself to the other circle.

STEPPING SIDEWAYS departure (LEFT PAN). STEPPING SIDEWAYS arrival (RIGHT PAN).

MACKENNA

Damn. That's what it looks like?

DANE

It never gets old. So cool.

SHAYLEE

You're up, Mack.

Sounds of FOOTSTEPS each time Mackenna says "stepping":

MACKENNA

Yep. Stepping sideways. I'm stepping sideways. I'm stepping sideways. I'm stepping.

(beat)

I am still in the same place.

SHAYLEE

Clear your head. Visualize yourself over here. Try again.

MACKENNA

Stepping over there. To there. Shit. No. It's not working.

DANE

It's harder than you think, young feather jumper. Practice.

SHAYLEE

That's enough for tonight. We can try again tomorrow. Maybe some inspiration will come to you in your dreams.

MACKENNA

Is that a changeling thing?

SHAYLEE

Not really. Just a mind over matter thing.

DANE

You got a spark, Mack.  
(quieter)  
But she's not ready.

SHAYLEE

I know. Her fetch is so powerful. And that fall, well it was pretty impressive. I think we need to...know her maker.

MACKENNA

I'm standing right here.

DANE

You know how dangerous that is.

SHAYLEE

She's not going to be ready in time. At some point...we need to go to Black Annis.

MACKENNA

Hello? What the fuck is a Black Annis?

NARRATOR

Wrong question, Mackenna. Who is Black Annis? You'll find out soon enough.  
(evil laugh)

THE END