Writing Alchemy Bonus Cast 5 – Transcripts and Accessibility

Transcribed by Larcie

Note: '*' is used to indicate music and sound effects that were added to the recording.

[*Intro music, a bright, uplifting piece similar to a video game soundtrack and featuring flutes, organ, and synths, begins playing.]

[*Music begins fading out.]

FAY: Hello and welcome to Writing Alchemy Bonus Cast Number Five. I'm Fay Onyx, and today's episode is about the new podcast transcripts and ways that I'm trying to make them accessible.

Before we get started, I have a quick announcement. In the previous Bonus Cast, I announced the Writing Alchemy TeePublic store where you can get Writing Alchemy merchandise with the adorable owlbear illustration that Meghan Dornbrock did, as well as a lot of exciting designs from other community artists like chubby rainbow mermaids, mermaids in wheelchairs, pride dragons, spoon-hoarding dragons, and merchandise featuring messages like "The Future Is Accessible" and "Not All Disabilities Are Visible."

This store is going on sale for both Black Friday and Cyber Monday. And everything's gonna be 30% off, which means $14 t-shirts and $11 mugs and all sorts of other things at 30% off prices! So there's going to be cell phone cases and tote bags and notebooks and stickers and pillows and wall hangings and a lot of other clothing items in addition to t-shirts. So if you're doing holiday shopping on either of those days, check out the Writing Alchemy store. Just follow the link in the show notes.

[*Transition music, a bouncy, humorous piece featuring bass, electric piano, and guitar.]

[*Music fades out as **FAY** begins speaking.]

FAY: All right, so there's been something going on in the background at Writing Alchemy that some of you probably already have seen—like announcements on Twitter or whatnot, but I wanted to officially announce it to all of my podcast listeners—which is that Writing

Alchemy episodes are now starting to be transcribed. So at this point we've got four episodes transcribed, and transcription is ongoing.

And this has all been made possible through the volunteer efforts of the amazing Larcie, who has been doing this free transcription work for Writing Alchemy starting last summer. I am so incredibly grateful for all of the hard work Larcie's putting into this project. The transcripts are really impressive, and I know they must take a lot of time.

And I'm just so grateful because this is something I've been wanting to do for a long time. It's an important aspect of accessibility, and unfortunately, one of the things that can happen for disabled folks and low-income folks is that making things accessible takes either a lot of time and effort or money or both. And so accessibility isn't always accessible. Larcie is taking on some of this labor and making it possible for transcripts to happen. And I'm just so grateful for that, and I'm excited to share them with all of you.

So at this point we've started with the two Cat's Paw Ghost Control episodes because those two episodes are each independent self-contained stories. Someone could just enjoy that on its own as a standalone piece.

And now the transcription has moved on to the character creation episodes, and we'll be moving through the Owlbear Reintroduction Program game. So that's the current plan.

But I do want to invite people to let us know if there's any particular episodes that they would benefit from having a transcript for. So if, like, you have a friend who would find the transcript more accessible, and you want to share that episode with them. And also, I do hope to get this Bonus Cast transcribed pretty soon, so that again, this invitation can be in writing. Or if you yourself are someone who is intrigued by a particular episode and would like to experience that episode. I can't promise any particular time frame, but absolutely, we're excited about doing episodes that people are wanting to experience in written form.

In order to make these transcripts as usable as possible, they are being produced in four formats. The first is an online post for ease of access, and that's just so you can quickly look something up if you're interested in it. The second is a Word document with the low-vision-friendly font Verdana. The third is a PDF using OpenDyslexic, which is a dyslexia-friendly font. And the PDF means that the font is inside the PDF so that even if your computer doesn't have that font, it's there. And finally, based on feedback from Tyro Kathar—thank you once again, Tyro, for giving some helpful feedback—a low-contrast version that is blue on black, which is designed as an access option for people with migraines.

As this indicates, feedback is actually something that's super helpful. So I did want to specifically invite all of you to give feedback on… the website, accessibility in general, and just what would make Writing Alchemy—the podcast, the website, any of the parts of it—more accessible to you.

Keeping in mind that some things are things I can easily implement, and some things take additional research to implement, while others take volunteer efforts from other people because I'm not currently able to afford them. Though hopefully at some point, finances will grow to the point where I can afford to pay people to do transcriptions, which would be ideal. So obviously, implementing accessibility is a complicated multi-step thing. But I absolutely invite people to give me that feedback because you know, it's only by knowing what to build towards that it's gonna happen, right? So that knowledge is really helpful and important.

Also, if you have positive feedback to give me on what's working well or that something is helpful to you that's already happening, that's incredibly useful too. I've got anxiety. There's a lot of self-criticism, like, "Ugh, there's so much more I wish I could do." I want to do so much more. So sometimes it's also just helpful to know that, like, what I am currently able to do, although not perfect, is still at a place where it's helpful to people. That would be helpful as well.

And um, I guess I just wanted to put a quick invitation out there: if any of you are in a space in your life where you have a little bit of extra capacity, and you would be excited to put that towards a project like this, I would be ecstatic to have other people willing to donate time towards creating transcripts. That would be absolutely amazing. Just being able to have some of them out there is amazing. It's something I wanted for so long. I just, I want this to be accessible, and that's the biggest thing that I've—I've been struggling with. And if any of you have the capacity for that, that would be an amazing gift.

But even if that's not the case, you know, just thank you all for listening. Thanks for being here, thanks for being part of this community with me, and I look forward to talking with you again soon.

[*End music, which is the same as the transition music, plays and then stops.]