

## Writing Alchemy Episode 41 – Inside the First Responders Training Program Part 2

Transcribed by Nikki Yager with help from Fay Onyx, using Otter.ai

[Intro music that is an energetic, electronic song begins playing.]

**TOBI:** [voiceover] You are listening to Writing Alchemy, stories that step outside the oppressive grind of the everyday world with your host, writer and artist Fay Onyx.

[Music swells and then fades to a background volume.]

**FAY:** We return to the First Responder's Training Program to catch up with Vanessa the Witch and Janus the Ghoul. In this sequel adventure, meet Gail the Ghost and follow the drama that swirls around the popular Chaz Drakon, as everyone prepares for another pivotal full moon ritual.

[Music swells and then fades out.]

Hello and welcome to the 41st episode of Writing Alchemy. I am Fay Onyx and I am excited to be here with the twenty second episode of Unfamiliar Heroes, my podcast series where I work with players and storytellers create new representations of disabled, sick, and neurodivergent people using tabletop role-playing games.

I've had some delays due to brain wellness issues, but we are back with the second episode of Inside the First Responders Training Program, a six episode story arc that is the sequel to Welcome to the First Responder's Training Program. It uses the Monsterhearts 2 game system by Avery Alder. I highly recommend it. Links are in the show notes.

I'm going to wrap this up by quickly mentioning that you can follow Writing Alchemy on twitter @ Writing underscore Alchemy, hashtag AlchemyCast. Visit Writing Alchemy dot net for all of the Writing Alchemy episodes, the Magic Goes Awry game system, and an extensive set of resources on accessibility and disability representation. And if you want to help me keep this podcast going, and my other work, pledge your support on patreon at patreon dot com slash Writing Alchemy, where you can get early access to each new episode, or make a donation through Ko-fi.

And now, let's get to the show!

Inside the First Responders Training Program, Part 2.

[The game theme, an angsty and emotional piece of rock music, plays.]

**JORDAN:** Hi, everyone. My name is Jordan, I'm your storyteller. Helping move the story along. I got the plot in my head, and I got some characters to play. I use he and him pronouns.

**TOBI:** Cool. Hey everyone, my name is Tobi Hill-Meyer. I'm a multiracial, queer trans woman and soon to be a mom! That's exciting and cool. I am going to be playing the character, Janus Greer, who is a ghoulish--recently deceased and woke up again, and now has a hunger for avenging injustice. Although sometimes at a cutesy level of snidely saying something mean to the person who cut in front of you in line.

**FAY:** Absolutely. \*laughs\* So my name is Fay Onyx. And I'm--Uh! You make it sound so easy to do it beautiful. Ugh!

**EVERYONE:** \*laughter\*

**FAY:** \*laughs\* Anyway, um, I'm a queer, asexual, genderqueer, with a bunch of other identities as well. And I have back condition and I'm neurodiverse and I am playing Vanessa the Witch. Who is ver-- takes everything very seriously. She's very kind of like judgmental in the "I Have Real Problems" sort of way. Yeah, that's, that's Vanessa.

**BILLIE:** Hello, I'm Billie Rain. And me and my character, Gail Strahan, are both mixed race. I-- we're actually both Middle Eastern and white. And I also am really excited because I'm seeing Janelle Monae tomorrow! And I also-- the Claws premiere on TNT is tonight which is like my favorite TV show. So my media is looking really good right now. Gail, on the other hand is not really into media. She is a ghost who died like 500 years ago and she's kind of uptight, and she has PTSD, but she is very well intentioned and is definitely a feminist.

**FAY:** Awesome!

[The angsty rock game theme music starts playing, then quiets down to a background volume for the voice over.]

**FAY:** [Voiceover] Last time, we met Gail the Ghost. Then things got started with Vanessa the Witch becoming the new teacher's assistant for Gail's only and favorite class, Herbology 1, taught by Professor Maria de la Cruz.

After previously excelling in Herbology, Gail's latest midterm grade was low, prompting Professor de la Cruz to ask Vanessa to review the

midterm with Gail. To Gail's dismay, the popular and annoying Chaz Drakon is excelling in Herbology.

Meanwhile, Janus is crushing on her two new friends, Tamara and Chaz, the resident power couple on the Sylvan Community College campus. After an awkward conversation with Chaz at a nearby crystal shop, Janus is now pursuing a romantic relationship with Tamara.

All right, let's jump in and find out what happens that evening. It's time to play!

[The music swells, then fades out.]

**JORDAN:** So the day ends and it's night time everybody's back at their respective houses. Is there anything that anyone else would like to do at the end of the day?

**FAY:** Well, I'm kind of wondering about like Vanessa and Gail, like, Professor de la Cruz said to like, connect, but like, did they actually like take a moment to like, actually like exchange--

**JORDAN:** Did they?

**FAY:** Contact info?

**BILLIE:** Sure, yeah.

**FAY:** So I'm guessing Vanessa, maybe just send an email, inviting Gail to maybe come to the Pagan Student Association office space.

**JORDAN:** OK

**FAY:** Some time when it's like during a time when it's normally pretty quiet. And then they can like, go over the test and stuff.

**JORDAN:** Did you want to do that today? Or did you want to do that the next day?

**FAY:** Well, I'm guessing Gail was pretty much like, "Here's my email bye," like, super embarrassed.

**BILLIE:** Yeah.

**FAY:** So I'm guessing Vanessa is gonna be like, Okay, I'll give it a little bit of time. I'll just send an email tonight. See what Gail replies?

**BILLIE:** An electronic communication?

**FAY:** Yeah. So does Gail check her email?

**BILLIE:** I mean, I would imagine, I mean, I'm assuming ghosts can use computers and things like that. But she's, I think that she's probably uncomfortable with it. I think she's pretty uncomfortable with like, most telecommunication, technology.

**JORDAN:** Right.

**FAY:** Right.

**JORDAN:** And where does Gail live? Can you tell us a little bit about that?

**BILLIE:** She lives in a shack.

[Bouncy folk music begins playing]

**JORDAN:** Okay

**BILLIE:** Just like a weird shack. She like found it on Craigslist.

**JORDAN:** Is it a love shack?

**BILLIE:** No, no, no, no.

**JORDAN:** It's not a love shack.

**BILLIE:** I think actually like, I feel like now that I'm doing this. I feel like maybe Gail was like gay. But like, is uncomfortable about it. \*Billie laughs\*

**JORDAN:** Oh yeah, okay! We can work with that!

**BILLIE:** But yeah, no, it's just like, kind of in like, it's like in the middle of sort of the, like the edge of a field next to the woods. And there's like nobody around. She really doesn't like people she doesn't feel comfortable around people is like really a loner. So she's just like, in her weird little shack. It's very small.

**JORDAN:** Okay! Is the shack close to school, or far away from school?

**BILLIE:** Um, it's not too far.

**JORDAN:** Okay

**BILLIE:** I would imagine most schools are kind of like on the edge of town. So she probably lives in a shack on that edge of town as well.

**FAY:** This is like a little place she's renting out or is it?

**BILLIE:** Yeah

**FAY:** Yeah, okay.

**BILLIE:** Yeah, she's renting it.

**JORDAN:** Okay, she's renting it.

**BILLIE:** From like some weird hippies.

**FAY:** That makes sense. Like they have a fairly large piece of land, but like a little-

**BILLIE:** Right, and it's like super cheap and it like doesn't really have much in the way of like, electricity or running water is really basic.

**FAY:** Sure, sure.

**JORDAN:** Is she like, I mean, you said, she's like, really into second wave feminism, is she like, like a separatist at all? Or, like, are we talking about like, eco feminist? Like, there are a lot of different kind of second wavers.

**BILLIE:** Yeah I would say she's kind of like an eco feminist.

**JORDAN:** Okay.

**BILLIE:** And she's not like she doesn't like, I think like, she doesn't want to hate men. But it's like her visceral reaction to like, men and masculinity. It's just like, Oh, God, like, I hate you.

**JORDAN:** Yeah.

**BILLIE:** She kind of feels bad about it. And then like, also, like, she like tries to make herself be friends with guys because I think she has like weird hang ups about the fact that she's only interested in girls.

**FAY AND JORDAN:** Mmmm mhm.

**JORDAN:** So does Gail have a phone?

**BILLIE:** She does. A landline? Yes.

**JORDAN:** Oh, she has a landline?

**BILLIE:** Yes.

**FAY:** \*Laughs\*

**JORDAN:** Oof. I uh...

**BILLIE:** \*laughs\* Yeah, and her power is run actually by like a thing that there's like a little creek. And like, there's just like a little power generator that supplies her like one outlet.

**JORDAN:** Got it.

**BILLIE:** And that's what she plugs her like laptop into.

**JORDAN:** Okay, and how often this she check her email?

**BILLIE:** Like, once a week.

**JORDAN:** Okay.

**EVERYONE:** \*Laughs\*

**BILLIE:** Yeah

**JORDAN:** All right.

**BILLIE:** When she's there, she's there. When she's gone. She's gone.

**JORDAN:** Okay. Great.

**BILLIE:** She's probably checking it compulsively right now because she gave Vanessa her email address.

**FAY:** Okay, cool.

**JORDAN:** Oh, ok, cool. So, Vanessa, gets a text message from Professor de la Cruz. And she's like, "Hey, I just wanted to check in. I really like, I really like you in our class. I think you're a great addition. Please reach out to Gail, she's a little shy. But I think that that will be a lasting connection."

[Music fades out.]

**FAY:** And I think- and Vanessa will text back you know, "I sent her an email at 8pm."

**EVERYONE:** \*Laughs\*

**FAY:** And, and then be like, "I'm thinking of inviting her to participate in the Pagan Student Association."

[Humorously bouncy guitar music starts playing.]

**JORDAN:** Professor de la Cruz sends back a wink emoji and a thumbs up emoji and sparkly heart emoji.

**EVERYONE:** \*Laughs\*

**JORDAN:** The letter U and the word DA, and then the word best with 14 exclamation points after it.

**EVERYONE:** \*Laughs\*

**JORDAN:** And then another text right after that that says, "Good job" with 15 exclamation points.

**EVERYONE:** \*Laughs\*

**BILLIE:** Awwww

**JORDAN:** So, that happened at 7:45 at 8:15, because your internet is really slow, you get an email from Vanessa. What does the email say?

**FAY:** Yeah, it's just like, "Hi Gail! Um, I was really hoping that we could get a chance to kind of go over your test and kind of figure out what's going on. And I think maybe a good space to do that. It might be the Pagan Student Association office, if you will be comfortable with that. It's pretty calm before noon. So if you would be up for like, meeting me, there may be like, 10. I don't know when you have classes, but you know, that would be like a good time. It's pretty calm. There's usually not anyone in there. So we could just, you know, focus on going over your-your test and that kind of private space. Would that be something that you'd be up for?"

**BILLIE:** But I say my response?

**JORDAN:** Are you going to reply to that email?

**BILLIE:** Yeah, she'll reply right away. "Dear Vanessa, thank you very much for your correspondence. I would very much like to meet with you and go over my test results. I would like to resolve these discrepancies as soon as possible. I have absolutely no problem with paganism. In fact, it is my preferred practice. Thank you very much. And I will see you soon. Sincerely, Gail" \*Laughs\*

**TOBI:** That's lovely.

**JORDAN:** So good. Alright, so you get this email back, like almost instantaneously for you like it pops up like is that 8:15 when you...pops back up so like when you-it took you 15 minutes to get the email to like download, but when you sent it off, it took you like-it took Vanessa about two seconds to get it back.

**FAY:** Okay

**JORDAN:** So is there any reply?

**FAY:** Yeah, Vanessa is just gonna be like, "So what day would be good for you? It sounds like sooner be better. I am free tomorrow at 10. Would that work for you?"

**BILLIE:** "Dear Vanessa, I am free tomorrow at 10am. I will see you at the Pagan Student Association. And I am very much looking forward to it. Thank you, Gail."

**FAY:** Vanessa will send back, "Awesome. Looking forward to it smiley face."

**BILLIE:** Gail says nothing.

**JORDAN:** So we're gonna fast forward to the next day. It's about 9:30. Gail, you find yourself in the Student Commons, which is where the Pagan Student Association is. And as you are preparing to get up there and meet, you're in the cafeteria, right? And you hear, "Gail..."

**BILLIE:** \*laughs\* (as Gail) Hello.

**JORDAN:** (as Chaz) Gail, Gail.

**BILLIE:** (as Gail) Yes. Hello.

**JORDAN:** (as Chaz) Hello.

**BILLIE:** (as Gail) Hello.

**JORDAN:** (as Chaz) You may not know me but my name is Chaz.

**BILLIE:** (as Gail) Hello, Chaz.

**JORDAN:** (as Chaz) Hello, Gail.

**BILLIE:** (as Gail) Hello.

**JORDAN:** (as Chaz) Professor de la Cruz sent me a text last night saying that you may want some extra help in the class.

**BILLIE:** (as Gail) That is true. I do need help in class. I am meeting Vanessa. In in the in the in the in the Pagan Student Association office.

**JORDAN:** (as Chaz) Oh the PSA! Do you know where it is?

**BILLIE:** (as Gail) Um, I don't know. I'm no, no.

**JORDAN:** (as Chaz) You don't know. Oh, that's good. Well, I can show you because I'm like the vice president of a PSA!

**BILLIE:** (as Gail) Oh, you are? You're the Vice President.

**JORDAN:** (as Chaz) Yes.

**BILLIE:** (as Gail) Of the place where I'm going?

**JORDAN:** (as Chaz) Yeah.

**BILLIE:** (as Gail) It's you.

**JORDAN:** (as Chaz) Yeah.

**BILLIE:** (as Gail) Okay.

**JORDAN:** (as Chaz) Vanessa's the president.

**BILLIE:** (as Gail) Oh okay.

**EVERYONE:** \*Laughs\*

**JORDAN:** (as Chaz) She's like, really smart.

**BILLIE:** (as Gail) Yes.

**JORDAN:** (as Chaz) She's like, she's like, really nice too. She's like, she's, like, really standoffish sometimes.

**BILLIE:** (as Gail) Is she?

**JORDAN:** (as Chaz) But it's okay, cause she like, really cares. It's like, you know what, you have someone who really cares?

**BILLIE:** (as Gail) I did. I did have people that cared about me once.

**JORDAN:** (as Chaz) Yeah. Well, I care about you doing well in Herbology. And sometimes it can be very difficult. Cuz like, Professor de la Cruz, her like, her like, questions are sometimes hard. Like they're tricky, you know? So you ever need help, bro? Just like, just like--

**BILLIE:** (as Gail) I-I'm female.

**JORDAN:** (as Chaz) Yeah.

**EVERYONE:** \*Laughs\*

**BILLIE:** (as Gail) Okay, I thought you were calling me brother.

**JORDAN:** (as Chaz) No, I didn't say brother.

**BILLIE:** (as Gail) Oh, oh okay.

**JORDAN:** (as Chaz) I just said bro.

**BILLIE:** (as Gail) I'm sorry.

**JORDAN:** (as Chaz) No, it's okay.

**BILLIE:** (as Gail) It's fine. That's good.

**JORDAN:** (as Chaz) You're good. I like your like, Renaissance Fair stuff. You're kinda cool.

**BILLIE:** (as Gail) Yes. I like clothing.

**EVERYONE:** \*Laughs\*

**BILLIE:** (as Chaz) Clothing is great.

**BILLIE:** (as Gail) Yes. It's good to wear clothing. I think it's better to wear clothing.

**EVERYONE:** \*Laughs\*

**JORDAN:** (as Chaz) Yeah, you're like, yeah. Anyway. Anyway, dude. Like if you need help with anything--

**BILLIE:** (as Gail) I'm, I'm female.

**JORDAN:** (as Chaz) Yeah, I know dude.

**BILLIE:** (as Gail) Okay.

**JORDAN:** (as Chaz) If you need help with anything, just let me know, man.

**BILLIE:** (as Gail) Okay. Thank you. I will notify you if I need additional tutoring on top of the tutoring, I will be receiving from Vanessa.

**JORDAN:** (as Chaz) Yeah, totally. I think Professor de la Cruz is really concerned.

**BILLIE:** (as Gail) Yes, yes. Well, I'm--I've been a terrible student and I disrupted class.

**JORDAN:** (as Chaz) Oh, no, bro. You were like--

**BILLIE:** (as Gail) I'm female.

**JORDAN:** (as Chaz) I know, bro. You were like the best in the class before the midterm.

**BILLIE:** (as Gail) Yeah. Yeah.

**JORDAN:** (as Chaz) So like I really looked up to you.

**BILLIE:** (as Gail) I feel terrible.

**JORDAN:** (as Chaz) Don't feel terrible. Everybody makes mistakes.

**BILLIE:** (as Gail) That's true. Thank you. You are correct. Yes, that is true. People make mistakes. That's a thing that happens.

**JORDAN:** (as Chaz) As as one of my favorite phrases on the internet says, "It's not if you fall down, but how you get back up", you know?

**BILLIE:** (as Gail) Wow. That's deep.

**BILLIE:** (as Chaz) Yeah. Thanks, man.

**JORDAN:** Well, let me show--

**BILLIE:** (as Gail) I'm female.

**JORDAN:** (as Chaz) I know. Let me show you where \*Laughs\* Let me show you where The Pagan Student Association is.

**BILLIE:** (as Gail) Thank you very much. I'd appreciate that. Thank you.

**JORDAN:** (as Chaz) Yeah.

**JORDAN:** And he like, takes you up to The Pagan Student Association.

**BILLIE:** She hates him.

**EVERYONE:** \*Laugh\*

**JORDAN:** Oh yeah, it was like my goal to make Chaz the most annoying person in the school. Anyway, I thought a lot about this character because he was just kind of like, a hate archetype for me.

**BILLIE:** It's like Bill and Ted's Excellent Adventure.

**JORDAN:** (in Chaz's voice) Yeah!

**EVERYONE:** \*Laugh\*

**JORDAN:** Yeah. Anyway, he like walks you up there. And you get there. And Vanessa is there and Tamara is there and he's like--

**BILLIE:** Oh, Tamara is there?

**JORDAN:** Yeah

**BILLIE:** Tamara. Tamara's there.

**JORDAN:** Yeah, Tamara.

**BILLIE:** Oh that's interesting. That's cool.

**JORDAN:** This is your first time meeting Tamara right?

**BILLIE:** Right. Great. Tamara's pretty.

**JORDAN:** She walks up and she's like, "Oh my god, another black person!"

[Soft folk music full of wonder starts playing.]

**BILLIE:** (as Gail) Hi. Hello.

**JORDAN:** (as Tamara) Hello.

**BILLIE:** (as Gail) I am Gail. Hi.

**JORDAN:** (as Tamara) I am Tamara.

**BILLIE:** (as Gail) Oh hello, T-T-Tamar? Tamara. Tarmar? I'm sorry. I cut you off. Hi!

**JORDAN:** (as Tamara) No, no worries.

**JORDAN:** And she like flashes you the most beautiful smile you've ever seen. And I this time, so you see Tamara this time she's wearing a beautiful tangerine dress. And it's like, it's like, it looks like cut from a single material. A single piece of cloth, but then it like flows out and it's like super flowy.

**BILLIE:** What's happening with her nails?

**JORDAN:** Her nails are still that beautiful, deep blue. Like her nails are like very long-not super long, but like they're about maybe two inches long. And they're this deep, beautiful electric teal.

**BILLIE:** Amazing!

**JORDAN:** And they're rounded.

**BILLIE:** Mmmmm.....

**JORDAN:** And she's just like, she like giggles a little bit and she's like, "You're so great." And the thing about Tamara she is like the most beautiful, highest of femmes. Like yes, so good. She doesn't wear any makeup but like all of the extra bits on her like just immaculate.

**BILLIE:** She wear like amazing jewelry as well.

**JORDAN:** Yeah totally.

**FAY:** Does she have like a necklace on that has both tangerine and blue in it that matches her nails and her dress?

**JORDAN:** Yes.

**BILLIE:** (as Gail) I-I love your necklace.

[The folk music ends and an uplifting, tinkly music track that is full of wonder begins.]

**JORDAN:** (as Tamara) Oh thank you. I just you know I made this.

**BILLIE:** (as Gail) You did? Is that-is that citrine and turquoise?

**JORDAN:** (as Tamara) Oh my god! Yes. Nobody ever-- Oh my God. You are so cool!

**BILLIE:** (as Gail) You're beautiful--The necklace is beautiful!

**JORDAN:** (as Tamara) Oh my, oh my god! Thank you, thank you so much! I love--

**JORDAN:** What are wearing?

**BILLIE:** Um, same thing I was wearing yesterday? She only has like three outfits.

**JORDAN:** Great, okay.

**BILLIE:** She does wear like stones like semi precious stones.

**JORDAN:** Okay, so what so--

**BILLIE:** She's wearing a moonstone. Let's say she's wearing a moonstone.

**JORDAN:** She's like, "Oh my god is that Moonstone?"

**BILLIE:** (as Gail) Yes. Yes. It's a moonstone. I love Moonstone. It's my favorite stone. I love it.

**JORDAN:** "Oh wow!" And Tamara says, she's like, "Hey, can I can I touch your blouse real quick?"

**BILLIE:** My-My blouse?

**JORDAN:** (as Tamara) Yeah.

**BILLIE:** (as Gail) Over my ch-chest?

**JORDAN:** (as Tamara) I was thinking more of your arm.

**BILLIE:** Oh sure yes, that's wonderful. Thank you! Yes wonderful!

**EVERYONE:** \*Laugh\*

**JORDAN:** And she like reaches out and feels it is like, "Oh, my God, this material is great." And she looks at the stitching and she's like, "This is hand stitched. Did you make this?"

**BILLIE:** (as Gail) Yes, I make all my clothes.

**JORDAN:** (as Tamara) You make all your clothes?!

**BILLIE:** (as Gail) Yes, I-I crocheted the shawl as well.

**BILLIE:** (as Tamara) You crocheted the shawl?!

**BILLIE:** (as Gail) Yes.

**JORDAN:** (as Tamara) Oh, wow!

**BILLIE:** (as Gail) Yes. I like to spend a lot of time at home in contemplation.

**JORDAN:** (as Tamara) Where do you live?

**BILLIE:** (as Gail) I live by the woods in the little shack in Jeremy and Sybil's property.

**JORDAN:** And her eyes. At that point, her eyes get real big. And she's like, "Oh." Disdain. "How long have you been there?"

**BILLIE:** (as Gail) I'm just just a month or so.

**BILLIE:** How is the class been going on? About as long as the class has been going?

**FAY:** I think we're in the middle of the term somewhere?

**JORDAN:** Yeah. So about two and a half months.

**BILLIE:** Okay. About two and a half months.

**JORDAN:** That's how long terms last right? Yeah, terms are like 8?

**FAY:** Terms. No terms are more like three months, three months. 10 weeks, but like then you got finals week and yeah.

**JORDAN:** Yeah. So we'll say you've been living there for about five, six weeks.

**BILLIE:** Okay.

**BILLIE:** (as Gail) I've been living there for approximately six weeks.

**JORDAN:** (as Tamara) Okay. Great. That's awesome. Um, yeah, we should-Jeremy and Sybil, huh?

**BILLIE:** (as Gail) Yes.

**JORDAN:** (as Tamara) How did you meet those?

**BILLIE:** (as Gail) I-there was an ad on the internet? And the location was preferable to me. And it had just the right amount of amenities at the appropriate cost for me.

**JORDAN:** "I see. Okay, well, that's good to know." And she like, she's like, "Well it is great meeting you. We should get coffee sometime."

**BILLIE:** (as Gail) I like coffee. Yeah, I do. I would like to have coffee with you. Anytime you want to have coffee. I would have coffee with you. Definitely.

**JORDAN:** And she-as you say that she just like giggles a little bit more. She walks over and she's like, "Oh, you-you've met my, uh, my boyfriend, Chaz."

**BILLIE:** (as Gail) Chaz. Oh, Chaz. Chaz is your boyfriend?

**JORDAN:** (as Chaz) Hey babe!

**BILLIE:** (as Gail) Yes, yes. We've met. We just met recently.

**JORDAN:** And she walks over and she's like, "Isn't he the greatest?" and she like, gives him like the deepest, most passionate kiss in front of everybody. He like dips her.

**FAY:** \*Groans at the social discomfort\*

**BILLIE:** I think Gail is just staring at the floor now.

**JORDAN:** It's like, super, super dramatic. She's like, "You gotta kiss me like that more often silly." And Chaz is like, "Vanessa!"

**FAY:** (as Vanessa) Hi!

**JORDAN:** (as Chaz) Vanessa, do you know- do you know Gail? Do you know Gail?

**FAY:** (as Vanessa) Yeah, well, we're gonna be going over some stuff from Herbology.

**JORDAN:** (as Chaz) Oh, great. I, Professor de la Cruz told me to tell you that if you need any extra support, since we're already working together in the PSA, that I should help you help Gail.

**FAY:** (as Vanessa) Awesome. Well--

**JORDAN:** (as Chaz) So if you guys ever like ever want to do like, study group or like, anything like that? We can always--

**BILLIE:** (as Gail) Will Tamara be in a study group?

[Music fades out.]

**JORDAN:** (as Chaz) Tamara isn't in Herbology?

**BILLIE:** (as Gail) True. That's true. You're absolutely right.

**JORDAN:** (as Chaz) "But--"

**JORDAN:** And Tamara's like, "I would love to spend more time with you. So."

[Humorously bouncy guitar music starts playing.]

**FAY:** (as Vanessa) Well, it sounds like maybe there'll be a study group. We might create something for multiple of the students who want a little extra, maybe a test prep study group before the next test? But maybe we could do that. I was thinking that maybe right now though. Since we'll be reviewing Gail's test that might be kind of a one on one kind of activity just cause you know, like, brings up feelings and stuff you know?

**JORDAN:** (as Chaz) Oh! Oh, yeah. Yeah! Oh my god. I'm so-I'm so sorry. I was just showing her where she where it was.

**FAY:** (as Vanessa) Nah, that's cool, that's cool.

**JORDAN:** (as Chaz) Hey Tamara, let's go. Let's go find Janus.

**BILLIE:** (imitating Chaz's voice) Janus...

**JORDAN:** (whispered in Chaz's voice) Janus!

**JORDAN:** She's like, he like grabs Tamara, and like, like leaves. He's like still carrying the skateboard inexplicably, no one knows why? I'm gonna leave y'all to the scene.

**FAY:** Awesome so, can Vanessa tell that Gail doesn't like Chaz, too. Is that really obvious?

**BILLIE:** I feel like it's obvious that she's more interested in working with Vanessa than Chaz.

**FAY:** Okay, okay, cool.

**BILLIE:** And-but she's so socially awkward. I feel like Gail is so awkward, but it's kind of like, like a modern person wouldn't

necessarily be able to tell what she's really thinking because she's so weird.

**FAY:** Right, right, right. So Vanessa will kind of take Gail aside into, I'm kind of imagining there being kind of like a little kind of nook area of the office, where she can kind of, like, set up a couple comfortable chairs. And, and basically, she's gonna start by saying, "Well, you know, I kind of-I heard what Professor de la Cruz said about, you know, you were talking about how you had some kind of anxiety or stress that was kind of making it hard for you to focus on the test."

[Slow, soft, emotional piano music starts playing.]

**FAY:** (as Vanessa) And I just wanted you to know, like, you know, not everyone knows this, but the on campus disability association, you know, sometimes, you know, you might want to check in, and see if, if you if you have test anxiety. If that's something kind of that interferes with your ability to, like, take tests sometimes. Like, there's accommodations for that.

And so like, they have, like, people you can go talk to, and, you know, it's okay, if that's not something you're comfortable with, but I do think maybe, like, they're super helpful, they're super kind. And so like, sometimes it's, it's not even, like, you, maybe you even already knew everything, it's just that the anxiety happened- and then it was hard for your brain to pull up the information that you already had. And so if that's something that's affecting your grades, like, you know, that's something that not everyone has to deal with. And so like, it's, you know, they can provide like a calmer testing environment, that, where you could maybe, like, people take tests in their office. And also, sometimes they can provide longer testing.

So I would encourage you to, like, talk to them and see what like, you know, maybe see if there's anything going on, where, you know, if this is something that comes up sometimes, like, it can help you and-so that it doesn't affect your grade, cause, you know, it's, if it's just the testing environment that's making your like, brain have a hard time remembering stuff. That's not like your fault. That's just, like, something that's happening.

And so like, if people could help you with that, like, you know, that would be really cool. And, you know, because it kind of seemed like you're taking the grade really, personally, even though like something outside of you kind of like, affected you. So...

**BILLIE:** (as Gail) So you're saying my brain is disabled, and I can go to an office to go to a special room to take tests?

**FAY:** (as Vanessa) Well, you know, it's, it's kind of like, you'd have to talk to them. But like, you know, like testing anxiety is the kind of thing for example, some people have testing anxiety, and that, that is the thing that some people's brains do.

**BILLIE:** (as Gail) Oh

**FAY:** (as Vanessa) And also, they have like tests for various other kinds of learning things where like, a lot of people have just things that are unique about their brains. And so like, some people call it disabilities, but sometimes people just call it like, that their brain is different, like so they call themselves neurodiverse or neurodivergent, because just their brain's a little different.

But like if your brain's a little different than like, how the class is, like geared towards, like, if that's geared to brains that are not like yours, then like sometimes, just knowing what's unique about your brain can help you like, effectively work with that. And also create environments, such as having alternate testing locations, where like, you can create environments that are going to help you do the best you can.

**BILLIE:** (as Gail) I do get overwhelmed sometimes. Yes. Thank you. I appreciate that. Thank you.

**FAY:** (as Vanessa) Yeah. So I just wanted you to know that that was a resource you can access, and--

**BILLIE:** (as Gail) You're very nice. Thank you.

**FAY:** (as Vanessa) Aw, thank you.

[The previous song ends and a soft, hopeful, piano song starts.]

**FAY:** (as Vanessa) Yeah, and you know, if there's anything I can do to help you feel more comfortable, I mean, I know it's stressful having a bad grade. And we're going to go through this thing by thing, and we're just going to kind of figure out like, what's going on, like, was it something about the wording? Was it just the you like even already knew it? So we'll just kind of go through this, you know, item by item, and we'll figure out what's going on.

**BILLIE:** (as Gail) Thank you.

**FAY:** (as Vanessa) And, you know, also, you know, as we get started I just wanted to mention also that like, sounds like you're like really comfortable with pagan stuff.

[The previous music ends and a uplifting and hopeful guitar song starts.]

**FAY:** I want you to know that there's a bunch of different groups available, you know, in the Pagan Student Association, you know, everything from like, we've got a feminist Action Group--

**BILLIE:** (as Gail) Feminists? I like feminists!

**FAY:** (as Vanessa) Oh, yeah. Well, we've got a feminist action group, you know, for example, and we have like monthly Full Moon Rituals, which are like everybody gets together for.

**BILLIE:** (as Gail) Hmm, wonderful.

**FAY:** (as Vanessa) So, you know, I just wanted you to know that there's a lot of community here in the Pagan Student Association. And sometimes it's just helpful, like, getting to know community and, you know, getting to know some people. And, you know, I thought I'd make sure you knew that was available to you too, cause like, you know, I definitely go to the feminist action group, sometimes I--

**BILLIE:** (as Gail) Do you? Are you a feminist?

**FAY:** (as Vanessa) Well, I mean, yeah, I mean, I'm in Professor de la Cruz, like, you know, one of her Women's Studies groups.

**BILLIE:** (as Gail) Women's studies?

**FAY:** (as Vanessa) Well she does the Women's Studies classes, like, did you did you not know that there's like a whole Women Studies like track?

**BILLIE:** (as Gail) I- Honestly, I did not.

**FAY:** (as Vanessa) Well, yeah. So there's like classes about that. For example, right now. Professor Maria de la Cruz is also teaching Great Moments in Magical Histories, which I'm taking.

**BILLIE:** (as Gail) For women? Is that a women's class?

**FAY:** (as Vanessa) It is focused around famous witches from history--

**BILLIE:** \*Dramatic gasp\*

**FAY:** "Including," dramatic pause, I guess, because I'm looking up the name. "Like, going into a lot of detail on Mother Sylvan, who's you know, you know, she was in the 1750s she was the one who started the Palo witch practice in this area.

**JORDAN:** (giving pronunciation correction) Palo.

**BILLIE:** Palo?

**JORDAN:** Palo. P.A.L.O.

**FAY:** (as Vanessa) Palo. Sorry. Palo. She's the one who started the Palo practice in this this area. Which is one of the most common like, current like pagan practices focusing around trees.

**BILLIE:** (as Gail) I like trees.

**FAY:** (as Vanessa) Absolutely! So like, you know, it seems like there's a lot of interests you have that that like, maybe there's other classes on campus?

**BILLIE:** (as Gail) Yes!

**FAY:** (as Vanessa) After, maybe after Herbology or, you know, we can get you connected to some some other people.

**BILLIE:** (as Gail) I would like that. Thank you. You're a nice person.

**FAY:** (as Vanessa) Thank you.

**FAY:** As always, Vanessa's very awkward when she gets compliments. She looks kind of like really awkward. Not at all projecting myself into that. \*laughs\*

[Music ends.]

[The mid-roll music, a calm electronic track, comes in.]

**FAY:** Welcome to the mid-roll! I'm working on mixing these up more and will be ending with a recommendation for one of my favorite podcasts, so keep listening!

All right, the winter holiday gift giving season is coming up fast and, with the shipping delays that have been happening all year, now is the perfect time to get some gifts ordered.

A great place to find gifts is the Writing Alchemy Tee Public store. It is full of beautiful art and empowering statements on a wide range of clothing and other items.

My favorite designs are the spoon hoarding dragon resting awkwardly on a huge pile of spoons and the beautiful portrait of a young black woman with leaves for hair, called "Thyme and thime again" by GDBee. This young woman is shown from the side with her eyes closed in a peaceful expression as a butterfly hovers next to her nose. Her hair is an arc of leaves that curves around her face, going from black to blue to purple to pink to orange to a gold that blends into the rising sun behind her. I have this beautiful portrait on a mug and as a wall art print that is hanging on my wall and I love it!

There is a bunch of other art by GDBee in the Writing Alchemy Store, including several gorgeous black mermaids, an animal party, and a black lives matter shirt that is a powerful portrait of a young black woman wearing a mask, goggles, and a black hoodie with BLM in gold letters on the back.

Elsewhere in the Writing Alchemy store, there are empowering statements, like "The Future Is Accessible," "Disability is an Intersection," "Not all disabilities are visible," "Gender is a Universe," "Ambulatory Wheelchair Users Exist," and "Wheelchairs Are Freedom."

Just following the Tee Public link in the show notes or on the Writing Alchemy website sends a few dollars my way when you make a purchase, even if you don't buy anything in the Writing Alchemy shop. And some of your money also goes to support the artists who made the designs!

And, right now, everything at Tee Public is on sale until the end of November. That is thirteen dollar t-shirts in sizes up to 5XL and up to 35% off site wide! And Tee Public isn't limited to clothing. They have masks, mugs, notebooks, tote bags, cell phone cases, stickers, magnets, pillows, and wall art. So check it out and support Writing Alchemy!

Now onto the recommendation! This episode's podcast recommendation is *Hit the Bricks*.

100 years after L. Frank Baum's saga that began with *The Wonderful Wizard of Oz*, the Gale Family Farm sits abandoned in what's left of the great Kansas prairies. After her parents' messy divorce, Jessi Hugson and her mother move to Dorothy's old neighborhood for a new beginning. Things were already off to a shaky start, but when Jessi and her cousin Wallace find a jewel-studded bracelet in Dorothy's front yard...things get twisted. Twister'd, even.

Now Jessi and Wallace find themselves in an Oz that's a little worse-for-wear. Dorothy is missing, and when her beloved friends went in search of her...well, they went missing too. Anybody with the means to get Jessi and Wallace home are gone and an Unseen Evil is lurking in the shadows.

Jessi must join forces with a new generation of Ozites and save Oz in this new Radio-Play in the tradition of the Audio Dramas and Fairylogues that came before it.'

What I love about it is that *Hit the Bricks* breathes new life into the world of Oz by creating a version of Oz that reflects the vibrant

diversity of our real world. Its huge cast has a bunch of my favorite voice actors in it, including people of color, queer folks, trans folks, and nonbinary folks. And this diversity is reflected in the characters and storyline, including representation of disability.

The first season is out, complete with transcripts. Links are in the show notes. I highly recommend checking it out!

And now back to the show!

[The music returns, swells, and then fades.]

**JORDAN:** It is-we are going to be a week later. Vanessa and Gail have been tutoring. How long have you been tutor- like every other day? What's the duration? Or frequency?

**FAY:** Hmmm. Let's see Vanessa's taking three quarters load. She's got some disability stuff going on. I guess part of it depends on how much Gail jumps into the Pagan Student Association stuff.

**BILLIE:** Gail is shy but I feel like actually like joining like groups would be something she's more comfortable with because then she doesn't actually have to interact as much. So she probably does get into it pretty quickly.

**JORDAN:** Okay. So we're gonna be-it's gonna be a week later. And it's the meeting of the Feminists Alliance Group, is that correct?

**FAY:** The Feminist Action Group-- Subgroup of the Pagan Students Association.

**JORDAN:** Which is a subgroup of the Pagan Student Association. We are going to find Gail and-- we're going to find Gail and Janus there a little bit early. Well, Janus is going to be in the room. Gail, you're gonna walk in looking for the feminists Action Group.

[Bouncy guitar music starts playing.]

**BILLIE:** (as Gail) Hello. Um, hi. Hi. Is this the feminist action group?

**TOBI:** (as Janus) Oh, yeah. Yeah, that meets here.

**BILLIE:** (as Gail) Oh, cool. That's great. I'm happy about that. Is the--is their meeting happening?

**TOBI:** (as Janus) Yeah, yeah, it's gonna be happening pretty soon.

**BILLIE:** (as Gail) Oh-

**JORDAN:** Y'all are about two minutes early.

**BILLIE:** (as Gail) Thank you, I'm Gail.

**TOBI:** (as Janus) I'm Janus. Good to meet you.

**BILLIE:** (as Gail) Good to meet you too. I'm I'm kind of new.

**TOBI:** (as Janus) Yeah, I was about to say I haven't seen you around.

**BILLIE:** (as Gail) Yes, I don't get out much.

**JORDAN:** Janus do you want to describe what you look like to Gail?

**TOBI:** I forgot what I look like.

**EVERYONE:** \*Laughs\*

**TOBI:** Okay, okay. All right. That's right. That's right. Tank top! A tank top and jeans.

**FAY:** Feel like it's kind of good 90s version of you.

**EVERYONE:** \*Agreement sounds\*

**TOBI:** Yeah, yeah. Okay.

**BILLIE:** Do you wear combat boots?

**TOBI:** Yeah, yeah, definitely combat boots. Probably like the like, like black pants that kind of like splay out a little bit towards the bottom and maybe have a chain on them somewhere.

**JORDAN:** Oh, yeah.

**BILLIE:** Yeah, yeah, yeah.

**TOBI:** Yeah.

**JORDAN:** Cool. Yeah, keep going.

**EVERYONE:** \*Laughs\*

**JORDAN:** So as your--and are you wearing the same thing? Still, Gail? Are you wearing something different?

**BILLIE:** Probably like a different version of the same thing.

**JORDAN:** Okay. So like the cut is a little bit different. Still a white tunic. The crocheted shawl and a long dress?

**BILLIE:** Some kind of jewel toned skirt.

**JORDAN:** A jewel toned skirt. Okay. As you are--long skirt, right?

**BILLIE:** Always.

**JORDAN:** Always. As you are talking in Tamara walks in and it's just like, "Oh my God. Hey, guys, y'all. Hey, ladies."

**TOBI:** (as Janus) Hey. So things are gonna get started pretty soon.

**JORDAN:** Yeah. So what y'all don't know is that Tamara is sort of the leader of the Feminist Action Group. With Chaz doing all of their duties of the club, and Vanessa actually running the club Tamara- it falls to Tamara to handle some of the sub clubs. So--

**BILLIE:** Is it Ta-mar or Ta-mar-ah?

**JORDAN:** Ta-mar-ah.

**BILLIE:** Ta-mar-ah, ok.

**JORDAN:** Yeah. Yeah, so Tamara is-- I was like, is it? I had a moment where it was like, is it Tam-ar-ah? I don't know.

**FAY:** No, it's Ta-mar-ah.

**JORDAN:** It's Ta-mar-ah, yeah. I just got a little thrown off. Anyway, Tamara is-she walks in and she's like, "Hey, thank you all for making it. It's great to see you. I run a couple other subgroups. I ran the Witches of Color, Pagan subgroup, and I also run the Feminist Action Group. And I actually also run the the No Man's Land, which is a group that is specifically designed for all folks that are not men to hang out and enjoy in the energy that is our stuff. Instead of having to deal with other men.

**BILLIE:** (as Gail) That's wonderful. That's, that's what I prefer.

**JORDAN:** (as Tamara) Yeah, the Feminist Action Group is open to everyone, cuz we have some people that are-- Let's say that they're feminist, and identify as male feminists, and we just want to have a space where we can educate people about the wonderful tenets of feminism as it intersects with our magical practices. But sometimes you need just spaces where there are free from the energies that distract from from-distract us from time to time. So yeah.

[The guitar music ends.]

**TOBI:** (as Janus) Yeah, I was hoping it was okay for me to come by Chaz suggested that I check out this group you're running.

**TOBI:** (as Tamara) \*suggestively\* Oh, yeah, it's totally okay that you're here.

**TOBI:** (as Janus) Yeah.

**JORDAN:** And she, she, like, reaches out and like, tries to turn you on.

[Slow, sensual jazz music starts playing.]

**TOBI:** Oh! Well, so does--

**FAY:** Whoah!

**JORDAN:** She like, she like strokes, the side of your face? "I'm really glad to see you."

**TOBI:** So mechanically, I'm not sure if-if you need to roll or if-if I'm supposed to roll to keep my cool.

**FAY:** So technically, in the rules, only players roll, but some people GM, where, when an NPC is doing a clear move, they will actually roll for the NPC. Technically, the rules are that players roll, so it'd be like Janus rolling to keep her cool.

**JORDAN:** Yeah. Roll to keep your cool.

**TOBI:** Okay. Okay. Well, let's do that. So I am Cold plus one. And I rolled a seven so that's eight. So let's see, it says on a 10 and up you keep your cool and gain insight, ask the MC a question about the situation and take one forward. On seven to nine, you will tell me how my actions would leave me vulnerable and I can choose to back down or go through with it.

**JORDAN:** So as you strokes your face, you clearly turn, like you didn't know you could turn red.

**TOBI:** Mm hmm. Mm hmm.

**JORDAN:** But you do. And normally this wouldn't be a problem if it was you and her but there's a new person in the room. And so you are trying to be very, you're trying to keep your cool, not for Tamara or your benefit, but for Gail's benefit.

**BILLIE:** Who probably looks aghast.

**JORDAN:** Yeah.

**EVERYONE:** \*Laughs\*

**TOBI:** Okay, well, I think in that case, I will not back down and, uh, and and roll with it. Damn the consequences.

**JORDAN:** Yeah. Gail, how do you react to this situation?

**BILLIE:** Like, I feel like Gail's normal reaction is to look down. But it's almost like she's like, she's sort of frozen just like, like just staring at them. \*Giggles\*

**JORDAN:** Tamara gets a little bit wrapped up in it, and then notices like Gail still in the room.

[Bouncy, humorous guitar music starts.]

**JORDAN:** (as Tamara) Oh, oh! Gail, Gail! Well it looks like it's just gonna be a small group of us today. I hope I didn't make you uncomfortable.

**BILLIE:** (as Gail) Umm, uhh, ummm....I am. Okay, thank you.

**JORDAN:** (as Tamara) Great. Well, this week, we're going to be talking about how we can use the--focus our energies at the Full Moon Ritual to help empower the women who are on campus against random attacks that have been happening to people.

**BILLIE:** (as Gail) Oh.

**JORDAN:** (as Tamara) We want to use our magic to make this campus as safe a space as possible for those who are vulnerable and impacted the most by patriarchy, which usually are women, femmes, nonbinary folks, all sorts of different people. So, yeah, do you anybody have any thoughts about how they can use their magical energies to make the campus a better place?

**TOBI:** (as Janus) Well, well, wait. So I mean, I know about a couple of the attacks that like, you know, the ones, the ones that I was involved in, but there have been more.

**JORDAN:** (as Tamara) No, just the ones that you've been involved in for the most part.

**TOBI:** (as Janus) Okay. Yeah, I was about to say like, if this is becoming a real problem, maybe we should like, get a patrol but like, I suppose if I was just patrolling, and it's just been me so far that that might. That might not help.

**JORDAN:** (as Tamara) Janus! Janus, that's a that's a great idea. A patrol?!

[Music fades out and a dramatic and energetic folk track starts playing.]

**TOBI:** (as Janus) Yeah.

**BILLIE:** (as Gail) Of women? Protecting other women?

**TOBI:** (as Janus) Yeah!

**BILLIE:** (as Gail) I like that idea.

**JORDAN:** (as Tamara) You do?

**BILLIE:** (as Gail) Well, yes, yes I do.

**JORDAN:** (as Tamara) Are you- Are you trained to fight and protect yourself?

**BILLIE:** (as Gail) No, no, no, I'm not. But I can do some things. I'm very good with magic. And I feel very strongly about this issue.

**JORDAN:** (as Tamara) How good with magic are you?

**BILLIE:** (as Gail) I'm very good. I'm very-I'm quite good. Yes. I, um, I'm especially good with plants.

**JORDAN:** (as Tamara) Plants, you say?

**BILLIE:** (as Gail) Yes, plants for protection, but also plants for aggression.

**TOBI:** (as Janus) Well, what does that do?

**BILLIE:** (as Gail) Well, for example, nettles can be a quite a potent weapon. If you strike someone with nettles, it's extremely painful.

**JORDAN:** At this Tamara's eyes goes a little while and she starts to smile. "Go on, tell me more."

**BILLIE:** (as Gail) Well, and lavender I, of course, I hang lavender in all the corners of my house for protection. It's a really good herb for protection. You know, anything with thorns, or that stings, you know? And of course, if you if you have the gift, then you can exaggerate its properties to make it even more potent, obviously.

**JORDAN:** (as Tamara) What do you mean "have the gift?"

**BILLIE:** (as Gail) Well, you know, like magic, like the gift, like, you know, if-- Honestly, I don't know that I've ever had to explain it before.

**JORDAN:** Huh.

**BILLIE:** (as Gail) Witches, are they? Do they have powers here?

**JORDAN:** (as Tamara) Yeah, yes, they do. But I've never heard anyone call it "the gift."

**BILLIE:** (as Gail) Oh, I see. I might be old fashioned. I often feel that I'm from another time.

**JORDAN:** (as Tamara) That's okay. That's fine. That's fine. That's great.

**TOBI:** (as Janus) Yeah, you know, like, I was basically thinking that if we would run into anything I could, like, punch it. But like if you- if you've got some, some, like, gifts that we can hurl at any threats, that would be pretty nifty.

**BILLIE:** (as Gail) Yes.

**JORDAN:** (as Tamara) You know, ladies, we should go out into the woods. To begin our patrol and gather some herbs for protection. I'm sure with Gail's guidance, we could learn quite a few things.

**BILLIE:** (as Gail) I hope so.

**JORDAN:** (as Tamara) That sounds great. Thank you so much, Gail.

**BILLIE:** (as Gail) It is my pleasure.

**TOBI:** (as Janus) This is going to be really awesome working together.

[Music fades out.]

**JORDAN:** And so we'll end that scene here, and so that happened in the afternoon. And towards the end of the night-- Toward the end of the night, we find ourselves actually in the bedroom of Vanessa. Vanessa is doing her patrol around the campus. And why don't you tell us? For those who may have forgotten at home--

**FAY:** Right.

**JORDAN:** What your patrol setup is like.

**FAY:** Okay, let me--there's a special phrasing--I'll look this up real fast. I have reviewed this. Yeah, the Pagan Student Association has a roving remote, radio controlled car--

**FAY:** [Slow, but dramatic and hip, synthetic music with a hint of spooky mystery starts.]

**FAY:** That is outfitted with a webcam, a supernatural activity detector, which sounds suspiciously like a Geiger counter with a scale that goes up to a maximum of four, with four being like the most significant thing you can imagine. And it has various like, kind of pet names, like Roving Supernatural Detector Unit.

**TOBI:** That's a pet name?

**BILLIE:** That doesn't sound like a pet name. \*laughter\*

**FAY:** Well, they're all like, you know, like, sometimes people just keep changing what they call it. So it would be an official name, except it like keeps changing a little bit. People are trying to make it sound the most official and awesome possible. And that's where it's kind of like, you know--

**TOBI:** The RSDU!

**FAY:** The what?

**TOBI:** RSDU.

**JORDAN:** The RSDU.

**FAY:** Oh gosh! It is only- it only goes in public spaces on campus for privacy concerns. But it does allow for patrolling the campus without having to physically patrol the campus. And so Vanessa does use that to engage in extracurricular activities where she's kind of just roving it around campus, making sure nothing untoward is happening.

**JORDAN:** You do that on a nightly basis?

**FAY:** I wouldn't say that she I doubt she has time to do it like every single night, but I think she tries to do it at least several nights a week.

**JORDAN:** Okay. \*yawns\* Excuse me. So thank you. So it's own one of these nightly patrols that you're in the northeast part of the campus, which is where the-near the woods, I think, or near the woods on the campus?

**FAY:** I have a map here. I didn't recreate the map on the--

**TOBI:** The woods are to the north.

**JORDAN:** Yeah.

**BILLIE:** That would be closer to where Gail lives then to.

**JORDAN:** Yeah.

**TOBI:** This is my map.

**FAY:** Oh, cool. Yeah. We'll use your map.

**TOBI:** Woods.

**JORDAN:** \*laughing\* Woods.

**FAY:** Okay woods are to the north.

**JORDAN:** The maps. This is the best map.

**FAY:** Oh, here's my map. Yes.

**JORDAN:** So you're at the northeastern part of the campus when your Geiger counter, or sorry, your supernatural supernatural counter--

[Medium intensity Geiger counter ticking noise starts.]

**JORDAN:** Starts ticking upwards to two and three. Which is unusual for you because most of the time, it's barely a one on your patrols.

**FAY:** Okay, yeah.

**JORDAN:** So you're, you're swiveling your car and trying to determine and as you turn sort of more toward the eastern part less to the north. It starts-- or more towards the north, I should say-- It starts to get stronger and stronger.

[Geiger counter noises get faster and louder]

**FAY:** Oh, okay.

**JORDAN:** So what are you do then?

**FAY:** So this is at night?

**JORDAN:** Mhm.

**FAY:** Okay, well, the remote control car is reasonably quiet. So she's gonna-she's gonna try to assess the area that is having this and see if there's anything.

**JORDAN:** So you look around, and there's not much that seems out of the ordinary--

**JORDAN:** [Geiger counter intensity countinuously increases.]

**JORDAN:** Until you notice two eyes that seem to be reflecting light back towards you.

**FAY:** Okkaay!

[The Geiger counter sounds fade out as the music volume swells to a spooky finish.]

[The angsty game theme plays briefly, then fades out.]

**FAY:** [voiceover] And that is the end of this episode. In a month you can look forward to the third episode of this adventure.

Audio editing for this episode was done by Ryan Boelter [Bolt-er].

Sound design was by me, Fay Onyx.

The music is from Kevin MacLeod of InCompeTec dot com, Jon Sayles [sales], and additional artists from the Free Music Archive.

Sound effects are from Free Sound dot org.

Transcription was done by Nikki Yager [Nick-key yay-grr] with help from me, using Otter dot ai.

Detailed credits are in the show notes.

If you want to find out more about today's guests, here's how to follow them.

[Start of recorded group section.]

**BILLIE:** BillieRain.com B I L L I E R A I N dot com. And my Twitter handle is at Billie Rain.

**JORDAN:** Uh, I am on Twitter as Mr-- uh, so M R underscore Smaragdine S M A-- [quiet background laughter] What? R A G D I N E. And that's pretty much, like, that's my handle everywhere. So if you see that you can find me there.

**TOBI:** And, um, I think probably the best place to find more info about me is at Tobi Hill-Meyer dot com it's T O B I H I L L M E Y E R.

**FAY:** Awesome! Well, thank you all so much, uh, for the first session of, uh-- I-I don't know exactly what we're going to name it yet, but, uh, Sylvan Community College, uh, game- or game two, I guess?

**JORDAN:** Yeah. \*laughter\*

**FAY:** Thank you so much!

**JORDAN:** Thank you!

**BILLIE:** Thanks for having me.

**TOBI:** Thanks!

[End of recorded group section.]

**FAY:** [voiceover] If you like what you hear want to hear more, be sure to subscribe to Writing Alchemy on your podcast catcher of choice so that you don't miss any of the upcoming episodes. Follow Writing Alchemy on twitter @ Writing underscore Alchemy, hashtag AlchemyCast. And if you want to help me keep this podcast and my

other work going, pledge your support on patreon at patreon dot com slash writing alchemy, or make a donation through Ko-fi.

[The outro music, a calm, uplifting electronic track, slowly fades in.]

**FAY:** You can find the show notes, complete with guest links and detailed music and sound effect credits, on Writing Alchemy dot net, where you can find all of the Writing Alchemy episodes, the Magic Goes Awry game system, and an extensive set of resources on accessibility and disability representation. There you can join the discussion and sign up for the mailing list to receive announcements about new podcasts and projects.

Thank you for listening, and please come back for Episode 3 of Inside the First Responder's Training Program!

[The calm, uplifting outro music continues for about half a minute, then stops.]