



CHOSEN PART SEVEN: THIS RIDE

Peter

[annoyed]

So you take this to the door, and leave it.

Tommy

[getting it, and is also annoyed]

Yeah, that part makes sense. But how do I know he won't just attack me? I took his band photo.

Peter

[sigh, grunt]

You'll be fine. Don't make eye contact, take the box, it's a stroller. He'll be more disarmed, don't engage, don't make eye contact. Things will work out, and you won't even have committed a crime.

Tommy

Stroller? The box says bassinet.

Peter

Who cares?

Tommy

A bassinet is not a stroller.

Peter

[dismissive]

How would I know?

And he won't care. The point is to be disorienting.
We're trolling him and goading him into a conflict.

Tommy

[not seeing this as a good thing]

And he goes after Rommel, but why?

This plan could send him back inside.

They fight, the cops come, what then? It's assault, if he breaks his probation, he goes back in.

Peter

[exasperated]

People like you... you want your war.

You want so many people to suffer.

Or that's what you say.

But now, with the world ripe for what you peckerwoods always wanted, your balls shrink.

[amused and challenging]

And Rommel isn't backing away. So, man up, and be the thing you claim you are and do what you're told.

Tommy

[puffing up]

You want to talk tough?

Ok.

[hits Peter, hurts his hand]

Ow, *fuck!*

Peter

[demonic voice]

Enough, fool.

Tommy

[shocked at the demonic visage in front of him]

He... wasn't lying when he said he made a...

Peter

[demonic]

Go.

Do what you're told.

Pushed to the point of breaking by friends and enemies, Hector was on the precipice of disaster, but you voted to have him listen to the self-proclaimed witch, Makayla, and possibly foil Rommel's plans.

**Witchever Path Presents
Chosen, Part Seven: This Ride**

Hector

[trying to be polite after this fucking day]

Do you guys have any Gunnar's Daughter in the back?

Clerk

[genial]

Yeah, actually. I hadn't put any out.

[dials phone]

Hey, Lisa? Can you bring a four back of Gunnar's Daughter to the register? Yeah, the stout.

Thanks.

Clerk

[to Hector]

Okay, so just this and the beer?

Hector

[sort of relieved]

Yeah. Thanks.

Clerk

[to Lisa]

Thanks, Lisa.

All right, sir. 20.50. Would you like to round up to support Invisible Angels Pet Rescue?

Hector

[relieved at a normal question]

Sure. Thanks.

[sound of door]

[walking]

Hector

[to God]

I'm talking to you right now because if this is all true, then you're probably real, too, right? Maybe not the way I learned about you in church, but I think it's safe to say that evil's gotta have a counterweight, right?

My mother would have me saying *Padre Nostro* and the whole rosary right now. But I never felt anything when I did that. Never. Those words, they were just lyrics. Lyrics to songs that said nothing to me, in my heart. And maybe I should be sorry, and repent for that.

[pause]

But I'm not even sure your words come from that church. Even if you are real. I think that priests were just as full as shit as Rommel. But it looks like he got the attention of the other side anyway, so maybe ... look.

I'm a father now. And maybe, maybe that's what you brought me to keep me out this shit. I don't know. But I should just be happy, just be at home, holding my daughter, instead of walking down the street to get beer, and resist the urge to get in my car and kill him.

[thinks better of swearing much more if this is a prayer]

That woman Hagbard and Mira are with, I don't know if you sent her or not, but I need *your* help. Because when I get back on that porch and go into my house, I need a sign I'm doing this right.

[cracks open a beer on the street]

So, I'll tell you what: Just let me know if this is the right thing to do the best way you can, all right?

[walks up stairs, takes a sip, gives us one of those 'ah" noises]

[opens door]

[walks upstairs]

[baby sounds]

Angie

[real quiet]

Where'd you go, perrito?

Hector

[whispering]

To the Co-op, Angie.

I got two things. Beer for me... and boar jerky for you.

I know you been wanting it for a few days.

Is she awake?

Angie

[happy and quiet]

Just woke up to eat a bit, but she's getting back to sleep now.

You want to hold her?

Hector

[take a sip]

Yeah. Sorry, I guess it was nerves, I opened it already without thinking, you know?

Angie

[amused]

Hector, I'm not most girls, okay? You can sip the beer real quick. I'll [yawn] hold her for a little bit and then you can take over. I need some sleep soon.

Hector

[just going with the flow, in contrast to the way the past week has been]

Okay, that works.
[sits down next to bed in the rocking chair]

Angie
Who rang the bell before?

Hector
[feeling that tension of what he needs to ignore]
Delivery guy. We got a stroller.

Angie
[touched]
Ay, from who?

Hector
[takes a breath and just tells the incomplete truth]
They didn't put their name in the card... at first I thought it was Hagbard or Mira, but I don't know for sure who did it.
Everything's been so nuts lately, Mama.
Rommel, he's ... just not going away.
I just want to focus on you and Leviana for a couple of days, you know?
I want this for us.

Angie
[calmly]
It's your choice on that, perrito. I believe in you. I think you chose right a few times. I heard you banging around down there, I was worried you'd be going out to take care of business.

Hector
[plainly, still quiet]
No, I talked to Hagbard and I think it just made me realize that this type of head game shit, it's for kids and people in the life. I don't want that, I want what we have, right here.
I want her. I want you. And right now, protecting you means not feeding into whatever Rommel's up to.

Angie
What if he comes by?

Hector
He gets shot.

Angie
Hector...

Hector

[a little louder]

That's pretty much all there is to it.
Who gives a shit about him?

Angie

[making a bit of sense]

If you shoot him, who's gonna hold her when I got to pee?

Hector

[pause starts to say something then laughs]

Give her over.

[takes Leviana]

[calmer]

You know, I will call the cops. I meant if he tries any thug shit, I can protect you both.
I love you.

[Angie gets up]

Angie

I love you, baby. I'll be right back.

[walks away]

[baby starts to cry]

Hector

[fatherly love and care, but in good naturedly]

Hey, Hey. You're going to be alright, mija. Daddy's going to give you a good life, I promise you.

[baby stops crying]

Oh, wow. You understand me?

Rommel

[angry]

I asked if you understand me.

[sound of muffled phone conversation]

Rommel

[disgusted]

Then what the fuck.



I'm here, you said you'd be coming by and now you're....

[She says something about being sorry]

Rommel

[hearing her cancel because she can't get a ride]

What?

[she tells him her mom wouldn't let her borrow the car]

How old are...

[she's twenty two]

Oh Jesus Christ, thank god. Well, what the fuck are you doing living up here in New Hampshire with no fucking car?

[she asks him why he doesn't have a car]

I just got out of fucking prison!

[dismissive]

Bitch, lose my number.

[hangs up]

[knocks on the door, but then door opens]

Peter

[amused Rommel has been stood up]

Hey Romeo...you decent?

Rommel

[blue balled]

Fuck you.

[realizes there's no Tommy]

Where's Tommy?

Peter

[dismissive]

I'm sure he's on his way back soon.

Probably trying to give you a chance to nail your groupie.

Which is obviously not going to happen.

So I decided to come over here and wait with you to see if your plan worked.

Rommel

Well, did you guys deliver the stroller?

Peter

He did. I was keeping our friend here comfortable.

[pats bag with Levi's skull]

Rommel

[uneasy]

Well, here's to hoping that Hector takes the bait.
Because if the next person coming through the door isn't him...

Peter

[shutting him up]

Your Probation Officer isn't going to bother you this late, and you know that.
He's at home in bed. It's time to move this along, though, before anyone comes back.
That is, if you still have the stomach for it.

Rommel

[unimpressed this time]

You're going to have to try harder than that. Appeals to my masculinity doesn't get me going,
especially now. What do you want me to do?

[takes skull out of bag, puts it on the table.]

Peter

[devious]

We're going to share a drink together, and toast to your future success.

Rommel

We don't have anything to drink in the house.

Peter

[calm]

Not to worry

[pulls bottle out of the bag]

I had been saving this for just such an occasion.

Rommel

[whistles]

That's a dusty bottle. I'll get some glasses.

Peter

[dismissively]

We don't need them.

Rommel

[thinking about it]
You want to drink straight out of the...

[dawns on him]
Wait out of *it*?

Peter

[calm]
Yeah.

Rommel

[it's the dawning of who that is, of what this would be]
I don't know.

Peter

[calm]
Sure you do.

[uncorks the wine]
Even when you made up your ritual, you knew.
You felt that cold crawling in your chest, nesting in the center, right near your heart. You felt it.
You felt it when you made your way to the parking lot. You felt it when you hit him with the car.
And you feel it now.

Rommel

[feeling that grip]
I didn't --

Peter

[just cutting him off]
No, no more. It's me. You called and I came. And I waited. I've watched and I've talked to each
of you along the way, and we're not going to go through the song and dance of the narrative
that got you out.

And you already know what you've done.

[pours drink]

Peter

I can't fill him up, it'll get all over the place, but here.
This will give you what you need to see this through.
I mean, you already killed him and aren't sorry.
Might as well go all in and get what you wanted, right?

[a few beats]

Rommel
[takes skull]
Might as well.

[sips]

[sound of coffee grinder]

Makayla
[pretty amused]
I didn't expect you guys to stick around tonight. If I did, I would have insisted you stay here rather than get an AirBNB down the road. I'm impressed you found one.
So, why'd you ask to come back after you two went over there?

Hagbard
[thoughtfully]
I want to know what I can do to make sure we all make it out of this okay.
Mira wanted some time to herself, and to call her girlfriend. Hector is with his wife and baby.

Makayla
[trying to figure them out]
Do you feel alone right now?

Hagbard
[a little amused]
Not really. I'm alone, but I can't say I'm lonely.
I've been like this most of my life. But I guess what I want to know from you is if there is a way I can stack the deck in our favor.
Because I don't think three old friends have what it takes to deal with what Rommel's doing.

Makayla
[feeling them out]
That's why you came to me, though. And I'll help you as best I can.
But I can't do it all the way for you, everyone's got to do their part.

Hagbard
[ready to share their thoughts on that]
Sure, but I think some people can handle more of the weight than others.
And I think I want to take on as much of this as I can.

So I have a question about what Hector said, and if it might allow me to do something... well, sneaky.

Something that may turn this on its side.

Makayla

I'm listening.

Hagbard

Belief's what this is about. And I know what we did, and I know that Rommel can do [grunts while flexing their hand] this to our hands. But here's the thing: we didn't get the deal. We didn't get the most love, or money, or real fame. Notoriety, sure, but we knew what we wanted.

Can I ... Can I give myself over to something else?

Makayla

Whoa... what.

Hagbard

I don't mean trading my soul to another demon, really. What if... I had something to trade of more value to someone else in exchange for making sure Rommel doesn't win?

Makayla

[getting ready to boot them out or hex them]

Let's put this all out on the table right now. What are you aiming to do, Hagbard? Because this type of shit gets dangerous when it's left ambiguous.

You need to be clear in you intentions and what you're about to propose, because once you speak it, I can't guarantee it won't be overheard.

Hagbard

[thinking they get it]

All right, got a pen?

[scribbling it down]

Makayla

Friend, you are crazy as fuck.
But that might work.

[music to show a transition in time]

Tommy

[comes through the door, sees Peter aka the Devil, in there with Rommel]

Should I leave you guys to it?

Rommel

[drunk]

Tommy! We've been sitting here for hours! It has been hours, right Pete?

Pete

[affirming]

It's three in the morning.

Rommel

[genial, happy drunk]

Really? Already. Wow. Tommy, *Tommy*.

Tommy

[puzzled]

What?

Rommel

[shusshing him]

Tommy. Shut up and tell me. Did you fuck up?

Because I expected Hector to be over here already, guns-a-blazing, fucking up so the cops came to defend me and the girl I was fucking by a big bad, angry mexican.

But he didn't show, Tommy. And the girl, she didn't show.

Tommy

[defensive]

I delivered the package and left.

And the girl, well, how would I know that she wouldn't show?

Peter

[being deviously supportive of Tommy]

Rommel, Tommy's a lot of things, but he's not disloyal. You can trust him. I had my doubts, but he's a fighter. He'd give blood for the cause.

He's here for you.

Tommy
[nervous that this demon has his back]

You know it.

[sees the skull Rommel is drinking out of]
What the fuck are you drinking out of?!

Rommel

[brushing him off]

Shut up, man, shut up. You're a student of our history. You know. The Thule Society was up to all of this. You know what that is right? Don't tell me I gotta lecture you on that part of World War 2. This is the rebirth of that, right here. Right here.

Tommy

[knowing that's Levi's skull]

Yeah, I know the stuff people talk about. And the Wolves of Odin, too.
What do you gotta do?

Peter

[stands up]

Bear witness with us, at this time, to Rommel about to reclaim what's his.
If he's the king, you would be his knight, his cupbearer. So... hold the cup while we refill it for him.

Tommy

[disbelief]

You want me to touch that skull?

Rommel

[happy drunk]

You got it, bro. You hold it, Pete will pour and I'll say the words.

Rommel

[clears throat]

I'll start.

You, who have given me strength in my confinement, allowed me to taste glory, and to cheat fate, I raise a glass once more and beseech you for the power to sway the other three to complete the pact that we made with thee. Let the Sanguine Red, potent in its vintage, flow into the skull of the first to fall and soak his essence into the drink and down my waiting throat. Let two become one until the deed is done.

Repeat that part, Tommy.

Tommy

Let... two

Rommel

Right, Let two become one until

Tommy

Let two become one until the deed is done?

Rommel

[laughs]

Great. Great. Now quick fill the cup I gotta drink.

Pete

[matter of fact]

Okay here we go.

Tommy

[confused]

Looks like your bottle's empty.

[his throat is cut and he begins his gurgling death]

[bottle drops]

{there's a fumbling}

Rommel

Shit the skull

Peter

Relax, I got them both.

[sound of skull filling]

Peter

[calm]

Welp, cup's running over, pal.

Drink up.

Rommel

[more sober]

Down the hatch, I guess.

[next day]
[crowd of people saying goodbye]

Hector

Thank you for all coming by. I love you, Tia.
See you, Martin. Luis. Prima Gabriela, Hasta luego!
Love you guys, take care.

[shuts door]
[sigh of relief]

Angie

[sounding exhausted]

The whole day! I thought they'd never leave.

Hector

[glad they left after all, it was a lot of people, even if they're family]
Mom would have stayed, and I think we hurt her feelings by letting her leave without offering.
I was going to offer, you know, to let her help us out, but ... ay, that was lot of fucking people.

Angie

[heartened he said it]

Was nice to get a little normal in, though, right, perrito? I mean, your family is loud and really *in your face* all the time, but it's nice to be annoyed at something normal you know?

Hector

[grateful]

Yeah, I know.

[thinks about what he's supposed to do]

Babe, why don't you give me the baby and you can head up to bed. I'll feed her and put her down.

Angie

Really?

Hector

Of course.

[light kiss then he gets baby]

Hi, baby. Hi. Let's take a seat... Oh shit... how am I going to call and... wait... got it.

[dials]

Hagbard
Hector?

Hector
I'm in. Tell me what I gotta do.

Hagbard
We're going to be coming back up tomorrow with Makayla.
Right now I'm over her house, going over the details. If this goes right, we're going to be able to
stop Rommel and beat this thing.
We just gotta stay strong. In the meantime, you need to avoid any contact with Rommel until I
see you next, okay?

Hector
I can do that. How's Mira?

Hagbard
She's all right. She's talking with Tara.
I think we're going to win this thing, man. Take care, be safe. Kiss the baby for me.

Hector
You bet man, be careful, too. Bye.

Hagbard.
Bye.

[drumming on a desktop]

Tara
Are you all right down there?
I wish you would have let me go with you.

Mira
I am, we just wanted to check out what some of our legal options were on Rommel; one of
Hagbard's fixer friends has a plan that they think will work, and I'm going along with it, because
every other plan is so flawed. If it doesn't work, Hagbard says we can always swallow our pride
and try the cops.

Tara

I'm worried about you. How's your head? How's your heart?

Mira

I'm all right, I think. I'm hungover from last night. We went really hard to blow off steam and -
[trail off]

Tara

[really concerned]

Hung over? That doesn't sound like you. Are you okay?
Please don't lie to me.

Mira

[feeling really guilty and weird]

This whole situation has me acting not like me, Tara-bear. I'm just trying to

[beep]

Oh shit.

[beep]

Tara

[worried]

What is it?

[beep]

Mira

[looking for the out of call waiting to give her a chance to think of what to say]
I gotta take this real quick, hold on.

[switches over]

Hello?

Levi

[spectrally]

Mira... Mira, don't hang up.

Mira

What the fuck?

Levi

The thing he did, the thing he did, I'm out. I can see again.
It's.... It's cold, and I can't hear them screaming anymore.
But I need your help or they'll get me again.
I don't want to be taken.

Mira

No no no nonononono.

Levi

Help me.

Mira

[hangs up]

[phone rings]

[Mira picks up third ring]

Tara

You hung up on me. What's going on?

Your Choices Are Big this week, because there two big choices to make. First, what does

Tara do?

Protect Tara

Let her know what just happened

Tell her Rommel called

And second, how will Hector show up to meet with Makayla and the gang?

Armed

Unarmed

With Angie

You can vote now at WitchverPath.com/vote.

We'll keep the poll open until Thursday, June 18, so don't delay.

We want to thank Black History Buff, Audio Drama Infinitum, and so many others who have been promoting black and POC podcasts right now. Check out their shows.

And thank you to Stephanie Lyons, our latest Patreon Subscriber! She joins the list of wanderers who get to listen, see, and interact with exclusive content, hear subscriber only episodes and more. If you can, consider becoming a subscriber at patreon.com/witcheverpath.

It's PRIDE month, and this is the most like the original PRIDE than any of the ones we have ever celebrated. Black Lives Matter, our Trans Siblings need us, and the world's shadows are threatening to close in on us... but you know what, you can make another choice for us. Support your marginalized friends, raise up their voices, and challenge those who are seeking to silence them.

This episode was written by Steven and Jas, and produced by Steven.

**Our cast this week was:
JD Lauriat as Peter
Tyler Bell as Tommy
Lito Velasco as Hector
Jas LaFond as Angie and Makayla
Steven LaFond as Levi
DJ Sylvis as Hagbard
Vyn Vox as Mira
Many Hall as Tara**