

A Human's Guide to Surviving Magical Mishaps by Kit Bryan Chapter 10

Rule 10—The best way to win a fight is to avoid it altogether. It's like winning by default, but with significantly fewer bruises.

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We both fall silent for a minute or two **as** we continue eating. It doesn't take long for me begin to feel uncomfortable with the quiet. Ashton is still looking around the room and I'm **well** aware that neither my dad or I have vacuumed in a few days.

"So, will you tell me a little about these criminals you are supposed to be hunting? You said they killed your king and escaped here, which I would guess implies that they are either tough, sneaky, or just really lucky. But then again, you came here to catch them all on your own and there are three of them which implies that you are either tougher, sneakier, or luckier than them. You don't really seem the type to rely on luck though, so I am curious." I snap my mouth shut again, realising that I am once again running my mouth. Ashton looks very solemn. He was serious when he spoke to the Mayor and my dad, but this is different. He was acting very formal then; now he is relaxed and himself, and I am asking him proper questions, although I do think it was odd that neither the Mayor nor my dad thought it was weird that the fae would send one guy to catch three criminals. I suppose Ashton must have

some kind of skills I don't know about.

"I suppose I should tell you a little about the bastards I am trying to catch, if only so you know what to look out for. As you said, there are three of them. They worked together as a group to break into the fae castle, take out the guards, and kill the king. I know a little of their particular abilities, although I do not know their exact species of fae so I cannot be sure that I know the complete extent of their powers." I nod; this is sure to be interesting and

slightly terrifying.

"One of the fae seems to have some kind of affinity with fire. He helped provide the others in the group with an escape route. They were not terribly subtle,

which is why I know that they ran here. The second of the group must have some knowledge or ability relating to poisons. That is how the king was murdered. The final member of the group has some kind of power over people's actions, convinces loyal guards to go take a break or to go to sleep. I do not

really know much more about them. I cannot even be sure that I know what they look like as it is entirely possible that they wore glamours, and those who saw them do not have the ability to see through glamours." Ashton seems frustrated.

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"So some people **can** see through glamours then?" I ask, catching on to that interesting

detail. That means there probably aren't a lot of fae just wandering around the human realm, right? Unless seeing through glamours is a purely fae skill. Ashton nods.

"Yes, although it is not a common ability. It is not connected to any specific species of Fae but rather the personality and intellect of the individual as well as their level of awareness." I

just stare.

"Okay, you lost me, I don't really know what you mean." I admit.

"Well, the only way to see past a glamour is to find a flaw in it. Noticing things like this is a skill most people don't really have or if they do then they don't really take the time to refine it." Okay, so it's a practice type thing and a little bit a personality slash natural skill I conclude.

"Can you do it?" I ask. Ashton shrugs one shoulder.

"Sometimes. If I am aware that the person is in a glamour and am looking for flaws, I might find something. But I don't really take the time to check every person I meet, and I am not naturally observant enough to notice when I am not truly searching." He seems a little embarrassed at this fact..

Ashton considers me for a moment.

“You might be good at it, actually. You are quite observant.” I frown.

“I didn’t notice that you had a glamour on.” I point out.

“You did not know that glamour existed, so why should you notice? Here.” Ashton blurs again and his glamour reappears. I hope changing back and forth like this doesn’t wear him out or whatever. But I suppose he knows his limits. I shouldn’t worry.

“Try now; it should be easier since you know what I actually look like. Find a flaw in my glamour, and you should be able to see past it.” He encourages.

“I don’t really know what you mean by flaw.” I admit. Ashton shrugs.

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Emergency calls only

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“Anything that seems unusual or doesn’t make sense.” I think about it for a moment, look him over, studying his features and try to remember to **focus** and not drool. His eyes. Ashton’s eyes are wrong; they don’t seem to have a colour. Or if they do, it is changing. The moment I realise this, Ashton’s glamour seems to melt away. When he doesn’t react, I realise that he hasn’t done anything; he is still waiting for me to say something.

“I did it, I think. Your eyes were weird, but you look like you now.” Ashton beams at me proudly.

“Very good! Most people cannot see through a glamour so fast. I am still glamoured right now, **but** you cannot see it correct?” I nod.

It will remain that way until I remove the glamour and put it on again; then you would have to find a flaw again, although it would likely be the same thing. I always did have difficulty imagining myself with different eyes, so I struggle to show them in my glamour. Still, you did very well.” I shrug, a little embarrassed at all his praise.

“You already told me which parts of you were glamoured to look different, and I knew what you should look like. I basically cheated.” Ashton shakes his head in disagreement.

“Regardless, I think with some practice you would become quite skilled at seeing through glamours.” I give him a small smile

“Thanks, I guess, although I doubt I will actually get much of a chance to practise. You are the only far I know, after all.” I point out

“At least for now.” I raise an eyebrow. For now? When would I meet another Fae? Unless he is referring to the criminals, but I am fairly sure that he intends to keep them as far from me as possible, so that can’t be it. Maybe he is just throwing it out there that it is actually possible.

Or maybe he pictures a lot more human and far interactions in the future.

“Right... so... if you don’t know what the criminals look like and they could be wearing glamour, how are you planning to find them?” | wonder #loud:

“I find their magic, or the effects of it at least. They are not accustomed to this realm, and it is unlikely that they will simply stop using their magic. They will not know how to fit in or hide it well. You should be able to assist me in determining if someone is displaying

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particularly odd behaviour or if there is some occurrence which **is** outside the norm. I will be able to determine **if** magic has been used in an area, and that will hopefully lead me to them.” Ashton hesitates a moment before speaking **again**.

“There is also a slight chance that they may go on the offensive and try to attack me themselves. Should this be the case, I will do my utmost to ensure that you are **not** endangered in any way. It would be quite useful for you to be able to see through glamours actually, although I doubt you will be able to do so without assistance right away. Still, if you should happen to notice **a** glamour and see a Fae, please inform me immediately. And *do*

make contact with them; try and avoid being noticed if you **can.**” I nod.

“**Sure**, I’m no fighter. Hiding, running, and backup sound like good plans to me.”

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Chapter Comments