

The Zoom Where It Happens

(The First Bardic War – v1.4)

Tune of “The Room Where It Happens” by Lin-Manuel Miranda, from the musical *Hamilton*
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A Zoom call is starting. The Royalty of the EAST KINGDOM *and* the MIDREALM, all clearly named in their video frames, do not look pleased.

The Royal Bards, also clearly named in their video frames, are all squirming nervously:

- DRAKE, CONSORT'S BARD of the EAST KINGDOM
- LAILA, FORMER QUEEN'S BARD of the EAST KINGDOM
- HONOR, ROYAL BARD of the MIDDLE KINGDOM
- HILLA, REGIONAL BARD of the MIDLANDS
- NEZKHA, ROSE BARD of the KINGDOM OF ATLANTIA

Krumhorn fanfare. Drum rhythm starts.

[DRAKE] *(nervously)*
Ahhhh, your Royal Majesties!

[EASTERN SOVEREIGN] *(shortly)*
Lord Drake.

[DRAKE]
Sir, so you've heard the news about our—

[EASTERN CONSORT]
Who's the troublemaker?

[LAILA] *(looking down)*
Well...

[HILLA]
You know the Journeymen's Concert?

[MIDREALM KING]
Yes?...

[HONOR] *(pointing to her Laurel wreath)*
Laurels weren't privy to it—

[MIDREALM QUEEN]
Honor, please, this isn't Shakespeare.

And all we want to know, is why?

[NEZKHA]
Well, that's a lot to unpack—

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[EASTERN CONSORT]

Why don't you give it a try?

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[HILLA] (*fidgeting*)

Huh...

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[LAILA] (*quietly, to DRAKE*)

So, how're we getting off of *this* thin ice?

[DRAKE]

I guess I'm gonna fin'ly have to take your advice.

[LAILA] (*incredulous*)

Really?

[DRAKE]

Talk less, beguile more...

[LAILA] (*rolling eyes*)

Oh dear.

[DRAKE]

Do whatever it takes to help them see how we've come to war.

[HONOR]

But our King and Queen can spot a faker quick.

[DRAKE]

Well, then the truth is my weapon...

[EASTERN SOVEREIGN]

Champions!

[DRAKE]

I'm sorry guys, I gotta start.

[NEZKHA]

But...

[DRAKE]

Unless, of course, you'd like to step in?

NEZKHA indicates "no". Krumhorn fanfare.

[DRAKE]

A bunch of bards from the Known World sign into a Zoom,

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[ALL]

Camaraderie is close—bros.

[DRAKE]

They emerge from the concert with tensions running high:

[ALL]

Diametrically opposed—foes.

[DRAKE]

The kingdom bards emerge with an Interkingdom Incident

And paperwork that nobody wants.

[HONOR]

The kingdoms all emerge on the brink of Bardic War!

And here's the pièce de résistance:

Strumming begins. The video frames for the ROYALS slide out of view. A larger set of video frames is revealed with a COMPANY of various bards from all over the Known World.

[DRAKE]

No one else was in

The Zoom where it happened,

The Zoom where it happened,

The Zoom where it happened...

[HONOR]

No one else was in

The Zoom where it happened,

The Zoom where it happened,

The Zoom where it happened...

[COMPANY]

The Zoom where it happened

The Zoom where it happened

[NEZKHA]

Who can really say

How a feud is born,

Did I speak with scorn?

It's all fuzzy next morn—

You just assume that it happens,

Feud is born

It's all fuzzy next morn

Assume that it happens

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[HAKON] ¶

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[NEZKHA AND HAKON] ¶

[DRAKE]

But no one else is in

The Zoom where it happens...

The Zoom where it happens...

Krumhorn fanfare.

[COMPANY]

Hilla claims—

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[HILLA]

Atlantian bards, we had so many, that I *might* have made a joke
That they'd invaded the Mid.

[COMPANY]

Hilla claims—

[HILLA]

Laila said,

[LAILA]

If we allied them with the East, we'd overthrow the Known World!

[HILLA]

Was she making a bid?

[COMPANY]

Hilla claims—

[HILLA]

Then Ermagerd jumps up:

[ERMAGERD]

Ansteorra says "Hold my mead!"

[HILLA]

And now we're in *El Cid*!

[COMPANY]

Hilla claims—

[HILLA]

Yes, I arranged the meeting.
The concert and the venue, but then we're competing...
What?!?

[DRAKE]

No one else was in
The Zoom where it happened,
The Zoom where it happened,
The Zoom where it happened...

[COMPANY]

The Zoom where it happened,
The Zoom where it happened,
The Zoom where it happened...

[NEZKHA]

No one else was in
The Zoom where it happened,
The Zoom where it happened,
The Zoom where it happened...

The Zoom where it happened,
The Zoom where it happened,
The Zoom where it happened...

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[LAILA]

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No one really knows
How the bards'll pick a fight Bards'll pick a fight

[ERMAGERD]
Incentives that are offered
When a Royal's not in sight Royal's not in sight

[HONOR]
You just assume that it happens Assume that it happens

[HILLA]
But no else is in
The Zoom where it happens... The Zoom where it happens...

Krumhorn fanfare.

[COMPANY]
Meanwhile—

[DRAKE]
Cerian is haggling over ransom for the
Bards of Atlantia (and yes, it's kinda witty)...

[COMPANY]
Meanwhile—

[NEZHKA]

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Temp'ratures are rising with alliances and battle songs—

Bards all shout chaotically.

[NEZHKA]
—It isn't pretty.

[DRAKE]
Then my good friend Laila, my own predecessor,
Approaches Hilla slyly, and plays the aggressor:

[LAILA]
Maybe we can mold this chaos with intention,
And win a victory from this accident,
A big event...

[HILLA]
What for?

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[LAILA]
A Bardic War.

[HILLA]
Tell me more...

[LAILA]
Wouldn't you like to feel a little *less* stuck at home?

[HILLA]
Actually, I would.

[LAILA]
We'll have performers be warriors!

[HILLA]
And we'll do points and keep score?

[LAILA]
For a full week or more!

[HILLA]
For sure!

[DRAKE]
No!

[COMPANY]
...one else was in the Zoom where it happened,

[ALL]
The Zoom where it happened,
The Zoom where it happened.

No one else was in the Zoom where it happened,
The Zoom where it happened,
The Zoom where it happened.

[DRAKE]
Ye gods!

[ALL]
Away they went!
It's a bloody Interkingdom Incident!

[CERIAN] (*Alchemist style*)
Click, BOOM!

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[ALL]

Then it happened.

[HONOR] (*whining*)

I wasn't even in the Zoom where it happened...

[COMPANY]

Laila Andalusiiya!

[DRAKE]

What were you thinking?

To propose an alliance,

When that was not your station?

[COMPANY]

Laila Andalusiiya!

[HONOR]

Did your Royals know about your boasting,

Or its impact on our kingdom relations?

[COMPANY]

Laila Andalusiiya!

[LAILA]

But don't you know, when I spoke, I hadn't noticed

There was talk of kingdom hostages?

I saw all these bards! Their brilliance and charms!

[DRAKE] (*realizing*)

You just were giving praise.

[LAILA]

Never meant a call to arms!

But if that's skin in the game, let's stay in the game,

Sequestered like we've been, how can we play in the game?

[NEZKHA]

We may get love for it,

[HILLA]

Or get hate for it,

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[NEZKHA AND HILLA]

This whole year we've had to

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[COMPANY]

Wait for it, wait for it, wait...

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[DRAKE]

Now, this might be heresy

[DRAKE AND HONOR]

But I'd like to leave my kingdom a legacy...

[HILLA]

What do *you* want, bards?

What do *you* want, bards?

What will you be doing when the
First Bardic War starts?

[COMPANY]

What do *you* want, bards?

What do *you* want, bards?

What do *you* want, bards?

What do *you* want?

[DRAKE]

I,

I want us all in

The Zoom where it happens

The Zoom where it happens

[HONOR]

I,

I want us all in

The Zoom where it happens

The Zoom where it happens

[NEZKHA]

I...

Want us all

In the Zoom where it happens...

[COMPANY]

I want us all in

The Zoom where it happens

The Zoom where it happens

The Zoom where it happens

J...

I want us all in the Zoom...

I want us all in

The Zoom where it happens

The Zoom where it happens

[LAILA]

Oh...

Oh...

I want us all...

I want us all...

The Zoom where it happens

I want us all in

The Zoom where it happens

The Zoom where it happens

The Zoom where it happens

[HILLA]

We've got to be...

We've got to be...

In that Zoom...

I want us all in

The Zoom where it happens

The Zoom where it happens

[DRAKE]

And the YouTube too!

The Zoom where it happens

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[COMPANY]
A war's been catalyzed!

[HILLA]
We were left unsupervised...

[COMPANY]
We say our bards need to use their words!

[HONOR]
But when they're off the leash, it really gets absurd...

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[COMPANY]
We need to restart our Dream,

[DRAKE]
But how else can you fight on a livestream?

[ALL]
We spoke the Doom where it happens,

| | |
|--------------------------------------------------------|----------------------------------------|
| [HILLA AND LAILA] Now we need you in The Zoom... | [COMPANY] The Zoom where it happens |
|--------------------------------------------------------|----------------------------------------|

| | |
|-----------------------------------|---------------------------|
| [DRAKE] You've got to be in... | The Zoom where it happens |
|-----------------------------------|---------------------------|

| | |
|-----------------------------------|---------------------------|
| [HONOR] You've got to be in... | The Zoom where it happens |
|-----------------------------------|---------------------------|

| | |
|------------------------------------------------------------------|---------------------------|
| [NEZKHA] Oh, you've got to be in The Zoom where it happens | The Zoom where it happens |
|------------------------------------------------------------------|---------------------------|

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| | |
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| [HILLA AND LAILA] You gotta be, You gotta be, You gotta be... In the Zoom! | The Zoom where it happens You gotta be in the Zoom Where it happens! |
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[ALL]
(*demonstrating mouse click with one finger, then an explosion with both hands*)
Click, boom!