

Marielda 04: The Crosstown Job Pt. 2

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[MUSIC — Marielda]

AUSTIN (as Narrator): *[slight draw]* Now, the people of Marielda, they weren't exactly familiar with trains. After all, until the Crosstown Express, there had only been the one. And that train rode the circumference of the city, mostly carried freight. Some obsidian from the miners round Quinceton, some finished product from the manufactories of Iris. Maybe, *maybe* a cobbin or two. But when the old Crosstown Express screeched to a halt in the sky above Helianthus, everyone in town knew something wasn't quite right. And I can't say that anyone knew exactly what it was the start of. Not the Six. Not Lance Sovereign Marielda. Not even Samoths himself. No one knew. Except me, of course.

[2:08]

[MUSIC — Marielda ends]

JACK: This is the duelist, so this is Ethan Hitchcock, which means the man crying at the bar is Edmund Hitchcock.

AUSTIN: Hey Jack?

JACK: Austin!

AUSTIN: Take three damage.

JACK: Great.

AUSTIN: Or give me a Resistance. Give me a Prowess Resistance, because Thackeray does not wait.

JACK: Oh, does he just draw a gun?

AUSTIN: Yes.

JACK: *[laughs]* To shoot at Ethan? Okay.

AUSTIN: Yes.

JACK: Okay, Prowess. Here we go. That's a one.

AUSTIN: Okay, that's, that's not so bad.

JACK: So I take one stress?

AUSTIN: Yes.

JACK: So does this catch me in the shoulder or something?

AUSTIN: No, it doesn't, it doesn't catch you at all. This is the thing with stress, like, you're not harmed. You're, you are stressed from this, but you are not harmed. So what do you do? Thackeray draws his gun and aims to shoot at you, and he would've hit— if he would've hit you, he would've hurt you very badly, I've just instantly learned how these rules work somehow in the last two seconds, it's like all come together in my head. *[laughter]* So. You would've gotten a *really* bad wound. Three harm is a *lot* of, of damage to suffer here.

JACK: Yeah. Oh yeah, that's, that would knock out Ethan for the rest of the mission, right?

AUSTIN: It would've done something bad like, it would've, you would've needed help, or you would've had to have spend stress just to do anything. So what happens instead? So he's, again, he's drawn his, his... he has kind of like a, one of those like a pistol with like a really long barrel on it like a, like the Joker had in the Tim Burton Batman movie? Do you know the one I'm talking about?

JACK: *[laughs]* No.

AUSTIN: Oh, oh buddy.

JACK: I haven't seen that one.

AUSTIN: I'm not gonna look it up. That's a good Batman.

JACK: I know what I'm gonna do, though, because the other thing about the move Cloak and Dagger, which is a move that's basically made for twins! Is that when I throw off my disguise, the resulting surprise gives me the initiative in the situation?

AUSTIN: Oh shit, you don't— yes.

JACK: So here's what's gonna happen. As Thackeray fires at Ethan, Edmund, crying at the bar, is going to turn around and fling the cat statue at Thackeray's head.

AUSTIN: Oh my God!

ALI: Hey! *Hey!*

[Sylvia laughs]

DRE: Porcelain's fragile, Jack! *[laughs]*

AUSTIN: Give me a... Hunt!

SYLVIA: *[cross]* Oh, shit.

JACK: I don't have any dice in that, Austin.

ALI: Jack, I swear to God.

[Dre laughs]

AUSTIN: *[cross]* Oh, pal. Give me, okay, so the way it works when you don't have any dice is...

JACK: I'll take a devil's bargain.

AUSTIN: That's not— I don't just, you don't just get to have those whenever you want, buddy. *[laughter]* I get to tell you when you get those. But what you could do, there are a couple things you can do that can help you here. You could— so by default, you would roll two dice and then take the lower one? Which is not good, let me tell ya. The other thing you could do is spend stress, you could spend two stress to get one die in the effect, or in the, in the—

JACK: Yeah, I'll do that.

AUSTIN: Alright, so spend the stress.

JACK: *[cross]* Cause this is a fairly stressful sit— what are the passengers doing right now?

AUSTIN: It's a mix of things. Screaming, digging through their wallets, most of them have backed away though, because the sword. The sword has made this like, a different situation than what's happening in the back car? Where like, oh yeah that was just a brawl, this is like, oh no this is a robbery, and these people are not up for a robbery.

JACK: I think also they're probably, they weren't expecting to see... Lance Commander Marielda, right?

AUSTIN: Mhm. Correct. Lance Sovereign, thank you.

JACK: Lance Sovereign. So I just roll one d6 here?

AUSTIN: Yep.

JACK: Good luck, Ali.

AUSTIN: Oof.

ALI: Fuck you...

AUSTIN: Oh, you rolled a two. You rolled a two! You... so we know that you've already resisted the damage, which is good. From the shot, but I think that the... I think it's just this really impotent thing.

JACK: It just goes bonk.

AUSTIN: Where, yeah, Lance Sovereign goes to shoot at, at what are the two, it's Edmund and...

JACK: Ethan.

AUSTIN: Ethan. Which one is the one standing up with the saber?

JACK: Ethan is the swordfighter.

AUSTIN: Alright so, goes to shoot Ethan, and then Edmund throws a cat statue at Thackeray, and it hits him in the chest and then falls to the ground. And like, he doesn't shoot, but he's just kind of like... looking between the two of you, I forgot that you guys couldn't see my face for a second. *[laughter]* Looking between the two of you, and is like... aiming his gun back and forth between the two.

JACK: And I think at this point, both twins look over at each other like

JACK (as Hitchcock): Aaah Thackeray! It's hey, hey! It's been a long time, hey Thackeray.

AUSTIN: Well, he turns his gun on the one on the ground and shoots, like this isn't? He isn't here to *talk* to you. Give me another—

JACK: Oh I don't think they care.

AUSTIN: Prowess, give me another Prowess Resistance.

JACK: Okay.

AUSTIN: Or else take three damage again.

JACK: Okay. Ali I haven't destroyed your cat.

AUSTIN: No, your cat's fine, your cat's fine.

JACK: Your cat's fine.

ALI: Okay.

JACK: It just went bonk.

ALI: Okay. I was afraid it was gonna shatter.

DRE: *[cross] [laughs]* Bonk.

AUSTIN: It's not gonna shatter from that.

ALI: Okay.

AUSTIN: I won't, I won't do that.

ALI: Yeah.

JACK: *[cross]* Two stress?

AUSTIN: Take two more stress!

DRE: Oh, buddy.

AUSTIN: Where are you at on stress, by the way?

JACK: Six!

AUSTIN: Oh! You get to ten and then you take some trauma, that's cool. This time I think the blast goes off, and drills a hole down, you can just like look down into Hell's Parish and see like, the city rolling slowly by through a, through a fist-sized hole in ground. Let's jump back to Castille, who has now come back into the main car and hears gunfire? And again, I wanna be clear because for people who maybe did not hear the holiday special last year, this isn't just a gun, this is shooting like, long bolts of energy of like, sunlight. But like, material sunlight.

SYLVIA: Yeah.

AUSTIN: It's great.

SYLVIA: Quick question about Castille.

AUSTIN: Sure.

SYLVIA: Did she just leave me in there?

AUSTIN: Yeah.

SYLVIA: Okay.

ALI: Yeah.

AUSTIN: That's what happened.

ALI: Uh huh! Yeah.

SYLVIA: Rude.

AUSTIN: You can all wake up at the same time, it's gonna be great.

ALI: *[cross]* Yeah, you'll be fine.

SYLVIA: Oh boy.

AUSTIN: Castille, what are you doing?

ALI: Sige, what do you think is our next step here?

AUSTIN: Boom! There's gunfire coming from the next car!

DRE: I mean Sige is, Sige's move is to run towards the gunfire.

ALI: Okay. Then I run after you.

AUSTIN: Alright, you go into that next car, and there is... there's a man standing over your friend, Edmund Hitchcock, shooting down a gun at him, you recognize him immediately, Noble Sovereign is like... like, the uniform is recognizable even though you don't know the man. And then you also notice there's another one of your friend, who is holding a saber, pointing it at him. And then when you two come in, Thackeray takes a step back, not like, he takes a step back like it's a dance move. Like, it's like it's choreographed. It isn't a retreat, it's like, a tactical and

aesthetic move he's making. And then he reaches back with one of his hands and opens the door, and you can hear as the pala-din in the other room come awake.

And there's something else. Outside of the windows, you can see that up ahead, or like, not up ahead I guess, like over to the side, there is another train track that is coming out of the ground, and this one is getting close to that train track. And it's not just going to, to hook up, it's then going to like, break off and go in a different direction altogether. And you look at the other side of the window and see that the other track goes back up north to Chrysanthemum Parish, and the, the new one heads down to the factories. And the car itself, that you are in, begins to split and reconfigure itself as the pala-din march onto it, two by two.

This... it's happening slowly because the engine is moving slowly, like the actual train is moving much slower than it's supposed to be right now. And so you can see it happening as if it's in slow motion, even though it isn't in slow motion, even though this is happening in real time, it looks like the, the, it's a very smooth cut. It isn't like it's breaking open, it's just like it's a, it's almost like a line of demarcation that's being opened up naturally, the way it's like, was built to have that happen? And you can see little additional bits of flooring like, come into being on each side as the train gets broader and separates itself down the middle. Does that make sense? Like, so it's splitting, but then both sides of the split car are also growing back like the flooring underneath it. So it's almost as if it's splitting and repairing itself into two different cars. And it looks like the area ahead of you is also doing that.

DRE: *[cross]* Oh, that's bad.

AUSTIN: It's not, here's why it's bad. Because nothing you did during the prep phrase, as far as I know, and again we could flash back but like, you didn't know this was gonna happen. So, new things are always scary. So despite the cars being split in half, Thackeray is not quite done yet, like Thackeray keeps his feet, and he starts going towards the... he like, steps past the Hitchcock that's on the ground, and draws his saber and is like, charging at the other Hitchcock across this luncheon car, looking to close distance. What do you do?

JACK: What's trance powder?

AUSTIN: Do— do you have some?

JACK: It's on my items list.

AUSTIN: Then yeah, you totally have some trance powder, what is it? Actually, let's ask Aubrey. Aubrey would know what that is.

JACK: *[cross]* Yeah, that's true.

AUSTIN: As our, as our resident alchemist.

SYLVIA: Yes, hello. Uh, trance powder. It kinda... does what it says, right?

AUSTIN: Does what it says, yeah. I think that that's fair.

SYLVIA: Yeah, like it's a very literally named thing, it sort of sends you into a very peaceful sort of trance for a short period of time, when inhaled. It's a, you just sort of like, pocket sand it at somebody if you wanted?

AUSTIN: Yeah. Alright.

SYLVIA: Or if you're just having a bad night.

AUSTIN: That's totally—

SYLVIA: Huff some pocket sand.

AUSTIN: Knock you right out, it's safe!

SYLVIA: Yeah.

AUSTIN: No long-lasting effects, right?

SYLVIA: I mean, in moderation.

AUSTIN: Everything.

SYLVIA: Everything in moderation.

JACK: Okay. I'd like to try and trance powder Thackeray, please?

AUSTIN: How are you doing it, like what's that look like?

JACK: So... Ethan Hitchcock, who is the, the Hitchcock that Thackeray is charging right now, I think. And I'm probably gonna have to roll for this.

AUSTIN: Oh yeah.

JACK: But I think what happens—

AUSTIN: Oh yes, you are going to have to roll for it.

[laughter]

JACK: Shall I roll and then narrate, or?

AUSTIN: No, no, no. Narrate what you wanna do.

JACK: Okay, what I want to do.

AUSTIN: Yes.

JACK: What I wanna do is make that I'm going to try and parry his strike, but instead almost like, like the carnival barkers in Tudor times or whatever just step forward and blow the powder into his face?

AUSTIN: Okay. That sounds like... Hm. Either Prowl or Hunt, probably?

JACK: Okay.

AUSTIN: Probably Prowl, cause Hunt is from a distance, it's like shooting from a long way apart.

DRE: Can I attempt to assist Jack in this?

AUSTIN: Totally. So the, teamwork works like, there's a couple things you can do for teamwork here. One, you can assist by taking one stress, which in exchange you'll give another player plus one D, like one dice. You will also suffer consequences of the roll. So if Jack fails, there you go. Only one person can do an assist. You can also lead a group action, which is like, I'm gonna be the person who takes the lead here, that's obviously not what's happening here so we can come back to that. You can face danger for a teammate, where you take consequences for somebody else and then try to resist if you want, and you can set up another character with your actions, so you can do a roll that then if you achieve it, gives the other team member either a greater effect when they try to do something, or a better position for trying to get it done. So what are you doing to help?

DRE: I think I'm basically just attacking this person from the back, just to kind of distract them?

AUSTIN: You are in front of him also.

DRE: Oh, am I?

AUSTIN: Yeah, absolutely, yeah.

DRE: Okay.

AUSTIN: He is coming from the east of this car, he's coming from the front of this car back to you guys.

DRE: Okay.

AUSTIN: Cause you're, so Sige and Castille you're standing near Ethan, Edmund is the one who's on the ground near the cat.

DRE: Gotcha.

AUSTIN: And Thackeray is kind of charging down car towards you all, so you're not behind him.

DRE: Okay. Well then I'll just, I just wanna like, charge him head on so that he is distracted, so that he maybe won't notice Hitchcock trying to pocket sand him?

AUSTIN: Okay, what I'll say is you will be... if, if, you will be in the same basic place where the pocket sand goes.

JACK: Great! Let's do it!

AUSTIN: Like you can't— you, unless, here's what I'll say, if you take an extra stress, I'll, I'll let be known that this is like, a thing you've done before? So you know to hold your breath.

DRE: So that would be two stress instead of one?

AUSTIN: Take two stress and that means that you can do this without— you'll give, you'll give Hitchcock an extra dice and you won't be, you'll still be at risk if the roll fails, do you know what I mean, like but if, but by default you won't actually just pass out from this trance powder.

DRE: What are you having Jack roll for this?

JACK: Prowl? Which I currently have zero in, so if you help me I'll have one.

AUSTIN: That's good, because if you had zero, it would be very bad.

JACK: Yes.

[Dre laughs]

AUSTIN: Cause—

JACK: I'm just saying that going in here Dre, Sige is basically providing me with the dice at this point.

[Dre laughs]

AUSTIN: Listen. That is useful, cause remember you can do any— you can try to do anything, it's just that if you have no skill in it, you roll two dice and take the lower one, so even having one helps a lot. What I'm gonna say is that this is, this is risky?

JACK: It sounds like it!

AUSTIN: What you're doing, so what you're doing is from a risky position... and I'm gonna say that you're gonna have standard effect. Because the things that make Thackeray good don't really come into play here, like he's just as susceptible to trance powder as any other like, action hero character would be. But more than most other people, but less—

JACK: Wait a second. I have a question here, Austin.

AUSTIN: Sure!

DRE: I like this two stress thing cause it's almost like it's, it's also invoking a flashback.

AUSTIN: Yes, totally, that's—

DRE: It's like, see like Sige and Hitchcock like, being like, okay no, I move like *this* and then you blow, and like just a bunch of scenes of Sige just falling over—

AUSTIN: *[laughing]* Passing the fuck out?

[laughter]

DRE: Cause he accidentally inhaled the trance powder. Or just being like, no, I can take it it's fine, just fuckin' blow away.

AUSTIN: Yep! Totally.

JACK: Oh man, Sige probably doesn't know if he's even practiced it with this, with *this* person, either.

DRE: No, yeah.

AUSTIN: Right! That's really good too! I love it so much!

JACK: And maybe he hasn't, let's see!

AUSTIN: Let's find out. *[laughter]* And remember so, just, before you roll Jack, you can also take one extra stress for—

JACK: I'm extremely stressed right now, Austin.

AUSTIN: Okay. Okay! Okay well then, make your roll.

JACK: *[groans]* Not good.

AUSTIN: *[cross]* Buddy. No.

JACK: Sorry.

AUSTIN: You didn't do it, you got a three.

DRE: *[cross]* Sleepy time.

AUSTIN: So, on a one to a three, things go badly, you suffer harm, a complication occurs, you end up in a desperate position, or you lose this opportunity for action. You... go to throw it but before you can— cause no, the thing you said was like, you're gonna parry his blow and then throw it, right?

JACK: Appear to parry his blow, yeah.

AUSTIN: Well what's that look like? Like what do you mean by appear to parry his blow?

JACK: I think it's like a feint, right? Like I think I'm making him think my arm is gonna be in one place and it's in another place.

AUSTIN: When you go to move your arm to the other place, his sword is there. So take, and I think you get like, your arm is slashed open.

JACK: Okay.

AUSTIN: And Dre? The sleeping powder goes towards you. The trance powder, you run right into it headfirst. So. We're gonna talk about what consequences and harm look like, now.

[Ali laughs]

DRE: *[cross]* We're a good gang. We're the best.

JACK: *[cross]* I think, I think Edmund Hitchcock on the floor is just like, has put his head in his hands as he's just watching his brother.

AUSTIN: *[laughs]* Alright, so when you take harm, anytime there's a consequence you can try to resist that consequence, but let's talk about harm right now. I'm gonna try to do a better job this

game, or this session, of like explaining how these rules work so that people at home can follow along and so that, now that I've said them out loud, I'll have internalized them a little bit better. But, there are three levels of harm. The first level, like lowest level is what you're about to receive, Hitchcock. You're going to have like, bleeding. And that will give you a reduced effect which means that going forward in scenes, instead of, when I say oh yeah, this is a standard—you'll do standard effect on this, you'll actually only do limited effect, when it's relevant.

JACK: Okay.

AUSTIN: Or, you could try to resist. So the same thing for you, Dre, Sige, the thing that you'll have is, if you fail to resist, you'll be knocked out for the rest of this scene. Or not, yeah, if you don't try to resist this, you'll be knocked out. And so the way this game works is like, I've given you what the, what the consequences are, and now you get to decide, no, no, no that's not what happened, I'm gonna resist that, because I'm a rad hero. Cause I'm like an adventurer and a scoundrel, I have the trick up my sleeve. So. Let's start with Hitchcock. Is your arm cut open? Are you bleeding?

JACK: I think it is.

AUSTIN: Okay, so then add "bleeding" to the first level of harm.

JACK: *[cross]* Which arm is this? Is this my sword hand?

AUSTIN: It doesn't matter. You're, it means for the rest of the scene, any time that like, any time that you do like, physically stuff you're gonna have a reduced effect for it.

JACK: *[cross]* Gonna have a bad time.

AUSTIN: Yeah, because, because you're suffering. Alright, what about you, Sige?

DRE: Yeah, I'll resist.

AUSTIN: What's that look like as the powder drifts up to your nose. Is this you just, like even though it came in early, you were still able to like, hold your breath in time?

DRE: I think it's like, I held my breath at the last second so there's still some up there and he's like, staggering to keep his footing and like, blowing very strongly out of his nose to try and force it out of his system. It's not graceful looking.

AUSTIN: Oh yeah, like— right, no, there's something bullish about it. Alright, so then, so then when you try to resist a consequence, I'll just read this— "when a PC suffers a consequence, the player may choose to resist it. Describe how the character resists, then roll using one of the PC's attributes, the character suffers six stress minus the highest die result to resist a

consequence." In this case, I think it's Prowess? It's consequence from physical strain or injury. Even though this is a thing that knocks you out, it does so physically, so like, it's not like it's like a mental stress thing. Four! That's, oh wait no, you take four stress, that's bad.

DRE: Yeah. That's bad.

AUSTIN: You only rolled a two. So. Oh, buddy. And remember, once you hit ten stress, you take trauma, which is a permanent thing that you'll have. Alright.

DRE: So I'm at six, now.

AUSTIN: So that means— I like this as like, it's you like, stumbling for a second, and like, keeping your bearing, and then we cut to Aubrey. So you're coming to—

SYLVIA: Oh boy.

AUSTIN: At the same time that Peg and Zaktrak are. What do you do? The engine is like— you can hear like the engine is making a, it used to be like, *[steady train engine sound]*, and now instead of that it's just like *[stuttering and slow train engine sound]*. And it's like, it's not doing great back here.

SYLVIA: I don't wanna try throwing things again, cause that didn't go well last time.

AUSTIN: But you're like, literally waking up, you're *just* standing up right now.

SYLVIA: *[cross]* Yeah.

AUSTIN: So like, what's the first thing Aubrey does?

SYLVIA: Like, first thing she notices, and is the engine, cause that's what her job was, was to get the engine taken care of. And... I think then, she notices the... probably pretty angry weaver and cobbler also in the cart?

AUSTIN: Mhm. That's true. So what's she do, I'm giving you the initiative here. In other words you get to do a thing here.

SYLVIA: Yeah, I'm... I think what she does is she like, grabs another like, vial from her pocket and just sorta holds it up in the air and like, keeps her hand over it so they can't see what's in it, and is just like,

SYLVIA (as Aubrey): Okay! Just— stay, stay where you are. Please. And we'll forget this whole thing happened.

AUSTIN: So this sounds like a Sway to me?

SYLVIA: Oh, great, I have zero in that.

AUSTIN: Oh no, that's— oh, did you not, you didn't put your point into sway, your crew point?

SYLVIA: No. Consort. Yeah.

AUSTIN: Yeah, and you're not doing that, I don't think you're—

SYLVIA: No, I'm not doing that at all. No, I'll totally roll zero on it.

AUSTIN: No, you're commanding. This is Command. This int—

SYLVIA: Okay, also zero, so.

[Dre laughs]

AUSTIN: Well. This is— this is—

SYLVIA: Aubrey is not a talker. She's not a talker!

AUSTIN: This is definitely intimidation and threat, right?

SYLVIA: Yeah, totally.

AUSTIN: Alright so, I'm going to, I'm actually again gonna zoom in on the book for a second that, that can help explain what, how action rolls work? So, any time that you have an obstacle in your way, you roll an action roll. And some action rolls are simple things, up until now we've basically only done simple action rolls? And those mean like, it's a single roll, you succeed or you fail. There are also complex actions, and this is the thing, this is the way this game kind of works in a, in a neat way? Is the, is that the... there are certain things that just like take a couple of, they take multiple steps to deal with, right? So I'm gonna make a new clock that represents Zaktrak and Peg. And they're a... this game calls this like, a complex thing? And what that means is you need to get four successes, basically, to deal with them.

SYLVIA: Okay.

AUSTIN: And you can get those any way you want, right? Like, that could be you stab them, and then they're not a problem anymore. That could mean that you convince them with a really good roll. It could mean that you just run away from them and like, escape them. So they, so for them, you need four successes, for like, clarity, or for like to kind of... show some other things

happening like, Thackeray has eight successes that you need to deal with Thackeray. So, let's try this Command with Zaktrak and Peg and see how that goes.

SYLVIA: Okay. I'm assuming it's either—

AUSTIN: I'm gonna say, I'm gonna again say that this is risky?

SYLVIA: Yeah. And...

AUSTIN: But here's one thing I will say is, I will give you a, an additional effect bonus because you've already knocked them out once.

SYLVIA: Okay.

AUSTIN: So that's like an extra factor that, because you are just like, they know that you're not joking. You could totally knock them the fuck out again. So take plus one dice from that.

SYLVIA: Standard effect?

AUSTIN: No, this'll be a great effect.

SYLVIA: Great effect.

AUSTIN: That's the, that's because they already, you've already threatened them once, basically.

SYLVIA: And then, one extra dice?

AUSTIN: One extra dice.

SYLVIA: What's up!

AUSTIN: Alright, hey, you got a five! That's pretty— that's pretty good. So you do it, but there is a consequence, you suffer harm, a complication occurs, you have reduced effect or you end up in a desperate position. So the way that also means that you got great effect, which means that I mark three ticks, which you can see leaves them with one. So I think that they put their hands up and they're like, "Okay." I think, let me make sure I get my voices right and, and actually describe them. Zaktrak you might recall had previously been like, saved by Peg from falling outside of the train? And she now has like her arm— she like, he fell into her weird long arms? And he's like, helping her up and they're both like, stepping back into the corner away from you and your vial. But... they hit a button near the back door and the door out of the engine room gets like a, a bars slide down locking you in with them.

AUSTIN (as Zaktrak): *[distressed]* Now, it's— it's— we don't mean any harm but we have our jobs! We can't lose these jobs!

SYLVIA (as Aubrey): Okay— okay. I... guys, I get it. I get it! You need your jobs.

AUSTIN (as Zaktrak): Just stay right there, the pala-din will be here soon, they won't hurt you—

SYLVIA (as Aubrey): Yeah, that's— they, okay, come on. Come on.

AUSTIN (as Zaktrak): Okay...

SYLVIA (as Aubrey): They, they will.

AUSTIN (as Zaktrak): They will.

SYLVIA (as Aubrey): So here's what I need from you guys, and nothing bad's gonna happen if you stay there..

SYLVIA: And she like, holds up the vial, like makes a show of the vial again. Still covering to show that it's actually very empty. *[Austin laughs]* But she's like okay! With her hands like, covering they can basically just see the cork part of it.

SYLVIA (as Aubrey): You two just stay over there.

AUSTIN: Peg's arms, like while you do this Peg's arms are like weaving through the air at the outside of your peripheral vision like she's like, trying to find a place where she knows you can't see, very clearly.

SYLVIA: So wait, can I see that she's doing this?

AUSTIN: Oh yeah, she's like not super good at this. But she—

SYLVIA (as Aubrey): Peg! Peg.

AUSTIN: They like, like what's the thing, they like slinkies, kind of come back in towards her? But they can't come all the way back in cause they're not like slinkies, there isn't a compressed form of her, so they just come in and like, hang on the— they go like, flop on the ground in front of her.

SYLVIA (as Aubrey): I just— okay, I need to get out of here. I need to— *[sighs]* Look, you guys totally have an excuse for everything that happened, like, just, I knocked you out, it's— the, there's residue.

SYLVIA: And she like, Aubrey's pointing at like, like this blue-ish stain on the ground.

SYLVIA (as Aubrey): No one's gonna fault you for that. So... I just need to deal with these—

SYLVIA: And she points at the bars behind her. As like,

SYLVIA (as Aubrey): So...

AUSTIN (as Peg): Why do you make things worse for us?

SYLVIA (as Aubrey): I'm not— Listen. I'm trying to do a job too.

AUSTIN (as Peg): You know how *hard* it is.

AUSTIN: Says Peg.

AUSTIN (as Peg): For people like us in Marielda. Why do you ruin things? We work hard to get here.

AUSTIN: And she like, steps forward past Zaktrak, and like, pushes, pushes him back with one of her arms and like, keeps pushing cause her arm is really long and like, also her strides are really hard to predict. Like she steps in strange, at strange distances because she can and she knows it'll throw you off. And she's also lumbering right, like she's really, she's taller than this room has room for, it's why she works underneath it. And like, when she stands up at her whole height, she has to crouch over a little bit? It's a little terrifying. Take Intimidated as she gets closer to you as a reduced effect level one harm, or resist. Or do something else. In, in response to this. You would resist with Resolve, which is, which lets you resist mental strain with your willpower.

SYLVIA: Yeah. Can I do another... flashback to prep something or are we already—

AUSTIN: Totally, always.

SYLVIA: Okay, cool.

AUSTIN: Always, always, always. What's the scene?

SYLVIA: So...

AUSTIN: Paint me a, paint me a picture.

SYLVIA: So they're— this is one of those things that I think Aubrey was talking to someone and they were talking about how this could be, there's a lot of security and this could be dangerous, and Aubrey's not super one for confrontation? As is pretty obvious. But she also really doesn't like hurting people, so this is her trying to make a... mild poison called choke dust.

[30:12]

AUSTIN: Ooh.

SYLVIA: But this is her trying to make a... it's not, it's already only fatal in high doses, but this is her trying to make a even more sort of reduced one so it only incapacitates temporarily?

AUSTIN: Okay. So that sounds like a Tinker check to me?

SYLVIA: Yeah.

AUSTIN: I'll give you controlled there, because it was— so, I'll say spend, spend the one stress to get a flashback.

SYLVIA: Totally.

AUSTIN: And then, and then it's a controlled and it's just a regular roll. So, it doesn't matter, like standard is fine.

SYLVIA: Five.

AUSTIN: Alright.... So you, here's what I'll say is, you totally can do it, but it actually takes up, it, you can have it, but it will take up both of your remaining vial slots.

SYLVIA: *[cross]* Okay.

AUSTIN: You basically had to, you have like, the poison, and then you have like a real light antidote that you throw at the same time that brings down the effect so that it doesn't hurt somebody.

SYLVIA: Okay.

AUSTIN: So you throw— you have to throw both of them at the same time.

SYLVIA: Do I have to roll to do this? Or...

AUSTIN: Yeah, you have to definitely roll to actually get the effect here.

SYLVIA: *[cross]* Okay, would that also—

AUSTIN: Again, I think that it's probably... so I'll read Prowl, Prowl is, is ambush with close violence, a backstab, throat-cutting blackjack et cetera, it's either that or it's skirmish with an opponent in close combat, assault or hold a position, brawl and wrestle? But like, I feel like aha, I got you with my secret, you know, poison thing, feels like Prowl to me.

SYLVIA: Yeah. Okay. That's also zero, so.

AUSTIN: Either roll it with zero, in which case you'd roll two and take the lowest one, or you can spend a stress to get a die.

SYLVIA: I'm pretty low on stress right now, so I'll spend one cause I make terrible decisions.

AUSTIN: Okay. No, that's, that's how this game is.

SYLVIA: So risky, I'm assuming?

AUSTIN: Risky, yeah. Most things are risky by default, and standard.

SYLVIA: Yeah. Standard as well?

AUSTIN: Yep.

SYLVIA: And then... one extra die.

AUSTIN: Yeah.

SYLVIA: Okay, three.

AUSTIN: Three is not, three is a failure, unfortunately.

SYLVIA: Three is a failure, yep.

AUSTIN: Yep! You go to throw, but your, before you can get the second one out, like, you have it like, I think it's like a really good shot of you like, holding up the one and like, shaking it, the fake one? While you're like slowly reaching into your back pouch to get the other two and you're holding them between your two fingers, or between like three fingers, you know what I mean? Like one vial between each, each one. And you're *just* about to throw it out, and you throw them both and the antidote cracks on Peg's skin, and then she catches the poison one. She shoves it in your face.

SYLVIA: Oh....

AUSTIN: Like, smashes it against your face. Take... Choking as a reduced— actually, that sounds... Hm. I think, take that as a level one harm, reduced effect. You don't have anything that like, protects you from your own poisons, or anything like that, right?

SYLVIA: Not right now, no.

AUSTIN: Okay. That— is that a thing that you could get?

SYLVIA: That's a thing later, it also lets me secrete it from my body.

AUSTIN: Oh.

SYLVIA: It's a pretty dope skill. But I don't have it.

AUSTIN: That's real good to have... What— that— this, let's be clear, this game doesn't just *have* cobbins in it, so that's a thing *people* can do in Blades in the Dark?

[laughter]

SYLVIA: "Choose a drug or poison to which you are immune, take one stress to secrete it through your skin or saliva or exhale it as a vapor."

AUSTIN: Yo!

SYLVIA: Yeah, it's dope.

AUSTIN: Uhhh, okay. Let's move back to the other car as you start coughing and like, reaching back and grabbing those bars and pulling on them and trying to open them. What's going on Castille?

ALI: I'm a little shaky on the rules still, but does... this game have like, an Assess? Like we used to?

AUSTIN: Like in terms of just like, what am I missing, that sort of thing? Yeah, Study, "study a person, document, or item," maybe, or no, Survey. "Survey a location or situation to understand what's going on, sense trouble before it happens, gather information about opportunities or exploits." Totally.

ALI: Okay. Cause I just saw this guy cut into my pal.

AUSTIN: Yeah.

ALI: So, I would like to Survey him, to see how I could hurt him the best?

AUSTIN: Totally, I think there's even like, a really good, go ahead and give me just a Survey check. I think this'll be simple, there's no like, alright. Good job, rolled a five. Alright so you are, so, controlled when you roll a four or five, you do it, but there's a consequence, it takes extra time, you have reduced effect, you suffer lesser harm or you end up in a risky position. So, you are, what's it look like when you're studying him? Like, what's, what's the actual... what does Castille do, is she just like standing still looking at him?

ALI: I think so, yeah.

AUSTIN: Okay, well that's really good, because as you look at him, there's two things you notice like, one, he has on this really, his like, you notice that his coat, he has on his like, Lancer Sovereign coat? Which changes color as light hits it? Like sometimes it's this deep purple, and other times it's almost like a bright orange? And you notice that in the skirmish that's happening, there's a moment when someone like, maybe even Sige like, hits into him, like maybe Sige caught a bit of him before, and you see like a spark of light when it hits. And so what you know is that he has on... this jacket that will protect him from physical attacks. So I will reveal this second clock of his, is... is his jacket. Which will, you'll have to get through if you hope to overcome him through physical defense. Or physical attacks. On the other hand, the thing you don't notice is that as the train car splits in two, it's splitting directly under you. Also the rest of the passengers don't seem bothered by this at all? They just like very smoothly move to one side or the other of the car. They're more... I guess they're actually more concerned about the fight that's happening. So they're not like, no one's, no one's like 'Oh my God the car is splitting in two!' They're just like oh my God that guy has a like, oh my God it's Thackeray, who are these ruffians, et cetera. You know? So now you, but underneath you is nothing. And your legs are kind of being pulled in two different directions as below you, all of Hell Parish comes into view. What do you do?

ALI: I have the Spider Climb ability?

AUSTIN: Oh, awesome, what's that do?

ALI: I think that it just lets me like, hook onto walls.

AUSTIN: Totally.

ALI: Can I jump to one of the walls?

AUSTIN: Mhm.

ALI: Okay. I will do that.

AUSTIN: Give me a, a check for it. It is... actually, you know what, I'm just gonna let you do it because it's terrifying?

ALI: *[laughing]* Okay.

AUSTIN: And you just like, what are you wearing? What's like, your clothing, I know you have that hat on, what's the rest of your clothing?

ALI: Okay. Yes, so I have a big floppy hat, everybody thinks that I'm a human, I have like a dress on like a turtleneck dress, long sleeves, so it like covers most of her body, and like a vest over that, that's like—

AUSTIN: *[cross]* Okay. What color is the dress?

ALI: Green.

AUSTIN: Okay so green vest, pale white marble skin with a like, obsidian scarring through it.

ALI: Yeah.

AUSTIN: The hat comes straight off, are you kidding me, like you jump onto the side of a train car, and you're hanging from it like a gremlin. *[laughter]* So yeah, that comes right the fuck off. What's your hair situation? Are you bald?

ALI: I think I have like, one of those cool like, marble updos?

AUSTIN: Okay, yeah, that's good, I like that. That looks good as hell. For that matter, what—Sige, what are you wearing?

DRE: Oh, um. I don't know I—

AUSTIN: Cause I've just been picturing Mark Henry in his like, in his like, one piece, basically.

DRE: *[laughs]* Remember, it's if Mark Henry joined the Vaudevillains, so...

AUSTIN: Okay, sorry.

DRE: I think he's wearing his like, his normal clothes with like, like... he's dressed like a bare knuckle boxer, maybe add some suspenders on there.

AUSTIN: Okay, cool.

ALI: Wait, wait wait, does he, he had the undercut?

AUSTIN: Oh yeah, does he have—?

DRE: I haven't thought about what kind of hair Sige has.

AUSTIN: I kinda want him to have an undercut.

DRE: *[cross]* I'm good with that.

AUSTIN: I want him to be a big black dude with a dope undercut!

ALI: Yeah.

DRE: I'm good with that.

AUSTIN: Alright, good. That's a look. And then we've talked about Hitchcock's like, cavalry coat situation, is that what he's wearing? They, is what they, both of them are wearing?

JACK: Yeah.

AUSTIN: Okay. Alright so you jump off to that one side, Thackeray has now, seeing the two Hitchcocks split up, *and* seeing like, everyone distracted, and seeing where the car is splitting, he actually like, sheathes his saber and starts running to the back of the engine, or back of the car like, he goes to get out of this room into the next one before it splits, cause that's his real concern, more than you at this point.

ALI: Oh, perfect.

AUSTIN: So you're just letting him go?

ALI: The stuff we want is forward, right?

AUSTIN: You tell me.

[Ali laughs]

JACK: I mean, where's Thackeray going? Like I mean like, what's Thackeray— that's mostly rhetorical, what's Thackeray's intention at this point?

AUSTIN: He wants to— you don't know that.

JACK: Yeah like, should we be concerned that Thackeray is aiming for somewhere?

ALI: *[cross]* I mean, from like, context clues, he's going to check on the engine. Right?

AUSTIN: Mhm, yes, he came back to start checking on the engine and just happened to run into you. And what he— he like seethes, and is just like,

AUSTIN (as Thackeray): I don't have time for you!

AUSTIN: Before moving back into the first of the two hell cars.

JACK: *[laughs]* Wait a second, so what happens is he comes through a door, one man throws a cat at him, he draws his sword and fires a gun at another man.

[laughter]

AUSTIN: Yeah, uh huh!

JACK: He runs towards the second man, who blows poison powder directly into the face of his gigantic friend. The train splits and a woman made of marble springs to the other carriage, and then he just goes like, alright, that's it.

AUSTIN: Right. So like the thing that you actually— the thing that happened there though actually is, when Castille jumped away, she cleared the way for him to move forward.

JACK: *[laughs]* Great.

AUSTIN: Because she was standing in the doorway before, and has now cleared off, so now he can just move forward. He's a very single-minded man.

JACK: *[cross]* Fantastic.

DRE: Oh, so he's headed towards the engine.

AUSTIN: Yes.

DRE: Oh, that's bad. Aubrey's back there.

AUSTIN: *[cross]* But coming in the back door... are five pala— or it's five pala-din are moving into this, this room towards you. And you can see past them that there are more in the next room. But the ones in the next room or the next train car have not, they're not like, activated? Only these five are.

JACK: Okay.

AUSTIN: This is all going real well for you all.

JACK: So, so Ethan Hitchcock, who is the guy who was cut by Thackeray, I think, is going to try and chase Thackeray into hell car two.

AUSTIN: Okay.

JACK: Probably while shouting:

JACK (as Hitchcock): Aubrey! Aubrey, don't let him in!

[Dre laughs]

AUSTIN: Don't let him in? Like it's Aubrey's— oh boy. Good.

SYLVIA: I'll do my best!

AUSTIN: Buddy. There are a bunch of people in that next car who are just like, sliding out of the way as Thackeray walks past. Everyone knows who this dude is, obviously. So at this point, I'm gonna move the cat, who is the only one left in the north, into this second car. So how are you stopping him at all, Hitchcock?

JACK: I mean how close to him am I?

AUSTIN: As close as you want to be. Like he's, he's ten feet in front of you, twenty feet in front of you, that's a closeable distance, he's just marching like, at a, at a determined pace towards the engine room.

JACK: Actually, I don't think so, cause I think the risk of trying to sort of tackle Lance Sovereign Marielda in a car full of people...

AUSTIN: Yep.

JACK: Who were getting out of the way of him a second ago? Probably not a great idea.

AUSTIN: Might not be great.

JACK: So I think I'm just following him at pace.

AUSTIN: Okay. Aubrey, what are you doing?

SYLVIA: Choking.

AUSTIN: So, but you can still do— you're not incapacitated.

SYLVIA: No, no, I know, I know.

AUSTIN: So you're choking, and, and Zaktrak is just so terrified but you've just pissed Peg off to no end. But while you're choking, she goes over and begins to, to stabilize and begins to speed the engine back up. So she, I've removed a tick from the train engine, like the stop train engine thing.

SYLVIA: Okay.

AUSTIN: So the, the train, everybody else? Starts picking up a little bit quicker, and the split continues going down towards the back of the, of the train.

SYLVIA: Is there anything that I can try and sabotage basically while I am coughing to make them seem that I'm just like, trying to crawl away?

AUSTIN: You could do a linked check where you could do Prowl and then Wreck?

SYLVIA: Okay.

AUSTIN: But what are you looking to sabotage?

SYLVIA: I'm looking to just straight up slow the train down, or if I can, stop it.

AUSTIN: Yeah, like you can give— you can kind of like really shadily kind of just like, rest your body on the side of the, of the like, room on an engine component?

SYLVIA: Yeah.

AUSTIN: And then try to kind of clandestinely... mess with it. But you have to give me a prowling first.

SYLVIA: Okay.

AUSTIN: Risky, risky standard.

SYLVIA: Wish me luck. *[blows a raspberry]*

AUSTIN: Not good, my friend.

SYLVIA: That's two, yeah.

AUSTIN: It is a two. Things go badly, you suffer harm, a complication occurs, you end up in a desperate position, you lose this opportunity for action. I think Peg sees you, and like, as she is like, wrenching a thing with one hand like, reaches back and grabs you and places you in the center of the room. You don't have this opportunity anymore. There's no, you don't take damage or anything, but like she like—

AUSTIN (as Peg): Stay where I can see you.

AUSTIN: Zaktrak is like,

AUSTIN (as Zaktrak): She's not— She's, you really shouldn't have upset her, she's really nice.

AUSTIN: And then, you, a light turns on next to the door. It is a... what color light would it be, and what's it even look like? It's a... It's like a crystal that's inlaid around the doorframe, lights up red, and Peg and Zaktrak immediately stop what they're doing and salute. God, what's a salute look like in this world? Jack, what's saluting look like? Like a military, like what do you do when you salute a military officer in Marielda?

JACK: I think it's almost like military snapping to attention, you know, like one hand is behind your back, and one hand is raised in a salute, like to your forehead.

AUSTIN: Okay. So remember Peg's—

JACK: *[cross]* Oh, God.

AUSTIN: One of Peg's arms is like a giant, huge loop that goes out for a while before looping back over to the salute. And the other one— it's like, almost as if she's doing like, I'm a little teapot? There's like a very curvy, but it still looks— again you don't see the weavers stand up like this that often. And Thackeray walks in, Aubrey, and like... scans the room and then looks at you? And like...

AUSTIN (as Thackeray): Who is this?

AUSTIN: And then Zaktrak sort of stumbling, says

AUSTIN (as Zaktrak): She, she told us she was reporting, and she had all the right, she, she knew what to do, and she was helping at first until the knockout gas and then—

AUSTIN: And then Thackeray just sort of shoots Zaktrak a look like, just... ugh. You know what's gonna happen to Zaktrak now, like that's it for Zaktrak! Hitchcock, what are you doing?

JACK: Does Thackeray know I'm here?

AUSTIN: No. The cars that you just passed were very crowded, like the... the door is still open right now, there will be a moment at which it closes and then you'll have to then, sneaking in will be more difficult. You couldn't sneak in past him right now, like he's still close to the doors, but you could do something if you wanted to do something.

JACK: Is his... is his special strong boys coat—

AUSTIN: You don't know about that.

JACK: Oh, okay.

AUSTIN: Castille knows about that.

JACK: Okay. So I—

AUSTIN: Or you know that it's all shiny and weird, but that's all.

JACK: Okay, so I can—

AUSTIN: Unless you know about it from some other means and want to tell me how that is.

JACK: Can I ask a question and can you tell me whether or not you can answer it, and then I can maybe do a flashback based on that? Okay.

AUSTIN: *[cross]* Totally, of course.

JACK: Would I know whether or not his coat protects him from damage to his head?

AUSTIN: You wouldn't know. People talk about the Golden Lance as like, superheroes. Like... it's like, sorry. Not like superheroes, like the way people in comics talk about superheroes.

JACK: Right.

AUSTIN: Where it's like, "I heard you can't, I heard that he's made of electricity." "Oh yeah, well I heard he eats people for breakfast! Like actually eats people!"

JACK: "He's not a bird *or* a plane!"

AUSTIN: Right, exactly, like that's the, and so there's lots of rumors about what Lance Sovereign Marielda is like. Some people say Lance Sovereign is Samoths himself. Some people say that, that his hands are made of fire. Some people say that, that no one has ever seen him bleed. Some people say he cut off his own nose so that he never had to smell anything again, that's how cruel he is, he hates beauty so much he never wanted to smell a flower again. Which really just reinforces they don't know how smell works? So.

JACK: Man... oh, man. I wanna do a flashback where Hitchcock was drinking in a bar next to Zaktrak.

AUSTIN: Okay.

JACK: Is that just one stress?

AUSTIN: What's the... hm. It might be, what do you wanna do? Like what's the thing that you wanna get out of this?

JACK: I wanna get a level of familiarity.

AUSTIN: With Zaktrak?

JACK: With Zaktrak.

AUSTIN: So the way... these work it's kind of like, it depends on the potential level of like, not realism, but like, how likely is this that this actually happened?

JACK: *[cross]* Yeah. Right. I could make a good argument for how likely it is. Which is that, they sent Hitchcock to research the bars where the train engineers hang out, and instead he just got drunk?

AUSTIN: Oh, yeah that's pretty likely. Yeah, sure, go for it.

JACK: So, how many stress is that?

AUSTIN: That's nothing, that's zero stress for a normal action or which you had an easy opportunity.

JACK: Oh, okay. Sure.

AUSTIN: Where it's like yeah, if you're gonna, yeah that sounds right. One is like a complex action, two is an elaborate action that you had several special opportunities or contingencies.

JACK: So I suppose Zaktrak and I got to talking about, about... what Zaktrak does?

AUSTIN: Mhm.

JACK: And what exactly that entails. And I don't think I remember very much of it at all, but I think I left the conversation feeling warmly towards this cobbin, and I hope the cobbin left the conversation feeling warmly towards me.

AUSTIN: That to me sounds like a roll.

JACK: Oh, yes.

AUSTIN: I think that's probably Sway.

JACK: *[cross]* Those have always gone well for me.

AUSTIN: Yeah, that sounds like a controlled Sway. Mm.

JACK: Okay.

AUSTIN: Mmm. It's a risky Sway. Because it could've gone— cause you don't remember how it went.

JACK: Oh yeah! *[laughs]* So—

AUSTIN: And it's a standard— standard effect.

JACK: Oh, man, yeah. I think, I think this is absolutely news to Hitchcock as well.

AUSTIN: Right, right.

JACK: So Hitchcock and Zaktrak have just locked eyes and have just sort of been like... and we're about to find out.

AUSTIN: Yep! I like, I like roleplaying games a lot!

JACK: Yes!

AUSTIN: Rolled a six. Nice work.

JACK: So I wonder whether or not Zaktrak reveals to Hitchcock that he doesn't really like his job very much.

AUSTIN: Mhm.

JACK: Or that he's afraid of the management.

AUSTIN: I think what he, I mean, that's not the situation. He is afraid of management, but he's a cobbler working in Marielda, he's afraid of everything, like he's not— he has reason to be afraid of management. And he likes his job quite a bit, actually, that's what, I mean, likes working with Peg and he gets to work on, on the only he gets to work on the only crosstown train, he gets to be there on train day!

JACK: Right.

AUSTIN: But he... misses his family and the pay isn't great, and he just had a good time with you, like he, he, you... he trusts you.

JACK: Can he remember it?

AUSTIN: Yeah. And his eyes light up when he sees you. And he goes— did you give him your real name do you think?

JACK: I think, I think I told him I was just called Captain Hitchcock.

AUSTIN: God, I wonder if he even thinks that you're with Thackeray? *[laughter]* Why wouldn't he? So Thackeray walks in, and, and like, Peg goes to say something as you walk in behind Thackeray, and then Zaktrak is like—

AUSTIN (as Zaktrak): *[whispering]* No, no, no! They're together!

JACK: And I think that this is a real— this turn of events is a real surprise for Hitchcock.

AUSTIN: Uh huh!

JACK: So he's just sort of standing—

AUSTIN: He smiles at, Zaktrak smiles at you as if like, oh thank God, it's gonna be okay! Like, it's gonna be good cop bad cop but we have good cop here now! *[Ali laughs]* Also, the Zaktrak and Peg clock has filled, because now Zaktrak's your buddy and now like, they're on your team! Not on your team but like, you've overcome that obstacle.

JACK: Okay. Oh boy. Can I just sort of make a gesture at Zaktrak like, right? Okay? Let's do it Zaktrak! I don't know if that really comes across to him. I wanna try and—

AUSTIN: Sure. I mean, what are you trying to, what, talk to me in terms. What are you trying to get him to do?

JACK: I'm trying to get him to perform an action that gives us the upper hand.

AUSTIN: You have the upper hand!

JACK: Really?

AUSTIN: You're in a room with Thackeray, he doesn't know you're here!

JACK: Okay.

AUSTIN: There isn't a more of an upper hand to get with Thackeray.

JACK: There *isn't* more of an upper hand to get.

AUSTIN: Like, unless you tie him down somehow, like that's not, like, you know. What's the upper hand you get on Batman in this scenario, do you know what I mean? like. Especially cause like, Zaktrak is Zaktrak, he's not gonna attack Thackeray because you give him a look.

JACK: Okay, I want, I want Zaktrak to close the door.

AUSTIN: Okay. I think he just, you, how do you signal that?

JACK: I think I point at the door and mouth *[stage whisper]* "Close the door!"

AUSTIN: He like, just gives you a little nod and a wink, like yeah, I got you. And he goes over and he closes the door. And Thackeray is like—

AUSTIN (as Thackeray): Kobold, what did you just do?

AUSTIN: And he starts to turn to you, Hitchcock, he starts to turn around to look at the door. What do you do?

JACK: I wanna try and clobber him over the—

AUSTIN: *[cross]* Aubrey like, also can, yeah. Go ahead.

JACK: Oh, can you help me, Aubrey?

SYLVIA: Yeah, no, I was gonna— I'm waiting for a moment to jump in and assist.

JACK: Great, absolutely, I'm gonna try and clobber him over the head with the, so, Hitchcock's sabers are, they have metal hand guards that cover the hand completely, and I'm just gonna try and clobber him over the head with the hand guard.

AUSTIN: Alright, so, how are you helping, Aubrey? Aubrey, rather, how are you helping?

SYLVIA: Yeah, so... I was thinking Aubrey just kinda jumps and grabs him by like, the ankle or something to distract him a little?

AUSTIN: Okay. That sounds... do you wanna do that as an Assist or as a Setup?

SYLVIA: That... what's the difference?

AUSTIN: So, in Assist, the mechanical difference is if you assist, you give Jack one extra dice.

SYLVIA: Okay.

AUSTIN: Which means like, it's more likely he'll succeed, if you do a Setup, then it gives, it will give Hitchcock either plus one effect or an improved position? Which means that it can increase how— it's almost like, assist would give him better accuracy to so speak, and setup would give him more damage, like greater effect.

SYLVIA: I think... I'm gonna go with Assist purely because I am not a fighter.

AUSTIN: Okay, sure. So you just kind of like grab—

SYLVIA: *[cross]* Type of person, like she's not, she wouldn't be able to set anything up, she's just trying to be a distraction.

AUSTIN: *[laughing]* Okay, sounds good!

SYLVIA: Yeah, so do I take a stress for that? How does assisting work again?

AUSTIN: Yeah, when you do an assist, you... take one stress to give another player one dice. Setup also doesn't cause stress, you would just try to do a roll.

SYLVIA: Yeah, I figured, but this is actually the safer thing.

AUSTIN: On the plus side— yeah, on the plus side, you just take the stress and get the effect, so now, go ahead Hitchcock, give me the... God, I guess this is, this is probably Prowl. Because you're ambushing with close violence, you're not— this isn't a fight.

JACK: Oh no.

AUSTIN: Uh huh! But you're taking an extra dice towards it, so.

JACK: I'll actually take a stress here and get another dice, please.

AUSTIN: Sounds good.

JACK: Is this a controlled position, cause he doesn't know I'm there?

AUSTIN: Yeah, this is.... Hm. Let me read controlled and see if that's, if that actually lines up, because in my mind, controlled is always like, sniper on the roof or, you know. Someone who's like, picking a lock in a, on a floor where there isn't anybody else? Like that's very clearly controlled? Whereas this is maybe a little riskier than that, because if you fuck up there will be a bad thing, you know what I mean?

JACK: Oh, yeah.

AUSTIN: But no, you're, you're exploiting a dominant advantage, you're acting on your own terms, I'll give you controlled. Totally. Go for it.

JACK: Okay, so that's a five.

AUSTIN: That's pretty good, that's a controlled— or that's a, that's a five on a controlled. So you do it, and it's standard, right? Standard success. You hit him in the head nicely. And, and he like, stumbles forward, but does not like and like, goes down to one knee for a moment, and you still have initiative over what's happening right now, but because you only got a five and not a six... you are, you lose control of the situation, you go from being in control to risky, as Thackeray like, draws his saber and like puts it to your throat as he comes back up and like... comes up to full stance. Zaktrak is very confused! And, and like, gasps the second you do this and like, doesn't know what to believe anymore? And Peg again like, very protectively pushes him back into a corner and like, stands in front of him? What do you do.

JACK: You got anything, Aubrey?

AUSTIN: Good! I'm glad you've locked yourself in a room with Batman.

SYLVIA: Could bite his leg.

AUSTIN: *[laughs]* Zaktrak says, Zaktrak shouts:

AUSTIN (as Zaktrak): Should I open the door?

AUSTIN: I feel so bad for Zaktrak! Let's jump ahead to, let's jump back to Sige and Castille, and Hitchcock the other. As five pala-din come into the car. They... go and like march and stand around Edmund Hitchcock who's on the ground near the bar, and just like, are looking down at him? And just kind of like, blockading him in and aren't moving. And they stand around him like, in a weird pattern where it's like, there's five of them right, so three of them are facing outwards and two of them are facing inwards towards him, and looking down at him. But the other three are facing outwards, and just like, keeping people away from you? Castille, they're not reacting to you at all, and that's weird.

ALI: Probably good.

AUSTIN: Mhm. As you cling into the wall. In fact like, people are like, pointing at you and like— why aren't they— why aren't they?? So what's going on in the luncheon car?

ALI: The train is still split?

AUSTIN: The train is increasingly split.

ALI: Okay.

AUSTIN: So the thing that happens here is that the... I guess you can see this if you're in the engine room through like, the back window? Through the very, very back of the train right there, you can like look outside, I guess you can't because there's stuff happening, but if you could look outside what you would see is that the other car has added, the car with the cat in it, call that cat car, has added one new thing in the back that looks like the engine room again, but has not added a hell car one or two. So like, the working class car isn't, doesn't exist on this other, this other train now.

ALI: I can crawl onto like, the roof, or the outside wall?

AUSTIN: Yeah, you totally could! You totally could do that.

ALI: Which I probably should, I was like, torn between my desire to protect Hitchcock and to acquire this thing?

AUSTIN: Yeah, to like do the mission?

ALI: But like, I could just like crawl to that last car.

AUSTIN: You totally could.

JACK: Oh, nice.

ALI: Yeah. So, I'm gonna try that.

AUSTIN: So I'm just gonna let you crawl up out of the train car, again like, people stare at you, and for one moment, the pala-din like, just catch you out of the corner of their eye, like you notice it as you get closer to them, they go like, all of their heads snap and look at you. But then you're out through the kind of like outward opening windows. And on top of this train car which is moving very quickly, and you're very high up, you're like hundreds of feet in the air, you're like on the roof of like, a, a sixty story building, basically, like that's how high up you are.

[1:00:00]

You are here, above the church and hospital in Helianthus. And you see that the track now extends in front of the train towards the Iris Parish church, which is this giant white like... it's not marble, it's like, God I don't even know what it— what to compare it to. It's just like, sharp white... I'm trying to think of like, what the material even is.

ALI: Like, pearlescent? Or?

AUSTIN: Not pearlescent, just like, glossy. And it's, it's a very thick building, like it's a wide, tall building, so it has kind of an obelisk feel to it, and it stands way above all the factories in Iris Parish, so there's just like, soot and, and smoke coming out of these factories, but standing above all of them is this massive white tower. But it's not like a— again, it's like plain white, sharp edges, no like... engravings, no flourishes of anything on the building itself, but this is where the train is headed. But you also look over to the left and see that the other train, the one with your cat form on it, is heading back north up towards Chrysanthemum Parish, and where that wall is. So from the top of the train car, what are you doing?

ALI: I am crawling towards the... front of the train?

AUSTIN: Okay.

ALI: Or is it the back of the train? Away from the engine room.

AUSTIN: *[cross]* It's the front. Yeah, away from the engine room. Alright, so... you make it over the pala-din car and as you get to the, the next car, you hear the sound of music coming from below.

ALI: Ooh.

AUSTIN: And if you like, tip your head out from over the edge of the train, and like, look down, you see huge open windows, and inside is a nicely carpeted rug and, nicely carpeted floor, and there are a bunch of like, potted plants in the corners and in between the windows, and there are about like... ten people sitting in the kind of, corners and against the wall. A lot of older people who are like, clearly like, three seconds away from napping? And you catch the sound of ballroom music, but it's skipping. And like every seven seconds, it's like *[sings a tune that skips and starts over]*. And you can see that there is like a record player that is skipping towards the front of that room. And at the center is like a big dance floor, but no one is on it. And you— I will I again, there is probably a banner. It's Train Day, so there's lots of banners everywhere? Which is really useful for me.

It probably says... God, who's holding this dance? Probably a Maelgwyn's Faithful... so you probably don't see a banner, they're not a bannery type. They're the like, they are probably more of a... you just like see their symbols? So their symbol is a lot like the Samoths symbol, which is like the circle with the sun, except, or like with the rays coming off of it, except they don't have the rays, they just have a circle. But it's that same like, golden circle.

ALI: Okay.

AUSTIN: Do you wanna keep going? Do you wanna go in, what do you wanna do?

ALI: Do I see— Mm. Do I see anything of like, value or interest?

AUSTIN: There's definitely some like... like value like, there's stuff to steal everywhere. If you're looking to like get paid, you could go pocket, you could probably go beat up those people and take all their money really easily. They're all pretty old and there's no like, guards in here. But there's nothing that's like, oh, this is clearly a place where there is like, a lot of money or something like that.

ALI: Okay. Then I'll continue on.

AUSTIN: Okay. Let's jump back to the Thackeray room.

SYLVIA: The fun times.

AUSTIN: What's— yeah, once Thackeray has his sword drawn and pointed at you Hitchcock.

JACK (as Hitchcock): Thackeray. Hey, Thackeray.

AUSTIN: Oh my God, are you really? Okay.

AUSTIN (as Thackeray): Hitchcock.

JACK (as Hitchcock): Hey, uh, it's good to see you again.

AUSTIN: He cuts your throat. *[laughter]* What? Yeah, no, he cuts you in the throat.

JACK: Okay

AUSTIN: Take... hm. It's gonna be level three harm, and it will be... what's a synonym for bleeding out on the floor?

JACK: Um, perforated.

[laughter]

DRE: Jesus.

AUSTIN: Deep cuts! For people—

SYLVIA: Yeah, deep, deep cuts, literally.

JACK: Deep cuts, yeah deep cuts.

AUSTIN: *[laughs]* Deep cuts! For people who are just jumping on board, we had a debate at the beginning of our last campaign about what perforated meant. Bleeding out is what you'll have.

JACK: Okay, so I'm—

AUSTIN: Or, you can resist.

JACK: Um... So this comes down to a weird sort of like, thing of like, which is gonna be more damaging to me in the long run, my stress getting up or bleeding out?

SYLVIA: *[cross]* Or dying.

AUSTIN: You won't be, you won't be *dying* necessarily— well, you'll be...

JACK: You know what—

AUSTIN: You will be, you will be at "need help," which means you can't do anything without spending stress or without someone helping you.

JACK: I mean, I'm in a room with an alchemist.

AUSTIN: Though you could spend a slot to have armor.

JACK: Oh, you mean like a, like an equipment slot.

AUSTIN: An equipment slot, and item, armor is one of the item slots.

SYLVIA: Yeah.

JACK: You know what, I'm gonna do that.

AUSTIN: Yeah. I kind of love that.

JACK: Yeah I'm gonna, I'm gonna do that.

AUSTIN: So what's the armor in this case? Are you wearing like a collar?

JACK: I, well I think that the jackets have this, have this stiff, this stiff collar on them, and I think that probably the training that we had as, as swordsmen, and the training that Thackeray would've had as well, but he probably wasn't... I think probably, he thinks fairly, I think he's underestimating us.

AUSTIN: Yes.

JACK: And so I don't think he expects Ethan to just like, twist his head really sharply as he sees the blade coming towards him, so it is at least ameliorated a little by this stiff, cloth collar.

AUSTIN: Alright, so then you spend the armor, basically?

JACK: Okay, so that's gone.

AUSTIN: And what that, the way armor works in this is that like, yeah once it's gone, once you use it to resist something, it's gone for the rest of the, the rest of like, the session.

JACK: Okay.

AUSTIN: It's really useful. It's a really useful way of doing that. I'll say, you know what, here's what I'll say is I think you probably don't resist severe harm, but it does reduce it to... a lighter form of harm. You're already bleeding, right

JACK: Yeah.

AUSTIN: What if also... what if you take outmaneuvered as a reduced effect thing and it's like, you're seeing Thackeray and he is... you feel like he's a better swordsman than you.

JACK: Oh yeah, absolutely.

AUSTIN: And you could, you could try to resist that with Insight, or not Insight, Resolve, if you wanted to, but again you would take stress if you failed.

JACK: No, I really like that as well because I feel that that's really appropriate to this like, locked in a room with Batman thing? Of just like what? None of your training in the boxing ring is gonna help you when you're locked in a room with Batman.

AUSTIN: Totally. Alright.

SYLVIA: I have a question about the room we're in.

AUSTIN: Sure.

SYLVIA: So there's a door leading into the rest of the train and there's a door leading out the back, right?

AUSTIN: Yes.

SYLVIA: And does that just open with a button?

AUSTIN: That opens with like, a lever or like a wheel or something. I think, in my mind it was a wheel. You could turn it pretty quickly, though.

SYLVIA: Could I do that?

AUSTIN: Yeah! Are you trying to do it without being noticed or are you just trying to do it—

SYLVIA: I'm just trying to do it.

AUSTIN: Alright, so then yeah, I'll just let you do it. The door opens and he notices it and like, steels himself when it, when you open the door, Thackeray does, everybody is like ready for the door to be open, but the door is open now. So that does introduce new possibilities. The... anything loose in the, in the compartment starts flying out the back of the door because the train is going faster now. Again, Peg has like, arms around Zaktrak and she like, latches her legs down through the, the like cracks in the back of the like, floor? Like in the corner? So that half of her legs are like down underneath the train. Thackeray sees you do this though, and draws a gun on you. What do you do?

SYLVIA: Ohhh boy. Is there anything I could hide behind?

AUSTIN: No.

SYLVIA: No. Can I just put my hands up?

AUSTIN: That's not a bad idea.

SYLVIA: Yeah!

AUSTIN: What's your, what's your goal? Like, don't shoot me?

SYLVIA: Not— don't, not get shot!

AUSTIN: Okay! Give me a Sway. That's what that sounds like to me!

JACK: I tried that and he tried to cut my throat!

SYLVIA: Yeah, I know.

AUSTIN: You're, but you're not, you're like, his old nemesis. And also you hit him!

SYLVIA: *[cross]* Desperate or risky?

AUSTIN: You also hit him. Desperate.

SYLVIA: Yeah.

AUSTIN: Take a, take an XP.

SYLVIA: Effect standard, or... limited?

AUSTIN: I'll give you standard.

JACK: If you surrender to him, I can try and hit him on the head again.

AUSTIN: You could totally try!

SYLVIA: I got a four with zero in that stat, so.

AUSTIN: That's not bad, you rolled a four and a six, you rolled really well.

SYLVIA: Yeah.

AUSTIN: So the four counts. Yeah, he... he doesn't, he holds you in place there and like, you know, sword is now like, pointed still at, at Hitchcock, and gun is pointed at you, and he like, takes a couple of steps towards you, Aubrey, and just like holds you both in place that way for a bit, and the mission clock ticks again. Let's hop back to Sige. What are you doing?

DRE: So the pala-din that are surrounding, which Hitchcock is in here again?

JACK: This is Edmund.

DRE: Edmund. Are they, are they attacking him, or they're just basically—

AUSTIN: Nope! They're just holding him in place, basically.

JACK: I think at this point Edmund is just weakly saying "Castille! Castille!"

AUSTIN: Castille—

DRE: She's gone!

AUSTIN: She's gone.

JACK: He can't see!

AUSTIN: Right, true, there are all those pala-din, that's true.

DRE: How did you say those, those tables are bolted down?

AUSTIN: Yeah, they're bolted in place. The ones in the middle of the room.

DRE: *[cross]* Like pretty— pretty heavily?

AUSTIN: I mean, you're a big dude, you could give it a shot.

JACK: Oh, yeah!

DRE: I kinda wanna rip one of those tables out and then use it as like, a battering ram to run into the group of pala-din.

AUSTIN: Alright. That, that sounds like a fun thing. *[laughter]* Listen, you're, you're equal to a small gang, which gives you a bonus on the roll to rip things out like, one person couldn't do it, but a small gang could probably rip one of these tables up.

DRE: Probably.

AUSTIN: So give me—

JACK: Oh, easy!

AUSTIN: Give me a... let's just do a Wreck roll?

DRE: Yeah.

AUSTIN: As a single roll for this, instead of making you do it and do an attack, like let's just... all one huge thing, so, so give me a Wreck. It is risky.

DRE: Sure.

AUSTIN: Because like, it, there are a bunch of pala-din here, and, and it's not like they're unaware, they're not all facing Hitchcock or something like that, but take... increased effect, whatever, was it great effect?

DRE: *[cross]* Yes.

AUSTIN: Is that right? Yeah. So take great effect.

DRE: No extra die?

AUSTIN: I don't know from... ah, no, because the thing that you're, the thing is that you're being allowed to do it at all.

DRE: Right.

AUSTIN: Is because you're a small gang.

DRE: Okay.

AUSTIN: I hope everyone, I hope there's always a small gang in every game we ever run.

DRE: Ah, six!

AUSTIN: What's good six! So, so I gave you extra— did I give you extra effect? Did I already say that?

DRE: Yeah, you said great effect.

AUSTIN: Yeah, yeah. Alright so that means you do... three ticks on these pala-din, which ain't fuckin' bad. So I think you, you tell me what happens.

DRE: I'm just imagining going in there like a bowling ball and just kind of knocking them all over and clearing the way for Hitchcock to get up.

AUSTIN: Alright yeah that totally, you knock them out, or you knock them all over. Of the five of them, two of them don't get back up. But the other three, it's weird, like when they march around, they look very inhuman, like they don't have much in the way of like, they march in synchronicity, they have like a very robotic feel? But when they like, fall over, they, they all kind of... go like, limp like children falling who haven't learned how to fall yet. And when they get back up and help each other up, everything is like, really rubbery and like, very like, organic looking. Despite the fact that they're all made of stone. The other thing is when you hit them, they chip. And like, the two of them that you, that you have killed like, their faces are shattered on the ground. And one of them, one of their legs is like, completely broken off. So yeah, you can stand up, Hitchcock, Sige you're now facing three pala-din who are not very happy and who, who draw weapons. Let's jump ahead back to Castille real quick?

ALI: Hi!

AUSTIN: Hey, Castille. So you are... able to see that the next, the next two cars, there's no windows in the next car, but the car after that has a huge... I guess you actually can't see that. There is a huge front window on the next car. But there are no windows on the sides of either of the next two cars. And there's no like, other way into the next two cars, as far as you can tell.

ALI: *[sighs]* Cause I have to get in there, into there somehow, so I was wondering if I have the ability to like... cut into the, the train to get back in?

AUSTIN: Sure. You could totally try to break through the ceiling.

ALI: Okay.

AUSTIN: That's a Wreck.

ALI: Yeah. Okay.

AUSTIN: Give me a Wreck with.. Gimme risky, and the risk is that like, you're on top of a train going incredibly fast and it's hard to hold yourself down while you also break in through a ceiling?

ALI: Six!

AUSTIN: Boom, look at that six! On one die. So you, what's it look like, what's her way to break in look like, what's she do with her hands, or whatever?

ALI: Think she might just be punching a hole through the top of it?

AUSTIN: I like that a lot, alright yeah, you punch through, and then you punch through again, and the metal bends and it's also like it's, on the rooftop I think it's like a really nice copper color? And it's really hot, except you can't feel that cause you're a statue woman. But it would be really hot to stand up here. But you punch through it and like, rip through the ceiling, and down inside is like, the light comes in from above you, and you can see a map of, you can see not a map, it's like a train set. It's like a diorama of Marielda. And like, you hop in, and there's a table that is like a train set of Marielda? And you can see all of these like, pistons firing and the, you can see like as the different train tracks are laid out, as you look at it you can see different parts of the city that where you're not at right now, being reconfigured the way that that happens sometimes? Which is like, oh yeah, this house just got shrunk down in size. This other house got expanded in size, like you know, the park just got an extra pond installed. And like, you just see this happening live on this little, micro version of the city. And you see... and like, that room is actually really dark right now, there's no lighting in here, so that's one thing. The other thing is you can see a little bit of light coming in from under the doorway of the next train car. But that's what you get here.

ALI: That diorama isn't the thing that we're looking for, right? We're looking for just like a plate that has the...

AUSTIN: You've been told there's a plate.

ALI: Okay.

AUSTIN: That's what you know.

ALI: *[laughing]* Okay!

AUSTIN: I mean like, what's she doing in the room? Are you investigating, are you breaking things, are you?

ALI: Can I do a Study on that diorama to see...

AUSTIN: Yeah, I think that's a Study, that's probably a Study. Totally.

ALI: Yeah, okay. Standard...

AUSTIN: Controlled, yeah. That's a one. You got a one. Good. *[Ali laughs]* You got a one at studying this table, that's good.

ALI: It's really dark! It's really dark?

AUSTIN: It *is* really dark, you're right, but it's controlled, which means you block, you hesitate or you falter, press on by seizing a risky opportunity or withdraw and try a different approach. So you... you're just like, studying the diorama and you, there's a button that you, that you find. And you like, inadvertently press it, and it opens up the door to the pala-din and whatever's in front of you, but you can't see what's in front of you because it's backlit by like, the, there's light coming through the front giant window of the.... Of the train. And it's like, a giant bright ball of en— of light that is like, completely blinding if you look that direction. And if you continue doing this, this is now risky, because those doors are open. The door back to the ballroom and the door forward to whatever's at the front of the train. But you can, you can try again, but it's going to be risky. Or you could withdraw and try a different approach. Light is now streaming in here, though.

ALI: Okay. The point of studying this is to see if this is the thing that I want, so yeah I'm gonna try again.

AUSTIN: Alright, sounds good.

ALI: Just the same die?

AUSTIN: Do you wanna take the stress to get a bonus, do you want anything else, is there any other thing you wanna use here? That can help? I don't know that there is, I'm just saying that there could be, I don't know. Remember that you have more stuff here than you actually have written down.

ALI: Right.

AUSTIN: Because you have like, all the other equipment that every class has.

ALI: Yeah yeah yeah. We also haven't defined what a lot of this... spooky attune stuff does?

AUSTIN: I think most of it isn't really gonna come up here? Most of the spooky stuff? There is also just description in the book for all of this stuff, just so you know.

ALI: Okay, yeah. But I don't think like a spirit mask is gonna help me look at this thing.

AUSTIN: I, I you know, I think maybe if you use the spirit mask, you might get a different result here. Is what I'll say.

ALI: *[laughs]* Okay. That's a tone, that's a voice you're using.

AUSTIN: It's a voice! It's a voice I'm using. You'll still have to roll, is what I'll say.

ALI: Yeah... You know what? Yeah, I'll use that and I'll take a stress because I've had a pretty easy time.

AUSTIN: Alright, so, so make the roll and take two, or... you'll take a great effect and you... can also take an extra die.

ALI: Okay, is this another...

AUSTIN: Study.

ALI: Study, okay.

AUSTIN: What's your mask look like?

ALI: Oh, boy. Cause it, does it work on like, alchemy or was it made by... like the church?

AUSTIN: *[cross]* You tell me. Yeah, what, what *is* it, where did you get it from? Because any of those are totally viable answers.

ALI: Right.

AUSTIN: Is it something you stole before? Who do you hate— who hates you?

ALI: Oh, the um. The lost and found.

AUSTIN: Oh, you stole it from the lost and found! *[Ali laughs]* You stole it from the Office of Lost Materials, which means you have no *idea* where it came from.

ALI: Right! I think in my—

AUSTIN: So.

ALI: In my head it feels almost like, like a chrome like, Phantom of the Opera mask?

AUSTIN: That's exactly what I'm imagining, so.

ALI: Nice!

AUSTIN: Good.

ALI: Okay.

AUSTIN: So you're a cool marble lady holding up a chrome Phantom of the Opera glass, or mask.

ALI: Controlled?

AUSTIN: Risky, not controlled.

ALI: Risky— oh, right. Okay. Risky, but great, and then plus one?

AUSTIN: Yep.

ALI: Okay.

AUSTIN: Perfect. Alright, four, four ain't bad, four's a success!

ALI: Okay.

[Dre laughs]

AUSTIN: You... begin to, to study it, with the mask on, the first thing the mask— you put on the mask and like, the... it is like an overwhelming... effect because the thing is just kind of tuned, oh show me spiritual energies! And the second you put it on, you are just like, blinded. And you have to tune it down, which is, which is kind of quaint, because sight is one of the only sensations that actually, that you actually have in the way that humans have sensations? And so like, this, super intense feeling of brightness does overwhelm you for a second, in multiple ways,

and then you're able to like readjust it, but it means that you got reduced effect. You only got two of the clocks ticked in? I'm not gonna make you roll again, I'm just gonna say that it's gonna take another clock— mission clock tick before you finish, and another, and that will come after we do another scene with somebody else. So... you're able to, the last shot that we see of you there is that like, you see... Kind of a glowing, aura coming from under the table, and you're able to like, "huh," and you like lean down to look, and then we cut back to... let's go back to Aubrey and, and Hitchcock in the back room. As Thackeray is holding you both at place. In place.

SYLVIA: Okay. So... let me just, like, for my own mental thing just sorta lay out how everything is right now? We've got the bars are, are the bars still on the door?

AUSTIN: The door's just closed, they're not barred right now.

SYLVIA: The door's just closed, okay.

AUSTIN: Yeah.

SYLVIA: The back door off of the train is open...

AUSTIN: Wide open.

SYLVIA: Peg and Zaktrak are...

AUSTIN: Nice and safe.

SYLVIA: They are like, sort of like, hooked in basically?

AUSTIN: *[cross]* Yeah, they're hooked in.

SYLVIA: From Peg's crazy limbs? And...

AUSTIN: They're, listen, they are beautiful and natural limbs.

SYLVIA: I— out of the like, people here, I think I'm the one who's been the most like, yes I love weavers! *[Austin laughs]* And then... he's got a gun pointed at me and a sword pointed at Hitchcock? Okay.

AUSTIN: *[cross]* Hitchcock. But he's made some space between you and, between himself and Hitchcock.

SYLVIA: Okay.

AUSTIN: Like he's now equidistant between you and Hitchcock.

SYLVIA: Alright, I'm kind of... okay, so that's— and then the train is not at full speed but...

AUSTIN: It's like eighty percent speed. It's moving.

SYLVIA: Yeah. It's moving at a solid speed, okay.

AUSTIN: Yeah.

SYLVIA: You got any ideas, Jack?

JACK: I mean... Is it worth even considering maybe trying to push him out of the train?

SYLVIA: That's exactly what I wanted to do.

JACK: I mean, we've got this open door is *right* here.

SYLVIA: Yeah.

AUSTIN: I just want to read, just from, from this real quick: "Players' best practices: Embrace scoundrel life. You are a daring criminal on the mean streets of a haunted city, you are not a risk-averse ordinary citizen. If you were, you'd indenture yourself to a workhouse and scrape out a meager living inside the status quo. You are daring, bold, ambitious, and ready to take big chances to live a bigger life."

SYLVIA: Yeah, okay, I say even though I am like, in front of him and I'm between him and the door.

AUSTIN: Uh huh.

SYLVIA: Right?

AUSTIN: Uh huh!

SYLVIA: I think Aubrey's just gonna yell:

SYLVIA (as Aubrey): Push him! Push him!!

AUSTIN: Alright!

JACK: *[laughs]* Aw man, okay. I'm gonna try and make a move to push him.

SYLVIA: Is there a way I could try and assist, maybe?

AUSTIN: Yeah totally, it sounds like that's what you're doing, totally.

SYLVIA: Yeah... could I maybe like, lunge at his feet like, lower to try and knock him off balance?

AUSTIN: Totally. So that means...

SYLVIA: So you get an extra die, Jack.

AUSTIN: You get an extra die, yeah.

SYLVIA: I'm stressed out.

AUSTIN: And you tell me, what are you doing, how are you doing this, is this a sneaky thing, is this Prowl or is this Skirmish?

JACK: This is Skirmish, it's brawl and wrestle, I think I'm just—

AUSTIN: *[cross]* Yeah.

JACK: I think I've probably actually thrown my sword to one side and I'm...

AUSTIN: That's, seems right. I think you, where are you at on stress right now?

JACK: Uh, I think seven!

AUSTIN: Oh, that's not so bad. I thought you were at eight or nine.

JACK: No, no no.

AUSTIN: Okay.... Alright so, yeah. That's, that's, you can do this, but it will be a limited effect by default. You could spend a stress to increase it from limited to standard? And I'm gonna give you a plus one, or I guess actually by default it would be limited, because you're, you're so hurt? And scared? But I'll give you a plus one because the door is open and because that's like, how he set it up? You're not trying to push him and open the door, Aubrey set that up in the last turn, and then I'll give you the, the plus one more if you take a stress.

JACK: Okay.

AUSTIN: Which would bring it up to great.

JACK: Yeah, I'll, I'll take stress.

AUSTIN: Okay. So then give me a Skirmish check.

JACK: So, okay, wait a second. So the position of this is...

AUSTIN: Oh, this is desperate.

JACK: Desperate, yeah, I was thinking this is really not gonna be anything else right now.

SYLVIA: *[cross]* Yeah.

DRE: Mark XP!

AUSTIN: Mhm, mark XP, yep.

JACK: Oh, yes I will also do that. Effect, great.

AUSTIN: Oh yeah. And then plus—

JACK: Extra?

AUSTIN: Plus one. Plus one from Aubrey just now. Or Audrey. Aubrey? Audrey.

SYLVIA: Audrey is the fake name, Aubrey is the real name.

AUSTIN: Right, I apologize.

SYLVIA: Yeah.

DRE: *[laughs]* I forgot about that.

JACK: Okay, here we go.

AUSTIN: Jesus Christ, what a bunch of...

[Sylvia laughs]

JACK: Ohh... well.

AUSTIN: Oh no.

JACK: Well!

AUSTIN: You rolled a four, four ain't bad. You do it, but there's a consequence, you suffer severe harm, a serious complication occurs, or you have reduced effect.

JACK: Oh, I think there's a fairly obvious one here.

AUSTIN: Oh, there sure is. Let me just grab Thackeray here, and he's just like hanging on... and then you're hanging onto him. Just like that! I marked down some Thackeray points here. Thackeray clock is now... filled through five of its eight pizza slices here.

JACK: They're not your nemesis if you haven't hanged from their boots from a train.

AUSTIN: That's exactly, that's speeding across, above a city? Yeah.

JACK: *[cross]* In the air.

AUSTIN: So yeah, you, you slam, Aubrey takes Thackeray's legs out from under him as he turns to face you and then you just grab him, Hitchcock and like, just push all the way out the door, but you do not keep a good hold on this? Or on, you don't like let go of him, or maybe he holds onto you as you... go pushing him out the back door? And you both fling yourselves out and he grabs on with one hand to the, to the train, to the inside of the engine room and is holding on while you hang onto his boots, totally. Your feet are like, inches above the rails of this thing, speeding by. If you get caught, that is not... it's bad. It's real bad.

JACK: Oh, God.

AUSTIN: Sige! And other Hitchcock. How you feeling?

DRE: Y'know.

AUSTIN: These pala-din are, are making moves towards you. Weapon's drawn, they have a bunch of short swords. And they're, still, mostly looking to like box you in, but it doesn't feel safe. Let's start with Sige, what do you do.

DRE: I'm gonna use one of my Cutter items that I get to carry with me for free.

AUSTIN: Ooh.

DRE: And that's my rage essence vial?

AUSTIN: What's that do?

ALI: *What?*

DRE: It's a single dose of rage essence, which greatly enhances the user's strength, resistance to pain, and irrational aggression for the span of several minutes.

JACK: *[cross]* What?

[Ali laughs]

AUSTIN: Oh, good.

DRE: And I think the way that Sige uses this is he just takes his hand and he crushes it intentionally like, cutting his hands? So that it just goes right into his blood.

AUSTIN: *[cross]* Nice. Good! Good.

ALI: Oh, lord.

AUSTIN: Alright, what's that look like on the like, can you immediately tell that he's enraged?

DRE: Oh, um....

AUSTIN: Or is it like... does he still look calm? Like what's that?

DRE: I think, I don't, like I don't think it's like cartoonishly obvious, I don't think he like hulks out or anything.

AUSTIN: Okay, yeah, yeah. I'm happy with that, yes.

DRE: Yeah.

AUSTIN: So I, I'll give you a bonus to effect here.

DRE: I'm gonna draw my fine hand weapon, which will count as one of my four—

AUSTIN: *[cross]* Oh, what's that? What *is* it?

DRE: So I'm picturing a like, old like, World War II, like, US trench knife? So it's just like a big combat knife and it's hilt guard is like, brass knuckles and then it's got like a cap at the bottom where if you wanted to like, knock somebody out you could hit them with that and do bad things to them.

AUSTIN: Okay cool. Alright, so give me a, give me a check.

DRE: *[cross]* I guess— Skirmish?

AUSTIN: *[cross]* That sounds like, Skirmish, yeah.

DRE: So for, one of my other Cutter moves is Brutal, where I gain potency versus physical targets, are these? Are these physical targets?

AUSTIN: Oh yeah, these are physical targets, you have, you have great, you have... very great effect.

DRE: Okay, and what position am I rolling from?

AUSTIN: I'll, because of this I'll give you a controlled position, normally I wouldn't do that but like, it's a combination of like you're a small— I guess the other thing is like it's actually, it's the rage vial plus that move, plus you're a small gang, which means you can take on multiple pala-din at once without it being— without giving them a scale advantage.

DRE: Okay.

AUSTIN: So I'll give you controlled like you're not— you're just tearing through shit right now.

DRE: *[laughs]* Controlled and great?

AUSTIN: It doesn't seem like there's much of a risk right now, so yeah, go for it.

DRE: Okay. Roll my three d6, there we go, six.

AUSTIN: Yo, six! Alright, so great effect There are... tell me, tell me how you take out two of the remaining three.

DRE: I think that... I've got the knife in like a reverse grip, and I just shove the knife into the head of one, and then do like a spinning backhand into the other one.

[1:30:00]

AUSTIN: You wouldn't think a knife could pierce marble like this, but it totally does, like it like not even a big— like it cuts straight through, it's almost as if you'd found like a flaw in their build. You know? And then like, do the backhand and it shatters one of the other ones' faces. The third one is not, it doesn't like, show fear on its face, but it, what it does is like, it takes steps back towards the, the door where the rest of the pala-din are, like blocking your progress? Or like trying to block your progress, but not threatening you anymore. Hitchcock? What do you do?

JACK: I think Hitchcock is gonna immediately try and make a break for the next carriage.

AUSTIN: Okay! Like to get a—

JACK: Oh, and I think that— I think that in that case, this, this has happened immediately after—

AUSTIN: At the same time— yeah, gotcha.

JACK: As the battering ram move.

AUSTIN: Sounds good. I think you can just get, you can just get past him

JACK: Okay!

AUSTIN: Or you can just totally get in there if that's when it's happening.

JACK: Yeah, okay.

AUSTIN: So you are, you're in a dark room filled with pala-din—

JACK: *[cross]* So I've already been in this room once already.

AUSTIN: Yes. Yes. And they're just standing. There's another... five in here who are standing up against the walls like, deactivated? Like.

JACK: Okay.

AUSTIN: Heads down, looking straight down at their feet. You don't see your, you don't see your son.

JACK: *[cross]* I'm gonna try and— he's not here, my son Edmund. I'm gonna try and get through into the next car.

AUSTIN: You can totally do that. You come up here, there's a button you can hit to unlock this door, and you walk right in. It's the room I described to Castille earlier? It is a ballroom with that same song caught in, in a loop on a, a record player. And at this point, there is one older couple who's gotten up to dance in the middle of the, the floor? And they're trying to dance to this skipping record and they can't quite tell if it's skipping, or if this is just the way music sounds these days because kids? But they're trying really hard and it's clear that they have a lot of affection for each other. And there's another like, six or seven people sitting, seated, taking you know, sips on... cocktails. A couple of them are chatting with each other. But they're just going about their day.

JACK: Who's running— this is Maelgwyn.

AUSTIN: Yeah, this is the, Maelgwyn's Faithful like... social event. And it's clear these are like, these are Chrysanthemum people. So it's not just like Maelgwyn's Faithful, because Maelgwyn's, most of Maelgwyn's Faithful are in Orchid parish, but these are like the upper crust of Maelgwyn's Faithful. It's like... you know, I've talked about Maelgwyn's Faithful before as having sights on city-wide control? And this is them definitely peacocking a little bit?

JACK: Yeah.

AUSTIN: Like, look at us, there are some rich people who like us too. And you've no idea what's happening in the other train car, so you don't know like, what the bulk of this was before the cars split?

JACK: Right.

AUSTIN: So, I won't tell you.

JACK: Okay. So I think Hitchcock comes through the door at some speed and then sees the room and then just sort of turns and closes the door behind him and says:

JACK (as Hitchcock): Well, folks, we're having a little trouble further down the train, but I just wanted to reassure you that everything, everything seems to be going okay. I hope you're enjoying— I hope you're enjoying train day!

AUSTIN (as an old man): Is everything alright?

AUSTIN: Says a man hunched over to your left on a, on a chair.

JACK (as Hitchcock): I wouldn't worry about it sir, I think it's being—

JACK: There's just like, sounds of carnage happening?

AUSTIN: Yeah, yes. *[sounds of carnage]* Like, yes! At this point Castille is punching through the roof, tearing it open.

[laughter]

JACK: Wait, is that on the other train? Or is that—

AUSTIN: No, that's this train too! This is ahead!

JACK: *[cross]* Oh, that's absolutely on this train!

AUSTIN: Yeah, everyone's on the same train except the cat, the cat is on the other train!

JACK (as Hitchcock): Sir, I think it's— I think it's being dealt with. I think everything's gonna be, gonna be just fine. God, it's been a bit of a day, huh?

AUSTIN (as the old man): It's been... it's beautiful.

JACK (as Hitchcock): Oh, I've never—

AUSTIN (as the old man): I've lived a... a very long time.

JACK (as Hitchcock): Yeah?

AUSTIN (as the old man): Yeah. It's... you know, I used to live here, back in the old days.

JACK: Is this Garrison Keillor?

AUSTIN (as the old man): When things were slower then...

JACK (as Hitchcock): Oh, yeah.

AUSTIN (as the old man): Quieter.

JACK (as Hitchcock): Yeah.

AUSTIN (as the old man): And before all the heat and the...

JACK (as Hitchcock): Oh, yeah.

AUSTIN (as the old man): And the war, of course, of course.

JACK (as Hitchcock): Oh, and the war, yes.

AUSTIN (as the old man): In the old days, things were... you know, I knew that boy. In the old days.

JACK (as Hitchcock): Oh yes? Which boy was that, sir?

AUSTIN (as the old man): Oh the one, the... can't say his name. You know how they are, the Golden Lance. And he was... he said there'd be beautiful things if we followed him, but me, I... I'm a loyal citizen. I'm a loyal parishioner. And that's me, a Samoths man to the end. And look at this! We got, train day!

JACK (as Hitchcock): Oh, train day!

AUSTIN: And he like, smiles and like gestures, he goes to gesture widely and he can't even get his arms up, but he like points out to like, look out at Marielda through the, through the window, and you can see the volcano out in the distance boiling up and through the other window you can see out the other direction to the west, and you can see the snow and the woods out in the other direction and some mountains in the distance there. You just get the impression that this man is from a time that seems so impossibly far away. That like, he knew a fletcher, he knew someone who made bows and arrows to go hunting. And now he's on a train fifty feet, or fifty stories in the air.

AUSTIN (as the old man): Anyway, a good dance. That's one thing that hasn't changed, a good dance.

JACK (as Hitchcock): No sir. No sir. Is the boy here?

AUSTIN (as the old man): Oh, heaven's, heaven's no, I hope not. That would be a... a terrible thing.

JACK (as Hitchcock): Well, I'm going to keep going, sir. Good day, good day.

AUSTIN (as the old man): No, no no, take a seat, take a seat! There's so much to talk about.

JACK (as Hitchcock): Can I... um.

AUSTIN (as the old man): Where are you from? Oh, you look like a military man.

JACK (as Hitchcock): Well, I served in the... I served in, in Samoth's army for a while.

AUSTIN (as the old man): Oh, a patriot!

JACK (as Hitchcock): Well... you, you could—

AUSTIN: Boom! Crash! Just like, nonsense noise happening behind you, Sige has just slammed his fist into a pala-din, the other Hitchcock is now hanging from a thread out of the back of the train car, the door just opens in front of you at this point, also, where Castille is now looking at the, the thing, that is now where we're at.

JACK (as Hitchcock): Well, sir, I, I think that we've got some sort of, some minor track issues ahead of us, in the following room, so I'm just going to just, bid you adieu now, glory to Samoth's, glory to Samoth's.

AUSTIN (as the old man): What did you say your name was again, son?

JACK (as Hitchcock): My name is Captain Hitchcock, sir.

AUSTIN (as the old man): Ah, Captain Hitchcock. That's a noble name. That's... you're a good man, Captain Hitchcock.

JACK (as Hitchcock): Well, the train is exploding, sir.

[laughter]

AUSTIN (as the old man): Who could imagine such a thing...

AUSTIN: And he just like, stares out the window again and sighs. And you walk past the like, dancing couple who are, *[sings the skipping tune]*. And like, walk past them into the next room where Castille, I'm gonna mark a mission clock advance, finds something under the, the diorama.

JACK: Nice!

AUSTIN: Which is... there's like a, a slot that opens up. And there are... there's like a.... A pair of metal clamps that are immediately underneath the center of this diorama. And there's like, some machinery that, it almost looks like a claw game but with like, claws that are actually meant to pick things up? And not fuck you over? And there's like, one big stone plate right underneath the diorama that's being held in place by those clamps. And then under the claw are six other huge stone plates. You *think* that these are the thing that you wanna get? They take up two inventory slots each because they're so heavy.

ALI: There's six of them...

AUSTIN: Uh huh!

ALI: We sell knowledge, right?

AUSTIN: Yes, you do sell knowledge.

ALI: Could I have possibly flashed back to a time... we probably have books on trains?

AUSTIN: No, cause there's one train besides this train. This is the second train that there is.

ALI: *[cross]* There wasn't like— there wasn't—

JACK: *[cross]* Oh, I'll tell you what though, people are writing books on trains right now.

AUSTIN: No, they're not. There, it is illegal to do that.

ALI: Oh...

AUSTIN: The pala-din will execute you if you write about trains. The Fontmen will come for you.

ALI: There's not like, a newspaper that they would've?

AUSTIN: There's absolutely not. The only thing that's printed in the newspaper about trains is that they are glorious and that Samoths has given us this gift.

ALI: Well, okay.

AUSTIN: This is why you're stealing this.

ALI: *[laughs]* Right.

AUSTIN: You're the people who are going to write about trains.

ALI: Maybe it cuts back to that same scene with Hitchcock in the bar but like, Castille is on the other side of the bar talking to someone else?

AUSTIN: *[laughs]* That's really good! Why is she— she can still just be talking to Zaktrak!

ALI: Yeah.

AUSTIN: Well, like, what's the thing that you want to get out of, out of this?

ALI: Knowing which one of these I should take, if any?

AUSTIN: Totally.

ALI: Yeah.

AUSTIN: Yeah, totally. I'd, I think Zaktrak would know.

ALI: Okay.

AUSTIN: And I kind of— I just like the visual, it's a Shane Black gag, it's just like, we've already seen the flashback of Hitchcock and Zaktrak talking about— and I think what we actually got was like, the punchline to a previous joke, right? And now we get whatever the setup line is? And it's coming from you, you know? *[Ali laughs]* And then you get to ask this question. So gimme a Sway.

ALI: Okay.

AUSTIN: And take, take... take two stress because you're like revisiting this same thing.

ALI: Controlled? Risky?

AUSTIN: Controlled.

ALI: Okay.

AUSTIN: We've already established that night went well.

ALI: And then standard?

AUSTIN: Yes.

ALI: Okay. No bonus...

AUSTIN: Yeah, cause I'm just gonna give you this knowledge if you succeed.

ALI: Okay, okay. Which I do! Or...

AUSTIN: Yeah, so you got a four, so you get the knowledge but there's gonna be something, there is going to be an effect, also, right? Or a consequence also. So the thing that you learn is that... there is, each plate does contain a different route, which makes each of them valuable, so as many as you can take is useful, but there is one that is like the master route? And you know that that's gonna be the one that has the most markings on it. The markings aren't just like a map, like it's not just like oh yeah, it's the map. But it's like the most tightly— you know what it is? It's that each of them is like a stone tablet with little etchings in it? Like, almost like

cuneiform? And the most, the one that has like the densest, tiniest writing on it is the one that is— the one that is the master plate. And so that's the one that will definitely be the most useful, but it's also gonna be the hardest one to decipher. So any of the other ones, like the one that's in right now, or any of the other ones all have different route information? That is like, a lot more understandable because it's much, it's much larger like, it's a larger font size, basically. And the smaller more dense one is going to be much harder and take a longer time to actually fully decipher. So that's what you know.

ALI: Okay.

AUSTIN: And Zaktrak tells you that by talking about his friend, his friend is an assistant. He says like, let's actually go to that bar scene really quick. He laughs at the joke, and then, and then starts talking and says:

AUSTIN (as Zaktrak): I'm such a lucky guy, you know, I— I, all my friends, well pretty much all my friends work in the factories, and I got this train job, and I got it, you know, a friend of mine who works with the Artificer, with the Artificer Mundane, he's working on these, these amazing things, they store, they're like... they're like books, but for machines. It's like, what if a, what if a factory or train or a windmill could read a book?

AUSTIN: So what do you do with the plate? Oh also, yeah, again, Hitchcock, when you walk into that room, it is super bright because... and like, Castille has on the mask at this point, so she sees like the spiritual version of this, but for you there is just like there is a sun in the next— not in the next compartment, but in front of the next compartment's like— there's a window there's a front window and outside of that, it's like there is a sun up there.

JACK: Oh man. Okay.

AUSTIN: While you figure that out, let's jump back to... Aubrey and Hitchcock.

SYLVIA: Okay. *[Jack laughs]* Yeah.

AUSTIN: Aubrey, what are you doing as Hitchcock and Thackeray hang out of the train?

SYLVIA: I think I like, scramble over and look over the edge and see what's going on?

AUSTIN: They are hanging over the edge of the train. Thackeray's like, trying to get a second hand up. And you're, it's clear that if you get even a little too close, he'll grab you.

SYLVIA: So, is Hitchcock hanging onto Thackeray, or is he also hanging on to part of the train?

AUSTIN: He's hanging onto Thackeray.

SYLVIA: Um... I have climbing gear.

AUSTIN: Ooh.

SYLVIA: Oh wait, do I, yeah I do have enough space to take that.

AUSTIN: Okay.

SYLVIA: It's two points. Could I take that and try and... sort of like, lower it to Hitchcock?

AUSTIN: You couldn't lower it to him, no. That's too controlled, that's not, if you're lowering something, Thackeray could grab you, or it.

SYLVIA: Yeah.

AUSTIN: You could like, throw it to him? You're death-defying scoundrels.

SYLVIA: Yeah...Yeah, no, you're right.

AUSTIN: Are you throwing him the kit, or are you like, throwing the hook for him to grab onto?

SYLVIA: I was gonna throw... the rope for him to grab onto.

AUSTIN: Okay.

SYLVIA: My plan was basically, actually throw him the rope end and then hook the grappling hook onto the like, train itself.

AUSTIN: Totally.

SYLVIA: Because if there's like— you've made it clear there's like, slats in the floor, right?

AUSTIN: Yeah, totally.

SYLVIA: So like, just like hook it into one of those.

AUSTIN: That's totally doable. I'm just gonna count this as a setup?

SYLVIA: Okay.

AUSTIN: So, so you can improve position for trying to get back up.

JACK: So essentially, Aubrey, have you just upgraded me to a much, much longer, much less stable rope at this point? Like, cause when I was hanging onto Thackeray I wasn't swinging around a lot, and now...

SYLVIA: Yeah, but you're also hanging onto a person.

AUSTIN: Right. And you can choke up on the— it depends on what you roll, but yes. I'm just gonna, what I'm doing is, instead of being desperate you're now risky. But while you were holding onto Thackeray that was a desperate position, now you're in a risky position because you have a—

JACK: Okay.

AUSTIN: Cause you're still hanging onto Thackeray, but you also have this rope.

SYLVIA: I also think the rope also probably has a better hold than just a dude hanging on.

JACK: *[cross]* Oh, that's true.

AUSTIN: *[cross]* Yes. Totally.

SYLVIA: It's like, on the train itself.

AUSTIN: Totally.

JACK: Right. And it's probably— the rope is probably not trying to shake me off.

AUSTIN: Right.

SYLVIA: No, I doubt it. I don't think it has a mind of its own.

JACK: Okay. Okay! So I'm gonna try and get back onto the train.

AUSTIN: So I think that that's... that's Prowl, also. Traverse obstacles, climb, swim, run, jump, and tumble.

JACK: Oh, no. Okay.

AUSTIN: Uh huh!

SYLVIA: I could also give you another assist here? If you want.

JACK: That might be super useful.

SYLVIA: I'm gonna, I'm gonna do the assist here, yeah.

AUSTIN: Okay.

SYLVIA: And the assist is just Aubrey sort of helping trying to pull up the rope.

AUSTIN: Okay.

SYLVIA: Yeah.

AUSTIN: And this I'll give you another plus one too, for Zaktrak and Peg.

JACK: Oh, okay.

AUSTIN: Zaktrak will help you not fall, grab onto the rope, so take— take plus two on your...

JACK: This is prowl.

SYLVIA: Little cobbin buddies love Hitchcock.

AUSTIN: Uh huh!

JACK: It's controlled... and it's—

AUSTIN: No, it's not controlled, it's risky.

SYLVIA: It's risky.

JACK: *[cross]* Oh, okay, rather than desperate, sure.

SYLVIA: *[cross]* It's risky instead of desperate yes.

JACK: Okay. Here we go.

SYLVIA: OH!

AUSTIN: Oh, look at that six!

ALI: You did it.

AUSTIN: And, and you like, God, you, what's that look like? You tell me.

JACK: I think I just let go. I think holding onto the rope, I think I let go and I'm immediately sort of like, Uncharted 4 style grappling hook just like, shooting out behind the train holding onto this rope. And I like, maybe this is more Counter/weight style of just like, brilliant anime bullshit but I think that with the help of Aubrey and the engineers, I'm just sort of like, trying to climb my way along this... essentially horizontal rope that's being pulled out behind the train?

AUSTIN: Totally.

JACK: Back towards the, back towards the cabin.

AUSTIN: I, and you, I think you pull it off.

JACK: Nice.

AUSTIN: And... everyone's like, *[exhales]*. And then the door closes. And Thackeray is gone. Sige, there's just that pala-din left. There's that one pala-din left! *[Jack laughs]* What do you do?

DRE: Yeah, one of the side effects of that rage essence vial is that I get *irrationally* aggressive.

AUSTIN: Oh boy.

DRE: So... yeah, I probably just keep punching this last pala-din that's here.

AUSTIN: Alright, give me a Skirmish! Good. Look at that, six.

JACK: Perfect.

AUSTIN: In fact, is that two sixes?

DRE: That's two, yeah, so I clear a stress, right?

AUSTIN: You clear a stress when you crit, you clear a stress. So like yeah, you like work it out of your system. So much so that you're like, *[sighs]*, you stand up and like, your muscles feel like nice and loose and good? It feels like a good workout, you know what I mean? And everyone else is just like, just besides themselves. *[laughter]* They're like, knocking furiously on the second, like working class, like please please please! Come on!

JACK: *[laughs]* Oh, it's gotten so bad that they're, they're aiming for the place where they saw Thackeray storming off towards.

AUSTIN: Yes!

JACK: They're like, oh that place looks better.

AUSTIN: Exactly. So you could all be wherever you wanna be right now. Tell me where you're at. Is everybody together again, is everybody...

SYLVIA: I was gonna try and fuck with the engine again, now that we...

AUSTIN: Oh, it is, it is... yeah, you could totally well. Yeah, you could totally fuck with the engine again.

SYLVIA: But like, because I'm assuming Peg and Zaktrak aren't trying to stop me this time?

AUSTIN: They are like... God, where, what are they even like at this point? I think that they're just like...

AUSTIN (as Zaktrak): You owe us big time.

SYLVIA (as Aubrey): I promise we will pay you back.

AUSTIN (as Zaktrak): We're gonna get in so much trouble.

AUSTIN: And Peg like, squeezes his little cobbin shoulder.

AUSTIN (as Peg): It's okay. They'll pay us back. Or else.

SYLVIA (as Aubrey): What's, what's life without a little trouble, right guys?

SYLVIA: And just sort of awkwardly turns away. But can I—

AUSTIN: What do you do?

AUSTIN (as Peg): What are you doing?

SYLVIA: *[cross]* I would like to— wh?

AUSTIN: As you start tinkering, Peg is asking what you're doing.

SYLVIA (as Aubrey): I'm stopping the train temporarily.

AUSTIN (as Peg): Fine.

SYLVIA: And then can I just roll my Tinker roll?

AUSTIN: Yep. Alright. So you get it, but it just takes an extra step.

SYLVIA: Okay.

AUSTIN: It just takes a little longer but you totally manage to pull the train into stop.

SYLVIA: I'm not super familiar with this type of... train stuff, so.

AUSTIN: Exactly, exactly.

SYLVIA: Makes sense.

AUSTIN: So I've advanced the mission clock to its final slice of the pie. You are now here. Right near, right outside this giant white church. Again, it's like a big obelisk. It's like a city block around, basically. It's a city block big. It's basically like the equivalent of one subway stop away from this giant white church, which is the Iris Parish church, that's kind of like at the center of a bunch of different factories— a bunch of little factories down at— it's like, almost, if it was a person, it would be like there are factories at its ankles. That's what it looks like. Like that's how big this place is. So where are you on the train, everybody?

ALI: Do we each wanna take a plate?

DRE: Yeah, that's kind of what I was thinking.

AUSTIN: Okay.

JACK: Yeah, it sounds like a good plan.

AUSTIN: So everyone in the, everyone's in the like, plate room at this point?

JACK: Yeah.

DRE: Yeah.

AUSTIN: Okay. Before you leave, yeah, Peg and Zaktrak very much are like, you better come get us. Like when all this is over, like after we get out of here?

SYLVIA: Aubrey just like, I promise, and like... effusively shakes Zaktrak's hand and probably tries to shake Peg's, and Peg does not want it.

AUSTIN: Peg shakes your hand and gives it a real—

SYLVIA: Okay.

AUSTIN: Gives it a squeeze and then like, a hand, the hand you don't see grabs you on the back of your neck. Huge fingers, long fingers, wrap all the way from the back of your neck around to your throat, and you feel their— her nails going into your throat a little bit. And then like, she lets go and like, pats you on your back as you leave.

SYLVIA (as Aubrey): It was lovely meeting you.

AUSTIN: Alright, so every, each of you takes one of these plates. Who has the important plate?

ALI: Probably me, cause I'm the one who remembers that.

AUSTIN: Yes, okay, sounds good. You have four of the five, of the six plates.

DRE: Yeah, we have to get off this train.

AUSTIN: The train is stopped. Uh huh!

DRE: Cool. How far off the ground are we?

AUSTIN: Fifty floors.

DRE: 'Kay.

AUSTIN: So...

ALI: Still? It's not like, lower...

AUSTIN: No, it's going into a, so if you, again, no one's gone to check this out yet, but.

ALI: Right.

AUSTIN: Because It's also just super bright. But no, it looks like... I guess you could've seen it when you were on the rooftop. It was going into that giant white building at like the— towards the top of that giant white building. No one had an escape plan?

DRE: I mean... the only thing I can think of is like, I don't, I mean, climbing gear and rappelling down to a rooftop, but I doubt like, standard climbing gear that we can pull out of our bags is long enough to do that.

AUSTIN: Yeah... Probably not.

JACK: I mean, we could've... I wonder whether or not this is the point for a flashback.

DRE: Yeah.

JACK: In which we set up our escape, but at the same time, we didn't know that we were gonna be going to the air, right, so.

AUSTIN: No. Yeah, you didn't.

JACK: I mean, so maybe just somewhere in Marielda right now there's just like, a man driving a cart? Where we were supposed to meet him? *[Austin laughs]* And he's just like, looking up at the train, seen visible going across the city—

AUSTIN: *[cross]* Yeah...

JACK: Sitting going like, "Oh..."

AUSTIN: It's Snitch Nightly, and he's just like, holding his fucking hair he's like jeez.

[laughter]

JACK: *[cross]* "Ohhh, this is gonna be bad."

AUSTIN: *[cross]* "Samothes, this, oh."

JACK: Um, yeah, so, what is this flashback?

DRE: What if— can we put the train in reverse?

AUSTIN: Yes, but that's not in the engine room.

SYLVIA: I mean, there's the final car we haven't gotten into.

AUSTIN: Yes.

JACK: I mean, we're so close to that last car.

AUSTIN: It's right there.

ALI: *[laughs]* We could just go in there.

DRE: Sure. Yeah, let's go in there.

JACK: Ah man, I really like this, cause there's just been so much noise, sound and fury on this whole train. For ages and ages and ages, and then there are loads of people gathered in this one room next to the last remaining room.

AUSTIN: Mhm. That is *filled* with light.

JACK: Yeah.

AUSTIN: So you... who walks in?

ALI: I'll go, I don't have—

JACK: You've got the mask.

ALI: Yeah.

AUSTIN: Alright, yeah. You go. You go and it's actually really good that you cause like, you have the mask on.

ALI: Right.

AUSTIN: Alright. So you step inside, and there is... It takes a second to even see it, cause it's so bright behind this, but like let me like... here, let me just literally just draw this really quick. So like, here is like, the, the window? This giant front window. The whole front of the train is a window. Right? But then there's like, a black shape that is like, blocking out bits of the like... it's it's right in the middle of that window. It's a throne. It's like a chair. But it takes you a while to even see it, because that's how bright this light is behind it. Like, the whole other, the behind it like, is just this giant ball of energy that's coming that you can see though the front windshield. And like, as you adjust your spirit mask so that you can like, actually see, you can see that there is like, seriously just a giant glowing ball of light and energy inside of that church. That's in front of you. And again when I say church, it's this giant white obelisk tower. And you can see that the train is like, gonna go past it and then into another like, stop area past that giant white ball of light.

And as you step forward into that room, and like, move past the throne, and look back, you see a figure seated in the chair. Who is... just like... hands folded, looking forward. And like, there is a... a sort of, first you think that it's like this because of the light that's, that's hitting him. He has this weird— he's like glowing, golden aura. Then you think that it's like that because you're, he's a spirit? He's like some sort of ghost or something, because you have your spirit mask on. But then as other people move into the room, they see him too. And then you notice, above where he is, there's like a little yellow crystal? It's like a Sims plumbob? And coming through, from it, is this image of this man who is... his skin is dark, and he has a well-cropped beard. Not like, super dark, like, like, Indian subcontinent dark, with close-cropped hair and a very simple like, golden crown. And like, dude is cut. And you can tell that because like, he's just wearing an open robe. And like, basically pajama pants. But like, looks regal as fuck?

And he looks up at you, Castille, and then you're in the cat. You're like, Castille's body goes limp for a second, everybody? And the cat is no longer back in the— actually, it's just, maybe you get to like see this happen from inside of it, it's a very uncomfortable feeling. You are in your cat body, Castille?

ALI: Uh huh...

AUSTIN: And like, you can't control it. And you walk through the luncheon car, which, in on this another train is totally still just like, oh yeah, everything's, everything's going about their business. And you walk past all of the pala-din, who are, who are like, just lined up on the walls. You walk past the, through the ballroom where people are dancing, and you're like, tip-toeing right down the middle as like, here are all the young, hot, rich Maelgwyn's faithful? You walk past a duplicate of the diorama room, and then you walk into the other front of the train car, where the cat version of you can see Samoths sitting in his throne. And the train moves forward, down the, the kind of Chrysanthemum Parish border, and splits one more time, where half of it loops back up and around but the half you're on crosses the water and heads back to the volcano where Samoths lives. And you leap up, not out of your desire, into his lap. And he pets you twice, and then you leave his consciousness. He is... There is a... you feel warm? You feel warm, and that's not a thing you feel. Ever. Because you're made of stone and rock.

ALI: Right.

AUSTIN: But when he picks you up, like the moments before you flash back into your own consciousness, there is a feeling of parental care. And like... it's a little bit like when you have a cat. And it's like, oh you fucking made a mess, and then like, the cat runs up to you, and you sit— and like, yeah I'm gonna fucking pet you, but you're, hm. Goddammit. Like, I love you, but you're the worst. *[Ali laughs]* And that's the, and like, so it's that but then literally also the feeling of warmth, of like actual heat from, from being near him. And then you're back in your body. And then the light— the like, almost holographic version of him goes out. Castille's back, like wakes back up. You can see that there's a, there totally are switches you can hit here. To like, turn the train the other direction. Though, of course, the engine is turned off right now. You guys turned off the engine!

[2:00:00]

SYLVIA: Look, I thought I was doing a good thing.

[laughter]

AUSTIN: I know, I know you thought well. You thought—

DRE: *[cross]* You did! You did do a good thing.

AUSTIN: I guess, here's what actually, what happens is you have all of the— the engine is broken, right, the, the plates are, are removed. And the train should not work at this point. And Literally what happens is, instead of going into the factory? It like... new track appears as it's stalled out at the top of this, all the way up there, and just in front of its front track, it dips just a little bit and then goes like a roller coaster straight down. Not straight down, but like down on an

arc, and it just like, and then you're, the whole train just dives. And then like, just at the last second pulls back up, zeroes out, and then goes into a... Like, a train station that was not there five minutes ago. And it's not, there's no people there, it's like an empty, abandoned train station. And you're able to climb back out of the, the roof of the car. And get away. But now you're, in the, in the factory district. I think you did it, I think you got through.

[laughter]

SYLVIA: We did it. Fucking hell!

ALI: Hi, I live in this town, let's just go hang out.

JACK: Oh!

AUSTIN: Yeah, let's end on like, a nice... a nice outro? Like a nice like, end of episode you know like, tv show style thing?

ALI: Right.

AUSTIN: Where, what do you all do when you succeed at this? Also yeah, I'm also just gonna straight up give you Zaktrak and Peg as cohorts.

JACK: Yes!

SYLVIA: *[cross]* Nice.

ALI: *[cross]* Nice.

SYLVIA: My buddies!

AUSTIN: Yeah, let's, let's, I mean, they're buddies, and also, they want a cut.

SYLVIA: Yeah, totally.

AUSTIN: Also, there's two Hitchcocks now. So you all climb out of the train, You're carrying these big heavy— *Oh* you have an extra one! Cause Hitchcock! There's two Hitchcocks, you can each carry!

[laughter]

SYLVIA: Nice!

ALI: Good! Good.

AUSTIN: And also, listen, fuck it, I'll say Zaktrak, Peg will not fuckin help, but Zaktrak will carry one for you too. So you get the whole six, big plates.

ALI: I kind of like the idea of Castille being like, yeah I live like two blocks from here, let's all just like, hide out and relax for a little bit!

AUSTIN: That's what criminals do, they go back to their real homes after they've robbed God?

JACK: Immediately after!

ALI: Well she lives in like, a place where no one else lives!

AUSTIN: That's, okay, that's totally fine. Do that.

ALI: Like, it is a actual hideout. And she's like yeah, let's go celebrate, but she doesn't have any like food or anything to drink? *[laughs]*

AUSTIN: Is this an empty warehouse?

ALI: Yeah!

AUSTIN: Does she have anything on her walls? What's her, what's her apartment like?

ALI: It's like a studio with like, a kiln and like, a bunch of weapons.

[MUSIC — Mariel da]

AUSTIN: *[cross]* Okay. Okay, let me paint this picture, then. Everybody goes to— you get a, you all get there and it's like, we made it! And then like yeah, you don't have any weapon— you don't have any booze, you don't have any drinks, you don't have any food. You don't have any music. Peg is like:

AUSTIN (as Peg): I'm going home.

AUSTIN: Zaktrak says that like,

AUSTIN (as Zaktrak): I know where there's a good bar! If you guys wanna go?

JACK (as Hitchcock): Yeah, I'll go.

DRE (as Sige): Yeah!

ALI (as Castille): Yeah!

AUSTIN: And so everybody starts to leave, everybody leaves and then like as everybody walks out of the room, a little cat hops in through the window. And like, goes and curls up on the bed and then like, turns back into a statue.

[MUSIC — Marielda ends]