

PALISADE 53: A Palette of Colors Pt. 8

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Recap

Austin: PALISADE is a show about empire, revolution, settler colonialism, politics, religion, war, and the many consequences thereof. For a full list of content warnings, please check the episode description.

[music intro - "[See All Of This](#)" by Jack de Quidt begins]

Jack: August Righteousness has been having recurring dreams about joining Wakeful.

Dre: Levi and the squad go out and do good things, and things happen, and then we come back, [**Austin:** Mmm.] and the Cause leadership is starting to ice Levi out.

Ali: Brnine feels sort of bad about losing Future, and Jesset hating them, I guess?

Sylvi: I think Cori ends up spending a lot of time at the consecrated Afflictions area?

Keith: Chests of treasure, overflowing chests of treasure, [**Dre** chuckles] and gold and money. And I think I'm just going around to all of the different Cause factions, and just like giving them huge sums of money.

Janine: Thisbe learned the power of autonomy, but then also learned that like, you can't—but you can't just do that all the time. Like, there's a limit to the power of autonomy.

Art: Future showed Clem all these bad outcomes.

Austin: Oh, yeah!

Art: And that—that fucks you up.

Keith: I would love to... I mean, wow, I feel so close to—

Austin: Doing the thing.

Keith: To taking every last cent of the Kesh fleet. I mean, they lose their ships, they lose this area. What else do they have? Nothing. Bank accounts empty. They were in this canyon looking for Fire Support.

Austin: Oh, sure.

Keith: Fire Support is here, too. I got both of the things. We get Fire Support, and we get Lander One.

Austin (as Jesset): This is what you're signing up for.

Austin: He says to Levi.

Austin (as Jesset): It's this. It's tears forever. [voice breaking, getting hoarse] You don't get to win. You just have to keep trying and losing people. You just have to see it go bad over and over and over again. It gets close. *You get close.* Over and over again. And then they take it from you. You compromise. You...

you mess up. It's... it's a vow. It's a vow to fail. That's what it means. Are you really ready to follow people like us to do *this*?

Dre (as Levi): I don't know! I'm not... thinking about that, and maybe I should, and maybe that's gonna be my problem to deal with later. Right now, I'm thinking about someone that I've heard a lot of really good stuff about is trying to throw their life away.

[music ends]

Introduction

[00:03:42]

Austin: Okay, so we did Levi's scene? Is that the only scene we've done so far from this round? Yes—

Keith: No, I did a scene.

Dre: No. Yeah yeah yeah, I was like, we had another one.

Austin: Oh Leap! The Leap final scene. Okay, yes. Of course, of course. Lander One. So, that leaves us with Brnine, August Righteousness, Coriolis Sunset, Clementine, uhh—Thisbe, and that's it. I knew how to do the rhythm on those. I knew how many it was. Why? Why are people asking questions?

Sylvi: [chuckles] No one said a thing.

Austin: I was asking.

Keith: No, no, I can hear them. They're loud.

[Ali spit takes]

Austin: Yeah, thank you. I hear them all the time. It's always like this for me. What—what are we doing? Who's up? Who's got a scene? As a reminder, we've broken

order. We're not going in any sort of order right now, we're just going by vibes. Who feels like it's time for their scene. I guess I'll ask this question. Does anyone feel like they're saving their scene for the end of the run?

Sylvi: Mine might be okay to do that with?

Austin: Mhm.

Sylvi: If—I'm showing my hand. If people want Cori in scenes, mine should probably go later?

Austin: Okay.

Ali: Mhm.

Janine: Uh oh.

August's Final Scene

[00:06:22]

Jack: I could go—I could go sooner, although this is the position that I've been in for the last two rounds as well.

Austin: Mhm.

[**Sylvi** chuckles]

Keith: But following new people.

Jack: That's true.

Austin: Yeah, at this point, you'd be third now instead of second.

Jack: Yes.

Austin: Right? You move by one.

[Ali giggles]

Austin: I've— [laughs] Yes.

Sylvi: Listen, nothing wrong with consistency.

Jack: I've shuffled up a little. Yeah, I can go.

Austin: Okay. Can you state your goal, your August Righteousness goal?

Jack: Yes. I'm playing August Righteousness, pronouns he/they, and my goal is, "Bring the Principality on Palisade to justice". The Divine Future was delivered by Levitation to August Righteousness in—god, is it a box? Is it the head? Is it just a box containing the golden orb? [Sylvi muffles laughter] I want the—I want an understanding of how Future comes into the hands of Cause leadership.

Sylvi: You said that and I was thinking of Se7en, sorry. [Jack chuckles] When you said that it was the head—

Austin: What's in the box?

Jack: What could it be?

Austin: Levi?

Dre: [short pause] Ooh, I'm sorry. Repeat that question.

Jack: How did Levi deliver Future to Cause leadership?

Dre: [exhales loudly] That is a great question, cause Future is one of those—one of those lil' squirrely guys, isn't it?

Jack: Mhm.

Austin: Uh-huh.

Keith: Classically.

Dre: Yeah, some kind of Mirage-tech box?

Austin: Oh, that's fun. Yeah.

Jack: Yeah.

Austin: Yeah. Something that you specifically—I mean, you're from the Mirage, maybe you—they—it's something explicitly built to help transport a Divine like this, huh?

Jack: Oh, it's similar tech to the prison that is currently holding Crusade.

Austin: Right.

Jack: But smaller and more portable.

Dre: Hm, sure. Put it in a pokeball.

Austin: Damn.

Jack: It would be a very cute pokeball because it's an orb already. So it would sort of just— [wheezes]

Austin: Snugly fit inside the pokeball. Yeah.

Dre: You know, hey. There are several Pokemon that are just orbs.

Austin: That's true.

Jack: It's true, yeah. I think that August Righteousness has received a vision, as everybody does, who interacts with Future. Even if—

Austin: I mean I guess—I have a question, is that true? Or is whatever the thing that it's been transported in prevent that?

Jack: It prevented it until I opened it.

Austin: Oh, you did open it, though? Okay.

Jack: I—I don't trust Levitation.

Austin: Sure, damn. Brutal. Okay.

Jack: I opened it and received a vision of Wakeful establishing a Divine empire on Palisade? And August Righteousness having rejoined the Gestalt to sort of like, cement that on the planet.

Austin: Mmm.

Jack: And it's awful. It's just, it's—it's—August knows that the futures that Future shows are not predictions so much as like—how have we described them in the past?—they're sort of like imaginings, or like they draw out a sort of—

Austin: Yeah, drawn out of the person, generally speaking. It's like, generally speaking, it had been previously like, what is the image of the future that *you* see for yourself in this moment? Is the way that I've always framed it.

Jack: Yeah.

Austin: Future crystallizes a sort of—you know, going back to COUNTER/Weight, when we know Future had other potential names like Zeal and Ambition, there's a sort of crystallization of a vision for one's own future, right? Not a broad objective position, nor historically *Future's* vision for the future—though perhaps that's one way it's decided to weaponize itself—or here it feels like maybe extracting an anxiety you have, and just crystallizing that.

Jack: Yeah, I think this is *absolutely* weaponized from Future. This is—this is you know, Future uses Gur's body as a rhetorical tool, [**Austin:** Mhm.] uses Gur's body as a mobility aid, as you know, as a way to pick things up, move, fly from planet to planet, you know, the body of Gur Sevraq has arrived. But ultimately, the sort of predictive and violent and consuming things are not lessened by being removed from Gur Sevraq's body. [**Austin:** Right.] So I think August opens this box, and Future just lashes out. And I think August is really starting to—we've spent so long fighting for Palisade and for its

people. And August is really worried that Stel Nideo, in collaboration with Wakeful, with the gestalt Wakeful, are just going to set a new seat of empire on Palisade itself.

Austin: Mhm.

Jack: We fought all this for so long, and in the last moments, like a—a fungus took root. And I think that August Righteousness, having encountered the gestalt in that sort of shimmering, stone-pillared garden, it's just this sort of shapeless mass starting to move on Palisade. So, I would like to go and set terms.

Austin: With Wakeful?

Jack: With Wakeful.

Austin: Okay. Where is this? Who's there? And what's your actual goal? What's the scene goal for August Righteousness?

Jack: I'm going to the Temple of the Threshold, the heart of the gestalt. I am bringing—

Austin: Which has been raised back up, by the way. I believe it was damaged during the earthquake when Figure died from Opposition. And here it has been brought back up, you know, the kind of—I always describe it as being sort of a coliseum in shape. It's this kind of circular, domed arena that has like these big entryways. And it's held up by these kind of prismatic walkways, these cloth prismatic walkways. And I think it has been lifted back up, but also—I don't know, I guess we'll get there and see what it looks like inside when you start describing, Jack.

Jack: I'm bringing Captain Brnine as like the sword arm of Millennium Break, of like—someone who came here and helped fight for this planet, as someone from the outside, you know. There was that great scene during the Wagon Wheel game, where August Righteousness basically said, “you little babies don't understand how long we've been fighting for this world”. [Dre chuckles] And I think that there is this moment of like bringing Brnine as someone who has seen some—who has seen both sides of that coin, as it were, you know, arriving to this place as someone new to it, and then having

spent so long in this fight. I would like to—Clementine is involved, but I think I'm not—this is the antagonistic side of it—

Austin: [cross] Right, as before.

Jack: [cross] —of an exhausted relationship. I think—August recognizes—

Austin: Wait, not an exhaust—an antagonistic relationship. [cross] A non-exhausted relationship.

Jack: [cross] As a—yes. Yeah yeah yeah.

Austin: It's not exhausted of Clem, right?

Jack: Yeah. August realizes that bringing Clem along while making the argument, you know, you're allying with— [chuckles] with a violent force against your best interests, [Austin: Mm, mhm.] is going to open a door to a kind of rhetoric [Ali giggles] that he is not willing to have. And I think that the frustration with that, the fury there, is part of what is driving him to this point of being like, all right, Stel Nideo down. And then when I have resolved this, Clementine is going to get it. My scene goal is... I'm thinking—

Austin: Do you want to talk through it?

Jack: Yeah, let's talk through it. Like, I'm—I'm doing that thing of trying to think of the right thing to say and then not saying it into the microphone.

Austin: Yeah, I couldn't tell if you were not looking for wording or if you didn't have a direction?

Jack: No, I think I have the direction, right? Which is, it's like, prevent Wakeful from using Palisade as the seat of empire. And this is so hard, right? Because what—And this is also why the scene is interesting. Because who is a Delegate to tell a Divine gestalt? Hey! don't reproduce the worst excesses of the Principality here, please?

[00:15:03]

Austin: Mhm.

Jack: You know, this is a big ask. It's—I'm thinking along the lines of—I think the thing August Righteousness is going to provide is a set of terms. You know, do not subjugate—it's an ultimatum, right? It's like if you cross these sort of physical or ideological or legal boundaries, it's war.

Austin: Cool. Yeah, I think that that makes sense. I think that that's—the other version of this that I was kind of curious about was—the other angle that I'm suggesting—not to overwrite this one, but maybe as part of an ultimatum or a different angle is—is there a world where August wants to extricate the Nidean aspects of Wakeful?

Because you don't have any problem with Opposition or Leadership or any of these other Divines that make up Wakeful. But you do have an issue presumably with, you know, whatever the, whoever the nearest, you know, Song of Nideo is, who's become a functionary of this emerging being, you know? Or whatever the military troops that are human, or—or Columnar or whatever, you know, synthetic troops who still wear Nidean colors, and who were part of the Nidean military machine. Or the part of the Nidean settler, you know, civilian settler program, which has continued here, right? Or the Divine Resonance, which was so key to the Nidean settler project, which has just been scooped in to Wakeful, and now hides inside of it, and hides literally behind, and part of a system that, you know—I mean, you know, Wakeful emerged from centuries, millennia of torture, right? And then, because of—driven partly because of that, towards unity, towards a sort of collaborative being-ness, wound up being a shield for things like the Divine Resonance, [**Jack:** Yes.] which have been at the forefront of this project. And so I wasn't sure if that would be part of what you were looking for.

Jack: No, I think that's absolutely it, because I think that that is preventing August from approaching these people with the kind of care or help or rehabilitation. And I mean rehabilitation there, not necessarily in the sense of like, rehabilitation as a process of justice, but rehabilitation as a process of like, physical rehabilitation following an injury,

or following years of trauma. The fact that Nideo is underneath that umbrella is preventing a kind of softening, I think, of the Cause's position there, right?

Because the fear, right, is what you're doing is you're reproducing—excuse me—a kind of Divine Principality, right? You're like, what if we reproduce the Principality, but with the primacy of Divines and of Divine thought? Whereas I think August Righteousness is like, hang on, there is a place for you here in this world, to—you were imprisoned here, often by the very people that you have now welcomed back into your fold. And we need to bring them to justice, and following that, you know, you can be welcomed into a process of rehabilitation on Palisade.

Art: What is the moral truth here, though? What is—what is real—

Jack: What is the moral truth of anything? I mean—That's a good question.

Art: Are—are the Divines necessarily members of the state? Or are they—are they—
[grimaces]

Jack: Me turning and looking at Thisbe? [**Austin** and **Dre** chuckle] I think, you know, I think this is very consistent, right?

Art: Are you looking at these Divines and saying, well, people couldn't figure this out, so you can't either?

Jack: I don't think that August Righteousness believes that a Divine is innately more capable of understanding statecraft or ideology than a person.

Ali: Also has a different relationship to Divinity than people do.

Jack: Well, August Righteousness is a person.

Ali: No, no, no, but I mean to Art's point of...

Austin: Than non-delegate people do.

Ali: Yeah.

Austin: Yeah, but is a person simultaneously.

Art: Yeah, but is that... is that correct?

Jack: Uhhh, yes, I think—well, I mean, we have provided several different answers to this in Friends at the Table, and I am so hesitant to be like, well, here's an answer. Because I don't think that's how it works. I would feel so reluctant to be like, well, Divines know the answers. [**Austin:** Yeah, I would-] Or like, well, Divines are capable of figuring this out.

Art: But like, what if—what if—

Austin: I would direct us to, Divines are socially constructed and socially real, right? Which is to say—

Jack: I mean, Aram Nideo was a Divine following his death.

Austin: Right, right. Which is to say—

Art: But is a Divine a member of a state?

Austin: Historically, yes.

Art: Is a Divine Nidean—

Austin: Many Divines have been both members of and functionaries of a state. Sometimes they are serving in leadership roles in the state of the Principality. Often they are in infrastructural roles of the state. They are subjects, which is to say they make decisions. They are not—again, assuming—let's talk about the biggest collection of Divines, which includes, let's say, Arbit? Which we've described as being unthinking, but just a functional machine; a really complex, incredible machine on one end. Arbit being the Divine that Grand Magnificent made at the end of Twilight Mirage to counteract the—what is now the broken Divine past, the countered Divine past, at the time the Crystal Palace, a predictive machine. On the other end, let's say Crusade, or Grace or

any of these classic Divines that we've seen that are like big thinking, talking robots, right?

And I think inside of that space, we have some of them who serve as primarily infrastructure that do not seem to have a subjectivity in the traditional sense that we talk about conscious subjectivity. And they are part of the state the way a highway is part of a state. But then we also have Divines who have served as effectively heads of state, or as members of a cabinet or in leadership roles and decision making roles. So like, because of the breadth of what Divine means, and because a Divine is not a single reducible thing, we've seen all of that stuff, you know.

Janine: We've also seen Divines that were forced into infrastructural roles [**Austin:** Mhm!] while clearly having more, you know, sapience and so on than a highway would have. So like, there's—

Austin: Totally, and we've seen Divines who wish they could just be infrastructure [**Janine:** Yeah.] and not have to deal with the subjective consciousness problem, right? It's *all* there. The breadth of what a Divine is, is not reducible insofar as the wide view of history is, which is not necessarily what I think a character like August's Righteousness might believe, but it is what we know is true based on our history here.

Jack: Does that answer your question, Art?

Art: Yeah, sort of.

Jack: [chuckles] I mean, I think where it gets dicey, and where I think that a lot of the show lives, is that humans are able to exert power on Divines in some ways, but are vastly outstripped in power in other ways, and Divines are able to easily exert power on humans in some ways, and are vastly outstripped in other ways. I think what is making August Righteousness'—the pit in August Righteousness' stomach, you know drop, is that the imperial force and conquest of Stel Nideo paired with the kind of immense world-shaping power—so great that they're able to turn themselves into a gestalt entity, raise the, you know, Temple of the Threshold, etc.—that is potentially, that could spiral extremely quickly, into Stel Nideo has resubjugated Palisade under the language of, I

mean, I know that we have it now, but like, the Divine Future has compelled, you know, the gestalt Wakeful to act in this way, as part of the gestalt, or, you know. And I think it's that sense of like, this is very different than 14 or 15 people at a cabinet table saying—the potential power that could be exerted here is immense, in favor of Stel Nideo.

Austin: Or at the very least as a shield for the people who already acted in that way, right? Like there's a way in which even if it doesn't—and this is where, why I raised the idea of bringing out the Nidean elements to some degree, was like—even if Wakeful just lives a peaceful life on Palisade for 5,000 more years, there will be a continuation of, [Jack: Mhm.] I'm invested in thinking about bringing the Principality on Palisade to justice for August Righteousness? Those people will not have been brought to justice, unless August Righteousness arrives at the idea that is, well, so long as they're being, as long as they're part of Wakeful and Wakeful is a social good, and Wakeful is—

Jack: I think quite the opposite, actually, Austin.

Austin: I mean, this is—I don't—it is hard for me to imagine the way you've been playing August Righteousness and the way that we've set up August Righteousness and all of the rhetorical tricks we've been playing around Righteousness, right, as being the one who would say, I actually don't even need a process of justice, of public justice doing, as long as like privately, these people face contrition and come to some public, you know—public service, public good role inside of Wakeful, etc. That to me has not been how you've been playing August Righteousness, [Jack chuckles] or how we've set up August Righteousness. I think there are a handful of characters in the history of Friends of the Table who maybe end there, but it's a small number, you know? [Jack: Yeah.] It's like pre... pre-end of Winter and Hieron, Alyosha, and maybe that's it, you know? People of willing—of infinite forgiveness, you know? But I don't think it's you.

Jack: No. I mean, a big sort of moment that I was thinking about is that I think, for example, August Righteousness probably disagrees with a lot of Mirage policymaking about the function of prisons. You know, or is less like—oh, let's let them look for contrition inside themselves, and see some sort of public good making within a

restorative community like Wakeful, and is closer to like, Jesset's just killing people. [chuckles] You know? Jesset is hunting down leaders and killing them.

Austin: Sorry, was that, and that's good? Or is that, and that's bad?

Jack: No, that is closer to the kind of [Austin: I see, yes.] sharper edged sense of justice than August Righteousness. August Righteousness, however, is like a statesman, so is instead being like, I'm going to go and try and get Nideo out of this, you know, get them out. Okay.

That was a lot of talking through. I appreciate taking the time to talk through it because, you know, as we get to the end of the game, and with a goal like “Bring the Principality on Palisade to justice”, I'm sure and I understand why, there are a lot of listeners who might be looking for like a courtroom scene. And I don't think that's these characters, and I don't think that's this story right now.

Austin: Right. That might be the epilogue that we get, like—

Jack: Oh yeah—

Austin: Here's how the trials went, you know?

Jack: Yeah, absolutely.

Austin: Also, I think I'll say really quick, I said I think Alyosha might be one of the few people who would do that sort of forgiving. Clearly, some of the freed Divines from the Garden of Fidelity [Jack: Yeah!] also want to do that sort of forgiveness, but I think that that's pretty consistent with how we've played Divines over the years too. Classically, sometimes grace just gets like this, right? Divines live in a different type of time and seem flexible in ways, because—in terms of what their perspectives on the world are, partly because they live in such different time spans, generally speaking, right?

Jack: Yeah.

Janine: There's also—this is a thing that I've been picking up on, or at least that I've been reading in, where like, there is a flip side to the classic, like “we could have made them look like anything, made them look like us” kind of thing. Which is from the Divine perspective like, they made us look like them. [**Austin:** Mhm.] And there are definitely some Divines who are going to feel a sense of obligation towards creator—like the, you know—it's not really a creator anymore, but like there is still a sense of like, we would not exist but for them. So you know, what does that mean?

That's I think part of what Thisbe is trying to unpick is like, what—you know, I want to say that like, I think a lot of what Jack, you've said about August in this is aligned with what Thisbe thinks, and she'd probably want to tag along for this. But like, there is a sense of like, whenever it is Divines, plus, you know, people, humans, mortals, whatever—however we want to frame, humans isn't right, but you know what I mean—whenever those two factors combine, holy empire seems to follow. And like, what if we tried something else? What if what if it didn't have to be that way? What if there wasn't this sort of obligation, this like parasitic, obligatory thing that keeps repeating, you know?

Jack: Yeah, break the wheel.

Ali: [chuckles] I was thinking of raising it in character about Thisbe's involvement. So I don't know if you'd like to come, or if—August is excluding, or—

Jack: You're absolutely welcome to come—no, no.

Austin: Gatekeep. August is gatekeeping—

Janine: Lord knows I've— [**Ali** laughs] Lord knows I've made August to tag along on so many things [chuckles]. I imagine Thisbe just like looking expectantly at them sometimes, like, [**Austin** chuckles] I'm just going to go do a thing. You can come.

Jack: Yeah.

Austin: Alright. So, Temple of the Threshold. Are you entering into it this time?

[00:30:00]

Jack: Yeeeah, yeah!

Austin: Because before, the last time we saw it, was you were kind of at the—

Jack: At the gates.

Austin: You were at the gates of Creston, right? There was—no, I guess that was—you visited it the first time, [Jack: That was Levi.] That was Levi in Creston. You did go to the kind of the, in my mind, the kind of edge of one of these bridges, these kind of cloth bridges.

Jack: August brought an army outside the gates to get them to turn over Gentian and Crusade. And now I think is coming as like a, you know, the truce has been going well except for that bit when Clementine, who we, who we, who we disavow, brought down two Divines. Yeah, I think, you know, welcomed inside or?

Austin: Yeah, actually, [Jack: Ali-] because post—sorry, yeah, go ahead and ask Ali.

Jack: Do you want to chat with Thisbe on the approach or would you like to chat with Thisbe in-situ?

Ali: Oh—um no, I'm sorry. I wasn't trying to call out a specific conversation there. I was imagining August inviting Brnine, and Brnine being like, well, Thisbe should come to this, right?

Jack: Oh, yeah.

Austin: Yeah, there were—I don't think Ali was asking for a scene.

Ali: Right. We don't have to zoom in on that. I just feel like that's the order of events.

Jack: Yeah, definitely.

Austin: I think welcomed in, you know, not just because the things went okay last time, but post-Creston, post-Levi's, you know, [Jack: Yeah.] why do we have to get

permission to help each other thing, I think there has been a shift in the way Wakeful has been interacting with the Cause and with, you know, with the people of Palisade. Which is like that's, by the way, why Cause has never had another name in some ways, right? Like, who are we? We're Palisade. That's who we are.

Jack: [chuckles] Yeah. Yeah.

Art: I'm sorry, you're talking about the Hexagon?

Austin: Yeah, I'm talking about the Hexagon. Yeah, that's right.

Jack: Ohh. God damn. [chuckles] Who do they send out? Is there like—is this a—is this a round table? Well it's the gestalt, right? So they don't—

Austin: Yeah. They could do a lot of different things here, right? I mean, I think that you are—this is a—this is a, you call ahead? Do you set up a meeting, or are you just showing up?

Jack: Yeah, I think—I think set up a meeting.

Keith: We know that they like calls ahead.

Austin: Do they?

Keith: Yeah, because when—cause Dre—

[Dre laughs]

Jack: Oh yeah! Because Dre showed up, and they were like, who the fuck are you? Climbed out of a well.

Keith: Really, they were like, you didn't even call.

Austin: [chuckling] Exactly, exactly.

Dre: They had a point.

Austin: Ehh... you know, you worked it out. It all turned out alright.

Dre: Yeah yeah yeah!

Austin: It all turned out OK. God, here's a—here's a fun one. Bright Mercy shows up to to welcome you. Who was the delegate of Mercy, who introduced the Wagon Wheel crew to Joyous Guard.

Jack: That's great.

Austin: And is like, here—here she is. Is she that Bright Mercy? Is she? I don't—I don't know. I don't know. You know, so. And she's like, you know,

Austin (as Bright Mercy): Right this way, where we've been expecting you. We have rooms prepared in case this turns into an overnight stay, or you just want to drop things off.

Jack (as August): Thank you.

Austin: And you're shown to rooms and, you know, you're moving through the space, which really does emphasize that it is—this was a Stel Nideo space three months ago, or six months ago or something, you know, I don't know what the timescale we're playing with is now here.

Jack: Are there Nideo colors and banners still on the walls? Has the gestalt removed those?

Austin: I think it's probably replaced those with something else. And—but I don't know what exactly. And I think—but I *do* think, that there has been some sort of like, emerging reconstruction architecturally of the internals of this place. It's still a little mini city in the middle of this big domed coliseum-type arena space? But I think there is a—you know, I think that there is a degree of like, and here's a little corner that was built by a sort of a focal point, like sometimes different parts of Wakeful will come into deep focus and collaborate together, right? And so it's like here is like, where you know, Guilt and Emphasis worked together on a thing, you know? Here's where these parts of who we

are collaborated and melded together and produced these buildings, or this public artwork or something like that, right? There's like a raising and lowering scale of how often different subcomponents of Wakeful work together in that way, you know?

And sometimes it is a fully active, you know, bringing all of its attention to one point in one place as Wakeful. And other times, it's smaller subcomponents are functioning in pairs or in groups. And that is—like all of that is available to Wakeful as it needs, you know?

Jack: And then non-Divine people as well, you know?

Austin: Yeah. And I think that's the biggest sign of Nidean influence here, right? Is there are just people who are definitely wearing the clothes of Nidean settlers. There are people who still check their, like, Resonance watches or whatever, you know? Listening to Siri do their little, like, what's their—what's their weekly report? You know, what's their—

Jack: Is it still coming through?

Austin: Resonance?

Jack: Yeah!

Austin: Yeah, yeah.

Jack: Broadcasting from within Wakeful.

Austin: Yeah. I think that there was like a decision made which was like, oh, this is a—this is a thing that these people find helpful. And are they—is it still also doing the surveillance state part of this? TBD! [chuckles] [**Jack** chuckles] You might want to ask Wakeful about that.

Dre: [chuckling] Who's to say?

Austin: Who's to say?

Jack: I mean I think—you know, at the meeting, several of these gestalt bodies, so that different facets are able to speak simultaneously and discuss? That's something I was thinking.

Austin: What's the room like where the meeting is?

Jack: It is... it's a cloister of the Temple of the Threshold. So it's not like the main nave, which I imagine has been... that is some sort of like internal government space—and I'm using government there in the loosest possible word—you know what I mean. That's like—that is Wakeful's space, or space to think or work things through, or, you know, that is the place that the sort of melded body inhabits. But here, on a nave, with the outside, there are, you know, still some color banners from when this was a temple, and you know, benches, and tables that have been set up. You know, big windows on either side, but not a particularly imposing space.

Austin: Yeah, they're not trying to show off necessarily.

Jack: No, and in fact, they might be like, well, you know, the showing off space is currently doing something else. And I think, yeah,

Jack (as August): I'd like to begin by just—

Jack: This is out of character.

Jack (as August): I'd like to, you know, emphasize the areas of collaboration that we've been doing really well in. And, you know, I'd like to extend my thanks to moments that they came in and broke windows.

Jack: And I think some of August Righteousness here is absolutely being like, this is the first half of the negotiations. And some of it is like, I didn't have the resources to fix that thing, and I'm genuinely grateful for it. He is navigating his own internal sort of like, different facets of, "I wish they hadn't done that". And, "that one was really useful". But he's presenting it all as like, you know, we're really grateful for the work and the collaboration that has been set up. I know that you had a chance to meet Levitation.

Austin: Yeah, and I think that they—they follow through on that with one, one little extra twist, which is like, they are not shy about naming the Delegates or the temporary, like the kind of like flash Delegates that they've made to help in specific ways, which sometimes are aspects of Nidean Divines, right? Out the gate, you know, they are willing to say that like—because that's part of what's happened here, right? It's not just, oh, Resonance is here, right? It's that Generous Resonance helped repair the waterworks, you know, in Carhaix, right? It's that, you know, we've already established—not Consecration, right?—but like similarly, other Nidean groups or forces or new delegates of Nidean Divines helped in ways X, Y, Z. And they're not super shy about saying that outright, you know?

Jack: And it's as this continues for a bit that you know, August Righteousness places his hands on the table, palms down, and kind of looks down at his hands, and looks up at the group and says,

Jack (as August): And now we come to the secondary matter of our meeting. This is of grave importance, and part of the reason that I've traveled here today in person to discuss this with you face to face. Your organization harbors criminals. Many criminals who have done great harm to my people and to the people of this planet. And we need to begin a series of discussions as to what is to be done about this.

Austin (as Delegate): We're always happy to have conversation.

Jack (as August): We're going to have it now.

Jack: And he opens his briefcase. And inside his briefcase is a list of the Nidean Divines that he could pull together, as well as a list of Nidean officers, names drawn from logs recovered at the Lone Marble—not the Lone Marblegroup—captured Nidean bases, and yeah, collabor—you know, as we got towards the end, and the Authority was collaborating with each other, pulling lists from Lone Marble, pulling lists from things recovered from the Paint Shop, etc., and slides this across the table.

Austin: They look at the list and, you know, I think this is Bright Mercy, you know, says,

Austin (as Bright Mercy): We'll take this into consideration.

Jack (as August): You'll take this into consideration today. These people are leaving with us in manacles, or the relationship between your group and ours is going to take a decidedly different turn.

Austin (as Bright Mercy): We are already taking it into consideration. You would rush us on carving away part of who we are, even given our history?

Jack (as August): [contemptuous] *Carving away part of who we are?* The people that you are protecting have carved away so much of myself, of this planet, of people that I care about for generations. Yes, I'm rushing you. You can make these decisions now, or you can make them over a series of blunt communications between our diplomats.

Austin (as Delegate): [slow, measured voice] We wish you had our perspective. You see no possibility for reintegration, for change, for how, in joining us, these... these living processes could find better context.

Jack (as August): I'm not interested in—

Austin: This, speaking, is Slow Righteousness.

Jack: [chuckles] Can I tell? Yes, I can tell.

Austin: Oh, yeah, instantly.

Jack: When the Divine that I am part of is, you know— [**Austin:** Yeah, oh yeah.] I think there's a bafflement. And I think part of the way August Righteousness works as a Delegate is, you know we've talked about how the Divines have, when Delegates are slivered away from them, they lose that capacity. And I think on some level August Righteousness is baffled that this other Righteousness is not august, is slow. [**Austin:** Mhm.] And says,

Jack (as August): I think you mistake me, sister. I am not Conciliatory Righteousness. I don't care too much about these people's capacity for change. I care about making right what was done to me. What was done to my other brothers and sisters. Very little patience for talking through slow change.

Austin (as Slow Righteousness): Why do you, who have lived for decades, carry greater authority than we, who were under the knife for millennia, in determining what justice looks like for them? It is selfish.

Jack: Stands up, sits down, you know, like, there's a real tension—real tension here. Let me think.

Austin: Is there any Thisbe or Brnine reaction to this? Because presumably they're in this room also. They didn't just hang out in the hotel or whatever.

Ali: I think that there is an extreme timidity from Brnine to interact here, both knowing that they were sort of invited as a weapon. **[Jack chuckles]** And also, like, if this breaks bad, that's why Brnine's here. Like, that's, you know, they're not the negotiator. I think Brnine is also in a difficult position to speak about Divine rehabilitation? I'm, like, super curious on, like, what Asepsis thinks here.

Austin: Oh, sure. I think Asepsis is—I don't know, my instinct—other people can maybe say if I'm—if they have different instincts—my instinct is that Asepsis would side with Righteousness, but that might be—August Righteousness—but that might be me thinking of classic Asepsis, verify integrity, get rid of outside—

Janine: Counterpoint.

Austin: Yeah, please.

Janine: Asepsis, generally a fan of homogeneity.

Austin: True. Yeah, but I don't—is that what this is? **[Ali: I... yeah.]** Or is this the inverse of that, where it's, like.

Janine: I don't know.

Austin: The blending of boundaries?

Janine: I'm not—I'm not staking a claim on it, I'm just putting it out there.

Austin: Yeah. Yeah yeah.

Ali: I do think—I do think that there's something about Wakeful at all that Asepsis rejects. And that's why I don't think it's, like, a tension in the scene of, like, well, what if Asepsis wants to be a part of that or whatever?

Janine: I guess It's a good angle that, like, yeah, truly the thing that August is pointing out is that like, you are taking these tainted elements in, and just saying it's fine.

Austin: Yeah, that to me seems like the way that—

Janine: Very anti-Asepsis.

Austin: Yeah, yeah.

Jack: I mean, I think August Righteousness, you know, slams his fist down on the table and says,

Jack (as August): You think I need to earn a sense of authority in this moment, earn it under the knife or earn it through some extended Divine time? I did not have the length of time and knowledge that you have. I was cut away from you. But I know what has been done to the people I love, and I would not see that continue under the sort of—

Jack: I can't find the way he would say it, but under the soft guise of, well, slowly we'll be able to rehabilitate these people. And then I think, also, sliding angrily from one angle to another, he says,

Jack (as August): And none of this will work, it's already happening. They are *already* turning you against us. They are *already* turning you against the world

that they got three quarters of a way through taking, and they seek to take the last quarter.

Austin (as Slow Righteousness): Oh, brother, it is sad. Give us a moment. It may be that we can be more patient than you can be.

Austin: Give me a dice roll. I think what they're considering internally is, you know what, sure. We'll lose them for a generation or two. [**Jack** chuckles] We can be patient.

Jack: God, this is fucking... this is Jesset City sobbing and saying, you think you get a little win, but on a long enough line, you know.

Austin: You know, it's partly—I think it's them saying like, hey, what happens here? We put them in manacles. We give them to you. We send them on their way with kind words.

Jack: All the humans die.

Austin: All the humans die. Or no—

Jack: They weren't going to have the capacity for—

Austin: It's not *all* the humans die, it's—you bring them—presumably, you—I don't know—maybe they don't know, but I suspect—

Keith: “All the Humans Die” is at Aria Joie song, pretty much.

[**Jack, Sylvi, Austin** chuckle]

Austin: Presumably, they go to a Divine rehabilitation center on—in the Twilight Mirage somewhere, is what they're thinking, right? They don't assume you execute them, but even if you killed them, you can't kill them in a way that matters. Right?

Jack: No, because they're Divines.

Austin: Right.

Jack: And this is so sad.

Keith: Have you tried grinding them up into a paste.

Ali: Can we not—

Austin: Well like, and we know—huh?

Ali: Can that—can it—they can't be destroyed?

Austin: No, they have their—[cross] Principality Divines—

Keith: [cross] They got the Gumption stuff.

Austin: —are Gumption—have that Gumption tech in them that makes them *always* able to be resurrected.

Jack: I would like to briefly say—

Austin: We have one way—yeah, go ahead.

Jack: —say on the record, as, you know, Friends at the Table is often the process of watching a writer's room, one of the notes that I took as a possible version of this scene is, Righteousness tries to destroy Future, question mark? [**Austin:** Mm.] Sealing it away in a box would be a disaster. Shatter it, question mark? [**Ali** chuckles] And all I could think of was Keith saying, have you tried grinding it into a paste?

[Friends chuckle]

Jack: But then I was like, everybody's just going to start breathing in Future. This is not, you know.

Austin: We have one place that we've seen Divines able to be dead, [cross] and it's Chimera's Lantern.

Jack: [cross] Yeah! It's on Chimera's Lantern!

Austin: Which is a sort of nightmare scenario, that it becomes a prison of death, instead of a place of respite, which is what the Chimeric Cadent had built it to be, you know?

Jack: And you know, Rigour got knocked into a sun, but that was pre-Gumption.

Austin: It was all pre-Gumption. Post-Gumption, Rigour could come back from being knocked into the sun. That's what happened with Motion.

Jack: Yeah, but they don't know where it is.

Austin: Well, no. My point being, sorry. If Rigour had been a post-Gumption text Divine, [Jack: Oh I see, yes, yes.] Rigour cannot come back.

Austin: Rigour was destroyed by the sun, right, because it didn't have whatever this weird super magical nanotech shit that Gumption had that allowed it to be rebuilt from, you know, echoes of particles, whatever the fuck it is that Motion just did, you know.

Jack: To continue the conversation that we were having earlier, *this* is a major difference between Divines and non-Divines. August Righteousness is going to die one day.

Austin: Right.

Jack: You know, so is Brnine.

Austin: Well, and there are some Divines here—I should say—there are some Divines here, like Integrity, that do not have that ability. If Integrity dies here, Integrity is dead, interestingly.

Jack: Yeah.

Austin: Different era, you know?

Jack: Different era. It was a *long* time ago.

Austin: Belgard did not have that technology, interestingly. Is now part of the Chimeric Cadent, you know? But the Chimeric Cadent is not immortal.

Janine: Weird example, because Belgard did technically die and come back.

Austin: True.

Janine: But you're right.

Austin: Yes. But different way.

Janine: Yeah.

Austin: You know, yeah. Yeah, yeah, yeah. So, dice rolls.

Roll/Resolution

[00:50:30]

Jack: Okay. This is not going to be a pleasant role, although—we'll see. So two dice for me.

Austin: Uh huh. Starts with three on the opposition.

Jack: Plus one for the relevant relationship here.

Austin: Which is... Clem?

Jack: This is Clem as the—August Righteousness is saying, clean the fucking house.

Austin: Uh huh. And then, there's no troubles over three, or three are over, so there's no—nothing from that. Then, relevant burdens and relevant obstacles. Troubled by dreams. That's one.

Jack: Absolutely.

Austin: Compromised leadership?

Jack: Nope. The leaders aren't here. I've set out. We've set terms.

Austin: It will be hard to actually capture them. They're slippery.

Jack: I think that probably counts.

Austin: That's two. Yeah, iconoclasts can't tell the difference. That's nothing. You have surrounded yourself with immensely dangerous captives. You're going to arrest them? Okay, let's see. So that's three more. That is six.

Jack: Six v three.

Austin: Someone want to roll the opposition dice?

Jack: Now, at the beginning of the game, we said, has August been lucky recently? And I said lucky. [chuckles]

Austin: Let's see. Okay!

Keith: Not the worst.

Austin: Okay!

Jack: Six.

Keith: I rolled one six, four two threes and two twos.

Austin: Yeah.

Art: So six, four and three play.

Austin: 6-4-3. Jack?

Jack: Okay.

Dre: [grimacing] Mmm...

Austin: 5-3-1. Oh, August.

Jack: No, no, there's a way to do this.

Art: Let's just—don't defend the six.

Jack: I mean, I can indulge in my vices. What's this called? Engaging in weakness.

Austin: Engaging in weakness. What is your chosen, what is your favored weakness?

Jack: My favored weakness is menace, win all ties.

Austin: Win all ties. **[Ali:** Mmm.]

Jack: I was thinking—but the problem is, is that taking misfortune here is going to have negative outcomes.

Austin: I mean, yeah,

Jack: But—this is such an interesting question in terms of like—

Keith: Just for you.

Jack: No, not necessarily.

Austin: No, not necessarily. Not necessarily. Because the final fortune or misfortune is about the kingdom.

Keith: Oh, yeah.

Jack: This is such an interesting question of like, where narrative power sits. You know, is it more advant—narrative power sits in a game system, right?—whereas it's like, is it more advantageous for me to *not* gain misfortune here, to save further kingdom pain later, or-? Do you see what I'm saying?

Austin: I do. **[Keith:** Yeah.] You're in a really tough place, is what I would say, mechanically. Right now you have three misfortune and one fortune.

Jack: Yeah. This means that I am going to end on a misfortune die. Whatever—

Austin: Well, we'll see. You will probably get one more fortune in the end because of the thing about [cross] ending with nothing over six.

Jack: [cross] Oh, with no six, yeah.

Austin: Which I believe we are now, with this scene, passing the possibility of. I guess it's not true because you could be crushed with multiple sixes.

Keith: No, technically—right.

Austin: You're right. The opposition could roll three sixes and win on those and that could change everything. Right? So I shouldn't say shit. But it's increasingly rare. It's increasingly rare, or improbable. But it's going to be tough.

Art: But you get a fortune from here, no matter what, and essentially maybe two. **[Keith:** Two, yeah, two.] If you lash out, you're looking at at least two fortune for winning on a five and a three.

Austin: Of course, lashing out will produce another misfortune. And Jack is going to get a misfortune from the six.

Art: Menace—yeah.

Jack: I mean, here's the thing. The six is narrative positioning is not good. It is doom. Is there a value in lashing out to try and remove the possibility of doom? Major misfortune. You know, part of the reason August came here was because they saw a terrible vision of like a new seat of empire. And let's say, for example—let's say, for example, that I win the scene. They hand over the prisoners, but there's like a rebellion among the prisoners. And you know, we essentially just reproduce Stel Nideo [chuckles] again outside of Wakeful?

Keith: I think that your best—mechanically, your best case scenario, which is not that bad of a thing to do, I think I think the downside to this is pretty low—is to lash out to reroll the six, bank on that not rerolling as a five or a six, which is, you know, a gamble, obviously, and then possibly end up with two fortune and two misfortune out of this.

Art: Well, no, because if you're going to lash out and then you have to menace to win the tie, you're in a—that's too much for you.

Keith: Well, no, because it would be, let's say that the five becomes a four, then you can win the—sorry, let's say that the five becomes a three, then you can win the two threes and lose the four.

Art: No, you don't win ties.

Keith: No, but there's a five, there's a five—oh sorry, I misread this three as a four, Jack's—

Art: Yeah, here, hold on. [cross] This rerolls, unless it's a two or one,

Keith: [cross] So, yeah, you'd have to roll it—you'd have to roll less than a three.

Art: You're not getting another win.

Keith: Yeah, I think you might just have to take it.

Jack: I don't want a Doom!

Austin: The thing that would come, right—the thing that would come from re-rolling the doom would be changing—

Keith: We can not have a doom.

Austin: —and this is a narrative thing, would be, it would go from changing the world to just putting more on August Righteousness, right? Which is like, a Jack maneuver if ever there's been one. [chuckles] [**Jack** chuckles]

Mechanically, that's about you wouldn't impact the map, you wouldn't draw another trouble, which means you wouldn't risk putting one of these twos back up to three, which would impact every scene after this, right? So there is value. There is a potential value there, for sure. But that's a—but it's mostly, not entirely, but mostly a narrative value.

Playing the misfortune/fortune game right now does not look like it's going well for August Righteousness, based on this die roll. But also based on just where they were at coming into this, you know?

Jack: Troubled by awful dreams. [chuckles] You know, sometimes you'll deliver the box containing a treasure that you've been hunting for years and you open it up, and it's like, terrible news, my friend. Um, yeah,

Austin: You know, you could, yeah.

Jack: I'm gonna lash out on the six.

Austin: Just the six, not, not any other ones.

Jack: No, I don't think we want to lash out on a four. I definitely don't want to lash out on that three.

Austin: You would need the four to, yeah, yeah, yeah, yeah.

Art: Again, lashing out on the four is—is mathematically correct.

Jack: Yeah, but you tried to sell me this last time, Art, and then it went really badly for August Righteousness.

Art: That's not how math works.

Keith: Yeah, it's been, this is a—it's been selling a lot at the store, the “reroll the four”.

[**Jack** chuckles]

Austin: I can hear the Balatro music playing.

Sylvi: I was literally, like.

Austin: Alright.

Sylvi: We take those.

Austin: Keith—yeah, we take those. Do you want to—do you want to reroll the six?

Keith: I'll reroll the six, sure.

Austin: We take those!

Keith: One. Great. So that's a two too!

Sylvi: Oh, we got the Cavendish!

Jack: No, but losing on a one does suck.

Austin: They don't lose on, they don't.

Art: Well, just win on the one.

Austin: They're gonna win on—they're gonna, see?

Art: Oh, they're gonna do that.

Austin: Yeah.

Art: Yeah.

Austin: You don't, they don't—you reroll the whole, you reroll inside of the dice. The thing that just happens, I pulled the one off and put the three on, because that's what—they now have four, three, three instead of five, four, instead of six, four, three.

Sylvi: Ohhh, okay.

Dre: Still better.

Jack: So I take one misfortune from lashing out, and then am I going to take another misfortune from the, um—

Keith: From the four, yeah.

Austin: Yeah, you're gonna, from the four or the three, it doesn't matter. **[Ali gasps]** But I guess narrative—yes?

Ali: Oh, it's not—it's in addition to exhausting a relationship?

Austin: It's in addition to, correct.

Art: For the last round, yeah.

Austin: Yeah, sorry.

Sylvi: The die is covering it, but you do get a fortune as well, right? From the five?

Austin: The five will give you a fortune.

Art: You get a fortune from the five and you lose a fortune for the loss.

Jack: Hey, are we sure it's a misfortune in addition to exhausting a relationship?

Austin: Yes.

Art: Yes, because the relationship no longer plays.

Austin: You can see here there's a little icon. It says, additionally, mark fortune or misfortune in the final chapter, and that's on three, four, and five on both sides. And that says additionally. So technically, what you should be doing is deciding, do you want a new obstacle or do you want an exhausted relationship?

Art: You should sort of be keeping in mind that it doesn't matter.

Jack: No, it's the last round, I just get the misfortune.

Austin: That's what I'm saying. You don't—you don't. It's *additionally*. You do get both. We don't have to care? But narratively, I do think it's interesting if you would rather this be narratively a new obstacle, or exhausting a relationship. **[Jack: Ohhh.] [Jack chuckles]** Because I think those are different outcomes.

Jack: This is exhausting the relationship, because it's Clementine, right? **[Austin:** Mmm.] It's going, you have come in here and talked such a big game about, you know, the sharp teeth of justice.

Austin: Of justice, yeah. Oof.

Jack: And, you know, this isn't August Righteousness immediately sends out hit squads, but it's like, if there was the worm in your stomach that was, it feels bad every time you use Clementine for an op, now it's just paralyzing, you know?

Austin: Alright. So what's the good part of this? What does your win look like?

[01:00:00]

Jack: I mean, immediately, this doesn't break bad. People don't start drawing pistols. They start handing people over. They come back, and they say—I imagine that there has been some pretty serious lobbying within the gestalt for “the time works differently for non-Divines”. And then I think there have been people who say, what does this matter?

You're talking to someone. You are talking through August to you know, millions, maybe a billion people, for whom time works *this* way. What are we compromising by basing our ideas of justice **[Austin:** Right.] on a timescale that vast amounts of people do not have access to?

Austin: I mean, here's the thing that I think to visualize this very—maybe not very clearly, in fact, I'm going to make it less—I'm going to make it more opaque. For a moment, the shell of Slow Righteousness looks at you, and there is a chord that plays. There is a light, a color, a sort of red, a sort of deep red that you feel inside. And it is approval from the Divine Righteousness, cohesive in a moment. This is what Righteousness would do, were it to be as whole as it could be, or at least so it thinks. And it's like, I don't know, you feel wind, right? You feel tall grass, you feel gray sky, and the color red.

And it is, of course, also an invitation.

No words said, but a sense. The sense that conversations, debates like these are happening constantly, and you don't get to be part of them because you're out here.

Jack: Damn. August Righteousness, turning and doing that meme with the holding hands with all the people who Samoths looked at points in Hieron. God; battenning it down inside of himself. This is not the conversation for today. This is, you know, there's work to be done.

Austin: I think the specific thing here too, is like the sense that you're getting is like, the Divines can talk—the Wakeful can talk all this game about patience and, oh, we can reintegrate the Divines that are taken from us here, blah blah blah blah blah. They won't get to reintegrate fucking Joe Nideo, right?

[**Sylvi** laughs]

Austin: Joe Nideo is getting the fuck out of here. [**Ali** wheezes] Right? Joe Nideo is leaving here and going to have a court case. You know?

Sylvi: Joe Nideo...

Austin: Joe Nideo is going to have to stand in front of people and say like, yes, I diverted the supplies from the civilians to the military, you know?

Sylvi: Oh no, they found Hunter Nideo's laptop.

Art: But was this also explicitly about other Divines?

Jack: Oh yeah, them too.

Austin: No, no, no, sorry. My point being, the perspective Righteousness is giving is like, yes, maybe the other Divines do get reintegrated from Wakeful five hundred years from now. Joe Nideo will not.

Jack: Oh right, yes. In the long view, maybe we'll get residents.

Austin: And so—yes.

Art: I didn't even know Joe Nideo was here.

Austin: Joe—what? Yes. I've been talking about Joe Nideo—

Art: Joe Nideo?

Austin: Yeah, Joe Nideo is here!

Art: Leader of the—the head guy? Joe Nideo?

Austin: No, no, it's like some fucking, some little—

Sylvi: It's like Joe Q. Public?

Jack: It's like Lance Corporal Arnolds.

Austin: Arnold Nideo is here.

Art: I thought I was participating in the joke, and I see that I was not.

[**Jack** laughs]

Sylvi: I thought you were, too!

Art: That Austin was not ready for me to participate in that way.

Austin: I thought that you were saying you didn't understand that Nidean humans were part of Wakeful's like, operation.

Art: No, I was talking to the man named Joe Nideo.

Austin: I see, I see.

[Dre and Jack chuckle]

Jack: My great, great, great, great, great, great, great, great grandfather Aram Nideo would've—

Austin: Right yes. [chuckles] Yes.

Dre: Oh yeah? Well my great great great great great grandpa would've beat up your great great grandpa.

[**Jack** chuckles]

Austin: Oh, right. Well, that's—might be true.

Keith: Also, they probably share both of those great great great great great great grandpas.

Austin: No they don't! We know Aram Nideo and Even Gardner! Levi's great great great grandfather was Even and Cascabel!

Keith: Oh sorry, I thought we were talking about hypothetical randos.

Austin: Mm, no. Cause we have a character here who is explicitly the great great great great great grandson, so.

Keith: Yeah I forget, yeah.

Jack: Okay. Arrest the Divines. Oh, man, this is fucked up because the Divines did a lot of like, merging and shit.

Austin: Yeah, it's violent. This is a violent act.

Jack: Yeah, yeah, yeah! Well, I was going to say that, like—what I was going to say explicitly is that, like, Righteousness wants the humans—this is not like, we're getting them out here, come and meet us at this place, turn yourself in. This is, you know, what worked for Exanceaster March, [**Austin:** Ohh...] it turns out, works for, you know, Indian subordinates. And—

Austin: Yeah. I think they make you watch. I think they make you come and get the Divines as they are, you know, what is the word I've been using for Delegates all season? I talk about them as being slivers, [**Jack:** Slivers, yeah.] as being shaved away. Right? What's, I mean, I want you to tell me, what does Wakeful—what does this part of Wakeful look like, like, as it sort of like, spits up the Divines you're taking?

Jack: Um, it's uhh—

Austin: So you realize we have two kind of emerging aesthetics here, right? We have on one hand, we've been talking about some Cronenbergian shit with them, fleshy and overlapping and, you know, gestalt in a physical way? And then we're also often leveraging the sort of a delegate synthetic shell that can take different digital form type stuff, right? But I think here, we were talking about a physical body for Wakeful. I think—

Jack: Yeah, one of the sort of like, something large, some large hand—large machine hand or, you know, there is this blurring, this Cronenberg blurring here as the Divines have sort of come together. Tears off a part of itself, and crushes it, or squeezes it inside its own fist. And this is painful for both the thing doing the squeezing, and the thing being squeezed. And almost like, you know, when you squeeze putty in your hand and then you open up your hand and it has that weird sort of reverse mold of the inside of your fingers?

As the hand opens, there is a sort of inchoate semi-molded shape of the Divine, the Divine that is being separated. And then the hand closes again and the same sort of burst and then opens and, you know, the Divine is more close to its original, “quote unquote” original, the form as we have seen it, until eventually molded painfully from a portion of its own limb or chest or you know, mass underneath a cathedral that we can't see, comes the Divines, the Nidean Divines that we know.

Austin: Yeah. Resonance is like cords, countless thin cords that are like, thin like hair. Giant, thin like cables that would, you know, run through a house or something except they're hair-like in size, and they're all—just like a tangled mass of them. It's been squeezed closed so they're all gathered, you know? A touchstone for this that I think is not right visually, but thinking about—I was thinking about you saying like, removing part of your own hand, something that has always blurred the line between organic and mechanical for me is in *The Terminator*. There's the scene where the Terminator repairs his hand. Have you seen this self-repairing scene?

Jack: I don't think so. I've never seen any of The Terminator movies, but I've seen a bunch of absolutely amazing GIFs and stills.

Austin: There's an incredible scene I was obsessed with and scared of as a kid, but I adored where the Terminator has to—

Jack: Mr. Terminator, Joe Terminator.

Austin: Joe Terminator—Joe Terminator.

[Dre chuckles]

Jack: In this case, Art, we are talking about the literal Joe Terminator.

Austin: The literal Joe Terminator, yeah.

Art: I think I've said this before on this show, but the first two Terminator films are absolutely worth watching.

Austin: Yes, yes.

Art: Frankly, put this recording down, watch those two and come back.

[Jack chuckles]

Austin: I've linked the scene.

Sylvi: Alright, see you in a bit

Austin: I need to say right now, that there is—he's cutting—he is cutting open his own arm, and then also removes his own eye. In this scene.

Jack: Woah!

Austin: It's—it is clinical. It is *wild*. It is one of the most wild things I've ever seen. But the way that he repairs the inside of his own hand, and like opens it up and you can see the mechanical pistons inside mixed with this synthetic flesh. And he just takes a plier in

there and is like, alright, I got to—okay, I have to pull this up. I see what's gone wrong here, you know?

Jack: This is fucking insane!

Art: The special effects *do not* hold up, but—

Austin: Ah, it's great.

Jack: No, I think this looks great. This is horrible.

Dre: Yeah, I this looks awesome.

Jack: Ugh!

Austin: Yeah it's great.

Keith: Oh yeah. I remember I saw this 40% asleep at Art's house [**Austin** and **Sylvi** chuckle] trying desperately to watch the rest of this movie because I had just gotten off of 20 hours of travel.

Jack: Was it a good time?

Keith: It was—I really liked it until I literally—it is so unlike me to fall asleep during a movie, I just like had reached a breaking point.

Art: But yeah, if you come to my house and you haven't seen Terminator, there's a pretty good chance.

Jack: So Art is—Art is backing up his words, I went to Art's house and within 12 hours, I was watching Terminator.

Austin: Incredible. Terminator, of course, where the phrase Tech Noir comes from.

Keith: Oh?

Austin: It's the dance club from Terminator.

Art: Yeah.

Jack: Oh my god.

Art: It's a very small downtown LA dance club that's in a *lot* of scenes, frankly.

Austin: Yeah, it's great. Alright, so, yeah, where do you take them? Is the Diadem becoming the—the, at least, holding cell for these Divines as you continue to gather them up?

Jack: Yeah, I think so. I mean, it—I think so. God, the like failed pseudo-utopian project—

Austin: [cross] I know, it's great.

Jack: [cross] —becoming like, a prison for Divines.

Austin: Is it also a prison for the people, for the humans and synthetics of Nideo?

Jack: No, I think there's a lot of prison infrastructure left over from the...

Austin: From the empire?

Jack: The empire. [chuckles]

Austin: Yeah, from the Principality? Yeah, sure.

Keith: Diadem seems kind of overkill for people.

Austin: Yeah. Well, you know, you have all that empty space, you know? You have all those bowling alleys.

Jack: The reason there were Divines in the Diadem is because they're often huge, and the Diadem is huge.

Austin: Which by the way, have you slid Devotion into there at this point?

Jack: Yes. Yeah. Um, not slid—it was also gross. It was gross.

Austin: Yeah.

Jack: It was like a— **[Dre:** Sure, sure, sure, sure.] it was like a process of—and there were a lot of people whose bodies were powering Devotion, and I think they had a lot—

Janine: Did you extrude—did you extrude Devotion into the Diadem?

Austin: Oh, an extrusion, yeah.

Keith: Oh, like a sausage.

Austin: I do just want to zoom in on the image of the Nidean people getting messages from Resonance until the Twilight Mirage sort of like anti-Divine crew moves in and it just goes quiet?

Austin: Oh that's great, yeah. Ugh. **[cross]** There's like a goodbye message that gets sent.

Keith: **[cross]** Sooner or later, someone's gonna—

Austin: There's like an end of service, like at the end of a free-to-play mobile game where they're like, **[chuckles]** it's like Resonance sends a message saying, we'd like to thank you for your patronage over the years. Or like, you know, da da da.

Jack: Well, and also some sort of like pro-Nidean, you know, **[Austin:** Yeah, absolutely.] trust that in the coming days you will be told that what you did was wrong. Understand in your hearts, that, you know, etc.

Austin: You know the truth of what our project here was. You know, carry the garden with you wherever you go.

Art: Sincerely, Joe Nideo.

Austin: That's right! **[chuckles]**

[Keith and Dre chuckle]

Art: A real guy who lives out there.

Austin: Joe Nideo, you know, chief operator, Resonance. I guess Resonance probably has an Elect, so it's Joe Nideo.

[**Jack** chuckles]

Art: Always has been.

Keith: Sooner or later, someone's gonna have to figure out how to kill Divines.

Austin: Someone's gotta have to figure that out again.

Keith: Someone's gonna have to figure that out, because these Gumption particles.

Jack: You might have wondered what happens to Elects in the sort of gestalt Wakeful consciousness. That wasn't part of this show, but it probably was gross!

Keith: Also—also a sausage.

Austin: Also a scene. And then—right, right. And then, like I said, you exhaust the Clementine relationship here.

Jack: Yep, I took two misfortune and one fortune.

Austin: Okay. Brutal. Alright, who's up? We still have Cori, Clem, Thisbe, and Brnine.

Thisbe's Final Scene

[01:12:41]

Janine: I got one.

Art: I'm... oh, go ahead.

Janine: I was going to say this. I think this one, like, dovetails nicely to that last one.

[**Austin:** Mmm.] Because I think it's a thing that, like, once the prisoners are dropped off

and stuff, Thisbe could be like, hey, can we take a quick detour? I said I would meet someone.

Austin: Ooh, sure.

Janine: And the thing that I want to do for this scene is, I want Thisbe and August and Brnine to meet up with the Chimeric Cadent in—*let me look at the map*—I mean, I guess the Afflicted Lands, because we're right there, I don't know.

Austin: Yeah, sure. I think this little bit right here in the southwest.

Janine: Well, I was thinking of the upper part.

Austin: Oh the upper ones. Okay. Yeah, sure.

Janine: I mean, the big thing is that I want to—there's a degree to which this is too—the whole thing of what I want to do is too big. So I kind of want to do a proof of concept version of it. [**Austin:** Ah.] And I want to, with the help of the Chimeric Cadent, try to heal, Refrain, perhaps.

Jack: Woah.

Janine: Yeah.

Austin: Heal in what way?

Janine: Heal, you know, in sort of a broad abstract way of like, the Afflictions are—I don't—they are, they are like Divine suffering made manifest, I guess? [**Austin:** Mhm.] That's how they feel. And I think a thing of like, if given the choice between killing them or trying to help them sort of come back from the edge of that suffering, Thisbe is going to want to try to help them come back? And I think if anyone is in a position to help, it's going to be the Chimeric Cadent. Like, that's—everything about them is equipped for that, right?

Austin: So they're in yeah, yeah. They are probably actually in what Cori has already set up, is the consecrated land, right? [**Janine:** Yeah yeah.] Or at least, you know,

maybe that's where Refrain has gone. Refrain obviously took that offer that Brnine gave them about helping Millennium Break in some ways, but I imagine still also shows up in the consecrated land.

Janine: I felt like a chunk of Refrain came with us, and then the rest of Refrain like, was hanging out?

Austin: The Divine Fleet engineers did—well, it all sided with Millennium Break, effectively, in exchange for the opportunity to offer people in Millennium Break, or on Palisade, in the Cause, [**Janine:** Oh, right! Yeah.] remember the ability to join in with Refrain, which I think has not happened as much as Refrain had thought it would, because things have been going better than they had been.

Janine: Well, and also, there's a competing, amorphous join us blob [**Austin:** There is.] [**Ali** chuckles] [**Dre:** Mmm.] that people can also go join, and it's not an Affliction. That actually makes me concerned. I don't want to make a second blob that starts some kind of religion. It was mostly like, you know, we have history with Refrain, and it felt like it would be a good way to sort of bookend that, versus approaching an Affliction that we haven't really seen or spent time with on screen?

Austin: Yeah.

Janine: You know?

Austin: You've met Dust—Ali?

Janine: That's true.

Ali: Yeah, well, I do think that maybe choosing another one here—because like, I mean I think for Brnine, that was part of a socialization attempt, right?

Janine: Yeah. Refrain's sort of on their healing journey already versus—so maybe that wouldn't even be the best proof of concept for this “can it be done thing”, because it's like, well, you know, Brnine's been putting some work. They're getting—they're okay, they're interested, they're talking to people.

Austin: They're talking, yeah.

Janine: Yeah, whereas Dust, I recall being... less... chill?

Jack: Yeah, tricerataurs!

[**Janine** chuckles]

Austin: Tricerataurs, making you all see a potential-like future, live inside of a dream of tomorrow that may or may not be.

Janine: Yeah.

Keith: Can I ask a question about Refrain's healing journey?

Ali: Mhm.

Austin: Yeah.

Keith: Because if they're out talking to people, [**Dre** chuckles] don't they want them for their sausage?

Austin: They do, but they want them for their sausage—well, no, they—they are willingly, openly working with Millennium Break in ways that we have not zoomed in on. But that was the stake of the scene, and Brnine won that scene.

Ali: Yeah.

Austin: Right? So that is true. That is not whatever additional motives, it's not ulterior motives in the manipulative sense, right?

Keith: Right. They have to be additional, not ulterior, because the roll was a success.

Austin: That is right.

Ali: Well, I think that I imagine there's just as many hospice situations where Millennium Break people might agree to that, [**Austin:** Right.] as there are like, Lattice and co.

being a part of discussions of like, scheduling transports, or stuff like that. **[Austin:** Right, right.] Or where—you know, how to move across this planet that they have, you know, perspective on how to do that.

Austin: Though the thing that I think is probably worth saying is Refrain has not gone back to calling itself Antiquity, which is what its Divine name was, many, many millennia ago, right? It sees itself as Refrain now, in some meaningful way, and I think that has not changed, and I don't know that it will, even if it is brought—like, that is who it is now to some degree, right? So, **[Janine:** Yeah.] I just want to signal that for the listener, who is like, is it going to go back to being the Divine Antiquity? You know.

Janine: I would say that this, to me, is not about changing an identity? It is more about like, it's you know, pulling the thorn out of the lion's paw.

Austin: Yeah.

Janine: You're not trying to make the lion into a dog, you're just trying to make the lion not suffer. **[Austin:** Yeah.] And sure, maybe it'll like you more. That's great.

Austin: Mhm. Is—who's in this scene? And I know you said Brnine and August—is Cori here, since it is the consecrated land, which they—which Cori built for them?

Sylvi: It could be.

Austin: Yeah.

Sylvi: Yeah. I think a lot of Cori's time right now is being spent making sure that's still stable.

Austin: Keeping the Iconoclasts away from it.

Sylvi: Yeah.

Austin: Yeah. And keeping it—yeah, alive.

Sylvi: Making sure things take root, you know?

Janine: Does Cori have to like, part a rosebush so that everyone can get in or something?

Sylvi: Oh my god.

Janine: It doesn't have to be a rosebush, you know, a Russian sage bush, whatever the fuck—

Austin: Yeah, yeah yeah yeah. Guide the way in. Yeah, uh huh. That's fun.

Ali: Also, I would include Lattice or like, [**Austin:** Mmm.] a different Delegate of Refrain here if we—

Austin: Yeah, that makes sense. Yeah, Lattice should come with this. I think that makes sense.

Janine: It would be good to have another Affliction to be like, they're cool.

Austin: We'll have to see how it goes. I like Dust for this a lot, right?

Janine: Yeah, I think Dust is the right one.

Austin: We've seen Dust in a fun way before. We have a pretty good strong idea of seeing Dust from a couple of different sequences and stuff. And you know, here we are in the Afflicted Lands, in the consecrated land within. What if a mummy could be a mech shawled and wrapped and deteriorating? You know as you get close, the sound begins to muffle, you know? Fog descends. You can still see it in the distance, the shape of it, as it walks in circles. And yeah, you approach it. What does the—what does the reaching out look like?

Janine: I think the reaching out—I think much like going to the Lantern, there's a degree to which it happens up on the approach. Because there's a desire to not take certain kinds of things by surprise? [**Austin:** Mmm, mhm.] And just to be like, hey, you know, if you announce that you're showing up—much like if you're showing up to fix someone's

windows—if you announce that you're showing up, then it's less startling and it's less likely you're trying to pull some shit because you've said, hey.

Austin: Yeah, right, yes.

Janine: Versus just appearing and being like, here's my hammers.

Keith: The benefits of call ahead.

Janine: Yeah, it's just polite. [chuckles]

Sylvi: I feel like I can help facilitate that, right?

Austin: Yeah!

Janine: Yeah, I guess also, like, yeah—Cori, I would assume, is in their good graces?

Sylvi: I sure would hope so.

Austin: I think good—I think it is good graces in a way that a dog might come to recognize a rabbit as not being a threat, [**Sylvi:** Sure.] you know?

Sylvi: I do have the boon “Affliction aligned with Perennial”.

Austin: Sure, okay, yeah.

Sylvi: Which might make that a little stronger than just that.

Austin: Yeah, that makes sense. That boon definitely feels like it would do that, yeah. Then, yeah, think of it less as that, and more of like oh, a dog sees a group of other dogs coming, but it knows the lead one. And so it's like okay, I guess this is okay, you know? There's a degree of familiarity, you're vouching, you know? But it's not a—it's not like, oh, hey, Cori, what's up? Who are your friends? [chuckles]

[**Janine** chuckles]

Sylvi: Was there a big ref there with me?

Janine: I don't think anyone's going for that.

Austin: You know, I think maybe a little echo of what it once did. Some of its Dust beings begin to approach, all of your electronics start freaking out. And they don't approach enough to where the foggy dust begins to get inhaled by you, but they do take your own forms. So suddenly, there's a big Dust Thisbe. There's a Dust Brnine, there's a Dust Cori. And they get close enough to where you can see the outlines of their eyes. And then they turn and start leading you back towards Dust.

Sylvi: They do this sometimes. [**Janine** chuckles] It's fine.

Austin: And there's a wall in the fog—sorry, there's a hole in the fog that kind of opens like a tunnel that lets you approach without breathing it in. And therefore not, you know, once again falling into the dreamlike state that you did down in the Diadem so many months ago. We can zoom in or zoom out here. What does the actual process of doing this? I guess the Chimeric Cadent is with you, right?

Janine: Yeah.

Austin: So big creature with you too. The—

Janine: Yeah. I don't know if this—A thing that I wasn't sure came across fully when we saw the Chimeric Cadent before, was that the Chimeric Cadent is supposed to, to a degree, be beautiful. It's like beautiful in a really horrifying way.

Austin: I think that came across, like the way a Bloodborne boss can be both scary and beautiful. Yeah yeah yeah.

Janine: Yes, yeah exactly.

Austin: And I think that there is a, you know, I think the scale is kind of fun. Dust itself, the shape of Dust itself in like the kind of shadow of it, the silhouette of it in the fog takes the same shape as the Chimeric Cadent, like trying it on in a sort of like—a sort of like, playing dress up sense. Like, oh, what's this? Like, ooh, I haven't seen something like

this before! [**Janine** chuckles] Ooh, what's it like to have big weird bat wings and to be a weird, a weird three-faced creature? This is sick, you know?

Sylvi: Always asking, though.

Austin: What happened once you were let into this kind of—the court of Dust?

Janine: I think, I think this is kind of a situation where, as much as anything, Thisbe is trying to facilitate. I kind of imagine this—I didn't actually say it in the August scene—but I kind of imagined Thisbe in that scene kind of just like standing behind August's chair, maybe putting a hand in the back of the chair at certain moments where it's just like, we have to stay calm and just get through this. There's a sense of just like, I can't—you know, acknowledging, I can't just do it myself like I tried to before. I can't just walk in and say the thing and then it'll and then it'll happen, and then—like that's not really how it works most of the time. Sometimes it'll work that way. Sometimes it won't. And, you know, maybe some additional value for the relationships where that does work, like some renewed appreciation for Brnine, I think, in terms of just like, oh, I say what I want to have happen and then they help it happen. That's cool.

Austin: Right. And that's rare. That's not a thing.

Janine: Yeah, it's not common. It's, you know, there's a moment where she was sort of taking it for granted, I think. But I think in this case, it is more facilitation. It is like making sure okay, here are the components that I think need to be combined. I think we need an Affliction who will hear us out. That is Dust, who has sort of, who has interfaced a little bit with Cori through this sort of sanctuary that's been provided.

And then it is also the Chimeric Cadent, who, from my limited understanding, has you know, has this long history of like, protecting Divines who want out and also has this you know passive like, this restorative, generally benevolent, but also a degree to which they are also a monster? They are not— [**Austin:** Oh yeah, oh yeah.] it's not Belgard anymore. It is a Divine transformed into something unrecognizable and frightening by typical definitions.

Austin: Yeah. Yeah, we were talking about Cronenbergian flesh Divines, here we are. We already had one this season, in fact. Yeah, this is fun. I think we can probably roll on this. The thing about this that I like a lot is there's sort of a like, well, how do you convince Divines to build a non-religious society where they're able to interact with each other just as like, beings?

Janine: You show it to them.

Austin: You just do it. You just start talking. [**Janine:** Yeah.] You just start having tea parties, like you just bring people over to hang.

Janine: You just show like, here's this Divine who's like, [**Austin:** Right.] they live off on their own and they do this thing. Or here's this Divine, you know—

Austin: You didn't show up with tribute, you didn't show up with asking them for their great wisdom. You said, hey, can we talk about some stuff? Can we exchange?

Janine: Yeah. And like, another important factor is, Thisbe has not and will never introduce herself as like the Elect—

Austin: The Elect of Integrity, yeah.

Janine: —or anything of Integrity. It is just, Integrity is a being that is with me for, I don't know how long, but right now, it is a thing where we are together as a unit. And like, it is not Thisbe saying that she is, like, anything special in that, it's just, we're together for a bit.

Roll/Resolution

[01:29:27]

Austin: Yeah, let's build some dice pools. Opposition starts with three. I think gains one from Confounded by the Burden of Free Will. [**Janine:** Yeah.] Probably gains one from “Some Divines and Their Shards are Antagonistic, Evil or Dangerous”. Though maybe not. Maybe having the Cori garden has made it not antagonistic.

Janine: We have kind of—we didn't have to bypass any threat. I mean— **[Austin:** Right, right.] we did bypass a threat, but we didn't have to confront the threat. **[cross]** It was just a thing of like—

Austin: **[cross]** Yeah, in a way it feels like—

Janine: There was already a roll that accomplished that right?

Austin: Right, Cori did that by setting the space up, I think. That makes sense.

Sylvi: You guys just knocked on the door and walked in, basically. Like, you were let in.

Austin: Yeah, “Thisbe is an outsider, why should she be the one to do this?” I think you have—that is what—again, you've gotten around by bringing in the Chimera Cadent for this.

Janine: Yeah.

Austin: Ebullience is still exploring the space, I think, however. **[chuckles]**

[Ali chuckles]

Janine: Yeah... yeah, you know, it's fair. Mhm.

Austin: You know, you gotta stay focused here. You gotta make sure you actually attend to this and don't get too jumpy.

Keith: That is meaningful, **[Austin:** Yeah!] in that, like, that little horror of be bopping around. Yeah. Also, this is just to colour August Righteousness here in this scene. This is a crazy second meeting to go to today?

[Janine laughs]

[Dre laughs]

Jack: Meeting one, I demand that you give me my prisoners or we're gonna do war. Meeting two, have you considered maybe... what about more generative, or different, or less restrictive ways of interacting with the world?

Austin: What about just chilling? [**Jack** chuckles] I mean, there's an important distinction, right? Which is, like, the Afflictions have done harm. They are not a—they are not the embodiment of an expansionist, harm-making, oppressive regime, right?

Jack: They're not a state.

Austin: Fundamentally.

Jack: You know, part of the whole conversation is, like, they are not state apparatus.

Austin: Yes.

Janine: They have done harm the way that a bear who—his territory is encroached upon by an expanding city will do harm.

Austin: I think even the way a bad person might do harm, but a bad person and an empire are different things. [**Jack:** Yeah!] [**Janine:** Mmm.] And I don't like bad people, you know? Put it out there. Let 'em know.

Keith: I do! Hahaha! [evil laughs]

Austin: Oh, no!

Janine: [chuckling] Booo.

Jack: This is a really spectacular Keith heel-turn! The Keith "I like bad people"—

Dre: [cross] Bad boy Keith.

Keith: [cross] I'm bad now!

Jack: Oh, bad Keith! Oh no.

Austin: Bad Keith's here. Alright—

Keith: Get ready.

Austin: You have four dice?

Janine: That's how Leap's story ends. [**Austin** chuckles] Marries Mustard Red. Elopes.

Austin: Nooooo!

[**Keith** chuckles]

Ali: Wow.

Austin: Presumably, you're taking the boon under the Chimera's wing here? [**Janine:** Yeah, yeah.] Or you're using that, that makes sense. And your August Righteousness relationship, so. Which is I think important, too, because like, August being here means that there is a broader—it's not just, oh, the Blue Channel. Classic Blue Channel. Always hanging out with the freaks, you know?

[**Janine** chuckles]

Jack: Right. The August means something there.

Janine: I think it's important to Thisbe that Delegates be... include— [**Austin:** Mmm.] Like, even though the conversations that she's been having don't always mention Delegates, it's mostly—it has been focused more on Divines, I think? But like, I think it's still important for her to have a Delegate in the room. [**Austin:** Mhm.] To be like, you are included in this if you want to be. And on the other side of it, showing the other side, like we work with Delegates. It's like, we are including them if they want to be included. It's not, we don't want to draw that line inherently.

Austin: Alright. Who wants to roll the opposition dice? Keith, do you want to roll these dice?

Keith: Sure, yeah. [cross] I've been rolling low.

Austin: [cross] Or Ali. I don't know.

Ali: I was about to. I'm in the scene, so.

Dre: Nah, it's bad guy Keith time.

Jack: Evil—Evil Keith—

Keith: Ali, do you want to roll them? [cross] I don't mind.

Janine: [cross] No, no, oh no..!

[Ali chuckles]

Jack: Evil Keith works for a YouTube show called Stab Button.

Janine: *Ahhh.* [fake distress]

Keith: Yes. Ever since joining—ever since creating Stab Button.

Austin: Oh my god, Keith.

Keith: I've become much better at rolling dice.

Jack: Wow.

Keith: Ooh. 3-4-4-5-6. Not great.

Janine: Why? Yeah, I was going to ask Ali to roll them, and that all just happened so fast.

Keith: I—I asked if Ali wanted to roll them, and then I didn't hear anything.

Jack: Evil Ali is called Bad Friend Ali. I think that's true.

Art: Ooh, that's rough.

Janine: Yeah...

Austin: Alright. Opposition rolled 6-5-4.

Keith: It's not the end of the world.

Austin: Janine, you rolled—

Janine: I'm going to cheat.

Austin: 6-3-2-2.

Janine: I rolled 6-3-2-2. Cheating is my favored approach.

Austin: Uh huh. And so you're going to reroll presumably two, two, three.

Janine: Yeah, I don't think—yeah.

Austin: And you get to add a die. You get an extra die here too, yeah. Fun.

Janine: What the fuck?

Sylvi: Oooh!

Ali: Whoa.

Austin: Did it—it happened, but it went worse.

Sylvi: Wow.

Ali: Whoa.

Dre: Mmm.

Austin: It was—it was 2-2-3. You rolled 3-1-3-1. Miserable.

Art: That's technically better.

Keith: No no, that's technically a little better.

Janine: Yeah...

Keith: You still have the six, it was a new white, so the six didn't turn into a worse—

Austin: No, it's not technically better. Right? No?

Art: Yeah, because there was one three before.

Austin: Oh there was one three before.

Art: There's now two threes.

Austin: Yeah, but there's no twos. The twos became ones.

Art: But you can only play your highest die anyway.

Austin: Yeah, that's fair—yeah. So nothing changed, effectively.

Keith: Right. Nothing changed.

Art: You could get a win.

Austin: And two losses.

Art: You could win.

Keith: Oh yeah.

Austin: You could cheat again, but boy, you already took one misfortune here, huh?

Janine: Yeah...

Keith: Oh, not cheat again, engage in weakness again.

Austin: Sorry, fuck, engage in weakness again.

Keith: Yeah.

Jack: It's wild how we have all fallen into that trap over and over again.

Austin: Ohh, this roll sucks. You could—

Art: Don't put cheat, a great word, on top of your list, I think, is the lesson here. [Ali chuckles] If flee was on top, we wouldn't be saying flee.

Austin: You know, you could—

Sylvi: That's right, everybody, Friends at the Table is a pro-cheating podcast.

Austin: Oh my god.

Evil Keith: *Ha ha ha ha!* My influence is spreading.

[Jack and Dre laugh]

Austin: I... I don't look at me for mechanical advice right now. I don't know what to do.

Janine: Ugh... yeah.

Austin: Rerolling the four doesn't even get you anything.

Keith: I think—yeah, take a win and a loss.

Austin: Yeah, I don't know what to do here.

Keith: I think it's win on a six and lose on a six is what I think.

Austin: And lose on the four or the five?

Art: And lose on the four or the five, yeah.

Keith: Yeah, yeah. Probably five is the best to lose on.

Janine: I, but—okay, but—

Art: It doesn't matter.

Janine: Do relationships and burdens matter at this point?

Keith: Well, relationship is a relationship—

Austin: Narratively.

Keith: —and a burden is a burden, so even if they only matter mechanically—

Dre: Mmm, I see.

Keith: —or narratively instead of mechanically, I think it would be nice to get a burden that is maybe a fleeting thing, versus fictionally burning a relationship.

Austin: Right. You will also remember—

Janine: No, I don't think that— [chuckles]

Austin: You don't mind burning the August relationship then, narratively?

Keith: Oh, okay.

Austin: [cross] If you don't mind that, then that's fine.

Janine: [cross] Yeah, no. Narratively, I don't care. No.

Austin: Okay, so then it doesn't matter to you. What—the important thing is the two, three—or the three, I'm sorry, the four and the five on the opposition win will still both give you a misfortune. So like, no matter what right now, [**Janine:** ...right.] you're getting two misfortune, three if you count the one you just took from cheating.

Janine: Oh my god.

Austin: Yeah, this was a really rough roll. This is conceptually as bad as it could have gone. That's not true, but it's not great.

Keith: Right. I can think of one more thing, and correct me if I'm missing something, because it is easy to miss things with the way these dice work. You could tie on the six and flee. [**Austin:** Oh!] And then you would only get two misfortune, and the whole thing would be a wash.

Dre: Oh, yeah.

Austin: Yeah, but you wouldn't win.

Keith: But you wouldn't win.

Art: You would lose the scene—

Keith: But you wouldn't lose.

Janine: Here's the thing that I'm—the place where I'm at, both as a player and as a Thisbe, is I'd rather take a bunch of misfortune and win, [**Austin:** Yeah.] than take less misfortune and lose.

Austin: And lose at this, yeah. With the note that the misfortunes are all going to cash out with the opposition saying mean things about you.

Janine: Yeah. What else is new?

Austin: During the epilogue. Yeah.

Sylvi: [softly] Yeah...

Janine: [sighs] I think I'm just gonna do it this way. I'm gonna do it as it is, which is I'm going to use the six to triumph over the five, let the four stand, and then that other six is gonna also be a...

Austin: Also, it happens.

Janine: Yeah.

Austin: Okay. What does your six, your resounding success, look like here?

Janine: [exhales] Man, suddenly it feels unearned. I think the—it feels—it feels unearned.

Austin: What do you mean?

Janine: It feels like—it feels like this shouldn't be a resounding success.

Austin: No, but it is, because the—it is... I mean, you could say it's not, if you want to, but you got the six. You place the six. The six is a resounding success. You get to mark fortune. Mechanically, that all happens, you know? It's—the way the game does work, you know, we shouldn't be applying mixed success results to a game that isn't built in that way. We'll tackle what the negative four and the negative six means separately, you know?

Janine: Yeah...

Austin: You got a resounding success. You get to narrate whatever the fuck that is as far as you're concerned, right? You achieved what you set out to do in a big way, is what it says in the book. And that's even if the opposition rolled six, six, one, and you put a six on a one.

Janine: I changed my mind.

Austin: Okay. Are you going to lash out?

Janine: I'm going to block the six with a six. And then I'm going to flee.

Austin: Interesting, okay. Which—flee ignores all losses from one to five. Losses on a six still count. So no loss, no win. The opposition decides what happens.

Keith: Net—no net change in misfortune versus the other thing, but no doom.

Austin: There's—it's still plus two misfortune total because—

Keith: Right. The other way would have been plus three misfortune, but one fortune.

Austin: Yeah, because you weakness-ed twice.

Janine: Yeah, weakness-ed twice. That's two misfortune.

Austin: Oh, that's brutal.

Janine: It's better than three!

Austin: Yeah, I agree. I agree.

Keith: Three and one, though!

Janine: Here's the thing. It's better than three misfortune and also doom.

Austin: Yeah, the doom is the brutal part. It really is. So.

Janine: And again, I think the fact that getting the victory, I was immediately like, this doesn't feel right though.

Austin: Yeah, yeah.

Janine: Sometimes that is a sign.

Austin: [exhales] Yeah.

Janine: It is a thing of truly like, I kind of don't want to know how it goes. Like I kind of.

Austin: Well!

Janine: I want it to be a thing that is like, they have to leave because it's not safe for them to be there while this is happening. Because it is... You know... [cross] Belgard—

Austin: [cross] Mm! Like Dust—go ahead.

Janine: Belgard had a little bit of Gumption adjacent stuff, right? Belgard had perfect recycling, which was not like as—I think Gumption was a little bit more flexible and grounded; perfect recycling was like stem cell shit, kind of.

Austin: Well, it was perfect recycling was a thing that you could do with other stuff specifically. [**Janine:** Yeah.] You could take a bunch of scrap metal and restore it to perfect format. And then that happened to also work with Belgard herself, right? Whereas Gumption was fundamentally about the self, and repairing the self no matter how small you broke it up, right? So yeah, so, to your point, the Chimeric Cadent is safer here than you are.

Janine: Yes. And I think specifically like, when you are working on Dust, when you are healing and restoring Dust, and the dust of Dust has the capabilities that we have seen it have, [**Austin:** Mhm.] it feels completely unhinged to be like, and here is what we see happening, and here is all of—like—

Austin: Well I think specifically—can I get zoomed in here? [**Janine:** Yeah.] Which is like, I think the dust starts to fall all around you. For the first 45 minutes, it was cool to be like, it had lifted the big fog clouds so that you could hang out, and then it starts to get comfortable, and it stops thinking about how you can't live in that fog without descending into an eternal sleep where you're seeing the few potential futures for yourself, and so like, you have to get the fuck out of there. The Chimeric Cadent can stay behind, and who knows how it goes, we don't know. I mean, the opposition could decide it goes good, or it decides it goes bad, but I do like the ambiguity you're talking about that Thisbe doesn't get to know. Thisbe has to flee, Cori has to flee.

Janine: That's the thing is like, Thisbe, August, Cori, Brnine, like, you can't be here.
[chuckles]

Austin: Yeah.

Janine: And these are—other than August—we all *know* what happens in the fucking dust. [**Austin:** Yeah, mhm.] We can recognize, like, oh, we gotta—

Jack: Yeah.

Janine: Yeah. I think the cost here is also—the cost of, like, not knowing in this moment is also just the cost of, like, I don't know if the Chimeric Cadent is, like, I don't know what's going on there.

Austin: We don't know, yeah.

Janine: Like, it's a full loss of contact there.

Austin: Yeah.

Jack: Yeah.

Austin: That's fun.

Jack: Yeah. I'm up for that.

Austin: Alright. Nothing ticks up. If there's no additional negative numbers here on war or wealth or any of those. But y'all have to get the fuck out. Clem, I'm guessing?

Clem's Final Scene

[01:43:50]

Art: Yeah, hi.

Austin: You said you had one, so.

Art: I do. And I would like to start by addressing— Hey. This is Art talking to you.

[Sylvi laughs]

Art: I've been sick this weekend. And we had a conversation in the last recording—I don't know that's this episode, probably not, it's been a while, even just in game time—about what Clem should look like, and what that meant for the interlude scene. And as soon as we hung up, I was like, I should have used those two fortune to destroy Arbit and become the Queen in Crystal. And if you were shouting at your podcast app during that conversation, because no one was bringing that up—

Austin: If you were a Clem Booster, if you're one of the many Clem stans.

Art: Yeah, or even just like a Chaos Booster.

Austin: Sure, sure, sure, sure, sure.

Art: I'm sorry that we didn't come up with that. I think at 100% I would've, but it didn't happen. And um, yeah, I didn't want to do it as a pickup. I just wanted to let it roll.

Austin: But you're here now.

Art: You know, we're here now, and I'm going to try it now, and the mechanics are going to be completely different.

Austin: [cross] Because before—

Jack: [cross] Oh shit.

Art: But you know, if you were—if you were upset before, I'm sorry that happened to you.

[**Austin** laughs]

Art: And we're going to try our best.

Evil Keith: I'm not. [**Sylvi** laughs] I'm not sorry about it.

Austin: But I already—are you—yeah, because before, you could have just spent your two fortune to do this.

Keith: To do it for free.

Austin: Narratively.

Keith: Well, to do it for two.

Austin: Right.

Jack: For the listener who entirely understandably might have glossed over the stakes here, Arbit was a device built by Grand Magnificent to—

Austin: Art's previous character!

Jack: Art's previous character,

Austin: Oh my god.

Jack: Art is now the Divine constructor and potentially destroyer, to remove the Kesh awful predictive engine, Crystal Palace's ability to predict the future. Now when we talked about Future's ability to see the future and we said that's not a prediction, Crystal Palace's sure is. Crystal Palace was also the engine that Kesh used to keep their homeworld Kesh On Cycle?

Austin: Mhm. Not just the homeworld!

Jack: Oh, Kesh!

Austin: The Principality of Kesh. [**Jack:** The Principality, yeah.] Which is most of the territory that Kesh still is in, if you look at the big picture map of the Divine Principality. That whole area was On Cycle. Thousand of planets.

Jack: Connadine wanted to put stuff back On Cycle again. The Crystal Palace is, of course, the crashed Reflecting Pool that has become the Crown of Glass, formerly Past. You want to destroy that thing?

Austin: Thereby re—

Art: I don't *want* to destroy that thing, but I think that it's what Clementine should try to do here.

Austin: I see, yes. Clem should—

Art: My desires are really not—

Austin: Well, and this is really great with the burden “The Future Freaks Me Out”, right? Because—

Jack: Oh god, that's great.

Art: I also—yeah, I think it actually dovetails really nicely with a lot of the stuff on Clem's sheet right now? [**Austin:** Yeah.] Yeah, I think this is going to be a lot of fun.

Austin: Yeah, I think this dovetails really nicely with “The Future Freaks Me Out”. I think the idea that, like, Future showed you a world you don't want to come to pass, and you're like, well, what if I saw a different future? [laughs]

Art: Yeah. Wait a minute, I have a better future back home!

Austin: Yeah, uh huh. Great. So you're leaving the planet. You're taking off in your dragon.

Art: Yeah, yeah.

Austin: And you're going to the place that Arbit was. Which was, of course, we all remember—

Art: Everyone does, especially me.

Austin: I think it was—

Art: We talk about it all the time.

Austin: I think it was...

Jack: It could have been moved. Is something that we could—

Austin: No... it's too complex.

Jack: It's two pieces of metal attached—sorry, three pieces of metal attached to each other.

Austin: No, it's not two or three pieces of metal. No, no, no! [cross] We characterized it like that—

Keith: [cross] It's like a Michael Bay—

Austin: We characterized it like that, but it's a big, complex super machine [Jack: Oh sure, yeah.] that took Grand Magnificent years to build. I think it was—

Keith: Isn't it like a Michael Bay washing machine or something? Is that what we described it as?

Austin: Michael Bay washing machine. We talked about it as the washing machine that bounced around on the trampoline. We talked about the—like a desk toy, etc., but I don't think that it was as simple as either of those things. I think that it actually had to be more complex in order to produce the unpredictability. Love it.

Jack: Reminds me of a piece by the contemporary artist Chris Burden called Metropolis II, which I'm almost sure I must have talked about at the time. You got to see a little video of this thing. It's a lot of little die-cast cars zooming around, like a weird, elaborate setup.

Austin: Mmm.

Keith: Ooh, it's a city!

Austin: I always imagined it sort of off in the desert, near the desert, which I think it was—I think it was on Crown, which is a big desert planet.

Jack: The desert is familiar to me.

Austin: And like, you know, the Crown of Glass being the big art planet. But maybe I'm—art, like artworks, [**Art:** Mhm.] not Art—Art, our friend. You know, normal art. But maybe I'm wrong, so. Anyway, you're going to go do that. You're leaving the planet.

Art: Yeah.

Austin: Do yo—is there like a—do people go, hey, where are you going? And you ignore them? What's the—what's the blockade do as Clem's drag—or are you just able to just avoid that entirely?

Art: Yeah, I think—I don't think the blockade is set up to stop an inky dragon. [**Austin:** Hmm.] I think the way it looks for things is probably a little more—

Austin: Spaceship shaped?

Art: Spaceship oriented.

Janine: What about the Gucci leash?

Austin: What about the Gucci leash? [**Art:** Um.] Are you bringing Gucci with you? Like, are you—have you knocked Gucci out? What's the framing of—because presumably the Gucci leash is going to be—

Art: Yeah I think this is—I think Clem knocks out Gucci, and like, stashes her along.

Janine: [chuckling] Oh my gosh, she's kidnapping Gucci.

Austin: Uh huh.

Jack: Is this Gucci's second on screen kidnapping?

Austin: Is that true? Who was the first one?

Jack: I think Veronique and Fealty kidnapped Gucci. [chuckles]

Austin: Oh, that did happen. That did happen.

Art: Yeah, yeah.

Austin: At the very beginning of all this. Palisade—the Road to PALISADE.

Art: Oh no, bringing Gucci is not correct, I think.

Austin: How do you get out of the leash though?

Art: I mean, can an unconscious person hold a leash?

Austin: Oh, I see.

[**Keith** chuckles]

Art: I think instead of the kidnapping, it's just an assault.

Jack: You're still gonna bop.

Janine: Is it like invisible? Do you knock her out and then like, you're like, fumbling for an invisible leash, like a mime to try and unloop it from her wrist or whatever?

Art: Um, I sort of assumed it was a device of some kind.

Janine: Yes, I don't know, sure!

Art: And if it's not, it certainly doesn't have an interplanetary range.

Austin: No, but presumably she's gonna give pursuit, right? One of the things that could go bad here is Gucci shows up and—

Art: Yeah, I'm fine with that.

Austin: Only because I guess actually Gucci—yeah, I guess Gucci is not an obstacle or a burden for you. So it does not have to show up in that way, in fact.

Art: No, but I think the relationship *does* matter. [**Austin:** Yeah, for sure.] I think both of my active relationships are pretty active here, considering August Righteousness declared their intention to betray me in their most recent scene.

Jack: Not to you, you were somewhere else.

Austin: I have confirmed here that it is—you decided to build this in a—the woods of a desert planet.

Art: Great work.

Jack: This is some real Grand Magnificent shit.

[**Janine** laughs]

Austin: Which I do believe is Crown, the planet Crown. So incredibly, Clementine has left the Crown of Glass on Palisade to go to the planet Crown, which was formed by the Crown of Glass, the culture of the Twilight Mirage, where Arbit is. And another thing that we said at the time, which is fun is, the big unpredictable Arbit wheel rotor Divine thing, a city slowly grew around it. So there's a city there.

Jack: Oh, yeah, I know what this is.

Austin: That is, and it's specifically a city of other people who build their own Divines. And those—it's that culture which is what allows Arbit to continue, because like, this culture of Divine-makers knows this, has the skills to maintain Arbit over time. Now, could they rebuild it from the jump? I don't know, Grand Magnificent was kind of a one-of-one, you know what I mean?

Art: You don't gotta tell me.

Austin: Grand Magnificent, the most Sigma character we've ever had here on Friends at the Table.

[**Keith** chuckles]

Janine: Booo.

Austin: And I don't know that anybody could— [laughs] could reproduce what Grand has built! But you know.

Sylvi: Great, great grandchild of Grand Magnificent.

Janine: Who's the most beta character we've ever had? [chuckling]

Jack: No, no! No!

Austin: No.

[**Dre** and **Janine** laugh]

Jack: This is Evil Keith's presence.

Austin: Sigma somehow is funny.

Keith: I think—!

Austin: But—! Anyway.

Evil Keith: Look, if you're—if we're not going to look at the whole picture, then you might as well not look.

Austin: Damn. [**Jack** chuckles] Evil Keith, 2024.

Evil Keith: [like a gremlin] *Heh heh heh heh!*

[**Dre** and **Sylvi** laugh]

Sylvi: Damn, weird time.is quote from Evil Keith today.

[**Keith** laughs]

Austin: What's this look like, Clem?

Art: This city's probably pretty big at this point, right?

Austin: 500 years.

Art: But you can't build too close to Arbit.

Austin: Yeah, you got to build it—like a big park that Arbit's in?

Art: It's probably—yeah, Arbit Park, but it also doesn't have vegetation that's too high because it can—

Austin: Yeah, chop it all off.

Art: She'll chop it all off. So it's just like, just like the Arbit—

Keith: I think you build a bunch of stuff really close and let it demolish it, and then it just lives inside a little ruin.

Art: The Great Lawn of Arbit. Yeah, and then there's like—and you know, Clem just sort of *descends* on it, is like, again, sort of counting on the fact that most people's defenses are not dragon-tuned.

Austin: Sure. Yeah, that's true.

Art: And, um, yeah, you know, is—

Austin: God, the arrival of Iconoclasts back in the Twilight Mirage. Ohh!

Dre: It's bad.

Jack: It is sort of ontologically evil. God, I don't like it.

Keith: What is?

Jack: Iconoclasts returning to the Twilight Mirage.

Keith: Oh, okay, sure. Yeah yeah yeah.

Austin: I think that's just history working on you, Jack. I think that's ideology—I think we care about this so deeply that it feels ontological, and not just historical. But they're particular historical beings, you know? [**Jack:** Yeah...] We just love the Twilight Mirage like that.

Evil Keith: I think it is evil, but also that that's good.

Austin: Right, because Evil Keith is here. So you go to war with this thing. Presumably the local Divines jump into action? But if they're Grand Magnificent descended Divines, if they're like, from this arts culture, [chuckling] they're like concept pieces as much as they are big robots. You know?

Art: Yeah, they're sort of like, I don't want to say chintzy, but you know, they're not—they're not war machines as much as they're, you know—one of them is like the Divine Stagecraft. And it looks great, but it doesn't really pack a punch.

Austin: I'll use this moment to remind people that the last thing that Grand ended up also making was Devotion, which is currently trapped inside of—

Sylvi: [chuckles] Going great!

Art: Well, Grand is better at this than these people.

Austin: Right, no, I understand. I do, I do. I get you.

Art: Yeah.

Austin: I get you. Alright. Dragon descends, war emerges.

Art: I think I'm ready to roll.

Austin: Mourning—the fleet of General Mourning at that point begins to maybe move into action, or is there some sort of rear defense fleet, Jack, that Mourning has? Like, who shows up to try to—

Jack: Oh, it's not Mourning at this point—

Austin: Yeah, that's what I was saying—

Jack: Because this is now deep within the Twilight Mirage. [cross] This is like a Qui Err...

Austin: [cross] Yeah, that's what I'm saying, is there some other—

Jack: Like a Qui Err defensive fleet. Yeah, oh god, okay. I—there's a Twilight Mirage troop—

Austin: Whatever the current Notion equivalent is, presumably hops to—

Jack: Yeah, I know *exactly* what it is. It is a—suddenly like the—like the Pleiades? Things like stars start falling from the sky, and they are men and women in like, wrapped in cloth that is acting as a parachute, except, you know, like a parachute balloons out; this is almost just like a streamer of cloth behind them, slowing their descent. They don't have spaceships, they just fall to the surface.

They're wearing like, chitinous armor? I think a lot about Jodorowski's designs for Dune that never got made, that incredible color pattern, but it's like almost like, bug-like. And this is a Twilight Mirage unit called At Em Ver Al, which is Quire for—or Qui Err for—“point light movement”? These people have these weapons that project—almost

like a Phasmophobia dot projector—project little points across 3D space, [Dre chuckles] and the soldiers can teleport to any point accessible—sort of like lit up by one of these little dots.

Austin: Can you send me their name in a DM so I can add it to my notes?

Jack: Yeah, they are called At Em Ver AI, the point light movement unit. I'm going to send this to you now. Okay. And this is just the immediate like, “hang on, wait a second, did Palisade just declare war on us?” force that has been deployed.

Roll/Resolution

[01:57:01]

Austin: God. God, right, sure. Well, they are three dice for the opposition, plus one for Clem, has no skills and is incapable of learning new ones, plus one for battered body, plus body and plus one for Future. [Art: Body and The Future Freaks Me Out.] That's six. Yeah. What do you got?

Art: And I'll delete those burdens just for housekeeping. And I'm saying I get two dice and then one for each of my non-exhausted relationships.

Austin: Which you are now betraying effectively.

Art: I don't think that August and I had a relationship that—that this would count as a betrayal to.

Jack: You were attacking a major ally?

Art: Yeah! But you were about to betray me.

Austin: Okay.

Jack: This is some real Clementine logic here.

Keith: I'll say in defense—

Art: You—you were! You can't—you certainly can't deny that.

Austin: August is out of scenes!

Art: I know, there's an epilogue.

Keith: In defense of Clem, the relationship—and this is very Clem—the relationship is “I won't be betrayed this time”, which has nothing to do with Clem betraying August,
[**Austin:** Yep!] it's only about August betraying Clem.

Austin: Right. Sure. Yeah. Great.

Dre: Mhm, mhm, mhm.

Keith: So, Clem is totally free to betray August.

Austin: Clementine Kesh has never betrayed anyone, yeah, I got it.

Yeah.

Jack: Yeah, in the same way that Jigsaw has never killed anybody.

[**Austin** laughs]

Sylvi: A sinister liar.

Keith: No-! Clem has betrayed people, it's just the relationship isn't about what Clem does to August.

Art: Yeah, that's not what it's about, yeah!

Austin: While doing something extremely wicked. Alright. Dice roll. Who wants to roll against Clem?

Jack: [immediately] *Me*.

[**Keith, Dre, Sylvi** laugh]

Austin: I see it.

Sylvi: Real “I must kill my creation”.

Keith: They're both doing it. They're both trying it.

Austin: Yeah, uh huh.

Jack: Oh... okay.

Austin: Oooh! *Hooo!*

Jack: Wow. *Wow.*

Austin: 6-6-5, strong showing!

Keith: Wow, very strong.

Sylvi: The Neighbor of the Beast.

Austin: The Neighbor of the Beast. [**Dre** chuckles] And this is only...

Sylvi: That's from Alan Wake 2.

Austin: Oh, damn, you can't claim it. I see. [**Sylvi:** Yeah.] 5-4 here from Clem.

Art: I will lash out.

Austin: I bet.

Keith: Yeah.

Art: At 6-6-5.

Austin: Okay. Jack, you want to reroll 6-6-5?

Art: That will give me an additional die. I'm dragging this six up for that. And I roll—

Austin: You reroll the six. That seemed— [gasps] And you rolled it as a six!

Art: I rolled a six.

Keith: 6-5. That's not bad.

Austin: That's not bad, 6-5-2.

Jack: Take the misfortune.

Art: Yes. I'm going to take another misfortune just as a—

Austin: Means you're about to do something else?

Keith: Oof. All of these—I'm getting pretty worried about these misfortunes.

Austin: I mean, a turn ago, you were like, ehh, it doesn't matter.

Keith: No, no, no!

Art: The way I see it is, I should have done this in the other scene.

Austin: Right. So this is so—right, right, right. I see what you're saying.

Jack: This is free money.

Austin: You're playing with house money. Yeah.

Art: Yeah.

Art: Oh shit, fuck, sorry.

Austin: It's okay, I got it.

Keith: I think if you roll the tape back, I was originally advocating for the least misfortune option, and also maybe suggesting people *not take so many burdens*.

Austin: Mmm, mhm. Oh, interesting. So what are you doing here?

Janine: You're not our dad.

Jack: Ha!

Keith: Yeah, I know.

Janine: We're taking the burdens we want.

Sylvi: You're just Evil Keith.

Evil Keith: I'm just Evil Keith, which means I'm the world's dad.

[Dre chuckles]

Austin: So wait, I thought you said you were going to take an additional misfortune here?

Art: I was—for a minute, I was like, well, I should flee, [Austin: Mmm.] to ignore the five? But it's the si—I guess that I don't get a burden. That doesn't matter—

Austin: It's a misfortune. The five will be a misfortune for you.

Art: Well, and I technically have to write a burden.

Austin: Yes, technically. Yes. But my point being that the cost there would be—would be from that, which if you flee, [Art: It would be a wash.] it's still a misfortune, so who cares? Right?

Art: Yeah. And fleeing—so I'm not occupying. I would just narrate the victim, Clem, permanently damages Arbit [Austin: Right.] while escaping. Yeah, I'll do that.

Janine: I can't not imagine this as Clem just dropping down from the sky, [chuckling] crushing and leaving now.

Austin: Yeah, that's basically what it is, right?

Art: That's basically it, yeah.

Janine: Yeah!

Austin: Yeah, flee again, says escape in body or spirit. So yeah, I guess that's—

Jack: Also, just—here's some context to the listener. This means that the first non-Twilight Mirage player to on-screen enter the Twilight Mirage, [chuckles]

Austin: Well, you've all been in the Twilight Mirage, but I know what you mean.

Jack: We've *been* in there, but Clem was like, I'm off. Let's go.

Austin: Yeah. I'm going to go wreck some shit.

Art: Oh, and I get a fortune.

Austin: Right from the five win.

Art: From the five win.

Austin: And you get a—technically a boon from the five win.

Art: That, yeah,

Austin: Which doesn't matter, but it's—I have repaired the Divine past.

Art: Oh, I could win with a four if that's more clever.

Austin: Get a new relationship with the Divine past?

Art: With the Divine past.

Austin: Yeah you could win with the four. That's true. You could.

Keith: Um, is, uh—

Austin: You should narrate this win. But Keith, go ahead and ask your question.

Keith: I lost it.

Austin: Alright. Well, narrate your—narrate what this success looks like, and then we get to narrate what the burden looks like.

Art: Well, no, there is no burden, I fled.

Austin: Oh, you fled. Yeah, you just get to fucking narrate.

Art: Uh, yeah, Clem, uh, you know, Clem is surprised by the resistance. Clem always thinks that this is going to be no problem. And of course, it is a problem. But she's got a sick dragon and just bl—you know, shoots. What do we say this dragon shoots?

Jack: Oh, ichor?

Austin: Yeah, a sort of burning ichor.

Art: And it clogs and then degrades—

Austin: Right.

Art: Arbit, and Arbit collapses.

Austin: It's like it gets in there. It gets deep into Arbit.

Art: Yeah. You would need a genius to rebuild Arbit at this point.

Jack: [chuckles] You know, in like a vinyl shirt with the picture of Leonardo da Vinci on it and on the back, there's, you know, shimmering, undrawable patterns. That sort of genius.

Austin: Mhm, mhm.

Art: Yeah. My favorite kind.

Keith: A condemnation of the genius town that sprung up around Arbit.

Art: Yeah.

Austin: Yeah.

Art: A bunch of posers.

Keith: My question was, how long did it take to get here? That was what I could remember.

Austin: Great question.

Art: Oh, probably a while.

Keith: Yeah. Flying on a dragon.

Austin: Through space.

Keith: Interplanetary, inter-solar system?

Austin: Yeah.

Art: Yeah.

Austin: Hey, what's—

Art: Wings don't work in space.

Austin: Yeah. Uh huh. [**Dre:** That's true.] And you now flee back towards the Crown of Glass. *Your* Crown of Glass, the ship, the Divine Past, where you will become its new Elect. Think of an elect name, Art. Or don't. Maybe you're not an Elect name person.

Keith: I think we should drown Clem.

Jack: God, even if— [wheezes]

Sylvi: Maybe get into a paste or something? Turn into one of those?

Jack: If, if—yeah, we'll grind her into paste—if, um, [**Sylvi:** Yeah, yeah, yeah.] hey, if Arbit is broken, is—a Divine is a social construct, but I would like to at least raise the possibility that this is just Crystal Palace now.

Austin: I mean, it's doing that.

Jack: Yeah, but I mean like—

Austin: It doesn't do what the Divine Past did, right? The Divine Past had been a collection of—The thing that its power was before it crashed on the sands of Obelle were—on Partizan—no, that's not true—yeah, that's right, Obelle is right, the seaside town of Obelle, that sounds like PARTIZAN 01 to me. [**Jack:** Yeah.] That's right.

Is that it could -it became a perfect repository of all time since before it was broken, which is still a powerful thing, right? The world's greatest archive of Divine history of, you know, it's the living—it's the library—it's not the living library of Memorius, that's somewhere else in the Twilight Mirage right now, [**Jack** chuckles] but it's still a perfect archive, or had been. So yeah, it's Crystal Palace.

But I think also, it's going to be whatever Clem decides to call it, right? And presumably you already have people inside or Iconoclasts inside repairing it, right? Getting it ready to launch again, as is foretold, you know? Somewhere deep in space, one of the unmentioned members of Leap's crew, Figure—Figure A, feels really bad for a moment. It's not great.

Jack: God, I bet that was a bit in one of the Dim Liturgy's books, [**Austin:** Oh, sure.] way back at the beginning of the season, was like, "Crystal Palace will come back into form again". And everyone was like, well, you know, maybe that's the fut—that's the distant future devoutly to be wished. [**Austin:** Mhm.] But, you know, we need to be here in the here and now. Who was the chief pilot of Crystal Palace in the Sunset—? Where did Keen—what did Keen arrive on—?

Austin: Keen Forrester Gloaming, what do you mean?

Jack: He was the chief intercessor in command of Crystal Palace?

Austin: He was the chief intercessor in command of it. It was operated by hundreds of people.

Jack: Yeah.

Austin: It had data cleaners, and it had a crew, and it had all that stuff, you know, it had soldiers and guards, which you may recall, Signet—

Jack: But what I mean to say is, it was under his command rather than like—

Austin: It was under his command. Yeah, yeah, yeah. He arrived on it, I believe, or alongside it, at the very least. Yeah. I had to go check something.

[reading] “The pane is shattered, but the words continue, falling off the glass and into my hand. The blood is in the grip. The blood is in the grip. The words continue, the blood is in the grip.”

Yeah. Okay, the Witch in Crystal is here.

[music intro - “[See All Of This](#)” by Jack de Quidt begins]

[music ends]