

PARTIZAN 05: Profit and Loss

Transcriber: thehreadbiter

[MUSIC - "TANAGER. PERFECT. TOUCHPAPER." starts]

Austin: Each of the stels of the Divine Principality react to crisis differently. Kesh contextualizes an event in its history. Nideo sends messages of stability through sermons and semiographs. Columnar identifies opportunity, and Apostolos seizes it. But for Stel Orion nothing ever seemed to change at all:

Across the Low Slate of Partizan, from the verdant fields of the Pyramid Plains, to the rich hills of Marengo, from the airless basins of the Old Old and into the depths of the bustling metropolis of Oxbridge... Stel Orion always keeps things going. It is always business as usual.

And if you asked Burden Bittenbach, descendent of the founder of Stel Orion, why this is, he might feed you a familiar platitude: Something about needing to keep your chin up when things are down, maybe. But in his heart, he would hide a different answer, something he might not ever even whisper, yet which flows through the veins of Stel Orion writ large:

Austin [as Burden Bittenbach]: "There is no such thing as a crisis at all. Things are *a/ways* going wrong, and when they do, that isn't an exception to the rule, but an extension of it. Expect every week to come with a bad day. Build a process around it. Have someone on standby. Take notes. Only a fool would expect anything else.

After all, when Stel Kesh or Stel Nideo or who-the-hell-ever came up with the idea of the Elect--someone chosen to pilot and interface with and speak to and corral these incomprehensible and unpredictable and minacious beings called Divines--they simultaneously, whether intentionally or not, invented the untimely death of the Elect too.

And deaths like that do not damage or disrupt or derail the engine of history.

They fuel it."

[2:35 - intro ends]

Austin: Welcome to Friends at the Table, an Actual Play podcast focused on critical worldbuilding, smart characterization, and fun interaction between good friends. I am your host, Austin Walker, and today we are continuing Partizan, with our game of Beam Saber by Austin

Ramsay. My goals are to ensure that everyone at the table is safe, to convey the world honestly, to fill the world with detail, and to play to find out what happens. This is our second as the... Society of Banners and Bright Returns, which means I am joined by Alicia Acampora.

Ali: Um, hi. I'm Alicia, you can find me at [ali_west](#) on twitter.com and you can find [Friends_Table](#) at friends... wait.

Austin: Yup. Got it.

[Janine laughs]

Ali: Yep. You can find that. [Friends_Table](#) on twitter. That's your favorite podcast, Friends at the Table, on twitter. There you go.

Austin: Wow. Good. Also Andrew Lee Swan is here.

Dre: Hey, you can find me on twitter at [swandre3000](#).

Austin: And Janine Hawkins.

Janine: You can find me on twitter at [bleatingheart](#).

Austin: As always, you can support the show by going to [friendsatthetable.cash](#)! We haven't played in a little bit, because we— there was some travel, and then some end-of-year work stuff, and everything else. But we are recording this before the end of the year [laughs], it'll come out quite a bit after that, I suspect, and I definitely ran another game with the Rapid Evening side of the game, which was very fun, and in general I can speak in a little bit to the kind of state of things, [laughs] writ large.

But what I really wanna start with is looking at the character sheets and moving into what in Forged in the Dark games is called the downtime...phase of play. In general, you can kind of think about games like Beam Saber and Blades in the Dark moving between kind of free play—kind of a segment where, y'know, "hey, what are you doin, what's goin on", missions, and then downtime. And then that downtime kind of bleeds into kinda free play, and back into a mission as you kinda figure out what it is you wanna like do. [laughs slightly] Objectives you're looking to complete, and where you wanna make some more money, or do whatever it is you're trying to get done.

And so I — we don't need to necessarily go through the entire end-of-session set of things, but I would like to go over it, just to give a little bit of insight into what that looks like, for listeners who maybe are thinking about getting into it themselves! So, there's basically like six steps here, and really we kind of did the first two right away, and then the other ones over the course of the next couple of weeks in between sessions. The first is, check the Squad's XP goals. Mark 1 XP for

each time that they occurred. Ali, you're in here. Do you wanna read **[Ali: Hi.]** what is under Squad XP on the Saber page?

Ali: ...Yeah. Oh! Okay, so, our Squad XP is one: execute a successful reconnaissance, espionage, sabotage or theft operation?

Austin: Which you definitely did! [laughs] Uh, you definitely did. I think we marked 2 there, because you definitely stole those mechs, and also did your job doing sabotage and espionage, so. Good job.

Ali: Thank you. Number two is: face off against challenges about your pay grade.

Austin: [amused] Which you did, by nature of being a Tier 0 Squad and literally everyone else in this game being above you. So yeah, that's at least one. I have the total number we've given you from whenever we recorded last time, but I don't remember where those came from, let's keep talkin!

Ali: [laughs] The third is: bolster your Squad's reputation or develop a new one. Our reputation, I believe, is...

Austin: Daring. You took Daring. Yes, and I'm gonna say, independently, and I did not get involved in this decision-making process, the Rapid Evening also took Daring.

Ali: Oh... Well...

Austin: Which I'm fine with, because let me tell you, y'all have different ideas about what Daring might mean.

Ali: [laughs quietly] Fair. And the last is: express the goals, inner conflict, or essential nature of the Squad.

Austin: Which I do think y'all did, but maybe only once there. Y'know? So I think this could be 2 for successfully doing those things, 2 for facing off challenges above your paygrade, because it wasn't just the kind of at the end of that last session, when you faced the descending, falling Divine that was about to crash into the ground and saved a bunch of people's lives, but even just like engaging with regular shit was a lot more difficult because — I mean, the thing is, y'all crushed it. That was maybe the most successful [muffled laughter from **Ali** and **Dre**] any Forged in the Dark situation has ever been — I say that knowing, Dre, your character took a scar, so it's not like [slight laugh] there wasn't any losses [Dre: Eh, it's fine.] [Ali: Yeah.], but like y'all did the damn thing. And you definitely expressed —

Ali: We get an SS rank. [laughing] On this fucking mission.

Austin: Yeah, [laughs] exactly. So I'm gonna give you 1 more here, you're only 1 away from levelling up the Squad, which is fun. Or getting a new Squad ability or upgrades, basically. So

that's one of the things you do. This next thing you do is you check Pilot XP and goals — sorry, XP Goals, and mark 1 XP for each time that occurs, or 2 XP if it happened multiple times. Um. Dre, do you wanna go with you, since — and also, Dre, real quick, we did decide on a scar for you, right?

Dre: Yes.

Austin: Do you wanna set up what that is and then we'll talk about XP also?

Dre: Yeah! I just tabbed away from the sheet, hold on.

Austin: No worries.

Dre: Um. So yeah, we picked Haunted as my scar.

Austin: [with relish] Yeah!

Dre: And specifically haunted by Valence's kind of brush with... ghost of Principality, right? [cross] wasn't that what we had described it?

Austin: [cross] It's like the ghosts of — it's like the history of the Principality, right, like.

Dre: Okay.

Austin: I mean, the thing that happened is the Divine Past crashed into the dunes west of that town, Obelle, and shattered, right? And like the... when that happened, there was kind of like an overwhelming almost psychic attack — not an attack, but like an explosion of information and feeling and emotion, caused — because this is the Divine that remembers everything going back to — you know — tens of thousands of years [laughs]! And also, because of the... Perennial Wave, like all of these nanomachines — and also you're a psychic. Right, you are an empath, you have empathic abilities, and so this was like, what if the Library of Alexandria was alive, and then you were there when it burned. [slight laugh] Right? So.

Dre: Yeah.

Austin: I think all of that kind of hit you. And that could be fun. I don't know! Like are you gonna see visions of the past, are you going to just have a weight, because you do have this emotional understanding of the empire, like, I don't know, we'll have to figure out in play what that looks like. Um. It's probably worth saying that the way scars work is similar to the way trauma works in Blades in the Dark. Scars are things that you, as a player, can kind of bring into play to complicate things for yourself. If you suffer the repercussions of a scar during your session, you can mark XP at the end of the session, so it's like another XP valve for you. And that can be a thing that you bring up, it can be a thing that I suggest. But you're the one who kind of has hands on this, because if you don't want this to come up, it doesn't have to. I think that's an important part and a safety mechanism for this game, is that these things are — even though

they're called scars and not trauma like they are in Blades in the Dark — they are still kind of traumatic in nature, and so it's important to say that whenever a character has these, the final — they are in the final hands of the player in terms of if they come up. So, y'know. We'll see how that goes. I will say, the one hard thing is, if you get more than — if you take a fourth scar condition, by default, that is when you have to retire the character. [Dre: Mm-hm.] Or... I guess it's actually more interesting. It's, [reading] "At this point, they must either retire to a life elsewhere or they can be handed over to a faction that has a negative relationship with the Squad. If they retire, they start to live away from the war with a quality of life indicated by the changes they made by spending drive. If they are given to another faction, the Squad's reputation with that faction goes up by one level. What happens to the pilot after that is up to the GM, but it probably isn't pleasant!"

Please — you know!? I don't know what type of game we're playin, but — [Dre laughs]... It would be a dark day when the party like — [amused] completely betrays another party member and sells them out! I guess it's possible! We could live in that world, we'll see. Um. But let's talk about your Xp as an Empath.

Dre: Yeah, so after doing Squad XP, check the pilot's XP goals and mark 1 Xp for each item that occurred, or 2 XP if that item happened multiple times.

Austin: Yes. And those are kind of in the middle of the sheet, also, I have them kind of highlighted, I don't know what you can see on my screen versus—

Dre: No, I can s—

Austin: Okay.

Dre: Yeah, I can see your thing. So the three things from my Playbook are: I addressed a challenge with understanding or poise.

Austin: Mm-hm.

Dre: You expressed your history, tragedy, or opening. And you struggled because of your beliefs, scars or quirks. I think we — I marked 3 XP, and I think it was 2 for a challenge with understanding or poise, and then 1 for history, tragedy or opening?

Austin: I think that that's correct, here. [Dre: Okay.] I don't know that you struggled because of your beliefs or quirks at this point.

Dre: Mm-hm.

Austin: Looking at those now. And while we're here, we should talk about your beliefs. What are your connection — beliefs with Broun and with Thisbe?

Dre: For Broun, “Broun is quite dependable and competent, I hope to see them as trustworthy.” And for Thisbe, “I’m not sure why Thisbe resists her potential, but I want to open her eyes.”

Austin: Great. Maybe we’ll see some development on beliefs this session. We will see. I’ll note, also, you get XP whenever you make a Desperate action, and you get that XP in the action that you’re rolling, and I don’t think anybody rolled Desperate in that entire... first session on your side? But! Um. Those 3 that you’ve taken, Dre, can stay in the Playbook XP track, or you could put them into one of your actions instead. **[Dre makes an intrigued noise]** The way that the game works is, if you max out your Playbook XP, you get a new special ability, and if you max out one of your action — your kind of attribute trackers, then you can put a point into one of the kind of actions that’s inside that larger category. So for instance, let’s say you started filling up your Insight track. Insight kind of is the category that Hunt, Study, Survey, and Engineer are in, and if you max that out, then you could put a point into one of those things. Um. Do do do... All right. let’s go to Janine! Let’s talk about Thisbe.

Janine: Okay.

Austin: What is Thisbe’s — what are Thisbe’s XP... triggers?

Janine: I think the last two are the same for everyone, right?

Austin: Oh yeah, that’s true. Yes, it’s only — it’s always expressing your history, tragedy, or opening, **[Janine: Yeah.]** or struggling because of your beliefs, scars, or quirks, but the first one is distinct.

Janine: Yeah, so Thisbe’s special one is: you fulfilled your purpose or addressed a challenge with understanding. Thisbe’s purpose, to clarify, is Labor, I think? Yeah.

Austin: Mm-hm. So, uh, what did we end up with here? We — it’s 3 XP here, do you think, is basically similar? I think it was — you fulfilled that purpose twice, and then...

Janine: Yeah, there was a lot of labor.

Austin: There was a lot of labor.

Janine: Done.

Austin: Definitely.

Janine: There was a lot of farm work, and demolition work, and hauling...

Austin: Farm work — okay. Farm — calling destroy — **[laughs]** — **[stammers]** — just being near a farm doesn’t make it farm work!

Janine: Tearing up a field is farm work!

Austin: All right, yeah, okay. That's fair. You know what? That's fair. That's fair.

Janine: Mow tore up that field and made a big haze of wheat or whatever the fuck, and.

Austin: That did happen.

Janine: Yeah.

Austin: What are —

Janine: Agriculture.

Austin: That is agriculture — what are your connections, what are your beliefs to Valence and Broun?

Janine: Um, my belief to Valence is “Valence seeks my obsolescence”.

Austin: [slight laugh] Period. Done. We're out. That's it.

Janine: Yup. And, for Broun, it's—

[15:00]

Janine: “Broun will sell or trade me in the moment my usefulness is expended”.

Austin: Tch — worse. [laughs] [**Janine** laughs] Absolutely. Terrifying. All right!

Janine: It is difficult to be the kind of robot who isn't fun and affable and [**Austin:** Mm-h.] recognizes their personhood!

Austin: Yeah. Yeah. And that's why we play games! Play to find out what happens! [laughs]

Janine: Yeah.

Austin: Um. All right. Broun, let's talk about your XP trigger, and then your connections.

Ali: So my XP trigger is: you addressed a challenge with technical skill or mayhem. And I have 4 XP points, so I think that I did that.

Austin: You definitely did that twice. [amused] That was like the whole mission, [**Ali** laughs] was addressing a challenge with skill or mayhem.

Ali: Uh-huh. Yeah. Mm-hm! And my connections are with Valence, “If I can impress Valence, there has to be money in it down the line.” [**Austin:** Mm.] And my connection right now with Thisbe is, “If I gain Thisbe's trust, I can get her to help me develop something.”

Austin: Okay! So definitely utilitarian, though maybe not as utilitarian and cold as Thisbe might suspect. Um. The... I think those other 2 are just 1 and 1, maybe, or — it's certainly expressing your history as a criminal, because you stole those mechs. **[Ali:** Mm-hm.] I think was the big thing there — or not your history — your history is labor, your tragedy was laid off, your opening was trade slash criminal, and I think taking those mechs to Salvage them — which we'll come back to momentarily...or to do something with them, I don't know. Is definitely part of that. Okay, so that's what XP looks like, that's kind of what the first couple of steps of an end of session conversation look like. The remainder were things that we kind of did on and off over the last couple of weeks. All of this, by the way, is on page 226 of the book. The third thing is that if a mission was completed, the GM should ask the pilots questions about what they wanna do next, which is things like hey, are you following up on something from that mission, or do you want to get an upgrade, do you wanna work towards an upgrade, is there an area in the world you wanna go to, is there an area you wanna target, or a Squad you want to target? Stuff like that. And then because the game had good language for just like good table relationships. Austin Ramsay suggests checking on each player's emotional state, making sure everyone had a good time and is not, y'know, emotionally off-balance or that you went into some territory you didn't mean to or stuff like that. And then just conversations around what people liked and disliked, basically. And so — and again, we basically did all that stuff, just over Discord in the last couple of weeks, versus at the table, after a three or four hour session. Those conversations can be kind of rough to sneak in when everyone's just like, actually, I'm gonna go eat pizza? Is the thing I'm gonna do? And the book even suggests like, hey, maybe wrap back around to this in a few days, so, for those GMs at home, definitely advice there. Um. Dre, we talked about your scar, so I can cross that off. All right, so, let's talk about what happens at the end of a mission. Obviously, for people listening at home, I suspect that this session after they've heard an entire other arc, so in terms of like time this might be a little weird, but we're gonna act as if — let's zoom the clock back to — y'know, that's what you do on a clock, right? You zoom? Let's wind the clock back to immediately after that mission, because one of the things we have to talk about is how much you get paid and what it means to get paid in a game like this that doesn't necessarily have like a money tracker or something like that. Dre, do you wanna read the four things listed under Mission Completed on 141?

Dre: Yeah! [reading] When the Squad completes a mission, follow this process. One: resolve the Squad's rewards. They're get Supply points and rep. Two: update the Squad's trust. They'll be more and less liked by other Squads and their factions. Three: determine the entanglements that affect the Squad. Life is unfair and harsh. Four: play through downtime activities. The Squad has some time to attend to their needs.

Austin: Awesome! So, the first of those two things, resolving reward and updating trust, are things that we recorded at the end of our last session, but which made for super bad radio, partly because it's a lot of math, a lot of bookkeeping, checking the book for guidance, and also because we were very tired. We also did some of that off-mic in between sessions. I think that stuff is really interesting, and it's game-y in sort of like an X-COM base building way. In fact, a lot of the kind of reward payment downtime stuff is very interesting in that way, but I think it's really

dry and long winded, the way we try to do it, so in general, this season, I'm going to try to summarize that stuff at the top of each session, and probably do most of it off-mic in general, just for ease of use. For what it's worth, that's also [laughing] the way we'd probably do it if we were just playing this game for ourselves at home, instead of like scheduling a session and then spending two hours just talking about math, we'd probably just do it in the group chat.

So I do wanna talk about how payment works this first time, though, just so that people listening at home have a rough idea of what this means and like the stuff that's interesting to track, and why things like rules of engagement matter, in terms of like gameplay stuff. So, unlike other games we've played, where you maybe find like gold or treasure at the end of an adventure, or you get paid a particular number of credits or something during a mission, in Bane — in Beam Saber, rather, we don't track cash or money like that. If you need to buy something like a cup of coffee or whatever, mostly we'll handwave it or maybe there's like a fortune roll we can do. But instead what we track is something more abstract called Supply points, and we roll for those at the end of every mission — that roll is kind of an abstraction of the negotiation and payment process, or of kind of the social capital you get with your faction from being successful. There are two types of Supply points: Materiel, which you can kind of think of as like the tools and hardware, and supplies, and again the social capital necessary to maintain or upgrade your mechs. So, Materiel. And then there's Personnel, which you can think of as like IOUs or favors or, again, a budget that's been earmarked for getting people to help you with things. So like, Materiel: Fixing your mechs; Personnel: helping you Recover from injuries, Gather Information, help you get stuff during downtime.

To get those Supply points, at the end of every mission we do what is called a Supply roll, which takes into account both how much your faction likes you — in this case, Stel Orion, and you're neutral with Stel Orion right now — and then how difficult the enemy you were up against was. Like I said, Stel Orion doesn't love you, necessarily, but you were up against the Swordbreakers, which is an Apostolosian Squad, they're who showed up in the Rapid Evening game with Cas'alir, for listeners. And the Swordbreakers are pretty tough. They are Tier 3, you are Tier 0. And I also wanna give you a bonus to that roll because I said at the top of the session last time that was a rush job and that you'd get paid extra. So, I gave you some extra dice there, you rolled those dice, and from that roll, you got 4 Supply points, so just kind of generic Supply points, and then this session we'll have to decide how many of those are Materiel points, how many of those are Personnel points. But for now, just I wrote down 4.

You also get a bonus to Materiel because you did this job for Stel Orion, and Stel Orion is a corporatocracy, and the way that Beam Saber works is the different types of governments give different bonuses. So corporatocracies give extra Materiel, whereas theocracies give extra Personnel, because you can kind of think of Materiel as big like stuff, and corporatocracies like Stel Orion, built on industry, capitalism, have a lot of stuff.

I guess a quick side note here. Real briefly. Because you're mercenaries, you might end up doing missions for other factions. Maybe you'll do a mission for Stel Nideo, who is a theocracy. Maybe you'll do a mission for Stel Apostolos, even though you faced them this time.

But as long as that mission is coming through Orion, and coming through the Scrivener's Guild, and coming through KO Rook, your dispatcher, then I'm gonna count that as working for Stel Orion, partly 'cause it keeps things simpler, but also because I kind of think we're assuming that Stel Orion is getting a cut of whatever money you make through the Scrivener's Guild. We're not counting that, we're not like adding that up, but I do think that that's like a way to think about this and it keeps things simple on your front. That's not to say you can't take independent missions or whatever, and maybe we'll get to that, and if we do — we'll deal with it when we deal with it.

So! 4 Supply points from the roll, plus another 2 Materiel from working with Stel Orion. I'm also gonna give you a bonus Personnel point from that big crate of contraband and like stolen cigarettes and booze and whatever else the smuggler Tes'ili Serikos had that Valence, remember, you took from them. So that is 4 generic Supply points, 2 Materiel, 1 Personnel. We also talked off-mic about this, but immediately spent those 2 Materiel to fix your mechs up. As part of the kind of end-of-mission process you get an opportunity to refresh the quirks on your vehicles. Quirks are the things that you spend to push yourself with a vehicle. You immediately spent two of those to get — Broun and Thisbe — to get Mow and the Three Cheers back up to full status. we don't have to get into this, but you immediately — that's — you know, don't wanna get into all that stuff. But! So that is money. That is the Supply points.

The other thing that you get from payment is rep points. Rep is reputation, and reputation is what it sounds like, it's how well people know about you. Eventually you can get enough rep that you can level up your Squad from a Tier 0 to a Tier 1. You'll have to spend some Materiel and Personnel for that, too, but, y'know. That's, again, we'll get there when we get there. You get bonus rep because you went up against the Swordbreakers, who are three Tiers higher than you, so you ended up with 5 rep, which is pretty good.

And then the other thing that we do before we get to entanglements and downtime is that we update your trust and relationship and status with other Squads and factions based on whether you've succeeded in the mission, and you helped them or hurt them, whether or not you stuck to the rules of engagement, whether or not you got some secondary objectives complete. This we also did off mic because it's easier to do that math really quickly, and that is — I guess, to quickly summarize what would have taken us like 30 minutes of conversation: bonus to the Oxblood Clan relationship, because of Valence saving them. So you're up to +2 with them now. You'd already been at +1, and you were trustworthy with them before, now you're both trustworthy and creative, because of how you went about the mission.

You dropped down with the Red Fennecs 1, they're that smuggler faction again, and they are vengeful towards you, so you're at -1 with them.

We decided not to give you a bonus with the Swordbreakers, because even though you saved a bunch of their lives with the broadcast and the big like psychic empathic warning, I don't think that they know who you are yet. But I did write down that they're curious about you, so they're looking into whoever that other group was — you.

And then you still have the -1 with the Scrivener's Guild, who I asked you to describe their relationship with you and Dre said "over it", which, fair.

And you have a -1 with Carrion Collections, which is the Orion salvaging company that I think we originally said that -1 was about y'all getting the recon rigging instead of them, but we decided it was more interesting if it was mostly about the Thisbe stuff — they kind of wanna steal Thisbe, and also I think maybe you got the workshop instead of the recon rig — or you also still have the recon rigging, but they're jealous about the workshop, they're covetous is the name that Janine came up with for them, or their relationship descriptor. And they want that workshop — they wanted that workshop, you got the workshop instead — they're a salvaging company, they think they could have put that workshop to better use.

Finally, the Stels themselves. Those track relationships much more granularly, because it's more difficult to upset or impress an entire country than a single tiny Squad [laughs] in that country. You lose 3 points of trust with Apostolos, which brings you down from neutral to -1, and because the mission went so well, you actually almost get up from completely neutral with Stel Orion to +1 with them, you're only 1 point of trust away from getting a +1 relationship with them. So maybe that's something you can look to during downtime.

Okay, so, finally, engagements. Not engagements, sorry. Entanglements. [reading] Entanglements exist because the world is unfair, the brass do things that seem random and incompetent, and your friends are vulnerable simply because they know you. After reward and trust are determined, the GM generates an entanglement for the Squad using the charts below. Look at the faction that the Squad has targeted during the mission to determine the entanglements table that will be used. If the last mission targeted an independent Squad, use that Squad's status.

Uh... Okay. If the relationship is -3, roll on Table A. If it's -2 or -1, roll on Table B. If it's 0 or higher, roll on Table C. Then — so that's — I guess right now, yes. You're using that table, okay. So we're going to be using Table B. Then roll a number of dice equal to 3 minus the Squad's relationship with their patron faction, so that would be 3, or the faction with the highest reputation — or relationship if they lack a patron. So your patron faction is what? Is 0, so you're gonna roll 3 dice. You would prefer to roll 1 dice than [slight laugh] than 3, because you're taking the highest result, and I think high is bad. Boom, 3d6. 3 is your highest! All right. [amused noise] So. Your entanglement is — oh wait! You have a move, don't you?

Dre: Yeah. We get to roll this twice.

Austin: Fuck! You just get to roll it twice, straight up?

Dre: Mm-hm.

Austin: All right, give me a — *you* give me a roll, then. You give me a 3d6 also, Dre. You got a 6! As your highest. So either! Uh. 3: Lowest Bidder. Turns out your Squad's gear was

manufactured by the lowest bidder. All vehicles [laughs] immediately suffer a level 2 damage Busted and level 1 damage Low on Ammo, each of which can be resisted separately, or each pilot can pay 1 Materiel to get the good stuff through back channels. Or, 6: Requisition. A Cohort, Squad Upgrade, or Acquired Asset is requisitioned by another Squad. Give up the item, take +2 trust with that Squad's patron faction; bribe the caller with Personnel equal to your Tier +3, so that would be 3 Personnel; try to hide the object; or fight back and lose 1 status with the Squad and their faction. If you don't have any cohorts—

[30:00]

Austin: — upgrades, or assets, you must select an option other than giving up the item, as the caller doesn't believe you don't [laughing] have it.

[**Janine** groans, amused]

Um. Lowest Bidder seems fuckin rough, honestly.

Dre: Mm-hm!

Ali: I wish to not. I do not wish to. [laughs]

[**Austin** laughs]

Dre: No, me neither.

Austin: [amused] No, you don't want to? [**Ali:** No, no.] Like all your shit — to like get on the boat and you immediately realize, actually, you got fucked over by some parts manufacturer? Like yeah, we did a good job, high five! And then just all of your mechs collapse in the background?

Ali: Um.

Dre: [laughs] Well, I guess we've got three new ones! So...

[**Austin** laughs]

Ali: I — Requisition is kind of interesting, it seems kind of like fiction-forward-y. Like [**Austin:** Yeah!] we could bridge that really easily.

Dre: Yeah. Well, and I think the question, too, is like, so when it says that — we don't have any cohorts, right?

Austin: No. You don't have any cohorts. You do have items. [**Dre:** Yeah.] So, Squad Upgrade or Acquired Asset. In this case, I would call those three Troop units that you did "Acquired Assets".

Or your upgrades, and your upgrades are your hidden base, whatever you have set up to Train — your Prowess Training stuff, and your workshop.

Dre: Yeah. I mean, I think the obvious thing here is probably the three mechs.

Austin: Yeah.

Dre: That we stole.

Austin: And it's someone being like, oh no, those are ours now. **[Ali laughs quietly]**

Dre: Yeah.

Ali: [dry] It has to be all three of them?

Austin: I mean, this is the — give up the item, bribe the caller with Personnel, try to hide the object, [cross] or fight back.

Janine: [cross] Item! Item, individual.

Ali: Yeah, they can just take the one, [cross] and then we get the other two.

Austin: [cross] Okay. Okay, take the one! I think, okay — I think that's fair. Okay. Is this Carrion, who literally is covetous towards you? Is this like you arrive back to your base and there is someone from Carrion Collections already here, being like, "Hey, yeah, we heard you got a find. We heard that you came back with stuff, we went through the channels and... this would make us even." They would actually say that this would make them even. Who do we know from Carrion, again? Let's see. Oh, right. Midnite Matinee, who is like the harelike leader of Carrion Collections. She is like a rabbit lady. And she has this like giant jackal-shaped... automated Hollow, like a robot — probably small — like, giant's strong, because Mow is probably — Mow is giant. This is big for a person. This is like small for a giant robot. I think probably like a light mech, but in the shape of a humanoid jackal person. And, yeah. I could imagine her just literally being at your dock. She is... do we wanna do this? Do we wanna do this scene? Do we just wanna go forward on this?

Ali: Yeah!

Dre: Yeah.

Austin: All right. Midnite Matinee is opportunistic, aggressive and playful. The leporine leader of Carrion Collections knows she is destined for more. She and her trusty Pack-model light AutoHollow are going to take what they can get, even if it means stepping on people to get it. That mech, the Pack-model AutoHollow, is like a largely automated mech like Mow, but instead of being a gigantic gorilla, it's like a much much smaller jackal — like a humanoid jackal-shaped mech. Like. It's bigger than Thisbe, but it is definitely smaller than the Hippocampus, which is

Valence's light mech. I think it's probably like only two floors tall. "Only", you know. It's still very big. I said it — she, she. This particular Pack-model AutoHollow takes she/her pronouns. So I think she's like — I think Midnite is like... Actually, tell me about your base again? I know it's a converted lighthouse, but that's kind of all I know. Like on a little island. What's it look like as your little boat ship like arrives with all your shit? Plus all your *other* shit.

[Ali snorts and Dre laughs quietly]

Dre: Do we have a cool like underground water dock? I know that's something we had talked about, but I don't know if we ever...

Austin: The base does have the Hidden FOB upgrade, which says that the Squad's FOB is hidden from even intensive searches. If it's discovered, a Long-Term Project will be required to once again conceal it. So I imagine like moving stuff in and out — like the actual base is underground or underwater, but I'm guessing that the lighthouse is like your... front office? Or something? Or maybe not — if it's hidden, then it's probably not at the same place, right?

Dre: Hm.

Austin: Like do you have a different front of office, that is like — that would not immediately lead people to — or! Is it the fact that it's underwater means that people don't even think, like, you have a base here?

Dre: Yeah. I mean, I guess when I'm thinking underwater, I almost picture like that you... like it's almost like a submarine dry dock.

Austin: Yeah yeah, that's totally what I'm imagining.

Dre: So like our mechs and shit go underwater to get into that.

Austin: Yeah.

Dre: So I think like that part is hidden, but yeah there probably is a front door, or something.

Austin: Like a lighthouse that's been converted into — I have been to lighthouses that have like the — what is — like the lighthouse-keeper attached house turned into like a gift shop or something, and instead that's turned into like an office? Like a reception area where you can meet people and take meetings and stuff like that? Is that the vibe?

Ali: Yeah, that makes sense.

Austin: This is your base, [Dre: Yeah.] you know. [Ali laughs] You can do whatever the fuck you want with it. Then yeah, then I imagine like those mechs are probably delivered by some mechanism that brings them down into that dry dock. I bet the boat that brought you back here isn't a submarine, but I bet there's some sort of mechanism where you're like, just drop those off

here. I promise it's okay. [slight laugh] Or something. You know, you have some other delivery mechanism here that I'm not gonna get into the particulars of unless someone has a dope idea, because you have the upgrade, I'm not gonna like cheat you out of the upgrade. So yeah, I think she is seated on the front porch of your [slight laugh] converted lighthouse. Her giant mech is standing — is like leaning against the like converted lightkeep houser — keeper house. And she is like sipping some sort of ice tea. God, what is she wearing? I think she has brown skin, big white ears. She's more fluffy — she's not like an anime rabbit girl in the sleek sense?

Janine: Is she like that rabbit fighting game... rabbit?

Austin: What's the... [typing] Well, what's the "rabbit fighting game"?

[Dre snorts]

Janine: Wasn't it called — it was like a... action-adventure called like —

Austin: Overgrowth. Overgrowth?

Janine: Le...

Austin: No, legaru... Lug...

Janine: Lugaru.

Austin: Lugaru. Um. I think she's more like Lugaru. Yeah. [doubtful] Mm! I think she's like a mix — she's like... okay, so the first step is, I just have to — it's difficult to be like, oh yeah she's a brown rabbit lady, and not think of Fran from Final Fantasy.

[Ali laughs]

Uh. Final Fantasy XII.

Janine: Or me, from Final Fantasy XIV. The other famous rabbit lady.

Austin: [sly] Oh, I don't know that character. Who's — [laughs] Ah! God, is it just that? Is she just your character from that? [Janine and Dre laugh] No, I think she's fuzzier. Like I think that she has...

Janine: [amused] She has to be able to talk, so she can't be my character on that.

Austin: Damn! Take that, final fan — [laughing] yeah, just — Final Fantasy XIV characters are just like [fake speech] Mahp mop mop, movin my mouth, I'm never actually gonna say anything of value here. Um, I think she's like a blend, then, between Final Fantasy XIV — what are they called? Viera? Is that right?

Janine: Yeah.

Dre: Mm-hm.

Austin: Viera, and like the Lugar — hm — [switching accented syllable] *Lugaru*, or *Lugaru* style like fuzzy all over. I think she is like... fuzzy all over from the... chin down, y'know, but there's like, a brown face underneath — or like in-between there, with kind of like grey-white fur, and she's wearing like a black coverall situation? [amused] Coveralls are like a flight suit, overalls are like the denim thing. She's not wearing overalls. She's wearing coveralls. Uh. That are like some sort of — it's like basically a piloting suit, y'know? Like it zips up the front, it's a one-piece. But it's kind of... you know, she's from a salvage company, so it's like it's black 'cause it hides grease and oil, but also she wears it with a sort of confidence that makes her look like a little more fashion-y than something like this should look like? She has like a bunch of patches on the arms, and a pair of sunglasses in the pockets — actually she has a pair of sunglasses on, and as you approach, she pops them off, and puts them in her pocket, and she goes...

[as **Midnite**]: [sigh] [pronounced 'saber'] SBBR. I hear things went well for you, on your latest operation.

Ali [as **Broun**]: Yeah, I guess so. Do you need something?

Midnite: I do. Um. [slight laugh] It's funny. I heard that it went really well... so well, in fact, that... you crossed the supply line! There's a certain point — I don't know if you know this, I don't know how well you check your contracts with the Scrivener's Guild — but a point at which enough resources go beyond what you were allotted, and because the Scrivener's Guild likes to make sure everyone has a fair chance, it goes into a pool. A requisition pool. And it turns out my paperwork was filed just in time. I'm gonna need one of those three Troop units that you, uh, *acquired* from the battlefield.

Austin: And suddenly she's like,

[as **Midnite**]: Popcorn!

Austin: And this big robot like, Brrrrrr, chnk. And lowers her hand. She's just like Mow where she's automated and not like a person but she's kind of right on that line. She's like right where Mow is, right on the other side of that kind of sapience line, where like Thisbe, even, is like across it. So I think she like lowers her hand, and inside of two giant fingers is like a manila envelope. [laughs] And... Midnite just takes this manila folder and hands it to you, Broun, you were the one who spoke, so. Like kind of like stands up and walks over to you, and all the paperwork is in order.

Ali: Well, I think there's an immediate [laughs] like.

[as **Broun**]: Whoa, you're not — you're not... this is ours. This stuff is ours. We got it. We went out there.

Midnite: You did get it. Yeah! Mm-hm!

Broun: Yeah.

Midnite: And, you know what they say. The world runs on circulation. It's like a heart. It has to beat —

Broun: Who says that? Who said that?

Midnite: They do. They do.

Broun: [suppressing laughter] Who's they? 'Cause I didn't say that.

Midnite: The people.

Broun: These are my... do you have any money? Do you have money for these robots?

Midnite: Do you have any money? To not give me the robot?

Broun: I... [laughs] I got them. They're mine!

Midnite: Oh, they're *yours*? They're not your team's. They're not SBBR's. The Society of Banners and Bright Returns, I thought you were a unit? If they're *yours*, then that's a different situation. But if they're *SBBR*'s, then — the tax clause hits.

Broun: Well, I think given the circumstance, my team would be happy to, um, give them to me instead of you!

Valence: I've never owned a... [**Austin** laughs] what was this called?

Broun: Uh-huh! Don't worry about it.

Midnite: Okay, so —

Broun: I'll take care of everything.

Midnite: Mm. So, if you... you're not gonna, then, report that you retrieved three troop units from—

Austin: — or you're gonna — sorry. Because it's already reported. Uh.

[as **Midnite**]: So you're gonna file a retraction, then, to the Scrivener's Guild, who you're already in hot water with, about those troop units?

Broun: Mm-hm!

Midnite: Because they noted that you already retrieved them. Is the thing. They're very — they like paperwork a lot.

Broun: Well —

Ali: I think Broun's like looking at Thisbe and Valence to be like, when did this — when did we fill this out?

Austin: This is just like one of those things that happens — I — it's probably a thing that happens at the end of any mission — you know that thing that we just did where you got paid?

Ali: Right, yeah.

Austin: It's that process, right, it's like oh yeah, so tell me what happened in this mission, blah blah blah blah. And it is totally within your rights to Salvage stuff. That is 100% a thing that was agreed upon. This is like —

Ali: It's probably one of those things of like when you're — I'm gonna say when you're doing your taxes but I don't know that this is 100% the time that you do this in. But like when you're... H&R Block always has that like number that goes up in the corner, and as you're putting in your income, you can just like change them and see them change?

Austin: Yeah. You're like, hmm.

Ali: And it was one of those things of like, yeah, I got three robots! And then the like, "here's the money that you get" thing goes up, and it's like, okay, yeah. Yeah, you can know that I had that.

Austin: You know what it is, too, like literally, remember, they're tracking how much income you've made for Orion, and so with you claiming them, it's like, "oh wow, that was a big win! Nice job! You really helped us out here!" [laughs] And in fact, by saying you did that, they now know you have this.

[Ali sighs]

And again, let me just talk about the mechanics. Your options here are to give up the item — which would upgrade your trust with Orion [Ali laughs] instantly to a higher tier, which is interesting. You could bribe Midnite Matinee and Carrion Collections with Personnel equal to your Tier +3, with 3 Personnel. As a note, you are sitting on 4 Supply points, at this point. And 1 Personnel point. So that would be a big bite into that money. Try to hide the object [laughs] [Ali laughs] which is kind of what you're doing now! Or fight back and lose 1 status with the Squad and their faction.

Ali: Um. What faction are they, are they also Orion?

Austin: They're also Orion, yes. [laughs]

Ali: [amused] Okay, fair, yeah, yeah, okay. Um. Well shucks. [quiet laugh]

Austin: It's up to y'all! You do have this hidden FOB! [**Ali** and **Dre** laugh] Like I'm not... Ugh!

[pause]

Janine: [huffs laugh] I think Thisbe looks at Broun and is like.

[45:00]

Janine [as **Thisbe**]: Operant Broun, is Operant Matinee... or sorry, Operant Broun, is this wage theft?

[**Austin** laughs loudly]

Janine: But more deadpan.

Austin: Uh-huh!

Janine: This is more like. [**Ali** laughs]

[as **Thisbe**]: If this is wage theft, I would like to catalogue the example.

[**Austin** laughs again]

Ali [as **Broun**]: This is a version of theft, let me tell ya! I... [laughs]

Austin [as **Midnite**]: This is not theft. This is collection. It's in our names. We're called Carrion Collections, we do collections. And this is... one such instance.

Broun: Go collect something else!

Midnite: We collect a lot of other things! Let me tell you! Let me tell you, *Operant* Broun, we could collect more things if maybe you didn't screw us outta that workshop.

Broun: We're doing better with that workshop anyway, clearly.

Midnite: [claps lightly] I know, you got three Troop units, one of which belongs to me!

[**Broun** sighs]

Thisbe: Operant Matinee, is this a tithe?

Midnite: A tithe...?

Thisbe: A tithe.

Midnite: [confused noise] I don't — that's like a church thing, right? I mean, listen. People would be in their rights to worship me, it's true.

[**Ali** laughs derisively]

Thisbe: No.

Midnite: And if it ma—... [sighs]

Broun: [amused] Even the robot's not gonna worship you.

Thisbe: That's not — Operant Matinee, that is not my understanding of religion.

[**Ali** laughs]

Dre [as **Valence**]: Mine either.

Midnite: [sighs] If it would make you feel better to think of it as a tithe, you can think of it as a tithe. If it would make you feel better to think of it as a payout...then it's a payout. If you want to go by the books, *which I did*, of the society that we live in, and say that it is an excess tax, then it's an excess tax! I'll file all of the paperwork on my side that says you did the right thing. I'm sure some higher ups here in Oxbridge will take notice of that — "Hm, good job. Oh, wow, Society of Banner and Bright Returns, they paid their due" and all that shit! And then we can both move on with our lives! And I'll have a Troop unit that'll help me do the thing we do, which is collections. I don't know why this has to be a painful process.

Broun: You know what, if Carrion needs other Squads' goods instead of getting things themselves, then sure.

Midnite: [huffs] Charity.

Valence: It is true, it is good to give to those who cannot help themselves.

Austin: [laughs] Ooh!

[as **Midnite**]: All right! The address is in there.

Austin: [laughing] And just like. Points at the manila envelope. [**Ali** laughs]

[as **Midnite**]: [cross] I'm not above charity!

Ali: [cross] “I’ll take those insults, and that robot too.”

Austin: Yes! Yup, absolutely! [both laugh] “As my accountant says, that’s what the robot is for!”
[Ali laughs] So you’re giving up one of these 3 Troop units.

Ali: Yeah.

Austin: Okay. I’m gonna make a note here that you have 2 Troop units here in the kind of notes section. Boom. And we’ll talk about those in a second, but hey! You gave it up, that means that your trust goes up... by, what was it, 3? By +2 with that Squad’s patron faction, which means you’re up a higher level with Stel Orion. Nice work. They are now helpful towards you. Stel Orion can be expected to help you, so long as it doesn’t cost them anything [laughs] and expect the same in return!

Dre: [amused] Sounds like a boss!

Austin: That sounds like a boss! [laughs] Exactly! All right, that is entanglements. We now, I believe, move on to downtime proper. Yeah, play through downtime activities. The Squad has some time to tend to their needs. Um. [amused] During the time. Between missions. Pilots can have free-play scenes where pilots talk with one another and NPCs, and perform three downtime activities. So each of you at this point has three downtime activities to do.

Janine: Is it two if we already did Upkeep?

Austin: Nope, that is a free Upkeep, **[Janine:** Oh, okay.] that was a free downtime, yeah. You still get three more. **[Janine:** Sick.] It’s like a lot. Yeah, it kinda rules! [laughs] It’s kinda like, oh wow, cool **[Dre laughs]**, like there’s this cool mechanic in this game that kind of blows by too fast every time, what if we just extended that? It’s very important, because you don’t want people to feel like they can’t repair their stuff, if they have the resources to repair it, y’know? So does anyone have a thing they wanna do? Or wanna know more about, even?

Janine: I wanna start a Long-Term Project.

Austin: Okay. What is that Long-Term Project?

Janine: Thisbe wants to find the farm **[Austin:** Oh, okay.] that she was found on.

Austin: How are you looking into this? **[Janine:** Um.] What’s that look like?

Janine: [cross] So that’s —

Austin: [cross] It’s a Long-Term Project so it doesn’t have to be an easy — you don’t have to have the whole answer right now, but y’know.

Janine: Yeah. I think the sort of starting point is to like narrow down where it is most likely that that farm was, remembering like what they farmed and stuff, **[Austin:** Yeah.] where are the

places where that is farmed and then looking into those individually. It's a big project for one little robot to look into. Finding a single farm in a fuckin galaxy.

Austin: Galaxy? Yeah. Is it like, I remember what the sky was colored. You know what I mean, like that type of stuff, where it's like — where you know what the biome is like, and so you can kind of do a check against all planets that have this type of soil, or whatever. Y'know?

Janine: That's kind of how I picture the project progressing is that like each time it is like she picks a detail that she remembers and focuses on it, so it's like **[Austin: Yeah.]** the first detail's gonna be the sort of broadest things of like, here is what they farmed. **[Austin: Mm. Mm-hm.]** Where do people farm this? And the next step is, well, I remember there were three moons. **[Austin: Right.]** Where are there three moons, where this is farmed? And then you narrow it down further.

Austin: Totally. How — so this is gonna advance your — I'll just read. Long-Term Project: when you work on a project, whether it's new or partially completed, describe how your pilot advances the project and roll an appropriate action. What action do you think this is?

Janine: Um.

Austin: The thing you're describing sounds like Study.

Janine: [unhappy] Yeah.

Austin: More than Survey.

Janine: [laughs] Yeah.

Austin: Or Interface, if you're going through the Palace, or just like... Interface, again, is you work closely with electronic equipment, making it an extension of your body. You might hack into a technologically advanced vehicle or understand how it works. You could program an electronic device to fulfil your desires, but Engineer might be better. I think Interface feels — it's Interface or Study, for sure.

Janine: I think for me the difference between Interface and Study is answering the question like, does Thisbe read text?

Austin: That's a good question, does Thisbe read text?

Janine: And I feel like she can probably recognize and parse text, but I don't think that's how she would want to go through information. Like I feel like that's way slower. [cross] Than her other options.

Austin: [cross] Right. So this is about building a spreadsheet, more than it's about reading Wikipedia. **[Janine: Yeah.]** If that makes sense. Then yeah, I'd say that's Interface. You'll end up

marking segments on the clock based on what you roll here. I'm just gonna read the whole thing since Long-Term Projects are such an important thing. [reading] Mark segments of the project clock according to your result. 1-3 advances it by 1, 4-5 advances it by 2, 6 advances it by 3. A crit, which is two 6s, would advance it by 5 segments. A Long-Term Project can cover any kind of endeavor that takes a great deal of time. Researching a new beam weapon, finding a mission person, building a romance, finding a personal sponsor, and many more possibilities. The GM will determine how many segments the project clock has, depending on what the goal is. To work on a project, you actually need the tools, skills, resources, et cetera to fulfill it, and [stammers] that might be a necessary preliminary project. For example, you might want to make deals with a group of guerillas, but you don't have any way of contacting them. As prep for that, you could build a good rapport with the civilians who live in an area that the guerillas operate in, and once you have their trust, you could work on contacting the soldiers. You can always spend 1 Personnel point for +1d to the Long-Term Project roll, or to increase the result by 1 level. Do you wanna do that, do —

Janine: The other thing I should say about this project is that like I — this is probably obvious, but I don't think once Thisbe finds the farm, okay, hands — y'know — dusting off hands emoji — emoji? I don't [laughs] like.

Austin: Uh-huh, dusting off hands emoji. [Ali laughs]

Janine: Work done. I think the thing that happens after this project is another project of like, get to the farm. Which is — [Austin: I mean —] also a complicated thing.

Austin: That's a super complicated thing, [Janine: Yeah.] given that you're stuck on a world [cross] that, et cetera, et cetera. So I guess —

Janine: [cross] Yes. Exactly. I just wanted to make it clear that I wasn't expecting this to be like a thing that's just like okay, well we found 'em! Bye, everyone! [laughs]

Austin: Right, right. As a reminder, the way that drives work is that each step that you take towards them — okay, so you have two drive clocks, right? They're both four steps. When you fill them — they both connect to the same drive, so you don't have two drives, but you have two kind of clocks that you can fill. When you fill one, it becomes a point that you can spend, it kinda becomes like a resource. You can spend a single one to [stammers] change your drive and also negate [stammers] any harm or damage, to change any roll to a 6 after you've rolled it, or to provide all of the assistance benefits to a teammate. It's like the moment that you just like — the main theme starts playing and you're like, I'm a fuckin action hero and like everything's gonna go my way, or like you're on the dance floor and you reveal that you've secretly been the best dancer [laughs] of all time, et cetera. With two filled drive clocks, you can cash them in to change your personal circumstances. This will allow anyone to be able to fulfill any drive that is just about them and where they are, which I think both you and Broun kind of have that vibe, right? Broun, yours is to own a spaceship? You could get that, with a two drive clock. Valence, however — Valence, your goal is what? To convince a major Stel to become a tireless defender

of the Nobel, which are your people? **[Dre: Mm-hm.]** That's gonna take more than two clocks [laughs]! Two clocks are about your personal circumstances, three filled drive clocks are about a Squad's circumstances, and four are about an entire faction's. You'll note, you only have two. So, the only way you can change the world or change the future for more than yourself, is to join drive clocks. And that is part of the negotiation of play, and society, and people. So. But! You know, for Thisbe, this is a two drive clock sorta thing. You get those two drive clocks filled, that feels like a thing that you could make happen. So, find the farm. How many — this'll give you one drive clock for succeeding it, or for finishing it. I think finding it is probably like a five step project? Does that seem fair? I'm torn between four and five. Part of this question ends up being about like [sighs] how many farm — here's one question, is what does Thisbe already know about these farmers? [amused] Do you even have a general idea of where [laughs] it was? Like let's move you over to the —

Janine: I don't think she does.

Austin: Let's move you over to this map, the galaxy map, which, by the way, this is the first time that we're using Annie's incredible maps, which, if you haven't seen them, will be in the 00 episode... podcast like post. So go look at those. But yeah, you don't know anywhere here. You don't know like oh yeah, we were in — they were from Stel Orion. Even. So it's like a really broad net?

Janine: I just don't think she had that awareness of factions at the stage that she was with them.

Austin: Yeah. [cross] All right, then let's...

Janine: [cross] Like they...you know, they dug her out of the ground, and **[Austin: [laughs] Yep.]** then they were like, okay, let's all work on this farm together, and like that's it. Like, for her, that was her world.

Austin: Yeah. Totally.

Janine: So once she's removed from that, and then she starts getting the context for everything else that's going on...

Austin: Yeah.

Janine: It's harder to place that in that original stuff.

Austin: Let's say it's a five step then. So yeah, give me your — and again, do you wanna spend a Personnel point on this? Again, the group dynamic here is like all right, you have, as a group, four Supply points and then one Personnel point. It is up to y'all to decide who gets to spend what, and blah blah blah.

Janine: It's one of those things where like I don't think Thisbe...

Austin: Mm.

Janine: I think Thisbe's nature would be to just work on this quietly and not ask for extra resources.

Austin: Yeah. All right! Then give me your one die, for your — the thing I said it was. What was it? Interface.

Janine: 1d6?

Austin: 1d6. That's a 4, so when you get a 4, 5, or 6 — or, sorry, a 4 or a 5, you advance it by two segments. All right, what's — are you in a bedroom? Are you in a — where are you? Where do you do this? What is like the. [laughs]

Janine: Does Thisbe have a bedroom? I don't —

Austin: I don't know, I'm asking you!

Janine: I don't know what she would do if **[Austin:** I guess you don't —] Broun was like, here's your bedroom.

Austin: I will say, I guess you don't have a bedroom because, as in a previous Forged in the Dark game, y'all don't have the quarters upgrade for your base, which means that you sleep, or rest, or —

Janine: In the garage.

Austin: In a — somewhere other than the FOB, where you are vulnerable.

Janine: We're all under the pool table this season.

Austin: Yep, [laughing] exactly. **[Ali snorts]** But where do you do this sort of research, even? Is this a thing that you do — do you go to the public library? Is there a public library? Is this just in your Palace database? Like, what's the vibe?

Janine: Um, I think the, you know, the first step would be checking what is most accessible, and I feel like given what we do, **[Austin:** Mm-hm.] we would have to have access to some kind of basic information about **[Austin:** Yeah!] the star system?

Austin: Yeah, this stuff is definitely in the thing we've been calling the Palace, which is a combination of like a news service and a kind of an encyclopedia. And you could get into it and try to make that basic chart. And it's like — the thing that I think is kind of interesting here is I'm curious, is this like — you do this thing, you succeeded at this. Does it feel like, good? Does

Thisbe have like an emotional reaction to being like, oh, I have this chart, of all of the farms in the galaxy, or all of the planets [laughs] that have farms in the galaxy?

Janine: No.

Austin: Okay.

Janine: I think — I mean, I think [laughs]... I think the like system for tracking a project is exactly what is going on in Thisbe's mind, of like it's a progress bar.

Austin: [amused] Right. [laughs] Okay.

Janine: And it's like an estimated progress bar, so there's like the little tilde beside it, where it's like approximately 18%, I don't... [Ali laughs]

Austin: [laughs] Right.

Janine: And like, so that's — I mean, the closest thing —

[1:00:00]

Janine: — to satisfaction that she's feeling from that is like, yes, there is progress. I made progress.

Austin: Cool. Um, all right. Broun or Valence. Y'all have an action.

Dre: Um, I know for one of mine I just want to Train to mark an XP.

Austin: Okay. What are you Training?

Dre: Uh, I'm doing my Playbook XP, so I'm not really sure — are you asking like what that looks like?

Austin: Yeah, I'm also — one sec — you can just do Playbook XP, right? Yes, you can.

Dre: Pretty sure you can.

Austin: It's one Attribute or one Playbook XP, and then also because y'all have Prowess Training equipment, you'd actually get two XP in any Prowess skill if you decided to Train Prowess. The Prowess skills, by the way, are Finesse, Prowl, Struggle or Wreck. But if you're working on your Playbook XP, yeah, tell me what it looks like!

Dre: [sighs] You know, I think it probably is just like studying, meditation kinda thing.

Austin: Okay!

Dre: Um. I don't think it looks like anything big or grand, but I think it is just probably more so studying than mediation.

Austin: Is it you using your prognostication tools, which I have forgotten what they looked like, except I remember that it was cool. It was a book, right?

Dre: Yeah, no, it's my religious text.

Austin: Yeah. Yeah yeah yeah. And it's like about opening it and there's a degree of randomness in terms of like what you open to, right? **[Dre: Mm-hm.]** Yeah, okay.

Dre: Yeah.

Austin: Cool. All right, yeah, so you mark that XP. Broun.

Ali: When we're doing our pilot actions, is it like I put a point in Prowness, or do I put a point in Struggle?

Austin: You put a point in Prowness, and then when that bar fills up, you get to put a point into any of the things in that subset.

Ali: Okay, yeah. I'm actually gonna train Resolve?

Austin: Okay.

Ali: [cross] I don't have any Resolve?

Austin: [cross] Yeah, 'cause you have nothing in Resolve right now? **[Ali laughs]** Yeah, fair! Uh, Resolve is Command, Consort, Sway and Interface. So what does Kal'mera Broun do when they Train Resolve?

Ali: Well, it's actually... now that I'm thinking about it, I think that — 'cause the other downtime action that I wanted to take was trying to improve our standing with the Scrivener's Guild?

Austin: Oh, sure!

Ali: So I think it's like a two step process and like just taking on extra work, but it;s like office or like busywork or whatever?

Austin: Yeah.

Ali: I think that all of the Resolve things are really like social, they're social skills.

Austin: Yeah.

Ali: Depending on how you wanna interact with people, so I think like I'm gonna go down to the office and like [**Austin** laughs] help them organize, fucking [laughs].

Austin: Yeah. Yeah yeah yeah.

Ali: Whatever, or do the like non mech stuff. So they both like our faction and also I get more face time with people, as just sort of a way to be like oh, how do I find the — how do I figure out how to interact with people in this new organization that I'm a part of. So.

Austin: Cool! I think that that — do you wanna do both of those right now? [**Ali:** Yeah, yeah!] So do you wanna mark that experience, and then — also, I do like that idea of just like, you do have to train those social skills by putting yourself out there. It is hard. It is not fun. [Ali laughs] Um. Especially — so now, the thing that's gonna be difficult is I think what you're talking about is Schmooze, probably, right? Say what your pilot does to improve relations with a faction. It says faction but I think it probably works with Squad just the same. [Ali: Oh, okay.] And make a fortune roll using an appropriate action. Increase trust according to the result. Um. You can also spend Personnel for +1d to the Schmooze roll, or to increase the result by one level. Also, important, actually important note here is, you do have an ability — your ability, Slippery, also gives you +1d when you Schmooze. So.

Ali: Oh, perfect!

Yeah, so instead of having 0 dice [laughs] for this. You will have. [**Ali** laughs] At least 1. So you start at 1. Do you wanna spend a Personnel to get another one, or do you wanna spend a Personnel to increase your roll — your successful — not your roll by 1, but your success level by 1?

Ali: Oh. Oh. Um. Do we know how many — how many points do we have [**Austin:** [sighs] So —] to mess with right now?

Austin: You have —

Ali: 4.

Austin: 4 — 5. Because you have four plus that floating Personnel point. Or you have a Personnel point for sure, and then you have to decide what those other Supply points are. Which could be either Materiel or Supply, and we need to decide what those are before we finish downtime, basically.

Ali: Okay, cool. Well, I'll use one for now. [**Austin:** Okay.] And then we'll know that one was used for [laughs] for...

Austin: So are you like straight up — well, I'll just pull the 1 out of Personnel, if that makes sense. [**Ali:** Okay, yeah.] You know, we already have that one there. So is that like you show up

with stolen [laughs] cigars and booze, [Ali also laughs] and magazines, or whatever? Contraband you've recovered?

Ali: Y'know, I don't — mm! [laughs]

Austin: Or is it something else, like what is the Personnel point — what is — mechanize this for me a little bit, y'know — or narrativize it.

Ali: Yeah, I don't know that, y'know, I'm showing up to the headquarters with a pack of cigarettes or whatever. [Austin laughs] But I think there's a version of that where... Gosh, what could we have? [stammers] What is — what is the like main base for the Scriveners like?

Austin: For the Scrivener's Guild. [Ali: Yeah.] They're like — I've been imagining it as kind of like a — I mean, first of all, let's talk about Oxbridge just a little bit so you know, in my mind, what I'm thinking about. It's a town towards the — if we go back to our map — the Partizan map. You can see Oxbridge is in Orion territory, kind of on the southern half of the — towards the very southern tip of the Prophet's Sea. It's the area between this big bridge — or this big lake — and the bay. And I imagine that it's a city kind of split into three. On the west side is Brightsky West, on the east side is Brightsky East, and the reason they're called Brightsky is because, one, it's a stolen Hypha word that means wonderful and, two [laughs]... those are the areas where the sun hits. And in the middle is Underbridge, and Underbridge is a place where... there's like a giant bridge that literally connects these two bodies of water together. It's like instead of building a canal, through this city, they built a bridge from one of the docks to the other dock, that is massive. That is like, you know, is as big as we've seen some Divines in this setting before. And that's called the Oxbridge. Because the ox is like the symbol of work in the galaxy. And all throughout the city, one, it's like kind of like... [sighs] not just tropical vibes, but like... kind of like tropical industrial vibes? There's this art that I really love from this tweet, that's "[Backgrounds from Basquash](#)", that is like, you know, palm trees growing out of everything, but also everything's a little run down, and everything's like pastel, but the pastels are fading to reveal brown underneath. And everything is super dense, but also kind of technological, and there's kind of a clear differentiation between various downtown areas, with kind of high rises and skyscrapers, and then — I don't think there's anything in our world, or I don't think there's anything in Oxbridge that is all the way to skyscraper. There are high rises, but there's nothing above 25 or 30 floors, which is pretty high, but we're not talking about like financial district New York, 100-floor buildings, do you know what I mean?

Ali: Yeah.

Austin: And the other half of it is, it's a canal city. It's a tiny canal city. There's like Venice-style canals running through this place, that are all over the place and then especially in Underbridge. And so I imagine that, one, the Scrivener's Guild is probably in, let's say, Brightsky West. And it's in a kind of like... It's like, imagine a bank that's been converted into... It's still a bank, but it [Ali laughs] also has converted part of its back offices into a sort of lounge, where members of the Scrivener's Guild like, do smoke cigars and hang out in fancy outfits and feel like hot shit,

but then in the upper floors is like, dense offices where people are in front of typewriter-type machines or word processors, and are surrounded by files and have, you know, triple paper duplicates. And that vibe — those two vibes, the sort of like posh, like, back room club — not club like a cool jazz club, like a club like a shitty rich person [Ali: Mm-hm.] hang out and smoke cigars club — [Ali laughs] mixes with like the Terry Gilliam's *Brazil*, bureaucracy nightmare. And so the front is like very fancy, but also like scraps of paper, and people running to and fro. You know what it feels like? Is like a hotel lobby. You know that vibe that hotel lobbies get where it's like, some people are here to have fun, but also some people here are like losing it 'cause they're here to work and [Ali: Mm-hm.] they have to keep a bright face on? So like that's the vibe in the kind of front office. And I literally do like the idea of it being a converted old timey bank. You know?

Ali: Yeah.

Austin: — But there is a big vault here. There are like underground vaults here that have both real material goods that are worth a lot of money that they've seized to have control of, and also scraps of paper that are worth even more money, because they have information on it that's important, or they have a contract, or something. Y'know. If we were doing the Blades in the Dark game, this would be a great place to rob! [slight laugh]

Ali: [laughs] Have you seen [Dre laughs] that CVS that's like built into a Chicago... bank, like a really fancy one?

Austin: No, but I'm looking it up right now. [cross] Oh my god! This is incredible.

Ali: [cross] I went there once and it's just — it's amazing. It's amazing.

Austin: It is a Walgreens... This is wild. [Ali makes agreeing noises] There's a vault door! There's just orange juice in there!

Ali: Mm-hm! It's incredible.

Austin: Yeah, this is great.

Ali: Anyway, I love this place — I think that I'm doing something — I think there's something interesting in bringing some of just the like stuff-stuff that's like hard to sell on the market, but that we got from these weird grocery smugglers [laughs].

Austin: Yeah. Yeah yeah yeah. So...

Ali: In terms of being like, yeah, I put some nice — I put some glass Coke bottles in the break room [Austin laughs], 'cause I'm gonna be working there all week anyway, but it's also [Austin: Right.] like a nice gift for the people who are also working there.

Austin: Right.

Ali: Yeah.

Austin: I love that. That's very good.

Ali: Do I have to roll a thing for that?

Austin: You do have to roll a thing, and I'm thinking about it — I'm gonna give you the Schmooze bonus 'cause this is definitely that, but I think this is a four-step clock. I think what you're doing really is a Long-Term Project. **[Ali laughs]** I'm giving you the Schmooze bonus 'cause what you're doing is "say what your pilot does to improve relations with a faction and make a fortune roll using an appropriate action", that is what you're doing, but Schmooze is technically about faction trust, and not about... Squad trust. It's about Orion, and not about the Scrivener's Guild. Right?

Ali: Oh, fair fair fair, okay.

Austin: But, we can kind of hit it in the middle and say it's a four-step Long-Term Project, because that seems right for this sort of thing. You are not trying to find a single **[laughs]** farm somewhere in the galaxy. So I'm gonna add that to your thing here. **[Ali: Sure.]** Which is "improve Scrivener's Guild relationship". Okay! And then yeah, that'd be... Right now you have one die, and again, you could spend a — oh, you said you were, right, so you're gonna spend it to increase the result level by one, right?

Ali: Yeah.

Austin: Okay, cool. Go ahead and... 1d6, then. **[cross]** Or do you have a question?

Ali: **[cross]** So... 1d6, okay. Yeah. I wasn't sure if it was like, Personnel was one die and then I had another one, but...

Austin: You could either roll 2d6, or roll 1d6 and assign the Personnel die to increase the level of effect. **[Ali: Oh, okay.]** It's up to you.

Ali: Then I'll —

Austin: **[stammers]** So it's... You know. Which way do you wanna roll the dice, basically.

Ali: Yeah, I'd rather have the +1 after the fact, I guess? I'm gonna roll one.

Austin: I think so too. Yeah, roll one.

Ali: **[cross]** And that's a 3, which turns into a 4.

Austin: [cross] All right, so that's a 3, but — so — which turns into 4, which means that you advance this clock by 2, I believe.

Ali: Cool.

Austin: Yeah. All right. So that means you're halfway there. Uh. We still have — each of you still has — or Broun, you only have one more, but Valence and Thisbe, you will have two more things you could do here. Do either of you have a thing you wanna do?

Janine: Um, I wanna Train. **[Austin:** Okay.] Just my Playbook.

Austin: Cool. What does that look like? Is this just, when we cut back to Thisbe and she's still...

Janine: [amused] I think she's moving boxes! **[Austin:** Great.] Like honestly.

Austin: Oh, y'know!

Janine: Y'know, her purpose is labor, like I think the thing is like she does her thing and then immediately is like I should do some... you know.

Austin: Some work. Yeah.

Janine: Yeah.

Austin: It's like, unloading those contraband supplies and putting them in —

Janine: A hundred percent.

Austin: Yeah.

Janine: [over **Ali's** laughter] It's organizing them, it's like, y'know, printing out labels and stuff. [laughs]

Austin: Awesome.

Janine: Moving things around.

Austin: Good. Valence?

Dre: I know I want to Schmooze, **[Ali** laughs] and I'm trying to decide who I wanna Schmooze with.

Austin: This is the dilemma, isn't it?

Dre: Yeah. Um, I'm kind of picking between the Oxblood Clan [Mm-hm]... and... [sighs] Maybe this isn't even a Schmooze. But like, I wanna know more about what the deal of the Church of the Resin Heart is.

Austin: Sure.

Dre: So I don't know [cross] if that is a Schmooze, or something else, but...

[cross] That is a Gather Information roll, which is not even a downtime action, really.

Dre: Hm.

Austin: But you can take it! You're allowed to do this, and it won't cost you an action. Gathering Information takes time, but it doesn't take a quote-unquote "activity". I'd say go for it.

Dre: Okay!

Austin: If you wanted to like — I'd say let's start with a Gather Information roll, and if there's something else you wanted to do after that point, we could talk about if there's a Long-Term Project you wanna do, or something else.

Dre: Yeah. Okay.

Austin: So. "When a pilot wants specific information about the game world, the GM will decide what information is common knowledge, or if there's an obstacle to having it"... So I can give you a little bit up top, but then if you want more, basically, you can roll for it.

Dre: Okay.

Austin: In this case, what would be rolling? What do you think?

Dre: Um... So basically what I'm [cross] trying to figure out...

Austin: [cross] Damn! You're good at learning shit!

Dre: Yeah! I'm a religious —

[1:15:00]

Dre: — scholar, Austin. [laughs]

Austin: Yeah, but I didn't know you were a *scholar*! Like.

Dre: Yeah!

Austin: I knew that you knew some shit. [Ali laughs] But I didn't know you had [Dre: Yeah!] 2 in Study and 2 in Survey, shit!

Dre: Basically, my goal here is to figure out how close like the Church of the Resin Heart's beliefs align with the Nobel's.

Austin: Sure.

Dre: As like a potential ally situation.

Austin: Sure! I think that's a thing worth rolling for. Because right now [Dre: Yeah.] what you know about the Church of the Resin Heart, aka the Friends of Gur Sevraq — Gur Sevraq — aka the Disciples of Logos, is pretty broad. You know that they are a quickly — they're a small church that's operating out of the Isles of Logos. They have gained followers fairly quickly. You know that their followers believe that Gur Sevraq, their leader — Gur Sevraq, by the way, I've decided uses both he and they pronouns, he/him and they/them. And they can do miracles... that's at least what his followers believe. [laughs] They also believe that — the group believes that the true God is coming, and they seek to spread the word as far as possible, and also that there is some like — you know that there is some notion of like, they believe in the power of discourse and conversation, and think that — they wanna connect the galaxy. Those are the handful of things you know. But yeah, go ahead and give me — what are you doing to do this? Is this a... Are you doing this socially or are you doing this via the Palace? Are you trying to find less-official information?

Dre: Oh, man. Yeah... 'Cause I think like if I just wanted to like go to Church of Resin Heart services I guess that would be like a [cross] Consort, or something?

Austin: [cross] That's a Consort for me, yeah, definitely.

Dre: But I also kind of like the idea of like digging into these miracles that have happened. [Austin: Yeah.] And like figuring out okay, what really happened here? Like almost comparing eyewitness reports and...

Austin: Yeah. Um. So let's start with this gather Information roll, then. I think that that's [Dre: Okay.] — tell me how you're doing the thing you just said. That sounds like a Consort.

Dre: [stammers] I think it probably starts with a Consort. And I think it is just like going there.

Austin: Okay.

Dre: Especially if they kind of propose themselves as being these people who are about open conversation.

Austin: Yeah. So you're like [cross] taking a short...

Dre: [cross] People interacting with one another.

Austin: Day trip, or like a couple days' trip to Isles of Logos to like see what the deal is, and like [Dre: Yeah.] get the vibe yourself, and talk a little bit. Okay. [Dre: Mm-hm!] Sounds good. So your Consort is 1 — I'm again going to allow this Schmooze bonus — like I don't understand why — I do, I guess, for a — I wouldn't let that Schmooze bonus — mm, you know what, it's Gather Information. This is not the thing about improving relationships. You know what, I'm not gonna let it work here. [cross] So yeah, just —

Dre: [cross] Yeah, yeah. Yeah, that's fine.

Austin: Just 1d6 by default. Again, you can spend... um. Set-up Roll, buh buh buh buh buh. I guess you could spend Stress on this, if you wanted to, actually. Because it is a Gather Information roll and not a...

Dre: Mm. No, I think I'll just roll it straight up.

Austin: Okay. So that is a — what is — a 1d6, then.

Dre: Mm-hm.

Austin: That's a 4.

Dre: Okay, 4.

Austin: Which means you get Limited information — or you get like Standard information. The miracles seem real. Um. [slight laugh] just last weekend, Gur Sevraq — what's a good miracle? Dre, what's a good miracle? You started this miracle — I mean, I guess I introduced the broad idea of the miracle, [Dre: Mm-hm.] but then you were like, oh yeah. Logos —

Dre: [cross] Now there's an ocean [laughs].

Austin: [cross] Now there's an ocean. So what's a good like mid- — like low-scale miracle? Like what's like a good [Dre sighs] localized miracle?

Dre: Mm.

Austin: Is it about like providing — you know. I think it's probably something... I don't want to go into like medical healing right away, or maybe even at all. [Dre: Right. Yeah.] But I... [sighs] There's something about like loaves and fishes that's a fun one, or that style of miracle, that style of like providing more for people.

Dre: Mm-hm.

Austin: What if it's something like... Last week — and this actually ties nicely into your last mission — when Past crashed, there was a shockwave that knocked all of the power out. All the

way out to the Isles of Logos. And it was like a really hot night there or something. And he managed to like, seemingly miraculously, like restart the generator. [Dre: Hm.] In a way that nowhere else in the western half of the continent — or of the moon— like, that happened.

Dre: [cross] Gotcha. Yeah, I'm into that.

Austin: [cross] They were the only people that that happened. So like that is a thing. And there's like footage. Do you know what I mean? I think people are still buzzing about this, even, before the sermon starts. And maybe even — I don't think that he delivers this sermon. In fact — actually, I think that — there's two things. One is like an attendant does an introduction before the sermon happens. And the sermon — and the attendant is the one who is like, we saw first hand the gifts of God, as delivered through the hands of our great prophet. And like does the hype-up for them. And then, when he actually shows up to talk — Gur Sevraq is not here to pat himself on the back on this shit. Instead, Gur Sevraq is all about what is coming up next for them, and you learn that they are about to lead the pilgrimage of the Prophet's Path.

At this point in the year, every year, but especially this year, it is important for the faithful to walk the Prophet's Path. You'll see on the map of Partizan there's this area that's been dotted white, right? That is the Prophet's Path, which I've noted is like an independent region. The reason it's independent is this is theoretically, historical sources say, where the Prophet Logos began their journey after arriving on Partizan? And they arrived on Partizan a thousand years ago, this year. And they arrived, and began walking east through the deserts — really, arriving right where — if you look at the map, there's a point where on the far west it's just barren moon. And that's because that part of the moon, they believe, was not blessed by the gifts of the Prophet Logos, and that as they travelled east, you can see life begin to come into the planet, and then eventually they reached the Isle of Logos, where they do the big miracle and create the sea.

And it is important, as a believer, that you walk the Prophet's Path. And what that means is literally, you have to walk the entire time, even if you're travelling by boat. The boat isn't allowed to move unless everyone on it is moving. And so like it will stop and anchor for people to like rest. But the hope is to do it in the same amount of time it took the Prophet. Which, they have a — they're like oh, it's a week on the boat, [laughs a bit] because the Prophet walked that distance in a week or whatever, and who knows if that's true. You know, this is a thing with religion, is like, does it matter that it's the same, or is what matters that it's a way for people to invoke their faith, or to think about and have this relationship with the divine and blah blah blah. Who knows, but this is the thing that Gur Sevraq is planning for.

And I think during this conversation, Gur Sevraq also raises that this could be very dangerous, because of the recent military action towards the north of the Prophet's Path. And that they're worried about Apostolosian — they're worried about aggression. I don't think that Gur Sevraq ever says the word Apostolosian, but does say aggression. Does say there are forces of violence in the world. Does say that things are volatile, currently, and that while everyone understands that the Prophet Logos gave this world something miraculous, something

unique, they are not believers. They are not Disciples of Logos in the same way. And so, they are like concerned about safety and security. Do you have any other questions, like your sheet actually — everyone's sheet in Beam Saber has like some unique Gather Information suggested question on it. And those aren't like necessary. You don't have to stay on those, but if you wanted to ask another one of those or something like that, I'd be fine with that.

Dre: Hm. I guess the most important question as to what I wanna get out of this is what drives them to do this.

Austin: Sure. You can tell that there is a genuine belief in Gur Sevraq's voice. And you are a people person. [amused] You are an Empath. It's not that you can never be wrong about this, right, but you are pretty good at this, and you don't sense an ulterior motive here. That's not true. You do sense something bigger. But that bigger motive is like... [sighs] It's not that what they're saying is a lie, it's that it's a smaller part of a bigger project. It is important — especially the walking the Prophet's Path thing. It's clear that Gur Sevraq really does value that action, and it probably even comes up that, you know, he's led this walk for the last five years. But. That doesn't mean that there might not also be something else happening here. Or that drives them more generally, especially. For more, you would have to take additional — at this point, you got your Gather Information. Y'know? if you wanted to do a Long-Term Project to begin investigating them more, or to strike up a relationship, or... Y'know. Yeah, I can just give you this, which is like, they would love to buy those two robots from you, or hire you for security.

Dre: Okay!

Austin: That's a mission opportunity for whatever your next mission is, if that's a thing you'd be interested in. Or, if you wanna flip those robots for money. [Ali laughs] That's also a mission. Broun, we haven't gotten to this yet, but you have options with what y'all wanna — what you can do with those robots. One of them is Salvage them for Materiel, but you could also just sell them. And selling them could be its own little mini mission, it's up to y'all what you wanna do with them. But for now you just have them in a warehouse somewhere. [slight laugh] Ah.

Dre: So if I wanted to — so if we don't already have like a established relationship with a faction, would you need to do a Long-Term Project to establish that before you can do a Schmooze?

Austin: So the thing is, again, they are a — I would let you set up the Long-Term Project to work towards getting a +1 relationship with them. Is what I would let you do, [Dre: Okay.] yeah. And I would let the Schmooze [cross] thing too — okay, so then.

Dre: [cross] Yeah, I would like to do that.

Austin: Let's do that — that's your third and final thing, right?

Dre: Um.

Austin: Or no, this is your sec — is that right?

Dre: Yes. Well, are we counting the [cross] Gather Information as one? Okay.

Austin: [cross] No, I'm not. Gather Information is a free action. It's a—so it's your second one.

Dre: Yeah, that's my second one.

Austin: All right, yeah. So go ahead and — again, I think this is a four-step project. And this, again, is definitely Consort, probably. Right?

Dre: Yeah. I agree.

Austin: But this I will let you get the +1 on Schmooze, because is still kind of what you're doing.

Dre: So two dice, this time.

Austin: Two dice.

Dre: Hey! 6!

Austin: A 6! Hell yeah! So a 6 increases it by 3. What's that look like? Is this just continuing to hang around, basically?

Dre: Yeah, and I think at the point where it's a 3 it is probably Valence having like one-on-one conversations with... I mean, other scholars in the church.

Austin: Right.

Dre: Like almost like... comparing notes is weird, [**Austin** laughs] but like I think having philosophical discussions of like, what is their understanding of the nature of God, versus Valence's [cross] understanding of the nature of God.

Austin: [cross] What is Valence's understanding of the nature of God?

Dre: Boy.

Austin: I know it's a big question. But.

Dre: Yeah.

Austin: That's the damn game we're playing, right?

Dre: Right, yeah.

Austin: Or what is the Nobel conception, even, if you wanna go that broad?

Dre: The Nobel conception, yeah, I think the Nobel conception of God is that, you know, there is a divine entity that kind of oversees the universe. I don't know — 'cause I was thinking about this, I think when you think of the big questions about — like stereotypical big questions about God [**Austin:** Mm-hm.] of like, you know, did God make everything? If there is a God, can we have free will? [**Austin:** Mm-hm.] I think the Nobel kinda take an approach of like... the way that we understand God is so outside of our understanding, like what's the point of even trying to answer those questions.

Austin: Okay.

Dre: Because like there's probably plenty — I think the Nobel would tend more towards thinking that we have free will, but also, if we didn't, we really wouldn't have a way of knowing.

Austin: Is that like a recurring kind of theme in the Nobel belief about God, is like... A lack of access to perfect information, but a kind of... But that doesn't mean that we shouldn't act as if X-Y-Z.

Dre: Yeah, and I think it's a lack of access to perfect information not because of God intentionally withholding, but because of their imperfections.

Austin: Gotcha.

[1:30:00]

Austin: That's interesting.

Dre: I sent you that, you know, that weird — not weird. I was actually pretty happy of it. So I'm not gonna call it weird. [**Austin:** Yeah!] That like... I guess fable is almost the best word. 'Cause we were talking, you know, I was thinking like I wanna have an explanation for why Valence wears a wolf mask besides just, I don't know, wolves are cool.

Austin: Wolves are — one, wolves are cool.

Dre: One — wolves are cool! [**Austin:** But.] Two, we have a history of wolves with this podcast [laughs].

Austin: We do.

Dre: [laughing] Three...

Austin: It's true.

Dre: And the story that I ended up writing was basically an explanation that the Nobel at one point thought themselves to be like special and chosen amongst God, like that they were the sheep for God as the shepherd's flock. And that there were wolves outside that they had to

either protect themselves from, overcome, attack, whatever. But then realized that they were wrong, they misunderstood God's intention, and that their role in what God's intention was is that everyone is a wolf. Everyone is part of God's pack. And their role is to grow that pack, not to keep themselves separate from everyone else.

Austin: I will include this thing that you sent me in the episode description, for people to read.

Dre: Sure.

Austin: 'Cause it's really good. Yeah, I like that a lot. And I think that you get kind of complex answers back, right, like... The Disciples of Gur Sevraq believe in a one true God, a monotheistic God. Which is not necessarily what everyone who is Progressive Asterist believes. Some Progressive Asterists believe in like the universe. Some of them just believe that like the Divines are almost gods themselves, and worth worshipping. But in general one of the core beliefs that is across the Progressive Asterism is this idea of the Divines being connected to that divine God, or to that true God. That doesn't come up so often, with the Disciples of Logos, the Church of the Resin Heart. Divines might serve God's purpose, is the way that they might frame it. Or that the Divines might, as all things do, reflect a certain aspect of godliness. But they do seem to think — as a scholar, you can see through a lot of that language as being almost like necessary cover for a different belief system. [cross] Y'know?

Dre: [cross] Yeah. Yeah. We can't just come out and say. That [laughs]...

Austin: Right.

Dre: We don't think the Divines have anything to do...

Austin: Right, like otherwise.

Dre: With divinity.

Austin: Even with the freedom they have by being on the Isles of Logos, heresy can only go so far. Especially as they gain power. Right? There is a cult to Perennial on this island, too, but they don't have shit. [laughs] Y'know what I mean? The Disciples of Logos are Tier 3, right? And so, there's a degree to which like you start to get a little bit bigger, and things end up being dangerous. Y'know? There's a way in which you end up getting attention you don't want [**Dre:** Yeah.] and so, yeah, like they definitely have to dance in that a little bit. [**Dre:** Okay.] So yeah! Cool. And again, that offer is on the table. If you wanted to provide security for them during that walk, that is a next job that could be available for you. And I think that they kind of like — that comes during this week of socializing and hanging out with them and et cetera. Okay. Thisbe, let's go to you. What's your vibe? What are you doin'?

Janine: Um. I don't know if this is a thing that I am supposed to start doing now, or if it's a thing that you gave me intending for it to roll into a future mission.

Austin: Mm-hm.

Janine: And I'm also not sure if it would be Schmooze or if it's a project or something.

Austin: Yeah.

Janine: But I think Thisbe wants to attempt to reach out to Mourningbride.

Austin: Totally! As a reminder for people listening, one of the last things that Cymbidium did was reach out to you and basically ask you to deliver a message to Mourningbride. Mourningbride is a member of one the other [laughs] lesser kind of hidden schools of faith or in this case coven of witches. She is a member of the Sable Court, which is a group of Hyphan witches, Ashen witches, that are on the planet, or on the moon. I think this is again a Long-Term Project to find — you can't just look in a phone book, you know?

Janine: Yeah, that's part of why I was like, [**Austin:** Yeah yeah yeah.] i don't know if I can just fuckin phone her up or what [laughs].

Austin: Yeah yeah, I think this is another Long-Term Project, but I think this an easier one, I think this is a three-step one? [**Janine:** Okay.] Because you have some basic information already. So. Let's set that as a three-step. I like this thing that you did with dashes, to dash out the...

Janine: It's just easier.

Austin: It is, it's good. Um. So, three-step clock — what are you doing to find her? [**Janine** sighs] Also, it's not just finding, this is like "get in contact with"...

Janine: Yeah. Yeah.

Austin: Mourningbride.

Janine: What do we have in the — like... you know, we're [cross] mercenaries, we... what?

Austin: [cross] Oh! Do you know what, though. Wait. You do know. Sorry. She is one of your contacts already. You have —

Janine: Okay, I didn't know if that counted. [**Austin:** Yeah, you have —] She makes me feel weird [laughs].

Austin: Yeah, but that meant you at least have a really general idea of where she is, right. [**Janine:** Yeah.] So maybe it is the case that that is part of why it's only a three-step clock. Is that like.

Janine: Okay.

Austin: You do know that the Sable Court— or at least *she*— is up near Lake Timea in the northeast of the map here, in what is called the Memoria Teardrop, which is this like Columnar-held area with a bunch of mountains and a lake and blah blah blah, and she's up in the forest, far northeast of you. But that gives you a little bit of a range to start poking around in terms of figuring out a way to get in touch with her. At least, so. I think that's fair — I guess the thing is like, if it's a contact, it's a contact, right? I feel like I'd rather just give you the contact. I feel like that's more exciting. [slight laugh] Right?

Janine: Okay. I mean, maybe part of that is like, if Mourningbride catches wind that Thisbe is looking for her [**Austin:** Mm-hm.] in some sense, does she finish bridging that gap?

Austin: Right.

Janine: Or does she wait?

Austin: Right right right. Um. Yeah.

Janine: Mourningbride is she/her, right?

Austin: Mourningbride is she/her. Correct.

Janine: Okay.

Austin: Correct. Correct. Okay! I think this is what we should do. Friends come in all different forms. There are those who are from childhood, current or former lovers, tied together by blood, and many others. A pilot's ally is not defined by the nature of their connection, but by the fact that the pilot can rely on them. Once per mission, a pilot can declare they quote "have an old friend who can help". Describe the scenario of when you last saw them, which, as I remember, that was you were delivering stuff there, [**Janine:** Yes.] and there was that uncanny experience?

Janine: Mm-hm.

Austin: And then, make an action roll appropriate for those circumstances, for that last time. Though at this point, I guess, it's almost as if you've done that already, because they're there as an uncanny ally, right? Or an uncanny contact, let's say. In fact, let's mark both the rival and the ally colors, 'cause who the fuck knows, right? [**Janine:** Mm-hm.] That's kind of part of the vibe. Yeah, I wanna say you just know how to get in contact. In fact. Janine. How would someone get in contact with Mourningbride? A witch of the wilds, if not the witch of the wilds, certainly.

Janine: Uh. [sighs] I mean, I can give you a woo-woo answer. I don't know if I have like a...

Austin: Excuse me?

Janine: Like a solid lore answer.

Austin: Uh-huh?

Janine: Here's a thought. How did Cymbidium communicate to Thisbe, like materially, what was that communication. Is that a thing —

Austin: That — go ahead.

Janine: No, you go ahead.

Austin: No, you go ahead.

Janine: [laughing] No, you!

Austin: I wanna know what you — what was on the tip of your tongue?

Janine: I was gonna say, is that a like a Chorus Bond-y thing?

Austin: Yes. A hundred percent. Or... I did note that Cymbidium had very fancy antlers. Right?

Janine: Mm-hm.

Austin: And Cymbidium had — this is like giving you a thing — yes. Yes. It was a Chorus Bond-y thing, Cymbidium learned about the Chorus Bond, via the Divine Past. Cymbidium was designated as Past's elect, and part of the knowledge that Past had that most people don't is that the Hypha used to have these things called the Chorus Bond, which were like kind of — not engraved, but what's the word I'm looking for? Inlaid?

Janine: Mm-hm.

Austin: Or something? Antlers that let them do kind of space psychic shit. They are what we've called Strati in the past, once they have access to the Chorus Bond. And so, I think it was like — Cymbidium was a very adept Elect. But was not... What did we call the people who did the Chorus Bond work — Chorus Bonders, or something like that? Anyway. He didn't know how to do that well, and didn't have the equipment and didn't have an expert to do it, but did have a limited version of it that he was able to do inside of Past, like with what was available inside of the Divine Past, where he lived. The other half of it is, you have shit in your coild ram horns. Which is what allowed you to hear that.

Janine: Mm-hm.

Austin: Y'know. He had enough to sense you, but you were the one who made that connection, because of your — whatever the fuck shit is in your weird — I almost said ears. Your horns, whatever they're called.

Janine: Yeah. I think they're just called horns, I don't think we called them anything special.

Austin: They're called horns, yeah. Got it. [laughs] So yeah!

Janine: Okay. It's tough, 'cause we're far away [laughs].

Austin: You are far away. And being like all right, peace — I mean, for what it's worth, y'all were also far away from the Isles of Logos, but it was interesting enough for me to be like yeah, let's let Dre go there and let Valence have that experience. You're very far from Lake Timea [laughs].

Janine: Other end of the map, basically.

Austin: Well, you're at Oxbridge now, so you're on the eastern hemisphere. **[Janine:** Oh, okay.] But it's certainly...far. There certainly is a mountain range, yeah, between y'all. [inaudible]

Janine: Right, okay.

Austin: [cross] I'll leave that box.

Janine: [cross] So actually, this is not nearly as bad I thought it was.

Austin: No, yeah, it's manageable.

Janine: Honestly, kind of equidistant to the Isle of Logos.

Austin: The difference is the Isle of Logos is...

Janine: Is by the water.

Austin: Is by water, and is a destination, whereas the Lake Timea is a place everyone thinks is haunted and creepy. **[Janine laughs]** [laughs] There's not like — [cross] I'm sure there's —

Janine: [cross] Yeah, but I'm a robot, so.

Austin: You are! You are, but it's far.

Janine: Yeah...

Austin: I'm gonna see if this map is correct.

Janine: But also. There's a bunch of mountains.

Austin: Yes.

Janine: What if a radio tower could climb a mountain? And talk to a telepath?

Austin: Right, so you could go out to the mountains and find like a high point and try to broadcast towards Lake Timea.

Janine: Yeah, the reason I was asking what Cymbidium did was 'cause I was wondering like is that a thing that Thisbe would have been like, can I do? Can I do that?

Austin: Mm. Mm-hm. Mm-hm.

Janine: And the answer's like, probably not really. But like kinda? [**Austin:** Yeah.] Like she's got stuff. [Austin: Yeah.] I think Mow also has stuff, doesn't he have some sort of fuckin...

Austin: Yeah, Mow specifically has —

Janine: Business — yeah.

Austin: Has a makeshift psionic amplifier. So. What Mow does not necessarily have is, I would say that this is probably — eh. It's Interface or it's Scan. If you're using Mow it's probably Scan — like Scan is more like receptive than send-y out-y. Maybe it would be Manipulate. I don't know. Regardless, you could do it. You could take a shot at this. But setting up a meeting and doing all that would be a larger thing. Do you know what I mean? [**Janine:** Yeah.] That would be a scene we would have to do, and we probably shouldn't do this downtime. [Janine: Mm-hm.] That would either need to be... if not a mission, at least a thing that the team is all doing together, you know what I mean?

Janine: Yeah.

Austin: But actually, I wouldn't mind leaving this session with a few possibilities here. So let's just say you can just do this thing. Let's make a roll to see how the conversation — what the tone of the conversation is, more than the... Or let's just have the conversation. If that makes sense. Instead of — and let's say this costs you an action, 'cause what you're now describing is a big deal, like you're leaving [laughs] — you are leaving to go sit up on a mountain and broadcast a psychic airwave — a semi-psychic — but that's the thing, is like, is it psychic or are you using technology and blah blah blah. So yeah, let's say you're doing that thing, and that will take your last action to do this.

Janine: Mm-hm.

Austin: What sort of message do you send out?

Janine: [sighs] Um. I think the message is just.

[as **Thisbe**]: Operant Cymbidium left a message for Operant Mourningbride.

Janine: [cross] It's like — I think it's like —

Austin: [cross] And it's just like that over and over into the night?

Janine: It is like an answering machine — it's [laughs] — Thisbe is like sending a text saying like, [smooth answering machine voice] "You have one missed call."

Austin: [laughs] That's really good.

Janine: [same voice] "Please call into your voicemail."

Austin: Right, exactly. Just like, you ever drive through the mountains at night and see those big radio towers that are blinking red? You know what I mean, that have a big red light in the distance? It's that, but it's a person on a big —

Janine: Yeah, exactly! [**Austin:** Big robot.] It's that, except it is a big farm gorilla. [Austin: Uh-huh.] And on top of the farm gorilla is like a ungulate woman with big thighs and giant watch springs for horns, [Austin: [amused] Uh-huh.] and she just has her face tilted up to the sky.

Austin: [amused] Right.

Janine: And is just like pinging softly, or something [laughs] like.

Austin: Yeah. Lit by the giant — gas giant behind you that is like bright — yeah. Great.

Janine: And there's someone just driving by in a Ford like, what the fuck.

Austin: What the fuck is going, oh god. 'Cause this is like the — this is probably the Pique... You're in the Pique Ridge, P-I-Q-U-E, which is controlled by Stel Nideo, and there's just like a lot of abandoned — or not abandoned but like un-... you know, -colonized or un-settled, let's say, mountains here. And so like there are roads going up towards Pique City.

[1:45:00]

Austin: And yeah, definitely just like people — someone in a truck, a truck driver who's like carrying groceries from the farms of Orion up towards Pique City, and just like, "All right. Yeah. Nideo's always up to some shit. [**Janine** laughs] I don't know what this bullshit is, but I guess they got some sorta gorilla god now, who knows." [Janine laughs again] Um. Yeah. God, can you give me — give me a fortune roll! Just give me a 1d... ah, what is... do do do do do, what Tier are they? I think they're Tier 2. Tier 2, give me 2d6. Just flat.

Janine: [quiet] That's a 3.

Austin: That's a 2 and a 1.

Janine: [quiet] 2 and a 1.

Austin: A 2 and a 1. Good job. I think all you get is,

[as **Mourningbride**]: You already know where I am.

Austin: And it's like a slap, like it arrives — like you're sending this back, and you have to send it — you send it for like three hours or something, and then it's as if all of that outward energy, all of the wavelengths that you've been sent out, have been collected and like spat back out back at you.

Janine: She put me on read, basically.

Austin: Yeah. Basically. Yeah. And then was like, you know, three hours later, was like “okay, question mark”! [**Ali** and **Janine** laugh] Um. And so, yeah. If you wanna deliver this message, it will mean going to Lake Timea, in person. But that's a thing you could do! Potential mission number two! [snorts] Who's left? Broun?

Ali: [cross] I have an action.

Austin: [cross] I need one more thing. Yeah.

Ali: I'm actually a little curious about our next potential mission, because I'm torn between salvaging or making something?

Austin: Sure.

Ali: Where Salvage is like, we take apart those things and I sell them off, and then we have like a chunk of Supply points.

Austin: Yeah.

Ali: Or making a Repairapede, [**Austin**: Ooh.] [amused] which is a Tier 3 drone. A cat-sized drone able to use a variety of tools.

Austin: Huh.

Janine: Why is it called a Repairapede?

Austin: [smug] Oh, you know why.

Janine: It's a cat-sized robot centipede that repairs things?

Austin: I think it is.

Ali: Yeah.

Dre: Thanks, I hate it.

[**Ali** laughs]

Janine: Cat-sized vertically or cat-sized horizontally? Like, is it — foot-to-shoulder as tall as a cat, but longer? Or is it all compressed into that same space, so it'd have very very narrow, weird segments and be very thick, [laughing] like a very thick centipede?

Austin: ...Y'know!

Ali: Well, it doesn't have to be centipede-shaped. [slight laugh]

Austin: [doubtful] Mm!

Ali: This could just be like a roomba situation.

Austin: [cross] We'd have to find a different name.

Janine: [cross] Could be a cat-shaped centipede with like a bunch of different little cat legs. [Ali laughs]

Austin: It could be that — I think we would have to find a new name for it, [Ali: Sure.] that isn't Repairapede. [Ali: Yeah.] but I believe in our ability to do that. [slight laugh]

Janine: [as Ali laughs] Repairabee? And it's like a cat-sized bee?

Austin: Aw!

Ali: Yeah. [cross] That's also...

Austin: [cross] And it like flies around?

Ali: Right, agile and able to be...

Austin: Yeah!

Ali: Moved, yeah.

Janine: Centipede's pretty agile, too, I dunno...

[Ali laughs]

Austin: Ah, that's true.

Ali: [uncomfortable] Ehh.

Austin: That's true. I don't like it, though. [slight laugh] Um. Yeah, I feel like... [louder] So yeah, you could Salvage it and make a roll and be like [snaps fingers] boom, you know what, let's turn one of these into between 1 and 5 Supply points. I would let you do that and still have one to do Salvage to if you wanted to do that either by pushing yourself and taking an additional long — I

think you push yourself to do another longtime — or another downtime action. Or by just doing it again next downtime, you know what I mean, I wouldn't...

Ali: Okay, yeah.

Austin: ...make one roll for each of those things. The other half of it is you could instead be like oh, let's just do a Long-Term Project where I'm like going around trying to find a good buyer, here? **[Ali:** Mm-hm.] Or, you could take the mission to sell them, at which point we could talk about who would be willing to buy them, and that could like a very light mission, or it could be a part of a larger mission. It could align with another mission you're doing, it could be something we do in kind of free play in another recording, you know what I mean? Like, hey, I found a buyer up in Columnar territory, and while we're up there, we're gonna do this mission that is about delivering a message to — Mourningbride, you know, or whatever it is.

Ali: Right, yeah.

Austin: I'm really open. This is a thing that's not ever been true, maybe, but like, I don't know what your next mission is! **[Ali laughs]** You fuckin tell me.

Ali: Yeah.

Austin: You know?

Ali: I do... like the narrative aspect of us being able to be like, well, it's special that we have these, and it's special that they're intact, **[Austin:** Yeah.] and that's kind of like a rare **[Austin:** Totally.] thing to be able to sell somebody that like having to go find someone and making a big thing of it sounds fun, to me?

Austin: Yeah, totally.

Ali: [laughing] But. [laughs] We're a group here—

Austin: Yeah, I will say—

Ali: —We can make this, yeah.

Austin: That's the thing is like this is a group decision, right, and so what it sounds like is on the table for the next session is going to — it's what Dre's investigated — sorry, it's what Valence has investigated, it's what Thisbe has investigated, and more broadly, it's a third potential buyer, or a second potential buyer, I guess, right. So, Valence, you've made contact with the Church of the Resin Heart, aka the Disciples of Logos. They are about to walk to Prophet's Path, and would love some — they would love some support with that, some defensive support. That could be a fun mission. Being their escorts while they do that, and also they would love to buy these mechs from you. Like, they have a security team. That security team does not have, you know, many robots. Because they're Tier 3, I bet they have a couple. but they're probably really

old, really beat-down. They're certainly not like Apostolosian Troop units, which would be well-maintained, well-taken care of. And maybe even communicate some degree of like social camouflage while walking the Prophet's Path, because they are not Stel Kesh shit, you know? They wouldn't look like they're Stel Kesh, or independent, or some sort of militia — or, I don't know, maybe a bad engagement roll would — I would leave on the table a bad Engagement roll in which people thought "those are stolen [laughs] from Stel Apostolos, fuck you!" The other half could be that we roll for you to find a potential buyer for those mechs, or for one of them, up in Columnar. I could definitely generate on the spot something interesting there. And then the mission there could be that sale as like a light early thing, and then going into the main mission, which would be about going to the memoria — or the Lake Timea, finding the Sable Court, and delivering that message. But that would have to be something it sounds like Thisbe would have to bring up as a thing that she wants to do, right? And I'm curious — really I just wanted to put all the cards on the table — or, third, we could just find a third more interesting buyer. Y'all could do anything. Like you could look at the map, you could look at your factions. At the end of the day, you could be like, uh, we just wanna take another mission assigned to us by our dispatcher, and that would also be acceptable. But it's up to y'all, in this regard. And I'd love to hear in-character you talk about what's next for you. Is there a meeting room? Where do you decide things? [slight laugh]

Janine: On top of the pool table!

Austin: On top of the pool table, right. [laughs]

Janine: There should be a meeting room, right? Like there should be a room that was like originally maybe [sighs]... I don't know why a lighthouse would have a pump, but like, I am kind of imagining it as being like a room where there is some sort of weird big old machine thing that's not actually used anymore, but there's like **[Austin: Mm.]** a table beside — like, you know, it's too much trouble to get out of there, so you just kinda like leave.

Austin: When you say a pump, you mean like a water pump, or like ...

Janine: Yeah.

Austin: Like a big, cylindrical...?

Janine: Yeah.

Austin: Yeah yeah yeah. All right, that's fine.

Janine: Some sort of weird thing — I don't know, that's just an idea.

Ali: I guess if you needed to like bring water to the top of the tower, you would need a big pump for it.

Austin: True.

Dre: True.

Austin: That's true.

Ali: [laughs quietly] I got you there. Um.

[**Janine** and **Austin** chuckle]

Austin: So what kicks off this conversation?

Ali: Is there like an aspect of us sort of needing to go through like internal books, you know?

Austin: Oh, yeah. Uh-huh, like your like inventory and like whatever your monthly profits and losses are, you goin over your P&L sheet and bein like, all right, well... [**Ali** laughs] [**Dre** laughs]

Ali: You're so mean to me [laughs].

Austin: Wait, why?! Why was that mean to you?

Ali: [laughing] 'Cause... the thought of these three characters being like yeah, we have to go over our P&L this [laughs]...

Austin: It's funny, it's great! [**Janine**, **Ali**, **Dre** laugh] You spent your whole life working for a fuckin arms manufacturer that definitely did things that way! [**Ali** keeps laughing] I love it, also. This is not a drag.

Ali: No, and you're right, so it's fine. [**Austin** laughs loudly] I was just being immediately like, meh.

Austin: Yeah, uh-huh, I got you. Mm-hm.

[**Ali**'s laughter trails off]

Janine: Also, for what it's worth, I don't think — Thisbe wouldn't have just walked off to a mountain and not told anyone first exactly what she was doing.

Austin: Oh, okay, that's interesting.

Janine: Like, a hundred percent, I... I could maybe see a point in this story where that would be different, but like right now, I don't even think she still fully sees herself — I don't think she sees herself as part of the team in the way the others do.

Austin: Mm-hm.

Janine: So I think to her [**Dre:** Hm!] it was like well, you need to sign yourself out, obviously. [All laugh] [cross] You need to — you know...

Austin: [cross] That's so much!

Ali: [cross] Aw!

Austin: Oh, buddy.

Janine: They need to know where you are in case they need to move some boxes, and.

Austin: Right, uh-huh.

Dre: Mm-hm.

Janine: You know, what time you're signing out, what time you're gonna sign back in, and you leave your driver's license [laughs] or whatever...

Austin: [laughs] Oh...

Ali: Um. Well then, yeah! I think in that case there's like an aspect of being like...

[as **Broun**]: So how'd the mountain go?

Janine [as **Thisbe**]: Operant Mourningbride replied tersely.

Broun: Oh.

Thisbe: She requested a meeting.

Broun: Oh!

Dre [as **Valence**]: Oh! Where are you gonna go?

Thisbe: I believe she — I believe Operant Mourningbride would like to meet...in the forest.

[**Broun** snorts]

Valence: But... which forest?

[**Ali** and **Austin** laugh]

Thisbe: The forest by Lake Timea where Operant Mourningbride resides.

Broun: Oh. That's out there.

Thisbe: It is somewhat far.

Broun: [sighs and buzzes lips] Is this like.

[Dre laughs]

Important to you?

[pause]

Dre: Oof.

Austin: [cackles] Ooh! It's wonderful. I love it.

Thisbe: Operant Cymbidium requested, before *dying*, that this message be conveyed? I do not believe I should... shirk.

Broun: No shirking! Got it. Uh.

Austin: My favorite Fortnite dance, the shirk...

Thisbe: Would Op—...

[Ali laughs loudly]

Thisbe: If Operant Broun requests that I shirk, then I will shirk.

Broun: Oh! No, no no — no, no no no. No. I'm asking you!

Valence: I don't think anyone here wants to request you to shirk.

Broun: Yeah, no. Yeah, if it's that — you know, if it's a big deal. We don't all have to — I mean, I'd be willing to go there with you, if you needed.

Valence: I think if it's important to Thisbe, we should go.

Thisbe: If you are concerned about the haunted forest, hauntings are not real.

Broun: I... was not. Concerned about being haunted. Um.

Valence: Now I'm more interested.

[mic noises]

Broun: [sighs] Okay. When do you wanna go? Is there a bus that goes out there, or what's the... [sighs again]...

[Ali is laughing]

Dre: I think Valence just like cocks their head to the side.

Austin: Ah...

Dre: And is very not sure if that's a joke or serious [laughs].

Thisbe: I do not have access to the bus schedule for Lake Timea.

[Janine laughs]

[Ali wheezes into a laugh]

[Austin sighs deeply]

Dre: Same head cocked, but now [laughing] looking at Thisbe.

[quiet laughter]

Austin: All right! [Ali laughs] Uh. I guess, is this the point at which it pops in your head, Broun, this like, [clicks tongue] "I bet I can find someone up there who can buy these fuckin mechs off me, and I bet they'd pay to move them."

Ali: [laughs] Yeah!

Austin: [cross] Do you know what I mean, like.

Ali: [cross] Go on the old...yeah, the old digital Craigslist and be like, delivery fee.

Austin: Right, exactly. [cross] A hundred percent.

Ali: [cross] I'll travel to you.

Austin: Yeah! Let me look at my faction sheet. This is why I have a faction sheet, to be like, huh. Who in Columnar would buy these from you? Actually, first, let's look at — let me see, do any of you know anyone from there, let's see.

Janine: You should see that big goat head.

Austin: What?

Dre: [cross] So, I mean, this —

Austin: [cross] Wait, what??

Dre: At this point, it —

Austin: [cross] Who has a big goat head?

Janine: [cross] The goat head?

Dre: Wha?

Janine: The big goat head?

Dre: Yeah...

Janine: Columnar's big goat head?

Austin: Ah —

Ali: On the lion.

Janine: Blue eyes mean run away, [**Austin** and **Dre:** Ohhh!] purple eyes mean get close.

Dre: Oh!

Austin: I didn't understand that you were looking at the map.

Dre: Hey, I get that joke.

[**Janine** laughs]

Austin: I don't, I'm not that far yet. Damn.

Dre: That's a good one, Janine.

[**Janine** laughs]

[**Austin** sighs and laughs]

Dre: So at this point, it's not an option for us to like just sell the mechs to the Prophet's Path [cross] and then go, it's kinda either-or?

Austin: [cross] Oh, yeah! You could — you could make that sale. You could make that sale.

Dre: Okay.

Austin: I would let you make that sale. That would be, um... God. it would be... [sighs] It's interesting, 'cause there's so many different ways we could do this, right? You know what? I know exactly the thing that this could be. And that could help pay for the situation, too. I forget what it's called, but there's a way to basically be like, oh, let's just do this as like a set-up roll, or

like as like a pr... As if to be like — okay, let's say you were doing a mission that was like about going to...

[2:00:00]

Austin: Break into a place, and the way you needed to break into the place was to get a special keycard, but you don't wanna play the whole game, or the whole mission of going to get that special keycard, you could just do a quick abstract roll for it, and you could do that. But maybe what I'll say — maybe the way to do it abstractly, if you want to, is for it to be a Salvage roll where you're not rolling Salvage, and instead you're rolling like Consort or Sway, as like a salesperson? And then I would give you a benefit, because — I would give you one level higher for the mechs, because — one, I'd let you roll it twice, 'cause you're — [doubtful] mm! Yeah. I would let you roll it — I would double whatever your roll is, 'cause you're selling two of them. And then because they're complete I'd give you one level higher than what they are, which is less than if you made it a full mission, maybe, but... But I would — you know, making it quick like this, you'd still get more than you would normally get from just salvaging them. And Broun still has their action. Like Broun didn't take that final action, right?

Dre: Sure. [cross] I also still have my third one, too.

Austin: [cross] Oh, you still have yours? Okay. Damn. Three's a lot.

Dre: But so I think Valence brings that up in this conversation, is like,

[as **Valence**]: Okay, well, it sounds like we're gonna head there, but before we go, I think I've got a lead on someone who might be interested in buying those Troops off of us.

Ali [as **Broun**]: Oh, yeah?

Valence: Um, the Church of the Resin Heart is about to embark on their journey rewalking the Prophet's Path, and—

Broun: That's not, um —

Valence: They wouldn't mind —

Broun: Those aren't numbers that you're saying.

Austin: Damn!

Valence: [weakly] Okay, well, I didn't —

[**Ali** laughs]

Janine: Wow!

Austin: It's like that, out here!

[**Valence** sighs loudly]

Broun: I mean, are they —

Valence: I mean, I didn't —

Broun: Is this more tithes?

[**Austin** laughs quietly]

Valence: Is this more what?

Broun: Tithes. We had that whole bit?

Valence: Oh. I thought you said tides, 'cause they're an island, but.

Broun: [laughs] Oh, that's — that's also another joke I coulda said. Good job!

[**Dre** and **Austin** laugh in amazement]

Valence: I mean, you know, I didn't bring a pamphlet, and try to sell them. They just expressed an interest.

Broun: Well...

Valence: I'm not gonna try and bargain with them, without bringin it to the group!

Broun: Well, this isn't —

Valence: I'm terrible at that sort of thing!

Broun: We're not donating them!

Austin: [amused] Y—...

Valence: They're not asking us to donate! [laughs]

Janine [as **Thisbe**]: Are these units not of use to us?

Valence: I mean, I can't fly one, and — no offense, Thisbe, but you can't really fit in one.

Broun: They're not of any use to us sitting in a warehouse.

Valence: [slowly] Yeah, so we could sell them, and make some money, and, seemingly, some good people will feel more safe as they practice their religion.

Thisbe: I understand.

Broun: Sounds like a win-win, yeah, sure.

Austin: You wanna just do that in a more abstract sense, [Ali laughs quietly] and someone roll Consort or Sway? Or, I guess Command — no, Command is not it. Command ain't it.

Janine: "Buy these robots!"

[quiet laughter from all]

Austin: "Buy them!"

[laughter]

Dre: "This is a great deal, you can't turn down these robots!"

Austin: Ah...

Dre: "Buy it now, and I'ma throw in a Xbox One!"

Austin: [laughs] "Inside the Troop! You can be gamin while you're out there in the field!"

Dre: [cross] Yo, dog!

Austin: [cross] Yeah. Um. You have a 1 in Consort, Valence. [Dre: Yeah.] [amused] That's the highest Consort, I think, in this crew.

Dre: Mm-hm! Yeah, and I feel fine using my last action to do this, unless somebody else feels very strongly that they would rather make the roll.

Ali: Uh, I'm good.

Austin: So I'm gonna say that this is like Salvage, but instead of rolling Engineer, you'll be rolling Consort, and, because they're selling them whole, you're gonna get one extra — like one level up on whatever you roll here — but not a critical. Critical — you're not gonna get a — if you roll a 6, I'll give you a bonus 1 Supply point, but I'm not gonna bring you up to 5. Do you know what I mean?

Dre: Gotcha. Sure.

Austin: So go ahead and give me — and I'm gonna double whatever you roll anyway, 'cause you're selling two of these fuckin things. All right! That's a 3, which traditionally would have been

1 Supply point, but at 4 or 5, it is 2, and I'll double that, for 4! So take 4 more Supply points. So that means, total, you are now sitting on 8 Supply points, total. We need to now decide what those are, or I guess, right now, Broun, you still have one final action, before we commit [**Ali**: Mm-hm.] and end downtime. What do you wanna do? Do you wanna build something, but we can do it off-mic?

Ali: Yeah, I guess I should think on it more if there's something unique I wanna build, just because that's gonna be a long time anyway. I'm afraid [**Austin**: Yeah.] I'm gonna run into the thing of like, I go on a mission and I think, oh, it'd be great if I had this thing. And then I — [**Austin**: And then —] It's, you know, four weeks before I...

Austin: Right. The thing that's difficult is — so the way that Manufacturing works is that you would roll Engineer, and then the quality that you would need to get is a Tier 3, and the way it works is... Project quality level is equal to the Squad's Tier — which is 0. And then that's adjusted by the result. 1-3 is -1, 4-5 is no change, 6 is +1, a crit is +2. If you have the Workshop upgrade, it's +1, so that's good. Can you spend anything to make it better? Yes, Materiel can be spent to increase the quality level of a Manufactured item at a rate of 1 for 1. So, you could totally do this in a single action. This is not a Long-Term Project. You could totally build this right now — it would just end up costing you some material, but you're sitting on a bunch of points right now.

Ali: Okay, yeah. Yeah, I might as well. Do you want me to just roll this?

Austin: Yeah, so it's 2d6, to start. So that's your Engineer, right?

Ali: Mm. 5?

Austin: That's a 5, which means that... On a 4 or 5, it makes no change, so right now you're at Tier 1, you need to spend 2 Materiel to finish making it. So you wanna say that you did that?

Ali: Yeah, we have, what, 5 or 6 points?

Austin: You have a total of 8 Supply points, which you have not [**Ali**: Oh, okay.] decided what those are yet, so let's say 2 of them were Materiel, and now you have 6 left. Tell me — this is the cat. Or is it the bee? This is the repair bee — what, did we have a name? Repairabee?

Janine: That wasn't serious [slight laugh].

Austin: Oh, was that not serious?

Janine: It was not serious, no [laughs]!

Ali: The like book description is, "a cat sized drone able to use a variety of tools".

Austin: Yeah.

Ali: Let me think for a second what that actually is. Besides just being a cool thing. Um.

Austin: It'll be a thing that... gives you a bonus on any time you're trying to repair stuff, or like.

[**Ali:** Mm-hm.] I'll think about what that actually means in play. The biggest thing is just fictionally, think about all the times having a drone around who can help carry shit, or like help you break into something or help you repair something, y'know.

Ali: Right.

Austin: You know, it would be the equivalent of a [sigh] fine repair tools, that carry themselves around. You know?

Ali: Yeah. That makes sense.

Austin: And do stuff automatically, or that you can like program to do stuff, or whatever. it's a droid, right? What you've built is a droid.

Ali: Right.

Austin: So, you know what, here's what I'm gonna say, Ali. [**Ali** laughs] I want you to love this droid. [**Ali** laughs louder] So I think you should take real-life downtime to dream up your dream repair droid.

Ali: Yeah. [**Austin:** I'll note —] Yeah, I need some droid time, um.

Austin: You need some droid time, there's an entire system in this game of upgrading stuff, this could be a platform. Like, R2D2 didn't start knowing how to do all that shit. [**Ali:** Right. Yeah.] R2D2 just used to roll around, and then was slowly improved, so. If you wanna have an R2D2, or a BT-whatever, or a BB-8. So yeah, let's sleep on what this [cross] droid looks like.

Ali: [cross] Yeah. Yeah, I'll do some droid time. Make some [inaudible].

Austin: You take some droid time.

Ali: Yeah...

Austin: Make some — yeah. Mm-hm! [**Ali** laughs loudly] No one knows what that means, Ali! [more laughter] Ah... Um, and it sounds like our next mission will be — it's really good you sold those mechs, because like, you're not gonna get paid for this next mission, unless... Mourningbride decides like, here's some cash in my pocket. Just as a note, the way that missions do work is that you get paid a base level based on the like.

[MUSIC - "TANAGER. PERFECT. TOUCHPAPER." starts]

Uh, how difficult the objective was or how difficult the like "target" quote-unquote was. But working with an independent faction, which is what this would definitely be — this does not

come in through your dispatcher, you know. They just don't have money to give you for delivering messages or whatever, or if they do it's like a tiny amount. So it's good you just made all this money [laughs] by flipping these robots. Because otherwise, it, eh, would not have been great.

[MUSIC plays out]

[2:11:32 - end]