

Twilight Mirage 57: The Siege of the Lineage Brighton Pt. 1

Transcriber: Lu

[SONG "The Notion" STARTS PLAYING]

AUSTIN: An excerpt from the journal of Kent Brighton, scion of the finest lineage of the Rogue Wave.

AUSTIN (as Kent): When I was a boy I spent summers on the brigantine of my favourite aunt, Mathilde. By day I learned how to mind the cool touch of the ship's inversion engine, and how to turn away brigands and thieves with a blade. By night, my time was split between my passion, poetry of course, and the drinking games the crew swore were key to my development as a would-be Captain. As you might imagine, all of these pursuits were dangerous, but none were as treacherous as the sea itself. It is as my aunt always said; the Moons control the tides, but it is the water, which bruises.

Which is why I must admit, fair journal, that this last month of battle on sea and in ether has been trying. It hasn't been the machines of war that our foes bring forth - in fact, their drill-boats and crank baits, their impossible cannonade technique, and their so called 'spear gun', however fierce, are more interesting than terrifying. Nor have the politics fatigued me; the arrival of this so-called Profit has given the Herringbone Flotilla and their allies in Advent an opening to attack us, but, as the diplomatic seas shifted in the breeze, we Brightons are poised to expand our influence, into new ports.

No, it is the sea itself, the water here on planet, the dense fogs above, which drains me so. I can predict the tacking of an enemy vessel, I can anticipate the burying of adverse obligations in the footnotes of a treaty, but the waters of Brighton, and the clouds of the Mirage move in ways unpredictable. There is no constellation to follow; the tides now move, not at the whims of gravity, but of some unknown will. How could anyone explore this alone?

And this, dearest journal of mine, is why I am grateful, for friends like The Notion. For Echo Reverie. For Even Gardner. For Gig Kep-hart. These, are my guiding stars. My most reliable navigators. And my solid anchors. Those who have kept me, from drifting away.

[SONG "The Notion" CONTINUES TILL THE END]

AUSTIN: Welcome to Friends at the Table, an actual play podcast focused on critical worldbuilding, smart characterization, and fun interaction between good friends! I your host Austin Walker, and you can find me on Twitter @Austin_Walker. Today we're continuing our game of Scum & Villainy by Stras Acimovic and John LeBoeuf-Little, a hack of Blades in the Dark, by John Harper. My goals today are to convey the fictional world honestly, to bring the Twilight Mirage to life, to make everything cool, weird and touchable, and to play to find out what happens. Joining me today, Andrew Lee Swan.

DRE: Hey, you can find me on Twitter @Swandre3000.

AUSTIN: Keith J. Carberry.

KEITH: Hi, you can find me on Twitter @KeithJCarberry, you can find the let's plays that I do at youtube.com/runbutton.

AUSTIN: And Sylvia¹ Clare.

SYLVIA: Hey, you can find me on Twitter @captaintrash, and you can find the other shows that I do on there @emojidrome and @VGChooChoo

AUSTIN: VGChooChoo! There you go.

SYLVIA: Uh-huh. That's the- that's the Twitter name...

AUSTIN: That's the Twitter name, Videogame Choo Choo is the name of the site, right?

SYLVIA: Yeah. I figured- I never plug the Twitter on here, and I should 'cause it's like "Hey. Look at all the stuff we do!" Y'know?

AUSTIN: Uh-huh!

DRE: Can I say- I was on planes this weekend and I listened to several episodes of Emojidrome, finally.

AUSTIN: Hell yeah!

DRE: And it is *fucking* excellent!

SYLVIA: Thank you! [AUSTIN laughs] It's been- it's been very fun, and also-

DRE: I was trying to explain to my partner why I was laughing- like, during a flight- and it was like "Okay, so it's my friend, and they're talking about emojis with one of their friends, and-" I did a bad job selling it but everyone should listen to Emojidrome. [AUSTIN cackles]

KEITH: It's- have you ever noticed how some of the emoji are a little weird? [everyone laughs]

SYLVIA: Hey guys, [DRE overlaps] you-

DRE: [unintelligible] Keith!

¹ The name in the audio recording is no longer in use, hence the audio/transcript discrepancy.

SYLVIA: Have you ever- have you ever looked at your phone and been like “What if there was like an hour of people laughing at this?” [DRE cackles]

KEITH: Yeah. [AUSTIN overlaps] I'm not-

AUSTIN: [overlapping] I mean, that shit's all the time, yeah!

KEITH: Yeah.

AUSTIN: *God*. Um... so-

KEITH: I can nutshell anything.

AUSTIN: That's not true! I've heard you shill those red- [laughing]

KEITH: [amused] No, no, no, I can *nutshell*

AUSTIN: *Oh*, I thought you'd said *I not shill*.

KEITH: No, no, no, I can do that. I can't- I will gladly shill for original beverages.

AUSTIN: [laughing] And snacks! Also Pirate's Booty!

KEITH: And snacks.

AUSTIN: I know, I've been there, I've heard the shilling. It's good.

KEITH: *Oohhh* do you wanna know- I- okay. Do you guys- do you wanna hear about a regional Rhode Island thing that I learned about?

AUSTIN: Always.

KEITH: It's *wild*. It's called the New York System, and you say “But you said it was Rhode Island”. Yes, it is Rhode Island, it is *not* New York, but it's called the New York System [AUSTIN chuckles]. It's a greasy hot dog store that serves greasy weird hot dogs *off a guy's arm*, and you- he just holds out, on his bare-ass arms, uncovered hot dogs in buns, and like- it'll be like eleven, twelve, piled up from his wrists to his- like, the middle of his forearm. Or the middle of his bicep, just covered in hot dogs, you grab it off this guy's arm.

AUSTIN: God...

KEITH: And that's a New York system. Oh, the Olneyville New York System I guess is the original one, but here's others- Austin, you might remember me mentioning a- trying to figure out what the hell Baba's Original New York System was?

AUSTIN: Yes!

KEITH: It's that. It's hot dogs served on an arm.

AUSTIN: Well that... [deadpan] that's *great*, [KEITH cackles] that's fantastic right there. That's a good-

KEITH: [laughing] Isn't that fucking *weird??* Oh, boy- covered in celery salt, too. *Covered* in it. And like, weird meat.

AUSTIN: Alright- that sounds okay!

KEITH: Yeah- I'm sure the hot dogs taste fine-

AUSTIN: [softly] Now I want a hot dog...

KEITH: -it's like a good trash hot dog. But it's also on an arm.

AUSTIN: [sigh] Okay. Let's keep things in mind, 'cause we've been talking about food shortly, maybe there's some food inspiration we can draw from here. It is- so the last episode that you listened to at home is probably the second part of the Signet/Tender ep- kind of duo adventure. Today we are joining Echo, Even and Gig on their trio adventure, and after this couple of episodes we'll jump over to Fourteen and Grand, and their duo episode! You might recall from the last episode that there was like about a month of time between the downtime episode and then Tender and Signet going to the Cathedral of- sorry, the Vault of Anticipation. [amused] Y'all on this call- *a lot of shit happened*, on their thing. [DRE giggles] There's a lot that happened- that your characters will not know yet so we don't have to talk about it, but *yo*. It was a lot. Um...[laughs]

KEITH: It sounded like it was gonna be a lot.

AUSTIN: It was. And it was. *And it was* [laughs]. Today we are jumping in after a lil bit of a time jump also, small one. It is the 27th day of the Siege of New Independence by the Herringbone Flotilla. As the conflict between the Herringbone Flotilla, faction of the Rogue Wave, and the Lineage Brighton has finally kicked off into full force. Uh, really big picture summary? So- you may recall that there were some kind of... prophecies, In your minds? About potential things that Advent might be doing here with support of the Herringbone Flotilla? And what has become increasingly apparent for y'all, as you've kinda come to support the Brighton Lineage- or at least keep regular folks from being hurt, and we can talk about what that looked like for y'all in broad terms in a second- um... it's become kind of clear to you- and in fact, we are kind of jumping to the end of an arc in a weird way? We're kind of summarizing to get to some of the juiciest stuff with the time that we have. You've come to understand that Advent kind of put up the Herringbone Flotilla, supplied them with more weapons, supplied them with more troops, and pushed them to kind of open a front on the lineage Brighton so that they would look the other way and lose something very important- and be distracted. So that has been a- imagine basically a month of y'all fighting against Advent across this sea planet, in places like New Independence, Perigian- which is

the other half of the Tides of Harmony that landed on this side- on this planet instead of Gift 3- it's kind of a neutral territory, we'll actually be there in a second- but I'm just very curious, in a broad scale way, how do you think this fight has been going for y'all?

KEITH: How big are the fights? Is it like, small- us and maybe some other people- [AUSTIN overlaps] or is this like a war?

AUSTIN: [overlapping] No, it's *big*, this is like the first open conflict in the Quire System since the Miracle, right? Like- I mean, there have obviously been skirmishes and we've seen- y'know, we're coming off of Grand and Morning's Observation being part of a huge fight between two particular agents, but it's been- it's been shadowrunners fighting, you might wanna say. You know what I mean? Or like, small arms- or small kind of military-type groups skirmishing? They've been the scale of fight you've been in, up until now. *Now....* this fight has felt like real fights. There are boats that ram each other, there have been- further development of technology that we saw here and there, in the past? So like- Even, I don't know if you remember, but during your 'This Year of Ours' vignette you were attacked by those like, drill drones? So like, those have been developed further. And some other techniques that we'll probably see in this adventure, that the various factions have kind of developed to get around- or kinda fight in spite of the no-projectile rules? Those have been developed further, and further, and further by Advent and by the Herringbone Flotilla, and then by- where they can- by the Brightons. [laughing] Except that like, the Brightons aren't necessarily good at this part of- anything? And this is like, a really good moment for the Brighton Lineage in some ways, because the sudden arrival of Our Profit, and kind of extension of the Church of the Self- and then also the kind of growth of the Waking Cadent's faction inside of the Divine Fleet- has made this kind of a big moment for them to capitalize on the shifting political landscape? Y'know, the Brighton Lineage has friends everywhere. [laughs] Except for in the Herringbone Flotilla- even there they probably have a few friends, right? Um... they are able to just kind of pull on the leavers a little bit, and be part of conversations that a group their size wouldn't normally be part of. So they've been able to kinda but down some long term routes with all these different groups, but on the short term... the fact that like, Our Profit showed up, the fact that everyone knows about the Rapid Evening now, the fact that the Waking Cadent is kind of splitting the vote so to speak? Or kind of... building on the divides inside of the Divine Free States? Means that... the poor Brighton Lineage has not had a lot of help show up. So that is how it has been going.

DRE: Hm...

KEITH: We're all the help they need, man!

AUSTIN: Is that true? Like, have you all been... like, very effective do you think?

DRE: I mean, I think if it's- if the theater is mostly vehicle battles-

AUSTIN: Yeah.

DRE: I mean, that's- that's kinda Even's thing.

AUSTIN: Yeah. And it has been, I think.

KEITH: Um... yeah, I'm gonna say yes. I'm gonna say that at the very least we're the most effective-

AUSTIN: [laughs] Sure.

KEITH: -people there to help.

AUSTIN: Right. So you've a good- yeah I'm cool with that, the idea of like "Hey, y'all are putting in work, even if the fight isn't necessarily going our way, it's clear that your value has been- has been supported?"

KEITH: Yeah.

AUSTIN: Um... Echo, I'm curious about you. How has this gone for you, as someone who has a very particular relationship to violence, especially now that you're *haunted*.

SYLVIA: Yeah, I think Echo's not as engaged as they were say, back during the Miracle of the Mirage? We had that fight with the axiom where they were- like, it was similar to this, where they were involved with a fleet, and the- no actually it was a fight with the NEH as well, I think

AUSTIN: Yes, it totally was.

SYLVIA: Anyway. They were definitely- that had them a bit more engaged? This it's very much like, "Yeah, I'll do what you guys need me to do" but I'm not exactly... feeling it?

AUSTIN: Right. Totally.

SYLVIA: I guess- does that make sense?

AUSTIN: Yes, 100%. Have you checked in with your folks at all?

SYLVIA: [pause] No.

SYLVIA: Okay, cool. So, this is where we're gonna enter in then. I think we have two shots. The first is... Echo, you are in Perigian- I- you can't tell me that not, you would actually reject this, so let's- let me pitch you this? And if you say no, then we can figure out- you can be with the other part of the party, and that's 100% fine.

SYLVIA: Okay.

AUSTIN: But... you get a letter from your parents. Um, who are Litany and Fugue, right?

SYLVIA: Yes...

AUSTIN: And it is like... "Hey. we know how things have been. *Please* come by. We're making dinner, it's an important day. We miss you."

SYLVIA: [groans] Ohhh, *god*... um- yeah, I think I'll go.

AUSTIN: Alright. So I think it's like, a shot of you looking at that letter, which is printed up on really fine- it's almost like resume paper? Do you know what I mean? Like very heavy stock? I imagine it's one of those things that come out of the Lineage system and the Rogue Wave, where it's just like- people on the ocean- the idea the you would send something made of printed material is like "Oh wow, we're from the ocean, we dont even got trees! [DRE and SYLVIA cackle] like, we don't get dogshit"

KEITH: And! And if you drop it [AUSTIN overlaps] it's done. It's too wet.

AUSTIN: [overlapping] It's done! It's in the ocean now. It's so wet. So not only is it on paper, it in really good paper.

KEITH: Yeah. The ocean is *so wet*.

AUSTIN: [laughing] It is! It's- [KEITH laughs] Alright, there's actually some debate about this on the internet, over whether or not the ocean is-

SYLVIA: [goans] *Oh my god* [AUSTIN cackles]

KEITH: I missed it, I miss-

AUSTIN: Don't worry about it, *don't you worry about it*, it's not even worth your time.

SYLVIA: [long sigh]

AUSTIN: [laughing] I'm glad Sylvia is just *distraught* now, though.

SYLVIA: I know *exactly* what you're talking about, and it will *kill* me.

AUSTIN: This- later on Keith, you look up whether or not water is wet, you'll be surprised to find that there's not- that there's not a total agreement about that. Um... so I think we get a shot- the opening shot of this episode is of Echo looking down at this invite? And then looking up at the Reverie School, which is- from the faction sheet "A martial arts academy turned fully feature college, based in the city that has grown around the remnants of Perigian. Where they once only taught self defence, now they've built a syllabus that brings a martial focus to the mind, to every discipline a citizen of Brighton might need". And I think it's like- I mean, you can tell me what the school itself looks like, but I think it's the school and then attached to it the kind of Reverie family home. And I think that it is Legato who teaches-

who is your other sibling?- who teaches at the Reverie School along with maybe one or both of your parents. So like, what's the school look like?

SYLVIA: God, I- [sigh] I'm not entirely sure, because I've definitely always had it in my head that they just taught out of their home?

AUSTIN: Sure.

SYLVIA: Because like- originally the Tides were so packed they had to do that.

AUSTIN: *Right*. So is it almost like an outdoor school maybe? In the sense of like- their home is still their home, but they can teach out in like, the front lawn?

SYLVIA: I definitely think that it's expanded to be like an actual school, I do like the look of this normal home like, basically stitched on to this larger building?

AUSTIN: [laughs] Yeah, totally.

SYLVIA: Um... but I don't have any specifics on the architecture itself [laughs]

AUSTIN: Imagine like-

SYLVIA: [overlapping] It's probably something along what- in the are what have, right?

AUSTIN: Well, what if it's- so it's in the- the city of Perigian is built from the remnants of Perigian in a way that's unlike Sage, which- remember, Sage kind of turned into this like, texan big county? I've always imagined Perigian as being a series of islands on which the debris of the Perigian arm landed? So what if it's just like a huge cargo hold that's been converted. That has sort of like a rounded front or something, y'know?

SYLVIA: Yeah I know, that definitely works for me.

AUSTIN: [amused] But then just like, a home, next to it, y'know? [laughs]

SYLVIA: Yeah, just like a nice house right next to it...

AUSTIN: Totally. So I think we get that shot, and we get Echo walking inside. And then it cuts from that to a- a different shot, to a- we get like, the movement of Echo moving, of walking towards the house? We get kind of like, that motion on the screen? And then it cuts to a similarly paced motion? It's almost like a P.T. Anderson style shot of the ocean, like on of those panning- not panning, but travelling shots across the sea that you see in a P.T. Anderson movie?

SYLVIA: Yeah.

AUSTIN: And it moves at that same steady pace, and then... it like opens up? And you see in the ocean, the ocean dips- it just descends. The ocean, like a wall of water, has been- a hole has been cut into the ocean! It's like an island but further down in the ocean, instead of above the ocean. And so it just like, Parting of the Red Sea style, ocean is just hanging there. On the ground-

KEITH: So it's like holding without the walls... it's like if the water was just there?

AUSTIN: Yes. 100%, it's if the water was just there, yes. And then what it is is- it's a field of desiccated gray corn, just like flattened on the ground? And in the middle of it is a- like a gray, kind of modern architectural facility, and I think- the viewer should recognize it immediately as being an Advent facility, probably a Concretetown Particulars facility- it's even made of the Q-concrete? Which is probably what's keeping the ocean at bay from this weird place. And we just get- we cut from that overshoot to a wide angled shot of Echo... sorry, not Echo- Even, Gig, and Kent [amused] leaving that facility as it smokes and burns behind them? And pushing- do you remember that hovercart from *veeery* beginning of this season, that had the node on it?

KEITH: Yeah, yeah, yeah.

AUSTIN: The node that would connect you to the Mirage, basically? There's just like a shitty- it's just like a pushcart, except it had a node on it before- now it has this big like, concrete crate on it. It's like a cube of concrete.

KEITH: Yeah. It's like the fucking things at Home Depot where you carry like all the wooden stuff?

AUSTIN: Yes. [KEITH overlaps] One of those.

KEITH: [overlapping] But it's a hover one.

AUSTIN: Except it hovers and like, it isn't- [amused] just like the ones from Home Depot, it ain't great, [DRE laughs] you know what I mean? Like-

KEITH: Yeah yeah, one of the wheels is weird, it's like a shopping cart.

AUSTIN: It doesn't have wheels! That's the thing, it doesn't- [KEITH overlaps] it gets stopped on things as if-

KEITH: 'Cause it's a hover-

AUSTIN: [laughing] Yes! Exactly.

KEITH: The hover is just bad, it hovers bad [DRE cackles]

AUSTIN: You just have to like, unstick it from the cornhusks basically?

KEITH: Yeah. It's not even touching them? But it like, snags?

AUSTIN: Exactly! And the concrete is definitely this special Q-concrete, this stuff that the Concretetown Particulars use? And it has captured whatever this thing is, or locked it down in some way? And you know, from burning that facility and fucking people up there and rescuing this thing- this thing, whatever it is- one, needs to be rejoined with, I think you know now is called the Wandering Sea, which they've been trying to capture for the last like- for *months* now.

KEITH: S-E-A, S-E-E, or the letter.

AUSTIN: S-E-A, like an ocean.

KEITH: Got it. Like and ocean.

AUSTIN: It used to be a thing that was on the planet Quire and now is floating in space [laughs] um... near Brighton. It is like the ocean, it's a part of the ocean that's alive- it was something that was alive inside of Brighton. They were going to use whatever this is to manipulate the living sea? And by returning it- or, the Wandering Sea- and by returning it to the Wandering Sea, you will prevent them from doing that. Um... and the thing is, if they were able to do that then one, they would have a cool space ocean under their control, and two, you know they were going to try to use the massive kind of space-cosmic energy power- brain power? Of the Wandering Sea to become their own predictive engine in the vein of Crystal Palace. So you've done the first part of this, you've gotten back whatever this thing is. And I think maybe the wide shot- let me go back and pop something else into the shot- we get the World Without End just hovering above all of this. I think it's actually a very pretty shot of... y'know, desiccated corn husks and these three figures pushing this cart, and then this kind of golden and brown spaceship in the distance, it's great. [laughs] So y'all have this thing, and your job is to just get outta here, and... go pick up Echo from dinner, and get it back to the spaceship- or get it back to the Wandering Sea up in space! That's all, no big deal. [pause] So what do you do? What's it look like pushing this thing back to the ship and getting it loaded up.

KEITH: Um... someone's in the back pushing and someone else is in the front like, picking it up a little bit when it gets snagged?

AUSTIN: Who is that, who is doing which?

KEITH: Um....

AUSTIN: [amused] I guess, more important, who is not doing one of those two things? [DRE giggles]

KEITH: I think it's... I think it's Even.

AUSTIN: Okay.

DRE: Pushing or picking up?

KEITH: Even is not doing anything.

DRE: Well that's- that's rude...

AUSTIN: *Woah!*

KEITH: Os it rude?? I mean sometimes it's only a two person job, and y'know, there's three people.

DRE: That's fair. Am I- I do have that cool gun now, so maybe I'm just holding point with my cool gun.

KEITH: [AUSTIN overlaps] Yeah, you're-

AUSTIN: [overlapping] Oh god, I forgot about the cool gun, tell me about your cool gun again.

DRE: I just- it's an SMG from Cascabel.

AUSTIN: That's right, yeah, I recall that now. Awesome. Um... alright, so I guess- Even, you're the one who picks it up first, or, who notices it first- which is... you can kind of see- we get a shot into the side of the ocean? And we can see kind of a ripple coming down like, from the surface of the ocean down into the ocean below. It's almost like- I mean, you know what it is immediately. It's a ship, a spaceship- or like a flying vessel- running low to the ocean so that you don't see it. But you see that it is getting closer by the effect that it's having on the under- you can kind of see the fish separate and flee from it? And its - y'know, it's still a little ways out there, but you're the one who notices that something is approaching you quickly, and it doesn't wanna be seen. What do you do?

DRE: So... is it under the water...?

AUSTIN: No, it's above the water, it's like- y'know how a helicopter, [DRE overlaps] when it's close to the water.

DRE: [overlapping] Yeah, okay. When it has the wash or whatever.

AUSTIN: Yeah, yeah, totally. It's doing that, but like- you can see all the fish and all the- you can see like, the fauna under the sea and stuff kind of separate and flee, kind of like a ripple in there, as it gets closer.

DRE: Okay. But I can't- I can't see this thing yet?

AUSTIN: No, 'cause it so low to the water? Than - you're looking up through the water for the shape, and- I guess you can kind of see like a shape once you start looking for it, but you can't quite make out what it is, or how big it is, or how far away it is even. It's just getting closer.

DRE: Um... is there anything nearby that we can like, take cover behind...?

AUSTIN: No, it's like a dedicated- [DRE overlaps] it is like a completely flattened field of corn.

DRE: [overlapping, laughing] Cool...

AUSTIN: [amused] This is going to be about speed, if you're going to- you could run back into the facility that's on fire. That's the closest thing.

DRE: That sounds bad. Um... no, I think i- who's pushing? If I'm not pushing, who is pushing?

AUSTIN: It's either Kent or Gig

KEITH: I'm pushing, Kent is- he's unsnagging.

AUSTIN: Okay

DRE: I think... Even like, turns around- I guess I'm not too far away from you guys, but Even like, turns around and runs next to you, Gig, and starts pushing with you? And relays that we have an incoming ship and that we need to get out of here.

AUSTIN: That's- yeah. That- okay

KEITH: Okay

AUSTIN: So... is that like- are you like, trying to make people hustle, basically? I'm trying to convert this into a roll of some kind.

DRE: Right. Um... yeah, I think so, I think it is- I think it is both a physical thing of "I'm gonna push this thing with you so that we move faster"

AUSTIN: Okay. But also- okay, yeah, so then maybe that is... what do you think that is? I don't think it's Helm- it's probably Scramble, right?

DRE: Right. I- yeah. I'm bad at that, but I think that's what it is. The only other thing I can see would maybe be a Command?

AUSTIN: Yeah, I could see that if it's like- it's such a simple act, to imagine what- I mean, I guess command could totally be that. Command could be just "Let's pick up the pace, fellas", right?

DRE: Right.

AUSTIN: That's totally acceptable.

DRE: Okay. I think I'm gonna do Command then.

AUSTIN: Alright, let's-

DRE: That has less chance to be disastrous...

AUSTIN: [amused] Totally. Let's do... standard here, the risk is that the ship is gonna show up?

DRE: What's our gambit situation right now?

AUSTIN: Y'all have- y'all have full gambit, you have two gambits.

DRE: Okay.

AUSTIN: Let me add it to the map here real quick.

DRE: I don't think I'm gonna use it here, I just wanna-

AUSTIN: Yeah, I getcha.

DRE: -know what's on the table.

AUSTIN: Two gambits. Gimme that dice roll. Alright, four ain't bad! Four ain't bad. Um... so I think y'all get the- so the hovercart kinda gets underneath the World Without End? But then you hear the sound of like, splashing? And you look over back to the wall of ocean, and whatever the ship is that's approaching, has already launched forward one of these Drilldones- these Drillbots? And it like, splashes over the top of this wall of ocean, and slams into the rear of the World Without End. and it isn't like, *in* yet, but it's latched on and is beginning to drill as you- what's it look like to reboard this thing? Is it like- I mean, in the past the World Without End has just landed. So, is it just on the ground, or is it hovering with some sort of like, hook-attach system to bring this big heavy thing on board, what is it?

DRE: I mean, don't we have a- we've got big arms on our ship, right?

AUSTIN: You do, you totally have those grapple arms, yeah.

DRE: Yeah! So if we're tryna hurry we could use these grapple arms to get them in there.

AUSTIN: Cool. So you like, attach the grapple arms and begin to pull up?

DRE: Yeah.

AUSTIN: Alright, let's do that as a roll also. I wanna see how quickly you can... [amsued] be dock workers. You really need Grand Magnificent for this one, honestly. [laughs, DRE and KEITH cackle] Um... this *is* probably scramble, though

DRE: Okay.

AUSTIN: I would say?

KEITH: I would love to Scramble right now.

AUSTIN: That's *probably* a group action, or... or yeah, Gig could be the one who's handling like, bringing all this- I guess it could be a Rig, also, I guess. In retrospect.

KEITH: I'm on TV, so I do carry costumes with me.

AUSTIN: Wait- [DRE cackles] wh- goddammit.

DRE: [laughing] Are you just changing like, when Even's like "We gotta pick up the pace!" you're like "Oh, yeah, you're right. [KEITH overlaps] Let me- let me put these clothes on"

KEITH: [overlapping] It's a quick change, everyone on TV can quick change.

AUSTIN: Uh-huh. *Oh*, is that one of- that's a TV skill!

KEITH: It's a TV skill

AUSTIN: Okay. I actually think this might be- I think you could use rig for this. 'Cause you're literally rigging together the like, grapple hook stuff.

KEITH: No, I can use scramble too! Scramble I think is a funnier visual.

AUSTIN: Okay. Well, what's that visual? Uh- do the roll and then tell me what the visual is. Again, it's risky standard as this ship approaches.

KEITH: I think I've just got like a... uh, I think I just got like, reflective- like, something reflective, and then something tattered, and then maybe like a sailor scarf or whatever? What are those called?

AUSTIN: A sailor scarf. We're gonna call it a sailor scarf, yeah, for sure.

KEITH: I think I've just got- I was like "Oh, I have these three things!" like "This is enough for us to- if everybody holds one of these, then we're good!" um...

AUSTIN: *Great.*

KEITH: And everybody sort of- I tie on the scarf, someone puts on a little reflective vest, and then- what was the third thing that I said?

AUSTIN: Uhhh... I don't-

KEITH: Just like, over their regular clothes too.

AUSTIN: Right. *Right.* No, I gotcha, I forgot what the third thing- what it was and you *just* said it, 'cause I was so focused on the scarf.

KEITH: Tattered, tattered clothes.

AUSTIN: Right.

KEITH: It was tattered- yeah! Just like "Yeah, y'know, I came with something with tatters. I tattered my clothes on the docks".

AUSTIN: You're ready to go. You fit right in.

KEITH: Yeah. Risky standard...

AUSTIN: Risky standard. At this point there's two risks, the risk is: this drill is gonna start doing damage if this takes too long? And two that ship is gonna start getting closed- but that is a six!

KEITH: *Nice*

AUSTIN: You just- you just scrambled this whole-

KEITH: TV skills, baby!

AUSTIN: TV skills! [DRE cackles] TV skills to pay the TV bills, y'know? Um...

SYLVIA: [softly] Oh, boy...

AUSTIN: So what's this look like, what's success at this look like for the three of you?

KEITH: Oh, we are like... each person- as soon as they put on the clothes like just, whole new personality. Like, adopts, entirely becomes, sort of the- [laughs] just becomes dock worker. Isn't panicked, is just sort of like, grumpily doing [AUSTIN overlaps] the shit they have to do all day.

AUSTIN: [overlapping] can I- yeah. Can I do my job, which is- [laughs] *can I fucking do my job, Keith?*

KEITH: Can I just do-

AUSTIN: Can I just fucking-

KEITH: Are you doing the awk- [AUSTIN overlaps]

AUSTIN: Hey, this is my dot, can I just *do my fucking job here?*

KEITH: Can I just do- I'm just tryna do my *fucking job here*.

AUSTIN: I'm tryna be a dock worker over here!

KEITH: Stop breathing down my neck!

AUSTIN: Yeah [laughs] Tryna load and unload and what not! Merch and marine shit! Um... the- my job, partially, is to make sense of things as if they were always part of the plan, as if they were always- as if the story just *worked*. It's a rule that's come up a lot lately, in some of the games we've been playing for Bluff, in Action Movie World and in World Wide Wrestling- there are some great principles which is like "Hey, as the GM, things are gonna happen, and it's your job to make it seem like this was part of the plan all along" Uh, it's a very good rule- a very good principle. Um... what if you did this shit with the dock worker stuff *before* you got here. What if this was like-

KEITH: We were already-

AUSTIN: Right, right, right! We're gonna be moving stuff, there's gonna be big heavy stuff! You should get- everyone should get in costume [laughs]

KEITH: Yeah! That works.

AUSTIN: Y'know what I mean? Like, that's just- [KEITH overlaps] and you'll see why later! [DRE cackles]

KEITH: [overlapping] Yes. So then the roll is not ac- it's not the change, it's act natural.

AUSTIN: Right. It's act natural. Or it- right, exactly! 'Cause you're already in the outfit. Look at how better you are in tatters and a scarf. And just scrambling around!

KEITH: Yeah. You can really feel the character when you're...

AUSTIN: Right! You're not in this big, heavy armor right now, you're in these tatters! And that just makes all the difference in the world.

KEITH: Yeah.

AUSTIN: You're just Errol Flynn'ing it all around the ship!

KEITH: It's just- it's just like a lil bit of method. Just a *lil bit* of method.

AUSTIN: Yeah, exactly. And the eye-bot definitely makes it really come alive in the footage, y'know?

KEITH: Oh, we- I've got a fucking eyepatch too! That helps.

AUSTIN: *God*... right, of course you do. Great. There's just footage of y'all like, swinging- what is it called in a ship, in a pirate ship, where you swing across the thing? There's a thing for that, right?

DRE: Like on the rigging?

AUSTIN: Like on the rigging, basically- the rigging is a spaceship that's above you! *God*, fucking- this game... so you load this thing up, and then you finally- I guess Even, you're going to the cockpit?

DRE: Yeah

AUSTIN: Okay. Echo and Gig, where are you going on this ship?

SYLVIA: I mean, I'm at dinner.

AUSTIN: Sorry, I meant, uhhhh Kent! Kent is me, I am Kent. [SYLVIA giggles] Kent, where are you going?

KEITH: Um... wait, so-

AUSTIN: So y'all loaded the thing onto the ship, everyone's back on the ship. Gig, where are you going on this ship? As eve runs to the- to the front, the cockpit

KEITH: I guess I'm going to my room.

AUSTIN: Ah- okay, real quick- real quick reminder: there's a drill attached to the rear of the ship that's drilling into the ship [DRE laughs]

KEITH: *Oh*, we didn't escape the drill?

AUSTIN: [KEITH overlaps] Noooo, the drill is attached-

KEITH: [overlapping] Ohhh, I misunderstood, I thought it was- okay.

AUSTIN: Nope, drill is attached, it just hasn't started doing damage yet.

KEITH: Oh, man- okay, so I guess I'm gonna go to the room where the drill is about to go through.

AUSTIN: Okay so- oh, where are you putting th- I guess it's just in a cargo hold, the big crate? The big cube?

KEITH: Um... I think that we should bring it more into like, the main area.

AUSTIN: Which main area? 'Cause remember, there's like a loooong hallway that's like the bulk of this ship.

KEITH: The center. Like, somewhere where- when I think if a cargo hold I think of somewhere that's like, one wall away from the outside?

AUSTIN: Yeah, true, true, true.

KEITH: And I don't wanna give them access to the thing.

AUSTIN: Okay. The very center of the ship is that big walkway that runs the length of the ship? And I think it's *very funny* if it's just there. [KEITH overlaps] I also think-

KEITH: [overlapping] I think it's just there.

AUSTIN: I also think it will be hard to get around the ship if you do that? Which-

KEITH: It's the safest place for it!

AUSTIN: *100%* fine with this. *100%* fine with this long alien-style corridor where halfway through it there's now just a big concrete cube, separating the front of the ship from the back of the ship.

KEITH: And it's not impossible- it's just- you have to do like a sidewalk real quick.

AUSTIN: Yeah! Or you have to do like, jump down into the lounge on the entrance and then jump for the other entrance to the lounge, to get around it? Y'know what I mean?

KEITH: Hm- oh yeah, you can navigate, just go on a different room.

AUSTIN: Just go on a different room, and that room has two doors y'know? Like that. Alright, cool, I like that.

KEITH: Like a classroom.

AUSTIN: *Exactly* like a classroom. Exactly! Um... I wish this ship had a classroom in it. So no, so I think this first drill is attached to the jumpdrive on your ship, which will prevent you from leaving the orbit of Brighton if it takes damage. So that is- it's attached to like, the engines at the rear of the ship.

KEITH: Okay.

AUSTIN: So do you and-

KEITH: Engine room sounds like a *great* room for me to go to.

AUSTIN: Okay, so you and Kent run to the engine room then.

KEITH: Yes.

AUSTIN: So then I guess- Even, what do you do, in the cockpit?

DRE: Um... I mean, I'm getting- have we like, left it running?

AUSTIN: Yeah, totally.

DRE: Okay. Um... [sigh] And there's still- has the ship come into view yet?

AUSTIN: Uh... just- y'know, just now, I think. If you like, pan your cameras or turn the ship, or lift a little bit higher so we get the shot of you rising above the sea wall? You see a- a kind of a- I'm imagining it as almost like a V-shape ship? Like... like a V, y'know? Just like a V, basically. Or- not even like a V, like- I'm gonna draw it real quick.

KEITH: Like a flying V

AUSTIN: Like a flying V! Right?

KEITH: so like a V with a guitar neck

AUSTIN: [amused] With a guitar neck. Y'know? Honestly? [KEITH cackles] That's not wrong. Yeah, it's like a flying V guitar, that's exactly what it is. Because this is the Ebony and Ivory, which your records indicate immediately is associated with the Castlerose Lineage. We've already seen- we've already seen the Castlerose Agents, back when it was a bounty hunter and hitman agency, you- [KEITH overlaps] the trumpet ship?

KEITH: [overlapping] Yeah, that's that guy that kidnapped me that we're friends with?

AUSTIN: That's Armstrong, who showed up in the other side of- you may have not listened to this yet, Keith? Have you listened to the most recent other-side game?

KEITH: Uhhh, most recent- no, no.

AUSTIN: Well, Armstrong shows up- Armstrong is cool, Armstrong is hanging out with Sui Juris now, with Tender Sky's ex, with Chiron... also Armstrong is a duck person now? He's- he made himself a duck man, 'cause he thinks it's cool.

KEITH: Huh. Oh! I did hear- I heard about the duck.

AUSTIN: Yeah, yeah. Okay so, this is not Armstrong, but it's clear that this is a couple- or, is a ship piloted by probably Castlerose- I mean, I think it has like- y'know, the IFF indication of being assigned to the Lineage Castlerose, which is what Miss's Castlerose ended up doing in the post-Miracle, she went off to join up with the Rogue Wave and affiliated herself with... with the Herringbone Flotilla, with the most piraty side of the Rogue Wave. Um... so she's barring down on you, [amused] in this flying V ship coming at you. Um... *fuck* [laughs] Such a goofy thing... Uh- but then we cut from that to the dinner table. *What is dinner like?*

SYLVIA: *Oh, boy.* Um...

KEITH: Oh, so we're having dinner with just the drill there? [AUSTIN overlaps] Oh, no, no, no- you're in a different place. Got it, yeah.

AUSTIN: No, Echo is- [amused] Echo is in a different sequence...

KEITH: Yeah, they're gone, they're gone!

AUSTIN: But that would be really funny, to be fair... [DRE giggles, KEITH cackles]

SYLVIA: It's a parallel, you guys are starting to have dinner and then... it cuts back to me. Um...

KEITH: There's a drill, but we're *hungry*, so... [AUSTIN chuckles]

SYLVIA: I think it's like, [AUSTIN overlaps] awkward-

AUSTIN: [overlapping] Are there hot dogs??

SYLVIA: -but not as bad as expected? Y'know?

AUSTIN: Okay. Yeah.

SYLVIA: It's one of those things where it's like... Echo hasn't seen their family in a while, and is also kind of realizing "Oh, I've grown up a lot since the last time I saw them"?

AUSTIN: Yeah. Can you tell me about them a little bit? What are they like?

SYLVIA: Uh- so I haven't actually- aside from the relationship they have with Echo, I haven't fleshed them out too much? I know that they're at strain, mostly because Echo and them-

when Echo was growing up they disagreed a lot, and because of that Echo kinda just.. did their thing, which ended up with them getting arrested.

AUSTIN: Totally.

SYLVIA: But like- Echo always saw them as very like- [laughs] you know how when you're growing up you see your parents as like, super strict a lot of the times if they're like that?

AUSTIN: Yeah

SYLVIA: Like “*Ugh*, you're the worst, you're a monster!” Um... there's definitely not bad shit that's happened between them in the past? Like, I've talked about how Echo and them don't talk and that's for a reason, because of the stuff that happened with Echo back when the Fleet was still a thing- but, uh... I think that after everything that's happened, it's kinda realizing that “Oh, my parents are getting ready for retirement”

AUSTIN: Right

SYLVIA: Uh, and... [AUSTIN overlaps] they've kind of relaxed.

AUSTIN: [overlapping] Is this the situation where- yes, okay. That's the thing I was curious about, because I've definitely- there's situations where it's like “Oh, they've chilled out” and there's situations where it's like “*Oh*, with better context they were at least coming from the right place, it wasn't as bad as I thought it was” and there's situations where it's both, where it's like, ‘meet in the middle’-

SYLVIA: Yeah. This is a bit of that. I think it's mostly them chilling out, but then also Echo being like “I definitely acted out a lot”.

AUSTIN: Cool, right. Um- so I think it is- and what is your relationship with Legato, who is your other sibling? Also, what are the pronouns for these various characters, so I can write them down and get them right.

SYLVIA: Um, I think both the parents are just binary he/him, she/her.

AUSTIN: Okay.

SYLVIA: I don't know about Legato- actually, [laughs] that's probably the character in this family I fleshed out the least...

AUSTIN: That's fine.

SYLVIA: So, if you wanna go anyway with it, feel free.

AUSTIN: I like- so the note that I have, I've written down Legato as your little sister? But who has kinda taken up from her standing as like, the heir of the Reverie School of Martial Arts,

basically? It's like, you're gone, Ballard is gone, I'm gonna be the one who like, moves the Reverie School forward, I'm taking over. And so like, a little bit of a chip on her shoulder, a little bit of like...

SYLVIA: *Huh.*

AUSTIN: ...attitude? Y'know? But also the good one, y'know- does that make sense? Like-

SYLVIA: Oh, for sure.

AUSTIN: -is pissy towards you and Ballard, but is also the one who like, always shows up to sunday dinners, y'know?

SYLVIA: Yeah, like... Legato is the one kind of keeping the family together-

AUSTIN: [overlapping] Yes, yeah.

SYLVIA: -even when two of the other children are gone?

AUSTIN: Right. And speaking of... there is a- I don't think there's a knock on the door, I think the door just opens. And you hear Ballard's voice.

SYLVIA: [AUSTIN overlaps] Alright!

AUSTIN (as Ballard): [overlapping] Uh, I'm so sorry I'm late, I just- things have been really... y'know, y'know how wild things have been.

AUSTIN: And just walks in the door, and then like- uh, you and he meet eyes. And he's in his Advent gear, his white Advent gear. He's in the process of taking off his coat and hanging it up.

SYLVIA: Ohhh- [struggling] uh- [laughing] I'm debating two things, and I think the one I'm gonna go with is... Echo, very awkwardly looking at whatever the equivalent of their cell phone is at this point [AUSTIN overlaps], and just hoping for the best.

AUSTIN: [laughing, overlapping] It's your eyepatch, right?

SYLVIA: Yeah.

AUSTIN: You had that eyepatch that produces the... *god.*

SYLVIA: [laughing] Which they tucked off to be polite when they came in [AUSTIN cackles], and now they're just like "Oh, hold on, I gotta check this real quick" So they're holding it up to their eye, but not putting it back on? Like "sorry, just- it's work, really quick" and meanwhile they're- I don't know... [laughs]

AUSTIN: Oh, man....

SYLVIA: Texting someone.

AUSTIN: I think at this point Litany- who I've written down is your dad- comes in with like, his famous stew? He's like-

AUSTIN (as Litany): Alright everybody, sit down! Stew is ready.

AUSTIN: And Legato kind of looks at the two of you- you and Ballad- and is like-

AUSTIN (as Legato): [sigh] Don't let this be a problem, you two. Let's sit down and have a good meal. [SYLVIA chuckles]

AUSTIN: And I think Ballad is like...

AUSTIN (as Ballad): Of course... of course.

AUSTIN: And sits down across from you?

SYLVIA: I put the eyepatch away and just like-

SYLVIA (as Echo): Listen, everything outside of this house's been left out there, okay? Let's just go with that for tonight.

SYLVIA: Very obvious sort of peacekeeping thing, like "just don't worry about it".

AUSTIN: Yeah. Is that how you really feel?

SYLVIA: Uh- I think it is how Echo really feels, where it's like... it's been such a nightmare few weeks that I can't- I'm not emotionally prepared to face this right now.

AUSTIN: Totally. Um... so I think immediately Fugue- your mom...? You said she/her for-

SYLVIA: Yes.

AUSTIN: -you said a she/her and a he/him parent, okay. So she's like- she just goes on in on like, how the school is going, and tries to use that as the common ground? Like, talks about some people you might remember from the neighbor, and how they are stepping up inside of the school, or how they are late on their bills- not gossipy necessarily, but trying to focus on stories that can bring everybody together? But Ballad is having a really hard time with it, very clearly. And- Ballad *is* checking his communicator, pretty commonly? And like... doesn't give you death glares, but- you catch some looks, every now and then.

SYLVIA: You know what, I think I give some back?

AUSTIN: Yeah

SYLVIA: Like, when I catch him it's like... okay but you're like- look at the uniform you're wearing.

AUSTIN: Uh-huh

SYLVIA: Y'know, like "Really, you're gonna be judging me for this?"

AUSTIN: Totally. There's a point at which I think- y'know, you're having a meal. In general I think it is- everyone here is an adult, y'know? And between you and Legato everything kinda stays pretty much on track? And then there's a point at which... your dad, Litany, runs to the bathroom, and there's a phone call, and Fugue has to go get the phone. So then it's just the three siblings. It's just you, Ballard and Legato. And... she is like-

Austin (as Legato): It means a lot to mom and dad that you came tonight. But it'd mean more if you like, stuck around, and maybe weren't trying to fucking *kill each other*. Can we get this to a place where- like, I don't even care... which one of you fixes your situation, but they're worried to death.

SYLVIA (as Echo): [sigh] There's nothing for them to worry about.

SYLVIA: -Echo lied!

AUSTIN: *Uh-huh!* [SYLVIA laughs]

SYLVIA: It's very much like, there's nothing- it's the awkward, no eye contact.

SYLVIA (as Echo): There's nothing for them to worry about, you're making a big deal out of nothing, we're fine. We're *fine*.

AUSTIN (as Ballard): I mean, I honestly don't get it.

AUSTIN: -says Ballard.

AUSTIN (as Ballard): You were there when all this came together, and now I get reports that your crew is working against us. But- we wouldn't be a crew without you. Uh... I was hoping you would like, come through? and - y'know, my line is open. There's room for you here. And it's safer, and we- [sigh] This system is gonna be *some much* better off once the NEH gets the fuck outta here, and Advent is the easiest way to make that happen. Not the easiest, the most... certain way. You know the Free States are a mess right now, there's two Cadents! They're not gonna do it.

SYLVIA (as Echo): I just don't see the point of trading the NEH for... diet NEH? Does that make sense?

AUSTIN (as Ballard): [deep breath] There's such a big difference, there's *such* a big difference. Advent didn't kill divines. Yeah, I get it, Advent does some shit that isn't... particularly attractive. They get their hands dirty [SYLVIA scoffs]. You and I've gotten our hands dirty before, though. You *specifically*. And it's so far removed than from sending people halfway across the galaxy to kill divines! There isn't some maniacal cult leader at the top of Advent. There isn't someone going around calling themselves Our Profit, and asking us to put our brains in a computer or *whatever the fuck* she wants us to do.

SYLVIA (as Echo): Okay so, we're on the same page for that one, i'll admit that. But- I just- [pause] I don't see how this- how we'd end up in a better place with Advent in charge? And I don't see how we'd end up in a better place with the Free States involved, but at least the Free States aren't shooting at me as much.

AUSTIN (as Ballard): I mean, we're only shooting at you because you're shooting at us! Or trying to take our shit, or trying to disrupt our plans- and you wanna know how- you wanna know how things get better by working with Advent? Advent *has* shit. Talk to Legato.

AUSTIN: And Legato shrugs, and is like-

AUSTIN (as Legato): They've helped the school a lot, Echo. Ballard's been able to give us a lot of supplies, some more space- and they've spread the word, y'know? Um... I get it too, but if we can give them, y'know, the Reverie school ideals- y'know, maybe we're doing our part.

SYLVIA (as Echo): I mean... that all sounds great. The problem is that no matter how great some of this stuff sounds, I still don't- I don't want our family training a bunch of Advent soldiers with the way we fight, I don't want that, and I don't- [bitter laugh] I don't wanna see, in however many years from now, some- if Advent manages to pull all this off, I don't wanna see something where i- they can trace it back to the Reverie School. I don't wanna see our family associated with the things that are gonna happen.

AUSTIN (as Ballard): Echo-

SYLVIA (as Echo): It's already there, [AUSTIN overlaps] and I don't want it to get worse.

AUSTIN (as Ballard): [overlapping] Echo, you brought us together. We're already associated. When the history books are written, it's gonna say that you and me were at the heart of this thing.

SYLVIA: Um... Echo has been like- at the start of what- Echo is like, in the middle of eating, so they've been holding the cutlery? And at this point it's like, their fist holding the spoon or whatever is just *shaking* completely.

AUSTIN: Yeah [sigh]

SYLVIA: And is like-

SYLVIA (as Echo): When all this is said and done, if I'm mentioned in a history book, I'm hoping it's just the footnote.

AUSTIN: And then your dad comes in with a new bowl? Or a new like, big pot? And he's like-

AUSTIN (as Litany): My famous iced stew! [KEITH cackles]

AUSTIN: [amused] And in the same bowls begins to pour out an iced stew dessert. Dessert stew! Uh... and we get the water spilling into that, end we cut from that water, back to the ocean, and back to the World Without End. And we get-

KEITH: Wait, is it a sweet dessert or a savory dessert?

AUSTIN: Uh- yes. Um... [DRE and KEITH burst out laughing] Gig. You are looking at this drill that's trying to break through the hull into the engine room. What are you doing?

KEITH: Oh, boy. Um...

AUSTIN: It's a big drill. So I'm gonna- let me give you scale here. It's like- like, look at a wall real quick?

KEITH: Okay.

AUSTIN: And then like, reach out your arm as far as you can reach? And then *double* that.

KEITH: In front or wide?

AUSTIN: *Wide*. And then double that wingspan. That's like, the hole that will be there from this big drill, this big drill drone.

KEITH: That's rough. So it's like... huge.

AUSTIN: Oh, yeah. Um... you don't know if this one is, but you know they make them with boarding modules. Also y'all can- the two of you plus Kent can totally talk via communicator during all this. I mean, all of you can talk- like eve Echo could talk to you via communicator at this point, you're all the same planet, but I wanna make sure it's not like "one of you is in the cockpit, and one of you is in the engine room, and you can't talk to each other" so.

KEITH: God, there's so- I mean... so how is it attached? So the drill is huge-

AUSTIN: Good question

KEITH: How big is the thing that is holding the drill?

AUSTIN: Good call. So-

KEITH: And is it like, hooked onto the ship, or is it like, enveloping part of the ship?

AUSTIN: So there are two versions of these things, these drills. One attaches via magnets on the outside, which is not as strong of a hold as the- kinda pierce and then bracket themselves on. This is a magnet one, but, the downside is, you can't see where the magnets are placed with your eyes- whereas the kind that pierces through the hull and bracket on- you can just see them [KEITH overlaps] You're able to see them directly.

KEITH: [overlapping] You're able to see them. Okay- well, I have an idea. I wanna demagnetize the metal of the hull of this ship.

AUSTIN: Okay, what's that- how do you do that? What does that look like?

KEITH: Okay, so I need some really thick cable, and I need an enormous battery.

AUSTIN: [amused] Okay, those are two things you need. Uh- do you say that over the ship comms?

KEITH: Yeah, yeah. I'm talking out loud knowing that that might be helpful, y'know?

AUSTIN (as Kent): Is an engine anything like a battery?

AUSTIN: Asks Kent.

KEITH (as Gig): An engine is... a little bit like a battery...

AUSTIN (as Kent): Even, any ideas?

KEITH: Was he always british?

AUSTIN: He was always sort of british, he was always like... in the middle, he's like-

KEITH: He's like rich guy-

AUSTIN: He's rich guy, but he's fun! He's fun, he loves polo.

KEITH: Right, okay.

AUSTIN: What is the [slipping into an accent]- that's the Mid-Atlantic. Mid-Atlantic accent. Is that what I'm doing, is that what this is?

KEITH: Um... it might be that, it might be sort of like a Boston Brahmin, it might be that Connecticut one that's similar?

AUSTIN: It could be that. It could be that! He smiles, he's always smiling.

KEITH: He's always smiling, it's a good one.

AUSTIN: It's a good smile, he has a good smile. [amused] Anyway! Even, any ideas?

KEITH: No, no ideas from Even, that's fine!

DRE: Wait- sorry.

KEITH: Oh, okay.

AUSTIN: He needs a battery- a big battery and some cables.

KEITH: Big battery and some cables!

DRE: Oh, boy. Uh...

AUSTIN: I'm looking- I'm looking at everyone's lists of items.

KEITH: Well, I have spare parts, and that's technically spare parts. But if I can take it out of something else, I think that'd be more fun. Something on the ship. Like, is there- what's the most fun thing on the ship? I bet that has a big battery in it.

DRE: It's not my robot, you're not touching my robot.

KEITH: Oh! Could I borrow the battery from your robot?

DRE: Nope.

AUSTIN: Is that- would that be big enough? Maybe that would be big enough, though.

KEITH: How bout this, I can use one of the mechs, those have batteries

AUSTIN: Those do have batteries...

DRE: There you go.

KEITH: I could just use one of the mechs as a battery- or, if it's not big enough, I could link the mechs together- chain them together and be like a big bat- even bigger battery!

AUSTIN: Alright, so- we would need to get those here, which would probably take a turn of time! [laughs, DRE cackles] Um... yeah, I love that idea! I love that idea! Uh, so let's- what is that? What's that look like?

KEITH: So I've got... three mechs sort of standing back to back, so they sort of look like a triangle, but shoulder to shoulder?

AUSTIN: Uh-huh

KEITH: And then I have-

AUSTIN: Let's do- I think this is probably- this is a linked roll? This is gonna be a scramble to get them here, 'cause they're not in the engine room? Or something else about moving them, but scramble seems the one to do there.

KEITH: Scramble and then rig.

AUSTIN: Yeah, I think so. And the way this is gonna work is- they've both opportunities to go bad? And so the Scramble is, partially- y'know let me just read from the linked rolls thing really quick.

KEITH: Okay.

AUSTIN: That way it's not... it's not a thing I'm just bullshitting! Okay, here's what I'm gonna say. I'm gonna say that by default this is a- the rig roll is desperate, and by doing a successful scramble you can set up your rig roll to either make it risky, or to give yourself a better effect. So it's- by default it's desperate standard? But- so the scramble action is either going to make it desperate great or risky standard. Do you know what I mean? If you succeed.

KEITH: If I succeed, got it. Um... so I know exactly- I mean, i'll roll the scramble first-

AUSTIN: Yes.

KEITH: And then talk about...

DRE: What is your scramble, Keith?

KEITH: Scramble's two! Scramble and rig are my two best stats, actually.

AUSTIN: Did you think about helping somehow?

DRE: Yeah. Well, I think- I mean, I could just send my Urbot into the back and have it-

AUSTIN: Oh, totally!

DRE: Like, help basically drive one of the mechs?

AUSTIN: [laughing] That's really good, yes!

DRE: Where do you want it?

KEITH: Is that- does that give me- what is that, is that a bonus dice?

AUSTIN: It's a plus one die, yeah.

KEITH: Okay so, [AUSTIN overlaps] so the scramble roll...

AUSTIN: [overlapping] So Even, take one stress for that,

KEITH: Is that- is the scramble roll risky? That sounds controlled

AUSTIN: That is controlled, that is controlled, yeah, yeah, yeah.

KEITH: Okay. Controlled... standard or-

AUSTIN: Standard, yeah.

KEITH. Okay, and then one bonus dice.

AUSTIN: Also Gig, did you take a new move? Did we decide what that move was gonna be?
[KEITH overlaps] Oh, that's Tenacious.

KEITH: [overlapping] That's ten- yeah, I took Tenacious, I really liked that idea.

AUSTIN: Okay, cool. I'm just gonna clear out your playbook advancement, but yes, I like that a lot.

KEITH: Oh, yes! Thank you.

AUSTIN: Cool, go ahead and give me that scramble. Or you- you didn't just do it, there it is. Alright, four!, so that is... but it's controlled, so that's not that bad. Um... you hesitate, withdraw and try a different approach or else do it- oh, did you use the plus one? Did you get the plus one die on that?

KEITH: I did, yeah, that was- I got a two, a three and a four.

AUSTIN: Alright, cool. So, ummm.... What I think happens here is, the- this is about time? You get them all set up but the drill has begun breaking through, I'm gonna advance this four step clock that- when that advances all the way, it will have broken through.

KEITH: I have sort of a time based idea for why this is taking so long?

AUSTIN: Sure

KEITH: And- I know that the scramble is what failed, but I think that the wire that I got? Is *really fucking hard to move*, and like, it's super stiff.

AUSTIN: Yeah. That's still scramble though, that's like, you're dragging it through that place- yeah, totally

KEITH: Yeah, that's true. Yeah, yeah. But the actual wiring of the robot takes forever

AUSTIN: I see what you're saying, gotcha. Alright, gimme a rig!

KEITH: Uh, has anybody ever messed with... like, an electrical socket [AUSTIN laughs], or like a screw terminal?

AUSTIN: Not a screw terminal, or- no. [amused] I fucked with like-

KEITH: So when you replace an electrical socket, the way that it's hooked up usually is, there's a screw? And you unscrew the screw, and then sort of put the wire underneath the screw?

AUSTIN: Yes, and you twist it kind of- yeah, yeah, yeah, totally.

KEITH: I'm doing that, but I'm doing that with like, that mechs' heads. Like, I'm unscrewing them a little bit [laughs] and then I'm sort of putting it around, and then screwing them back in

AUSTIN: Right. [KEITH overlaps] So here's the things we know-

KEITH: [overlapping] And then I'm wiring them all together

AUSTIN: I know that you have your mech and we have the- Even's mech. I don't know if you have anyone else's mechs here which is *fine*, I'm just-

KEITH: Well, I have two mechs! That's enough

AUSTIN: I guess you maybe probably have Fourteen's. I don't think Grand took Fourteen's with them- mh! They might have.

KEITH: I have the Urbot, can I wire up the Urbot, use the Urbot's battery?

DRE: [softly] Please don't use my friendly robot as a battery.

KEITH: These are all friendly robots, that I'm using!

AUSTIN: Yeah but- but Even's is like, alive!

DRE: Yeah, Urbots have sentience.

AUSTIN: Yes.

KEITH: Okay.

AUSTIN: That's a big difference. Two is fine, I just wanted to get the picture right.

KEITH: Okay

AUSTIN: Or- I guess, Echo, is yours on board? [laughing] Is the Overture on board or did you bring it with you to dinner?

SYLVIA: I don't think I brought it to dinner-

AUSTIN: Okay, so you have three.

KEITH: I have three. Got it, great. So that's what I'm doing, I'm using their mech necks as screw terminals and wiring them all up together.

AUSTIN: Yup!

KEITH: And then- very carefully!- I'm gonna put it- just sort of like, put it in tpw spots on the wall, to like make a circuit out of the wall.

AUSTIN: Yeah

KEITH: So what are my effects? You said risky [AUSTIN overlaps] standard or is that-

AUSTIN: [overlapping] Risky- it's either risky standard or desperate great.

KEITH: What does great give me...? I always forget this.

AUSTIN: So- it's just more effect, basically. So, in this case, the standard will demagnetize this thing? But it won't- here's what i'll say really cleanly? Standard will erase the progress that's been made but it will not be enough to get this thing off the ship, you'll still need to do one more thing to do that- someone will. But the- but great would blast it away.

KEITH: Okay.

AUSTIN: The difference between risky and desperate is *pretty big* [laughs]- in terms of if things go bad.

KEITH: Just- does, uh... does tinker help here? With clock segments?

AUSTIN: Umm... I'll- hm... not enough. It would but not enough to change it from one effect to another

KEITH: Okay, then I'm gonna do... um, desperate great.

AUSTIN: Love it. I love it. Play that desperate shit out, y'know?

DRE: I mean, I will- how is- are you two on rig?

KEITH: I'm two on rig- I was gonna use a gambit.

DRE: Okay. I mean-

KEITH: And I know what my gambit is. Oh, I know what it- what it might look like.

AUSTIN: Sure

DRE: I was also gonna offero to assist you. I guess we could do both, if we-

AUSTIN: You could do both.

DRE: - if we wanna four-die this thing.

KEITH: That would be *nuts*.

AUSTIN: That's a lot of die.

KEITH: So what's your- what's your help suggestion?

DRE: Uh- [KEITH overlaps] I mean-

KEITH: [overlapping] 'Cause I know-

DRE: I think- like, my Urbot is still back there with you

AUSTIN: Yeah, totally

DRE: Like, I think it could just continue doing stuff

AUSTIN: [laughing] It could like, hold the flashlight for you, [DRE chuckles] or help you move the cord around...

KEITH: Yeah. So i- what I had in mind for my gambit was, um... y'know in a movie when like, you've got power and it's like "Oh, it's just not enough!" when someone hits something?

AUSTIN: Yeah

KEITH: To get- so I think that the thing that I hit- um, [chuckles] I basically electrocute myself to add voltage to the...

AUSTIN: *Great*

KEITH: - The thing? That's my gambit.

AUSTIN: Okay, spend it and give it to me, gimme the roll! And Dre, are you spending- are you taking the stress?

DRE: Yeah, yeah, yeah

KEITH: Two sixes!

AUSTIN: *Holy shit*. Two sixes on a desperate great.

DRE: Worth it.

AUSTIN: So worth it. Let me just read here real quick, just so I'm very clear. "On desperate a six is you do it, with a critical as you do with increased effect" Uh... that's *incredibly* good. Fuck. [KEITH laughs] Alright. What- so yeah, you *blast* this thing off. I think that you give it that extra juice, it runs through you- you somehow manage not to take any damage from that? Um- and we just get a shot of- again, it's like, internally it's a very chaotic shot? It's like, you're wrapping these things in wire, you hit the button, the Urbot goes like "BRRrrrrr". And then we get a wide shot, and it's just like, a little spark? Almost like a spark in the sky, like a line gets drawn through the World Without End, and a spark happens off in the sky? It's the Drillbot disconnecting and going "Poof..." and falling into the water below. Um... and then we get the duel style horizontal shot of the World Without End and then the flying V- which I've already said the name of, the Ebony and Ivory. It's a black and white vessel.

KEITH: How fun is it that it's a guitar-shaped thing named after another music thing- [AUSTIN overlaps]

AUSTIN: [overlapping] After a different music thing- it's extremely good... [amused] It's a piano music thing, but named-

KEITH: It's a piano song, but with a guitar...

AUSTIN: Yeah!

KEITH: A guitar shape...

AUSTIN: Totally, it's perfect. Um- and we need to do an engagement now. The good news is, by solving this drill dilemma you're in a *much* better place to do this, because your engines are not fucked up. So. we need to talk about engagement real quick! I know we do it every session- or every arc- but always good to talk through it one more time. Y'all need to choose what your method is to engage, to engage with. You have some choices here.... It is either- I'm looking for that list. Here they are. [pause] So again, the engagement here is you're beginning to try to escape with the crate of whatever the fuck it is you have? And your mission is to go pick up Echo from dinner, and then get this thing back to space, to the

Wandering Sea, reunite it, free it from whatever this cube-situation is, and- and you'll have won the day. Um... your options for engagement- and your most immediate obstacle is the Ebony and Ivory- Assault: so violence to the target. Deception: lure, trick or manipulate. Infiltration: trespass unseen- which I don't think is possible [DRE chuckles]- Mystic: engage mystic ways or powers. Social: negotiate, bargain or persuade. And Transport: carry cargo or people through danger. Which is the most obvious one. Each of those has a detail you have to fill in? Let me know the ones you're thinking of and I'll explain what the detail is.

KEITH: Um... I'm leaning with- towards either the first one or last one, either do violence or...

AUSTIN: transport, right.

DRE: Yeah, I'm- I'm in the same way.

AUSTIN: For assault the detail I need is the point of attack, and transport I need the route and the means.

KEITH: Hm... so here's a thing, I know a good point of attack, and it has to do with knowing about guitars

AUSTIN: [laughing] Okay, that's- [sigh, DRE cackles]

KEITH: Gibson guitar... heads-

AUSTIN: Uh-huh. *Uh-huh*

KEITH: -are constantly breaking, 'cause the angle? Most guitar heads are flat- like, parallel with the neck? Or like, at the same angle as the neck. Gibson guitars go down a little bit, and they're constantly breaking [laughs]. And that would be a really good place to start our attack, it's the weakest part of a Gibson guitar. Flying Vs are Gibsons

AUSTIN: I will say, this is not a reverse flying V. Which means the the front of the ship is the V, and the head of the guitar neck is *behind* the- it's the safest point

KEITH: Yeah, yeah, yeah

AUSTIN: So the engagement there would have to be like. "We're gonna maneuver around it somehow and hit it in the butt" y'know?

KEITH: In the butt, right in the butt [DRE laughs]

DRE: In the butt!

AUSTIN: [amused] In the *butt*. [DRE Giggles]

KEITH: Yeah. We could even consider trying to snap it right there, where probably the engines are, right? Or some-

AUSTIN: Some sort of thruster, or engine or something back there. Probably. Probably. Or maybe it's not, maybe it's like- y'know what I think it is actually? I think that that is it's-

KEITH: It's a podracer and the wings of the V are where the engines are?

AUSTIN: Yeah, 100%. And the back is the bridge? And it like- it's like king of above a little bit? It's like a Star Destroyer, a little bit

KEITH: Yeah

AUSTIN: But also- that's also like the launchpads for the drills. The drills actually launch from various points on the neck? Each fret-

KEITH: [overlapping] Where the tuning pegs are.

AUSTIN: *Exactly*, [DRE laughs] each tuning peg is a drill that can detach and shoot off, yes.

KEITH: This is the perfect spaceship

AUSTIN: It's *so good*. [DRE and KEITH cackle] It's honestly perfect...

DRE: I can't lie, I kinda wanna fuck up this spaceship.

KEITH: I kinda wanna fuck up the spaceship too, yeah. They've sent a drill to destroy [AUSTIN overlaps] our fishing ship?

AUSTIN: [overlapping, amused] Alright, great. So that's- you gonna assault? You gonna do the- you have the point of attack.

DRE: Can I- can I make a pitch for opening salvo here?

AUSTIN: Pleeese! 100%!

DRE: Um... as the drill- as Gig pops the drill off, I want to use our arms to basically snap that drill up and then throw it back at the engines.

AUSTIN: Yes. Yes, 100%. *100%*. This is that good good shit right here. [laughs] Echo in the chat says "Please fuck up the spaceship as far away from my parents' house as possible" We will see how this roll goes! [DRE cackles]

KEITH: I don't know-I don't know, that thing falling from the sky might sort of- it might distract from your current situation.

DRE: That's true

AUSTIN: It totally could, it totally could! So-

SYLVIA: Don't break their house!

KEITH: I won't break the house but I might [DRE overlaps] break the yard.

DRE: [overlapping] What about that swingset on the backyard?

KEITH: Yeah

SYLVIA: No! [AUSTIN laughs]

KEITH: Okay

AUSTIN: Alright, so the detail we have, um.... We're gonna need item loadout, so think about how much stuff you wanna be carrying with you?

KEITH: What- again, can you remind me the downside to having a higher load?

AUSTIN: Stealth. It's stealth, it's about stealth mostly? Or- it can be about weight, that can be like- if you're doing a marathon, I'd be like "Oh, but you have all that shit on, that's gonna cause a complication for you" y'know?

KEITH: Yeah. Y'know, I've gone light load every single time and it's never helped, so I'm gonna go normal load this time.

AUSTIN: Alright. So normal- remember, you get a bonus thing because the World Without End now has... 'Loaded for Bear' has the special armor. Do y'all just remove- like, pull off the tattered rags to reveal your matching armor?

KEITH: Yeah, yeah, yeah, yeah! [DRE chuckles]

AUSTIN: Okay. Two-

KEITH: Which we decided are basically the- are gold zental suits from-

AUSTIN: [overlapping] Yeah, 100%. Yeah they're like zental suits mixed with Destiny armor. [laughing] Which is already a pretty close comparison too- here's a question! Does Brighton have on some variation thereof? Does Brighton have on the Green Ranger verison of the White Ranger Version of this? Does Kent-

KEITH: I think ours looks like the White Ranger's one, so I guess he's the Green Ranger- or does that make sense 'cause then they're the same ranger...?

AUSTIN:Right

KEITH: Can he be the Green Ranger when we're the White Rangers?

AUSTIN: I don't know. How 'bout this-

KEITH: I guess it doesn't- I guess- y'know what, it's Power Rangers lore, it doesn't matter

AUSTIN: It's doesn't matter, our lore is our lore [KEITH laughs]. Here's the- the extinguishing thing, he has like a tricorn hat on top of his armor

DRE: [whispers] *Oh my god*

KEITH: *Oh....* Sick, yeah. Does he have the flute- does he have the combat flute.

AUSTIN: He has a combat piccolo

KEITH: Okay. Excellent

AUSTIN: Yeah. Um... and it hangs from his neck.

KEITH: At least it's not a combat oboe, that's the hardest combat [AUSTIN overlaps] instrument to play.

AUSTIN: [overlapping] It's *so difficult*- well, unless you're real big and strong? I can imagine Siege from... [DRE cackles] Marielda having a combat oboe and just *wrecking* shop with it. [KEITH and DRE giggle] Alright, engagement roll. So it's a fortune roll-

KEITH: I think I control over those double reeds [AUSTIN laughs]

AUSTIN: You start with 1d for sheer luck. Then, is this operation particularly bold or daring? Take +1d. Is it overly complex or contingent on many factions? Take -1d- this is bold and daring! Take +1. I don't think it's that contingent on many factors.

KEITH: I don't think it's- no.

AUSTIN: It's pretty straight forward, so you're up to two. Does it expose a vulnerability of a target or hit them where they're weakest?

KEITH: Yes, it does!

AUSTIN: [hesitant] Yeah...

KEITH: Remember the thing about- it's a Gibson flying V guitar!

Aus: Yes, it is a Gibson- [KEITH overlaps]

KEITH: [overlapping] I knew where those are weakest!

AUSTIN: You did know that, so take three. [DRE cackles] Take another one, so that's up to three. Um... then, can any of your friends or contacts provide aid or insight for this operation? I don't think anyone can do that here. Are any enemies or rivals interfering in the operation? -1. This is not a surprise attack, they know this is happening? So that's gonna drop you back down, because Castlerose and two agents you've been fighting on and off in various forms across this- the history of this fucking game are here? In a new form? So that's back to two. Are there any other elements you wanna consider? Maybe a lower tier target would give you +1d, maybe a higher tier target would make it harder. So, the good news is you have all your shit intact. You have all- your crew level is intact and you didn't take damage from that drill, so I'm gonna give you the +1 from that. So, engagement roll is three dice. Who wants to roll it? Also- wait, is there anything- is there anybody who has sort of engagement skills

KEITH: Uh, I do not.

AUSTIN: Snatch and Grab does not work here, this is an assault plan, not deception, infiltration or social...

DRE: Yeah...

AUSTIN: And I think, Even, your speed thing only happens with-

DRE: Yeah, when I'm actually doing rolls

AUSTIN: Right, exactly. Like an actual roll, not a- yeah. Alright!

KEITH: Do we get a gambit from the double-

AUSTIN: Nooo, that's the- desperate rolls don't generate gambits unless you are Grand Magnificent.

KEITH: *Ohhhh*, maybe that's what I'm thinking of.

AUSTIN: Yeah, Grand himself has the ability to generate gambits on desperate rolls

KEITH: I thought it was the double critical that did it

AUSTIN: No, just a six- it's a six on risky rolls, normally

DRE: Oh, but you do take XP for rolling desperate, right?

AUSTIN: Yes, yes yes. So take- put XP *wherever* you like, Keith

KEITH: Okay. Um... put- Oh! Including in Insight, Prowess or Resolve?

AUSTIN: Yeah, totally.

KEITH: Sick

AUSTIN: I'm pretty sure that's right, in a desperate roll

KEITH: I'm gonna do it

DRE: Yeah... I can't remember if it anywhere you want or if it's in the thing-

AUSTIN: [overlapping] Oh, is it the thing you rolled? That's probably what it is, it's in the thing you rolled. So, it's in-

KEITH: Okay, and that is rig, so I can put it in Insight?

AUSTIN: Yeah, yep, that makes sense. Which is- hey look, you're already building that up pretty good

KEITH: Yeah

AUSTIN: Alright, gimme a- so, somebody roll three dice. [pause] Alright! You're piloting, right? So.

DRE: Uh...

AUSTIN: That's a five, that's not bad! Mixed result, you're in a risky position when the action starts. So what happens here- the drill salms into the weak point? But does not- it does some damage and it like- they spin, they do like a tailspin across the ocean? But they don't fall in, y'know what I mean? But you're able to get out in front on them, and so now... I'm gonna add a new clock and it's a *big one*, this is the mission clock, this is the fucking thing. Um... boom, mission clock. In fact- actually, this might not be enough, I might need a bigger clock than this. No, this is fine. This is fine, I thought about the amount of time we have.

KEITH: You could add a bonus slice

AUSTIN: Yeah- y'know what, maybe i'll do that.

KEITH: Out a lil' bonus slice in there

AUSTIN: Actually- y'know, this is what we're gonna do. There's gonna be two clocks: first clock- simple, lil' four step clock!- is going to be the "Pick up Echo" clock [DRE laughs]

KEITH: My favorite- that's my favorite dance, by the way. The four step

AUSTIN: The four step, the lil' four step.

KEITH: The lil' four step!

AUSTIN: Alright. So, speaking of Echo! So y'all zip past the Ebony and Ivory, and begin heading towards Perigian as the Ebony and Ivory begins to kinda spin back into control and give chase, but y'all are on your way. Alright, back in the Reverie household. You're eating dinner at this point, and everyone is getting a little- a little, y'know. It's one of those things where like, your aunt came over, and then there's someone else over, and people are watching Jeopardy in the other room... this scene should feel a lot like the scene where Cat's Cradle showed up in Seiche- on Gift-3? That's sort of like a dinnertime scene- except no one shows up to ruin anything this time. And... I think we do just get a sequence of- I think Ballad is like-

AUSTIN (as Ballad): I'm gonna go up front and, uh... stretch my legs. Hey, Echo, you wanna... you wanna join me real quick?

SYLVIA (as Echo): ... Sure!

AUSTIN: And like, go out to the front porch, y'know. Um... I think as soon as you step on the front door, it starts to rain a little bit? It starts to drizzle. And he's just like -

AUSTIN (as Ballad): Ugh, figures... I'll be quick. I just wanted to say... I know how things are right now, and I don't know what's coming next. I don't, y'know- I mean, I have some ideas, but... uh... I just wanted to say that- [sigh] hm. I hope you know how much I care about you, and... that all this shit is nothing. Y'know? Like- [huffs]

AUSTIN: And you can't quite tell if he's struggling to be honest, or if he is... bullshit- like, it's- it should be hard to tell, whether or not this is honesty or- honesty that he doesn't know how to deal with, or if it's bullshit, y'know?

SYLVIA: Yeah, for sure. Um... I don't think Echo has like a verbal response? I think what they do is, when he's kinda like... waffling a bit, they cut him off and just hug him?

AUSTIN: Uh-huh.

SYLVIA: And... pat him on the back and just goes-

SYLVIA (as Echo): Just stay safe, okay?

SYLVIA: And that *a*lso has that kind of air of...

AUSTIN: Yeah

SYLVIA: ... half and half? But there's definitely something there.

AUSTIN: [sigh] He's just like-

AUSTIN (as Ballad): I love you a lot. And this is gonna be *shitty*- this is gonna be *shitty*, Echo, *this is gonna suck*. I fucking hate this, alright? Like, I'm not- I'm gonna go put on that jacket, and I'm gonna go to work. But I fucking *hate* this.

SYLVIA (as Echo): [laughs softly] I mean, at least we're on the same page about one thing

AUSTIN (as Ballad): [laughs, then takes a deep breath] Why did we have to come to *these fucking planets*...

SYLVIA: To be fair, they kinda- they got the jump on us

AUSTIN: Yeah, they did.

AUSTIN (as Ballad): [sigh] Alright, um... look, you should go wait for your people, they're on their way. Alright? I shouldn't be telling you that. Um...

AUSTIN: And he like, sends over coordinates for like, the closest dock where you'll be able to get picked up quickly?

AUSTIN (as Ballad): Alright?

SYLVIA (as Echo): Alright... um... I'm just gonna go- I'll go say bye to everyone then.

AUSTIN (as Ballad): Yeah. Same

SYLVIA (as Echo): Take care of yourself, okay?

AUSTIN as Ballad: yeah, i'll wait- yeah.

AUSTIN: And then he just waits out here in the rain for you to go say goodbye, and then like... after you do your goodbyes? He goes in to do his.

SYLVIA: Ohh. I, really quickly, am gonna use communicator...

AUSTIN: *Uhhh*

SYLVIA: To say "Hey. You guys need to not go to this dock"? And it's the one that he gave me.

AUSTIN: *Uh-huh* [DRE laughs]

SYLVIA: "Because they know you're going there"

AUSTIN: Okay!

SYLVIA: And that's- listen. If that bites me in the ass, that bites me in the ass!

AUSTIN: Yup! Uh-huh! I getcha!

SYLVIA: It's- y'know, it's one of those things where I can't trust him all the way and it *sucks*

AUSTIN: Uh-huh, I get you, and it's gonna immediately be clear whether or not he has telling the truth, so

SYLVIA: Mh-hm

AUSTIN: Alright, so you send that in to Even?

SYLVIA: Yeah

AUSTIN: Alright

SYLVIA: And Gig too. I think Gig can hear it as well!

AUSTIN: Everybody on the- okay. Cool. [DRE and SYLVIA chuckle]

KEITH: Thanks. I feel so lucky

SYLVIA: Hey! I'm trying to patch things up a bit after I said I didn't trust you on that one planet, but didn't actually *say* it.

AUSTIN: [chuckles] Prefect

SYLVIA: Y'know, it was just kind of in my brain, but for some reason it's made things awkward.

AUSTIN: Perfect. Alright, so... back on the ship. We're- now there's like, low- y'know, the ship is just being chased across the ocean, across a bunch of other little vessels- or other islands, rather. I said vessels 'cause I'm imagining that, again, parts of Perigian have crash landed and- kind of islands have formed around them, and have turned into little- y'know, one family of islands, like the Maldives basically? [laughs] so what are y'all doing to try to put distance between you and the ship behind you? I think it's mostly Even's question, as pilot here.

DRE: I mean, here's the thing- I can fly really fast, Austin.

AUSTIN: Yeah, I've heard.

DRE: I don't know if you know this about me.

AUSTIN: Uh-huh!

DRE: I can make the things that go 'vroom-vroom' go even more 'vroom-vroom'.

SYLVIA: [laughs] You can add another 'vroom'.

DRE: Yeah.

AUSTIN: Uh-huh, totally.

DRE: It's a silent 'vroom', and that's why it's effective.

AUSTIN: Right- well-

DRE: What the fuck am I talking about-

AUSTIN: I don't even fucking know! [DRE cackles] You tell me!

KEITH: You were talking about how many vrooms your... your spaceship can do.

AUSTIN: Which sounds like a lot! So the first thing is, I've switched out this four step clock with this six step clock... because- [SYLVIA laughs] because that was absolutely not a lie, that was absolutely your big brother-

SYLVIA: [overlapping] I know...

AUSTIN: -giving you a heads-up as to where to go and get out of here safely?

SYLVIA: I know....

AUSTIN: So I increased that clock from a four to a six! But, Even...

SYLVIA: [laughing] The *second* I said it, I was like, *ughhhh*.

AUSTIN: Of course! But that was the right play, that's the right- that's interesting and good.

SYLVIA: Oh, for sure. It's- it's the most interesting storytelling.

AUSTIN: Totally. So, Even. I'm guessing this is just a helm from you?

DRE: Yeah... [AUSTIN overlaps] and I guess-

AUSTIN: [overlapping] I said just, but holy shit, you got a lot of dice.

DRE: I got three helm!

KEITH: Why don't- uh... why don't we continue to evade- can we do both of the clocks at once, where I go to get Echo while Even continues to evade this ship?

AUSTIN: Uhhh- that's the same clock.

KEITH: That's the same clock? Oh, is it just- I thought it was one for one and one for another.

AUSTIN: No, there's one clock on the table right now.

KEITH: Okay.

AUSTIN: The pick up Echo clock- is basically the like, put some distance between you and them to get Echo on board.

KEITH: Okay.

AUSTIN: Uh- y'know, without taking damage.

DRE: Sure. Is there- I know you said this is like a big, empty field where we started, as we're moving through stuff, is there... [AUSTIN overlaps] I guess, does it become anything besides an empty field?

AUSTIN: [overlapping] At this point you've just- yeah, yeah- I mean, at this point you're just over the ocean. You're over the ocean, heading towards perigina, over a bunch of little islands and shit. But there's not like, big structures, you know what I mean?

DRE: Right. So there's nothing we can- like, there's not the equivalent of moving into the asteroid field to... [AUSTIN overlaps, unintelligible]

AUSTIN: [overlapping] No- not down on Brighton, no, right? Like, it's a big ocean world- I mean, I think-

KEITH: Is- because we're a fishing ship, can we play sort of chicken and get close to the water?

AUSTIN: Sure.

KEITH: Is that possible?

AUSTIN: Your space fishing ship? But- sure. I think this fishing ship has probably done some... water fishing once or twice. So yeah, you can totally do that.

DRE: *Oh*, what if it's- we're getting down, close to the water, and we're using the arms to like, kick up a bunch of water?

AUSTIN: *Oooooh*, that's good.

KEITH: *Ooh*, that *is* good.

AUSTIN: I like that.

DRE: Yeah, so it's like, masking where we're going.

AUSTIN: Okay, totally. Yeah, let's do it.

KEITH: This is like... squid ink.

AUSTIN: Uh- totally!

DRE: Yeah!

AUSTIN: So this is helm? Helm work for you, Even?

DRE: I think so. And this is risky... standard?

AUSTIN: Risky standard. Is this a speed-focused roll? I think so, this is about getting there quickly, even though you're using the arms and shit this is still a speed roll. So you've got potency, which means it's gonna be... I'll say it's risky great?

DRE: Cool.

AUSTIN: Uh... alright. [pause] also, I need to look at what your engines look like. Alright, fours, some fours. Your engines are only level one, which is *not where you want them to be*, necessarily. So I think that that- but it's great, so that's still a success, which is good- it's like, a pretty meaningful one. So here's what I think happens is like, you begin to... spray the water up? And you look back and you see that the V part of the flying V has turned bright, glowing red, and it's heating up? And is just like, instantly evaporating all of the water on front of it- which actually produces all this scary smoke behind you- or like, steam behind you. And it like, emerges from the cloud of steam and gets closer to you. So you advance this clock, but because you only got a four it did not- you did not get great effect, you only got standard effect, so I'm only advancing it by two... um- so it's getting closer to you, and if it touches the ship, it will do some damage with the heated V, basically.

DRE: Okay...

AUSTIN: Um, it's like- I'm trying to think of an equivalent... it's like a heat blade or something, y'know? [DRE chuckles] Y'know, a heat blade.

DRE: Yeah!

KEITH: Yeah.

DRE: But ship-sized.

AUSTIN: But ship-sized- but a big, ship-sized one. Uh... what's next, what's your next play here? You can see that it's prepping to send another Drillbot at you.

KEITH: Am I still there with the mechs?

AUSTIN: Yeah, totally.

KEITH: Okay, just in case.

AUSTIN: I mean- yeah, where do you wanna be? I think it's probably been a few minutes here. Heav you put them back in their launchpads, basically? Or have you kept them with the engines- at the engine room? As like- y'know-

KEITH: Uhhh... I think I've kept them. Like, I knew that this ship- if we knew about the ship [AUSTIN overlaps] we knew that they had other drills...

AUSTIN: [overlapping] Are they like- are they like, loaded onto the hovercart for easy transport, at this point? Is there like [KEITH overlaps] a mobile battery thing?

KEITH: [overlapping] Oh, that would be nice, yeah. Like, I can bring it anywhere that needs to be electrocuted!

AUSTIN: Kent is like...

AUSTIN (as Kent): Gig, you always take me on the strangest adventures!

KEITH (as Gig): This one's- this isn't that strange yet. There's room for this one to grow.

AUSTIN (as Kent): Oh. I- I can imagine. I think I'm gonna go attend to the big concrete cube and see what that whole thing is about.

KEITH (as Gig): Yeah? oh, that's great.

AUSTIN (as Kent): Uh- I'll be in the cargo- or, I'll be in the middle of the plankway, then. Because that's where we stored it, instead of a cargo hold! It is much safer!

KEITH (as Gig): It's much safer!

AUSTIN: Great

KEITH (as Gig): Sounds like there's some attitude there, that's fine.

AUSTIN (as Kent): no, no, no, it's- again, very strange adventures, I have a great time.

AUSTIN: And then- he says that, and then we cut to two Drillbots being launched? And heading your way. What do you do, Even, as the pilot?

DRE: Uh....[humming a melody] uh- [KEITH overlaps]

KEITH: [overlapping] Do we-

DRE: Go ahead, Keith

KEITH: Do we have- I can't remember what it's called, but y'know when you have like a rock on your tail, and you drop that hotstuff out of your butt? You're-

AUSTIN: Chaff?

KEITH: What is it called?

AUSTIN: Chaff

DRE: Yeah, chaff

KEITH: They're called chaff?

AUSTIN: They can be- it's a countermeasure of some sort. [DRE and KEITH overlap] It's a chaff or a flare

KEITH: [overlapping] Countermeasure, yeah!

DRE: [overlapping] A lotta-

AUSTIN: Either if those work.

DRE: A lotta ship butt talk today [KEITH cackles]

AUSTIN: *I don't know*, I don't know what's up with that.

KEITH: Ships have always had butts and it's only now that we're finally-

DRE: I- listen, I was on a plane at six thirty, that's my excuse [AUSTIN overlaps]. [laughing] I don't know what's going on with Keith...

AUSTIN: [overlapping] That's a good excuse. In any case the answer, sadly, is no.

KEITH: Okay

AUSTIN: No, you do not have those. Even, what's up? Give me some shit.

DRE: Hm... are they shooting for a particular part of the ship?

AUSTIN: Uh- yes? But it's not clear at this point which. You could do a... you could do a study action or gather information roll to find out what's going on, what their plan is? Or find out what all their techniques are, if you want?

DRE: Yeah, I think that would be... good.

AUSTIN: Alright, so what are you using to do that?

DRE: Um... I think the way that Even's able to do it- it like, goes back to his ability to connect with machines by being a hybrid?

AUSTIN: Oh, sure.

DRE: And then he can like- he can kinda like, use half of his brain to autopilot the ship, basically, and use the other half to- paying attention to what's going on behind the ship, and kinda figuring out what their tactics are and stuff.

AUSTIN: Totally. So is that study, then?

DRE: I think so!

AUSTIN: Alright, yeah, give me a study. And this is just a- this is now a risky standard. Whatever, just roll study.

DRE: Okay

AUSTIN: And success will let me- oh, six! Look at that! That will give you basic information and then you ask follow-up questions also! Alright, so... part of this is also knowing from the last like, 27 days of what this fight has been like? So you recognize that it has both types of Drillbots available. The ones I've talked about before, the magnet ones, and also the piercing ones, the ones that stick in. it is launching both a piercing one and a magnetized one right now. The magnetized one is heading back to the engine room, the drill one is heading to the cargo bay, where presumably they think you've put the cube. You also note that the- uh sorry, not drill, the bracket one, the one that's gonna pierce and put in the brackets- you also know that the bracket one has carrying capacity. It has like, a boarding party on board. Or at least it has the ca- the space for one? Y'know, it has the compartment to hold a boarding party. Um... so that's headed your way also. You *a/so* know... I mean, let me just double check to see if this thing- and I've already told you about the flying V like, heat-torch thing? Um.... I think you're able to scan it and get three life signs? There are three people on board, there is Miss's Castlerose, who is the captain- Captain Castlerose now? And there is McCartney and Wonder, who are the two remaining musical hitmen? Previously they were... god, they were the Count- no they were- it wasn't count based, it was Duke, the Duke, it was... oh god, I forgot who the three characters are. It was Mingus, Charles Mingus, and it

was.... Uhhh I forget who the third of the trio was! But you killed one of them. Echo killed one of them. And then they changed in the Holiday Special into David Bowie and Freddie Mercury, and now, in their newest forms as Paul McCartney and Stevie Wonder.

DRE: Is this- is this the three that are on the ship, or that are on the drill?

AUSTIN: On the- they are on the ship. You do not sense any organic lifesigns on the drill that has a carrying capacity. Um- but hey, on a six? It's torch units, it's reprogrammed torch units on their way.

DRE: Okay. Uh- is the thing that we did against the previous magnet drill... like, would that still be effective? Can they like-

AUSTIN: That will work on the other magnet drill, for sure, but it will not work on the bracket drill, 'cause that one actually brackets in if it hits.

DRE: Sure

AUSTIN: And then, finally, it is definitely in conversation to another ship? It is in conversation to a ship called The Prince Elect, and that is- that is Ballard's ship, it's registered as Ballard's kind of flagship. So that's- unless there's other questions, that's what you know.

DRE: Hm... yeah, I think that... covers what I would want to know?

AUSTIN: Alright!

DRE: Uh... and you said the magnet is just going for the engines again?

AUSTIN: Magnet to engines, bracket to cargo hold, yeah

DRE: Okay. Um....

KEITH: They fucking think it's in the cargo hold! See, man? I fucking knew it.

AUSTIN: They do, yeah, 100%!

DRE: [overlapping] Nailed it [laughs] I guess- Gig, would it be possible for you to just keep this kinda like, anti-polarity thing going?

KEITH: Well, I can help- I could do that for the one that's coming back to where I am, but I can't do that for this other one.

DRE: Right. But can you do that and then leave it, and just let it run? Or is that something that you have to keep an eye on?

KEITH: Um- its just wire, so I could just permanently demagnetize the whole ship. So it's like itd bump into the ship and then just fall off? [cackles]

AUSTIN: So that's the thing, I think they'd have the ability to re- I mean, it's still metal, do you know what I mean? You'd have to cut that- or, here's what ill say. Yes, you could do that? But you'll have to keep this device active. Do you know what I mean? Which means you could not [KEITH overlaps] use your mech while it's active.

KEITH: [overlapping] Oh, I have an idea!

DRE: Hm... what if I got the ship like, wet with all this water to better conduct the- [AUSTIN overlaps] whatever current you're pumping out, yeah.

AUSTIN: [overlapping] As a counter.

KEITH: The... the other thing is, I could make a remote that turns it on and off.

AUSTIN: Totally. That's a good call.

KEITH: Let me see if there's anything here that I could do.

DRE: Yeah.

KEITH: I'm gonna do that.

AUSTIN: Uhhh, yeah. That's a rig roll, right?

KEITH: Yeah.

AUSTIN: Uh, what are you- can you mark off something in your stuff to note this is- repair tools or something?

KEITH: Yeah, I could use spare parts.

AUSTIN: Spare parts, perfect. Perfect, perfect, perfect.

KEITH: Um... alright, and it's still risky standard?

AUSTIN: This is risky standard, yeah. The risk again is that this takes long? It's a situation where you're like "Oh, hold on, I got a plan!" and Even is just continuing to fly straight while you do this

KEITH: Oh, okay... five.

AUSTIN: Alright! So... I think you manage to build this thing, but... and again, this is something you could resist, it does take you too long, and the bracket one hits the cargo

hold. You could resist that outcome, you just have to tell me how you do it and then resist using, let me say... insight, because that's where your rig is.

KEITH: Um... tell me about the effects again, of resisting? I take stress.

AUSTIN: You take stress, yeah. [KEITH overlaps] But you get to basically say "No, that didn't happen".

KEITH: [overlapping] How much-

AUSTIN: You roll whatever the chosen stat is, the stat that I'm saying- in this case it's insight, so you'd be rolling two- and it's six minus whatever your highest-

KEITH: [overlapping] That's three.

AUSTIN: No, it's not, it's two. It's-

KEITH: Oh, the highest one, not the marker, got it, yeah

AUSTIN: No, it's how many skills you have inside of a given attribute.

KEITH: Ohh, okay.

AUSTIN: It's like- if you look at it sideways it makes sense? Do you know what I mean?

KEITH: Yeah, yeah. And then- what is the way you calculate the stress you get?

AUSTIN: It's six minus whatever your highest roll is.

KEITH: Okay, deal. Let's resist.

AUSTIN: Alright, give me an insight roll. And what's it look like to resist this? Is it just like "no, I can go faster"?

KEITH: Um- y'know what I think it is? Is I can build it while I'm moving.

AUSTIN: There you go!

KEITH: I can do it while I'm running to the other room.

AUSTIN: Yes, I love it, great. You're just like, pulling shit out of your backpack and like-

KEITH: OH NOO!

AUSTIN: Bro... you rolled a two. That's four-

KEITH: [softly] One, two, three, four, full stress.

AUSTIN: *Full stress... Gig.*

DRE: Oh....

AUSTIN: *Gig, you got a status.* So...

KEITH: And I'm gone for forever, right? I'm just out.

AUSTIN: You're gone for- you're out! I'll say that there will be a point- I mean, I'll read again from the book [laughing]. Oh, *boy*, that was a roll you made! You made a roll! You just ran for it!

KEITH: See, this is what I meant before when I was like "No, I don't wanna choose to take a status here"? This is fucking why! [AUSTIN overlaps] Shit like this!

AUSTIN: [overlapping] When you suffer status you're taken out of action. You're left for dead or otherwise trapped out of the current conflict, only to come back later, sheken and drained. When you return you have zero stress and your vice has been satisfied for the next downtime! That's nice. Status conditions are *permanent*, your character requires a new personality quirk indicated by their condition, and they can earn XP by using it to 'cause trouble. When you mark your status condition your character cannot continue... blah blah blah. So this is only your first one, and you have a choice. Cold, haunted, obsessed, paranoid, reckless, soft, unstable or vicious.

KEITH: I'd already picked one

AUSTIN: Which one was it?

KEITH: Reckless

AUSTIN: Okay. Well, what's it look like in this immediate moment?

KEITH: In this immediate mo- I mean, I just showed- like, I can fucking build this thing while I'm running [AUSTIN overlaps] to this place, there's a boarding party...

AUSTIN: [overlapping] Right. In a spaceship! Uh-huh!

KEITH: -in a spaceship, there's two drills...

AUSTIN: Yeah

KEITH: - I probably bump my fucking knee on the thing that I put in the hallway... [laughing] uh... but I think it's- [AUSTIN overlaps]

AUSTIN: [overlapping] Like, stumbling over the Urbot- Yeah.

KEITH: I think it's a pattern of... increased risk to myself, and then like- when it backfires here is like doubling down

AUSTIN: Right

KEITH: But I didn't- the shit that I was doing that got me hurt is because I wasn't... I wasn't taking enough of a risk, I didn't go fast enough

AUSTIN: Right

KEITH: -my ideas weren't weird enough.

AUSTIN: Alright, so here's the thing that I think happens here, you rush into the cargo hold the second the magnet one attaches? You hit the button- it works, that device works!- it zapps off the magnet one. Brighton has picked- Kent has pulled out a sword and is ready to stand down whatever comes out of this fucking drill that's attached? And then it pistons in- it's not even drilling, it's like a... it's like a pile-driver, it's like a pile bunker, it just punches- like the Big O's fist, y'know what I'm talking about?

KEITH: Yeah, yeah, yeah

AUSTIN: And it's just like, 'pop', and it just catches you. It just catches you, and knock you the fuck out. I'm not gonna give you damage here 'cause that's... not how this works? But it just- it's one of the things you were moving too quick to see it? And Kent goes like, "Gig!" and then- knocks you out, there's dust in the air everywhere, and then four Torch units walk through the dust and appear. And we get Kent on the communicators, to you Even, and he's like

AUSTIN (as Kent): [panicked] Ohhhh, no. [KEITH laughs] Ohhh, no! Gig- there are four- ahhhh!

AUSTIN: [amused] And then immediately begins to run back up to the- he grabs Gig! Grabs Gig, grabs Gig by the arm, *will not* leave Gig back here, and begins dragging you up and away as the Torch units begin their- they *completely* ignore you and Kent, Gig, and just begin scanning all of the cargo to try to locate this thing that they're looking for. Their eyes all light up- and, in fact, it's three white ones? It's Pear, Celery and Asparagus? And then there's one big red one that's steps up at last and is like [laughing] too tall for this whole place, honestly? They didn't know what the inside of this ship looked like! And that one is Mutton. Adn- and the four of them are like- immediately begin looking through the cargo. Um... at this point, Even, I'm gonna say that Kent shows up with- dragging Gig? Gig on top of the big cube, the big concrete cube? [laughs] and pulling you towards the- into the cockpit, basically, so that you're all together. And Kent is like-

AUSTIN (as Kent): [breathless] There are four Torch units, and they're all in the cargo bay... all I have is a sword [DRE cackles]

DRE: Um... okay, what is in the cargo bay right now?

AUSTIN: Um... good question.

DRE: Because we have our mechs-

AUSTIN: You have your mechs!

DRE: - hooked up to this weird battery thing.

AUSTIN: Uh-huh

DRE: We have the...

AUSTIN: It like- you know what, you have a galley, which means you have food- food is in there? Um, here's- I mean, here's the actual thing I think? Your cred is in there.

DRE: [whispers] Oh, shit... Okay.

AUSTIN: Like, the group cred is in there. We talked, remember- there's literally the big pile of money that Advent gave you forever ago? [DRE chuckles] It's *literally* in there. So there's stuff in there, I get where you're going for, I'm happy to go down that road. But that's what's in there right now.

DRE: Okay, um....hm

AUSTIN: It's three cred, I'm looking at it on the sheet.

DRE: Is that all we have in our ship's stash??

AUSTIN: [laughing] Yeah dog, it ain't good. Y'all have not been saving

DRE: Well shit. That's nothing [AUSTIN and DRE laugh] I'll just take that out of my stash and replace it!

AUSTIN: Uh-huh? Alright!

DRE: Yeah, so... here's what I do. How do Torch units like, remain... like, what's their propulsion like? I can't remember. Do they have legs, are they-

AUSTIN: They have legs, they're humanoid.

DRE: Okay, gotcha.

AUSTIN: I like that- it's funny because I've been playing XCOM 2 a lot- if you search for "Spark Unit XCOM 2", uh... I'm gonna see if it's the default image or not, but- yeah! Basically- not the one with the two eyes, uh... man, all these ones have the cool two-eye one. Um... that one has [KEITH overlaps] benders-

KEITH: [overlapping] The four-eyed one? Is that what you're talking about?

AUSTIN: No, it's actually- it's just like a box, it's just like- I think I put it somewhere, I think I put my big beef unit somewhere. Hm. Why did I say it like that? [DRE giggles] I really, really, truly should not.

DRE: I get it, talking about ship butts and now-

AUSTIN: Uh-huh

DRE: [AUSTIN overlaps] -beefy robots...

AUSTIN: [overlapping] Oh, here we go! Go into our chat, into our Twilight Mirage chat? And search for 'beef' [DRE snorts and chuckles]

SYLVIA: Such a good sentence!

KEITH: Is it not... this one? Is it this one?

AUSTIN: I'm just gonna reshare this image.

KEITH: 'Cause that looks like a beef to me.

DRE: Is it this one? This one looks like a beef.

AUSTIN: It's not that one, 'cause it doesn't have those eyes! It's- yes yes yes yes. Dre, the one that you shared.

DRE: Okay.

AUSTIN: I'm sharing this one now, again. This is- that's Mother's Glory and Beef. [amused] From my personal playthrough of XCOM 2. So it's just like, one big eye- remember they have like, the big- I mean, the difference is that they have the big PAR light, they have the big stage light on their heads? But y'know, they have those good reverse-joint legs, and like- or consulate bent legs and stuff like that. So yeah, that's them, they have big PAR light and are currently using that at like a log illumination to kinda light up this cargo hold.

DRE: Okay, um-

AUSTIN: Are you just gonna drop them?

DRE: No- god, Austin, that's too boring. Here's what I'm gonna do....

AUSTIN: Hell yeah, I fucking love this game.

DRE: [cackles] Uh, first I'm going to- we have engines in the back on the ship, right?

AUSTIN: Yes.

DRE: And cargo hold is like-

AUSTIN: I think it's maybe on the bottom side. You pulled up the cube to begin with into there.

DRE: Yeah.

AUSTIN: So yeah.

DRE: So here's what I'm gonna do. I... flip the ship, so it's upside down but at an angle?

AUSTIN: Hell yeah. Uh-huh?

DRE: Uh... and actually dip the back end of the ship, where the cargo hold door is, into the water?

AUSTIN: Uh-huh...

DRE: -flip the door open, and then gun the engines.

AUSTIN: What's the- [DRE overlaps] Okay

DRE: [overlapping] So basically- so basically I'm dumping it into the water?

AUSTIN: Uh-huh! Filling it up!

DRE: Like, basically- instantly flooding it?

AUSTIN: Yep.

DRE: Kicking- like, leaving the door open and then just like, jamming on the engines.

AUSTIN: To leave them behind, basically?

DRE: Yeah.

AUSTIN: Okay, cool, love it. You probably splash them up along with everything else inside!

DRE: Sure, yeah.

AUSTIN: Give me- gimme a fucking helm! [laughing] Risky standard. This is- this might be desperate great too!

DRE: [laughing] Yeah dog, this is desperate, come on! [cackles]

AUSTIN: This is desperate, this is desperate, this is desperate. Uh... this is desperate- I'll give you great in this 'cause it's wild as shit. [DRE cackles] And I'm here trying to reward creativity. For the culture- so yeah, desperate great helm, you've one gambit left I'll remind you, and as always you can push yourself for more dice.

DRE: I'm gonna go for it. Well that's a four...

AUSTIN: Oooh, okay, on desperate four ain't good! So on four on a desperate... you do it but there's a consequence, you suffer severe harm, a serious complication ocuuuurs

KEITH: Is this the one where we all die? [laughs]

AUSTIN: [amused] This could be the one where y'all die, 'cause here's what happens.

DRE: [softly] I got it...

SYLVIA: Oh my god...

AUSTIN: Okay, we'll see, but this is what is gonna happen. Um- you're going to get the effect- so you're gonna knock them out, they're gonna get pushed out of this thing for sure, 100%. But the engines are gonna take damage from this. And separately- this is desperate, this is *desperate*- oh, y'know what? You didn't fail, so just the engines. The engines are gonna take damage from this.

DRE: Okay

AUSTIN: So that is the complication.

DRE: I'm gonna resist that.

AUSTIN: Alright! So yeah, you resist with helm- with Prowess?

DRE: Yeah.

AUSTIN: Go ahead.

DRE: And- when I resist the consequences of piloting I get an extra 1d, [AUSTIN overlaps] from my piloting experience.

AUSTIN: [overlapping] Hell yeah. Nice work. That's useful. [pause] Give me that roll!

DRE: [quietly] Three...

AUSTIN: Alright, still three! Three stress. You're up to five now?

DRE: Yes.

AUSTIN: Yikes. Okay!

DRE: Eh, that's fine [chuckles]

AUSTIN: It's fine. So what does this look like? The engines were supposed to get flooded from this, and they would've just stopped working? So instead, they don't. What happens, how do you prevent that from happening?

DRE: Um.... I think I just have to kick the engines on in a way that I know it's gonna- like, they're fine for now, but that's probably gonna do some long- like, we're gonna have to make some extra maintenance on them for them to heat up and thrust that quickly.

AUSTIN: Right.

DRE: Like, the metal is used to being able to- it can withstand that high heat, but you have to build up to it? But with this I'm just gunning it as fast and as hard as I can, I I know that it's probably not great for the long term like, state on the ship.

AUSTIN: Okay, cool. You still get great success so- you still get to advance three, so you only need one more, uh... clock tick, and you'll caught up to Echo. And we should bounce over to Echo really quick! Um... Echo.

SYLVIA: Yeah!

AUSTIN: Do you like evens or odds?

SYLVIA: [sigh] I mean, I have a friend named Even, so....

KEITH: [DRE overlaps] Yes, so odds.

DRE: [overlapping] You're gonna pick odds, yeah. [DRE and KEITH cackle]

SYLVIA: yeah, I'll go with odds then. Um...

AUSTIN: [amused] Alright, so odds is gonna be good for you, evens is gonna be bad for you.

SYLVIA: Okay...

AUSTIN: That's an even.

DRE: Goddammit! [cackles]

SYLVIA: Why do I listen to you guys??

AUSTIN: Uh, so you were- what's the other dock like, the one that you decided to go to?

SYLVIA: Uh- I think it's probably like... maybe it's like, the reason that this one is not as good to go to is that it's a little bigger and busier [laughs]

AUSTIN: It's bigger and busier and there you see the Prince Elect, the flagship of Ballard Reverie [laughs]

SYLVIA: God.

AUSTIN: Which is... this like, really cool- it's so hard for me not to just get back to the same reference points on ships, so if people have good ideas on what Ballard's ship should look like, I'd love to hear it. Because, especially with the name the Prince Elect, I just immediately- and specially given it's an Advent ship- it begins to look like the ships from Legend of Galactic Heroes, the Imperial ships from that? Which have these like, long, knife-like shape? Um... but I'd love to hear another- a different take on this. Maybe it has cloth involved. Maybe it straight up has sashes along the sides that almost like- in fact, yeah, there we go. It has sails, it like operates as a seaship? But also can operate as a sun- as a solar sail type situation. Or I guess a Mirage sail. And it's on it's side, so it like a curved bottom, a flat top, and it does have like a knife-like design, but then imagine kind of like- almost like drapes hanging from the sides? That can either be positioned to be above it, for piloting in the sea, or on its sides, like wings almost- clothed wings on its side, for when it's in space. And it's docked in the ocean here? [laughs] and you just walk into this dock, and you're in the dock where they're gonna pick you up! Um... and then you make eye contact with two people. The first is someone you know, and who you kinda have an okay relationship with! And that is Lumen Lux. Do you remember Lumen?

SYLVIA: Oh... not of the top of my head.

AUSTIN: So... Lumen is- was someone from the town of Polyphony. They were the former Volunteer of Sage who moved to Polyphony and had a really good time! After they left Polyphony, Ballard got in touch with them and reconverted them back to the Volunteers of Sage. which you know that they are not necessarily- they were not- they were like, ready to not do that for a while? But Ballard is very convincing. The other person is... Cat's Cradle, who is the person- the member from the Concretetown Particulars who helped bring together this group to begin with. And both of them are like, clearly waiting for Ballard to arrive? Um... and there's some other people moving around the ship, you can see them boarding and getting ready? There's definitely a person who has like- it takes you- like, you definitely do a double take, 'cause you haven't seen them yet, but they're one of the many many many

cultures that make up Advent, and they are... like a fire person, inside of a suit that's like, containing them. And imagine almost like- what is that species? From Starbound.

SYLVIA: The... Novakids I think?

AUSTIN: The Novakids, yeah. Almost like a Novakid type species. Um... they definitely have a- less wild west, more retro-futurism? More like, in a big astronaut suit, just like star stuff floating around in there? So there's those three people, and clearly they're waiting for Ballard to show up. And Lumen spots you immediately and begins to wave at you? Because they don't know what you're here for! What do you do?

SYLVIA: Oh boy! I'm tryna think of like... what a good gesture for "please stop doing that" is. Um.... [sigh] Can I make like, a little wave and then like a shush thing? And just be like.... [laughs]

AUSTIN: Alright, give me a roll.

SYLVIA: Like "please don't!". Uh, I don't know what that- would that be...?

AUSTIN: I think there's a couple of ways to do what you're doing, right?

SYLVIA: Yeah

AUSTIN: uh, you could do... that could be consort or sway? Or it could be.... [sigh] I'm tryna think if skulk- could it be skulk?

SYLVIA: I can think of was to make this more skulky. Um...if-

AUSTIN: It's up to you, you're the one whos gonna roll these dice.

SYLVIA: Yeah, I would- I mean, so the other things you said I have cero in, [laughing] so i'd like to make it more skulky.

AUSTIN: Alright, tell me how it's skulky, make it skulky for me.

SYLVIA: I think it's- y'know what I think it is? I think its - like I said, it's busy here? I think... what I try to do is get lost in the crowd in the sense that they lose track of me through a crowd of people [AUSTIN overlaps] moving around here, y'know?

AUSTIN: [overlapping] Yeah! Totally. Yeah, alright- so give me that. And this will, if it suc- it's risky standard- if you succeed, this will advance your "pick up Echo" clock, so. Alright, that is a four! So, here's what I'm gonna say. I'm gonna say you advance that clock successfully, which means that you're now ready to be picked up, you've kinda disappeared into the crowd? And are like, at a- you're at like a little unused harbour in this docking area? And you can totally be picked up? But your position is immediately going to be desperate, because

both of these ships are going to be in your tail, immediately. Uh- you could resist that! I don't know what your stress is at, but.

SYLVIA: Uh- I actually could resist that, my stress is only at two right now!

AUSTIN: Alright! How do you resist it? Is it misdirection, is it- [SYLVIA overlaps] It's Prowess, for sure

SYLVIA: I think- yeah, I was gonna say I think misdirection, I think I lean into the sort of smoke and mirrors aspect of trying to slip away here.

AUSTIN: Do you like, send them the wrong direction- do you make it look like you're going one way and you go the other?

SYLVIA: Yeah, I- [laughs] y'know what I could do is- [laughs] oh, no, I don't wanna do that. Nevermind. I was gonna stick my jacket on somebody, but then I was like, they'll shoot them.

AUSTIN: They'll shoot them and *you'd lose your jacket!*

SYLVIA: Well, I already gave away the one-

AUSTIN: Oh, true!

SYLVIA: This is the leather jacket.

AUSTIN: [SYLVIA overlaps] This is the other jacket!

SYLVIA: [overlapping] I- I've gone through a few jackets...

AUSTIN: Right

SYLVIA: So... ugh. Yeah, I'm trying to think of ways it makes sense to misdirect them, that already continue down the path I've been going down here?

AUSTIN: You could put it on something that's not a problem if it gets shot, so much.

SYLVIA: [laughing] Are there like... [sigh] no, 'cause I don't wanna- hm. I gotta just think of what I could do that with. We've already established that robots are people, [AUSTIN overlaps] so I don't wanna do it-

AUSTIN: [overlapping] There are robots that are people, there absolutely are robots that are people. However, there are also robots that are not people, right?

SYLVIA: Okay

AUSTIN: So maybe it's like a- like imagine, what if a mop could just mop by itself.

SYLVIA: Yeah, I was gonna say maybe it did just work things...

AUSTIN: Yeah, jan- or like a floor-waxing machine.

SYLVIA: Oh, prefect.

AUSTIN: y'know what I mean? With that big, round base that just- and you just like, hung the jacket on it basically? [laughs]

SYLVIA: Yeah, yeah

AUSTIN: Perfect. Uh- give me a prowess resist! [pause] Hey, cero stress! You rolled a six! [laughing] see, you could've done that, Keith!

KEITH: Yeah, I could've done that...

AUSTIN: That could've happened! [DRE cackles]

SYLVIA: Does that mean I clear stress too? 'Cause I got a crit on that?

AUSTIN: No, you only get a crit if you get two sixes.

SYLVIA: Oh, no- yeah yeah.

AUSTIN: Uh-huh, uh-huh.

SYLVIA: Well, y'know what? I'm still gonna take it.

AUSTIN: [amused] Alright, so you're just waiting patiently by the dock to- waiting to get picked up. So y'all will not be on a desperate position as you do this. [DRE laughs] alright!

SYLVIA: You're welcome.

DRE: [laughing] Ship just pulls up leaking water out the back door.

AUSTIN: Uh-huh, 100%!

SYLVIA (as Echo): What did you *do*??

AUSTIN: And Gig is knocked the fuck out? Gig, you will reenter the scene not quite yet but soon. Soon.

KEITH: 'Kay

AUSTIN: [laughs] *God*... y'know, what- yeah, tell me how this goes. As you board.

SYLVIA: Oh- me? Um... [laughing] oh, it's a lot of just like- [DRE overlaps] y'know like-

DRE: [overlapping, amused] Yeah, you just walk into the wet cargo hold, you see all of our mechs hooked up to a battery.... [laughs]

AUSTIN: *Uh-huh.*

SYLVIA: It's... it's not quite the gif that everybody uses from Community of Donald Glover walking in with the pizza, [DRE and AUSTIN laugh] but spiritually? It's very similar. Like, emotionally, it's on the same wavelength of just like 'Oof'- like a sigh relief- and then Echo opens their eyes and sees what's going on, and is just like, [pained sigh]

AUSTIN: Yeah, I wanna say maybe one of the Torch units, Pear, held on with one arm? It's like, completely destroyed by the power of the water, but it's just like "Mergh...br..." and it shuts down? [SYLVIA chuckles] It's dripping wet, water is coming out of it's pores, basically.

SYLVIA: If like- if this was made into some sort of gif I would have like an extended bit of Echo just trying to like, [laughing] kick it off of the ship without getting in the water. Just like, the very awkward- starting with trying to kick it and then getting like a broom or something to sort of pry it off before getting inside, so there's nothing left of it...

Aud: Perfect, good. [sigh] Do you have words for Echo and- or for Even and... Kent? Also Gig is just like- I think that Kent has grabbed one of the beanbag chairs from the lounge to rest Gig on [DRE cackles]

KEITH: Come on, man.

AUSTIN: What? That's good! What would you prefer?

KEITH: I just-

DRE: [overlapping] Forgot about our beanbag chairs...

KEITH: It'll hurt- my back will be all stiff! [KEITH and AUSTIN laugh]

AUSTIN: *God...* [sigh] Alright- so do you all have words at this point, before you take off again?

SYLVIA: [laughing] Y'know, I think- there's very much a look of like... "I thought you were supposed to-" Like, it's communicated nonverbally, but it's "I thought you were supposed to be good at piloting" towards Even [DRE chuckles] In a very friendly way, but still a little like, skeptical of him? Like, okay...

DRE: Uh... I think Even says-

DRE (as Even): Look, whatever happened here was probably still less awkward than your dinner.

SYLVIA (as Echo): Y'know what? Surprisingly, n- I think you're wrong on this one! [DRE laughs] Weirdly enough!

AUSTIN: Oh, god... alright, so maybe we take a- maybe we stop here tonight? It's been two hours of episode in the can? Um- here's where we should leave it, I think, is... we get the ship beginning to take off and get- probably- Even, do you get clearance to go to space, or do you just go?

DRE: Who do we have to get clearance from?

AUSTIN: Perigian... Y'know, Perigian board of whatever, the Perigian air traffic control?

DRE: Uh... are they cool with us or not?

AUSTIN: Perigian is neutral on this conflict.

DRE: Then probably yes.

AUSTIN: Okay. So yeah, they'll give you clearance, and then- and then I think we get them saying like "Word Without End, go ahead to launch route 007" and then we get the same person or another person going like "Yeah, that's right, that's right. The Prince Elect, um... you're next in line. Launch route 008" and we get the two ships pulling into launch configuration and beginning to take off.... We have Ballard in the cockpit- or not the cockpit, the... the bridge of the Prince Elect, we have a wounded- but not out of the fight- Ebony and Ivory behind that, and then we kind of zoom out and we get like, the reverse Star Wars shot of looking up into space? And we see that the Herringbone Flotilla is slowly moving in this general direction, which is the actual flotilla operated by the former excerpt Will, leader of the Herringbone Flotilla. And I think we just get a picture of her- we get an image of her, and she's... she's *really good*, she is- she has like, silver hair, she's like... old? She's in like her sixties probably? Seventies? She's *older* than that, she looks to be in her sixties! She slike Signet in that she's been around for hundreds of years? And is... I think of her a lot as being a One Piece character?

SYLVIA: Hell yeah

AUSTIN: She has like a blouse- like a white pirate shirt on? With like, the fringe? And then she has her Herringbone trench coat that she wears as a cape, with like a golden buckle? And she absolutely has a green pirate bottle that she's taking swings of, and her leg up on the- like, a console of a spaceship- and there's a person on the console whos working the navigation system, but she's like, full on captain Morgan, one foot up there, leaning forward looking out the port window as the icons select- y'know, or the various ships in this game kinda get highlighted by the hud... and she like-

AUSTIN (as Will): Hm... I wonder if I'll get to be involved.

AUSTIN: And we cut back from her as the World Without End kind of lifts off and separates from... Brighton- from below, up into space. And I think we're gonna call it there! [SONG "The Notion" STARTS PLAYING] Well be back to find out if y'all can bring whatever's in this cube you haven't opened yet to the Wandering Sea. Oh, also, I think this is probably where Gig- you start to wake up. Like, you feel yourself move- you feel yourself get into space? What do you say as you wake up?

KEITH (as Gig): How are we gonna get this drill off??? [AUSTIN laughs]

AUSTIN: And Kent is like-

AUSTIN (as Kent): You did that already...

KEITH (as Gig): No no, the second one!

AUSTIN (as Kent): Water, was the answer. We used water. It got very wet.

KEITH (as Gig): Wait- the ocean isn't wet.

AUSTIN: Ugh. [AUSTIN and DRE cackle] Gig would say that...

[SONG "The Notion" PLAYS TILL THE END]