

## **PALISADE 47: A Palette of Colors Pt. 2**

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### **Recap**

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

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

**Jack:** Palisade is a place where political action is no longer reserved for the what if.

**Austin:** Mhm.

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**Ali:** Palisade is in a position where even if it gets rid of the Bilats, it also needs to find its, like, planetary identity.

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**Art:** But what if everything's just like, spookier?

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**Janine:** My goal is to mend the scattered shards of divinity.

-

**Dre:** To be a force for good acknowledged across the galaxies.

-

**Ali:** Connect to the wider network of Millennium Break.

-

**Keith:** To expose the worst crimes of the Bilateral Intercession on Palisade.

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**Jack:** Bring the Principality on Palisade to justice.

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**Art:** I want to rule Stel Kesh.

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**Sylvi:** My bloodied hands must break the wheel.

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

## Introduction

[4:04]

**Austin:** Welcome to Friends at the Table, an actual play podcast focused on critical worldbuilding, smart characterization, and fun interaction between good friends. I am your host, Austin Walker. Joining me today, Ali Acampora.

**Ali:** Hi, my name is Ali. You can find me on [friendsatthetable.cash](https://www.friendsatthetable.cash), I host a show called Gathering Information. I'm on the Stardew streams that get linked there sometimes. I'm just saying things. Go to [friendsatthetable.cash](https://www.friendsatthetable.cash).

**Austin:** That's our Patreon, where you can support us.

**Ali:** Uh-huh. Uh-huh, yeah. [laughing] I should have said that, instead of pitching Stardew Valley.

**Austin:** Well, you know. Nah, Stardew Valley's great.

**Ali:** But I wish I was fishing right now, sorry to say.

**Dre:** Damn.

**Austin:** Damn. I wish I was fishing. Damn. True.

**Art:** Damn, I wish I was fishing right now.

[**Keith** and **Ali** laugh]

**Janine:** We did do a big fish-off yesterday, and two people got matching bucket hats.

**Keith:** Yep.

**Sylvi:** Oh my god.

**Dre:** Wow.

**Keith:** And matching Omni Geodes.

**Ali:** Uh-huh. [laughs]

**Sylvi:** The bucket hats are more exciting to me, personally.

[**Ali** and **Jack** chuckle]

**Austin:** It's true. Also joining us, Andrew Lee Swan.

**Dre:** Hey, you can find me on Twitter at [@swandre3000](#). Is it safe to plug certain things by the time this goes out?

**Keith:** Should be.

**Ali:** It's safe to—yes, yes it is.

**Dre:** Yeah.

**Art:** Prob—unless you're talking about something real different.

**Dre:** No, I'm talking about the merch that will be in the store by the time you hear this at [friendsatthetable.shop](#).

**Keith:** [mimics air horns]

[Sylvi laughs]

**Janine:** I've got to write those descriptions, but otherwise I think we're all good to go, right?

**Art:** Yeah, frankly, it's probably old news by the time you're hearing this.

**Janine:** No. [laughs]

**Ali:** No, well, fine. Y'know. [laughs]

**Art:** All your cool friends already have it, they're wearing—they've been wearing it, they've been wondering where you are.

**Dre:** Yeah, you fuckin' nerd. Go to [friendsatthetable.shop](#). [laughs]

**Art:** You fuckin' nerd.

**Ali:** Woah.

**Sylvi:** Wow.

**Keith:** Sorry, let's see if I can do this. This is—I'm gonna try this out.

[soundboard plays audio recording of Keith saying "Fr-Fr-Fr-Friends at the table dot..."]

**Keith:** Shop!

[group laughter] [someone claps]

**Austin:** Live edit. That worked.

**Sylvi:** Well done.

**Austin:** Yeah, yeah. That was Keith Carberry.

**Keith:** Hi, my name is Keith J. Carberry. You can find me on [x.com](#) and [Cohost.org](#) at @KeithJCarberry. You can find the Let's Play that I do at YouTube dom—[.com/RunButton](#). May is subscribe to RunButton on YouTube month or else.

[Ali laughs]

**Art:** Woah!

**Sylvi:** Woah!

**Austin:** What's the else?

**Keith:** So you gotta sign up or else.

**Sylvi:** [laughing] The killer is around every corner!

**Keith:** Please don't find out what "or else" is.

**Austin:** The killer? Oh no!

**Janine:** So that "YouTube dom" thing wasn't a spoof, that's—

[Sylvi and Keith laugh]

**Ali:** Huh?

**Sylvi:** No, I heard it too, Janine.

**Austin:** Uh-huh. That's what the "or else" is.

**Janine:** [laughs] I heard you hear it, Sylvi, and then I was like, hm...

**Austin:** Yeah. Uh-huh.

[**Sylvi** and **Ali** laugh]

**Keith:** Also, listen to Media Club Plus. Not or else. That's fine. People are doing that, so I don't have to threaten anybody.

**Sylvi:** No, or else. Or else from me.

**Keith:** Well, people have been doing it, so it's not as urgent.

**Dre:** Yeah, you fuckin' nerd. You're not listening to Media Club Prus?

**Keith:** Media Club Plus?

**Dre:** I can't even talk right. I don't—you're a nerd.

**Sylvi:** Youtube dom, Media Club Prus...

**Keith:** Please. This is what you're doing to Dre by not listening to Medium—

[group erupts into boisterous laughter]

**Keith:** [laughing] Medium Club. Hold on—edit that out or we're gonna get burned on that. People will be saying Medium Club Plus everywhere! This is a disaster!

[group laughter continues]

**Art:** "Oh, how was the episode this week?" Well, it was a real Medium Club Plus.

**Keith:** [laughing] Medium Club Plus, more like.

**Austin:** Why don't you just name it Large Club at that point? I don't know...

[group laughter continues]

**Sylvi:** Oh my god.

**Austin:** Janine Hawkins is here.

**Janine:** You don't want a do-over on that? You don't want to...

**Austin:** No.

[Keith laughs]

**Sylvi:** No. Keep it. Ship it.

**Dre:** No.

**Janine:** Alright.

**Austin:** That's content.

**Dre:** Let's do it live.

**Janine:** Alright, uh, I'm Janine, I'm at [@bleatingheart](#) on Cohost and stuff. I've been doing some streams. We've been playing some Stardew Valley, as Ali said. I also did a stream of a game called Life Makeover, where some things happen.

**Austin:** Is that the one with the haters?

[Ali chuckles]

**Janine:** You could call it a life makeover. Oh, yeah. Yeah, they—

**Austin:** Yeah.

**Janine:** Again, you know, I was like, maybe they won't say haters as much in the back half of this thing. They say it more. They say it like, every... So, haters beware.

[Austin laughs] [Ali chuckles]

**Janine:** You're in for a sca—I don't know. Whatever.

**Austin:** You're in for a scare, that's right.

**Art:** You're in for a scare.

**Janine:** I was trying to find room for some sort of, like, fake fumble about the things I do, like, start, mid...

**Austin:** No, you can't fake it. You can't. It has to—yeah, you can't...

**Janine:** No, you can't. You can't, and it's sad. It's sad, really.

[**Jack** laughs] [**Ali** chuckles]

**Janine:** Anyway.

**Austin:** Sylvi Bullet.

**Sylvi:** Hey. [chuckles]

**Art:** Hey.

**Sylvi:** I'm Sylvia. You can find me everywhere at @sylvibullet. Over on youtube dot dom, [stifled laughter in background] you can find a Let's Play of 999 that Keith and I have been doing on the Friends at the Table YouTube. That's been pretty fun. We finished one route, we're gonna get back to—we're getting back to it, I promise. And yeah, I'm on Medium Club. We covered everything.

**Austin:** Art Martinez-Tebbel.

**Art:** Hi, um, I don't know that there's anything else. I'm also on Twitter at [@atebbel](#), and Cohost at [@amtebbel](#). And I think Bluesky's just over.

**Austin:** You've been on Slow Knife.

**Art:** Oh, Slow Knife is still going on.



**Sylvi:** Oh, yeah, that is still going.

**Art:** Listen to that at [friendsatthetable.cash](https://friendsatthetable.cash) if you're giving us enough money. I don't know how much it is off the top of my head, [**Keith:** Five.] but if you don't see it, just give us more money.

[**Austin** hums] [**Ali** laughs]

**Keith:** It's five.

**Sylvi:** I agree.

**Dre:** Yeah, give us more money.

**Keith:** Try eight. Just try it.

**Art:** Oh, and check out our newsletter. You can follow our newsletter at [friendsatthetable.cash](https://friendsatthetable.cash) for no dollars at all, and you can find out everything we're doing on a given week.

**Janine:** It's true. It's free, it comes right to your email, it's in full, you don't even have to click a link, it's just right all there.

**Art:** Yeah.

**Janine:** I mean, you should click links. You should click all the links that are in it, but you don't have to click a link to read the links. It's efficient.

**Art:** Yeah. Whatever you want.

**Austin:** It's right in your email, yeah. And Jack de Quidt.

**Jack:** Hi, I'm Jack. You can find me on Cohost at [@jdq](https://cohost.org/@jdq), and you can buy any of the music featured on the show at [notquitereal.bandcamp.com](https://notquitereal.bandcamp.com). Last time I introduced myself, I said that I hadn't started writing the finale theme yet. Now I've written 45 seconds of it. Is that enough? No, but...

**Sylvi:** Loop it.

**Janine:** No, because it has to be 8 minutes long, right? Like the other one?

**Austin:** No.

**Jack:** Yeah, yeah, yeah.

[**Ali** laughs]

**Keith:** Contractually, it has to be as long or longer as your last song.

**Ali:** Uh-huh.

**Jack:** Yeah.

**Janine:** Our finale's gonna be a rock opera.

**Jack:** Oh my god. No.

**Janine:** Get on it, Jack.

**Jack:** I'm gonna personally trap Austin in hell.

**Austin:** Yeah.

**Janine:** Woah.

**Austin:** 8 minute intro...

**Art:** We should do a rock opera one of these days.

**Jack:** No!

**Sylvi:** No. I'll die.

[**Janine** laughs]

**Keith:** Die of excitement?

**Sylvi:** That's one way to put it.

**Austin:** The real funny thing would be 8-minute “previously on”s that Ali would have to put together three times in a row or whatever.

**Ali:** Yeah. Uh-huh. I would just start talking into a microphone. [laughs]

**Jack:** Yeah, this is just being cruel to the production team.

**Austin:** Yeah, mhm. Mhm.

## **Session Starts / Character Introductions**

[11:35]

**Austin:** Today, we are continuing our game of Questlandia, a game of ill-fated kingdoms, second edition by Hannah Shaffer and Evan Rowland. Our goals are to portray a world entrenched in conflict, to let the players make a difference, to connect the magic and the mundane, and to play to find out what happens. We should go over our kingdom and our characters before we delve into our first scene.

Our kingdom's name is Palisade. It has the following scores—or sorry, it has the ambition of control or unification, or “control, comma, unification.” It has a 2 in—numbers low equal more stable, numbers high equal more chaotic and dangerous. A 2 in war and conflict, a 1 in wealth and resources, a 1 in health and spirit, a 2 in unrest and revolution. Its features are norms are: “the Diadem; the Afflictions; it's in the Mirage; it's spookier—” Don Draper voice, “it's spookier.”

[Sylvi laughs]

**Austin:** Don Draper when he's trying to sell you cigarettes.

**Art:** Their kingdom is poison, ours is spookier.

**Austin:** [laughing] Their kingdom is poison, ours is spookier, yeah. Their cigarettes give you cancer, ours are spookier. “Doubt; revolutionary potential; the Delegate system;

disparate technologies,” and “basketball.” As—Sylvi, as you and I mentioned yesterday in our internal chat, appropriately timed for the NBA playoffs.

**Sylvi:** Oh, yeah. Bing bong.

**Austin:** Bing bong. That’s right. The terms and idioms that we have written down here are “Divine; do you have it; Bilats; the Cause,” and “the hors d’oeuvres are gone,” a thing I’ve already forgotten what it means, but that I thought was funny last time. Thisbe, tell me your name and pronouns, your role, your drive, your recent luck. Just read me everything on your sheet, honestly. Let’s just go through it.

**Janine:** Yeah, alright. I’m Thisbe, I’m she/her, I’m the messenger. A messenger? I don’t know how Questlandia—it’s not Dungeon World, so it’s maybe just a messenger. Drive is change, comma, progress. My wecent—wecent luck is...

**Keith:** What is going on today? [laughs]

[Ali and Sylvi laugh]

**Austin:** I don’t know.

**Sylvi:** So, what people don’t know is that, actually, everyone in your phones right now has one of those speech scramblers playing. We thought it would keep us on our toes.

**Jack:** Yeah, this morning I poured myself a glass of water, and my hand slipped, and I dumped the entire glass of water over my kitchen counter.

**Janine:** Oh no!

**Jack:** So I think there’s something in the... [chuckling] I think there’s something in the air.

**Janine:** Recent luck is good in a bewildering way. Strange luck, you know. Personality: gentle and powerful. Those are not opposites. I will fight you if you think they are opposites. Weakness—cheat: “break the rules, reroll any of your own dice.” Appearance: you know.

[**Jack** chuckles]

**Janine:** Relationships—Cori: “Cori has been poisoned by conflict, but she is not beyond saving.” Brnine: “Brnine has been my anchor,” and that is exhausted. Goal: “Mend the scattered shards of Divinity.” The obstacles are “some Divines and their shards are antagonistic, evil, or dangerous,” and “Thisbe is an outsider; why should she be the one to do this?”

**Austin:** And, at the very bottom of your sheet—

**Janine:** Oh, right.

**Austin:** Everyone should go over this too. Everybody has an aspect—yes.

**Janine:** [cross] I am in control of “it’s spookier.”

**Austin:** You are in control of “it’s spookier.” Alright. Let’s go to the right.

**Dre:** Hey, that’s me, right?

**Austin:** Mhm.

**Dre:** Okay. I’m playing Levitation Cascabel-Gardner, his role is the scout, my drives are adventure and wanderlust, my recent luck is just so lucky, bro. I’m here, I’m living the dream. My personality traits are daredevil and ambitious. My weakness is flee, which allows me to escape in body or spirit. My relationships are August Righteousness, and my thoughts on—is August them or him?

**Jack:** He/they.

**Dre:** He/they, okay. My thoughts on them are “now this is what a hero looks like.” And my other relationship with Eclectic, which is exhausted, is: “Eclectic seems cool enough, but he’s kinda boring.” [**Sylvi** laughs] My goal is to be a force for good acknowledged across the galaxy, and the obstacles in front of that are “death is a constant real threat.” I guess we can just leave it as death. Death is an obstacle.

**Sylvi:** Damn!

**Austin:** Yeah, death is an obstacle. Yeah.

**Dre:** And then “other people are already the hero here.” The feature that I have assigned, or picked, are the Afflictions.

**Austin:** Over to the right.

**Ali:** Yeah, I’m playing Calvin Brine, they/them. My roles are hero, inventor, warrior. My drives are change, progress, guilt, panic... [laughs]

[**Dre** laughs]

**Austin:** Hm.

**Ali:** My recent luck is “extremely,” my personality is daredevil and bumbling, my weakness is lash out: lose control, make them hurt. My goal is to connect the wider network of Millennium Break—connect to the wider network of Millennium Break. My obstacles are that the Twilight Mirage is impenetrable, and that Calvin Brine is impenetrable.

**Austin:** Calvin Bwine.

**Ali:** Calvin Bwine.

[**Sylvi** laughs]

**Ali:** [laughing] My relationships are, with Thisbe, my relationship to Thisbe is that we’re old friends, that is exhausted. I also have Eclectic, “Eclectic is a new crew member.” If you want more context with this, go listen to PALISADE.

**Austin:** Damn, true. Damn.

**Dre:** Put in the work.

**Ali:** And PARTIZAN. And then the thing that I have control over is health and spirit.

**Austin:** Health and spirit. Love it. Alright, Jack.

**Jack:** I am playing August Righteousness. August's pronouns are he/they. My role is rebel leader/cook. My drive is change and progress. My recent luck is lucky. My personality is ambitious and cynical. My weakness is menace: intimidate or threaten, which lets me win all ties from 1 to 5, because usually ties are sort of nothing happens. My relationships are with Levitation, and my relation there is "a skilled soldier with a bridge to the Mirage, but he's late to a long war, and I am not easily impressed." And then with Clementine, the relationship is—oh, and the relationship with Levitation is exhausted. And then with Clementine, the relationship is "a violent, unpredictable dog. So it's paying off tonight, but what about tomorrow morning?" My goal is "bring the Principality on Palisade to justice," and the obstacles there are "compromised leadership" and "it will be hard to actually capture them; they are slippery."

**Austin:** Someone's added the sweat emoji here.

**Jack:** Don't know who did that.

**Austin:** Don't know who did that. And you...

**Jack:** I'm gonna fucking get those war criminals.

**Austin:** Uh-huh. And what's the aspect of the kingdom that you are in control of, or that you are currently...

**Jack:** I'm in control of "in the Mirage."

**Austin:** Let's just go down here. Like clockwise, let's go clockwise. So, Sylvi.

**Sylvi:** Okay. I was like, aw, I'm gonna go last, this is great. Nope. So I'm playing Coriolis Sunset, pronouns she/her. Role, obviously hero. My drive is love and loyalty. My recent luck, I just put "lucky" and a smiley face, because I pulled a card and it said it's been pretty good. Personality, daredevil and protective. My weakness is lash out: lose control, make them hurt, reroll any of the opposition's dice. My relationships, first is with the Witch in Glass, which is just—all I wrote is "hate, hate, hate." And then Thisbe, my

relationship is exhausted, “Thisbe always looks out for me,” is the relationship there. My goal—we do goal and obstacles, right?

**Austin:** Yep, we do everything. Yeah.

**Sylvi:** My goal is “my bloodied hands must break the wheel.” Obstacles are: “How do you break the wheel from this place of relative peace?” and “Cori’s only skill is violence. Do you even know how to build something?”

[**Jack** and **Austin** chuckle]

**Sylvi:** I didn’t say I’m building a new wheel, though.

**Austin:** That’s true. That’s true. That’s true. And then, your facet.

**Sylvi:** Oh, right. My facet is war and conflict, because all I know is violence. [laughs]

**Austin:** All you know is violence. Yeah, as a reminder, I guess—thinking about it now, let’s be conscious of whether or not it feels like you end up answering your own questions as Cori.

**Sylvi:** For sure.

**Austin:** You know? Because Cori is very war and conflict focused. But—and if we do, we’ll end up trading out or tagging in whatever.

**Sylvi:** [cross] I’m happy to delegate to let other people control it a little bit more.

**Austin:** Yeah. And make sure you have something there, too. But you have plenty of other stuff that’s not that, so we’ll see how it goes.

**Sylvi:** Yeah.

**Austin:** Over to Keith.

**Keith:** Hi, I’m playing Eclectic Opposition, pronouns he/him. My role is detective, my drive is “adventure, wanderlust,” recent luck: unlucky. Personality is dramatic and jovial,



weakness is cheat. Relationships, with Levi: “New recruit is enthusiastic, but for what?” That is exhausted. And with Brnine, “I came to Palisade with a short list of who to trust, and Brnine was on it.” My goal is to expose the worst crimes of the Bilateral Intercession on Palisade, and the obstacles are “doubt runs rampant, people are closed off—is this the best use of your time?” and “the Bilats are covering up their misdeeds.”

**Austin:** And your facet?

**Keith:** Facet, oh, is revolutionary potential.

**Austin:** There we go. And Art. Last but, uh... maybe least in very particular ways, your character. Not you, though.

**Art:** Thank you.

[**Sylvi** laughs]

**Austin:** To be a hundred percent clear.

**Art:** That would be just a real bad start to the... [chuckles]

[**Austin** chuckles]

**Art:** I’m playing Clementine, Clementine’s pronouns are she/her. Clementine’s role is outcast, and Clementine’s drives are love and loyalty. Recent luck—

**Jack:** Can you talk about love there? I feel like I missed why you chose love in the last recording.

**Art:** Um...

**Janine:** Self-love is a kind of love.

**Art:** Yeah.

**Jack:** Yeah. Fair enough.

**Ali:** Or admiration? That's really what she's looking for, right?

**Art:** Yeah.

**Austin:** The love that a queen has.

**Ali:** Yeah.

**Art:** Yeah. The love...

**Austin:** The sort of love that causes your whole culture to shut down for a week if you die, and everyone mourns in public.

**Art:** Yeah. Looking at royal funerals like goals.

[**Jack** chuckles]

**Art:** Recent luck, lucky. Personality, dramatic and notorious. I feel like these were written for Clem. Weakness is lashing out. Relationship with August is "I won't be betrayed this time." And with Cori, "Nobody touches my stuff."

[**Sylvi** laughs]

**Art:** And that relationship is exhausted. Clementine's goal is "I want to rule Stel Kesh," just as it ever was, and the obstacles are: "Stel Kesh is out there and you were exiled anyway," and "has no skills, and incapable of learning new ones."

**Austin:** [hums] Right.

[**Keith** chuckles]

**Jack:** We cooked with some of these.

[**Ali** laughs] [**Dre** chuckles]

**Austin:** Yeah. And facet?

**Art:** Doubt.

**Austin:** Ah, good. Interesting that you have that, meaning Clem won't ask any questions about doubt. Clem doesn't doubt anything ever.

**[23:46]**

**Austin:** Alright, it is time to begin playing the game. We've been playing the game, writing those—if you need evidence that making characters is playing the game, just go listen to all the obstacles we wrote for every character. That's playing the game, as far as I'm concerned. However, roleplaying in Questlandia, on page 44, begins by saying "Questlandia has three chapters that follow your characters as they pursue their goals. Your character will have three turns before the game ends with an epilogue. During your turn, you're in the spotlight. You'll play out a scene that centers on your character, which begins with some roleplay, and ends with resolution. Everyone else will play as the opposition, describing the world, introducing narrative conflicts and roleplaying as people that show up in the scene. Let the most—" I'm gonna skip over some paragraphs here as they say things like "you can talk in or out of character," as we have established that as things we do all the time.

"Let the most excited player take the first turn with their character in the spotlight. After that, the turn continues in clockwise order." So that's the order we just went in. I'm gonna say sheet clockwise. Who is most excited? Who, for instance, maybe has a scene goal in mind? Everyone rate your excitement from 1 to 10.

**[Sylvi laughs] [Ali chuckles]**

**Dre:** Hm...

**Janine:** In what direction?

**Keith:** Personal excitement or character excitement?

**Austin:** Personal. It's personal excitement, right?

**Ali:** 6.

**Janine:** Is 10 high excitement, or 1, like, number one excited?

**Austin:** 10 is high.

**Ali:** 10 is high.

**Austin:** 10 is high.

**Dre:** Now, I'm excited. I'm like a 7 or 8 on excited.

**Austin:** Okay.

**Dre:** Now, if you asked me to rate if I have an idea of a scene of what to do first, that's a lower number.

[**Ali** and **Keith** laugh]

**Austin:** I was saying one way of checking would be that, but, let the most excited player take the first turn with their character in the spotlight.

**Ali:** I have a scene in mind, but I don't feel particularly excited. [laughs]

[**Sylvi** laughs]

**Austin:** Oh my god.

**Ali:** I can go. I'm just saying, people haven't said any numbers.

**Austin:** Let's go with Brnine.

**Ali:** Okay. Um, hi.

**Austin:** "Being in the spotlight—" Hi.

**Ali:** Hello. Hello!

**Austin:** "During your turn in the spotlight, your character will try to take a significant step towards accomplishing their goal." Your goal, of course, again, is to connect to the wider

network of Millennium Break. The small step—in order to—that step towards that goal is called a scene goal. “Your scene goal should always be risky or uncertain. Imagine you’ve already accomplished the easy parts.” They give an example here of a bad scene goal, like, “I want to let the guard captain know my name.” That’s not exciting enough. Their suggestion for that is like, it should be like, “make sure that the guard captain hires you on the spot,” or defame him and steal his job. Something like “I want to research the ancient technology in the imperial library” is too safe. Your goal should be “I want to uncover secret information in the forbidden archives,” right? So, big dramatic things. For those of you who have been playing Realis, this is me saying it should be a dramatic intent. This should be a big, interesting, dramatic thing. It shouldn’t be the same thing as your main goal, right? So your goal for the scene should not be “connect to the wider network of Millennium Break,” it should be...

**Ali:** No, yeah.

**Jack:** Ah, done!

**Austin:** Yeah, exactly.

**Jack:** Nice and sorted.

[Ali chuckles]

**Austin:** So, figure out what your scene goal is, and then tell the other players what it is, and then set up three—answer three questions. “Where are you, what are you doing, who are you with? It is a good idea to include at least one of your characters unexhausted relationships,” says the book. Because if they’re there, they can give you bonus dice when it’s time to do dice stuff.

**Ali:** Okay, so this might be a little out there, maybe we can talk it back, but I did want to try to reach out to Refrain.

**Austin:** Oh, interesting. Sure. Refrain the—one of the Afflictions?

**Ali:** One of the Afflictions, yeah. Which is the one that I've had the bond with throughout Palisade, I think.

**Austin:** Throughout—yeah, I believe that's...

**Ali:** 'Cause I—okay, so I was like, let me see if there are any of the Afflictions that seem communicate-y, [**Austin** hums] and I think Refrain is sort of, of the five, one of the most there, and I was like, oh, this is a win-win, because I can...

**Austin:** Mhm.

**Ali:** [laughs] I can also, you know. Continue that plot.

**Austin:** Yeah, as a reminder, Refrain is the one that you met first on Isle of the Broken Key. They are the sort of—you met them at first as a theater, a theater that emerged in a strange place. You walked—you felt yourself pulled into the theater, and there inside, you saw someone who was a member of the same species as our dearly departed Valence, a Nobel, and they were a sort of digital ghost, and what you learned was this Affliction is sort of like a corruption of a Divine, the Divine Antiquity, that was sort of like an arc—a living archive of people's memories. So cool, weird, theater Affliction that can summon up the ghosts of people from the Twilight Mirage era. But was not actually in the Twilight Mirage until—I guess now, right? Was part of the Palisade, you know, group, not part of the original Twilight Mirage group, so. But had been part of the Divine Fleet before that. So yeah.

**Ali:** Okay, yeah, what were the five core Divines, though? Because I was like, oh, Refrain, Reprisal, Chorus...

**Janine:** I have this open right now.

**Ali:** Okay.

**Janine:** I think there might be some overlap in what we want to do in some ways, maybe not goals, but in paths.

**Ali:** Come on down.

**Janine:** So we have Dust, right? Which is the Divine Reflection.

**Austin:** Mhm. That was the one that was big mummy—big dust mummy, y'all went down into the catacombs.

**Ali:** Okay, yeah we did that one, yeah.

**Janine:** Big mummy dust.

**Austin:** Big mummy dust, mhm.

**Janine:** Refrain, which was Antiquity.

**Austin:** Mhm.

**Janine:** Ravel, which was Logic.

**Austin:** Mhm.

**Janine:** Cleave, which was—

**Austin:** Which, I don't know that you've ever met Ravel. Ravel is the one on the map—and if you zoom in on the map, in the top left, the one that's like a big weird neuron, walking weird creature, like, looks kind of like a stick bug.

**Janine:** “A massive loose brain neuron prowling the hills and valleys,” you could say.

**Austin:** Yeah. Mhm.

**Jack:** [chuckles] Cool.

**Janine:** Quote to—I don't know when this... PALISADE 03: Today is a Monday. Thank you, fatt.wiki.

**Austin:** Yeah, I think I just read from my notes on that one, yeah.

**Janine:** Cleave, which is Decisiveness. That one seems bad.

**Austin:** Mhm. And Cleave was the—was Cleave the big dragon knife, the knife dragon? “What if a dragon was a knife” from the opening of Palisade?

**Jack:** Oh, yeah. Who we saw in the—yeah.

**Austin:** Yep.

**Janine:** Its pawn looks like, quote, “if a dragon was made of knives.”

**Austin:** Yeah. Mhm. Mhm.

**Janine:** PALISADE 01: Into the World Pt. 1.

**Austin:** Yeah.

**Jack:** Who has the invisible tricerataurs?

**Austin:** That’s Oversight.

**Janine:** That would be... Oversight, yeah, which was once the Div—wait, no, no, no, no—

**Austin:** No?

**Janine:** The tricerataurs is Ravel.

**Austin:** Oh, yeah. Right, right, right.

**Janine:** Because it’s the three horns of a non-binary logic.

**Austin:** The three horns of a non-binary logic, right, of course, of course, of course.

[Dre and Jack laugh]

**Austin:** Yeah, mhm. You know, not—it’s a—it’s a system of logic that has a third thing besides true and false. You know, normal stuff.



**Janine:** And the last one is Oversight, which was once the Divine Affection, which looks like a, quote, “slowly moving statue whose features are always fluctuating under a stone shroud.” Once again, PALISADE 03: Today Is A Monday.

**Austin:** We have not encountered that one in play in any way, in fact. That’s the one on the top right, the furthest—

**Janine:** They seem nice.

**Austin:** Yeah, they seem cool. I’m specifically thinking there of, you know when you see those sculptures that are like, it’s like a sculpture of someone wearing a shroud over their face, but the sculpture really captures the cloth-like nature of it, despite being made of stone?

**Janine:** Yeah. These go viral every so often.

**Austin:** Yeah, exactly. It’s that, except the stone changes and takes on different faces and stuff. And also, was a big Divine-sized thing, right? So, yeah. Was once the Divine Affection. So, those are the Afflictions. And I say that partly because I’m not in control of them. They are not mine right now, so someone has the Afflictions.

**Dre:** Me. I do.

**Janine:** Dre. Dre does.

**Austin:** Dre does. There we go.

**Dre:** I’m glad we have this page, because my ADHD medicine is out of stock, so this will be very helpful. [laughs]

**Austin:** Oh, bud. Yeah, absolutely.

**Ali:** Yeah, I was going off of the Five Afflictions thing that we’ve been putting in the dossiers. So it sounds like Antiquity is probably still on in theme. [laughs]

**Austin:** Yeah. I think that’s right. And it’s the one that you know.

**Ali:** Maybe Affection could be in there too, but also Refrain is probably the one I would be like “Hey, man. Come help me out.”

**Austin:** Uh-huh.

## **Brnine’s First Scene**

[31:56]

**Austin:** What is the scene? What is the—where are you, what are you doing, who’s with you?

**Ali:** So, I think that I’m, like, somewhere in—on the fields of Palisade somewhere. We last saw them at the Isle of the Broken Key, but I wonder if...

**Austin:** You didn’t. You saw them, like, wave at you.

**Jack:** Oh, yeah.

**Austin:** As you went to do the sun stuff, the stellar combustor.

**Ali:** Oh, sure, sure, sure.

**Austin:** They watched you go, basically, from below. I think at the time they were in the Shale Belt, or maybe near the Temple of the Threshold or something, but it can be wherever you want here.

**Ali:** Yeah, I just want to be, like, in the fields.

**Austin:** Yeah, Bontive Valley somewhere, maybe. That makes sense.

**Ali:** Yeah, going through, making the trek, the camping trip to go find a monster.

**Austin:** That’s kind of fun. Like, moving through fields and even maybe some woods, because there’s a report of the creepy theater, someone reported it in as being like, a few miles away, but you have to walk there for some reason. Like, it’s not a thing you can approach by ship, for some reason. You know?

**Ali:** Yeah, this is the little montage of going through things.

**Austin:** Yeah, yeah, yeah.

**Ali:** And I think, who am I with? I guess if I—if it feels thematically appropriate and you want to be on this journey, Thisbe, you can come here too, but I don't want to link the scenes if you don't want to.

**Janine:** Yeah, well, I mean, it's not like linking the—I can just be there, right? That's the game?

**Ali:** Yeah, come on up.

**Austin:** Yeah, you would still have your own scene, to be clear, later in this round.

**Janine:** Yeah.

**Ali:** Uh-huh. I would take Eclectic, if you're interested in some mysteries.

**Keith:** Sure. I like a mystery.

**Ali:** And then maybe... I want, like, a droid. I guess I have Asepsis. Asepsis is my droid.

[Sylvi laughs]

**Keith:** [laughing] "I want a droid."

[Ali laughs]

**Austin:** Oh my god.

**Ali:** Not like...

**Keith:** We're like a year late on you getting a droid.

**Austin:** [33:18] the whole season, yeah.

**Janine:** I mean, before that, you even had droids. You had the little lunch boxers.

**Austin:** Yeah.

**Ali:** Yeah, I had...

**Jack:** Bing 32.

**Ali:** Bing 32.

**Austin:** You had Bing 32.

**Dre:** Oh, yeah.

**Ali:** I still have one. I have the plant one.

**Austin:** Bing 32 underserved this season. We really did wrong by Bing 32.

**Ali:** Well, Bing 32 is for the people now. Remember how Bing 32's for the—

**Austin:** Oh, right.

**Ali:** Well, Bing 32 was always for the people. Whatever.

**Austin:** You, like, mass produced Bing 32s.

**Ali:** Uh-huh.

**Austin:** Bing 32 exists all through Millennium Break, you know?

**Janine:** I just want to put this idea into the universe of a bunch of Asepsis, little Asepsis drones, carpooling in a Bing 32.

[Ali laughs]

**Austin:** That's fun.

**Janine:** With the top open like it's a convertible.

**Austin:** Mhm.

**Keith:** When you say Bing 32 is for the people, you mean that like how stuff at Sharper Image is for the people.

**Ali:** [laughs] No, I mean that Bing 32 is open source.

**Keith:** Oh, okay.

**Art:** I'm sorry, Keith, who shops at Sharper Image?

**Dre:** People.

**Keith:** Um, dads?

**Art:** But like, in a broader sense?

**Keith:** I guess they count as people.

[Ali laughs]

**Sylvi:** Eh...

**Ali:** I like—yeah, it's fun to go to the mall and look at the...

**Austin:** Alright. What is the question? What is your scene goal?

**Ali:** Oh, my—well, speaking to them. [laughs]

**Austin:** Well, it has to be bigger than that.

**Ali:** Yeah. Um, I...

**Janine:** What do you want from them?

**Ali:** I would like to recruit Refrain to Millennium Break.

**Austin:** [hums] That's good. That's good.

**Ali:** [chuckles] That's been my goal the whole season. Let's fucking go. Who cares?

**Austin:** Yeah, okay.

**Jack:** It's so funny that your—that Brnine's, like, broad goal is connect to the wider network of Millennium Break, and step one is "I would like to bring in a hyper-local corrupted Divine."

**Ali:** Yeah. Who can talk to people.

**Dre:** You gotta start somewhere.

**Keith:** I just want to highlight what happened when I brought a slightly spacey rent-a-cop to the—people freaked out.

[Ali laughs]

**Dre:** Well, we also didn't know who you were. At that point.

**Sylvi:** Yeah.

**Ali:** I had just been on TV. I just got made for the first time in five years. It was a tenuous time.

**Janine:** Brnine also—didn't Brnine—didn't you specifically have a bond or whatever with Refrain?

**Austin:** Yeah.

**Ali:** We did, yeah.

**Janine:** Yeah. So this is like a friend. This is like if you tried to bring the cop in now, which would be fine, because...

**Ali:** [cross] I want to understand Refrain. I want to understand Lattice.

**Keith:** I'm just saying some of us are making natural connections out there, and some of us are like, "What if we got the monsters? What if we went out and got the monsters?"

**Austin:** Keith, some of us feel about cops the way you feel about...

**Janine:** [cross] Two of us are like “what if we got the monsters,” to be fair.

**Austin:** Right.

**Sylvi:** Yeah.

**Austin:** First of all, this is a ship of monsters. Two, I think many of the members of the Blue Channel feel about cops the way you, Keith, feel about Divines. Which is, there’s no good ones.

**Keith:** No, look, I get it, I’m just putting out parallels. Not contradicting.

[Ali and Sylvi laugh]

**Janine:** You also are kind of a monster.

**Sylvi:** I’m just poking holes, you know?

**Janine:** Like, what’s—

**Keith:** They’re called the Afflictions. It’s not like it’s...

**Janine:** Yeah, but what’s a corrupted Divine to a shattered Divine? Or a spooky Divine?

**Keith:** Look, I’m just saying, all I’m saying is...

**Art:** Is this like, a riddle?

**Janine:** Yeah.

**Keith:** If a bunch of people had, you know, socially motivated reactions to the shitty cop who showed up, **Austin:** Mhm.] we also need to take into account the social motivations behind the fucking Afflictions.

**Austin:** Yes. If Brnine shows up to the next council meeting...

**Janine:** [cross] Well, we're also going to the monster. We're not bringing the monster to us.

**Austin:** Let's get into the scene.

**Keith:** Well, one of us is going to get the monster.

**Austin:** Let's—no, that's not true. There's a group of people.

**Keith:** Three of us are going.

**Austin:** Uh-huh.

**Ali:** I invited you.

**Austin:** Including you, apparently. Are you going?

**Keith:** Yeah, I'm going.

[group laughter]

**Dre:** Gotta make sure it doesn't go wrong.

**Janine:** Do you want to—Abby—Abby? What the heck? Ali, do you want to rescind that invitation?

**Ali:** No. No, no, no. Keith can have his opinions, Eclectic will have different opinions.

**Austin:** For the rest of your scene...

**Ali:** You know, this is a modern marvel.

**Keith:** No, this is the smalltalk on the way.

[Ali chuckles]

**Austin:** "For the rest of the scene, your job is to describe what your character thinks, feels, and does in pursuit of your scene goal. The others at the table will describe the



world, roleplay as other characters, and throw obstacles in your way. Your scene isn't a runaway train. At any point, you can talk on a player to player level about the type of scene you want, or the direction it's taking." Obviously, we can always you know, say, "Hey, I don't like where this is going, let's take this from the top," or "Hey, I don't want this to be in the scene," et cetera.

And then Ali, "You are in control of when your scene starts to wrap up. The final part of your scene is called resolution. The resolution involves rolling dice to discover the outcomes of your scene. You'll often end up calling for your resolution during difficult or risky situations where you would like to be surprised by what comes next. The details of how a resolution work will be described on page 52." For those of us playing the opposition, I'm not gonna read this whole section, but the kind of highlights of what we should be doing—we should be asking questions, so things like what do you have packed for this trip, or what are you gonna try to do next, or how do you feel? We should be roleplaying as other characters, and obviously especially for those who are directly in the scene, as other characters. We should investigate the setting. You can ask questions about the world or scene goals and conflicts.

Anyone can answer questions about the setting, including the spotlight player, and this is a great place where the owned facets, the people who owned facets can chime in about what their facets are. As a reminder, if someone asks a question about a facet that hasn't been picked up yet, someone should pick up that facet, and we'll add it to your list of facets. And we can bring in obstacles. The spotlight player has some obstacles in the way of their goal. You can always ask for a reminder about what those are. Ali, what are your two obstacles again?

**Ali:** The Twilight Mirage is impenetrable, and Calvin Brnine is impenetrable.

**Austin:** There we go. Remember, the opposition's job is to support the spotlight player and the story at large. Bringing in conflict and obstacles is part of that, but you don't have to oppose everything the spotlight player attempts." And then we should collaborate on a player level. We should say "Hey, would it be okay if we just had a convo between our two characters?" Or "Hey, do you think it's time for resolution?" et

cetera. There's some opposition etiquette here, which hopefully people had a chance to read. "Keep the spotlight character in the spotlight, respect the spotlight character's agency," those are the two big ones. Those are the two big ones. And then we'll get to actual dice resolution when, Ali, you decide it's time for resolution. So, you're walking towards—do we want to actually come in at you see the theater in the distance?

**Ali:** Yeah, that seems good.

**Austin:** Yeah.

**Ali:** Um, yeah.

**Austin:** Dre, is the theater marked in any way? Is there anything special about the theater today? About Refrain's cool theater?

**Dre:** Hm. I'm trying to remember, what is like, the... when we last saw the mirror, what was going on in the theater and everything.

**Austin:** I don't think we saw—I don't remember there being any, like, special...

**Janine:** I think it was just the gas person, right?

**Austin:** Yeah, the person who was there the first time that Brnine went there. And theoretically, it should be someone different. It shouldn't be Lattice again. Lattice being another member of the Nobel. That's at least historically how it has gone, right? The theater shows a new person, because it's pulling from its sort of archive of people. But maybe that's not the case this time. You'll get to tell me.

**Keith:** Do we have an answer—have we, like, talked about—has anything happened to the Afflictions now that we're in the Twilight Mirage?

**Austin:** Great question.

**Dre:** Yeah, that's what I was wondering, too.

**Austin:** Well, Dre? Has anything happened?

**Keith:** This could go to “spookier,” also.

[Ali laughs]

**Austin:** It could go to spookier, it could also go to... does anybody have—

**Janine:** [chanting] Circus! Circus!

**Austin:** Does anybody have—and it could also go to “in the Mirage,” so I’d say Jack, Dre, and Janine, you all have parts of answers to that question, if anything’s happened with the Afflictions. I mean, actually, before that, even, they became more active. That was a thing that we set up in the last pre-finale episode, was like, they begin roaming the hills in a more active way.

**Keith:** And, sorry, what was it that roamed?

**Austin:** Huh?

**Keith:** It was like, terrors?

**Jack:** Oh, “horrors walk the streets” was what we said.

**Keith:** Horrors walk the streets?

**Austin:** Horrors walk the streets, yeah.

**Dre:** Oh, yeah.

**Austin:** But they begin to, like, you know, they’re out and about in a more aggressive way, was the last thing that we saw. But I don’t—in terms of that bigger question of have they changed, has something changed, that is, I’d say, “Afflictions,” “it’s spookier,” and “in the Mirage” are all things that could weigh in there.

**Janine:** I have a suggestion for how it could be spookier and more Mirage-y and, you know, it kind of touches on everything, but my thinking is that with this—with Refrain in particular, being back in the Mirage is probably, like, special in a different way, because their whole thing is reflecting people who were in the Mirage, right? Like...

**Austin:** They were not in the Mirage, they were in the Divine Fleet before the Mirage. As a really high level reminder of a core Palisade thing, Palisade was like, Plan B, right? When things were going really bad in the group called the Divine Fleet, when they were being attacked and cut down severely by a group called the New Earth Hegemony, who were hunting them down, two big ideas came up. One of them became the Twilight Mirage, which was this false nebula that members of the Fleet hid in. The other idea was “let’s go build a planet of our own that we can live on,” and that was Palisade. Palisade was a Divine who became a planet, and on that being, on that planet, were a number of other Divines, including the ones who are now the Afflictions. And potentially, excuse me, also some of the ones who would go on to become the Divines that were carved up for the Delegates, though some of those also come from the Divine Principality, the early days, so. So, yeah. But you’re right, Janine, in the sense that they are people who still have connections to the predecessor of the Twilight Mirage, you know?

**Janine:** My thought was what if it was like, not a movie set, but like, one of those fake towns that you would shoot a movie in, where it like, looks super real, but all the buildings are hollow, and there’s like people walking around?

**Austin:** Oh, that’s fun.

**Dre:** Ooh.

**Jack:** Oh, I love this.

**Keith:** Yeah, like Blazing Saddles.

[Dre laughs]

**Jack:** I’ve never seen Blazing Saddles.

**Keith:** Famously, this happens in Blazing Saddles.

**Dre:** Yes, it does. Yeah.

**Austin:** Mhm.

**Jack:** I think, also, there is—there's like, a sort of curiosity about the proximity to the Mirage now where, you know, I could sort of imagine the Afflictions that are flight capable, which might be one or two of them, sort of like pouring up into a low planet orbit, to sort of like, make contact with—you know, it's not like the Mirage is outside the atmosphere, it's everywhere. But sort of to dip their toes into the pond, and the Mirage, the sort of nebula, the coils of the nebula itself responding in some way, of these sort of—these things that have a shared lineage, but are sort of alternatives to each other, sort of making a reaching out and not quite knowing what to do with that connection. But I think that's part of, also, what you were describing of like, they're more active now, and it's the activity of one cat seeing another cat on the other side of a screen door.

**Austin:** Mhm. That's very fun.

**Ali:** The captain has arrived.

**Dre:** Yeah. My two thoughts on what could be different with Refrain specifically in the Mirage—I love the idea that being, like, a weird set ghost town ish but one of its powers was that it can cause electronics to break and rust over, with the note that Refrain seemed to have some control over whether this happens. I'm wondering if maybe it has lost some of that control.

**Austin:** Oh, that's fun.

**Dre:** And then also that we know at this point the ghosts are people from the Divine Fleet, and I'm wondering if maybe it is starting to have ghosts from the Twilight Mirage show up.

**Austin:** Interesting. That it's like, linked into the Mesh here, and has, like, [**Jack:** Yeah.] added new records to its old records. Like instant, like in a sort of, like, oh, yeah, like, I'm just on this Wi-Fi now and it starts to pull in the local—like an update, yeah.

**Jack:** It's like when you—or when you touch a wet paper towel to ink, and the ink just suddenly starts bleeding into the paper towel.

**Austin:** Yeah, that's really fun. That's great. So yeah, I guess that's what you're seeing is this, you know, weird set of facade buildings and stuff. And I mean, simply the fact that there is more than one—there were always more than one ghost inside of the theater, but they tended to be like, a group looking at the stage, and then the stage, you know? The one on the stage who's speaking. If this is now like a whole haunted town, that's even more interesting, so.

**Janine:** Hey, pitch. Remember Acre Seven?

**Austin:** I do remember Acre Seven.

**Janine:** What if there was like—what if it had learned about Acre Seven's vibe, and was like, I could do that.

**Austin:** Sure. Do you want to remind people about Acre Seven?

**Janine:** I don't know, I'm just spitballing here.

**Dre:** Yeah, what's, who—can we get a reminder about Acre Seven?

**Janine:** Acre Seven, yeah, Acre Seven was the—was like a person, but also the ghost of all the people on a planet, right?

**Austin:** Mhm.

**Janine:** Was like, had like... Or no, it—

**Austin:** Of the planet itself, too.

**Janine:** Right, the planet itself, yeah. The planet itself had identified with one particular person, sort of, but also had all the other people, and would like, flicker between them.

**Austin:** There was like a sort of living, looping gif type vibe for Acre Seven.

**Janine:** Yeah.

**Dre:** Mhm.

**Austin:** She was—she had been, like, the lover of Potency, the Divine Potency, and maybe the Divine Potency's excerpt, I don't quite remember what the full vibe was, but she was one of the Beloved Ivy, I want to believe.

**Janine:** But just the idea of, like, you don't have to pick one thing.

**Austin:** Right, you can—well, yeah, Refrain was already doing that before, but not the way Acre Seven—Acre Seven would flip between peop—flip between bodily forms pretty quickly, whereas Refrain was almost like, "Tonight's performance is by this guy." You know?

**Dre:** Sure.

**Austin:** And then switch over.

**Janine:** Yeah.

**Austin:** So yeah, if it adopts some of the Acre Seven fluctuations and fast forward stutter step type stuff, that'd be very fun. So yeah.

**Ali:** Yeah. I mean, I think in this scene Brnine would be, like, stopping people to talk to them, like, confused, obviously, but like, you know, in it.

**Austin:** What type of questions are you asking them?

**Ali:** Uh... Hey. [bursting into laughter] What's up?

[**Sylvi** laughs]

**Jack:** That's a classic Brnine opener.

**Dre:** 'Sup, brah?

[**Keith** laughs]

**Sylvi:** "Hey!"

**Ali:** What's going on here?

**Janine:** Oh, jeez.

**Ali:** You know. "What's all this now?"

**Sylvi:** Brnine goes up and says "What up, playboy?"

[**Ali** laughs]

**Ali:** "That looks cool." No, I mean, I think that they're... To zoom out on, like, what Brnine's question is, I think it's some of the, like... How do you feel about being in the Twilight Mirage, like, for real, and then would pivot into this, like, you know, we gotta work together. [chuckles] This is good for everybody.

**Janine:** Okay, we need to play this out. We need to play this out.

**Ali:** Okay, I'm trying to play it out. [chuckles]

**Janine:** Okay, I want to just add to this for some flavor. Thisbe—because we've acknowledged, right, that this is the, like, tech crumbling-ness of Refrain has been, like, amped up, I want to say that Thisbe has—there's like, a gold snapping sort of sizzling thing going on with Thisbe where it's like kind of trying to wrest her, but then Integrity is like, zapping it away in a fun way, so it's a little bit like, sizzly energy. I don't know, I just wanted some representation of the electronics thing happening.

**Ali:** [laughing] Okay.

**Janine:** I think Thisbe looks around and says,

Janine (as **Thisbe**): I think we should ask for the director.

Ali (as **Brnine**): Oh, yeah. Yeah, yeah. Hey, uh... Is the director around here?

**Dre:** Boy, I am setting up something that I don't know how I'm gonna play in-character, but I think it's a cool idea. I think the conversation with Brnine and whoever else talks is



almost like—fuck, I haven't played either of these games. What are the two games where it's like, you're looking through video clips—I think one of them's Her Story?

**Austin:** Oh, Her Story, yeah.

**Keith:** Oh, yeah.

**Dre:** Where it's like, you're looking through video clips, and as you hit certain key terms or whatever, you can find new clips. So I almost think it's like this, right? As you're asking questions, and you say the right key word or something, the person you're talking to, like, their whole body almost becomes a slot machine, and then a new person just kind of pops out where the other person was.

**Austin:** Yeah. I love that. That's fun. That's very Acre Seven, also. This works. This is good.

**Dre:** So, the last direct question was “can we talk to the director?”

**Ali:** Mhm.

**Dre:** So yeah, I guess the director probably is the first of those key words. So, I don't know who you're talking to at first, and I don't think we need—we don't—do we necessarily want to try and pick names?

**Austin:** No, we don't need to pick—no, no, no.

**Dre:** Okay, yeah. Gosh, what does it look like for a person to turn into a whirling slot machine? I guess they're a ghost, it's not like a person. There's not like, totally weird body horror here.

**Austin:** Yeah, yeah.

**Dre:** But yeah, it's probably just a mix of colors, and then a completely different person pops up and says... oof.

Dre (as **Refrain**): You're looking for the head man in charge, huh?

Ali (as **Brnine**): Uh, yeah, hi.

Dre (as **Refrain**): Hello. Could you, uh... What's your business?

Ali (as **Brnine**): Um, well, my name is Calvin Brnine. I, uh...

**Dre:** As soon as you say Calvin Brnine, it happens again.

**Ali:** Hi, aw.

Ali (as **Brnine**): Hey.

**Austin:** Who shows up?

Dre (as **Refrain**): I believe you had a previous appointment.

Ali (as **Brnine**): Um, uh...

Dre (as **Refrain**): Is this a follow-up to your previous conversation?

Ali (as **Brnine**): Yes, yes, yes. Yeah.

Dre (as **Refrain**): I don't believe that there are any necessary developments at this time.

Ali (as **Brnine**): Well, sure, but I would like to—is Lattice here? Lattice is here?

**Dre:** Ooh.

**Austin:** Keyword.

**Dre:** Does that make Lattice pop up?

[**Ali** laughs]

**Austin:** I guess, yeah?

**Janine:** But it's people that you don't know.

**Austin:** It's supposed to be, yeah.

**Janine:** Is that like a weird loophole?

**Austin:** Yeah. I don't know. Or is this the Twilight Mirage difference, right? Has that shifted this?

**Dre:** [hums] Okay, last time we saw Lattice, that's where the—I guess the conversation didn't go bad, right? Because the whole deal is that Refrain is not hostile to the Cause, but it is disinterested in the Cause, because they think that the Cause won't win, right?

**Austin:** That was kind of the vibe, yeah.

**Dre:** Okay.

**Austin:** If I'm remembering right. It wasn't, you know. Brnine made a swing at "could we work together," [**Ali:** Mhm.] and you were asked questions about why or how are you gonna win this time, and did not have great answers. But that was all a different era.

**Ali:** Yeah, I was doing like a dorky recruitment speech to a ghost. [laughs]

**Austin:** Yeah, yeah.

**Dre:** Damn.

**Janine:** But also, a lot has changed.

**Austin:** A lot's changed.

**Dre:** Well, yeah. So, maybe—yes, you say Lattice, the thing rolls over, and Lattice appears. And they just merely ask,

Dre (as **Lattice**): What has changed since our last conversation?

Ali (as **Brnine**): What's diff—we're in the Twilight Mirage. Hey, by the way. Hi.

Dre (as **Lattice**): Yes, you are in the Twilight Mirage. You can also walk from one shop to another, and that doesn't change what you have to offer.

Ali (as **Brnine**): Well, I—what shops? What? This is Thisbe and Eclectic, by the way. I, uh—well, I just—I thought it would be nice to talk, and...

[Ali laughs]

**Keith**: Now I'm looking at Brnine like, we came all the way here because you thought it would be nice to talk?

**Janine**: Yeah, I think what Thisbe knew of this plan, she thought there would maybe be something a little more. I think there's a sense of, like, oh, do...

**Ali**: [laughs] Trust the process!

[Sylvi laughs]

**Keith**: I mean, okay. You can't argue with results.

**Dre**: [laughing] That's true.

[Ali laughs]

**Janine**: Brnine.

**Austin**: What are we building right now?

**Dre**: God, is Brnine the Ben Simmons of Millennium Break?

**Austin**: Nooo!

**Sylvi**: No.

**Dre**: No.

**Sylvi**: Brnine actually takes shots.

**Dre:** Yeah, no, that's true.

**Austin:** This is bad. We're doing basketball jokes.

[**Ali** and **Dre** chuckle]

**Dre:** Brnine is not on the floor result of Ben Simmons, but like, spiritually.

**Austin:** Damn. This is brutal.

**Dre:** I say this as someone who loves Ben Simmons.

**Keith:** Why do you love Ben Simmons?

**Austin:** [cross] We have to keep moving. We have to keep moving.

**Dre:** Yeah, we gotta keep moving. Okay. Yes, okay. Lattice is just annoyed.

Dre (as **Lattice**): I remember this is why our previous conversation was not very fruitful.

Ali (as **Brnine**): I'm sorry, I just thought the transition might be—have been weird for the Afflictions, and, um, I... Things aren't worse. Things aren't worse, so to speak, but that doesn't mean they're not different. We're, like, disconnected. We're, like, stuck. We're like—we're, like, detached.

Janine (as **Thisbe**): As is our opposition.

**Janine:** Thisbe adds in, helpfully. [chuckles]

Dre (as **Lattice**): Yes, the opposition is weaker. Which...

Ali (as **Brnine**): Well, this is bigger than that. This isn't just fighting, this is people. This is connection. This is—I have to talk to the people that I can't.

Dre (as **Lattice**): Calvin Brnine, please state clearly what it is you wish to discuss and what you would like to change.

[Ali laughs]

Ali (as **Brnine**): As a representative of Millennium Break, our combined forces off of Palisade have been inaccessible by the ones that are on Palisade. And this isn't, like, where we belong. You know what I mean? Like, I guess I don't think that you care, I guess, but I just, you know.

**Dre**: Yeah, I don't think the Affliction Refrain cares about if they are where they belong or not.

Ali (as **Brnine**): We're not gonna be able to leave.

**Keith**: Can I—by “this isn't where we belong,” you mean you don't belong on Palisade.

**Ali**: Yeah.

**Keith**: 'Cause that's also not, like, universally true. I'm from here. A bunch of people in part of the Cause are from here.

**Ali**: Well, sure, but I—yeah. I'm talking about Millennium Break, but yeah. Brnine is a dumb person. [laughing] Like, they can be wrong.

[Keith laughs]

**Dre**: Damn.

**Sylvi**: What? Hey, come on. Be nice. I don't think Brnine's ever done anything dumb.

**Dre**: I want to be clear, I'm not playing the character this way because I or the character thinks Calvin Brnine is a dumb person. This is me leaning into “Calvin Brnine is impenetrable.”

**Austin**: Yeah.

**Ali**: Sure.

**Dre:** Calvin Brnine talks in circles sometimes. I mean, I think the rub here is, again, it goes back to, it's like, okay, sure, that's what the Affliction can do for you. What can you do for the Affliction to be worth helping?

Dre (as **Lattice**): Have you reconsidered our proposition, or do you have something to offer that would be equally valuable?

**Austin:** Like of joining—the offer being give your life up and join Refrain. Whew. Should have caught them a few weeks ago back out at the old Lone Marble Group.

[Ali and **Keith** laugh]

**Ali:** Yeah, their whole thing was not doing this.

**Austin:** Mhm.

**Ali:** Um...

Ali (as **Brnine**): You know I can't do that. I just thought we could work, like, together. I don't know that the war's still gonna happen anymore. And I bet that that's probably good for you and yours, but I don't know.

**Dre:** Well, okay, so maybe that's the third path, right? Because I think the third path, then, is if the war isn't gonna happen anymore, what happens to the Afflictions when the war isn't happening anymore? And I guess, specifically, what happens to Refrain when the war isn't happening anymore?

**Austin:** Can we—let's stay in character. Ask this.

**Dre:** Yeah, yeah, yeah. Sorry. Gosh, so Brnine said, "I don't think the war is happening anymore." And maybe—okay, maybe this is where Brnine—Brnine has more outside knowledge of the whole state of the world, maybe, and so Lattice as Refrain asks:

Dre (as **Lattice**): What makes you think that?

Ali (as **Brnine**): Um, well, we're in the Twilight Mirage now. Like, I mean, the Bilats that are here are gonna get stomped out or reconfigured or put on trial or... I don't know. I think it's just gonna be all, um, feeding people, and making the trains work again, and voting, or something. I don't know. I don't know. This is... It's not that I don't care about Palisade, I just think that I'm meant for something else, and I can't stay here with you because of that. But there could be like, a—

**Ali:** [laughs] And Brnine does the thing that I'm doing with my hands, which is like, take—like, interlock your fingers together.

**Dre:** Okay. I'm gonna say something in character, but Austin, I am prefacing it by saying, like, if you think this is too fucked up of a thing for an Affliction to say, I would like you to tel me.

**Keith:** Too fucked up for Affliction.

**Dre:** Yeah.

Dre (as **Lattice**): It does sound as if they will be so easily defeated that they will be stomped out, as you said. And if you are still unwilling to join us, perhaps once they are stomped out, they could become useful to us instead.

**Austin:** [chuckles] It's good, actually.

**Dre:** Okay.

**Austin:** It's simply good for the Divine, like, person archive—

**Dre:** Feed me the Bilats.

**Austin:** Yeah, to say "Feed me the Bilats, I want them for the archive."

Dre (as **Lattice**): I want your new perspective. It's probably more interesting than the rest of them, but if I can't have one good one, I'll take a couple hundred mediocre ones.



Ali (as **Brnine**): I'm sorry, what did you have in mind? You want them to come here and join you?

Dre (as **Lattice**): And to stay here. Yes.

Ali (as **Brnine**): Wouldn't that hurt you? Listen, I can make some calls.

[Ali chuckles]

**Dre**: Hey, out of—would that hurt me? I don't know.

[**Sylvi** and **Ali** laughs]

**Austin**: I don't know. Like, is the... That's a good question. What's hurt, you know?

**Dre**: Yeah, that's where I'm also at, yeah.

**Austin**: Are you a bookshelf? The bookshelf doesn't care what books it's carrying.

**Dre**: Sure.

**Austin**: Or are you a tree, and it does matter what comes to nest in you?

[Dre hums]

**Jack**: And it would be entering into your archive... You know, you've felt a great sense of—

**Janine**: It was so anti—I think—sorry.

**Jack**: No, I think, I imagine we were gonna say the same thing.

**Janine**: Yeah.

**Jack**: You know, as an Affliction, you felt such a great sense of being wronged, and it could be that “bring me the Bilats and I will eat them” as retribution in that sense, but it's—

**Austin:** Or as “I want to see that perspective.”

**Jack:** Right, yeah.

[Dre hums]

**Austin:** Right? Which is—

**Dre:** Yeah, maybe that’s another thing that has...

**Austin:** Which is not what I would do, but I’m not an Affliction. I’m not a divine god, you know? Or a machine god.

**Dre:** I mean, ultimately, that’s the flip that has switched going from Palisade to the Twilight Mirage, is that Refrain used to be more specific and would filter out, like, who would be on the bookshelf, and that filter has just gone away.

**Austin:** Which we’ve seen by the absorption of some Twilight Mirage files, even.

**Dre:** Mhm. Yes, yeah.

## **Roll/Resolution**

[1:04:34]

**Austin:** That’s interesting. I think it’s interesting. I think that it’s fucked up, but I think that, like, that’s a fun, scary thing for Refrain to want. I don’t know what the resolution here is. [Ali laughs] I don’t know what the roll here is.

**Ali:** I guess we can—yeah. That’s—yeah. But I guess we can roll and then figure that out through the dice results?

**Austin:** Yeah, that makes sense. That makes sense.

**Dre:** Sure, yeah, yeah, yeah.

**Janine:** I mean, also, what's even the offer here? Because Brnine was like, "hey, join Millennium Break" and stuff, and then Lattice is like, "I want to eat people"?

**Austin:** I think it's "I'll join Millennium Break if..."

**Janine:** "I can eat people."

**Austin:** "...you let me—" Yeah, absorb...

**Dre:** Eat people, yeah.

**Austin:** Eat people. Yum, yum, yum. Which, you know, Brnine, you can just say no to, and have a counter-offer, and maybe that would be the resolution roll.

**Dre:** Yeah.

**Austin:** But, you know.

**Ali:** Yeah, I—yeah. I mean, I don't know... do I reject this offer? I don't know that I do that. [uncertain wavering] Eh, I don't know... I mean, it seems fair enough, right?

**Austin:** [scoffs] Real Asepsis mind right here.

[Ali laughs]

**Dre:** Mhm.

**Janine:** God...

**Austin:** Maybe even Asepsis is like, "Yeah, you eat things, but not to keep them. You eat them to destroy them."

**Dre:** I mean, you keep them in your belly for a little bit.

**Sylvi:** You should not keep them there long-term, though. Typically speaking.

**Janine:** Yeah, this is what serial killers say. They say stuff like this.

**Ali:** It's just a monster.

**Janine:** They say "I ate the liver because I wanted them with me."

**Sylvi:** I've seen Hannibal.

**Ali:** Yeah, I mean, I feel like if Brnine would have an objection here, it would be, like, this is the kind of the thing that—this is the sort of a choice a person should make for themselves.

**Austin:** I mean, is that the thing you end up offering?

**Ali:** What do you...

**Austin:** Like, "Hey, I'll let you make this offer to more people."

**Ali:** Oh, sure, yeah.

Ali (as **Brnine**): I mean, I can't speak for other people. I can make some calls, I guess, and we can figure it out.

[**Dre** laughs]

Ali (as **Brnine**): I just feel like similarly to the position that I'm in, you know, you can't separate people from what—I mean, you get it. You know, you should...

**Dre:** "Listen, Dracula, I can't just give you people to eat, but I'll ask if they want to be vampires."

[**Ali** laughs]

Ali (as **Brnine**): I think it would be more hurtful for both parties if you had people who didn't want to be here, you know? But that's just something to keep in mind.

**Dre:** No, I think that's a good counter offer. I think that's enough that that brings us to a roll.

**Austin:** Yeah, let's hit this roll. So, we draw dice—actually, you call for resolution. Ali would be the one who calls for it.

**Dre:** Bang your gavel.

**Austin:** Yeah, bang your gavel, exactly. Then... I'm just double-checking if there's anything else here worth reading. Okay, "Drawing dice: the more dice you roll, the more options you'll have when determining your outcome of your scene. The opposition starts with three red dice," which are—I guess I made them black because they're black on this sheet. So, start with three. One, two, three. "Then, add one more for each relevant obstacle, relevant burden, or kingdom trouble at 3 or higher." So, that's—I would say one relevant one is Brnine being impenetrable. There's no burdens yet, burdens are a thing yet to enter play.

**Jack:** Relevant kingdom trouble. Uh...

**Austin:** No, there's nothing above 3.

**Dre:** Yeah, we don't have anything above 3.

**Jack:** Oh, yeah, sure, above 3, right.

**Austin:** Yep. And it doesn't—I don't know that being in the Mirage is actually an obstacle for this particular exchange.

**Dre:** Mhm.

**Keith:** Right. It was sort of the reason why we're here, kind of, but not in that way.

**Austin:** Right, exactly. The spotlight player starts with two white dice plus one relevant—or one more for each relevant mastered obstacle. None of those yet. Relevant boon. I don't think we have any boons yet. And no—and relevant relationship, which has to be, I believe, an un-exhausted relationship, I believe. I'm double-checking.

**Jack:** Yes, it does.

**Austin:** It does, okay.

**Ali:** Did we feel like Eclectic was involved enough to...

**Keith:** I asked what they wanted. That seems pretty keystone.

**Austin:** Yeah.

**Ali:** Yeah.

**Austin:** Yeah, I would take it.

**Dre:** Sure.

**Austin:** Let's go for it. Alright, then, select them all, right click them, and hit "multi-sided: random side." Boom.

**Jack:** Ooh.

**Dre:** Oh, you're doing that. Okay.

**Austin:** Yeah, I did—sorry, I'll just handle the opposition dice for the sake of it. The opposition dice automatically selects, I believe, the highest three. Is that correct, people?

**Ali:** Uh-huh. And then there's—I will admit that I don't have my head fully around these rules, but I can choose—I have roll—okay.

**Austin:** I'll just read the instructions, **[Ali: Yeah.]** since this is the first time we're doing it, and the listener would love to know how this works, maybe.

**Ali:** Uh-huh.

**Austin:** "In Questlandia, dice outcomes correspond to story results. Each scene has multiple outcomes determined by three dice pairs. The highest die in each pair determines whether the outcome is positive or negative. When the dice are tied, they cancel out, there's no outcome for that pair. The opposition always puts three dice

forward. The spotlight player can only ever put two forward. That means there will always be one unpaired opposition die, so no matter how well you roll, something will always go wrong.”

And there are six kinds of outcomes, basically. So again, the way this works is, we rolled a bunch of dice, Ali, you’re going to put your dice against our dice, so, again, the ones that the opposition puts forward are 6, 5, 3, you came up with 6, 5, 5, right? You could put the 6 against our 6 to cancel it out, because it would be a tie, and that would prevent that from being anything, from resolving in any mechanical way. You could put your 6 against our 5 or our 3 to get your 6 result, because it would have won that, but then our 6 would get through. Does that make sense? So like, again, you have 6, 5, 5. You could cancel out our 6 and our 5 by putting your 6 against our 6 and your 5 against our 5. Then our 3 would go forward, and the 3 result, which is “receive a new obstacle,” would trigger.

**Ali:** Ooh. Okay, okay. Okay, and then—

**Austin:** Right? Or—

**Ali:** Looking at that, I could either—so, “receive a new obstacle” is one of the things...

**Austin:** Yeah, I’ll just read—I’m gonna read the short versions of it really quick, which is: “1s cause dramatic upheavals, 2s bring reversals of fortune, 3s impact the obstacles between you and your goal, 4s change your relationship, 5s give small boons or burdens that impact a future scene, 6s are special. Wins bring resounding success, losses escalate the kingdom’s trouble.”

**Ali:** Okay. Okay, okay, okay.

**Dre:** And...

**Ali:** I think—oh.

**Dre:** Ali, also don’t forgot your pow—or your weakness. Not your power, your weakness.

**Ali:** Uh-huh.

**Dre:** Because your lash out says re-roll any of the opposition's dice.

**Austin:** Yes.

**Ali:** Yeah.

**Austin:** But if you do that, you have to mark—what do you have to mark? What's the actual thing that you mark?

**Ali:** Unfortune—misfortune?

**Austin:** Misfortune, right?

**Jack:** Yes, it's—

**Ali:** Circle for fortune, fill in for misfortune. Okay, okay, okay.

**Jack:** It's worth saying that you can use any weaknesses.

**Austin:** That's correct.

**Jack:** You just get a bonus for your sort of, like, chosen weakness.

**Ali:** Oh, sure, sure, sure.

**Austin:** Yeah, that's correct.

**Dre:** Oh, okay.

**Ali:** I think what I am going to do is I'm gonna counter the 6 with my 6, and then I'm gonna counter...

**Austin:** Which prevents "mark misfortune, escalate a random trouble, and impact the map," which would be very—that's big, bad stuff.

[**Ali** and **Jack** laugh]



**Dre:** Very bad.

**Ali:** Yeah.

**Austin:** You have blocked a thing—that level—the negative 6 is “Doom: the spotlight player marks misfortune, and then draws a new trouble from the deck. The opposition narrates the trouble’s effect on the kingdom and its impact on the map.” So you’re blocking that. That’s good.

**Ali:** I am also gonna block the 3 with my 5 to take a negative 5 and take a burden.

**Austin:** Which means—and, so yeah, you take the negative 5, which is a... “Receive a burden: the spotlight player gets a burden. The opposition narrates what this looks like. A burden is something negative and temporary, like getting stung by a swamp bee, or picking up an unlucky penny. If any burdens are relevant in a future turn, the opposition gains extra dice for each, and the spotlight player crosses them out” The example that they give here: “The merchant pretended he’d been outhaggled, giving you the metallic bird with a sigh. Secretly, he was thrilled to be rid of the thrice-cursed cockatiel. It’s your burden now.”

[Sylvi laughs]

**Ali:** Yeah, gotta get that bird.

**Jack:** Bluff City ass situation.

**Austin:** But you’re also getting the positive 5, right? Because you’ve canceled out the 3, the negative 3, and gotten the positive 5, because that wins that fight.

**Ali:** Oh.

**Austin:** Right? Because you’re not just canceling, that’s the thing.

**Jack:** Yeah.

**Keith:** Right.

**Austin:** You've won that round, you know?

**Ali:** Oh. I did not realize.

**Keith:** It's versus.

**Austin:** It's versus, yeah, yeah, yeah.

**Ali:** I did not know.

**Austin:** They only cancel if it's paired.

**Ali:** Okay, okay.

**Austin:** Nothing happens only if they're paired. "Take a boon: the spotlight player gets a boon. They narrate what that looks like. A boon is something positive and temporary, like [laughs] picking up a lucky penny, [**Ali** laughs] or gaining fleeting stardom from winning the space-time game show."

**Jack:** Getting a really cool cockatiel.

**Austin:** Yeah. "If any boons are relevant to a future turn, the spotlight player gains an extra dice for each, then crosses them out." Extra die for each. "My revolutionary poetry was acknowledged by the mayor who granted me the, quote, 'metaphorical key to the city.' It's just those words on a small scroll, but hey, that's a boon." So, opposition. What is the burden that they leave the scene with, and what is the boon that they leave the scene with?

**Dre:** Oh, hm...

**Jack:** Brnine picks the boon.

**Austin:** I guess actually the boon—yeah, Ali, you're gonna pick your own boon, but.

**Dre:** Yeah.

**Ali:** Okay.

**Dre:** Uh... Oh, boy. Tell me if this counts. This would be—this fits into the category of burden. I mean, you said you wanted a droid, [**Ali** chuckles] and so what if Lattice just like, comes with you?

**Austin:** [hums] Yeah. I like it.

**Ali:** Yeah. Why not?

**Austin:** Uh-huh. I love to have just an extra Nobel around all the time.

[**Ali** chuckles]

**Dre:** Sure. That's probably not complicated for anyone.

**Austin:** I love—Brnine, you're thirsty. It's the middle of the night. You get up to go get water and there's a Nobel in the hallway. You know? Sometimes you just run into people.

[**Ali** chuckles]

**Ali:** Okay, Lattice joins the Blue Channel.

**Dre:** [chuckling] Air quotes, "joins." But yeah.

**Jack:** And that's explicitly a burden, which is so funny. It's not like...

**Austin:** [chuckles] It could explicitly be a boon also, which could be funny, but you tell me what your boon is.

**Jack:** Oh, it could be both, yeah.

**Ali:** It's funny, because I—yeah, for a second there I was thinking of—because, like, I—the reason this was sort of my first challenge and then I was trying to...

**Austin:** Actually, we have fucked this up a little bit.

**Ali:** Oh?

**Austin:** So, you finish your thought and then I'll come back around.

**Ali:** Okay, well, yeah, I—I wanted this to be step one of what is a technological advancement for Brnine at the end of this. So like, I had had this picture of, like, Brnine actually communicating with a bunch of other people in Refrain, [chuckles] because, you know, there's probably some tech guys in there.

**Austin:** Yeah.

**Ali:** But the idea of, like, Lattice just being around is—[chuckles] you got the guy right here. So I don't have to think of a bunch of different NPCs. But what was the mistake before?

**Austin:** So, after the dice have been paired, the spotlight player will narrate their victories, starting with the lowest die result and continuing to the highest. Next, the opposition narrates the spotlight player's losses, again from lowest to highest. "These narrations can be quick and to the point, or include some roleplaying. Sometimes resolution is called for early in a scene, and most of the roleplaying happens in describing the outcomes. Any approach is okay as long as all victories and losses are narrated and recorded. Note, in the rare case that an outcome would give you boons, burdens, relationships, or obstacles that don't fit on the character sheet, you can write those in the notes section." That's fine. We're pretty good on that.

And then, "Did I achieve my scene goal? None of the dice results directly determine whether or not you achieved your scene goal. That's decided while narrating outcomes. As long as the spotlight player has any victories, they can narrate whether the scene goal was accomplished. If the spotlight player has no victories, the opposition will decide. No matter who has narrative control, their aim is to move the story forward. The end of a scene should never leave you back where you began."

So, in other words, because you got at least one win, you can decide whether or not Refrain joins Millennium Break. Whether or not you got your good answer to the scene question. If you had gotten no victories, Refrain would have decided.

**Ali:** Oh, sure, sure, sure.

**Austin:** The opposition decides that instead, right?

**Ali:** Okay.

**Austin:** So you can decide that. And then the other thing is, what we should do is you should narrate based on your success, and then the Opposition will narrate their success. You know? Their one success, basically.

**Ali:** Okay, sure.

**Austin:** Which I kind of think we already kind of did in this case, but if we want more detail, I'm also happy with that.

**Ali:** Yeah, I mean, I feel like this is a good throughline in terms of, like, the resolution was, you know, Lattice making an offer and Brnine sort of making that counter-offer, and I think the scene of the victory can be, like, further litigating—litigating is not the right word there—but, you know. Like, adding nuance to whatever the agreement is, and like, you know, Lattice kind of warming up over time through the conversation. And then, like, we can keep that Lattice joins as the burden, but I think that, like, yeah, I succeeded in the scene. I guess I—I suppose that I did. And then I have my boon, my boon, and I think that my boon is—maybe my boon can be like, something related to the Cause?

**Austin:** Sure.

**Ali:** Like...

**Austin:** I mean, I think the—go ahead, what were you gonna say?

**Ali:** Well, just that, like... [laughs] You know, maybe I'm talking myself out of this, because I don't think that anyone's gonna respond to this noise by being like, nice one, captain. But... [laughs]

**Austin:** You've given us a digital archive to upload ourselves from, or into, and then disappear from reality itself. Uh-huh.

**Ali:** Mhm. [chuckles]

**Keith:** Sick.

**Austin:** What's funny is this has happened on Twilight Mirage before in some ways, you know? The Argosy, Spliced is out there somewhere. The New Earth Hegemony plus Tender Sky fleet, you know?

**Janine:** I was gonna ask if there's a mechanism for relationships getting harmed in this game.

[Ali laughs]

**Austin:** There is, and we didn't roll it.

**Janine:** Okay, alright.

**Austin:** But yes, if you look, the negative result 4 is exhaust one relationship.

**Janine:** I'm already exhausted, yeah.

**Austin:** You don't like this so much, Thisbe.

**Janine:** No, I'm registering Thisbe's disapproval in the BioWare sense on this one.

[Ali laughs]

**Austin:** One second, I'll find our ghost tokens.

**Keith:** Can we just—because that was—there was a lot there. Getting our footing, doing the first scene.

**Austin:** Yeah, yeah.

**Keith:** Can we just do, super quick, what the actual deal was? What did we get out of that?

**Austin:** Lattice seems to have joined Millennium Break.

**Keith:** But like...

**Austin:** Or not Lattice, Refrain.

**Keith:** The image of Lattice as a burden.

**Austin:** Oh, Lattice is hanging around the Blue Channel constantly.

**Keith:** So we get that Lattice is hanging around the Blue Channel constantly.

**Austin:** So that's a burden for Brnine, because Brnine refuses to grieve Valence.

**Keith:** Right. Okay. And does that—I guess it'll bear out if that is going to—it doesn't—I guess what the thing is I'm kind of confused, it doesn't seem really like the Affliction joined, and more like Lattice is here.

**Austin:** Sorry. Also in the background is the thing that I think Brnine said, which is like, now you have this huge archive of people who are knowledgeable about things to talk to about—

**Ali:** Mhm.

**Keith:** Okay, so we got an encyclopedia.

**Ali:** Yeah.

**Austin:** Of pre-Twilight Mirage technology, you know.

**Keith:** I can work with that.

**Austin:** Think about, like, that's the culture that built Gumption, for instance, right?

**Keith:** Yeah.

**Austin:** And Gumption is the way that all of the Divines are immortal now.

**Keith:** Yeah.

**Austin:** Well, you know the engineer. You can talk to engineers from that era now, right?

**Keith:** We've also got Future out there being the—this sounds like a source for counter-Future propaganda.

**Austin:** Maybe. I'm curious how it would go.

**Keith:** Maybe.

**Austin:** We can do that in another scene, right? But yeah.

**Keith:** Okay. And then what they got is that they can keep asking people to mind meld.

**Austin:** I'm curious what that mind meld offer looks like, yeah.

**Jack:** Yeah.

**Austin:** Is that a message that gets sent out on the Strand to the rest of Millennium Break? Is it something that, you know, what's the...

**Jack:** It's also—

**Keith:** [cross] Anyone who's done...

**Jack:** Was there also, like—and I might have been misunderstanding the stakes of the scene a little, but I feel like there was a bit of "I will join Millennium Break if you let me eat Bilat prisoners."

**Austin:** No, that got countered.

**Jack:** Oh, that was "I don't actually want to do that." Right.

**Sylvi:** Oh, okay.

**Austin:** Yeah, the counter argument—Brnine said, instead, "I will let you ask people in Millennium Break to join," yeah.



**Jack:** To join. Right. Cool.

**Austin:** And if they want to join, they can join. That was my read. Is that correct, Ali?

**Ali:** Well—yeah. Well, Brnine’s thing was like, you know, this should be an opt-in thing. I don’t think it was necessarily, like, Millennium Break people would go in there, but anybody who would be interested.

**Jack:** To join the—right.

**Ali:** Yeah.

**Austin:** How are you supporting that? Like, what is your follow-through on that?

**Ali:** Yeah, I—well, that’s what I was trying to—I think sort of the trouble of the gain here is also me trying to figure out what this boon is. But I, you know, I do think, like, Brnine would connect Lattice to Millennium Break. Like, I think that there’s, like, you know, Brnine’s belief that part of the liberation of Palisade would include the Five Afflictions [Austin: Mhm.] is still there. So that’s why I was thinking of like, would the Cause—I don’t want to write, like, more respect with the Cause, but like, more authority? Like, I don’t know. I think that’s what I’m struggling around.

**Austin:** You know, remember, one of their examples was “you found a lucky penny.” You don’t have to go big.

**Ali:** Sure. Okay, yeah.

**Austin:** These are temporary, short-term—it didn’t improve the situation on the ground, you know?

**Ali:** Okay, yeah.

**Austin:** It made you feel good in a way that you can cash in on next scene, right?

**Ali:** [chuckles] Okay, yeah. Yeah, I guess my boon would be—oh, is my keyboard off? Okay. [typing] “Access to Twilight Mirage engineers.” Two Es. But I do think, like, that

there's—you know, Brnine calls a Cause meeting about this, and then has to, you know, talk to August and Mustard Red about, like, "Hey, this is kind of important to me, and I..."

**Austin:** Mhm.

**Ali:** [laughs] "I just think this person should be included, and I don't know..." Does that feel like that answers that question, or...

**Austin:** Truly wild conversation, but—yeah, I mean the thing—yeah, I think so. I think the thing that is probably worth saying out loud is like, this is a being that is going to make the real case to people that it is worth dying to enshrine part of your culture that might be lost. That like, you can become part of this living archive, or this undead archive, in order to ensure that the things you know about the world aren't lost forever. And I suspect that there are some people from outside of Palisade who might feel like, well, sure, there's something here I care—there's something I know about the world outside that isn't—that will be lost with my death here, right? And I don't know how many people say yes to that, or what their situation of life is, or, you know, but that is the case that Lattice—or that refrain is going to start making. It's what Refrain made to begin with in the Divine Fleet, right? Was like, "Hey, we're all being hunted, let's ensure that there is a Divine archive, a sacred archive, of what life was really like to begin with." And so, I suspect there are some people who feel really uncomfortable about that throughout the Cause. **[Ali:** Mhm.] You know? Who are like, "No, I'm not gonna die, I'm not gonna let this thing eat me so that my grandmother's salsa recipe is maintained. Like, that's not... My priorities are different than that." So, I imagine there's a little debate about this, you know?

**Keith:** You know, I just want to bring this back around from the beginning. No matter how we feel about the Afflictions, they're called the Afflictions here on Palisade.

**Austin:** Yeah, but who named them that, Keith?

**Keith:** Well, probably the Fabreal Duchy.

**Austin:** Yeah. So, I think that there is a...

**Keith:** But there's a bunch of—you don't have to be the Fabreal Duchy to have, like, bad ideas.

**Austin:** No, I know that. I know that. But I do think that it is—again, last episode we had Gucci—or two episodes ago, we had Gucci say “You had a Branched on your ship,” and we all went, “[gasps] I can't believe Gucci said that.”

**Keith:** Okay, but it's—this is the “feed me your brain” machine.

**Austin:** I know. Keith, I know. I'm just—

**Ali:** Yeah, but fictionally people have done that.

**Austin:** Right.

**Ali:** Like, I know that we want to litigate it, because, but like, the idolization part of it is too hot to touch out of character, so like, if in the world people have done that, then like, in current day, they would do that. I don't need to get into why they would.

**Austin:** Well, and importantly, yes, I think there are people who are like, the Afflictions are scary. There are also people who never liked Phrygian because Phrygian was a Branched, right? It's not new, I think, for the Blue Channel to be associating with things that are—you know, Figure was the weird undead twice-over, you know, connected to the adversary.

**Keith:** Okay, I just—I don't—

**Austin:** We have lots of devils that are on your side of this war. This isn't—so, yes, I think there are people who are part of the Cause who are like, “this is a little freaky to me,” but I don't want to grind the game to the halt because it wouldn't be the first time. You know?

**Keith:** Sure, whatever.

**Austin:** That's all. Right? Am I wrong about that?

**Keith:** I just feel like there's a meaningful difference...

**Austin:** [cross] Figure was a devil worshiper. No, there's—the adversary—Perennial is the devil in the world. We saw Perennial cough and kill a bunch of people, right?

**Keith:** I mean, yeah. I'm not...

**Austin:** And Cori currently worships and is in a connected relationship with the devil. Right?

**Sylvi:** Just threw up the horns.

[Ali laughs]

**Austin:** And Phrygian was part of a species that I have said the people in the Divine Principality cannot look at without feeling sick.

**Keith:** Yeah. I think the—it's less that I'm even trying to make a point, and more that I'm just trying to highlight that, you know, for whoever we're hanging out with that someone might be like "Oh, they're hanging out with them?" We usually don't have to send an email being like, "And you can donate your brain and become a ghost." You know? Like, that's a little bit different than just like, Phrygian being somewhere, and someone might be...

**Austin:** I mean, actually, what I think it is is that we have not zoomed in on someone sent an email that said "Hey, there is a Branched as part of our crew. Do—like, you cannot use that word around them anymore. Treat them with respect." Someone had to send that email to Millennium Break at some point about Phrygian.

**Keith:** Mhm.

**Austin:** Now, was it on Partizan five years ago? Maybe, right?

**Keith:** Right.

**Austin:** But I don't know that it's that... I don't think that no communication happened around there being a Branched as part of Millennium Break, you know? I don't think people—to the degree that we talked about it.

**Ali:** [cross] Gucci said as much last week, yeah.

**Austin:** Right, exactly. Right. Gucci said “I had to defend you for having Phrygian” last week. I do take your point. I do think that it's worth saying that there are people who are not comfortable with this, but I think that that's part of being in the Cause, is being around people you're not comfortable with.

**Keith:** [cross] Right, that's really all I was saying.

**Austin:** Yeah.

**Ali:** Mhm. And, yeah, I guess to narrativize it, that is part of why I shied off of like, connecting my boon to the Cause at large.

**Austin:** Mhm.

**Ali:** 'Cause I don't know that it would just be like, a, oh, yeah, pat on the back.

**Austin:** Right.

**Ali:** “Nice recruitment you got.”

**Austin:** No, I don't necessarily think it's that, yeah.

**Ali:** Yeah, I think it's much more nuanced than that.

**Austin:** You have gained particular access to a particular type of expertise that you can rely on going forward. [**Ali:** Mhm.] Yeah, again, notably, nothing positive happened in terms of the kingdom's scores, right? It's not like you got this and then health and spirit got stronger, you know? [**Ali:** Mhm.] Nothing—it's just all that you got out of that was a little boon for yourself, right? And the narrative positioning of now having that, so. Alright.

## August's First Scene

[1:29:49]

**Austin:** “Once you’ve narrated the outcomes of your scene and recorded the results, your turn is complete. The person to your left clockwise will take the next turn.”

**Ali:** Oh, and we’re doing that by sitting position, right? So that would be...

**Austin:** I think by sheet position. Yeah, so I think, Jack, August Righteousness goes next, I think.

**Jack:** Exciting.

**Austin:** We’re just gonna go clockwise.

**Ali:** Oh, okay, instead of—okay. But we figure—okay.

**Austin:** It’s weird, because it says player to your left, and then it says clockwise. Is that clockwise? I guess that’s clockwise. If you’re facing inward, yeah.

**Art:** Yes, that is how a clock goes.

**Ali:** Yeah.

**Keith:** Yeah, if you’re 6 o’clock facing inward, then to your left is 7.

**Austin:** Then to your left is clockwise, yeah, yeah, yeah. That makes sense.

**Ali:** But we’re gonna pick the sheets and not the sitting order that we chose for relationships?

**Austin:** Oh, I guess.

**Art:** Yeah, shouldn’t the relationship order be the sitting order?

**Austin:** Sure.

**Keith:** So, okay. That might get—that will be so confusing for me, though.

**Ali:** Okay, then let's just do it house rules, yeah.

**Jack:** We have it written down.

**Ali:** It's up there, but if it's—

**Keith:** Unless there's something that we're getting by doing it by relationships that I'm not seeing. Do we get anything out of it?

**Art:** Well, the relationships are supposed—in the book, the relationships are the sitting order, so that, quote unquote, doesn't do anything.

**Keith:** Right, yeah, yeah, yeah.

**Ali:** Yeah, we can house rule it.

**Austin:** I like shaking it up, because it means that we don't go—we don't go, there's a Brnine and Eclectic scene, then there's an Eclectic and Brnine scene, and then there's an Eclectic and Levitation scene, and then there's a—you know?

**Ali:** Right, right.

**Keith:** Right. Yeah, yeah.

**Austin:** So I like the mix up, so. So, next scene. I believe that's August.

**Jack:** Yeah, okay. Right. The framework for beginning a scene is, I think, scene goal, where are you...

**Austin:** Yep. Who, where, what.

**Jack:** Who, where, what.

**Austin:** Right? Or something like that, yeah.

**Jack:** Yeah, okay. I would like to take a real swing at—we keep sort of gesturing at the fact that there is remaining Principality military resistance on the planet. Both our number—I keep saying our number—our war and conflict number reflects that, and also, you know, we know that Clementine captured Lucia, but there is—we’ve also narrated, like, scattered pockets of the Whitestar Fleet, who are, you know, presumably trained and dangerous soldiers, even, you know, cut off from their supply line or something. I sort of have these images of—well, let’s get into it. I would like...

**Austin:** I just want to emphasize it’s them, but it’s also Crusade, and Crusade’s whole retinue is still here as far as we know.

**Jack:** Yeah, it’s...

**Austin:** And we know that Exanceaster March has gone to ground somewhere probably with some, like, elite bodyguards, right?

**Jack:** Yes.

**Austin:** Something like that.

**Jack:** Yeah. But, you know, I sort of have an—August Righteousness and Mourning sort of have, like, a list of like, alright, you know, who are we getting? And I think I’d like to start by trying to take out one of the Landers. You know, one of these sort of, like...

**Austin:** I’d go bigger. Not “one of,” like, the core remaining Whitestar Fleet.

**Jack:** Yeah. Yeah, okay. I didn’t know if—

**Austin:** Because you only get three scenes, right? And a couple of interludes.

**Jack:** Yeah, yeah, yeah. Well then, I’d like to—my original plan had been I’m gonna launch an operation to try and knock out the remaining sort of cells, the Lander cells.

**Austin:** Okay.

**Jack:** On the planet.



**Austin:** Yeah.

**Jack:** And we can zoom in in a sort of Firebrand sense on the one that August and the people he is with are at, [**Austin:** Right.] but we can sort of interpret the dice as being this wider operation of successes and failures, et cetera.

**Austin:** That makes sense. I like it. Where is it happening?

**Jack:** I am targeting Lander Twelve, which has crashed into the side of Steeple Catterick. That is the mountain with the now-abandoned, or I imagine that Millennium Break probably tried to move in, or the Cause tried to move in, and it was going very well until Lander Twelve crashed into the side of the mountain, and then they sort of, like, some of them fell during that engagement, or whatever.

**Austin:** Right, Steeple Catterick, where the Paint Shop used to be. Before it was abandoned.

**Jack:** On the very top of the mountain.

**Austin:** Yeah, yeah.

**Jack:** Catterick's—the Paint Shop's on the very peak, and Lander Twelve, which is a series of, like, sort of like round drilling craft, the goal had been that they would hit the ground, drill into the ground, and then a team of Whitestar sappers would sort of pour out and start physically undermining things. Now they've wedged themselves in the side of a mountain. And I think August Righteousness himself out on the field is, like, attached to one of those abseils, like, grappling down the mountain along with a squad of his soldiers. I have also brought... let's see.

**Austin:** Who are your relationships?

**Jack:** My god. So my relationships are with Levitation. That relationship is exhausted. And with Clementine. Now, I get a benefit only if the relationship is not exhausted. So...

**Austin:** That's right.

**Jack:** Wow. Am I about to bring in the truly cursed fighting team of Coriolis Sunset and Clementine Kesh?

**Sylvi:** Oh my god.

**Austin:** Oh, that's so fun. Yeah, sure.

**Jack:** And my goal is—so the goal of the broader operation is, you know, elsewhere on Palisade, we get these sort of montages of Kalar and the crew, maybe Kalar and Levitation, setting up to try and take down another Lander unit or whatever. But we are focusing in on this mountainside assault of Twelve.

**Austin:** Right. And again, the scene's question is—or your scene goal is to—we keep coming back to this phrase, to stomp out the remains of the Whitestar Fleet on Palisade.

**Jack:** Yep. Yep.

**Austin:** So, and it is—so it's on top of—it's not on top of. It's along Steeple Catterick, this huge mountain, and it is Cori, you, and Clem.

**Jack:** Plus a crew of, you know, [**Austin:** Right.] Righteousness' best.

**Austin:** Right. And it's up against the remnants of Lucia's fleet, or members of the—so Kesh folks, specifically. Alright, everybody else plays opposition, so what are your obstacles again?

**Jack:** Obstacle one: compromised leadership.

**Austin:** Ah.

**Jack:** That's difficult, because I have Clementine with me. You know, we sort of spun that out as talking about, like, Mustard is obviously compromised leadership.

**Austin:** Yeah.

**Jack:** It could also be a much softer compromise as well as the truly terrifying compromises. For example, the pirates have very interesting thoughts about sort of autonomy. [**Austin:** Mhm.] Righteousness probably believes in different kinds of punishment than the Mirage people. [**Austin:** Mhm.] You know, stuff like that. And then “it will be hard to actually capture them; they’re slippery.” They are both skilled and evasive soldiers, and they are—they have gone to ground and have been able to get ground for a while in an extremely complex mountain peak.

**Austin:** Right, right.

**Jack:** They’ve been here since the Landers came down, you know?

**Austin:** Yeah, that’s fun. Especially given that so much of the Cause was like, that was what made them successful during the kind of Sinder Karst era, right? Of like, oh, we’re in the caves, we’re in the mountains. This is our territory. And now Lucia’s people are doing that in Steeple Catterick.

**Jack:** Yeah.

**Austin:** Fun. Can I get a picture? What’s—you’ve given me Righteousness coming down on the rappelling line. Let’s get a Cori image and a Clementine image. How are y’all going about this part of your encounter?

**Sylvi:** Oh my god. I mean...

**Austin:** Have we seen—are you—Cori, are you in an Altar? Are you in your new Altar?

**Sylvi:** I was gonna—so, yeah. I don’t have a new one, I was just thinking that the Paramerion got, like, a Perennial colorway type thing.

**Austin:** Sure, that makes sense.

**Jack:** Russian sage, purple.

**Sylvi:** There’s like, flowers and stuff sticking out of it.

**Austin:** Yeah, yeah.

**Sylvi:** Yeah, yeah. It looks overgrown now in a weird way.

**Austin:** Yeah, did the—you know, we talked about the flowers on Figure's, you know, final Altar, the Broken Spoke, kind of blooming again. [**Sylvi:** Yeah.] Did they then grow across the hangar and begin to grow along yours?

**Sylvi:** Oh, I love that.

**Austin:** They reached across?

**Sylvi:** Yeah.

**Austin:** That's kind of fun.

**Sylvi:** I just had this idea of this skeleton mech covered in vines and stuff, and was like, yeah, nah, that's cool as fuck. [laughs]

**Austin:** So you've got your big metal wings, you've got—you're in—you're doing the damn thing in the Paramerion.

**Sylvi:** Yeah, this is what I'm good at. If you look at my sheet, you'll notice it says "hero" on it.

**Austin:** Mhm.

**Sylvi:** So I'm doing hero things.

**Austin:** So, August Righteousness is like climbing and going up and down on the ropes, and is leading their whole crew that way. Are you flying, like, defense as they try to breach this...

**Sylvi:** Yeah, like, air support would be my guess to at least start. [**Austin:** Yeah, yeah.] Obviously projectiles aren't as much of a thing given Twilight Mirage, but...

**Austin:** No, that's not true, remember? That's all...

**Sylvi:** Oh, wait, no, yeah, we—right, we invented guns.

**Austin:** It's all—yeah, we reinvented...

**Sylvi:** If guns do not exist, it would be necessary to reinvent them. I forgot.

**Jack:** August Righteousness has an AK-47. He has, like, a...

**Austin:** Just an AK. Just literally an AK-47.

**Jack:** I mean, he has a future AK. He has...

**Austin:** Okay, okay. But it's legible in that way that, like, sometimes Star Wars will put an AK-47 in someone's hand, and you're like, wait a second, that's not a regular blaster, that's just an AK-47.

**Jack:** Yeah. A light, cheap, automatic weapon.

**Sylvi:** August Righteousness poppin' out with the Draco.

[**Jack** chuckles]

**Austin:** Yeah, that's right. Uh-huh. Um, Clem. The Witch in Glass.

**Art:** Yeah, I think Clem, for dramatic purposes, is also performing air support. I would like to put an image into the chat.

**Austin:** Oh, I'm excited.

**Jack:** Oh my god. Horrors walk the streets.

**Art:** Of the thing that I think Clem is riding on.

**Jack:** [chuckling] I'm so excited to see what this shit is.

**Austin:** If it's the Green Goblin flier, I'm gonna laugh so hard.

**Art:** No...

**Sylvi:** We can rule this universe!

**Austin:** Ooh, what is...

**Jack:** Woah!

**Keith:** It's big.

**Austin:** Can you please describe what we're looking at?

**Art:** Yeah, this is—I mean, this is a Magic: the Gathering card if you'd like to go find it. This is the Multiverse Legends version of Skithiryx the Blight Dragon...

[**Jack** laughs]

**Sylvi:** Okay.

**Art:** And I'm gonna tell you, the artist of this piece did a great job of taking the note "the Blight Dragon".

**Austin:** Uh-huh.

**Jack:** The artist is, I think, Kekai Kotaki?

**Art:** Yeah. That's what I'm reading here, too. And it's just like, it's like a dragon sketched out of the, like, shadows of Hiroshima is how I feel looking at it.

**Jack:** Jesus.

**Sylvi:** Jesus.

**Dre:** Yeah.

**Keith:** Oh my god.

**Dre:** It's fucked.

**Austin:** Christ.

**Art:** It's really flat-looking in a way that I think is super cool.

**Austin:** Oh, yeah.

**Art:** Like, clearly the one arm is coming out towards us, right? But the image doesn't portray that depth.

**Austin:** Yeah.

**Jack:** Yeah.

**Art:** The image knows it's a playing card.

**Jack:** And it is—it might as well all be teeth.

**Art:** Yeah, it's teeth all the way down.

**Austin:** Yeah, this is a little "what if a dragon was entirely teeth," you know? Was made of teeth.

[**Jack** chuckles]

**Art:** Yeah.

**Jack:** And not teeth like those fellows in Sangfielle, where they were made out of, you know...

**Austin:** Molars or whatever.

**Jack:** Noticeable enamel teeth.

**Austin:** Yeah, no, this is...

**Jack:** These are like, sharp dark blades.

**Austin:** Yeah.

**Keith:** Right, it's like its ribcage...

**Art:** Oh, Sylvi found the full artwork, which shows that it does eventually stop being teeth and becomes an inkwell.

**Jack:** [chuckles] Yes, it does.

**Austin:** That rules. Also the wings here being just, like, bone shivs up in the shape, sort of, of wings, but not filled in. There's no webbing in the wings, you know?

**Keith:** Yeah.

**Janine:** It's a dragon, but a death metal font.

**Austin:** Yeah.

**Keith:** Yeah.

**Art:** Mhm.

**Sylvi:** That's why I like it. I figured it out. Thank you.

**Austin:** Yeah. Mhm.

**Art:** And the tail just comes out of nowhere.

**Austin:** It's good.

**Keith:** And the ribs are gonna give you a big hug. A big sharp hug.

**Austin:** Yeah.

**Art:** Uh-huh.

**Sylvi:** Yippee!

**Austin:** Yeah.

**Art:** So Clem is riding this dragon.

**Jack:** Amazing.



**Art:** And it's sort of like... just exuding giant teeth at the ground.

**Austin:** Like, exuding in an active...

**Art:** Like a breath weapon would do, but without—

**Austin:** Yeah, right.

**Sylvi:** Oh my god.

**Art:** It's not a breath weapon. It's just sort of coming.

**Austin:** Like Archangel from the X-Men.

**Art:** Like Archangel from the X-Men, but from the chest area instead of the wing area.

**Austin:** Yeah, mhm. Cool. Good.

**Jack:** Is she impassive on this dragon? Is she, like, yelling? I'm so curious about the image of Clem's face riding a death dragon.

**Art:** If I could get away... I'm gonna suggest—I'll pitch something and you tell me if I can get away with this, which is Clem in leisurely recline on the back of this dragon.

**Austin:** One leg over the other, relaxed.

**Art:** Yeah.

**Janine:** Oh my god, you're describing the pose of the Final Fantasy 14 Behemoth mount.

**Dre:** Oh, yeah.

**Austin:** Oh, you are. Yeah, yeah, yeah. Uh-huh. Let me see if we can get an image of that mount in here with someone on the back. Importantly, I have a really important question, which is, now that you're not a Perennial girlie, what's in place of the—is it this black ink tooth stuff? The Witch in Glass, Clem used to have a sort of face mask of the

Russian sage. Has it become a face mask and crown of this, like, black inky tooth stuff? Or is that just tied to this...

**Art:** I think it's just a more vague black inkiness.

**Austin:** Okay.

**Art:** And it sort of comes into focus as it needs to be.

**Austin:** Yeah.

**Art:** Sometimes it's toothy. Sometimes it's—I guess we can say not floral, because that's what we just went from, but you know.

**Austin:** Different type of floral is possible, but.

**Art:** Yeah, different type of floral.

**Austin:** Yeah. That's fun.

**Art:** Do you know there's more than one type of flower?

**Jack:** I've heard.

**Austin:** That's new. New to me.

**Dre:** Damn. Fucked up if true.

**Austin:** Damn.

**Art:** And yes, this Final Fantasy 14 mount is the correct...

**Jack:** Sort of pose.

**Austin:** Really in repose.

**Art:** Maybe even with this little chair.

**Austin:** Right, sure.

**Art:** Yeah.

**Austin:** Sure.

**Jack:** Someone else who I think is here not in person, but is here in maybe over the comms is Gucci Garantine, because August Righteousness is serious when he says Clem is your responsibility, Gucci.

**Austin:** [hums] Mhm.

**Jack:** And has deployed her on this mission only with her handler, you know.

**Austin:** Right. Yeah, Gucci is in some sort of nearby ship watching everything.

**Jack:** [chuckles] In a cold sweat.

**Austin:** In a cold sweat, being like, “Please don’t make me need to launch in the Transgress Oblige to, like, go put the leash on Clem. Please let this just go normal.”

**Jack:** “I don’t want to start battling Iconoclasts.”

**Austin:** Yeah, uh-huh. You know, I think you probably get—you know, you’re going up, or you’re going in, you’re going—where are you...

**Jack:** I’m going down.

**Austin:** Down. You’re going—I see.

**Jack:** I think we were, like, dropped. The ground team was like, dropped at the top of the mountain, and we are descending into it.

**Austin:** Uh-huh.

**Jack:** There’s a real sort of, like, what if Ethan Hawke—no. Ethan Hunt—no. Which one is Tom Cruise?

**Sylvi:** Eh, kind of an Ethan...

**Austin:** Ethan Hunt.

**Austin:** The other one is Ethan Hawke, yeah.

**Jack:** From Before Sunrise.

**Austin:** As far as we know, Ethan Hawke could at any moment pull a mask off, revealing that he has always been Tom Cruise.

**Jack:** [chuckles] Yes.

**Sylvi:** That would disappoint me so much.

**Art:** Well...

**Austin:** Me too. Same.

**Art:** If he takes the mask off, does he reveal that he's Ethan Hunt?

**Austin:** I guess so, right.

**Jack:** That's true, actually.

**Austin:** That's actually true, yeah.

**Jack:** Yeah, I think August Righteousness is doing a sort of Ethan Hunt maneuver if he was a shabby revolutionary instead of, you know. He's in improvized camo. I think the Cause has been here long enough that they have developed some sort of field uniform, so I think he's in the greys and whites and blues of mountain camouflage. Gun on his back, fingerless gloves as he descends the mountain.

**Austin:** Yeah. Well, let me tell you, I think they're slippery. And as you're coming down the rappel lines and trying to get to whatever tier it is that there's like the entryway into their cave system, they're firing at you from below, they're firing at you from below, and then, you know, when you're in your most compromised position, the rocks start to fall on you from above. Right? The boulders start falling down at you. You know, trying to catch you and hit you with those, you know, some sort of anti-air nets are shot at the

two flying mechs, there's all sorts of trickery as they retreat from their external position deeper into the caves. Maybe they're not trying to actually kill you so much as like, you know, hit you here before they retreat to new safety.

**Jack:** Yeah. I think, you know, ear piece—I love that in fiction when people have to touch their ears so that the viewer knows that they're using an ear piece. I don't think that they have to do that in real life. I don't think there's a little button on there.

**Austin:** Well, they're loose. They all fit kinda loose. You gotta put them in there.

**Jack:** Oh, yeah.

**Austin:** "I gotta—let me listen. Let me push it in a little bit. This doesn't actually fit my head," yeah.

**Jack:** Yeah. I think, you know, scrambling for breath, little burst of automatic weapons fire, and August is like,

Jack (as **August**): Clementine, come in.

Art (as **Clem**): Yes.

Jack (as **August**): Do you copy?

Art (as **Clem**): Of course.

Jack (as **August**): I think Coriolis can handle the rest of the air support. We need support inside the caves. They're pinning us down in here. Can you deploy Iconoclasts?

**Jack:** He says it like the word coming out of his mouth is sour on his tongue. And as a cook, he'd know.

[**Austin** hums]

Art (as **Clem**): Just a moment.

**Art:** And then I guess Clem does whatever that looks like. I...

**Austin:** What's it look like?

**Jack:** What does a horrifying assault of Iconoclasts into—actually, can you tell me what it looks like from the perspective of, like, vice corporal Luta of the Whitestar Fleet, [Austin laughs] who is in a cave, you know, fairly deep in a cave right now. It's dark, you know, he has little halogen lamps branded with the Whitestar symbol.

**Austin:** Right. Which I think, by the way, is their—they are hoping what they're gonna do is force you to land, go inside of their cave system—

**Jack:** And then just kill me.

**Austin:** —and then get caught in a crossfire. Right, exactly. They know how the cave system works. They think that it's safe in there. They're trying to stop fighting you outside and draw you in deeper.

**Jack:** And August Righteousness is sending in a ferret to kill rabbits.

**Art:** Yeah. I think it sounds—oh, I'm going to need to be on so much of my bullshit today.

**Sylvi:** Good.

**Art:** You know Blade 2?

[Jack and Dre laugh]

**Austin:** Yes. I sure do.

**Art:** You know the sound those horrible vampires make?

**Austin:** The, like, special Blade 2 vampires.

**Art:** The special Blade 2 vampires.

**Austin:** Yeah, uh-huh.

**Art:** I think it sounds like that.

**Austin:** Can you give me an approx—Keith, have you seen these?

[Dre laughs]

**Keith:** I have never seen Blade, no. Is it like an inward scream? That's what I'm guessing. Like, a screech scream?

**Austin:** That's not too far off, I think.

**Art:** I'm gonna refrain from describing the vampires.

**Keith:** Can I guess what the sound is having never seen the movie?

**Art:** Yeah.

**Keith:** [shrill, piercing shriek]

[Sylvi laughs]

**Art:** That's pretty close, I think.

**Austin:** That's pretty fucking close.

**Keith:** Not bad, right?

**Austin:** I'm gonna find the clip. We gotta find a clip.

**Sylvi:** Even sounds he doesn't know.

[Keith laughs]

**Austin:** I think we got a clip to show.

**Dre:** You brought a clip?

**Austin:** I think I brought a clip.

**Austin:** Let's see here.

**Jack:** Go to VT.

**Austin:** Yeah, okay, here we go. Here we go. It's—I'm gonna give you a timestamp here. It's 52 seconds here in "Blade 2 Clip: Vampires vs. Reavers 2002 Sci-Fi". I'm gonna send this over, and then you can hit play.

**Jack:** 60 seconds?

**Austin:** 52 seconds.

**Jack:** Woah, look at this guy's fuckin' face!

**Austin:** Have y'all not seen Blade—you should watch Blade 2.

**Sylvi:** I haven't seen Blade 2. I've only seen Blade.

**Jack:** I haven't seen any Blade movies.

**Dre:** I haven't seen it in a long time.

**Art:** Oh my god.

**Sylvi:** I've only seen the first one.

**Keith:** Oh, it's an alien vampire.

**Austin:** They're so fucked up.

**Art:** It's Guillermo del Toro doing a Marvel movie.

**Jack:** Wait, it's del Toro del Toro?

**Sylvi:** Oh, is it del Toro? I didn't know.

**Austin:** Yeah, it's del Toro. It's Guillermo del Toro.



**Jack:** I mean, I saw this guy's face open up. That's del Toro.

**Austin:** Yeah.

**Jack:** Oh, it's so good.

**Sylvi:** Yeah, no. As soon as I saw the evil pussy mouth, everything made sense.

**Austin:** It rules.

**Keith:** Yeah, I've always wanted to see Blade, I just never got around to it.

**Austin:** This is where Norman Reedus got his break.

**Keith:** Really?

**Dre:** Oh, yeah.

**Jack:** Holy shit. Look at this.

**Austin:** He's like an absolute scumbag in this movie, it's...

**Sylvi:** And then they got reunited in Death Stranding. Him and Guillermo.

**Austin:** That's true.

**Keith:** Wow.

**Sylvi:** [laughing] And now I see art of them making out on my Twitter timeline.

**Dre:** Beautiful.

**Keith:** I am not following those accounts.

**Austin:** Oh, this creature design is so good.

**Sylvi:** That's fine. You're not in fujoshi Twitter like I am.

**Austin:** Did you say you're not on Yoshi Twitter?

**Sylvi:** Fujoshi Twitter.

**Austin:** Oh, fujoshi twitter. Much—yeah, okay.

**Sylvi:** Yeah. Different island.

**Keith:** I am on Yoshi Twitter.

**Austin:** Yeah, I was gonna say, I think Keith's on Yoshi Twitter, actually, Sylvi.

**Keith:** I'm on Yoshi island time.

**Sylvi:** Keith's definitely on Yoshi Twitter.

**Austin:** Alright.

**Art:** This movie fuckin' slaps.

**Austin:** Yeah, uh-huh.

**Jack:** Which is the one with the blood rave? That's 1. Blade 1?

**Austin:** That's 1.

**Sylvi:** That's 1, I'm pretty sure. I've seen that.

**Austin:** That movie slaps, too. That movie's also great, don't get me wrong.

**Sylvi:** Yeah, that movie's great.

**Austin:** But blade 2, hoo.

**Art:** Yeah.

**Austin:** Alright, so, what do you send in there? They make that sound.

**Keith:** Yeah.

**Austin:** What do they see?

**Jack:** And then what does the corporal see?

**Art:** But I think ferrets is almost right. I think it's maybe, like, four big ferrets.

**Sylvi:** Woah. No, he's cooking.

**Austin:** Let him cook.

**Dre:** Yeah.

**Keith:** How big?

**Art:** You know, like, what if a ferret was the size of a greyhound bus?

**Jack:** Oh, Jesus.

[**Keith** laughs]

**Janine:** Now that's a—fuck, what are those called?

**Sylvi:** Yo!

**Keith:** Art was playing Palworld.

**Austin:** What are those called?

**Jack:** Oh, right, yes. Yes.

**Art:** If this is a real thing, I don't want to know about it.

**Austin:** Yeah, if this is a real thing, I gotta go.

**Jack:** They are—are they river otters, Janine?

**Janine:** Kamaitachi? Is that what I'm thinking about?

**Sylvi:** Oh, kamai—I know what kamaitachi is because of wrestling. That's like a folklore thing, right?

**Janine:** No, this is—these aren't quite...

**Austin:** No, no, no. Are you sure?

**Janine:** I don't know.

**Austin:** This looks right.

**Art:** Well, and also, their mouths open up like the Blade 2 vampires.

**Austin:** Sure.

**Sylvi:** Hiromu used to be one of these.

**Keith:** Oh, this guy's cool. I googled, uh...

**Austin:** Kamaitachi.

**Keith:** Kamaitachi, and I found this cool ferret.

**Austin:** Yeah.

**Keith:** It's carrying a big scythe.

**Sylvi:** Oh!

**Art:** Woah.

**Austin:** That's Naruto, right?

**Keith:** Yeah, it's from Naruto, yeah.

**Jack:** Woah, look at that guy! And then the other thing that I'm thinking of are river otters, which are fucking terrifying. I think there should be more animals that are just a frightening version of the regular animal. These things are massive.

**Art:** There's no way this is the size of a greyhound.

**Jack:** No, it's a bit smaller than a greyhound.

**Keith:** Yeah, it's like a big cat or a small dog.

**Austin:** Oh my god. Oh my god, these things are fucking—sorry, I'm looking at “otters the size of lions once roamed the earth.” Look at the scale on this thing.

**Janine:** Yeah.

**Jack:** [chuckling] And now they roam Steeple Catterick, except they're the size of a greyhound bus.

**Sylvi:** I would love to see a ferret this size in real life. And presumably die because of it, but still.

**Jack:** Although...

**Austin:** Oh, here we go. Now this is the sort of image you want to find on the internet.

[scattered group laughter]

**Austin:** This is from a World of Warcraft forum post called “add a giant ferret mount”.

**Jack:** And it's a still, it's a very famous still of Jurassic Park with the rain falling at the tyrannosaurus exhibit, and it's that...

**Sylvi:** This is fantastic.

[**Keith** laughs]

**Jack:** It's that shot of the t-rex breaking out, except it's been replaced by a—what animal is that? Is that a ferret, Keith?

**Keith:** That's a ferret, yeah. That's a normal ferret.

**Jack:** Do they have a special name?

**Sylvi:** Is this what's happening in this base right now? The second image here?

[**Jack** chuckles]

**Janine:** Are those black-footed ferrets or masked ferrets or something?

**Art:** Yeah, black-footed ferrets are like the wild version of this.

**Austin:** Yeah, these are great. So they're ferrets.

**Sylvi:** Either way, this base smells terrible now.

**Keith:** The other kind of domestic ferret is called an Angora ferret.

**Art:** Yeah, I want the, like, muscular tube feel.

**Jack:** Yeah.

**Sylvi:** [chuckling] Muscular tube.

**Austin:** Can I interest you in the Behemoth from Final Fantasy 14 mount?

**Sylvi:** [chuckling] I hate "muscular tube" so much.

**Dre:** Yeah, it's not great.

**Keith:** Honestly, Jurassic World would be—

**Art:** That's not tube-y enough.

**Austin:** Very muscular, though, isn't it?

**Sylvi:** Tube-y?

**Keith:** This scene from Jurassic World makes a lot more sense if the thing he's holding up are three big ferrets instead of three raptors.

**Austin:** Yes.

**Jack:** [chuckles] Yes. Yes.

**Keith:** Because they do act like that if you hold your hands up. They go like, what the fuck? [laughs]

[Dre laughs]

**Austin:** The image is the Chris Pratt raptor thing, except instead of raptors, they are ferrets. It's great.

**Jack:** Are they easily frightened, Keith, or are they mostly just baffled?

**Keith:** They are so easily frightened. Well, they do the—they, you know, they square up to fight, but then you'll go like, "Aah!" Like you would do to a baby, and they like—

**Sylvi:** What?

[Dre chuckles]

**Keith:** —you know, like the one on the right there, it goes to its side to make itself big, and then it hops backwards until it crashes into something. That's like their main thing.

**Sylvi:** Are you intimidating babies often, Keith?

**Dre:** Yeah, you're not squaring up against babies, Sylvi?

**Keith:** Yeah, that's how you play with—you know, you go like, "Waugh!" to babies, and then they go, "Aaaah!"

**Jack:** Wait, Keith, you go peekaboo. [chuckles]

**Keith:** Ferrets do the same thing.

**Sylvi:** I don't know. I don't hang out with babies that often.

**Keith:** Honestly, yeah, you know... This is a river otter. They're—it almost looks like a sea leopard. Is that what I'm thinking of?

**Jack:** A sea lion? In any case, these things are—they are the size of a greyhound bus?

**Austin:** They're gonna get released.

**Keith:** Leopard seal, that's what I'm thinking of, a leopard seal.

**Austin:** Yeah. But they're flexible, right? Which means that they can like, go through the cave system.

**Jack:** Fill the caves. God.

**Art:** Mhm.

**Austin:** Now, here's my interesting thing. You gotta go in there after them, August.

**Jack:** Well, actually, hang on.

**Austin:** Oh, okay.

**Jack:** I'm gonna, you know, how long is it until the screaming starts?

[pause]

**Keith:** [monstrous shriek]

**Jack:** From the people, Art?

**Keith:** Oh.

**Jack:** I mean, how quickly are your Iconoclasts....

**Keith:** [quietly mimics people screaming]

**Art:** I think pretty quickly, right? I don't...

**Jack:** Okay. Then I'm gonna tell you to halt.

Jack (as **August**): Clementine. Hold fire.

**Art:** Is that how this works?

**Jack:** I mean, can you reign in the Iconoclasts?

**Art:** I suppose.



**Jack:** You tell me.

**Art:** That must be how it works. It's just instantly silenced. They don't exist in there.

**Jack:** [laughing] Oh my god. But presumably, the viscera from their initial assault is. It's not like the attack has just vanished, it's just that they have gone.

**Art:** Yeah, they're wherever they are when they're not...

**Jack:** Yeah, and I think August Righteousness like, speaks into a—

**Austin:** Sorry, wait a second. Is this not the question?

**Jack:** I'm gonna try—I mean, this could be the— of just like, do the Iconoclasts kill them all? I want to incite them to surrender, you know?

**Austin:** Oh, I see. I see.

**Jack:** I launched an opening volley, and I'm gonna try and get them to surrender.

**Austin:** Yeah. So you're—so then that is the actual goal here, is to get them to surrender, not to kill them all.

**Jack:** Yeah.

**Austin:** Not to squash them, or, you know, once and for all.

**Jack:** Well, I've come prepared—well, I needed to come prepared to get into position.

**Austin:** Right.

**Jack:** There were probably casualties there. And then I need to...

**Austin:** I guess, really, my question is where is the uncertainty that we're going to be rolling for?

**Jack:** That's a great question. Yeah.

**Austin:** Because what I was trying to emphasize was it might—one place it might be, because these are the things that you have as obstacles are “they’re slippery” and “compromised leadership”, can you actually trust that the Iconoclasts aren’t in there anymore, and that you’re not just going to get eaten by them the second you go in?

**Jack:** Oh my god. That is—actually, that is better than—that is a more player character focused tension, I think, than “can we execute a surrender effectively”. Right?

**Austin:** Though I don’t want to take away, if Clem, you’re saying you can call them back, then that’s a thing you can do. Right? Or, maybe it isn’t a thing you know you can do. Have you done it before?

**Art:** I can’t imagine when.

**Jack:** Oh, man. Let’s roll it back then. Let’s let the Iconoclasts have swept through, and then...

**Austin:** Yeah. The screaming stops.

**Keith:** Yeah.

**Jack:** Let’s send in Righteousness.

**Austin:** And Clem, if you give a die for this, then that’s you saying yeah, I tried to call them back, but you tell me if you give a...

**Art:** Oh, definitely.

**Austin:** Okay.

**Art:** Definitely tried.

**Jack:** I’m gonna bring in Cori as well, if that’s okay. You know, like, we need to clear this area.

**Sylvi:** Please do. I would love to show up Clementine Kesh’s stupid fuckin’ ferrets, you know?

**Jack:** Yeah, Clementine Kesh's four ferrets. You know, snapping on head lamps.

**Sylvi:** I can take them.

**Art:** Hey, you know, there's three more where those came from.

[**Jack** and **Austin** laugh]

**Austin:** Cori, how does it feel to have the Witch in Glass here on your side?

**Sylvi:** Um... There is like, a... You ever get that feeling where your shoulders are always just like, constantly tensed, you know? Like when you're anxious or something?

**Austin:** I do.

**Jack:** Yeah.

**Art:** All the time.

**Sylvi:** Yeah, yeah, yeah. [chuckles] I figured this crew would understand what I'm talking about.

[**Dre** laughs]

**Sylvi:** It's like that times ten, or something. There's a constant worry about, like, is there just gonna be a knife in my back all of a sudden because of this?

**Austin:** Yeah.

**Sylvi:** 'Cause like, already, Clementine Kesh, not to be trusted. Now that I'm on team Perennial, even moreso—

**Austin:** Mhm.

**Jack:** Right.

**Sylvi:** —is kind of the way Cori looks at it, where it's like, I don't, like... You have betrayed—you have harmed and betrayed so many people that are close to me at this point now that it's like the fact that we aren't actively fighting feels super unnatural.

**Austin:** I have a follow-up question—

**Jack:** And fighting Iconoclastically.

**Austin:** —Cori, that's actually a little broader, which is...

**Sylvi:** Yeah.

**Austin:** How does it feel to be taking orders from August Righteousness and not Brnine? This is—have we seen Cori outside of the Blue Channel in this way?

**Sylvi:** No. No, I don't think we have.

**Austin:** This feels like a consequence of Mourning and Righteousness kind of taking control of the Cause, kind of now more unilaterally deploying resources and assets, you know?

**Sylvi:** Yeah.

**Austin:** Like, you know. Jack, you framed this scene as August saying “and Cori's there.”

**Jack:** Yeah.

**Austin:** You know, you asked for Cori to be here too, but you didn't do a scene where you talked to Brnine. I'm sure Brnine would have said yes, but you know.

**Jack:** And said “Can I have Coriolis?”

**Austin:** Yeah. Which is interesting.

**Sylvi:** “I'd love your little angel of death, if you don't mind.”

**Austin:** Yeah.

**Sylvi:** I think the big attitude she's got going into this is like, alright, time to show them why the Blue Channel is gonna win this fuckin' war, or won this fuckin' war, depending on how you look at it.

**Austin:** Right, right.

**Jack:** Yeah.

**Sylvi:** Like...

**Austin:** Like back when NBA players used to actually play in the All-Star Game instead of just like, trying to show off. Yeah.

**Sylvi:** Yeah, yeah, yeah. No, absolutely. I'm out here doing windmill dunks.

[**Austin** laughs]

**Jack:** Cori—how does Cori, who is used to move night and captain Brnine's little "let's not do any civilian death" speeches—[chuckles]

[**Ali** chuckles]

**Sylvi:** Uh-huh.

**Jack:** Sorry, am I misremembering—what was that speech, Ali? It was before you deployed into...

**Sylvi:** [chuckles] It was like, "let's communicate before..."

**Austin:** Right.

**Ali:** Yeah, it was, you know, let's just—comms open. You know. [chuckles]

**Jack:** Yeah.

**Ali:** State your intentions, we don't want any funny business.

**Jack:** From my own team.

**Austin:** [chuckles] Funny business.

[**Ali** and **Jack** laugh]

**Jack:** How does Cori feel about being drafted into this sort of revolutionary unit as, like, a respected soldier, but very—it's very business-like. It's very, like... you know.

**Sylvi:** Uh... I don't know, like, it's not—I don't know if it's actually as much of a stretch as you might think, because in my head, Cori's been in some sort of, like, military or military-adjacent hierarchy since she was, like, a preteen, you know?

**Jack:** Right.

**Sylvi:** She grew up being trained to be a mech pilot. I don't think it was always like, "Oh, Griesel Sunset's daughter's here, let's treat her with the kid gloves."

**Austin:** Right, right.

**Sylvi:** Like, he didn't rank high enough for that type of treatment.

**Austin:** Sure.

**Jack:** There's a kind of, like, an old muscle being used again.

**Sylvi:** Yeah. It's like, it definitely doesn't—like, there's not as much satisfaction that comes when it's like, you're fighting alongside people that you know and have come to love, but there is just that sort of, like, "Well, yeah, no, this is—I'm a soldier. I know how to do this." And, you know, she might not love everybody's sort of, like, commanding officer style, so I'm sure that there's gonna be—it's not uncommon for there to do a Cori special and think of her own orders to follow, but...

**Jack:** [chuckles] Yeah.

**Sylvi:** I don't think there's any immediate friction, I guess, between her and August, I guess is the best way to put it, right?

**Austin:** Sure. Yeah.

**Jack:** Yeah. Okay.

**Austin:** So then, yeah, August and August's troops and Cori inside of the caves. Clem, are you in the caves, or are you holding it down outside?

**Art:** I think Clem is still on the dragon.

**Austin:** Yeah, of course.

**Jack:** Yeah, you sort of take the opportunity when you can, right?

**Sylvi:** Yeah.

**Art:** Yeah. When else is that gonna come up?

**Austin:** Does the dragon have a name? Or no, because it's—also, wait, is that dragon an Iconoclast, or is that dragon an Axiom?

**Art:** I think the dragon's an Iconoclast.

**Jack:** Oh my god. [laughs] Greatest of all time, god's greatest mistake.

**Austin:** Yeah, uh-huh.

**Jack:** Clementine flying an Iconoclast.

**Austin:** Yeah. A thing worth saying is the—you know, we left—there's a big mystery here for Clem that I don't know that we are actually going to actually directly answer, but Volition was the last being to make Axioms, and it seemed like the Iconoclasts needed volition to do that for them, and then clem is just doing it. So, did Clem find some other source of power? Is this leftover Perennial power? Is there something else that's letting clem do the Axiom thing? We don't know, but a thing...

**Art:** Is Clem perhaps the most special girl?

**Jack:** God.

**Sylvi:** No, 'cause I'm right here!

**Dre:** That's true. How could you?

[**Sylvi** laughs]

**Jack:** I have a pitch for this, but again, we might not actually need to answer it.

**Austin:** Yeah, yeah. Yeah.

**Jack:** But yeah.

**Austin:** Well, it's something to think about.

**Jack:** I know what it is in my head, and I'm rotating it slowly.

**Austin:** You're rotating it. Interesting. I love that. Alright, well, quiet entry into caves, you know, finding the evidence of the ferret massacre, hearing strange sounds in the distance.

**Sylvi:** [laughs] Don't say it like that.

**Jack:** God. It's the w—yeah.

## **Roll/Resolution**

[2:03:00]

**Austin:** Time to do a roll.

**Jack:** It's the worst. Alright.

**Austin:** Let's build our things, right? Which is opposition starts at three, and then you gain one for each trouble over—or they gain one for each trouble over 3, each relevant obstacle, which I think is two here.



**Jack:** I think it might be.

**Austin:** And then each relevant burden, there's no burdens for you yet. And then on your side, what do you get? You start with two, and then relevant relationship, which is the third one.

**Jack:** With Clementine.

**Austin:** And that's it.

**Jack:** Yeah.

**Austin:** Alright. I will roll these opposition dice. You can roll those other ones. [scoffing]  
Oh my god. 6, 5, 5 on opposition.

**Jack:** Oh no. Oh no.

**Dre:** Jesus.

**Jack:** I've rolled a 4, 2, 2.

**Austin:** [groans] It's going bad! You could—what's your—you could, um...

**Jack:** Oh, I could do any of these.

**Austin:** You could weakness, yeah.

**Jack:** Yeah.

**Austin:** So, for the listener, the thing that's bad is all of Jack's dice are lower than all of the opposition dice.

[Sylvi laughs]

**Keith:** It's a pretty startling loss.

**Jack:** It's the Ernestina Pickman school of rolling dice.

**Keith:** Oh, there's one that's higher. The 4 beats the 2.

**Austin:** The 4—no, there's no—no, but those aren't in. They're not put up.

**Art:** The 2 isn't put up.

**Austin:** Though I guess, first of all, do you want to use one of your weaknesses?

**Jack:** I do, and I'm in a bit of a bind here, because let's say—so the opposition has rolled a 6, a 5, and a 5. Let's say I use the weakness "lash out", which lets me reroll any number of the opposition's dice, and I reroll those three dice. I'm still left with a 4, a 2, and a 2.

**Austin:** Right. Your dice suck, in other words.

**Jack:** However, if I use the weakness "cheat", and I reroll any number of my own die, I still have to beat a 6, a 5, and a 5.

**Austin:** Mhm.

**Jack:** I think I'm gonna start by lashing out.

**Austin:** Okay.

**Keith:** [laughs] That's a funny thing to say when you're about to lash out. "I'm going to start by—I'm about to lash out right now. Everybody prepare."

**Austin:** So which ones are you rerolling?

**Art:** I wouldn't reroll that 3, if that's what you're wondering.

**Austin:** Or the 2, presumably, right?

**Keith:** It's gotta be the 6, 5, 5, right?

**Art:** Yeah.

**Jack:** Yeah.

**Austin:** Okay. Yeah, but Art, you're right, that's the question, was like, 3 is one of those ones where it could come back 2 or 1, but there's a greater chance of it coming back 4, 5, 6, right?

**Jack:** Yeah, yeah, yeah. And I think, to narrativize this, the way I am lashing out is, you know, August is thinking in his head, "This fucking Mirage shit." You know? Like, I've been used to fighting—you know, fighting the Whitestar crew is fine. He's scared. There's like a bead of—no, he's a Delegate, so he probably doesn't sweat. You know, his eyebrow twitches, or his cheek twitches, and over the comms, he says,

Jack (as **August**): Clementine. Come in here immediately. I need a guide.

**Art:** Do you get reception in these caves?

**Austin:** Yeah.

**Keith:** They brought cave phones.

**Jack:** No, and I have to send back a line through my soldiers.

**Austin:** Interesting. Oh, that's fun.

**Jack:** "August needs reinforcements." Which means that there is some poor sap, like an inverse Occam Olio, standing at the cave mouth saying [chuckling] "Uh, Clementine, come in, August wants to talk to you."

**Austin:** "Can you land your big ink dragon and come help?"

**Jack:** "Please!"

**Dre:** Uwu.

**Jack:** Uwu. Okay, so I get to reroll your dice now.

**Austin:** Yeah.

**Art:** I think the ink dragon lands right next to that poor mother...

**Jack:** Jesus.

**Austin:** Do you want to do the reroll, Jack?

**Jack:** Yeah.

**Austin:** Okay. Select the ones you want to reroll.

**Jack:** Okay.

**Sylvi:** What if it ends up worse?

**Austin:** So 6, 3, 3, now is what you're up against.

**Art:** 3. So now you've got one win.

**Sylvi:** Better than none, right?

**Keith:** Better than none.

**Austin:** Oh, mark your misfortune, first of all. Please.

**Dre:** [chuckling] Please.

**Jack:** Oh, yep. And misfortune is you da-da-da...

**Austin:** Fill it instead of circling it.

**Jack:** Fill it up?

**Keith:** This is great, because now you could still technically flee, but you'd still take the loss for the 6, and an extra misfortune for nothing.

**Jack:** Yeah.

**Keith:** Or...

**Art:** It's probably worth just taking a obstacle.

**Keith:** Or you could cheat to reroll your dice and maybe get the 6.

**Austin:** You could get a 6. And you could—sorry, and you're good at what again? You're good at...

**Jack:** Menace.

**Austin:** Which we're not using.

**Jack:** No. It wouldn't be helpful, menace, here.

**Austin:** No.

**Sylvi:** Sorry, you're good at what again?

**Keith:** Remind me?

**Jack:** What are you good at again? No skills, aw man.

**Austin:** So what are you gonna do?

**Keith:** I would go for it.

**Jack:** Yeah, I mean, you're only playing these characters once, aren't you?

**Keith:** Because what are you gonna do, take all the losses? The plan was to do two from the start, right?

**Jack:** Here's the other thing. I'm like an old general, right? Like, the—feeling the fear in these caves, the thing is trust that my other squads out in the world are acting with bravery and might be facing better odds than me, and push ahead.

**Austin:** Yeah, sure. I think the second—by the way, Clem, do you go inside? You do? You do follow the order?

**Art:** Oh, yeah.

**Austin:** Okay. I think as you do that, Gucci brings whatever ship Gucci is in at this point, probably one of the—a ship assigned by General Mourning, is my guess—closer in so that—just does not like this. Is ready to go try to pull people out of this because this seems dangerous now, you know? If Clem wanted to, this would be a moment where she could kill August Righteousness and Coriolis, and oh my god, oh my god, oh my god, and then could come out and say “Yeah, they got ’em. Yeah, they got ’em in there. I did my best to save them, but they died.” And this is what’s going through Gucci’s head, is like, “I fucked up, I fucked up, I fucked up, she’s gonna kill them in there and blame the Whitestar Fleet. This is exactly what she’s gonna do. She was always gonna do this.” I think Gucci is running down to the hangar, is like, “prepare my Altar,” you know? Roll those dice.

**Jack:** Now, hang on. I should probably keep the 4, right? Because that’s a guaranteed win.

**Austin:** But that’s one less chance that you get a 6.

**Art:** You have a 50/50 chance of getting a 4 or better on that 4 reroll.

**Jack:** So you say just roll the lot? I’m checking in with my Bilateral correspondent Art Martinez-Tebbel.

**Keith:** Does it—I don’t know anything about odds. Does it make it worse that you’re rerolling three and that the other two dice have to be better?

**Art:** No.

**Keith:** Okay.

**Art:** I mean, it still might not work, [**Keith:** Right.] but it’s... I think the odds say reroll the 4.

**Keith:** It is, at the end of the day, a gamble.

**Art:** Yeah, I guess, what’s your tolerance for gambling?

**Jack:** I kidnapped the Fabreal duke from his own castle.

**Austin:** You did. That's true, yeah. Roll those dice.

[pause]

**Keith:** Oh my god.

**Austin:** Oh my god.

**Art:** Oh my god! [laughs]

**Keith:** Oh my god!

**Austin:** It got worse, everybody.

**Keith:** It got worse on almost every front.

**Austin:** 3, 2, 1. It was 4, 2, 2.

**Jack:** I'm just marking this misfortune...

**Art:** 4, 2, 2.

**Austin:** And then it became 3, 2, 1.

**Keith:** Hey, is that a straight? Does this game do straights?

**Jack:** [chuckles] I'm just marking a misfortune.

**Austin:** Alright, what happens here? Let's assign them. So you're gonna cancel, presumably, one of the 3s with the 3.

**Jack:** Yeah.

**Keith:** And the 1 with the 1.

**Jack:** Nothing happens now. Usually I would win. I would—

**Austin:** No, the 1s aren't in play.

**Keith:** Oh, they're not.

**Austin:** It's 6, 3, 3. Yeah, it's just this middle section here.

**Jack:** And I want to, you know, August benefits when there are ties, because he can use his weakness to menace his way through the ties. However, deep in the caves...

**Austin:** But you already used your 2, right? So.

**Jack:** Yeah, yeah. I already used my 2. Okay, so now it doesn't—

**Austin:** Well, no, because remember, there's a way of—there's a system now for narrating what the outcomes are.

**Jack:** Oh, yeah, you're right.

**Austin:** That we didn't—"Narrating outcomes: After the dice have been paired..." So, what did you pair?

**Jack:** I paired a 3, and I paired a 3.

**Austin:** No.

**Keith:** No.

**Austin:** You don't have a second 3.

**Keith:** We only have a 2.

**Jack:** Oh, no, sorry, I paired a 3 to a 3. I see.

**Austin:** I see. And then you put a 2 against something. You lost.

**Jack:** And it doesn't matter—yeah.



**Austin:** It doesn't matter, yeah, but it's important to look at it. "After the dice have been paired, the spotlight player will narrate their victories, starting with the lowest die result and continuing to the highest." Do you have any victories?

**Jack:** I don't. I have a tie.

**Austin:** You only get to pair 2, so we're just gonna keep that 1 out of here altogether.

**Jack:** No, no, no, no, do it this way. I want to make a valiant effort.

**Austin:** I see. I see, okay. Yeah, that makes sense.

**Jack:** I moved the 2 up from the 3 to the 6.

**Austin:** Yeah, I see. "Next, the opposition narrates the spotlight player's losses, again from lowest to highest die results. These narrations can be quick and to the point, or include some roleplaying." So, first loss is a 3, which again, is—oh, this is new. Oh, this is—we haven't gotten 3s before, have we?

**Jack:** No, this is new.

**Austin:** Alright, dice outcomes. "3—negative, receive a new obstacle: The opposition gives the spotlight player a new obstacle. The opposition then describes this new roadblock between the spotlight player and their goal." Their example: "The gods were deeply offended by Lenore's mannerless entrance. To bring a crossbow into the Panoptical Sanctum? Unspeakable. From now on, her every move would be scrutinized by their immortal eyes." That's a fun one. So, first new obstacle, opposition. What's new for August Righteousness to have to deal with, and what happens to emphasize it? You know, it feels like—it feels like—here's my pitch for the first one, and this has nothing to do with the Iconoclasts. This just has to do with the...

**Jack:** Oh, with Whitestar.

**Austin:** With Whitestar, and with the Bilats in general. There are more of them than you thought.

**Jack:** Oh, god. That's fuckin' scary.

**Austin:** You didn't—you thought that there—you know, the losses that you had estimated were wrong. More of them went to ground, more of them have, you know, gotten back together, there are actually—there's a higher chance that you're going to run into a high quality of, or a high quantity of enemies than what you thought. And this happens because, as you're moving deeper in, past where you thought the Iconoclasts had killed everybody, you know, a trap goes off, right? An explosion happens separating Righteousness, Cori, and Clem, and the other troops all from each other, right? Some explosions start happening, and a reinforcement group shows up from the Whitestar group, from Lander Twelve, and, you know, begins to just tear through Righteousness's people. So there's one new obstacle. Obstacle number two. Oh, that one gets canceled. Obstacle number two gets canceled, huh?

**Jack:** Oh, yeah. Yep.

**Austin:** Okay.

**Jack:** So instead, we are looking at my 6 here, which, again, is "Doom: Mark misfortune, escalate a random trouble, and impact the map." So I'm gonna mark misfortune again. I'll just put this with the rest of my misfortune.

**Austin:** Yeah. So, and then draw yourself a card.

**Jack:** Okay, there's a six of diamonds just on there.

**Austin:** It's not this six. I'm gonna get rid of it. That shouldn't be there. I'm gonna pull it out and put it in with the discard. Can you draw a card? Is that a thing you can do?

**Jack:** Yep.

**Austin:** Okay.

**Jack:** I have drawn a jack of diamonds.

**Austin:** So, wealth and resources gets worse. Interesting.

**Jack:** And it impacts the map in some way.

**Austin:** What happened here?

**Jack:** Now, remember, I have squadrons elsewhere. There are other attacks, you know, if that's something that we want to... It doesn't need to be Steeple Catterick focused, right?

**Austin:** Yeah. Is it Iconoclast focused? Are Clem's forces elsewhere, like, ruining the world?

**Jack:** It would be amazing if the first Clementine assault just paid out dividends for Clementine.

**Austin:** I mean part of the thing here, too, sorry—I made that thing that was like “this isn't related to the Iconoclasts” because I misunder—I forgot that you canceled the other obstacle.

**Jack:** Oh, right, yeah.

**Austin:** If we prefer this obstacle to be tied to the Iconoclasts, because that's what that roll was kind of about more, and if, Art, you're interested in that, I'm happy to go that direction instead, and to get rid of the one that I just wrote.

**Art:** It's tricky.

**Janine:** I have an idea.

**Jack:** Yeah.

**Janine:** This is a possibility for how it could go wrong. You know how when you're training AI, part of the problem is you'll be like, “Hey, here's a bunch of pictures of cats,” and it'll be like, “Cool, okay, I know what a cat is now.” And then you'll show it a picture of a dog in a collar, and then it's only looking at the collar, so it's like, “Yeah, that's a cat.” And you're like, wait, what? And it'll say that anything wearing a collar is a cat. What if the Iconoclasts something similar?

**Austin:** Yeah.

**Janine:** There is something that they attach to their target here where it's like, "Oh, okay, if it has X, it's a bad guy, and we'll fuck it up." But like, sometimes that thing is on a good thing.

**Austin:** Yeah. I mean, can I point at a thing that actually, Jack, you called attention to previously already?

**Jack:** Yeah.

**Austin:** Which is, one of the questions you asked Cori was, "Hey, we're not like the Blue Channel. We are rigorous, we are regimented, we are a military force. We all have uniforms, we all move with hand signals," you know? What if the Iconoclasts couldn't—what if for—as far as they're concerned, you're also military occupiers of Palisade.

**Jack:** [laughs] Oh, it's good. It's an immediate repudiation of the "let's get Clem on board" project.

**Austin:** Uh-huh. That's kind of fun.

**Jack:** So we could change...

**Sylvi:** We should repudiate that.

**Jack:** We should change the thing to...

**Austin:** Obstacle to...

**Jack:** [chuckling] Iconoclasts are having difficulty telling between...

**Austin:** [typing] "Can't tell the difference between Jade Kill and—" or "between Cause soldiers and Bilat military."

**Jack:** Especially because the first sort of, like, main military use of the Iconoclasts was capturing Lucia, right?

**Austin:** Right.

**Jack:** Was going up against, like, a sort of platonic soldier force.

**Austin:** What's this look like in play? Do the ferrets come for you? Sorry, go ahead, Jack.

**Jack:** What if we get out and we find that our staging ground has just been destroyed by the Iconoclasts? Like, the guy outside who called in Clem is dead—you know, while we were making our way through the tunnel, the Iconoclasts have, having exhausted the fight inside the tunnel, just, you know, gotten to work on Righteousness' staging ground on the cliffs outside.

**Austin:** Right. Well, and there is Gucci, like, dripping in...

**Jack:** Awful Iconoclastic—yeah.

**Austin:** Inky, Iconoclastic goo in the Transgress Oblige. I'm picturing, like, sort of the posture of Emily Blunt in...

**Jack:** Oh, tomorrow—day after—what's that fuckin' movie called?

**Austin:** Yeah. They renamed it.

**Sylvi:** Edge of Tomorrow?

**Austin:** What is it?

**Sylvi:** Wasn't it called Edge of Tomorrow, and they renamed it to like, Die—

**Austin:** [cross] Edge of Tomorrow, All You Need Is Kill. Yeah.

**Sylvi:** All You Need Is Kill, yeah.

**Austin:** Yeah, yeah, yeah. Sort of just that, like, "I've gotten through the fight" exhaustion, but like, Clem's weird monsters killed a bunch of people and destroyed a bunch of equipment, they can't be trusted to go do stuff at least on their own, you know?

**Jack:** Yeah.

**Austin:** I put Clem on a leash, but Clem didn't keep the monsters on a leash.

**Jack:** What does my relationship with Clementine say? "A violent, unpredictable dog. So it's paying off tonight, but what about tomorrow morning?? I didn't realize that was, like, non-figurative. [chuckling] It was like, Righteousness wrote that in his journal, and then went out into this mission.

**Austin:** Righteousness goes back, crosses out dog, writes ferret. "A violent, unpredictable ferret."

**Jack:** [chuckles] And then crosses out "so it's paying off tonight."

**Austin:** Yeah.

**Jack:** Okay. Yep. I'm happy with that. Real fucking terrible turn for me.

**Austin:** Okay, well, now the doom.

**Jack:** And then we have the 6. Doom.

**Austin:** Yeah.

**Jack:** This is...

**Austin:** Which you drew—it's the increased wealth and resources, or not the increase, the increase of chaos, the decrease of stability of those.

**Jack:** Yes, and this bumps that to 3.

**Austin:** No, to a 2, I already raised it.

**Jack:** Oh, you already raised it? Okay, cool.

**Austin:** Yeah, it was a 1.

**Jack:** So that means that people are starting to feel it, but...

**Austin:** Yes. So, “Updating the map: The first time trouble affects a location, the location is impacted. Sorry, “Whenever you add a new trouble or heal an old one, a location near the kingdom will be directly affected. Everyone decides together which location this is. The first time trouble affects a location, that location is impacted and no longer functions the same way. The hospital has shut down, the woods are ablaze, rationing is enforced in the city. The second time a trouble affects a specific location, that location is transformed. A transformed location takes on a new meaning entirely. The hospital becomes an orphanage for demon foundlings, the wood becomes the dragon’s domain, the city becomes ghost-haunted boroughs.” So...

**Keith:** Hey, we could have a dragon’s domain.

**Austin:** We could. I think at this point it’s just impacting, so where is wealth and resources? What has gone wrong during this whole big military offensive that has weakened our wealth and resources throughout Palisade, or somewhere in Palisade? Because you were saying this fight was happening everywhere, right, Jack?

**Jack:** Yeah, yeah. At least where the sort of Whitestar cells, you know.

**Austin:** Right, right. Yeah.

**Jack:** Oh my god. The place to start picking at wealth and resources is the Bontive Valley, right?

**Austin:** It is, yeah. It is, though I’m cautious because it’s like, damn, were there cells still in the Bontive Valley? Maybe.

**Ali:** Yeah, we keep going back to this. [chuckles]

**Austin:** Yeah. We could put it in Sinder Karst, or the Shale Belt, and have it be wealth and resources in a mineral sense. We could have it be...

**Jack:** We could—

**Austin:** We could have it be—I mean, the Bontive Valley tap could simply be that, like, hey, we've lost so many resources and had to resupply that there isn't more to tap there. You know?

**Jack:** Yeah.

**Austin:** The harvest, we've gone through all of our silos. We've gone through all of our remaining, you know.

**Jack:** We could actually—remember when we discussed the Crown of Glass as like a—almost like a pleasure town, or like that's where people go to rest?

**Austin:** Yeah.

**Jack:** You know, what if the Iconoclasts empowered, you know, do something to Clementine's city to make it—you know, what if that resource begins to fall apart for the Cause?

**Austin:** That's fun, yeah. Yeah. Because there isn't a place—I guess that's health and spirit a little bit, but wealth and resources, the idea of being like, hey, the resource that is a place to go have downtime, a place to go kick it, is no longer available because the monsters are too monstrous.

**Jack:** They might just kill you.

**Austin:** They used to simply prowl the streets at night, but now they're like, annoying.

[Dre laughs]

**Jack:** They'll get you.

**Sylvi:** They always gotta make it so in your face.

**Jack:** [laughs] We should get some, you know, some nice banks and cops to walk alongside the monsters.

**Sylvi:** Yeah.



**Austin:** Eugh.

**Jack:** Okay.

**Sylvi:** [laughing] No ink at pride.

[Ali snickers]

**Keith:** I mean, that's how you drain some resources, is open a new police department.

**Sylvi:** [laughing] Sorry. I got really excited when I realized they were made of ink.

**Austin:** The idea of “we need to—yeah, we have these creatures on our side, but they actually require more resources to keep them from hurting us than we thought they would” is not bad either, though it doesn't really affect a single location in the same way.

**Jack:** We gotta get a lot of Q-Concrete. Right? Iconoclasts—what if we start outfitting—what if we start strip mining the Shale Belt and put Q-Concrete against our own soldiers? No, that's—no.

**Sylvi:** Oh my god.

**Austin:** I mean...

**Jack:** That is transformed, not impacted.

**Keith:** Why no?

**Austin:** Why no? Yeah, I guess that's—well, impacted could be that you are...

**Jack:** Well, but also, the—yeah.

**Austin:** You are strip mining the Shale Belt, right? You are getting the resources needed for that. But that's...

**Jack:** I can't see why at this point, though, Righteousness and Mourning wouldn't just go, “That's it.” You know...

**Austin:** Yeah. “We’re cutting them loose.”

**Jack:** “Why are we scarring the surface of our own world post-victory against cutting loose a woman we hate?”

**Austin:** That’s a good question.

**Art:** It’s a little too soon to get there, though.

**Austin:** In round one before there is even a Clem scene.

**Jack:** I mean, the Iconoclasts opened really strong. I gotta say, this is a real W scene for Clem and the Iconoclasts. Okay, let’s see...

**Austin:** Well, and the doom doesn’t have to be tied to that at all. The doom doesn’t have to be Iconoclasts at all. It could be the broader scene. You could have just simply failed against the Whitestar Fleet.

**Jack:** Yeah. That’s very true. I mean, this could be reflective of the “there’s more of them than we thought.”

**Austin:** Which, does—that’s not there anymore as an obstacle, but.

**Jack:** Oh, but I mean to say, you know, we could try and pull some of that character in, [Austin: Yeah, yeah.] although we are looking for a wealth and resources thing, which is like...

**Austin:** That’s part of why I’m like, I think transforming Sinder Karst—or, sorry, not transforming it, but—it’s not called tap. Impacting Sinder Karst by saying hey, it’s no longer just a base of operations, it’s actually a mineral, you know, it no longer functions the same way, right? It is now a place where we need to kick up manufacturing there or something, right? Or Joyous Guard, which used to be just a base of operations, now on top of being a base of operations, you know, people are turning it into a major industrial hub, or something like that. Or maybe the Bontive Valley, instead of just being the place

where stuff is grown, it's also where we need to manufacture more bullets or whatever, you know?

**Jack:** [exhales] Yeah.

**Austin:** There was a sound there from someone, I don't know who.

**Jack:** It was me.

**Austin:** Okay.

**Jack:** It was, yeah, I—yes, but against Whitestar, right? As opposed to against the Iconoclasts.

**Austin:** Right. Just like, “Oh, this fight is harder than we thought it was, we actually need to double down, and it's stretching us thin,” right? “We're spending more money than we thought we were, we are—” and again, two isn't so bad, right? That's the thing, right? A 2 is still, a level 2 is—“it's a more widespread problem, most people on the street could tell you about it, but the majority have been spared from its impact.:

**Jack:** Yeah. I'll tell you what this is. This is the pirates are taking a higher cut. Mustard Red has had to go to the pirates [**Austin:** Uh-huh.] and say “August says that we need more weapons, so you are going to have to increase your raids on Principality ships so we can take their weaponry from them,” and the pirates are like, “Well, you know, the Principality has revealed itself to be more armed, so we're gonna need better pay, or better assurances of our safety for that.” Because that dovetails well—

**Austin:** Can someone decorate Rifle Island with a crown or a palace or something that makes it look cool, please?

**Jack:** Yeah, yeah. Skelton Knaggs, the head of the pirates, an absolute hard-nosed businessman, is like, “Look. My crews have always been good, but if you're gonna, you know, now that the Whitestar Fleet has really started to rear their head...”

**Austin:** “It's time for us to get paid.”

**Jack:** Yeah. And they were already being paid, because that's where we got a lot of our weapons from.

**Austin:** Right, right.

**Jack:** You know, we have factories, but part of it is we're confiscating a bunch of shit from defeated Principality units.

**Austin:** Love it. Alright.

**Jack:** Oh, what a mess.

**Austin:** That's your scene.

**Jack:** Yep.

## **Cori's First Scene**

[2:26:13]

**Austin:** Cori, do you have a scene ready to go?

**Sylvi:** Yeah, [laughs] so, I've had a lot of time to sit and think about what type of scenes should I be doing, and I really think we gotta just swing for the fences with everything, right?

**Austin:** Three scenes per person, right?

**Art:** There's no other place to do it.

**Austin:** That's right.

**Sylvi:** Exactly. [laughing] Anyway, my heart rate is going crazy for this one.

**Austin:** Wow!

**Art:** Woah.

**Sylvi:** I have been, like, sitting on this for like a week, and I don't know why, it's just gotten bigger and bigger in my head, the finale, and I'm like, "Ah, shit, I really gotta make sure we do this, okay." Also, a lot of caffeine.

**Austin:** A lot of caffeine.

[**Dre** and **Janine** chuckle]

**Sylvi:** So... [laughs] You know how Arbitrage kinda fucked off, right?

**Austin:** I do know.

**Sylvi:** And there's like a lot of people who were, like, working for Arbitrage, that are kind of like, not really—like, we don't really know where they're, like, affiliated, currently, because of that?

**Austin:** We don't know. It's true.

**Sylvi:** What if we, like, recruited some of them?

**Austin:** Are you twirling hair in your finger as you speak?

**Sylvi:** [chuckles] A little bit. I might be.

[**Ali** and **Janine** laugh]

**Austin:** So is your goal...

**Sylvi:** Uh-huh.

**Austin:** To recruit...

**Sylvi:** Yeah.

**Austin:** Elle Evensong?

**Sylvi:** Of course it is.

**Austin:** Okay. Where—

**Sylvi:** Why wouldn't it be? Why not?

**Austin:** Play to find out what happens.

**Sylvi:** Yeah, exactly.

**Austin:** Where, what, and who? Is it just a one-on-one? Are you just gonna go talk to Elle?

**Sylvi:** I mean... I think so. I was like—behind the scenes, we had to delay this recording, so I've been spending a lot of time agonizing over, like, could this person come? Could this relationship affect—like, I don't think so, though.

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

**Sylvi:** I don't know. Um... It might just be the two of them. There were those "I'm gonna find you" texts at the end of the last downtime we did.

**Austin:** There sure were. Yeah. "I'm coming for you" I think is what I said. If I didn't, that's what I should have said.

**Sylvi:** Yeah, I believe so.

**Austin:** Uh-huh.

**Sylvi:** So I feel like that's just a collision waiting to happen.

**Austin:** What's the best place for this conversation to happen, then? Or for this sequence—I'm guessing it's a conversation. Is it a fight? Is it a conversation? Is it both? Is it a...

**Sylvi:** Let's play to find out what happens, Austin. [laughs]

**Austin:** Okay. Well, we have the what, where, and who.

**Sylvi:** No, I'm trying to think of, like, an important place for it.

**Austin:** Could it be, like, in some abandoned ruins from the Isle of the Broken Key?

**Sylvi:** Sure.

**Austin:** Like, you know, we last saw them in the vision that Eclectic got from Thisbe's opening up your brain to the psychic maelstrom, whatever that move is called. And we saw that there was like a fight between the Dim Liturgy and the Devotion people, and presum—my guess is that left at least part of the Isle of the Broken Key, like, damaged and abandoned, you know? I effectively believe that the rest of the Devotees have fucked off from Palisade, right?

**Sylvi:** Yeah.

**Austin:** And are now—or are living in, you know, in hiding somewhere on Palisade, and definitely living elsewhere inside of the Twilight Mirage. So it could be fun to see y'all, like, in the castle from the big party early on in the Isle of the Broken Key, the masquerade party, or...

**Sylvi:** Oh, fuck yeah, absolutely!

**Austin:** You know? There's kind of like, the abandoned—you get that great feeling of like, this place, you know, was in the middle of something else, you know?

**Jack:** It's New Year's Eve 1969 or whatever.

**Austin:** Right, exactly. Yeah, yeah.

**Sylvi:** Oh my god.

**Austin:** Do you send word to her, or do you just—does she send word to you? What's the...

**Sylvi:** I think, with the way that this is in my head, I think Cori's the one who, like, sends the—[chuckles] does the like, drop a pin thing, like, sends a location, like...

**Austin:** Yeah, yeah. Uh-huh. Yeah. And then I think she shows up faster than she could if she wasn't already nearby. Do you know what I mean? Like...

**Sylvi:** Oh, she's excited.

**Austin:** Uh-huh. Dark room.

**Sylvi:** Yeah.

**Austin:** Where are you in this room? I'm imagining it, if you imagine it as an empty—a room where there was a masquerade ball happening. Let's pause and leave out the bit that the last time we saw a masquerade ball happening was probably last year in game time, maybe they just do those there sometimes. So, you know.

**Sylvi:** It's like in Dragon's Dogma 2, they're just every night. [laughs]

**Austin:** They're just every night, yeah, exactly, exactly. God, that fucking quest. The—so there's like masks on tables, and unfinished drinks and, you know, maybe there was a fight in here between the Devotees and the Dim Liturgy, and there's a bar, and there's, you know, things hanging from the ceiling like—what are the words I'm looking for? Like, decorations. Colorful decorations. What are those called? What are, like—

**Dre:** Streamers?

**Austin:** Streamers, yeah. Like streamers and stuff like that. Or...

**Sylvi:** Okay.

**Art:** "What are those called," Austin says, describing something that has thousands of words for it.

**Austin:** Well, this is why it's hard to pick just one, you know? Yeah. And where are you, then, when she comes in? What is your posture? What does she see? What's the camera see?



**Sylvi:** We gotta be as melodramatic as possible with this, right?

**Austin:** Mhm.

**Sylvi:** I feel like there's like a—I like the image of Cori having come into this room through a balcony, raised up on the hand of her mech, and is just, like, standing on it via when she comes in.

**Austin:** Yeah, that's fun.

Sylvi (as **Cori**): You made it!

Austin (as **Elle**): I did. How are you holding up?

Sylvi (as **Cori**): Oh, you know. Been a busy time. Couple changes going on.

**Sylvi:** Shows off the flowery wings a little bit.

Austin (as **Elle**): It's very impressive.

Sylvi (as **Cori**): Yeah, I thought you'd think so.

Austin (as **Elle**): I have to say, it wasn't one of the outcomes I imagined for you.

Sylvi (as **Cori**): I'm full of surprises, what can I say?

Austin (as **Elle**): So, what's your plan? Gonna stay here and hunt down Bilats like Righteousness is?

Sylvi (as **Cori**): Eh. At least for a little while, but I've been thinking a little more ambitiously lately.

Austin (as **Elle**): Oh, I have to hear this. Do you want anything?

**Austin:** And goes behind the bar and begins to mix herself a drink.

[**Sylvi** laughs]

Sylvi (as **Cori**): I'll just have whatever you're having.

**Austin**: Raises an eyebrow.

**Sylvi**: Shrugs.

**Austin**: Alright. Uh-huh. What's she drink? What is the Elle Evensong drink of choice? Like, a really strong whiskey sour?

**Sylvi**: Oh my god.

**Austin**: Makes you one. It's very strong.

**Sylvi**: Absolutely pulls a face after she takes a sip.

**Austin**: Yeah, mhm.

Austin (as **Elle**): Tell me about your ambitions.

**Sylvi**: Oh, how would she phrase this? I don't want to, like, rush myself too much doing this. Ah, does—what would be, like, a small display of Perennial magic that she could do while she starts talking?

**Austin**: You know, it's kind of an open book at this point. What have we seen Perennial magic do? We've seen some time trickery, right? We've seen things kind of—at this point not whole timelines, but like, objects go in reverse, right? Or tiny time loops, looping gif type stuff, which we've always played with. Things growing, you know? Plant life and stuff like that. And then, generally, the sort of Perennial Wave stuff that we've seen too, right? So electronics flickering on or off, right?

**Sylvi**: Yeah.

**Austin**: Being able to turn stuff on and off at a distance. Or I think the most advanced version of this that we've seen is like, using the Perennial Wave itself as like, nanomachine, like, raw material that you then make into something else. Like, that's

what Motion did when Motion had this power, kind of. Not this literal power, not Perennial power, but...

**Sylvi:** Yeah. I don't know, like—

**Austin:** You know, was forming stuff with it, you know? Could you form a drink stirrer or something?

**Sylvi:** I was gonna do, like, a little bit of Russian sage, even, but I like the drink stirrer.

**Austin:** Oh, that's fun. Yeah. I mean, why not both?

**Sylvi:** It could be solid enough to use, yeah.

**Austin:** Yeah, yeah, yeah, absolutely. Yeah. That's very cute. One sec, let me get in character.

Austin (as **Elle**): [scoffs] That's very cute.

[**Sylvi** laughs]

**Austin:** Had to get a little more patronizing.

**Sylvi:** [chuckling] Yeah, yeah, of course, of course.

**Art:** Nailed it.

Sylvi (as **Cori**): Ah, I mean, you know. Don't wanna scare you off with the big shit, right? Anyway...

Austin (as **Elle**): Scare me off? Oh...

Sylvi (as **Cori**): Well, yeah.

Austin (as **Elle**): You have to know when you show power, it's only an invitation.

**Sylvi:** Holy shit. [laughs]

**Art:** Jesus.

[**Sylvi** continues laughing]

Sylvi (as **Cori**): [stuttering] For what?

[**Dre** laughs]

**Sylvi:** [laughing] I had to find the voice. I had to find the voice.

Austin (as **Elle**): To see how much of it's just for show.

Sylvi (as **Cori**): Ah, okay. I mean, when has it ever been?

Austin (as **Elle**): Oh. I thought all the time. I've never seen you commit to power. I've seen you try to live up to the shadow I cast, I've seen you on posters, I've seen you trying to be Devotion's bright little girl. And I guess you have a new goddess now, but—taking power for yourself, using it for more than parlor tricks, that would be new.

Sylvi (as **Cori**): Like I said, a lot of things have been changing lately. Guess it's just up to me to prove you wrong once again.

Austin (as **Elle**): It's funny, I have a way that you could do that.

Sylvi (as **Cori**): Oh, now you've got me curious.

**Austin:** She finishes her drink, and then places a little disk down that's about the size of the glass, and then flips the glass over, and places it on top of the disk just as it begins to light up, and the effect is that it kind of projects, all around you, light filling up the room. It is a big map of the galaxy. And you can see the Twilight Mirage towards the center, you know, it's part of one of the Principality's arms, it's part of the Stel Nideo arm, and it's kind of towards the middle, and you can see it growing, which you know is part of what the Cult of Devotion's plan is, but more than that, you can see all of these other arms begin to fracture.

They're color-coded, right? So there's the big blue Stel Orion arm, there's the big orange Stel Kesh arm, there's the big purple Stel Columnar arm, and they begin to fracture. You know, what was Stel Kesh's huge orange kind of branch of the galaxy breaks into a bunch of little orange clusters, and the oranges begin to change, right, so like, at first, there's just regular—the same orange for all of them, and then one of them moves towards a burnt sienna, and another one becomes this kind of bright neon orange, and this begins happening to every one of the Stel arms, basically. She's showing you a picture of the projected next generation of life, basically. And she says,

Austin (as **Elle**): The Perfect Millennium's over. People just don't know it yet. And what comes next is a fracturing. Countless little kingdoms, little warlords, little democracies. One after another, the people of Kesh and Nideo and Columnar and Orion and Apostolos, and even the Branched, will turn on each other. And after the blood is spilled, they'll realize they still gotta talk to one another sometimes. And they still want to send things to one another. They'll still want to buy things, and they'll still want to make promises that they can count on, and bit by bit, a new world will start to emerge. Nothing as serious or solid as the Divine Principality. Honestly, something more in line with Aram Nideo's original vision.

**Austin:** And she snaps her fingers, and between all of these smaller clusters of color, a long red line begins to form like a skeletal structure connecting one organ to another, connecting one micro kingdom to the next.

Austin (as **Elle**): We're going to build this. My client and the rest of his coterie—

**Austin:** I guess, actually, its.

Austin (as **Elle**): My client and its coterie of other agents are going to build the world that comes next. And it's going to need power to do it. I'm gonna leave here with a handful of people. A handful of powerful people. Got a one-way ticket. If you dream of more than being a hero on a tiny planet in a tiny system, you can come with me and show me how powerful you are.

Sylvi (as **Cori**): That's... That's the big dream? You're—sorry. I just, you gave me so much shit for the Devotion stuff, but here you are trying to be a middle manager.

Austin (as **Elle**): It's not that I'm trying to be a middle manager. It's that no one counts but middle managers. We lost that fight thousands of years ago. So you can call it middle management, you can call it client-service relations, you can call it...

Sylvi (as **Cori**): I call it giving up.

Austin (as **Elle**): I'm fine with that. Call it whatever you want. I'll die decades from now, and I'll have lived a happy life.

Sylvi (as **Cori**): And now it's my turn to not believe you.

Austin (as **Elle**): Build me another dream, then.

**Sylvi**: Oh, I have an idea. Hey, do you remember the way the move Flash is described in Armour Astir?

**Austin**: Would you like to read it to me?

**Sylvi**: I do, but I need to get it up, [**Austin** laughs] because I didn't think about doing this beforehand, so I was like, stalling a little while I typed in stuff.

**Austin**: This is the last move that you took as Cori before we switched from Armour Astir. Yeah.

**Sylvi**: Yeah. "You may communicate with other Channelers instantly over great distances in times of urgent need, sending words or even feelings and sensations to help or hinder faster than anyone or anything else can act. So quickly, in fact, you may do it after a roll has been made." That part doesn't really matter. What I want to do, because she said "build me another dream," [**Austin**: Yeah.] I'm gonna show her the one where we're fighting together with my psychic powers that I already had.

**Austin:** This is fun. Yeah, yeah, yeah. That's very fun.

**Sylvi:** Yeah. I already did.

**Austin:** This sounds like the roll to me.

**Sylvi:** Yeah.

**Austin:** Because you're trying to convince her—tell me what you're trying to convince her of.

**Sylvi:** I'm trying to convince her that we can do more than just resign ourselves to fighting for a—what sounds like a conglomerate, basically. Like, Arbitrage—I don't know how else to describe Arbitrage.

**Austin:** Sure.

**Sylvi:** There is, like, a part of Cori that's very hurt that Elle doesn't believe in anything, really, anymore.

**Austin:** I mean, that is what it is, right? Like, it is absolute nihilism. It is absolute—yes.

**Sylvi:** Yeah. This is the, like, if you don't—"you don't have anything to believe in, so believe in me" is the pitch.

**Austin:** Right, okay.

**Sylvi:** Yeah.

## **Roll/Resolution**

[2:42:42]

**Austin:** That sounds like it's time to roll some dice.

**Sylvi:** Oh boy.

**Austin:** Let's remember how dice work.

**Sylvi:** Yeah, please. [laughs]

**Austin:** Alright. You start with—you start with—I guess we start with three over here on the opposition, [**Sylvi:** Yeah.] plus one more for every trouble at 3 or more, which is none right now, and then every relevant burden, which you should have no burdens, currently.

**Sylvi:** Nope.

**Austin:** And every relevant obstacle. Which is, “how do you break the wheel from this place of relative peace,” [**Sylvi:** Yeah.] or “Cori’s only skill is violence; do you even know how to build something?”

**Sylvi:** I’m trying!

**Jack:** Cori’s only skill is violence—I mean, the thing that you just described was fighting together with Elle, [**Austin:** Yes.] and Elle specific—Elle’s sort of, like, repast earlier was “I’ll live for decades and I’ll die happy.” Like, I think an obstacle is are you capable of imagining a future that isn’t about, like, “we can fight together.”

**Austin:** Yeah.

**Sylvi:** She can, but that didn’t come up in the show before. [laughs]

**Austin:** It didn’t, and I actually think the other one’s also hard, which is like, if your pitch is “stay here and fight with me,” which is the pitch from the dream, the other half of it is like, how do you do anything with the greater galaxy from here? Are you just going to imagine being here—I guess, actually, that dream, was that dream—that dream was not in the Twilight Mirage. That dream was outside. So maybe that does...

**Sylvi:** That dream was outside the Twilight Mirage, yeah.

**Austin:** Then, yeah, I’d say that second one is a problem, but maybe not the first one. Thoughts?

**Sylvi:** Oh, boy.



**Austin:** Jack, you were making a case that it was an obstacle.

**Jack:** I was making a case that—let me just scroll down here.

**Austin:** Or that this particular dream sidesteps that.

**Jack:** No, I was actually—I was looking at the second one being an obstacle. Cori's only skill is violence, yeah.

**Austin:** Yeah.

**Jack:** I think that Elle has a way out of the Mirage, and, you know, you do seem to be pitching—you're challenging her nihilism with, you know, "what if we continued to fight until our backs are against the wall?" But I do think that that comes into conflict with the obstacle "do you know how to build something?"

**Austin:** Right.

**Sylvi:** Yeah.

**Austin:** Yeah.

**Jack:** And I think that that, you know, what about when the fighting's done?

**Austin:** Yeah, I think that's right.

**Jack:** It's tough as well, because Elle, for all of Elle's grim semi-corporate nihilism, the thing she's proposing is actually a kind of building something, you know?

**Austin:** Mhm.

**Sylvi:** Yeah...

**Jack:** She's like, "We can construct a network between various sort of petty kingdoms and things that will be productive or generative or something."

**Sylvi:** She's trying to build more of the suffering that put us in this!

**Austin:** Yeah. Uh-huh. Because she thinks it's inevitable.

**Sylvi:** Yeah.

**Austin:** And she thinks the opposite, the alternative is worse, is what she believes. Right? Or she believes, sorry, it's not even that she—Arbitrage believes that the alternative is worse. She believes that there are only these two options, and this is the one that's gonna happen, so you may as well be on the side of the side that's gonna win, because that's the way that you get to die happy decades from now, right? Complete cynicism. No moral judgment is part of it. It literally is just [**Sylvi:** Yeah.] "I've done the math and I think this side is gonna win. Being on their side is the best way for me to—" and you know, there's a lot happening here. There's a lot of, like...

**Sylvi:** It's pure pragmatism, right?

**Austin:** It is, and it comes from being the cult's perfect, you know—they were the first poster child of this cult, right? [**Sylvi:** Mhm.] And were used, and so now they're like, "Well, the world is a world of being used." And "so let me at least pick who's going to use me." Right? Miserable.

**Art:** Would you describe this as Nate Silver-esque?

**Austin:** I would describe this as Nate Silver-esque.

**Sylvi:** Oh, don't.

**Austin:** Yeah. Miserable.

**Sylvi:** Cori just got the ick.

**Austin:** [laughs] Alright, you get bonus dice from...

[**Sylvi** laughs]

**Austin:** Relevant relationships, relevant boons, and mastered obstacles. I don't know that you have any of those.

**Sylvi:** I don't got shit.

**Keith:** No, and it's two dice, right?

**Austin:** This is two dice. Alright.

**Keith:** Yeah.

**Sylvi:** This is not gonna go well for me.

**Jack:** Remember your weaknesses.

**Austin:** Yeah, remember your weaknesses. Alright, get ready to roll. I'm gonna roll the opposition dice. Okay. Well, that's a 6, a 4, and a 2.

**Sylvi:** I don't know if I rolled that right, but okay.

**Austin:** It'll say it in the sidebar.

**Jack:** Yeah, that rolled. Alas. Okay.

**Sylvi:** Fuck.

**Austin:** Well...

**Sylvi:** Hold up.

**Austin:** What are your—what's your weakness?

**Sylvi:** My weakness is lash out. Which is "control, make them hurt."

**Austin:** Which is reroll any number—okay, so I rolled a 6, a 4, and a 2—and a 1, but we're gonna discard the 1, the 1's low. So right now, the opposition has placed 6, 4, 2.

**Sylvi:** Yeah.

**Austin:** You get to place any two, so you could—and you rolled a 4 and a 2, [**Sylvi:** Yeah.] so by default, if you wanted to, you could either match the 4 and the 2 so that the

6, the bad 6 resolved, which is, again, doom, you would mark a misfortune and escalate a random trouble and impact the map,

**Sylvi:** Uh-huh.

**Austin:** Or, you could theoretically put the 4 against the 2, and get one win there, gaining a new relationship.

**Sylvi:** I mean...

**Austin:** And then the 2 would not block anything. As a reminder to the listener, the way this game works is you try to block your opposition's success—your opposition's dice with your own dice of equal number, which cancels them out.

**Jack:** You could also, by lashing out, [**Austin:** Right.] which lets you reroll any number of your opponent's die, because it is your favored weakness, you could roll another white die.

**Austin:** That's right.

**Jack:** You can use any of these weaknesses, [**Sylvi:** Oh.] it's just you get the—you get that extra die bonus by using your favored weakness. You will have to mark misfortune, though.

**Sylvi:** Wait, so, am I rerolling a die, or am I getting a die?

**Austin:** You get to roll another die, I believe. If someone remembers differently, please let us know, but I'm pretty sure...

**Sylvi:** Well, why would I not lash out?

**Austin:** Well, you'll mark a misfortune.

**Art:** Why indeed?

**Keith:** You'll mark misfortune.

**Sylvi:** Oh.

**Keith:** But if you reroll the die—yeah.

**Jack:** [cross] “But if you choose your favored weakness, roll an extra die,” says the game.

**Sylvi:** Okay.

**Austin:** Which is pretty good.

**Sylvi:** That is pretty good.

**Jack:** And you can do weaknesses twice.

**Austin:** You can do weaknesses twice. Can you even—can you do the same weakness twice, or is it just...

**Jack:** You can use weakness twice in each scene. The second must be a different form, says the game.

**Austin:** Okay, so, you could lash out and make me reroll the 6 or the 4, or both. I mean, you could make me reroll any of the dice you want. I would probably not make me reroll the 2.

**Sylvi:** Yeah, that 2 is not leaving.

**Austin:** Yeah. Art, are there any statistical things here that we’re not thinking about strategically?

**Art:** I probably wouldn’t reroll the 4.

**Austin:** Yeah.

**Art:** But like...

**Keith:** So taking a weakness to reroll the 6.

**Sylvi:** I just kind of don't want...

**Austin:** The 6 is bad.

**Sylvi:** The problem is the 6 is really bad.

**Art:** I guess rerolling the 4 is good, because you have a 50/50 chance to get lower, and only a one third chance to get higher.

**Austin:** Yeah.

**Keith:** And hey...

**Art:** And psychically, it would feel bad to get another 4, but it really doesn't matter statistically.

**Austin:** Mhm.

**Keith:** We made this gamble last time and it went really bad, so this time it'll go really good.

**Jack:** Oh, yeah.

**Art:** Nope. Don't listen to that math.

**Sylvi:** Why would you say that? Why would you say that out loud?

**Art:** That also doesn't matter.

**Austin:** You could also match the 4 and the 2 and then do menace, which is win all ties on 1-5. So you would end up winning—

[Sylvi laughs]

**Austin:** You would end up getting reversal of fortune and relationship, but then also doom.

**Sylvi:** So, when I'm using the...

**Austin:** Hm. [chuckling] Hm, hm, hm.

**Sylvi:** Oh my god, don't—making it harder for me to decide things. Can I just get the—when I use a weakness, I mark a misfortune as well?

**Austin:** When you—yes, exactly. Yes.

**Sylvi:** Okay, but...

**Austin:** And misfortunes will come up later. In between sets of scenes, so once everybody goes around once, we'll do an interlude. And when you're in an interlude, you can spend fortune and misfortune, I believe, right? To get—you basically choose a type of interlude to have, and some of them give you misfortunes, and some of them remove misfortunes.

**Sylvi:** Mhm.

**Austin:** And I believe, really quick, on weaknesses, you get to roll an extra die, but you still only get to place two. Is that correct?

**Jack:** I think that is true.

**Sylvi:** Yeah, it says pair any two.

**Art:** You only ever place two, yeah.

**Austin:** Yeah, okay. So, do you want to start by lashing out?

**Sylvi:** Yeah, I mean, yeah, I should.

**Austin:** Okay.

**Sylvi:** I think just both mechanically, and, you know, it's Coriolis Sunset. What does she do? She lashes out.

**Austin:** What's it look like?

**Sylvi:** I don't think it's physically lashing out.

**Austin:** Yeah, yeah, yeah.

**Sylvi:** I don't think that tracks with what she's trying to do here.

**Keith:** But maybe.

**Sylvi:** Let's see how this goes. I'm trying to think of something to do with the map, maybe.

**Austin:** That's fun. The map plus Perennial magic, maybe?

**Sylvi:** Yes. Like, this might end up leaning too menace, though, when I'm thinking about it, where it's like—'cause like, it feels more like she's threatening, which is like, "You have the power of a Divine nobody has heard of behind you, I have the power of the Divine everyone's afraid of behind me."

**Austin:** Give me that for real.

**Sylvi:** Yeah?

**Austin:** Because I think that that can be lash out if you put your voice in it.

**Sylvi:** Okay. Um...

**Austin:** Just say what you said, but like, let Cori say it.

**Sylvi:** Yeah, yeah, yeah. No, I'm trying to find it, Austin.

**Austin:** Okay, okay. I believe in you.

**Sylvi:** Please. As a performer, I need my... [chuckles] I'm getting familiar with the space right now, et cetera.

**Austin:** Yeah, yeah.



Sylvi (as **Cori**): You're hedging all your bets on a Divine that nobody has heard of outside of us. Meanwhile, I'm here with a power that has taken the entire Golden Branch. More than the Golden Branch. The entire universe is afraid of the power that I am now part of. I think you're betting on a losing horse.

**Austin:** I think this can be lash out. Roll another die.

**Sylvi:** Mitski fans yelling at me for not saying losing dog. I rolled a 5.

**Austin:** Ooh. Alright, well, this is interesting.

**Sylvi:** And wait, also, reroll the 6, and...

**Austin:** Oh, right, I reroll the 6. 6 and the 4, or just the 6?

**Sylvi:** I'm trying to decide. I think it's safe to—you know, just reroll the 6, because rolling the 5 really made that...

**Austin:** It sure did.

**Sylvi:** It made it a lot less pressureful.

**Austin:** And that's a 2, so this becomes a 4, 2, 2, instead of a—whatever it was before. A 6, 4, 2, yeah. So, now...

**Sylvi:** I play to win.

**Jack:** Mark menace. Or, mark misfortune.

**Austin:** Right. Mark misfortune on your sheet.

**Sylvi:** Where do I mark that?

**Austin:** On your sheet, there's like a section underneath. You circle for fortune, you fill for misfortune.

**Sylvi:** Oh, there it is. Yeah.

**Austin:** And so, now, what it looks like is...

**Sylvi:** What it looks like is, I mean...

**Austin:** You're winning a 5 and a...

**Sylvi:** Right, because the 5 is a burden, meanwhile, reversal of fortune...

**Austin:** Is a boon. Well, yeah, if you get the 5, you'll get a boon, which is great, and then the 4 is a relationship. Form a new relationship.

**Sylvi:** Yeah. Interesting.

**Dre:** Interesting.

**Austin:** And then 2 will be swap a fortune for misfortune.

**Sylvi:** Well, I don't pair the 2, right? Because it just says pair any two.

**Austin:** Sorry, I meant the loss.

**Sylvi:** Oh, the—sorry.

**Austin:** The bad one.

**Sylvi:** Yeah.

**Austin:** The bad one will be a reversal of fortune, but bad. Not reversal of fortune good. "An unfortunate turn," says the book, "the opposition changes one of any player's fortune into a misfortune. The opposition then narrates the die or reversal. If nobody has any fortune, just choose any player and have them mark misfortune." That's interesting. And then the way that we resolve these, again, is we go spotlight player narrates victories, opposition narrates losses. So what's this look like? This hits Elle. I think she falters. What's it look like from here?

**Sylvi:** I...

**Austin:** I mean, I guess, again, the way that this actually works is we can finish narrating out the scene, and then each die becomes you narrate the outcome. “After the dice have been paired, the spotlight player,” which is you, “will narrate their victories starting with the lowest die result and continuing onto the highest. Next, the opposition narrates the spotlight player’s losses, again from lowest to highest die result. These narrations can be quick and to the point, or include some roleplaying. Sometimes, resolution is called for early in a scene, and most of the roleplaying happens in describing the outcomes. Any approach is okay as long as victories and losses are narrated and recorded.” So yeah, your initial positive one is “form a new relationship.”

**Sylvi:** Yeah. Um... I don’t know how toxic it is to, like, after using the [chuckles] lash out ability to be like, “and then Coriolis Sunset finally kissed a girl,” but I think I’m going to. Just feels right, and like, when else am I gonna get the chance to just say that out loud?

**Austin:** Can I paint a background thing as you kiss?

**Sylvi:** Please, Austin.

**Austin:** The red lines connecting the little clusters all bloom into Russian sage.

**Sylvi:** My fist is in the air.

**Austin:** Yeah.

**Sylvi:** She did it, everybody.

**Austin:** She did it. She did it. Toxic yuri is here.

**Sylvi:** Don’t worry about whether I’m talking about me or Cori there. She did it.

[**Austin** and **Jack** laugh]

**Dre:** She did it!

**Austin:** So you—when that happens, that is the 4, the positive 4, so that is “Form a new relationship: The spotlight player makes a new relationship. The new relationship can

be with another player's character or an NPC. If you choose another player's character, both players should agree." But go ahead and add...

**Sylvi:** I mean, you know.

**Austin:** Add Elle Evensong to your relationship list and write up a little thing.

**Sylvi:** Cori changing the relationship status on Facebook. [laughs]

**Austin:** Oh my god. Unbelievable. And then, take a boon.

**Sylvi:** Yeah, boon.

**Austin:** "The spotlight player gets a boon." Tell me what that looks like. Narrate what this looks like. "A boon is something positive and temporary, like picking up a lucky penny, or gaining fleeting stardom from winning a space-time game show."

**Sylvi:** Oh my god. I might need to think about this a little.

**Jack:** I have a pitch.

**Sylvi:** Please, help me. [laughs]

**Jack:** Your new girlfriend professes to have a single use ticket out of the Mirage.

**Austin:** Uh-huh.

**Sylvi:** That is true, yeah. Oh, that is—yeah, no, that's a great one.

**Austin:** A one-way ticket out of the Mirage is a pretty good boon.

**Sylvi:** Yeah. I'm adding that. Okay. Yay! [laughs]

**Austin:** Okay. And then, the opposition gets to describe the one negative outcome here, which is a 2, and on that side, it is "An unfortunate turn: The opposition changes one of any player's fortunes to a misfortune. The opposition then narrates the die or

reversal. If nobody has fortune, just choose any player and have them mark misfortune. For example—”

**Jack:** God, the fact that it’s one of any players is so funny—

**Austin:** I know. It’s so funny.

**Sylvi:** Yeah.

**Jack:** —because the impression that I get is the opposition player just sort of going like, “And fuck you over there.”

[**Keith** laughs]

**Austin:** And they can even say “and fuck me.” They could take it on themselves.

**Sylvi:** “What are you saying fuck me for?”

**Austin:** “What are you saying fuck me for?” Yeah. Their example here: “A heap of coins lay on the table, a fortune that would last me for the rest of my life—then, before my eyes, a coin wobbled and spun, sublimating into a tiny golden spirit. It screeched, and the other coins began spinning as well. I was presently surrounded by screaming ghosts. ‘Oh no,’ I sighed, ‘not this again.’” That’s a bad life.

**Keith:** Yeah.

**Sylvi:** Yeah.

**Austin:** So, where does this misfortune go? Who gets this added misfortune point, and what is it?

**Sylvi:** I mean, I’m down to take it.

**Austin:** I mean, that’s fair, but if anybody wants to give themselves misfortune, if somebody wants to be on the—again, it’s not like a—it’s not a burden, so we don’t have to write down the specifics, necessarily, but we do have to narrate it.

**Sylvi:** Yeah.

**Austin:** Is it tied to—god, is it—with Elle out of the picture as the remaining agent of Arbitrage, [**Sylvi:** Yeah.] does it now fall on Mustard Red to be the person who...

**Sylvi:** Oh my fucking god.

**Austin:** And then, like, it's just misfortune for you, because like, lots of little things start not going your way in like, the—like, everybody gets the next month of rations packets or whatever, and yours are all the flavor you don't like. And you get, like...

[**Sylvi** and **Art** laugh]

**Keith:** Mustard Red would know, too.

**Sylvi:** Oh my god, she would!

**Austin:** Right, of course, has the dossier, I'm sure, right? Or like, oh, you have 25 less minutes on the Strand than you're supposed to every day. You know, like? It's like, you keep running into glitches with your internet access, you know? Or just like, you have to reset the router over and over again. Like, all sorts of little annoyances.

**Keith:** Who knew Mustard Red could be petty like that?

**Jack:** [laughs] One day you open a magazine and die.

**Austin:** One day you open a magazine and die.

**Keith:** [laughs] I keep getting this same magazine shipped to me.

[**Austin** laughs]

**Jack:** Really weird. There's a little note on the front that says "read the middle," and then a picture of a skull.

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