

The Road to PALISADE 15: Orbital Pt. 5

Transcriber: robotchangeling#0793

Austin: The Road to PALISADE is a show about war, politics, religion, revolutionary violence, and the many consequences thereof. For a full list of content warnings, please check the episode description.

Sylvi (as Pasodoble): Ah, yes, the General. Quite an imposing figure.

Austin (as 3T): Oh, do you know her?

Sylvi (as Pasodoble): Yes, we've been acquainted. *[3T sighs]* Very casually, just when she arrived. A very wary one, that General Mourning.

Austin (as 3T): You would think I'd be the first person to be like, "Yeah, we need generals," but I think we were doing fine with just people getting out there and doing it themselves, so...

Sylvi (as Pasodoble): Mm. A lot less bureaucracy when it's like that, am I right?

Austin (as 3T): That is what I'm saying, so...

Sylvi (as Pasodoble): Hmm.

Austin (as 3T): I mean, could you...if you know her like that, could you talk to her? And like...

Sylvi (as Pasodoble): *[laughs]* I don't think she'd listen to me. However, I think we could probably work something out.

[intro music begins]

Ali (as Mustard): This isn't going to be all about appearances this week, 3T. You can, you know, really relax.

Keith (as Cheal): What do you— wait, what do you mean?

Ali (as Mustard): Well, 3T is an icon, is a role model.

Austin (as 3T): Thank you. Yeah, it's...

Keith (as Cheal): None of us should be relaxing here. What are you— this is the cult.

Ali (as Mustard): Oh. Well, sure.

Keith (as Cheal): They've been turning people. You're— I thought you were here investigating. You shouldn't be encouraging people. 3T, I don't know what you're doing here. *[Austin laughs]*

Austin (as 3T): What do you mean it's a cult? We're on a retreat.

Keith (as Cheal): This is a cult.

Austin (as 3T): It's a cult?

Keith (as Cheal): Yeah. They've been, like, kidnapping people and brainwashing them.

Austin (as 3T): No one has any weird...candles.

Ali (as Mustard): Well, they've been...

Austin (as 3T): There's nothing occult about this.

Ali (as Mustard): People have been wandering in on their own accord and seeming to find some peace. I don't like it. I'm just here to, you know, receive more information.

Keith (as Cheal): We're in a secret forest.

Austin (as False Fruit): Please check immediately to see if Qualitative Fruit is there. You need to turn around. You have a child onboard. Bring my kid back, you pieces of shit.

Ali (as Strikeout): I don't think that's going to make them want to help you.

Austin (as False Fruit): I don't care. They need to come back. You need to come back now.

Jack: You can see the other planets up in the sky, and they are also burning too. You're standing just in the middle of flame, and the rivers have evaporated around you. And in the same voice that people heard in their blood earlier, as though, like, speaking through you like you've got a high fever, a voice says, "If you reveal this, you will lose, because you don't love me enough."

[recap ends; song plays out]

Austin: Welcome to Friends at the Table, an actual play podcast focused on critical

worldbuilding, smart characterization, and fun interaction between good friends. I'm your host, Austin Walker. Joining me today, Keith Carberry.

Keith: Hi, my name is Keith Carberry. You can find me on Twitter at [@KeithJCarberry](https://twitter.com/KeithJCarberry), and you can find the let's plays that I do at youtube.com/runbutton.

Austin: Sylvi Clare.

Sylvia: Hey, I'm Sylvia, and if you want to hear more of me, you can listen to my other podcast Emojidrome 2.0 on any podcatcher you have.

Austin: There we go. You got it.

Sylvia: Yeah. Any of 'em.

Austin: I know it was touch and go for a little bit in terms of learning the new 2.0 stuff.

Sylvia: Yeah, I'm...

Austin: You crushed it.

Sylvia: I'm a professional.

Austin: Yeah, no doubt. *[Sylvia laughs]* Jack de Quidt.

Jack: Hi, I'm Jack. You can find me on Twitter at [@notquitereal](https://twitter.com/notquitereal) and buy any of the music featured on the show at notquitereal.bandcamp.com. I looked through, recently, the emoji that they're about to add, Sylvi.

Austin: Ooh.

Jack: And I'm very excited for them to add the goose.

Sylvia: Oh my god.

Ali: Ohh.

Austin: They're adding a goose emoji.

Sylvia: This is a live reaction. I have not heard of this. *[Ali laughs]* Holy fuck.

Austin: Wow. I can't even look at it, because my computer doesn't have it. There's an Emojipedia— oh, it's a draft page, 'cause it's not actually in. I see. I see.

Sylvia: I went on a date recently that involved tips on fighting a goose, actually, so. Just came up.

Jack: Oh. Don't, right?

Austin: Are they good? Were they good tips?

Sylvia: Yeah, just grab it by the neck.

Austin: Yeah, that's a good call.

Ali: Oh, sure.

Keith: Yeah, it's a massive weak spot.

Sylvia: Yeah. *[laughter]*

Jack: Yeah.

Austin: Honestly.

Jack: It's literally massive. It's literally massive.

Keith: Yeah.

Sylvia: Yeah.

Jack: You know, it's not just spiritually massive to the goose. That's most of the goose.

Austin: Yeah.

Sylvia: Apparently they just kind of go limp.

Austin: Yeah, I would. Wouldn't you?

Ali: Yeah.

Sylvia: Yeah!

Austin: *[regretful]* Mm, ah.

Sylvia: From experience, yes.

Austin: Hmm. *[quickly]* And Ali Acampora. *[Sylvia laughs loudly]*

Ali: Hi!

Austin: Hi, Ali.

Ali: You can find me over at [@ali_west](#) on Twitter. You can find the show over at [@friends_table](#). And to Jack's point, I believe this Friday is Bandcamp Friday on the second, so.

Jack: Oh, yeah, it is.

Ali: Go to Bandcamp.

Jack: Go to Bandcamp.

Austin: Mm. Yeah, I'll try to put this in the feed early enough that people can do that.

Ali: Yeah.

Austin: *[laughs quietly]* I mean, go to Bandcamp on any Friday, but especially on Bandcamp Friday.

Ali: Mm-hmm. Mm-hmm.

Keith: Uh, I will say— they have stopped doing Bandcamp Friday every first Friday of the month, so I...

Austin: Right, it's like quarterly now or something, right?

Keith: Okay.

Jack: It's something like quarterly.

Austin: I'm asking, I don't know.

Jack: Maybe it's every other month.

Austin: Mm.

Jack: Which might actually be quarterly. I don't know how many months there are in a year.

Austin: 12.

Jack: But I recommend Bandcamp Fridays as a way in which all money—except a little bit for payment processing—goes directly to the artists, and it makes a real difference.

Austin: Oh, I fucking bet.

Jack: It's extremely cool, and there is always good music to pick up on Bandcamp.

Austin: Yeah.

Jack: I guess it's worth saying that I ran the numbers a while ago, and if I had put the music for Friends at the Table on Spotify, based on my current rates of listening, which are pretty good, I would be able to pay one month's rent in nine years time.

Austin: Cool. Cool, cool, cool. *[laughter]*

Jack: So.

Austin: Mm-hmm.

Ali: Wow.

Austin: So is that why it's not on Spotify? Because of how it's, uh, a crime?

Jack: That is why I am not. I think it is fundamentally exploitative. Yes.

Austin: Uh huh. Yeah. *[sarcastic]* But Jack, every little bit adds up.

Ali: Mm-hmm.

Jack: Go fuck yourself.

Austin: But Jack, you'd be exposing new people. *[Jack laughs]*

Jack: All right, well. Let's explore the Twilight Mirage.

Austin: As always, you can directly support the show by going to friendsatthetable.cash. If you're hearing this on the main feed and there was like a, you know, Previously On or a cool intro, that is because we did a bunch of work to, you know, punch it up after we originally recorded it months ago. I mean, this particular game was always public, because it was a benefit or bonus, an incentive for our National Network of Abortion Funds livestream back in July of 2022, 'cause I have no idea when this episode will actually be in the feed. It might be in 2023. Who knows?

Sylvia: July of 2023.

Austin: Yeah, okay. *[Ali laughs]*

Sylvia: Mm-hmm, mm-hmm. Yeah.

Austin: And so, so yeah, if you like what we do, make sure to support us. That is the best way to kind of collectively give us cash. What's up? What have we done recently? Let's take a look at this chart. The Devotion begin— okay, things last time that I recall. Let's go back. Was this the...we discussed the war situation, Cheal, ghost, uh huh. Outside tracking algorithm. Ah, yes. Arbitrage convinces Mustard to use the outside tracking algorithm, but Mourning seizes her computer. 3T takes a break from more assemblages and gets recruited by C.T.H. to join the Devotion retreat. Deutsch is nearly caught planting a bomb by Mustard; she escapes but only having her cover blown by Joe de Vivre. That was definitely last time.

Ali: Mm-hmm.

Austin: The Devotion retreat begins. Paris and Fresh Fruit use radio station to send a message to the ship carrying Fresh's missing kid, Qualitative, Qualitative Fruit. 3T rouses a crowd at the retreat, quote, "creating scapegoats and corrosive arguments about those in the Brink who are being careful and tactical about how to engage the Principality in war." Pushy discovers that the Divine Devotion has been making the Mirage bombs and has a wild vision from Devotion featuring an ominous threat: quote, "If you reveal this information, you will fail, because you don't love me enough."

Jack: You will lose the war.

Austin: Oh. That's not how I read that at the time. That's interesting.

Keith: Oh, that's how I read that. How did you read it?

Austin: I read it as, like, you will fail in your attempt to undermine me. The thing you just said is way worse!

Jack: Yeah, I mean...

Austin: Yeah, yeah, yeah.

Jack: Maybe like, this is a nice retcon.

Austin: No, no, no.

Jack: But the the vision of a burning planet [*Austin: "Uh huh"*] that Pushy had, for me, was absolutely like, the Mirage is gonna get wiped if you let on that I'm doing this.

Austin: Yes, yes. That to me is more interesting. Let's go with that. My much more lowkey threat of just like, "You'll fuck up," is not as interesting. [*laughter*]

Jack: I have to say that the father who has a kid is called False Fruit not Fresh Fruit, but I do like that name.

Ali: Wow.

Austin: Oh, did I fuck that up? Is it Fresh? It's False?

Jack: Yeah, it's False.

Austin: False Fruit.

Jack: Fresh Fruit. Fresh is a really good... *[laughs quietly]*

Keith: *[laughs]* Fresh Fruit.

Sylvia: Fresh is my cousin.

Austin: I was gonna say, Fresh is his cousin or his spouse or...

Keith: I kind of let it roll over me the first time you said it. I didn't really notice.

Jack: *[laughs]* Fresh Fruit.

Keith: Fresh Fruit.

Austin: False Fruit's very funny. Yeah, there it is. False Fruit.

Sylvia: Some people call him Harry Styles.

Jack: Wowee!

Sylvia: Sorry! *[laughs]*

Jack: Fuck him up, Sylvi!

Austin: *[laughs]* Whew! Ah, boy.

Sylvia: Let's move on. *[laughs]*

Austin: Listen. People's interiority, et cetera. *[Sylvia laughs]* Mustard interviews—

Keith: This is something that I don't know about.

Austin: Yeah, Keith, you're just, don't–

Ali: Don't worry about it.

Austin: Don't worry about it.

Sylvia: Don't worry about it.

Austin: I knew you wouldn't. *[laughter]* Mustard interviews people at the retreat and learns about Devotion's mission. She's kind of into it.

Keith: Thanks, Ali.

Austin: Keith, you're just incredibly offline in a way that I love for you. *[Keith laughs]*

Ali: Yeah, you just have blinders on about so many things.

Austin: You're immortal. *[Keith laughs]* I bet you don't even know about the Raytheon Girls Who Code. *[laughs]*

Jack: Raytheon Girls Who Code.

Sylvia: Oh my god!

Keith: The Radeon Girls Who Code, did you say?

Austin: *[laughs]* Uh huh! Raytheon–

Ali: I had to tell Keith who Caroline Calloway was like last week.

Austin: Right, sure. Yes.

Jack: Wow.

Keith: No, no, that wasn't me. You told me about who she was two years ago when that was a thing.

Austin: Okay.

Ali: Oh. *[laughs]*

Jack: Oh, I see, I see.

Ali: Oh, was it Lucas who didn't know, then?

Keith: Yeah, that was Lucas.

Ali: Oh, okay. Fair, fair, fair.

Austin: Right. That makes sense. *[Ali laughs]* Girls Who Code and Raytheon Technologies launch pilot program. *[Ali groans]*

Austin: Mm-hmm, mm-hmm, mm-hmm, mm-hmm.

Jack: Ah.

Austin: Mm-hmm. *[grimly sarcastic]* It's cool. It's good.

Jack: Wow.

Sylvia: That was put in the PALISADE chat, right?

Austin: Oh yeah, instantly. *[Ali laughs]* Instantly. I think I did.

Sylvia: Yeah, yeah, yeah. Just wanted to make sure.

Austin: Wait. Did I actually put that there?

Sylvia: You did. You did.

Austin: Okay, okay, okay. Good. Mm-hmm.

Sylvia: Under the cool forks thing.

Austin: Mm-hmm. Yeah. Right. *[Ali laughs]* The forks thing is...

Jack: Wait, the cool forks? Let me see the cool forks.

Austin: Yeah.

Jack: I feel like I must have seen it but not internalized it. Let's see.

Ali: Oh, the forks are great.

Jack: Oh yeah, this machine makes forks in a really—

Sylvia: Yeah.

Jack: This machine makes forks in a weird way.

Sylvia: Such a weird thing that Woody Guthrie wrote on his guitar. *[laughs]*

Jack: *[laughs]* This machine makes forks.

Austin: This machine makes forks! *[laughter]*

Jack: People kept saying, “Woody, aren’t you...Woody, aren’t you a folk musician?” and he kept like nodding, and they’d be like, “But your guitar!” *[laughter]* “You know what I say: this machine makes forks in a really weird way.”

Austin: Ah!

Jack: *[singing]* “This land is your land...” *[laughter]*

Austin: Ah, off to a— we’re punchy tonight, folks.

Ali: Mm-hmm.

Keith: I can’t believe I missed this very funny joke by googling “Raytheon Girls Who Code.” *[laughter]*

Austin: Okay, so those the are things that had happened.

Ali: Mm-hmm.

Austin: Our current threats. Hundreds of military starships are using a nearby moon as a staging area: resolved.

Jack: We have unfortunately gone to war as a result of that resolution, but...

Austin: Ah, yes. Residents have been disappearing, emerging days later as new members of a strange cult: still active. And three, a huge shipment of blue oranges has pushed the Brink to the brink. There are too many people to safely house, to keep well fed, et cetera. An interesting thing that came up via a conversation in a group chat that I’m in...it’s actually a Discord that I’m in. Someone, I think unrelated to *Orbital*, was just wondering about guns and the Twilight Mirage, and it made me think about how guns have happened on this ship.

Jack: Mm.

Austin: Because we have seen there was a shootout between Lament and rival...ah, fuck. Gimme Gimme? Gimme Gimme, is that right? Yeah, Gimme Gimme, the rival spy from the Pact.

Keith: Yeah.

Austin: And there was an assassination. And when we last saw the Twilight Mirage, there were very rare guns.

Jack: This is very interesting.

Austin: Cascabel could make guns, you know, pretty often. We had a number of characters like Kentucky's Corona who would use like single shot pistols and then dispose of them, like you draw a gun and shoot it and drop it, because the Mirage and Quire would have like made roses, you know, sprout from its barrel after you shoot once or just make it explode in your hand or whatever. And there had been New Earth Hegemony research into guns, but you may recall that was what the Calciyummm story was all about, and then that got stopped. And I want to say the Rapid Evening had some unique stuff by the end of the Twilight Mirage, but like...here's me also saying we will continue to spoil Twilight Mirage and PARTIZAN and maybe even COUNTER/Weight as we play today. Keep that in mind, et cetera. Yes, I actually just saw that—oh, we're still on the title screen. Let me pull you over to the actual Miro board, which again, just shoutouts to Jack Harrison who made *Orbital* for setting up this excellent Miro board. It's so good to use. So yeah, I don't know what the state of guns is here.

Jack: Hmm.

Austin: Has 500 years been...in 500 years, has that been walked back? Or...

Jack: Or...

Austin: Uh huh.

Jack: Or does a certain Divine capable of doing strange things with the Mirage and people's pulses [Austin: "*Right, right*"] recognize the insidious value of devoted people being able to have guns? Like, is there an extent to which something— you know, we've talked about how... [sighs] You described it as like things things are working in ways that people aren't expecting. Something is odd with the Mirage around here, and there's the implication that it's to do with the proximity to Devotion in some way. Has that Divine also had thoughts about hey, maybe it's a good idea if people can wield weapons here, for love.

[0:15:27]

Sylvia: Yeah, I...

Austin: For love. Go ahead.

Sylvia: I think like something about the way it interprets it is it's like there's many forms of Devotion, right, and being willing to kill and die for something is a form of that, and so it's able to

be shaped into that sort of form. Does that make sense?

Austin: Mm-hmm. Mm-hmm.

Sylvia: Yeah.

Austin: There's a sort of terrible openness to it.

Sylvia: Mm-hmm.

Keith: What was the original mechanic of the destroying guns?

Austin: After the Second Miracle— or, sorry, after the first, the Miracle of the Mirage, Quire made it so that guns didn't work anymore. Guns would break upon use. And I don't— people in the chat are saying after Quire...at some point, guns started working again, because Quire died, but I don't think that that's...I'm checking. I'm checking. But in at least through the finale, guns was like rare enough that it was a special resource that y'all had. Ah, no, yeah, I see here. Wait, wait. *[laughter]*

Ali: Checking the tapes.

Austin: Here's Dre saying, "Uh, I mean, sure. I'm sure the word has gotten out that fucking guns work again." So I guess guns work again.

Sylvia: Okay.

Ali: That answers that.

Austin: Yeah, apparently. Asked and answered.

Keith: So I guess the way that they had these guns is that they bought them at the gun store.

Austin: They bought them at the gun store. Yeah, yeah, yeah, yeah, yeah. *[Ali laughs]* The Twilight Mirage never really figured out how to do— the Qui Err Collective never really, you know, did anything with guns. They're like, "Guns, sure. Why not?" That's certainly true. No, I bet that even though the world could no longer stop them from being fired, they nevertheless probably did try to restrict usage and ownership in some ways.

Jack: In fact, they probably went like, well, this is...there is even more of a duty for us now to actually think this through, since the world won't do it for and with us.

Austin: Mm-hmm. Yeah, yeah, yeah. Yep. Yep, there we go.

Jack: Oh, but everybody's getting shot on the— well, two people are getting shot. Several people

are getting shot on the Brink right now.

Austin: Right now? Are you suggesting a new scene?

Jack: Well, no, I mean— *[Ali and Jack laugh]* No. Gimme Gimme; Knighton was stabbed.

Austin: Knighton was stabbed, and then— but there was a gunfight, so yes.

Jack: Yeah. Oh, and I think that maybe Mourning's Assistant, General Mourning's assistant got shot, maybe?

Sylvia: Yes.

Austin: Right. That is correct, yeah.

Sylvia: I forgot to add that, yeah.

Austin: Mm-hmm.

Sylvia: That was the last thing that happened.

Austin: Oh, we should add that. We should add that to the thing.

Sylvia: Yeah.

Austin: Can you add a new...you can just copy the last one and then delete what it said here.

Sylvia: Oh, okay.

Austin: Yeah.

Sylvia: Cool. Thank you.

Austin: Go ahead and just type it in there. Thank you.

Sylvia: Oh, that...why is my font so big? What?

Austin: Just double click and type. It'll get small as you type.

Sylvia: Oh, okay.

Austin: Sorry. I use Miro for work, and so...

Sylvia: No worries. I'm glad someone here knows how to use it well.

Austin: Uh huh.

Jack: Look at our timeline completely journeying off outside of the playable space. *[Ali laughs]*

Austin: Yeah, well...

Keith: Yeah, it's a nice visual representation of how we play games differently from people who write games.

Sylvia: Yeah.

Austin: *[laughs]* Uh huh.

Ali: Mm.

Jack: We have exited the realms of the illustrations.

Austin: Mm-hmm. We're going to get to this board I put way over here *[Jack laughs]* to be like, "Well, no one's— that's way out of the play range, so it's fine."

Jack: God, let's make this board like a character, and if we reach them, that character arrives. *[Austin and Ali laugh]*

Keith: Is this timeline part of the Miro board?

Austin: Yep.

Keith: Or did we just have this idea?

Austin: Nope, part of the Miro board.

Keith: Okay. So, yeah.

Austin: Mm-hmm. Mm-hmm. I suspect what we were supposed to do is just drag some stuff down and just loop it, but it's fine.

Ali: Mm-hmm.

Austin: Or make them tinier than this. It's fine. *[Sylvia laughs]* So, who would like to start with a scene? We are all back here. Again, we can frame a major scene, narrate a minor scene, or read the station.

Jack: Oh, wait, before we do, there is another thing that has happened, and I'm going to need

some help remembering it.

Austin: Yes.

Jack: Hasn't Cheal...isn't Cheal like connected to the vines in a really weird way? Like...

Keith: Yes.

Jack: Help me out here, Keith. It's like the guardian ghost is like actually the vine plants or something?

Austin: Mm.

Keith: Yeah, I think that we've...that I've talked about it as if there was some disaster that happened with the first garden and that it was either Cheal Pushy's fault or it was blamed on him, but he does have this sort of growth of vines that like hangs around with him.

Jack: Mm.

Keith: And does also sort of act on its own, in Cheal's interest, it seems like.

Jack: Right, right.

Keith: But we haven't talked about like what any of that is about.

Jack: Okay, cool. It is able to operate computers, I think.

Keith: Yeah.

Jack: 'Cause it deletes footage.

Austin: It deleted footage for you. Yeah, yeah, yeah.

Keith: Yeah, it deleted footage. It knows about online. *[Keith and Austin laugh]*

Jack: God, fuck. The plants know about online.

Austin: Ugh.

Ali: Oh boy.

Austin: What a loss for the plants, honestly.

Jack: Yeah.

Austin: This retreat is still ongoing. I feel like we had a Mustard sequence— oh, no, we did the Mustard interviews, right?

Ali: Uh huh.

Keith: Yeah. Does—

Austin: Was— uh huh?

Keith: Does “She's kind of into it” mean she's kind of into the interviews or kind of into the cult?

Austin: No, she was kind of into the cult.

Keith: Yeah. Yeah, yeah, yeah.

Ali: Yeah.

Austin: Right? Is that right?

Ali: She was slipping a little bit at these meetings and checking her pulse, and...

Austin: Right.

Ali: It's going poorly. *[laughs]*

Austin: Right, right. You were connecting to it for lots of established reasons is what I would say.

Ali: Yeah.

Keith: Who else is at the retreat right now, besides me and Mustard?

Austin: I'm here. 3T's here, and then Toaster Wroaster and Kengine Engine. It was like dozens and dozens of people, right?

Keith: Okay. My memory was that Paris and Deutsch were coming?

Austin: There was a thought about trying to get everybody there. I mean, one place to start would just be not there, because we do have to get the Paris and False Fruit connecting with the kid scene, going to get the the escape pod, but we can also save that as like a fun sting at the end of this first round. But then, yeah, who else wasn't? Deutsch wasn't here.

Sylvia: Mm-hmm. I was busy killing.

Austin: You were busy killing. *[Keith laughs]*

Jack: Queen of plans, Deutsch Synchro.

Austin: Mm-hmm, mm-hmm.

Sylvia: Absolutely. Number one smooth talker, great at disguises.

Jack: Plans to what end? Nobody knows.

Sylvia: Not even her.

Jack: Oh, God.

Keith: Do we remember what I did after the...

Austin: I believe we cut there, didn't we? You didn't...

Keith: I...

Austin: You like weren't captured or anything, but you didn't like leave the—

Keith: No.

Austin: You didn't leave the retreat.

Keith: I have a vague memory that I left. I don't know if I did, but I have sort of this like feeling that I got so freaked out that I left.

Austin: Mm.

Keith: But we could just say that I didn't.

Austin: Or we could just say that you did.

Ali: Mm-hmm.

Keith: Or we could you say that I did, yeah. I don't know. Is there someone I can run into?

Jack: You could run into me.

Keith: Okay.

Jack: Because you have very dangerous information, and I am a broker.

Keith: Okay.

Jack: I'm a resource for information with the connections to get what you need.

Austin: It could be fun to have a sequence of of Pushy going to Paris while Paris and False Fruit are trying to like get to a ship to go recover Fruit's kid.

Keith: Mm-hmm.

Jack: Like a walk and talk to it.

Austin: A walk and talk interruption, where it's like, ah, you're already juggling a different thing, you know?

Jack: Yeah.

Austin: And now here comes Pushy talking about some wild shit.

Keith: Yeah. Have we even had— have Paris and Pushy had a scene together?

Jack: I think we've been in scenes—

Austin: Yes. Paris tells Deutsch about the new— no, sorry, no. Deutsch is not Pushy.

Jack: Nope.

Austin: I kept forgetting Cheal is your first name.

Keith: Yeah.

Austin: Yeah. Paris finds a stowaway.

Keith: No, I'm not Paris Pushy.

Austin: *[laughs quietly]* That's funny, though. Here's— this is the shit for— if you check chat real quick. If I do a search for Paris, it highlights all the places Paris's name is.

Jack: Whoa!

Austin: Do you see this? This is how Miro— Miro is good, actually. Knighton to Deutsch...

Jack: I keep getting emails from Miro being like, *[Austin: "Yeah"]* "Here's what your team's got

up to this week,” and it’s just this game. *[Austin and Ali laugh]*

Sylvia: It is what we're up to.

Keith: Yeah, that’s true.

Austin: Paris met Mustard. Paris gathers 20 Brink Proxy volunteers.

Keith: I don't think we've been in a scene together.

Austin: Not yet. There's nothing saying you couldn't know each other, though.

Keith: No.

Austin: I guess you don't have a prebuilt bond.

Keith: Right.

Austin: But Paris is an information broker, right?

Keith: Yeah.

Austin: I bet you've needed—

Jack: Uh, mostly actually a fruit and vegetables broker, but I think on the Brink that's, you know.

Austin: Right, right, right. Yes.

Keith: Yeah, you're the Source. People know you're the Source.

Austin: Yeah, you're the Source.

Keith: Yeah.

Ali: Mm-hmm.

Austin: “If you need something, you'll usually find me in the night markets.”

Jack: Except now you find me pushing through the night markets with a very anxious False Fruit on the way to like...

Austin: *[laughs quietly]* Fresh Fruit. Sorry, it's so funny.

Jack: Fresh Fruit. *[laughs quietly]* Very anxious Fresh Fruit. Yeah. On the way to like Bluebell

Dock or whatever to get a ship out into, like, presumably into no man's land between the Brink and...

Austin: Mm-hmm, mm-hmm. And Palisade.

Jack: Yeah.

Austin: Which is very far away, but ships go fast, and we're close enough in this window in terms of where the Brink is, so.

Keith: And, sorry, False Fruit's the parent of the lost...

Austin: Correct.

Jack: An Orchard Guildsperson.

Austin: Uh huh.

Jack: Mm-hmm.

Austin: Which is to say: could be connected to...

Jack: Oh, what's— this is really fun, actually, because False Fruit—

Austin: To Devotion.

Jack: Could be connected but is also like deeply anxious.

Austin: Yes.

Jack: And their mind is on something else.

Austin: Uh huh.

Jack: And this is going to be an interesting test of...

Austin: Mm-hmm.

Jack: Yeah.

Austin: So, what's...what do you say when you show up to Paris?

Keith: Um, I think that I'm like startled still, stunned, like confused. I've been told not to give information, and I...

Austin: Hmm.

Keith: I don't think I know whether to trust it or not. I think a reasonable gut instinct is like, well, just in case, *[laughs quietly]* like, maybe don't say exactly what you saw.

Jack: Right. Even though, as we talked about it in the last episode, this isn't like a prediction in a game of *Kingdom*. This is just a Divine.

Austin: Right. Right.

Keith: Yeah.

Jack: Like, the Divine could believe this, or it could be bullshitting you, or, you know.

Keith: Right.

Austin: Right.

Keith: But if someone hands you like a gun to play Russian Roulette with...

Jack: Yeah. Yeah.

Keith: There's no...like, the...

Austin: Whatever you do with it, you're—

Keith: Chances are there's a bullet in there.

Austin: Right. Yeah, yeah.

Jack: Yeah.

Keith: Okay.

Austin: At the very least, you know there is an act of intimidation happening, which is scary.

Keith: Yeah.

Austin: Right? Yeah.

Keith: So, I think Cheal finds Paris and is like focusing in on that nobody seems to be doing anything about the cult. *[Jack laughs quietly]* Like, I went to the...

Keith (as Cheal): I went to the retreat to investigate the cult.

Jack (as Paris): Walk with me. I can't talk for long. I'm just heading to the dock.

Austin (as False Fruit): Who's this?

Jack (as Paris): Uh, this is Cheal Pushy.

Jack: It's Cheal Pushy, right?

Keith: Yeah.

Jack: Yeah.

Austin (as False Fruit): Oh, Pushy's. Yeah, I've been to Pushy's.

Jack (as Paris): Runs Pushy's, yeah, yeah, yeah.

Austin (as False Fruit): It's good. I like what you got on tap.

Keith (as Cheal): Thank you.

Jack (as Paris): This way.

Jack: And just like points down a corridor as we will start walking towards the dock.

Jack (as Paris): What is it, Cheal?

Keith (as Cheal): It's bad over there. We went...I went to check in on them.

Jack (as Paris): Yep.

Keith (as Cheal): Because I thought maybe Mustard was supposed to be looking into the cult and seemed not to really be doing that. And I went through a tree—

Austin (as False Fruit): There's a cult? What's the cult?

Jack (as Paris): It's, ugh, people are talking about a cult. It's...people think that there's something—

Austin (as False Fruit): Does this have to do with my kid?

Jack (as Paris): I don't think so, no. Pushy, you need to be clearer.

Keith (as Cheal): What, did your kid disappear?

Jack (as Paris): But we know where they are.

Austin (as False Fruit): Yeah, my kid disappeared.

Keith (as Cheal): Well, then maybe.

Jack (as Paris): No!

Keith (as Cheal): Because the cult is making people disappear. And then reappear days later and they're weird.

Jack: Paris looks at False Fruit and just like shrugs and is like:

Jack (as Paris): No, this is a different— *[Austin and Keith laugh]* we know where the kid is.

Austin (as False Fruit): Eh, I don't know, wait a second. Maybe we should hear this Pushy out. Maybe it's connected.

Keith (as Cheal): Yeah.

Jack (as Paris): We don't need much time. Come on. Keep walking. Step it up.

Keith (as Cheal): Okay.

Jack (as Paris): Go on.

Keith (as Cheal): Um...3T—

Jack (as Paris): *[frustrated]* The kid's on the fucking— okay. *[Austin laughs]*

Keith (as Cheal): 3T was there. 3T seems to be a member of this cult.

[0:30:00]

Jack (as Paris): Yeah, okay.

Keith (as Cheal): Fully a member of the cult.

Jack (as Paris): What else is new?

Keith (as Cheal): Mustard seems to be pretending to be investigating the cult.

Jack (as Paris): Uh huh.

Keith (as Cheal): But is actually a member of the cult.

Jack (as Paris): Okay. Why are you coming to me with this? This is Brink Proxy business.

Keith (as Cheal): Yeah, and that's why I'm concerned, because—

Jack (as Paris): Oh, I think you might be confused. I was only volunteering at Brink Proxy, because I made a deal with Mus— I'm not like part of Brink Proxy.

Keith (as Cheal): Okay.

Jack (as Paris): So, you can go and— I want to help you, Pushy, but look, come here.

Jack: Slams a button, opens the airlock open.

Austin (as False Fruit): Whoa!

Jack (as Paris): We're just taking a trip out to pick this guy's kid up. You come with, we can talk it through.

Keith (as Cheal): The cult put the kid in space?

Jack (as Paris): *[exasperated]* Oh, Jesus Christ!

Austin: Did you just say— you just told me the cult— did you just say that? What did you say?
[laughs quietly]

Jack: Who?

Austin: You. Did you just say that the cult did that or was that Pushy jumping to conclusions?

Keith: No, no, that's me.

Austin: Okay, okay.

Keith: I inferred that based on the...

Austin: I'm very tired.

Jack: *[laughs quietly]* The cult put the kid in space.

Austin: Okay.

Keith: Yeah.

Jack (as Paris): No, no. False Fruit. Look. We've got to go. It's just a short trip. You're welcome to come. We can talk through whatever you've got to talk through on the way. Otherwise, it'll have to wait until later.

Austin (as False Fruit): Who's behind this cult?

Keith (as Cheal): *[stilted]* I am not at liberty to discuss.

Austin (as False Fruit): Why?

Jack (as Paris): I don't understand— yeah, what have you got— you know, you say this is bad news. So far you've just told me that people were at a retreat.

Keith (as Cheal): There was a threat—

Jack (as Paris): I think this is bad news.

Keith (as Cheal): *[stilted]* A credible threat on life.

Jack (as Paris): All right, okay. Get into the ship or stay outside. We're about to leave. I'm happy to talk this through with you. Are you in or are you out?

Keith (as Cheal): I'm in.

Keith: I get in.

Jack (as Paris): All right.

Jack: Door closes. *[imitates airlock closing]* Things take off. The three of us are now floating in a little ship, further and further away from the Brink.

Jack (as Paris): All right.

Austin: Whose ship is this?

Jack: This is one of my contacts' ships.

Austin: Ah, sure. Right, okay.

Jack: I can expend a token to have taken advantage of “call in a timely favor from a prominent client” if we want a ship.

Austin: Mm.

Jack: Or we could just hand wave it. Um...whose ship is this?

Austin: Whose ship is this?

Jack: Or it could be mine. Like, it could be my ship. I'm a broker, so like...

Austin: Yeah, you're a broker. You're a broker. Maybe you have a little ship. Maybe you have like...tell me about what your ship is like.

Jack: Uh, this ship is called...this ship is called Waterfall Guardians, and it is basically just like a white van. It doesn't look like a white van, but its functional equivalent is like...

Austin: Uh huh.

Jack: You know, it has a refrigerated back for storing fruits and vegetables. It can't go particularly quickly, but it's not like it's rundown or like bad. It's just like a working ship.

Keith: Right.

Jack: And it has fuel capacity to get us out there. This is the Mirage. I imagine we think about fuel in a kind of different way. It doesn't have weapons, because it wouldn't need to.

Austin: Uh huh.

Jack: Yeah, Waterfall Guardians.

Austin: I'm gonna add it to your notes. I'm just gonna grab a post-it; it's easier.

Jack: Lament checks whether Knighton is one of their targets. *[laughs quietly]* And there's a small cockpit that the three of us are sitting in, like one of those trucks that have—

Austin: Really quick, Waterfall Guardians, right?

Jack: Yes.

Austin: Not Gardens? Okay, 'cause I typed “Gardens.”

Jack: No, no, no.

Austin: Okay, there we go.

Jack: I'm thinking of like three big stone mythical creatures that guard waterfalls.

Austin: Ah, right, of course.

Jack: Or guard a waterfall.

Austin: Yeah, yeah, yeah.

Jack: But yeah, we're all sitting next to each other, like in one of those trucks that has three seats in the front.

Austin: Uh huh.

Jack: And it is me, and then it is Pushy, and then it is False Fruit.

Jack (as Paris): Okay, we got a bit of time. We should get there in, uh...what does that timer say by your side, False Fruit?

Austin (as False Fruit): Uh, 22?

Jack (as Paris): That's minutes. Yeah, we should get there in 22 minutes, get the kid, we'll get back. So you've got 44 minutes, Cheal.

Keith (as Cheal): *[sighs]*

Jack (as Paris): It's a busy day.

Keith (as Cheal): I—

Austin (as False Fruit): Which cult is this?

Jack (as Paris): This is the cult that...people have been disappearing, which is concerning.

Austin (as False Fruit): It's like a...

Jack (as Paris): Lots of people have been talking Brink Proxy and stuff.

Austin (as False Fruit): Eh, but what's the...what are they getting up to? What's the...people are disappearing and coming back, but are they coming back weird?

Jack (as Paris): That's a great question.

Keith (as Cheal): They're coming back weird.

Austin (as False Fruit): Huh.

Jack (as Paris): How weird? Weird how?

Keith (as Cheal): Okay. Super in-your-face friendly, very interested in like unity but like in a weird way, and they keep checking their pulse, and...

Austin: False Fruit is not as good at lying as he thinks he is, and...who's next to him?

Jack: Pushy.

Austin: Pushy, are you looking— who are you looking towards? I think, you know, in my mind, you are talking to Paris. Paris is looking at you and therefore also in my direction, because, you know, it's like Paris is all the way to the left, I'm all the way to the right. And so, Paris, you can see that when Pushy mentions checking pulses, it seems as if False Fruit knows more or that that triggers something in False Fruit. False Fruit's face falls, right? False Fruit's face falls. *[Keith laughs]*

Ali: Mm.

Keith: A great little tongue twister for anyone out there doing a newscast. *[Austin laughs]*

Jack (as Paris): Are you, uh...you familiar with this, False Fruit?

Austin (as False Fruit): *[lying]* Uh, no. Familiar with what?

Jack (as Paris): Well, just when he mentioned the pulse checking thing, you know, it seemed like you had some sort of response. Were you at the meeting at Pushy's?

Austin (as False Fruit): What meeting? The meeting? No.

Keith (as Cheal): It was an assemblage, an assemblage.

Austin (as False Fruit): Oh, the assemblage. No, I was working.

Keith: *[laughs]* They all pretend to not know what...

Jack: *[laughs quietly]* Oh, right, sorry, the assemblage.

Keith: Oh, yeah, the assemblage. Yeah, I definitely remember that. Meeting, I have no idea what the fuck you're talking about.

Austin: No idea what that is.

Austin (as False Fruit): Uh, the...no, I just, um...yeah, people check their pulses sometimes.

Keith (as Cheal): No, not sometimes.

Jack (as Paris): Yeah, it just sounds like they're being weird, Pushy. None of this sounds concerning.

Keith (as Cheal): No. No. It's like— okay. Like, imagine like a horror movie where the main character realizes that everyone else has been turned into like a bug person, but they're disguised as humans.

Jack (as Paris): Right, and then they see them doing something frightening, right?

Keith (as Cheal): You see them, yeah, doing something extremely weird, and you're like, "Oh my God, I'm the only one here not..."

Austin (as False Fruit): The thing is they're checking their pulses. That's not so weird.

Keith (as Cheal): No.

Jack (as Paris): They're checking their pulses, then they do something like big and consequential in the horror movie, right? And that's when you go— it's when you turn the corner, right, and you see the bug person eating Mr. Samuels, right?

Keith (as Cheal): Okay.

Jack (as Paris): For sap.

Keith (as Cheal): Right. I didn't see anybody get eaten.

Jack (as Paris): Okay, well, that's a relief. Good.

Keith (as Cheal): But imagine...just imagine 100 people, all at the same time, no notice, no nothing, totally synchronized, check their pulse all at once, same expression on their face, same movements with their hands.

Austin (as False Fruit): Yeah, they're doing, what, like a little prayer. What about it?

Keith (as Cheal): No, it wasn't a prayer. I mean, maybe it's a prayer for them. I don't know. I don't know.

Austin (as False Fruit): Yeah, it's just like a— uh, it's probably just like a prayer for them.

Keith (as Cheal): It's not just like a prayer for them. *[sighs]* I don't know. I don't know why. I don't know why there's so many of them. I don't know how they're getting people. Mustard didn't disappear, and she was doing it.

Austin (as False Fruit): This sounds like you're overreacting. I mean, I don't know you like that, Pushy. But it feels like you just—

Jack (as Paris): Some people just like doing the wave at a sports game or something.

Keith (as Cheal): Okay.

Jack (as Paris): Everybody moving at the same time. This is some sort of, you know.

Keith (as Cheal): *[seriously]* I can't tell you what I saw. But, *[Sylvia laughs quietly]* Paris: what scares you the most in the world?

Jack (as Paris): Uh, large bodies of water.

Keith (as Cheal): If you saw—

Keith: Is that true, by the way?

Jack: For me, Jack, or Paris? *[Ali laughs]*

Keith: Yes. Oh, no, Jack, is it true for Paris?

Jack: Yes. Yes.

Keith: Okay. You get a token.

Austin: Oh.

Jack: Ooh.

Keith: That was my lure question.

Austin: Look at that. Yeah.

Keith (as Cheal): If you saw what I saw, you would have a new biggest fear.

Jack (as Paris): You saw something?

Austin (as False Fruit): What'd you see?

Jack (as Paris): What did you see?

Keith (as Cheal): I was threatened in a way I was told specifically not to say.

Austin (as False Fruit): By who? Listen, all right.

Jack (as Paris): Just tell us.

Austin (as False Fruit): Cards on the table, I know some— they're fine. They have their— they're a little— we do some work with them sometimes. They're just, they have their little thing. They do their pulse; they say a prayer.

Jack (as Paris): Okay.

Austin (as False Fruit): They say a prayer!

Jack (as Paris): Right, so that's what...right.

Austin (as False Fruit): They ain't threatening anybody.

Keith (as Cheal): They threatened me!

Jack (as Paris): Who threatened you?

Keith (as Cheal): They threatened you too. They threatened the both of you.

Austin (as False Fruit): They threatened me?

Jack (as Paris): They threatened us?

Keith (as Cheal): They threatened everybody.

Jack (as Paris): The cult threatened?

Austin (as False Fruit): Who?

Jack (as Paris): What are you talking around here, Pushy?

Keith: Ah, okay. I'm going to use a weak move.

Austin: Ooh.

Jack: Oohooohooohooohoo.

Keith: I'm going to...oh, that's not really what this move is about.

Austin: You're looking at this one? I think this is true.

Keith: Overindulge and reveal something about yourself that you...

Austin: I mean...

Keith: Well, I don't think it's an overindulge in revealing things. I think it's like overindulge something else.

Austin: Eh, let's— I think it's broad enough.

Keith: Okay.

Austin: The revealing something about yourself.

Keith: Okay.

Austin: It doesn't have to be overindulge in a substance.

Keith: All right.

Austin: You know, I think, in fact, it not saying that is part of the breadth of what it's trying to give you.

Keith (as Cheal): It was a Divine.

Jack (as Paris): What?

Austin: The ship shakes and creaks.

Keith (as Cheal): Do you see that? Did you see what it— what happened?

Austin: Our ship, the ship we're on, shakes and creaks as if it's like...it's like turbulence, but what if instead of feeling like turbulence, it feels like you've gone from being like a plane in the sky to like a submarine.

Jack: Whoa!

Austin: Like, the pressure drops out, and there's suddenly texture around us instead of it just

being an empty vacuum.

Jack (as Paris): Okay, easy does it.

Jack: Just pulls down like a...

Austin (as False Fruit): Whoa! You know how to pilot this thing?

Jack (as Paris): Yeah, yeah, yeah. Put your seat belts on.

Austin (as False Fruit): *[laughs nervously]* I don't think they're gonna help out here!

Jack (as Paris): There's a Divine— okay. Did you know about this, False Fruit? There's a Divine? They've got a Divine going on?

Austin (as False Fruit): *[stammers]*

Jack (as Paris): Hey, listen, did you know about this?

Austin (as False Fruit): Uh...you want to know what I know?

Jack (as Paris): Yes. Tell me what you know.

Austin (as False Fruit): All I know is...uh...

Jack (as Paris): Oh, are you now scared to say something?

Austin (as False Fruit): I'm not sca— well!

Austin: And I gesture at the whole thing around us, shaking and creaking and whatnot.

Jack (as Paris): It's just turbulence. It's just Mirage turbulence.

Keith (as Cheal): It's very poorly timed turbulence, if it's turbulence.

Jack (as Paris): *[sighs]*

Austin (as False Fruit): I can tell you what...I can tell you what I know. It's not a— I can tell you what I know, but you gotta get me and Qualitative off the station.

Jack (as Paris): Hmm.

Austin (as False Fruit): And you gotta get in there and erase any record of us ever being here.

Jack (as Paris): Of you and the kid?

Austin (as False Fruit): Uh huh, and my job, and you gotta set me up with a new job somewhere, somewhere safe.

Austin: I'm either entangling a resident with a criminal obligation or offering something rare and elicit—this information—at a ruinously high price.

Jack: Yeah. I will also take a token for commit to provide for someone you know you can't support.

Austin: Ha! Oh, yeah, uh huh.

Jack: Yeah. Okay.

Jack (as Paris): Wait, wait, wait, wait, wait. You two, do you seriously believe that what you know puts us in danger right now?

Austin (as False Fruit): I didn't think so this morning, but now I'm hearing different.

Keith (as Cheal): I believe it enough to not do it.

Jack (as Paris): Is this Divine one that I know of already?

Austin (as False Fruit): How am I supposed to know how well you do your prayer read?

Keith (as Cheal): Yeah, did you take a Divine class?

Jack (as Paris): Yeah, I went to school. I've read my books. I know the great old Divines. I've encountered a few new ones.

Keith: Do I even know? I don't even know if I know.

Austin: I don't think it gave you...

Keith: The message that I got didn't say, "By the way, this is from Devotion."

Austin: Yeah. Yeah. I don't think it did.

Keith: So.

Austin: And like, I don't think it communicated itself...has it communicated itself with the word Devotion? Was that part of the...I know we had some cool visuals during the concert, but I don't

remember.

Jack: It said, "You don't love me enough."

Austin: "You don't love me enough."

Jack: People who understand Divines might be able to make a guess it's a Divine about love or something.

Austin: This is my question. We had Sylvi give us some of this earlier.

Sylvia: Mm-hmm.

Austin: How public is Devotion as a Divine?

Sylvia: Uh...

Austin: Is this a fairly new Divine? Is this a...

Sylvia: I think it is a newly recognized one, yeah.

Austin: Okay.

Sylvia: I think it is one that was not really known until recently.

Austin: Gotcha.

Jack (as Paris): It's not Arbitrage, is it?

Keith (as Cheal): Uh, no.

Jack (as Paris): Ugh...

Keith (as Cheal): I mean, I don't know.

Jack (as Paris): I don't know if that's good news or bad news. Was it on a phone? Did it threaten you on like a—

Keith (as Cheal): Is there another Divine problem?

Jack (as Paris): Apparently there's another Divine problem.

Keith (as Cheal): In what way?

Jack: Just like pinching the bridge of his nose.

[0:45:00]

Jack (as Paris): Mustard encountered a Divine on a—

Keith (as Cheal): Mustard again?! *[laughter]*

Austin: Ohh.

Jack: Okay, Paris looks at False Fruit and is just like:

Jack (as Paris): Tell me what you know.

Austin (as False Fruit): Here? Now? Let me get my kid first. We're so close.

Jack (as Paris): Yeah. Yeah. It's not safe out here.

Keith (as Cheal): Uh, I don't know.

Austin (as False Fruit): What do you mean you don't know?

Keith (as Cheal): We're just gonna be sitting here.

Austin (as False Fruit): Yeah, we're—

Keith (as Cheal): I don't know what's gonna happen where we're going.

Austin (as False Fruit): We are 15 minutes away.

Keith (as Cheal): I don't want to lose— so we should just sit here in silence instead of you telling?

Austin (as False Fruit): *[exhales]* Are you telling me my kid is—

Jack (as Paris): You are very resistant to telling us.

Austin (as False Fruit): Yeah.

Keith (as Cheal): Yeah! That's what I'm saying.

Austin (as False Fruit): *You* were very resistant.

Keith (as Cheal): But I was open resistant. You are lying resistant.

Austin (as False Fruit): I didn't understand what I knew.

Keith (as Cheal): *[quietly]* Okay.

Austin (as False Fruit): All right? I'm not very—

Keith (as Cheal): So you're gonna say? You're not gonna be weird?

Austin (as False Fruit): No.

Keith (as Cheal): Okay, I guess you now have your new stakes.

Jack: 15 minutes of frosty silence.

Austin: Mm-hmm.

Keith: No, Cheal's gonna— he's just gonna chat.

Austin: Okay. *[Keith laughs]*

Jack: You seen any good movies lately? You, uh...?

Keith: That's what's—

Jack: Yeah, do we want to leave this here on the way and come back to this?

Keith: I'm good either way. We've been going for a while, so yeah, I don't mind switching up.

Jack: Yeah. I'd like to like move the camera, at least for a second.

Austin: Important note from Miles: we do know the name of this Divine.

Keith: We do?

Austin: Yeah, because what is the name of the cult?

Jack: Uh, Friends of Devotion. *[laughs quietly]*

Austin: Ah, yeah. Mm-hmm.

Sylvia: Yeah.

Keith: Is it? Oh, okay, and we know—

Sylvia: They've been mentioning Devotion, yeah.

Austin: Yeah, mm-hmm.

Keith: Okay, okay, okay.

Austin: Mm-hmm. Which long term, again, we'll probably end up shifting it from "The Friends of" in the future at some point. I don't know if they'll become the Church of Devotion or some other thing, but for now, they are the Friends of Devotion.

Sylvia: I've also...yeah, I've been thinking of them as like Devotees as another word for them.

Austin: Devotees. Yeah, that's fun.

Sylvia: Yeah.

Austin: So yeah.

Keith: Go to their gift shop and buy a devo-tee, T-E-E.

Sylvia: Yeah. That's also how you just spell that word, so. *[Austin laughs quietly]*

Keith: Good point.

Jack: I became a Friend of Devotion and all I got was *[Austin: "The devo T-E-E"]* the compulsion to check my pulse every 25 seconds.

Austin: Uh huh. *[laughs quietly]*

Keith: Parentheticals around "tee."

Austin: False is dead silent for this, is not talking, is steaming.

Jack: Yeah. And...yeah, we just keep...

Austin: We dock with this...

Jack: Waterfall Guardians approaches.

Austin: Yeah.

Jack: Sees a tiny vessel.

Austin: Escape pod. Can I throw a wrench in which is fun?

Keith: Sure.

Jack: Yeah.

Austin: Which is I think Qualitative is on that escape pod but there's probably like two other people there too, receive more refugees than we can comfortably accommodate.

Jack: Oh, god, yeah. Yeah.

Austin: It's like another kid and then someone who was like really fired up, and they were like, *[nervously backing down]* "No, um...I'll go with the kid. I'll make sure the kids are safe."

Jack: Yeah.

Austin: And they got cold feet and just...

Jack: War? Hmm, I'm not actually all about it.

Austin: Right, exactly.

Jack: Yeah, totally.

Keith: Oh, so these are people who also want to come back.

Austin: Uh huh.

Keith: Okay, yeah.

Austin: On our already cramped van.

Jack: Mm-hmm. People like sitting in the back of the van.

Austin: Mm-hmm.

Jack: Make this extremely, you know, like a fuel run, because more people on board.

Austin: I think False moves into the back of the van to sit with Qualitative, freeing up a seat in the front for one of these new people, but also False is not talking about what he promised he would talk about. He's very much like, *[concerned]* "Oh, are you okay?" You know, talking to his kid and being like very...that is the thing False Fruit is doing.

Jack: I mean, bless his soul.

Austin: Uh huh.

Jack: He has just recovered his kid from a warzone.

Austin: Yes.

Keith: Yeah.

Jack: But also I see what you're getting at.

Austin: Yeah.

Jack: Okay. Meanwhile, on the Brink.

Austin: Yeah. Who's up?

Jack: I'm gonna move...that was Cheal's scene, right?

Austin: It was either Cheal's or Paris's, yeah.

Keith: Yeah, that was my scene.

Austin: Yeah, that makes sense. So yeah, meanwhile at the retreat, or meanwhile wherever Lament is killing somebody.

Sylvia: Hey, we don't know if I'm killing anyone else yet.

Austin: No, you're right.

Sylvia: My thing was gonna be a Read the Station. I was gonna...

Austin: Oh, sure.

Sylvia: Yeah. I wanted to like get a temperature check on the— 'cause the first murder was covered up. This murder wasn't.

Austin: Mm-hmm.

Sylvia: So I would love to know how people are feeling about a body being found in the...I put "meeting place," I think, on the card, but they wouldn't use that word.

Austin: *[laughs]* The assemblage hall.

Sylvia: Yeah, the assemblage hall that the Devotees meet in.

Austin: The Hall of Devotion.

Sylvia: Yeah. Oh my God.

Austin: All right. Uh, that's not a minor scene. It's a Read the Station, so: choose a topic. You might talk about a previous— so you can either make a question or a statement.

Sylvia: Mm-hmm.

Austin: What is your question or statement?

Sylvia: Is the statement “A body has been found in the assembly hall...”

Austin: Uh, it should be more...

Sylvia: Yeah, okay.

Austin: Um, I guess it could be that. *[reading]* “You could frame your topic as a question, like ‘Should we accept the deserters as refugees?’ or a statement, like ‘The deserters will bring the war upon us.’” That feels more like...

Sylvia: Yeah.

Austin: Feels like more pushed and feels like there's an issue or like a position.

Jack: Like a value statement.

Austin: Yeah, yeah, yeah.

Sylvia: Hmm. Is it safe to keep the Devotees on the Brink?

Austin: Because the body was found there? Or is this a pivot to—

Sylvia: Yeah, because people...yeah.

Austin: Okay.

Sylvia: Like, are they involved? Like, someone died there.

Austin: Yes, okay.

Sylvia: Is it safe to keep this around, you know?

Austin: Yes, yes. “Then, starting on your left, each player takes turns weighing in on a topic. You can speak as a class of residents like The Smugglers or as an established group like Red Sun Galactic. Give a sentence describing how the group feels about the issue. The views shared are always opinions and beliefs, not facts. And then, once everyone's weighed in, including you, the discussion is over. You don't need to settle on a unified position; communities are messy and contain multitudes. Instead, draw upon what you learned to color your actions and inspire your questions in subsequent scenes.” So.

Sylvia: How do we do the order again? Are we going by the boards?

Austin: We'll go, yeah, by boards, so left of you is me, I guess. Oh, well, this is easy for me. I'm the Troublemakers, and the Troublemakers think that this is a setup. The Troublemakers think that the Friends of Devotion are allies in the struggle and that they would never...if this person got killed, then they were either doing something they shouldn't *[laughs quietly]* and they were involved or this is some sort of Principality plot. They're probably wrong, you know, because—

Sylvia: Oh, definitely, yeah.

Austin: I think— yeah, I mean, I can't say if other people dismiss that position, *[Sylvia laughs quietly]* but I think the Troublemakers are that, you know? It's like when you try to criticize anybody who has like stans online, they just, you know...

Keith: They'll just say literally whatever?

Austin: Whatever, yeah.

Sylvia: They're posting threads of everything good that the cult's done.

Austin: Uh huh.

Sylvia: Yeah.

Austin: So now up to Pushy.

Keith: Sorry, the question was how do we feel about a dead body being found?

Austin: No, it was—

Sylvia: No, it's...

Austin: Yeah, go ahead.

Sylvia: Do we feel safe with the cult onboard still?

Keith: Safe. Okay. And am I answering as Pushy?

Austin: No, you're answering as...

Sylvia: You're answering as anybody, right?

Austin: Well, I don't think it's an individual. It's a group.

Sylvia: Okay.

Austin: You're answering as a group. It can be a specific group, or it can be a broad...so you could do, for instance, the Orchard Syndicate or the Broken Circle, but you could also do criminals or you could do, you know, merchants.

Keith: Okay.

Austin: But you couldn't do the Divine Arbitrage as a single person. I believe that that's true.

Keith: Okay. So yeah, so I will do the scum and villainy, the various criminals on the station.

Austin: Mm-hmm.

Keith: They are extremely conflicted. These are jobs. Like, the cult is hiring criminals to do things.

Austin: Mm-hmm.

Keith: And so money is flowing for criminals in a way that it has, like, people willing to do shady things are getting paid more often, and I would say even with maybe even safer jobs.

Austin: Right.

Keith: But they're creepy, and like not all of us are into the stuff that they're doing, and they're like off-putting in a way that just like working for someone who's just like kind of dangerous isn't. So I think that this is very ambivalent in a big sense.

Austin: Hmm. All right, Ali.

Ali: Yeah, hi. Um...I think I'm going to be speaking on behalf of like a different church on the station.

Austin: Oh, fun. Yeah. Is it a Divine church, or is it an unrelated new church for us?

Ali: I guess it would be a Divine church if we're in the Twilight Mirage still, but sort of in the like "Divinity is the thing" sort of church.

Austin: Mm-hmm.

Ali: Like not to a specific Divine, I guess.

Austin: Right, right, right. But like...the Resonant Orbit could still exist, right? Like, we haven't said those words during this game or this, you know... *[Ali laughs]* But they could. I don't know if the Resonant Orbit left with the Divine Fleet or not, you know? I don't know if there's a Cadent still here, 'cause there's no Cadent in the Principality, right?

Ali: Oh, sure, right, yeah. But like...I don't know that like...just because the physical presence of Divines is gone doesn't mean that like people's...

Austin: Oh, I still think there are Divines here. Not all of the Divines— and that's what I'm saying, right? Is like the...we know that many Divines left with the Divine Fleet, but we also know that like Arbit didn't and obviously Devotion didn't.

Ali: Right, right, right. Yeah, yeah, yeah.

Austin: And so I'm curious if it is literally the Resonant Orbit, which was the big church slash government back in the Twilight Mirage era, but I don't know...again, we just know that they don't exist out in the Divine Principality, so maybe that did stay here. I'm curious if there is a Cadent working somewhere in the Twilight Mirage today or if that is a retired title, you know?

Ali: Mm-hmm.

Austin: I don't know. Anyway, it could just be— for now, it can just be a generic other church.

Ali: Sure. *[laughs]* Yeah, we can cross that bridge when we come to it.

Austin: Mm-hmm.

Ali: But yeah, I think the statement or the sort of reaction is like one that's more like compassionate in terms of like, well, we've just seen this community ripped apart by violence.

Austin: Mm.

Ali: And there's such like pressure and confusion amongst people on the station already. To push someone out that has been a haven this whole time would be inconsiderate and cruel, and we have to support our fellow...you know.

Austin: Mm-hmm.

Ali: *[laughs]* Our fellow station mates.

Austin: Perfect. And Jack.

Jack: I am speaking on behalf of cult members. *[Sylvia laughs quietly]*

Austin: Ah.

Ali: Oh!

Jack: And the sort of sentiment that starts bubbling up from the cult members is: get rid of us from where? Get rid of us from the people who work the grocery stores?

Austin: Mm.

Jack: Or do you want to get rid of us from the people in the print workshop? Or do you want to get rid of us from the hotdog seller outside the public pool? I mean, when you talk about “getting rid of the cult,” you understand that we don’t all just like live in one place and do— you’re talking about the people who live on this station. By what measure are you going to identify who’s in the cult? How are you going to purge us from this place? We just live here.

Austin: And Sylvi.

Sylvia: Uh, I was gonna...mm.

Austin: Mm.

Sylvia: Jack, you took my one. *[laughs]* I feel like I might do a contingent of like the truckers, like the haulers and stuff.

Austin: Mm-hmm.

Sylvia: Whose attitude basically sums up to: there’s been nothing but trouble since they’ve been more and more active on here. It’s been interfering with stuff. We’re not feeling safe to go out because of everything going on with the ships outside, and now they’re just making things even more tense.

Austin: Mm.

Sylvia: Yeah. Just very stressed out about it all

Austin: Fair. All right, well, that’s a scene. I’ll add that. *[typing]* Hold a conversation. Held a conversation on whether or not to remove the Devotees after a body was found in their hall.

Mixed results. *[Austin and Jack laugh]* Truckers and— who else was positive on removing them? Just the truckers really, right?

Sylvia: I think they were just scared, yeah.

Austin: Yeah, truckers are scared.

[1:00:00]

Jack: Oh, and the the criminal people were like, well, they're—

Austin: They're ambivalent, right?

Jack: Yeah. They're like, "They give us jobs and stuff, but also they're weird."

Austin: Uh huh. Other church was supportive of them. Troublemakers doubted they did anything wrong. *[Ali laughs]* And Devotees—obviously—and Devotees emphasized their presence as station members. There we go. Nice and legible. Eh, you zoom in enough, it is. *[Sylvia laughs]* All right. Really get in there. And that is your turn, Sylvi.

Sylvia: Mm-hmm.

Austin: Mustard, you feeling anything? You got any ideas here?

Ali: *[sighs]* Yeah, I gotta get up to some stuff with this cult, right? *[laughs]*

Austin: I think so.

Ali: How are we gonna escalate some cult business today?

Austin: I don't know. It feels like we're on a precipice.

Jack: Day two of the retreat, babey. *[Ali laughs]*

Austin: Yeah. It feels like we're on the precipice of it breaking one of two ways, and I mean, you know, infinite ways, but the two quickly emerging ones, between what Pushy is now doing starting to spread the word that there's some stuff up and that conversation being held, is get rid of the cult. The other, and I think this is represented really well by what Jack's answer was, is the cult runs the station. Not maybe directly, but if more and more people are from the cult, eventually it doesn't become a thing you can purge so simply and does become a thing that's like, there's...the Devotees are important across all parts of the ship or all parts of the station, and that's not something you can just close the door on. It feels like we're rapidly reaching a point where, if they're not dealt with, that will be the case, you know? And maybe that's interesting. We'll see, I guess. But yeah, day two. To keep it in the action, day two. What's

Mustard get up to? The sun rises on the false sky of this ship, this weird outside forest ship.
What's Mustard get up to?

Ali: Yeah, I wonder if it's something like...because the like ideal of the cult right now is to continue spreading, right? And I wonder if this can be sort of a minor scene of like Mustard at like a campfire or something about like some like higher level cult people who are just like, "We'd really like to plan these events, but we'd like to get, you know, information from someone who's involved with the Brink Proxy about it," and it's just Mustard like... *[Ali and Jack laugh]*

Austin: Mm.

Ali: ...giving all of these secrets about the ship, basically. *[laughs]*

Austin: Oh my God. *[sighs]*

Ali: In terms of being like:

Ali (as Mustard): Yeah, well, you can access this through that way. People don't really know that. You know, there's approximately 320 residents in Section 14, so I think that if you started there, that would be smart.

Ali: And just like sort of like... *[laughs]*

Austin: God.

Jack: Why...? How does this happen? Like, what is Mustard...is Mustard just like falling for it? Or is there...like, what's Mustard's play here?

Ali: Yeah, I think it's the thing of like you get someone alone who wants to speak about the thing that they're passionate about.

Jack: Oh God, yeah. *[Ali laughs]*

Austin: Mm.

Ali: And once it's like, "Oh, someone's paying attention to me about how, you know, how skilled and knowledgeable I am about things," but is just like completely—like, *completely*—getting manipulated here in terms of like, "Oh, wow, that's really interesting. What's your...I never knew that the security system for that—" *[laughs]*

Austin: Right, yeah, uh huh.

Ali: "You know, used an alpha base access code instead of *[Austin: "Uh huh"]* the one that we use for the other one," and things like that.

Austin: God.

Ali: It's all fine.

Austin: Mm-hmm. I would love a scene— I'm going to use an interstellar war move on myself to get a scene with Mourning.

Jack: Okay.

Austin: Mark someone with the ire of a senior officer. I'm marking myself. I like filed the paperwork that was like, I have a religious retreat. But I did that and like, you know, I think Mourning maybe sees through it or maybe suspects. I mean, you tell me, Jack, as the person playing Mourning. Does she think that I'm like trying to just get away from doing what I promised I would do which was kind of be part of this bigger process?

Jack: She thinks kind of one thing worse, right?

Austin: Mm.

Jack: Which is like, my assistant's body was found at your retreat.

Austin: Ah. Whoa, whoa, whoa. It wasn't at the retreat. It was while we were at the retreat. It was in the Devotion assemblage hall.

Jack: Yeah. And you know, she is not making the accusation that 3T has killed her assistant.

Austin: Well, let's get into it. I'd like to do it specifically. I'd like to like...

Jack: Yeah.

Austin: Does Mourning come out to the forest ship to find me? All I want is— the only thing I can say is...

Jack: Oh, that's so creepy.

Austin: Yeah.

Jack: God, yeah, no. This is big Sergeant Howie in *The Wicker Man* arriving at the station.

Austin: Right. Yes. Yes.

Jack: On his little floatplane and calling out, "Send a dinghy out. I need to come aboard."

Austin: Uh huh.

Jack: Yeah, so I think, you know, down through the forest comes General Mourning, and she's got an assistant– a second–

Austin: A new assistant?

Jack: Another assistant with her. She's wearing...I was gonna say she's wearing mourning, but that's like, no pun intended.

Austin: Mm.

Jack: She's wearing some symbol of having lost her assistant.

Austin: Yeah.

Jack: I think she generally wears dark colors, but she might be wearing like a band of brilliant color or a band of gold or something around her arm.

Austin: Mm-hmm. We should note that the kid she had with her is probably safe in childcare currently, right?

Jack: She would not bring the kid. When she came here, [*Austin: "Mm-hmm"*] she did not quite realize the extent to which the war was going to as rapidly engage.

Austin: Right. Yeah.

Jack: Otherwise she wouldn't have brought the kid.

Austin: Yeah.

Jack: But now that she has, the kid's in– she's not bringing the kid to...

Austin: [*laughs quietly*] To the Devotion retreat? No?

Jack: Ellelyn is not coming to the Devotion retreat, no.

Austin: Ellelyn, right. Yes.

Jack: That's E-L-L-E-L-Y-N. Ellelyn.

Austin: E-L-L-E...

Jack: L-Y-N.

Austin: L-Y-N? Okay. Is that her kid or her grandkid? I don't remember.

Jack: It is her granddaughter.

Austin: Granddaughter. Okay.

Jack: It's her son's kid.

Austin: Gotcha. Yep.

Jack: Who is presumably doing something back on Quire. Yeah, and I think, you know, she speaks to a cult leader first, to be like, "Is Tanager here?"

Austin: Does the cult leader...

Jack: I'm curious if, yeah.

Austin: Sylvi, would a cult leader say if I were here?

Sylvia: I don't think that like...I'm trying to decide, because it's like, on one hand, I don't think that they're in the habit of like hiding people's presences, 'cause they think that looks suspicious.

Austin: Right.

Sylvia: But on the other, it's like, oh, this guy is kind— you know what? No, this is a general showing up. I think they'd mention it at that point, actually.

Austin: Mm-hmm.

Sylvia: I was gonna be like, "Well, Tanager is a celebrity."

Austin: Mm-hmm.

Sylvia: Maybe they want to keep...he/him for Tanager?

Austin: Uh, Tanager's he/him, yes.

Sylvia: Okay, yeah.

Austin: Yes, I had to double check myself.

Sylvia: Yeah, that was my thinking.

Jack: The loudest car in the world just went past my house.

Sylvia: Oh my gosh.

Jack: Sorry for the recording.

Austin: Nope. Oh, yeah, it'll be on the recording. It did not come through the Discord at least.

Sylvia: So yeah, yeah, I think they would be like, "Oh, yeah, he's..." I couldn't think of it. "At the Pavilion over here." *[laughs quietly]*

Austin: Mm-hmm.

Jack: The pavilion's made of roses.

Austin: And yeah, you just see me. I'm not hiding. Yeah, I'm in the pavilion. I'm, you know, talking with some people, you know, very casually. You know, I imagine there's like...I think I'm vaping, probably. *[Sylvia laughs]*

Ali: Mm.

Austin: And like have a cup of coffee in my other hand. Like, it's morning wake up hour, you know?

Jack: Yes.

Austin: You know, it's morning social hour before like the kayaking and pulse checks begin.

Jack: But now it's Mourning social hour.

Austin: Ah, yeah, uh huh.

Jack: 'Cause General Mourning is here.

Austin: I think, you know, rub my temples and like toss my hair back and you start to approach.

Jack (as Mourning): Good morning, Tanager.

Austin (as 3T): Oh, hi, General.

Jack (as Mourning): Rough night?

Austin (as 3T): No, it was great.

Jack (as Mourning): Very relaxing?

Austin (as 3T): Um, it was inspiring.

Jack (as Mourning): Oh, I'm glad to hear it. We missed you at the meeting yesterday. Come with me. I'd like to talk somewhere a little more private.

Austin (as 3T): Why? What's wrong with here?

Jack (as Mourning): We're surrounded— the stuff that we need to talk about, Tanager, involves a degree of circumspection, and I don't want to burden these people with it.

Austin: He like nods and is like, "All right, fine, I won't put up a fight," but nods in that sort of like showoffy way where it's like, "Oh, here we go. Principal's calling me to her office again." [*Jack laughs*] You know, like cool kid. And yeah, goes to...follows you somewhere else. Where are you leading him?

Jack: Out of the forest ship.

Austin: Hmm. All the way out?

Jack: Like, down the corridor. Yep.

Austin: I don't think he's— no, he's not gonna leave.

Jack: Ooh.

Austin: He'll go somewhere private in the ship.

Jack: Yeah, all right.

Austin: I think if you start to like head too close, he's like:

Austin (as 3T): Whoa, whoa, whoa. I still have the rest of the retreat to do. You're not gonna get me out of here.

Jack (as Mourning): Oh, you do. Okay, well.

Jack: There's like a bench.

Austin (as 3T): It's only day two. I filed five days.

Jack (as Mourning): Yeah, you filed five days for a religious exemption, which I was happy to give, but—

Austin (as 3T): But something came up?

Jack (as Mourning): You and I both know that— yes, something came up. My assistant was killed. Is this something that you weren't aware of, Tanager?

Austin (as 3T): *[shocked]* When was your— your assistant was *killed*?

Jack (as Mourning): Yesterday, yes. She was shot in the back of the head. Do you know where she was killed?

Austin (as 3T): She was shot in the— was it the Principality? What happened?

Jack (as Mourning): It was in the meeting hall of a certain group known for holding retreats in the middle of workweeks.

Austin: Face just like, “Come on.”

Austin (as 3T): You're fucking with me.

Jack (as Mourning): Not at all. Meet Roberta.

Jack: Roberta smiles.

Austin (as 3T): Hello, Roberta.

Jack (as Mourning): This is my temporary assistant. I worked with Alexis for 25 years, before she was killed in your meeting hall.

Austin (as 3T): Now, okay, wait a— first of all. *[Sylvia laughs]* First of all.

Jack (as Mourning): First of all.

Austin (as 3T): I'm sorry for your loss. That...that sucks. I'm sorry, first of all. Second of all, it is not my meeting hall. It is...what happened?

Jack (as Mourning): What do you want me to say? She was shot in the back of the head.

Austin (as 3T): Is there footage? Is there...do we know who did it?

Jack (as Mourning): Brink Proxy is working on it now. It seems that somebody cleared the footage of the night.

Austin: And like, I think, you know, 3T is like:

Austin (as 3T): I haven't...I've been here. I've been off the mesh.

Jack (as Mourning): Tanager. Tanager. I am not suggesting that you killed Alexis.

Austin (as 3T): No, I'm just saying I didn't know about it. I would have sent flowers or like...something. I...

Jack (as Mourning): What does—

Austin (as 3T): You don't— we were all here. This is a— this is—

Jack (as Mourning): Do you know these people well?

Austin (as 3T): I know them well enough that they support me.

Jack (as Mourning): I mean, what I mean to say is you're confident that all members of this group were present?

Austin (as 3T): Everybody I know who I've met with here is here. Now, if they have some members who wouldn't be at their big devotional retreat, then I haven't met them before. But everyone I know is here. Everyone I know from the Devotees is here. You think that they killed someone—? Okay. Wait. *[quietly laughs incredulously]* All right. You think that they killed someone in their own assemblage hall and left the body there for you to find?

Jack (as Mourning): I think that the arrival of a Mirage general and her assistants could be a cause for alarm. I wonder whether or not Alexis— I have no understanding of why Alexis was in the meeting hall.

Austin (as 3T): *[gasps]*

Jack (as Mourning): What? Wipe that smile off your face.

Austin: He just gasps. No, that was not a laugh. I'm going to spend a token, my one token to put my worldview aside to help someone out at a critical moment.

Ali: Mm.

Austin (as 3T): You can hide a body on this station.

Austin: He says, wavering.

Jack (as Mourning): What? What is it?

Austin (as 3T): You can— there are ways to— if someone wanted to kill someone here and get the body away, they could do it, because I know someone who did it, who's hid a body before.

[1:15:12]

Jack: General Mourning like opens a black notebook and leans forward.

Jack (as Mourning): Tell me everything. *[Sylvia laughs]*

Austin (as 3T): Uh...

Jack (as Mourning): This is not a time to waver in your convictions, Tanager. I know you are a person with a good heart.

Austin (as 3T): *[deep, conflicted breath]* It's— you...

Austin: Shut the Fuck Up Fridays. *[Keith laughs]*

Jack (as Mourning): I am losing my patience, Tanager.

Austin (as 3T): What you're going to see is going to make it look like I was involved in ways I was not, but I was involved.

Jack: *[laughs quietly]* Just like looking, like what the fuck are you— you know, keep talking.

Austin: Uh huh.

Austin (as 3T): The night of my concert, a little after it—

Jack (as Mourning): *[sarcastic]* Oh, a memorable night.

Austin (as 3T): You don't know the half of it. I was backstage afterwards. I was still coming down. I heard a struggle in the bathroom, and I saw Deutsch, who...this guy must have hit them? I don't— I don't know what— I thought it was a fight. I thought it was like a, you know, bar drunk guy type thing. And he was dead. He was dead. And Pushy and I helped get rid of the body, because Deutsch was clearly defending herself, and we didn't want her to get in trouble. So I know you can hide a body, and Deutsch knew how to hide a body.

Jack (as Mourning): Hmm. Okay, I don't know that I can let you stay for the rest of the retreat. We have questions that we need to ask. I'd like you to take me to where this

happened. I would be happy to talk to...I believe their name is Pasodoble, to see about getting you out early. Would you be willing to come back onto the main body of the ship with me to go through these things?

Austin: Running the calculation in his head.

Austin (as 3T): *[sighs]* Yeah. We don't...we don't need to talk to C.T.H. We can just go. I'll send a message.

Jack (as Mourning): Okay. Let's go.

Austin (as 3T): *[sighs]*

Austin: I think that's a scene.

Sylvia: You snitched!

Austin: Uh huh.

Jack: *[sing-song]* We've got a spy on board, spy on board!

Austin: *[laughs quietly]* I snitched to protect—

Keith: I don't know what you're talking about. I'm not on that video.

Austin: Okay, but I snitched to protect the cult I love. *[Jack laughs]*

Keith: Yeah, yeah.

Sylvia: Uh huh.

Jack: Shut the Fuck Up Fridays unless it's about the cult you love. *[Austin laughs]*

Sylvia: I guess it's Make a Deal Monday instead. *[Austin, Keith, and Jack laugh]*

Austin: I didn't even make a deal! 3T didn't even get protection!

Sylvia: Yeah.

Jack: It goes Shut the Fuck Up Friday, silence, silence, Make a Deal Monday.

Austin: Uh huh, yeah.

Jack: That's what the purpose of the days is.

Austin: Mm-hmm. *[Sylvia laughs]*

Jack: The only person who has so far asked for protection, actually, is False Fruit, who has asked for it from a broker.

Austin: Uh huh. Which...

Jack: From a greengrocer.

Austin: Yeah. Which, it is that greengrocer's turn. Right?

Jack: Yeah. All right. I would like to spend a token to call in a timely favor from a prominent client.

Austin: Hmm.

Jack: And in this case, the client is False Fruit, who I have asked to meet me in a...oh, in the sauna where I accidentally sold out Knighton.

Austin: Oh, okay, speaking of selling people out.

Jack: With Pushy, because we need to...people have said to me that they would give me information, and neither of them did, and now it's time to pay the piper.

Austin: Mm.

Keith (as Cheal): Sorry, what information did I not give you?

Jack (as Paris): You didn't tell me what you found.

Keith (as Cheal): I told you it's potentially extremely dangerous for me to tell you what I found. Someone else can tell you what I found. If False Fruit knows what I'm talking about, then False Fruit can connect the dots. If I connect the dots—

Jack (as Paris): Well, this is why I've brought you here to corroborate it.

Keith (as Cheal): Okay, that's fair.

Jack (as Paris): You don't need to say anything. You simply need to enjoy the 14 different whirlpool effects of western jacuzzi. *[Austin laughs]*

Keith (as Cheal): I'm currently on nine.

Austin (as False Fruit): Mm.

Jack (as Paris): Oh, whoa, what does it go up to? 14, right, I understand.

Keith (as Cheal): 14, yeah.

Jack (as Paris): You don't want to be overwhelmed.

Keith (as Cheal): It goes like this. It goes: bup bup bup bup bup bup bup, brrrrrrrrrrrrrr, bup bup bup.

Austin (as False Fruit): Oh, yeah, it's a good one. I like that one.

Keith (as Cheal): Yeah.

Jack (as Paris): Mm-hmm. I'm so glad that we got...

Jack: What's the kid called?

Austin: Qualitative.

Jack: Qualitative.

Keith: Qualitative Fruit.

Austin: Qualitative Fruit.

Jack (as Paris): How's Qualitative doing?

Austin: Qualitative is with me. Qualitative's here.

Jack: You brought him?!

Austin: I'm not...we're...

Jack: Ah, this is the General Mourning approach.

Austin: Yeah, uh huh. After what just happened?

Jack: Yeah, I mean, fair enough. I understand it. Also, everybody loves a spa day.

Austin: Uh huh.

Jack (as Paris): Okay. I know this is hard. We're not out in the vacuum of space. Brink

Proxy are presumably, you know, on top of the station.

Jack: Whatever the Mirage equivalent of “God’s in his heaven, all’s right with the world” is.

Austin: Mm-hmm! *[laughs quietly]*

Jack (as Paris): We need to talk.

Austin (as False Fruit): About...the stuff from the other day.

Jack (as Paris): About the Divine.

Austin (as False Fruit): Did you...did you get a way for us to leave the station and get our names erased and all that?

Jack (as Paris): I’m working on it.

Austin (as False Fruit): You gotta promise me.

Jack (as Paris): I promise you.

Austin (as False Fruit): I know you’re a good broker, but I mostly think you move fruit.

Jack (as Paris): That’s—

Austin (as False Fruit): Which in this particular case, is kind of what I’m asking you to do.

Jack (as Paris): Oh, yeah. Look, I’m glad that we can have a little lightness of touch about it, a little funny joke. I’m gonna get you out of here, I promise. I’m gonna try and move you back towards the center of the Mirage, the planets.

Austin (as False Fruit): And you have a job and something? It doesn’t have to be a big thing. I just, we have to—

Jack (as Paris): I have a cousin on Moonlock.

Austin (as False Fruit): *[disappointed]* Moonlock. Fine.

Jack (as Paris): He makes machines that make the machines that put the laces in shoes.

Austin (as False Fruit): Yeah, I know what’s on Moonlock.

Jack (as Paris): Look, I'm sorry. He says it's quite fun. He says it's quite...the machines are apparently pretty intricate and interesting.

Austin (as False Fruit): I like machines. All right, fine. What do you want to know?

Jack (as Paris): Where to start? Who is this Divine?

Austin (as False Fruit): Devotion. The Devotees, Friends of Devotion, Fervor, Devotion.

Jack: Something very bad about hearing that.

Austin: Mm.

Jack: There is...Paris feels his blood.

Austin: Mm. *[laughs quietly]*

Jack: Which is something that you do in a spa anyway, *[Austin: "Mm-hmm"]* I feel like, but *[laughs quietly]* this is concerning.

Jack (as Paris): It's on the station?

Austin (as False Fruit): Uh, I guess? I guess so. It's...they're on the station, right? So it's probably here. It works here, so either it's not here and it can do stuff here or it's here.

Jack: Paris looks at Cheal with like a, "Yes? Is this the case?"

Keith: I do a grimace face. *[Austin laughs]*

Jack (as Paris): And this Divine, Devotion. How does it operate?

Austin (as False Fruit): I don't know it one-to-one. Like, I don't know it. You know that I move fruit for the Orchard Syndicate, right?

Jack (as Paris): Mm-hmm.

Austin (as False Fruit): I have bought and sold for many years. I'd say about five, six years ago, we got some new partnerships rolling. One of those was with this group. They helped us with expanding into some new areas. They helped us, you know, do some research on some new types of bloranges. They, you know, they were just one of many groups that we started working with as part of exchanges and whatnot. Things, about a year ago, started to get a little hotter. They had us moving stuff besides fruit. We already had the logistics and infrastructure set up. We already had the trade routes, and we were mostly moving things that weren't anything by themselves, right? Pipes, metal...you

know, chips. Eventually, we started moving refined things, things that were already put together. Weapons, medical supplies, like they were preparing for something, which, who hasn't been talking about what's happening outside of the Mirage? So, what's to worry about? We have a group that's a little more paranoid than usual. They're stockpiling defenses. Okay. Devotion. They check their pulse every once in a while. Okay. They get a member in our leadership team. Okay. Seems fine. We get asked, "Hey, take these shipments, and dump them at the edge of the Mirage." We started doing this work with some Orion people, right? Orion's not...some Orion isn't in the Principality anymore—

Jack (as Paris): Right.

Austin (as False Fruit): And so it feels like it's okay to do that. You know, you and I went to the same schools.

Jack (as Paris): Mm-hmm.

Austin (as False Fruit): We both know what the dangers are, but it's...

Jack (as Paris): It is what it is.

Austin (as False Fruit): Maybe you bring people in, right?

Jack (as Paris): Yeah.

Austin (as False Fruit): Orion is an opportunity. Maybe we spread some of the way we see the world if we start to work with them. Maybe we don't.

Jack (as Paris): Right.

Austin (as False Fruit): During those trades, we start dropping these shipments, just random coordinates, just these big boxes. And the other day, that's the boxes exploded. And I, at the time, thought that was all that kid. But when I think about who he's been with and about who he's been...you know, it's them again. They had us move stuff. They built stuff. We dropped stuff off. That's Devotion. That's the Devotees. I don't...they didn't bring me in, you know? I'm not checking my pulse, but I know those guys. They're not...they don't come back that weird. They come back...brighter, you know? Who doesn't sometimes? You have a spa day. You meet someone new. You find religion.

Keith (as Cheal): Feel your blood a little bit.

Austin (as False Fruit): You feel your blood a little bit! *[Keith laughs]* Some people take up jogging. Some people take up violin. Some people check their pulse! We got a Divine that just spins around. Just zooo, zooo, zooooo. It just spins around all day. People

worship it. How is—

Keith: Cheal corroborates to everyone that 3T definitely was working with the cult to do those bombs. Like, I know that for pretty much 100% sure, right? I'm pretty sure that Cheal knows this.

Austin: I think Cheal, at this point, has put together that what you thought were guns were the Mirage bombs, yeah.

Keith: Yeah.

Austin: For the “Mourning Mirage” debut, yeah.

Jack (as Paris): But there's...this Divine is not spinning around. This Divine is forming the Mirage into bombs.

Austin (as False Fruit): It might be. I don't know if this Divine spins or doesn't spin. Don't put me on record— don't put me on record at all.

Keith: I'm sorry, but why do we need to know if it spins or not?

Jack: *[laughs quietly]* Oh, 'cause False Fruit was making a reference to Arbit, I think.

Austin: Yes, yes.

Jack: A Divine which does just sort of spin around all the time.

Keith: Oh, sure, yeah.

Jack: It's an interesting sort of increasing curve of designs that spin round and round. In COUNTER/Weight very few Divines that span round and round.

Austin: Yeah, increasingly.

Jack: Twilight Mirage. It's a bell curve.

Austin: Yeah.

Jack: Many in Twilight Mirage span around a lot.

Austin: Yeah.

Jack: PARTIZAN, very few span around.

Keith: I was thinking...so, you know, Arbit has bits. It spins internally, right?

Austin: No, the whole thing spins. I mean, it...

Keith: Oh, okay.

Jack: The whole thing just...that thing just zooms around.

Austin: Yeah, yeah, yeah.

Keith: In my head, I was picturing a Divine that twirls?

Austin: Oh, yeah, not like that.

Keith: Yeah.

Austin: It's like that desk toy, you know?

Keith: Right. Yeah, yeah, yeah.

Austin: You know what I'm talking about.

Keith: Yeah.

Jack (as Paris): There's something that you're not able to say, Cheal, right?

Keith (as Cheal): Right.

Jack (as Paris): Because you feel like you're in danger.

Keith (as Cheal): Yes.

Austin (as False Fruit): I mean, it's a Divine.

Keith (as Cheal): I feel like we're all in danger.

Austin (as False Fruit): But maybe we're not! Wait. I mean, I don't want to be here, but that's because I don't want to be close to a warzone anymore, and—

[1:30:00]

Jack (as Paris): No, you knew the war was coming. No, you knew the war was coming.

Austin (as False Fruit): No, I knew that people were getting their defenses ready, and why wouldn't they be?

Jack (as Paris): It was as soon as Cheal started talking about the Divine that you said to me, “I need to get out of here.”

Austin (as False Fruit): Yeah, because I think we’re on the fucking doorstep of a war, and I want my kid—

Jack (as Paris): And this Divine is gonna push us into it?

Austin (as False Fruit): It doesn't matter if the Divine is gonna or not! In fact, maybe it should push us into the war. I don't want my kid on the front line!

Jack: Glances over at the kid.

Keith: I mean, this is a four year old kid.

Austin: The kid kind of, you know, sees his father yelling and is like, “Uhh?”

Austin (as False Fruit): I'm sorry. I'm sorry, Qualie.

Jack (as Paris): Okay. Okay.

Austin (as False Fruit): Come here. We're gonna be in a— we're gonna be safe, Qualie. Sorry for yelling. I'm very heated.

Keith (as Qualitative): *[tiny voice]* That's okay. *[Sylvia laughs]*

Jack (as Paris): It's a hard time. You can go. I just want to talk to Pushy real quick. That was very brave of you to say. Thank you for, you know.

Austin (as False Fruit): When are we gonna get out of here? How many...here's what I'm gonna do. I'm gonna get my stuff packed.

Jack (as Paris): Yeah, you get your stuff packed.

Austin (as False Fruit): And you know, I'm not gonna buy any more. I'm not gonna go get any more groceries. How about that? Which means when my refrigerator is empty, we gotta be gone.

Jack (as Paris): Can you get four days of groceries?

Austin (as False Fruit): I have four days of groceries. Think I don't have my fridge filled?

Jack (as Paris): Okay. It's Monday.

Austin (as False Fruit): Yeah.

Jack (as Paris): It's Space Monday.

Austin (as False Fruit): I got until the end of the week.

Jack (as Paris): Yeah, yep.

Jack: Shakes your hand.

Austin (as False Fruit): *[sighs]*

Austin: And gets up and leaves, leaving you alone with Pushy.

Jack (as Paris): Pushy.

Keith (as Cheal): Mm-hmm.

Jack (as Paris): Something had False Fruit scared, and they talked.

Keith (as Cheal): Yeah.

Jack (as Paris): Are you as brave as them?

Keith (as Cheal): No. No, I was— I mean, yes, but I think that we're working on different scales.

Jack: I'm going to ask a player: what would it take your character to get your character to give me the information that you are withholding? *[Austin laughs quietly]* If you name your price, you gain a token.

Keith: Uh, I need proof that the Divine Devotion does not have powers of prognostication.

Jack: And is this what you tell me?

Keith: Yes.

Jack: Huh. Well, all right. I'm spa'd out. I got some reading to do.

Keith: *[laughs]* Okay.

Austin: The...how many numbers of the water jets were there?

Jack: There are 14 max.

Keith: 14.

Austin: There's a 15th, and it switches to that one. And can you guess what the rhythm is?

Jack: Oh no.

Keith: A heartbeat.

Austin: It's a heart. It's your heartbeat. It's your pulse.

Keith: I jump out of the water. *[Sylvia laughs quietly]*

Jack: Being inside a sauna, inside a Jacuzzi that is pulsing to the exact heart rate of your pulse is some James Turrell shit.

Austin: Uh huh. *[laughs]* It is! It's like one of those, um...you see people do that thing with like a pool where they put like sound waves into it to make the whole thing have wild waves like that are synced up to make geometric shapes?

Jack: Yeah, it's really cool.

Keith: Uh huh, yeah.

Austin: It's like that, but your body is in there, and it's set to your body's internal rhythm.

Jack: I don't know if that's good for you. I mean, like, I don't know.

Austin: We gotta find out.

Jack: It would be interesting to experience.

Austin: It would be interesting.

Jack: Anyway, that's my scene.

Austin: And that is the round. So, has "Residents have been disappearing and emerging days later as new members of a strange cult" been resolved?

Jack: Yes, I think so.

Austin: Oh, really?

Jack: Unless...well.

Keith: There's definitely an argument that, similar to "Hundreds of military starships are using a nearby moon as a staging area," we've gotten to a point where this cannot be solved.

Austin: Right. Or that solved means when we jump to whatever...whenever PALISADE starts, Devotion has a stronghold on the Brink. Or that Devotion's actions have moved. Because you're not...you're right. We're not going to resolve it, right? But what I'm saying is my job as worldbuilder will be to take whatever the end of this is and extend it forward into PALISADE, where we will not be on the Brink in PALISADE. Maybe we will one day, who knows? But Palisade will be here, and it will be front of mind, right? And so whatever knock on effects from "the cult wasn't stopped," I have to run with. So as long as we're cool with "the cult wasn't stopped and continued to grow in power," then...

Jack: Oh. Or do we want to...yeah, I don't know.

Keith: Yeah, so, I feel like we're in the process of creating a credible *[Jack: "Yeah, I think that is..."]* anti-cult force that we need to set up to resolve that can stretch out.

Austin: I think we need to see it, 'cause I don't—

Keith: We haven't gotten there yet.

Austin: We have not gotten there yet, certainly.

Jack: No, but people have information that they didn't.

Austin: Yes, yes. That's why I don't—

Jack: For whatever good that is, but yeah.

Austin: I don't think this is resolved. I'm of the mind that it might not be resolvable in that way, but I'd like to see that play out.

Jack: Yeah. Right.

Austin: I'd like to see you try. *[laughs quietly]* Like a villain.

Keith: As long as there's a germinating seed of anti-cult, then we can extrapolate that out, instead of just having to extrapolate like, "Well, the Brink is a cult."

Austin: Right. Yes, yes. So you're saying we can resolve it, if the resolution is Devotion exists and has grown in strength. I mean, Devotion is probably going to exist and grow in strength,

because it's a Divine, and I don't think anything you have at hand can stop a Divine.

Keith: Yeah.

Austin: What you're saying is like the other half of that resolution is...

Keith: So we need a little bit more.

Austin: Okay, so you do want more scenes before we resolve.

Keith: I do want a little bit more, yeah.

Austin: Okay, then let's not resolve it.

Keith: Yeah.

Austin: The second one is "A huge shipment of blue oranges has pushed the Brink to the brink. There are too many people to safely house, to keep well fed, et cetera." I don't think that's resolved. Or if it's resolved, it hasn't gotten better. We have not seen anybody work on that.

Keith: As a group, we are so good at creating problems and so bad at solving them.

Austin: Yep. Mm-hmm. *[Keith laughs]*

Sylvia: Damn.

Jack: Well, we are quite good at solving problems. It just takes us between 12 and 15 months.

Austin: *[laughs quietly]* I can solve. I can solve with a minor scene.

Keith: Okay.

Austin: I can solve this, this...

Sylvia: Okay. *[Sylvia and Keith laugh]*

Austin: This one right here. And I can make it bad for us at the same time.

Ali: Ooh!

Jack: Fear.

Austin: I actually don't know that I can do this, 'cause a minor scene has to have your character in it, right? Let's see.

Keith: Yeah, a minor scene has...

Austin: Give instructions from your character. So I can't actually do this, 'cause I don't have...I mean, I guess I could use my turn to frame a scene with other people this turn. Here's my idea for it, and this is the classic Friends at the Table maneuver for like what a suspicious group does. You know who should solve this problem is the Devotees.

Jack: The fucking cult.

Austin: Is the cult. The cult should be like, "We are shipping in more ships."

Keith: That is a classic.

Austin: It's a classic.

Sylvia: Reach out with your food.

Austin: *[laughs]* Reach out with your food! Exactly. They should reach out with more ships arriving that can attach to the Brink that give people more housing, that give people better– that introduce better security, that introduce, you know, that have operating kitchens ready to go. Literally, this was not intentional, but what I just set up as False Fruit was they've been stockpiling shit.

Keith: Mm.

Austin: And so like them spending that stockpile and moving it here to sort of put a flag in the ground is a classic Friends at the Table villain maneuver. *[laughs]*

Keith: Yeah, it really is.

Austin: "I can help."

Jack: The question I would have about that would be how that would play. Is that consistent with what we last learned about Reading the Station about the cult?

Austin: I think so.

Jack: It might be, yeah.

Austin: The only people who were firm against them was the truckers.

Jack: And of course, then the cult's argument is, well, the truckers are against it because they want to control the monopoly for these kinds of... *[laughs quietly]*

Austin: Yeah, uh huh. Exactly. Yeah. And it doesn't solve the cult problem. I'm not saying we close the cult problem there. I mean, we could, right? We could be like, "Okay, the end." That's a fun wrap up, but it's not a good wrap up, right? I think that might be a thing that we could get a scene of that theoretically closes a huge shipment of blue oranges. Like, that feels like a thing that they could pull the trigger on that would close up that particular thing instead of leaving that open, instead of leaving both open, you know? And I mean, that might be "offer strength at a great personal cost." Or, you know, they are also part of the scum and villainy, right, and so that could also be "offer something rarely and illicit at a ruinously high price," right? The rare and illicit thing, the rare thing is space, food, security.

Keith: Space food and security.

Austin: Those are the, you know, those are the things that we've outlined in threat three as being...

Keith: The two things.

Austin: Well, we have two there. It says "et cetera," right?

Sylvia: I think Keith is saying "space food."

Jack: *[laughs quietly]* Keith is saying "space food."

Austin: Space food. I see. *[Keith and others laugh]* Space food, yes. You're right. Yeah, apologies, I missed this. Space food and security, yeah, uh huh. Space and food security. Also true.

Keith: Isn't it fun to break up sentences in weird different ways? That's a blast.

Austin: That's so fun. Language. Have y'all done that? And so maybe we can actually do that as a major. Maybe that can be a thing happening in the background of a major scene, where...go ahead?

Sylvia: I was gonna suggest that maybe the other ships could be arriving as part of this retreat thing.

Austin: Right! That's a good idea.

Sylvia: Like, that could be part of what they're celebrating, like just to link that stuff together.

Austin: Yeah. Yeah.

Sylvia: Like, it docks next to the ship that they're on.

Austin: Mm-hmm.

Sylvia: It's got this sort of like...

Austin: Oh, and it's all doing the same type of thing?

Sylvia: Yeah.

Austin: Where it's like, they all have the false forest? They all have—

Sylvia: Yeah, some have more like buildings and stuff in it though, like...

Austin: Right, that's exactly what I was thinking. It's like...it's like a BluSky Dome from COUNTER/Weight, right?

Sylvia: Very much. Very much.

Austin: It's like, oh, we're outside here.

Sylvia: Yeah.

Austin: I love this as the anti-brutalism so much, of like what Devotion is promising you this like beautiful world and is like completely deceiving you about what the reality of the situation is.

Sylvia: Mm-hmm!

Austin: Ah, love to have a god.

Sylvia: *[laughs quietly]* The thesis of Friends at the Table.

Keith: That's Friends at the Table, yeah.

Sylvia: Yeah!

Austin: *[laughs]* Ahh. I'd like to tease something, but it's probably too early to tease it. Right, Ali?

Ali: Uh, yeah.

Austin: Okay.

Sylvia: We're starting a religion! *[loud laughter]*

Austin: Oh my god.

Ali: God.

Austin: Could you imagine if we were like, “We’re putting in the paperwork to become a religion! Tax exemption!” *[laughter]*

Ali: Come to our retreat.

Austin: God.

Sylvia: Oh my God.

Austin: Absolutely not.

Keith: This has all been stealth marketing for us becoming a real religion that you can join. *[laughter]* I’m going to— me, I’m going to become a high priest!

Austin: Keith Carberry. *[laughter]* Gur Sevraq was really just good practice for me.

Sylvia: Oh my God!

Ali: Mm, mm-hmm, mm-hmm.

Austin: Unbelievable.

Sylvia: We’d do great.

Jack: Unfortunately, I am leaving Friends at the Table. *[Austin and Sylvia laugh]*

Austin: Ah, our first schism.

Keith: To start a rival religion.

Austin: Yeah, now we’re a real religion. *[laughter]*

Jack: That’s right, I’m the anti-high priest. *[laughter]*

Sylvia: Uh huh.

Austin: Oh, lord. So, are we doing another scene at the retreat, or are we doing something new? This could be happening in the background of whatever the next 3T Mourning scene is. This could be happening with Mustard, could be part of bringing stuff together. Deutsch could be trying to kill someone in the middle of all these new ships arriving.

Sylvia: Yeah. I'm still trying to land on something for my scene.

Austin: Mm-hmm. I should also raise this, really quick. Okay, one second, because here's the thing. Let me actually read from the book something else really quick.

Sylvia: Mm-hmm.

Austin: Buh buh buh buh buh. Before the Storm, the Aftermath, okay. "When you mark the last threat as resolved, it's time to bring things to a close. To wrap up loose ends, play one more round. As with the first round, each player will narrate a minor scene. This time demonstrate how your characters and their lives were changed by your story's events. If your character didn't survive or you'd rather leave their fate a mystery, you can instead Read the Station, checking in with the community in the aftermath." So, I just want to raise: if we do think that we have now hit a bit where we're like, this feels like we could start doing wrap up via minor scenes, we could do that instead of doing another round of major scenes first. I'm happy to do those major scenes, but I also think about a lot of them as— I feel like we've climaxed in some way with the reveal of Devotion, with the the stuff with...I'm sorry, I'm blanking on what literally just happened. With the Devotees showing up to to donate stuff.

Sylvia: Yeah.

Austin: Like, we can do that stuff as scenes, but also, if we think that that actually does bring an end to these things, we can give farewell scenes to our characters instead of playing out minutia. But I think that does leave some things open like Deutsch's safety, stuff like that.

Jack: We are maybe like one round away from that.

Austin: One round. Yeah.

Sylvia: Yeah.

Austin: All right. Well, keep that in mind, and let's see where we're at, then, or who has things.

[pause]

[1:45:00]

Jack: So, I have just been given...I don't want to do a scene again, but in terms of like where Paris is moving for a future scene, I have just been given two challenges.

Austin: Uh huh.

Jack: Challenge one is secure stuff for the Fruits.

Austin: Mm-hmm.

Jack: The Fruit. And challenge two is what do I do with this information, this knowledge of the Divine. And also, I can put two and two together that Cheal is worried about speaking to me, because they think that the Divine has predicted something.

Austin: Mm-hmm.

Jack: Cheal said, you know, like, "Can Divines prognosticate things?" or whatever.

Austin: Mm-hmm.

Jack: So I think Paris is very much in the, thing one: get these people off safely. Thing two: what do I do with this information, and who can I bring it to in order to act most safely?

Austin: Yeah, these are big.

Jack: And I'd be happy to play either of those scenes out, either in a major or a minor scene, but I don't want to double up, because I just did the scene with...

Austin: Yeah, that's why I'm also being a little...because my request for a scene will probably also be a 3T— I mean, I guess it doesn't have to be. I can very easily do a 3T minor scene that doesn't move anything forward, because 3T's already moved a lot forward, you know? But that doesn't necessarily get anybody else anywhere, you know?

Jack: He sure fucking has.

Austin: I think I would like 3T to wait until...I don't think 3T has a lot of mobility right now. I think— eh, I don't know, Art, do you have 3T under house arrest? What do have you 3T doing?

Jack: Who is Art?

Austin: What? I said—

Jack: "I don't know, Art, do you have 3T under house arrest?"

Austin: Yeah. Do you have 3T—

Jack: Jack.

Austin: Did I say Art?

Sylvia: Yes.

Ali: Mm-hmm. *[quiet laughter]*

Austin: I may have started to say a different word. I think I was trying to say something else. I don't think I was saying Art. *[laughter]* I'll have to check the tape on that one, but...

Jack: God, 3T might be back under house arrest again. It's a combination of a curfew and like, I think he's spending a lot of time with Mourning.

Austin: Mm-hmm.

Jack: In terms of like, "Talk me through this. Take me back through. Let's do a recreation," you know.

Austin: Right, I mean, I guess that was the next scene, was being in Pushy's.

Jack: Going over it.

Austin: Showing you where that happens, right?

Jack: Yep.

Austin: So maybe that is...

Jack: Being interviewed about Deutsch.

Austin: Yeah, maybe that's enough as a minor scene is doing those interviews, being like, "Yeah, there was a person here, you know, da da da da da."

Jack: "Deutsch works at Pushy's, it's..." I mean, I don't know how much of a snitch you want to be, but yeah, that stuff.

Austin: I talk you through that night. And again, the thing I think at this point I'm really trying to re-emphasize is like, my point is there are ways to get a body off this ship. If a killer exists—

Jack: So this is a work.

Austin: So this is a work, right. I keep saying:

Austin (as 3T): I'm not saying Deutsch is involved. I'm not saying Pushy's involved.
[Sylvia laughs] I'm saying they knew how to get rid of bodies really quick.

Austin: And et cetera. Do you find the tape that doesn't have Pushy on it?

Jack: Oh, inevitably, right?

Austin: Mm-hmm.

Jack: Like, just combing through everything.

Austin: Which makes me look like a liar.

Jack: Yes, and the lengthy days of this continue.

Austin: Right.

Jack: Of like Mourning— you know, some days it's just not Mourning, because General Mourning is busy doing something, trying to organize the fucking war as well.

Austin: Yes, yes.

Jack: Now a murder mystery is happening.

Austin: Does the murder mystery get put on the person I hated and who hated me, Coracin Seventine, or does General Mourning to keep it a military matter?

Jack: No, because General Mourning has been told that Seventine is not good.

Austin: Mm, mm-hmm.

Jack: And specifically has a distaste for you.

Austin: Mm-hmm.

Jack: So I think explicitly keeps Seventine out of it.

Austin: Okay.

Jack: It's Roberta. It's Seven— I was about to say Seventine. It's Mourning's assistant, Mourning's new assistant coming in.

Austin: Ah, Roberta. Sure, sure, sure.

Jack: *[laughs quietly]* Which is like such a good plotline to be the replacement assistant hired to figure out the murder of your previous post.

Austin: Oh, it's very good. Mm-hmm.

Jack: But it's just exhausting for Tanager.

Austin: Yeah, and just like momentum killing, you know? But like, I think we now see him defeated and resigned.

Sylvia: I have a question for my stuff.

Austin: Sure.

Sylvia: Are people like actively looking for me now?

Austin: Great question.

Sylvia: Like, does Mourning have people out— because that could lead into...

Austin: Yeah.

Sylvia: I was thinking of a major scene of going to Tanager and being like, "What the fuck did you say to them?"

Jack: I mean, that's—

Austin: Oh, yeah, that's good.

Sylvia: Yeah.

Jack: Like, that's very good.

Austin: Let's do that scene. Let's do that scene.

Sylvia: Yeah, okay.

Jack: I think Mourning does have people out for you, but it's a combination of...it's a combination of I don't think she's being like, "We need to hunt the spy that's on board, Deutsch Synchro."

Austin: Uh huh.

Jack: I think it's much more like, to quote John Darnielle, she's got guys on every corner.

Austin: Uh huh.

Jack: And they are keeping an eye out for you.

Austin: Mm-hmm.

Sylvia: Yeah, I don't know how surveilled Tanager is, but I think this is very much like waiting until I'm 100% sure there is nobody there.

Austin: Mm-hmm.

Sylvia: And then I'm breaking into your home and confronting you. *[laughs quietly]*

Austin: Yeah, I'm staying in the studio. I stay in the studio all the time now. I live out of my studio, which is a more public place, but that it's still...it's right near the night markets, but it's not private, you know? Or, sorry, it's not actually public.

Jack: Making increasingly morose art.

Austin: No, I think it's a lot of unfinished open-ended piano melodies, where I'm like starting a song and then letting it go and starting a new song and like...and I think that's what I'm doing when Deutsch comes in. What were you gonna say?

Jack: Oh, that's just exactly– yeah, that is morose work for me.

Austin: Okay.

Jack: Getting halfway through a piano melody and then going, “Oh, fuck it, ugh.”

Austin: *[laughs]* Deutsch.

Sylvia: Yeah, I don't think you see me until like...

Austin: Oh.

Sylvia: I think you're at the piano.

Austin: Uh huh.

Sylvia: And then like, I don't...I close the door loud enough for you to hear, so you can turn around and see me.

Austin: I can turn around and look at you, yeah.

Sylvia: Yeah.

Sylvia (as Deutsch): What did you tell them?

Austin (as 3T): *[sighs]*

Sylvia (as Deutsch): I've had people sniffing around for me the past like 24 hours, and I don't like it, Tanager.

Austin (as 3T): Hey, hey, hey. Sit down. We'll talk.

Sylvia: I do not sit down.

Austin: I play— I like try to finish a phrase. I'm like:

Austin (as 3T): Give me a second.

Austin: Like, trying to find the end of this phrase, and I can't find it, and so finally, I'm like:

Austin (as 3T): What I told them was...what I told them was that it couldn't have been the Devotees who killed Mourning's assistant. Because I was there when that guy attacked you and helped get rid of a body, and it's easy to get rid of a body on this station, and so why would someone just leave a body in the middle of the assemblage hall? That, to me, seems like a work.

Sylvia (as Deutsch): *[sighs]* Great. *[sighs]* So, not only did you tell a general that I killed somebody, you also made it—

Austin (as 3T): In self defense.

Sylvia (as Deutsch): *[unimpressed]* Yeah, okay. I'm sure that doesn't...I'm sure that that argument is really gonna help me get off her most wanted list.

Austin (as 3T): We should have just gone to Brink Proxy to begin with. We shouldn't have gotten rid of the body to begin with. *[sighs]*

Sylvia (as Deutsch): Come on, man.

Austin (as 3T): What do you— it was self defense! It would have been fine. But I was so hyped up and worried and confused, and you said we needed to get rid of it.

Sylvia (as Deutsch): Yeah. You did me a solid, and now... *[sighs]* It's like I don't even know you, man. *[Jack and Sylvia laugh]* Since when does 3T talk to cops?

Austin (as 3T): They're not cops. They're soldiers, and they're on our side against the fucking Principality.

Sylvia (as Deutsch): *[scoffs quietly]* Yeah.

Austin (as 3T): And they're trying to come after my biggest supporters, the people who are actually going to help us fight that war. They were gonna go arrest Pasodoble, probably. We have to be unified. Let's just go to Brink Proxy together and explain what happened, and it'll be cool. It'll be fine.

Jack: Oh, this is great.

Keith: It's so funny that 3T calls the cult of Devotion his supporters.

Austin: Uh huh.

Sylvia: Yeah.

Keith: *[laughs]* Just a very funny way to think of the cult.

Jack: *[laughs]* My cult of supporters.

Austin: It's because that's what Pasodoble has told him is true.

Keith: Yeah, yeah, yeah.

Austin: And so he buys into it.

Keith: Yeah. This is just like a weird religiousy version of the Troublemakers.

Austin: Yeah, exactly! That's exactly right. Yeah.

Sylvia: I want to ask...

Austin: Hmm.

Sylvia: I guess out of character, but I don't know, it could be in character. How could I gain your character's confidence?

Austin: You could go with me to Brink Proxy and say... *[Jack laughs]*

Sylvia: Okay, yeah. I figured.

Austin: It's not gonna happen? No?

Sylvia: Yeah, yeah, yeah, nah.

Austin: You could...

Sylvia: No, it's— the answer can be that that's it.

Austin: Yeah, I know.

Sylvia: I don't mind that being...

Austin: Well, I'm thinking about 3T and 3T being weak right now and 3T being like emotionally...

Sylvia: Yeah, okay.

Austin: Like, 3T feels like a fuckup. And a week ago, 3T felt like a revolutionary and a rockstar, like literally both of those things at once.

Sylvia: Mm-hmm.

Austin: Felt like he had threaded the needle perfectly. And so I think it would actually be remarkably easy to get his confidence right now in terms of like trying to make him feel good about his efforts. And like, the same— I can't play 3T as being...

Sylvia: Yeah.

Austin: 'Cause 3T is...let me look. 3T is, as written: smokey eyes, perfect makeup, battle scars, and then visionary, confident, believes that he'll be a powerful leader. And I think that like playing into that last one could help trigger that confidence again.

Sylvia: Okay.

Austin: Where it's like, you know, telling him that he's made good decisions and that we'll get through this, like that style of support, you know?

Sylvia: Okay. Yes, I like this. I can work with this.

Austin: All right. So I get a token? That's how that works?

Sylvia: Yeah, that was my lure.

Austin: Yes.

Sylvia: If you reveal a weakness, you gain a token.

Austin: That's a weakness. Easy to stroke my ego.

Sylvia: Yeah. I think what she does is like, she pauses for a minute. I don't think like... *[laughs quietly]* I don't think 3T sees any like weapons on her.

Austin: Mm-hmm.

Sylvia: But she has been thinking about shooting him this entire time.

Austin: Yeah, sure. Of course.

Sylvia: Yeah, wrap up a loose end easier than that.

Austin: Uh huh.

Sylvia: But also, he's become an asset at the same time.

Austin: Mm-hmm.

Sylvia: So it's a complicated situation for her. I think what she does is she like sighs, like sort of rubs her face a little, and then is like:

Sylvia (as Deutsch): Okay. I get where you were coming from, and like, I guess I can't fault you for wanting to take care of your people.

Sylvia: Very clearly emphasizing, by the way, that like she is trying to give the image that the people who follow the cult are just all in on 3T.

Austin: Right, right, right, right. Uh huh.

Sylvia: Big fans, you know?

Austin: Yeah.

Sylvia (as Deutsch): But you gotta keep my name out of your mouth about this stuff.

Austin (as 3T): I'm sorry. I will.

Sylvia (as Deutsch): Okay. 'Cause, look, I don't want to scare you or anything, but you have seen what I'm capable of, and...just saying.

Austin (as 3T): *[scoffs]* That's a funny joke. Don't—

Sylvia (as Deutsch): Uh huh?

Austin (as 3T): Don't tell that joke anywhere but here.

Sylvia (as Deutsch): Yeah, of course. Just joshing ya. But again...just, next time she asks you something, shut the fuck up, okay?

Austin (as 3T): Yeah. Yeah. I'm sorry, Deutsch.

Sylvia (as Deutsch): Yeah, no problem. I'm gonna go avoid the people who are looking for me now and try and get like 10 minutes of sleep or something.

Austin (as 3T): If you need to stay anywhere, my place is empty.

Sylvia (as Deutsch): *[sarcastic]* Yeah, I'm sure they're not checking that place out.

Austin (as 3T): All right, well, fair.

Sylvia (as Deutsch): I'll catch you later, 3T.

Austin (as 3T): Bye.

Sylvia: And then she just leaves, like, yeah, okay.

Keith: "I'll kill you. LOL, JK." *[Austin laughs]*

Sylvia: Yeah, no, extremely! I said "In Minecraft."

Jack: It's big Martin Blank vibes from *Grosse Pointe Blank*.

Austin: Yes, it is, it is, it is.

Sylvia: Mm-hmm.

Jack: Like, don't say that. You shouldn't say rude things to me. You're my therapist.

Austin: *[laughs]* Yes.

Jack: Also, I know where you live.

Austin: Yes. *[Austin and Sylvia laugh]*

Sylvia: Okay, I like that scene.

Austin: Mm-hmm.

Sylvia: Also, you have a token now. Hey, enjoy.

Austin: I do. I love to have a token.

Sylvia: I wanted to get my lure in at least once before we wrap things up. *[laughs]*

Austin: Uh huh.

Keith: Yeah, I think we've only used two lures, maybe three?

Austin: I've used lures before.

Sylvia: We've used them a couple of times.

Austin: Yeah, we've used them a few times.

Sylvia: I just noticed that I kept forgetting to.

Austin: We're just in session five, and it's been running for six weeks, so.

Sylvia: Yeah.

Ali: Hi. I'm here. I was just eating m&ms.

Austin: Hi.

Sylvia: No worries. Regular m&ms, or...?

Ali: Peanut.

Sylvia: Oh, okay.

Jack: Cult m&ms.

Keith: So you said, "I was eating evidence." *[laughter]*

Sylvia: No, that's what I'm doing right now to hide my tracks, yeah.

Keith: Peanut's good. Peanut's probably the best one.

Sylvia: I wouldn't know.

Ali: Thank you. Thank you.

Austin: My favorite thing about—

Keith: Hey, Sylvi, are you allergic to peanuts? Or you just don't...

Sylvia: I know, I've never brought this up ever.

Austin: Oh.

Sylvia: Yeah.

Keith: I had no idea.

Sylvia: Yeah.

Keith: I mean, I guess it's like not something that people, you know, in other countries need to know for safety reasons. *[Ali and Sylvia laugh]* "By the way, you can't eat peanut butter while we're recording. I'm that allergic." *[Austin laughs]*

Ali: Ohh.

Sylvia: Yeah. Absolutely not. I'll smell it through my microphone, and I'll get sick.

[2:00:00]

Austin: And that'll be bad.

Keith: They have almond ones. Do you like the almond ones?

Sylvia: I actually haven't tried those. That sounds good. We should keep playing our game.

Austin: We should be playing our game.

Ali: Mm-hmm.

Austin: I like these little guys. They look like they're running on top of our game. It's very funny to me.

Jack: Oh, yeah, I moved them there.

Austin: Oh, you did.

Sylvia: Oh, good.

Austin: Okay, good, good, good.

Jack: Yeah, they used to live above actions, and I've moved them.

Austin: Right. Yeah, good.

Sylvia: Thank you so much.

Keith: Oh, they're running across the timeline.

Jack: Are they being pursued by an attack ship, or...?

Austin: No, it's just extra little, you know, down here. So yeah, we're good. All right, so...

Sylvia: Now it looks like it's supposed to be this long.

Austin: Yeah, exactly. *[Sylvia laughs]* Mustard, you said that you— or Ali, you said you were back. Does that mean that Mustard has a scene?

Ali: Um, I can think of one, for sure. I was wondering...since it seems like this is gonna be the final round.

Austin: Mm-hmm.

Ali: As like a... *[laughs]* I had two ideas.

Austin: Mm-hmm.

Ali: Which is that either we get the Cycle End Feast on screen.

Austin: Oh, sure.

Jack: Oh, yeah.

Ali: And we have Mustard's part of it as being like, "Well, I'm here, and I'm in the cult now."
[laughs]

Austin: Mm-hmm. Mm-hmm.

Ali: Or I was wondering if I should be talking to Mourning, who's like, "Hey, I looked at your computer, *[Austin: "Uh huh, oh"]* and there's a Divine on it, and also you have all of this surveillance footage that seems kind of creepy."

Austin: God.

Ali: Or I was wondering if anyone in the cults or THC— *[quiet laughter]*

Austin: Oh!

Ali: Or C.H.T., C.T.H..

Sylvia: Excuse me?

Jack: Wait, sorry?

Ali: C.T.H.? Wait. *[laughs]*

Austin: C.T.H. C.T.H.?

Sylvia: Yo!

Jack: THC Pasodoble.

Sylvia: THC Pasodoble!

Austin: *[laughing]* THC Pasodoble!

Sylvia: Let's fucking go!

Austin: Let's fucking go. Could you Pasodoble that THC? *[all laugh]*

Keith: I forgot that that was Pasodoble's name, so I thought that Ali was forgetting 3T's name and just being really, really wrong. *[laughter]*

Ali: If there were any political allies— not allies, like villains, enemies, rivals?

Austin: Oh, right, sure. Uh huh.

Ali: That could be left alone with a magazine, *[laughing]* but maybe that'll be my capper.

Austin: Oh!

Sylvia: God.

Ali: 'Cause we don't need another assassin.

Austin: In the Coen Brothers version of this, someone just finds it by mistake.

Ali: Yeah.

Austin: This is how, like— I'm not suggesting this for Deutsch, but in the Coen Brothers version of this, Deutsch finds the magazine by chance, you know? and is like killing time by flipping through it, and just sees the picture and dies, right? *[Ali laughs]*

Sylvia: You know?

Austin: I'm not saying we do that.

Sylvia: I honestly don't hate it, but...

Austin: I don't know how you would even find it at this point, but...

Sylvia: Yeah, exactly.

Ali: Yeah. In that case, I'll just bring it in in the middle in the final cap.

Austin: Yeah, uh huh.

Ali: But yeah, before either of those scenes, Jack, I know that you've been Mourning a bunch tonight, so we can do more of a...

Jack: Yeah. We could do another one if we don't want Mourning. Also, I feel like every time I've had a scene with you, Ali, it's been my character saying you're being fooled about a Divine. *[Ali and Sylvia laugh]*

Austin: It's so funny.

Jack: And I think it'd be kind of bad to just keep reappearing as a new person each— sort of like the Grim Reaper in different guises, saying, *[ominously]* "Mustard Red! That's also a Divine!" *[Ali laughs]*

Keith: *[laughs]* It's very funny how many different people keep warning her, though!

Austin: Mm-hmm.

Keith: Like, everyone in her life is like, "Stop doing this. This stuff is bad," and she's like, "I don't know, it seems pretty awesome to me."

Ali (as Mustard): I just...are we not supposed to have access to power? I don't get it!
[laughter]

Jack: Are we not supposed to have access to— *[laughs]* well, power's just out there. We should just have, just grasp it.

Keith: You know, all you have to do is just ask for a dangerous magazine, and you can get it.
[Ali laughs]

Sylvia: Yeah. There are no issues with this.

Jack: Mourning doesn't know about the magazine, though, right?

Ali: I don't think so.

Jack: Mourning definitely knows that such a magazine exists but has not...does not know...
[sighs]

Ali: That it currently resides on the ship? Yeah, I bet not. *[laughs]*

Jack: No. Mourning is on her fourth straight migraine, just as a result.

Austin: Ugh.

Sylvia: *[laughs]* Oof.

Austin: Hate it.

Jack: But yeah, no, I will pass on playing Mourning.

Ali: *[laughs]* Okay.

Jack: Unless it really comes down to it, or unless you want Mustard to just get her just deserts in some respect.

Ali: I mean, I guess if Mourning is like...I guess there's maybe a more interesting thing happening here which is that like if Mourning becomes...like the sort of like video game thing of like, oh, Mourning didn't schedule her days well enough and didn't access the like subplot of finding out about Arbitrage, 'cause she didn't take— she didn't have the time to be like...

Jack: And her lady got shot.

Ali: Right, yeah. *[laughs]* Like, you could have been a part of the Arbitrage plotline,
[Austin: "Mm"] but you weren't, because you got involved and because someone was trying to murder you. And instead, like, does Mustard end up becoming a bridge between Arbitrage and Devotion?

Austin: God. Miserable.

Jack: Oh my God.

Ali: *[laughs]* Just this like plunky idiot has...

Austin: Oh! Oh, this is the most Coen Brothers thing. *[Ali laughs]*

Jack: Oh!

Keith: Wait, wait. I'm sorry, I think I missed this. What is the pitch?

Austin: Of course!

Jack: This is great. Yeah, I had not even thought– Mustard is– it's more specific than just the Coen Brothers thing, Austin, right? It's like, *Fargo* the movie and *Fargo* the series have this great repeating structural gag, which is: someone attempts to do something they think is going to work, and a bad coincidence suddenly puts them monumentally over their head. *[Ali laughs]*

Austin: Yeah. Keith, what Ali suggested was that Mustard could be the bridge between Devotion, you know, the Divine and the cult she's now part of.

Ali: Mm-hmm.

Austin: And the Divine, comma, Arbitrage, who is the Divine on her computer, in her cell phone, in the mesh net that she uses.

Jack: In a locked box in General Mourning's office that she hasn't been able to open, *[Ali laughs]* because she's been trying to solve a murder mystery and negotiate the Mirage's entrance into a war.

Austin: Uh huh. So.

Keith: I mean, yeah, it's great.

Austin: Yeah, it's great. It's incredible.

Jack: Oh, it's so horrible! It's exactly what Mustard deserves. *[Ali laughs]*

Austin: The market has its own pulse, you know?

Ali (as Mustard): True!

Austin: God.

Ali (as Mustard): That's a great point. I think the two of you would really get along.

Austin: *[laughs]* Oh, it's so bad! *[Ali laughs]*

Keith: I think it does feel, in a way, like we spent so long saying, "Well, we said we wouldn't do anything to the Twilight Mirage." *[Ali laughs]*

Austin: Yeah, yeah, yeah. Yeah.

Keith: And now that we're able to, we're like, "and so we'll fucking kill it in one go!" *[Austin laughs]*

Sylvia: That's fucking right!

Austin: Sickos dot jpeg. *[laughter]*

Sylvia: What are we doing here if not being sickos, you know? Like, let's lean in.

Austin: Mm-hmm. Mm-hmm. Well, the thing that I like about it is both Devotion and Arbitrage would think that they got the better of the deal and they're going to be the ones in charge, right?

Jack: Divines rip each other to shreds with a sense of—

Austin: Ahem.

Jack: Mm-hmm?

Austin: "When Divines fight, millions die."

Jack: When Divines fight, millions die. But also, Divines are like...not all of them. We have seen Divines being like intensely petty.

Austin: Yeah.

Jack: And not above— like, Grace is like a great example of this.

Austin: Mm-hmm.

Jack: Grace—and, to a certain extent, Righteousness—think they are constantly making the correct play.

Austin: Yeah.

Jack: And are always getting outmaneuvered by the other. Rigour was invented to get very slightly ahead of another corporation. *[Austin and Ali laugh]*

Austin: Yes. Yes. Yep! Never forget it!

Keith: Well, okay.

Austin: Not immensely ahead. A little ahead. *[Jack laughs quietly]*

Keith: There is a sense, though, where—

Austin: And some Divines are like Belgard, right? who are like devoted to healing people and helping people, and Bounty.

Jack: And some Divines are like Arbit, who are like, “Whee! Hahaha!” *[laughter]*

Sylvia: Me. That's my type of Divine.

Austin: Keith, sorry, you were saying.

Keith: There is like, you know, for as petty as Divines can be and how like, you know, ambitious they can be towards like whatever weird goal they have, there is kind of a sense between Devotion and Arbitrage that they don't have goals that would conflict in that way.

Austin: Right. Yeah.

Keith: And instead just might be devastatingly cooperative.

Austin: Yes. Yes. Yes.

Keith: There is nothing about people loving Devotion and expanding the Twilight Mirage that will stop Arbitrage from making a bunch of fucking money.

Austin: If that's what Arbitrage wants.

Keith: Right, sure. It seems...

Austin: Yeah. I think the money is a medium and is a...

Keith: Well, okay, capturing a bunch of lanes of capital.

Austin: Yes. Right, we actually know what this is: commodifying traditions, becoming the backbone of all commerce, right?

Keith: Yeah. Yeah.

Austin: Money is small. You know, having US dollars is small compared to being the USD and

having everything pegged to your currency, right?

Keith: Yeah.

Austin: That is the shit that, you know, Arbitrage, that it is interested in.

Keith: Yeah.

Austin: It wants to be— it wants the language of the galaxy to be money and for money to be spoken in Arbitrage.

Keith: Yeah.

Austin: And money to be spoken in glint coin.

Sylvia: Ugh.

Keith: And it's possible that that breeds like contention between two Divines who absolutely—

Austin: Totally.

Keith: Like, where Devotion doesn't want the— like, wants the language of...

Austin: Pulses and love and...

Keith: Yeah, to be like love and togetherness and also keep thinking about me.

Austin: *[sarcastic]* If only we had some sort of real life example of hyper capitalism and a sort of foundationalist *[Keith: "Yeah"]* extremist religion working together over decades. Hmm.

Keith: This is exactly what I'm thinking of, where it's like, this doesn't necessarily— it maybe is more dangerous when two Divines cooperate.

Austin: Yes.

Keith: Maybe even more people die.

Austin: *[laughs]* Yeah. Yeah, when two Divines fight, millions of people die. When they cooperate, billions do, right?

Sylvia: Yeah.

Keith: Yeah. Yeah.

Austin: Uh huh. God. I don't know that that's a scene of some sort, but it's...

Keith: I hate this show. *[Keith and Ali laugh]*

Austin: Yeah. I guess that's a minor scene for Mustard, right? Mustard is...

Ali: Yeah.

Austin: What is the moment of connection, here? How does it happen? Is this like, does Mustard complain to someone in the Friends of Devotion, in the Devotees, about not having access to Arbitrage anymore because you got your computer taken, and then like, they gave you a new computer? *[laughs]* Or they like re-hooked you into the net or something?

Ali: Oh, I was thinking of something like a little bit more sinister, where it was like...yeah. *[laughs quietly]* Mustard like returning to the Brink Proxy and like going to her like work setup or whatever.

Austin: Mm, mm-hmm.

Ali: Or like checking her like personal phone instead of her laptop *[Austin: "Right, right"]* and like seeing a message from Arbitrage there, and then Arbitrage being like...well, it's just like the subtle way it did all of the other things, right? which is like, you know, Mustard like putting cult events in her Google Calendar or whatever, and Arbitrage being like, "Well, you know, let me auto fill this for you."

Austin: God, yeah.

Ali: Or like, you know, "Add this to our database. Add your contacts to our database, and we'll be able to send them coupons," or whatever, and... *[laughs]*

Sylvia: God.

Austin: Everyone in the Devotees getting a—

Ali: "We'll give you \$5 for everybody who spends \$30 on our..." *[laughs]*

Austin: Uh huh. God. I was gonna say a Groupon, but now you've got them into multilevel marketing. Unbelievable. *[Ali laughs]* Again, like, it's just this, right? You know, I could turn on any TV— in four hours, once we're past midnight, I could flip around the TV channel until we find some pastor somewhere selling multilevel marketing food bunker buckets, you know?

Sylvia: Oh, yeah, absolutely.

Austin: Ugh. So yeah, love it. Fantastic.

Sylvia: I was trying to get a bit more of that vibe with C.T.H., so this is perfect. *[Ali laughs]*

Austin: It's all right here, yeah.

Sylvia: Yeah.

Ali: Or it's even like Mustard buying like supplies for the Day End Feast from the Arbitrage market.

Austin: Right, ugh.

Ali: And then being like, "Oh, well, I got it from yada yada to the..."

Austin: It's as simple as: Wait a second, where did the...you know, we need more blank. We need more gravy, right?

Ali: Mm.

Austin: And you're like, "Oh, I can get us more gravy. *[Ali laughs]* I have a gravy guy. I got a gravy Arbitrage." *[Sylvia laughs]*

Ali: Oh.

Keith: Garbitrage.

Austin: *[scoffs]* And it just gives you the gravy, and that's the way in. Yeah, I love this. This is very funny to me and terrible. All right, Paris, Cheal, Lament.

Sylvia: Did I not do mine?

Austin: Did you do yours? What was yours?

Sylvia: Mine was seeing you at your studio.

Austin: Oh, you saw me. That was not mine. That was yours.

Sylvia: Yeah, yeah, yeah. That was mine.

Austin: Yeah, yeah, yeah. Okay. Whoops, whoops, whoops, whoops.

Sylvia: Yeah.

Austin: So then, Paris, me, and Cheal.

Sylvia: Mm-hmm.

Keith: Um, I sort of feel like I gotta escalate this.

Austin: Mm-hmm.

Keith: Like, I told Paris. You know, Paris is gonna go do like research on whether or not I can tell him more. But do I have a connection? Do I know about...? No.

Austin: Do you know about what?

Keith: Well, I was like...okay, here's the problem. This is a form problem.

[2:15:02]

Austin: Mm-hmm?

Keith: Because the person that I would escalate this to is the, uh...shit, what is the general's name?

Austin: Mourning.

Keith: But I was just like, well, I don't want to do a scene with Paris, 'cause I did my last two scenes with Paris.

Austin: Mm-hmm.

Keith: And then Jack saying, *[laughs]* "I don't want to do Mourning anymore unless I have to," and then it's like, well, instead of this Jack character, I should escalate it to this other Jack character. *[Jack laughs]*

Austin: We could have somebody else play Rebecca, Mourning's assistant.

Jack: Oh, Roberta.

Austin: Roberta, not Rebecca. Sorry, Roberta. We could do...there are other people, presumably, in this organization at this point.

Keith: Yeah.

Jack: Also, other people could play Mourning.

Austin: Yeah, that's also true.

Jack: Mourning would probably be the person to bring— uh, Mourning's crew would probably be the person to bring it to, although they are not specialists in terms of...they're soldiers.

Austin: It would be fun— what's that command center look like? Do you know what I mean? It would be fun to see Pushy enter a room or a ship that is whatever this version of a military that General Mourning has been building.

Keith: I also have a side thing, which is that I could go to— I could have a contact in the Broken Circle, the zealous gang.

Austin: Yeah, what is their deal?

Keith: They're a different...

Austin: So there is a second cult. *[Keith and Jack laugh]*

Keith: Yeah, there's a zealous gang. We don't know what they're zealous for.

Austin: Yeah.

Keith: But I picked zealous for them, because I thought it'd be funny if there was a zealous gang that wasn't the weird Orchard Syndicate that we knew was a cult.

Austin: Mm-hmm. Mm-hmm.

Keith: So, I could go to...we could make up like a high level Broken Circle, you know.

Jack: The danger there though is like introducing a new entity this late in the day.

Austin: Mm-hmm.

Keith: Yeah. Yeah, let's do the command center.

Austin: Jack, what's it look like there?

Jack: It's the capital ship that they brought. So, first they were in rented space or like community space set up for visiting, you know, like meetings or whatever. But as it got worse, they brought in like, I guess, a flagship or something which has docked onto the side of the Brink, like everything else has, and it has in it like a kitchen. It has sleeping quarters. It has— I mean, all this stuff would be great to solve the refugee situation, except there's only one of these ships, and the cult has provided like 30.

Austin: Mm-hmm.

Jack: I'm picturing the inside as having like lots of– so, this is like– I want to do like a distinct aesthetic change from the Brink, in terms of like what we've seen so far, because this has come from close to the center of the Mirage, so I'm imagining like lots and lots of hanging fabrics and tapestries and yeah, almost like woven murals of things showing other events. There's a mural that was created almost like the Bayeux Tapestry to commemorate coming here that has been hung. There's stuff hanging from the ceilings that gives the effect of being inside a series of large tents that all kind of interlink with each other. And yeah, Keith, I think you're told pretty quickly that General Mourning is not available right now. *[laughs quietly]*

Austin: I think I can play– I can play Roberta, I think.

Jack: Oh, yeah, yeah, yeah.

Austin: Roberta's right, right? Is that what you said, Roberta?

Jack: Yeah, but I think what happens is Pushy is told that it's not...you know, you can get a second aide-de-camp or whatever.

Austin: Right, right.

Jack: And it's only when– what is it the Pushy says to convince this organization that General Mourning's second should come out?

Keith: *[sighs thoughtfully]* Um...

Jack: Other than “I think I've been cursed to non speech.” *[Keith laughs]*

Austin: Mm.

Keith: Uh, I guess that I...I guess I am gonna say...I'm gonna say that I have...yeah, I guess maybe I'm gonna do a little bit of bus throwing and say– there we go, I lost my tab. I'm gonna say that I have information on the cult, on 3T, and on other dangerous activities on the ship that are being blatantly ignored by the...oh my god, I have forgotten the name of–

Ali: Brink Proxy?

Jack: Brink Proxy, Keith.

Keith: Brink Proxy again. *[laughs]* I don't know why I can't remember this.

Austin: It is what it is.

Keith: Is being ignored by Brink Proxy or even facilitated by them, and someone has to do

something or the consequences will be apocalyptic.

Jack: So, what happens is that word gets back to General Mourning's desk, and General Mourning says:

Jack (as Mourning): Cheal Pushy from Pushy's Bar, where the body was?

Austin: Oh my God, right!

Jack (as Mourning): Look, I'll get up.

Jack: And I think she goes to get up, and Roberta is like, "No, you stay here."

Austin: You stay, yeah, yeah, yeah.

Austin (as Roberta): I'll deal with it. Bring him into a room.

Austin: And there's a little room. What was the aesthetic of this place, Jack?

Jack: Like, fabric everywhere.

Austin: I was gonna say— okay, yeah.

Jack: Tents, almost like crepe fabric or pastel.

Austin: Mm-hmm.

Jack: Bright Mirage pastel colors and then murals, woven murals.

Austin: Mm-hmm.

Jack: Oh god, there's a...you keep talking, there's a specific...

Austin: You go digging.

Jack: Artist that I'm trying to find, yeah.

Austin: Roberta brings you to a room, Pushy, that is all this fabric stuff. There's a nice plush couch up against the wall and then a kind of coffee table with two kind of big, you know, arm chairs facing each other. They're not actually facing each other. They're kind of facing at an angle inwards towards each other and towards the sofa, and there's like a...it's an oval coffee table, but instead of having glass on it or something else, there is a very fine, almost impossibly thin fabric pulled extremely taut around the wooden oval.

Jack: Oh, sick.

Austin: And it's firm enough to hold a cup of cold coffee, which Roberta places down and then realizes, and she says:

Austin (as Roberta): Would you like anything to drink?

Keith: Is the coffee cold on purpose or because it's old?

Austin: This is old coffee. Her coffee is old coffee, but she could get you new coffee.

Keith (as Cheal): I'll have water.

Austin: And then she stands up and goes over to like a little refrigerator in the corner that's like a, you know, waist high thing, bigger than a mini fridge, smaller than a real fridge.

Keith: Mm-hmm.

Austin: And produces, you know, a glass bottle of water and brings it over with a cup, with a pair of cups, and pours both of you glasses. She crosses her legs. I imagine she is in her late 30s, early 40s. She's Qui Err. I think her complexion is like bluish gray. She has her hair in a bun, but like her head nubs are tall enough to be poking through some of that bun, and they're kind of in like a circular format, a circular pattern. And she says:

Austin (as Roberta): My name is Roberta Orphan. You can call me Roberta. Now, before you get into this apocalyptic news, we do have a few questions for you.

Keith (as Cheal): Um, okay, but it's really important.

Austin (as Roberta): So are our questions.

Keith (as Cheal): Okay.

Austin (as Roberta): On the night of Tanager's concert, the deployment of the arms that created a synthetic Mirage, were you at the bar the entire night?

Keith: Um...oh, that's a good question. I don't remember if I was there. I'm gonna say I was there the entire night.

Austin (as Roberta): Did you close the bar? When the night was over, were you there to lock the door? I assume you lock the door to the venue.

Keith: Obviously, Cheal Pushy knows why this is extremely bad, and the thing that he doesn't know is that the plant on my back went and deleted the video evidence of me having been

there.

Austin: You don't know that! Ohhh.

Jack: Oh no!

Austin: Mm! Cheers to us.

Jack: God, you spend four and a half years setting up fucking dominoes, and then they start falling down.

Keith: *[laughs, clears throat]* I am going to use a token.

Austin: Mm.

Jack: Hell yeah.

Austin: Wait, you don't have any tokens.

Keith: I do have a token, I just don't have a visual...

Austin: Oh, you didn't grab a token.

Keith: Yeah, I used the weak move overindulge and reveal something about yourself.

Austin: Yeah, I remember that. Yes, yes, yes, yes. I'm putting a token there temporarily.

Keith: Yeah. I'm going to use the move...

Austin: Jeez, these moves.

Keith: Yeah, so I'm deciding between one or two.

Austin: Wow.

Keith: They are: "Say just the right thing to soothe someone's troubled mind and open them up to change," but Roberta's mind doesn't seem that troubled, and "open them up to change" seems like a gentle way to describe like convincing someone that you weren't involved with a murder without even letting them know that you know a murder happened.

Austin: Mm-hmm. *[Jack laughs quietly]*

Keith: And then "Tear someone to pieces with intense scorn."

Austin: Jesus.

Ali: Mm.

Keith: That sounds like a really easy way to get someone to change the topic but also seems a little harsh.

Austin: You think it would change the topic if you tore her to pieces with intense scorn.

Keith: Yes.

Austin: Okay.

Keith: I think so.

Austin: You'd be spending a token. I just feel like that's...

Keith: Well, it would be a guilt trip about like: the thing that I'm here to talk about is extremely important. The idea that you would come to me with another thing, questions about some other thing.

Austin (as Roberta): You think— there's a killer on board. That isn't that different. That isn't that small.

Keith (as Cheal): *[scornfully]* There's something much worse than a killer on board. What about the word “apocalyptic” do you not understand? I was being literal. *[Jack laughs quietly]* I'm being literal about the word “apocalypse.” I chose it on purpose.

Austin (as Roberta): Do you have bodies? We have a body. In fact, there was another killing a week before.

Keith (as Cheal): *[pause]* A week before the concert?

Austin (as Roberta): A week before this—

Austin: Or I guess was it after? When was the body...no, no, no, no.

Austin (as Roberta): You don't understand. There have been three bodies now we know.

Keith (as Cheal): Is that true?

Austin (as Roberta): You have three bodies? Yes! Yes, it's true. One person—

Keith (as Cheal): Well, yeah, it's still much worse than that. No, I don't have bodies. *[Ali laughs]* This is a preventative thing. I don't have any bodies. *[Sylvia laughs]* I'm here to prevent bodies. I'm here to prevent a billion bodies.

Jack: Your Honor, I'm here to prevent a billion bodies. *[Jack and Ali laugh]*

Austin (as Roberta): We have a body in your venue on the night of the concert and testimony placing you there, covering up the death. We have—

Keith (as Cheal): Testimony? Testimony from who?

Austin (as Roberta): From a witness. We have a body, found on board one of the oldest vessels on board, of a refugee in need of aid who was shot to death by an unknown killer, and a gun battle, a running gun battle which followed, damaging, it seems, the entire vessel. And we now have the body of my predecessor. Now, how apocalyptic? More apocalyptic than 3000% more dead on board in a week than normally come in a year?

Keith (as Cheal): Yes.

Austin (as Roberta): *[pause]* What is it you want to tell us?

Austin: I'm gonna take that token away.

Keith: I quickly go over the events leading up to my decision to investigate the cult retreat. I am curious if they even know about the cult that has been disappearing and reappearing citizens.

Austin: Yeah. They picked up 3T from the retreat.

Keith: Oh, right. Yeah, yeah, yeah, yeah.

Austin: Yeah. And my predecessor was—

Keith: But did they know it was a cult?

Austin (as Roberta): My predecessor was killed in their HQ, in their assemblage hall.

Keith (as Cheal): Oh. Well, then this is obviously related. These people are weird. They're dangerous. 3T is helping them.

Austin (as Roberta): 3T is helping us.

Keith (as Cheal): 3T is helping them. It seems like whatever 3T is doing to help you is because he was caught so obviously helping them, and you had to come and clean up

his mess.

Austin (as Roberta): You're suggesting that 3T is involved in the death of my predecessor.

[2:30:00]

Keith (as Cheal): I don't know what deaths 3T is involved in, but I do know that he was given these—

Austin (as Roberta): So you're denying that you helped hide a body with 3T.

Keith (as Cheal): *[pause, uncomfortable]* Why would you say that?

Austin (as Roberta): Because we have a witness placing you at your bar—

Keith (as Cheal): A witness? What witness?

Austin (as Roberta): Is it true or isn't it?

Keith (as Cheal): *[lying emphatically]* No, it's not true.

Austin (as Roberta): Oh, dear.

Keith (as Cheal): What witness? *[Sylvia laughs]*

Austin: Writes something down.

Austin (as Roberta): I'll need to be back in a moment. You sit right here.

Austin: Stands up and leaves and locks the door.

Jack: This is the exact inverse of the bind that 3T found himself caught in with General Mourning at the retreat, and the two people have taken the exact opposite responses, right?

Austin: Mm-hmm.

Jack: Like, in an attempt to prove his innocence, 3T sold someone out. And in order to stick to his guns—

Austin: Yep.

Jack: Pushy has gotten himself deeper in a hole.

Austin: But not really, because the evidence doesn't show Pushy there.

Jack: No.

Austin: But Pushy doesn't know that.

Jack: No.

Keith: Right.

Austin: Yeah.

Keith: I think I'm— Cheal thinks he's about to get caught, I think.

Austin: Yeah. Yeah.

Austin: Roberta comes back in with a glossy photo of you and a glossy photo of Deutsch Synchro and says:

Austin (as Roberta): Do you know this person?

Keith (as Cheal): Uh, they've been to the bar.

Austin (as Roberta): They've been to the bar. Have you spoken with this person? Please understand we're working with Brink Proxy and we have have access to their records.

Keith (as Cheal): Uh, I'm sorry, but I speak to a lot of people. I have a very busy establishment. We have a lot of events. If someone's been to the bar, I can assume that I've spoken to them.

Austin (as Roberta): You're suggesting that you have not had any extensive work alongside Deutsch Synchro?

Keith (as Cheal): Deutsch Synchro...um, no.

Austin (as Roberta): *[slowly]* Mr. Pushy. I'm giving you one last opportunity before we escalate. We understand that it was an act of self defense, and we are not Brink Proxy, but we are trying to identify whether or not there is a killer on board and who it might be. We know that someone was killed in your bar on the night of 3T's concert. We believe that you believe that that was an act of self defense. We are trying to piece together whether that is true and whether we can connect anyone involved that night to the killing in the Devotion Hall.

Keith (as Cheal): Do you want to talk to me about the apocalyptic event that I'm trying to prevent, or do you need me to get a lawyer?

Austin (as Roberta): I need you to pick a side.

Austin: "Force someone to pick a side, literally or otherwise."

Austin (as Roberta): Are you on the side of the Brink and the Twilight Mirage, or are you on the side of the killer running rampant on this station? I've heard what you've said. There is a cult. We know about the cult. We are looking into them. My predecessor was found in their hall! You've given me nothing new!

Keith (as Cheal): That you are investigating anything but the cult shows me that you do not understand the severity of the situation.

Austin (as Roberta): That I'm investigating anything but the cult. You think the cult is the only thing that goes wrong on this station?

Keith (as Cheal): It's the only thing that *matters* that goes wrong.

Austin (as Roberta): We are at war! There are agents from the greatest—

Keith (as Cheal): Why do you think that is?

Austin (as Roberta): Not because of this cult!

Keith (as Cheal): It is specifically because of the cult.

Austin (as Roberta): The cult is not the Divine Principality! You're being a fool!

Keith (as Cheal): Where do you think [*Roberta: "Where do I think—"*] 3T got the Mirage bombs?

Austin (as Roberta): [*sighs*] You're saying they came from the cult.

Keith (as Cheal): Yes.

Austin (as Roberta): You didn't give me this. This is what I'm saying.

Keith (as Cheal): I was— I literally have been sitting here trying to tell you!

Austin (as Roberta): So you're saying that— what is the evidence that you have for this?

Keith: Um, I have that. I just give it.

Austin: Do you actually have physical evidence of this?

Keith: Uh, yeah, I have those papers. I took them.

Austin: You took the papers.

Keith: I took the papers.

Austin: Begins to look through them.

Austin (as Roberta): Interesting. Hmm.

Jack: General Mourning comes out of her office and just stands in the doorway and gestures to Roberta to be like, "Yep, keep going. I'm just listening."

Austin: Mm-hmm, mm-hmm.

Austin (as Roberta): How long do you believe that Tanager has been working with or for the Divine Devotion?

Keith (as Cheal): I heard rumors going back—

Austin (as Roberta): Not rumors. We know rumors. What do you know?

Keith (as Cheal): Over a month.

Austin (as Roberta): Over a month.

Keith (as Cheal): At least.

Austin: Now I have to think: what has Tanager told them about what Tanager has done? Did we say on screen what Tanager had debriefed with Mourning?

Jack: We did not say that on screen.

Austin: Or did Mourning not ask those questions?

Jack: No, not on screen.

Austin: Yeah.

Jack: Probably in the conversations that they had had. We know that Mourning knows that Tanager incited the—

Austin: Yeah.

Jack: She came to his studio saying, "This is what you've done."

Austin: Yes.

Jack: And I wonder if in the subsequent...well, it all happened coincidental– it happened at the same time as the concert, so I think that...the bombs going off.

Austin: Right, all right. An important thing is: Tanager doesn't know Devotion made those bombs. That's what I'm tripping over.

Jack: No. Right, yes.

Austin: Tanager got them from Decario Dicario, who is his lover.

Jack: C.T.H. Pasodoble's...

Austin: Yes, and is actually part of– right, exactly. Yes. So.

Jack: There's like a triangle here of who knows what.

Austin: Exactly, and so that means he couldn't have preemptively said, "Oh, I got those from blah blah blah." So this is a revelation, and so I think Roberta continues this line of questioning and says:

Austin (as Roberta): What do you know about Devotion? Because understand, what we have seen breaks no law.

Keith: Um...I'm just thinking of if I have anything. I mean, they're kidnapping people! *[laughs]*

Austin: They're not. They're not kidnapping people.

Jack: They're not.

Austin: They're not. People are going to their things and coming back a few days after.

Keith: Yeah.

Austin: That's not a kidnapping.

Keith: Well, they're causing a lot of people to be reported missing.

Austin: Yes, but that's not a crime. No one's gone missing. Everybody's come back, right?

Keith: I meant to queue this up beforehand and just sort of whiffed, but I meant that selling out 3T at the very beginning to be selling out one of your regulars to protect yourself.

Austin: Mm-hmm.

Keith: Which is a weak move that I have.

Austin: Yeah, you can take it. That definitely feels like a thing to get a token.

Keith: Okay. Okay, so do I have any evidence that they've committed an actual crime? I don't think I do. I mean, I gave them the Mirage bomb thing, which seems like a crime to me.

Austin (as Roberta): Divines have lots of latitude, unfortunately. Divines are walking weapons. What 3T did is a crime.

Keith (as Cheal): But if he was working with them, then they also did it. They did the same crime. They all did it together.

Austin (as Roberta): We will investigate whether 3T was working with them.

Keith (as Cheal): Okay.

Austin (as Roberta): From what we have seen, 3T was working with primarily the Orchard Syndicate and with, uh, a close confidant of his.

Keith: Um...this is maybe cheating.

Austin (as Roberta): Regardless, if he was the one moving those bombs into trucks, then it is those people and not the Divine who will be held accountable.

Keith: Do I want to use...do I want to go— I want to go a little bit further than I did with my weak move from the Paris scene. No, I don't know if I can do that. I'm like wanting someone to do something but not allowing myself to say the thing that I would need to say to get anybody to like really listen. I think all I've done is make them a little bit more sure that 3T is causing problems on the station.

Austin: I think that is exactly right.

Keith: Yeah.

Austin: I think you've written 3T's arrest warrant here.

Keith: Yeah. Um...okay. I'm going to...and I think also Pushy doesn't like understand Devotion, like doesn't know what Devotion wants.

Austin: No, yeah, you— mm-mm.

Keith: I don't like have motivations. I don't know. Like, I guess I vaguely would understand that Devotion is behind the push to get us into a war with the Divine Principality. Maybe I just give up. Or maybe I spend— I'll spend my token. I'm gonna spend my token.

Austin: Mm-hmm.

Keith: To say just the right thing to soothe someone's troubled mind and open them up to change.

Austin: Mm. What is the thing? And what is the change you're hoping to pursue or get them to pursue?

Keith: I want to...I want to convince Roberta that they need to be actively working...

Austin: So yeah, what is the thing that would...? I mean, I don't know that her mind is that troubled, personally, because she— in her mind, we are investigating Devotion, because that was where we started investigating.

Keith: Yeah. Yeah.

Austin: If anything, the thing that's happened that you— right now, the thing you've convinced her of is 3T was trying to take the fall for...or, sorry, not that, that 3T was trying to cover up his own involvement by throwing...

Keith: By throwing me under the bus.

Austin: By throwing you under the bus and by suggesting that it's not the cult, right?

Keith: Yeah.

Austin: But in fact, it's increasingly like, oh, he's like playing along to try to like make it seem as if it's not him, you know?

Keith: Yeah.

Austin: So I don't know that her mind is actually even troubled at this point.

Keith: Okay.

Austin: This feels like it makes sense and that what they're gonna go do now is double down on the investigation on 3T and continue their investigation of Devotion.

Keith: All right, I have it.

Austin: Okay.

Keith: I have a thing to say.

Keith (as Cheal): *[stilted]* There are cameras in Pushy's that will show me, 3T, and Deutsch Synchro moving a dead body that 3T and I found after his concert. Deutsch Synchro says that they killed this person in self defense. We believed her. This is not an important crime. You need to stop worrying about that *[quiet laughter]* and start worrying about the fact that you think that you are on a case but you're actually on a path to the destruction of the Twilight Mirage.

Austin (as Roberta): By the Divine Devotion.

Keith (as Cheal): Yes.

Austin (as Roberta): Who you are saying is attempting to spread the Mirage?

Keith (as Cheal): Yes.

Austin (as Roberta): But aims to destroy it.

Keith (as Cheal): Yes.

Austin (as Roberta): Hmm. And you can confirm that you and Tanager and Synchro hid a body.

[2:45:00]

Keith (as Cheal): It's all on the tape.

Austin (as Roberta): Do you know whose body that was?

Keith (as Cheal): No.

Keith: Wait...I'm thinking back.

Austin: It was a shitty Orion businessman.

Keith: I do know that?

Austin: Mm, Sylvi?

Keith: I'll say it if I know.

Austin: Yeah, yeah, yeah.

Keith: Like, whatever is true about what I know, then I'll say it.

Sylvia: Yeah. Um...

Austin: It was...we kind of described him as a loudmouth sort.

Sylvia: Yeah. Very obnoxious, I think, was what we were going for when he described this guy, real...

Austin: Mm-hmm.

Keith: Was this the fruit stowaway?

Sylvia: No.

Austin: No. No, no, no, no.

Keith: Okay.

Austin: This was a Stel Orion businessman, executive.

Keith: Okay.

Austin: A shitty executive here who was one of Deutsch's targets.

Sylvia: Yeah.

Keith: Yeah, so whatever I know about that, I'll say.

Austin: So you say shitty businessman from...

Keith: Shitty businessman from Orion.

Austin: From the Princ— from Orion.

Austin (as Roberta): If you remember any more information about that person, tell us. Please remain seated for a few minutes. We'll send someone in for a final debrief. Help

yourself to the refrigerator.

Austin: And stands up and takes the papers that you gave her out the door, locking eyes with Mourning. And then someone comes and is just like, “Can you fill out this questionnaire to make sure that your experience being interviewed was not terrible?” *[Sylvia laughs quietly]*

Keith: Yeah. I give mostly threes, I guess.

Austin: *[laughs quietly]* Yeah, uh huh.

Jack: It goes up to 14. *[Austin laughs]*

Keith: Okay, then I give mostly fours and fives.

Austin: Damn! *[Jack laughs quietly]* All right.

Jack: I would like to do a minor scene in which I secure passage.

Austin: Mm.

Jack: I am going to spend a token. I can spend tokens in a minor scene? I think I can.

Austin: Yeah, yeah, definitely.

Jack: To ensure safe passage to Moonlock and to my cousin, but in terms of being honest to the circumstances by which I got this, I don't think I have been able to get a confirmation from my cousin that they will be able—

Austin: Sure, yeah.

Jack: I've sent a message, but it's like when you're waiting for...like, you have an important deadline, and you need someone to get back to you about the thing, and eventually you're like, “Okay, fuck, I'm just gonna do it.”

Austin: I gotta do my part of it, yeah. Yeah, yeah, yeah.

Jack: And so yeah, I think we see...and Paris hasn't told— oh, God, has Paris told them this? What is more...

Austin: Mm.

Jack: I think, if we are being honest, Paris has told them. Paris seems like *[Austin: “Yeah”]* he would take the consequences, and they're bad. It is an acrimonious parting, in terms of like, you know, “This is what you promised.”

Austin: You promised us, yeah, yeah, yeah.

Jack: “This is where you've fallen through.”

Austin: Yep.

Jack: “What, so you're just shipping me off with no— you know, where am I gonna sleep?”

Austin: You have like a—

Jack: And Paris is like, “Look, the answer might be my cousin's.”

Austin: Do you have like a fruit basket?

Jack: Yes, I have a basket of...it was originally a basket of blue oranges, but everybody was...

Austin: Sick of them.

Jack: Paris brought a basket of blue oranges, and False Fruit said, “Fuck off. Absolutely not.”
[Austin laughs] And, feeling so bad about the next thing he was about to tell them, Paris went to the market next door to the dock and bought a second fruit basket.

Austin: Unbelievable.

Jack: And it's just, you know, it's just...I think they get to a point, as we have often seen with False Fruit and Paris, where there's just sort of like begrudging, like, “Well, yeah, good luck to you.” “Yeah, well, good luck to you.” And they sort of mean it in their hearts, but it's like, “Ugh, okay.”

Austin: Yeah.

Jack: Into the ship. This captain is going to take you to Moonlock. As the ship goes out, it passes one of General Mourning's fleet on a patrol route. Oh, no, it is flown out a certain distance by one of the golden ships.

Austin: Mm, mm-hmm. And then like—

Jack: And then passes.

Austin: Yeah. That's a good scene.

Jack: Yeah.

Austin: All right, well, Tanager. Oof.

Jack: Oh, buddy.

Austin: Uh...anyone want to kill Tanager?

Sylvia: Oof. *[Austin laughs]*

Keith: Is this a vote or a volunteer?

Austin: No, I'm like...Tanager can live. I'm happy for Tanager to live. I'm curious if Tanager does feel like a loose end for anyone still itching to escape the ever-closing, you know...

Jack: Uh, jaws of—

Austin: Jaws of General Mourning and co. Whether that's Pasodoble or Synchro or Decario or someone else from the orange syndicate or the ghost or...but also, you know, there's a version of this all that ends with Tanager spending this token to sway an audience into impassioned action or to defuse a tense situation with humor and beauty and being like a positive force. It just doesn't feel like what we've set up, you know?

Jack: It could be Tanager being like, "All right, the vanguard has gone out. Time for the rear guard!" *[laughs quietly]*

Austin: Uh huh.

Jack: "I need another crew of people to go and attack Palisade."

Austin: Yeah, yeah, yeah, exactly. No, I think, at this point...I have to think again. I have to look again. Visionary and confident and powerful leader. Does he want to find out for himself? I think that's...okay.

Keith: Find out for himself what? 'Cause that might be what I was thinking.

Austin: He wants to go see Devotion, face to face.

Keith: Oh, wants to go see Devotion. Oh, okay.

Austin: Uh huh.

Jack: *[forboding]* Ooh.

Keith: I was thinking if 3T was gonna die anywhere, I think the most fun place to die would be on the frontlines fighting the Principality.

Austin: Oh, yeah, fighting the Principality. No.

Keith: Regretting a bunch of decisions about... *[laughs]*

Austin: *[laughs quietly]* Uh huh. Uh, no, he would die happy doing that. That would be great.

Keith: Yeah, you think so?

Jack: What might be interesting to—

Austin: They're coming to kill us, Keith.

Keith: Yeah...

Austin: Like, it's not...

Jack: They are not...

Austin: It is true that the Principality— the point of the Road to PALISADE is charting the course of them coming to kill everybody here, so he would be happy to die fighting them.

Keith: But there is still something that happens to you, I think, *[Austin: "Maybe, for some people, yeah"]* when you are in intense pain, bleeding out.

Austin: Totally, yeah. We do know too many stories of people who are like that devoted to this, that like, yes, it feels it is terrible.

Jack: It is, uh...

Austin: But 3T we've painted as this like absolute diehard, and I don't want to undercut him by saying he's fake.

Jack: Right.

Keith: Well, okay, but I wouldn't...3T feels like very intense but also very naive to me, and...

Austin: Agreed.

Jack: Naive in certain ways.

Austin: Yeah. You know.

Keith: Yeah, but I just wouldn't...he just seems like someone that, to me, would have like lost all

the heat in the face of...

Austin: No, like, listen, it's important that one of the things I gave him was battle scars.

Keith: Yeah, that's fair.

Austin: Because I wanted to make it very clear that he doesn't...he's had life beyond the Brink, and in those times, has gotten into shit, you know? I don't think he comes from a particularly nice place. I don't think he comes from a place that is like— he comes from the Mirage, but he comes from a Mirage where he would have ended up with battle scars, right? And that, I think, follows him forward, which is why I think, in this moment, he is in the depths of the ship trying to find Devotion, which I think is “Taking action, leaving yourself vulnerable.”

Jack: Yep.

Austin: Where is Devotion?

Sylvia: Uh...like here or in general? 'Cause I don't think the main body of it is here.

Austin: Is there a portal? Not a literal portal. Is there a...where would Pasodoble speak to Devotion, you know?

Sylvia: Oh. Um...

Austin: What is— is there like a, you know, an Illusive Man-style weird holo room? Is there a weird pool of vertical water that vibrates and appears as Devotion? Does Devotion— is there a place in the station I can stand where Devotion will speak in my blood?

Sylvia: I think it's on the ship where the retreat takes place.

Austin: Mm, mm-hmm.

Sylvia: And there is a specific place where the sky will open up and Devotion will speak to you.

Austin: All right. I go there. I think I'm spending this token to find that place, which is like either “Introduce a fervent supporter ready to act” or “Sway an audience into—” I think it's “Introduce a fervent supporter ready to act.” Someone I met at the retreat was like, “I saw Devotion once.” Do we have Devotion pronouns?

Sylvia: No, I don't think Devotion is the type that...

Austin: That takes any?

Sylvia: Yeah. Or like is picky about it, you know?

Austin: Okay, gotcha. So, in fact, does take any...

Sylvia: Yeah, literally will take any. Yeah.

Austin: Use what you need to show me love. Right.

Sylvia: Exactly.

Austin: Mm-hmm.

Sylvia: It's mostly just the feeling behind it than it is the actual language.

Austin: Mm-hmm. Then they're like, "Yeah, you know, I saw him in the sky." Whoever this was, someone I met that first night or that morning, and I'm calling on that person to lead me there. And I'm like, I've gone off— you know, whatever my futuristic ankle bracelet is is going off at this point, right? So Mourning's office knows that I am not in the studio anymore. And like, I don't know what the map looks like, but I'm like beeping all through the station until I get to the forests. And then like, as soon as I go into that lock, I disappear, that airlock.

Sylvia: Yeah.

Austin: And I go to that place, and I like sit on— I lay down on the grass and look up and like try to find Devotion in the sky.

Sylvia: Would you like to? *[laughs quietly]* Like, should we do this?

Austin: I don't know. Yeah, yeah, you tell me.

Sylvia: So, I have— I know what it looks like when it notices you. When the sky opens up, I have this idea. I'm going to link an image here. Nothing— I'm gonna talk about capillaries and stuff, but it's not—

Austin: Mm-hmm.

Sylvia: It's not gory or anything. I just think that when this rift in the sort of virtual sky opens—

Austin: Oh, that's fun.

Jack: Oh, wow.

Sylvia: It opens like this, and then within each of those little gaps of the capillary, there's like a pupil of an eye.

Austin: Yeah! This rules.

Sylvia: Yeah. And I think it...there's a moment where like each of these little eyes blinks for a second before they are all staring at you, and there is a feeling of like...there's a feeling of warmth and also a feeling of it like expecting, like it's wondering what you've brought it here for.

Austin (as 3T): Can you— can you hear me?

Sylvia: You don't hear a voice. You just feel the response of—

Austin: Yeah.

Sylvia (as Devotion): Of course. I can hear all of you. As sure as I can feel your pulse.

Sylvia: That's what it says, actually.

Austin (as 3T): I am...I am worried that I did it wrong.

Sylvia (as Devotion): Did what wrong?

Austin (as 3T): I know where we have to get. I *know* where we have to get. I don't know if...what if I derailed us? What if I...

Sylvia: It's a very weird sensation when you feel something laughing in your bloodstream.
[laughs] Like, in your pulse.

Austin: Mm-hmm.

Sylvia: There is like a feeling...because a lot of this is not directly like spoken language.

Austin: No, yeah, yeah.

Sylvia: Is what's happening here. The thing that it communicates is like, Devotion itself, like one person is not enough to derail it, no matter what actions you've taken.

Austin (as 3T): It's not one person. I don't understand why we're all not unified on this thing. They see one dead person, and they think...I don't know if they're gonna come for you. I don't know if they're gonna come for me. I don't know if they're coming for Decario.

Sylvia: There is like a feeling of “Let them come.” There is like, “What can they do in the face of us?” But I think also— oh, fuck, I had something I was gonna say, and I lost it. Oh, “Why are we not uniting people?” was what I was gonna respond to.

Austin: Mm-hmm, mm-hmm, mm-hmm.

Sylvia: And I think that the feeling that Devotion gives you here is like: You can't force the ties that bind us together, or else they'll become manacles. Like, we can't make everyone connected just by saying we want to or by forcing them to. They have to come to us, and if they don't, we will have to like weather that, but we have to trust in the chain that we've built.

[3:00:10]

Austin (as 3T): But wasn't I forcing us? Wasn't the point that we'd sat on our hands too long and even if I did have to...even if I did have to bring people by chain into the right action, it would be better than waiting until the Principality came?

Austin: And I want to be clear, 3T's not saying, "Wasn't that our plan together?"

Sylvia: Yeah.

Austin: This is 3T saying that was— "Was I wrong for what I did?"

Sylvia: Yeah. *[sighs]* Gosh, speaking as a god is hard.

Austin: Mm!

Sylvia: No, I don't— like, I think, just to sort of loop into the vision that— not like specifically loop into the vision that Cheal had.

Austin: Mm-hmm.

Sylvia: It was Cheal that had that, right?

Austin: Yeah.

Sylvia: I get Pushy and Paris mixed up, like everybody else.

Austin: Cheal is right, yeah.

Sylvia: That was Cheal? Okay, cool. I think just to like sort of tie that together, it's like: You did what we thought— you did what we predicted you would do, and there's nothing wrong with that.

Austin: And I think...go ahead. What are you gonna say?

Sylvia: No, no, no. I don't think I had anything else, unless you've got more.

Austin: Okay. I think he just asks directly:

Austin (as 3T): How many people is it gonna cost to win this?

Sylvia (as Devotion): More than you could fathom, child.

Sylvia: And it closes its eyes and leaves.

Austin: Uh huh. I think he just lays there.

Sylvia: Yeah.

Austin: And like, lets it, you know. Maybe Mourning's people come and find him. Maybe he finds his way back to the studio the next morning.

Sylvia: Mm-hmm.

Austin: But we'll see what happens in the next round, I guess.

Sylvia: Yeah.

Austin: All right.

Sylvia: Okay, we...

Austin: We— uh huh?

Sylvia: I was going to ask, were we gonna try and do the last— were we gonna do a final round now, or how are we feeling?

Austin: So, I think it's fair to say huge shipment of blue oranges has been rendered resolved.

Sylvia: Mm-hmm.

Austin: Boop. The question is if we have resolution on this last one, which we might, but I don't know what that looks like. The residents have been disappearing, emerging days later as members of a strange cult.

Keith: *And* residents have been disappearing, emerging days later?

Austin: *[laughs]* What's Mourning do, Jack? 'Cause Mourning doesn't get a big final, you know, close off scene if we do end this here. So, given all that information...and in some ways, to talk about what happens to other people, we're gonna need to know what Mourning gets up to here, right?

Jack: Yeah.

Austin: Because it seems as if what Mourning has is...and I imagine this is what the conversation with Roberta and whatever the rest of that team looks like, is like, we now have: Devotion built these bombs, Devotion used 3T to deliver those bombs, et cetera. We also have Deutsch Synchro killed a Stel Orion CEO or executive as a different thing to pursue. I don't know what her resourcing is like, so I don't know if it is making a choice or if it is you could do both.

Jack: Yeah.

Austin: It might be you could do both.

Jack: It's also like not her job.

Austin: Right. Right.

Jack: She's a general. She's here to...

Austin: Yep.

Jack: She's like, this is all— Pushy was kind of *[Austin: "Right"]* onto something, where he was like, "You guys..." I think she takes— I think her immediate action is she needs to at least temporarily secure 3T, C.T.H. THC Pasodoble, *[Austin and Sylvia laugh]* Decario Dicario if she can?

Austin: Gone.

Jack: Yeah.

Austin: Gone!

Jack: Gone. Speaking of gone, Deutsch Synchro, and I want to let Sylvi narrate that ahead of...

Austin: Right.

Jack: Put it this way: Mourning is now actively getting people out and returning with them, and she is going to...she has put out a call to two additional teams back on Quire. One is specialized in Divines and like, what are Divines doing? Do we know what the Divines are doing, and what if they are doing something actively harmful?

Austin: Mm.

Jack: I don't know if they're priests or they are holy people or they are— I don't really know what Divine intervent— wait, Divine intervention looks like. *[Jack and Austin laugh quietly]* But they are

now coming to the Brink, and I think that she is also probably taking C.T.H. Pasodoble, 3T, and Deutsch, if she can get her hands on her, back towards the center of the Twilight Mirage for some sort of justice, essentially doing that back in the center of the Mirage rather than it all happening at a remove on the Brink.

Austin: Where it seems...Devotion doesn't have de facto more literal authority here *[Jack: "No"]* but does have a bunch of ships where people are living and eating and doing daily life stuff.

Jack: The Erlenlight Squad or whatever who specialize in Divines *[Austin: "Uh huh, yes"]* are definitely coming out to the Brink.

Austin: Yes, yes.

Jack: And I imagine they do something like— and they arrive quickly, because Mirage ships, you know.

Austin: Mm.

Jack: She can get the message out quickly, and they come quickly. And they do something that immediately looks like when a house gets a termite tent around it.

Austin: Mm-hmm.

Jack: They like drape the bridge— eh, the bridge. They drape the entire Brink in some strange like gauze or netting or something that isn't like—

Austin: Oh. It looks like a lantern. It looks like a paper lantern now.

Jack: Yeah! Oh, yes, they inflate it around the Brink.

Austin: Mm-hmm.

Jack: So first it's this folded thing, and then it's a big paper lantern around it. And they are not naive enough to be like, "We have trapped the Divine."

Austin: Yeah.

Jack: But they are like, this will help us figure out what is going on, where the Divine is, what kind of influence it can involve. To figure out what the Erlenlight Divine Squadron, what their philosophy is, is too much for this episode.

Austin: Mm-hmm.

Jack: But they have showed up, and they've built a lantern around the Brink.

Austin: If it's even there.

Jack: Yeah, yeah.

Austin: Right?

Jack: Well, but...this is *Phasmophobia*, going like, "Is it in the basement?"

Austin: "Is it in the basement?" Yeah, yeah, yeah. Sorry—

Jack: We don't know that it's in the basement, but we've seen a lot of things happening in the basement.

Austin: Well, the thing that I'm saying is Devotion...if Decario is gone, Devotion might be gone. The Devotees might be here, but Devotion may have done what it needed to do on the Brink as a Divine, right?

Jack: Yes. Fair. Yes, very possibly.

Austin: Because Sylvi said it disappears, right? And so like, maybe they're, you know, who knows.

Jack: Barking up the wrong tree.

Austin: Yeah.

Jack: Yep. But they'll find something.

Austin: But what we do know is— yes, they'll find something. They'll find that it was making these bombs, presumably?

Jack: Yes, and they might get a better sense of kind of like what the scope of the Divine is. Again, I don't know what this team is capable of. When I say "scope," I mean are they, like, how big is this Divine? How far can its influence be threaded?

Austin: Mm-hmm.

Jack: That kind of stuff.

Austin: What do they find out?

Jack: Uh, Sylvi?

Sylvia: Oh, gosh. Um... *[laughs nervously]* I don't know. Sorry, got put on the spot there.

Jack: No, no, we can figure this out. Um...

Sylvia: Mm-hmm.

Austin: I'm mostly curious about, like, what's the takeaway here? Because, again, part of what my job is gonna be is: jump six months later.

Sylvia: Yeah.

Austin: Has Devotion been stomped out? Has Devotion become *[Jack: "Oh, oh God no"]* a schismatic new, like, a counter authority to the Qui Err Coalition? Has it— you know what I mean?

Jack: Yes.

Austin: And like, I will make a decision around that stuff.

Sylvia: Yeah.

Austin: Because I'm going to need to, but I would love for that to be a collaborative decision and not a unilateral one.

Sylvia: Well, like...just for big picture perspective, I would love Devotion to continue to be like a threatening faction going forward.

Jack: Oh, yeah.

Austin: Mm-hmm, mm-hmm.

Sylvia: So, something that puts them either at odds with the Qui Err Coalition or seen as an alternative to them would work for me.

Austin: Mm-hmm.

Jack: Yeah. I think—

Austin: But nevertheless...and this is the part that's tricky.

Sylvia: Mm-hmm.

Austin: A threat who is on the same side in the fundamental war on Palisade.

Sylvia: Yeah.

Jack: Yes.

Austin: Against the Divine Principality and the Curtain.

Jack: Yes.

Austin: Right.

Jack: Yeah, it's like they can detect it in the Mirage everywhere.

Austin: Mm.

Jack: Or, you know, they can feel the particles of it. You know, it is there in the nebula with them. Yeah, it's like two predatorial fish swimming in the same water.

Austin: Uh huh.

Jack: Never quite knowing how close they are to the other.

Austin: God. Fucking Qui Err Coalition reinvents the Rapid Evening and their Eclipse squadron or whatever.

Jack: Uh, the Heresy Squadron?

Austin: Yeah, the Heresy Squadron, yes. God. Terrible. But presumably other Divines...not every Divine is involved in this, in Devotion's scheme, as far as we know.

Sylvia: Mm-hmm.

Austin: So. I mean, we do know Arbitrage is now, *[laughs quietly]* and maybe that's part of this that's hard, right? is with Arbitrage's help, it's that much easier for things to disappear, to get assets into hiding, to bribe people, to cover things up, right?

Jack: Totally.

Austin: It's like, to simply hide behind resources.

Jack: Or even, at certain times, to play the old 3T/Deutsch Synchro/Pushy trick of just being like, "Yes, there was a Divine here. It was the Divine Arbitrage."

Austin: Mm-hmm. Mm-hmm.

Jack: And the squadron's like, "Mm, okay. We found the Divine. We don't need to look for another one."

Austin: Right. Right. Totally. All right, well.

Keith: I almost brought up the other one too, but I didn't.

Austin: Right, Arbitrage? Right, yeah. All right, final round of short scenes. Given all of that, who has a feeling for a scene, for a minor scene in that context?

Sylvia: *[sighs]* I have one. I think I figured out how to wrap up on that stuff.

Jack: Yeah.

Austin: Mm-hmm.

Sylvia: I think that, with the situation escalating, she's kind of— she's started plans to get like extraction, so she's like cleaning up. She doesn't have a lot of things on the Brink itself, but she's like tying up some loose ends, and I think we just like see her in like her workspace making sure that like the way she communicated with the Curtain is like disabled and stuff like that.

Austin: Mm, mm-hmm.

Sylvia: And she's about to leave, and when she turns around, we see Gimme Gimme in the doorway, and that's...

Austin: Oh!

Sylvia: Cut there, and we don't know what happens.

Austin: Cut there. Love that. That's fun.

Sylvia: Yeah.

Austin: All right.

Jack: Paris is preparing for the Cycle End Feast. It is a very busy time for a fruits and vegetables broker. It is 3:00 in the morning waking up, and, you know, 11:00, midnight going to bed. Making sure everything's in place. Feeling kind of weird about Pushy's, always has kind of like weird emotions showing up at Pushy's to be like, "Here are the limes," or whatever. Keeps trying to contact his cousin and has been getting into, after a while...no, I don't think he hears back from his cousin. We know that communication is fast enough that his cousin could get back if he wanted to.

Austin: Yeah. He just doesn't?

Jack: But I imagine that his cousin is mad. But it's like, you know, every so often rationing comes into effect because of the increased tensions, and then it eases as new stuff comes in. The refugee situation is kind of weird after Pasodoble got taken. Lots of hungry mouths to feed. But yeah, doing the work of being a greengrocer as the festival approaches.

Ali: I think Mustard's is pretty straightforward and also can move the timeline a bit. *[laughs quietly]* I think that we see her moving into a new office with her own vending machine.

Jack: Oh. *[laughs quietly]*

Keith: Wow.

Austin: Oh, boy.

Ali: I think the connection with... *[laughs]*

Austin: Oh, brother.

Keith: She deserves it. She did the work.

Ali: She did the work. She made the connections. I think the audience can recognize some like faces in Brink Proxy that were at the cult retreat.

Austin: At the retreat? Ugh.

Ali: I think that she's like setting down boxes. She's like unpacking them and getting her desk organized. And by the door to the room, there is a magazine rack, and she pulls out the magazine from the box and puts it into the rack, and the screen just goes black, and people at home are like, "I think my cable's busted." *[Austin, Ali, Jack, and Keith laugh]*

[3:15:14]

Austin: I got one. I don't— I mean, I don't know where I'm being kept for the arms manufacturing and dealing. Or not dealing, but using. We haven't talked about what the equivalent of...you know, I suspect that Twilight Mirage has maintained its relationship of being against poor carceral justice programs and being interested in rehabilitation and fundamentally safety, but not in a security theater safety way, not in a we believe the only way to keep people safe is to, quote unquote, keep criminals locked up, et cetera, but in an actual like, how do we maintain, you know, this community and et cetera. That said, I suspect—simply in terms of the number of things they need to talk to 3T about and probably fear of some sort—he is not allowed a lot of mobility outside of— like, he is not allowed— at some point, they draw a line about how far he can

go and what he can do.

Keith: Don't leave town.

Austin: Right. I guess I don't want to speak for Mourning, but I think it's out of Mourning's hands at a certain point, right?

Jack: Yeah. Yeah. I mean, Mourning got— she wasn't kidding when she said that her patience was running out, in terms of what she was supposed to be here to do.

Austin: Mm-hmm.

Jack: And I think past a certain point, she went, "All right, okay. This is not my purview anymore."

Austin: Right. And like, in the Restorative Justice model, it's difficult, because the victim is either no one or literally everyone in the Mirage who...

Jack: In the Twilight Mirage.

Austin: Right, in the sense that 3T made a decision about their proximity to war that they did not make. And as such, that is a— it is not like he can meet with one person and be, you know, come to some feeling of resolution or justice.

Jack: This is like—

Austin: And in fact, many people still agree with him, so it's not even like there is...

Jack: Yeah.

Austin: It is not as simple as that. And in fact, my image here is not as—

Jack: Oh!

Austin: Yeah, go ahead.

Jack: And this is where it dovetails with General Mourning, right?

Austin: Mm-hmm.

Jack: In terms of talking about— the fact that people agree with 3T and go, "3T didn't do anything wrong," is what—

Austin: Mm-hmm.

Jack: This is part of the questions that General Mourning is also talking about, right? Of like, who is speaking for whom here?

Austin: Right.

Jack: So maybe she flies back to Quire for a certain period or whatever.

Austin: Uh huh. Not Quire. Quire doesn't exist. Quire is not one of the planets of the system.

Jack: She flies back to...

Austin: Seneschal?

Jack: Seneschal.

Austin: Uh, Skein? I don't know.

Jack: Skein.

Austin: Yeah.

Jack: Isn't it Skein?

Austin: There's a bunch of them. Skein is where...

Jack: I'm trying to think about where we had said her base was.

Austin: Ah, yeah, I don't remember where. I think we said, of her, Seneschal's Brace. But Skein is where the first, the new wave of Qui Err arrived and started building a government, or many governments really. Many, many communes, really. Anyway, none of that's the image in my mind, because my image is mostly...3T is limited, in terms of what he can do directly at this point. But I don't know...you know, I don't think this is behind plate glass. It might be an observed meeting with Decario. And 3T signs some papers and transfers some files, and the next week, the Divine, comma, Arbitrage ensures that there is a new 3T single released all across the Mirage.

Jack: Hmm.

Austin: And it's not— and it just keeps happening, right? There's 3T the person, and then there is— there's Tanager the person, and then there's 3T the brand, and 3T the brand is a wonderful, terrible echo of our Aria Joies, right? of that style of, you know, musical embodiment of the war. The war drums, you know? And I don't even know that 3T does it in a way...we don't have to zoom in on that conversation, but 3T is made to look— feels guilty as he does it. Not guilty

because...I mean, partly guilty because he thinks it might be the wrong thing to do, but guilty because he feels like he failed to achieve what he wanted to achieve and is made to feel that way by Decario, right? Decario plays on that feeling of like, "You had one chance to get this right, and you fucked it up. Let us run with what you got, 'cause you can't do it anymore." And other than that, we don't see much of him as a person in this final scene. What we see is like, you know, a new 3T video or whatever, a new 3T hologram Metaverse bullshit that Arbitrage makes. 3T is at the VMAs. 3T is also on house arrest. *[Sylvia laughs quietly]*

Ali: Ooh.

Austin: Right? 3T is on TikTok as a Vtuber, but not even him.

Sylvia: No!

Austin: It's not even actually him. Cheal.

Keith: Yeah. I think...unless Cheal is getting in trouble for admitting to hiding a body that there's no evidence of him doing.

Austin: It doesn't seem like it. Cheal was not brought back to center of Mirage, right?

Keith: No.

Jack: I don't think so. I think that they teased out pretty quickly that Cheal was being swindled.

Austin: Right, right.

Keith: Right. Because that is— at the end of the day, the thing that I was innocent— the thing that I was guilty of was not reporting that someone else had committed a murder.

Austin: Yes, yes.

Keith: Or some sort of crime.

Jack: There were a lot of lengthy unpleasant conversations.

Keith: Yeah. Especially when they found out that there was no evidence of me doing this.

Austin: Yeah.

Keith: Why did you tell us you were on this video? *[laughs]*

Austin: Yeah.

Keith: So, when...Devotion is no longer on the Brink, right?

Austin: It seems like the Divine might not be, but the Devotees are definitely here.

Keith: The cult is still...

Sylvia: Yeah.

Keith: Are they still checking their pulses all the time?

Sylvia: Yeah.

Keith: Okay.

Austin: For sure, right?

Keith: I thought maybe proximity to the...

Sylvia: No, there's still like...Devotion still has reach. It's just not physically here.

Keith: Okay. So, I think Pushy's doing...just back to having, you know, relatively normal weeks, except for every once in a while waking up and feeling [*Austin: "Mm"*] the vines on my back beating in sync with my heartbeat.

Austin: Cool. Good.

Keith: And that is scary. And I don't know, maybe I get rid of 'em? Or maybe I find out that so are all of the vines on the station beating.

Austin: Right. On that pulse.

[end music]