

## COUNTER/Weight 20: The Glimmer Incident: The Executive Enters!

Transcriber: the dread biter#0090

[MUSIC - "THE LONG WAY AROUND" starts]

AUSTIN: On the night before it happens: Orth, brown, pocked face, his large stature turned inwards, hidden and unsure on the chaise in the officer's lounge. Tea, a bright spike of golden hair topping a perfectly worn uniform, and the weight of the ship on her shoulders.

Natalya, round eyes looking over round glasses at the info screen, wondering how much she can let the others know. Sokrates, the second prince, standing firm and sleek and alone on the Apolostolosian cruiser: When will they listen?

Addax, his plum hair neatly styled, his tan skin taut with purpose, and Peace around him, ever-threatening. And Jace, poor Jace, his soft, light face, his compact body, drawn even tighter under the stress. A clarity of vision and quiet fear.

And Ibex. And Ibex.

[MUSIC - "THE LONG WAY AROUND" finishes]

AUSTIN: "Will the Kingdom allow Ibex and Righteousness to join?"

JACK: Oh, Jesus.

SYLVIA: Oh, god.

ALI: Oh, boy.

AUSTIN: Who has the first scene?

SYLVIA: Hoo!

KEITH: Me, I do.

ALI: Who went last?

AUSTIN: Sokrates, you're up.

DRE: So-crayts.

AUSTIN: So-crayts!

KEITH: All right. Mhm. Um.

AUSTIN: Gimme a hot scene. Or a cool scene.

KEITH: All right, I'm gonna go to Jace and Addax, I wanna find them.

AUSTIN: You could, you could bring them together somewhere, where would you like this scene to happen?

KEITH: I think—I think that it's gotta happen—I think that it's gotta happen in the... the hangar bay.

AUSTIN: Okay.

KEITH: I think they're both in the hangar bay.

AUSTIN: Okay.

KEITH: And I go to find them. I do—I track them down, and then I rush up.

AUSTIN: Just like doing diagnostics and stuff?

KEITH: And yeah—yeah. They just like being around the robots.

AUSTIN: They do, it's true.

KEITH: Um. Addax doesn't like being in his so much maybe?

AUSTIN: But near it.

KEITH: Yeah.

AUSTIN: Okay.

KEITH: And I think—I think I u—really what I wanna do is get a gauge on like how dangerous this guy is.

AUSTIN: Mm.

KEITH: If Ibex is—how much of a benefit it would be to keep him close and how much he could hurt the northern part of the Diaspora if he was allowed to join.

AUSTIN: Okay.

KEITH: And I feel like—I just feel like those two out of anybody Addax in particular would—would know that.

AUSTIN: Sure. So here comes... Here comes this fuckin Apostolosian guy.

ART: Looking for military—

AUSTIN: Or person.

ART: —looking for really top level military intelligence.

AUSTIN: Yeah. Yeah. What's up?

[ALI laughs]

ART: How strong are your—

DRE: Seems fine. Seems fine.

DRE: So, say, how many ships would it take to blow this thing up?

KEITH: Yeah.

AUSTIN: Mhm.

DRE: Just spitball.

KEITH: Listen, we're on the same team you guys.

AUSTIN: Uh.

KEITH: I'm a captain too, you know!

[ALI laughs]

ART (as Addax): Righteousness is a—is a—is a dangerous Divine.

AUSTIN: Do you want me to give you some hot info on Righteousness?

ART: Yeah.

AUSTIN: So you can like sp—f—

ART: I mean I was gonna try to just keep it vague and general, but I'll take hot info.

AUSTIN: I'm gonna—Yeah. Um. So in the future, Righteousness is understood as being this formation of grav tanks, of like, hover tanks.

KEITH: Oh, this is that guy!

ALI: Yeahhh.

JACK: Mhm.

KEITH: Ohhh, right.

AUSTIN: Yeah.

JACK: Keith has up until this point thought we were just dealing with like John Divine.

[ALI laughs]

AUSTIN: Yeah, no, this is like—this is a baddy.

JACK: He flies a car in the air.

AUSTIN: This is a big bad.

[Laughter]

AUSTIN: The truth is, that unlike the other Divines, Righteousness doesn't actually have a physical form, so to speak. Righteousness is, effectively, an operating system, and that is it. It can be deployed across any number of physical assets. And it is—and, you know, there's a way to do that that is wrong, that dilutes the power of Righteousness, but if deployed intelligently, it can bring together a disparate group of assets, and make them function in a way that is incredibly smart and coherent, in a way that's faster and more accurate than any human pilots could use them. In fact, it's not even just about pilots, right? Like, there were Candidates of Righteousness who used Righteousness as a economic weapon, instead of a military one. By, you know, seeding, you know, trading algorithms with Righteousness. So, it's a—it's rad. It's also terrifying. So.

KEITH: Yeah.

AUSTIN: Ibex is also one of the rising stars of the Diaspora. Like Addax, Ibex's showed incredible competence in earlier skirmishes against OriCon. And unlike basically any other

candidate, even at this young age, it's clear that Ibex is like the dominant person in this relationship. To the degree that some people—

KEITH: You mean dominant over Righteousness.

AUSTIN: Over Righteousness. To the degree that some people have stopped calling Ibex a Candidate and started calling him an Executive.

DRE: Mm!

ART: Ugh, that's gross. People are gross. Do better, Diaspora.

AUSTIN: Yeah. Quite gross. Yeah.

KEITH: Yeah.

KEITH: I guess—I guess what I'm trying to—

AUSTIN: So that's—that's the info I'm giving Addax, and I don't know what Addax is going to give back.

KEITH: Right. Yeah, yeah, yeah.

ART: But what are you—what are you trying? Finish—finish your thought.

KEITH: Oh, uh, I guess the conversation that I'm trying to have with the two of you is. Will—Ibex really refuse these refugees, if we decide to leave, will he cave and let them stay? And if he won't, will allowing him on our—ship cau—further the divide between the Diaspora and—uh—with Grace.

ART (as Addax): Ibex is dangerous, potentially ruinous, for other parts of the Diaspora, and potentially our own—our own operation here.

KEITH (as Sokrates): So you're saying not a—not a smart idea to let him on board?

ART (as Addax): I—but only if he wants to be.

KEITH (as Sokrates): Right. So he could be an asshat—

ART (as Addax): He could be an incredible asset, I just don't think—I just don't think that's terribly likely. I think it would put a lot of lives at risk, ours and—and—and those of the people north of here. Space north, that is.

KEITH (as Sokrates): Right. Sp—sp—the *Royal* Up.

[JACK, ART and SYLVIA laugh]

AUSTIN: Galactic—I think—we call that direction coreward or galactic north.

KEITH: Um. I like coreward.

AUSTIN: Yeah, it's pretty good.

KEITH: Yeah. What is the—what are the nearest two planets to Glimmer like?

AUSTIN: Uh, Slighter is a weird—like—

KEITH: Sorry, I mean the nearest two away from Slighter.

AUSTIN: Oh, okay. Further on.

KEITH: Which we have already passed. Yeah.

AUSTIN: Next up would be Wreathe, which is—which is—oh, sorry, there's Coral, which is like one little spot away, and that is a mining world where there are Apostolosians who—this had previously been an Apostolosian world, and it's still primarily Apostolosians, and they're struggling to assimilate. The Divine Service is there, um. And your understanding, Addax, is that Service is a harsh taskmaster. And maybe that's not helping them assimilate super well. The next one up is Wreathe, which is an oceanic world... that was recently colonized, and it's pacifistic. Love and Compassion are the Divines there, and they tend to be sort of isolationist—

KEITH: Oh, well, f—

AUSTIN: —which also means that it's an easy target for Righteousness.

KEITH: But this is—this is one space outside his technical—

AUSTIN: He could get there. Yes.

KEITH: He could get there, but it's out—it's outside of, right now, his sphere of influence.

AUSTIN: Right.

KEITH: And dropping these—saying fuck you to—I guess—I guess “politely declining” Ibex and dropping these refugees off at—Wreathe?

AUSTIN: Wreathe. Yeah. Like a Christmas wreath. Like a holiday wreath.

KEITH: Wreathe. Right.

SYLVIA: Festive.

KEITH: Yeah.

AUSTIN: Yeah.

KEITH: Dropping them off at Wreathe I guess wouldn't—like Righteousness isn't gonna go there to kill the refugees.

AUSTIN: [doubtful] No. But it's not a safe place. I can't say that, that's not—I can't make predictions.

KEITH: Right, yeah, yeah, yeah.

AUSTIN: If I could—

KEITH: Mhh... Yeah.

[SYLVIA laughs]

AUSTIN: Uh, Jace can—Jace is in the scene and can predict whatever he wants.

KEITH: Yeah.

[ALI laughs]

KEITH: All right. So, I go—all of those words I've—that I've been saying out loud, I've been saying them to Addax and Jace.

KEITH (as Sokrates): So what do you think?

ALI: It's tough, 'cause I think Jace's whole thing here is like—Jace sort of wants to have the—the refugees here, 'cause we just went through that whole thing the last time, and like—

AUSTIN: Mhm.

ALI: —what's the point of doing all that if we're just gonna like keep bringing them—like just keep—are we just gonna go from planet to planet, until we find a place that we can put them? But it's tough 'cause I think that he also kinda wants to default to what Addax is saying.

AUSTIN: What's—follow through on the—

ALI: The first thing.

AUSTIN: —on the first thing a little bit.

ALI: Yeah.

AUSTIN: Why don't you—why doesn't Jace wanna do that? Because here's the thing t—I should make clear too. What Jace wants to do can be different than what he predicts will happen.

ALI: Right.

AUSTIN: And that's actually really interesting.

ALI: Yeah. I mean, there's that—still that like fear, right?

AUSTIN: Mhm.

ALI: That like—the present danger is always going to be present and—

AUSTIN: Right.

ALI: The longer we have refugees, the more they're at risk. So I think the thing is is that like Ibex is dangerous, but it makes more sense to have soldiers at risk than it is to have civilians.

AUSTIN: Mhm. Okay.

ALI: Um. I just... don't know how to translate that into a prediction...

AUSTIN: So that—I mean, that—that sounds like either no, and if no, then. Sorry, it sounds like “if no, then the—then you will not be able to protect the refugees in the future.” Or that like maybe a softer version of that, which is I—just like—or you know what maybe it's more specific, maybe it's like “the refugees will not be happy about this, because they will be being put at risk” or something like that? Or it's yes—

KEITH: Man, Glimmer sounds like a nice place.

[ALI laughs]

AUSTIN: Or. It's pretty nice. Or it's yes, and it's um. Like. Leaving the refugees here will be safer



than bringing them with us. “If Yes, then the refugees will be safe on Glimmer.” Which is different than “the refugees get to stay on Glimmer,” which is what Ibex has currently promised you.

ALI: I kinda like fucking with the stakes here—

AUSTIN: That’s fine.

ALI: —so I think putting the Prediction in “yes, if we bring him on, they will definitely be safe.”

AUSTIN: Okay.

ALI: Yeah.

AUSTIN: Yeah. ‘Cause that encourages yes. I got you.

[ALI laughs]

AUSTIN: That encourages you guys to make the bad decision.

ALI: [amused] Right.

ART: Always looking out for us.

AUSTIN: Yup! Uh, Addax, any either immediate use of authority, or long-term orders that you think are tied in here?

ART: Yeah, I have a—I have a simple order, which is: “If yes—if yes, we have to just immediately execute him, just—

[Laughter]

ART: —wait until he’s on-board—

SYLVIA: Jesus.

AUSTIN: Uh-huh.

ART: —the refugees are off, and then just shoot him in the face.”

[SYLVIA, JACK and DRE laugh]

AUSTIN: [amused] I don’t think that’s gonna—I appreciate it. I appreciate it. I appreciate the boldness of this. Well, and again—you know what—

ART: If you want to hear the scene I'm gonna narrate when we say yes?

AUSTIN: Yeah. Gimme that. Yeah. Go for it.

ART: [pleased with himself] He's coming on. He's looking all cocky. He's like 'Ha ha ha, my plan has succeeded.' Then bam! Shot in the face. Bleeding all over the floor.

AUSTIN: Good... Outside of this weird memory loop you're in like... Jace forms a smile. And then like the game—the like the weird like simula—memory simulation just rewinds to before happens. Because Jace is stuck in this weird memory loop forever.

ART: Haha. Yeah...

SYLVIA: Aw. Buddy.

JACK: Jace is in the Animus, right?

AUSTIN: Yeah, basically.

ALI: Bwuhh.

AUSTIN: But like for himself.

JACK: Yeah. He's looking for the Piece of Eden, and the Piece of Eden is just a galaxy being sad.

AUSTIN: I think he's just looking for like internal peace.

JACK: Yes.

SYLVIA: Mm.

AUSTIN: Just like. Ohh. Just ohh.

ALI: Yeah, just like 'I made the right choices, right?' Augh. Ohh.

AUSTIN: Right. And like any diversion is—played out, and he gets a little bit of joy from it, and then. Not so much.

ART: But no, I don't think I have anything at this...

AUSTIN: Okay. All right, that sc—[coughs] ‘Scuse me. That sounds like a scene. Any Reactions to that scene?

SYLVIA: No.

AUSTIN: Okay. Um. Orth—

JACK: Okay.

AUSTIN: —wait, did we just do Orth? No, we did not just do Orth.

SYLVIA: No. That was, um, Sokrates.

AUSTIN: Yes. Yes.

JACK: Okay. I would like... to...

AUSTIN: I just wanna—before we continue, I just wanna like underline how much power you have here. Which is a lot. Like, you could—this is not just like. Like you’re director when it’s your scene, and you could tell me anything is happening, basically. Um. Which includes challenging these other things. In other words, right now, one of the things is like yes—“if yes, the refugees will get to stay on Glimmer.” You could—you could Challenge that with a wild scene that completely changes the effect—or like the—the stakes right now, in a big way. I’m not saying you should do that or you have to do that, I just wanna make sure that it’s clear we don’t only have to be talking about like characters talking to each other to come to a conclusion, if that makes sense?

JACK: Mhm.

AUSTIN: In other words like one of these answers could be—could be. You could Challenge that and say—I’m not saying you should do this—but like literally just like, “Oh, we just fired drop pods down there filled with the refugees right now.”

[JACK laughs]

AUSTIN: “And he can fuck off.” And I don’t know that that’s anything any of these characters will do, nor do I think you have the capability to fire drop pods in any of these vehicles, but that’s a thing that—that’s like the scale at which you’re allowed to narrate scenes.

**[15:04]**

JACK: So, remember when Orth was looking through the Wikipedia pages—

AUSTIN: Yes.

JACK: —uh, in the previous turn. He has read about Ibex, as a result of that. And so what happens is, Orth is sitting at the—at the you know the flight deck on the Kingdom Come, and someone comes over, like a staffer just comes over and whispers in his ear, and he just like stands up and walks out of the thing. Um. And he's going to go and see Natalya.

AUSTIN: Okay.

JACK: Who I think is probably... um. Natalya is probably... in her private quarters, I think?

AUSTIN: Does that line up?

DRE: Yeah.

AUSTIN: Yeah? Okay.

JACK: Um.

AUSTIN: What are her—all right, so her private quarters are on the Seventh Sun, are those like—so we've seen her in Snowtrak ten years later, and it's just like computers everywhere and like. All sorts of research stuff happening. Is that what's happening in her private quarters, or are they calmer, or more busy?

DRE: I think that. Um. She probably still has some of that tech, but it's a lot more like it's smaller and more concealable?

AUSTIN: Okay.

DRE: 'Cause I mean she's a secret agent. She's a spy.

AUSTIN: Yes!

DRE: Um. So no, I think like maybe she has like one—like whatever the regular kind of like wall-panel computer is—

AUSTIN: Mhm.

DRE: —and then like a space iPad.

AUSTIN: Okay.

JACK: So just to be—yeah—just double clear. Natalya is a spy for the Rapid Evening.

AUSTIN: Correct. Yes.

JACK: Who is sending in reports regularly somehow.

AUSTIN: [nonchalantly] Ah, yeah. They have—they have lots of technology. They can do lots of things.

JACK: Yes. Orth knocks on Natalya's door.

DRE: Uh. She opens.

JACK: Okay. And Orth just like walks in and closes the door behind him and says,

JACK (as Orth): This is really bad. We have all refugees—we. Right. We have all these refugees, they're living—and you told me to put them on my ship.

[DRE breathes in]

JACK (as Orth): So now we have all these refugees. And we can't get rid of them, and we can't make them safe, unless we—we bring on this man who—is going to wipe everything out north of here. I gua—that's what he's gonna do. *That's what he's gonna do.* So. [sigh] Is there any way at all we can bring him on, and we can. Um. Spy on him. I want to know what he's planning, and I wanna know where he's planning, and I'm just—I want you to—you built my ship. I want you to tell me that the Kingdom Come has the capability to do this, and you—I want you to show me how it's done.

DRE (as Natalya): Orth. Something like that. You don't watch it, *it watches you.*

JACK (as Orth): Right, I don't really know what that means, but I'm asking you—

[Laughter]

JACK (as Orth): —can we. Is there any way we can spy on Ibex, 'cause those refugees are gonna be safe, Natalya. And also I don't want a galactic war north of here, more than is already happening.

DRE (as Natalya): We cannot let him come with us. I mean, maybe we conscript the refugees, we teach them to fight, we teach them to be useful, but we can't—he *cannot*. They... Whatever that thing is cannot come with us.

JACK (as Orth): [breath] So these refugees just stay?

DRE (as Natalya): I don't know, Orth. It's your damn ship, you figure it out.

JACK (as Orth): [breath] You gave me this ship. Or rather—I was—I was made captain of this ship—

DRE (as Natalya): Oh yeah, I didn't give you that ship, they took it from me.

JACK (as Orth): So I'm sure that there's something great going on in there, I'm sure that there's something just fantastic going on inside the ship, and if you could somehow let me know how to just use it, in the event that—you know. We might be able to... you know... prevent future problems. Natalya, I need you to rig the Kingdom Come for bugs. And that's an order.

AUSTIN: You can say no. And—you know. That's not. You don't have to do the thing. Then, of course, Orth can make a different choice.

DRE: Yeah. Um, and the thing is she probably already has the Kingdom Come rigged with bugs.

[Laughter]

AUSTIN: Yeah.

JACK: Yep. That's—

AUSTIN: True! Yeah.

JACK: She has this thing—

SYLVIA: Woah. It's probably literally flipping a switch and just being like “yeah, here, you got access to the same shit now.”

AUSTIN: Yeah. “Let me add you to this Google—to this Google Doc. One second.”

[Laughter]

DRE (as Natalya): Orth, I'm telling you, if we let—if we let Righteousness come with us, we won't make it out of this alive.

AUSTIN: That's a big prediction. Is that a prediction?

JACK: Oh my god. Can I try—Natalya can make predictions? Oh, my god.

AUSTIN: Or is that just a thing that Natalya said?

DRE: [thinking] I mean. Uhhhhhh. Yeah, that's a prediction.

AUSTIN: Okay.

[ALI laughs evilly]

AUSTIN: [gleeful] That's one of those predictions Imma keep on the Big Screen.

[Laughter]

SYLVIA: Jesus.

DRE: And I think in that case "we" is Orth and Natalya.

AUSTIN: Okay.

JACK: [laughs] Oh, god. But we know—we know they make it out of it alive.

AUSTIN: You know. Predictions don't always come true exactly the way that they're meant to.

DRE: Mhm.

JACK (as Orth): Natalya. I will leave you be, but I will remind you that I am your commanding officer... and, uh.

JACK: And then Orth just leaves.

[Laughter]

AUSTIN: Oh fuck.

SYLVIA: Oh buddy.

AUSTIN: Oh buddy, oh boy, oh buddy. Uh, we should've been marking things, by the way. Was that first thing a Crossroads?

ART: That was Keith's.

SYLVIA: Oh.

AUSTIN: That was a Crossroads.

KEITH: Yeah, sorry, yeah, it was a Crossroads.

AUSTIN: Okay. And it sounds like that was the end of yours, Orth?

JACK: Yeah. I don't think that I made an order... I tried very hard to make an order.

AUSTIN: You did. Well, you can still do—you could have done that, but like. Y'know.

JACK: Okay, what if I make an order that if Ibex comes on board, Natalya—and I'm putting this in the heaviest inverted commas possible—

AUSTIN: Ooh.

JACK: —“rigs the Kingdom Come with bugs.”

AUSTIN: I mean. Yes, you could totally make that order. Uh, actually I'm not sure you—I think you can. But I think it needs more, because like or else... what?

JACK: I don't—I really don't think Orth has thought that far ahead.

ALI: Aw.

JACK: But if the mechanic doesn't work that far, then I don't think it should be written down as an order.

AUSTIN: I'm double checking. ...Well the thing is like I'm not sure if... duh duh duh...

JACK: Do I need to make an ultimatum basically?

AUSTIN: I think so, I think to some degree at least.

DRE: Yeah.

AUSTIN: Because otherwise it's not—you can't just—Natalya will always have the agency to say no. You know what I mean.

JACK: Right, totally. And part of my concern as a player is that I don't know what capacity at this point...

AUSTIN: Mhm.

JACK: Commander Godlove is going to have against an agent of the—of the Rapid Evening.



AUSTIN: Right, but—you know, it doesn't—it—you're not gonna kill Natalya—

JACK: No.

AUSTIN: —but you could put her in a brig, and then her Role changes.

DRE: Yeah.

AUSTIN: She still gets to be—

DRE: You could try her for treason.

AUSTIN: Right. And who knows, maybe then she comes out the other side a Power, or a Touchstone, y'know?

JACK: [with trepidation] Yeah...

AUSTIN: It's up to you.

JACK: No, I mean—I—yeah—to be—so... Thinking about it realistically—

AUSTIN: Okay, so here's—here's like—

JACK: —is Orth going to go back thinking that he has made an order, or is he going to go back thinking that he's made a mistake? And I think that he thinks he's made a mistake.

AUSTIN: Okay. I will read this from the rulebook, which is *"You can use your authority to make the Kingdom do something to another character: throw them in jail, give them a raise, etc. Describe how you make this happen. You cannot use Power to control another player's character, but you can threaten or bribe characters to make them do what you want."*

JACK: Oh, wow.

AUSTIN: *"Power does not let you change another character's Role; you cannot throw a Perspective character—you CAN throw a Perspective character in prison, but that does not stop them from being right."*

JACK: Okay.

AUSTIN: And you can also, again—you can also give orders that are only carried out if the—if the Crossroad result you specify is chosen, which we've already gone over.

JACK: No, I don't think that that—I don't think that's an order. But I do think that that is a mark in the Crisis box?

AUSTIN: Sure.

JACK: Because I think Orth went to Natalya with a plan, and Natalya basically went “Ah. No.”

AUSTIN: “No. This is bad.” Yeah, totally. Which represents maybe a broader crisis of command here.

JACK: Yes, I think so.

AUSTIN: Okay.

JACK: Possibly a reflection of what Tea was beginning to notice in the canteen previously.

AUSTIN: Totally. Yeah. Natalya!

DRE: Uh. I feel like we need something in this no column.

AUSTIN: Totally.

DRE: All right. Natalya needs to figure out a way that they can say no to Ibex and Righteousness but still get these refugees off the ship.

AUSTIN: Mhm.

DRE: So maybe she goes to talk to Tea.

AUSTIN: Okay.

SYLVIA: Okay.

AUSTIN: Where at, and what are they doing?

DRE: Um. Let's say... Let's go to the commissary! We haven't been in the commissary.

AUSTIN: No, not really, yeah. So you're—it's kind of a busy place and it's kind of both—where both of you are stationed. It is—it's definitely the sort of place where you might meet up.

DRE: Yeah.

AUSTIN: I think there's probably lots of noise here, it's the sort of privacy you can have in a room filled with soldiers eating loudly.

[SYLVIA laughs]

DRE: Huh. Yeah, I think Natalya just kinda like—Sylvia, what do you think Tea is doing?

SYLVIA: I think Tea's probably like eating with her unit the main like crew of the Queen's Gambit. You like pull her away from them? After.

DRE: Yeah, she just kind like tugs on her like arm like—

DRE (as Natalya): Hey, we need to—we need to talk.

AUSTIN: How's the Gambit been behaving, by the way?

SYLVIA: They... They're not super happy with Command, but they feel like... They f—[laughs]  
Tea has been basically reassuring them that she's making sure that their best interests are kept.

AUSTIN: Okay.

SYLVIA: So they're under control right now, but they're not like the most happy. Like they kinda make jokes at Orth's expense a lot.

AUSTIN: Mhm.

SYLVIA: And like mor—general morale towards the non-combatant higher ups is low.

AUSTIN: Okay. So if there is a divide here, it's this like soldier versus support.

SYLVIA: Yeah, exactly. Um. So basically she's just kind of playing the wrangler lately trying to keep them—

AUSTIN: Yeah. Totally.

SYLVIA: —relaxed, and being like “look, we're still helping people and shit.”

AUSTIN: Okay. So. Scene.

DRE (as Natalya): Tea, we have to—we have to do something about this.

SYLVIA (as Tea): Look. I—are you s—shouldn't you be talking to Orth about this? He's the one who makes the decisions around here. I'm just in charge of my people.

DRE (as Natalya): Orth—Orth wants to let Righteousness come with us, and we—that can't happen.

SYLVIA (as Tea): He's scared, probably.

DRE (as Natalya): I'm scared! You should be scared.

SYLVIA (as Tea): Yeah... That's pretty—a pretty reasonable response, but it's not like he can... Ibex can't break the ceasefire we have going on. He's got—his people aren't on this ship. We could say no to him!

DRE (as Natalya): Do you think that your squadron could get these refugees down on Glimmer?

SYLVIA (as Tea): [exhales] Hoo. That is a big... thing you're asking of me there, Greaves. Um. In theory. It would be hard, though. We wouldn't be able—we like—they'd be there, but they wouldn't anything set up for them. If like if the government doesn't take them, they won't have shelter, they won't have papers, they won't have anything.

DRE (as Natalya): What do you need?

SYLVIA (as Tea): Um. Are they—okay, uh... We'd need—we'd need a safe place to put them. They need somewhere to live, right?

AUSTIN: [laughs] I like that Natalya was like “What sort of weird gadget do you need?” and your answer was like “They need the security of a human life.”

SYLVIA (as Tea): Yeah, like—like we can get them down there okay. We just need something in place to—like it's not getting them there that's the problem. It's the—what happens when we leave them. So... if you can get... papers for these people, basically, so if any—we can get them down somewhere, and if people come knocking, they aren't kicked off this planet, or thrown in prison or something... then I could see what I can do.

DRE (as Natalya): All right.

SYLVIA (as Tea): Okay.

DRE (as Natalya): I'll let you know, Tea. Thank you.

SYLVIA: And then she goes back to eating.

[SYLVIA and DRE laugh]

DRE: Um. So I think my prediction here is “if it’s—if it’s no...” Maybe this isn’t a prediction, you tell me, Austin.

AUSTIN: Yeah.

DRE: “If it’s—if it’s no, the Rapid Evening recruits these refugees.” Or somehow provides for them? I don’t know.

AUSTIN: That doesn’t feel like a Prediction you’ve made here.

DRE: Yeah.

AUSTIN: I think that’s a thing that Natalya would love to happen, but I don’t think that that’s—I think you’re in fact predicting—the things that you’re predicting here are like... are... about like... “If no, then there will be, at some cost, an oppur—uh... an attempt to place them on the planet anyway.”

DRE: Mm.

AUSTIN: Do you know what I mean?

DRE: Okay. Yeah.

AUSTIN: Um. And that cost could just be like resources. You know?

DRE: Yeah.

AUSTIN: Like, “if no, Natalya and the Gambit—Queen’s Gambit will... you know, go out of pocket on getting these people down there.”

DRE: Okay.

AUSTIN: Which will reflect in the future.

DRE: Yeah. I think that works.

AUSTIN: I think that that’s... And it also means that you’ll probably be pissing off Righteousness, right? And Ibex.

DRE: Well, sure. Yeah.

AUSTIN: You know, like you do.

SYLVIA: I imagine we'll be pissing off a lot of people—

AUSTIN: Yeah. Um. Right.

SYLVIA: —with like direct insubordination and everything.

DRE: [disparaging] It's just Orth.

SYLVIA: Aw.

[DRE laughs]

JACK: [mildly] Now, hey.

[Laughter]

AUSTIN: Okay. ...And that's an advancement on Crossroad... Jace.

ALI: Yeah. Um. I... this actually kinda works, 'cause I was thinking of doing a Reaction to that scene, but I think just doing it—

AUSTIN: Oh, sorry. As always, if you want to do a Reaction, just do it. You can do it. Just let me know.

ALI: No, but I think like just kind of flipping the page—

AUSTIN: Okay.

ALI: —and having this be Jace's scene—

AUSTIN: Works too.

ALI: —like directly after that works too.

AUSTIN: Okay.

ALI: I think Jace is probably like at the table, sitting across from Tea, like just listening to them at first, but then once Natalya leaves and like some other people leave the table, he's like,

ALI (as Jace): That's... a bad idea? Do you think that she's gonna like follow through with that and like... even if she does, like how long term would that be?

AUSTIN: Are you Challenging this Perspective? Or this.... prediction?

ALI: I don't think I'm Challenging it, I think I'm just adding a consequence. So the prediction now is like—

AUSTIN: That's a Challenge.

ALI: Okay.

AUSTIN: Because—which is fine, but like that's a Challenge. Like that's.

ALI: Okay.

AUSTIN: Because you know... Both Natalya and Jace are Perspectives, and by default, like anything a Perspective predicts will come true. Like that is not—she's not wrong about that.

**[30:02]**

ALI: Okay.

AUSTIN: The thing she just predicted will come true, *unless* you're proving that it's wrong in some way. Which you can do! But then you're challenging it. You know what I mean?

ALI: Yeah. Well, I'm not trying to say that like they wouldn't be put on the planet, but like that that would still result in consequences for...

AUSTIN: Totally.

ALI: ...the refugees, or for us, potentially.

AUSTIN: Okay.

ALI: And I think I—I think I almost like it better if it's... Like, a prediction would be to follow through on the consequence of...

AUSTIN: Right.

ALI: ...there being a cost with us putting them down there, but I think it would be kind of on a—I don't know if this is uninteresting, or if it's on too wide a scale, but like. That the refugees would end up being supporters of...

AUSTIN: Ooh.

ALI: Ibex?

AUSTIN: I like that better.

ALI: Yeah.

AUSTIN: Yeah.

ALI: 'Cause like that's also how he would play it, right?

AUSTIN: Yes. Totally.

ALI: Like he's being weirdly undermined—

AUSTIN: Yes.

ALI: —but he's trying to gain influence, so he'd be like “Haha, okay, I'm gonna turn this into a win for me.”

JACK: And I bet he could do that, as well.

AUSTIN: Mhm. Well—

ALI: He would.

AUSTIN: —this also—this also is a thing that you can generalize again, where it's like it's not just “the refugees will become,” it's—in fact, I'll change it. “Refugees will become supporters of Ibex.” Meaning not just these—this set, but like, oh, the ones on Gemm. You know, like this is part of his thing—

DRE: Oh boy.

ALI: Right.

AUSTIN: —is like “Oh, he's the one who's gonna look for us, the people who've actually been hurt by this shit.”

ALI: Right, yeah, so there's this like tiny percentage of people who are like “Wait, that was kinda weird that he like said that we couldn't go on—”

AUSTIN: Right.

ALI: but then like news gets out that like “oh, Ibex is like the savior—”



AUSTIN: Right.

ALI: “—and like he’ll take people in with open arms,” and like yeahh. That’s so good.

AUSTIN: I mean, it’s even just—you know. Who even knows how long the like “he wouldn’t let us in” thing stays? He’s real good at spinning. It might just be like, “Why didn’t Orth and Addax, you know, drop us off there? Why didn’t they save us?” You know.

ALI: Right right right yeah.

AUSTIN: It—very—it’s a very short route to “I told them to leave you all at Glimmer, I don’t why they didn’t do that.”

[ALI and Jack laugh]

JACK: How’s it going, Natalya? Yeah, how’s it going? What about that—

ALI: Yeah, like, wait, how long were you guys like locked in the deck? That—I didn’t do that, you guys were just hanging out at the gates? That’s weird. Come in, hey, hi.

AUSTIN: Yeah. Hey, come on in.

ALI: [laughs] But yeah, I really like that, so. So that’s my prediction.

AUSTIN: Okay.

JACK: You’re a villain, Ali. You’re a villain.

ALI: [laughing] I just... I have this power in this game to just like make things bad on both sides—

AUSTIN: Oh, that’s what this game is good for—

ALI: —so I’m just gonna take it.

AUSTIN: —yeah, good.

ALI: These are all of Jace’s regrets, so there you go.

ART: Jace regrets making all of the situations no-win, and giving the bad guys power? What a weird thing to regret! I’m glad we’re helping him through that.

AUSTIN: God.

ALI: Yeah, no matter what he does, there's gonna be a consequence, and that's perfect. But yeah, and I [sighs]... Yeah, it just sort of plays out through that conversation, we don't have to flesh that out more.

SYLVIA: Okay.

AUSTIN: Okay. I think I placed these right, is this correct? Orth, this was an order, that—or no this was... who made this—the Natalya and the Gambit, based on—

JACK: Oh, that was Natalya.

AUSTIN: That was a prediction.

DRE: Yeah, that was a prediction.

AUSTIN: And then—okay, yeah yeah yeah. Okay. We're all good now. ...And then what are you checking, Ali? And does anyone have any Reactions?

ALI: Um, that feels like a Crossroads, unless you want to make it a Crisis.

AUSTIN: I think that's—I think you're right. I think you're right that it's a Crossroads. Tea!

SYLVIA: Yeah!

AUSTIN: How you doing? You want a scene with some people, or you wanna go by yourself, or...

SYLVIA: Yeah, I have like kind of an idea for a scene.

AUSTIN: Sure.

SYLVIA: ...Would Orth be kinda like trying to placate Ibex, you think? This's mostly towards Jack, like while they're deliberating?

JACK: ...In the sense that... Are we assuming that we have open communication with Ibex?

AUSTIN: You totally can.

SYLVIA: Yeah.

AUSTIN: That's totally a thing that can happen.

SYLVIA: 'Cause I was thinking of like a scene where Tea goes to talk to Orth about this idea that Natalya had.

JACK: Mm.

SYLVIA: Um. And walks in on him talking to Ibex. And then ends up not trusting Orth because of it.

JACK: There's a possibility for that. [sighs] Yeah.

SYLVIA: Yeah.

JACK: I don't—I don't know whether or not...

SYLVIA: I don't think she'd even know like what they were talking about, she'd just know that he was talking to him, and she'd assume the worst.

JACK: I could see that. I don't know—

SYLVIA: Yeah.

JACK: —a plot—and this is like a—this is like a player thing—but like a plotline that always irritates me in like Disney movies when it happens is when a character misunderstands—

SYLVIA: Yeah.

AUSTIN: Yeah.

JACK: —like they see the hero character in the boat with the villains and assume that they've left them for the villains? And as the viewer, I'm always screaming like 'No, talk about this!'

[Laughter]

AUSTIN: Right.

JACK: And I wonder whether or not there's an opportunity to—to push that scene into a different place—

SYLVIA: [thoughtfully] We could!

JACK: —or to push how the interruption happens.

SYLVIA: [laughs] Like we could... we could—I mean, we could have Orth clarify afterwards. We could have Orth just like imm—like stop her from leaving, and clarify.

JACK: That's true. But—and is that something that she would believe, do you think?

SYLVIA: I think she would, like they have history there. And like she knows Orth generally means well, despite his...

[JACK laughs]

KEITH: Bumbling?

SYLVIA: Spinelessness, I was gonna say, but yeah, bumbling also works. Like he's been thrust into a situation that he can't handle, and she's trying to help out this poor guy.

JACK: Yeah.

SYLVIA: Because of this like—yeah.

JACK: I could see that working. I'm curious about what... what Orth's angle is with Ibex. I'm curious about what—[laughs] what do you say to Ibex?

SYLVIA: Yeah, like what they'd be talking about? I think it's just sort of like—what they'd be talking about at that point is just a very much like “We're still like—I'm still talking to my crew about what will our—”

[JACK laughs]

AUSTIN: Right. It's been a day or two.

SYLVIA: “decision be, and...” Yeah.

AUSTIN: It's been a couple—it's been a little while, and it's like—Ibex is like “I want an answer. I need an answer.”

SYLVIA: Yeah. And he's just like—Orth is just trying to buy time. Like it's no—nothing concrete. ...You think that would work?

JACK: Yeah, I think that would super work. Yeah, I'm up for that.

SYLVIA: Okay.

AUSTIN: Well, it sounds—

SYLVIA: I think the scene's—

AUSTIN: —yeah, it sounds like we've done the first half of that scene just through narration, right?

SYLVIA: Yeah.

AUSTIN: So what does the second half look like? What does the actual post-call conversation look like?

SYLVIA: [laughs] So I think like... for no reason, Tea just talks in like one of those like angry hushed whispers, like,

SYLVIA (as Tea): [whispering] What the hell are you doing talking to him?

SYLVIA: Like she doesn't want to raise her voice, 'cause people are like outside this room with Orth, like waiting— like I assume Orth's office has guards or something that kinda—

JACK: Yeah, probably, or like—

SYLVIA: Or like at least one.

JACK: —someone's.

SYLVIA: And so she wants to just... oh, go.

JACK: Oh just like someone's sitting on like a—pull-down bench or something outside the...

SYLVIA: [laughs] Yeah. Yeah, like he's reading a magazine or something, but if she yelled at Orth like she wanted to yell at him right now, they would definitely hear. So she's just like,

SYLVIA (as Tea): [whispering] What are you doing talking to him?

JACK (as Orth): [whispering] I mean, I can't—*what am I supposed to do?* He's been calling me for the last six hours, and there's only so many times you can ignore him, because then he called me again, and then—

SYLVIA (as Tea): [whispering] Listen.

JACK (as Orth): [whispering] —and then when I checked the news channel on the planet, his face was on there, saying that he was hoping to open communications with the Kingdom Come! So I answered.

SYLVIA (as Tea): [whispering] So—yeah, okay. [sighs]

SYLVIA: She just like does a really long sigh there, where she's like... trying to just calm herself down, and is like,

SYLVIA (as Tea): [whispering] Okay. Just tell me you're not going to say yes to him! We figured out something we can do. We can get—we can—Natalya came to me. She's gonna... secure it so my people can bring the refugees down. It's gonna take a night or two, but we can get them down, no prob—*hopefully*, no problem, and they'll be safe, and we can st—keep this guy off of our ship, and off of—away from our operations.

JACK (as Orth): [whispering] How are they not gonna see them coming down from the fleet?

SYLVIA (as Tea): [whispering] Orth, you flew with us. You know how good we are.

JACK (as Orth): [whispering] And these people are going to be safe?

SYLVIA (as Tea): [whispering] I will do everything in my power to make sure they are safe.

JACK (as Orth): [whispering] And we trust Ibex to... honor his word?

SYLVIA (as Tea): [whispering] [laughs] I don't trust Ibex as far as I could throw him. Well, no, I could throw him—I could probably throw him pretty far.

[DRE laughs]

AUSTIN: Good.

SYLVIA (as Tea): [whispering] I don't trust Ibex at all, basically, is what I'm trying to say here.

JACK (as Orth): [whispering] And you're still willing to make this sacrifice.

SYLVIA (as Tea): [whispering]: It's a risk we should—we have to take. I don't want him here. I want to get these people safe. If you—look. You're the one who makes the decisions here, Orth. I'm just coming to you with an option. But—I cannot tell you enough how—*bad* of an idea it is to let him come with us.

JACK (as Orth): [whispering] [sighs] ...Okay. If—

JACK: [laughs] Oh.

AUSTIN: What's up? Hi.

JACK: I just—I just realized that Orth could—oh. Orth could be like “But for your own sake, you have to take some of my men.” But that would be a complete nightmare. That would be a disaster!

AUSTIN: Mhm.

SYLVIA: Yeah.

JACK: Because these people wouldn't know how to fly with the... with the Queen's Gambit at all.

SYLVIA: The Gambit. Yeah.

JACK: So I don't think I'm gonna do that. I can't just keep rubbing Orth's face in the dirt.

SYLVIA: Yeah.

JACK: So I don't think he's gonna make that call.

SYLVIA: I think I just—Natalya's<sup>1</sup> also gonna say like,

SYLVIA (as Tea): Look. I know that you weren't at all prepared to be given this objective, but you're smart, Orth. You're smarter than people give you credit for, and you can figure this out. Just—[sighs] Grow a pair, would ya?

SYLVIA: And then she leaves.

JACK (as Orth): [with trepidation] Okay.

AUSTIN: So what were the predictions being made there that I missed?

SYLVIA: I don't think there were any predictions made, it was mostly just—

JACK: I think that—

SYLVIA: —now Orth has knowledge of the plan.

JACK: Yeah.

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<sup>1</sup> Sylvi means Tea.

AUSTIN: Well—okay.

SYLVIA: Yeah.

JACK: And I think that—that Tea is gone a pretty good way to ensuring that Orth is gonna vote no, I think.

SYLVIA: [quietly] Yeah.

AUSTIN: Um. That was not my food, so I'm still a little... [???] [40:00]

[Laughter]

DRE: Dang!

AUSTIN: That was my roommate's food. My food—my roommate also got food.

DRE: Way to rub it in.

AUSTIN: I know.

ALI: Dang.

AUSTIN: I know.

KEITH: You guys didn't coordinate this?

AUSTIN: We don't really coordinate anything.

KEITH: I feel like—I feel like food delivery is a—is a necessary coordination.

ALI: Well, sometime when you live with someone you just don't...

AUSTIN: Yeah.

DRE: Yeah.

KEITH: Maybe sometimes when *you* live with somebody.

SYLVIA: Jeez.



AUSTIN: Um. So there was nothing there? Okay. Well, what are you marking? And does anyone—does anyone have a Reaction?

SYLVIA: I think Crossroads would be what's marked there, I don't think that really goes towards Crisis.

AUSTIN: Okay.

SYLVIA: I think [laughs] that the outcome of—

AUSTIN: Mhm.

SYLVIA: —whatever—if they do the... I will say, like depending on if they have to go and bring the people, that could probably go towards Crisis?

AUSTIN: Can I get—can I ask for a Reaction from a Touchstone in like a sentence or two? Can I just get a feeling from a Touchstone on what the feel is of the people on the ship?

KEITH: Um. Yeah. Everybody's really nervous and upset—

SYLVIA: Yep!

KEITH: —and nobody wants either thing!

AUSTIN: Okay. Do—is that true to the people—do the people know enough about Righteousness to—to have that feeling?

KEITH: I think—okay, so I think that—I think that all of the OriCon and—Apostolosian people do not want Ibex and Righteousness on the ship.

AUSTIN: Okay.

KEITH: And kind of everybody—

AUSTIN: Fuck. Here's my food.

KEITH: —especially the. Uh.

ART: So what do we think it is this time?

[Jack and Ali laugh]

KEITH: Everybody especially—

JACK: It's gonna be a man with a gigantic box, and inside is gonna be Ibex.

[Laughter]

SYLVIA: Oh, god.

ART: This time it's a singing telegram for his roommate.

DRE: It's his neighbor's apartment's food. And they're like, "ah, I got the wrong door, sorry!"

ALI: Austin would just take their food.

KEITH: Well, last time he—there wasn't even a buzz.

JACK: No, Austin had hallucinated a buzz.

KEITH: He thought there was a buzz and—[laughs] Yeah. It's a food-lushination.

DRE: A follushination.

SYLVIA: [dryly] Um. I've definitely had that happen to me, so...

KEITH: Yeah, it's sort of like when you feel your phone vibrate in your pocket, but it didn't vibrate at all.

DRE: Yeah.

SYLVIA: Yeah, totally.

KEITH: And you're an idiot and you're crazy.

AUSTIN: That was my food, I'm back, I got it.

KEITH: And once you—

DRE and SYLVIA: Heyy!

AUSTIN: It happens, sorry.

KEITH: Nice!

AUSTIN: What's up?

KEITH: Oh, the other sentence that I was gonna say was “Everybody, especially the... refugees would like to have a place for the refugees to go, as soon as possible.”

AUSTIN: Okay, yeah, that seems fair. Is there any tension at this point, between the refugees and the non-refugees? And this can—you’re a Touchstone here.

KEITH: I think that the—

SYLVIA: Um? I, well—I agree with Keith—

KEITH: I th—

SYLVIA: —what Keith’s said so far, so I’ll just let him keep going.

AUSTIN: Yep.

KEITH: I think that the—well, the refugees are all—they’re all [coughs] from the Diaspora, and so none of them are like treating Ibex or—as a threat. So, the fact that we would hesitate—

AUSTIN: Okay.

KEITH: —to put them on this planet is like—doesn’t even make sense to them?

AUSTIN: Right. Okay, I like that. That actually helps a lot, because—it doesn’t add—again, that’s not a prediction about the future, but it should be a thing that we think about in terms of what the choice is, right. Like what Keith is saying is that the refugees will not be happy if they don’t fucking get told in on this planning! And they’ll probably be confused by being snuck down there in some weird way. Which is probably why Jace’s prediction of—them being—

KEITH: Right. And if the—if they don’t get to go, and the answer is “Well, Ibex... you know?—”

AUSTIN: Exactly.

KEITH: —they’d be like, “What do you mean?” You know? “You mean our hero?”

[ALI laughs]

AUSTIN: Yeah, yeah. Exactly. It’s great! This is a good situation we’re in. Good. Whose turn is it? Yeah, it’s great. Addax, I think.

SYLVIA: Uh, it would be Addax’s turn.

ART: Um. I wanna meet with—how many people did you could do at once?

AUSTIN: As many as you want.

ART: I want—I want... Tea, Jace and Orth on... the bridge. And I want us to have a serious conversation of what it might look like if—we say no and it gets violent.

AUSTIN: Okay.

SYLVIA: Okay.

AUSTIN: What—which bridge are we on?

ART: Uh, *the* bridge, Location One.

AUSTIN: I know, but—so that's—that could be—

SYLVIA: Of which ship?

AUSTIN: —any of the ships, because—

ART: Uh, sure. Uh...

AUSTIN: But this sounds like maybe it's on like Peace's—

ART: That might be the safest place to do it. That's certainly the place we know that there's no...

AUSTIN: Which is—So I imagine that that bridge is like—in my mind, that bridge is almost like Tron. It's just like weird black and neon and like sh—or like... uh... Jack Kirby, what's the dudes who I'm thinking of?

ART: The New Gods?

AUSTIN: The New Gods? Is that—what's the other group that he also did? That's just the New Gods again.

ART: Oh, the ones he did for Marvel that are just the New Gods again. Um...

AUSTIN: Yeah, those ones.

ART: Aw, shit.

AUSTIN: 'Cause those might be who I'm thinking of. But maybe it's not.

ART: Um. I'm really just hiding that I'm looking it up at this point.

AUSTIN: [loud typing] I'm also doing that. I'm really mad that neither of us can get this.

ART: Yeah, me too.

AUSTIN: Where s—

KEITH: Sorry, what are you trying to get?

AUSTIN: The comic thing, the weird comic thing.

KEITH: Okay.

ART: The—the group that he made for Marvel after he did the Fourth World at DC.

KEITH: Is it, uh...

**[45:00]**

ART: Oh, is it Inhumans?

SYLVIA: Uh, the X-Men!

KEITH: Watchmen? Are you talking about the Watchmen?

AUSTIN: [dryly] Yeah, it was the Watchmen, yeah. There it is. Thanks.

KEITH: [laughs] Are you talking about the New 52?

ART: It's the Inhumans, is who I was thinking you were talking about.

[KEITH laughs]

AUSTIN: And is that who I'm talking about?

ART: It looks like before...

AUSTIN: I don't think that's true, that's not who—I don't think that's who I mean.

SYLVIA: [amazed] [laughing] Jesus Christ...

DRE: Good. This is good radio.

ART: The Celestials.

AUSTIN: This is the best radio, I don't...

SYLVIA: Yeah, I love it, I love it.

AUSTIN: Is that what they're called?

ART: The Eternals? I think you're talking about the Eternals, look at this.

AUSTIN: That's them. I'm—think I'm talking about the Eternals. [typing] Let me see. This is all good. What's wrong? Everyone's making noises at us and I don't understand—I do mean the Eternals—

ART: Yeah.

AUSTIN: —but who I really meant, Art? Were the New Gods.

[Incredulous laughter]

AUSTIN: [???] DC. [45:40]

[ALI laughs]

SYLVIA: Haha, holy shit!

ART: Yeah, I knew you meant the New Gods the whole time, but you said you didn't, I had to really keep talking—

AUSTIN: Okay. Because they looked the way I'm talking, right? Like you know what I'm talking about? You know what I'm talking about, like—sharp lines and like weird circles and just like super geometric—weird/cube [???] shapes. [45:56]

ART: Yeah. Yeah, I'm familiar with the New Gods, yes.

AUSTIN: Okay. Good. So that's what your—I think that's what the bridge of Peace looks like when it's in spaceship mode.

ART: Oh, I forgot that we made this into a Transformer—

AUSTIN: So...

ART: —during this episode.

AUSTIN: ...Yeah, we just did that. That's cool. Well, you know, we actually did it last episode, when one of Jack's lyrics was about Peace flying overhead, and like in my mind it was a weird spaceship doing that. Um. So.

KEITH: Did my Reaction add a checkbox anywhere?

AUSTIN: No, but you could. Uh, the way it—

KEITH: Put one on Crisis.

AUSTIN: Yeah. Okay. Actually, wait one second, let me actually make sure that that's not...

KEITH: Okay. Could be unfair.

AUSTIN: That might only be a thing you can do on your... Yeah—

KEITH: Okay.

AUSTIN: —that's a thing you can only do on your turn. That's like a bonus thing you can do on your turn.

KEITH: Okay. So during Reactions, you don't get to add—no one gets to add anything anywhere?

AUSTIN: No one gets to add any—

KEITH: Unless they're Challenging?

AUSTIN: Well, no. So Perspectives and Powers can do orders and predictions in a Reaction—

KEITH: Okay.

AUSTIN: —but the Touchstone's special power is that you can always express your attitude, which is like making an instant prediction that predicts—you know what I mean, like you're just narrating something that's true about the world right there, and then on your turn, you're—

KEITH: Okay.

AUSTIN: you can do a bonus Crisis checkbox in addition to whatever checkbox you naturally hit. Okay. So that scene. Gimme that hot scene.

ART: Uh. So there's like a—there's some sort of like—space... hologram junk, right? There's like a—a map of our forces, and like a prediction of what we think Righteousness might be able to do, right? 'Cause Righteousness is hard to—is hard to know. And...

AUSTIN: Yeah, sure.

ART: And I'm—you know—and I'm honestly posing the question to other people, like,

ART (as Addax): If he attacks, what could we do? What are our losses going to be? What can we salvage?

ALI (as Jace): Are you asking 'cause you're expecting him to attack?

ART (as Addax): I think it's within the realm of possibility, yes.

[ALI sighs]

JACK: Are—are you a—this isn't me—this isn't Orth asking it. Are you aware of the plan to sneak the refugees onto the planet.

ART: Uh. Probably?

ALI: Well, that's what you're asking, right? Like if we're doing this weird mission and he—

ART: If he attacks us—

ALI: —the Queen's Gambit...

SYLVIA: I mean...

JACK: Oh, I thought what you were asking was if we just say like no.

SYLVIA: I mean, we could put it like simply like—would—who—so, out of who knows it, would have anybody have told Addax? 'Cause like...

AUSTIN: Yeah, I don't know if Addax would know about this plan.

SYLVIA: Unless I think like unless Jace or Orth told him.

JACK: I wouldn't have told him.

ALI: I feel like Jace might have?



JACK: [laughs] After overhearing it from Tea?

ALI: Yeah.

SYLVIA: Yeah.

ALI: Yeah, I think—Jace—Jace would ask—

AUSTIN: I mean—wait. Then that should be *this* scene. That's a cool thing to see. That should be this scene.

[ALI laughs]

ART: Sure.

AUSTIN: Like how does Jace explain that d—in the middle of this conversation?

ALI: Well, I—

SYLVIA: Tea's right there, too.

AUSTIN: Yeah, who all is actually in this scene again? Can I get a—who—like a...?

JACK: I am.

SYLVIA: It was—

ALI: It was Orth, Tea, Jace.

SYLVIA: —Tea, Orth...

ART: The group that I thought—

ALI: Addax...

AUSTIN: Okay. So it's—

ART: —would most need to involved with planning a military operation.

AUSTIN: Yeah. That seems right. Okay.

DRE: Um, maybe Natalya's listening to this?

JACK: Oh! I bet.

SYLVIA: I mean, she wouldn't have spies on...

AUSTIN: No, you...

ALI: On Peace, yeah.

SYLVIA: would she have spies on Peace?

AUSTIN: Yeah, she can—oh, maybe not!

SYLVIA: She—would she have bugs on Peace?

DRE: Probably not.

AUSTIN: That—probably not.

SYLVIA: Yeah.

AUSTIN: I should also—actually, let me as the GM just say a quick thing here that I just realized I should talk about. Jace, it's real weird being inside of a Divine.

ART: Oh, sure. I bet.

AUSTIN: This is a thing that I realize like I—maybe we didn't make super clear and maybe fucking should've. Like Jace is like Stage One of the September Institute. Jace is like a *natural* Stratus. That's why Jace is so fucking effective against—Divines.

ALI: Oh...! Okay.

AUSTIN: Like not in a way that Mako is. Like Mako hacks things. Jace... just gets them somehow. Jace is a step ahead...

ALI: Ooooookay.

AUSTIN: And is like... is able to anticipate them and their programming, whereas Mako and his generation of Strati are able to like *interfere* with the way Divines function.

ALI: [laughs] So... this is natural newtypes against artificial ones?

SYLVIA: [delighted] I was gonna say!

AUSTIN: What?

SYLVIA: He's a fucking newtype!

AUSTIN: [satisfied] Yeah, dog, what, of course they're newtypes!

SYLVIA: Yeah, no.

AUSTIN: That's—I'm—yeah.

ALI: Sorry, I had to say it out loud, but um. Okay, yeah. So it's kind of like—it's kind of unnerving in a way, but like also like weirdly familiar in a way that Jace probably doesn't... expect it to be? I guess? I think that Peace is this incredibly intimidating thing and Jace expects to feel sort of out of place there, but he doesn't, and that's more unnerving than just being the usual anxiety with it, but... And I think yeah so this conversation is just playing out, with like Orth and Tea sort of being like you know... 'If he says no, like maybe we can like... how long would it take us to just leave? Maybe we would be able to like get away before he's able to launch an attack?' And then Jace is like,

ALI (as Jace): Wait, but like if we go down onto the planet, then we have to—

ALI: And like Orth and Tea like shoot Jace a look. And then Addax is like 'Wait, what?'

SYLVIA: Ooh!

ALI: Jace like sees those looks, but just continues on, and is like,

ALI (as Jace): Yeah, so—wait, did you not know this? Because we were thinking of—just like—putting them down there. Which seems—I—it's an idea. I would run the mission if it came to that, but, uh... that certainly complicates the attack plan.

ART: I mean it's a lot to take in, right? I think it's like a staggering, like he puts his hand on his head. I just did it in my life and took my head too far away from my mic. But you all know, listening, what someone with their hand in their—and their head in their hand looks like.

[ART sighs]

ALI (as Jace): ...Oh, so you didn't know... about this. About that plan?

ART (as Addax): No.

SYLVIA (as Tea): Nope! He didn't!!

ALI (as Jace): Aha. Well. So, Addax. [laughs] We were thinking—they were thinking that we would just sort of take the refugees and put them down? Just to undermine Ibex completely. Which, uh... it's an idea. Sure.

ART (as Addax): It's an audacious idea. I don't think he would... Oh, god. I don't think he would—he would kill those refugees...

ALI (as Jace): Do you think that that's our safest bet?

ART (as Addax): I don't—I don't know that we have a safe option here, right? Like this is—this is a very dangerous man with a very dangerous weapon. What—what do we do if he—if he fires on the refugee ships? What do we do if he takes that time to fire on our command ships? What do we do—

AUSTIN: As Addax talks, the colors on the bridge of Peace shift slightly.

JACK (as Orth): Do you have the capacity as a Divine to... engage... successfully with Ibex?

ART (as Addax): I have no idea.

AUSTIN: When Divines fight, millions of people die.

JACK: And does Addax know that?

AUSTIN: I'm sorry, that's a thing you all felt just now.

JACK: [quietly] Oh, okay.

AUSTIN: That's a thing Peace is telling you.

JACK (as Orth): Right. Well. Um, I think that, uh, I am starting to get to a point where I—I think I might call it for the night. Um. There's a lot of stuff to be done on the Kingdom Come. I think that if we could assemble some sort of strategy before first bell tomorrow, um... we can't let him on board. We can't let him on board.

ART (as Addax): Well, what's our other choice?

ALI (as Jace): I mean—we're pilots, you're telling us to deal with an attack. We could do that. We could do that, right, team? We've done that.

SYLVIA (as Tea): Uh. Yeah. L—I don't how—how big is this guy's force, Addax? Do—

ART (as Addax): There's no way to tell. He could—he could have—he could have any—he could have literally anything out there. I mean, not literally anything. But y'know. Figuratively literally anything out there.

JACK (as Orth): Is it in our interests to attempt to consult... Peace? [laughs] Who has previously chipped in on this conversation.

AUSTIN: Is that a thing Orth says out loud?

ALI: Yeah, does Orth have that much like understanding of what that was?

AUSTIN: Orth knows. Orth—I—you know.

ALI: Okay. Yeah.

JACK: Might—

AUSTIN: Orth's read Wikipedia.

ALI: Right. Well there we go.

JACK: Yeah.

AUSTIN: We've established this fact. So is that a thing Orth says out loud, or is that—

JACK: Yes, I think so.

AUSTIN: Okay.

ART: Ugh. But I don't want them to see me afraid to ask my... Divine for guidance here.

[JACK laughs]

ART (as Addax): You're right. Peace probably knows more than I do about this situation. Yeah, I'm asking Peace—

AUSTIN: You're ask—you're asking Peace? Okay. I'm gonna use my GM powers.

JACK: Oh, Jesus, he's gonna make another thing, isn't here?

ART: Another decision, or another...?

KEITH: Wait, what are the things?

AUSTIN: I'm gonna make a prediction.

JACK: Oh, when Austin writes in that box, and the last time this happened.... Ibex wanted to come on board.

AUSTIN: Ah, yeah, here we go. It's a simple statement that Peace makes. Like it's—it's said with a sort of finality and... resignation. And it's that—it's that

AUSTIN (as Peace): If you say no, there will be serious military losses.

ART: That could mean anything.

AUSTIN: Yeah.

[JACK laughs]

SYLVIA: Yeah.

ALI: Right, that's not just us, like they're—military's big.

AUSTIN: Mm. Ah. Sorry.

[ALI laughs]

SYLVIA: Aahh...

AUSTIN: That's—sorry. You're right. That's not—Peace would say,

AUSTIN (as Peace): You will all *suffer* serious military losses.

ALI: [resigned] Ahh!

SYLVIA: Well, um... I think the giant, almost omnipotent talking robot changed Tea's mind a bit there.

[ALI laughs]

KEITH: So basically what we're saying, we'll all suffer military losses or Orth and Natalya won't make it out of this thing alive.

[AUSTIN, JACK and KEITH laugh]

AUSTIN: Right, and Righteousness and Ibex get to fly by your side, right. That's—there's a bigger prediction there, with yes, is Ibex gets to be in every scene going forward.

JACK: What time is it?

AUSTIN: In space?

JACK: On—planetside.

AUSTIN: [disappointed] Oh.

JACK: Like presumably we know what time it is down...

AUSTIN: I mean, it's every time on the planet, because that's how planets work.

JACK: Sorry. Okay, yeah.

AUSTIN: Uh.

[KEITH laughs]

ALI: Don't be rude!

KEITH: Oh, you mean it's not like Star Wars where each planet has one city?

AUSTIN: Right. Right. Uh, no. But let's say like at the spaceport place... it's evening. I think. This feels like an evening talk. Right?

JACK: Mm.

ART: Yeah.

SYLVIA: Yeah.

ART: Where you eat dinner, people are telling us all of our friends are going to die.

AUSTIN: Also—yeah. Also.

ART: Kind of charming, but terrifying.

AUSTIN: Y'know. Good evening talk.

SYLVIA: I mean, that's not something you do over lunch.

AUSTIN: Yeah. Exactly.

ALI: Can I kinda—I f—so like Jace wants to be impressive, right?

AUSTIN: Yeah.

ALI: So I feel like...

AUSTIN: Hah.

ALI: Everyone's sort of like unnerved after that Peace thing, and Jace is just sort of like,

ALI (as Jace): Listen, we... brought them here to leave them here, right? And if you don't even know what Ibex is, maybe having him closer will help us understand that.

AUSTIN: Oh, okay. I thought you were going in a *different* direction here.

ALI: No, Jace is—

JACK: In the sense of like a “keep your friends close and your enemies closer?”

AUSTIN: Okay.

ALI: Yeah. Jace is pretty firmly saying like,

ALI (as Jace): So we've just learned that a bunch of people are going to die if we don't do this. And we fear this guy, but we don't—you can't even tell me what he is and what he has, like. We can just let him on, and learn what that is. At the very least.

AUSTIN: Not knowing. Not knowing is why he is dangerous.

JACK: That seems like a fairly good argument for—well, as good an argument as we're going to get for bringing him closer—I am caught between my Fear and my Issue, right now. My Fear being that—the Kingdom will be used as a pawn in larger conflicts, so that's if we vote yes and Ibex comes on board. Versus my Issue, which is I know the assignment is a well-calculated suicide mission meant to get rid of me—

AUSTIN: Uh-huh.

SYLVIA: Yeah...



JACK: —my troublesome crew, an heir, and a powerful Divine, which is if we vote no and suffer military losses.

SYLVIA: I—a hundred percent feeling that, actually. I'm kinda in the situation, where it's like. I don't want to help this dude at all, but I also don't want the people I'm responsible for to die.

JACK (as Orth): We need to make a call.

SYLVIA: Yeah.

JACK: And I think this is—I think this is Orth saying that. Whose—

AUSTIN: This is—

ART: This is my scene, we can call it, I mean...

AUSTIN: —this is Addax's.

JACK: Addax's.

AUSTIN: Yeah, I think that's the end of the scene, is—I like the end of the scene almost being this like impasse. Of like, well.

JACK: Yeah. Just people completely stuck.

**[1:00:02]**

AUSTIN: Yeah. As the Earth—or as the planet turns below. Is that Crossroad? I'm guessing it's Crossroad?

ART: Yeah. Who didn't do Crossroad? 'Cause usually we're done at this point.

DRE: We did one Crisis.

ART: Someone did Crisis? All right.

AUSTIN: Someone did Crisis.

KEITH: Someone did Crisis.

JACK: I did Crisis.

AUSTIN: So it's—that's fair. Sokrates.

DRE: Austin, can I react to that scene?

AUSTIN: Totally.

DRE: Or at least attempt to?

AUSTIN: Absolutely.

DRE: I wanna Challenge “you will all suffer serious military losses.”

AUSTIN: Sure. How?

DRE: ...The Rapid Evening has a military response if Righteousness attempts to be violent.

AUSTIN: Okay. Then so the way Challenges work is that the person being Challenged gets to say either no, that’s not enough, at which choice you get to Overthrow them, which is—I won’t ever do that as the GM. For my predictions, I will only ever give you “yes, if”s. In this case, it’s “yes, if you reveal to the rest of the crew that you are a member of the Rapid Evening.”

[JACK laughs]

DRE: Oh yeah. Yeah. Yeah, totally.

AUSTIN: Okay.

DRE: Yeah.

AUSTIN: So I will cross this out... But they don’t know that yet, right. That’s...

DRE: Mhm.

AUSTIN: Unless you’re doing that in advance, in which case yeah, um... Well—actually tell me what that reaction—actually describe that scene to me. That can’t just be a thing you say like give me the...

DRE: Yeah. So I think it is—it’s Natalya is like listening, you know, she’s either listening or watching you know through her bugs that she has. And basically like flips open her space iPad and puts in some secret code combination that accesses the Rapid Evening programming within it.

AUSTIN: Mhm.

DRE: And sends like a super high priority SOS.

AUSTIN: Okay. That's interesting... Okay. Next scene is Sokrates. Also, so—I guess my question is, do you communicate that to them in some way, about—without, at this point, saying you're part of the Rapid Evening? Do you say something at all about like assuring them that that won't happen?

DRE: Um. I guess it's... That depends on mechanics-wise, like when it comes time for the Power people to decide like what choicing we're make, is there a mechanic in place where I could do that as like a contingency if they choose yes?

AUSTIN: Yeah. So you could totally... there's a—there's a—you could just Challenge... Wait what do you mean if they—oh, if they choose yes... No. If they choose yes, you could Challenge them choosing yes?

DRE: Mhm.

AUSTIN: But you couldn't - you couldn't go in at that point and change your—that prediction. Whereas if they chose no, you could go in at that point and Challenge that prediction so that it doesn't come true. But—my suggestion is that like Orth was with you earlier, saying like “Hey, show me what this ship can really do.”

DRE: Mhm.

AUSTIN: It might be easy enough to tell him like, “Ehh, don't worry about it. Yeah, that ship is way more powerful than you're giving it credit for.”

DRE: Yeah. Okay.

AUSTIN: And then like that could spread a little bit and cancel out that prediction.

DRE: Okay. Sure.

AUSTIN: Which is not the case. The case is not actually “the ship is going to save them,” and they will still find out that you are in fact a member of this weird secret group.

DRE: Mhm. That's fine.

AUSTIN: And we'll have to talk about that. But.

DRE: Yeah.

AUSTIN: Yeah. Okay! Sokrates.

KEITH: Hi.

AUSTIN: What's up?

KEITH: Just thinking about scenes.

AUSTIN: Yeah.

[DRE laughs]

AUSTIN: So what are you—[in singsong voice] What're you thinkin' about?

[ALI laughs]

KEITH: Uh... [laughs] I think—man, I feel like—I feel like [coughs] 'scuse me. Dre's was a real clincher.

AUSTIN: Yeah. This can be a short little thing for you that just advances a little bit.

KEITH: Yeah, sure. I guess, um. I guess I could—I could do sort of a—a sort of 'on my lonesome' scene, you know looking down at the planet, thinking about... the safety of the refugees and what it really means for two Divines to have to fight each other?

AUSTIN: Yeah.

KEITH: And of Peace's warning that millions of people die when two Divines fight, which is crazy.

AUSTIN: Yep.

KEITH: And about, y'know, how either way that this goes, there are severe consequences.

AUSTIN: Okay. That sounds good. Let's advance that. Where was that happening? I do want an image. Was that just in—

KEITH: That's in—that's—I would say that's in my private quarters.

AUSTIN: Okay.

KEITH: That's the first time I haven't had to run and get someone.

AUSTIN: Yeah. 'S true. Yeah, that—which is interesting, right? Like all these other decisions are happening everywhere else, and Sokrates is alone in their ship, in their quarters, like “Cool. This is working out the way I intended, totally.”

[ALI laughs]

AUSTIN: “I’m a hero. I’m going to save everyone.” Alright. It is time to resolve... this... Crossroad. ...When... you... resolve—do you wanna end the game here? I think we wanna end this session, maybe. It is late. It has been a long time. This is going to be broken up into multiple episodes for sure.

Set the Stage. Let’s read what the cards say. “Will the Kingdom allow Ibex and Righteousness to join? If yes, the refugees get to stay on Glimmer, the refugees will be safe, and Orth and Natalya will not make it out of this thing alive. If no, Natalya and the Gambit will place the refugees on the planet at a cost.”—what that cost is, maybe not clear yet. We’ll have to decide that in the playing. Or—yeah, we’ll have to decide it in the playing. “Refugees will become supporters of Ibex, and Natalya will be outed as a member of the Rapid Evening.”

So, step one: Decision, Power. How you feelin’, Powers?

ART: Um.

JACK: [morosely] Awful.

ART: Uh.

[AUSTIN laughs]

ART: Uh.

JACK: I love to play fun and relaxing games with my friends.

[SYLVIA laughs]

AUSTIN: Yeah.

ART: No. ...Ah, fuck! ...No? Question mark?

[ALI, AUSTIN and DRE laugh]

JACK: Here’s what I would say, is—oh, we can’t see the map. But we’ve got a lot of—

AUSTIN: Oh, I'll pull you back on the map, I'll pull you back. Gimme a second here. There you go.

JACK: Right. We've got a lot of space between us and Sigilia.

AUSTIN: It's three jumps. That's not that far.

JACK: Okay. But do we want three jumps with Ibex and Righteousness pissed, chasing us? Or do we want three... [head in hands] oh, oh, my god...

[AUSTIN and ART laugh]

ART: You—k—just kinda trailed off there, Jack.

[ALI laughs]

JACK: Oh yeah? Yeah? [laughs] I think the problem is that I was way more confident when we were going to suffer massive military losses. [laughs]

[AUSTIN and ALI laugh]

JACK: And now, I am less confident. I was definitely going to vote yes. And now I am—[sighs] Where are you looking, Art?

ART: Addax, the person who has to live with this choice, wants to vote no. Art, the person who wants fun, dramatic stories to come out of this, wants to vote yes. And one of these two has to lose. Like, I think it's a fun story to have us—

AUSTIN: That's true.

ART: —with Ibex... going north, seeing what happens, savin' the galaxy. But. It's a stupid decision, it's really stupid.

AUSTIN: [laughs] Uh-huh.

JACK: Is Orth s—the question—this kind of gets to the point of like—is Orth showing us this in retrospect because he stood next to Ibex on a ship as something terrible happened, or is he showing us this in retrospect because he saw Ibex on a comm link hundreds of thousands of miles away doing something horrific?

AUSTIN: I will note, none of these—none of the—the prediction for no is not “And then Ibex will leave the game forever.”

JACK: Right. Exactly. Yeah.

AUSTIN: So—I—yeah.

JACK: I am very afraid that if we vote no, Ibex is going to go, “Oh, well, that was a bad move.”

AUSTIN: Well, you know. That’s. You know. We’ll see.

KEITH: I mean, the game doesn’t end either way.

AUSTIN: Correct.

KEITH: Right, like, choosing yes doesn’t mean that we lost.

ALI: Yeah, like the central conflict is still gonna be here.

AUSTIN: Mhm. [tauntingly] But still.

ALI: But we are trying to learn about him, just a reminder for the Chime.

ART: I can learn lots of things, from all sorts of places.

[ALI laughs]

ART: Maybe we get to the end, and they’re like, “Oh, and here’s all—”

JACK: Every—

ART: “—here’s our—” the head of the Diaspora Intelligence Services goes, “Here’s our full dossier on... Ibex you can read now for your great work.”

[Laughter]

JACK: No. Orth is voting no, and here’s why. Orth went in to see Natalya saying “I’ve got a plan, everything’s gonna be fine, we’re gonna bring him on board, and then we’re gonna spy on him,” and Natalya said “You are making the biggest mistake you have ever made.” From that point on, every person Orth saw said “You are making the biggest mistake you have ever made bringing him on board the ship.”

AUSTIN: Mhm.

JACK: Up to the point where military losses were suggested, when Orth began to get a bit worried. But the way that he was placated was by Natalya, a person who I guess he respects,

because Natalya built his ship, said, “You know what, no, your ship’s gonna be fine. Your ship’s gonna do okay.” And I think that that, to an extent, would stroke Orth’s ego, because he’s like “Yeah, my ship can do okay.” And in combination with the fact that everybody else has been saying “Do not bring Ibex onboard,” I think I’m going to vote no.

ART: All right. Austin, can we talk about—can we talk about patriotism? And what patriotism means in this context?

AUSTIN: Yeah. Let’s—good lord. How long do you have?

ART: I mean—I’m—it’s early here.

[Laughter]

AUSTIN: Right, okay, let’s talk.

ART: Addax believes fully in the Diaspora’s perfection.

AUSTIN: Correct.

ART: Help me—help me project this onto this situation.

AUSTIN: Which in—so like—

ART: Does that mean that he believes in—the Divines?

AUSTIN: Might not—

ART: Or does that mean he believes in Grace?

AUSTIN: I think he beli—no, I think he believes in—I think one of the things he believes in, and maybe this is me projecting, is that part of the thing that makes democracy work is dissensus, is... conflict between interested parties. And so, you know, Ibex isn’t—Ibex can’t be bad, ‘cause if Ibex was bad, then the Diaspora would be imperfect. Right? Ibex must therefore be good, and the only spin on that that Addax can think of is that at the very least, Ibex’s presence pushes things towards improvement. Even if Ibex is wrong in the specific, his presence is a catalyst for positive change as the—as the republic fixes things.

ART: And I have had no s—and Addax has no specific negative interactions.

AUSTIN: There’s a rivalry. And at that point, you have to—you have to think about how much of a person Addax is, and how—you know—willing to let your personality interfere. In which case, we should show that. In other words, Addax was this rising star. Addax has since been sent off



on—you know, has been—has been given to this mission, which is important, but is not like... you're not a front-line hero right now.

ART: Sure, this isn't glamorous.

AUSTIN: And you're not being—right, and you're not with Grace—who is one of the leaders—and you're not with Righteousness either, right, you're not with any of the Divines who have strong political control. And maybe that's okay, like maybe that's what your job is, but it's up to think about how Addax as an individual thinks about themselves in their—himself in this role, you know?

ART: All right, I—ugh. Augh, that makes it harder! I—you had—until the very—

AUSTIN: Yeah, sorry. My answer was totally—

ART: —end that you had me for a total yes—but at the end it was like—but it's like—you're—you know—it feels like I should say no because I'm gonna do this, I'm gonna be the hero. Forget Righteousness. He could have been in on this, and he decided no until we were at his doorstep.

AUSTIN: Right. Let me read what happens when there's a stalemate?

ART: Sure. Yeah.

JACK: Oh, dear.

AUSTIN: Just in case. So in this case, this would be if Addax went yes and if Orth went no. *"If the result is a tie, it is a stalemate and the Crossroad won't—"* oh, sorry. *"Count the votes. The majority wins. Unless someone changes the outcome by interrupting to Challenge someone's vote, change their Role to Power, or overcome someone's Power, the Crossroad is now decided."*

So in other words, unless someone Challenges one of these votes to change it to be—let's say Addax went yes and Orth went no. At that point, we would have a stalemate. Unless someone said no, I'm gonna Challenge your vote, in which case they'd get to make a proposition and say change it to yes, if I do this thing. Or if they Overthrow someone and say no, I'm the Power, I get to decide what happens. Or unless they say, in fact, my character has stopped being the thing they were before: we'll have one less of that thing, and now I'm also a Power, and we will outvote you two-to-one.

If they don't do any of that, then it's a stalemate, and if it's a stalemate, the crossroad won't—*"Crossroad won't be decided yet. It remains in play. If there are no Power characters, and no one decides to take Power—"* That's not—that's not relevant. But—you then skip the rest of Crossroad, and add two more checkboxes to the Crossroad, and when they're checked

again, you try to resolve it again. So it just gets—it gets worse and worse. And we'll just have to revisit it. So I guess I'm pushing towards actually resolving it, unless you think we need more scenes to resolve it. Or someone making a dramatic action, in one direction or the other, to push things.

ART: I mean, I don't think more scenes is what's gonna help.

AUSTIN: Also... at a stalemate, the Touchstone gets to decide how people react, and each Touchstone may check or uncheck a box of Crisis. If there's a stalemate.

JACK: Is there gonna be a stalemate, Art?

ART: I really—I really kinda want—I—ugh, fuck! Yeah, I'm voting yes.

JACK: Oh, j...

AUSTIN: Right now... Right now there's a stalemate. Addax thinks that we should take Righteousness on—Righteousness and Ibex on, Orth says no. Is that correct? Just to be...

JACK: Yes.

AUSTIN: Okay.

ART: Yep.

AUSTIN: Is anyone interrupting this to push this one way or the other?

DRE: [tightly] Uh, maybe? [laughs] Maybe.

AUSTIN: So, during the resolution, every player can interrupt once. Except if you—if you interrupt to say I'm gonna Challenge that, change your vote because I'm changing the circumstances and then the person says no, then you could say all right, well, fuck you, I'm actually Overthrowing you. So that's the only time that you can—that you can interrupt twice. But so yeah. Is anyone interrupting to Challenge one of these votes, and—

DRE: What are the—what are the—what are like the gameplay differences between like switching Roles, so like if I switched—

AUSTIN: So.

DRE: —to a Power Role, versus Challenging or interrupting.

AUSTIN: Right. If you don't switch, the other person gets to keep their Role, but it means that they're still there as a—in that Role, right. ...So, yeah. That's it. That's the big difference. I'm gonna read this so you can think about it. *"Interrupt: take a stand. If you don't like how the Crossroad is turning out, you can do something about it. You can interrupt the normal steps of the Crossroad resolution to challenge something, change your Role, or overthrow another player's role. Usually you wait to hear what other players are doing with their Roles and then decide whether to interrupt."*

Here's their example, which I'll read. *"The Duchess, Power, is pushing the Crossroad towards war with no opposition. A Perspective cha—character doesn't want that, so he interrupts to change his Role to Power and then votes 'No' to create a stalemate. He could have tried to overthrow the Duchess instead and take her Power away."* That's a good use of creating a stalemate, right, is like, oh, now I'm the new Power, so that we have more scenes to maybe push this the other direction. *"Much like the limits on using or switching Roles, there are limits,"* blah blah blah, that's not gonna come up here. Um. Yeah. So, you can totally... make a Challenge here. Otherwise we're s—we're here for another two scenes. At least. Minimum.

[1:16:07]

DRE: I just—I can't think of a—like a way—

AUSTIN: Well.

DRE: —that she could Challenge Addax for the reasons that he's voting yes.

AUSTIN: So, Challenging—I—maybe I should illustrate Challenging a bit more broadly, which is that a Challenge—a Challenge would be you saying to Art, "Would you change your vote if...?" And that can be big. That could be like anything from I give you—my character gives your character this bribe, to like, I threaten your character with physical violence, to, I display some power or secret. Do you know what I mean?

DRE: Yeah.

AUSTIN: Though in this case, you've already kind of promised that, in a way.

DRE: Yeah.

AUSTIN: I'll read the section here though. *"When you wanna Challenge something, follow—use the following steps. Declare: Announce what you're Challenging and who did it or established it. That player is the defender. Two. Show us how you Challenge it. Roleplay or narrate what you do to stop the defender did—what the defender did or established. Three. If you are Challenging something the defender did with their Role, and they don't have that Role..."* don't worry about that... *"Good enough. The defender gets to decide if what you did works. This is a decision the*

*player makes, not the character. They choose one of these replies: Yes; no; or yes, if.*" In which case, this could just be—so Addax said yes, right?

ART: Yes.

ALI: Yeah.

AUSTIN: [clears throat] Natalya could literally interfere somehow with the proceedings so that that yes becomes a no. I don't know what that looks like—

DRE: Yeah.

AUSTIN: —but like it doesn't have to be that you convince Addax to vote no. It could be that Addax's vote turns into a no based on some sort of interference, or it could be that you convince him. Or you convince Art as player. Not necessarily Addax, you know?

DRE: Yeah. Um. It's like this is like tough because it's like it's the end of a long game, and this when you need to like—have your best stuff but like everybody's tired. [laughs]

AUSTIN: Yeah. Uh-huh. Everyone's exhausted. I know. But that's—

KEITH: Okay, so hold on, if we're not sure exactly how we're going to proceed here in terms of changing Art's to a no or whether or not to overthrow him, how about instead, I interfere with Jack?

AUSTIN: Sure.

DRE: Oh, yeah.

AUSTIN: I mean, you could make—everyone could interfere.

ALI: Yeah.

AUSTIN: What do you want to do with Jack?

KEITH: Yeah. I w—[laughs] I would to f—to first—I would like to try to interfere, go into—is this all being decided in a big room, or is this—are we—is it like separate right now?

AUSTIN: It's way—it's whatever we need it to be.

KEITH: Okay. So then, I'm going to... approach Orth, by himself, and I'm going to tell him like,

KEITH (as Sokrates): Hey, I feel like we're not thinking about what our mission is. Our mission is to go and stop this weapon of—just unbelievable scale from being built. Ibex is dangerous and a thorn in our sides, but we have no reason to think that he wouldn't be helpful in what is basically a suicide mission, from your own words.

JACK: All right.

AUSTIN: Orth, does that convince you, or do you need more? Or, would it not convince you? So yes, no, or yes-if. And here you could even understand the Challenge as being like a dramatic speech about your responsibility.

JACK: ...Oh, man!

AUSTIN: Uh-huh.

JACK: Um. ...Orth... Orth brought in the food for the refugees into the dome.

AUSTIN: Yeah, he did. Remember? He like went all the way... out of his... like, literally, he paid his own money.

JACK: To the point where he got kidnapped.

AUSTIN: Yeah. So that he could feed people.

JACK: And he... didn't he work with the Apostolosians, at that point?

AUSTIN: He did. He was willing to do that, yeah, totally. They were like one of his contacts for recovering that stuff.

ALI: Yeah, they were the ones who actually like recovered the food after he... did that.

AUSTIN: And. Yes, a hundred percent.

[DRE laughs]

JACK: So I reckon...

AUSTIN: Uh-huh.

JACK: That whatever the hell Sokrates says... makes Orth... thank him<sup>2</sup>, and salute, and then turn round and walk back into the cockpit of the Kingdom Come, where he dials Ibex.

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<sup>2</sup> Sokrates uses they/them pronouns.

AUSTIN: Okay. And says yes?

JACK: Yes.

AUSTIN: Where does Ibex stay, do you think?

JACK: [laughing] On the Kingdom Come?

AUSTIN: Okay.

JACK: It's where the refugees were.

AUSTIN: Well, it's where some of them were. Yeah, they were all over the place, but yeah. ...All right, let's f—let's narrate this stuff... out. Um. I'm really glad you caught that, Jack. That's a really good future connection. That's a really good like "Oh, this is why he did that." It's not just 'cause he's like a nice man. It's 'cause he has history here.

JACK: Yeah.

AUSTIN: Um.... Okay.

SYLVIA: I was muted, but I was making noises while you put that together—

AUSTIN: [amused] Okay.

[DRE and JACK laugh]

SYLVIA: —and I was like ahhh!

AUSTIN: Yeah. Uh, okay. Here we go... nope, not overthrow. Here we go. Okay. So. Orders. No orders over here on the left. That's good. That's good.

[ALI laughs]

AUSTIN: [sighs] Predictions!

[Loud breaths]

AUSTIN: I'm gonna decide myyy prediction came true!

ART: That's good. Yeah, that would be—that would be a real dick move.

AUSTIN: I'm not gonna be that asshole. No.

[ALI laughs]

AUSTIN: Yeah. Jace, does yours come true?

ALI: Uh, yeah!

AUSTIN: Awesome. So the refugees will be safe. How do you narra—how—let's—between the two of us, how do we narrate that they are allowed and that they will be safe?

ALI: Um. And it has—doesn't have to be anything like big, and dramatic, right?

AUSTIN: [encouragingly] No! Totally not.

ALI: It's just like—you know, it's like a scene of them going through the gates and like filling out paperwork—

AUSTIN: Yeah.

ALI: —and their fingerprints are being signed, and then like—

AUSTIN: And like, they're being treated with respect?

ALI: Right, yeah, exactly. And then like...

AUSTIN: They have families there, maybe, even?

ALI: Right, or at least people like—they're brought into like—housing—

AUSTIN: Mhm

ALI: —and like there's a facility that they go into, and there like, there's beds, with like pillows, and it's not like a shitty spaceship, and like it all looks like it's fine.

AUSTIN: Totally.

SYLVIA: They're gonna get the um [voice trailing off] people from the other planet, aren't they...?

AUSTIN: Yes. I think? M—mm. Mm?

SYLVIA: I was wondering if that was part of the agreement. We never really clarified.

[ALI laughs]

AUSTIN: That was never made part of the agreement, was it?

SYLVIA: Damn!

ALI: [amused] We never just—

JACK: Wait, what was the matter with the agreement?

SYLVIA: We might have got played.

AUSTIN: That—that they would go back and pick up the previous refugees, the—more refugees from Glimmer.

[???]: Like— [1:22:49]

[JACK sighs]

ALI: [???]

AUSTIN: No one made that case.

ALI: [laughs] [???]

AUSTIN: You know, it's not too late, a Perspective could still jump in and predict that.

[SYLVIA laughs]

KEITH: Sorry, what was the—what's the thing we missed?

AUSTIN: No one predicted or ordered that more um... that more... that the remaining refugees from Glimmer would be brought here.

KEITH: Oh, from, you mean—Gemm?

AUSTIN: Yeah.

ALI: Right.

AUSTIN: Mhm. From Gemm. Mentioned Glimmer, my bad.

KEITH: Okay. Yeah.



AUSTIN: Yeah. Huh.

KEITH: Yeah, we could still—we could still do that.

ALI: Yeah, I feel that's a prediction that could...

AUSTIN: I think that's a thing you can still do predict, let me just double check.

ALI: ...could be made, though...

AUSTIN: I might be wrong, though. Actually, I might be wrong, you can't—sorry—

SYLVIA: Sorry.

AUSTIN: Sorry, you can interrupt to Challenge a prediction that's been made, you can't interrupt to make a new prediction.

ALI: Well.

AUSTIN: So. Y'know.

SYLVIA: Oops.

AUSTIN: That—that actually makes a lot of sense, based on the way the future turns out.

SYLVIA: Yeah.

AUSTIN: Which is that like, y'know, at this point, in the future... Ibex is still trying to gather a bunch of people together? And in the future, Gemm is still a fucking hellhole, filled with people who are in miserable condition.

JACK: [sadly] Hah.

ALI: [sadly] Oh, right. True.

AUSTIN: So I kind of like a little bit the like, oh, we got so caught up on dealing with what we had that we did not, in fact, save the people from before.

DRE: Mm.

AUSTIN: So.

ALI: We're all kind of *not* good at this.

AUSTIN: Kind of. Uh, Natalya. How do you want to signal that Orth and Natalya won't make it out of this thing alive?

DRE: Um. So I'm picturing a scene where like Orth is coming to Natalya's quarters to like tell her face to face his decision?

AUSTIN: Yeah! Yeah.

DRE: Um. And like while he's walking down the hallway, it cuts to Natalya in her room on her Rapid Evening space iPad.

AUSTIN: Mhm.

DRE: And she's like furiously like typing like y'know like "I need extraction," like "This is gonna go south."

AUSTIN: Mhm. Oh.

DRE: And then something pops up on the display...

AUSTIN: Uh-huh.

DRE: Like, her—whatever her like space WiFi connection signal is like—that icon disappears.

AUSTIN: Uh-huh.

DRE: And then like lines of code that do not look—like she doesn't know what they are, but she knows who it is.

AUSTIN: Right. Right.

DRE: Just start like appearing on her iPad, and she like throws it against the wall right as Orth opens the door.

AUSTIN: Uh-huh. And like, there is no contacting the Rapid Evening anymore, because like you're on Righteousness' WiFi now.

DRE: Mhm.

AUSTIN: Good.

DRE: Um. And maybe as Orth opens the door like y'know he sees like this iPad go flying against the wall, and like all the blood drains from her face. And she says something like along the lines of,

DRE (as Natalya): I'm not who you think I am.

AUSTIN: Heh. Okay. I like that a lot.

DRE: And that's how she wraps Orth up in this too.

AUSTIN: Yeah. I like it. I like it. Um. And also now of course, Righteousness and Ibex know that too, right? *"Each Touchstone decides whether everything that has happened during this Crossroad resolution (the decision, the outcome and the predictions, etc.) has brought the Kingdom closer to a disaster or calmed the situation down."*

SYLVIA: Hoo.

AUSTIN: Pretty sure—

[Laughter]

AUSTIN: Uh—I also just realized—

KEITH: Wait, sorry, what was the sentence? What was the...?

AUSTIN: Do you think all this has *"brought the Kingdom closer to a disaster or calmed the situation down. Show what your character thinks about what has happened. Say where you are and what you think. This shows how the people of the Kingdom feel."* And then two, *"If you think it's bad, you may check a Crisis box."* Also, if you think it's good, you may *uncheck* a Crisis box, which I don't think you did last turn. Did you?

KEITH: No. No one—I didn't actually even know enough to do that.

AUSTIN: Yeah, I did a bad. I did—you got—

KEITH: I wouldn't have, but—

AUSTIN: Yeah, I think next turn, right?

KEITH: Oh no, I would have. Yeah yeah yeah yeah.

AUSTIN: Sylvia, you also... would Tea have unchecked, last turn?

SYLVIA: I don't think so. I think last turn it was more of a...

AUSTIN: Okay. Just leave it be? Okay.

SYLVIA: ...like no, things don't get better, but they don't get worse.

AUSTIN: Okay. That's fair. Okay. That's fair. Yeah. So, we're at two Crisis boxes right now, it sounded like maybe both of you wanted to light up another Crisis box.

SYLVIA: Yeah, I think so! It's bad!

KEITH: Yeah, it's worse now.

SYLVIA: Give me a picture of Tea and give me a picture of Sokrates.

KEITH: Well, you know what? Actually, this—I will—I believe—

AUSTIN: Okay.

KEITH: I believed enough in that it was a good idea for Ibex to come onboard that I convinced—

AUSTIN: Yeah, totally! Yeah, you don't get to fuckin' make this a Crisis.

KEITH: —I went and convinced Orth not—so, I guess I'm gonna go remain neutral.

AUSTIN: Yeah. Okay.

SYLVIA: I'm not!

[Laughter]

SYLVIA: No, Tea is... ah...

AUSTIN: What's this look like for—what's Tea doing when this happens? So, I think it's literally—y'know. Ibex makes it a fucking photo op. Right? Like—

SYLVIA: Yeah, totally.

AUSTIN: Shaking Addax's—salutes Addax, shakes hands with Orth, and then like—does like a little bow for Jace.

SYLVIA: Yeah.

[ALI laughs]

SYLVIA: And, um. Ugh.

KEITH: Yeah. Ibex is a real schmoozer.

AUSTIN: Oh, he's a fucking piece of work.

SYLVIA: Yeah. Um.

ALI: I'm in love with him.

AUSTIN: Ah, he has a very nice like suit on. There's no buttons or anything. You don't really understand how it closes.

SYLVIA: Ugh!!

AUSTIN: But it's not like a—he's not like wearing a sweater, it's definitely a suit, you just don't under—

SYLVIA: [laughs] It's a tearaway suit!

AUSTIN: Yeah. It's perfect.

SYLVIA: He's just gonna rip at a moment's notice.

KEITH: No no no, do you wanna know the secret? Do you wanna know the secret? It's Velcro.

AUSTIN: Yeah. It's Velcro, don't—don't tell anyone.

JACK: I like—

KEITH: It looks very sophisticated, but when you hear him try to take it off—

SYLVIA: Wait—

[???]: [very bad Velcro foley] [1:29:59]

KEITH: —you know immediately he has on one of those velcro suits.

SYLVIA: Is that one of those suit onesies?

AUSTIN: Yes. And he looks *amazing*.

SYLVIA: Yeah.

JACK: I guess like—is the other terrifying thing about this that he doesn't have a visible Divine with him?

AUSTIN: Correct.

JACK: That he is literally just boarding the Kingdom Come carrying like a bag?

AUSTIN: By himself. Yeah. No bag.

JACK: He's just—he just walks onto the Kingdom Come and that's it.

AUSTIN: Yeah. Uh-huh.

JACK: But everybody knows that there is a Divine there.

AUSTIN: Yes.

ART: [enthusiastically] I think you're selling it short, Jack! I think that's not the only terrifying thing going on here.

AUSTIN: [laughs] Oh, boy... Uh, so yeah, what's Tea's—yeah.

SYLVIA: Yeah. I think Tea is like standing off to the side during this. She spent like the morning trying to get her—like get the Oricon soldiers to chill the fuck out about the decision.

AUSTIN: Mhm.

SYLVIA: Um. It didn't work very well. Everyone is incredibly tense. And like it's clear that she's barely like—she's also incredibly tense, and like is putting on a face for the other soldiers. And, um... when, um... I think the way it works is that when... Ibex does the little bow to Jace, she checks to make sure that her sidearm is loaded.

AUSTIN: [laughs] Good. I like it.

SYLVIA: Yeah. And that's it.

AUSTIN: And that is how—that is how that side of the Kingdom is feeling. So it's—again, the Kingdom is split here. Um. Okay. The next stage of this is... let's make—that's totally good... Um... *"Reflection. One at a time, read your wish or fear aloud. Is that still what your character is thinking about? If not, you can change it. Tell us what made your attitude change."*

ART: I think I'm—I think I'm staying. That the—

AUSTIN: What is it?

ART: “That the Kingdom will end Apostolos’ terror permanently.” I think that’s still what Addax wants in his heart of hearts. He wants this mission to succeed—

AUSTIN: Okay.

ART: —that’s why he voted yes, that’s why he accepted this greater danger. He needs to save everyone. And he’s willing to shake hands with the devil to do it.

AUSTIN: Okay.

ART: Or in this case, be saluted to by the devil.

AUSTIN: Sounds good. Sokrates.

**[1:30:06]**

KEITH: Uh, mine—my wish is “that the Kingdom will be a symbol of unity for the whole sector.” I think that that is still true. I think that allowing Ibex onto the ship and not being concerned about it is token to that.

AUSTIN: Good. Orth?

JACK: Uh, my fear is that the King—[laughs] is “that the Kingdom will be used as a pawn in larger conflicts.”

[Laughter]

DRE: Huh.

SYLVIA: Oh, buddy.

DRE: How ‘bout that.

AUSTIN: How’s that going?

JACK: I am very afraid.

AUSTIN: Okay. Natalya?

DRE: Uh, fears “that the Kingdom’s new tech will hurt the sector in the end.” I don’t think that’s what she’s afraid of anymore.

AUSTIN: Right. In fact, like—yeah go—what do you think it is now?

DRE: She’s afraid that Ibex will expose and kill her.

AUSTIN: Good. Okay... Oh, no, it can’t be that. It cannot be about—sorry, I should be clear. Fears are about what the Kingdom—

DRE: Mm!

AUSTIN: Something that happens to the Kingdom, or that will happen through the Kingdom. Not about personal fears.

DRE: Gotcha.

AUSTIN: Not about like what happens to you.

DRE: Huuaaah...

AUSTIN: But I think you’re probably on the right track.

DRE: Yeah. [sighs] I mean, she’s terrified of Ibex.

AUSTIN: Yeah.

DRE: Um. So maybe it is just that she’s terrified “that Ibex will tear the Kingdom...”

AUSTIN: Okay.

DRE: “...apart.”

AUSTIN: Okay. Um... and then... do do do... Jace.

ALI: Uh, I fear “that the Kingdom will do more harm than good to the people of the Golden sector.”

AUSTIN: Mhm.

ALI: Uh. W... It’s tough, ‘cause I feel like that’s still true, but didn’t really come up through this?



AUSTIN: Uh. I don't know, I think that was—that's part of the whole refugee crisis, right? Is like.

ALI: Right, yeah.

AUSTIN: Are you here to help these people, or are you here to do this mission?

ALI: ...Yeah. Yeah, okay.

AUSTIN: So maybe that's—maybe, in fact, it's more of a wish than a fear?

ALI: Um...

AUSTIN: ...Is that—is that—is that more actionable if it's a wish? Where it's like Jace wishes that the Kingdom would be a force for good in this vague way?

ALI: Um, I guess—so that's like where all of Jace's motivations for this...

AUSTIN: Mhm.

ALI: .. came from, where it's just like, let's let 'em on, if it's gonna help these people, like what are you doing?

AUSTIN: Right. Yeah.

ALI: Um. And I guess that still comes from like a place of fear.

AUSTIN: Okay.

ALI: I'll leave it as a fear, yeah.

AUSTIN: Okay. And Tea.

SYLVIA: So... her current fear is uh, fears "that the everyday workers in the Kingdom will be ignored by the higher-ups."

AUSTIN: Mhm.

SYLVIA: Um. [sighs] I'm like tempted to change it, a little? To be like, uh... fear "that the mission will end up"—like fear "that like a catastrophe will happen to the people in the Kingdom that she wants to protect," or something along those lines.

AUSTIN: Mhm.

SYLVIA: 'Cause she's less afraid of being u—of the people she cares about being used, and more afraid of the people she's trying to protect being killed. If that makes sense.

AUSTIN: Yeah. Okay. Yeah. Uh—

SYLVIA: I'm not sure how to word it precisely.

AUSTIN: Fears “that the people of the Kingdom... will be put into danger, into severe danger.” Yeah.

SYLVIA: Yeah.

AUSTIN: Yeah.

SYLVIA: Yeah, pretty much.

AUSTIN: Okay. Uh... and then I check the check time passes box, because time is always movin'. Uh, and then we're gonna—wrap up just about now, but I just wanna peek ahead just a little bit. Do you wanna go to Coral or to Wreathe, next?

ALI: Wreathe was like the pretty one, right?

AUSTIN: Wreathe is an oceanic—

[SYLVIA laughs loudly]

AUSTIN: —oceanic world that's been recently colon—colonized and is pacifistic. And uh—and Coral is where Apostolosians are struggling to assimilate and are being maybe mistreated by the Divine Service.

JACK: Ah, taking Ibex to a pacifist world could never go wrong.

KEITH: Let's go there.

[ALI laughs]

SYLVIA: Yeah...

AUSTIN: I'm just gonna do this as straight up and down vote. Actually, no, this is a decision Powers get to make.

JACK: No, don't make us do this again!

[Laughter]

AUSTIN: How do you guys feel? Where do you wanna go? You gotta be quick.

DRE: Let's go to the beach.

ALI: This OVA should have a beach episode.

AUSTIN: Yeah, totally. All right, Wreathe.

ART: Wreathe. Yeah.

JACK: Wreathe. The beach.

AUSTIN: Well, let me just, uh.

SYLVIA: Oh my god.

AUSTIN: Give you a little narration before we wrap up today. For Wreathe.

It's funny. Well. Maybe it's not so funny. [laughs] On that—on that run from Glimmer to Wreathe, you would think that with the... with the refugees gone, you would have the supplies you need to continue the rest of your journey, you wouldn't be, you know, *undersupplied* here. Um. But somewhere along the line—maybe this was just a mistake of bookkeeping along the way with the refugees. Maybe something a little less on the up-and-up happened along the line? But it seems like you're down on food stores. And here's the thing. Wreathe has a bunch of food. And you really just need those supplies, like you need them. You won't be able to get where you're going without them. And so the question is... "Will the Kingdom take food and supplies from the people of Wreathe?"

KEITH: [whispering] Like. We can't do that!

ALI: Take is a really strong....

AUSTIN: Take is a very strong word.

DRE: Mhm.

ALI: Empathy is there, like, we're gonna...

AUSTIN: If no, one of the condit—one of the predictions, one of my GM predictions is that "you will have a military strike." We'll see you next week. Happy holidays...

KEITH: ...I put a really good joke in the chat.

AUSTIN: That's a good joke.

KEITH: Thanks. Thanks.

ART: It's a good joke. You could have said that out loud.

AUSTIN: I don't know why you didn't say it. Yeah.

KEITH: That's—I felt like I couldn't really attribute it to oxygen as effectively with words.

ART: Oh, 'cause you don't have like the vocal range to do a good oxygen impression?

AUSTIN: Who does a oxygen? Does—do any of us have a good oxygen in their back pocket?

KEITH: Wait—let me see if I—[whooshes by exhaling loudly]

[JACK laughs]

KEITH: How was that?

JACK: That's the sound oxygen makes.

SYLVIA: I don't know, sounded more like a hydrogen to me, but...

AUSTIN: Oh, yeah...

JACK: Mm.

AUSTIN: It's tough! It's like—that's like the difference between like an Australian and an English accent is basically the difference between a hydrogen and an oxygen.

JACK: [laughs] Yeah.

AUSTIN: Yeah.

ART: But you'll really offend hydrogens and oxygens if you say that.

AUSTIN: I know. Cut this one. Don't let this be in the full podcast.

JACK: Can you do a—can you do a potassium, Keith?

KEITH: A potassium?

JACK: Yeah.

KEITH: ...Yeah, that's sort of like a [makes wet squishing noise with mouth]

AUSTIN: Uh-huh!

KEITH: That's a—'cause it's a banana peel.

AUSTIN: It's a banana. Yeah.

SYLVIA: Ugh...

ART: Yeah.

JACK: Oh, yeah yeah yeah, that makes sense.

SYLVIA: Don't make that noise again.

KEITH: I can do any—I can do any molecule.

JACK: Can you?

KEITH: Any—any—I can do any molecule, and I can do any element.

[DRE laughs]

AUSTIN: Huh. Okay. That's good.

KEITH: Which is what I—you know. 'Cause that's an element and not a molecule.

DRE: Okay, nice.

AUSTIN: Let me uh—let me hear like a nice neon.

SYLVIA [???]: [grunts] [1:36:48]

JACK: [amused] No.

ART: This is an easy one.

KEITH: That's a noble gas, so it's like [voice lowered] Hm~!

[DRE laughs]

AUSTIN: Oh, okay.

[JACK laughs]

AUSTIN: Let me get, um—let me get, uhhh—let me get like a...

JACK: Cesium.

AUSTIN: Yeah. There you go.

DRE: Yeah.

KEITH: Cesium, um, clink! Clink! [quietly] Clink....

AUSTIN: Wait, what was that, can I get a—can we just turn the volume up on that little—but *you* shouldn't go louder, we just need the volume higher on that.

KEITH: Ah, yeah, I'll turn—I'll turn my mixer up, hold on—[coughs politely]

AUSTIN: Thank you. Okay, yeah, that's pretty good. That's not bad, that's not bad. Good.

KEITH: No.

JACK: Yeah.

KEITH: No, none of them are bad, they're all perfect! That's the—

ART: [villainously] Heh heh heh heh.

AUSTIN: Well, okay, let's slow down. Let's not—let's not say things we can't take back.

KEITH: [insistently] I can make any noise.

AUSTIN: Can I get a—like a stronetium? Strontium?

KEITH: Strontium... [coughs] Ugh...

AUSTIN: That's pretty good! Yeah, the cl—now it's good, yeah.

KEITH: Yeah. Yeah, and then it trie—the recovery at the end.

JACK: Is the lifetime of this bit how many elements we know?

KEITH: Oh, no, Austin's already started googling elements.

JACK: Oh. [laughs]

AUSTIN: [laughs] I have a whole list. I have a whole list...

ART: It's the periodic table?

JACK: With *all* the elements.

AUSTIN: It is—well, I guess—is that what this is, it's the periodic table! Yeah. That's what this is.

ART: Yeah. The element list.

KEITH: So like just every once in a while, we come back to it.

AUSTIN: Yeah, we can come back to this whenever we need to in the future now.

KEITH: Yeah, periodically.

[JACK laughs]

AUSTIN: I would like to hear—[laughs] Oh, boy...

ART: Boo...

[AUSTIN laughs]

ART: I turn on this bit, this podcast, this whole thing!

AUSTIN: [recovering] Oh, boy. Okay. We can stop.

ALI: We should go to Roll20?

AUSTIN: I'm on Roll20. I'm ready to go.

JACK: I'm not—I'm not on Roll20 yet. Do a time.is.

KEITH: Yeah, I'm on, yeah.

ART: Four of us are in Roll20 already.

ALI: Time.is... is uh Dre good?

DRE: Yes.

ALI: Cool.

AUSTIN: Was that your dad?

ART: But Keith is gone.

DRE: Yeah, that was.

AUSTIN: Oh, is Keith gone?

JACK: [surprised] Oh, Keith's just gone.

[ALI laughs]

DRE: Oh.

ALI: Cool.

JACK: Oh, no, he's back.

ALI: Keith?

AUSTIN: Welcome back.

KEITH: Hi.

ALI: Hello.

JACK: What happened?

KEITH: I was trying to listen to the pr—the pronunciation of a cheese, so that I could make a joke.

[Laughter]

KEITH: But I couldn't hear over you guys talking, so I hung up—



[Laughter]

JACK: Keith, do you want to say this cheese name?

KEITH: Well, no, because the pronunciation is *obviously wrong*. There's no way—there's no way that the cheese spelled B - U - C - H - E - R - O - N is pronounced “uhnewshron~”

AUSTIN: [jokingly] That's Roquefort. It's actually—it's weird—it's spelled weird? We call that Roquefort cheese.

KEITH: Yeah.

JACK: Yeah. Mm.

KEITH: Anyway, it's a cheese that I had the other day, but I didn't know how to pronounce it, so I wanted to look it up first. Uh, to no avail.

JACK: The best—the best cheese—

ALI: Do you remember when we got that like cave cheese from that place?

KEITH: —It was very good. It's a goat cheese, I think. What's that?

ALI: We went to that place with Joel and Amanda, and you got like cave cheese?

KEITH: Oh, I had—yeah, I had cave—I got cave-aged cheese.

AUSTIN: How was it?

JACK: Oh, nice! That's the best place for cheeses.

KEITH: I actually brought that restaurant up. It's called, uh, The Salty Pig? I brought it up to my cousin, Maura [???] [1:39:24] and she was like “Oh, I love [laughing] I love that place!” I was like, “Oh, god, anybody but Joel's heard of that place?”

[ALI and KEITH laugh]

ART: I also recently had—

AUSTIN: Is that—was that like a gruyère? What—

ART: —*cave-aged cheese*. It's—I think it's the new thing.

AUSTIN: Huh.

ART: I had a cave-aged gruyère.

KEITH: It was—

AUSTIN: Yeah, that's what I—yeah, that's what I've heard as being like the hot—the hot shit right now, is a cave-aged gruyère.

ALI: Ooh.

KEITH: It was—I'll tell you what the—what exactly it was that was cave-aged. Um.

JACK: He's looking up how to pronounce it.

KEITH: This was, uh...

AUSTIN: Or this is the longest 'deez nuts' joke I've ever heard.

[JACK snorts]

[KEITH laughs]

AUSTIN: [laughs] Also, don't age those in a cave. That's rough. It's a rough way of living.

KEITH: Oh, guys, I think they—I think that they might have switched out which of the cheeses was cave-aged, because this is a Trés Bonne goat cheese.

[ALI makes a noise]

JACK: Trés Bonne as in very good?

AUSTIN: Wait—does this mean “very good?”

KEITH: Yeah. That's what it said.

AUSTIN: [laughs] I think they're pulling a fast one over on you.

KEITH: That's the name of the cheese. Yeah.

AUSTIN: [doubtful] Mm!

[JACK laughs]

ALI: Hey, so—

KEITH: Yeah no, Très Bonne cheese is a—is the name of a type of cheese.

ALI: We should start before like 2:30?

JACK: Yeah.

KEITH: Cave-aged for... nine months, you guys!

[Laughter]

SYLVIA: I agree!

KEITH: Listen! This is a cheese—this is a cheese gestating in a cave for the length of a human life. Or, wait, or—or no, for the length of a—

AUSTIN: Wait.

JACK: [alarmed] What!?

AUSTIN: Uh-oh! We're all dying.

[Laughter]

AUSTIN: [amused] Always a good time on Friends at the Table!

KEITH: Hold on, someone just walked into my home.

AUSTIN: Uh-oh.

KEITH: And I can't tell who it is. [away from mic] Who are you?

ALI: Uh...

[Typing noises]

AUSTIN: [laughing] And that was the last we heard from Keith.

ALI: I've run out of Love Live videos to watch while you guys all banter about cheese, so it's time to start the podcast.

DRE: It's time to go! [laughs]

ART: That's how we measure all time on Friends at the Table.

KEITH: Okay, I'm back.

AUSTIN: Mhm!

[Laughter]

KEITH: Guys, I cannot find a consistent pronunciation of this cheese!

ALI: Wait, we were waiting on Keith and Keith is back, we are starting the show.

KEITH: Boo-shron.

ALI: We're not talking about cheese.

KEITH: Boo-shron cheese.

AUSTIN: [correctly] Bucheron.

KEITH: ...Sure. This pronunciation definitely has an N at the end, and I do not believe it is a silent N.

AUSTIN: Bucheron-hon. It just—yeah—it just gets doubles—

KEITH: Bucheron. Bucheron.

AUSTIN: —it's a—it's the stuttering N. It's the French stuttering N.

KEITH: Guys, guys, do you want cheddar or [fancily] bucheron?

SYLVIA: I got a one. I rolled one on cheese.

AUSTIN: Yeah. Whose bacon cheeseburger, uh, comes with, uh...?

[ALI laughs]

JACK: [interjecting] Okay. Ibex has joined the fleet.

[AUSTIN and ALI laugh]

AUSTIN: [laughing] And he loves bucheron!

SYLVIA: Yeah.

ALI: We're clapping at forty. Get to time.is right now.

AUSTIN: Oh no. Where do I go?

KEITH: He kicks—

ALI: Go right now.

KEITH: —he kicks *four* whole refugees out to make room for his cases of bucheron.

[Laughter]

AUSTIN: [laughing] Sorry, I think you mean his *caves* of bucheron!

KEITH: [laughing] His caves, yeah!

JACK: I don't have like room for—

[Clapping]

SYLVIA: Oh, were we clapping?

AUSTIN: No one clapped but me!

SYLVIA: Oh, I didn't clap.

KEITH: I bet it [??] [1:41:58] series of caves.

DRE: Oh, what are we clapping at?

AUSTIN: Twenty-nine. We're gonna—at the top of the minute.

ALI: Yes.

JACK: Kay. That means we have T — got ten seconds of cheese jokes.

AUSTIN: At—which means twenty-nine.

KEITH: Hold on, no, I'm not op—I'm not ready. ...I'm ready, I'm ready!

AUSTIN: Okay.

[Clapping]

AUSTIN: Whew! I felt it!

DRE: That was good.

[ALI laughs]

AUSTIN: There's energy in the room! [sighs] I should have listened to the very end of the last recording. The last thing we left on was...

ALI: Uh, beach episode. We're going to Wreathe.

AUSTIN: We're going to Wreathe.

ALI: Uh, food?

AUSTIN: So you arrive at Wreathe, and here is what the Crossroad is. The Crossroad is that "Will or will not the Kingdom take food and supplies from Wreathe?" I should set up a little bit... more why that's like a thing. Um. Wreathe—I don't know if you remember this from our world generation episode—Wreathe is kind of a real cool place.

Wreathe is a salt industrial world—a salt industry world. It makes like a bunch of like salt, I guess? Like it's just an ocean planet that ships salt around. And like even deep in the future, people need salt. Um. It's a breathable-mix place. It's a temperate place. It's just like—it is like really nice beach planet. Human-miscable biosphere, and the thing is, there's only like tens of thousands of inhabitants here. It's not a big—like, it's a tiny planet. It's a tiny ocean planet that's not filled with a lot of people, because like that's kind of how the Diaspora does. Uh. And that also means that there's not actually a lot of resources here.

Another thing we set up early on in this game was that like... Space fleets are a big deal, in the sense that like they're not huge massive armadas. The size of the fleet that you have now, this like four ship thing, is a substantial fleet, and part of that is it takes a lot of resources to keep it going, especially the Oricon and Apostolos... vessels. Um. For whatever reason. It's a Divine. Like I'm not even gonna talk about—talk about what powers the Divines. They're basically super robots. They're powered by like—I don't know—fury and belief—and like the heart of suns somewhere else in the universe? Who knows. But for the Oricon vessels and for the Apostolos vessels, the Apostolosian vessels, like those need a lot of resources to continue. And you will need a re—a re-up here.

Um. That's not a thing that—that Crossroad can't change. Right? So, um... In other words, you can't just say like no, we don't need those, to take food and supplies from Wreathe! You're going to need to take them to... or you could say no to this Crossroad, but it would mean some bad things. And then we should play it as such. So that's like the one setup here I wanna make. I think you're probably—the fleet is overhead of Wreathe now. And it's almost like a—I almost imagine it as being like a city-state, in terms of like its importance to the greater Diaspora, and its kind of like—the attitudes around it? Um. So that's one thing. Two, the—our week started with one prediction from—I'm—I was gonna say from me as the GM. Which was "There will be a military strike."

SYLVIA: Oh, god.

AUSTIN: But I might—I was thinking about shaking one other thing up here, which is that—I think there's a new player in the game. Which is... Ibex is just in your crew now.

SYLVIA: Oh, god.

[ALI laughs]

AUSTIN: So I'm adding Ibex here to the turn order. Um. Other than that, it's Orth's turn. Uh. To have a scene.

**[1:45:27]**

JACK: Okay. So, um. All—

AUSTIN: Ah, also, I think Ibex is probably... [sighs] I think Ibex is probably Power.

ART: Yeah.

[ALI laughs]

AUSTIN: I think Ibex wants a vote. So keep that in mind.

SYLVIA: Yeah, no, that makes sense.

JACK: [laughs] Okay.

ART: No, someone usurp right away.

KEITH: [facetiously] But Austin, none of us are playing Ibex!

AUSTIN: [facetiously] Oh yeah, who—yeah, what could happen? Who could play Ibex here?

ALI: Huh.

AUSTIN: I don't know. Weird.

SYLVIA: It's me again.

AUSTIN: [laughs] Yeah, it's Sylvia, it's weird!

[JACK laughs]

AUSTIN: [amused] I will be playing Ibex.

JACK: Um. Okay, so I would like a scene with... Addax. Uh... Because...

AUSTIN: Where is it and what are you doing?

JACK: Um, I would like to be in the... I think that I would like to call Addax to the bridge of the Kingdom Come.

AUSTIN: Okay. So it's this tiny little bridge, right? Like this is like a little—like compared to the bridge of um the larger—the Seventh Sun—this is the tiny Kingdom Come bridge that AuDy will pilot a decade from now.

JACK: Yeah. Which I think is probably about the size of a—comparatively large room, maybe?

AUSTIN: Mhm. Totally.

JACK: Like a house room, not like a ship room. Um. It's got stuff in it.

ART: What a dignified place for this meeting.

JACK: Yeah. And I don't think... I mean anybody else can chip in, but I think it's probably just Addax and I...

AUSTIN: Sounds good. Also I'll be playing Righteousness, if that wasn't clear.

SYLVIA: I mean, they're kind of the same character, with Ibex.

JACK: Righteousness, who has just arrived in the simulation?

AUSTIN: Right.



JACK: Do the people out—does Orth, sitting—

AUSTIN: Maybe I—maybe I need to make that more clear.

SYLVIA: Oh!

AUSTIN: I will be playing—also be playing Righteousness, who is jacked in to the simulation.

ALI: [sarcastically] Great, great. Perfect!

AUSTIN: On the outside world.

JACK: Does Orth know that something has joined the simulation?

AUSTIN: No.

JACK: Okay.

AUSTIN: Orth is like—Orth is like that dude in Inception, just kind of sitting in that room, y'know?

JACK: Right. [laughs] Yeah.

SYLVIA: Well, because—I mean like Dre and I are also both outside forces jacked into the simulation, right, so.

AUSTIN: Correct. Correct.

JACK: Oh, that's true, yeah, I guess—

SYLVIA: Orth's just got no idea.

AUSTIN: Right.

ART: Another failure for Orth.

[Scandalized laughter]

AUSTIN: Aw!

ALI: God!

JACK (as Orth): Candidate Addax.

ART (as Addax): Yeah.

JACK (as Orth): Look. You see this light here?

JACK: And I point at a light on the cockpit, and it's off.

JACK (as Orth): This light needs to be on.

[DRE and AUSTIN laugh]

JACK (as Orth): As does that one, and those ones over there. That one up there, you know that governs—you know—how we—how we managed waste, and how we manage water. And more of these lights are gonna keep going off unless we do something. And I've been told by some my best people that what we really need is we need stuff. We need stuff from this planet, and we need it like really quite quickly. So what I'm asking is. As an—as a member of the Diaspora, do you think they're going to give it to us?

ART (as Addax): I think between myself and Ibex, we have the authority to claim it, honestly.

JACK (as Orth): But—I kinda don't want to just—I don't want to end up taking stuff from people who need it. You know? That's—that's what we spent these last couple of weeks trying to avoid.

ART (as Addax): Right. But everyone needs stuff. You know? Everything out there, somehow needs. If we're gonna—

JACK: And then like a couple of lights go out.

[AUSTIN laughs]

ART (as Addax): If we're gonna end this war, it might need to be a little uncomfortable on Wreath for a little bit. They're—the resources are out there, they can be resupplied. Between myself and Grace and Ibex, we can—we can make this happen.

JACK: I'm wondering whether or not the fact that we have taken on—uh, hang on—we took refugees on from a Diasporan planet, right?

AUSTIN: Yes. Yeah.

JACK: And these are Diasporan refugees.

AUSTIN: The—wait—what—the ones that you took on?

JACK: Yes.

AUSTIN: Yeah, those were Diasporan refu—well. There's probably a mix. But primarily Diasporan, yes.

JACK (as Orth): Do you think that the fact that we provided aid—significant aid—to—to your—countrymen... previously, do you think that's going to give us an advantage here, Addax?

ART (as Addax): Absolutely. We're winning the—I hate to use the term, but we're certainly winning the propaganda portion of this... of this... leg.

JACK (as Orth): Um. Yeah, I wasn't really thinking of this—thinking of this as propaganda so much as I really don't want to—I don't want to steal food from these people, and I'm just—I'm just—I just want to know if I have your support in positioning this as—as sort of reciprocal request for aid?

ART (as Addax): It is—yeah, it isn't stealing. We're not—we're not gonna run down there in the middle of the night and take it. We're gonna—we're gonna do this the proper way, and I think—I think you do have my support, and the support of... of all the Diaspora, honestly.

AUSTIN: That sounds like an order from Addax here, which is, if we—yes, “if yes, we do this the proper way. This isn't pillaging.”

JACK: Yeah—I—

ART: Yeah. Absolutely. I certainly don't think Peace is willing to pillage.

AUSTIN: Okay.

ART: Maybe.

AUSTIN: Order might be. But—

JACK: Dude. Have you ever seen Peace? Peace is terrifying.

AUSTIN: Yeah.

[DRE laughs]

ALI: But it's also inspirational.

ART: But benevolently terrifying.

AUSTIN: I do—I will say, of course, nothing that they just said in this scene is necessarily going to come true, because neither of them are Perspectives, and what they think is true—

JACK: Yeah.

AUSTIN: —about the world is not necessarily. Um. I also think that's probably the end of that scene, just so we can keep it—keep it moving.

JACK: Mhm.

AUSTIN: Uh, Natalya is up next.

DRE: Hey. Quick question, Austin.

AUSTIN: Sure.

DRE: When you say there—we have military—

JACK: Oh, sorry, we should mark a thing.

DRE: Oh, sorry, go ahead, Jack.

JACK: We need to mark a box.

AUSTIN: You do, yes.

JACK: And I think that that is a Crossroads box.

AUSTIN: Oh, yeah. Definitely. That sounds right to me.

JACK: Sorry, go ahead, Dre.

DRE: Oh, no problem. Um, when you say military strike, do you mean like we're gonna launch missiles at things?

AUSTIN: We did not—we did not figure that out, did we?

DRE: Okay. Or—that could be like a labor strike.

ART: That's not really a military strike. Yeah, I thought it was that.

AUSTIN: I think it's—we'll figure out what it is in play.

SYLVIA: Yeah. I think we—actually do think we said it was gonna be like a strike in the sense of—

AUSTIN: Okay.

SYLVIA: —the soldiers revolting.

DRE: Okay. That's—

AUSTIN: Which could then also lead to—

JACK: Oh, a shakeup.

AUSTIN: Actual physical violence happening to someone.

SYLVIA: C—yeah, 'cause I'm just like wait, milit—where would they military strike? “No, we're not gonna take your food, but we *are* gonna bomb you.”

[ALI laughs]

AUSTIN: Right. Yes.

SYLVIA: Like, what?

JACK: Um, yeah.

DRE: All right. Um. I feel like I need to throw in a complication on this. 'Cause so far, it's just like, hey, do you wanna get some food? And we won't pillage people, and it'll be fine? Or do you want everybody to be mad? And we don't get to make easy decisions, that's not how Friends at the Table works.

AUSTIN: No! We don't.

DRE: Um... So, I think—I wanna talk with Jace. I haven't had a scene with Jace yet.

AUSTIN: Good call.

ALI: Okay. Hi!

AUSTIN: Where did you meet up? And what are you doing?

DRE: Let's—

AUSTIN: That's like always—I know I keep hitting those two thing, but like that is—that is like one of the big tips in this game, or in the book, is like... *"The secret to p—the secret of a good scene is painting a clear picture so players know exactly what's going on. Being able to visualize the situation clearly, where you are, why you are there, enables your characters—enables you to play your character like a real person. That's the cardinal rule. It doesn't have to be exciting. It has to be clear. Exciting things can emerge from play,"* but like, even if it's just, we're at this place doing this thing, it's more than just, oh, we're talking in a vacuum.

DRE: Yeah.

AUSTIN: So. So try to keep it—try to ground it in some way.

DRE: Ali, let's say we're in the officer's lounge, playing—what's our space card game called?

[ALI laughs]

AUSTIN: Ooh, good question. That's a good—that's a good scene, though.

JACK: Hearthstone.

[Laughter]

DRE: Friends at the Table, brought to you by Blizzard Interactive.

AUSTIN: If only.

[DRE laughs]

AUSTIN: Get that Blizzard money.

DRE: Yeah.

AUSTIN: Also, wait, they fuckin' owe us after DiVa.

JACK: Yeah, come on, and Bastion!

ALI: Yeah! Come—come on.

AUSTIN: And Bastion! Yeah! Ah!

ALI: Auuuuhaa.

ART: Yeah, pay us in Hearthstone packs, to the account—

JACK: I'd also like an Overwatch beta.

ALI: No. I would like dollars, please.

SYLVIA: Yeah.

ALI: Thank you.

DRE: All right, well, we're playing space cards.

ALI: Okay.

AUSTIN: Yes.

DRE: Um.

AUSTIN: We're playing—playing YuGiOh.

JACK: [confidently] Space Truck Six.

ALI: [whispering] Yes!

DRE: And I think Natalya's just kind of asking—um. 'Cause Jace is a Touchstone, right?

ALI: Yeah.

AUSTIN: Uh-uh.

ALI: No, I'm a—we're both Perspective.

AUSTIN: Jace is a—is Perspective, yeah.

DRE: Oh, we are both Perspective. Okay. Well, then we could doubly fuck things up on this turn.

ALI: [intrigued] Yeah!

AUSTIN: Great.

DRE: Um. So I guess we're playing space cards... And Jace is—Jace is a military person.

ALI: Mhm.

DRE: So maybe Natalya's just asking, you know, how are your fellow pilots and troops doing, you know, since we've—maybe we've had to ration food lately, on our way to Wreathe, and that's why this resupply is such a big plan.

DRE (as Natalya): So why—how are people handling the rationing of food?

ALI (as Jace): Oh, I don't know, I mean... we had all those refugees, so people understood that there was gonna be a little bit of sacrifice, but it's uh getting kinda thin, so people are a little nervous.

DRE (as Natalya): Yeah. I don't know. Maybe... I'm worried that if we—if we—you know, depending on who we put in charge of getting this food, how are we gonna be sure that somebody doesn't, you know, take a little bit more than they're supposed to? For themselves, or for other people.

ALI (as Jace): Ah... You think anyone here is capable of that? I mean...

DRE (as Natalya): I think when people are hungry, they're capable of a lot of things.

ALI (as Jace): Eh... I... We're all here for a purpose, and we just—I mean, we've just went through all that like trying to help people. I don't know... we're not really here in the business of stealing from a planet, right?

DRE (as Natalya): Listen. Jace, we're both Oricon. You're telling me that if some of our boots on the ground—we've been stuck in Diaspora space and we've been helping them out this whole way, taking on extra Divines and refugees, you know, maybe it's time for Oricon to take a little extra.

ALI (as Jace): That's, uh... jeez. Um. I don't really—I don't know, I... listen, I know the people who are the most upset about this thing, and they are not capable of *stealing* from civilians. At the end of the day, we're soldiers trying to save the world? Um. So... I trust Orth. I—I trust the Gambit. They're not gonna take extra food.

DRE (as Natalya): I don't know.

AUSTIN: Do either of you want to Challenge the other on their Perspective? Otherwise, we're getting two contrary Perspectives—which is fine! And then we'll have to... go after... that can be a thing we can resolve throughout play. Basically, it sounds like you're making alt—different perspectives?



DRE: Yeah.

ALI: Mhm.

AUSTIN: Uh, and in play, characters can go out of their way to disprove one of those perspectives in future scenes. Does that make sense?

ALI: Yeah.

DRE: Mhm.

AUSTIN: So like we should write both of these perspe—or both of these predictions down, and then—somewhere in the—either, you know, somewhere in the play before we cross the Crossroad, before we finish the Crossroad, or in the resolution of the Crossroad, they will have to be resolved via the Challenge system. But it sounds like we're making—that—both of those as predictions. That sounds right?

DRE: Yep.

ALI: Uh, yeah.

AUSTIN: Those predictions were, again, if—if—Natalya was saying that “if we take it, then the—some military officers will take more than they're—what their just due. Or what their—”

DRE: Yeah, some Oricon officers will basically take something for themselves.

AUSTIN: Ah, and then—and that's Natalya. Okay. And—let's just grab it—this is a copy and paste job! Boom.

[ALI laughs]

AUSTIN: “Won't.” There we go. Boom.

[DRE, KEITH and ALI laugh]

DRE: Short and sweet.

AUSTIN: Yep. Okay. Get back to your card game. You marking Crossroad, time passes, or Crisis?

ALI: Uh, Crossroads?

AUSTIN: Natalya? It's your turn, so I think you get the actual decision there.

DRE: Oh, yeah, Crossroads.

AUSTIN: Yeah, okay, that's what I thought. Now it is Jace's turn, though!

ALI: Haha! Um. Okay. Hm. I think I'm going to talk to... Tea.

SYLVIA: Hi.

ALI: Hi!

[AUSTIN laughs]

ALI: Um, Tea, do you wanna be in the commissary?

SYLVIA: Sure! I'm good wherever. Commissary's the—commissary's the big like um common area...?

AUSTIN: It's a, yeah, giant cafeteria, basically.

ALI: Yeah.

AUSTIN: Yeah.

SYLVIA: Yeah, that works.

ALI: I like letting up the scene, too, 'cause it's like all the soldiers there like...

AUSTIN: Yes.

ALI: With... like they have food, we still have a little bit of a food, but it's like...

SYLVIA: Not that much.

ALI: Not as much?

AUSTIN: Right.

DRE: Lunch.

AUSTIN: It's like—it's like—yesterday there was some sort of like roast meat, and today it's a soup made out of the remains of that roast meat?

[ALI laughs]

DRE: Mhm.

ALI: Yeah. The camera like is a bunch of soldiers in line, and like one of them's complaining about the portion that he got, and then it cuts to Tea and Jace.

AUSTIN: Mhm. Mhm. Do Tea and Jace get special food treatment?

SYLVIA: Um.

ALI: No...

SYLVIA: Nah.

AUSTIN: Orth, do you take your—does Orth take his food in his private quarters, on the Kingdom Come?

JACK: Um.

AUSTIN: Or does Orth go to the Seventh Sun to eat with soldiers.

JACK: I think that he probably goes to the Seventh Sun, because—or—I don't know. He falls asleep in the officers' lounge a lot of the time?

AUSTIN: That's true.

JACK: So I assume that he would go and eat with the other officers.

AUSTIN: Oh, so—but he probably eats in the officers' lounge, not in the commissary.

JACK: Oh, yeah, that's true. Yeah, that's absolutely true.

AUSTIN: So still like among people, but just among the officers, instead of among—

JACK: Among the officers.

AUSTIN: ...right, whereas Tea and Jace eat with everybody.

JACK: Yeah.

AUSTIN: Okay.

ALI: Um, so I think that we just kind of sit down and like we look around like our Queen's Gambit table, uh. And...

AUSTIN: Yeah, ev—the gang is all there. Like.

ALI: Right, the—[laughs]

AUSTIN: Many of which will be dead [laughs] in the future.

[ALI laughs]

AUSTIN: Because the Chime or Order will have *killed* them.

SYLVIA: Oh...

ALI: Anyway, so I think that like, we're at like our cool kids table or whatever, but like the—like the buzz in the cafeteria's definitely this issue.

AUSTIN: Yeah.

ALI: So I think that, uh...

SYLVIA: I mean, like everybody's probably complaining about the food, right? So, yeah.

ALI: Right. Or not even complaining, being like—well, there's just as much complaining as there is like, so what's the plan? Has Orth come up with a plan yet?

AUSTIN: Mhm.

ALI: And I think that's actually the conversation that Tea and Jace are having like um,

ALI (as Jace): Do you know of anything yet, like, did Orth give you any orders?

**[2:00:20]**

ALI: Trying to like figure out what the rumor mill is right now.

SYLVIA: Yeah, um.

SYLVIA (as Tea): No, he hasn't talked to me yet. Which, uh, surprise, because he seems to be running to me for every problem lately.

ALI (as Jace): Oof. Just... be nice to Orth.

[KEITH makes a shooting noise]

[DRE laughs]

SYLVIA (as Tea): I am—I am nice to Orth. I'm nice—I... T... It's called tough love, Jace. You should—you should know enough about that by now.

ALI (as Jace): Yeah. Oof. I sure do... I don't know, are we gonna—we gonna make a plan under his—behind his back like last time?

SYLVIA (as Tea): [sighs] I mean, if we have to! We have to eat, right?

ALI (as Jace): Yeah... Yeah, we do.

SYLVIA (as Tea): Desperate times. Come on. We're not gonna let our people starve out here.

ALI (as Jace): Yeah, I just don't wanna like... steal this stuff. You know? Like they have to make uh—acquisition of... request, and fill out some paperwork, and like who knows how long this is even gonna take?

SYLVIA (as Tea): Well. You know what I wanna know? I wanna know why this Ibex guy didn't bring any food. Or did he? Like—why couldn't have he helped us out?

AUSTIN: No, he walked on by himself. To be clear. Yeah.

SYLVIA: Yeah. She's very much still frustrated about that, so she's a little distracted. And also...

AUSTIN: And therefore, so are... everybody else in this room.

SYLVIA: Yeah. Like. They just—

AUSTIN: As Touchstone, like that's—

SYLVIA: They just feel like, well, what the hell? We're all—we're running out of food after this hoity-toity rich—rich lookin' dude came on. Why couldn't he have brought supplies, too? He's obviously got the sway to.

ALI: Does Ibex take special food?

AUSTIN: Oh, yeah.

SYLVIA: Oh, of course.

ALI: Ah, but of course.

AUSTIN: Oh, yeah.

ALI (as Jace): Yeah, I don't know. Maybe someone should talk to him about it.

SYLVIA (as Tea): [laughs] Be my guest.

[ALI laughs]

AUSTIN: Uh, so no prediction there from Jace, it didn't sound like.

ALI: Um, I th—Mm... I think the prediction is that "if Orth doesn't move faster, then the Queen's Gambit is gonna take it into their own hands."

AUSTIN: So that's actually—so you—that's a prediction about like something broadly happening in the story, which—which...

ALI: Okay.

AUSTIN: We don't write down.

ALI: [understanding] Okay.

AUSTIN: Right like we only write down predictions about this final decision about Yes or No in the—at the Crossroad level?

ALI: [understanding] Okay.

AUSTIN: Um. But it did sound like Sylvia was saying that Tea was saying that, uh, the general tone here is that like Ibex is the one who should have the stuff to begin with, and—just kind of—

SYLVIA: There's like a—there's a lot of bitterness there.

AUSTIN: Yeah, there's almost like a this isn't our problem?

ALI: Um.

AUSTIN: That it's—that's what it sounded like from Tea.

ALI: Yeah.

AUSTIN: Which isn't a prediction. That's not—I'm just—that's the Touchstone thing.

ALI: Uh, maybe "If no, the Oricon soldiers will f... uh... consider Ibex accountable for the food loss?"

AUSTIN: Sure.

ALI: Okay.

AUSTIN: That's fair.

ALI: Yeah.

AUSTIN: Okay!

SYLVIA: Okay, so my scene now, right?

AUSTIN: So Tea is up. Yeah.

SYLVIA: Yeah. [whispering] I think—what should we do?

AUSTIN: Do you wanna—do you wanna hold your scene for a second and let me do a scene, and then we'll bounce back to you?

SYLVIA: Yeah, go right ahead, 'cause I actually am completely unsure about mine.

AUSTIN: So that way it's not also like a chain from one to another to another?

SYLVIA: Yeah.

AUSTIN: 'Cause we've done like Natalya to Jace, Jace to Tea.

SYLVIA: Oh, yes.

AUSTIN: Uh, Ibex has a scene—wants a scene with Addax and Sokrates on the observation deck of the—of—

KEITH: Oh, this is my first scene with—in someone else's scene!

AUSTIN: Right. Yeah. I need to get you into scenes. Uh, at the observation deck of the Apostolosian ship, looking down on the Kingdom Come. Uh, Addax<sup>3</sup> has his hands behind his back. Like he's already in the deck, he's requested that you two come and join him to discuss some important matters. Do you show up? Both of you.

KEITH: Yeah. Yep.

ART: Of course.

KEITH (as Sokrates): Hi, Ibex. Hi-bex.

AUSTIN (as Ibex): D—it's...

[SYLVIA laughs]

AUSTIN (as Ibex): Nice to meet you, Sokrates, thank you for having us on the ship. This fleet is a *mess*.

AUSTIN: And Ibex like nods his head forward at the Kingdom Come.

AUSTIN (as Ibex): So much of it is that man's fault.

KEITH (as Sokrates): Or—are you talking about Orth?

AUSTIN (as Ibex): Yeah.

KEITH (as Sokrates): [offended] He's nice!

AUSTIN (as Ibex): Nice men don't make good leaders, Sokrates. You should know that. [sighs] What's the plan, Addax? Is it to [amused] split this thing down the middle all the way? We're in *our land* now. We're on our side of the map, this should be ours. And now we're gonna take what little supplies the people of Wreathe have? We could push a little further, we could have our stomachs a little bit more empty.

ART (as Addax): I mean, but where—there's—it's not like there's a world of plenty on our—on our course. We need something, the situation here is too tense.

AUSTIN (as Ibex): I think we drop the Kingdom Come, we move those supplies over to the Seventh Sun, we go without that ship. It's easy enough.

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<sup>3</sup> Austin means Ibex.



KEITH (as Sokrates): Well, hold on. There's like—there's like two hundred people here. Almost all of them are OriCon. There's almost as few Diasporans as there are Apostolosians.

AUSTIN (as Ibex): That's exactly right, and they're taking up more resources that are necessary for this mission. If I'd been put in charge of this mission to begin with, we would be running at a *much* more efficient rate! Honestly, Addax and I could do this *ourselves*. But we think that it's important—

ART (as Addax): I'm not—I'm not sure that's true.

AUSTIN (as Ibex): You should have more confidence in yourself. You're better than Grace ever gives you credit for. Here's what I'm saying. If we're gonna continue, if we're gonna take this food, this needs to become a Diaspora operation, with some *assistance* from OriCon. It's you and me, Addax. And—and with the *generous* intelligence provided by Sokrates and the Apostolosians. But it's you and me in charge of this thing. Orth steps down and he becomes a consultant.

ART (as Addax): That's gonna be a hard sell. We can't just win the war, we also have to win the peace.

AUSTIN (as Ibex): ...The peace comes after the war. If we can't win the war, then we can't win the peace afterwards. And right now, with *that* man—good luck winning the war.

AUSTIN: Ibex is making an order.

ART: Yeah, it sounds like it.

AUSTIN: If yes, then Orth steps down.

ALI: Yikes.

ART: Yikes.

AUSTIN: Is anybody else here—I do—again, the Touchstone from Sokrates is definitely “Orth’s a nice guy!” Like that’s the opinion of people in the fleet, is like “He might not be the best at his job, but he’s a nice guy!” Like everyone kinda likes Orth!

KEITH: Yeah, everybody likes Orth. Everybody likes Orth. Even the other Diasporans like Orth.

AUSTIN: Right, right. Exactly. Is there any order from Addax here, before we close the scene?

ART: I don't think so.

AUSTIN: Okay.

ART: I mean, yeah. Ugh.

KEITH: There is a—there is a—a box in Crisis checked, if I could do that.

AUSTIN: Sure. Any scene you're in. Pretty sure that's how that works, let me just double-check that. Yeah, when you're in a scene. Oh, wait, you know what?

KEITH: What?

AUSTIN: Sorry, no, you can only do—you can only mark it—an extra Crisis thing in a scene that is *your* scene.

KEITH: Okay.

AUSTIN: Only in your scene can you mark an extra Crisis thing. Uh, that's too far, let's—I made that too small. There we go. Bring that back up. Uh, I'll mark a Crossroad here. Uh.... okay. Tea? Do you wanna go back to you at this point?

SYLVIA: Yeah, um. God, I still am not a hundred percent sure, uh, what I wanna do here.

AUSTIN: Any suggestions from people? For a good Tea scene?

KEITH: How—I have a real quick thi—how do—how does like changing your own and other people's, uh, Roles work?

AUSTIN: You can do it whenever you want. So you can change your own by saying "I've decided to change my own Role."

KEITH: Okay.

AUSTIN: "And in this scene I'm changing my Role." You can't use your—you can't use two of the same Role powers in the same scene. So like I couldn't have made that order and then switched Ibex from being Power to Perspective to also make a prediction.

KEITH: Okay.

AUSTIN: So that's one thing. Uh. The... thing is that you can also challenge someone's pred—like what someone has done or said. So you can say—someone could now say that they wanna challenge Ibex's order that Orth will step down as fleet leader, and to do that you would

say, hey Austin, do you think—do you think that order would change if Natalya did this? And I would say either yeah, okay, yeah, if she goes through with that, then yeah that would change. Or I'd say like yeah, but only if this other bad thing [laughs] happens. You know, I toss a—then, if I say no to all of that, you can also say like, well, fuck it, Natalya—I'm using Natalya because she's not you here, I'm just using a third party—

KEITH: Right, yeah, yeah.

AUSTIN: —Natalya, you know—Dre would be able to say, okay, well then Natalya's gonna actually overthrow Ibex here.

KEITH: Okay.

AUSTIN: And that means Ibex switches to a different Role, Natalya becomes Power, and Natalya has to describe a cost that came with that change. For her. That like something bad happened, or some—there was some cost of that change. So that's—those are the ways in which you can move people around.

SYLVIA: All right. Um, I think what just makes the most sense from a character standpoint would be Tea checking in with Orth to see what the—like if he [laughs] *has* any plan here?

AUSTIN: Mhm.

SYLVIA: And I think the way that starts is like...

AUSTIN: Where is this?

SYLVIA: I—I want to like outside Orth's office, like Orth...

AUSTIN: Okay.

SYLVIA: Like Orth is about to step out to do something completely unrelated and Tea's just out there waiting for him. And he's<sup>4</sup> like

SYLVIA (as Tea): Hey, Orth, got a minute?

AUSTIN: Another good Tea-Orth walk-and-talk?

SYLVIA: Yep.

AUSTIN: Good.

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<sup>4</sup> Tea uses she/her pronouns.

SYLVIA: My favorite. Um. Directed by Aaron Sorkin.

AUSTIN: Yep.

JACK (as Orth): Oh, Tea!

SYLVIA (as Tea): Hey. Uh. Well, this should be pretty obvious, but... things are not great right now, with people and the food.

JACK (as Orth): No. No.

SYLVIA (as Tea): ...Do you... what's the plan, Orth?

JACK (as Orth): Well, I've got one.

SYLVIA (as Tea): [amused] Good.

JACK (as Orth): And what we're going to do is we're going to—we're going to send an envoy down onto the—onto the planet and speak with some of their leaders about a sort of reciprocal... sort of food deal, based on the fact that we just picked up a load of Diasporans, and you know, we can account for that, in terms of that they need to be fed, and also um... You know, I think that they're more likely to think favorably of us... So I'm thinking just a sort of a—sort of a political envoy. And I mean, I think that—I think that in a situation like this, I think this is something that I could even see Ibex like really supporting, because, you know, this whole thing is sort of... talking and his whole thing is sort of talking to people—

[AUSTIN laughs]

[SYLVIA groans]

JACK (as Orth): —and I think that sort of in this situation... He could do some talking.

SYLVIA: Uh... has... has... She puts her hand up and like,

SYLVIA (as Tea): Don't... don't let him take charge of this.

JACK (as Orth): But he's really good at talking.

SYLVIA (as Tea): Yes! That's exactly my point. He's very good at talking. He's very good at talking himself into places and talking people out of them.

JACK (as Orth): I mean, what I'm saying is, if we've got Ibex on board, it makes sense to—to...

SYLVIA (as Tea): Ah... Orth. Just because someone is on this ship doesn't mean you can trust them, okay?

JACK (as Orth): [defensively] [laughs] Well, I mean, I know that! Well, yeah, I mean... I mean, I know that...

SYLVIA (as Tea): Okay.

[KEITH laughs]

[ALI and SYLVIA make pitying noises]

SYLVIA (as Tea): Of course—of course you do, buddy.

JACK (as Orth): But yeah... you know, I just sort of feel we've gotta use our assets, right? Right.

SYLVIA (as Tea): If you do send him down... [sighs] send someone with him that you can... trust, okay?

JACK (as Orth): I—do you mean you?

SYLVIA (as Tea): Oh, god, no, I wouldn't want to be stuck in a room with that guy for more than a minute.

JACK (as Orth): [laughs] Oh, good.

AUSTIN: Well, now we have to have that scene.

SYLVIA: I mean, yeah, they—

AUSTIN: That's—whoops!

SYLVIA: But like—it's like,

SYLVIA (as Tea): You wanna send me down to talk to people? That doesn't sound like the best idea. I was thinking, uh, Addax.

JACK (as Orth): [unhappily] Yeah... Yeah, okay.

SYLVIA (as Tea): 'Cause...

JACK (as Orth): Yeah, I can...

SYLVIA (as Tea): You know. He knows... him.

JACK (as Orth): Mhm.

SYLVIA (as Tea): And... I don't know? He seems a—he seems more trustworthy than the other guy.

JACK (as Orth): Okay, okay. Okay. That makes sense. I—thanks—thank you for your input, Tea. Thank you for your input.

SYLVIA (as Tea): I mean, as long—I'm just glad you've got something... in the works, 'cause... I was worried there, for a minute.

JACK (as Orth): [flattered] Ah. Oh. No, it's okay. I—you know, I got a—I got a plan—I—I know what I'm doing here. I think I know what I'm doing here.

SYLVIA (as Tea): Do you think you know what you're doing or do you know what you're doing?

JACK (as Orth): [blithely] Ha, yeah. Yeah.

SYLVIA (as Tea): [sighs] All right. Good talk, Orth.

SYLVIA: And then she just walks off.

JACK (as Orth): Thanks, Tea! Thanks.

SYLVIA: What a loveable doof.

AUSTIN: Yeah. Uh.

SYLVIA: And I think that... was just Crossroads there.

AUSTIN: Yeah, I think so. There—and no orders or anything from that.

JACK: Oh. Well, I don't know whether or not it's an extension of the no pillaging in that we're going to send an envoy...? A planetary envoy?

AUSTIN: That's—that feels like a plan for now, not a...

JACK: Ah, okay.

AUSTIN: Right? Is that—is that what that was? Or that a thing that was supposed to happen after yes, or before yes?

JACK: I think that that's sort of contingent on—yes is sort of contingent on that, right. I don't know. At this point— it seems—

AUSTIN: Okay. I didn't know if that was like a we're going to go down there and check that out, and like discuss that with the people down, or if that was a... I didn't know if that was like a we're going to see how viable yes is here. Versus, um. We're going to decide yes, this is what's gonna, and then we're gonna send those guys down to deal with it.

JACK: Yeah, I think—

AUSTIN: It was the...

JACK: —I think it was closer to that. To the latter.

AUSTIN: Okay. I'm just gonna modify that order to "No pillaging, and also envoys!"

[DRE laughs]

JACK: This is the only order so far that has an exclamation mark.

AUSTIN: Yes. That's appropriate.

SYLVIA: And of course it's an Orth order, so it makes perfect sense.

AUSTIN: Yes.

JACK: Yes.

AUSTIN: Addax?

JACK: It's—it really should have two exclamation points.

AUSTIN: Oh, you're right, you're right, you're right. You're right.

ART: Wait, he's allowed to modify my order?

AUSTIN: Oh, sorry, that was *your* order! *Your* order was no pillaging. I get it.

JACK: Oh, yeah, that was—

AUSTIN: That's all right. Yeah, then that should be fine.

JACK: That should have full stops, then.

AUSTIN: Yes. Absolutely. "No pillaging." Period.

SYLVIA: "No pillaging..." Dot dot dot. And then underneath, "And also envoys!!" Exclamation mark.

AUSTIN: [laughs] Yeah. Uh-huh.

ALI: Can you add like a sweat drop emoji?

[AUSTIN, JACK and DRE laugh]

JACK: Just like pulling at a collar.

ART: 'Cause if we can modify other people's order, then I have a very clear...

AUSTIN: No, sadly. Well, you can—yeah. You can totally Challenge those orders. Like again, that's what that is. Would be going to—

ART: Well, I can't challenge—me challenging another Power is silly, right? I'd overthrow him and we'd both just end up being Power still.

AUSTIN: No, no no. If you overthrow—if you overthrow someone's—um. I—I think you can totally overthrow someone who is the same thing as you. It forces them—

ART: If I r—I thought the rule was—

KEITH: Yeah, they have to pick a different thing. They don't just take your place.

ART: —you overthrow and end up—I thought you switched when you do an overthrow.

AUSTIN: You do, but I—but—okay, let me actually just double check the thing here. But I think orders<sup>5</sup> can still like clash and have to come to a decision, and that decision can include one of them stepping down. And that would definitely be, let's say, a Crisis mark being checked?

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<sup>5</sup> Austin means Powers.



**[2:15:01]**

[JACK laughs]

AUSTIN: Uh.

JACK: I don't actually r—know what happens when Crisis fills up. So I'm excited about—

AUSTIN: Uh, we get a Crisis scene, and it's bad.

ALI: Uh, yeah, we have to figure out if the Kingdom is destroyed or not.

JACK: Oh, wow.

ART: All our scenes are bad.

AUSTIN: Yes. Yeah, you can totally overthrow someone who has your Role.

ART: [doubtful] Okay.

AUSTIN: If you already have the same role as the defender, or if the defender only acquired their current Role during this player's turn, the defender can try to choose to overthrow you at the same time. So you could counter-overthrow. That means like both people could be knocked out. Like if you came after a Power, the other Power would be—there's a chance that that other—that both Powers could end up without Power.

JACK: Huh.

ART: Sure.

AUSTIN: Which is actually kind of great.

ART: Yeah. But that's...

KEITH: When you become overthrowned, do you get to pick what other thing?

AUSTIN: Yes. You get to pick what your new Role is.

KEITH: Okay.

AUSTIN: And then describe how you do it. Uh, *“To overthrow Power, show how your character takes away the defender's authority, or why the defender does not have the authority they think they have. To overthrow Perspective, have your character show us what the defender is wrong*

*about. Confront the defender, tell someone else, or just reflect on their mistakes. And to overthrow Touchstone, show us what your character feels that does not agree with the defender. Show how the people reflect your character's attitude, not the defender's."* Uh, and that's like similar to what you would be doing when you challenge, right? Like you'd be saying, oh, actually the people don't feel this way. Or, actually, that prediction is wrong because you don't understand how our military works. Or something like that.

ART: Ugh. I don't know who to talk to. Um.

AUSTIN: It could be a solo scene, too. Like it doesn't have to be...

ART: Yeah, I guess. I guess that's what it is, and I hate—I hate—I feel like I've had too many solo scenes.

AUSTIN: I see. Well then—

KEITH: Addax is the broodiest, I think, out of everybody.

AUSTIN: That is true.

JACK: Yeah, Addax is brooding all the time.

ALI: Yeah...

AUSTIN: Yeah, Addax is definitely alone in their room.

ALI: Jace and Addax are...

JACK: Addax is the anti-Orth.

AUSTIN: Mhm.

ART: All right. Then I guess I do need a broody scene. I need a scene with Addax like considering... his original commission for this mission?

AUSTIN: Mhm.

ART: Like, you know, 'cause—'cause Ibex has come on and said like, we need to take this over, this needs to be our thing. But like that's not the original orders. And I think like Addax needs to—to think about it because... it's either... [sighs] Because he doesn't—he believes in the Diaspora. He believes in—in us, he can't—his thing can't be like 'I've gotta swing this more to Oricon's favor,' that's not it. So.

AUSTIN: Right. Right. His—his—what is his—what's the thing you're referencing here? You're specifically saying—or he's—one of his things specifically does say like—

ART: "Addax believes fully in the Diaspora's perfection."

AUSTIN: Right. Right.

ART: And I think, yeah, it's kind of like you know a scene of contemplation with—with Peace, you know?

AUSTIN: Can I, uh—can I—can I interject something here?

ART: Of course.

AUSTIN: You're surr—are you like—you're probably in Peace's cockpit, or something? Right?

ART: Yeah.

AUSTIN: And like I imagine it's just like a video feed of the fleet, and just like other stuff that's coming through, in terms of communications and stuff. Addax, you learn that ahead of you, to the north—the galactic north—coreward, the conflict between Vox and... Apothesa? Apote—Apo—yeah, Apothesa. In the future, that planet is known as, um. What is that planet known as in the future? [sighs] God, why have I already forgotten this? Slate. Right right right, you know, the Diasporan Resources Division—Slate Division, Slate, has really heated up. And the Apostolosians there are—have developed some sort of weird like shielding system for some of their colony—or some of their orbital like cannon ships? And they're literally like moving them into into position around Vox, and then just like torching huge settlements from orbit. And—and Diasporan counterattacks, even from Divines, are not working. And you're not quite sure what's happening there. But like that's the—the footage you're seeing is like the destruction of Vox.

ART: Okay. Uh, so that...

AUSTIN: Also, the reason you're seeing that? Like from the—from the um—the viewer—the kind of like—the audience understands this? Is that like Righteousness is feeding you that information. Is feeding you those images. I mean, it just looks like it's coming up on your regular news feed, obviously, but like that's what's being filtered through.

ART: Well, that's the... okay. All right. That's—that seems ob—that seems counter to Righteousness' end here, but—yeah, let's keep going.

AUSTIN: [casually] Mm. It depends.

ART: I think that's a time passes box?

AUSTIN: Yeah, I think so, too. We're getting close to that, also.

SYLVIA: What's that do again?

AUSTIN: We take a—we take like a—there's a break, and we kind of get a scene of things just kind of being like nothing happening. And it would—it would also defer any Crossroad—any Crossroad we're on, as if to say like, we can't figure out this situation. There's a chance it'll happen also—in fact now I think it will definitely be happening after this Crossroad. There will be a time passes scene after this Crossroad, because there's only one box, and every Crossroad ends with filling in that time passes box. Uh. Sokrates.

KEITH: Hi. I would like a scene with Addax, Jace, Orth, and Ibex.

AUSTIN: Nice! Good!

[ALI laughs]

JACK: Oh, wow.

AUSTIN: Getting 'em all together. All the players.

ALI: Oh!

ART: Oh, that's the scene I didn't want to put together, so. Good job, Keith.

AUSTIN: Yeah. Yeah.

KEITH: Thank you...

AUSTIN: Who—where is it?

KEITH: Uh, this is on the bridge of... the Kingdom Come.

AUSTIN: Okay.

JACK: Oh my god.

AUSTIN: They're all very tightly packed.

KEITH (as Sokrates): All right, guys. All right, everybody. Everybody ready?

AUSTIN: He's<sup>6</sup> a camp counselor. This is the worst.

[Laughter]

KEITH (as Sokrates): Listen.

ART: There's a reason Sokrates got passed over for Cass.

AUSTIN: Yeah. Yeah. Yep.

[Laughter]

KEITH (as Sokrates): Listen. Things are weird, we all know things are weird... I think that I have a solution... I just wanted to say, first: Orth, I apologize; Ibex came to me and Addax and he was like 'Hey, let's overthrow Orth.'

JACK: Oh, g—!

AUSTIN (as Ibex): I'm sorry?

ALI (as Jace): Uh, that.

KEITH (as Sokrates): That's step one.

ALI (as Jace): Uh.

JACK (as Orth): What?

KEITH (as Sokrates): Step two is, I'm saying, here's the thing—

JACK (as Orth): —No, can we go back to step one?

AUSTIN (as Ibex): Sure.

KEITH (as Sokrates): —Yeah, okay, did you have a question?

AUSTIN (as Ibex): Orth.

JACK (as Orth): I, uh, this plan—

AUSTIN (as Ibex): Mr. Godlove. You and I both know—

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<sup>6</sup> Sokrates uses they/them pronouns.

JACK (as Orth): —None of this was made clear to—

KEITH (as Sokrates): Yeah, well, that's why I'm here. To make things clear.

AUSTIN (as Ibex): —that the way things are going is hurting people. I'm *very* appreciative of everything you did for the Diasporan refugees, and that's why I know that in your heart of hearts, you'll continue to do what's best for everyone in the Golden Branch star sector.

KEITH (as Sokrates): Oh, God. What a blowhard. All right. Listen.

[Laughter]

SYLVIA: Shit!

KEITH (as Sokrates): So that's what we're here about is that,

JACK (as Orth): Right. But.

KEITH (as Sokrates): Ibex, this is a fleet full of people that are scared of you—

AUSTIN (as Ibex): It's very clear—

JACK (as Orth): So hang on a second.

AUSTIN (as Ibex): —that there are leaders in this room, and there are people that are well loved by the rest of the Fleet, and that are doing their best.

JACK (as Orth): Ha, well, yeah—yes, but, uh...

AUSTIN (as Ibex): And maybe they should step aside.

ALI (as Jace): That's not—the people aren't going to stand for that. Orth is our leader.

AUSTIN (as Ibex): You think you know the people, Jace?

JACK (as Orth): —No, they gave me this ship.

ALI (as Jace): Yeah.

AUSTIN (as Ibex): Jace, look at me. The people are gonna forget about you.

KEITH (as Sokrates): Ugh. Okay, listen. Ibex—

JACK (as Orth): —Well, I don't know if that's true...

KEITH (as Sokrates): —you're very obnoxious.

AUSTIN (as Ibex): You're going to be—you're going to give them an *incredible* sacrifice, and they're gonna *forget* about you.

KEITH (as Sokrates): J—j—j—okay. All right.

ALI: Jace is clenching his fists.

KEITH (as Sokrates): God. Jesus christ. All right, so.

ART: Addax reaches out, to like, you know, 'Don't, don't do it.' Like, you know, the 'Hold me back!'

AUSTIN: Mhm.

KEITH (as Sokrates): The whole thing of this mission, Ibex, right, is that we're all coming together, we're doing this important thing, we're going to stop the other Apostolosians from using this horrible weapon of mass destruction. Now, the case, really, is that almost everybody—

AUSTIN (as Ibex): [angrily] Are—Are you? Is that what we're gonna do? Finally stop your people from murdering mine?

KEITH (as Sokrates): Yeah, yeah. Almost everybody on this ship is really, really afraid of you. We don't like you, at all.

AUSTIN (as Ibex): They *should* be afraid of me.

KEITH (as Sokrates): Yeah, that's what I'm saying. They should be afraid of you, and they *are* afraid of you! I don't really think that you coming in as a latecomer to this whole thing, and trying to muscle yourself into the top tier, trying to put Orth aside—I don't think that that's gonna help anybody, and it's creating a vacuum of chaos.

AUSTIN (as Ibex): —I'm not here to be well-liked. I'm here to wipe your people off the map.

KEITH (as Sokrates): Right, that's what I'm saying! You say things like that, and nobody *likes* it. Nobody likes—

AUSTIN (as Ibex): [as if stating the obvious] But it has to get done. I'm not here to be well-liked!

KEITH (as Sokrates): Right, but you have to be well-liked by the people that you want to be in *charge* of!

JACK (as Orth): —Yeah, what he [sic] said.

AUSTIN (as Ibex): I don't want to be in charge of them. I want to direct them—

KEITH (as Sokrates): —and that's why you can't be in charge of them anymore.

AUSTIN (as Ibex): —like a *sword*.

KEITH (as Sokrates): You're not in charge of anything or anyone or any decision-making, you're done with it.

AUSTIN (as Ibex): Oh, really?

KEITH (as Sokrates): Nobody's listening to you—

JACK (as Orth): Um, Sokrates.

KEITH (as Sokrates): —it's just, you're scary and mean!

JACK (as Orth): Sokrates.

AUSTIN (as Ibex): [angrily] Are you—are you thinking that maybe I should be doing something else with the ship?

KEITH (as Sokrates): *Yes!*

AUSTIN (as Ibex): Maybe you don't *need* Righteousness to power your resources here?

KEITH (as Sokrates): Yeah! Yeah!

ALI (as Jace): We didn't need you when we started this mission. You are not a part of this.

KEITH (as Sokrates): We only brought you on—

AUSTIN (as Ibex): [calmly] Okay.



KEITH (as Sokrates): —so that you wouldn't leave *your citizens* high and dry, stranded on our ship. On *Orth's* ship!

AUSTIN: So this is—this is an overthrow, I'm guessing.

KEITH: Yeah.

AUSTIN: So Sokrates is taking Power.

KEITH: Yeah.

ALI: Jesus christ—!

AUSTIN: What's the cost for Sokrates here?

JACK: Everything.

[Laughter]

KEITH: Uh, the cost for Sokrates is that—I think that the cost for Sokrates is that the—he doesn't [sic] have any sort of emotional connection to the Diasporans at all. They all—

AUSTIN: They turn on him [sic]. Okay.

KEITH: They—yeah.

AUSTIN: I like that a lot, and totally we'll go with it.

SYLVIA: This is so good.

AUSTIN: Uh, Ibex is taking Touchstone.

[ALI laughs]

SYLVIA: Oh, my god.

KEITH: Prick—

ART: Yeah. That's not...

AUSTIN: We'll get a reaction scene after this scene.

ART: Sure.

AUSTIN: Ibex just walks out this scene, though. Like Ibex is like

AUSTIN (as Ibex): Fine.

AUSTIN: And he leaves.

KEITH: Ugh. What a pissbaby.

AUSTIN: Or—are you—are you giving—are you using your authority to like do something to Ibex?

KEITH: Um, I'm using my authority...

AUSTIN: Like is he getting locked up somewhere?

KEITH: Um. No, he's not getting locked up somewhere.

AUSTIN: Okay.

KEITH: Um. [laughs] I feel like that would make things worse for me.

AUSTIN: [agreeably] Probably!

[KEITH laughs]

DRE: [with schadenfreude] So you should do it!

KEITH: Um. I—does that—does that nullify by itself, uh...

AUSTIN: Uh-uh.

KEITH: ...uh, his order from before.

AUSTIN: No.

KEITH: No?

AUSTIN: No, it doesn't. You'll have to... actually, you know what, there might have been an errata about this. Let me just double—pull up the actual thing, because there was a weird change to the rule that I wanna make sure is actually reflected here.

KEITH: Kay.

AUSTIN: *"If the player who made the order does not the Power anymore—" yeah, "a current Power can adopt that order and describe it being carried out,"* or if no one—yeah, if no one adopts that order, it can be cancelled. So yeah, as long as no one adopts it, it gets canceled at resolution. But we should leave it on the table until then, because there's still a chance that Ibex could take order ag—or take Power again. In which case, it's still live.

KEITH: Okay.

KEITH (as Sokrates): So, guys. How's—that was... How'd I do?

[ALI and DRE laugh]

ALI (as Jace): Ugh, that guy sucks. Ugh.

JACK (as Orth): Sok—

KEITH (as Sokrates): Right?

ART: Um. I wanna—I wanna go up to Orth, and I wanna grab him on the shoulders and say,

ART (as Addax): When someone's on your ship, you make them call you Captain Godlove.

JACK (as Orth): Well, heh—well, right, but... [mumbling] Yeah, okay... [clearly upset] I'm going to need everybody to leave the bridge now for a bit?

ALI (as Jace): All right, Captain.

ART (as Addax): Of course, Captain.

AUSTIN: Oh. Buddy.

JACK (as Orth): [quietly] Thank you.

AUSTIN: I'd like a reaction scene.

ART: [grumpily] You would.

[SYLVIA laughs]

AUSTIN: It happens, like, overnight. Like, he's in the commissary now, and he's talking with people, and he's like the funniest guy any of them have ever met. And, like, everyone really *likes Ibex*.

[SYLVIA groans]

And, bit by bit, they start worrying about not just the future of this fleet, but the future of the Golden Branch star sector. Any other reaction scenes?

JACK: Um, I think that Orth just sits in the cockpit and turns all the lights off?

AUSTIN: Yeah. Oh, that's just—no, actually, the lights just turn off.

JACK: Oh, yes. [laughs]

AUSTIN: Because of the lack of supplies!

[ALI makes a sad noise]

JACK: Yeah. And the last lights turn off, and the ship just starts just slowly turning? Sideways.

AUSTIN: Uh. That's a Crossroad, I'm guessing?

JACK: Yeah, I think so.

AUSTIN: Orth. It's your scene.

ALI: Oh, god. Let Orth live.

[Laughter]

JACK: Um. I'd like a scene [singsong] with Ibex.

SYLVIA: Oh.

AUSTIN: Okay. Where at?

JACK: I think that Orth asks Ibex to come to the bridge of the Kingdom Come, but doesn't get a message, so he goes to the commissary.

AUSTIN: Okay. Um.

JACK: Where—

AUSTIN: Go ahead.

JACK: Is Ibex with people, or?

AUSTIN: Oh, yeah. Life of the party. That's the thing like Ibex doesn't have a role—Ibex has become like—started serving food in the commissary.

SYLVIA: Jesus.

ALI: Jesus christ.

AUSTIN: Is like,

AUSTIN (as Ibex): Oh yeah! Yeah, I'll be right back.

AUSTIN: and takes off his work gloves and like wanders over to a corner and does like a little—like a quick handshake with someone as they walk by—or as he walks by. And goes over to a corner, like in a prison movie, where it's like no one sits in that corner 'cause it's Ibex's corner?

AUSTIN (as Ibex): Orth! [claps] Good to see you.

JACK (as Orth): Candidate—

AUSTIN (as Ibex): Shame about all that business the other day. I—eugh.

JACK (as Orth): Yes, well.

AUSTIN: Hand on your shoulder.

AUSTIN (as Ibex): Take a seat.

JACK (as Orth): Oh, uh, thanks. Um, so I have a—um, I have some questions. I have two questions.

AUSTIN (as Ibex): Sure.

JACK (as Orth): Did—did you mean what you said back there on the ship about—about—you know... me not flying the ship anymore?

AUSTIN (as Ibex): No, you'd keep flying it, of course. It's just—I think you'd make a great leader in peacetime.

JACK (as Orth): Huh. Thanks!

AUSTIN (as Ibex): Really. The people here really love you, and that's impressive. I'm—I am—it is rare to see a leader who, at the same time, has your gentleness? You know, you're like a very good dog.

JACK (as Orth): [sincerely pleased] Oh, thank you.

AUSTIN (as Ibex): And that's—it's wonderful to see that, and the relationship you have with your people is incredible. The fact that we were able to meet in your—on your—on your bridge, even, was fantastic. It's just that right now things are *really tough*. And I'm worried about what will happen here, especially in Diasporan space. As we get deeper in... It's hard to know if the rest of the folks in the Diaspora will take to you as well as the rest of the crew does. You understand, right?

**[2:30:15]**

JACK (as Orth): [breathes in] ...Right, but I got those refugees on board.

AUSTIN (as Ibex): That was fantastic! I'm really, like I said, what a great way—I'm not sure that other people in OriCon would have worked as hard as you did for that. But you know how people are. Sometimes, uh, you do a good deed for 'em, and next thing you know they've forgotten about it. They'll even twist it. I'm gonna warn you. Someone's gonna twist your good deeds around on you one of these days, and you're not gonna see it coming.

JACK (as Orth): [meekly] Okay, so my sec—my second—can I have some of those chips, by the way?

[Laughter]

AUSTIN (as Ibex): Ah, absolutely. Whatever is mine is yours, Orth.

JACK (as Orth): Sorry, we don't have much f—we don't have much food left on the Kingdom Come.

AUSTIN (as Ibex): I—absolutely, I understand. You c—you know what, listen, come to my kitchen whenever you want, we'll make sure you're taken care of.

JACK (as Orth): Oh, thanks! Um. Sssso who do you think... you know, who do you think would take over?

AUSTIN (as Ibex): Well, you know, here's the thing: you—you don't even need to *technically* step down. You just need someone to help you... make the right decisions. You understand?

JACK (as Orth): Oh. Have you met Tea?

AUSTIN (as Ibex): Oh, Tea is great. Tea—you know—Tea is, uh...

JACK (as Orth): Ha! Did you know, she used to be my boss?

AUSTIN (as Ibex): [nonplussed] Ah. I could see that.

[SYLVIA sighs]

ALI: [laughing] Jesus christ...

JACK (as Orth): Ha.

AUSTIN (as Ibex): But she's better on the front lines, you know? That's where the people really need her, is leading the soldiers out on the charge. That seems—that seems r—that seems right.

JACK (as Orth): Mm.

AUSTIN (as Ibex): The people wouldn't be happy with her as leader.

JACK (as Orth): You have to tell me if—if—you know, you think this might be too much for you, 'cause you've got a lot on your hands here, but...

AUSTIN (as Ibex): A lot—the mashed potatoes today, am I right?

JACK (as Orth): Heh, yeah, uh.

SYLVIA: Fuck.

[DRE laughs]

JACK (as Ibex): You. Maybe—maybe you wouldn't mind, you know, helping out here and there, you know? Doing some—doing some mashed potatoes?

AUSTIN (as Ibex): Oh, man. I—you know, it's just—it seems like a... How about this? Every day, you meet me here, after the whole day is just about over, and you need to

make a few more decisions. Sign this paper, sign that paper. And, uh. And then—and then we'll just—you know. I'll help you out with some things.

[MUSIC - THE LONG WAY AROUND starts]

And listen! In the *long* run, I think you'll be better for it.

JACK (as Orth): You know, I—these last days I've been thinking back a lot to—to when they gave me this flight suit and when they gave me this ship and, you know... I called my dad and he was really proud of me, and I don't really wanna...

ALI: Jesus christ.

[KEITH laughs sadly]

JACK (as Orth): You know, I don't really wanna go back on that, but at the same time, sometimes I feel like making these decisions is what a commander has to do. [unsure] Right?

AUSTIN (as Ibex): You're exactly right, Orth. It *is* what a commander needs to do. And that's why I want to help you make 'em.

JACK (as Orth): Yes, thanks, Ibex. Thanks. Thanks. Uh, I'm going to take this mashed potato.

AUSTIN (as Ibex): Take it, please. That's—that's. Put a little salt on it, you'll love it.

JACK: And I guess Orth just gets up and leaves the commissary.

AUSTIN: Is this—did you overthrow...? What did you just do?

[ALI and KEITH laugh]

JACK: I think I stepped down?

AUSTIN: Right, but like—did you... Okay. You did step down!

JACK: Yeah!

AUSTIN: I'm trying to figure out how the rules work with this.

[MUSIC plays to end]