

PARTIZAN 11: DESERT SQUIRE - SLEIGHT

Transcriber: Lu

[SONG "TANAGER. PERFECT. TOUCHPAPER." STARTS PLAYING]

AUSTIN (as Crysanth): You will secure their safety, and you will do it without being identified- we cannot send you as open escort, your presence, if discovered and tied to Kesh, will further Apostolosian's hostilities in the region. But if you can protect the pilgrimage until it reaches the sea, you will be doing the Principality a great service. And if you find that you cannot protect it, you must do this at least: extract Gur Sevraq from the fray and bring them to a secure location here, in Cruciat.

SYLVIA (as Millie): Yeah, so we've got a hostile presence put here, probably could use some backup over by the sandstorm- thank you.

JACK (as Clementine): Debutante, we are under attack. A troop unit has been decapitated.

JACK: I forgot the word for when someone's head gets shot off. [Austin laughs]

SYLVIA (as Millie): Oh cool, I think I have an idea about who might have done that. Will report on my findings later.

JACK (as Clementine): Millie!

SYLVIA (as Millie): What? What? What is it?

JACK (as Clementine): You can't just say, "I'll tell you later"! [Keith laughs]

SYLVIA (as Millie): I mean, I'm— it's either... I'm being shot at. I need to get ready to shoot back at him!

JACK (as Clementine): Okay, fine, fine, fine. Just know that we're struggling here, too.

[Keith and Austin cackle]

SYLVIA (as Millie): [mocking concern] I'm so, so sorry to hear that.

AUSTIN: Sovereign Immunity, you know the Song is here because very quickly around Gur Sevraq and you, the Song's security falls into place, and like, matches step with Gur Sevraq's own security? And with Avar and the rest- and I think the Song starts to say-

AUSTIN (as the Song): We have secured transport. Follow me and we'll all get out of here alive.

ART (as Sovereign Immunity): It's a trap!

AUSTIN: the Song says-

AUSTIN (as the Song): You should not trust the man. That man is a traitor to our entire principality.

AUSTIN: Another limb comes out from under there? As if to say "we're going with Sovereign". And Avar says, uh-

AUSTIN (as Avar): My boss is a fan of your work.

JACK: I suppose what Clem does is, raises her gun?

JACK (as Clementine): Stand fast, for Partizan! For the Rapid Evening!

JACK: And there's just the sound of like- just feet pouring from the rocks around us. And just like, a bunch of strangers to these people. And take the fire line, and then just open fire on the approaching Conjuror.

[SONG "TANAGER. PERFECT. TOUCHPAPER." STOPS PLAYING]

KEITH (as Leap): Callister?

AUSTIN (as Callister): Yeah! Drive!

KEITH (as Leap): C.D.?

AUSTIN (as Callister): Yeah, C.D.! E.L.? Holy shit!

KEITH (as Leap): What are you doing here?

AUSTIN (as Callister): What are *you* doing here??

KEITH (as Leap): I'm- technically this is my sentence.

AUSTIN (as Callister): Oh.

KEITH (as Leap): So i- can you meet me halfway?

AUSTIN (as Callister): What's that mean?

KEITH (as Leap): I have this side thing-

AUSTIN (as Callister): here, today.

KEITH (as Leap): here, today. If you can- if you ping thama- the Thaumaturge- Thaumaturgie?

AUSTIN: [overlapping] Thaumaturge-

KEITH (as Leap): If you can ping the Thaumaturge and get me that favor, I can go do my own thing- I can't get anybody else to back off. I'm not leading shit right now.

AUSTIN: Millie, you see where the Thaumaturge is, Clem, you can see where the Thaumaturge is, like- kinda flickers into existence, it's another silhouette here inside of the sand as Callister- you know, has basically revealed it to you all. Um- or at least to- has revealed it maybe to Leap, who then can reveal it to everybody. In the back of this convoy, again- Sovereign, you, Gur and Avar are kind of squared off against Nideo- against not Nideo, but against the Song of Partizan? Aleel, uh... Verdicate. And then- is there a third party here? I guess that's the jist of it right now.

KEITH: I have one thing to say, and its...

KEITH (as Leap): [dramatically] Ahh, I need to back off, I got hit!

AUSTIN: God. A.O. comes over the comms-

AUSTIN (as A.O.): You alright?

KEITH (as Leap): I think I'm good, I just need to check on something, I gotta go over to the hill.

[Austin laughs]

AUSTIN (as A.O.): You sure? You need anything?

KEITH (as Leap): Nah, I just need to, uh- do a system diagnostic.

AUSTIN: [amused] What here is evil?

SYLVIA: Fucking christ. [Austin laughs]

JACK: Just so we're clear, did Callister sell out A-tek?

AUSTIN: In a sense. What's a sellout, you know?

JACK: I mean, did Callister know that A-tek was immediately gonna receive fire from-

AUSTIN: Oh yeah, 100%.

JACK: Yeah.

AUSTIN: But A-tek is his handler, right? Um... and as long as it doesn't come back on him- how does he know that wasn't Millie figuring out where she was? Right?

JACK: Right.

AUSTIN: Um- and the answer is- you know, you probably do enough systems diagnostics for real and you can trace it back- but Callister is a pro, Callister has been doing this for a minute, right? And it's a sandstorm. You know. Um... so yeah, just to restate the situation, Thaumaturge

in the sandstorm still drawing sights down the kind of lane, so to speak. To the south of that somewhere, maybe in the hills, is Millie, in your mech. To the west of that both Leap, who has been dancing around in the sand, to draw attention and draw out the Thaumaturge and A-tek. To the west of that is Clementine, who has, along with the cohort, just taken down the conjurer before it could get off its multiple clone technology shit? Further to the west of that, far by human standards but not that far if you're in a vehicle or if you have a ride, is Sovereign Immunity, Gur Sevraq, Aleel Verdiccate- who is the Song of Partizan, the kind of de facto leader of the church or received asterism here- and [laughs] you are effectively trying to bring Gur Sevraq away into some sort of extraction of your own, Sovereign Immunity, um... as has been to you as a special objective by Clementine's mom and the Curtain. Um... am I missing- oh, and above it all is Callister Drive, who has not given up on his part of this mission yet- Callister Drive being the once pirate, now kind of boot licking- a sellout? Who has his own house, his own lordship inside of Stel Orion? And he is here to also try to steal Gur Sevraq, and has not given up on that, but has made a sort of trade of information with Leap.

AUSTIN: Let's go to Sovereign Immunity, because we kinda haven't been back there in a second. Um, last time we saw you, Gur and Gur's- Gur Sevraq and their chief of security, Avar [pronounced a-var]- or Avar [pronounced ah-var]. Kinda went back to back with you? [laughs] Because it seemed as if Gur Sevraq was impressed by you revealing yourself to be the Farmer, who once led a Farmer's revolution on a planet far from here. What do you do?

ART: Um... this is tricky, on one hand... I'm winning. On the other hand, I'm out of plan.

AUSTIN: [amused] Uh-huh!

ART: How close are we to tunnels?

AUSTIN: Oh, good question! You have that move, right?

ART: Yeah, it's- do I roll for tunnels? [Sylvia laughs]

AUSTIN: You can roll for tunnels, do you wanna roll for tunnels?

ART: Yeah, I think that tunnels is the best way out.

JACK: This is-

AUSTIN: [overlapping] here's what I'm gonna- go ahead

JACK: We're talking about secret routes here, right?

AUSTIN: Yeah, you have secret routes, and so- the thing I'm gonna try to decide is- the thing is, you're going to know one. That's what I'm going to say straight up is, you have secret routes as one of your things, right? Which is +1d to engagement rolls with transport plans, you might have access to long forgotten underground subways, little known mountain paths, or some other route of your choosing- that's true no matter what, but what I want is a roll for you to determine

how quickly you can get to one, or how close one is to where you are. So I'm- there's no roll you're gonna make where I'm like "no, there isn't one", it's just gonna be about how close you are to one. So I think I need-

ART: I want you to know that I'm looking for- just right here. I'm looking for-

AUSTIN: Yeah, I gotcha-

JACK: [amused] directly beneath!

AUSTIN: yeah. I think-

ART: [overlapping] I'm standing on a manhole cover right now.

KEITH: Trapdoor in the desert.

AUSTIN: Um- there's a couple of ways we could do this. One is- I'm being an advocate for you here- one is I could ask you to do a survey roll, like "fuck, where was it?" again, and you make that roll- that's not great.

ART: Yeah, I don't have that.

AUSTIN: What else you could do, is a flashback, which is something we barely ever do.

ART: Yeah.

AUSTIN: In this season, we've not done that much, even though when we first used Blades In the Dark we did them a lot more. So, flashbacks are a thing in Forged In the Dark games that are really cool? And I'm looking for the full text so I can read them- read it out loud for people who- here we go. [reading] When a pilot has prepared for a seemingly unexpected circumstance, they can have a flashback to show why they aren't caught off guard. The pilot should describe what they did, and the GM will tell them if there's a need for an action roll. If the preparation was simple and there was ample opportunity to do so, it costs 0 stress. If the preparation was complicated or there was little chance to make it, it costs one stress. If the preparation was convoluted, involving unlikely occurrences and opening, it costs two stress. A flashback cannot undo something that has already happened, like removing a character that's currently in the scene, but it can provide means for dealing with the current situation. If a flashback involves a downtime activity, pay one personnel or rep instead of stress- this is not, or it probably won't. What you'd be flashbacking is like, "I already had an extraction point nearby", right?

ART: Yeah. Um, I should- I should be honest and forthright with you.

AUSTIN: Yeah.

ART: Which is that- I should really do something right now that requires a much simpler flashback? But part of me is just like- we just go and get out of here, and later I should do the flashback to the thing I should just do in real life now? Or in real life as far as this game is.

AUSTIN: What's the thing you wanna do now?

ART: Um... how many rings does Leap need? I'm never gonna get closer-

AUSTIN: [overlapping, amused] Leap only needs a ring, one ring.

ART: I'm never getting closer to the Song.

AUSTIN: Wait, what song- oh- [amused] okay, I got confused, like "is there some sort of song we're quoting the lyrics of?"

[Keith laughs]

ART: I might need a flashback-

KEITH: [overlapping] I'm like, in the process of getting out of that area

AUSTIN: [overlapping] Leap is in route, that is definitely a thing that's happening, and- there's a world in which you coordinated with him to get you out of here, maybe, and stuff. Um... you're basically saying "I can help Leap get a ring"?

ART: I can help Leap get a ring, and then I won't need to flashback later when we didn't get the ring.

AUSTIN: [laughs] I don't know- I don't know that we're- I think Leap is about to show up and try to get these rings

ART: Hm. I might-

KEITH: Yeah. Yeah yeah yeah.

ART: If you think- I'm just right here, y'know?

KEITH: Yeah. Well, I have a new- I leveled up, I have a new move.

AUSTIN: Oh, what's your new move?

KEITH: I have a move called Shadow, [reading] you might spend your spark to resist a consequence from detection or security measures, or to push yourself for a feat of athletics or stealth.

ART: [overlapping] Oh I don't have any of that, I was just gonna try to- honestly there's a way where I end up just punching *him.

AUSTIN: Her, her, the Song is her.

ART: Sorry. And there's a place where I end up just punching her and taking one.

[Austin laughs]

KEITH: [laughs] The- okay. Don't do that.

ART: I'm doing fine.

KEITH: She likes you, I think that is valuable?

AUSTIN: [overlapping] She does not.

KEITH: No? Does she not like you?

JACK: Different person.

KEITH: She picked you over-

AUSTIN: You....uh-

JACK: [overlapping, amused] I think we're talking about different people here, the Song-

KEITH: Oh okay, we're talking about the Song, right. The Song is trying to steal Gur Sevraq, and you're going to punch the Song.

AUSTIN: And take her rings. Or at least a ring.

KEITH: [overlapping] And take a ring, yeah, right.

AUSTIN: [overlapping] But I don't even know- I don't even think that Sovereign Immunity knows anything about those rings.

ART: Well, we would need a flashback for that.

AUSTIN: I see, you're saying "What if we did a flashback for Leap sharing that". I don't know-

ART: [overlapping] But I'm saying- if Leap has a plan? I was just trying to help, and if my help isn't needed here I can use this flashback sequence to just get out of here.

AUSTIN: You go ahead and...

KEITH: You're trying to get out of here with Gur Sevraq-

AUSTIN: [overlapping] Gur Sevraq, yeah. I think this is-

ART: [overlapping] If I can help on the way out I would, but if you don't need it you don't need it.

KEITH: Um... see, that's the- I was coming to you to help you, can you get out without my help?

ART: [overlapping] We'll find out.

KEITH: That- okay. So that was part of my plan, was "Hey, I might have given Orion a tick on their clock, but I'm going to go over where Gur Sevraq is and try to help over there after I steal the ring".

AUSTIN: Right.

KEITH: But. Um.... I guess we'll see if Sovereign Immunity needs Leap's help.

ART: Okay so, I guess I'm gonna use- I'm gonna use a flashback to get out, and if later I need- we can use a flashback to have helped you here, let's just flag this moment-

AUSTIN: Uh-huh. As a moment where there could have been a second flashback, like in Fast and Furious, like "ah, you thought that was all that happened, but actually-" [laughs]

ART: Right, if we need to find out that they switched the vault, this is where we drove under the overpass and the garbage truck was there.

AUSTIN: [amused] Right, uh-huh. Yes.

KEITH: It's a great way to resolve some future PC conflict, where each character takes turns assuming stress and doing a flashback scene to be more prepared than the previous flashback scene-

AUSTIN: [laughs] So, I'm going to say that this is probably a one stress flashback, just to set up a nearby exit path? It's one stress because how would you know that it is the particular place? And the answer is you'd be overprepared, right? You know a bunch of exit routes from a bunch of places on this path because you've studied the maps and prepped for it. But it's still- it's not two stress because of secret routes, that's a thing you have already? So I'll give you a +1 for that.

ART: Alright.

AUSTIN: Um... so now it's just a matter of getting there, and getting out. So, how are you gonna go about that?

ART: Well, I have a bunch of ideas that are things I don't have stats for.

AUSTIN: [laughs] Right.

ART: Um... a lot of people are probably looking just directly at me right now, huh.

AUSTIN: Oh yeah, this is- this has become a bit of a scene? I mean, I wanna be clear, there's hundreds of people, it's chaos, there's a sandstorm, there are moments where you can see

clearly and moments where you can't. Um... and Gur Sevraq is doing a little prayer under his breath. So it's very chaotic.

ART: Yeah.

AUSTIN: Sevraq is just repeating the word 'progression' over and over.

ART: Oh my god... alright. So, I have to get into a tunnel without anyone noticing, or... with people noticing and not wanting to follow me.

AUSTIN: Uh-huh.

ART: That's probably easier.

AUSTIN: [amused] Yeah! Given what the stats you're looking at are.

ART: Yeah- why don't we get into a tunnel and then I will, um... use my heavy weapon to just- that tunnel doesn't work anymore. I'll just break it behind me.

AUSTIN: Okay. I'm gonna say that doing this in- doing the order of just "I'm gonna run, I'm gonna take a break and just run to the nearest tunnel and block the path" is going to be desperate? Desperate standard? Because not only do you have the sandstorm, you also have all of the Song's guards, who are armed and will be trying to hurt you while you do this.

ART: Great.

AUSTIN: So that's gonna be desperate standard- or I guess- you tell me, that sounded like wreck to me, I was guessing that was wreck since wreck is the thing that you would destroy a tunnel with?

ART: Yeah, uh-huh, yeah.

AUSTIN: Okay. Sorry to jump to conclusions there.

ART: No, that's right. Um... and I'm not-

AUSTIN: [overlapping] Do you wanna push yourself?

ART: -I'm gonna push myself so I can get the force required to cave in a whole-

AUSTIN: Oh, alright! That then becomes- yeah, I think that that is just a thing you need to do to do that effectively? O yeah, take- push yourself, you either take the +1 die or the +1, uh... better effect or better position? Up to you. But you won't get another bonus on top of that the way you would.

ART: Right, yeah. Well, I'm looking for some- I guess I'm looking for increased effect, I'm looking for some gusto. I'm looking for no one being like "Wow, let's dig that out".

AUSTIN: Yeah. Desperate great.

ART: Uh-huh.

AUSTIN: Mark your prowess track, because any time you roll desperate you get to mark XP on that- in the given track. You're gonna push yourself, you know, you gotta do desperate things to get better. So that's- right now it's just 1d6 still.

ART: Wait, don't I still get the... I still get the normal-

AUSTIN: [overlapping] No, 'cause you're picking- pushing yourself is +1 die or greater effect.

ART: [overlapping] Or greater effect, okay.

AUSTIN: Or better positioning, up to you. So you could do desperate standard with 2d6 if you'd rather do that.

ART: No, no, I'm...

AUSTIN: Alright! [laughs]

ART: I'm a big dummy here.

AUSTIN: [laughing] Is there any way anyone could help?

SYLVIA: I'm in the desert...

JACK: I could be making- I could be making an approach?

AUSTIN: Clem is closer, and Clem hasn't been in a scene in a second.

JACK: The theory that the toughs, A.O. and his toughs, might be holding the fort on the front line, with Gur Sevraq's crew, Avar's crew? So in theory Clem could be kind of hot footing it back to Sovereign. Um...

AUSTIN: Yeah, I think that would be enough to do cover fire or something, you know?

JACK: Yeah, absolutely, we could-

KEITH: [overlapping] This also potentially leaves Millie alone.

AUSTIN: Millie is effectively alone already.

KEITH: Okay-

JACK: [overlapping] We're so far away from each other, right?

AUSTIN: Yes.

KEITH: I thought that you were about halfway between-

AUSTIN: Yeah, but halfway between as a human on ground versus being in a big robot? Those distances are *really* big.

JACK: Also, isn't Millie up on like, cliffsides?

AUSTIN: Yeah, up on cliffsides-

SYLVIA: [overlapping] I think so, yeah.

AUSTIN: That's where you were, previously.

JACK: Okay, assisting would cost one stress, which would bring me like, real close to the bad news mark.

AUSTIN: Yeah [laughs]

JACK: Um... I need to take- I really want to take tactical genius next time around, that move [laughs] did not appeal when we were making the character, but now I'm like "oh, this is probably going to be really useful" Um...

AUSTIN: Oh yeah, that's great, look at that.

JACK: Yeah! It's one of those moves that you don't think of taking at first, and then you're like- yeah, I'll spend this stress to come and help.

AUSTIN: Okay.

JACK: It's just one, right?

KEITH: [overlapping] I don't know-

AUSTIN: [overlapping] What's that look like? Just you, coming through the sand, firing guns?

JACK: Um...

AUSTIN: Or making noise, or...

JACK: I think- I wanna take Art's lead in terms of how he wants to narrate this? [amused] Because if Art is trying to do this fairly stealthily and then Clem shows up guns blazing- I don't know.

ART: No, I'm committed to causing a cave-in, I think stealth is over.

JACK: Okay!

ART: I think cover fire is actually- anything is stealthy if people are getting shot at [Austin laughs]

JACK: Yeah, no, absolutely. Um... okay. Yeah.

AUSTIN: 2d6 then for you- and again, it's up to you I guess, Sovereign Immunity, if you want to take that help as- *Oh*. No no no no, no, sorry, I almost fucked up. It does not cost you one stress to help Sovereign Immunity-

JACK: It costs me two, doesn't it?

AUSTIN: It costs you two, because you have two ticks, you have two beliefs about Sovereign Immunity now. It would mean that this would *really* help Sovereign Immunity- [Jack laughs] you'd get two bonuses, Art, if Clem helped you, instead of one. You get one bonus per belief.

JACK: [overlapping] Oh no, actually- oh no... would it give me now or when I tick over?

AUSTIN: [overlapping] But it would instantly- it would instantly give trauma. No, it's when you hit nine.

JACK: Fucking hell!

SYLVIA: [laughing] Oh, god...

AUSTIN: You're at seven now.

JACK: Shit. [Austin laughs] The problem is- this is, on some level, very narratively compelling after Sovereign's communication with Clem during downtime.

AUSTIN: Yeah. [Jack sighs] It kind of rules!

KEITH: And Clem's inability to reduce stress in that scene with Leap [laughs]

AUSTIN: Yes, yes.

JACK: Yeah... let me look at-

AUSTIN: It kinda rules! [laughs]

JACK: Do we think it's unearned, having Clem- well, I was about to say "Do we think it's unearned, having Clem learn her lesson from Sovereign's conversation" I don't know whether or not throwing herself straight towards a scar is necessarily learning her lesson. She's definitely acting on what Sovereign said.

AUSTIN: This is like, someone telling you "Well, if you wanna play at Carnegie Hall, you have to practice" and then the next day you go "I'm going to practice in Carnegie Hall" [Jack laughs, Sylvia and Keith cackle]

JACK: "Send me!". Uh, yeah, yeah, absolutely. Yeah, alright. Um... this is one of these decisions that I think is going to be... exhausting, [laughs] but I'll go for it. We can work out how this works.

AUSTIN: Yeah. Let's start with this roll from Art, because that will help us understand what the situation looks like? [laughing] Because like, if Art still fails at this?

JACK: [overlapping] Oh, that's very funny.

AUSTIN: That's very funny and bad.

ART: Yeah, let's not root for that. [Jack chuckles] Um, so-

AUSTIN: [overlapping] Friends at the Table!

KEITH: I hope that Art does a good job.

ART: Thanks, Keith.

AUSTIN: I wanna break it down for people listening, because I think that this is interesting- an interesting element of this game, that I want to make sure we don't just breeze past too quickly- um... you know already that characters have beliefs with each other, beliefs about each other? And the way that the- in other Forged in the Dark games, you can spend one stress to help each other, but in Beam Saber, that stress cost increases the better characters know each other, the more beliefs they have about each other, and you gain beliefs by cutting loose with them- so because [laughing] Clem and Sovereign Immunity did that cut loose, Clem has two beliefs, which means that she can better help Sovereign Immunity- she gives him two bonuses- but it will cost her more stress because she's more invested in the outcome.

JACK: Hm. Yes, that's fantastic, and I think being invested in an outcome is pretty much what we're talking about here, from like, a narrative position.

AUSTIN: Yeah.

JACK: Um, I've also worked out what she's doing, and it's not- it's kinda covering fire. Um...

AUSTIN: Okay, do you wanna say what that is first, or do you wanna wait until the roll?

JACK: Yeah, let's figure out how it goes.

AUSTIN: Okay! Then, Art, what are you doing with these two bonuses?

ART: I'm getting to 3d6 I think.

AUSTIN: Uh-huh.

ART: 'Cause- I mean, there's no- there's no better- not being desperate is a fool's game.

AUSTIN: Right, agreed. Wait, did we say it was desperate standard?

ART: It's now desperate standard, 'cause I used my push to push that up.

AUSTIN: Yes, okay. So 3d6 desperate standard. That's a five! That's a mixed success, [laughs] which based on desperate still ain't great! You tell me what this starts to look like, you tell me the successful part of this and then we can talk through the rest.

ART: I mean, I think we get to the tunnel, and- I guess I have to mark my load, hold on- and I take out the giant mech carving scythe

AUSTIN: Uh-huh. Which no normal person should be able to wield, and yet Sovereign Immunity...

ART: Yeah.

AUSTIN: The hulking up, bulking up in this tunnel entrance.

ART: Yeah. I guess pull it out of my cloak or something? I don't know, we gotta- I don't know where it comes from.

AUSTIN: You've not secretly been holding the briefcase or whatever- the carrying case the whole time.

ART: Maybe it should like, Titanfall.

AUSTIN: You think it's in space? You think it was in a mortar nearby? [Keith laughs] what's the- and then you got it mortar launched in.

ART: Uh-huh. Catch it. Keep running.

AUSTIN: Okay, you catch it, you keep running.

ART: Yeah. I don't know, we'll figure it out. Um... [laughs] 'cause like, would carrying a big giant weapon case be really conspicuous?

AUSTIN: Maybe it like, folds up on your back in a cool way? I don't know.

ART: It's tricky though, 'cause-

KEITH: [overlapping] You did say it was part of your load at the beginning before Austin said that's not how it works.

ART: I did, yeah. Um- I guess the blade must be part of a- you know, must be bigger than a human torso.

AUSTIN: You said that you had a really big torso. [Sylvia laughs]

ART: Hm. But not a long- not a longer torso.

AUSTIN: You're not really tall? You don't have a long torso?

ART: I don't think so.

AUSTIN: Okay.

ART: Sylvester Stallone is my pull, he's not very tall.

AUSTIN: Yeah, fair.

ART: Anyway- Stallone and Chris Rock were together for a television commercial recently.
Um... [Sylvia laughs]

AUSTIN: God- yeah. We did. So-

ART: Alright. So- and just hacks at the ceiling- roof? What do caves have? Top part?

AUSTIN: Just- the roof, the roof of the cave, right?

ART: [overlapping] The roof of the cave?

KEITH: Yeah, that's-

AUSTIN: [overlapping] The roof of the mouth?

ART: Yeah, sure.

KEITH: A mouth is a cave. A mouth is just a face cave.

AUSTIN: Yeah, a cave mouth..

ART: Yeah. A mouth is a cave your face makes.

SYLVIA: I- okay!

AUSTIN: I love that song.

SYLVIA: Um! [Keith laughs]

AUSTIN: And it comes collapsing down.

ART: [overlapping] It comes collapsing down, yeah.

AUSTIN: Um... Clem, how do you see yourself involved here?

JACK: One of the things I can take is 'flares'?

AUSTIN: Yeah, true.

JACK: And I like the idea- [Austin laughs] flares come with 'flares, flashlights or glowsticks, as a simple form of illumination' and I think if Clem wants to provide some sort of covering fire in a way that we know, because of the framing of taking those two stress is going to be excessive and dangerous, I wonder if- y'know, we talk a lot about this like Mad Max-

AUSTIN: Yeah

JACK: Like, bright colored flares.

AUSTIN: [overlapping] The bright colored- yeah.

JACK: What about just, sort of like... migraine aura riot of color, being half illuminated through a sandstorm? Of just like, bizzare lights and shadows and sand being illuminated-

AUSTIN: God, and she gets caught in the storm element of the sandstorm? So it's like- you ever used the google paintbrush thing on a VR or whatever? You know what that is?

JACK: [overlapping] Oh yeah, tilt brush or something.

AUSTIN: [overlapping] You know what I'm talking about? Tilt brush, yeah- whatever those are, that style of- you shoot this flare off, that is part light part- y'know, powder- and it's just like being-

JACK: [overlapping] You know when planes drop reflective stuff to fuck up missiles?

AUSTIN: Right. Chaff.

JACK: Yeah yeah yeah, that's just surrounding me. And it's all caught in the storm, and like, I'm my hair, and-

AUSTIN: Love it. Love it.

JACK: And presumably also fucks stuff up for... the Song's guards as well, who are just like-

AUSTIN: [overlapping] Right, who are now shooting at-

JACK: [overlapping, amused] - some kind of monster is emerging from- [Austin laughs]

AUSTIN: I think that aleel verdicate's guards are like... really only dressed in robes, very religious garbs- actually, I think they might actually have these high collar uniforms that have big fold over collar-

JACK: Oh, brilliant.

AUSTIN: Foldover like a chest panel thing, very neutral colors but with, um... really bright fringe work? Like, gold or silver- I think they're all different colors, there's almost like a Power Ranger's

element to them here. In terms of not being- y'know how the power- you know how in a sentai show, the characters are already color coded, even before they get into their gear? [Jack laughs] It's that style, they're all in their uniforms with like- this one has a green headband, and this one has a red one- you know?

KEITH: "I wear a yellow t-shirt every day!"

AUSTIN: [laughing] Exactly- "just 'cause! It's just what I'm feeling!"

SYLVIA: "It's my favorite color!"

AUSTIN: Yeah, exactly! [laughs] Um... yeah, so that's the vibe. And they have like- they have like, bolt action rifles? That is like- you know the Garand? The famous bolt action- it's not really a bolt action rifle, that's a semi-automatic rifle, but when you put the clip out it goes like 'ping!'? You know that 'ping'?

JACK: Uh-huh, the bit comes out shooting out the side.

AUSTIN: The bit comes out shooting out the side. It's like that, but instead of shooting bullets it's shooting needles? Like, big, big needles- not like injection needles, like spikes I guess? And it makes that ping noise with each shot. So those are flying all over the place as Sovereign Immunity is running through the sandstorm towards- hopefully- where there's one of these tunnels- that is an exit point to it. Before we get to our consequences, Jack, I need you to know this is the situation with Clem hitting nine stress.

JACK: Uh-huh.

AUSTIN: You can now remove yourself quietly from the scene- and if you do, you will heal all stress and choose a scar suitable to the event that filled that last stress box. You'll then leave the situation in a terrible state, but return then later in an appropriate time without the need to cut loose due to scars in the next downtime- or, you could push on recklessly. In that case, you'll take what's called a dire action- with this action you can ignore any harm or damage penalties you currently have. You cannot then spend stress to take this action, nor can you make resist rolls, since stress is at max, but if you get a six on that dire action you will then be able to make another dire action, which will allow you to kind of chain rolls and stay in the scene if you need it- if you desperately needed to. But the second you roll a five or lower you then- or the second you decide "No, I'm gonna cash out" then the rest of that stuff fires off and you hit a scar and you leave. I guess actually... if you decide "That's it, I'm done", even then- or if you fail- you would take an appropriate level 3 harm, and then get removed from the scene in bad shape

JACK: Oh, so that's just to stop me from taking dire actions all the time.

AUSTIN: All the time. Because if you do, you're going to take a level 3 harm? But if this was a situation where you're like "I need to stay in this scene" you could do that with the risk of that level three harm- now, if you happened to somehow roll a crit, you would heal one stress, no longer be in dire states, and avoid taking a scar and that level 3 harm, so. Just- I don't know that

this is that sequence, I don't know if this is that scenario for you, but that's just on the table as a thing that you could do, just so you know. But I'm guessing that's not the case?

JACK: I don't think so. Um...

AUSTIN: Okay

Jack. I'm already at 'lacerated'? And I'm- [Keith cackles]

AUSTIN: You are. That's a level 2 harm.

JACK: - going to have to... I'm gonna have to cut loose in a big way, this stress won't clear-

AUSTIN: No no no, this stress clears itself, if you take a scar. When you- right now the stress is gonna clear itself. 'Cause it maxed out.

KEITH: And then think about how much help you can be [Jack laughs]

AUSTIN: This stress is gonna probably clear out before we end this *session*.

KEITH: Also, you're predicting that Clem will take a scar this- today?

AUSTIN: Clem is at 9 stress, Clem-

JACK: [overlapping] Clem is going to get a scar.

KEITH: Oh, you already decided to do it, okay.

AUSTIN: [amused] Unless she decides to try to do a dire action and theoretically get two sixes to clear one stress, which is a *real* gamble.

JACK: Yeah, that's very difficult to roll, isn't it. So one successful dire action... [laughs] as soon as I fail a dire action I get a level 3 harm-

AUSTIN: Yes

JACK: I get a scar, I get kicked out of the scene, but all my stress clears.

AUSTIN: Right- but your stress is also going to clear if you do nothing at this point.

JACK: Yes.

AUSTIN: Cause you got a scar. Anytime you get a scar, your stress clears.

JACK: Okay.

AUSTIN: Because you maxed out that bar, and the cost of that is a scar.

JACK: Okay.

AUSTIN: [amused] I'm just giving you the tools at your disposal here.

JACK: Yeah, no- they're all bad tools. [Austin laughs] Um...

AUSTIN: So you want me to give you the other- do you want me to give you the desperate consequences, which we haven't yet gotten to?

JACK: Yeah. Yeah, alright, let's see the situation that the party is in, and then we can discuss things like odds of rolling a six in said situations.

AUSTIN: Right. Yes, ok, totally. So... god, I think- the first thing that happens here is that those needle things I talked about before? Uh- one of those is hitting Sovereign Immunity 100%. Sovereign Immunity, I need you to take a level 3 harm. And that level 3 harm is 'impaled'.

ART: I would like to resist that.

AUSTIN: That sounds like a good idea. You can resist that by rolling your Prowess, which is 2 dice. Because you have Forged in the Fire, you'll get another dice, so that's 2d6 instead of 2d6. Um- I'll also note, you could declare armor, and that would reduce it immediately from a level 3 harm, to a level... have we talked about this? I think to a level 1 harm, I think we said it would reduce it by 2.

ART: That would be my last point of load?

AUSTIN: Okay. Yeah, you went with light load.

ART: Yeah, to look more like a traveling pilgrim.

AUSTIN: Yes.

KEITH: That worked out.

AUSTIN: It did

ART: Yeah...

KEITH: He got in a big fight right away.

AUSTIN: I'll note, you get cheap armor, you get lighter armor, because you literally have a thing called 'light armor' on your character sheet that is only one thing instead of two- which you would straight up not be able to use, the default armor is just too heavy for your current situation. So yeah, do you wanna do that resist, with prowess? 3d6?

ART: What am I trying to roll again?

AUSTIN: This is resolve, which is- sorry, prowess, which is 2 because you have on in struggle and one in wreck.

ART: And what do I want?

AUSTIN: It's- you're gonna get stress equal 6 minus whatever your result is.

ART: Okay, I would just like to note that I'm at 6 stress.

AUSTIN: Yes, you are. Which means that if you get four five or six, you are going to take a scar.

JACK: Oh my god- wanna come to Carnegie Hall? [Austin cackles]

ART: Wait. Six minus?

AUSTIN: Six minus. So- eyah, sorry, the other way around. If you get one two or three, right, yes.

ART: But I keep the highest.

AUSTIN: You keep high, yeah. You wanna roll as many dice as you can on this.

[pause]

ART: I'm a god! [Keith laughs, Sylvia cackles]]

AUSTIN: You got a six, you got a six.

JACK: [overlapping, laughing, unintelligible]

AUSTIN: Reduce that down then to level one 'scratched' damage? Still hurt!

JACK: Does it just whiff by? Does it like-

AUSTIN: Yeah, yeah.

JACK: Painfully, but not dangerously.

AUSTIN: Yeah, scratched up maybe, or uh... bloodied, y'know? Let's go with bloodied.

KEITH: Scraped.

AUSTIN: Scraped is good!

JACK: Scraped is good because scrapes suck.

AUSTIN: Scrapes suck! Scrapes *will* give me less effect for the day [laughs]

JACK: Yeah [laughs]

KEITH: Bloodied seems broad.

AUSTIN: Bloodied is at level two. Impaled, level three, bloodied, level two, scraped, level one.

KEITH: Nicked, I've been nicked.

AUSTIN: Yeah, exactly! Let's go to Millie. I guess- really quick, Clem, we see you just disappear into the sand [laughs]

JACK: Oh yeah, no, it's- it's like... you know in cartoons when animals fight that it just makes a big cloud? [laughing] With stars and stuff coming out of it? [Keith cackles] It's just that but one woman in the middle of color and light in a sandstorm.

AUSTIN: Amazing. Um... Millie.

SYLVIA: Speaking of one woman being alone in a sandstorm, it's Millie time! Um-

AUSTIN: [laughing] How you doing?

SYLVIA: So, I- we've located Thaumaturge now because she was pinged, so-

AUSTIN: [laughing] Were you sitting on "It's Millie time"?

SYLVIA: Yeah I was, um...

AUSTIN: [amused] This whole time? Can we get an "it's Millie time" print?

SYLVIA: Look, we were trying to think of a Partizan shirt, I'm just sayin! [Austin laughs] I want to destroy this other fucking sniper.

AUSTIN: yeahhh, sniper duel in the fucking sand!

SYLVIA: So, I would like to- I'm in my mech, and I wanna fire- I'm doing a lot here, I'm pushing myself, I'm using- I wanna be using special ammunition, it's one of the things I can mark for my vehicle?

AUSTIN: Ooh, what kind of special ammunition are you using, what does it do?

SYLVIA: So, what I was picturing, because this is like... I still don't know the shape of this thing so much, I know more the location? I've described the ammunition that the Stray Dog uses as these like, javelins, steel spikes basically? And what this is is one that opens up mid flight into a bunch of smaller- but still big for a person!- steel spikes. Basically more like a grapeshot type thing?

AUSTIN: Right.

SYLVIA: Yeah. Except if it was needles [laughs]

AUSTIN: I'll note how this works, which is that, um- you've now declared special ammunition, so that means that's part of what's in the Stray Dog now.

SYLVIA: Yeah.

AUSTIN: At the beginning of each mission you can declare- whenever you basically declare it? In a mission, going forward, are gonna use it- you can tell me what it is for that mission. So that's it for this particular mission, but next mission if you wanted to mix it up, you can mix it up.

SYLVIA: Yeah, I'm very excited to play with this.

AUSTIN: In general it's like... you get a special effect against one type of enemy? In this case, what are the conditions?

SYLVIA: What I'm hoping for here is that this is, um... because- [sighs] I guess the idea would be to cover a greater like, range of space in one shot? Y'know what I mean?

AUSTIN: Yeah yeah yeah, an AOE- maybe it does really good against lightly armored stuff, because you're hitting it- which you suspect this is, 'cause sniper mechs aren't necessarily really heavy bulky things.

SYLVIA: And like, on top of that- it's part of that and part of just like, not knowing where she is.

AUSTIN: Totally, totally.

SYLVIA: And then also I wanna push myself. So I'm gonna be using- I can only do that once, right?

AUSTIN: You can only do that once, you have to declare which quirk you're using.

SYLVIA: I'm gonna mark my overwhelming sensors.

AUSTIN: Okay. Which means that there is- we've talked about this briefly, but-

SYLVIA: Yeah, we've mentioned it. I sort of described it as- I think I compared it to like, a virtual reality headset, but when you put it on, you are in a different body completely? You feel everything? Or- not feel everything, but it feels like you're inhabiting-

AUSTIN: [overlapping] Your perception is off, right?

SYLVIA: Yeah! It's very surreal, I think that it- I don't wanna get too much into the specifics, but I do think that there is a connection legitimately to her body, to the way this thing hooks up to the mech? Um... we can put a veil over that.

AUSTIN: Yeah, but there's some sort of physical connection.

SYLVIA: Yeah, and it sucks, but it works really well. And then... [amused] so, tell me about this collateral die thing, Austin.

AUSTIN: Okay! So, the way collateral die works is that I give you a bonus die, and I get to do something. That can do literal collateral damage, unintended harm- someone else gets hurt in the crossfire- I could make you sacrifice supplies or an item, I could make you- offer you not make you- offer you the chance to offend or anger a faction for a bonus die, to start or tick a troublesome clock, to suffer harm, to have a rival show up unexpectedly, or to betray a friend or a loved one. [laughs]

SYLVIA: Alright, sounds great!

AUSTIN: [overlapping] And I'll give you a bonus die if you do this, you know.

SYLVIA: Yeah, um... well, I'm trying to max out my dice here, so, yeah.

AUSTIN: Yeah. Totally fair, totally fair. I think you- hm. I'm trying to keep this focused, given how late we are in the game, so to speak. And so, I think the thing that I'm gonna offer is, let me tick the 'discovered' clock one more time. It's at four of six right now, it would go up to five of six. And that again, is the clock that tracks whether or not the Rapid Evening- you are discovered as a group to be tied to Stel Kesh. So taking this will put you right up on the edge.

SYLVIA: Okay. That's not my problem.

AUSTIN: Okay.

SYLVIA: [laughs] That's not Millie's problem.

AUSTIN: Yeah, yeah, yeah. I think fictionally- I just wanna say what this is, is like- partially this is, um... partially this is people watching and being like "oh, wait, isn't this the mech that was in Obelle a few weeks ago?" Partly this is- you have to imagine people three weeks from now, at the site. Y'know what I mean? Picking through things, like "Wait a second, that ammo is the same ammo that was used when Horizon was driven away at Obelle, when duh duh duh duh" You know? They can start piecing stuff together, it's not always one to one, someone sees you and goes "You're from Stel Kesh!" [laughs] Etcetera. So yeah, take that other bonus die, what are you up to now?

SYLVIA: I think- so, if I'm using bombard now, that would be... with the collateral die and pushing myself, that would be 4d6?

AUSTIN: 4d6!

SYLVIA: And then...

AUSTIN: Well, if you're using those for +1.

SYLVIA: I am, I think...

AUSTIN: You are. So it's 4d6- I think this is desperate standard. Oh-

SYLVIA: [overlapping] There's sharpshoot- yeah, 'cause I have reduced effect, which is why I'm also asking if sharpshooter comes into effect here?

AUSTIN: Oh, you have reduced effect from scrambled.

SYLVIA: Yeah. 'Cause I took that armor earlier.

AUSTIN: I think that sharpshooter comes into effect- 'cause you're already pushing yourself, so yeah. But in a way- in a fictional sense more than a- narrative sense?

SYLVIA: [overlapping] Okay, works for me.

AUSTIN: So which are you doing, are you trying to suppress the enemy or are you trying to make a ranged attack at extreme distance beyond what's normal for the weapon?

SYLVIA: I think it is the former, I think I'm trying to make a range attack at extreme distance beyond what's normal for the weapon.

AUSTIN: Okay, cool. That actually helps, because it means that you're a little safe from the counterfire from Thaumaturge specifically.

SYLVIA: Alright.

AUSTIN: Because you're basically outshooting her from a further distance, if that makes sense.

SYLVIA: Hell yeah

AUSTIN: Alright, so 4d6, desperate standard.

SYLVIA: That's a five.

AUSTIN: Oh my god that first one gave me a heart attack, I swear.

SYLVIA: Yeah, same here.

AUSTIN: Um... alright, so, I'll go ahead and mark Thaumaturge by three, because that's what a success- oh wait, it's only by two, sorry- on a standard success- So yeah, what's it look like as you shoot through the sand at your foe?

SYLVIA: Uh... I think Millie is really mad- she's kinda banged up I think, at this point? Just from like, shrapnel and shit that's been- she's been under fire this whole time? I think this shot is literally just her screaming while she fires this giant spike, and like- in the show of this, I see it

following that projectile until it splits off, and then we just see this mass of like, ammo just falling down onto where the Thaumaturge is.

AUSTIN: Okay, cool. So yeah, I think we see the Thaumaturge get hit pretty bad, like- unable to have that's distance and fire back- until- there's this barrage of shots going back and forth between the two of you, the ones being fired at you are *completely* missing you, the ones that you're firing are hitting and driving her even further back, trying to get to a safer position- and then there's a pause, and then all of the sand throughout this entire canyon just *drops* down to the ground. Like, in an instant, in such a way that people are buried now up to their shins or knees [laughs] in new sand. 'Cause it all just fell on them- and Leap, you mech appears- you were hidden in the sand, in a sense, like- suddenly, oh there's Leap, there's uh- what's the name of your mech? I always forget, I'm sorry.

KEITH: Uh, Heads Up.

AUSTIN: The Heads Up, right there, in the middle of the sky shooting down this canyon trench. There is Clementine, passed out on the sand [laughs] There are all these people who you could barely see, 'cause you couldn't see that far in front of you- and the reason that that cut out like that is because finally the Tempestarii has gotten into the conflict, has stopped being in sandstorm mode and has just instantly shot a missile down through the sand at you, Millie?

SYLVIA: Okay.

AUSTIN: And I'm going to need you- I'm gonna need you mech, the stray dog, to take a level two damage, 'blasted'.

SYLVIA: Okay...

AUSTIN: Which again, you can resist. You could also try to add armor- though, actually, I think you-

SYLVIA: I already used my armor?

AUSTIN: You did use your armor already...

SYLVIA: Yeah.

AUSTIN: Check the level two damage 'blasted', which-

SYLVIA: I'm gonna resist, I think. Yeah.

AUSTIN: Okay, so that means taking your- it is four quirks minus whatever vehicle action you're doing? But you also have that Rapid Evening thing, so it costs one less.

SYLVIA: Okay.

AUSTIN: So it takes two quirks to resist.

SYLVIA: Okay, those are... all of them. Uh- [laughs, keith laughs]

AUSTIN: [amused] Okay, that's also gonna put you in a situation that I have to talk about. I'm sorry. This is a real fight, this is like, the real fucking fight.

SYLVIA: Yeah! It'd be great if I had some backup.

AUSTIN: [laughs] Breakdown is permanent damage to the vehicle, where only the symptoms can be treated. Each time a vehicle gets a point of breakdown, the last quirk used must be degraded in some way, representing the symptoms of that breakdown. That's either done by modifying the quirk's existing descriptor, or by adding a new negative descriptor.

SYLVIA: I can't- i- ugh... [laughs]

AUSTIN: The example here is that "Pitchfork has pushed her agrarian custom past its limit and its gained a point of breakdown. The final quirk she used was 'slow and heavy', so that's the one that has to be degraded. She considers making that quirk 'slow, clumsy and heavy', but ultimately decides to go with 'unresponsive and heavy'" So, what was the last one that you used here, was it focused design or that's Leap's-

SYLVIA: [overlapping, amused] Can I change my mind about this...?

AUSTIN: Oh yeah! Totally.

SYLVIA: 'Cause I didn't know that- I wasn't 100% on the breakdown rules, and I don't wanna have a permanent debuff on my mech, I'll take that level two harm.

AUSTIN: You'll take that level two harm, alright. That level two harm is rough. So yeah, go ahead and add 'blasted' to your damage chart. Um... and that is-

KEITH: Can you resist part of damage with a quirk and take the rest of it?

AUSTIN: [overlapping] No, absolutely not. Resistance is resistance, unfortunately, so. The other- so that was one of two desperate consequences- when you have desperate consequences you could, for instance, give a level three harm, or a level three damage, but instead I was like "I'll do one risky consequence and one controlled consequence"- the other consequence, the other controlled consequence here, is sort of lighter? [laughs] is that you're still in a desperate position, even though the sandstorm has let up? But you're in a desperate position because Callister drive and the tempestarii has landed, and his mech has turned into a regular- his plane, his jet, has turned into a mech, he has like a transforming mech. And it is like- basically a humanoid design- very sleek design, because it's a Columnar- it's like a stolen Columnar prototype, with a visor that covers the entire eye region- and it has like, big shoulder pads? As if it can do lots of charging into stuff? It almost looks like- I'm almost imagining it more like a megaman boss than a gundam, y'know what I mean? It's a little more caricature-y, if that

makes sense. And it draws a sword-ass sword and points it at you, and begins to charge in. so you're still in a desperate position, let's hop over to Leap.

KEITH: Hi.

AUSTIN: Hi! This is a good opportunity- if you're here to steal some fucking rings- [amused] you see everybody very confused as the sandstorm comes to an end, people have their legs caught in the sand, Clem is knocked out on the ground, currently, um... the Song of Partizan is like, being pulled out of the sand by her guards- but you're right up on them, at this point. You're still in your mech, but you tell me what you wanna do.

KEITH: Everyone- I'm mad at everyone for playing so bad that now it's not an obvious choice to just steal the fucking ring, like I meant to. One person's passed out, one person's gone, [laughing] Millie is almost dead.

SYLVIA: Uh-huh!

AUSTIN: Uh-huh

KEITH: Damn. um...okay. And the sandstorm's over.

AUSTIN: Yes, the sandstorm is over.

KEITH: Even more perfect time to steal something is *in* the sandstorm. Um... but, uh- so, Clem is passed out because she is scarred, and that's how it works.

AUSTIN: Correct- well, we did that because I think that's an easy way to take Clem out of this scene.

KEITH: That's what I mean, passed out because she's out of the scene because she's scarred. Um... and-

AUSTIN: But is not in any immediate threat. Like, I'm not gonna have someone run up on her and be like "And now you're dead".

KEITH: And Sovereign Immunity effectively made an escape?

AUSTIN: No, Sovereign Immunity has not escaped yet, Sovereign Immunity still needs to tick one last-

JACK: [overlapping] Didn't he collapse a tunnel?

AUSTIN: Still needs to tick one more clock to- one more tick to get away with Gur Sevraq, yeah. Why- Gur Sevraq is not necessarily gonna be like "Alright, let's go with you".

KEITH: I guess, yeah... I guess that there's... I guess I will do a bombard.

AUSTIN: On the Song of- on who?

KEITH: [overlapping] No, on the battlefield of where the two enemy mechs still are.

AUSTIN: Okay.

KEITH: 'Cause it still looks- it looked totally fine before, everything looked like it was working when I left, originally.

AUSTIN: Uh-huh!

KEITH: And then one round of bullshit and now it doesn't anymore, so I'm going to bombard. I'm still in my mech-

AUSTIN: Desperate situations are real- you're in a not-desperate situation anymore, you're now- in fact, if you're doing this, this is a controlled situation for you.

KEITH: Um...

AUSTIN: So what are you doing, you're bombarding- you're doing the long distance-

KEITH: Yeah.

AUSTIN: -shots here? Um... is this- sorry, are you bombarding or are you destroying?

KEITH: Oh- destroying, sorry. I said bombard, but I meant destroy. I'm- my character is bombarding, but bombarding is better done with destroy, that's the- [laughs]

AUSTIN: That's not true.

KEITH: No? Is that not true?

AUSTIN: No, bombarding is best done with bombard, which is when you use vehicular weapons designed to attack targets beyond human sight.

KEITH: Okay, it's- it's not beyond human sight, 'cause I'm shooting them with the-

AUSTIN: No, it's definitely-

KEITH: I'm doing the same thing I did last time with destroy.

AUSTIN: Last time what you did was- you did carpet bombing, which is non-targeted. You were like "Let me just shoot a bunch of bombs in that general direction"? You were not targeting enemies, whereas bombard is explicitly targeting enemies to try to shoot them. You could use destroy, but destroy is going to have reduced effect.

KEITH: The text of bombard says literally "You could use saturated bombardment, but destroy might be better"?

AUSTIN: Yeah, I just wanna be 100% clear that the thing- the specifics here are that like, destroy is when you do not have- when you're not like "I'm going to target this particular enemy"? Which means the potential consequences are, and I wanna be 100% clear with this up top, saturation bombing, carpet bombing, risks hurting other people.

KEITH: Right.

JACK: [overlapping] Help!

AUSTIN: So that is- hm?

JACK: Help! [laughs]

KEITH: Help? What's the-

JACK: [amused] Clem is just passed out on the battlefield, right? [Austin laughs]

KEITH: I thought that you were beyond where I was going to bombard-

AUSTIN: No no no no, Clem will not be hurt by the- [Keith overlaps, unintelligible]

KEITH: [overlapping] Is there any- there's no civilians over that way-

AUSTIN: Millie is over that way.

SYLVIA: Uh-huh!

KEITH: Right.

AUSTIN: Is the person who I'm saying is in danger if you fuck up this roll. I know you've gotten nothing but sixes [laughs, keith cackles]

KEITH: I had one not six!

JACK: [amused] You could be taking dire actions all the time.

AUSTIN: True [laughs]

KEITH: Um...

AUSTIN: Again, just to be clear- when you destroy, you deploy overwhelming destruction through your vehicle. You might carpet bomb a military base, you might smash a building as a wrecking ball, you could attack using a bus as a weapon, but battle might be better- whereas bombard is, you use vehicular weapons to attack targets beyond human sight, which is what you're doing. You might designate long range missile targets, you might shoot a railgun through a skyscraper at an enemy, you could use saturation bombardment, but destroy might be better- so if you're trying to destroy like, a military base, or hit like, a big AOE area- destroy totally

works for that, I'm gonna let you do that, but it is putting Millie at risk. And it will be less effective than bombard, which is about targeting particular enemies.

KEITH: Okay. Um... [pause] If I do fail the destroy roll, what does resisting the consequences to that look like?

AUSTIN: It depends on what the consequences are.

KEITH: Yeah. Well, specifically like- um...

AUSTIN: If the consequence is Millie gets hurt?

KEITH: Right.

AUSTIN: You'd have to tell me, how do you resist that?

KEITH: I don't know... um...

AUSTIN: Well, that can be- you know, I think that's a thing- mechanically what that is is that you would burn quirks equal to four minus whatever the relevant action is- in this case I think it would be expertise, since you'd be using destroy, and- y'know, you pre programed in blah blah blah- y'know, maybe. I will note- actually, I'm looking at numbers here. [laughs] I don't think you can resist.

KEITH: No? Why?

AUSTIN: Four minus- so you have two in expertise, uh... so that is- you can, but it would cost you to break down. 'Cause you have the bonuses, but you only have one quirk left- so you could totally resist-

KEITH: [overlapping] Does pushing myself in a vehicle- is that always quirks? Or is that something else?

AUSTIN: That's always quirks, unless it's like, I'm talking to someone. But if you're using vehicle stuff-

KEITH: [overlapping] Yeah, I'm using vehicle- right. Um... I guess- I don't have a ton that I could do. Nah, I'm just gonna go do the ring. I already left, I left the area.

SYLVIA: [overlapping] Bye!

AUSTIN: [overlapping] Okay, committing- okay! So what's that look like?

KEITH: [overlapping] And then- I'm more worried about like- if I help, then I will [laughing] destroy Millie or her mech, so.

AUSTIN: It's a possibility.

SYLVIA: Fair.

KEITH: 'Cause destroy is the only thing that I have points in for like, attacking?

AUSTIN: Right, you'd have to do- right, totally. You have two in it! That's not bad.

KEITH: No, no. I have two in it, which is good.

AUSTIN: But. But! It is very interesting to be like, you've walked through all these sixes... is it time for- is the toll coming, you know?

KEITH: Right. At least with shadow I have a move, not just like-

AUSTIN: Help

KEITH: Yeah, exactly.

AUSTIN: [laughing] So what does this look like?

KEITH: Um... I get out of my mech- well, I think I probably try to spot the Song, first, right?

AUSTIN: Yeah, she's here, she's being pulled up by like, five security guards who are all confused because of everything that's just happened. Like, it's pretty clear- and you've been spying on her for days and days anyway, right? So you know who she is, you know where she is. You have her in your sights, so to speak.

KEITH: Could- I mean... could this be just like, a pickpocket?

AUSTIN: I think so...

KEITH: Like, the simplest thing that you can do as a thief, is like-

AUSTIN: [amused] You run over and, uh-

KEITH: - just take something off of someone's person.

AUSTIN: You're like "Oh, let me help you up!" and then like- [laughs]

KEITH: [overlapping] Yeah, and just slip the ring off.

AUSTIN: I think- that's a prowl to me!

KEITH: It's a prowl, um...

AUSTIN: This will be risky, but I don't think it's that- it's a single roll, so it's not even like risky standard or whatever. It's risky, 'cause she's surrounded by people.

KEITH: [overlapping] Right. So I've got two in prowl, I'm also gonna- um... i- I mean, I have two choices, I can either add a roll to this by pushing myself, using my spark-

AUSTIN: Yeah.

KEITH: - or I could push- oh, y'know what, I exactly know what I'm doing. I'm gonna push myself, not with shadow, regular push myself, and if I fuck up I can use shadow to resist.

AUSTIN: [overlapping, unintelligible] - shadow to resist, yeah, totally. I also will say that you are, um... I was gonna give you something else here, but I forget- oh, I will give you a collateral die if you let me finish this discovered clock.

KEITH: No.

AUSTIN: Okay. I made the offer!

KEITH: Yeah.

AUSTIN: So this is 3d6, risky.

KEITH: 3d6... where...?

AUSTIN: You're going for one ring, right? Or you're going for... you're going for whatever-

KEITH: If I roll a crit, I'm getting two rings.

AUSTIN: Yeah, you're gonna get two rings 100%. If you get a crit, I'm getting you two rings.

KEITH: I was told I maybe don't even want three rings. [Austin laughs] By a reliable source.

AUSTIN: True.

KEITH: Five.

AUSTIN: That's a five, that's a five, that's a risky consequence, um- which I think you're about to resist, instantly, by spending your shadow spark- which is the name of a transformer almost certainly [Keith laughs]- and I think that that, um... that consequence would've been me ticking the discovered clock? But how do you- tell me how you keep your face hidden long enough for people not to put together- for this like, elite Nideo squad not to remember who you are, and look up who the fuck you are? What's that resistance look like?

KEITH: I know what it is. I'm wearing one of my other ri- I'm wearing my biggest, flashiest of my other rings?

SYLVIA: [amused] Oh my god...

AUSTIN: Uh-huh?

KEITH: And so, when I help the Song up, and her guards look at me, I scratch my face and the thing they notice, instead of my face, is my giant gold ring, with a *big* sapphire in it.

AUSTIN: Perfect. Here's a question, do you replace the ring on her finger? With a fake?

KEITH: Well, I don't know what it looks like.

AUSTIN: But you do, 'cause you've been looking at her for five days.

KEITH: Oh, that's fair.

AUSTIN: [amused] It's like "thi is the ring that will be a good duplicate, she won't even notice it's missing".

KEITH: Like an Indiana Jones bag of sand? Yeah, yeah, yeah.

AUSTIN: Yeah, you've been in your mech for five days looking at your big [laughing] box of rings-

KEITH: [laughing] Trying to figure out which one looks the right way and color?

AUSTIN: [amused] Yeah, I'm giving this to you- this is not another roll, this is just me, I'm a fan- this is *great*. Um... she'll notice, but not for a while, do you know what I mean? Not even like, this week.

KEITH: Yeah, not anywhere close to like- "where did i- when- where? When?" and it's like, two weeks ago.

AUSTIN: Right, exactly. Perfect. So yeah, you help her up, and- y'know, kind of like pulls away from you eventually? But not in like a- more in a rabble rouser type of way? And I think that she points at the tunnel that Gur Sevraq and Sovereign Immunity went through, and is like.

AUSTIN (as the Song): After them!

KEITH: To me??

AUSTIN: No, to her- y'know, her entourage.

KEITH: Um...

AUSTIN: I'm gonna say-

KEITH: [overlapping] What if I try to, uh- give them false directions?

AUSTIN: Uuh. Okay, what's this look like?

KEITH: I'm like, uh... I'm like-

KEITH (as Leap): I saw them, you can cut them off if you go that way!

KEITH: 'Cause they went through the tunnel, right?

AUSTIN: They did go through a tunnel.

KEITH: And no one knows where that tunnel goes.

AUSTIN: [overlapping] and the tunnel is collapsed- right, exactly.

KEITH: Their side of the tunnel collapsed, so it's like "i know where that tunnel comes out"

Austin; I think this is- this is a command, a consort or a sway? That's- the thing you just did, I think it's a sway, this feels like misdirection to me. Right?

KEITH: Yeah.

AUSTIN: You wanna make that roll?

KEITH: Hm...

AUSTIN: You have a zero in sway, just for the listeners.

KEITH: No, yeah, I don't wanna tick- I decided last time we were recording, when I declined to get another tick in discovered, that I was going to try for us to not get discovered, so.

AUSTIN: Good call. Yeah, and this is definitely another risk of that, so. Um... alright. Sovereign Immunity, you're through the tunnels, you're able to like, get up to a distant hill, basically, where you have a jeep prepared, you know? And I think at this point Avar is like-

AUSTIN (as Avar): Alright Farmer, slow down!

AUSTIN: And Gur Sevraq is still like-

AUSTIN (as Gur Sevraq): [muttering under breath] Progression. Progression. Progression. Progression.

AUSTIN: And Avar is like-

AUSTIN (as Avar): Where are you taking us? Our people need us.

ART (as Sovereign Immunity): [overlapping] A safehouse? Hm...

AUSTIN (as Avar): We can't leave them back there like this.

ART (as Sovereign Immunity): Okay-

AUSTIN (as Avar): We have to finish the Path.

ART (as Sovereign Immunity): There's always going to be another anniversary.

AUSTIN: [laughing] Said on the millennial celebration of- [Keith cackles]

ART: Only 999 years away, I mean- people are living longer than ever.

AUSTIN: God... um-

ART (as Sovereign Immunity): It's dangerous back there.

AUSTIN (as Avar): It's dangerous- I know it's dangerous back there, I'm the head of security, I've known this whole thing has been dangerous, Gur Sevraq knew it was dangerous, everyone walking- everyone traveling this path knew it was dangerous, they're doing it anyway. Maybe we didn't know it was this dangerous, but- [sighs]

ART (as Sovereign Immunity): I can offer you some temporary shelter. We can reorganize this, we can try it again.

AUSTIN: Is this a lie?

ART: No? [Sylvia laughs]

AUSTIN: [amused] Art.

ART: No, no. I'm- I don't think I'm going to turn... I don't think I'm going to fill my objective.

AUSTIN: *Oh*, interesting, okay.

ART: Or rather, I think I'm going to offer Gur Sevraq the hospitality of Clementine, Clementine Kesh.

AUSTIN: I see. Right.

ART: And then try to sort of like... smooth talk that with Crysanth, someone who's *very* susceptible to my smooth talking, [Austin, laughing: oh yeah, very] as we saw in the downtime episode, when I got thrown in jail.

AUSTIN: Yeah! Alright, I think this is a risky standard, um- consort. If that's- that seems like you're being... consort, more than command, to me. You're being legit.

ART: Yeah, uh-huh. I haven't rolled out the whole deal, but-

AUSTIN: Well yeah, go ahead and- then let's do that, I think that they say-

AUSTIN (as Avar): Tell me exactly where you're taking us, tell me- that was aleel predicate, and she was going to take him and put him in the bottom of some received palace. Where are you gonna take us?

ART: Well, let's roll before I say 'prison'.

AUSTIN: [laughs] So that's 2d6 by default, are you pushing yourself?

ART: No, I don't have any stress to push myself.

AUSTIN: Alright, that's a five-

ART: A very fancy prison [laughs] Um- no, hold on.

ART (as Sovereign Immunity): I can offer you the hospitality of Clementine Kesh- [Sylvia cackles] who I've been working with a lot lately, who I think has a lot of potential- [Keith and Jack laugh] and could definitely be a force of good, on Partizan and in the entire house of Kesh. [amused] that was her, crashing her mech for no reason back there-

AUSTIN: The, um... the radio on Avar's shoulder goes [static foley]

AUSTIN (as radio person): Did he just say Kesh??

JACK: Oh-ho!

AUSTIN: I've ticked the discovered bar up to six.

JACK: [laughing] I was wondering if that would happen.

ART: Who keeps their radio passively on!

AUSTIN: When you have the *Prophet*- or whoever this is?? When you have the leader of your faith, you know??

ART: [uncertain] Hm... it's rude as shit, is my point.

[Austin laughs]

JACK: [laughing] Oh, Jesus...

KEITH: [overlapping] It's inadmissible in court of law to not tell someone that you're recording, this does not-

ART: [overlapping, unintelligible]

SYLVIA: [overlapping] "Are you Kesh? You have to tell me if you're Kesh." [Keith and Austin laugh]

ART: I will resist this-

AUSTIN: [overlapping] "I think he just said 'yes Kesh!'"

JACK: [laughing] Yes Kesh!

AUSTIN: What is the resistance here? [Art laughs] the stakes are- go ahead, uh-huh?

ART: A resistance can't involve a flashback.

AUSTIN: Not really, no, it can't undo what has happened fictionally. So I think maybe the thing that you hear is not someone saying "did he say Kesh?", is more like... you hear the sound of their radio having been on, you hear the sound of [static foley], and recognize, like, "oh shit, someone has been listening in".

ART: Um, what if it's like... "Did he say Kesh?" and they answer "no"

AUSTIN: [laughs] Right, which is just an eye look, right?

ART: Yeah.

AUSTIN: You're basically intimidating- yeah, that's a-

ART: I'm- intimidation is very strong!

AUSTIN: Okay...

JACK: [overlapping, amused] Says the man carrying a weapon no human could wield.

AUSTIN: [laughing] Yeah, exactly! It's kind of hard not to be intimidating. Though you are wearing light armor, which, as we know, means you're less intimidating.

ART: Light load, I've no armor at all. I'm really hoping this doesn't become a fight.

AUSTIN: So this is, uh... that s is a resolve resist, which is two dice to resolve- it's 2d6, and you, again, take the highest one- six minus the highest one is how much stress you would take. You need not to roll a one, two, three here. Ill note, this is not a combat situation anymore, which means you don't get that bonus one from forged in the fire, which was nerfed in-between our sessions. [Jack laughs]

ART: Um...

JACK: Live patching.

AUSTIN: Uh-huh!

KEITH: Is there an argument for it not being nerfed until after this session has been completed?

AUSTIN: No...

ART: What if I punch myself in the face while this is happening? [Keith and Austin cackle]

SYLVIA: It's worth a shot!

KEITH: Yeah, give it a shot!

AUSTIN: If I hadn't told you about it and said "if you want to change this to a different move, let me know", then I would say "absolutely". But I did give a heads up on this as soon as it hit.

JACK: Well, then you shoulda thought about plausible deniability here, Austin! [laughs]

ART: Yeah- uhhhh....

KEITH: I may have responded, but I was in a fugue state.

AUSTIN: Unbelievable. Another six.

KEITH: Wow. They just keep coming!

AUSTIN: [overlapping] Another six...

SYLVIA: [overlapping] I'd love to get one of those...

AUSTIN: [laughs] I bet! Uh, that's another six, so zero stress on this again. Nice work. Six five is also just a good roll, good dice!

KEITH: [overlapping] Good roll.

AUSTIN: That's a success over on Dungeon World, Hadrian came through with an 11, full success, 2d6 + zero! Wow. [laughs] So yeah, I think that they just like, hit the button back, and they go-

AUSTIN (as Avar): No, no Kesh [Art laughs]

AUSTIN: Uh, and... and nod at you, and say-

AUSTIN (as Avar): Alright, show us the way.

ART: I think you wanna tick discovered back down to five.

AUSTIN: I'm gonna tick that down back to five, which means it's still possible that it ticks up. Um- and I'm gonna tick up your thing up to six- to four.

ART: We get in our space Jeep and we drive away!

AUSTIN: I think it's just a regular Jeep.

ART: I don't think they-

KEITH: [overlapping] By 'regular Jeep' you mean Jeep brand Jeep? [Austin laughs]

ART: It's a Jeep Liberty- [laughs]

AUSTIN: Okay!

ART: Of model year- [mumbles] Jeep Liberty

KEITH: [overlapping] Honestly, if I had to choose one car that people are bizarrely fascinated with, to last Millions of years into the future, it'd probably be Jeep.

AUSTIN: Jeeps are cool.

ART: Maybe like an M150 pickup?

KEITH: Jeep people would never let Jeeps stop being made

AUSTIN: Yeah, 100%, 100%. Alright, Millie-

SYLVIA: [overlapping] Until we stop the Jeep people from being made- yes, hello. [Austin and keith cackle]

AUSTIN: Millie- how you doing, buddy?

SYLVIA: I need to get out of this mech, because it just got blasted while I was hooked up to it's nervous system? [laughs]

AUSTIN: Yeah, that hurts, huh?

SYLVIA: Yeah, it's not good.

AUSTIN: That ain't it, that ain't it. You should- *oh*, there's an Ace move you should get.

SYLVIA: Yeah? there's a couple I'm looking at.

AUSTIN: [laughs] The one I was thinking of is Meat Is Cheap, Save the Metal,[laughs] which is where *you* take damage instead of-

SYLVIA: [amused] I'm not gonna day it on air, but it's the one above it, that I'm looking at.

AUSTIN: Yeah, that one's great! I mean, given the circumstances we're in, I feel like it's something that maybe Millie would be interested in.

SYLVIA: Yeah! Anyway- um... i- the good thing is that the sandstorm has stopped, which means my vision's pretty cleared up. And I also happen to have a sniper rifle that people can use.

AUSTIN: That's true. The bad news is, you now have one mech who is trying to snipe you, and one mech that has a sword and is charging you, currently.

JACK: [sighs] Oh, boy...

SYLVIA: Yeah, um... hm... I gotta figure something out here then. I'm just looking at like- my moves, you know. The things I can do.

AUSTIN: Yeah!

SYLVIA: Um...

AUSTIN: Do you wanna take a break? Art, I know you have to walk Mabel.

ART: Yeah, um- I mean, we could- I could push through for another round, but if we need a pause, it's a perfect time.

SYLVIA: Uh...

AUSTIN: Up to you, Sylvia.

SYLVIA: I'm gonna shoot her? I don't care about the mech, I'm very hyper focused on this, and I can-

AUSTIN: On Thaumaturge-

SYLVIA: [overlapping] On Thaumaturge, yeah. And I can, uh-

AUSTIN:[overlapping] You're gonna try to like, shoot through the...

SYLVIA: Yeah, at this point I'm hoping to find... like, structural integrity that has been damaged and shoot through it, I am- y'know. Lethality.

AUSTIN: I gotcha.

SYLVIA: Yeah

AUSTIN: You have a special- you have a special gun for this, right? You have a fine sniper rifle.

SYLVIA: Yes. Which I'm marking that...

AUSTIN: Mark that- and then is this also special ammunition for that, so that you can shoot through... a mech?

SYLVIA: [overlapping] Austin, you read my mind.

AUSTIN: I'm sorry.

SYLVIA: It's okay! No, we're on the same page, it's good!

AUSTIN: It's good. I love this visually, because this- is Runt involved in this, also?

SYLVIA: Yeah- well, I have to take the sniper rifle out of it-

AUSTIN: Hell yeah.

SYLVIA: Um... yeah, so I'm gonna do that, and I'm gonna push myself.

AUSTIN: Bringing you up to six stress.

SYLVIA: Yeah, 'cause I wanna activate Sharpshooter, and I wanna get a bonus die for this..

AUSTIN: Oh, yeah.

SYLVIA: So... this would be 3d6, I think?

AUSTIN: 3d6 is right. I think- let me just triple check, there's nothing else that's firing here, no, no, no... okay.

SYLVIA: And effectiveness- I'm assuming desperate.

AUSTIN: Oh yeah. Oh yeah! Oh yeah, desperate- desperate standard.

SYLVIA: Okay. Oh, that- hold on- that's a six!

KEITH: Nice!

AUSTIN: That's a six, look at you.

KEITH: It finally came!

AUSTIN: Yeah, your six finally showed up, tell me what this looks like.

SYLVIA: [overlapping] Not when I needed it. Um... I think it is... I think it's pretty simple? Millie is getting out of her mech, she is pissed off- I wanna note, she's turned off her communications at this point, because she is *swearing* to herself a lot?- she pulls the rifle out, loads it, and then it's just like- I think it's a mirror of the way the cannon fire was earlier, except this time it pierces the cockpit.

AUSTIN: Damn... perfect. Um- and I think that there is a yell over the comms? And the Tempestarii stops short of slashing down at you and the mech you've gotten out of as A-tek comes over the comms, and pauses and is like-i could just stomp you. But also you just- *because* you just shot my friend. But also it's clear- we just get the shot of Callister trying to decide whether or not he should go back to his friend or if he should try to knock you out here,

and like, kind of comes to terms with the situation? It's like, the sandstorm is done, we've lost Gur Sevraq, fuck. Um... and I think comes over the comms and says, um-

AUSTIN (as Callister): You're Leap's friend, right?

SYLVIA (as Millie): [laughs] Coworkers.

AUSTIN (as Callister): Coworkers. You remind him to get in touch. I still owe him that information.

SYLVIA (as Millie): [sighs] Yeah, whatever.

AUSTIN (as Callister): Just business.

SYLVIA (as Millie): Yeah, sure, just business.

SYLVIA: This entire time Millie has had her gun pointed at his mech [laughs]

AUSTIN: [laughing] Like- and he's pointing a sword down at you, right? Just giant fucking mech sword, coming to the point of your sniper rifle, you know?

SYLVIA: Yeah, that's fun.

AUSTIN: And then yeah, jets back away- jumps up into the air, turns back into a jet and flies over to A-tek, where he's going to try to save her life.

SYLVIA: Okay!

AUSTIN: So at this point, Sovereign Immunity, you have gotten up to the- the jeep, that clock filled, I'm counting y'all as being off the map at this point. Everyone else is kinda getting back on their feet, no one knows where Gur Sevraq has gone to- though I believe- I would say, I would suggest that pretty quickly the Song of received asterism, aleel verdicate, will start spreading the rumor that the [laughing] escaped convict slash Sovereign Immunity-

JACK: Oh Jesus...

AUSTIN: - known as the Farmer has- hm, will she be stopped- I think she would want to pursue doing that, and I'll have to figure out off-mic if that is a thing that she does, she certainly knows that you're here now. Um... but people wonder where Gur Sevraq is. I think we definitely get a shot, Clementine, of you waking up and A.O. helping you off the ground? You know, looking up and A.O. os lifting you up, and- y'know, he's a little worse for wear also. But you're okay, and everyone can kind of be where they need to be at this point? I'm curious, what does the next step look like, for y'all? Like- go ahead.

SYLVIA: I need to find where everyone went. Um-

AUSTIN: I'm like- I'm giving the handwave to basically say-

SYLVIA: [overlapping] Yeah, for sure.

AUSTIN: You have a point- what's the word I'm looking for? You have like a designated point where you're supposed to meet afterwards?

SYLVIA: Okay, yeah, that basically was my question, was like-

AUSTIN: [overlapping] Yeah, I'm not gonna make you like- "now spend two stress to have secured a [laughing] rendezvous point, no. what I'm gonna do is say- where are you? What's this...? What is the rendezvous point and what is next steps? Also Clem, do you know what scar you're taking?

JACK: I've been thinking about it? Um...the three that I'm looking at are obsessed, paranoid and vicious? I think I am leaning towards 'obsessed', in part because I think that... Clem's reckless action was motivated by... "Yeah, I'm going to go to Carnegie Hall to practice" and so I wonder whether or not the scar would manifest in a sort of hyperfocus in- like, "This is what we are doing". Paranoid would work, in theory, if we're going to try smooth things over with Crysanth, and take Gur Sevraq for the time being, because Clem is terrified of Crysanth? Not without reason? Vicious I'm mostly thinking of because Clem is a real piece of work, and if we wanted an opportunity to take vicious as a scar- but I think that's something we'd have to- I mean, all of these are things that are gonna require like, active thought going forward, if I want to play this scar well? But I'm wary of just picking vicious because Clem seems like a nasty person, and then try to sort of retroactively work around that.

AUSTIN: Uh-huh. Of those, I definitely lean obsessed for the reason that you set up? I think that like, the deal of her recklessness- because reckless is one of these, but I don't think that that is the thing, the thing really is "I'm going to rule Kesh, and that means throwing myself into this process"

JACK: Yes.

AUSTIN: In a way that's maybe unhealthy.

JACK: And I think there is- I think there is definitely a version of this where Clem regains consciousness in the sand, with A.O. Rook, and looks around to see Gur Sevraq and Sovereign not there, and goes "Oh, it worked. I did great".

AUSTIN: Right, right. Right. Victory achieved.

JACK: Yeah. That sucked? I feel awful. But I'm not injured. Um... that worked for me. So I think with that in mind I'm probably gonna take obsessed.

AUSTIN: Let's do it, put that- clear that stress and mark uh... and add obsessed under your scars.

JACK: Oh! I was just adding that to Leap's character sheet, sorry- [laughs]

AUSTIN: [amused] Not what you want! Leap, you are not obsessed!

JACK: [amused] Obsessed- obsessed with rings. [Keith cackles] You know what they say, 31 rings to the equiaxed.

KEITH: [laughing] I promise that Leap mostly doesn't care about rings! I don't know how this happened.

AUSTIN: Y'know, it happens like this.

KEITH: Sometimes you just end up with a bomb score. [Austin laughs]

JACK: Is it our camp, is it- no, I reckon is a secondary camp that we have specifically put up to recover to, that contains like... electrolyte drinks, and- [amused] you know, reflective blankets and things- specifically, don't go back to the place you were before, never return to the same place twice-

AUSTIN: Right.

JACK: This is like, the recovery point that we have prepped, hoping that it would-

AUSTIN: [overlapping] And at some point some sort of long distance travel thing is gonna show up and begin to-

JACK: Yeah yeah yeah, "Be at this point on this day, and..."

AUSTIN: Right. Um...

ART: Okay, but as soon as you said electrolyte drink I was like "this is soccer practice" [Austin laughs]

JACK: [amused] Well, it's kinda got that weird vibe, right? It's a cross between soccer practice and when you finish a marathon? And like, four people come and give you a little blanket, and they're like- you did the unpleasant thing.

AUSTIN: God... so. Who opens the conversation on what you're doing?

SYLVIA (as Millie): Hey, you guys look like shit! [Austin chuckles]

SYLVIA: [amused] Millie also looks like shit, but is not addressing it. She is- like, just showed up, and is tossing all her guns into her Runt?

SYLVIA (as Millie): How'd it go?

JACK (as Clementine): Million. Are you well?

SYLVIA (as Millie): You know. It's- I'm how I am usually.

AUSTIN: Are Avar and Gur Sevraq like, in this close area? Are they being kept somewhere else? Are they....?

ART: Well, there's probably not that much room, right?

AUSTIN: Yeah, I'm guessing. Um... so I guess- I want to say, Avar introduces themselves, they're like-

AUSTIN (as Avar): I only know these two. I'm Avar, I'm guessing you know who Gur Sevraq is.

AUSTIN: And Gur Sevraq produces a hand out from the robes, and says-

AUSTIN (as Gur Sevraq): Thank you for your daring rescue.

SYLVIA (as Millie): Oh! Um... no problem. I'd shake, but I have some glass shards in my palm that I'm still tryna get out, so... like, maybe later? Uh...

AUSTIN (as Gur Sevraq): Do you need to be attended to?

SYLVIA (as Millie): No, no, this is-

JACK (as Clementine): Do you need to be attended to?

SYLVIA (as Millie): No, I'm fine. Serious- what is going on? Weren't we supposed to like, get them somewhere, instead of with us?

JACK (as Clementine): We are waiting extraction.

SYLVIA (as Millie): Ok- okay.

SYLVIA: This is like- I don't think anyone's filled in Millie that we're kidnaping this guy? [laughs] Or, not kidnaping, but taking him back? She still thinks the mission was to get him to... the end of the path.

KEITH: Yeah, I don't know if anyone besides Sovereign Immunity knows that.

AUSTIN: Everyone knew that if, um... Gur Sevraq's life was directly under threat, the plan B would be an extraction back to Cruciat? But that- it's up to y'all to think, was that at the point on which.... Wo- the question in the air, to some regard right now, is- isn't the situation kind of under control now? Why not finish the walk, right?

KEITH: Yeah. Am I there?

AUSTIN: Yeah, everyone is here.

JACK: Everyone's here, we've all arrived.

KEITH: I'll say that. I'll say "Isn't the situation under control now? Why not finish the walk?"

ART (as Sovereign Immunity): I don't think it's under control.

KEITH (as Leap): Why?

AUSTIN: Avar I think actually speaks up, since Sovereign Immunity successfully made the earlier rolls, and says-

AUSTIN (as Avar): We don't know what else lies in wait. Um... this could've been a preliminary force, and now that we know that Nideo is out for us too, i- who knows what's at the end of the path.

KEITH: Who was Callister working for?

AUSTIN: Uh... I think that he just sold you "some scientists"? I don't know that he- did he say? Maybe he actually said.

KEITH: Yeah, he said that he was working-

AUSTIN: It's House Bittenbach, it's House Bittenbach from Stel Orion. So, House Callister is a house in Stel Orion, they're like a tier 2 house? House Bittenbach is a much stronger house- they're only tier 3, but they're like... the first Orion house, and so they have, in the galactic scheme, a lot of sway?

KEITH: Yeah.

AUSTIN: Even though in all Partizan they don't necessarily have a ton.

KEITH: Um... oh, I also- just to clarify, 'cause I'm remembering... I had a memory of, um.... Of episode zero- Callister Drive changed his name to Callister Drive Callister, so that he could have his house named House Callister instead of House Drive- does he go by Drive, or by Callister? I guess-

AUSTIN: Yeah, he's- there is a degree to which- and we didn't really get into this- but there's a degree to which what's happening with Callister is that he is being very assimilationist?

Keith: Yeah.

AUSTIN: Um... and I'll note again, he's not Equiaxed, the fact that he has a human face is very much about him playing the angles on how to get ahead in Stel Orion. Which is about- you know, even though Stel Orion has a broader sense of like- a broader range of norms about body type and around disability and stuff like that, it is still primarily humans, and so- [amused] it's not as pro-human racist as, let's say, Kesh or Nideo? It's still one of those things where like, if someone walks into your shop, and they look like a human- and they look like a *hot* human, like he does- he knows that's gonna give him a little bit of an angle, and so he's going for it. So there's definitely a degree by which, for him, the whole thing is kind of a play, y'know?

KEITH: Yeah.

AUSTIN: So yeah, that's that. But back to the moment at hand, I think Gur Sevraq- so, Avar basically makes the case, is like "I'm not sure we are safe", and then Gur Sevraq says, um...

AUSTIN (as Gur Sevraq): There are many paths. If we would walk this one, we will. Why did you save me?

ART (as Sovereign Immunity): Because you're important.

AUSTIN (as Gur Sevraq): I'm important to you? I'm important to those you work for?

ART (as Sovereign Immunity): Yes.

AUSTIN (as Gur Sevraq): Have... have the desires of the Farmer aligned themselves with Stel Kesh then?

ART (as Sovereign Immunity): At the moment. I am... assisting Clementine.

AUSTIN (as Gur Sevraq): A scion of the house.

ART (as Sovereign Immunity): But, uh... a minor one.

JACK: [laughs] Clementine just like, fidgets uncomfortably.

AUSTIN (as Gur Sevraq): I will travel this path with you, but know that when you give me to them, they will find things. I will not be able to resist.

ART (as Sovereign Immunity): I would prefer that you stay with us. I hope your path doesn't cross Crysanth's.

AUSTIN (as Gur Sevraq): Crysanth Kesh. Of course.

JACK (as Clementine): Sovereign, we will be returning them to my mother.

ART (as Sovereign Immunity): I don't- are we?

JACK (as Clementine): Well, we've been given our orders.

SYLVIA (as Millie): I mean- well, if we've been given our orders, guys...

AUSTIN (as Gur Sevraq): And your orders were my recovery.

ART (as Sovereign Immunity): And you're recovered. I see no reason that you can't stay with us for a little bit, and when the time is right, we'll move you along.

AUSTIN (as Gur Sevraq): Only if you will allow me to continue my work.

ART (as Sovereign Immunity): I would be overjoyed.

AUSTIN (as Gur Sevraq): Avar. Return to our flock. Lead them home. Without me at their front, there will be no other attack.

AUSTIN: And Avar is like-

AUSTIN (as Avar): Um- you want me to leave you with these people.

AUSTIN: And Gur Sevraq nods.

AUSTIN (as Gur Sevraq): I've learned what I can learn on the Isles. Perhaps... the Taiga will offer new information in my search.

AUSTIN: And then I think that they kind of like, sit down and begin- you know, effectively, go through a prayer cycle.

SYLVIA: Uh- at this point I kinda wanna make sure Leap gets that message that was left for me- for him?

AUSTIN: Yeah.

SYLVIA: I think- Millie is kinda flip about it? Is like-

SYLVIA (as Millie): Hey, just so you know, um... I might have killed one of your pals, the other one said... call him? Or something? [Austin laughs] Yeah, so there's that...

KEITH (as Leap): Great- no pals, those aren't pals. But that is good.

SYLVIA (as Millie): Okay, cool- well, it might be singular.

AUSTIN (as A.O.): [overlapping] I was about to say, you got pals out here?

KEITH (as Leap): No-

AUSTIN (as A.O.): 'Cause we were getting shot, and you out here meeting pals-

SYLVIA (as Millie): Well, I was getting shot by the pals... it was painful.

AUSTIN (as A.O.): [overlapping] Oh okay, you were out here getting shot by the pals, we were out here, that motherfucker had like a mine that turned into another mech- but *thankfully* my girl Clem called us in, we took care of it. But I don't know where you were during that moment particularly, Leap. Hanging with your pals, apparently.

KEITH (as Leap): I was nearby- no, there's- there's no pals, I wasn't hanging with any pals.

AUSTIN (as A.O.): No pals.

KEITH (as Leap): No.

SYLVIA (as Millie): He seemed to know you.

KEITH (as Leap): Yes, I know him- I do know him.

SYLVIA (as Millie): Okay.

AUSTIN (as A.O.): But not in like a palling around situation.

KEITH (as Leap): No.

AUSTIN (as A.O.): Y'all weren't like- you don't go back like that.

KEITH (as Leap): No. we do go back, but not in a pal way.

AUSTIN (as A.O.): Oh, you *do* go back!

SYLVIA (as Millie): Oh, okay!

KEITH (as Leap): Not in a pal way.

AUSTIN (as A.O.): I see.

KEITH (as Leap): You know how you know someone for a really long time, and you don't like them, but you still *know* them for that whole time.

SYLVIA: Millie looks at Clem [laughs]

AUSTIN (as A.O.): [overlapping] Sometimes I know people for a very little amount of time and I don't like them.

JACK (as Clementine): Mr. Leap.

KEITH (as Leap): Yeah?

JACK (as Clementine): Who were you talking to?

KEITH (as Leap): What do you mean?

JACK (as Clementine): This pal of yours.

KEITH (as Leap): There's- there's no pal! [Austin laughs] It sounds like *Millie* was talking to him.

JACK (as Clementine): [overlapping] Ver'Million seems to think that there was some kind of a message.

KEITH (as Leap): Yeah, what was the message?

SYLVIA: [amused] This is where I ask Austin, because I genuinely forgot.

AUSTIN: Callister's message was basically just like, call me so I can- get in touch with me so that I can deliver the information I promised him in exchange. [laughs] was basically like "my half of the bargain- I have to pay back my half of the bargain!"

SYLVIA: Okay, yeah!

SYLVIA (as Millie): Yeah, he said call him about something he owed you. Something like that, I don't know.

AUSTIN (as A.O.): Not a pal, but y'all are exchanging things. That is a thing that is happening.

KEITH (as Leap): He owes me one. He owes me one.

AUSTIN (as A.O.): He owes you one? He owes *you* one?

KEITH (as Leap): Yeah.

AUSTIN (as A.O.): He owes you one.

KEITH (as Leap): Yeah.

JACK (as Clementine): Why does he owe you one?

KEITH (as Leap): Well, they ran away, didn't they?

SYLVIA (as Millie): Uh-!

AUSTIN (as A.O.): That sounds like you owe him one!

JACK (as Clementine): Also, I don't believe they ran away. Millie, did they run away?

SYLVIA (as Millie): I mean, do you wanna see my mech?

JACK (as Clementine): No, I'm perfectly alright, thank you.

SYLVIA (as Millie): Yeah, no- I mean, they did, but I had-

KEITH (as Leap): [overlapping] There you go, they ran away.

SYLVIA (as Millie): Not because of you!

KEITH (as Leap): What are you talking about?

JACK (as Clementine): What did you do during the last hour and a half, Exeter?

KEITH (as Leap): I- hold on, let's talk about time here, it seemed to me that maybe eight minutes- [Austin cackles] or maybe even four minutes.

AUSTIN: [amused] To be fair, Clementine lost some time in there?

KEITH (as Leap): You were unconscious, you don't know anything about what's going on! You- I think you fell down and took a nap on the sand!

JACK (as Clementine): [overlapping] Well then, please clear it up for me.

KEITH (as Leap): Was the sand soft, while everyone else was working and fighting?

JACK (as Clementine): Tell me what you did.

KEITH (as Leap): I- I nearly took down the entire Conjurer-

JACK (as Clementine): [overlapping] There's a very clear answer to this, Exeter.

KEITH (as Leap): - and then I located the Thaumaturge, and then I went try and help, uh... secure Gur Sevrak.

SYLVIA (as Millie): I'll give him credit on one of those things, he did ping the Thaumaturge.

KEITH (as Leap): And I did take down almost the entire Conjurer too!

SYLVIA (as Millie): Right- yeah, okay, two things. You're good.

KEITH (as Leap): Yeah. So two-

JACK (as Clementine): Sovereign, did you see him?

AUSTIN (as A.O.): Almost, almost, *almost*- nah nah nah nah.

KEITH (as Leap): [overlapping] 75% of the damage was me.

AUSTIN (as A.O.): If you- a hand grenade still goes off at 25%. You gotta finish the fight.

[pause]

KEITH (as Leap): No.

AUSTIN (as A.O.): You don't like, hit someone down, they drop down-

KEITH (as Leap): [overlapping] I entirely reject the premise.

AUSTIN (as A.O.): You don't win the fight if it's a seven and a half count, Leap. You gotta get a ten count.

KEITH (as Leap): I loosened the mayo jar.

AUSTIN (as A.O.): You loosened the- what? I'm not tryna have a sandwich!

KEITH (as Leap): [overlapping] I loosed the mayo jar, someone else popped it off [popping sound]

AUSTIN (as A.O.): [overlapping] I ask you for a sandwich, you make me a sandwich, you don't take the jar- no!

KEITH (as Leap): Who are you?

[Sylvia giggles]

AUSTIN (as A.O.): Who am I? I'm A.O. Rooke!

KEITH (as Leap): [overlapping] Yeah!

AUSTIN (as A.O.): I beat the Conjuror! That's who I am!

KEITH (as Leap): [overlapping] No, you did not beat the Conjuror!

JACK (as Clementine): I fought side by side with him.

AUSTIN (as A.O.): That's right! Arm around you, that's right!

KEITH (as Leap): [overlapping, mumbling] You didn't beat the conjurer...

AUSTIN (as A.O.): Gas you up- Clementine out there. You don't know about that.

JACK (as Clementine): Thank you.

AUSTIN (as A.O.): You were in a robot! Clementine was on the ground, with us! 75%- [scoffs]

SYLVIA: [amused] I- Millie is giving everyone the most bemused look, because she knows what she just went through? [Jack laughs]

AUSTIN: Uh-huh. Yeah, Millie is actually the person who probably got it the worst, all said, in terms of just... damage we're gonna have to deal with.

JACK: Being in the scrap?

SYLVIA: Yeah.

AUSTIN: [overlapping] Yeah. Well actually, now that I'm looking at sheets, Clementine is the one with a level two personal harm, so.

SYLVIA: Yeah. We all got fucked up, it's fine!

KEITH: [overlapping] And a scar.

JACK: [overlapping] Oh, I don't know about *all* of us...

SYLVIA: True.

JACK: Um... I'm trying to think- yeah, I think Clem wants to know...

JACK (as Clementine): Who was the figure you spoke to, Leap?

KEITH (as Leap): Callister Drive.

JACK (as Clementine): What did you say?

ART: [overlapping] Callister. [Austin and Jack laugh]

KEITH (as Leap): Callister Drive Callister

JACK (as Clementine): Of house Orion.

KEITH (as Leap): Yeah.

JACK (as Clementine): What did you say?

KEITH (as Leap): Millie- Millie spoke to him.

JACK (as Clementine): Did you?

KEITH (as Leap): No.

SYLVIA (as Millie): It's- okay. I just said he seemed to know you, so like...

JACK (as Clementine): Can you explain why Millie thinks that he expects you to contact him?

KEITH (as Leap): Well he said- he owes me a favor.

SYLVIA (as Millie): He said Leap's name....

JACK (as Clementine): I don't believe you, and there's very little I can do about it. [Austin laughs]

KEITH (as Leap): That's- no arguments.

JACK (as Clementine): If I find that you have been lying to me-

KEITH (as Leap): You're gonna put me in jail?

JACK (as Clementine): Stel Kesh will deliver consequences.

KEITH (as Leap): [mumbling] Well, okay.

JACK (as Clementine): Alright, are we done here?

AUSTIN (as A.O.): Yeah, about.

JACK (as Clementine): Sovereign, thank you for your work. Millie, I'm sorry that we were unable to provide you assistance in the time that you needed it. Mr. Leap, good work, 25% of the way there.

KEITH (as Leap): 75%.

JACK (as Clementine): Everybody pack up, we're moving out.

KEITH (as Leap): Plus the Thaumaturge.

SYLVIA (as Millie): That- okay.

JACK: [amused] Is this just picking up boxes and grumbling?

AUSTIN: Yeah, uh-huh, all the way through. Everyone yeah, securing supplies, getting them onto helicarriers and-

JACK: Gur Sevraq being like, waved over in some direction, people fighting in the background...

AUSTIN: I think- I would actually- in the middle of all this, Clem, Gur Sevraq approaches you. You know, there's a moment when people are loading stuff up, and getting mechs in the order where they can actually travel again, and not just be falling apart? And... Sevraq, very- one of those moments of like "Oh, this person is right next to me, I didn't know that they were approaching me", and they're like-

AUSTIN (as Gur Sevraq): Clementine.

JACK (as Clementine): Sevraq.

AUSTIN (as Gur Sevraq): The... I sense a great deal of ambition in you.

JACK (as Clementine): [overlapping] What's that supposed to mean?

AUSTIN (as Gur Sevraq): [overlapping] It is the standard sort.

JACK: God, I don't know if Clem knows how to answer this. Like...

JACK (as Clementine): What is the standard sort?

AUSTIN (as Gur Sevraq): The standard sort sees... the crown without the pen. Sees the throne without the street.

JACK: Okay, now Clem believes that there's a correct answer to this question?

AUSTIN: Uh-huh [laughs]

KEITH: Like it's a riddle? You've been presented with a riddle? [Austin laughs]

JACK: Yeah yeah yeah, I have to find- and I think she says-

JACK (as Clementine): Like many in my family, I think it is safe to say that I have a vision for Kesh.

AUSTIN (as Gur Sevraq): Would you share, then, not the whole vision, just... a glimpse? What does Clementine's Kesh look like?

AUSTIN: There is a moment here where I'm- Austin is reaching across the table and saying- for some reason, maybe that is beyond human comprehension, there is a brief moment of clarity for Clementine. And I want you to like, release the limiter on what Clementine- Clementine has a genuine moment of vision here.

JACK: Right, this is a sort of- [laughs] a sort of Road to Damascus vision.

AUSTIN: I don't know that it's a good one, I'm not saying that the scales fall from your eyes-

JACK: [overlapping, laughing] No no no, this is not like- yes

AUSTIN: And it does not come from Gur Sevraq, in the sense that like- you're not being Jedi mind tricked [laughs]. The Whills aren't going to work inside of you-

JACK: [overlapping] What, like the Whills?

AUSTIN: [amused] Right, yeah, uh-huh. Um... this is- knowing certain terms, in terms of our fiction, there's something divine happening here. I don't know that you know that it is- in fact, I'm sure you don't know what it is, but this is the sort of moment where like- a vision does crystalize in your mind. For a brief moment, at least. And in some ways, if there is a Jedi mind trick happening here, it is Gur Sevraq using a technique to get you to... to vocalize that crystallization in a way that may even surprise yourself? But... he is trying to get you to do that so that there can be a judgement made about your vision of Stel Kesh, if that makes sense.

JACK: Yes, yes. He is, in a sense, asking a question that he really does want to know the answer to.

AUSTIN: Yes, 100%. Even if that means giving you the ability to answer it for the first time. And that can come in in a vision sense, right? This could be us- you can imagine this as a vignette or a shot of the world under Clementine, what that would look like. Or it could be... you could answer in a poem, you know what I mean? It does not have to be... "and then I cut taxes" or... [laughs]

JACK: [overlapping] This is not like- [laughing] this is not the- I wanna reduce-

AUSTIN: [overlapping, laughing] The most mealy-mouthed campaign promise!

JACK: [amused] Yeah, god- Clementine showing up is like “Well, it's important to consider that uh, we have to set ourselves achievable goals, people” [laughs, Austin cackles]

SYLVIA: I hear Kesh invested in the apps they used for the...

JACK: Yeah, “there is no magic money tree”... [Austin cackles] God.

AUSTIN: [laughing] “The shape of the principality is the issue that defines”- yeah.

KEITH: It's past due that Kesh has access to affordable healthcare!

AUSTIN: God... but it could be that. In a sense, this is like the- there should be an honesty here, even if it's really embarrassing [laughs]

JACK: Yeah.

KEITH: It could be a poem about access to affordable healthcare.

AUSTIN: [laughs] Right.

JACK: Yeah-

AUSTIN: [amused] ‘Affordable’, ugh!

SYLVIA: Yeah, yep.

JACK: [laughs] It's all about choice, the future of Kesh is all about choice. I think- no, okay, um... god, okay. It's... super tight, letterbox closeup on Clementine's face, pulling back just a little, and we can see that she's no longer standing on this kind of like, desert- in this slowly-being-dismantled camp. And then we get a shot of, um... the pilgrims completing the route. And performing the conclusions, presumably the rituals and the celebrations. And then, like, in a single camera movement, a... like, a pan of absurd size? We move up over the sea, towards Cruciat. And inside Cruciat we get the full scope of that image of Clem's face that we saw before, which is Clementine sitting on the floor at the end of the throne room, armed soldiers flanking the room on either side, people coming in, kneeling before the throne... and then just rapid images of Clem shaking hands with leaders of other Stels, and aircraft units being moved into position on borders- I think it's this image startling in its- it's almost oxymoronic, in that it's like- we see the blissful appeal of liberalism?

AUSTIN: Uh-huh

JACK: - wielded by the sword of someone who is delighted, finally, to have secured the place that she considers her station.

AUSTIN: Hm...

JACK: This is Clem's vision of Kesh, is "I'm taking meetings with the Columnar Tabulary, and I'm securing the arms manufacturing treaties with Orion, so that we can keep our armies safe"

AUSTIN: Uh-huh. Um... god, give me one second, I need to find something. Um... I think, before they step away- and this is delivered almost nonverbally, right? This is just an eye- this is just the eyes meet, and sorta semi-magically communicated, right?

JACK: Yes, or I wonder if Clem conveys the importance, in much the same way Crysanth did, of- if it's important that- god, what did Crysanth say? Like, "the religious freedoms are protected by Kesh" or something.

AUSTIN: Yeah yeah yeah, that's definitely how she dressed it up.

JACK: Clem like, reaffirms how important it is that the, um... that the pilgrimage be completed successfully, and in doing so, I think- I don't know even if she knows she's doing it- just shows a little too much of her hand, where it's clear that the manner in which that would be achieved is through...

AUSTIN: The most incremental of incrementalist- [laughs]

JACK: Yeah, and if anything- I don't think that- what would Crysanth look like on the throne? Does Crysanth have the desire to be loved in the same way that Clem does?

AUSTIN: No, right? I think that's the thing.

JACK: [overlapping] And I think that's the scary thing, right? That in Clem's throne room, people are bringing gifts

AUSTIN: [laughs] Right. And genuinely so, as far as the camera can show.

JACK: Yeah, absolutely. Yes, I think Clem relishes the fact that they love her as much as they fear her?

AUSTIN: Hm. Um... I think that they nod to you, and, very quietly, they say-

AUSTIN (as Gur Sevraq): I see. Hm.

AUSTIN: And I think- as a reminder, Gur Sevraq has six eyes, these kinda spider-like features, and they kinda look down and are scanning- thoughts, in a way. And they all look up, all at once in a snap back up at you, and... Sevraq says-

AUSTIN (as Gur Sevraq): Did you know, Clementine Kesh, that the Portcullis System, the so called gates which connect system to system as a line of highways — we think of them as opening doors, but in truth, they are, and always have been, projecting walls. Freedom is the natural state. I hope to read more of this in your libraries.

JACK (as Clementine): I will offer you any hospitality you require.

AUSTIN: And there is something in the way he said it that... he is not being metaphorical
[laughs]

JACK: The Portcullis Gates are all closed right now. Or the gate out of-

AUSTIN: [overlapping] They open and close every week, once a week they open.

JACK: And this is why Crysanth is still stuck? Crysanth is only stuck for a week.

AUSTIN: [overlapping] Yes- well, now Crysanth is stuck for another reason, which is- Crysanth is stuck because to get back into space is very expensive, unless you have a huge piece of infrastructure that launches things into space? [amused] Which only Apostolos has, on Partizan.

JACK: Oh great, and we've just been escalating that situation spectacularly.

AUSTIN: Uh-huh. All the way.

JACK: *God*. Okay.

AUSTIN: Uh-huh! So. And under the old treaties, she would've been okay- she could have still used it- until the escalation from the first SBBR game, which made them think they were being attacked on a second front, and that is- and all the stuff with past, and blah blah blah, so yeah.

JACK: And the Portcullis Gates connect to systems that we- in the... the whole scope of the sci-fi series.

AUSTIN: [overlapping] Every- the entire Principality is connected. You can imagine it as like, the big floating octagonal- or whatever, I think I actually said hexagonal- like, floating doorways in space. Or floating doorways in space, floating gates in space, just like, structures made of stone and circuitry and metal, that kinda open up with this terrible splash of water-like energy? Like a stargate but way more goth than metal? [laughs] and you fly your ship through it, and it's really uncomfortable.

JACK: Oh yeah, it makes you really ill.

AUSTIN: It makes you really ill, and you have to be trained to do it and not be off your feet for the next few days. Um... space travel is not fun in this world, necessarily. So yeah. And then I guess y'all get on some helicopters- helicarriers or hover boats or whatever, and head back.

JACK: Yeah...

SYLVIA: Yeah!

AUSTIN: So, I think we can do most of the math stuff off mic? But before we do any of that, there is- in terms of both framing- the mission, is it successful or not- but also in terms of the map, everything- and in terms of the fiction, we need to answer one question before we wrap,

which is- what are you doing with Gur Sevraq? Are you giving him to Crysanth and the Curtain, like they asked? Are you keeping him? If you're keeping him, are you hiding him?

JACK: It's like, how do you hide something from the most powerful spy in the country?

AUSTIN: Right-

ART: [overlapping] We're not hiding it, we're- we're being sneaky about it. Or not sneaky, but-

AUSTIN: [amused] That's hiding it.

ART: No, it's not *hiding*, we're like- we're saying that- we're *not* hiding it. We're like... moving it.

AUSTIN: Crysanth is like- "Deliver Gur Sevraq", and you're like "Don't worry, we got him"

ART: Right.

JACK: Will she buy that?

AUSTIN: I don't think so! We have to talk about what you know she would do, right?

JACK: I feel like Crysanth has... Clem's insistence that we have to follow the orders, I feel like is coming from a place where Crysanth has delivered an order, and so- is the kind of person that expects that to be completed, unless-

AUSTIN: You are- you completed her part of the order in the sense that she said "bring- secure him and return him", right? And once we have him- like, that part of it was not in the question? The mission was just if things go sour, secure them, bring them back to Cruciat, to a secure location in Cruciat.

JACK: Um... what if we say we don't have him?

AUSTIN: This is the juice. This is what I'm talking about.

JACK: He got away. He's gone.

AUSTIN: Alright... talk me through that a little bit?

JACK: Okay, so, if we- this is my Powerpoint.

AUSTIN: Uh-huh

JACK: - for "let's lie magnificently"

AUSTIN: [amused] In the back of a transit helicopter, [Jack laughs] with a projection screen awkwardly stacked on some stuff- like, a crate of grenades- projecting a Powerpoint.

JACK: [laughing] Yeah, just pointing with a shadow of a finger- the way I see it is... we could say he has disappeared and we don't know where he is?

AUSTIN: Uh-huh.

JACK: Or- we could try and frame somebody! Who- this is me speaking out of character- who, in theory, would be more advantageous for us to frame, if we were going to frame somebody?

AUSTIN: God, good question. Gucci Garantine! [laughs]

KEITH: Frame someone as is in like- who... if we say that this other team got Gur?

JACK: Yeah.

AUSTIN: People you don't like. There are people who don't like *you*, let's start with that, right? Uh- house Brightline, negative two relationship with you. Uh- slash Horizon. Negative one with the Church of Received Asterism, which is new. House Callister is at negative one. Uh... Glory, the Apostolosian crew at a negative one.

SYLVIA: Now *there's* an idea! [Jack and Austin laugh]

AUSTIN: Those are the groups that you have negatives with, currently.

SYLVIA: I genuinely have an idea of how we could pin this on the Apostolosians, if you want.

JACK: Oh, shit. What, you mean Kesh's natural enemies? [laughs]

SYLVIA: Yeah, you know. Well, I was- there's evidence there from my mech in- like, it's pretty easy to just claim that, like.... Millie's mech was acting under Apostolosian orders, and was part of this.

AUSTIN: Well, not just you, either, right? There's the two troops that were literally originally Apostolosian troops units that SBBR recovered and salvaged and then sold to Gur Sevraq, and that now have been damaged here- you can literally find parts from Apostolosian mechs here in the battlefield.

JACK: Oh, shit. Who's territory are we in right now? We're in Orion? We're in unseated-

AUSTIN: [overlapping] No, no one's. You're in the Prophet's Path, the Prophet's Path is- yeah, exactly. This is totally-

JACK: Would... 'cause those ships flew overhead, those Apostolos scout ships.

AUSTIN: The Apostolosian- yeah, uh-huh.

JACK: We could claim that it didn't actually happen like that, right?

AUSTIN: Yeah, the-

JACK: That those ships dropped the unit or something.

AUSTIN: Right, none of this was like, recorded, right? I think we think a lot about like, modern day stuff is like "Oh, everything is constantly being filmed" - this is not- no one had their cell phone out, necessarily, right?

JACK: Do they not have like, radar devices?

AUSTIN: Yeah, sure. But there's a limit-

JACK: - being like "Apostolos flew over the prophet's path on this day"

AUSTIN: Oh, yeah yeah yeah, I'm saying that this is good for you in the sense that you don't need footage of Apostolosian mechs on the ground to tell that lie. It would help, but there's a reason why when we started this season I had- I literally had a specific camera mech show up to get that footage? Was because that is what you would need to happen to see that globally? But the counter of that is, you could just tell a lie, right? And it would be kind of hard to falsify that lie, instantly. Now, in the long term, [amused] if Gur Sevraq pops up in the middle of Cruciat city, there's a problem, you know? But, short term, not a problem. You could pin it on the Apostolosians.

JACK: Have we heard anything that would suggest the Apostolosians- other than going "Everyone wants Gur Sevraq, so obviously the Apostolosians also want him"- have we heard anything that is like, plausible? Either from Callister or-

AUSTIN: [laughs] They are, ironically, the people le- oh, I think only- it's easy to imagine someone like Dahlia wanting a Gur Sevraq on their side, right? Gur Sevraq preaches about-

KEITH: Everyone wants a Gur Sevraq! [Jack laughs]

AUSTIN: Everyone wants one. And I think, maybe, in some ways, the ideology of Gur Sevraq is what would be important to the Apostolosians, more than the- whatever this secret thing is that he supposedly knows.

JACK: Okay. And so for them it might even be like we were talking about with the general earlier, where it's like "well, if we have him, Orion can't have him"

AUSTIN: Right. Yeah, I don't think you need- this will be a roll to tell your mother this.

JACK: [overlapping] Also we hate them.

AUSTIN: Yes. Well, do you? I mean, some of you do.

SYLVIA: Yeah.

AUSTIN: You hate Glory, certainly, right?

SYLVIA: Yeah, and this is kind of where this is coming from, just out of spite.

JACK: Isn't Apostolos the old Kesh enemy?

AUSTIN: Yes, but- yes, but you said we hate them, who is we? you?

KEITH: Yeah, I don't give a shit.

AUSTIN: You do.

JACK: Oh, uh- Crysanth. Like, the- the people we would be lying to.

AUSTIN: Yeah, totally. Yes, correct.

KEITH: [amused] Leap hates Kesh, 'cause he's in jail in Kesh.

SYLVIA: Yeah, I also hate Kesh, but like- y'know. [Jack laughs]

KEITH: I do wanna say, in character, as someone who has had to tell a lot of lies in order to steal things- not usually people- um... it's a much less complicated lie to say "everything was fine" than to say "someone else came and stole the guy that actually we have."

ART: Yeah...

KEITH: He's just at home! Gur Sevraq's just at home- sorry, they're just at home!

AUSTIN: No, Gur Sevraq is both he/him and they/them.

KEITH: Oh, okay. I didn't know that. Maybe I did.

AUSTIN: Um... I hope either- go ahead.

JACK (as Clementine): Mr. Leap, I respect your input here, and I understand that your history of criminality positions you more than adequately to speak to this-

KEITH (as Leap): Thanks, I really appreciate that. From you.

JACK (as Clementine): I appreciate that. Um- the issue that I keep coming back to is that if we are serious about following through with the plan you suggest, why wouldn't Kesh nobility simply wait to see the ritual completed? What possible reason would they have to stop the prophet's path?

KEITH (as Leap): I don't follow.

JACK (as Clementine): Why would Gur Sevraq simply give up and go home?

KEITH (as Leap): Oh, I was just like- he did finish it. They finished it.

ART (as Sovereign Immunity): But then they would go and try to extract them again, and he wouldn't be there.

KEITH (as Leap): That's not our problem, then.

ART (as Sovereign Immunity): It might end up being our problem, if [laughing] we're the people they send to go get them. [Jack laughs]

AUSTIN: Yeah.

JACK: "Oh, I can't find him again, he's gone again!"

KEITH: "Can't find him!" [laughs] "He's obviously gone somewhere, vacation or something"

JACK: [amused] That's an easy paycheck though, isn't it? [laughs]

KEITH: Yeah, we'll take that same mission over and over again, like "eh, Gur Sevraq- we don't know"

JACK: I think the thing Clem is saying here as well is that the idea of framing Apostolos is very compelling?

KEITH: That's fair. Out of character, that's fair.

ART: You can say that, I don't think you need to dance around it too much.

JACK: Oh, yeah- I mean, Clem sucks. She can just say.... [Austin cackles]

JACK (as Clementine): Mr. Leap, we have been handed an excellent opportunity to get one over on Stel Apostolos.

KEITH (as Leap): I wasn't looking to get one over on Stel Apostolos.

JACK (as Clementine): I was!

KEITH (as Leap): Well, there we go! Okay. Why are you even asking my opinion? [laughs] I feel like this is above my paygrade, 'cause I'm not being paid! [Jack and Austin laugh]

ART: [amused] All paygrades are above-

JACK: [laughing] He's being paid in rings... [Austin cackles]

SYLVIA (as Millie): Wait, we're getting rings?

KEITH (as Leap): No, no one is getting any rings

SYLVIA (as Millie): Oh...

AUSTIN: [laughing] Thirteen rings gleaming off Leap's hands [Keith laughs]

JACK: So many rings...

KEITH: I've got one ring pulled up to my neck on my drawstrings.

AUSTIN: And it's whispering-

JACK: [laughing] Keith, did you see that photo of rings that I shared?

KEITH: Uh- [laughing] I did, yeah, I was- I saw it, laughed, then tried to explain it to Isaac.

AUSTIN: It's so funny....

KEITH: Tried to explain why I was laughing at 30 rings.

JACK: [counting, amused] One, two, three, four, five, six, seven, eight, nine, ten, eleven, twelve, thirteen, fourteen, fifteen, sixteen, seventeen, eighteen- this is a human wearing twenty rings, four on each finger, with no stylistic consistency. [Keith laughs]

ART: And they're all on the palm side! I didn't realize the first time.

JACK: [overlapping] Yeah, they're wearing them backwards for some reason!

KEITH: It seems sort of like, just an experiment to see how many different kinds of ring you can put on one hand.

AUSTIN: [laughs] @thegemhunter on Instagram. Alright, so- it sounds like the plan is tuck him away and tell Crysanth Apostolos has him.

KEITH: It's really funny that like, Clem needs a staff of loyal, uh...

AUSTIN: [amused] Oh yeah.

KEITH: - loyal soldiers? And instead has a gaggle of criminals that she just pretends are soldiers and advisors?

JACK: [overlapping, amused] She has no level of authority over them?

KEITH: [overlapping] Like, "Okay, call Leap out of his cell, I need to ask him whether we should frame Apostolos" [cackles]

JACK: Yeah! And then just be like, Leap says no and Clem is like [laughing] "Thank you for your input, I'm going to frame Apostolos" [Keith cackles]

AUSTIN: God... so funny.

JACK: Yeah, let's do it.

AUSTIN: I'm gonna interrupt this then for this roll, I think we need to roll these dice-

JACK: [overlapping] Oh, Jesus.

AUSTIN: - to see- 'cause I need to know if she- cause the result here is gonna be, does she believe you, right? Um...

JACK: Right, and if she doesn't believe us- I mean, we will have to deal with the consequences of having tried to tell that lie, which is why I'm not going to be the one to tell it.

AUSTIN: Wait, who's telling it- [laughing] okay! [cackles]

SYLVIA: Oh my god....

JACK: But if...

AUSTIN: Sovereign might be better at it, you know?

JACK: If she doesn't buy it, we just go with plan one, right? Which is "Well, then you can't have him" [Austin laughs]

ART: [amused] I thought that would end up with all of us dead.

KEITH: I- what is-

JACK: [overlapping, amused] That's the plan that I thought would-

KEITH: What is Clem's- maybe we talked about this, what is Clem's motivation for not just giving them up.

JACK: Uh, greed?

AUSTIN: Is this obsessed?

JACK: Yeah, this is absolutely obsessed! This is Clem- Gur Sevraq is someone who has a great deal of personal charisma and power? And who asked Clem to visualize the future in which she rules Kesh?

KEITH: And you did.

JACK: And we know that they are potentially a living map to something very powerful. I think Clem has seen a piece come into her hands for a moment? And is like, "why don't we hold onto it?". And frame Apostolos. [laughs]

KEITH: Right.

AUSTIN: And also- right. And use his absence as- do you know- does anybody here play... chess?

KEITH: I know the rules of chess.

AUSTIN: So, in chess there's this thing called a discovered attack, or I guess you can get someone in a discovered check? Um- and that is, basically, where if you have a set of pieces, and let's say- forget about chess, just think about things, like a war? You can imagine there being a group of cavalry charging forward and behind them are a bunch of people with guns, and in front of the cavalry is a king, and the king is like "whatever, I've got spearmen in front of me, spears are gonna take out the fucking cavalry no problem, spears are great against cavalry, I've played Fire Emblem" This king plays videogames- but then the cavalry moves out of the way, revealing the riflemen, and the riflemen just Jack them up, right? And that is a discovered attack, where the absence of that cavalry piece, of that knight or whatever, produces an attack? And the other half of this is you can pin people in place, 'cause you could have a pawn in the way of a bishop or something, and then the king is on the other side of that pawn, so I can't fucking move the pawn now, 'cause if I move the pawn the king is gonna get got! And in this case it's almost as if Gur Sevraq being removed from the board creates an absence in which Crysanth can now- is necessarily attacking through. And maybe more, we'll see how rolls go. [laughs]

AUSTIN: Anyway, thank you for letting me have this chess metaphor, I knew all this chess watching would pay off one day [Jack chuckles]. I need a roll, though. I need like a brief scene during this reward segment.

JACK: What are we rolling?

AUSTIN: It sounds like- I don't know, what are you rolling? Are you lying? Or are you-

ART: Yes.

AUSTIN: Yeah, it sounds like a lie to me [Jack laughs]

KEITH: I can't believe Millie was just like "Why don't we just escalate this war?"

SYLVIA: Sorry- I'm acting out of spite? [Austin cackles] Which means I'm justified, so...

Jack. I'm acting out of greed, which means *I'm* justified.

[Austin laughs]

KEITH: I'm acting out of "Don't care, why are we doing this?" [Jack and Austin laugh]

ART: And I think chaos benefits me.

AUSTIN: True, true. [Jack laughs] In the Rapid Evening- no one knows how to lie in the new Rapid Evening, not a single person here took a point in sway-

JACK: Oh, fucking shit- Austin, will you give us a bonus 'cause we have secret routes? We can hide him there technically? [Sylvia cackles] I'm being serious!

AUSTIN: Yes, I'll give you a one.

SYLVIA: [overlapping, amused] I know, it's just funny...

AUSTIN: I'll give you a one to roll this-

KEITH: [overlapping] You're saying it's a lie but they can't prove we're lying 'cause they can't find them?

AUSTIN: Well, you got the bonus here of... you don't- where? Where is he then? [laughs] If we have them, where is he? [Jack laughs] And the answer is like, between the library and the third kitchen- [laughing] in the walls! But she doesn't know it.

JACK: [overlapping] It's like, Clem has been in the winter palace for ages, before anyone else arrived? So she's just like "I know the secret routes around this palace".

AUSTIN: Yeah.

KEITH: I can't believe no one has any sway.

JACK: [overlapping] We can Parasite our way into—

AUSTIN: No one did, it's very funny to me.

KEITH: We have plenty of command and consort.

SYLVIA: Yeah.

AUSTIN: 100%. [amused] You could try commanding Crysanth.

ART: I had a sway, and then it was taken away 'cause it wasn't supposed to be there.

AUSTIN: That's true, you did have a sway, but it was an illegal sway.

KEITH: But you did choose to take the sway instead of one of your other- your one command.

AUSTIN: I think- yeah, it came together in a weird way. Anyway-

JACK: What would a...

AUSTIN: [overlapping] It's 1d6

JACK: What are those fucked up dice that you give us? When you do a bad thing to us?

AUSTIN: Oh, a collateral? I don't think I can give you- I guess I could-

KEITH: I thought they were just for combat

AUSTIN: Oh- no, collateral die-

JACK: [overlapping] - devil's bargain?

AUSTIN: That's what a collateral die is.

JACK: [laughs] Oh, okay.

AUSTIN: Um, I think I can do that. Yeah, this is an action. Here it's what it's gonna be, I'll give you one if you let me the old, uh... "Gucci is still investigating you" clock. One tick.

JACK: Oh, now we're a victorian farce, where someone has brought someone into the palace who mustn't be seen, and we have to hide them from the...

AUSTIN: Right, from you rival, Gucci Garantine, who is gonna be like "wait a second, who is that? what's going on, why do you have a- blah blah blah"

JACK: "Is that the prophet of-" [laughs]

AUSTIN: [laughing] Right, "is that Logos-" not logos kantel, "is that Gur Sevraq? The one they say can do miracles again?" By the way, you didn't see that guy do any miracles, but y'know.

JACK: Where is the track, where is that Gucci track?

AUSTIN: That's on your Rapid Evening sheet, right now it's empty, it's zero out of four.

JACK: Oh. What will you give us if you get to tick that once?

AUSTIN: You get a die, you get another die. So you get 2d6 instead of 1d6.

JACK: And how does secret routes come in place?

AUSTIN: By giving you that first d6.

JACK: Oh, I see! Right, whereas instead we would be rolling 2d6 and taking the lowest.

AUSTIN: [laughing] None of you can lie! Yes!

JACK: [laughing] Okay, so here we're rolling 2d6 and taking the highest.

AUSTIN: And taking the highest.

JACK: Is there anything else we can do here? Do we have any kind of modifiers on moves that we can use?

AUSTIN: [overlapping] Yeah, does anyone have any-

KEITH: [overlapping] Well, someone could help, but I don't... want to.

AUSTIN: Sovereign could help, I guess.

JACK: Oh, I'm not rolling this. Um...

AUSTIN: [amused] Okay, well then you could help. With your no stress.

KEITH: [overlapping] Wait, who's rolling it?

JACK: Sovereign. [Austin laughs]

KEITH: Has Sovereign agreed- has Art agreed to that?

ART: Yeah sure, why not.

KEITH: Okay.

ART: But I'm not gonna decide whether or not to tick up your rival clock.

JACK: Has my stress cleared, or would we be catching, uh-

AUSTIN: Yeah, your stress has cleared, your stress is clear

JACK: Oh, it clears when you take the scar?

AUSTIN: It clears when you take the scar, exactly.

KEITH: If it's- if Art's rolling the dice, does the collateral die change?

AUSTIN: No, I'm making- Horizon finding out who the Rapid Evening is, and who Gucci- sorry, who Clementine Kesh is- is still a wider concern for everyone, I would say.

JACK: That's bad news across the board. Um...

KEITH: I like it.

AUSTIN: It's fun!

KEITH: I think Leap likes it. Or would like it if he knew.

AUSTIN: Right.

JACK: Yeah, I will- actually, here's the thing. Art, do you... feel up to rolling this? Because if you actually don't want to have to do this scene, I am happy to roll it.

ART: Yeah, I'll roll it, I don't....

JACK: Oh, I just didn't know if you were like, "I'll do it, but I would prefer not to have to try and negotiate at this time"? Um...

ART: No, I'm perfectly comfortable negotiating.

JACK: [laughs] Okay.

AUSTIN: How are you helping?

JACK: How am I helping?

AUSTIN: Yeah. Are you there?

JACK: Yes, I think this is two things? I think this is, um... this is both the PR person sitting off-camera during the hollywood interview [Austin laughs], just like, watching? And also it is like, a really intense 15 minutes before the call, in which Clem is like "This is what we are going over. I don't care how you convince her".

AUSTIN: [overlapping] Oh, so this is a call, you're not going in person.

JACK: It depends! Which do you think is more...

ART: I think we should do it exactly like a hollywood press junket, in front of a black background with a poster? [Jack and Austin laugh] Of like... where's Gur Sevraq!

AUSTIN: [overlapping, laughing] A poster of Gur Sevraq! With a big question mark.

ART: [laughing] With a big question mark, [Keith cackles] and a lot of people come in, we talk to them all, but-

JACK: [overlapping] 1423! Summer 1423: Where Is Gur Sevraq?

AUSTIN: God...

JACK: - where is Gur Sevraq- I mean, is it-

KEITH: [overlapping] How is it like, working with the Song? [Austin and Jack laugh]

ART: Oh, it was great, just an incredible talent. You can really see her shine through on the work we did together.

JACK: [laughing] Beautiful ring, great shot of it- do we- is it more dramatic to stage it as a voice call, and be able to narrate stuff that way? Or to have it happen in person, do you think?

AUSTIN: I think it's person, I think it's some sort of room.

JACK: Oh damn, so then Clem has to come, right? Just as like- oh, and I like this 'cause it frames Sovereign Immunity as a Sovereign Immunity as well? Like, someone speaking beside Clementine?

AUSTIN: On your behalf, yeah yeah yeah. Totally.

JACK: Okay, so I think I'm there, is how I'm helping, and I have like revised with Sovereign on what the plan is.

AUSTIN: Do you- where do you find her? Is she in that museum you were supposed to go to if you had questions? But instead you're showing up having done the mission?

JACK: Oh god, yeah, let's frame this as a success. I mean, it is- I'm taking two stress here?

AUSTIN: Right, because you have a two with Sovereign? You do! That means you give Sovereign-

JACK: [overlapping] Yeah, that's-

AUSTIN: Sovereign, you get two extra dice from this. So this is actually, suddenly, a great roll.

ART: Great.

JACK: So we are taking one die from secret routes, we're taking one dice from- we might want to reconsider the devil's bargain?

AUSTIN: True. Because you're gonna get two from this push.

JACK: So that would give us 3d6. It's 3d6 or 4d6, right?

AUSTIN: Uh-huh

ART: Hm... four is a lot.

JACK: Are you saying it's too much, or are you saying it's the right amount to make sure that we get done what we want to get done?

ART: I mean, it's hard to say. Probability is a funny thing. [laughs] It's your- I don't wanna- it's your rival clock, how badly do you want to-

AUSTIN: This is not the rival clock, I wanna be clear again, there's a rival clock-

JACK: This is a very bad news, one of Gucci finding out.

AUSTIN: There's- the rival clock is good to advance, cause the rival clock is what lets you eventually learn stuff about your rival, and duh duh duh- this is the clock about Gucci- this is a

clock about the group, horizon, learning who the Rapid Evening is. The group horizon being a tier three group that currently is at neutral with you. And who knows what happens when that completes! Maybe there's a world where that completes and it's good for you. But maybe there's a world where that completes and it's not very good for you. Given that Gucci is Clem's rival? I don't wanna under-

JACK: [overlapping] We might be able to sway it one way or another, right?

AUSTIN: Wight, but I don't wanna undersell that this is a real- like... whole squad related thing, this is not just a Clem thing.

JACK: I wouldn't say no to that extra die, but if the probability feels better just trusting three, Art, I'm happy to trust you on that one.

ART: I don't know what the probability is! Um.... [Austin laughs] Lest just- let's not do it, let's not take- just do three.

AUSTIN: Alright, 3d6.

ART: Alright, I'm gonna hit roll 3d6 and then I'm gonna hit 1d6? And we're gonna see what I should've done.

SYLVIA: Oh my god...

AUSTIN: Good, I appreciate it. It's a five.

SYLVIA: Okay! Yo didn't- didn't need the extra dice.

AUSTIN: You didn't need it, and now you get to rest. You got a four on your fourth die, that wouldn't have helped at all. Um... so what's this look like? You find her in the- whatever the north museum- there's a place in Cruciat called Museum Row? That I wrote about somewhere... let me see if I have my description here... "Before the war struck, an emerging tourism industry had come to Cruciat, and so Kesh invested in dozens of niche museums in the city's commercial district." So it's just like- there's just an entire museum district, and most of them are like "Oh yes, the Museum of Teacups. This is the Museum of Doors, this is the Museum of Battles we lost" [laughs] "In Memoriam, the Museum". But she is in the oldest of the museums, which is the North Museum, the first of the Museums. It's just about general Kesh- Kesh's kind of colonization of the northern part of this continent? Or of this moon? And she's kind of coopted, taken over an entire study facility? You know, a special projects zone? And is clearly actually researching some stuff. And you come in, and she's just like-

AUSTIN (as Crysasnth): Yes? I told you not to come unless you absolutely needed a question answered.

ART (as Sovereign Immunity): Um, I suppose the question we need answered is what is war with Apostolos gonna look like.

[Jack laughs]

AUSTIN (as Crysanth): [sighs] What?

ART (as Sovereign Immunity): The Apostolosians have Gur Sevraq.

AUSTIN (as Crysanth): They do? Hm. how? How did they take him?

ART: What was our story? Big robots?

JACK: [amused] They- patrol flights- flashback to Clem and Sovereign [Austin laughs] sitting in Clem's receiving room- uh- they flew a detachment of Apostolosian scout units overhead and dropped three mechs into a sand- into an unnatural sandstorm.

ART: Okay, great.

ART (as Sovereign Immunity): They flew three ships overhead, they dropped mechs into an unnatural sandstorm- a technology we were not briefed on them having, a horrible thing to witness in person.

AUSTIN (as Crysanth): I see. Hm... [pause] Why was it that you were unable to secure Sevraq? All you've told me so far is that you faced additional opponents.

ART (as Sovereign Immunity): We were not prepared for the measures they were using, this was- this was a military action.

AUSTIN (as Crysanth): Yes, and you're a military unit.

ART (as Sovereign Immunity): We are a *paramilitary* unit. [Jack chuckles]

AUSTIN (as Crysanth): I suspect you don't know what that word means.

ART (as Sovereign Immunity): Little [Jack laughs, keith cackles]

AUSTIN (as Crysanth): That's not what that word means.

JACK: [laughing] Crysanth finally closing her book.

AUSTIN: [laughing] yeah, uh-huh.

ART (as Sovereign Immunity): Well, I- does it mean airborne? Like a paratrooper?

AUSTIN (as Crysanth): No!

ART (as Sovereign Immunity): 'Cause we didn't get parachutes at all. [Austin laughs]

AUSTIN: You didn't but your scythe did!

ART: [laughs] That's true.

JACK: Reverse Fulton.

AUSTIN (as Crysanth): It means an unofficial military body. A militia gathered by upstarts. Is that what you are? I thought you had the force of Kesh behind you.

ART (as Sovereign Immunity): No, it turns out there was just four of us in the desert, [Austin laughs] like a bunch of schmucks. Um... anyway, the sandstorm technology was very confusing, it messes with your sensors, it's hard to see. Y'know, your body sensors, the eyes.

AUSTIN (as Crysanth): Hm...

ART (as Sovereign Immunity): Well, it's a lot of- ears, it messes up your ears, it's very loud. Smells real bad [laughs]

AUSTIN (as Crysanth): Was there any information about where in the Barranca they would have taken him? Or do you simply ask that we pierce Fort Icebreaker and lay siege to all Apostolosian territory?

ART (as Sovereign Immunity): That would be great. Um...

AUSTIN (as Crysanth): You certainly have given us a motivator. A catalyst.

AUSTIN: She nods.

AUSTIN (as Crysanth): Maybe this is better than a prophet.

AUSTIN. And stands up. And because this is a mixed success there are consequences. The first is that the Church of the Resin Heart, the Friends of Gur Sevraq, trust you a little less, partially because whether you lost Gur Sevraq to Apostolos or you're holding onto him- y'know, he seems a little less safe than when Avar left them with you, and much less safe than you promised that they would be. And partially they also trust you less because of the second consequence, which is that you have used their leader in a political pawn in a move that will send a whole lot of people to die. Within a week, Kesh will announce a new offensive, and a call to arms, claiming that they will once and for all breach and destroy Apostolos' impregnable Fort Icebreaker so that they can recover Gur Sevraq, who they call the inheritor of the Prophet Logos' legacy. I say this is a call to arms because they don't aim to do this alone. One way or another, Crysanth Kesh will ensure that this will be more than just a one sided assault. In whispers delivered to generals by her agents, and in backroom meetings with the wealthiest stakeholders of Orion, and in public proclamations filtered through the Partizan palace news service, Crysanth's message will pierce all of Partizan. First, Kesh says, there was Apostolos' attack on the past, and the killing of Cymbidium. Now there is the kidnapping of Gur Sevraq. You know, whether she is delivering this message herself, or if it's spoken by one of her envoys or spies or spokespeople, it's always basically the same. How can you- Stel Orion, or Stel Columnar, or Stel Nideo- how can you be sure that these brutes will not target you next? It is

pretense, obviously- Crysanth Kesh is not a fool, she knows that if Stel Orion tries to rescue Gur Sevraq, it will be for profit, and if Stel Nideo finally enters the civil war, it will be to recover the honor that they lost from the Farmer's sin, and hopefully to regain the influence that comes with it. And if Columnar is to cross over the dark part of Partizan to attack Apostolos where they are weakest, it will be because they, more than anyone else, have the capability to take Sevraq apart, and to find out what they know, and to find out what makes him so special.

[SONG "TANAGER. PERFECT. TOUCHPAPER." STARTS PLAYING]

AUSTIN: Crysanth doesn't know which Stel will come to Kesh's aid, and she suspects that, as the dominoes fall, at least one of her erstwhile rivals will take up arms in defense of Apostolos, but that doesn't bother her. I think for her, she is excited about things moving forward into the next phase of the war on Partizan. It will be chaotic, but chaos is where Crysanth Kesh thrives.

[SONG "TANAGER. PERFECT. TOUCHPAPER." STOPS PLAYING]