

COUNTER/Weight 08: Our Hostage Below

Transcribed by Mary (to 10:18) and Jen @wronghandle (10:18 to 1:48:18)

ART: Well, this is a good time for me to talk about my problem with the Star Wars comic books, which I just started reading.

AUSTIN: How's it been? How are they going?

ALI: Which one is this?

AUSTIN: Is it the new one? is it the one with the Han Solo ex-wife situation?

ART: I will eventually get to that, yes.

AUSTIN: Okay.

ART: But I'm also reading—

AUSTIN: Spoilers.

ART: —Darth Vader, the comic. I'm only like an issue in, so—

AUSTIN: Okay.

ART: Whatever. But what really got to me was the first issue starts with like a crawl, a Star Wars crawl. But it's from like the perspective of the empire. And it sort of breaks the crawl for me. I always thought the crawl was impartial.

ALI: Ohhh.

AUSTIN: No, the crawl's not impartial.

KEITH: The crawl says stuff like the *evil* empire.

AUSTIN: Mhmm.

ALI: yeah.

ART: But the empire *is* evil.

ALI: Eh, depends on what side you're looking at.

[AUSTIN laughing]

ART: Remember when Anakin killed all those kids?

ALI: Eh.

[Overlapping]

AUSTIN: Right! But that was before there was an em—

ALI: That was such a long time ago.

AUSTIN: —the empire didn't exist yet.

ALI: Yeah.

AUSTIN: So that's not the empire.

KEITH: And also, Anakin wasn't like, he's not going "I killed all these kids 'cause I'm evil." He killed them so no one he knew would die. [ALI and KEITH laugh]

ART: And then people died.

ALI: He knew those kids. Wait...he knew those kids—

ART: Yeah, he also knew those kid.

ALI: He lived in the same building as those kids.

KEITH: I didn't say they were perfect movies. I just said that's why he did it.

ALI [skeptically]: Okay.

AUSTIN: Yeah, it literally says "the evil galactic empire" in the first sentence.

KEITH: Mhmm.

ART: Yeah—

AUSTIN: The second sentence, second sentence.

ART: And then it goes on to be like, "They created this machine that kills planets." I think you're allowed to call something evil when they build a Death Star.

ALI: Uhh.

AUSTIN: It's a deterrent.

ALI: What those planets don't need to be there? What if they're destroying evil planets?

AUSTIN: Right? See? Also it's called the Death Star. [KEITH laughs]

[MUSIC starts - "The Long Way Around"]

AUSTIN [narration]: Koda Whitegloves glares out of the auto-car at the warm humid pastels of Counterweight's Centralia Dome. Outside, throngs of civilians shout, hungry in response. Koda sighs and looks forward, buttoning up their form-fitting white uniform, shiny silver buttons reflecting the light and the heat. The car parks and Koda steps out, and enters their clinic. Inside, parents beg Koda's algorithmic receptionist for service, but Koda walks past with an official's gait. And then, the office. And then, Koda's face, determined. And then on the holoscreen the face of another Apostolosian, and then the words, "Fine Due."

[MUSIC ends - "The Long Way Around"]

AUSTIN: Welcome to Friends at the Table, an actual play podcast focused on critical world-building, smart characterization, and fun interaction between good friends. We are, as always, presented by StreamFriends.tv and runbutton.net. Joining me today, as *a/ways*, as almost always, Ali.

ALI: Hi. I'm—

AUSTIN: Where can people find you on Twitter?

ALI: I am @ali_west.

AUSTIN: Jack.

JACK: Hi there, I'm on Twitter @notquitereal.

AUSTIN: Art.

ART: I'm on Twitter @atebbel.

AUSTIN: And Keith.

KEITH: I'm on Twitter @KeithJCarberry and YouTube.com/runbutton

AUSTIN: Rad. How's it going? Are we ready to do some role-playing?

ALI: Yeah.

KEITH: Yeah, I'm ready to play roles.

JACK: Absolutely.

AUSTIN: Where were we last?

ALI: We—

JACK: In a desert.

AUSTIN: We were in a desert. Do you remember—

ALI: Is it a desert?

KEITH: Yes. I feel like, yeah. Well, it was the plains of a—

AUSTIN: Do you remember what domes you were in between?

[KEITH sucks in a deep breath]

ALI: Dome 7 and Metta.

AUSTIN: And Metta, aka Dome 3. I know that because—

ALI: You finally named it. [giggles]

AUSTIN: I finally named it and—well, I named it that time, but also —

ALI: There's a map?!

ART: There's a map?!

AUSTIN: I made a map!

JACK: Ahhhh. Oh my god, listeners to this audio podcast, this is brilliant.

AUSTIN: I know, this is [brain exploding noise].

JACK: We've got a planet. And there are these—

ALI: Listeners, if you go to friendsatthetable.net the map will be up, it will be fine.

JACK: There are these domes on there.

ART: It kind of looks like symbol of the Galactic Empire in Star Wars.

JACK: It super does.

AUSTIN: It does sort of look like that.

JACK: Yeah, if you ever had to go to a planet and hunt crystals, this would be the planet.

ALI: mhm.

AUSTIN: How do I make it? Okay, anyway.

KEITH: If I remember correctly, the thing we were doing was playing Mad Max?

AUSTIN: Right, you were playing *Mad* Max, that's correct.

ART: Yeah.

ALI: Right. We had—

AUSTIN: You had been—yeah, go ahead.

ALI: We had gotten ambushed. And we were about to get double ambushed.

AUSTIN: Right.

ALI: The Netted Wave was on the way.

KEITH: There was the Church of the Dead Machines?

AUSTIN: It's called the Iron Choir, but they do worship the dead metal.

KEITH: The dead metal.

AUSTIN: Yeah. But you had done a pretty good job of taking them the fuck out.

KEITH: Yeah.

AUSTIN: Right? They had been—

JACK: Wait. How did we know that the Netted Wave are coming?

AUSTIN: Because they showed up. Because they were there.

JACK: Oh, okay. Oh right they turned up at the end.

AUSTIN: They showed up with their big sky barge.

KEITH: Who's the Netted Wave again?

ALI: They're the group of Apostolosians that were like—

JACK: Oh my god, they did, didn't they?

ALI: —who were gonna like start some shit.

AUSTIN: That is what Jamil told you.

ALI: Jamil was like, "Yeah, they might be behind these protests in some sort of way."

KEITH: Oh.

JACK: Militant Apostolosians. [ART snorts] So the Iron Choir, which sounds like a Dark Souls boss, the Iron Choir has captured Orth Godlove, right? And had kind of gotten him into what I can call a kind of classic Friends at the Table hostage situation. [ART laughs]. And we were all—she was like, "surrender or I'll kill him."

AUSTIN: Yep. Yep.

JACK: Again, classic Friends at the Table situation. Keith—

AUSTIN: Keith shot, or Mako shot the gun out of her hand, giving her the tag—

JACK: And then threatened—

AUSTIN: —helpless—

JACK: —to shoot her more.

AUSTIN]: Or harmless? Helpless? Uh, yeah.

JACK: And then we were all like, "Uhhhh, maybe that's a bad idea." And then we left it, just as the Netted Wave turned up on Jabba's skybarge. Right?

AUSTIN: Correct. So you also did a good job of just taking out the majority of the rest of the Iron Choir's stuff. I know you destroyed at least one of their levs—

JACK: yeah, we killed their Lion Sprayer.

AUSTIN: —their free-levs.

JACK: Which just flipped it over.

AUSTIN: I still think, there are two of the henchmen for the Iron Choir alive out in the desert somewhere. But they don't have their free-levs anymore. The things with the Lion Sprayers that they were riding around on. And Brother Sterling is still aboard the first train. He's still in there. It's been flipped over. Right?

So right now, the situation is: Orth is being held captive by Sister Rust. There's a giant sky barge coming at you that you assume is the Netted Wave—I may have said it was the Netted Wave. I don't actually remember if I actually said that or not—

ALI: You did.

AUSTIN: It's the Netted Wave.

KEITH: Is the Netted Wave someone that Orth would have given that message to?

AUSTIN: You did not see the Netted Wave in that list, no.

KEITH: Okay.

AUSTIN: Remember you hacked his—

KEITH: Yeah, yeah.

AUSTIN: —his email and checked to see who he sent messages to. And he did not send anything to the Netted Wave

KEITH: Not CCed on the email.

AUSTIN: Right. BCCed, please, he's a professional.

KEITH: Right. Yeah, yeah, yeah.

AUSTIN: So what do you do? And again, your personal situations. Ali is in the Queen's Regalia. Its armor has been blown off. That's not good. AuDy is in the Kingdom Come. How is the Kingdom Come doing?

JACK: I'll check, but I think it's fine.

AUSTIN: Okay. Mako is flying around? Or is Mako on the ground now?

KEITH: Yeah, I believe that I'm on the board on the ground.

JACK: My armor is out, but it's otherwise fine.

AUSTIN: And then Cass is in the Megalophile.

ART: He's¹ undamaged.

AUSTIN: Nice.

JACK: Nice:

AUSTIN: Good job. So what do you do, as a group?

KEITH: What's the name of the person who has Orth?

[simultaneously]

AUSTIN: Sister Rust.

JACK: Sister Rust.

AUSTIN: You don't know that, though. I'm saying it.

KEITH: How about-to-snap-his-neck does she seem?

AUSTIN: Pretty.

KEITH: I remember it being—

AUSTIN: Yes. Pretty committed to that notion.

KEITH: Yeah. Okay.

¹ Apostolosian pronouns default to they/them. This would probably include Cass.

AUSTIN: She would like to do it, if you approach her. Though now— I think things are— things got worse when the Netted Wave showed up.

ALI: Yeah, is she reacting to them approaching at all?

AUSTIN. Only by tightening her grip on Orth.

ALI: Yikes!

AUSTIN: She's in a very much like, "This is our hostage. No one get near me. This is our stuff."

KEITH: What do we— how does it— do we want to fuck with the Netted Wave? Or do we want to just—?

JACK (as AuDy): Cass, what do you think?

ART (as Cass): I'm voting for a three-way stand-off here. I think we just let this develop and see what happens. Right? Let's just keep holding guns in both directions—

KEITH (as Mako): Okay.

ART as Cass): —and see what happens.

KEITH (as Mako): Hold on, my two guns are actually just one gun, so I can only cover one direction at a time. [ALI laughs]

AUSTIN: That is true, you do have a double gun. But it's actually--they point in the same— That's not great, that was maybe a—you should have gotten like a T-split, that way—

KEITH: You're right.

AUSTIN: You can get that upgrade later, don't worry.

ALI: Yeah.

KEITH: Yeah, I'll get a T-Splitter.

ALI (as Aria): Yeah. We should at least not be the ones who shoot first, maybe.

JACK: I mean, should we try and open a dialogue?

KEITH: I can open a dialogue. That's what I was thinking. I was thinking of trying to convince Sister Rust that the Netted Wave is maybe—maybe don't want to just take one person and bounce.

ART: Wait, I just had a crazy thought.

KEITH: Yeah? What's that.

ART: Which is that Mako shouldn't be in charge of our negotiating.

KEITH: Should, or shouldn't?

ART: I'm just— what if we end up buying a lot of expensive stuff? [JACK chuckles]

AUSTIN: Hoh boy.

[00:10:15]

KEITH: I have a really high coax.

AUSTIN: How are you negotiating this stuff, by the way, with each other? Is this— you're having this talk? Or are we— how out of character is this conversation right now?

KEITH: I feel like right now we're 90% out of character.

ALI: Yeah, but the—

AUSTIN: Okay. Give me something in character. Given me the speed and tone by which you're communicating in character right now.

JACK: Can we have speakers? I mean, is that a thing in this game? Or—

AUSTIN: Yeah. You actually can just— er, actually—

KEITH: Or you can do it with a bullhorn.

AUSTIN: Actually, it has speakers if you have the speakers tag. You know?

JACK: Ah, right. I didn't know if that was a tag. I do not have that tag, so I am—

ALI: [protesting noise] What—

AUSTIN: Whereas Aria definitely does [JACK: Oh yeah, she does] because that's part of her deal.

ALI: No, but we've established—

AUSTIN: You can talk to—

ALI: —in this world that [JACK: Oh yeah] the four of us are connected—

JACK: We can talk to each other.

ALI: —through our comms.

[simultaneously]

JACK: I can't talk to Sister Rust.

AUSTIN: Oh yeah, you can talk to each other.

AUSTIN: I just wanted— I'm trying to— right. You can't talk to Sister Rust [ALI: Oh, okay], exactly. Or you could, but it would be through the Queen's Regalia speakers, probably. Right? You could patch your voice—

ALI: It's the Regent's Brilliance, by the way.

AUSTIN: What did I say, Queen's— what am I saying?

ALI: You keep saying the Queen's Regalia.

AUSTIN: What is that?

[simultaneously]

ALI: I don't know. [laughs]

JACK: It's a thing in the Tower of London.

AUSTIN: It's not. You know what it is? The rigalia is a thing for the Netted Wave, that's why I keep calling it that.

ALI: Oh, okay. Yeah.

KEITH: What is it, actually?

ALI: It's the Regent's Brilliance.

AUSTIN: The Regent's Brilliance.

KEITH: The Regent's Brilliance. Okay.

ALI: And I usually just call it the Brilliance.

AUSTIN: The thing that people control Apostolosian rigs with is rigalia [ALI: Yeah. Right]. And it's a crown and gauntlets.

JACK: [laughs] Oh, we're the worst.

AUSTIN: Yeah. We're the best, you're right. We are the best. That's what you said, right?

ART: Uh huh. That's what I heard.

JACK: Okay. So.

AUSTIN: So yeah. Again, the speed of the situation is, the Netted Wave— their big sky barge with the golden sail, an energy sail, is speeding down the Starlight Strait. And as it approaches - it's 30 seconds out at this point - you see three figures leap off of the back of it. I'm picturing—

KEITH: Probably friendly.

AUSTIN: I'm picturing them as a little bit smaller than the Megalophile and the Regent's Brilliance. Smaller than OriCon mechs are, and smaller even than the Apostolosian mech that Cass has. Almost like powered suits. Almost person-sized. A little bit bigger than that - so like 8 to 10 feet tall, let's say - with sharp boosters coming out of the back. Four kind of sharp cylinders out the back, and then wings from the shoulders up, coming right out of the shoulders. And a bright blue flash.

They move almost in— they almost move in fits and starts— er, stops and starts. Right? Where it's like, they dash up into the sky, they hover for a second, and then they dash again. It's much more chaotic than the kind of long sweeps that we've seen from other mechs so far in the game.

JACK: I'm going—

AUSTIN: And they come up in threes, in a set of three, and they move in a very well-choreographed manner.

JACK: Okay. I'm going to radio Cass.

JACK (as Audy): Ah, Cass, we have Apostolosian mechs coming in. I can hold them off if you want to maintain the situation on the ground.

ART (as Cass): We're losing the situation on the ground. I think we should take any chance to shake that up.

JACK (as Audy): Should we just—

KEITH: Are we losing the situation on the ground? We've got two mechs.

AUSTIN: There was a debate about this. Go ahead. There was a debate about this, because it depends on what you define winning as.

KEITH: I feel like we've got one person on their side with the leverage of their arm around Orth, and then we've two mechs and me with a gun pointed at her.

AUSTIN: Yeah, but any shot that you fire has the risk of killing Orth, from any of those sources. Right?

KEITH: Right, but any action on her end against Orth and she'd be dead.

AUSTIN: Yeah, but who cares? Because her victory condition is you don't get Orth. Right? Your victory condition is you get Orth and also the food that's missing. So it's— you need Orth or her to tell you where that food is. You know what I mean? That's why it's tricky.

ALI: Well, our victory condition is actually just Orth. Orth can figure out that rest of that.

AUSTIN: [nonplussed] I guess. Sure. [ALI laughs] Yes. That's fair, yeah. Right. You don't get paid if Orth dies is the important thing there.

JACK (as Audy): All right. Okay, so I'm just—

ART (as Cass): I mean, that's my vote. That anything that shakes up this situation is probably good for us. And we're wrong a lot, so we'll see what happens.

JACK: I'm going to— just in the favor of making a move, I'm going to turn the Kingdom Come around and start jetting toward the Apostolosian party.

AUSTIN: Okay. I like the image of the Kingdom Come - it was in this kind of hovering state - real slow, almost creaking rotation back in the other direction.

JACK: With the intention of— they're interested, but I'm hoping to get them very immediately interested.

AUSTIN: That sounds like a Coax to me. It sounds like an Operate check, actually, in an attempt to give them an adjective that like Interested or something like that.

JACK: Yeah. Okay, so my Coax is 3.

AUSTIN: Okay. Er, no, no. You should use Operate here.

JACK: Oh, should I?

AUSTIN: Because you're Operating, you're piloting. Right?

JACK: Oh yeah. Yeah. Okay. My operate's actually 2. So I will—

AUSTIN: Okay. But Coax would be you're talking to them.

JACK: Yeah. Roll 2d6 and—

AUSTIN: So wait, wait, wait. Don't roll anything yet.

JACK: No, I'm not going to.

AUSTIN: Okay. Right now you're at 2d6. Do any of your positive adjectives, objects, or objects' tags help you for this? I'm looking at your stuff now. I think Blunt could help. There's a way in which you could be piloting your ship in a very— this isn't a careful turn, this isn't a stylish— this is, "No, look over here. Look at my big stupid ship."

JACK: Sure. We could do Blunt and Rotor Fans from the vehicle, meaning that I can turn really quickly to pull up in front of them. [AUSTIN: Totally] So I'm going to roll 4d6. My highest roll is a 6.

AUSTIN: Did you— and you don't have any negatives?

JACK: My armor is disabled, but beyond that, no.

AUSTIN: But other than that, you don't. Okay. Okay, and what adjective are you looking to put on them?

JACK: Interested.

AUSTIN: Interested is good. Okay, they're— I'm going to say, yeah, that the person who that's against does not have a high enough Coax to resist that. So—

JACK: I'm not interested in making it sticky. I mean, we only need them [AUSTIN: Yup] to be interested for as long as it takes Sister Rust [AUSTIN: Totally] to be interested.

AUSTIN: Totally. So wait, who are you trying to affect with this? You're trying to affect the Apostolosians of the Netted Wave?

JACK: I think— yeah, the Netted Wave.

AUSTIN: Okay. So what happens is that two of them, two of the— they're in kind of little mini-mechs called Hoplites, fly up past you— er, not past you but above you. They jet up into the sky in a course around you. But the main ship, the Athenian, starts moving towards you with one of the other Hoplites kind of running in front of it, hopping in front of it as, not a scout, taking point. So they get the Interested tag.

JACK: And I'm just trying to pull them back towards the party on the ground.

AUSTIN: Okay, I see. Yup. And so they're kind of chasing you now, back that way. Yeah, I gotchu. They were already, in a sense, interested in the stuff on the ground, so it's an easy thing for you to do successfully.

What do the rest of you do? Oh, let me give you a better prompt. One of the remaining Iron Choir members has begun running towards Sister Rust, gun in hand. You're just flying in the air, Keith? Mako?

KEITH: I'm kind of on the ground in front of where Rust is.

AUSTIN: Okay. Okay, I'm trying to decide if you even see this from your position. So they're coming at you from an angle behind you. [KEITH: Okay] They are going to try to give you the adjective Suppressed [KEITH: Okay] as they fire.

This guy— this is— ahh, who's left again? This is Nickel, who is going to try to give you the adjective Suppressed by using a— he has a modified version of the pistols that a lot of you have. But it doesn't have any of the cool cyberpunk wired stuff. All that has been hacked out of it, literally, physically removed. Any of the special chips inside that give you, "Oh, this is your gun" or helps your aim or anything. All that has ripped out [KEITH: Right] and then just duct taped back— the holes have been duct taped over. There's kind of firing in your general direction. [KEITH: Okay] What is your— how do you react to that? What's your—?

KEITH: I'm going to sort of flip my fly board up and sort of, kind of do a 90-degree swing upwards to avoid it, and then back down to a resting state.

AUSTIN: So that's an Operate. What's your Operate score?

KEITH: My Operate is 3. Yeah.

AUSTIN: Okay, so that means the difficulty by default is 3. You could also, when this comes in, you can discharge your push die to defend further. But this guy has a 3 in Shoot, and he is Eager, and he's using the barker. So that's a total of 5d6. [KEITH: Okay] Highest is a 5. What is your—?

[00:20:10]

KEITH: My Operate is a 3.

AUSTIN: Okay, so you could use—

KEITH: But I have these 2 push dice.

AUSTIN: And tie goes to defender. [KEITH: Awesome!] You don't have any hurt die, right? There's no—

KEITH: No, nothing.

AUSTIN: Okay. We lose this guy. Okay, so you're good. The bullets fly around your head, but you hold steady with your aim on Sister Rust. What do you do?

KEITH: I want to fly sort of backwards and behind, keeping an eye on this guy but also keeping my gun on Rust and apply—

AUSTIN: You're going to need multiple rolls to do this, because at this point you want to both—

KEITH: Oh, I don't want to apply anything mechanical to this guy.

AUSTIN: Okay, so then what are you doing? So at this point— so what I'm saying is that if you move, then Harmless probably gets cleared from Rust because that was a temporary thing that was part of you keeping a gun held on her— er, shooting the gun out of her hand. She'll be able to pick that up if you stop aiming at her.

KEITH: Yeah. I wanted to find a way to apply Surrounded to Rust. Basically just do more things to make her feel less confident in—

AUSTIN: Yeah. Surrounded makes sense. This dude will continue to be a threat if someone doesn't take care of him. [KEITH: Okay] And it's tough to take care of individuals from riggers. It's harder to aim at an individual human, because that's below— unless you have a special weapon designed for anti-personnel stuff. [KEITH: Yeah.] It's easy to take care of a bunch of people in a crowd, way harder to take care of one dude running. Which is not the case in TitanFall, so.

KEITH: Right. [laughs]

ART: So you're saying we've betrayed the inspiration for this game?

AUSTIN: It's true, it's true.

KEITH: I'll leave this guy being a threat for now [AUSTIN: Okay] and try and give Cass Surrounded— not Cass, Rust Surrounded.

AUSTIN: Oh, is this a situation where you want to— maybe what you want to do is move to a position where you can keep your gun focused on her, but also maybe she's between you and Nickel?

[simultaneously]

AUSTIN: So you're flying towards her—

KEITH: Yeah. That's what I was talking—

AUSTIN: Up and over her? I see what you're saying.

KEITH: Right. That's what I was talking about earlier.

AUSTIN: Right. I didn't get a picture of that in my head. [KEITH: Oh, okay] I saw you— yeah, I gotcha. Totally. That was a good idea that I did not understand at the time.

KEITH: No, that's fine. I get it, it's cool.

AUSTIN: So yeah. So recharge your push die. [KEITH: All right] Yeah, you got it. And then give me a Operate, because that again, is definitely a— you're trying to move to a better position. Which, against her— how much does she get?

KEITH: Okay, so I've got— it's been a while since we did this so it would be 3d6 plus however many push dice I can use that would make sense for what I have tags-wise? [AUSTIN: Yeah] Okay, so if I use the—

AUSTIN: Yeah. So again, that would probably be the actual—

KEITH: —if I use Quick and the actual board itself.

AUSTIN: Totally. Yeah. And that is [KEITH: 5d6] a total of 5? 5d6?

KEITH: Yeah. So 5 is my highest.

AUSTIN: 5 is your highest. And her highest for her thing— let's see, does she have anything she wants to— she's going to try to— I think she just needs to try to move away from you here. [KEITH: Yeah] And no, she doesn't. So yeah, you're giving her Surrounded and Harmless. So she has two negatives here, which is good for you. [KEITH: Yeah]

All right, so you left that guy alive. You left that guy totally [KEITH: Yeah] not dealt with. So he—

KEITH: Orth is more important. I'll get shot, whatever.

JACK: Perforated.

KEITH: Don't— please don't shoot me.

AUSTIN: Right. He just walks up to Orth and puts a gun on Orth's head. [KEITH: Okay] He's just walking towards you, but his gun is aimed at Orth, not at you. And he just goes up and puts the gun on Orth's gun and clicks it. [KEITH: Yeah] And his goal there is to give her, to give Sister Rust the positive adjective Backed Up. [KEITH: Okay; ALI giggles] So she now has another positive adjective. What do—

ART: So—

AUSTIN: Go for it.

ART: So call me an insensitive asshole, but I think I still want to be more focused on the incoming mechs. [AUSTIN: Mmhmm; JACK chuckles] I don't really know how to help the situation on the ground. [AUSTIN: Okay] I'm too big, it's too out of my hands. I'm not going to go down there and talk to anyone.

AUSTIN: That's fair.

KEITH: You could really intimidate someone.

AUSTIN: True.

ART: Can I, though? Just flexing with my giant mech arms [laughs] like, "Grrr!"

KEITH: Well, I mean, you can point with your giant mech guns.

ART: But it doesn't— they're probably smart enough to know that, yeah, they have a hostage. I can't shoot one of them.

KEITH: Are they? They took all the cool stuff out of their guns, how smart could they be?
[AUSTIN, ALI, and ART laugh]

JACK: In any case.

KEITH: They probably never even heard of Twitter.

AUSTIN: They haven't, it's true. It's true.

ART: Huh. Let Ali go, I'm still thinking of a replacement adjective.

AUSTIN: Okay. Aria, what are you doing right now?

ALI: I feel like I should help what's going on on the ground, but I don't know how.

AUSTIN: It's a tough situation.

ALI: I mean, there's nothing I can do action-wise, but—

KEITH: There's also you guys can get out of your mechs. Also.

AUSTIN: Totally!

ALI: Right. I could do one of two things. I could either use my speakers to tell them to stand down, or I could open up the cockpit on my mech and jump out of it and hope to jump onto that guy.

AUSTIN: Oh yeah, you could totally do that.

KEITH: That'd be really cool.

ALI: To tackle him.

KEITH: Do that one, it's cool! [ALI laughs]

AUSTIN: That one's pretty cool.

ALI: Would that be a Move roll? Probably.

AUSTIN: Move or Fight. Ahh [ALI: Okay] hmm.

KEITH: It might be Operate because of how well you aim jumping out.

AUSTIN: No, it's definitely a Move or a Fight. It's not a— it's a tackle, I'm going to say that's a Fight. [ALI: Yeah?] Though I could go either way. I could totally go— because if you're trying to

jump onto a moving vehicle, it's a Move. If you're trying to jump onto a person, it would be Fight. If you're wrestling someone, it would be Fight. [ALI: Okay] But I could go either way.

ALI: But I think— the move, the action here is the ability of me to land on a guy. [laughs]
Tackling is sort of a side effect. [laughs]

AUSTIN: Sure. Then Move.

KEITH: Yeah.

ALI: Okay. And I am going to use ... yikes. I don't have a lot of dice here.

AUSTIN: No, you don't. It's a rough situation right now.

ALI: I'm probably still— I'm going to discharge one for Energetic. I feel like that—

AUSTIN: Yeah, this is definitely Energetic.

ALI: Yeah. So that's going to be a 4d6. [laughs] And I got a 4.

AUSTIN: Oof. Ooh.

[ALI makes a distressed noise]

AUSTIN: Ahh, one second.

ALI: It was a really risky move, so if it doesn't work— [laughs]

AUSTIN: It was. It was a really risky move.

KEITH: [laughing] Did you just jump out next to the guy?

AUSTIN: He is discharging—

[simultaneously]

KEITH: He has— I mean, could you get a de facto startled?

ALI: He'll still be startled.

AUSTIN: He is not startled, in fact. [ALI laughs] You land on him. He's discharging one to increase his Fight from 3 to 4. And you just land on his armor, and he shakes you off with a heavy elbow back. And you land in the sand behind him. [ALI: Okay] She says,

AUSTIN (as Sister Rust): If any of you move, I'm going to kill him.

AUSTIN: That is an ultimatum, which is a— she's not making a move on you, but she's saying if anything happens, that is the move she is going to try to do, is a Fight attack on Orth to kill him.

JACK: I'm going to radio in and say,

JACK (as AuDy): Hey, I'm arriving with a load of mechs. [JACK and ALI laugh]

AUSTIN: [laughing] Yeah. Meanwhile, across the—

JACK: I didn't hear that, did I?

AUSTIN: Yeah, yeah. At that moment the two hoplights who went over the Kingdom Come towards where the free-lev has been knocked over and where Sister Rust is, you can see them in the sky getting closer and closer. You see the brilliant blue flashes of their short-area jump boosters. And all around you, there are explosions as rounds start hitting the sand. What type of guns do these guys have again? Let's see.

KEITH: Little ones. Really small ones.

AUSTIN: Yeah, little tiny— no, sorry. You know what? It's not— I forgot. Yeah, okay. It's not rounds. From each of them, there's a line of a huge thick laser beam that cuts— almost like— probably warning shots. Probably. And like their jump boosters, they're kind of staccato shots where it's like vrrrm vrrrm brmm brmm as they cut lines in the sand around all of you. What are you all doing?

KEITH: I'm going to tell Sister Rust,

KEITH (as Mako): Hey, we got way bigger problems than this deal. I think that they're gonna try to kill us. You should give us Orth [ART laughs], and we'll help you out.

AUSTIN: It sounds like a Coax.

KEITH: That is a Coax. That's one hell of Coax.

[simultaneously]

AUSTIN: [anxiously] Keith, a roll on Coax.

JACK: Keith, where did all your dice go, Keith?

KEITH: I believe is a 4.

AUSTIN: To the leader of this—

KEITH: No, I have these 2.

ART: "We just lost this fight. Give us what we want, and we'll help you." [laughs]

KEITH: Yeah. [ALI laughs]

AUSTIN: Yeah. Uh huh.

KEITH: All right. So I'm also— let's do Clever.

AUSTIN: Uh huh. That's Clever.

ART: Is it?

JACK: Keith has a hurt dice, right?

KEITH: Charming. It's Charming. It's very Charming to ask someone to give you everything they want.

[00:29:54]

AUSTIN: Just give me the roll. Yes, yes Just give me the roll. That's 6. [KEITH: Yeah] She is going to discharge 1 for Zealous. And no, there's no way. [ALI snorts] In fact, what she says in response, my turn now—

KEITH: Note that I did not move when I said the words.

JACK: [laughing] I don't think there are— semantics is not an effective tool in hostage negotiations. [JACK and KEITH laugh]

AUSTIN: Not so much, no. Man, I'm trying to make sure this doesn't— I'm trying really hard to make this not go real bad for you. I'm really trying.

ALI: [whimpering] I really like Orth. [laughs nervously]

AUSTIN: Me too! I like him a lot. But I'm trying to stare through the cross hairs like all the books say I should do. And it doesn't look good for him right now.

JACK: Hey.

ART: I never really liked Orth. I'm pretty okay with this.

AUSTIN: [softly] Oh boy.

KEITH: Yeah, we can find that 200 whatever— how much was it? How much was he going to give us for saving his life?

ALI: 10!

AUSTIN: Not 200! Jesus christ.

ALI: 10.

KEITH: 200 bucks? I don't know.

AUSTIN: No! No. That would be enough to pay off your loans. [laughing] He was not giving you that. [ALI giggles]

KEITH: No, no, no. Not credits. Just bucks. 200 bucks.

AUSTIN: B-U-Ks, B-U-X. Future bucks. Right. She says,

AUSTIN (as Sister Rust): Look at you, so consumed by the Metal That Speaks that you have no strength of your own. I can see you. You wish you knew our language instead.

AUSTIN: And she is trying to give you— I need a good adjective about self-doubt. [KEITH: Okay] What's a good adjective about doubting yourself? Like existential-crisis doubt.

ART: Ennui?

AUSTIN: Ennui, she's trying to give you—

KEITH: Give me on-weed?

AUSTIN: Yeah [laughs].

ART: [off mic] Weed off.

KEITH: [laughing] Yeah, fucking Mako is on weed right now. [slurpy inhale noise]

AUSTIN: She is going to roll—

ALI: Dank.

AUSTIN: I need to— the thing I need to find here, which is what's the maximum number of dice you can roll in this game?

JACK: Oh dear.

ALI: Oh my god.

KEITH: You're trying really hard to give me on-weed.

AUSTIN: Yeah, yeah. Well, she has a 5 in Coax. She's definitely using Zealous—

JACK: I really wish I had speakers.

AUSTIN: —this is definitely her being super Zealous. She's using Boisterous for sure, and she's using Persuasive for sure. [KEITH: Okay] She could be using Big, but I'm not letting her use Big because I'm friendly and don't hate you that much. [KEITH: Okay] I only hate you enough to roll 5, 6, 7, 8d6.

ART: Also, I've seen some large people in my life, and they never made me doubt my existential worth.

AUSTIN: Totally. That's fair. That's fair.

KEITH: I have a question though about— if you try to give me a sticky adjective or a permanent adjective and I block it, do I still get those dice? Or do you keep those dice because I—?

AUSTIN: I keep those dice. You only exchange dice when sticky stuff happens. When stuff sticks.

KEITH: Not when you miss.

AUSTIN: Correct. [KEITH: Okay] Missing does not do it. But she does also have 2 hurt die. She has Surrounded, and she has Harmless. She'll also have to roll those in a second. Right now she has a 6.1, which is really good. You better hope she rolls a 6 on one of these. She does! [KEITH: Great] So 6 gets cancelled. It's still a 5. What is your—

KEITH: All right, my Coax is 5. And tie goes to me?

AUSTIN: Your Coax is 5 now?

KEITH: Yeah.

AUSTIN: That's real good. Yeah, so tie goes to—

KEITH: Yeah, so I had 2. So even if you got 6, I could have gotten 7.

AUSTIN: Totally, yeah. All right. So you are not shook by this even a little bit.

KEITH: No. Can I chuckle?

AUSTIN: [laughing] Yeah, you can totally chuckle.

KEITH: I chuckle.

AUSTIN: This is totally a time to chuckle. Wait, your Coax is only 4 right now.

KEITH: Is it? Oh, I rolled with 4 earlier. I don't know why I thought I had 5. I take it back.

AUSTIN: So you can still get up to a 5.

KEITH: Yeah, I just--

AUSTIN: But you have to discharge something.

KEITH: Boom.

AUSTIN: Okay. And what is your defense there? What are you using to defend? What are you discharging to up your defense here?

KEITH: I think that I am using Clever to realize that she's just trying to make me nervous.

AUSTIN: Right. This even feels to me a little bit like you're too clever for your own— you're so into your own shit. You're like, "No, I'm just the best. What are you talking about?"

KEITH (as Mako): I'm just so— what are you talking about? How could I be weak, I just— look at all this shit I did!

AUSTIN: It's not that even that you are Clever.

KEITH (as Mako): I just shot a gun out of your hand! Talking about how weak I am.

AUSTIN: It's that you think you're Clever is more than the fact that you are Clever—

KEITH: Right. Sure.

AUSTIN: —is your defense here. [KEITH: Yeah] Kingdom Come, there is now a ship heading your way and one hoplight. And they have decided that they don't— they think that you are in between them and what they want.

KEITH: Should we try to ask them what it is they want?

AUSTIN: No one did that. That's not true.

ART: Some of us don't have the technology. [laughs]

AUSTIN: Right. [laughs]

JACK: Do I have an onboard radio to communicate, like ship-to-ship radio?

AUSTIN: Do you? I don't— what are your tag?

JACK: Oh, oh. I didn't— it's hard to tell what is tags and what is not.

AUSTIN: I'm happy with— basically, anything you would— anything that increases your effectiveness or the breadth of possible actions is— outside of— one of the things that's built into this game is that party members can talk to each other whenever they want.

JACK: Wait, hang on a second, Austin. I think I do have speakers. I have Mic, does that count?

[simultaneously]

KEITH: No, that's the butler.

AUSTIN: That's only— that's just [laughs]

AUSTIN: Yeah, that's just your butler Mike. [KEITH cracks up] No, Mic is actually separate from speakers.

JACK: Wait, so I have a useless Mic? [laughs]

AUSTIN: Yeah, apparently.

ALI: Well, you should switch that to Audio Kit, which would—

AUSTIN: You have an Audio Kit because of your background, Ali. We specifically built Audio Kit because you worked for Disney on their thing.

ALI: Oh, okay. Right. [KEITH laughs]

AUSTIN: Like, "Oh yeah, that makes sense, you have that."

ART: Guys, guys! Space Disney. Let's keep our—

AUSTIN: Space— sorry! Space Disney. [ALI giggles]

ART: I have an idea. [AUSTIN: Uh huh?] The trim of my mech is Apostolosian. Can I make myself conspicuous? Is there a way to make myself conspicuous that doesn't get Orth killed immediately?

AUSTIN: Sure.

ART: What do you think that looks like?

KEITH: If you leave the area where—

AUSTIN: Oh. You tell me. I thought you were saying you wanted to go down that route. I don't know. What does that look like?

ART: I'm working on it.

AUSTIN: Also, Jack, the reason you have Mic is so you can hear things outside of the ship. That's an exterior Mic. [JACK laughs] That's a "you know what's in the world" Mic, not a "the world can hear you" Mic.

JACK: Ah, great.

AUSTIN: But I realized it's the same thing with your Camera. If someone took out your Camera, you also wouldn't have the vision from— you know what I mean?

[simultaneously]

JACK: Yeah. So I—

ART: Okay. Oh.

AUSTIN: You got something?

ART: My rigalia is Linked. Could I just put a lot of static out on it?

AUSTIN: Sure. Just kind of make a— it's like shooting a gun in the air, in a sense.

ART: Yeah, but it's a thing that the Dead Metal people wouldn't be able to hear.

AUSTIN: Oh, interesting. Yeah, they wouldn't be able to hear it at all. I'm going to just— yeah, you can just do that. What are you trying to— what's the effect you're trying to get?

ART: I want them to see me and to acknowledge that I'm with AuDy [AUSTIN: Okay] and that maybe we're not the bad guys here.

AUSTIN: Okay. So do you fly towards AuDy, also, in the Kingdom Come?

ART: Ah, I'm not exactly sure my flight capability. I don't have—

AUSTIN: You don't have any boosters or anything? What do you have?

ART: No. I have Cam, Linked, 2 armor, Missile Battery, Rail Kit, and Strong and Large. I imagine I have—

AUSTIN: Yeah. You can jump and probably get up onto the ship and out of it. But you probably can't fly.

KEITH: Haven't you flown before?

ALI: Yeah. That seems—

AUSTIN: No, we definitely had him fly before, which is a mistake on our part. It's one of those things where it's— yeah, you can probably make jumps.

JACK: I can pick him up.

AUSTIN: And he can just— I think probably you can probably get back up to the ship. If you wanted to jump up onto the Kingdom Come, you could do it. But sustained flight doesn't happen.

ALI: Right.

ART: Sure, yeah. I imagine there's some sort of positioning system.

JACK: Jump jets or something.

ART: Yeah. That the way that mechs work requires some sort of propulsion technology. But yeah. What we're saying is I can't fly or—

AUSTIN: Or hover or do any of the stuff that the Regent's Brilliance can. [ART: Yeah] All right, yeah. I don't think that this even needs an adjective applied. I think when you do this, there is a— a comm channel opens between the Athenian ship (the name of the ship is the Athenian, it's not— I understand that the name of the group is the Apostolosians, I haven't just forgotten that) and both the Kingdom Come and the Megalophile.

There is kind of a regal-looking Apostolosian who has— there is a great deal of knowledge in their eyes. Very strong shoulders and almost a lack of color to their skin. It looks like someone who is tired beyond their years. You know what I mean? They've been through more than they wish they had been.

ART: This is—

KEITH: Like Kevin Costner in Swing Vote?

AUSTIN: Yeah, that's a— everyone knows Swing Vote, a very popular American film. This man is played by— er, this character's played by Kevin Costner. They say,

AUSTIN (as Kimon Tell): This is Kimon Tell of the Netted Wave. I am played by Kevin Cost—

AUSTIN: No.

ART: [laughing] That's what Kevin Costner's characters always say in those movies.

AUSTIN: Every time. It's "Hey, it's me, Kevin Costner."

KEITH: "It's me, Kevin Costner. This is about to be about baseball."

AUSTIN: Yeah. "If you build it, it's me, Kevin Costner." [ART, ALI, and KEITH laugh]. Kimon Tell is wearing a crown. It's a silvery crown with little red jewels in it. It's one of those rad situations of like the military jacket, but the top of it is folded down at an angle. But also that's the way it's supposed to be worn, so it's not actually like they're breaking uniform code. It's like, "Oh, this is one of those cool jackets that has the flap." And two heavy-looking gloves which they have in a— maybe it's a— I think it's a crossed-arm situation.

[00:40:21]

AUSTIN (as Kimon Tell): Who am I speaking with?

ART: Hold on, I need to look up my last names.

KEITH: I just googled "military flap jacket," because I don't think I know what you're talking about.

AUSTIN: You don't know what I'm talking about?

KEITH: No. I can't find any.

AUSTIN: I'll find it.

KEITH: Is there a character that you can think of that would—?

AUSTIN: Anime. You know.

KEITH: [googling] Anime. Military. Boy.

AUSTIN: That's not gonna— don't do that search.

ART: Oh no!

KEITH: [laughs] A lot of these are several boys, and they are interested in each other. [ALI giggles]

AUSTIN: You don't say? Really?

KEITH: Yeah, really.

AUSTIN: I bet I can find one, though. I bet I can find an anime military boy wearing this jacket.

ALI: "Anime military boy" gets you a lot of Nazis. [giggles in distress]

AUSTIN: Yeah, it's true. It sure does.

KEITH: Yeah, yeah, yeah. No, it's really— yeah.

AUSTIN: This is not that, this is not a Nazi outfit— this is not that, I promise.

KEITH: Oh sorry, did I forget to say that most of these were Nazis?

AUSTIN: You did forget that, somehow.

KEITH: Yeah.

ALI: [snorts] I'm seeing all Nazis and dicks here, so I'm just going to back out.

KEITH: Oh, I don't see any dicks.

AUSTIN: Okay, so what it is—

KEITH: Oh, wait. No, there's a dick. Never mind.

AUSTIN: It's one of those things where it comes all the way over and up, and the buttons are on the far side. Do you know what I mean?

KEITH: Okay. Like an admiral thing?

AUSTIN: Is that what an admiral jacket looks like?

KEITH: I think so.

AUSTIN: What's an admiral jacket? Let's see.

KEITH: I don't know. I'm thinking of the guy from Mass Effect. [AUSTIN: No] The admiral from Mass Effect.

AUSTIN: Which admiral from Mass Effect?

[simultaneously]

KEITH: Um, Anderson?

AUSTIN: Maybe it is an admiral's jacket

ALI: Hackett?

KEITH: Hackett.

AUSTIN: Yeah, okay, I found it. Well, this is wrong. Yeah, it's sort of like Hackett.

KEITH: Is it— hold on. Is it like that? Is it more like that?

JACK: This is a Procrastinate roll.

AUSTIN: Yeah, it's like that. It's like Swing Vote starring Kevin Costner. Thanks. [JACK chuckles]

KEITH: Is it like that? That's not— I promise you that it's not—

AUSTIN: Yeah, it's like that, except that instead of being oval like that— that's not Hackett at all, that's Anderson.

KEITH: But the flap is falling down.

AUSTIN: Yes. The flap is falling that way.

KEITH: I said Anderson.

AUSTIN: Oh, okay. I thought you said Hackett. Someone said Hackett.

KEITH: No, no.

ALI: I said Hackett. Sorry.

AUSTIN: Aha!

ALI: Hackett's the admiral.

AUSTIN: That is true.

KEITH: Wasn't Anderson promoted?

[simultaneously]

ALI: Later.

AUSTIN: Later.

AUSTIN: Anyway!

ART: Anyway!

ART (as Cass): This is Cassander Timaeus Berenice, decommissioned army medic.

AUSTIN: Huh.

ART (as Cass): Er— army medic, decommissioned.

ART: Sorry. That's, I think—

AUSTIN: Do people know you? I don't remember how this works. Do people— do they know?

ART: I think I'm a little famous, but I don't know how famous.

AUSTIN: Is Timaeus Berenice recognizable as part of the surname of the royal family?

ART: No. I took it— most royal families don't actually have surnames. [AUSTIN: Okay.] But I've since learned that they do when they serve in the military, because that's how the military works.

AUSTIN: You've since learned that?

ART: Yeah, I looked it up.

AUSTIN: Oh, I thought you meant in Apostolos. [laughs] That's like, "Wow, okay. That's a cool way to think about games, I guess." Okay. So they would— yeah, let's say Timon² knows you. Timon would know you. He wouldn't know you personally. Or, they wouldn't know you personally.

ART: I was probably in the papers.

AUSTIN: But they would definitely know. They would definitely know. Timon says,

AUSTIN (as Timon): Medic Berenice, funny seeing you here. You're in the middle of an operation that my group's undertaking. I advise you leave the battlefield immediately.

ART (as Cass): I can't let you shoot down the ship.

AUSTIN (as Timon): Target's not the ship. So get out of the way, or else I will have to shoot it down.

ART (as Cass): AuDy?

JACK (as AuDy): We're unable to let you harm our hostage— or, the hostage that has been taken. [KEITH laughs]

AUSTIN: You didn't say "our hostage," to be clear. Okay, okay.

JACK: No, I did. I did.

AUSTIN: Okay.

JACK (as AuDy): We're unable to let you harm our hostage in the desert below.

AUSTIN (as Timon): Is Mr. Godlove under your control?

JACK (as AuDy): Yes.

AUSTIN (as Timon): Then I apologize, but I'm going to close this comm channel now.

AUSTIN: And he³ closes it. And from the front of the Athenian vessel— the very front of it lights up with— you've seen stuff like this on some Diaspora equipment. It's a shielding system.

² This character was originally referred to as Kimon, but Austin mistakenly calls them Timon several times.

³ Apostolosians default to they/them.

Except it burns a little bit brighter than that does. Most of the time with Diasporan stuff, when it gets hit and when it get hit and the shield pops on, you can see it in a flash. Right? It's kind of shimmering there. And something hits it, and it goes fhooh! And you can see the whole thing. This is always in that bright flash mode. And the engines on the Athenian go into overdrive, and another golden sail flaps out. And it charges directly into the Kingdom Come. [JACK gasps nervously]

Give me— or, I'm going to do an Operate check here.

KEITH: So I have a question on why we lied to them—

AUSTIN: Me too.

KEITH: —and now we're fighting with them.

[simultaneously]

ALI: Yeah.

ART: Yeah, I'm not sure about that either.

JACK: Well, because as far as I was concerned— hang on, wait a second. I interpreted, "Is he under our control?" as essentially— not the immediate situation but who is working for whom. [AUSTIN: Uh huh] And AuDy has had a rocky relationship with Orth [AUSTIN: Sure] since they cross lied to each other. And I think AuDy probably assumes that once Orth is out of this situation, we're going to have to have words.

AUSTIN: Okay. No, I think that's fine. I think was AuDy saying— my read on this was AuDy saying, "He's ours. We want that money. This is our mission, not— " You know what I mean? [JACK: Yeah] This is like competing bounty hunters going after the same bounty, but in reverse. [JACK: Yeah] This is competing security companies trying to defend the same person [JACK laughs] to get that money.

JACK: What do I need to roll?

AUSTIN: Nothing, because you're— it depends on how you're going to defend, but you're not rolling anything. They are rolling to Operate against you.

JACK: My Operate is 2.

AUSTIN: So if you're going to— so 1 for the actually energy ram, 1 for the sail drive and 1 for— let's do 1 for this grav hook. So it shoots this gravity hook thing. It's just the hook. There's no tether. And it slams into the side of the— over the top of the Kingdom Come, and a gravitational force starts pulling it towards the Athenian's energy ram.

KEITH: Finally, some things that I can Fog.

AUSTIN: Huh. [JACK laughs] A little extra difficulty, but yes. You will be able to. So that's a 6, what is your Operate?

JACK: My Operate is 2.

AUSTIN: Okay. And I don't know that you have the dice necessarily to defend.

JACK: I could bring it up to 4.

AUSTIN: You can't, because your dice are currently discharged.

JACK: Oh. Yes.

AUSTIN: So I'm going to make something bad sticky. Let's see, what am I destroying on your ship? You don't have any armor left, do you? Or do you have armor left?

JACK: Nope, my armor is disabled.

AUSTIN: Okay. And your thrusters are destroyed.

JACK: Okay. So I'm just flying on rotor fans now?

AUSTIN: Yeah, and I think that means you can hover in place. But it's hard to get places quick. So yeah. The energy ram on this thing just slides right through the back end of the Kingdom Come, twisting it in the air and shaking it pretty heavily. And the thrusters explode in a brilliant flash.

Let's jump back down to the ground level. Lasers are everywhere. Sister Rust is standing her ground. But it's about to get super bad. Someone has to do a thing, or else— I don't know.

ALI: What are Sister Rust's adjectives right now?

AUSTIN: She has a bunch. Her adjectives are mixed positive and negative. She has Persuasive, Zealous, Big, Boisterous, Surrounded, Harmless, and Backed Up. Backed Up is positive also.

ALI: Okay. So my idea is to convince her to stand down. But I could either do that as a treat roll by taking away Helpless or by Coaxing her. I think. Maybe.

AUSTIN: Wait, what was that first thing? As a—?

ALI: A treat roll to take away Helpless.

AUSTIN: Hmm. So you'd be— I think it makes more sense to try to— I think I see what you're doing there, but in this case, Helpless was specifically about disarming her.

ALI: Okay. Fair enough, yeah.

AUSTIN: So getting rid of it would only benefit her situation. Right now it's a negative thing. [ALI: Okay, yeah] So yeah, I think you'd need to apply something new to her. Anything new, probably at this point, given the situation, would cause her to stand down.

ALI: Because I think— really, the point that I would want to make in a Coax is, "We're going to die." [AUSTIN: Yup] "Is holding him worth your life?"

KEITH: I will say that because her Coax is 5, it's very hard to Coax her—

AUSTIN: That is true.

KEITH: —to Coax her into anything.

ALI: Okay, that's right.

AUSTIN: Yup. Correct. Yup.

KEITH: You know who probably doesn't have a 5 Coax is dude with his gun to Orth's head.

ALI: Ohhh, right.

KEITH: Getting that guy to back down would take away Backed Up, probably.

[00:50:05]

AUSTIN: it totally would.

ALI: Okay. Yeah. Yeah, so maybe that's the better call. Maybe we have to start doing some stuff to this guy. [AUSTIN: Yeah] Is this guy named yet?

AUSTIN: Yeah, it's Nickel.

ALI: Nickel? Oh, okay.

KEITH: I think we gotta get this clown out of here. This Nickel clown.

AUSTIN: Yeah. So what do you say to him?

ALI: I mean, it's probably the same thing. Right? Where it's like,

ALI (as Aria): You are absolutely going to die if we don't move. Is staying here with your gun to his head worth your life?

AUSTIN: Sounds good. Give me a roll.

ALI: I could make the argument that being Alluring—

AUSTIN: I think that's totally what you should do. [ALI giggles] I think that's exactly how Aria Joie would do this, yes.

ALI: So that is a 5d6. I'm going to discharge that.

AUSTIN: That's a 6.

ALI: I get a 6!

AUSTIN: And you don't have any negative adjectives, right?

ALI: No. The Brilliance does.

AUSTIN: So what do you give him?

ALI: I think I'm giving him— I was going to say Worried, but that's not strong.

AUSTIN: Worried is probably strong enough for a fleeting adjective. Yeah.

ALI: Yeah, but it doesn't convey someone fearing their life.

AUSTIN: What about Panicked?

ALI: Panicked's good.

AUSTIN: Because Panicked even has a short-term connotation where it's like he's Panicked right now.

ALI: I think Panicked is good. I don't have— I can't risk it to sticky it.

AUSTIN: Yeah, you don't want to lose that last push die.

ALI: Yeah. Yeah, that's not going to—

AUSTIN: Right now, to people listening, Ali has 1 push die. Art has 2. Jack has 4. Keith has 2. I have 3.

KEITH: You did have 5 until a minute ago.

AUSTIN: Yeah, until I gave 2 to Jack to fuck up the Kingdom Come in a big way.

KEITH: Yeah. In a really big way.

AUSTIN: So yeah. He shakes his— [narrating in a panicked voice] he gets real shaky. And he looks at you back and forth. [returning to his normal cadence] And he turns and runs and goes over to the wreckage of the free-lev train and grabs, picks up the other remaining member of the Iron Choir, Brother Sterling, and starts dragging him through the sand into the darkness. I think it's a nice middle ground for him between completely chickening out and still getting to flee.

This doesn't stop the fact that lasers are everywhere right now. [KEITH: Right] One of the two Apostolosian mechs lands in front of the group of you. It is a strange thing to see up close, because none of you have dealt with these before personally. And it's just not at the right scale. It isn't big like a mech in the same way, and so it feels like you're looking at a big person. Do you know what I mean? Like, who is that big man? It has the effect of being a little more scary than just looking at a mech, because you understand mechs are vehicles that people are in. This conveys the sense that— it's almost as if it's an extension of the body of the person inside of it. It makes it seem like the person in there is stronger and tougher than you are as an individual, somehow. It is pretty terrifying.

And as it lands, the speaker on the outside of it turns on. And a voice comes on that feels, immediately, dismissive of all of you and this whole situation. And she says,⁴

AUSTIN (oddly accented): All of you. Put your hands up, and I won't kill you. If any of you move, you will all die.

AUSTIN: And she levels— so the hoplight has one arm that ends in a Mega Man-style barrel. And she points that down at you. The other one has a weird claw hand. And I think she's trying to hit everyone in this scene with the adjective Compliant.

JACK: Oh, can I hear her now? Am I close enough for—?

AUSTIN: Yeah, yeah, yeah. She's also speaking with a big—

⁴ While this character is referred to with she/her throughout this episode, Austin later states that they should be using they/them.

JACK: Speaker system.

AUSTIN: —speaker system thing.

KEITH: Audio Kit?

AUSTIN: She do not have an Audio Kit. She just has Speaker system. She has Speakers and Mic and Cam. It's probably a Coax, right? And she is going to use the fact that she has a big beam arm thing. She's going to use the actual Speaker system thing. And then, I think she's going to hang on to that third one. It's only 4d6 actually, she's not— er, sorry, 2d6. I didn't do all the— er, 3. 3, 3, 3. She has a 1. She's not super good at Coaxing.

ALI: Nice.

KEITH: No. The voice you used for her sounded like a Coaxy voice.

AUSTIN: No. She's not super good at Coaxing. [KEITH: No?] That's just her voice. Some people have nice voices. It doesn't mean that they're great at Coaxing. Does everybody have a 2 Coax or lower?

KEITH: No.

JACK: I think I do, yes.

AUSTIN: Oh, you're not on the ground. You're fine. You're not targeted here. Oh, you know what? That was the third one. She has to discharge the third one, because she's trying to hit multiple people at once. I knew I had to discharge— okay. So yeah. No one has 2 or lower? So she completely fails at that. [JACK laughs] Which again, bad scene all around.

I think I have to make this roll. I've tried really hard to not have to do this.

JACK: No, no. Roll it.

AUSTIN: But I'm going to roll it.

KEITH: Orth has been very silent.

AUSTIN: Orth has had his throat clamped - what? - by a giant woman!

KEITH: He could still talk.

AUSTIN: No! No. No!

KEITH: And before— he was quiet before. He had a gun.

AUSTIN: Have you ever been choked?

KEITH: Yeah.

AUSTIN: Have you?

KEITH: Yeah, fifth grade.

AUSTIN: Okay. When I've been choked—

KEITH: He got expelled for doing it.

AUSTIN: That's good. I haven't been able to actually— he's been struggling. He hasn't been able to say— he's like, rrrwwrr. But he isn't [KEITH: Okay], he can't make a compelling argument.

KEITH: Well, before he just had a gun to his head. He wasn't being choked then.

AUSTIN: No, no, no. But then you shoot the gun out of his hand, and then she started choking him.

KEITH: Yeah, yeah, yeah.

AUSTIN: So she is going to try to give him A Bad Thing. So get rid of all of those.

ALI: This is horrible.

AUSTIN: It's gonna be bad, guys! [ALI laughs in distress] I tried real hard. I tried to give you a lot of time to get in there.

ART: Well, we're idiots.

AUSTIN: Eh. Slow down. [JACK laughs]

ALI: [still distressed] I mean, Mako hasn't gone for a while. Isn't he going to move?

AUSTIN: There was plenty of time when I said, "What do you do?" and no one said anything, so.

ALI: Okay.

KEITH: No, I spoke up, and you said, "Let's let Ali go."

AUSTIN: Oh. Well, what do you want to do?

KEITH: Okay—

AUSTIN: Now-or-never situation.

KEITH: —okay. Now I have—

ART: I also had a very bad plan I didn't get to execute.

KEITH: I'm right there.

AUSTIN: Yes. You are right there.

KEITH: I've been kind of in front of her for a while.

AUSTIN: Right. She is, in fact— you actually have her pincerred. You and Aria have her pincerred, and she's doing her best to hold up Orth and look at both of you at the same time.

KEITH: I'm going to fucking charge her, and I'm going to use Operate to tackle her because I'm on my thing. And I'm just using the force of the forward motion effect to run into her.

AUSTIN: So you're not then landing— you're not getting off. If you want to tackle—

KEITH: No, I'm not getting off the board. I'm just flying into her.

AUSTIN: Okay. And then continuing to fly?

KEITH: Yeah.

AUSTIN: Okay, yeah. Give me an Operate check.

KEITH: All right. So refresh that, and I'm going to roll Quick and with my board to add 2 push dice for that.

AUSTIN: Sounds good. What do you—

KEITH: And it's going to be a 5—

AUSTIN: Yeah, go ahead. Yeah, it's a 6. What are you giving her?

KEITH: I'm going to give her— oh shit. There was something that you gave me one time that I thought it was really good, and I wanted to use that.

AUSTIN: [laughing] Okay?

KEITH: I think you gave me Laid Out one time, and I want to reuse that.

AUSTIN: Yeah, that's fine.

KEITH: I want to recycle Laid Out.

AUSTIN: Okay. She gets knocked from behind. That's at least a sticky, if she's Laid Out like that, then— [KEITH: Yeah] She gets knocked out. Orth goes flying forward into the ground. Tisiphone, who is the pilot of the Hoplite, who is aiming at you currently, says,

AUSTIN (as Tisiphone): Very good.

AUSTIN: She doesn't understand that she didn't really— this is all according to her plan, as far as she's concerned. [JACK chuckles]

AUSTIN (as Tisiphone): Orth!

AUSTIN: And she reaches down with her claw hand. And she says,

AUSTIN (as Tisiphone): Prepare yourself.

AUSTIN: And fires her claw hand at him. Does anyone intercede?

[simultaneously]

KEITH: Yes.

ART: Yep.

ALI: I can. [JACK laughs]

ART: I would like to.

AUSTIN: Let's let the robot intercede.

KEITH: Okay. The robot can intercede. I'll Fog the shit out of that claw, though.

ART: My plan, because this is a little robot, right?

AUSTIN: It's smaller than you, yes. It's bigger than a person.

ART: I want to jump off this ship and cannonball it. [KEITH laughs]

AUSTIN: Okay, give me an Operate check.

ART: And I would like to use Large.

AUSTIN: Good, yeah, uh huh. [ALI laughs] That's true.

JACK: And round.

AUSTIN: Uh huh.

ART: So that's 4 dice. And I want to give her Jostled? Flattened? [AUSTIN: Good] Pancaked, Pancaked.

KEITH: Flattened is good.

AUSTIN: Pancaked. Pancaked is good. Pancaked is fantastic.

ALI: Pancaked is very good.

AUSTIN: You guys want to get some waffs?

KEITH: I want to get some waffs right now.

AUSTIN: Some hot waffs?

ART: I got a 6 and a 5.

KEITH: Some steamy waffs.

AUSTIN: She is going to use the Hoplite's wings to jump backwards out of the way. As you land, she slides back away from you. But it does prevent her from grabbing Orth with her claw arms. However, the other two Hoplites— er, sorry, the other one Hoplite arrives, landing — as she does that, she falls backwards and then lands. The other one lands next to her from above.

Let's jump back into the sky and see how the Kingdom Come is doing, now that there's no mech there to defend it.

[1:00:13]

JACK: Well, I can't move.

AUSTIN: You can hover. You can move. You can hover around, but you can't-- also, everything is now within the same area. There isn't a huge gap.

JACK: Oh, okay. All right. Okay, so we got two mechs on the ground [AUSTIN: Uh huh]. We got Orth who is now— ooo.

AUSTIN: Orth is fine. Orth is fine.

JACK: Can we— I can try and Skype Orth?

AUSTIN: [uncertainly] Sure.

JACK: No, I'm being— I assume he has a communicator, right?

AUSTIN: Ah, no. He's off the grid right now, remember?

JACK: Oh, yeah. He's—

AUSTIN: So no, you can't. Yeah.

JACK: Yeah, okay. Can I try and bring the Kingdom Come in to land between the mechs and Orth?

AUSTIN: Not enough space between them.

JACK: Not enough space. Okay.

AUSTIN: You could land behind him.

JACK: Okay. In that case, I would try to— I'd like to try and land the Kingdom Come behind Orth. [AUSTIN: Okay] That doesn't require a roll, right?

AUSTIN: No, you can just do that.

JACK: And I'm going to get out of the ship and make a run for Orth.

AUSTIN: Okay, let's say— let's keep it kinda bite-sized chunks. [JACK: Mm hmm, sure] You

land— here's this quick scene happening here. She⁵ shoots her lasers, lands - this is Tisiphone - says, "Hey, give me Orth." Keith/Mako on his hover deck slams in to the back Sister Rust's head. Orth goes flying. Tisiphone almost grabs Orth, and then the Megalophile tries to land on her, and so she jumps back and lands. Her friend lands next to her. And then behind Orth, the Kingdom Come lands. And now we're in a real stand-off situation.

ALI: I have an idea?

AUSTIN: What's your idea?

ALI: So Orth got thrown forward, which means he's sort of close to me.

AUSTIN: Yeah. You two are— in the middle is Orth, the knocked-over Sister Rust, Aria, and Mako. But Mako is closer to the Hoplites than anybody else in that middle.

ALI: I am going to have the Brilliance lower its hand so me and Orth can get into it and then go into the cockpit.

AUSTIN: Okay. Give me an Operate check.

ALI: Great. Okay.

AUSTIN: So the reason you're— you can do that, but there's going to be interference. Someone's going to— you know what? You don't need to roll to do that [ALI: Okay], but someone is going to roll to try to stop you from doing that.

ALI: Does my discharge dice get recharged since I'm making them?

AUSTIN: No. It's not a— the dice only recharge when you're rolling to do a thing. [ALI: Okay] And this is a complicated thing with this system, because I'm trying to— I've been trying to figure out what to do in scenarios like this, which is— so another, a similar scenario would be if you wanted to give someone else a positive adjective, but someone else wanted to interfere with that. [ALI: Right] And the way it should work, you could just do this. You could just give— you could just rescue yourself and Orth. But to do that, I have to— the fictional vectors have to line up so that you can do it. And right now, to do it would be to be attacked.

So right now, the situation is there's an ultimatum in place. There's a rules ultimatum which says if you move to do that, then you will be shot at by Tisiphone. So as you start to do that, she's going to shoot at you to try to give you the adjective Pinned Down. If she fails, then you're able to just do it.

⁵ Austin later states that they should be using they/them for Tisiphone.

ALI: Okay. That seems fair.

AUSTIN: I think that makes sense. [ALI: Yeah] Her shoot is 4, and Energy Beam is 5.

ALI: This is a roll.

AUSTIN: Oh oh oh, and she has Destructive. That's the other one. That's a 6.1.

ALI: It sure is.

AUSTIN: And I think— so what's your— I think it's a Move defense probably? Or something else.

ALI: I could have—

AUSTIN: Yeah?

ALI: What could protect us a little better here? I could just— it could be that the Brilliance is reaching for us [AUSTIN: Yeah] and since *they see that, *they shoot at us. And instead, it covers us with its giant hand so at least we're protected.

AUSTIN: So it— so you're not going to be able to get up to a 7 in defense, but you could redirect. You could have the Brilliance take this damage for you, if you want a thing

ALI: Yes. Yes.

AUSTIN: I think that's fair.

ALI: Yeah, this damage that I'm absolutely taking.

AUSTIN: I think it hits. You know Flexible? I think we get rid of— we destroy Flexible as a tag.

ALI: Yeah— how— really?

AUSTIN: I think it's the only thing here that makes sense. Otherwise it's something worse than that. You know? [JACK chuckles] I have to destroy tags. Right?

ALI: Right. You can't destroy parts.

AUSTIN: Right, exactly. It doesn't have Cool Arms or something for me to destroy. [ALI: Yeah] So I'm going to destroy Flexible, which represents the fact that it has—

ALI: I think that works. I think we can say that only the hand is damaged, but because the entire skeleton [AUSTIN: Yeah] isn't intact, the computer [AUSTIN: Yeah] that transmits the signal is now mechanically—

AUSTIN: Yeah. So give Destroyed to your Flexible tag—

ALI: Yikes!

AUSTIN: —which is now a negative adjective for when you're in there, which means you have to start rolling hurt die.

ALI: [uncertainly] Okay.

AUSTIN: But you're able to get him in there.

ALI: Oh, okay. So I still— okay.

AUSTIN: Yeah, yeah. You still—

ALI: I thought that it was just cut out.

AUSTIN: Because of the way we ended up working that out, I think you can still hop in there with him. It's in a bad place, but you kind of took an attack of opportunity doing it, if that makes sense.

ALI: Okay. Okay, yeah. That's fair.

AUSTIN: Mako, what are you doing?

KEITH: I am— so can you tell me what's happening with Jack and the thing again?

AUSTIN: Kingdom Come has landed behind you all.

KEITH: Okay. And where's the ship that fucked it up?

AUSTIN: Still in the sky.

KEITH: Still in the sky?

AUSTIN: Yeah. Yeah, kind of above and in front of you a little bit. And there's another hoplight that's darting around its front as a form of defense.

KEITH: Okay. I want to fog the ship. I want to give it the adjective Grounded, sticky. My Hack is 4. I'm going to use my other die for just my fog abilities. [AUSTIN: Yup] Not a super good roll.

AUSTIN: It is not.

KEITH: It is not.

AUSTIN: It is going to— so there is a— the way this is working is vaguely similar to a thing that's happened before, which that the one that's up there [KEITH: Yeah] is redirecting all Hack attempts through it. The hoplight that's up there is kind of running defense, and it is going to— it's Hack is only 3, so right now you're beating it. But it uses the two tags - sorry, where'd it go? - Linked and Alt Language. Part of the reason that you're not able to get through is that it's not in the common coding language that you're used to fucking around with. [KEITH: Okay] It's in a weird Apostolosian set up.

KEITH: Okay. Well, I wouldn't— I don't think my shit works on a code level, does it?

AUSTIN: Well, it still—

KEITH: I mean, you would still win, because you're defending.

AUSTIN: It would still— I mean, the way that I'm talking about it, though, it's a— actually, I had to discard 2 because I'm up to 5 instead of 4. Because if I only went up to 4, you'd still win because you had two 4s.

KEITH: Oh, okay.

AUSTIN: So it would be 4.1. But your tactic knows how to Hack into riggers and Divines. That's what it was built to do. Do you know what I mean?

KEITH: Yeah yeah yeah.

AUSTIN: Which, when I say Alternate Language, you can think about it in a billion different ways. It's just that the tag that I set up for these and a few other things in the universe to represent that Hacking across cultures is actually tough [KEITH: Okay] because— maybe it's not just language, it's the way the thing—

KEITH: The way that I— somehow the way that I'm interacting with things, it feels differently than I'm used to.

AUSTIN: Exactly. It's a little alien. You can do it. You almost do it. You almost do it. [KEITH Right] At the very least, you've wrapped up this guy for the moment. Right? I don't have those push dice right now. [KEITH: Yeah] So you try to Hack in. And you notice that the remaining

hoplight has intercepted you. You kind of see— I don't know, what's it look like when you try to fog things? What's it feel like when you try to fog things?

KEITH: I guess— okay, so it's the feeling of a video game controller vibrating when you're doing a [AUSTIN: Okay] door unlocking mini game.

AUSTIN: Okay. Sure.

KEITH: Like in Thief. And then you're just, "Ah, I just gotta get the vibration in the right spot."

AUSTIN: Totally.

KEITH: You gotta— yeah.

AUSTIN: So in this case, the thing is you're expecting it to vibrate to the way all these things always vibrate [KEITH: Yeah] and it's vibrating in a different part of your head. And also, there's a weird sound mechanic you can't wrap your head around. [KEITH: Right] Like, "Oh wait, do I have to go when it makes the weird clink sound, or does that mean I've already gone?" It's like picking up a new lockpicking game in a new game for the first time.

KEITH: Right. Yeah.

AUSTIN: You know you can get there eventually, but you're not quite there yet. Jack, AuDy wanted to go— at this point, AuDy, you don't want to go pick up Orth. Because not Orth is on—

JACK: Orth's in the Regent's Brilliance, right?

AUSTIN: Brilliance, yeah.

ALI: Oh, sorry, Jack.

JACK: Oh no no no. It's fine. Where is Sister Rust?

AUSTIN: Sister Rust is flat on her face in the dust, in the dirt.

JACK: Is she unconscious?

AUSTIN: Yes.

JACK: All right. Okay. Do we want to kidnap her?

AUSTIN: You're bad people! [ALI makes a confused noise]

JACK: She's kidnapped— okay, hang a second. [AUSTIN: Uh huh] Her and the Iron Choir have taken out a major guy—

AUSTIN: That's fair.

JACK: Even if we can't extract any useful information from her, we could claim a bounty on her.

AUSTIN: I just like that you said "kidnap" and not "capture" or "arrest".

JACK: Oh, we're very— we're kidnapping. [laughs]

[1:10:04]

AUSTIN: Right. That's what I mean.

KEITH: You know what? I like this bounty thing. I like ransoming her.

AUSTIN: That's still not a bounty. Ransoming is, again, a bad person's word. [ALI giggles] You don't— okay.

[simultaneously]

ART: Yeah. We're hoping she's wanted by law enforcement--

KEITH: No, a ransoming is just a self-imposed bounty.

ART: —and not that her family wants her back.

AUSTIN: [laughing] Right.

ALI: Either way, though, we're all about the creds.

AUSTIN: God.

JACK: Okay, so I'm going to leave the Kingdom Come, and I'm going to approach Sister—

AUSTIN: You could, yes. You could just totally grab her.

JACK: I'm just going to— oh, okay. So I'm going to basically put Sister Rust in the [laughs] remember when we kidnapped that—

AUSTIN: So you land, you get out of the ship.

JACK: And I just go and pick— yes, so—

AUSTIN: You're running towards this group. Aria's— the Brilliance lands, blocks the shot. From the outside, it would look like AuDy is going to pick up Orth at first. And then Orth is safe, but AuDy is still sprinting [JACK laughs] and grabs this knocked-out religious figure and drags her back into— over its shoulder, back into the Kingdom Come.

JACK: Yep. Oh yeah.

AUSTIN: Cool.

JACK: Remember when we kidnapped the last guy—

AUSTIN: I do remember.

JACK: —and Cass and Mako were both accidentally were bad cop simultaneously? [ALI giggles]

AUSTIN: I recall.

JACK: I have a feeling we've probably built a brig. [laughter from ALI]

AUSTIN: I think you have— you had figured out how to tie that guy up. She's not going to— she can't. She's knocked out right now. So I think—

JACK: That's unlikely, though.

AUSTIN: —you can transfer or you can shift— right now, she has Laid Out. You can just give her Restrained or something instead.

JACK: Mm hmm. Yeah, cool. Okay.

AUSTIN: And then trade those.

[simultaneously]

KEITH: Lateral adjectives?

JACK: So I'm gonna make sure she's restrained.

AUSTIN: Yeah, yeah.

JACK: And then I guess I'm just going to take position on the field with the pals? [AUSTIN: Okay] With the villainous pals.

KEITH: I like this ransom idea, because I'm a little bit in the hole. [ALI laughs]

AUSTIN: [drily] You don't say.

JACK: Hey! Hey!

ART: It's not ransom. We have to stop saying ransom. We're the good guys.

[simultaneously]

KEITH: Are we?

ALI: [laughing] Are we?

AUSTIN: I'm not sure. I'm not sure.

KEITH: Who says we're the good guys?

AUSTIN: I'm not sure. Well, you know. Counterweight's Angels have been running those—

ART: Well, so there's— so we've got everything we want. The only problem right now is that there's people trying to kill us for it, right?

AUSTIN: Right. Speaking of. One of them

ART: Oh, wait.

AUSTIN: Oh, you have a thing?

ART: I mean, I guess you can go first.

AUSTIN: What's your thing?

ART: I was going to fight these guys. Right? We gotta fight these guys.

AUSTIN: You gotta, but I feel like one of them needs to respond to Aria loading Orth into the Brilliance first. [ART: Sure] And it does it— so again, so one of them has shot forward, Queen's Brilliance blocks the shot, AuDy grabs Sister Rust and runs her back in. And the one that is shooting at you— and I'm going to say the Brilliance is dodging out of the way and getting hit a little bit. It's where it loses the Flexible thing. The other one? The other hoplight puts its wings up. It looks like it's about to take off, it looks like it's about to charge forward into you, and then it just sinks into the sand super quickly.

JACK: Ohhh dear. [distressed noise from ALI]

AUSTIN: And then the whole ground shakes out from under you, and then it pops back up, trying to tackle the Queen's Brilliance from below through the sand.

JACK: It used Dig?

AUSTIN: Yeah, it used Dig. It has a tunneler system.

[simultaneously]

JACK: Oh my god, adjective are so cool!

KEITH: So all our moves are going to have missed for a full turn.

AUSTIN: For a full turn.

KEITH: For one full turn! This is worse than the solar beam.

AUSTIN: Is the worst. Is this— this is an Operate check, I think. Maybe it's not? Wait wait wait. One second. One second. I'm going to say this is Fight. Fight uses mech limbs. So this is Alekto, who has Unceasing, so it's kind of a rapid flurry of attacks. I think they're piloting this almost like— there's almost something dolphin-like about this, where it's a series of attacks. Dipping down into the sand dunes, popping up for quick hit, over and over again. You know what I mean? It's swooping down into the sand like it's ocean, popping up and throwing a punch, and then diving back down.

ALI: Oh, so it's just trying to beat me? Or it is trying to—

AUSTIN: It's trying to—

ALI: Did you say tackle before?

AUSTIN: I did say tackle, but I realized they have Unceasing. I was like, "Oh yeah, it makes more sense." Quick— it's quick melee attacks using the claw hand [ALI: Okay] diving in and out of the sand dunes. [ALI: Okay] Yeah, so let's use Unceasing. Let's use the tunneler. This is on the Brilliance. And Fight for Alekto is 4. So that's 6-6.

ALI: And I'm defending with?

AUSTIN: You could defend with— yeah, I think either Fight or Operate, probably?

ALI: Okay. I think either— I have a 2 in Operate, so there's no way this is—

AUSTIN: And Fight is probably also not great?

ALI: Fight is a 1.

AUSTIN: Okay.

KEITH: Good luck, Ali!

AUSTIN: They are giving you ho. You know what? Who needs dice? Who needs 'em? Finally, after a series of heavy punches with the claw, Alekto grabs onto the back of the Brilliance, clamps down and pulls off the jetpack, tossing it into the air, where it explodes.

ALI: [softly] Fuck you. [giggles]

JACK: Okay, so—

AUSTIN: Ali, though— listen, you have 5 push die. That's a lot of push die!

ALI: I don't have anything to do with them!

JACK: The other thing is, earlier when Austin was explaining this rule change, he used as an example the Brilliance's jetpack breaking.

AUSTIN: I did.

JACK: "Oh, by the way—"

KEITH: Wait, sorry. What was the rule change? I missed a rule change?

AUSTIN: Yeah, you missed a rule change. This was before we started playing, which is— as written, the Disabled and Destroyed tags don't produce any hurt dice, which means getting hurt in a mech or in a vehicle at all doesn't really matter. [KEITH: Right] Your dice don't affect— that being Disabled limits your ability only to do things directly with those, whereas any time a robot loses its jetpack in an anime, that's a big fucking deal. That hurts the mech's ability to do shit, in the same way that losing your cyber arm and getting Disarmed or something would hurt your ability to do everything else in this game. I wanted to make sure this has a feeling of— I wanted this to still feel like there was some hurt happening when your stuff gets ruined. [KEITH: Right] It's not as bad as you getting hurt. You don't have to have brain surgery to save your robot now, there's no chance of you getting something really terrible.

KEITH: Right. Just get a new jetpack.

AUSTIN: It just costs you.

KEITH: But until then—

AUSTIN: Right. Until then, you don't have that jetpack. And also you're rolling hurt dice when using that mech [KEITH: Okay] because it's also been designed to be used with a jetpack. Right? That's how it's been used.

ALI: Right, yeah. When you had given this rule, I was like, "Oh, it opens us up for the possibilities of the scene where Lieutenant Burning dies in 0080." [AUSTIN: Totally] Where this one thing in his robot was fucked up that isn't related [AUSTIN: Exactly] to why he died, but because that thing was wrong, his shit just blew up.

AUSTIN: Yes. Exactly. So it opens you up to shit breaking. So it sounded, though, like Cass had a thing.

ART: Yeah. I might be changing my mind. So I'm going to use my— I'm going to shoot missiles. I think that's my—

AUSTIN: Okay. That's a good move.

ALI: Yeah.

KEITH: Are you going to target multiple things? Are you going to take out a specific hoplight?

ART: I think I'm going to try and hit all three of them. [AUSTIN: Okay] So I'm using Missile. I've reassigned my— I can't hit all of them.

AUSTIN: You can. You can, you can.

KEITH: Yeah. It's just 1 push dice to hit all of them. 1 extra.

ART: All right. I'll use 1 die to hit all three.

AUSTIN: Okay. With your cool Missile battery.

ART: Using my Shoot of 2. I'm bad at everything, guys.

KEITH: Do you want to add another— you could add another die.

AUSTIN: Right. Add one for the Missile battery.

ART: So I'm rolling 3.

KEITH: Yeah. Good luck, man.

ART: Thanks. There's a 6 there.

AUSTIN: Hey, there's a 6. That's good. And I don't have push dice to defend. That hits all of them. [KEITH: Nice!] They each get slammed with missiles. What tag are you giving at the lowest end, and are you making any of them sticky or locked? You have—

KEITH: I have a question. Because he targeted all of them, is it 1 dice per sticky?

AUSTIN: No.

KEITH: Or 1 die for all sticky?

AUSTIN: It's 1 per. It still counts as 1 per to make it stick. [KEITH: Okay] They each have an armor, so you could disable the armor on two of them if you gave me 2 of your push die. Or you could destroy the armor on one of them with the same thing. Although destroy versus disable is not a big deal during any single given scene.

ART: Sure. Yeah, I guess I'm trying to give them— what do missiles do? Because Blown Up isn't a—

KEITH: Explode.

AUSTIN: Whatever you try to do, the armor's gonna soak it. [ART: All right] So the thing to do here is either destroy or disable their armor.

ART: All right, I will disable two armors. And I do that by moving these dice down to here? Or to here?

AUSTIN: Yeah. To my red. Yeah, you got it. So I have 2 now. Which two are you aiming at--er, which two do you want to disable?

ART: The lead lady and the digger.

AUSTIN: And I'll give— you can give the other one something fleeting, I think. But it's fleeting, which means it just takes a single action to remove it, for them. You can give them something like—

ART: Distracted? Hassled? Hassled.

AUSTIN: Hassled. Hassled! I like Hassled.

[1:20:00]

JACK: Hassled is a very the Kingdom Come adjective.

AUSTIN: Okay. Disable armor. Hassled and disabled armor. And Hassled is on the one that was blocking Mako's ability to try to—

KEITH: Yeah.

JACK: Ah, cool.

AUSTIN: So that's pretty good. Who should be next? Who wants to go? Who has a thing?

KEITH: I've got kind of a thing.

AUSTIN: What's your thing, Mako?

KEITH: I want to try to fog the Hassled Hoplite.

AUSTIN: Sure. Sounds good.

KEITH: And I want to try to give it a sticky adjective of Controlled.

AUSTIN: Ooo. Okay. [KEITH: Yeah] That's good.

KEITH: So that's going to be 5d6.

AUSTIN: That's a 6. You don't have any hurt die, right?

KEITH: No hurt die.

AUSTIN: All right, that is a 6. That is, I think, going to be better than— yeah. Okay. Yeah, give it Controlled.

KEITH: Awesome. It is now Controlled, and you get this guy.

AUSTIN: Okay. That is a good one. Again, so that's— you're using your weird brain stuff, and it just clicks into place finally. [KEITH: Yeah] Maybe it feels like [laughs] here's the way I'm kind of imagining it in terms of feeling. It feels like you're trying to break into the main door for the ship, and then you're— you can't quite reach it. Right? And then you realize, "Oh, there's kind of a screen door between me and the main ship." And you just open the screen door. [KEITH and JACK laugh] That's what it feels like to hack this thing. So yeah. Now you have Controlled over Megaera's Hoplite.

The one who— Tisiphone, the Hoplite who had been shooting at everyone, turn their attention to the Megalophile. And she opens her comms— er, they open their comms. I've been imagining this character with very feminine features, and it's very hard to keep the Apostolosian "they" in my head because of it, which is one of the tricky things of trying to do gender right in a weird space alien race, you know? So apologies. They target the Megalophile with their laser cannon, and I think just begin to unload. The Hoplite puts the— almost clamps down. I guess you can't really clamp down into sand. But takes a wide stance so that they can get some stability as the other Hoplite is fucking diving in and out of the sand dunes. And just levels the laser cannon at you and starts firing at Cass's mech.

Let's give it a attack here. Their shoot is 4 plus Destructive plus Energy Beam arm. Oh, you know what though? It's funnier if it's not the Energy Beam arm. Your missiles hit and knock it back, destroying some armor, and then its missile pods come down and take target at you. [JACK chuckles] And it's kind of a "two can play at that game" thing. And in fact—

JACK: Like an Iron Man-style—

AUSTIN: Yeah. It's going to now discharge a third one to do exactly what you did and target the Megalophile, the Brilliance, and The Kingdom Come with missiles. [ALI moans in distress]

ART: It's fine! Don't worry. What are you worried about?

ALI: [giggling] So many things!

AUSTIN: That's a 6. That's a 6.

JACK: Aaaaaa!

AUSTIN: For 5.1, but a 6. So you could defend that with a bunch of different things.

KEITH: Wait, don't you have to roll hurt die now?

AUSTIN: No, because it's just their armor that was ruined. Armor doesn't count as an aid.

KEITH: Oh, okay.

AUSTIN: That was part of the rule thing that we figured out. It's kind of like, "Oh, the super benefit of armor is it gives you an extra hit before you have to start dealing with hurt die."

[KEITH: Yeah]

ALI: But once hurt die come into play, it's like—

AUSTIN: Things can take a tumble.

[simultaneously]

ALI: Yes. You're hurt.

AUSTIN: Cass, you still have armor, right?

ART: I still have 2 armor!

AUSTIN: Look at that! You can just soak this.

ART: I plan to.

AUSTIN: I'll give you that, because that's a Disabled armor. Actually, unless you can defend it.

ART: I cannot.

AUSTIN: Okay. Hooo, Kingdom Come, how's that looking?

JACK: Well, you know all my armor that I don't have? [AUSTIN: Uh huh] I don't have it.

AUSTIN: And your operate score isn't a 6? No?

JACK: No, sir.

AUSTIN: What is your Operate score?

JACK: It is a—

KEITH: 2?

JACK: I think it's 2.

AUSTIN: It is a 2. It is a 2.

JACK: Yep. It's a 2.

AUSTIN: Okay. That's low. It's not as high as it could be.

KEITH: No. It's not nearly.

AUSTIN: Here's another die for you, then.

KEITH: Ali can nearly defend from this, too.

ALI: Can I?

KEITH: You can, I think.

AUSTIN: And AuDy, the— oh, how bad is it? How bad is it? Let me— mmm.

KEITH: Ali, at least it's not just you and me now.

AUSTIN: Oh, you still have a third way to move. You also have Hover. I didn't realize you have a Hover thing.

JACK: Oh, I do!

AUSTIN: Maybe we should get rid of Hover. Maybe we should rename Hover Speaker, maybe that's where you can have your Speaker.

JACK: Could I just trade it?

AUSTIN: Because Rotor Fans instead of— Rotor Fans and Hover are both doing the same thing. Right?

KEITH: Well, I'll say this. It sounds like it's a good backup for when you destroy one of those two. [AUSTIN laughs] When you're about to do that.

AUSTIN: That is true. I'm not making you do that, I want to make sure.

JACK: No, I would like— that's a change I would like to make. I feel that the Kingdom Come should have a Speaker.

AUSTIN: Yeah. I think it disables your Burst Cannons.

JACK: Great, because the next move that I was going to make was I was going to open fire. So now [ALI chuckles] I'm going to not do that.

AUSTIN: You can still— there's other things you could do.

JACK: Kingdom Come has no other weapons, other than—

AUSTIN: It has Huge.

JACK: Yeah, that's what I was thinking was the other one. And it's already— I mean, how much worse can it get?

AUSTIN: Exactly. And in fact—

JACK: [laughing] The answer is: very.

AUSTIN: —I think it's bigger than the Athenian ship, because the Athenian ship does not have Huge.

JACK: Oh, okay.

AUSTIN: So it can really do some damage there.

KEITH: Yeah, why not have two cannonballs in one game?

AUSTIN: And then the Brilliance— yeah, exactly.

ALI: Hi! Hey, hi.

AUSTIN: Your armor's fucked, right?

ALI: I don't have any armor.

KEITH: Hold on, but you can defend against this.

AUSTIN: Oh. Oh!

ALI: I have 3 Move, and I guess I can bring that up. How would I defend against this?

KEITH: No, bring it up to 6 with your 3 die.

AUSTIN: You mean Operate. This is Operate, not Move.

KEITH: Okay. Well, then you've got 4 dice.

AUSTIN: You do have 4 dice. That is true. All right, let's— you can do this. I believe in you. You could use Energetic. You're just moving right now. [ALI: Right, yeah] This is just like you're going everywhere. You use Savvy because you're knowledgeable enough to know, "Boys, sit down. I have to defend us." [ALI and JACK laugh]

KEITH: That's the one that sounds like Energetic.

AUSTIN: Both of those. And then the first thing you do is turn on your defense computer.

ALI: Right. Yeah, yeah.

AUSTIN: So that's 2. 3 is ... [ALI sighs]

KEITH: 3 is you got thrusters to move out of the way, kinda?

AUSTIN: No. Jetpack's destroyed.

ALI: No, those are taken.

KEITH: Jetpack's destroyed.

ALI: And I should notice—

KEITH: Flexible's destroyed.

AUSTIN: Flexible's destroyed.

ALI: I should note that's destroyed

AUSTIN: You could use the head vulcans to shoot down some of the incoming missiles. That's a cool look.

ALI: I was going to do— I was going to do that or use my beam saber for it.

AUSTIN: Both of those are good, though I also think that might shift you into Fight or Shoot territory.

ALI: Okay.

KEITH: You've got Allure. You can flirt with the missiles.

AUSTIN: You could flirt the missiles down.

JACK: No, that's Undertale.

AUSTIN: Oh, okay. You're right. You're right, you're right. Oh, you might not have it. You might not have it. One, two—

KEITH: Hold on.

AUSTIN: What's your—

KEITH: Hold on.

AUSTIN: Operate is 2, you need to get up to 6. You have the dice for it, you just might not have—

ALI: Whoa whoa, wait. Can I use Nerve Linked—

AUSTIN: Totally.

ALI: —to do that, "my body is in a better place than my robot is"? So the robot [can move?] better?

AUSTIN: Well, it's just about— it's just about— yeah, yeah. Totally. Yes.

ALI: No.

AUSTIN: Yes.

ALI: Okay. [laughs]

AUSTIN: Yeah, yeah. I see what you're saying. Yes. [ALI: Yeah] It doesn't— you're not using the joysticks, you're completely Nerve Linked into it. So totally [ALI: Yeah] that works.

ALI: So I'm just discharging 3 of these dice?

AUSTIN: You would need one more of those, still. Right?

ALI: Do I?

[simultaneously]

KEITH: That Nerve Linked sounds good.

AUSTIN: So what do you have?

AUSTIN: Nerve Linked—

KEITH: No, you've got Energetic,

AUSTIN: Oh yeah. You're right. You're right.

KEITH: —Savvy.

ALI: Yeah. So that's one, two, three. Yeah. So I just defend.

AUSTIN: I think this is like a cool anime face cut-in to you of you getting serious. Do you know what I mean? [ALI: Yes] This is definitely your Newtype flash moment. [ALI giggles] This is definitely the [light chiming sound]. You totally tuned in to this moment. [ALI: Yeah] Are you just dodging through the swarm of missiles as they twirl towards you in the night?

ALI: Yeah. I think I just sort of will myself out of them. They're coming towards me, and I can't do any of the cool flight stuff [AUSTIN: Yeah] with my robot. But I've been using it for years, and also I have the sort of relationship with it where even if it's just kind of hopping on its toes, I can move it in such a way that I don't need my jetpack for it.

AUSTIN: It's one of these things where it's just the slightest movement lets you get out of the way.

ALI: Right. Yeah, exactly.

AUSTIN: All right. So that is what this character does.

ALI: I fucking did it.

AUSTIN: Good job! You dodged. What do you do after you dodge these missiles?

ALI: All right. If we can't leave, and we can't— we could fight them, but that's tough. Should we be trying to make them stand down? [JACK snorts] We're past that, right?

JACK: [laughing] I have a feeling we're probably— [ALI laughs]

AUSTIN: I don't know. You tell me.

ART: It's a little weird that Orth can't stop this. Right? We're both here trying to get his money.

AUSTIN: No one's talked to Orth yet.

ART: It's weird that he has to declare who the winner is.

AUSTIN: And no, I told you already— he did not— they are not on his list.

ART: Yeah. But—

KEITH: Is he— is he bound or something? Why hasn't he done anything? Is he just sitting on the ground?

[1:30:17]

AUSTIN: Because he's been kidnapped and beat the shit out of him, and now you just rescued him and—

ALI: Yeah, he's in my cockpit. But I am so in the zone right now that even if he is saying anything, I am not listening to him. [laughs]

JACK: I can try and contact him. I have a mic. [KEITH giggles]

AUSTIN: You're going to call in to the Brilliance?

JACK: Yeah.

AUSTIN: Totally.

JACK (as AuDy): Orth?

AUSTIN (as Orth): AuDy, is that you?

JACK (as AuDy): Yep.

AUSTIN (as Orth): You gotta get us outta here. This is a bad scene.

JACK (as AuDy): This is not a very good situation. Do you have any advice?

AUSTIN (as Orth): I'm not really sure what the strategic situation is on the ground right now. I'm paying you to get me out of here. Get me out of here!

JACK (as AuDy): Why do these people have an interest in you?

AUSTIN (as Orth): I'm not sure, AuDy!

JACK (as AuDy): Okay, okay.

AUSTIN (as Orth): [ranting a little] To be honest, I prefer them to the cultists that had me before, but I would prefer more than that to be home at Centralia at my office. Let's go!

JACK (as AuDy): Orth's useless.

JACK: I say, and I end the call.

AUSTIN: Good.

ALI: So this game works by applying adjectives.

AUSTIN: It does. [ART laughs]

ALI: So I feel like I don't have a lot of action to attack people here, and that opens myself up to stuff. I have all these dice.

AUSTIN: A ton of die. You really do.

ALI: I feel like— yeah.

AUSTIN: There are things you can still do. Think outside of the box of punching and kicking.
[ALI: Right, yeah] I mean, you still have weapons. You totally could still—

ALI: No. Yeah, because I was— I have all of my weapons, but I don't have— well, actually, I guess I could use those dice to defend. And that's the point of them. So I should start fighting.

AUSTIN: That's true.

ALI: What I was going to do was try to do another Audio Kit thing to get people distracted or annoyed.

AUSTIN: You could totally do that.

ALI: Yeah?

AUSTIN: Though at this point, there is a question of are you trying to get away? Are you trying to— what are you— what's the plan with Orth?

ALI: Right. I would like to get away, but I don't want to— I guess I could leave the team.
[AUSTIN: Right] And I would get followed, regardless.

AUSTIN: Yeah, but then they would have to turn their backs on the team. Maybe that's a thing. Right?

ALI: Yeah. Okay, yeah.

AUSTIN: Maybe you could use something here to give them something about their backs being to the enemy. I think just, again, Distracted would be fine or—

ART: Defenceless?

AUSTIN: Defenceless totally would be great.

ART: Eh? Eh?

ALI: Eh haha. Okay, I play this—

AUSTIN: Though I do want to say that there are noncombat solutions to this encounter. I just want to make that explicitly clear.

ALI: So yeah. I feel like I open the comm links to Cass— or to everyone, probably. And just be like,

ALI (as Aria): Listen, I gotta at least try to go. You guys do what you can.

ALI: And then, god—

ART (as Cass): All right.

ALI: Do I just start running? No. I can't— that would be too silly. And also not—

AUSTIN: I mean, why not? That might—

JACK: Just powering through the Starlight Strait. [ALI giggles]

AUSTIN: Just running down the trench of it? That would—

ART: Yeah, that's pretty cool!

AUSTIN: That's pretty fucking cool.

ALI: Yeah. So that's— it's a lowered thing, right? So—

AUSTIN: Yeah, it's a lowered pit. It's a trench.

ALI: —I would be kind of protected if I just—

AUSTIN: I like that a lot.

ALI: Yeah.

JACK: And this is when the song with vocals starts playing.

AUSTIN: Yes.

ART: Also you should be doing that Armored Core-style sliding down the rails.

[simultaneously]

ALI: Yes.

AUSTIN: Yes.

AUSTIN: Totally. [to himself] I should play Armored Core. [softly] Fuck!

ART: There should be more Armored Core to play.

AUSTIN: [dejectedly] I agree. All right. So give me— how are you doing distraction type stuff?

ALI: Yeah, I think that this move is sort of different from that initial thought, unless— oh no no no. I could do the fireworks thing again [AUSTIN: Yeah, totally] where [laughs]

AUSTIN: Fireworks and music starts playing.

ALI: So I— which of the Hoplites is the biggest threat to me?

AUSTIN: One that probably tore your jetpack off [ALI: Okay] which is the one piloted by Megaera.

ALI: Is that still under the ground?

AUSTIN: No, it's out of the ground right this second.

ALI: Okay, so what I do is that the Regent's hand points at it with one finger extended like it's holding a gun. [AUSTIN: Yeah] And it pulls the invisible trigger, and the fireworks shoot out of the head vulcans. [AUSTIN: Yep] And there's just this horrible flash of light and sound. And then while that is happening, I just slide close to the ground into the trench, and just try to run.

AUSTIN: Do you want to— remember, you have all these dice. You might want to just do it to multiple people. So yeah.

ALI: Yeah. No, yeah. Yeah, I'm going to put the adjective on everyone, but I think it's just really funny [AUSTIN: Yes] that it looks like she was attacking that one guy. [laughs] What's— is Defenceless the thing here?

AUSTIN: Defenceless feels too strong. It does. [ALI: Yeah] I mean, you're basically taunting. Right? So maybe—

ART: Irked?

AUSTIN: Irked isn't bad.

ALI: Well, it's a taunt in two ways.

KEITH: Irked doesn't seem strong enough.

ALI: In that I'm not taunting them to annoy them, I'm taunting them—

KEITH: Oh, Baited.

ALI: —to think this horrible attack is happening, and then I am— I'm creating a distraction for myself.

KEITH: Baited.

AUSTIN: Baited is—

JACK: Bamboozled.

AUSTIN: Do you want them to chase you, or do you want them to not chase you? That's the thing.

ALI: Yeah. No, yeah. So the thing is, I want them to basically sort of think that the fireworks are an attack. [AUSTIN: Oh, okay] So they'll be like, "Oh shit!" And then while they're reacting to that, I get to run away. And then because I'm in a trench, they won't know where I went.

AUSTIN: Ahhh! Ooo.

ALI: That's what I mean. Yes.

AUSTIN: I see. I see, I see, I see. Let's get— that is something different, then. That is not just—

JACK: Tricked?

AUSTIN: Tricked isn't bad.

KEITH: Duped?

AUSTIN: Duped is good.

ALI: Duped is good, yes. Okay.

AUSTIN: Let's see if you can do it.

ART: Wait, Bamboozled? Can we do Bamboozled?

AUSTIN: We can do Bamboozled.

JACK: I suggested that!

AUSTIN: We could do Hoodwinked.

ART: Hoodwinked? [ALI and KEITH laugh] Welcome to Friends at the Table, an actual-play homage to The Autobiography of Malcolm X.

AUSTIN: Run Amok? Led Astray? All right. I think it's Coax.

ALI: That's fine. I'm pretty good—

AUSTIN: I think it's Coax plus head vulcans plus Speaker Show. Speaker Kit? Speaker Box? Audio Kit?

ALI: Plus the love below? No. Plus Savvy? [AUSTIN: Yeah, totally] Yeah. Okay, so that's a lot.

AUSTIN: And then plus 1 for it being against everybody. Listen, you might want to figure out a way to use the last one, just because. Right? [JACK laughs] Because remember, you have to role hurt die here, too, and that's going to be risky.

ALI: Oh, okay. Um—

AUSTIN: So maybe—

ALI: Could— I don't know if Alluring could work.

AUSTIN: Alluring. Alluring, you could make a case.

ALI: I can make a case for Alluring with that moment that I described with her [AUSTIN: Yes] pointing the hand. It's like, "Oh, what weapon does she have in her weird—"

AUSTIN: Oh, does she say something? Do you have a thing that— do you open all your comms and give a shout of a thing?

KEITH: "Better watch out, because this is real and strong!"

AUSTIN: Is this another "the bells are ringing" moment?

ALI: She's just going to say, "This ends here."

AUSTIN: Right. Good. Totally.

ALI: So they're all like, "Oh well, okay."

AUSTIN: Alluring, boom. All right. So your Coax is 3?

ALI: Yeah.

AUSTIN: 4, 5, 6. Roll 7d6.

ALI: Okay.

JACK: They're all going to be 1s.

ALI: Okay, I got a 6.2?

AUSTIN: I think it just turns out to be 6.1, because they'll never have over a 6. [ALI: Okay] So that's good, but now you have to roll hurt die. You have 1, 2d6 I think? You don't have any other negatives, right?

ALI: Ah, no.

AUSTIN: You have Flexible broken, Jetpack is broken, and that's it? And armor, but whatever.

ALI: Yeah, armor doesn't count. Okay. Armor doesn't count.

AUSTIN: 2d6.

ALI: Oh my god, if there's a 6 in here, what am I going to do?

AUSTIN: You have a 5.

ALI: Oh, I have the 5.

AUSTIN: As long as it's not a 5 and 6.

KEITH: Yeah, you have to roll a 5 and 6 now to really be—

AUSTIN: Fucked.

KEITH: —I don't want to say.

AUSTIN: There's a 6! Hoo.

ALI: No, but I have the 5! I have the 5! It's okay! [nervous laughter]

AUSTIN: So let's see. This is definitely—

ALI: It's a 6 and a 4, for the listeners.

AUSTIN: Kimon Tell's Coax is 2. Beaten. Alekto's Coax is 1. Beaten. [ALI giggles nervously]
Tisiphone's Coax is 1. Beaten. Megaera's Coax is 3, which is still beaten. Or you have a 5?

KEITH: Yeah, a 5.

AUSTIN: Okay, I can't even spend out— I only have 1 push die left. So yeah, they're all taken in. I think they all go into intense defensive mode. Yeah. The one that's been diving dives under the ground, just digs. It's like, "Ah okay, I'll be safe underground!" The one that's been Controlled just locks up and falls from the sky [KEITH: Ha ha ha ha!] down. And is just like, "Wah?" [panicked sounds] because the pilot had been trying to get control again, couldn't really do that, and then like, "Oh, I have to defend!" [panicked sounds]. Falls to the ground. And Alekto starts shooting at you as you fly away. Their natural response to you threatening was just, "No!" Fire - fire - fire - fire. [ALI laughs] And just lasers are in the air. Bolts of lasers are in the air all around you, and then they get blinded. And then you're gone. So Duped.

And now you have made it to the trench, where you start to run away.

ALI: Nice!

AUSTIN: I'm torn, because we could just end this episode here, and I could give you a little something. This could be an escape route for all of you, if you wanted. And maybe you should want it.

JACK: Do we want to be out of the desert?

ART: Even the Kingdom Come?

AUSTIN: Even the— well, the Kingdom Come could— even the Kingdom Come.

JACK: [dubious] Mmm.

ART: Just slowly hover down the trench?

KEITH: It sounds like— hold on, it sounds like you're making a concession.

AUSTIN: I'm making a concession because they would go chasing the Brilliance here. That's their target. [KEITH: Right] So this could be a situation where the Brilliance is getting away, and the rest of you could limp in a different direction to survive. I think at the point at which the Brilliance gets away, Orth reopens the comms and says,

AUSTIN (as Orth): The Choir took the shipment. They took everything! Get me out of here. But I don't know what we're going to do about these people.

[1:41:01]

KEITH: [laughing] I don't think they were bad guys. I think they—

AUSTIN: Lots of people weren't bad guys in the situation. I think let's just—

KEITH: Yeah, I feel like they were just trying to get the food back so that no one would blame them.

AUSTIN: So yeah. I think this is a situation where maybe half of you get down to— I'm going to move you back over to this map, and then we'll wrap up. Half of you get to Metta, to Dome 3. The rest of you get to Dome 7. You got Orth out.

The Apostolosians, the Netted Wave want Orth. And they could still— there are reasons for that. But also there were motivations here that weren't necessarily clear. [KEITH: Yeah] Which kind of get clarified the next night. I'm going to paint just one last picture, and then we'll wrap. Orth is safely returned. You're at— what was the name of that coffee shop that we invented?

ALI: Constellation?

AUSTIN: Constellation, yeah, which is a great name. Aria, I think—

KEITH: Central Perk?

AUSTIN: Right, Central Perk. Central Constellation. You are seated at Constellation, and you're supposed to meet with Jamil as just like a, "Wow, I can't believe that all happened."

ALI: Oh yeah. I was actually— my thing was going to be— the moment I got to talk to Orth was going to be like, "Tell me everything you know about Netted Wave so I can tell my friend about it." [AUSTIN: Totally] So maybe I just organize a meeting between them?

AUSTIN: Totally.

ALI: Okay.

AUSTIN: And when Jamil comes in to sit down with the three of you— er, with the two of you—

[MUSIC starts - "The Long Way Around"]

—the ding-dong of— there's kind of a subway tone plays, and the screen turns on. All the screens in the Constellation turn on, and it's another message from Counterweight's Angels. And it's images of you fighting off the Netted Wave. And it says, "Security group The Chime successfully defeated foreign terrorists and recovered the food that the people of Counterweight so desperately needed."

ALI: And the Choir.

AUSTIN: Yeah.

ART: Well, that's a weird lie.

AUSTIN: Yeah. Uh huh. We'll end on one little other thing, which is you get a call from Koda, Cass.

ART: Yeah?

AUSTIN: And they don't look pleased.

ART: Why?

AUSTIN: Let's end it there. We'll figure that out in the future.

[MUSIC ends - "The Long Way Around"]

KEITH: Oh, Koda's not pleased that you went to war with an Apostillian group? Apotoly, Apostolian group?

AUSTIN: There you go. Close enough. Yeah. Very complicated stuff.

[simultaneously]

KEITH: War is—

ART: War is such a strong word for what that was. [ALI giggles]

AUSTIN: That was a skirmish. That was a skirmish. Everyone had the best— a lot of different people had different interests. The Iron Choir—

KEITH: Yeah. No no no, I mean—

AUSTIN: —did not have a good thing in mind. I will tell you that much. The Iron Choir was not being noble there. They wanted food because they're hungry. But yeah. Apostolosian, the Netted Wave was trying to do the right thing.

KEITH: Yeah. Well, only—

AUSTIN: In fact—

KEITH: I can't remember who. One of us lied to them. [laughs] They got mad.

ALI: It was Jack. For some reason. [laughs as KEITH cracks up]

AUSTIN: I'll just give it to you, which is the thing Koda is pissed about is that— Koda turned on the TV and it said that your group fed everybody, when in fact the Netted Wave finally recovered that food and got it back to the domes. And—

ALI (as Aria): Oh, thanks guys.

AUSTIN (as Koda): What the fuck, Cass!

KEITH (as Mako): Oh, they gave us credit for that? That's nice.

AUSTIN (as Koda): They didn't give you credit for shit! The weird group that put y'all on—

JACK: Space Banksy gave us credit.

AUSTIN: Right. Space Banksy [ALI cracks up loudly]--

KEITH: That's who I meant, Space Banksy.

AUSTIN: That's totally it. Space Banksy. [ALI is still cracking up]

JACK: Ah, I hate Space Banksy. [ALI is still cracking up]

ART: We'll deal with it next time. But mistakes were made.

ALI: [gasping for breath after laughing so hard] I'm sorry, Sylvia⁶. [cracks up again]

AUSTIN: Wow. So loud.

ALI: That's fine.

KEITH: I really want to see his play on Aria's amusement park. [ALI claps and screams a little]

AUSTIN: Yeah.

KEITH: I really want to see how he can knock them down a peg.

ALI: [laughing] He's so gonna be so mad.

KEITH: "You guys, what if all this wasn't cool? What if it was weird and wrong?"

ALI: [still laughing] It's already weird and wrong!

KEITH: "What if it was weirder and wronger? There's TWO dancing mechs!" [ALI and AUSTIN laugh, JACK makes a protesting noise]

AUSTIN: Ohhh boy.

KEITH: Guys, let's start a revolution. [ALI dissolves in giggles]

AUSTIN: Yeah. Uh huh.

JACK: The thing is, right? This hurts me so much in my heart. But I know AuDy does not care.

AUSTIN: Uh huh.

JACK: I'm torn. I just want to register for the recording that there's a degree of pain here, but.

AUSTIN: Uh huh. Yep.

JACK: Oh god.

AUSTIN: Okay. That's good. Let's wrap up. Thanks for joining me. [ALI is STILL quietly giggling]
I'm Austin Walker. You can find me @austin_walker on Twitter, the Calcultech on Twitch where I

⁶The name in the audio recording is no longer in use, hence the audio/transcript discrepancy.

never stream, basically, anymore. That's because I do lots more streaming over at giantbomb.com. What about you all? Ali, where can people find you?

ALI: You can find me @ali_west on Twitter, and I stream video games at streamfriends.tv and twitch.tv/streamfriends.

AUSTIN: What about you, Art?

ART: You can find me on Twitter @atebbel. I guess by the time this goes up, I will have already streamed Part 1 of Barkley Shut Up And Jam Guided over on Streamfriends. And comicbooks.com publishes my movie reviews, apparently whenever they damn well feel like it.

AUSTIN: Oh jeez.

KEITH Oh man.

AUSTIN: Ah, Keith, what about you?

KEITH: You can find me on Twitter @keithjcarberry. You can find the Let's Plays that I do at youtube.com/runbutton and also at contentburger.biz. And you can find me— they just hired me over at comicbooks.com [JACK and AUSTIN laugh] to do movie reviews, so they'll get my stuff out ASAP. They said, "Anything you write'll be up same day." [ART laughs]

AUSTIN: Jack, what about you?

JACK: My name is Jack de Quidt. I'm a writer and composer, and I've got a new game coming out soon that I can't say anything about yet. But it's gonna be coming, and it's exciting.

AUSTIN: When is it out?

JACK: I can't say.

AUSTIN: Will it be out by the time this goes live? Should you be able to say it?

JACK: Ah, I don't know when this is going to go live.

KEITH: You can say now, and we'll just bleep it last-minute if that's—

AUSTIN: Yeah, we'll bleep it.

ART: It would be funny if we bleeped it and people were like, "It's weird that Jack's new game is just a string of profanity."

JACK: Yeah. It's amazing.

ART: "It's weird that he's working on Shit Fuck: The Game." [ALI and AUSTIN laugh]

AUSTIN: Bye, internet.

JACK: See you, the internet.