

Bluff City 06: There Is No Greater Love Pt. 2

Transcribers: Lu [00:00:00 - 00:27:00], Iris (@sacredwhim) [00:27:00 - 3:00:31]

[MUSIC INTRO - "[There Is No Greater Love](#)" by Jack de Quidt BEGINS]

AUSTIN (as NARRATOR): I took your advice, doc. The boardwalk? The beach? I went there. Took a trip last night. [PAUSE] What? It's *Blake*, doc. Blake Blossom? The *actor*? The *dream*, remember the *dream*? I had it again last night, the same one—the radioman's voice, the town on fire, the parties, the do-gooders, the same thing. So I went there.

When I woke up, I just got right out of bed. And I put on my sandals and those long shorts they sell in the gift shops here, walked out of my room, got in the elevator, and I strolled down to the shore, middle of the night. Big steps. Determined. "Envision your path." That's what you always say, right, doc? "Walk in the direction you want to go." Well, I did it. I thought real hard about my dream—with each step, I brought it more into focus. A murder in a restaurant. The radio man, I think, some sort of conspiracy theorist, but also a sort of neighborhood good guy—people liked him, missed him, so they set the whole place ablaze. There was a corrupt mayor, I think? Some sort of weird corporation? I keep thinking about crabs.

And this crew investigating his death—his nephew, a private eye with delusions of grandeur; a former cop who worked with him a couple of times; a big-name fan, you know, someone who called in? And a crook, a source he kept around for tips. I brought it all into focus. And you know what, doc? Nothing. No feeling of déjà vu, no transportation back to the old days, no memory of my parents. No holiday bliss, no feelings of nausea, no epiphany, no radio host. No crab-men, nothing. Just sand in water, some shells, and the neon glow of the casino lights. Just me in my shorts and my sandals—just me, alone, *again*, or something like it. And doc, I was at my wit's *end*. I thought about—and I'm serious here, doc, I really considered—just walking into the sea and letting it take me wherever it takes people on nights like that. I took off my sandals. I wanted to be barefoot when I walked in, feel that cold water hit my nerves directly. So I started walking. "Envision your path," right? "Walk in the direction you want to go."

But just as my feet hit the surf, I heard a voice—authoritative, attentive, real. Not like yours. "Wait just a minute there," he said, so I stopped. And I turned around and there he was, peacoat and all. He made me feel like a little boy. He asked me if I'd ever been to the real Bluff City. And I hadn't. Now I know I hadn't. But I'm there now, and I'm just calling to let you know I won't be needing your services anymore. I'm home now.

[MUSIC INTRO - "There Is No Greater Love" by Jack de Quidt ENDS]

AUSTIN: Welcome to Friends At the Table, an actual play podcast focused on critical worldbuilding, smart characterization, and fun interaction between good friends. I am your host Austin Walker. We are back to Bluff City to play a game called Noirlandia, which is a game that we haven't played in a month, so apologies right away. It's a game by Evan Rowland, and joining me today is the same crew as last time. Ali Acampora.

ALI: Hi, my name is Alicia Acampora, you can find me [@ali_west](#) on Twitter, and you can follow the show over [@Friends_west](#)—no, table.

KEITH: Nope! [LAUGHING] Friends west.

AUSTIN: Friends west, friends underscore west. [LAUGHS] [Twitter.com/friends_west](#). I don't think anyone has that, we could get that. Uh, Jack de Quidt.

JACK: I'm Jack de Quidt, you can find me on twitter [@notquitereal](#), and buy any of the music featured on the show at [notquitereal.bandcamp.com](#). Including, by the time this episode goes out, all the Bluff City music up to now!

AUSTIN: True. Keith J. Carberry.

KEITH: Hi, my name is Keith Carberry, you can find me on twitter [@KeithJCarberry](#), you can find the Let's Plays that I do at [youtube.com/runbutton](#).

AUSTIN: And Arthur Martinez-Tebbel.

ART: Hey! You can find me on twitter [@atebbel_west](#).

AUSTIN: That's it, yep, you got it.

[KEITH LAUGHS]

AUSTIN: As always, you can find the show at [friendsatthetable.net](#), and you can support us at [friendsatthetable.cash](#).

ALI: Which you're doing, if you're listening to this. Thank you.

AUSTIN: It's true, that's true—or you're listening with a friend, a friend is like 'hey, listen to this dope thing' and you're in a car, and you're like on a road trip or something?

JACK: Or you're Roberta, who has been pirating it from us, *Roberta*. Don't do that.

KEITH: Roberta.

AUSTIN: [LAUGHS] Please? Please?

KEITH: Hey, if—

ART: I would like to say again that if you're listening to a friend's subscription, if you're listening to this episode and you're liking it—

AUSTIN: Okay.

ART: —you're basically stealing from us.

AUSTIN: Okay.

JACK: No no no, we're really grateful, honestly, it's great! It really means—it means so much!

[LIGHT GROUP LAUGHTER]

AUSTIN: So, we're gonna—

KEITH: And tell your friend to show you the first half, don't just skip to the second half.

[ALI LAUGHS]

AUSTIN: Yeah, don't just jump into this one. 'Cause who knows how this is gonna go.

KEITH: That's weird, your friend's weird.

AUSTIN: We are jumping back into our game of Noirlandia. Right now, you have one answer. You know that Hector Hu, priest and radioman, dead at age 36, was killed because he stole—via hacking or some other way—a document from the mayor's office—Ollie Frasier, the mayor—had a document that he'd received from Ollerenshaw Office of Requisitions that had to do with some really weird, like, verging on the uncanny, verging on the supernatural—a description of an alternative Bluff City, a place called Blough City, or Blue City, B-L-O-U-G-H. And it's a letter that Hector didn't remember—it's not a letter, it's a document that Hector didn't remember, but was about him going to this place, included an interrogation of him. And you know that that is why he was killed—you don't know how it was pulled off, you don't know who did it.

There are a bunch of other things happening in this world right now. The world is split into four places—the shore, which is the upper crust; downtown, the Boardwalk; the outskirts, which is like the mainland away from Bluff City proper; and Skid Row, which is the Cove, which is sort of the—the kind of housing development on Bluff City for lower income and working class folks. The outskirts, where the mainland is—a lot of the people who come in to work in the city are currently in the middle of a weird rebellion? [LAUGHS] Because they have had it up to here with the upper crust's weird galas and strange demands around what good communication looks like? And just general corruption and waste and all of that, and there are lots of fires. It's called the Omega Love... I guess, Rebellion? Or—maybe that's the name of the movement.

Other stuff on the table, let's see. Captain Leslie Strada is a former officer of the Navy whose name I think you found in the document that you were looking over. Showdog Fancy Hot Dog Shop was where Hector was killed. You have a cause of death there, which is 'gun, close range'.

ALI: It's since been burned down, right?

AUSTIN: It was burned down, yeah, that's why it's face down.

JACK: Oh, yeah, it was burned down.

AUSTIN: That's why it's face down. So that doesn't count as a connection. The goal of the game is for you to connect things in serieses of three? So like, you have Ollerenshaw, to the document, to the Mayor, and so that's one connection, that's how you got the 'how was the victim killed' answer. Right now other things on the table that you have connections are: Captain Leslie Strada to Hector Hu, and... that might be the only active one. Is that the only active one? Yes.

KEITH: Oh, I didn't realize we couldn't use Snowdog, and that's why it was turned down, I just thought that it meant that you had to be from the upper crust to do it now.

ART: That is true.

AUSTIN: You can—yes, now that it's turned face down, you have to be from the upper crust. So that connection—

ART: So only I can connect it.

AUSTIN: Right. So let's go over your characters really quick. Art, tell me about Tyler Taylor Pierce.

ART: Tyler Taylor Pierce is a private eye operating out of the shore. His principle, which I guess is the game mechanic here, is 'justice must be done', and his demeanor is—he's trying to fake it until he makes it, kinda. He is not a very wealthy man, but he would like to be the private eye to the rich and powerful. So, y'know. He's doing that.

AUSTIN: Right.

ART: You know what fakers look like, you've seen them.

AUSTIN: [LAUGHS] Sure have. Next up is Patty Fink.

KEITH: My character's name is Patty Fink, she is a low level criminal and conspiracy theorist. She was a friend and confidant of Hector Hu, and sells illegal fireworks to teens.

AUSTIN: Right. Good.

[KEITH LAUGHS]

AUSTIN: Tell me about Chris Andrews, Ali.

ALI: Yeah. Chris is an out-of-towner who operates mostly out of the outskirts. She was an avid fan and call-in person of Hector's radio show. Um...

AUSTIN: Principle.

ALI: My principle is 'never betray my own'.

AUSTIN: And you are from the outskirts?

ALI: Yeah.

AUSTIN: Cool. And also, same thing Patty, your principle is 'justice must be done' and you're from downtown. The Boardwalk.

KEITH: Yes, yeah.

AUSTIN: Okay. And Florence Slowly.

JACK: I am a retired police detective, now private detective. Lapsed private detective, who worked with Hector as like an informant. A long time ago, once successfully, and one spectacularly unsuccessfully. My principle is 'never reveal my true self', and I'm from the...

AUSTIN: Outskirts, mainland.

JACK: I'm also from the outskirts?

AUSTIN: Yeah. Mhm. That's what it says, so.

JACK: Yeah, yeah, yeah. Wait, where does it say it?

AUSTIN: At the bottom of your sheet.

JACK: Oh, it says that at the bottom. It had—it was written down. Okay, good.

AUSTIN: Last thing I'll note is that everybody has ownership over a different part of the fiction. Art, you have ownership over 'never be the first one to arrive or the last to leave', the sort of cultural laws of—or kind of cultural moors of these parties. Keith, you have ownership over kind of the architecture here, so if anyone is like 'oh, what's this look like?' Keith, that's on you.

[10:01]

AUSTIN: Ali, you have the ownership over the strange use of language and communication, the sort of hyper-politeness and proceduralism that goes into every conversation with people in public. And Florence, you have—I guess you also have the corruption of the charity gala, so maybe, Art, you have ownership over time in general, right? And like, when people show up, are people there late, stuff like that. And then Jack, you have specifically these galas. 'Gahl-uhs?' Gahl-uhs. Gal-uhs.

ART: What's different, it's—I think when the rules spell it out, it's the law versus the corruption, is the difference there.

AUSTIN: Oh, you're right. You're right, you're right. Gotcha. Yes. totally. Cool, so... Whose turn was it? Patty just had a scene, right? Who else had had scenes, at this point? Had everybody had a scene?

ALI: We'd all done one, we did one round around the table.

AUSTIN: 'Cause we started with Art, right? And art had the—

ALI: Then me, then—

AUSTIN: Oh, what order were we going in?

ALI: It was Art, Jack, me, and then Keith.

AUSTIN: Okay, but like what—where did I get that order from?

ALI: Oh.

KEITH: I think it might have been the order of the names at the bottom, that are all changed.

JACK: Oh, the names at the bottom? Oh wow, we've really confused ourselves there.

AUSTIN: Yeah, exactly. So it was Art, Jack, Ali, Keith.

ALI: Or is it based on like—

JACK: No, I think you're right, Ali, I think—

AUSTIN: 'Cause what was Jack's scene? I don't even remember Jack's scene at this point.

ALI: Jack went to the mayor's office—

AUSTIN: Oh, the mayor's office.

KEITH: The mayor's office.

JACK: I went to the mayor's office, yeah.

ALI: —to speak to a kid who spilled wax on him? [LAUGHS]

[KEITH LAUGHS]

AUSTIN: Well, and then to the mayor. The mayor, also. But yes, there was the wax kid. Alright.

ALI: Also, real quick—Art, did you mention that Hector used to—was your uncle?

AUSTIN: Right, you did not, yeah.

ART: Uncle. No, I did not mention that. Hector was my uncle.

AUSTIN: Yes, that was the connection there. And then Florence, your connection had been that Hector had worked with you on some cases, given you both good information and very bad information.

JACK: Mhm.

AUSTIN: Gotcha. Okay, cool. So then if we're going around the table still, it is Art's turn to frame a scene. Let's remember how this works. "Scenes: Protagonists set the scene. Where, what, who with: where are you, what are you doing, who are you with? If you need inspiration, think about which leads on the corkboard you might be investigating. The first scenes of the game often begin with hearing the bad news about the victim." I guess we're past that at this point. So yeah, that's definitely where to start here.

ART: Okay, I'm struggling, and maybe you guys can help me get through this. It seems like I should be trying to draw a third connection—because only I can draw one to Showdog. And if we move that index card up just a little bit, it wouldn't look like it says Snowdog. [LAUGHS]

JACK: That is true.

AUSTIN: Okay. Well that's not as fun, is it?

ART: They named this restaurant after the Cuba Gooding Jr. movie.

ALI: Maybe.

AUSTIN: I got it, I got it.

KEITH: Well, it's 'cause the owner also quit being a dentist. That's the plot of that movie, that guy—Cuba Gooding quit being a dentist in Miami to go sled dogs in Alaska.

ART: Cool.

KEITH: Yeah. Now you know. [LAUGHS]

AUSTIN: Good to know.

ART: But my last scene was also up here, so I'm trying to like, figure out a way to make it different.

AUSTIN: Well, the thing is, the thing you draw... I don't know that the thing you—I don't know that if you add a lead, you get to put it where it is. The thing that you can do is... I just need to double check this. The thing that you can do is connect to that thing, it doesn't have to be from there, I don't think.

ART: I'm looking, too.

AUSTIN: "If your character operates in the same district as a destroyed lead—" which yours does— "you treat the lead as undestroyed. Your character knows how to make use of the fragments that remain." Yeah, you can get a lead anywhere and connect it. Like, the thing that's tough right now is that—because remember, you're gonna do a scene and then we're gonna—there's gonna be an outcome, and then the outcome is gonna decide whether or not you can connect a new lead.

ART: Whether or not you can connect or add, yeah.

AUSTIN: Yeah. And so—what you can—you can always connect to that thing.

ART: Sure. Okay, so like—where do I want to go and be to get information here about it burning down, or about the...

JACK: I was wondering whether or not, like, this is the point at which we start pushing for a person? Or like, people? What's the word... People who did—

KEITH: Suspect.

JACK: Suspects!

ART: Am I looking for a murderer or am I looking for an arsonist?

JACK: I mean, you might be looking for both.

AUSTIN: You're looking for a murderer. The question is who did it, and that question is 'Who killed Hector Hu?' That person might be the arsonist, it might not, we'll figure that out in play, I don't have an answer to that. But the question is—

ART: But like, the *lead* is the arsonist, right? I think that's the...

AUSTIN: I think that that could be the ar—I don't think that we have a—I don't think there's a right answer between if you're chasing down the arsonist or who you think might be the murderer.

ART: Sure. Yeah, I guess I'm asserting that I think that the path is—

AUSTIN: Okay.

ART: 'Cause I don't think it's likely that it's a coincidence that someone burnt this restaurant down.

AUSTIN: Right. So who are you—

ART: So I find—

AUSTIN: So, were you at the restaurant that's all burnt down looking for clues?

ART: No.

AUSTIN: Okay.

ART: I think I am at a seedy bar in the cove.

AUSTIN: Okay.

KEITH: A CD bar? I haven't seen one of those since MP3s came out.

[ALI SNICKERS]

AUSTIN: I knew it was coming. I knew it was coming the second he said seedy bar.

ART: I quit.

AUSTIN: Yep.

[ALI AND KEITH LAUGH]

ART: I don't know if you guys want to see if Sylvi or Dre wants to just take over from here...

AUSTIN: Yeah, I'll see if in Bluff—I'll see if anyone wants to tag in, or...

ART: I'll see you guys next month maybe, um...

[ALI AND JACK SNICKER]

ART: Enjoy the holiday special, bye. [LAUGHS]

KEITH: Later!

ART: But that is the name of this bar, it's the C.D. Lounge.

[KEITH LAUGHS]

AUSTIN: Uh-huh, I'm gonna add this to the list.

ART: They bought super into discmen?

AUSTIN: Uh-huh.

ART: Back in the day, and the premise of the lounge is like—you know, you've been in a lounge, and they've had like a singer or a band, and they're never that good, especially in a town like Bluff City where the casinos are pulling a lot of talent. You don't wanna go to a place and listen to a bad thing, so what they did was they bought a whole mess of discmen. And depending on who you listen to, they either cut a deal with the company, or they cut a deal with someone who made a crate fall off the back of a truck, but you go in, you give them a deposit of \$5, and they

give you a discman, and at all the tables there's like one of those little binders full of CDs, and you can listen to whatever you want. And they have those little splitters, if you want to like, share with someone at the same table.

AUSTIN: This is a headphone situation, not a speaker situation.

ART: Yeah, it's a headphone situation.

AUSTIN: Gotcha.

ART: Which makes it a really good bar to do some unsavory activity, because everyone's wearing headphones. They can't—

AUSTIN: [LAUGHING] But what if they have the music off?

JACK: [LAUGHING] I wasn't gonna say that, but, I mean, that's a great point.

AUSTIN: Maybe you can't. Maybe you—there's no volume knob. Or you can turn it down, but only to a point.

ALI: Well, the thing is nobody is talking.

ART: Yeah.

AUSTIN: Right, that means that if you're the one talking, everyone else can just hear it.

JACK: This is the like, you—

ALI: No, you send them like little letters or whatever. Or the—it's like, when you go on an airplane and you have—have you been on an airplane that has a messaging system between seats?

JACK: Oh, yeah.

AUSTIN: Yes, yeah.

KEITH: Wait, I have a—oh wait, no, Ali, you finish your thing.

ALI: [LAUGHS] Well, I was just gonna say, if like—

JACK: This fits, though.

AUSTIN: Yeah.

ALI: —if communication is super weird in the city to begin with, and then also—if the point is that you go to listen to music by yourself, but also plan a drug deal or pay someone to burn down a hot dog stand or whatever, you go and listen to your music, and then you see a guy across the bar, and then you say 'hey, what's up?' to seat 32 or whatever.

AUSTIN: Right.

ALI: And then that's who you—

ART: Well, they have—the cocktail waitresses will pass notes for you, yes.

ALI: Also that.

AUSTIN: Yeah. Okay, cool. What are you doing, and who are you with?

ART: Oh, does anyone wanna come with? Does anyone think that they would be down for this adventure?

AUSTIN: We should be having as many scenes as possible with multiple people at this point, because we did a bad job of that before.

KEITH: Yeah.

ART: So I'm soliciting...

KEITH: This feels like a place that I've been to before. This feels like Patty Fink's sort of vibe.

AUSTIN: Yeah, I'm into it. That makes sense. Anybody else?

ALI: I'll be there if there's room in the car for it, essentially, yeah.

AUSTIN: Cool, yeah.

ART: Yeah.

AUSTIN: Alright, so what are you doing?

ART: I think that we're there to get some information. I think we're like—we're there to see who's there, and I think we find a local person—hold on, I'm consulting my Bluff City name list. I think we're there to see Vincenzo de Martino.

AUSTIN: Okay.

ART: Who is a—

AUSTIN: Our second Vince.

ART: He is the kind of person you go to see if you need something bad to happen.

AUSTIN: Okay. Who wants to play—Jack, do you want to be Vincenzo, or should I be Vincenzo?

JACK: I'll be Vincenzo.

AUSTIN: Okay.

ART: So we show up, and I think we take a—he's in a booth, and we get like, a booth two booths down.

AUSTIN: With a three—like, a three-jack headphone splitter?

ART: Yeah.

AUSTIN: Okay.

ART: And we put on some Bobby Darin.

AUSTIN: Sure.

ALI: Of course.

ART: And we kinda get into it. We pass over a note like, 'what do you know about the...' I'm trying to think of some euphemisms to use here.

ALI: The roast?

ART: Yeah, 'what do you know about the weenie roast?'

KEITH: [SIMULTANEOUSLY] The weenie roast. [LAUGHS]

[ALI AND JACK LAUGH]

AUSTIN: Good.

JACK: I think Vincenzo sends back a note that just says 'What'.

[20:02]

[KEITH LAUGHS]

ART (as TAYLOR): You know, you ever go camping? And, um... you want something to eat, but it's not time for s'mores, and you maybe cook some dogs over a flame. I hear some people make a *show* of it.

[ALI AND JACK SNICKER]

JACK (as VINCENZO): You brought *three* people?

ART (as TAYLOR): It's been a whole day. I mean, we're—we just had a whole thing at a diner. It just didn't feel right for everyone to go home.

JACK (as VINCENZO): It's been a whole day for everyone, man! Bluff City is *bad* at the moment! Um—okay, fine, alright. Let's talk.

AUSTIN: 'Weed?' You guys get a message. It just says 'weed' question mark? From table 37.

KEITH: I text back like [CHUCKLING] 'Yeah, I got some.'

AUSTIN: 'No, me too.'

ART: Oh my god.

KEITH: 'Oh, sorry.'

AUSTIN: [LAUGHING] 'Weed?' Question mark?

KEITH (as PATTY): [LAUGHING] Hey, do any of you guys need this guy's weed?

[ALI AND KEITH LAUGH]

JACK (as VINCENZO): What are you doing?

ART (as TAYLOR): Uh, we're being solicited? Or—wait—

[KEITH LAUGHS]

ALI (as CHRIS): Do you need any weed from this guy?

KEITH (as PATTY): [LAUGHING] Do you need any weed from this guy?

JACK (as VINCENZO): No. Alright, what do you want to know?

ART (as TAYLOR): I mean, do you know anything about that torch? Or campfire?

JACK (as VINCENZO): Yeah, I've heard some rumors about the campfire.

ART (as TAYLOR): I'm just saying, like—it looks a little more like two sticks rubbed together, if you know what I'm saying.

JACK (as VINCENZO): Yes.

[AUSTIN LAUGHS]

ALI (as CHRIS): Why aren't we asking him about Showdogs?

ART (as TAYLOR): Because if we find the person who torched the place, we'll find the person who did the murder.

ALI (as CHRIS): No, I mean, but we're not going camping after this, why aren't we just asking him about it?

KEITH (as PATTY): Hey, do you know who torched Showdogs?

ART (as TAYLOR): Oh my goodness.

ALI (as CHRIS): Thank you! [LAUGHS]

JACK (as VINCENZO): Who's this one?

KEITH (as PATTY): Hi, Patty Fink.

AUSTIN: And this is all coming from the same—the same table, right? Coming all from the same table over text.

KEITH: I thought that we—

JACK: Yeah, it's just—you can just see this exasperated dude on the other side of the room.

KEITH: It's a group text.

AUSTIN: 'Hey ;)' winky face from table 7. 'What are you doing?'

JACK (as VINCENZO): Look, I've heard some rumors, but, uh... it'll cost you.

ART (as TAYLOR): [SIGHS]

KEITH (as PATTY): Weed?

[GROUP LAUGHTER]

JACK (as VINCENZO): I have two payment tiers. There's the medium one, and there's the one if you want a little more.

KEITH (as PATTY): I think we want the little more.

AUSTIN: I feel like this is the challenge roll, is the negotiation.

KEITH: Yeah.

JACK: Oh, yeah, yeah, yeah. Right?

AUSTIN: Right? "Once per turn, when attempting something difficult or dangerous as the protagonist, you'll determine the outcome with a challenge roll. You might be convincing police of your good intentions, duking out with the street gangs, seducing the mayor, or outwitting the high school's chess team captain. First, describe which of the four conditions best fits this category: Body, Heart, Mind or Rep." What do you think?

ART: It's probably Rep, right?

KEITH: It's probably Rep, I agree, Rep.

ALI: Yeah.

AUSTIN: Yeah, like, unless you're trying to outwit him, it would be—definitely be rep.

ART: Oh, that—I mean, we're better at that, but Rep seems to be what we actually narrated.

AUSTIN: No, I just mean like—what I'm saying is, we're now abstracting what the ongoing negotiation looks like. And so, for me, Rep would be like 'yeah, I can get you that' or like 'yeah, trust me, I can make that happen', whereas mind would be like—it just depends on how you wanna tackle it.

ART: Sure.

KEITH: I mean, we could try to get a better deal, and that would be Mind-y.

ALI: Yeah.

KEITH: We could be like 'how do we get the good package for the normal price?' For like, the regular package price. 'Buddy.'

ART: Sure. And if you meet us out back maybe we can slip you one of these discmans.

[JACK LAUGHS]

KEITH: I've got—I have some mini clips on me.

AUSTIN: Oh, boy. Alright, let's talk about how this works again, 'cause it's been a minute. This is not the investigation roll, this is just the challenge roll, right?

KEITH: Yes.

AUSTIN: Alright. So—"protagonist rolls a white die, supporters roll black die, adding extra white or black die from the governing condition. If either player rolls multiple dice, count highest against results." So you definitely roll two white dice, right, because you have the Mind +1. Right?

KEITH: Yeah.

JACK: Oh, yeah.

AUSTIN: Where do extra black die come from? That's the bit I forgot.

JACK: It's to do with if you have... Oh, I think this one just starts with a regular number of black die, right? And it's the one at the end of the scene that comes with extra black die.

AUSTIN: This can also come with black die, but I don't remember if it comes from—

ART: Oh, I think it's if you—it's if you have negatives in the stat.

AUSTIN: Okay, that's it, then.

JACK: Oh, true.

AUSTIN: Okay.

ART: So this is going to be two against one.

AUSTIN: Okay.

ART: And then we take the highest? Yeah, put the highest of each.

AUSTIN: Yes. Okay. So, you get ready to roll. Alright, we have these die in the middle of the table. Right.

ART: So I'm just gonna select these two white and roll 'em?

AUSTIN: Yep. And I'm gonna take this one black and roll it. Alright, so you got a 5. I got a 2.

ART: Alright, and you have a 2, and so it's two or higher, I succeed, unconditional win.

AUSTIN: [CROSSTALK] So that's a white, it's succeed by two or higher. Unconditional win.

KEITH: An unconditional win! [LAUGHS]

ART: So like, it's—

AUSTIN: I got it, I got it.

KEITH: [LAUGHING] I heard you get it.

AUSTIN: So you keep that white die, that white die is gonna stay.

ART: Alright.

AUSTIN: I'm gonna pull the rest back up actually, is what I'm gonna do.

ART: So that's it, like, we—through a combination of guile and the distracting nature of the room, we get him down to the normal price, plus the weed from the guy at table 36—I hear it's good stuff, it's got that bass, you know, it's not these regular headphones.

[ALI SNICKERS]

JACK: How am I—what do I narrate? Do I get to narrate, like, a thing, or...

AUSTIN: No, we just have to figure out—

ALI: I think Art does?

AUSTIN: Yeah, Art definitely gets to narrate how this goes from here, but like—that was the challenge, was getting that. So now the question is like—how do we do the investigation?

JACK: Oh, yeah.

AUSTIN: Is the investigation a packet of documents, is it a story that is being told, is it whether or not you can piece together something from—here's one I like, here's my suggestion is, he's like, 'alright, I'll tell you what I know.' And then you get this explanation that is in deeper code.

JACK: Oh, yeah.

AUSTIN: That is dressed up even more in this language and communication way, than this like—like, hyper-play and also euphemistic because it's illegal, and it's just like, hard to piece together.

ART: Yeah, just like a run of complete jargon, right? It's like—

AUSTIN: Yeah. Right.

ART: 'You know, I hear it was kerosene and one of those—what do you call 'em? The long lighters that you click? That's how they built that fire.'

AUSTIN: Wait, is it actually kerosene, though?

ART: Welp, transaction over.

AUSTIN: [CHUCKLES] Right, well, I think it's actually—what I'm saying is like, 30 lines of text.

ART: Sure.

AUSTIN: And it's not, like—the word kerosene never comes up. He's now pivoted. He's talking about a circus. Do you know what I mean?

JACK: 'Four brothers decided to open a shop on the west of so-and-so.'

AUSTIN: Right. It's a Professor Layton puzzle. Right, exactly.

JACK: It's the fuckin' chicken-rabbit-fox thing.

AUSTIN: Right, exactly. And so then I guess the investigation roll is piecing that together?

JACK: And then he just sits back in his chair like 'okay, cool.'

AUSTIN: Right.

JACK: 'My part of this transaction is over.'

AUSTIN: So then we can just jump into the investigation roll and keep it moving if you want to. It doesn't seem like a very —

ART: Sure, and we can also have like a 'us trying to figure it out' scene, but I don't know how like, that's—worth diminishing returns.

AUSTIN: Right, well, the question is we don't know if you figure it out yet or not.

ART: Oh, sure.

AUSTIN: But I would love a little description of what it looks like for you to be figuring this out.

ART (as TAYLOR): Alright, so, the circus has replaced their elephants with mice.

[AUSTIN AND JACK CHUCKLE]

ART (as TAYLOR): And the store on Charles Street is having a sale, but it's only for factory-second merchandise.

JACK: He's like, nodding.

[KEITH LAUGHS]

ART (as TAYLOR): But. Okay, so—is—are the mice the merchandise?

JACK: Are you asking him? Or are you asking them?

[ALI LAUGHS]

ART: I think I'm asking the table, we're trying to...

KEITH (as PATTY): I thought the mice was the accelerant.

ART (as TAYLOR): Oh, 'cause they're faster.

KEITH (as PATTY): Yeah.

ART (as TAYLOR): 'Cause elephants are slow.

KEITH (as PATTY): Right. So that must have been the—the mice running and scaring the elephant must be the accelerant lighting and burning the elephant, which is the building.

ART (as TAYLOR): Okay, but what's all the stuff about landscaping at Princeton?

[ALI CHUCKLES]

KEITH (as PATTY): That must be to indicate that the guy who did it has a good education.

[AUSTIN AND ART HUM]

ART (as TAYLOR): Or he's just from up north.

AUSTIN: Hmm.

KEITH (as PATTY): Or he's just from up north. So he's either highly educated or from Michigan.

[30:07]

[GROUP SNICKERING]

KEITH (as PATTY): It's the northern-most state.

ART (as TAYLOR): I don't think that's—[CHUCKLING] I don't think that's true.

[GROUP CHUCKLES]

KEITH (as PATTY): No?

ART (as TAYLOR): I'm pretty sure Alaska is the northern-most state.

KEITH (as PATTY): [LOUDLY] Continental state! Come on!

AUSTIN: [LAUGHING] You just—Patty Fink says that out loud, just shouts it—

[GROUP LAUGHTER]

KEITH: It's also—it's extra-not because Washington, North Dakota, Montana, and Minnesota are all more north than Michigan. [LAUGHS]

AUSTIN: [LAUGHS] I do love the notion that Patty Fink has this wrong answer. She probably has a lot of them, right?

KEITH: [LAUGHING] Yes.

AUSTIN: She probably thinks—she has a lot of trivia in her head that's just wrong.

ART: Wait, are you counting the upper peninsula?

KEITH: What's the upper peninsula? No, I'm not—I forgot about the upper peninsula! God damn it! You know, it's just that it just seems so close to Canada.

ALI: True.

ART: Oh, no, there's definitely so much more north than that upper peninsula.

[ALI LAUGHS]

ART: [LAUGHING] I'm looking at a map now, and he had the—South Dakota's almost further north than Michigan.

KEITH: Yeah, I mean, yeah.

AUSTIN: [LAUGHING] And it has 'South' in the name.

KEITH: Hold on, but it's *almost*. I think you're forgetting about the upper part of Michigan.

ART: That's what I said.

KEITH: I think it's just Washington, North Dakota, Minnesota, Montana, and Maine. So it's still top ten.

AUSTIN: Where's Hawaii in all this? Low. Hawaii is low.

KEITH: *Continental!*

ART: Did we say Idaho? Is Idaho on your list?

KEITH: Idaho? No, Idaho is not on the list.

AUSTIN: No, Idaho is up there.

ART: It's definitely up there.

KEITH: It is up—oh, you're right, it's got a little foothold in there. What a sneaky piece of shit.

[GROUP SNICKERS]

AUSTIN: Jesus christ.

ART: [LAUGHING] Sneaky Idaho pan-handle. This is not important, we can probably get to the investigation roll now.

[KEITH LAUGHS]

AUSTIN: Uh-huh. Let's do the investigation roll. Alright, so how does this work? Let's remember. I mostly remember. No, I don't. That was a lie. Alright, so you start with two dice. This is definitely Mind. Right?

ART: Plus the die from before?

KEITH: Yeah.

AUSTIN: Yeah, then you add the die from before. From the successful challenge Then you—what else? Is this Mind again? 'Cause you have Mind.

KEITH: I think this is Mind again, yeah.

JACK: 'Cause you're trying to like, unpick it, right?

ART: Yeah.

AUSTIN: Yeah, totally. So that's 4. I think that's what you get. Opposition starts at 3. Then—

ART: And then, how do we get—wait, how many bargain dice is it?

AUSTIN: Bargain dice come from something else. Bargain dice come from—

ART: [CROSSTALK] Oh, if I succeed at a challenge roll—

JACK: [CROSSTALK] Oh, you can offer bargains. Anyone can offer you bargains for the cost of a black die, I think?

ART: Wait, it says "if the protagonist succeeds on their challenge roll, and for each answer your group has found, give a white die to a supporter, and use the bargain dice." So how many answers do we have?

AUSTIN: Alright. You have one answer, so I'll put that over to the side, that's true.

ART: And then one for—

AUSTIN: And then—oh, and you know what, the challenge is also a supporter roll. So those two are over to the right here, so I'll need someone who is not Art to roll those.

ART: So I don't think we get a—we don't get a die for succeeding, that's a bargain die.

AUSTIN: That's a bargain die. Yeah. That's why I've reduced your pool to three, which is your two dice plus your positive condition.

ART: Alright.

AUSTIN: Then—

KEITH: Wait—

AUSTIN: My question is whether or not the escalation becomes two more—

KEITH: I thought we got one more because we have one escalated.

AUSTIN: You have two escalations though. That's my question.

KEITH: Oh, okay.

ART: No, it's for each escalated district. We only have one escalated district.

AUSTIN: Does it say that in the thing? Okay.

ART: Yeah, that's on page 57.

AUSTIN: Thank you. And the—I'm looking at the hand-out which just says 'each escalation'.

ART: Oh, sure.

AUSTIN: What page is it? 57?

ART: 57.

AUSTIN: Okay.

ART: 57 by the page numbers, I don't know what it is by the PDF number.

AUSTIN: Yeah, I got you. Cool. Oh, that's actually not bad. So then one of those.

ART: Yeah.

AUSTIN: And that's it, right? Four versus three and then the—

KEITH: I wouldn't call it not so bad. [SNICKERING] It's still pretty bad.

AUSTIN: Eh, it's four.

ART: Well, the worst part is we can only use two of the white dice when we're done here.

AUSTIN: Right. Yes. That is the worst part. That is how this game works. I forgot about that. There's gonna be a failure in here. Okay, so I'm gonna roll the four.

ART: Alright, so who's gonna roll the bargain dice?

ALI: These two little ones over here? I can roll those.

ART: Alright, and I'll roll the three.

AUSTIN: And I'll roll the four. Alright.

ART: Oh, fuck.

AUSTIN: Uh-huh.

JACK: Oh no.

ART: Oh fuck.

AUSTIN: So, the dark ones, the black ones, got 6-4-3, and so now you pair them up. Right?

KEITH: So we can do the 5 with the 4, the 4 with the 3, and that's all we can do.

AUSTIN: I'm just gonna repeat how this works because it's been a month since people have listened, and also because it's been a month since I've played this game, if not more. So, what basically just happened is—Tyler uses his Mind to roll some dice. He also gets some bonuses because we have an answer, right? Which gives him one extra die. And 'cause he's succeeded at the good negotiation, the challenge before. So that's two extra side bargain dice. And he's rolling those dice, and then I'm rolling negative dice for the mystery plus the fact that things are heating up. I now have in front of me four dice. I'm picking the three highest ones and putting them in a column. Art's job now is to pick two of his plus—including one of the bargain ones, and pair them off as a way of countering the negative dice that are here. When something is—does it work—is it greater-equal than? Or is it just greater than?

ART: I can win ties by breaking my principle.

AUSTIN: Right.

ART: And I can take a bargain die by accepting a bargain.

AUSTIN: Okay. But the bargain dice don't you help right now.

ART: But it only has two dice, so it's always gonna be a fail, yeah.

AUSTIN: Right.

KEITH: Yeah.

ART: Yeah, the bargain dice don't help.

AUSTIN: Oh, and you can't beat the 6, huh?

ART: I can't beat the 6.

KEITH: [CROSSTALK] So we lose on the 6.

AUSTIN: There's no way to get us to beat that 6.

KEITH: No, because there's no way the tie goes—there's no way to beat a 6 at all ever.

AUSTIN: Wait, wait, wait, it's not—

ART: Well, there is. If you break your principle, and you have a 6, you can beat a 6.

KEITH: Oh, okay.

AUSTIN: Wait, is that true? Or is that if you break your principle?

ART: Yeah, if you break your principle and you have a 6, you can beat the 6 because then you beat ties.

AUSTIN: Okay, so all it does is beat ties. It doesn't just—jesus. That's brutal.

KEITH: But you beat all ties for one principle break.

AUSTIN: Got you. I see. So right now the outcomes are—there's a miss on a 6, which means "Escalate or destroy a lead: draw a card, look at the district that shares its suit. If it has any undestroyed leads, destroy one of those. If it has no undestroyed leads, escalate the district." Then you've won a 5 and a 4. Which is "add a random connection or lead" and "add a random connection or lead". Right?

ART: Yeah.

AUSTIN: How do you—what order do you want to resolve these in?

ART: Do I choose?

AUSTIN: Uh... I think so. Maybe not. Do you start at the highest? Let's see.

KEITH: Wait, so, could you establish two—could you establish the two hits and then use the 6 to destroy one of the two new ones?

ART: Well, 'cause it would be random.

AUSTIN: It's random, yeah. You draw a card on that 6, and whatever—"you look at the district that shares its suit, if it has any undestroyed leads, destroy one of these leads."

KEITH: Ohh.

AUSTIN: So yeah, this is actually—

ART: [CROSSTALK] Do you wanna create a—

AUSTIN: This is a good question.

KEITH: So the way that I did it would still be possible, and we would maybe be able to offset some of the damage by destroying a newly created lead, or—

ART: Yeah, I do think it is right to resolve the two hits and then resolve the miss because I feel that's also more thematic, like—

AUSTIN: Yeah, me too.

ART: 'Oh, we found the person, but they're dead.' Or 'we found this, but it's whatever.'

AUSTIN: Yeah, “save any misses on a 6 for last.” It does say that explicitly.

ART: Okay.

AUSTIN: I thought it did. Alright, so, do you want to add a random lead, or make a connection?

ART: I have two, so I want to start by adding a lead, and then hopefully use the second one to connect it.

AUSTIN: Okay, so I’m gonna make that first draw now.

ART: And then the suit and the number tell us what it is, is that right?

AUSTIN: I believe so. Boom, it’s a four of diamonds. Diamonds is upper crust, the shore. And I think that that is—where is the table that I’m looking for? Here it is. Tables.

KEITH: Maybe that’s what they meant by Princeton. Upper crust.

AUSTIN: It’s also just in this Noirlandia tables handout in the folder. So it is either a writer/journalist, a park, or a map. If it’s a lead, it’s either a journalist—if it’s an identity, or a person, rather—if it’s a place, it’s a park, and if it’s a thing, it’s a map.

KEITH: Maybe it’s a journalist on a take turned hitman.

AUSTIN: Okay, no. Because that’s a different one. I think hitman is just a different one.

KEITH: Oh, is that on there?

AUSTIN: Probably. “Assassin/hired gun.” Yes.

KEITH: Yeah, yeah, yeah, you’re probably right. We can’t mix numbers.

ART: It could be a journalist that’s giving us some info, but I don’t know how we got there from here.

AUSTIN: It could be a park or a map.

KEITH: Maybe they have info on Strada. So it could be—we could do Hu to Strada to journalist. I don’t know if that makes sense.

AUSTIN: It could be a—

ALI: Maybe the journalist did it. [SNICKERS]

AUSTIN: Right, so here’s a thing that you can think about is, the next thing you do could be to connect this and get a three—to get a whole connection. Right? To get an answer.

ART: Yeah, um—

AUSTIN: You couldn't answer it, because you have to then—you still have to go get a 6 to get that answer, but you need that three—those three things to be connected. Three leads connected. And right now we have two things that are—we have two two-lead connections. We have Captain Leslie Strada to Hector Hu, and we have 'cause of death: gun, close-range' to Showdog Fancy Hot Dog Shop.

[40:03]

ART: Does anyone have a good journalist name? I don't.

KEITH: Let me look at my list.

ART: 'Cause my—I have two names right now and they're both—they both want something a little bigger than this.

[ALI CHUCKLES]

AUSTIN: I have Clarence B. Grimes.

ALI: Ooh.

AUSTIN: Oh, but I mean—we also have—here's another one—we have Jennifer Jetta already on the screen. As the journalist who wrote about Hector Hu dying.

ART: Oh, sure.

JACK: Oh, as the journalist.

AUSTIN: So we already know she's investigating it.

ART: That works.

AUSTIN: So it's Jennifer Jetta.

ART: Yeah. Who like, maybe is just in a few too many places, and maybe did their undergrad work at Princeton and, you know—

AUSTIN: Right.

KEITH: Maybe is from Michigan.

ALI: Been groomed.

[KEITH LAUGHS]

AUSTIN: Alright, so we know that's she's the—where are you connecting it then? Are you connecting it to 'cause of death'? Or are you connecting that to Strada and Hector?

ART: I'm connecting it to Showdog.

AUSTIN: Okay.

ART: I think that she's been—

AUSTIN: Can you connect to dead things? Even if—or can you only use them if they're Heart?

ALI: I thought—yeah, I thought Heart was—

ART: I can because I'm a Diamond.

AUSTIN: I didn't know if that meant that it—okay, so it just straight up counts as alive for you.

ART: I think that's what it says.

AUSTIN: Okay. I think that that's true. I believe that that's true. Undestroyed.

ART: They can use it as an undestroyed lead.

AUSTIN: Yep, then you're good to go.

ART: Alright. Then she was first with the story, she was first with the arson, she's just—she's just been a little too first.

AUSTIN: Yeah. Gotcha.

ART: I'm not supplying the answer, I'm just providing the connection.

AUSTIN: Jennifer Jetta, journalist.

JACK: 'She's been a little too first' is a great way of putting it.

AUSTIN: Uh-huh.

ART: It's time to destroy something?

AUSTIN: Uh-huh. One second, I have to update her thing so that it now says "Jennifer Jetta: journalist, a little too first." And I will draw another card, and it is a four of spades—[LAUGHING] Oh my god. Let's talk about the outskirts. There are no leads down here. This is the best—

ART: Oh my goodness.

JACK: Wait, wait, wait. Don't we get two—don't we get two good card draws before we have the bad card draw?

AUSTIN: No. He did the one good card draw and then he used his second move to connect it.

JACK: Oh no!

AUSTIN: I mean, no, this is the best possible outcome for you. Right?

ALI: Yeah.

KEITH: I thought that— isn't there a thing where if you escalate one place three times you lose?

AUSTIN: Oh, is that true? I think it was—

ART: No, it was, if three different places are escalated, you lose.

AUSTIN: Yeah. So what is this—but what is this third escalation in this single fucking district?

ART: What's past Omega Love? [WHISPERING] Is it Alpha Hate?

[GROUP LAUGHTER]

AUSTIN: God.

ART: So, no?

ALI: I mean...

ART: I mean, Alpha Hate sounds like a men's rights movement.

ALI: True.

AUSTIN: It does. I don't want it to be that. Because we've been actually framing this escalation as being vaguely positive in a weird way. As in, 'fuck the world', like, 'fuck this corrupt nothing'.

JACK: Yeah, what is like, the third stage of this?

AUSTIN: Is it—

ALI: Is it something bigger? Is it like, success for them?

AUSTIN: Right, like—but what's that look like?

ART: Yeah, what's further than this?

ALI: Well... [CHUCKLES]

JACK: What if it's some kind of like, mass gathering of some sort in like a stadium or something? I don't know, like—I don't know in what way to escalate that.

AUSTIN: It shouldn't be an event. It should be an ongoing state.

JACK: Yeah, yeah, yeah.

AUSTIN: So we can't be like, 'and then they all got together in the stadium'.

ART: What if it's like a—

AUSTIN: Like, it could be riots in the streets of all of the—do you know what I mean? It could be that for the rest of this game, everything that's happening is happening in the midst of, like, a state of emergency with the National Guard being pulled in and stuff like that. You know what I mean?

ALI: Yeah, I mean, before it was like people weren't going to work because they weren't sleeping.

AUSTIN: That was Infinite Love.

ALI: Or—okay.

AUSTIN: Then Omega Love was that they started to protest openly.

ALI: Right.

AUSTIN: And now we're at the third stage, which to me means like, you have to escalate from there. Which either means that like—I don't know, it feels like very direct collective action.

KEITH: I think the National Guard thing makes sense. Calling in someone to try to deal with the thing, and then that's the new state, is like you have the Infinite—you have the Omega Love sort of clashing with people that are trying to—

AUSTIN: With police state, basically? As the National Guard rolls in?

KEITH: Yeah, yeah.

ALI: Yeah, the only other, like—I don't know. Like disrupting the galas or like, something about how the city turns. Right? Like...

JACK: Yeah, I was thinking about that.

KEITH: And then eventually when we escalate the mainland a fourth time, we can have the National Guard enter Infinite Love.

AUSTIN: I would—[SNICKERS] Yeah, great. I would lean towards it not just being 'and then the galas'—which have only ever been offscreen—are, 'something's happening over there'.

ALI: Yeah.

AUSTIN: I want this to be something that can be referenced in every scene going forward. Which to me, like, there are armored personnel carriers. There are—streets are locked off.

ART: What if we do it one step further? What if the National Guard came, and they like, were instantly defeated? What if it's like, helicopters blaring old radio broadcasts or circling the area? What if it's like—

AUSTIN: Oh, that's pretty good.

ART: You know, the rioters are in the armored personnel, like—

AUSTIN: Right, right.

ART: What if we skip the military occupation and go to 'welp, the military lost.'

AUSTIN: Right. I like that.

KEITH: I like that too.

AUSTIN: And I like the notion of the helicopters playing Hector Hu from the sky, like, circling a lot. Like, big military helicopters, not news helicopters.

ART: Yeah.

JACK: My only—and I mean, I kinda feel that like we—I'm up for picking something and moving on, but my concern there would be, we're carrying Bluff City forward? And if like, a district of Bluff City roundly defeated the National Guard—

AUSTIN: We know that this happens in the future. We know that—like we've talked about this being in 202X. Right? Or 2030-something. There's a lot of time between whenever this happens and the last game that we played. I don't mind putting a pole down, putting a banner down that says 'and then this is an event that happens in Bluff City history'. And then in the weird future of some of the strange—like, we're already at a world in which the people have galas and don't talk the way we do now. Do you know what I mean?

JACK: Yeah, that is—yeah, that's fair. Yeah.

AUSTIN: And we're saying that that's canon. Like, this isn't a sidestory of Bluff City. Everything else that happens in Bluff City is gonna happen either before or after this.

JACK: Okay.

AUSTIN: So I like the notion of escalating it even further. I like 'defeated National Guard'. Because it's fuckin' wild. And also because that's like a good—it's just a good visual for me, of like, burnt-out APCs on the streets of Bluff City, and like—or like, them going down the boardwalk in, like, National Guard golf carts. You know what I mean?

ART: Like, the APCs are blocking the bridge, right? Like, you can't get to them—you can't get to the mainland. You can't go that way.

AUSTIN: Right. Yeah. I like it a lot. In my mind it starts to look—it starts to look like *Strange Days* a little bit, or like—there are some other neo-noir that have like, the world is on fire around the primary action. But that stuff is the background, it's not what the protagonists are involved with because they're trying to figure out who killed this person and not why things are blowing up. You know?

ART: Yeah, and it really leads—well, I'm getting ahead of myself.

AUSTIN: Yes, well, next scene is Jack's.

JACK: Okay. So.

AUSTIN: So. [CHUCKLES] Yeah.

JACK: So we have this journalist.

AUSTIN: Mhm.

JACK: But I can't interact with that. I can't translate—

AUSTIN: You can interact with the journalist, but you cannot interact with Showdog.

JACK: And as such, I can't create an answer?

AUSTIN: You cannot create an answer in that trio, no.

ART: Oh, fuck.

AUSTIN: Yeah. This is why I was asking those questions before.

JACK: Okay. Um...

AUSTIN: But you can work on a third answer, right? You can now work on the Leslie Strada side of things.

JACK: Yeah, I can work on 'how was it pulled off.'

AUSTIN: Oh right, you were not in that last scene. So maybe you were off doing something else, and then we can put together a—it's again, 'who, where, what are you doing'.

JACK: Yeah. So Leslie Strada—what we know about Leslie Strada is that he is another coast guard.

AUSTIN: He was a former coast guard officer if what I listened to at the end of the last episode when I was prepping for this is true.

JACK: He was like—

AUSTIN: I believe former coast guard. Might have been in the documents that you were looking over.

JACK: He's like, mentioned in the document. Yeah. Okay. Alright. Um... So I think that I want to see if I can speak to him. See if I can go find him. And I want to bring... Chris? I think just Chris.

ALI: Okay.

JACK: Chris, do you want to come hunt a former coast guard?

ALI: Absolutely.

JACK: So there's kind of two ways of going about this, I think. Either we could play the scene as though we are trying to locate him, or we could play the scene as though we have located him and go forward from there.

AUSTIN: I like the—we're in the third act, right?

ALI: Yeah.

AUSTIN: Or towards the end of the second act? I like the chase version of this more than the 'we found him and now we're just gonna do another scene of talking'.

JACK: Mm.

AUSTIN: You know what I mean? Like, the talking will be the investigation roll. But the challenge roll I like as tracking him down, or chasing him once you have him, or something like that, a lot more than like, the challenge being—I just don't want to recreate the structure of the last scene. You know?

[50 : 00]

JACK: Yeah, yeah. Okay. So let's—okay. So I think we get a shot of Florence in a telephone booth, looking through a telephone name book for Strada's name and finding it and dialing it and the line not connecting, but I think it's like an address book. I think it's one of those old school address books. But there's an address, and we find our way to the house, and it's on fire. And as it is—as we're kind of standing there in the thing, the garage is burning, and from the burning garage comes an old car as though the garage was on fire and someone in the garage got into a car and drove it out through the front doors.

[AUSTIN HUMS]

JACK: Like the—almost like the car in the barn in *O Brother, Where Art Thou?*

AUSTIN: Yeah.

JACK: After the barn catches—just this like, [IMITATES EXPLOSION] sparks and this car just comes out of the thing.

AUSTIN: And when you say old car, do you mean like an old 80s beater, or do you mean like a big curvy mid-century—

JACK: I think it's like a curvy mid-century car, but I think it is like very worse for wear.

AUSTIN: Okay.

JACK: It was black, but a combination of the ash and the general 'worse for wear' makes it almost look like a car that has been, like, it's—the car is graying. And it's also probably—like, the wing mirror comes off as it comes out. And on the inside of this car as we see it, just like—it has no plates, as we see it begin to head off down the street. We can see this very, very elderly, small elderly man behind the wheel. Chris, do you have a car? How did we get here?

ALI: Um, I could have a car.

JACK: What's your car—

ALI: I think that I, like—I don't live inside the city, so I think that I like drive into Bluff City every four weeks or whatever and then go back and forth. So yeah, I have a car.

JACK: So you're like—this is the worst visit to Bluff City you've ever had. [LAUGHING]

ALI: [LAUGHS] Well, I have to get to the bottom of this mystery for this man that I analyzed, so.

JACK: Yeah. What's your car?

ALI: I don't know. I think it's a little, like—I don't know anything about cars. I think that it's green. Um...

AUSTIN: [LAUGHS] Don't worry, Chris probably also doesn't know anything about cars and that's even better.

[GROUP CHUCKLES]

ART: A hatchback is a car where the back of it all opens like a—

ALI: What's one of those—you know like a station wagon?

AUSTIN: Yes.

ALI: Like the really long cars?

AUSTIN: Uh-huh.

JACK: Oh, yeah.

ALI: That are like longer than they should be?

AUSTIN: Yeah. Is it all green or does it have wood paneling?

ALI: Oh, of course it has wood paneling.

AUSTIN: Okay.

ART: [HUMOROUSLY] Yeah, Austin, you idiot.

AUSTIN: Well, I was just—

JACK: [CROSSTALK] The back of it is just like full of memorabilia and boxes.

AUSTIN: Is it this?

ALI: I think it's like—it's kind of as if she lives out of her car a little bit. [CHUCKLES]

AUSTIN: Like documents, and boxes with stuff.

ALI: Yeah. Yeah, yeah, yeah. Like clothes and—

AUSTIN: Shoes. Yeah.

JACK: That is a good car.

AUSTIN: It's a good ass car.

JACK: Is it fast enough?

ALI: She offers you some coffee when you get in. Yeah, it probably goes fast enough.
[LAUGHS]

JACK: So Florence is like—this is Florence's fourth or fifth coffee.

[ALI CHUCKLES]

JACK: She didn't sleep because of what was happening in the streets. Like, just noise all night. And Florence is like leaning forward and tapping against the floor with her feet. She's had like, a *lot* of coffee today. And as we're driving, she's like,

JACK (as FLORENCE): Chris, I gotta tell you something. And you're the only one who's gonna believe me, so you have to believe me, okay?

ALI (as CHRIS): Yeah, of course.

JACK (as FLORENCE): Back then, in the diner, where we were, I saw him. I saw Hector!

ALI: [LAUGHS] I think that she like, slams on the breaks which is probably a really bad idea.
[LAUGHS]

JACK (as FLORENCE): No, no, no, keep going. We're chasing the car.

JACK: The coffee goes all over my lap.

ALI: Yeah, there's like a pot of coffee in this car by the way. She offers it to you when you go in. And it tips over, but it has one of those things so it doesn't spill out, but um...

ALI (as CHRIS): [INCREDULOUS] You saw him?

JACK (as FLORENCE): Yeah, like he was—well I mean, it wasn't like he was alive, but it looked like he was alive? I saw him out of the window where the coast guard had sat.

ALI (as CHRIS): [STAMMERING] And you didn't like, chase him or tell anyone at the time?

JACK (as FLORENCE): I thought it was kind of like a—and nobody would believe me, firstly, but I knew you would because like, you know. We both know the guy. But also I figured it was kind of like a sort of—you know, I figured it was like a—like sort of a vision situation. You know?

ALI (as CHRIS): Ohh.

JACK (as FLORENCE): Rather than a 'he's alive' situation. He was getting into a jitney and he looked at me through the window.

ALI (as CHRIS): Where was the jitney going?

JACK (as FLORENCE): Away? I don't know. This wasn't like a dream, Chris. This was like—I could just see it from my—and the jitney drove away. And the view behind was all weird, Chris?

ALI (as CHRIS): Was it a vision or a dream?

JACK (as FLORENCE): It was more like a vision situation. This wasn't a dream. I haven't slept.

ALI (as CHRIS): So not a vision, a vision situation. 'Cause that's a different thing.

JACK (as FLORENCE): Sorry?

[ALI AND ART LAUGH]

ALI (as CHRIS): There's visions that people have when, like, you know. There's someone trying to communicate with them and they have a vision of what's going on, and then

there's a vision *situation* where like, you know, you're thinking about the thing really bad, and then you *think* that someone's talking to you. So was it a vision or a vision situation?

JACK (as FLORENCE): [DELIBERATING] Ahh...

ALI (as CHRIS): Did it feel like he was there?

JACK (as FLORENCE): Take a left here. How would I know? He looked at me. His eyes, like—his eyes, like—

ALI (as CHRIS): What kind of look was it?

JACK (as FLORENCE): It was like a—

ALI (as CHRIS): Was it like a 'help me', was it like a 'goodbye', was it like a 'I'm gonna be going to this other place'? Was it a 'join me on the jitney'?

JACK (as FLORENCE): It was like all of those, it was like he was—no, it wasn't a 'join me on the jitney'. I'm sorry I didn't go out there, but it would have—it was a vision, it was not a vision situation, I misspoke. He was there, and his eyes kind of like... burrowed.

JACK: And she's like, gesturing. She can't find the words to express the look that the listener knows was this kind of very—he's turning and staring through the window, and it's very weird.

ALI (as CHRIS): [SIGHS] Well, what do you think this means? Do you think we should try to find him, or like...

JACK (as FLORENCE): I don't know. I don't know. I just wanted to tell you, because I know he meant a lot to you. And...

ALI (as CHRIS): [MUTTERING] It was a jitney.

JACK (as FLORENCE): Well, yeah. It—yeah. It was. It was a—I was talking about how much he meant to you and hoping you'd seen him too.

AUSTIN: But it was a jitney. Yeah.

ALI: Well, I think that she's like, trying to think through previous broadcasts?

JACK: Oh, yeah.

ALI: To remember if he'd ever mentioned one.

AUSTIN: No, but it was in the document.

ALI: Okay.

AUSTIN: The bright blue jitney and the orange ocean are in the document.

ALI: Oh, okay.

AUSTIN: They're in the interrogation, they're in the document you have. And like, yeah, he's talked about jitneys a billion times because he's from Bluff City and there are jitneys, like.

ALI: Right, yeah, yeah, yeah. Had he ever talked about—no. Like, the other Bluff City on air at all?

AUSTIN: No. No, because he doesn't—the thing that he sent back—or the thing that the note that was in that document that he made was that he doesn't remember any of the stuff that he supposedly experienced and talked about.

ALI: Right, right. Okay.

AUSTIN: So, no. But there are these things that line up, right? Like, the word—and again, this comes in from last episode, which is like, there was a... what do you call it? Like, a statue of armor, of medieval armor, and there are people named Knight and Page and Squire in that document. He talks about the crab-men and he has eight horseshoe crabs on his walls. There are clearly things that overlap, but he doesn't see—he didn't know about the overlap. Do you know what I mean?

ALI: Okay, yeah. I just didn't know the timeline on when that document was made.

AUSTIN: I didn't give a timeline on when the document was from, but he got it recently.

ALI: Or like, when he wrote it. Okay.

AUSTIN: He doesn't know. Right? Like, that's the thing is...

ALI: Okay.

AUSTIN: But years ago. Like, it reflects a—because you know that he has been this person for a couple of years or whatever. Right? He kind of swept into Bluff City recently in the last few years and became this—had this big impact on people, and presumably it came before that. Like, I'm happy saying before he was 30 he was involved with the shit on the document, and after 30 he was Hector Hu, priest and radio man.

ALI: Okay.

AUSTIN: So what is the—so what are you doing? Are you chasing down the car at this point? Is that the, like—

JACK: Yeah, I think that it's like a—I think that what we get at that point is like a montage of what you just described, of like, making those connections. Of like, these two people in this—who are basically—I think what it is, it's basically a car chase, except the participants in

the chasing car are also having the montage where you've realized, like, 'oh my god, this matches up to that thing! This matches up to—'

AUSTIN: Right, right.

JACK: Like, taking off a mailbox as you go around a corner really quickly.

[AUSTIN AND ALI CHUCKLE]

[1:00:13]

JACK: And like, hastily pouring more coffee or whatever.

AUSTIN: Right.

JACK: So I guess we're trying to make a roll to catch up with this—catch up with this—oh, I know what it is. What's the name of that thing that, um... What's the name of that maneuver that police cars do?

AUSTIN: The pit maneuver?

JACK: The pit maneuver.

ART: Pit maneuver, yeah.

JACK: So I reckon the back half of the montage is ex-cop Florence explaining how to perform a pit maneuver to Chris, who is driving? And I think that's probably what we're rolling for. To try and immobilize either Leslie's car or the person who's driving.

AUSTIN: Right.

JACK: I don't know if this is Leslie.

AUSTIN: So what do you think this is? Or, not you, but what's the—the table decides what stat to roll here. Thoughts? This feels like Heart or Mind, in terms of—Mind for like, 'I'm explaining to you how to do this thing'.

[JACK CHUCKLES]

AUSTIN: But Heart could be like—I don't know, how are you doing it?

JACK: I think probably in a similar manner than the manner we've seen this scene already. So it's lots of Florence saying like, 'alright, visualize the car from above. Okay. Visualize yourself from above, and he's going down the road in front of you, and you need to make sure—okay, so there's like an—picture an L on the right-hand side of your car, and match that—'

AUSTIN: So this is Mind and not Heart. This is not like, steel yourself, this is—

JACK: Yeah, this is not like, 'you can do it'.

AUSTIN: 'Here is the technique.'

JACK: I think there is a lot of Florence saying 'you can do it', but [CHUCKLING] I don't think it's wrapped in the best stuff.

AUSTIN: Okay. So then this is a Challenge roll, then—there's an extra black die, because you're at negative—you're at Conflicted Mind, right?

JACK: Mhm. Which I think also fits with the tenor of this scene.

AUSTIN: Oh yeah.

JACK: I think I am more definitely more conflicted than I am content right now.

AUSTIN: Yes. Fair. Yeah, so it's just one on two, I think. Right?

JACK: Yeah. Um—

AUSTIN: 'Cause you just have the one basic one, and then—there's the one basic black die, and there's another one because you're at your condition.

JACK: Okay.

AUSTIN: You know, just roll good. That's all.

JACK: How do I—wait—oh, I see it around the side.

AUSTIN: Right-click it and then—yeah, you got it.

JACK: Oh my god.

AUSTIN: Oof. That's a 2. I got a 6. I got a 2 and a 6, you got a 2.

ART: Ohh.

AUSTIN: Which beats it by more than 2, so that is a black die. "Narrate how the investigation just got more difficult; keep the black die."

KEITH: That's how. It kept the black die.

AUSTIN: Yeah, here's—can I make a suggestion?

JACK: Yeah, go ahead.

AUSTIN: I think you get T-boned by a different car.

[ALI GASPS]

JACK: Is it clear that this car is involved? That this isn't an accident?

AUSTIN: Oh, yeah. So what I like is, that car T-bones you, you hit a fire hydrant, there's a lamp-post that goes down, there's a fire in the background, we get the good shot of fire with the water going up in the air at night, or at sunset or whatever—it's night-time at this point for sure—and then we get, you know—you thought you were chasing Leslie Strada. You were not chasing Leslie Strada. This woman who gets out of this car, this is like—it's like a Lincoln Town Car. And it has a thing on the front that is meant—

KEITH: Is it black? Is it a black Lincoln Town Car?

AUSTIN: Of course it's a blank Lincoln Town Car, yeah. And it has a thing on the front that is meant to protect it during impact, you know? It has like the cage on the front that like basically—

JACK: It's like a fuckin' Mad Max car.

AUSTIN: Yeah, it's like a battering ram. Yeah, exactly. It's like a Mad Max car. And she gets out, and it's just like—god, it's someone like Catherine Hepburn, or something, in a coast guard uniform. Or like a long peacoat, and smoking a cigarette with her hair up, and walks over to you and like—you know, there's a car alarm going off in the background, and she waits in front of your car and waits for you to get out.

JACK: [EXHALES] Okay.

AUSTIN: Everyone is shaken up, that's why you have this other black die. Right?

JACK: Yeah, yeah. We've—this is like a—this is like a car accident.

AUSTIN: Yeah. Mhm.

JACK: I think for a moment Florence thinks that she is in her own car. She's in her police cruiser.

AUSTIN: Right.

JACK: And so she opens the glove compartment to get a weapon.

[AUSTIN LAUGHS]

JACK: What is inside Chris's glove compartment?

ALI: A cup of coffee, first of all.

JACK: Just like, empty cups.

ALI: Yeah, like, some rinds and some empty cups, and like, old filters.

AUSTIN: Does it smell like old coffee or does it smell like new coffee? What's it smell like?

ALI: Like new coffee, she makes it in the car. [LAUGHS]

AUSTIN: Gotcha, gotcha.

JACK: So I think that, just like—how are you doing after the crash? I think that—yeah, Florence leans over and checks on Chris.

ALI: Um, probably not great.

JACK: [CHUCKLES] Okay.

[JACK AND ALI LAUGH]

ALI: I mean, I guess it depends what direction we got hit from but. Probably driver's side? Yeah.

JACK: T-boned, I guess. Yeah. Yeah, bad. Hm.

ALI: I don't think it's horrible, but it's like, y'know. Dirty and riled up.

JACK: Okay. So I'm gonna, like, grab the big pot of coffee, and kick open the passenger side door and kind of climb out. There's like, glass coming off my shoulders.

AUSTIN (as SMOKING WOMAN): Slowly, now.

AUSTIN: She says.

JACK (as FLORENCE): Yes?

AUSTIN (as SMOKING WOMAN): You're getting too close.

JACK (as FLORENCE): That's what we're supposed to be doing, isn't it?

AUSTIN: She takes a drag of the cigarette.

AUSTIN (as SMOKING WOMAN): You can find out who killed him without digging into things no one needs to know.

JACK (as FLORENCE): A lot of people have tried to tell me that during my career. And then after my career, as well.

[KEITH LAUGHS]

AUSTIN (as SMOKING WOMAN): I still have a career. Take it from me.

JACK (as FLORENCE): Are you Leslie Strada?

AUSTIN (as SMOKING WOMAN): She nods.

JACK (as FLORENCE): Okay, what's your deal?

[AUSTIN AND ALI SNICKER]

ALI: Is that how detectives work?

AUSTIN: Yeah, good interrogation.

ART: Yeah, good detective work.

AUSTIN (as LESLIE STRADA): My deal is that I keep people safe. Your deal is you're holding an empty coffee pot in the middle of a street after martial law has been defeated, asking me about a dead man.

JACK (as FLORENCE): Well, it was full earlier.

[AUSTIN CHUCKLES]

JACK: And I just drop it.

AUSTIN: Wait, does it shatter?

JACK: [CHUCKLING] Yeah, it just breaks.

AUSTIN: [LAUGHING] Oh, you've broken Chris's coffee pot!

ALI: No, what?

AUSTIN: Make it be like a percolator so it's metal, so it doesn't break.

ALI: Yeah.

JACK: [LAUGHING] Okay, okay.

KEITH: It's a french press. [LAUGHS]

JACK: [CHUCKLING] It's a french press.

ALI: She makes it in the car, it's like a thermos.

[AUSTIN SIGHS]

JACK: Oh, it's like a thermos. Alright.

ALI: Yeah.

JACK: I thought that the weapon that I had—[LAUGHS] I thought the weapon I picked was like the one that we had in Los Angeles, right? Like a glass coffee pot.

AUSTIN: Yeah, I gotcha.

JACK: [LAUGHING] But instead I picked up a thermos. Okay. Fine.

AUSTIN: Full of coffee.

ALI: Well, you can hit someone with it. And also there's hot coffee in it.

JACK: Yeah, it's—

AUSTIN: Well, now it's on the ground and the coffee is spilling.

ALI: Well, now it's—yeah.

JACK: Yeah. That's true.

JACK (as FLORENCE): You're not gonna get away, Leslie. Just because you crashed your car into our car. You might get away this time.

KEITH: 'You might literally move away from us.'

AUSTIN: [LAUGHS] Yeah.

ALI (as CHRIS): [MUTTERING] Who's gonna fix my car?

ART: Hey Florence, do you have a concussion? [LAUGHING] What's going on here?

JACK: [LAUGHING] I've just been in a car crash and I haven't slept for two days! And, I'm conflicted!

[ALI HUMS]

AUSTIN (as LESLIE STRADA): Call your friends. Have them take care of you. I'm going to get back into my car, and you're going to focus on who killed Hector Hu, and nothing else.

JACK: I think Florence takes a step forward.

AUSTIN: Uh-huh.

JACK: And—the thing that I am conflicted on here is that after setting up the fight that there wasn't a gun in the glove compartment earlier, it would feel cheap to have Florence draw a gun in a holster.

AUSTIN: Yeah.

JACK: So I think that like—is she armed? Is Leslie armed?

AUSTIN: Uh... not noticeably. I mean, she might have a shoulder holster inside of her coat, but her coat is buttoned right now, right? So she'd have to like, reach into the coat.

JACK: Yeah.

AUSTIN: I mean, 'what do the dice say' is really what this is gonna come down to.

JACK: Yeah. Let's look at the table.

AUSTIN: I mean, you have to roll.

JACK: Oh, right.

AUSTIN: This is investigation. So I'm asking you what do you—yeah, how are you investigating?

JACK: [EXHALES] Okay, let's do it like this. I think, you know, coffee pot on the floor beside her, and as Chris begins to climb out of the passenger side door because the driver side door won't open, I think Florence steps forward to attempt to like—what's—I think the word is probably illegal, but what's it when a private investigator tries to take someone into custody? To try and like—

ART: A citizen's arrest.

JACK: To try and like, *get* the person.

AUSTIN: I guess that's a citizen's arrest.

KEITH: I think that's a citizen's arrest.

AUSTIN: So what's that look like? Don't worry about the legal category, tell me what happens.

JACK: Yeah, like, I don't want to narrate it too far because we don't know it's successful—

AUSTIN: Right, right, right, but what is she trying to do?

JACK: She is trying to—oh, man. I think what she's trying to do is—I think she has a pair of handcuffs.

[1:10:02]

AUSTIN: Mhm.

JACK: And she is trying to essentially, like, debalance—put Leslie off balance and pull her hands behind her back.

AUSTIN: Right, and handcuff her.

JACK: And handcuff her.

AUSTIN: Okay.

JACK: This isn't like an attack so much as a maneuver.

AUSTIN: Okay.

JACK: But the previous one didn't go great, so.

AUSTIN: So this is Body. Right?

JACK: Yeah. Oh, yes.

KEITH: So it—sorry, it seems like you have grounds for a citizen's arrest because you did see the person commit a crime which was hitting you intentionally with their car?

JACK: Yeah.

KEITH: And that is the highest form of arrest a private eye can make is a citizen's arrest. They don't have any extra powers.

AUSTIN: Good to know.

JACK: Huh. I mean, also, it's the third act, and literally in the corkboard that is in our shared investigations offices, her name is linked to the name of the murdered man.

AUSTIN: Mhm.

KEITH: That's true, but you have to have literally seen the crime. You can't just know that they committed one and citizen's arrest them.

JACK: I sure saw a crime.

[ALI SNORTS]

KEITH: Yeah. No, I'm agreeing with you.

AUSTIN: Alright, so, you start with two white dice.

JACK: Yep.

AUSTIN: Boop. "Give the supporter three black dice, if the protagonist failed—" sorry, give the supporter three black dice, got those, then a fourth one for the failed challenge, then another one for the escalation.

KEITH: That's very cool and good.

AUSTIN: Right? Uh-huh? And then where do bargain dice come from? We don't have any. There's no bargain dice? 'Cause you didn't succeed at the challenge roll? And because—

ART: No, there—don't you get—

AUSTIN: And because—

KEITH: I believe you still get bargain dice, I thought.

AUSTIN: “If the protagonist succeeded on their challenge roll, and for each answer—” oh, and one—yeah. There’s one. There’s one for the answer. There’s one for the group. The answer that’s established. So that’s it.

KEITH: Okay. I’ll roll that one.

AUSTIN: Three on five is not a great number.

JACK: No, it really is not.

AUSTIN: Alright.

JACK: Alright. I’m gonna roll my two.

AUSTIN: I’m gonna roll my five.

JACK: I mean, like—the narrative framing of this is not a positive one.

AUSTIN: Oh, that’s not bad. Yeah. You got a good roll on this side. You got a 4, a 3, a 3, a 2, and a 1.

JACK: And I just rolled a 4 and a 2.

AUSTIN: Yeah.

KEITH: Woah boy.

AUSTIN: And did you roll bargain dice? The bargain dice is a 1. So that’s not great, actually. Oh, buddy.

KEITH: Yeah, that’s really bad. Yeah, yeah, yeah, that’s super bad.

JACK: [SIGHING] Oh, this game.

KEITH: This is a really hard game. This game seems like it was designed to end in disaster.

AUSTIN: Noir is hard—you’re close, is the thing that’s interesting. Right? With a couple of different moves.

KEITH: I know. Well, that’s the noir thing, right?

AUSTIN: And you’re actually not that far from—you’re actually pretty far from losing, you still have to escalate two different districts.

KEITH: Yeah.

JACK: Yeah, we have to escalate two other districts.

AUSTIN: But I guess that's luck. You could have gotten three dead districts by now, totally.

KEITH: Yeah. Well, we're running into like—we're getting so many black dice that characters, I think, are about to start dying off.

AUSTIN: That might be happening.

ART: No.

AUSTIN: We'll see.

ART: You need a 1. That's not a 1.

AUSTIN: You do need a 1 for that to happen.

KEITH: Yeah.

AUSTIN: So. Where are you pairing these off?

JACK: Okay, so it would make sense to—let me check the table here real quick. A draw counts as a miss, right?

KEITH: Yeah.

ART: Unless you want to break your principle.

AUSTIN: Right, which is 'reveal your true nature'.

[JACK HUMS]

KEITH: Oh my god, what's your true nature?

AUSTIN: I have an idea.

JACK: Great question, Keith.

[KEITH CHUCKLES]

JACK: I also have an idea, but I'm curious to hear what Austin's is. But we can go into that as it—

AUSTIN: We'll cross that bridge, right?

JACK: Yeah.

KEITH: How about you say them at the same time? 3, 2, 1, and then say it.

AUSTIN: Uh-huh. So you have a 4 and a 2. I mean—oy. That 2 isn't going to do you any favors, huh?

JACK: No.

KEITH: No.

AUSTIN: Alright, so your options here are: you could tie the 4 and break your principle—

JACK: Yeah. To get the hit.

AUSTIN: To get a hit, which would stop 'damage a condition'. Maybe that's just a bad play. It doesn't mean—

ART: But you'd still have the same condition.

KEITH: 3 and 4 have the same outcome. So it doesn't matter.

AUSTIN: Yeah, it doesn't matter. So, in this case what's happening is two of your conditions are getting damaged, and also you're adding a random lead or connection.

JACK: Yeah.

ART: Well, no, it's just this—it's the condition governing this investigation roll, so it's a double hit on one condition.

AUSTIN: Oh, shit. Which is Body. Right?

JACK: Oh, my god. Can I get down to -2? Is that—oh yeah.

AUSTIN: Yeah. You can get down to -3 or something, right?

ART: But the minuses are gonna add—start adding black dice to rolls.

AUSTIN: Yeah.

ART: You've basically turned off your Body.

AUSTIN: Yeah. Your Body is going to go down to Broken.

KEITH: Well, Florence is getting up there.

ALI: It is Florence Slowly, not Quickly.

JACK: [CHUCKLES] It is. This is consistent with what we know about Florence recently.

AUSTIN: Mhm.

JACK: Okay, so—

KEITH: You burned yourself out.

AUSTIN: So yeah, the outcome here no matter where you put your dice is going to be—

JACK: One lead, and—

AUSTIN: One lead, or new connection, and a -2 to your Body.

JACK: Okay. I think I'm gonna go for the lead here.

AUSTIN: Okay. Go ahead and draw it.

JACK: So I think—

AUSTIN: Remember, it's a drawn lead.

JACK: Yeah, yeah. I was gonna narrate how it happens—

AUSTIN: Okay.

JACK: —but we should see what the thing is here.

AUSTIN: It is an eight of spades.

JACK: Eight of spades.

KEITH: This is our first thing in the mainland.

AUSTIN: It is.

ALI: Oh.

KEITH: Interesting timing.

AUSTIN: I don't know what happens with that, because it's a dead place, right? So that means it—yeah.

ART: It's an escalated place, it's not a dead place.

AUSTIN: Okay, well. [CHUCKLES]

ART: [CHUCKLING] Chill.

ALI: Some would say that it's very lively. Considered.

AUSTIN: Yeah, that's true. That's fair.

KEITH: It is too lively to get anything done.

JACK: Okay, so our options here are shop, a vehicle, or a cop/deputy.

AUSTIN: Well. [CHUCKLES]

JACK: [CHUCKLES] Hm.

AUSTIN: What was the first one?

KEITH: Shop.

JACK: A shop.

AUSTIN: A shop. Okay.

KEITH: [QUIETLY] A shop!

JACK: A shop, a vehicle, or a cop/deputy.

AUSTIN: Any strong feelings?

JACK: Cop is interesting because it would link us to—it would link us both back to Florence's past and also, you know. This has been a show about cops and detectives. I'm both cautious of introducing a new character, but also I feel like we could use one.

AUSTIN: I mean, this eight could be Florence.

JACK: It could be myself?

AUSTIN: Yeah, it could be. If you were cautious about introducing a new character.

JACK: Yeah, I mean, I am a cop. I am a cop or a deputy.

AUSTIN: Mhm.

JACK: Hm. Ohh.

AUSTIN: I like the notion of her being like—I mean, this is like the 'you catch on slowly' thing again, right? Of like, you're involved. And I can't believe you don't even know you're involved.

JACK: Yeah, I reckon what it is—

AUSTIN: And you don't even remember.

JACK: I reckon what it is is, I succeed. I put the handcuffs on her and put her in the back of the car, which kind of miraculously starts. And as we're driving, she just—I think she just says something to Chris, like—I think she conveys something to Chris about Florence.

AUSTIN: Right. It's just like a lean forward of—eye contact with Florence, then leans forward from behind Chris and whispers something behind a closed hand.

JACK: Yeah, yeah, yeah. And then I think we lose her. I don't think we—I don't know how this happens, but I'm thinking a lot about like—there are scenes in the Fargo TV series where suspects just like, whatever the opposite of a miracle is. They just go.

AUSTIN: Slip away.

JACK: So I think what it is, is—oh, I know exactly what it is. After having whispered this to Chris, she just says 'pull over here'. And the car does. And she just gets out. Like, she's not wearing handcuffs anymore. And she just walks away.

AUSTIN: So how does the Body brokenness come in? Is this just like, something deep sets in?

JACK: I think—yeah. I think that Florence knows—I think that whether or not she knows it directly or not, she—or what if she's—it's Body, not Mind, so I don't want it to be like—yeah. I think she's asleep.

AUSTIN: [LAUGHS] I like that. I actually like that a lot. I actually like that like, you've drifted off to sleep.

JACK: And I wake up and—

AUSTIN: Like, it feels like part of you isn't there anymore. Like it feels like your body is like—you left something in that dream.

JACK: Yeah.

AUSTIN: And I'll say to Chris, the thing that she said is 'she doesn't even know she's one of us.' I'm not saying that that's a broken principle, because I don't know that Florence knows that—

JACK: I don't know. Yeah.

AUSTIN: —and I don't know that that is still—that's not enough to be true self. But she's definitely involved in this conspiracy in some way.

JACK: Okay, so let's put this eight—

AUSTIN: 'Florence Slowly.' And hey, this is where you're from, anyway, isn't it?

JACK: [CHUCKLES] Sure is. Yeah it is, actually. Oh, dear. This is why following what cards suggest is so good.

AUSTIN: Mhm. Totally. Okay.

ART: Oh, but—hm.

ALI: What?

ART: If we fail on a 6 again, and we draw a spade, we're gonna have to—

AUSTIN: Uh-huh.

ART: We're gonna have to make a choice.

AUSTIN: Uh-huh.

[ALI LAUGHS]

KEITH: Wait, what happens then? Wait, what happens?

AUSTIN: The reason we've been escalating is because there has not been any leads in that space. Now there's a lead there in the outskirts.

ALI: Right.

AUSTIN: So if—when you draw a 6 on a failure, that 6 either destroys the lead, or escalates the district.

KEITH: Ohh. Well, we can just escalate it again.

AUSTIN: No, no, no, it's in that order—

ART: No, it has to destroy.

[1:20:00]

KEITH: Oh, it destroys it. Ohh.

AUSTIN: If there is—yeah. Uh-huh.

ALI: Yeah.

ART: That's why the hot dog stand is burnt down.

KEITH: [EXHALES] Hoo. Woah boy.

[ALI LAUGHS]

AUSTIN: Uh-huh. Alright, so. Just keep that over there so there's no line.

ART: That's the subtitle of Noirlandia. Noirlandia: Woah Boy.

AUSTIN: That's good. Alright. Who's up next? Next up is Chris. So yeah, like, what happens after this—you've like pulled the car over, you've let her out. Like, there is definitely a

weird—there was like a weird mind trickery thing happening here. She isn't Jedi mind-tricking you, but there was just like, 'over here, please'.

ALI: Yeah.

AUSTIN: And you just like slow the car to a halt and she gets out and walks away. So what's next?

ALI: Um... I don't know.

AUSTIN: 'Who, what, where?'

ALI: What are we trying to do strategy-wise at this point?

AUSTIN: You need to answer 'how was it'—oh, like gameplay-wise? Like, mechanically?

ALI: Yeah.

AUSTIN: You need to connect—it looks to me—and people can disagree—it looks to me like you need to connect Florence to Hector or Strada, which like, obviously they're on the table now and you just need to figure out what that connection is, and then you can answer who did it, how was it pulled off, or one or the other, and then you need to—it looks like you need to wrap back around to Tyler Taylor Pierce and let Art get the answer on 'cause of death', 'Showdog', and 'Jennifer Jetta', but you could also just add another thing to that chain and connect it a different way.

ALI: Okay.

ART: I'm not sure that that's true.

AUSTIN: Yeah it is.

ART: Is it?

AUSTIN: Yeah. I'm pretty sure the connections can still go through a thing.

ART: If there's a chain of three undestroyed leads, the chain doesn't run the right way.

AUSTIN: I thought that it did. I thought that I read a thing that said that still worked, but I'll double-check. Maybe you're right.

ART: I would love to be wrong about that.

ALI: Are we just making chains of three, or are we closing the loop?

JACK: I think it's just chains.

AUSTIN: It's just the chains.

ALI: Okay.

AUSTIN: So like, Ollerenshaw official document to Ollie Frasier.

ALI: Oh, and then like, Strada to Hector to Florence. Or to the mayor or to whoever else. Oh god, okay. I think the obvious thing to do—

AUSTIN: “A destroyed lead can still be part of a chain used to find an answer, but the chain would have to include three other undestroyed unused leads.” So yeah. You can connect a third thing. It can still be part of a chain. Like, you can still pass through it.

ART: Alright, it’s just a little bit of clumsy wording.

AUSTIN: Yes, totally. Sorry about that, Ali, I didn’t mean to cut you off.

ALI: No, no, no. Yeah, I think the thing here is probably to just follow through with the Florence-Leslie-Hector thing. I don’t know how to like, narratively, though.

AUSTIN: Let’s start with a ‘where’. Where would she go to try to get information about this stuff?

ALI: I mean, Florence is just there, so like. [LAUGHING]

AUSTIN: I know, but we can time-jump. We don’t—we can do whatever we want, right?

ALI: Yeah.

AUSTIN: We can go to like, she’s asleep in a hotel—like, someone can say, ‘where’s Florence?’ and you can be like ‘oh, she’s asleep in my place’. Or she’s like, ‘I put her in a hotel, I have the key, she’s out’, like—

ALI: Right, right, right.

AUSTIN: ‘She’s knocked out, but she’s alive’, you know? Or something like that.

ALI: Yeah. But it’s to figure out her connection to this bigger thing.

AUSTIN: Yeah, totally. Totally.

ALI: Sure. Um... I mean, the thing that we’ve been leaning on a lot is like, meeting places, or message boards or whatever—is there a way to get in touch with the—’cause like, Florence was an official detective, and Leslie was officially part of the coast guard.

AUSTIN: The coast guard. Yeah.

ALI: Is there a way to get a gala onscreen, and go to a police academy sort of gala or whatever?

AUSTIN: Or like a police gala? Yeah, the whatever policeman’s ball, right?

ART: The policeman's ball, yeah.

ALI: Yeah.

AUSTIN: Which like, they're still having despite what's all happening?

JACK: [SIGHS] Yeah.

ALI: Oh, yeah, of course. It's to raise money for them to like, be able to get back into power or something? I don't know.

AUSTIN: No, I think it's probably even worse, right? Because the whole thing is that it's corrupt and is, like—they're not using it—that's what it used to be. It used to be like 'how can we raise money to get a good thing done?' and now it's like this petty little 'how do we raise money to build a new statue of myself? How do I raise money to change the name of this hotel to something else?' Or something. You know?

ALI: Oh, right, yeah. Art, do you wanna—does Tyler Taylor Pierce want to be in this scene? 'Cause this seems like—

ART: This seems kinda like his deal?

ALI: Yeah.

ART: Sure.

ALI: Yeah. Unless anyone else wants to come.

ART: He's got season tickets to the policeman's ball.

[ALI LAUGHS]

ALI: Oh, that's awful. Just imagine that. Just a book of police ball tickets.

AUSTIN: God.

ART: I tell you, I can't get a ticket in this town.

ALI: But yeah, I think they both go there and they're doing a little, like, snooping around. And not even like—maybe not even to figure out what's going on with Florence directly, but to like, figure out what 'one of us' means.

AUSTIN: Right.

ALI: And assuming that like, the upper crust authority in this town probably has a bunch of members of whatever that society is. So yeah.

AUSTIN: What's this place look like? Let's get a description of this place. I want there to be a big banner that says like 'a night of blue' or something like that.

[ALI LAUGHS]

ART: Oh. I hate it.

AUSTIN: One, because it's the shitty blue—you know. You know what I mean. Blue, like police, like cops, but also Bluff City/Blough City, so like we're doing weird double-entendres inside of terminology.

ART: And it's a blues band, right?

AUSTIN: And also it's a blues—it's not a blues *band*, I think, I think we're like deep in neo-noir dark cities shit, it's like a blues singer of the—it's like a woman who is singing the blues—it's like a white lady singing the blues in a nice dress.

ALI: Oh my god, I know exactly what it is. 'Cause this is a holiday game, right?

AUSTIN: Yes, this is a holiday game. You're totally right. Yes.

ALI: So a thing that happens with rich people—

AUSTIN: God, it should be snowing, also, shouldn't it?

ALI: Yes, also. But we're inside. Or maybe we're outside. It could be like an outside ball. But a thing that happens that rich people do is that, like, at really fancy malls and really fancy stores and stuff, there will be holiday shopping events.

[AUSTIN HUMS]

ALI: Where like the—all of the stores serve champagne, and everyone's there to spend a bunch of money, and the things that you buy for yourself, like, a very small amount of it is donated to charity.

AUSTIN: Right.

ALI: Instead of just like, donating that yourself.

AUSTIN: Yeah.

ALI: So I think it's one of those, and it's like a special, like—if you show your badge or whatever you get a 10% discount at all the stores on this bottom floor of the mall.

AUSTIN: Right.

ALI: And it's the mall that people are still like—there's like, waiters with trays.

AUSTIN: Yeah. I mean, for what it's worth, this exists in Atlantic City already to some degree, which is that there used to be a mall called the Ocean One Mall, which is where I worked in Atlantic City, that was like a mall. It was like a mall on a pier in Atlantic City, and it was like a mall. It was like local stores, and local store owners, and small businesses and stuff. And then that got replaced, that got shut down and got turned into—god, it's not the Walk, it might be called the Pier Shops or something.

KEITH: Yeah, the pier shops at Caesar's.

AUSTIN: Yeah, the playground now at Caesar's.

ART: Oh my god, I'm throwing up right now.

[ALI LAUGHS]

AUSTIN: Dude, it's so—have you looked inside of it? Because it's like Tiffany and Co., it's like—

ALI: Oh, lord.

KEITH: Oh, wow.

AUSTIN: It's like a big fountain show in the back, where there's like a big—you know what I mean when I say fountain. There's like a fountain with water that shoots up in time to bad music.

KEITH: Yeah.

ART: Yeah, yeah, yeah, we have so many of those. Los Angeles is literally filled with fountain show outdoor malls, yeah.

AUSTIN: Yes. It's like a rich Los Angeles mall but in Atlantic fucking City. It's the worst.

[ALI CHUCKLES]

ART: Do you ever go to the Grove? Is the Grove part of your L.A. tourism?

ALI: Yeah, we went to the Grove together.

AUSTIN: We went together, remember? We went and played that Benjamin there.

ART: Oh, yeah.

ALI: Yeah.

ART: Well, that's the LA-est example of this. Well, Rodeo Drive is like the most version of this, but that might even be further.

AUSTIN: Yeah, I think that's probably—that's like too far, but yeah, I like this notion of it being—and here's what I like about the—we talked about is it inside or outside, I think part of it

is just—I think part of the roof is just gone. From a helicopter crash. Or who knows? Someone blew up part of the fucking roof and there is just snow piling on the ground in the corner. And it's overcast and it's like that white cloudy light is coming in in part of the building. And someone goes over and cleans it up every once in a while.

ALI: Yeah.

AUSTIN: But like, that's just happening in the background here.

ALI: Right. It still has the appearance of being warm.

AUSTIN: Yes.

ALI: Like, here's like a fireplace somewhere, and people are dressed up really nice, but they look a little bit cold.

AUSTIN: Yeah, totally.

ALI: I think the singer's probably in that fountain, but they just put like—like a table inside of the fountain for her to stand on.

AUSTIN: You don't think it's a piano?

ALI: Oh, maybe.

AUSTIN: She's like, standing on a piano that someone is playing and she's singing. And there's fountain water all around her, and she's freezing. And so is the piano player.

ART: Yeah, that's got to really fuck up the sound of that piano.

KEITH: Can it be like a piano that you wouldn't usually stand on? Can it be like an upright piano?

[ALI LAUGHS]

AUSTIN: [CHUCKLING] That's tough. That's a tough—yeah, only space for the upright.

ALI: Yeah.

AUSTIN: So what's this—so what are you doing here? You're like, kind of schmoozing?

ALI: Yeah, I think we're schmoozing, and I think that we're just trying to get information from people. Maybe not directly—well, I don't know. I don't know if we're like trying to overhear people, or like—

ART: I'm trying to get some clients, I don't know about you.

ALI: Well, obviously. [LAUGHS]

ART: 'Tyler Taylor Pierce, Private Eye. These boys in blue, they do great work, but they can't be everywhere, and they won't catch your cheating husband. Give me a call. Here's my card. You have got to try whatever they're calling these fancy pigs in a blanket.'

[GROUP CHUCKLES]

AUSTIN: They're calling them 'showdogs'.

ART: 'Oh. Rest in peace.' Pours a little champagne out.

[1:30:03]

KEITH: Into a fountain.

AUSTIN: Right. So Chris, what are you doing? 'Cause this is your scene. You're the protagonist in this scene.

ALI: Yeah, I think that Tyler's a fantastic distraction.

AUSTIN: Uh-huh. [CHUCKLES]

ALI: While he's distracting people—I was trying to think if there was an interesting thing with receipts and it's not that. I wonder if it's like, talking to the people who work the shops, but it's also maybe not that? Um...

[AUSTIN HUMS]

AUSTIN: I'm trying to think of places where you would find information. Like, is there—is there something in part of this gala that is part of the weird communication stuff in this city, that is like a book of records or something, that the person who's officiating this ball has to put their hand on, and something's in that book, is there—are there records from the mall that are about surveillance records that have people coming in and out, is there like an elite bar that no one can get into except for people who are elite members? Do you know what I mean?

ALI: Yeah, yeah.

AUSTIN: Like is there a club that you notice—somehow, that you learn both Florence and Leslie Strada are members of? We could even amend that backwards into the previous scene, to where you notice something while you're putting Florence into a motel room for her to recover in, you by mistake find a card that lists the name of a bar or something in this place.

KEITH: It's a Dave & Buster's power card.

AUSTIN: It's a Dave & Buster's power card. [CHUCKLES] Exactly. It has three dollars, which is not enough to play any games, because the world is terrible.

[ALI AND KEITH LAUGH]

AUSTIN: But yeah, you know what I mean. Right? A member's card.

ALI: Yeah, yeah, yeah. I like that, I think it makes sense. I think that there's like—I think that maybe the reason Chris invited Tyler was that there's like a—there's like a—it's like you need to make sure that you're on the list, but it's not just a list of people, it's also like a list of people and then their alliances.

AUSTIN: Right, right. Totally.

ALI: So it's basically this chart of who knows each other and how.

AUSTIN: Okay.

ALI: And then I think that maybe having that information, being able to cross-reference it, or like, go somewhere within this party, like you said, a private bar or whatever.

AUSTIN: So wait, are you looking for that sort of map of connections? Or you—is that how you got in? I missed the start of that sentence.

ALI: I think that maybe stealing that map of connections is probably the thing that—

AUSTIN: Yeah, I like that a lot.

ALI: Okay, yeah.

AUSTIN: I like that a lot because there's another thing that you have that you don't—you might not remember that you have that might line up with it really nicely.

ALI: [LAUGHING] Okay. Um—

JACK: Ohh. I think I just realized what it is.

AUSTIN: Okay. So—

ART: Show-off.

AUSTIN: How do you—where is it? It's in this club, so maybe the challenge is about getting into that club, like, frontways? Or is it like sneaking in? Like, what's the—

ALI: I think it's like getting in, but then getting into where the staff works.

AUSTIN: Right.

ALI: Because they're the ones keeping track of that thing.

AUSTIN: Right. 'Cause that's the thing that is like—

ALI: It's like a giant binder that they check at the door or whatever.

AUSTIN: Right. I think it's literally a map. I think it's literally a thing on the wall.

ALI: Oh, okay.

AUSTIN: Like, I want to make it—I want it to be map-like for that reason. Like, almost like 'alright, so here is—' and you're on it. Right? Now, because you're walked in the door with Tyler Taylor Pierce, and so it's like Tyler Taylor Pierce has a—not an underling, but some sort of like—you're almost like a vassal at this point? Like, it's almost like a weird medieval hierarchy. Like, 'oh, okay, well, if Chris Andrews is with Tyler Taylor Pierce, then she's allowed in here'. Not 'in here' the back room, but into the door of the gala. You know?

ALI: Right. Yeah.

AUSTIN: Alright, so where is it and how do you try to get in? How do you get into the staff room? Or it's like the security, like the back—I imagine there's no doorman at this place, but what happens is if you come in, they give you 30 minutes to buy something, and if you don't buy something within 30 minutes someone comes by and escorts you out of the mall.

ALI: Yeah. I think that the staff room is like a commandeered Starbucks.

AUSTIN: Okay, sure.

ALI: That they put a little—'cause it's not serving coffee during this thing or whatever—

AUSTIN: No, no.

ALI: —but there's like a little velvet rope and only they can get back there.

AUSTIN: Okay.

ALI: And they have a bunch of monitors set up, because they set up to the security cameras and have that big—I think it's like—it's like, there's the seats and everything, and there's a little corner where you can turn, and then over there is this big thing against the wall.

AUSTIN: Mhm.

ALI: And yeah. I don't know if it's like—I don't know if it's just like pretending that I belong there, because that's the easiest way to get into a place that you're not supposed to be. But yeah, I think that she's the sort of person who can sort of slip through the cracks in that way, because she's kind of not from this city and has been added to this thing but is not well-known enough that like, every person working security at that desk knows who she is.

AUSTIN: So is this—Reputation is what you're rolling here, basically?

ALI: Um...

AUSTIN: It's interesting because your Reputation is Overlooked, which is something that you're leaning on, right?

ALI: Yeah, that makes sense.

AUSTIN: Alright, so that's one white die versus what I think is one black die.

ALI: Okay.

AUSTIN: I always get confused around challenge rolls. So if you're listening, and you're like 'I have no idea how this game is working', listen.

ALI: Yeah, guess what?

AUSTIN: "Supporter rolls a black die, adding any extra white—" Yep, that's it. Just one white, one black. Alright. Ready?

ALI: Okay. Yeah.

AUSTIN: Rolling. Rolled a 4. You rolled a 2.

ALI: Okay.

AUSTIN: 4 wins. Wins by 2.

ALI: [CHUCKLES] Okay, yep.

AUSTIN: So what happens? Who do you talk to? Who's at the front—does anybody have a name for whoever's on this velvet rope who shuts you down?

KEITH: Bouncer. Oh, let me check my names for a bouncer.

AUSTIN: Do I have a bouncer already? Who is 'James Magnolia James'? Why is that on my list?

[KEITH LAUGHS]

ALI: That was the detective that Art spoke to in the first scene of this game.

JACK: Oh, the detective.

AUSTIN: Right, what did he sound like?

JACK: Oh, he was like—

ART: Incredulous.

JACK: He was like, very—he was not at all into the fact that this guy was trying to come in and get him to the crime scene. His whole thing was like, ‘I can see straight through your ridiculous bag ploy.’

AUSTIN: Right.

ALI: Yeah.

AUSTIN: I like it being that guy—

ART: [SARCASTICALLY] Which is weird, because no one could possibly see through that ploy.

[JACK CHUCKLES]

ART: That was a *perfect* plan.

ALI: Perfect.

AUSTIN: Why was he named Magnolia?

JACK: It was just a name, I think.

ALI: Jack was on one.

AUSTIN: Gotcha.

JACK: Yeah, I think that’s fair.

AUSTIN: Alright, it was Jack. So Jack, you can play James Magnolia James, who is currently at this police ball guarding the door—or, guarding the velvet roped-off Starbucks where they have set up their like, security station. So what’s this failure look like, and then Chris, how do you turn that into your investigation roll?

ALI: Well, I think that she just tried to walk in.

AUSTIN: Oh, okay. Just walked right past James Magnolia James.

ALI: That’s the thing, of just being like, ‘yeah, I’m wearing a black shirt—’

[AUSTIN LAUGHS]

ALI (as CHRIS): I work security here, I was just down over at the Bed Bath & Beyond and I had to speak to Miss Carla because of a coupon issue and now I’m just trying to come back into the meeting room.

JACK (as JAMES MAGNOLIA JAMES): Yeah. No.

[AUSTIN AND ALI LAUGH]

ALI (as CHRIS): Excuse me?

JACK (as JAMES MAGNOLIA JAMES): No, that's not gonna work. That's not—what's he doing here?

ALI: Oh, I don't think that Tyler's with me.

JACK: Oh, okay. Alright. Oh, you're just—okay.

ALI: We got into the party together, and then now—

JACK: And then you've—

ALI: —we've since separated. He's now working, and I'm trying to be a security guard.

ALI (as CHRIS): We like, know each other, but I'm also— [QUIETLY] he asked me to come to this party with him, and I was like 'yeah', 'cause, you know, we just met and it's really nice and everything, but I like am working here. [CHUCKLES] And it's kind of awkward. So if you could not make this a thing.

[KEITH LAUGHS]

JACK (as JAMES MAGNOLIA JAMES): Yeah. No. This is—this is—it sounds like you're the one making this a thing, at this point. Can I see some ID, please?

ALI (as CHRIS): Um, they don't, like—I just got hired for the night, it was like a Craigslist thing.

ALI: And then she's like, looking for her license.

JACK (as JAMES MAGNOLIA JAMES): For the night, on a Craigslist thing, to the police ball?

ALI (as CHRIS): Yeah, all of the police are at the ball, you need extra security, what?

[AUSTIN AND ART LAUGH]

AUSTIN: Okay, yeah.

JACK (as JAMES MAGNOLIA JAMES): Okay. Yeah, I'll give you that one. I'll give you that one. You're not getting in here. This is—everything about your story screams lies.

ALI (as CHRIS): I can show you the Craigslist post.

AUSTIN: Ooh!

JACK (as JAMES MAGNOLIA JAMES): Okay. Alright.

ALI: And then she pulls out the giant iPad that she had that had the document on it. Not on right now, obviously. But it's just like—and it's a Craigslist post. It's like, 'security needed'. November 28th or whatever.

AUSTIN: Is this a real Craigslist post or do we get a flashback to you making that Craigslist post?

JACK: [CHUCKLING] Of you writing one earlier.

[ALI LAUGHS]

AUSTIN: Like, laying down on the motel bed while Florence is knocked out in the chair, you're like, 'you know what, I'm gonna—' like laying down and typing this out, and then moving Florence back to the bed.

ALI: Yeah.

AUSTIN: Don't ask me why you didn't just sit in the chair and do it, but.

ALI: You gotta have space to lie on Craigslist.

AUSTIN: Yeah. Uh-huh.

ALI: But yeah, just like, you know. 'Need extra people, email a picture and your resume and whatever.'

JACK (as JAMES MAGNOLIA JAMES): Yeah, this is number 12. You got number 10 written down there.

ALI (as CHRIS): Wait, what?

JACK (as JAMES MAGNOLIA JAMES): You got number 10 written on the address at the thing. It says 'the ball at number 10'. This is number 12.

ALI (as CHRIS): Oh, it was a typo.

JACK (as JAMES MAGNOLIA JAMES): [CHUCKLING] I'm not letting you in.

AUSTIN: 'That I definitely didn't make. It wasn't me. It's not my typo. #NotMyTypo.'

[ALI LAUGHS]

ALI (as CHRIS): Well, there isn't a number 10. The number 10 is all the way out on the other side of the city. 'Cause like, the numbers are weird. There's only one—

JACK (as JAMES MAGNOLIA JAMES): What's your name?

ALI (as CHRIS): My name is Christine Andrews.

JACK (as JAMES MAGNOLIA JAMES): Christine Andrews, go and enjoy the party.

ALI (as CHRIS): Are you firing me?

[1:40:00]

JACK (as JAMES MAGNOLIA JAMES): I'm not firing you because you are not—

AUSTIN: Was that tears? Is Christine crying? Or was that just a laugh?

ALI: She is definitely crying.

AUSTIN: Oh my god.

JACK (as JAMES MAGNOLIA JAMES): I am not firing you because you are not security.

ALI (as CHRIS): I just—

[GROUP LAUGHTER]

JACK (as JAMES MAGNOLIA JAMES): Are you crying?

ALI (as CHRIS): I really needed this gig. And I just—

JACK (as JAMES MAGNOLIA JAMES): Yeah, yeah. Uh-huh?

ALI (as CHRIS): It's just—Christmas is in like three weeks, and I haven't bought anything yet.

JACK (as JAMES MAGNOLIA JAMES): It's a tough time for—

ALI (as CHRIS): It was like \$100 in a night. That's like four presents. That's my whole family!

JACK (as JAMES MAGNOLIA JAMES): Your whole family?

ALI (as CHRIS): Yeah!

JACK (as JAMES MAGNOLIA JAMES): You're—I'm not buying this. I'm sorry that it's rough. It's rough for a lot of people this time of year. But also I think you're still lying to me.

ALI (as CHRIS): [SOBBING] I am lying to you, but can I go in there and get some coffee at least?

JACK (as JAMES MAGNOLIA JAMES): So you are lying to me?

ALI (as CHRIS): I am.

[UPROARIOUS GROUP LAUGHTER]

AUSTIN: But like, yes, right? That has to be a yes. And that's how you get to make an investigation roll, is you get three seconds to look at this fucking board and memorize as much as you can remember.

JACK: I think the guy's just like—I think he's laughing.

[KEITH LAUGHS]

JACK: I think he's like,

JACK (as JAMES MAGNOLIA JAMES): Alright, Chris. I'm gonna go to the bathroom, and when I come back, I don't want to see you again. Okay? Have we got an agreement now?

ALI (as CHRIS): Okay, thank you.

JACK (as JAMES MAGNOLIA JAMES): Alright. Okay. Have a good night.

ALI: She walks over to the place where they have all the extra sugar and syrups and napkins and she wipes her face, and then looks at the whatever.

AUSTIN: Alright, give me an investigation roll.

ALI: Yeah.

AUSTIN: I think this is... [UNCERTAINLY] Mind? I don't know, what do you think? What do other people think? What's like, quickly studying this thing?

ART: Yeah that's probably Mind, right?

KEITH: I think it's probably Mind, yeah.

JACK: I think it's Mind.

ALI: Yeah.

AUSTIN: Sorry. This is gonna go rough again, probably.

ALI: Yeah, I'm Conflicted, so.

AUSTIN: Let's see. Alright. "In investigation rolls, start with two." That's two white. That's good. That's a good start. Nice two white. "Opposition starts with three black."

KEITH: I could make an argument for Body if you had a notepad and you were furiously writing it down.

ALI: [CHUCKLES] Um...

ART: The old handwriting check.

ALI: I could be. That seems unfair, but I could be.

AUSTIN: Look into your hearts. You know? That's what I'm gonna say.

KEITH: Well, it's definitely not Heart.

ALI: Are you positive?

AUSTIN: I'm pretty sure it's not Heart.

KEITH: Yeah, I think it's—

ALI: [LAUGHING] Okay.

JACK: Yeah, Heart would have been talking to the guy. If you'd been like, 'talk me through this.'

ALI: Yeah, it's probably Mind. It's not like how fast I can write down this like, whatever.

AUSTIN: I mean, the Heart roll would be how long it takes him to come back. Right?

JACK: Mhm. Yeah, like how effectively have you convinced this guy?

AUSTIN: To like—yeah.

ALI: Yeah.

AUSTIN: I might be fine with that, honestly. That might be kind of interesting.

ALI: [CROSSTALK] I mean, it's still black.

AUSTIN: Oh, is it? Okay.

KEITH: [CROSSTALK] Is Guilty any better than Conflicted?

ALI: Yeah.

AUSTIN: No it's not, it's the same thing. Okay.

KEITH: No, it's—yeah.

AUSTIN: Yeah, Body to me is the one that's the stretchiest stretch. I don't think that's gonna be—

KEITH: Well, it was specifically the word 'vigorous' had me picturing scrambling on a piece of paper.

AUSTIN: Yeah, I got it. I mean... Listen, don't think that I'm not searching this document to see if there's any way that I can give you this on Body. I'm looking right now to see if there's any write-up of the word 'Body' that makes it sound like this. There isn't.

KEITH: Super-strong finger muscles. No, that's Mind.

AUSTIN: It's probably Mind. Okay, so. Two white dice, three black dice plus a failed challenge is one more, plus an escalation is one more, plus a negative condition is one more, that's six. But there is one—

ART: One bargain.

AUSTIN: One bargain.

ART: I'm gonna roll that bargain.

AUSTIN: Alright.

ALI: Thank you.

AUSTIN: Roll good.

ALI: And I roll these two?

AUSTIN: You roll the two. Oh, it's a 6 on the bargain!

KEITH: It's a 6, there we go.

[GROUP EXCLAIMS]

AUSTIN: Oh my *god*!

KEITH: Oh my god.

ALI: Oh, lordy.

KEITH: Alright, game over, bye.

AUSTIN: Ohh-kay. Okay. Okay.

ALI: A fail. Okay. Alright.

KEITH: That was three—Austin rolled three 6s.

AUSTIN: I rolled three 6s. And those are the ones. You can't—you have to pick the high ones. You can't pick the other ones.

KEITH: Yeah. Yeah.

ART: So it's one success if you want to break your principle.

ALI: Wasn't there like—

AUSTIN: What's your principle? 'Never betray my own.' Oof.

ALI: It is—yeah.

KEITH: Oh, you've gotta betray your own, huh?

ART: Ohh.

ALI: [SCOFFS] Yes.

ART: Ali, it's probably time to betray your own.

AUSTIN: Who are 'your own', is the question?

ALI: I think that I did the last game, actually. It's like the—

ART: The outskirts-ers?

ALI: Well, at the time it was like the people at the radio office.

AUSTIN: Oh, did you break a principle then?

ALI: I think so.

AUSTIN: You don't have a mark for it. I don't remember if you did that. Shit.

KEITH: I don't think you did. I think we decided against it.

AUSTIN: Me too.

ALI: Okay.

KEITH: I would like to say that we do have, best case scenario, two 1 out of 4 chances to kill Jack.

[AUSTIN AND JACK CHUCKLE]

AUSTIN: Well no, because there have been a lot of draws already that have been spades. So it's not quite 2 out of 4. Or 1 out of 4. It's—

ALI: Yeah.

KEITH: That's fair.

AUSTIN: But it's close.

ALI: Its getting there. It's getting wild.

AUSTIN: Uh-huh.

ART: Oh, but you also have to take Harm to even use that—you would have to take Harm and then break your principle.

AUSTIN: No wait—do you have to do both of them?

ART: To use a bargain die, you need to get harmed.

ALI: Then what's the point of the bargain—what?

AUSTIN: Yeah, that's the bargain.

KEITH: Yeah, this is a fucking brutal game where you are always almost dying.

ART: "These bargains work like bargains on challenge rolls. A supporter can propose how you'll get lucky in the Investigation at the cost of harming one of your conditions."

AUSTIN: But that's only if you're using the—it's changing without the bargain.

ART: But that's the 6. The 6 is the—to tie to use the broken principle to get the—

KEITH: [CROSSTALK] Yeah, we can only use the tie to—yeah.

AUSTIN: I see, in the *first* place. Fuck. I see.

KEITH: So, without using the bargain die, we have three 6s that are misses. With the bargain die—

ART: With the 6, you can—

KEITH: You have to harm yourself and—

ART: With hitting on the 6, you can add and connect a lead or find an answer.

ALI: Oh, okay.

AUSTIN: Yeah.

ALI: Which is probably worth doing.

AUSTIN: Worth harming—so you'd be harming Mind and betraying your people.

KEITH: Yeah.

ART: Can we do this out of order?

AUSTIN: We can do this in whatever—no, black 6s have to end. That's the rule is you have to end on that.

ALI: Wait, what?

ART: No, I mean can we do it the other—can we—can the bargain have to do with the principle break?

AUSTIN: Yeah.

ART: 'Cause I rolled the die, so I get to offer the bargain.

ALI: Okay.

AUSTIN: Yeah, totally. So what is your offered bargain?

ART: I mean, I want to hear how the principle would be broken, and then I'm gonna offer—

AUSTIN: I see what you're saying.

ART: I'm offering Heart harm, is what I'm offering.

KEITH: I do think that anybody gets to offer the bargain. We can all offer different bargains.

ALI: Yes, true. Yeah, yeah.

AUSTIN: No, it's any supporters who rolled a bargain die can propose a bargain. But I'm fine with it being—

KEITH: Oh, is it for challenge rolls?

AUSTIN: Yeah, for challenge rolls anybody can propose a bargain.

KEITH: Okay.

AUSTIN: Oh, oh, oh. No. "On investigation rolls—however, unlike in investigation rolls, bargainers in investigation rolls—" Hm. I'm gonna start this all over. "However, unlike in challenge rolls, bargainers in investigation rolls can propose a purely narrative cost. Accepting a narrative bargain doesn't harm a condition, but you'll have to fulfill the end of the bargain to the best of your abilities. Narrative bargains look like, for instance: you lose your lucky hat to the bayss, you have to adopt every single one of these abducted dalmatians, or you'll need to vow to put every member of the corrupt monarchy behind bars, even your father."

ALI: Yikes.

ART: I don't know what that looks like here.

[ALI CHUCKLES]

ART: But like, we can sure talk about it. You don't have a lucky hat.

AUSTIN: Yeah, what do you have that you could betray, or that you could lose here narratively or otherwise? I mean, it could still just be a condition that breaks. Right?

ALI: Right. Which I don't mind. I mean, we're getting towards the end of this. Yeah, I think 'never betray my own', it's kind of like in reference to this greater society of people who believe the stuff that Hector said, and then I don't know—

ART: How do you betray those people to get this piece of information, though?

ALI: It could be like, a guy that someone in the security office offers me a thing, or tells me to do a thing or not do a thing, or something like that.

AUSTIN: Like, what if James Magnolia actually offers like—'You know what? Give me your login. Give me your login to that form and you can stay as long as you want.'

[ALI GASPS]

JACK: Huh.

ART: Ohh.

ALI: Ohh. That's a big betrayal.

AUSTIN: Yeah. Especially because we know that that is where the Omega Love crew is exchanging information and stuff. Right? So he's basically asking for access to where the revolution is organizing.

ART: So that's the principle. What's the bargain?

AUSTIN: I think that's the bargain. I would be fine with that being both. Or we can make the bargain be that Mind goes down from Conflicted, because—

ART: Or Rep goes down?

AUSTIN: Or Rep goes down. Can it be—it can be anything, it isn't just whatever we rolled?

ART: It can be anything you want, yeh.

AUSTIN: Yeah, it could be Rep. Right, I mean, that definitely would lower Rep.

ALI: Yeah.

ART: Being a narc is bad for your reputation.

AUSTIN: Yeah. What are the words? What's under—what's the lower—what's the next thing down on both Rep and Mind? Let's see. On Rep it would be—

[1:50:07]

ALI: Suspected.

AUSTIN: Right.

ALI: And then—

ART: 'Cause they're not sure. I mean, how would you be sure about that?

AUSTIN: Wait, what?

ART: How would you be sure—'cause Suspected works, right? You don't—they don't *know*.

AUSTIN: Right.

ALI: Yeah.

AUSTIN: And that would work because it's not like you're—I don't know that betraying them gives you a good Rep with the cops either. Right?

ALI: [LAUGHING] True.

AUSTIN: You're a snitch. Cops don't like snitches. Cops use snitches. Cops are like, 'that's a trustworthy person right there'. It's like—

ALI: True.

AUSTIN: 'I'm trying to use this person to get other people in jail.' So yeah, I like Rep maybe going down to Suspected.

ALI: Okay. Yeah, and then the thing that I get is... I get to make a connection and a new—

AUSTIN: Yeah, let's read from the thing. "Create a lead from scratch and connect it to any other lead, or if there is a chain of three undestroyed leads connected on the board, you can create an answer." So you can create and connect a new lead from scratch.

ALI: Oh.

ART: Or make an answer out of—

AUSTIN: I don't think there's anything that we have three connections of.

ART: Oh, 'cause Jack didn't—Florence didn't connect.

AUSTIN: No, Florence doesn't connect yet.

ART: Okay.

ALI: Can I make an answer from the office, the official—

ART: We have—

ALI: We have that already?

ART: We have that answer.

AUSTIN: The little green dots on each piece are—yeah.

ALI: Okay. They're an answer already.

AUSTIN: Those are an answer. God, it's so close. You're so close to getting this answer.

[ALI LAUGHS]

AUSTIN: When it says "from scratch", what's that mean?

ART: You don't have to go with the card, right?

KEITH: Yeah, you can pick anything you want.

AUSTIN: Cool. That's good. Is this the first time we've done that?

KEITH: We've already done it once.

ART: No, I believe that's where Ollie Frasier came from.

AUSTIN: Oh, you're right. That's right. He's an index card. You're right. Yeah. Okay. that makes sense.

ART: Oh, and so that must be 'cause of death: gun, close-range' too.

AUSTIN: Yes. totally. Alright, so what do we find? What is the connect—whats the new thing that you're adding and connecting?

ALI: What do we find?

AUSTIN: So it could be something new on 'cause of death—Jennifer Jetta—Showdogs', or it can be something new that connects to Hector and Captain Leslie Strada.

ALI: It should be to Hector and Leslie, right?

KEITH: Yeah.

AUSTIN: Yeah, I think so.

ALI: Well, I was like—I came here trying to figure out what that sort of secret society was.

AUSTIN: Yeah, I think that that's definitely it. Right?

ALI: Yeah.

AUSTIN: So—

ART: Oh, we might have made a mistake.

AUSTIN: Oh yeah?

ALI: Oh?

ART: Turning yourself into a lead is its own—

AUSTIN: Yeah, I saw that. I'm okay with—

ART: Alright.

AUSTIN: I think that that's a—so yeah, there's an outcome that is pin yourself and damage Rep, it doesn't ever say you can't pin yourself otherwise, so I think we're fine.

ART: Okay.

AUSTIN: I saw that and I think we're alright. And also we didn't damage Florence's Rep, so.

ART: Sure.

ALI: Yeah.

ART: It does really lay out that dead—

AUSTIN: It sure does. So I think—yeah, you get the name of this. So, do you remember in Hector Hu's office there was a corkboard that had strings on it, but nothing else. It had pins and strings. It's the map board. It's the same map that they have.

ALI: [GASPS] Oh.

AUSTIN: So like, if you overlay the map in this office with his corkboard, you would get one of the corkboards that you're looking with, with connections and stuff, and you put together that it is a corkboard—not just the lines connect members of a group, that I need to commit to a name on and I have a number of potential names. My top one right now is the Concern, but otherwise it's like, the City, the County, it's definitely a C-word. I like the Concern a lot.

JACK: I like Concern.

KEITH: I like Concern.

AUSTIN: So I'm gonna write down 'Concern'. And that is the name of the group that at the very least Strada and Hector are part of. Maybe Florence—Florence isn't connected because we don't get to connect Florence. I mean, I guess that—that's up to you. Who do you connect to the Concern? Do you connect Strada and Hu or do you connect Florence to the Concern?

ALI: I would probably make that three-chain, right?

AUSTIN: Yeah, I'm with you. I think that that's the right call. A hundred percent.

ALI: With apologies to Florence.

JACK: It's cool. I mean, that's probably good news right now.

AUSTIN: Uh-huh. Art asks in the chat, "Do they have a longer name like Concerned Citizens for Blahblahblah?" No. This is just the Concern. This is one of those. Do you know what I mean? And in fact, I don't even know that it says it outright. Like, I think it's one of those things where you get the shots in your head about looking at the documents, and there are points at which it referred to the concern, and you thought it was a lowercase C—in fact, maybe it's always written with a lowercase C, and it's like, 'oh, do you mean the thing that this is concerned with?' You know what I mean? Like, the issue at hand? And like, no, no, no, that's a capital C, that's the—this is a group. This is a group called the Concern. And both Hector before he remembered it and Leslie Strada even now are clearly both part of it.

ALI: Okay.

AUSTIN: So.

ALI: Do we then make an answer from this or do we need a 6?

AUSTIN: No, someone else has to make an answer with a 6.

ART: Yeah, you need another 6.

ALI: Oh, lord.

ART: Bad stuff's about to happen.

AUSTIN: Uh-huh. "Escalate or destroy a lead twice: draw a card and look at the district that it shares its suit with. If it has any undestroyed leads, destroy one of those. If it has no undestroyed leads, escalate the district."

ART: Jack, I'm reaching out. I'm reaching out for you.

AUSTIN: Oh, where is this? Where is this? Where is *this*? Where is the Concern at?

ALI: Oh.

AUSTIN: Is it in the area you're at?

ALI: I guess?

AUSTIN: The Concern feels like it's downtown or shore, right?

KEITH: Yeah, it feels like the boardwalk to me.

ALI: Yeah.

AUSTIN: Yeah, I'm cool with that, I just want to make sure—I don't remember if the new lead can go anywhere or is it where you're at. Do you know what I mean?

ART: The board says—

KEITH: It's from scratch, so it can be whatever you want.

AUSTIN: Yeah, that makes sense.

ART: Yeah.

AUSTIN: Alright. So we're gonna put that downtown? Is that what we just said or did I miss that?

KEITH: Yeah. That's where the mayor is, so, you know. That's like—

AUSTIN: Yeah, I'm with you.

ALI: Yeah, that adds up.

AUSTIN: Yeah.

ALI: The shore's a little heavy right now, so.

KEITH: Yeah.

AUSTIN: The shore sure is a little heavy. Alright, time to draw two cards and hope that it doesn't spoil everything we're working on, right?

[JACK GROANS]

KEITH: It's about to, I feel like.

ART: We can still be in scene—

AUSTIN: Queen of hearts.

KEITH: Okay. There it is.

AUSTIN: So we destroy one of these leads.

ART: But then it should be Ollie Frasier, right? Because we've already got the answer.

AUSTIN: We already have the answer. Yeah, I think that we're allowed to do that, right?

JACK: Can we do that? Can we destroy—

KEITH: Yes.

AUSTIN: Are you just saying that 'cause you want it to be true?

KEITH: It doesn't—I don't—

JACK: I don't think I am.

KEITH: I don't remember it because we read that passage earlier. I don't remember it saying it has to be active leads.

ART: I don't, um—"they must not be destroyed."

AUSTIN: What, answers?

ART: It says they must be connected to find an answer.

AUSTIN: Yeah, yeah, yeah.

ART: It doesn't say once it's an answer.

KEITH: It says destroy any—"if it has any undestroyed leads, destroy any one of those" is what it says.

AUSTIN: My question is, is it still a lead if it has an answer?

KEITH: Yes.

ART: I don't see anything that answers that.

KEITH: Well, 'cause if you go—if you like solved a mystery, right? You're like 'well, we followed our leads', then it'll become a new 'we followed our—'

AUSTIN: Oh, holy shit. I think we may have—we definitely missed something. Here's a big one that I didn't notice: "Answers are leads and they don't belong to any district."

[ALI SCOFFS]

JACK: Uh...

ALI: Wait, what?

ART: Oh, so they can't be destroyed.

AUSTIN: Right. So I mean, that's fine. I'm not saying that these—I'm saying that you could also be connecting things to why the victim was killed, for instance.

KEITH: Ohh.

ALI: Oh.

ART: But then you can't create connections to find more answers from the leads.

KEITH: But that makes the—

AUSTIN: No, no, non that's not what I mean.

KEITH: The string of three leads is not the answer. The answer is a separate thing that doesn't live anywhere.

AUSTIN: Yes. I am saying that what I need to add to this board is another lead called 'why was the victim killed'.

JACK: Yeah.

ART: Sure.

JACK: So we can actually in theory use that in future—

AUSTIN: Yes. That should have been on the board already

ART: No, it can't—it specifically says they can't—oh they *can* be used to create connections.

AUSTIN: Yes, and they don't belong to any district which means—

ART: They can't be destroyed.

AUSTIN: They can't be destroyed, which is why they're good. That's good to have. I wish we had noticed that.

KEITH: Oh, so we've actually had that from the start of this session.

AUSTIN: Of this session, there should have been this other 'the reason the victim was killed' answer.

KEITH: Yeah.

ART: Okay.

AUSTIN: I don't know that that—does that change much, though? It might.

KEITH: You did write it as the Concern again.

AUSTIN: I know, sorry.

ART: No?

AUSTIN: I'm gonna write "he stole the doc", is what I'm gonna write, and then that's the reason he was killed.

ART: I mean, there's an obvious connection to be made right now, that we might have made—

AUSTIN: Which is?

ART: —which is, 'Strada—Hu—cause of death'. Or just draw a line from Hector Hu to 'he stole the doc' and that's an answer.

AUSTIN: So instead of doing—instead of playing Florence Slowly, what we would have done was draw a connection to 'he stole the doc', is what you're saying.

ART: Right. But I don't know if—or from Strada to 'he stole the doc'. 'Cause that's what that scene was.

AUSTIN: Right. Instead of drawing Florence.

ART: And then—yeah.

AUSTIN: I'm just trying to make sure y'all have a chance of winning fairly. I'm trying to be a fan of the players.

ART: And then right now instead of creating the Concern, we could have created the answer here.

[2:00:01]

AUSTIN: Right, that's what I'm saying. Yes, yes, yes. Exactly. Exactly.

ALI: [HUMS] Well...

AUSTIN: It's up to y'all. I—

KEITH: I like that. I think that's a good idea. I mean, if we didn't know a thing about the game, and the thing was preventing us from getting an answer at the right time, I would rather have the answer, right?

ALI: Yeah.

AUSTIN: Yeah, and I'm also willing to—what I'm gonna end up saying is like—I still think that that's part of you getting the answer here, is he stole the doc about the Concern.

KEITH: Okay, so we still get the Concern.

AUSTIN: And then—well, and then what we get is—so wait, did we get—that is who did it? Is that what that was?

ART: Yeah, I think so.

AUSTIN: 'Cause then what we get is—oop, I just moved the wrong thing. God. Sorry for people listening to this nonsense that we're doing. But what we get is—and maybe you see it—okay, here's what you see. There are all of these different colors, Chris, on the board—on the corkboard. Right? On Hector's corkboard in his office. And they all have different colors and then you remember that he's always done this on the radio, like, 'we've got a code green here today, folks. We've got a code red. We've got a code burgundy.' And when it's a code burgundy, that means someone got killed. But he can't say that, 'cause the cops are listening. The legal team—people on the legal team won't let him say the truth, so he can't say that so-and-so—he can't say that J.F.K. is the real killer.

[KEITH LAUGHS]

AUSTIN: But what he can say is, 'we got a code burgundy here'. And so you put together that there's a burgundy line from Leslie Strada to a blank space that is Hector Hu. And so that's how you—

KEITH: Okay. And how does J.F.K. fit in?

AUSTIN: J.F.K. killed somebody else.

KEITH: Oh, dang.

AUSTIN: J.F.K. killed a lot of crab-men, let me tell ya. Alright, so. Whew. That's a weird rule to have found while looking for a completely different rule. So—

ART: Alright, so that's our new answer.

AUSTIN: So that's a new answer. But wait, that also then gets added to the list of leads. Right?

KEITH: Okay.

ALI: Right. Yes.

AUSTIN: So where's the third one—and then Hector is now also used. Okay. So now there's—

KEITH: Don't forget to destroy the mayor, though.

AUSTIN: I will destroy the mayor.

ART: The mayor is now destroyed.

AUSTIN: But I'm going to now also add—this is 'who did it', and the answer is Leslie Strada from the Concern.

ART: So what's the answer I'm building over here? What's the—

AUSTIN: How it was done. How it was pulled off. Right?

ART: Okay. Sure.

AUSTIN: I'm asking.

ART: I'm just making sure I'm not gonna—no that's true, right? That the journalist could have been involved in the set-up?

AUSTIN: Sure.

ART: You know, Hector had to have sources from all over, and Jennifer Jetta got him to go to the right place and—

AUSTIN: We'll see. We'll see.

ART: Yeah, we'll see if I can roll a 6.

AUSTIN: Alright, so—

ALI: That's what I was saying. They were trimming the whatever at Princeton. They were grooming her.

AUSTIN: So is Florence no longer a thing? Florence is no longer a lead?

ART: Florence is no longer a lead.

AUSTIN: I've deleted Florence, but not because she's dead. We did still draw this queen of hearts, which does mean that Ollie Frasier is dead.

ART: Yeah, and we have to draw one more.

AUSTIN: Right. I'm just gonna flip him upside down, is what I'm gonna do. *Woosh!*

ART: But we still have that answer, even though he is a dead lead.

AUSTIN: Yeah, I don't think when a lead dies—right, that's the whole thing I was trying to look up. Is if a lead—if you destroy—if you escalate—hm. If you draw a 6 in a district that has a lead that was used for an answer, does that—

ART: No, because the answer is now its own lead.

AUSTIN: Right, but does that old lead still exist? Yes, right? I'm gonna say yes. I'm just gonna make a judgment call instead of getting caught up, he's dead. And also it's cool to have the dead mayor, right? Boom. Done.

KEITH: I've been saying that for years.

AUSTIN: [LAUGHS] God.

KEITH: It's cool to have a dead mayor.

AUSTIN: Uh-huh. Boom, he died, sorry, sorry Steve Harvey. And then we draw a second one. And hope it's not another heart. Or maybe it is, we'll see.

ART: No, we do want another heart, I think.

AUSTIN: [LAUGHS INCREDULOUSLY] Nope! It is another spade!

ALI: [DEJECTED GROAN]

AUSTIN: But no, Florence isn't there anymore, so Florence is safe—

KEITH: Wait, I missed that, why isn't Florence there anymore?

AUSTIN: Because the thing we would have done instead would be to connect Leslie to the reason the victim was killed.

KEITH: Oh, okay. Great, well then now, uh—

AUSTIN: I don't believe that we've escalated this one place four times!

JACK: This is just—

KEITH: We have got—no, it's really good luck, because we would have lost otherwise. For sure.

ART: Right, we would have all the way lost this game by now.

JACK: Is this when the sinkhole opens and it falls into hell?

AUSTIN: Yeah, like, what's next?!

ART: Well, they defeated the national guard, does it just escalate, like? The fuckin'—

KEITH: Does it start actually—

ART: The navy rolls up a battleship and shells the place, I mean—

ALI: Well, like, is it just not a part of Bluff City anymore?

AUSTIN: Yeah, right?

KEITH: Yeah, that's exactly what I was gonna say, is like, does it separate and start being its own thing?

ALI: Yeah.

AUSTIN: I mean, it already was on paper. Like, these were supposed to be the communities that were not part of Bluff City proper. These were supposed to be—

ART: Yeah, this is Egg Harbor Township.

AUSTIN: This is Egg Harbor Township, yeah, exactly. This is where I'm—this is Northfield, this is like the places—these are the malls and the mainland where the people who go into Bluff City to work already are, so there was already a disconnect, but like, how do we make that disconnect more permanent? Like, do the bridges blow up, do they—I don't know. I don't know how this escalates further than this.

JACK: We could do some more work to like, tie it into the holiday season and have it be something to do with a combination of the national guard and a very heavy snowfall?

AUSTIN: Yeah, is this a blizzard? A blizzard hits?

JACK: A blizzard hits—oh, what were you gonna say, Ali?

ALI: Well, I was gonna say, are people—'cause this is the surrounding area of Bluff City, right?

AUSTIN: Uh-huh.

ALI: Like, are people not able to leave Bluff City because the area around it has like—are protecting their borders?

AUSTIN: I mean that was what we kind of did with the defeated national guard, we imagined there being like, the armored personnel character blocking the bridges already. Right?

ART: What if just the blizzard hits and there's just no snowplows?

AUSTIN: Right.

ART: Because everything's fucked. The blizzard hits and everywhere else is 'okay, we dug out, we cleaned up', and this area's just like 'well, the blizzard hit and now there's a foot of snow, and no one knows what to do', and now it's just ice and you can't leave your house, and you can't get in and out of Bluff City, like, it just turned itself into this natural impenetrable barricade.

AUSTIN: But also, the thing is, remember these are the workers for Bluff City. Right?

ART: Yeah.

AUSTIN: Which means Bluff City's also probably not dug out. So now we have a blizzard everywhere.

ART: Sure, there's just a foot of snow everywhere.

AUSTIN: I think it's like three feet.

JACK: Ohh.

AUSTIN: I think it's like—I think it's—

ART: It's waist-deep snow all the way around.

JACK: I mean we're kind of thinking about *The Division* here, right Austin?

AUSTIN: Yes, a hundred percent. Yeah. We're thinking about the worst parts of *The Division* where it's just like, this is brutal. Yeah.

JACK: But also like, chronologically this is happening the same time as the gala, right? So there's the snow coming through the ceiling suddenly starts whipping up, and there's this weird atmosphere of all these, like—the music stops briefly and then comes back, and it's like, all these people who are like 'is this hitting really hard?' And then people begin to get stuck in the gala, or the valet service just can't work anymore.

AUSTIN: I'm just gonna do this, which is I'm gonna name it "Winter Storm Florence" just to keep it confusing.

[ALI AND KEITH CHUCKLE]

AUSTIN: Like, it just happens to be called Winter Storm Florence. Florence is still on the table, just a different Florence.

JACK: Florence is still in the motel at this point. She's just, like—

AUSTIN: With the snow piling up outside—let's go, like, two feet of snow. It's enough to lift your legs out, but it's—that's a lot of snow.

ALI AND JACK: Yeah.

AUSTIN: And yeah, like, people are stuck in this fucking mall now. I like it. That was the second one. That's—so how does Ollie Frasier die and how does the news spread about that? The mayor?

ART: What if it's like—what if he slipped and fell? You know, wink.

AUSTIN: Wait. So wait, who killed him?

JACK: Sorry?

KEITH: It's a code burgundy.

AUSTIN: Okay, it's a code burgundy. Right, of course.

JACK: Well, is this—is this—is this the Concern making a move? Kind of going like, look, this has gone really badly for all of us. No one is supposed to know about this.

AUSTIN: Right. Yeah. Right, like, this is a document that was sitting in Ollie Frasier's fuckin' email box. He probably never *opened* it. You know? That's not what he cares about. What he cared about was finding a way to skim off of taxes so that he could, you know, get a better set of golf clubs. Not, like, anything to do with a weird alternate Bluff City. Alright, I think we're good. So yeah, I think it's the Concern, question mark, but how does the news spread? Is it just like, whispered across the gala? Oh, is it like, whispered across the gala, and then people are like 'dadadadada' and you step out of the Starbucks, and then on a big, like, jumbotron super-monitor, you know what I mean, his face just shows up and it just says 'Ollie Frasier, 1968-203x' or whatever.

JACK: Like, it's been set up to reveal that, or?

AUSTIN: No, it's just like, yeah, well now the news is—the local news has it all and it's just being broadcast around this police gala, and everyone kind of stops as—

JACK: Like, goes quiet.

AUSTIN: As Gabby Gabs comes on or whoever.

AUSTIN: 'Bluff City's beloved mayor Ollie Frasier was found dead today in city hall.'

KEITH: 'Code circle.' She does her own thing.

[2:10:01]

AUSTIN: She does—yeah. 'I'm trying out a new thing, code circle, how's that work? Code X button. Merry Christmas, Xbox.'

[KEITH LAUGHS]

ALI: [CHUCKLES] Fuck off.

AUSTIN: Art says 'survived by his son Foreman Frasier'. Yeah, uh-huh. Good. You know what it has to be is like, he was also killed by a gun at close-range. It's like the same cause of death as Hector, so. Patty Fink.

KEITH: Yeah, the—I'm kind of in a weird spot where I'm like, I'm not even sure where to go. Like, I'm not—

AUSTIN: Who—yeah, what are you doing? Who, what, and where?

KEITH: I guess I want to investigate the Concern. That's like my biggest priority, I think. Is to like—but, in terms of like, tying that to something—I guess I want to —do we know—oh, did we move the Concern away from the boardwalk?

AUSTIN: It's not attached to anything. Answers are not attached to anything.

KEITH: Oh, it's an answer. Ohh, right.

AUSTIN: Yes, that's what I'm saying. That is the 'who did it' answer.

KEITH: It, well—oh, 'cause it *used* to be a from scratch.

AUSTIN: No.

KEITH: No? Just the Concern? Wasn't that the boardwalk before we got—

AUSTIN: Remember, we erased that. Because—

ART: Yeah, we erased that. This isn't—

KEITH: Right, that's what I'm saying is—I was thinking of that when I was like 'where does it belong to'. But now it's an answer.

AUSTIN: And answers don't belong. Yeah.

KEITH: So—oh, I'm moving a bunch of stuff by accident. Let's see. There we go. I fixed it.

AUSTIN: Okay.

KEITH: Hm. Well, I guess I want to go downtown and look into the mayor's death. And see if I can link, like—see if I can dig up anything on the Concern from that. If they left behind any clues.

AUSTIN: Okay, so you're like, back to city hall.

KEITH: Back to city hall.

AUSTIN: It's all snowed in. We get a shot of you walking in snowshoes or whatever.

KEITH: Crunching along.

AUSTIN: Are you alone here, or are you with other people?

KEITH: Anybody who wants to come can come for this one.

ART: I was in the last one and I want to be ready for the next one, so I think this isn't appropriate.

KEITH: Sit it out? Alright, it can just be me.

AUSTIN: I can imagine Florence showing up on her own.

JACK: To come to the—just like, arriving?

AUSTIN: Like, in a daze? Yeah. Do you know what I mean? Like, still concussed probably from that car accident and like, not all—completely just out of sorts. Like, almost wandering in because you know in your heart that there is something here, you know.

JACK: Yeah. Yeah. There's—my body is having a bad time.

AUSTIN: You could have had a dream, or something.

JACK: Oh, yeah, no, I definitely had a dream. I *definitely* had a dream.

AUSTIN: Right. And so you two are—

JACK: I woke up knowing the mayor was dead without seeing the news.

AUSTIN: Right. And so both of you arrive at the same time in the snow, the snow is piling up, the wind is whipping around, it's so bright and white here, and you can hear—I also like the notion of besides the wind, you can also just—it's as if the wind is carrying—and this is not how sound works, I don't think—but the wind is carrying the sound of the ocean closer and closer. You're not near the ocean here, but it sounds like you are. Maybe you were, I forget where the mayor's office was in my mind. I forgot—I don't remember where it was.

KEITH: The boardwalk, which is ocean-y.

AUSTIN: It does say that, so yeah. So yeah. It's just like, the ocean is super loud right now. So what are you doing, Patty?

KEITH: Is there like, a crime scene? Like what kind of—what's the—I assume there's a crime scene.

AUSTIN: Yeah, but I bet it's like, deserted. Or not deserted, but like—there's like, three cops there.

KEITH: A lot of them are at the ball.

AUSTIN: Because of the ball, and then because of the snowstorm, it's like there's barely enough—yeah. It's like, two cops are there. The mayor's office is also just like, shut down for the

holidays and the snow, and the riots, and like—I want it to have this almost creepy vibe—I realize that the vibe that we’ve hit with this is actually not super—it’s not even just like it’s not super noir, but the film that it’s reminding me the most of is *Cosmopolis*. And Don DeLillo’s work in general of being like, creepy modernism. Creepy, contemporary, ‘the world is on fire and we don’t know what to do about it’. Don DeLillo’s work is really good, I should have thought about that as a potential Bluff City influence, but yeah. Anyway. That’s definitely my vibe, especially with the Omega Love stuff mixing with the blizzard and the deaths around town. So what are you looking for? So yeah, you go into the front door, and I want this place to just feel like, deserted, maybe.

KEITH: Yeah.

AUSTIN: But you can tell me, you’re the architecture person, so like—

KEITH: No one’s around, wax on the floor.

AUSTIN: Yeah, wax everywhere.

[KEITH LAUGHS]

KEITH: Yeah, I mean, I think—I remember describing city hall as the most official-y-looking building in the place, like a traditional city hall sort of domed weathervaned marble building with pillars and stuff. And just like, really loud echo-y floors, like the *clunk, clunk, clunk* of people walking, you just hear it all throughout the building because there’s no one else there to break up the echoes. And do we know from the news reports where the mayor was killed? Was it in the building?

AUSTIN: Probably not, I don’t think they get that—I mean, it was in the building. It was found in city hall, but not more than that.

KEITH: It’s probably his office. I’m going to his office first. That’s the first place. Is Florence—are you like, with me now?

JACK: I think so. I think that we—oh, I think that at first it’s a lot like the Vegas scene from *Bladerunner*, right? Where it’s just like, figures on their own walking through this cavernous empty space, and then realizing that there are other people there, and then realizing who they are. So I think we’re together by now, but I think we didn’t arrive—it wasn’t like we met up in front of the door.

KEITH: Yeah, right, yeah. Alright, yeah, so let’s go up to the office and see if we can figure out what’s going on. The perpetrators always return to the scene of the crime.

AUSTIN: Yeah. What do you find up there?

KEITH: Um...

AUSTIN: Is that where he is, is he somewhere else, is it still deserted?

KEITH: I think that's where he was killed, but he's not there.

AUSTIN: Okay.

KEITH: There's police tape but there's no police, but the crime scene is otherwise presumably untouched.

AUSTIN: Okay.

KEITH: Presumably. [WHISPERING] Bum-bum.

AUSTIN: Is that like, *Law and Order* sound? Is that what that was?

KEITH: Yeah, that was—[LAUGHING] that's what that was.

AUSTIN: Okay.

KEITH: Yeah, so I think I just—I want to look around and see if I can find anything. See if it was sacked.

AUSTIN: Right, the thing is that that would be the investigation roll, for sure.

KEITH: Oh, okay.

AUSTIN: I'm trying to figure out if there's a challenge roll here. And it might be another thing where I draw a card and we see what that card says because it sounds like we're not sure if there's—like, what else could be happening here?

KEITH: Well, finding it could be the challenge.

AUSTIN: No, 'cause that's the investigation. I don't want it to be like—'cause you're gonna continue no matter what. If you fail the challenge, you still continue. Do you know what I mean?

KEITH: Right.

AUSTIN: The challenge should be something that gets in the way or complicates the investigation, and so it can't be like 'well, you failed the challenge so you don't find it. Now give me an investigation roll.' You know?

KEITH: Right, yeah.

AUSTIN: I'm gonna pull a card, and do a dramatic hit.

KEITH: Maybe someone shows up.

AUSTIN: 'The tech goes haywire' is what I just drew. And that can be fun. Like—oop, I didn't mean to draw that big red splash—I'm gonna put this up here with these other things. So like, how does the tech go haywire? I think that makes perfect sense given the storm.

KEITH: He has that golf machine, that angry golf machine.

AUSTIN: He does have an angry golf machine. He also has—

KEITH: Maybe that starts being really loudly, just like—'nice shot!'

JACK: It could be, like—Keith talked about this building as being weird and cavernous and weathervane-y. What if all of the power in the building goes out? And because of the snowfall, and because of the fact that this building just has rooms in rooms in rooms, it gets really dark. And we get this very—what's his name? Like, Roger Deakins-style slabs of light, and everything else is just nothing there at all, and I reckon that maybe—I don't know how you feel about this, Keith—maybe caught in one of the slabs of light is the body.

KEITH: I like that.

AUSTIN: Yeah.

ALI: Ooh.

AUSTIN: I also like over this in the background we have the helicopter blades, and we have Hector Hu's voice broadcasting about storms, or about the ocean, or something, and how 'the ocean hides things, friends. The ocean hides us all.' Like, broadcasting off in the distance, like this weird inverted off-world colonies thing where it's very specifically about this place instead of about a nice place, you know?

[ART CHUCKLES]

JACK: Yeah. And there's just like, a shaft of light from a window that has been half-opened—like a shutter that is half-open, and caught in this shaft of light lying on his front is the body of the mayor.

AUSTIN: Right. So then, yeah, the challenge would be like, looking around this—like, how well—either turning the lights back on, or finding flashlights, or something like that.

[2:20:05]

JACK: Yeah, it's like, how do you do—how do you—how do you do a detective investigation in a room that the detectives have already probably fled, and when there's no power?

AUSTIN: And in the dark. Yeah. Right, and all the computers are out now, too. Right? So it has to be paperwork.

JACK: Yeah.

AUSTIN: So how do you go about trying to fix this, or work in this condition, Patty?

KEITH: Yeah, I think I'm gonna navigate using my phone's flashlight.

AUSTIN: Okay. So give me a challenge roll. How—what's that look like? Is that—what do people think? Is trying to dig through this stuff in the dark a Body, a Mind, a Heart, or a Rep?

KEITH: It could be Body for eyes, or it could be Hear—I could see—

ALI: Body or Mind.

KEITH: I could see Body, Mind, or Heart. Heart for just like, the determination of like, 'I'm frustrated, I can't see shit'.

AUSTIN: Right.

KEITH: Mind for—I don't know, I don't know, maybe not mind. But probably Body or Heart. Ali, what was your thing for Mind?

ALI: I feel like it's Mind in terms of like, knowing when you put your hand on a thing, it's this. Or like knowing to move around a corner, or like, put your hand against a wall to steady yourself. Like, I feel like being able to move around a space that's completely dark is like a focus. Like, more thoughtful.

AUSTIN: Yeah, I like that too.

KEITH: Okay. Yeah, I'll do Mind.

AUSTIN: Okay. And you're +1 Mind.

KEITH: I am +1 Mind.

AUSTIN: So it's two white.

KEITH: Two white. Do I get anything else or just this two?

AUSTIN: It's just challenge, so it's just those two white I'm pretty sure.

KEITH: 'Kay.

AUSTIN: Yeah. Supporter rolls a black die. Yeah, okay.

KEITH: Alright.

AUSTIN: So roll one of these black die. I'm gonna get rid of one of the other ones, one second. Put those up there. Roll 3-sided, random side. That's a 4 on my side.

KEITH: I got two 5s.

AUSTIN: Alright, so that's stalemate. You have to win by two or more.

ART: That's a stalemate.

KEITH: Aw, man.

AUSTIN: So now, it is time—you could do a—what do you call it—

KEITH: A bargain?

AUSTIN: Yeah, a bargain. “When neither die is higher by two or more, it’s a stalemate. Supporter will offer a bargain. Success is in return for damaging a condition.” Thoughts?

ART: Heart, I think, is the obvious damage, but I’m...

AUSTIN: Oh, really? Why is that the obvious one? I’m actually not—that’s a surprise to me.

KEITH: Just like, damaging my resolve?

ALI: Yeah.

ART: Yeah, like, getting rattled.

AUSTIN: Right

ALI: Especially if, like, Patty is this character who is so in control of things, like—

AUSTIN: Yeah

ALI: She is a person who paid off every single person who was in a company, like...

KEITH: [LAUGHS] Hold on, there is a handful of people that were not paid off.

AUSTIN: A handful is strong. It's four. I think a handful has to be five or more because you have five fingers.

KEITH: Did I say four? Okay.

AUSTIN: You said four, I just listened to it.

[ALI CHUCKLES]

KEITH: You can grab a handful of stuff without using your thumb.

AUSTIN: Mmkay.

ART: I don't know, if you have four Cheetos in your hand, it's still a handful of Cheetos.

ALI: Yeah, but if it was like four marbles...

KEITH: Depends on how big the marbles are.

AUSTIN: Okay. Anyway—

KEITH: You can have a handful of anything.

AUSTIN: The point is—

KEITH: A handful of pool balls is only like two or three pool balls.

AUSTIN: I like the notion—

ART: By that logic, like, one tenth of a person is a handful.

AUSTIN: Okay.

KEITH: Yeah.

AUSTIN: I like Heart dropping. So Heart goes down from Quiet to Guilty.

KEITH: To Guilty.

AUSTIN: Which is -1.

ART: Yeah.

AUSTIN: But that means you get the win, which means you get this die on the side for the thing. And so yeah, does that just look like—is that the moment that you—like, you come face to face with the body of this guy who is just laid out on a table or something, waiting for—because there are no medics who can make it through the snow right now, it's just like—and it's freezing in here because the power is off, you can see your own breath.

ART: Which helps to preserve the body for when the coroner can get in, but..

AUSTIN: That's good, that's good.

KEITH: Yeah.

ART: I'm just—small favors, you know?

KEITH: Listen, they're not gonna—they are *not* gonna send an official coroner. They are gonna send, like—they're gonna send a coast guard dressed up as a coroner. No official business is ever gonna touch this body, mark my words.

AUSTIN: Mm, I see what you're saying.

JACK: This is Hector Hu talking now.

AUSTIN: Yeah, uh-huh.

KEITH: Yeah, so that's what I'm doing. I'm seeing the body, and I'm touching the body.

AUSTIN: [INCRECULOUS] Don't touch the body?

KEITH: I gotta be like, is it real? Is this a latex mask? Is this a false flag?

AUSTIN: What do you think, Florence, can you—is it a false flag? What do you think about all this?

KEITH (as PATTY): Oh boy. Is it a false flag? I don't know. I mean, if it's a false flag, I'm not convinced that it's not a false flag. Florence, what do you think?

JACK (as FLORENCE): I don't think that this is a false flag at all.

KEITH (as PATTY): Hm.

JACK (as FLORENCE): I think that this is—

KEITH (as PATTY): Touch the face. Try to pull it off.

JACK (as FLORENCE): I'm not gonna try and pull his face off.

KEITH (as PATTY): Try to pull it off.

ART: Always good to have your fingerprints on a corpse.

AUSTIN: Yeah, it's great.

KEITH: It's cold out, we've got gloves on.

JACK (as FLORENCE): I'm not going to try and pull his face off. This is—

KEITH (as PATTY): Okay, well then, it's not a false flag.

JACK (as FLORENCE): Look, I don't know if any of this is, you know, legit, it's—I mean, well, it's not, but like—if it's like—

KEITH (as PATTY): Murder's never legit, Florence.

JACK (as FLORENCE): Right, it's just, if this is like—what I'm saying is, you might be right. There might be something more going on here, but I think that he's dead, and I don't think that pulling his face off is going to, you know, change that.

[KEITH CHUCKLES]

KEITH (as PATTY): That's fair enough.

KEITH: I think I'm ready to investigate this. This body.

AUSTIN: Alright. What do we got? How are you doing it? What's the investigation—like is it just the body, or are you looking for files, or are you looking through everything?

KEITH: I'm gonna start with pockets on the body.

AUSTIN: Okay.

KEITH: But I am, I think—if there's nothing in there, then I'll go somewhere else.

AUSTIN: Sure.

KEITH: But I think scraps of paper, business cards, strange wounds in addition to the supposed 'cause of death' wound.

AUSTIN: Sure. Okay. Alright. So, investigation. You start with two white. So is this Mind again? Is that what this is?

KEITH: Yeah.

AUSTIN: Alright, well, good. Your Mind is still +1, so that's good. So that's up to three. There's a supporter die from—or, a bargain die from the winning challenge.

KEITH: Okay.

AUSTIN: And there's two more bonus dice, because you've solved two things. You have two answers.

KEITH: Oh, thank god.

AUSTIN: So that's three bonus die. Look at this, it's coming together, y'all.

KEITH: Holy moly.

AUSTIN: Okay, but then on the bad side. we got three bad dies to start, one more for the dead outskirts, the escalated outskirts—I keep saying dead. The escalated outskirts. And then I think that that's it, because there's no more negatives here, right?

ART: No, because the other one comes from failing them.

AUSTIN: From conditions and from challenge fails, yeah. Alright, this is—you have—six on four is not so bad.

KEITH: This is not so bad.

AUSTIN: Alright, Jack, do you want to roll the three side ones?

JACK: Mhm.

AUSTIN: And I'll roll the middle.

JACK: Let's give this a go.

AUSTIN: Those are low dice on my side. Holy shit.

KEITH: High dice on my side!

JACK: Woah.

[ALI GASPS]

JACK: Okay. Here we go.

KEITH: Here we go! Woah!

AUSTIN: Alright, I rolled 4-3-2-2, so 4-3-2 are mine. We don't even need the bargain die. Keith rolled 6-6-1.

ART: We win.

AUSTIN: I think we're gonna win.

[ALI GASPS]

KEITH: Wait. Well, we have that 2. That 2's important.

AUSTIN: Oh, you can't mark that 1. You can't mark the 1.

KEITH: I know.

AUSTIN: The 1—you can only put four or two dice on your side, Keith.

KEITH: Oh, okay. Wait, so, but—I have to get another die from the other side then, to...

AUSTIN: No, you can't. You can only ever put four or two dice.

ART: No, two is all you get.

KEITH: Oh. So I do get that loss.

AUSTIN: So you have to decide where to put those 6s.

KEITH: Okay, gotcha. Let me look at this thing real quick.

ART: On a 2, you would pin yourself and damage Rep, but that's not gonna matter because we win.

AUSTIN: On the two 6s, right? Because the 6s are 'find an answer, or add/connect a new lead'. And then...

KEITH: Yeah, create a lead from scratch and then create a connection, that's what I can do.

ART: And if you add and connect a new lead to the thing over here—

KEITH: Yeah, deal.

ART: You can then find an answer, that's three answers.

AUSTIN: That's three answers.

KEITH: Yeah.

AUSTIN: So what do you find? Let's start—and then, so yeah, the choices on the other side would be to damage a condition—to damage a condition or to pin self and damage Rep. I kind of think that last one is the right one, since you're touching this dude's face.

KEITH: Yeah. [LAUGHS] I said I had gloves on.

AUSTIN: True. All sorts of technology these days.

KEITH: Yeah. Well, they know I was here and they have my prints, they can put 'em on his face. They don't need me to actually touch him to frame me. That's the truth, you can take that home. [LAUGHS]

AUSTIN: God.

AUSTIN: I'm adding you over here as a pin suspect. Alright, so what do you add? What's the new thing that you're adding from scratch? "Create a lead from scratch and connect it to any other lead."

[2:30:02]

JACK: Hm.

AUSTIN: And that can connect to—it looks like what you should connect it to is either "Cause of death: gun at close-range" or "Jennifer Jetta: Journalist, a little too first".

KEITH: So I could create...

AUSTIN: Or yourself, but I don't think you wanna go down that route here.

KEITH: Oh, yeah, like, I didn't know it, but I did it the whole time. I did it. Or was it 'how was it pulled off', somehow with my help.

ART: You have to add and connect a new lead and 6 does not let you...

AUSTIN: Yeah. You're right. Does not let you connect old leads.

KEITH: Okay, so I can—

AUSTIN: You can create a lead from scratch and connect it to any other lead. So this is a new thing, in fact. It is not Leslie Strada and the Concern.

KEITH: Yes. So I'm—oh, man.

ART: I guess you're gonna have to make something new and draw it over here.

AUSTIN: Yeah.

KEITH: A red herring, we had no idea.

AUSTIN: Well, Leslie Strada and the Concern is who did it still, but how it was pulled off is some other new thing.

KEITH: Okay. Well then I'll connect it to—

ART: Maybe it *was* a false flag.

[KEITH LAUGHS]

AUSTIN: Yeah.

KEITH: Hold on. There's so much—hold on. So basically what I have to do is, I have to—removed from the investigation that we've already done, invent how it was pulled off? That's my task now? I can do that.

AUSTIN: Well you have to add a new element to this, right?

KEITH: I have to add a new element to this, yeah.

AUSTIN: Cause of death is 'a gun at close-range', we know that. We know that—

KEITH: Yeah. That's what I'm gonna focus on. I'm gonna attach something to "cause of death: close-range", and then attach something to that.

AUSTIN: Okay.

KEITH: But I need a second to create this. Give me one second. For the love of god, give me a second.

[GROUP LAUGHTER]

AUSTIN: Uh-huh. It's a lot, I get it.

ART: Keith, you need to do it right now.

KEITH: Oh, god damn it. Okay. Let me blow my nose, hold on. I'm dripping.

ART: [SARCASTIC] This is too much time you're taking. This is outrageous.

ALI: [SARCASTIC] It's unprofessional, if you ask me.

KEITH: It's cold in this courthouse.

ART: [SARCASTIC] Yeah, honestly. We're wholly unsatisfied with your work here.

KEITH: [MUTTERING] Jesus christ.

ALI: This will be coming up in your review.

KEITH: Okay. So. I think—

ART: I like that we're all just letting him twist here. No one's offering.

AUSTIN: Nope!

KEITH: No one's offering. Yeah, no, it's fine. It's fine.

[ALI CHUCKLES]

AUSTIN: It's a hard question.

KEITH: It's a fucking hard—

ALI: Well, he said that he wanted a second.

AUSTIN: He did say that he wanted a second.

KEITH: Yeah, I did say I want a second. I think that—I think that what happened was that Hector Hu had already been killed, but instead of having a missing Hu, which would have inspired a lot of people to go out and start searching for him, they staged his death in Showdogs in front of everybody. Cause of death, gun at close-range.

AUSTIN: So he'd been dead.

KEITH: He'd been dead.

AUSTIN: How long?

KEITH: Since his last broadcast. Since his pre—

AUSTIN: Okay. So this isn't like a months-long thing where they'd been running tape or something.

KEITH: Oh, no, that's even better. I love that.

ART: Yeah, there is no amount of time you could have said that I would have been disappointed too long, Keith. You could have been like '15 years' and I would have been like 'great'.

KEITH: It had been weeks, they'd been—they had been pasting together new shows from snippets of old shows.

ART: Oh, and all of the information in those shows was a ruse.

KEITH: It was a ruse.

AUSTIN: It was a ruse.

ALI: But I talked to him.

KEITH: Yeah, you talked to—

ART: Or *did* you?

AUSTIN: Or did you?

KEITH: Or did you?

AUSTIN: Yeah, did you just like, find the cassette tape?

ALI: I'm winking at my microphone.

AUSTIN: Oh, okay.

AUSTIN: And you hit play, and it's like the rough version of one of these recordings?

KEITH: Yeah.

AUSTIN: Where it's just like very clearly stitched together—

KEITH: And they have a sound alike for words they couldn't get in. Or like, if they couldn't get the inflection right, they've got a pitch-bender to make it sound like he's asking a question, when really he's saying a statement.

AUSTIN: Okay, and the thing that you have here is—again, the thing for me that I wanna make it clear is like, the mayor wasn't behind this, the mayor was like giving the money to do it, because they were blackmailing him or because they were—you know, like, he's too much of a small-fry to get any of this shit. Like, he was appropriating tax money for this for some other reason of Ollerenshaw. You know what I mean, like?

KEITH: It's probably like an election thing. They probably told him like, 'hey, we're working towards getting—maintaining your electability'.

AUSTIN: Right. Yeah, maybe that's totally it, is like—it wasn't that—it isn't even like 'oh yeah, you're gonna kill and replace Hector Hu', it was, 'I got a new' like, his campaign—or maybe it was Jennifer Jetta even was like, 'I have a great way to get you re-elected'. And the answer was, we're gonna turn this guy's radio programming into subconscious messaging, basically. What's the word I'm looking for? Not subconscious messaging.

KEITH: Subliminal messaging.

AUSTIN: Subliminal messaging. Thank you. And we're gonna broadcast out secret things about how you're making the town better. Just gonna sneak it in there bit by bit. And Ollie Frasier's like, 'well, what's gonna happen to the real guy?' And they're just like, 'don't worry. He's left. He left'.

KEITH: He's already gone.

AUSTIN: He went back home with his family. Yeah, he's already gone. And the answer is, yeah, he did die a long time ago. So then you're gonna connect that to 'cause of death: gun at close-range', right?

KEITH: Yes, yes.

AUSTIN: This is a long drawing I'm gonna make. Zip! Zwoop! Bop! There we go.

KEITH: Who was I meeting with?

AUSTIN: I don't know. Hector?

KEITH: Who was I informing?

AUSTIN: Yeah. And who did Florence see? Does this mean Florence saw the fake?

JACK: Yeah, or was it actually a vision situation, rather than a—?

AUSTIN: Or was it a vision situation?

[ALI CHUCKLES]

KEITH: Or, or, was it the ghost of Hector Hu come back from beyond the grave?

AUSTIN: Hector died months ago? Oh, and that's probably part of the thing you find to, is like the coroner's report that is like, 'yeah, he's been dead'. He's been dead for two weeks, or something.

ART: Why did someone shoot this decomposing corpse in the head and then send it to the morgue?

[ALI AND KEITH CHUCKLE]

AUSTIN: Right, or like the time of death, or the cause of death was not in fact 'gun, close-range', it was poison two weeks ago. You know? And not in the sense that he's been dying over two weeks, in the sense that he died two weeks ago, was then kept alive, was *My Weekend at Bernie's*-ed into Showdogs, and killed there.

KEITH: Yep.

AUSTIN: Or shot there, not killed there. Alright, and then your second thing is that you make it an answer, right?

KEITH: Yeah. So the answer would be...

AUSTIN: How was it pulled off?

KEITH: Hector—

AUSTIN: Uh-huh.

KEITH: I guess 'how was *this* pulled off' was that Hector was *Weekend at Bernies*-ed into Showdogs and shot, to make it look like he was freshly killed.

AUSTIN: Yeah.

KEITH: All thanks to the mayor's dirty money. Little did he know he was financing his own corr—his own destruction.

AUSTIN: Yeah.

JACK: Little did he know.

KEITH: Little did he know.

AUSTIN: And now he doesn't know anything.

KEITH: Now he doesn't know anything.

ART: He did not know that.

[KEITH AND AUSTIN LAUGH]

AUSTIN: Boom. Alright, we have answers now. "When your group has three answers, or once three districts are escalated, the case ends and you begin the epilogue. You'll go around the table, learning a bit about the future of each character and the city at large. You can tell

epilogues in any order. For your epilogue, begin by taking one white dice for each unmarked box by your principle, then taking another one if all three questions were answered.” So who wants to go first?

KEITH: We should stick with the same order.

ART: You should really read the next two paragraphs, ‘cause they’re relevant right now.

AUSTIN: Okay. “Then, take one black die for each black mark next to your principle”—which, the only person who has that is Chris—”and another one if all—if three districts are escalated.” So you’re just gonna take—most of you are just gonna take one, right?

KEITH: No, most of us are gonna take none.

AUSTIN: Right. No, no, no, you take—oh, do you not start with any black die? Yeah.

KEITH: I don’t think you start with any, yeah.

AUSTIN: Okay. Wow. Okay. “Arrange the dice in front of you in an alternating pattern starting with a white die if possible. Now you and the other players will start a ‘fortunately/unfortunately’ story.” This is like a fiasco situation. “You’ll narrate a positive element of your character’s future for each white die, and for each black die, the other players will narrate one negative aspect.” So again, it is one white die for each unmarked box, so everyone should start with two except for Chris, Chris should start with one, and then another one—not another one per question, Keith. Just another *one*.

KEITH: Wait. You start with two and then another one. So I have three.

AUSTIN: Where do you see ‘start with two’?

KEITH: I thought you said start with two white dice if you don’t have your—

AUSTIN: No, I was telling you you get two total.

KEITH: Oh, okay.

AUSTIN: Yeah, yeah, yeah.

ART: No, it’s three.

KEITH: Yeah, I was right. It’s three.

ART: One for each unmarked principle, and then one for having the three questions.

AUSTIN: Oh, you’re right. You’re right. You’re right. You’re right. It’s one for each—yeah, wow, okay. Yeah, yeah, yeah.

KEITH: This is gonna be a really, uh—

AUSTIN: So who gets three? Taylor gets three, Florence gets three.

KEITH: 'Sunshine and puppy dogs' epilogue.

ART: This is like, so upbeat for a Christmas-time Friends at the Table episode.

AUSTIN: Alright. So who's starting?

KEITH: I think we should go in the regular—the turn order. So—

AUSTIN: Okay. Starting with Art?

KEITH: Yeah.

ART: Alright.

AUSTIN: 'So, fortunately...' blank.

ART: So, fortunately, being involved in correctly sussing out this giant thing, you know, being the guy who helped with the killing of the mayor—

[2:40:06]

AUSTIN: Mhm. Wait. Wait.

ART: And no one's—

[KEITH LAUGHS]

AUSTIN: You might want to phrase that a different way so it doesn't sound like—it sounds like you *killed* the mayor.

ART: Helped—*investigated* the killing of the mayor.

AUSTIN: There you go.

ART: That finally gives Tyler a foothold into the shore. He starts getting that work he always wanted. He starts being like—'hey, okay, I think my wife's screwing around on me', and Tylers gets to start doing that PI work, and it's like—it's not as good. Right? It's not as fun as this case was. Like, it's a—I know I'm supposed to do good stuff here, but like, it's a little bit of a bummer.

AUSTIN: Sure.

ART: But like, on the other hand—

AUSTIN: Is this the second 'fortunately'? Or is this the same 'fortunately'?

ART: No. On the other hand, no one ever gets killed.

AUSTIN: Fair.

ART: I mean, I guess people probably do get killed investigating people's wives cheating on them, but like... it's nice for him to have a slower turn of pace, you know?

AUSTIN: Mhm.

ART: That's not an expression. 'Turn of pace' is not a thing.

AUSTIN: A slower turn of pace.

ART: Slower turn of pace.

KEITH: Turned into a slower pace.

ART: Yeah. And fortunately, he nurtures all of the rest of these contacts. He—I don't want to like, box everyone else in too much, but like, he starts socializing with these people. He sees Patty and Chris and Florence, you know, not terribly often, but like, some. And it kind of like, provides a little bit of light in what was a—you know, not like a sad life before, but, you know—

KEITH: But a very sad life.

ART: Not the—

[KEITH LAUGHS]

ART: You know, he's not faking his way into a hot dog stand anymore with cheaper hot dogs.

[KEITH LAUGHS]

ART: He's, you know.

AUSTIN: Do we get a shot of him eating a nice hot dog?

ART: Um... no, but I think you do get a shot of him eating a cheaper hot dog out of the cheaper hot dog bag, on a bench in front of where Showdogs burnt down.

AUSTIN: Gotcha, okay.

ART: They're like rebuilding Showdogs, and he's gonna sit in front of there eating—I'm so sure we had a name for the cheaper hot dog place in the first place and I don't remember it, but—

KEITH: Oh, we did.

AUSTIN: Oh, we definitely did. A hundred percent.

ALI: Oh my god, we did, it was Alleydog.

AUSTIN: It was.

KEITH: [LAUGHING] Alleydog!

ART: Alleydogs. He was eating an Alleydog.

KEITH: I'm glad that he feels comfortable eating an Alleydog out in the open.

ART: But he is, because like, you know, once every few weeks he sees the rest of y'all for a drink. It's like he doesn't need—he doesn't feel the need to fake who he is anymore, because he's validated by his other friends, and by his, you know, increasing—he fucking likes Alleydogs. They're good. They're fine.

AUSTIN: They are good. Hell yeah.

ART: Hell yeah.

AUSTIN: Get you some Alleydogs. That's their motto.

JACK: Is that their slogan?

AUSTIN: Yeah. Is there a third 'fortunately' or was that your third 'fortunately'?

KEITH: I think there's one more.

ART: There's one more that's supposed to be at the city.

AUSTIN: Is that per person or is that the final final?

ART: I think it's supposed to be everyone. Your last die uses part of the same—

AUSTIN: Okay. Good. I like that. That's better. I was gonna—

ART: If your efforts bring any improvement—how did my efforts bring an improvement?

AUSTIN: [CHUCKLING] Good question.

ART: You know, this—I'm thinking a little esoteric here, but the more destructive aspects of this party culture, the gala culture, starts to fall apart. Because, you know, a lot of it was the socializing and all of this, but some of it was, at a masquerade ball, it's easy to sleep around on your spouse.

AUSTIN: So you're just saying that the—

ART: But not if Tyler's in the parking lot. And so like, things kind of like stopped being this weird esoteric *Eyes Wide Shut* nightmare.

AUSTIN: Uh-huh.

ART: And I'm gonna call that a win.

AUSTIN: It's certainly—

ART: That's—I don't wanna live in *Eyes Wide Shut*.

KEITH: So you're saying you changed the—you improved the city by decreasing infidelity.
[LAUGHS]

ART: Yeah, I'm such a good narc that things got better.

AUSTIN: Great. Oh, okay.

KEITH: People are like, 'I'm sorry, I can't pursue this extramarital relationship with you because Tyler's got my fuckin' number.'

AUSTIN: 'That motherfucker's out here.'

ART: Yeah, and I'm not gonna—I'm not gonna like—I'm not going to this stupid party now, like.

AUSTIN: Okay.

ART: And things get back to normal. Not having a weird gala culture is a good thing, I just want to get that on the record.

AUSTIN: Okay. That's fair.

ART: This is my moral stance.

AUSTIN: Uh-huh. Alright. Who was next? I've lost my—

JACK: I think it's me?

ALI: Florence? Yeah.

AUSTIN: Florence, yeah, Florence.

JACK: Oof. Okay.

AUSTIN: Three good things.

JACK: Yeah, this is gonna be—right, so, I think, fortunately, Florence largely recovers from the events of the blizzard. And kind of as part of this, is able to make it back to her home in the outskirts, kind of safely, where her daughter is safe. It's like, the blizzard knocked the power out in the house, and brought down a roof somewhere, but it's, like, fine. That's 'Thing A'. God, I'm trying to think. What are some fortunate—is it fortunate that she—

KEITH: It's really weird to have a 'fortunately' without an 'unfortunately'.

AUSTIN: It does.

KEITH: I've played this game many times and it just feels weird to go from 'fortunately' to 'fortunately'.

AUSTIN: Right, yeah.

JACK: Yeah, 'fortunately, fortunately.' What were you going to say, Austin?

AUSTIN: I was going to suggest, like, you never reveal your true self to yourself. Like—

JACK: Yeah. Like, I think it's kind of a grim one to say, right? But it's like, Florence never realized the extent to which she is involved in what is going on. I don't want to say never—at this point, Florence does not realize. And, you know, is able to go home and continue to an extent what she was doing before. I don't think anything that happened is so out of the ordinary that Florence is like 'that's it, I'm hanging up my detective spurs'. And then as to the city—oh. What if it's something to do with the mayoral election?

AUSTIN: Oh, that's good. Who gets elected? Not Hector Hu. Some, like—

[ALI LAUGHS]

JACK: I think it's like, um—I think—I kind of almost want to save this for a potential Bluff City in the future where we have to come up with another cool mayor. I think that—

AUSTIN: That's true.

JACK: I think that they are like, young, and like, came from the local community, they're not like someone who's just like from a wealthy family who's like 'I'm gonna be the dang mayor now'. And I think that part of the reason that Florence is able to at least—I think what Florence does here is exerts pressure on the city council.

AUSTIN: Right. And they make it a clean election, right? Like, you secure that it's a clean election.

JACK: Oh, yeah. It's clean in so far as it—there's probably weird lobbying and stuff going on, but it's not a fix.

AUSTIN: Yeah.

JACK: Yeah, I think that's my three.

AUSTIN: Cool. Those are three positives. Christine Andrews.

ALI: Yeah, so, I think fortunately Christine ends up getting an apartment in Bluff City. She has like, a place of her own now—

AUSTIN: Nice.

ALI: She's not like, living out of her car and leaving whenever. And like, she has a job, and she's settled here, and she hangs out with Tyler once a week, and it's really nice. And I think unfortunately she's not able to ever leave the city?

AUSTIN: No, you don't get to decide your 'unfortunately'.

ALI: I don't?

AUSTIN: No, 'unfortunately' is people at the table.

ALI: Oh.

KEITH: Yeah, we get to decide that for you. We force it on you.

AUSTIN: I know what it is.

ALI: Okay.

AUSTIN: They show up at your door and give you a choice. You can join the Concern or not.

ALI: Oh, um...

AUSTIN: 'Hector was part of us. If you want to do the work Hector was actually doing, you'll join us. Otherwise—' there is no otherwise. I think Leslie Strada shows up at your door with a peacoat.

ALI: Okay.

KEITH: For you. This is your peacoat.

AUSTIN: Yeah, this is your peacoat.

ALI: Yeah, then I guess she joins, then.

AUSTIN: That is the 'unfortunately'. There are things that are nice to hear about on the radio and there are things that are—that's the distance you want from them. The distance from 'there are crab-people that are ruining things, I'm sure of it' to knowing who the crab-people are is a big—and it's why Hector didn't remember any of that stuff anymore. Hector was debriefed, Hector didn't—Hector was relieved of that knowledge so that he could live a decent life. And instead, he hung onto bits of it, and it led him to where it led him. But what's your 'fortunately' for the city?

ALI: Oh, um... hm.

KEITH: Fortunately for the city, Chris is on the case.

ALI: [LAUGHS] Yeah, I don't know. It was gonna lead into the other thing that I was setting up. But I think like, it probably still works in that like, the—I think the relationship between the upper echelon and the people who lived in the outskirts has improved. It's not like, this weird tense riot thing that it was.

[2:50:00]

AUSTIN: Yeah, like, how does the world talk about this? Like, is this just rolled into—with the blizzard in a weird way? From the outside? Do you know what I mean? Where it's like—

ALI: Right, yeah, I think its one of those things where like, because the blizzard happened, because the national guard wasn't able to come in, that it was just like—the city dug themselves out. And whatever, you know, scraps happened there, or whatever compromises happened there, was, you know, between only the people who had access to the city at the time.

AUSTIN: What happens in Bluff City stays in Bluff City.

ALI: Right.

AUSTIN: No one goes to, like—yeah, people took over armored personnel carriers and helicopters, but then the blizzard ended, the—I guess like, that's the thing is like, is the killer brought to justice? Like, do we both get the scene of Leslie Strada in handcuffs, and also get Leslie Strada showing up in a peacoat to get yo?

ALI: Yeah, maybe, I mean, I guess I don't see why not.

AUSTIN: Because we solved this case.

ALI: It would be weird to be like—yeah. For it to be like, 'oh, it's a happy ending', and then all of these people are upset, but like, we didn't get that.

AUSTIN: No I think that like—yeah, I do think that people are not upset. I'm with you a hundred percent. Like, I think it's a happy ending for the city. Everybody goes back to normal, and also pay wages go up, and the gala system is broken, and people are actually treated like people again.

ALI: Yeah.

AUSTIN: But the thing I was just sidebar trying to get was like, we—you figured out who did it, but we didn't ever get the like, 'anyone's going to jail over it' thing, and I'm just trying to ask everybody as a group, does somebody go to jail for this? Or do things just kind of blow over and you're left with the knowledge of what happened? Like, does the newspaper publish a thing that says, like, 'a secret organization named the Concern killed our beloved Hector Hu two weeks ago'.

JACK: I don't think so, right? 'Cause like—

AUSTIN: No, me either.

JACK: I reckon that we are capable of making some positive change, or some effective change, but I don't know if—I feel like—

ALI: We need to shut down the Concern, we haven't done that, obviously.

AUSTIN: Right, and we know what it is.

JACK: Like, I feel like the Concern is more entrenched than what we can do there.

AUSTIN: Yeah, I'm cool with that. I just wanted to make sure that we had what that closing shot looked like for—not the closing shot, but like, what the shot looked like in terms of who killed him and what happens there. Alright, so then, Patty.

KEITH: Yeah. Patty... hm. Fortunately, being in the news has expanded my clientele.

AUSTIN: Oh my god.

KEITH: I am no longer a low-level criminal, but now I am an upper-low level criminal.

JACK: Mid-level.

KEITH: Verging on mid-level criminal.

AUSTIN: Ooh.

KEITH: Yeah. It's nice. A career—I am now a career criminal.

AUSTIN: Oh, it's not just a job, it's a career. Look at you.

KEITH: It's a career. Yeah. I mean, I've decided that if I do what I love, I don't work a day in my life. [LAUGHS]

AUSTIN: God.

ALI: Yikes. That's a rough one.

KEITH: I mean—

JACK: It's just the sound of Rigor in the background.

KEITH: It's more true when I'm like, stealing fireworks and selling them to kids.

AUSTIN: [LAUGHING] Wait, so is that still your *career*?!

[KEITH LAUGHS]

AUSTIN: Like, is the career part of it just, you're on the ACA now, like?

KEITH: No, that's the part that I love. That's the part that I love.

AUSTIN: I see.

KEITH: The part that's my career is other stuff. Like, larceny...

AUSTIN: Petty larceny.

KEITH: I think I can sell information now instead of trading information.

AUSTIN: Oh, wow.

KEITH: I think that's what it is.

AUSTIN: [LAUGHING] You weren't getting a cut before?

KEITH: Well no, I was trading it for information that I needed to get a cut from that end.

AUSTIN: Oh, I see.

KEITH: I was working the angles. Now I am the angle.

AUSTIN: Oh, gotcha. Wait—okay. Mhm. Good.

KEITH: And fortunately—ah, this one's tough.

AUSTIN: This is the city.

KEITH: Second one's tough. No no no, the third one's the city.

AUSTIN: Oh Jesus, that's—right, that was only your first. Okay.

KEITH: [CHUCKLING] Did it take that long? Did I waste that much of your time?

AUSTIN: No, no, I'm just—I'm with you, it seems tough. 'You're a career criminal' is one positive, I guess.

KEITH: Yeah. What am I gonna do, go legit?

AUSTIN: Right, no.

KEITH: Let's see. Fortunately—I don't know. I feel like I want an in with the new in radio host.

AUSTIN: Oh, that's kinda good. Gabby Gabs?

KEITH: Maybe my new guy is like SiriusXM. And I'm like, national.

AUSTIN: What? Wait—

ALI: Oh, you're an informer for like, a national conspiracy theorist.

AUSTIN: I see.

KEITH: Yeah. Yeah, yeah.

AUSTIN: Gotcha. Yeah, I like that.

KEITH: Moving up from local terrestrial to national satellite.

AUSTIN: Gotcha. You're doing—you're like, on the info wars grind now. Good. Good job, buddy.

ART: I think that's below national syndicate.

KEITH: Please, everybody knows that Alex Jones is just—

AUSTIN: Is a false flag operation.

KEITH: Is, uh—shit, why am I forgetting this guy's name? Edit this out.

AUSTIN: Oh, the comedian.

KEITH: Yeah. Yeah, yeah, yeah. Shit.

AUSTIN: Fuck, who is he? Oh my god.

KEITH: Oh, Bill Hicks. That's—yeah, Jesus Christ.

AUSTIN: Bill Hicks. He's just Bill Hicks. Yeah.

KEITH: Yeah, everybody knows Alex Jones is just Bill Hicks as a C.I.A. cover, and is controlled opposition. I don't work for no controlled opposition.

AUSTIN: Gotcha.

KEITH: I work for the real opposition. It's Tom Hartman. [LAUGHS]

AUSTIN: Oh my god.

KEITH: No, it's just like—

AUSTIN: And then the city.

KEITH: And then the city. How did my investigat—oh, well, I think that, you know, solving Hector Hu's murder and the mayor's death—or I guess not solve—I guess I didn't solve—did I solve the mayor's death?

AUSTIN: Eh, we assume that it was the Concern, also. Maybe probably Leslie.

KEITH: Yeah. Well, I think—I think that this is leading to a sort of incrementally less corrupt government system. This is sort of Art's thing, but without infidelity.

AUSTIN: It's also sort of Jack's thing, right?

KEITH: Ah, god damn it, yeah.

AUSTIN: Which was the new mayor thing.

KEITH: Yeah.

AUSTIN: Maybe it has to do with the coast guard. Like, maybe the coast guard station in Bluff City gets shut down.

KEITH: Yeah. Maybe they're too—maybe they're—nah, I bet they're still around. I bet there's like, one new upper management guy. I bet they moved one guy, and there's a new guy who's maybe better, but they're more cautious about the shit they're willing to pull because they know Patty Finks on the case.

AUSTIN: Okay.

KEITH: Patty Fink's got her eye on the coast guard.

AUSTIN: So they're just like, a little less public about what they're doing.

KEITH: They're less public, I think they're less—I think their schemes are less grandiose. I think they're aiming smaller. I think they've moved on from conspiracy shit to like, I don't know. Like, low-level organized crime stuff. Like, I bet they're shaking down business owners. Which they always were, but now instead of using that to fund, you know, like kidnappings, they're using it to fund, like, a coffee machine, a new espresso machine for the office.

AUSTIN: That's a—I bet they could just find that in the budget. I bet they could just find a new coffee machine in the budget, they probably don't need to shake anybody down.

KEITH: No, no, no, they *could* have found it in the budget, but they spent it all on fancy new ships and, like, tasers.

AUSTIN: Right. Gotcha. Yeah, I kind of like the notion there of just like, to expand on it, or to work with it given what's coming in a couple of months, is like—so like, what the Concern does, very broadly, is like, deep dives into this alternate Bluff City.

[MUSIC OUTRO - "[There Is No Greater Love](#)" by Jack de Quidt BEGINS]

AUSTIN: And that's what Hector used to do. It's what Leslie still does, maybe. It's what Florence used to do, at some point in her career, and doesn't remember it. It is what Chris is being taken

to do. Maybe they'd gotten authority to fuck with the city a little bit, the real city, and like, to get extra money to do their dirty work or their investigations, and now it's like, 'no, you work with what you—' You're like, 'no more harassing coffee shop owners, no more putting pressure on people in the real Bluff City. You're gonna work with the budget you have, you're gonna work with the people you have, leave this city alone.'

[MUSIC OUTRO - "[There Is No Greater Love](#)" by Jack de Quidt PLAYS OUT]