

PARTIZAN 43: The Tunnels Beneath

Transcriber: Ella @SRbackwards

AUSTIN: There is damn near no mention of what's going on in the Chasmata quarry in any file public or private, in any conversation we've been able to overhear, in any communication we've been able to intercept.

[[TANAGER. PERFECT. TOUCHPAPER.](#) by Jack de Quidt begins playing]

And not just us with, uh, some of the intel provided by Exeter Leap, we know that it's not even talked about on the interior systems of the Curtain or Nideo. This is completely off the grid, or damn near. One: we think a concentrated attack would provide opportunity for a small team to get in and out. Two: I believe that the so-called green miracle, the new jungles in Kesh territory was predicated by something inside that facility, something powerful. And three: whatever that thing is, [sighs] might be tied to what some members of Millennium Break call Autonomy Itself. I'm not a religious person. My guess is it's an unaccounted part of what the late Valence and Gur Sevraq called the Exemplar.

KEITH: Is there- Is there a way... is there a way to leverage Crysanth, in this?

JACK: ... She's dead. [laughs]

ART: We- We say we're there on official business, and then just like, we have some sort of, like, device...

JACK: Oh shit. [cross] And they take us into protective custody.

ART: [cross] And when we get in-

KEITH: Yeah.

ART: Yeah, then we get in, then the attack happens and they'll lock down-

KEITH: [cross] We're already inside.

ART: [cross] And they won't be as focused on us because everything outside'll be happening.

KEITH: Yeah. Is the- That also gives us the opportunity to, if we're getting there and we're there- we're pitching ourselves as, "Hey look, they fu- they killed- These people killed Crysanth Kesh. We're here to make sure that you have this shit locked down here." And then there's a security breach. We could really big time it, make it like, "Oh brother, these people, [laughs] don't even-"

JACK: [*cross*] Useless. [*laughs*] Useless. I don't even know what these are. Combat archeologists.

KEITH: Peons.

AUSTIN: You've no idea.

JACK: Yeah.

AUSTIN: Yeah. You truly have no idea what you're up against.

KEITH: Yeah. [*cross*] We know-

JACK: We know they're digging and that's it. We know that they're digging and whatever they're digging is important enough that they keep killing spies.

ART: And none of this plan gets, uh, Sovereign Immunity inside the walls.

JACK: Um...

KEITH: I think you can- I think, I don't think that you're... I think that we can get you in. Just have a mask, just wear a mask.

[[TANAGER. PERFECT. TOUCHPAPER.](#) plays to end]

AUSTIN:

(*As guard*) Colonel Shine will be with you momentarily.

Um, and, uh, leads you into a small- a small room. Sovereign Immunity, you know, again, that this has a certain Kesh quality to it, this- the kind of architecture here. Um, this has like a, uh, genuinely kind of humanist, uh, classical architectural style. Um, it is- It is perhaps more utilitarian than most Kesh- It's not Cruciat where like, it's showy, but they can't help but like, make the, um, the crown molding look nice. Do you know what I mean? They can't help but have well-tiled floors, uh, inside. And you immediately recognize that you- you- I'm gonna say you recognize two things. The first is that there is- You do see kind of Curtain-based communication, uh, like operations? The sort of stuff that, you know, from Crysanth- from spending years working with Crysanth were like protocol, right?

Certain types of exchanges, certain sorts of, uh, conversational cues... But there's also something else happening that feels like there's almost a translation happening with the other folks here in the Chasmata quarry to pass word along or to something else. Maybe that's because Chasmata is like, so far removed from everything else, like, and it has its own internal, like, Patois or like dialect, you know? It has its own like thieves' cant. But- But, uh, you're not sure. Um, so you kind of pick up on that pretty quickly.

And then after a few moments, um, I think a, uh, a Columnar person shows up. Their name is... I have it down here somewhere... Lincoln Shine. So, uh, they use he/him, and he has like a big boxy robot head. It's kind of like- It's- It's angular and boxy, so it kind of like, starts like, um, like where a chin would, like- It kind of comes down to a point where a chin would be, but then kind of opens up to be kind of more broad. It's almost like an inverted triangle a little bit. It doesn't end on like a point like a triangle *[laughs]* but it ends on kind of a squared off rounded top, uh, almost. And that face is like black with some, like, bright blue lighting. And he says,

(As Lincoln Shine) We received your message. Um, we were not expecting for it to be... not the Gabardine. Uh... *[sighs]*

And I think it's at this point that your distraction hits. The artillery starts to be fired. Um, and you know, from here, I think what we see is one of the incoming artillery shells hits something in the quarry. It lights up. I'm guessing you're doing this at night? In my mind you were doing this at night. Is that right?

JACK: Oh yeah.

AUSTIN: Okay.

DRE: *[cross]* That makes sense.

JACK: *[cross]* The lights in the snow, and like...

AUSTIN: Yeah, yeah, exactly. That's a hundred percent how I've been picturing this. Yeah. Um, and so the- So we get the shot of- of the facility at night and, you know, there's a huge explosion and some screaming, and then you could hear the artillery- the other artillery shells in the- in the sky, like, whistling on their way in. And then there is a- like, a burst of gunfire from something in the airspace and the remainder of the artillery shells are shot down. And you don't know- We don't see what did that. There's a shape moving in the sky above *[JACK: Hm.]* that kind of like, you know, blocks out some of the stars and you can kind of make out a flying shape, but that's about it. And as soon as that happens, Shine says,

(As Lincoln Shine) Not now. Come with me immediately.

And does as you expected, and leads you to a small panic room.

ART: I think it's important that we, like, be grumbly about this. *[cross]* Like...

AUSTIN: Sure. What's that look like?

JACK: Yeah, we're like, ugh.

ART:

(As Sovereign Immunity) Oh my g- We're just here on- Who- What- How do you keep this operation going? This is amateur hour.

KEITH:

(As *Phrygian*) We're here to make sure you are doing things right, and it looks like you aren't.

DRE:

(As *The Figure in Bismuth*) [nervously] Oh, this- I thought this place was going to be safe.

AUSTIN: [laughs] And then you're playing scared. Good.

DRE: Uh-huh.

AUSTIN: [cross] Um... He-

KEITH: [laughs] Oh, that's good. That's a good angle.

AUSTIN: He says, um,

(As *Lincoln Shine*) Yes, well, there have been some changes recently and well, we can talk about that. Follow me.

And- And quickly leads you through this, kind of, northern building, uh, of port- Point Beryl. Actually, you know what? I'm gonna say it's the southern route. It's the smaller one. The north one is like a big- So for people who don't know there's a - or can't see - um, again, big mountain on the north end of this map, then a U-shaped wall going from the western half of that mountain down into, like, a big snow field, over, then back up, uh, to the other end of the mountain to form kind of a "U" that- that kind of, uh, walls in the quarry itself. On the eastern side of that wall are two big buildings cut down- cut down, like, not the middle, but like, at the lower fifth, uh, a road kind of comes in for the kind of import- uh, import road, basically. Which is where you all are. You are in the- the kind of, bottom fifth- the building to the bottom fifth of that, not to the north, um, which is- which is- No, you're still outside. You're here. You're not in the walls.

ART: Here.

AUSTIN: Yeah, yeah, yeah. Totally. Um, and-

KEITH: So we're in the small slice of- of Beryl?

AUSTIN: Correct. You're in a small slice of Beryl. The big slice of Beryl is presumably some sort of hanger-warehouse. You know, offloading stuff that gets brought in, stuff like that. Maybe that's where they have [cross] more stuff.

KEITH: [cross] And Point Diamond is like the m- the quarry, like, that's where the goods are, we think.

AUSTIN: That's what you think. Yeah, totally.

KEITH: [cross] Right.

AUSTIN: This is an administrative building and a building where there are- You know, you've walked past a few computers, offices. As you're walking through the space, you kind of try to get a little bit of a layout of it, but, you know, you'd have to roll to do more than that. But he's leading you to a panic room. Which, uh, if no one- Are you good with that? No one's trying to like break away right now?

ART: I mean, I was really hoping this panic room would be on the other side of the wall.

AUSTIN: Yeah. Well... You know, maybe that connects to the other side of the wall. You'll have to figure it out, you know?

ART: [cross] Alright.

AUSTIN: [cross] The other side of the wall is-

KEITH: [cross] It shares a wall with the wall, at least.

AUSTIN: [cross] It does share a wall with the wall. Also it's a quarry on the other side of this thing. So there wouldn't really be space for a panic room there, because of the holes in the ground.

DRE: Mm. Right.

AUSTIN: You know?

KEITH: It could have been at Point Citrine, I guess.

AUSTIN: It totally could have been, but Point Citrine is probably where that first artillery shell was just shot.

JACK: [laughing] Probably something-

AUSTIN: Right. Um, anyway, you get-

KEITH: [cross] Good point.

AUSTIN: You get brought to a- you get brought to a panic room, um, and Shine says- Commander Shine says- Or Lieutenant Shine says,

(As *Lincoln Shine*) I'll be right back. Please... uh, take a seat. We'll have guards posted outside in case of anything.

And then turns to leave. It's a small room. That is- So it's like, you go through a door that comes into a hallway. That hallway has some sort of, you know, scanner in it, uh, that- that has- Like it's a regular door, basically that- that goes into a hallway, that then goes to a heavier metal door, that is like the panic room sh- like lockdown, heavy security door that, uh, Shine, I think probably plugged into to open up?

JACK: Hm.

AUSTIN: Like- He did like a- like a USB cable from his wrist into it, um, to open it up. And then, there are probably other, like, bio-scanners for people who are not Columnar. *[laughs]* But- But does that, uh, to open it and then- And then, you know, leaves you in there. There's, you know, a refrigerator and, uh, scanners... You know, a radio picking up chatter from around the house, security cameras... You know, stuff like- A bed, you know? *[laughs]* Maybe a couple of beds. Like a- It's like a bunker more than a... You know what it's like? It's like one of those bunkers from Control. If any of you've played Control that is literally like-

JACK: Oh yeah. *[cross]* Two bunk beds.

AUSTIN: Alright, quick. *[cross]* Two bunk beds, yeah, exactly. Exactly. A bathroom or not even a bathroom, but a, you know, a toilet.

JACK: Those are fun in a kind of grim sort of way.

AUSTIN: Yeah. And you leave- And he leaves, um, and there are two guards, you know, outside the- Not outside this heavy door, but outside the smaller regular door that connects to this.

JACK: Okay. *[pause]* Okay.

KEITH: Mm. *[pause]* So we gotta get further in.

JACK: *[pause]* There's no visible cameras in this room, right?

AUSTIN: Sure. Yes, of course. Yeah, of course. *[JACK: Okay.]* Of course there are.

KEITH: Visible watching in the room *[AUSTIN: Yes.]* and- Okay.

JACK: Yeah, yeah, yeah. I just wanna- Hm.

AUSTIN: Like, if someone breaks into your panic room and kills you, you definitely want *[cross]* footage of that.

JACK: *[cross]* You- You probably want footage of that, yeah. *[laughs]* Yeah. Um, okay.

AUSTIN: You can hear additional artillery fire coming out, you know, out- outside. *[cross]* The ground shakes a little bit.

JACK: *[cross]* Because that- that bit is still working.

AUSTIN: Yeah. Yeah. Totally. A hundred percent. You can hear-

JACK: *[sighs]* Okay.

AUSTIN: In fact, you can feel the footsteps of Hollows moving into position, uh, different places outside. And like construction machines, kind of moving out of harm's way. Um, stuff like that. Um, it's- it's muted-

JACK: *[cross]* Do any of us-

AUSTIN: [cross] It's muted here because of the- the bunker you're in, basically.

KEITH: [cross] So...

AUSTIN: But yeah.

KEITH: It seems like the two choices are to go through the wall [JACK: Right] where the wall is, or get those guards in here.

JACK: And then take this guy- [sighs] You know... um...

KEITH: Do a Star- Do a Star Wars on them.

JACK: Yeah, but then we'd have to get back- We'd have to get through the checkpoint. I mean, it's- it's worth a shot. Can anybody here, um... uh, Interface... well?

KEITH: Sure can't.

AUSTIN: What are you-

DRE: [cross] No.

AUSTIN: What are you trying to do? Because it might not be Interface. [cross] Don't- Don't talk to me about-

JACK: [cross] Uh, just buy us some time with the cameras, you know? Like do a sort of Ocean's loop on the camera. [cross] Um, so the- So the-

KEITH: [cross] Could be Engineer.

AUSTIN: That could be Engineer, yeah. I would- That's- In this world, it's probably Engineer.

JACK: Oh, sure.

DRE: I mean, I could also just break the camera.

JACK: Yeah. It'll- It'll like probably- Like, some security guard will sit up and go, "what the fuck is happening in the panic room?"

ART: Well, I mean, the point of the diversion is that that security guard is looking at something else.

JACK: Yeah, that's true. Um... I wonder how thick the wall is.

KEITH: It looks thick.

AUSTIN: It's- It's... I mean, you're just talking about the panic room wall or the *wall* wall? [cross] The- The base wall?

JACK: The, like, interior wall.

AUSTIN: Okay.

JACK: Yeah, the base wall.

AUSTIN: Yeah. Um... Yeah, I'm- I'm gonna let you try to explore stuff here and not give you stuff you haven't seen yourselves yet.

KEITH: Okay. The wall seems like it would be extremely tough slash loud to get through.

JACK: Yeah. *[cross]* This is known as Shawshank Redemption.

AUSTIN: *[cross]* I just really want to zoom in for a second. How are you leaving the panic room?

JACK: *[cross]* Oh, sorry. I think Keith- I think Keith and I might be misunderstanding here that, that this area here is adjacent to the actual wall.

KEITH: *[cross]* We'd be through the wall of the panic room. Okay.

JACK: So we could sort of tunnel-

AUSTIN: Yeah, but the- but the panic room isn't.

JACK: Right. Okay. I see.

KEITH: *[understanding]* Oh!

JACK: I think this is where the confusion was.

AUSTIN: *[cross]* Yeah, I don't under- You're in the middle of this building.

KEITH: *[cross]* Okay, where- So where- The panic room is like on this side.

AUSTIN: You're in the dead middle of this building.

KEITH: Dead middle. Okay.

AUSTIN: *[cross]* Yeah. Yeah.

JACK: Okay.

KEITH: And it does not extend to the wall then?

AUSTIN: No, no.

KEITH: Got it.

AUSTIN: No, this is a- The scale of these maps is weird, right? But like, you're in a very big building.

KEITH: Yeah.

AUSTIN: The building to your north is massive. This is a very big building.

JACK: We're in like a h- a school sized complex [cross] or something, right?

AUSTIN: [cross] Yeah, let's say that like a- like a big high school.

JACK: Yeah. Okay.

AUSTIN: And the thing across from you is a- is like an airport.

KEITH: Let's say... Are we all agreed that there's no dumb ideas?

ART: Sure.

DRE: Yeah.

KEITH: And are we okay maybe looking a little foolish?

ART: I mean, I'm not agreeing to anything before you tell me the whole idea.

KEITH: Sure. What if we try to lure whoever's watching the cameras into the room by playing dead. And also if they weren't watching the cameras, then we would just be lying on the floor for a couple of minutes.

[15:00]

ART: The Metal Gear Solid. [laughs]

KEITH: We can pretend to choke out on poison gas and collapse. And when someone rushes in, we grab 'em.

AUSTIN: And also, [cross] just as a clear thing-

JACK: [cross] Just bang on the inside.

AUSTIN: You could have already had this conversation before being in the room, which is why no one is listening in [JACK: Right.] and hearing you say this. [JACK: Yes.] Like, you a hundred percent would have already made this plan, if this is a plan you want to do.

KEITH: Yeah.

JACK: Or we just bang on the inside of the wall and say... One of us falls down, the other one says, "help me", you know...

ART: Yeah, one of us just [cross] pretends to have a- have a crisis.

JACK: [cross] "They're injured."

DRE: I mean, I could do that. I already was acting very upset.

AUSTIN: It's true. You were upset.

JACK: Oh yeah. True. Okay.

AUSTIN: Sure.

JACK: I'm- I'm supportive of this plan. I do think we should just come up with step two before we begin it. [cross] Step two is-

KEITH: [cross] Grab- Step two is grab 'em.

JACK: And then we...

KEITH: Well, then we're- we're free of whoever was watching the cameras. I think. [cross] So we're free to- to leave.

DRE: [cross] That's a... That's a big leap in logic.

JACK: Yeah, I don't think that the people...

KEITH: Well, that- that was the key- I guess, yeah, that was the key to the not- to the not shouting part, because if you only pass out and don't shout, then the people- the only person that could come would be the person that sees [cross] us do this. [Jack laughs]

AUSTIN: [cross] That person would get on the radio and say, something is [cross] wrong with the people in the-

JACK: [cross, laughing] Yeah, they'd say go in the room. Let's- Let's Engineer this camera. Let's get a loop running on this camera or something.

AUSTIN: Alright. Who wants to roll Engineer? You, [Jack: Uh...] Kalar?

JACK: My Engineer is one. [cross] Is that the highest we have?

AUSTIN: [cross] You are- You and- You and the Figure both got one. Yeah. I'm checking to see if y'all have anything that helps with this.

DRE: I don't- Do I have one in Engineer? Oh, I do.

AUSTIN: You do.

JACK: Jesus. Okay. Could someone assist me?

DRE: I would love to assist, [cross] I have zero stress.

AUSTIN: [cross] There we go. What's this look like?

JACK: Okay, this is Kalar removing the wire from his ear. [AUSTIN: Mm.] From his- Yeah, birds have ears.

AUSTIN: [cross] Yeah, yeah, of course.

JACK: From his ear. It wasn't a wire. It is some kind of small interface thing. I was reading about, um, the Sovi- The early Soviet bugs that were like passive listening devices? [AUSTIN:

Mhm.] That weren't detectable until a signal was broadcast. And I think this is the kind of thing that is able to remotely access very low tech- comparatively low tech things like cameras, uh, and- and sort of, um, patch them with new data or new information, but it requires physical contact. Um, and again, you couldn't do it on like, a mech or something.

AUSTIN: Right, right, right. Yeah. Give me a, uh- Give me your Engineer. So 2d6 risky standard. The bonus- Or, sorry, the bonus one I'm guessing is coming from... from, uh, Figure. You could instead [DRE: Yeah.] take- take improved effect and go risky great, but have only one die... You know, et cetera.

JACK: Yeah.

AUSTIN: Okay.

JACK: And this is just like... This is just like the... The image is the person standing in the corner of the room, trying to get a cellphone signal.

AUSTIN: Yeah, right.

JACK: Except it's just Kalar reaching up with a long wing to, you know...

AUSTIN: *[laughs]* Alright. Uh...

JACK: Risky...?

AUSTIN: Standard.

KEITH: Standard.

AUSTIN: *[cross]* 2d6.

JACK: *[cross]* Standard.

AUSTIN: Hey, that's a six. Alright.

KEITH: Great.

AUSTIN: Um, so yeah, you get this- You get this engineering, uh- You get this loop running on the camera. Uh, you now are free to do whatever you need in here without it being broadcast elsewhere.

JACK: Okay. And then I think we just move straight into some sort of a... *[cross]* some sort of a Star Wars smash-and-grab.

AUSTIN: *[cross]* Let's- Let's- Yeah. Well, let me do, let me create a little clock for you. How about that? Um, to- to break in. How's that sound? Without- Without, um, any detection. Actually, do I want to do it the other way, which is- Let's just free play and I'll have a clock that is, *[cross]* if this fills up, you get- you get detected.

JACK: *[cross]* They're finding out. *[laughs]*

AUSTIN: Yeah yeah yeah yeah yeah. So this is- We don't need a clock to- to- We can just- Because we make the right decisions here, it's not like a whole clock you have to fill out or anything. So right now that clock has not ticked at all.

JACK: I think Figure feigning some sort of a heart attack or some sort of a fear thing is- is good.

AUSTIN: Yeah.

JACK: Uh...

AUSTIN: Um, and then calling out. So now at this point, you're calling out to the guards outside, not to...

ART: Right.

JACK: You're just banging on the inside of the door. [AUSTIN: Yeah, yeah.] "They're sick, they got sick."

AUSTIN: Um, who's doing that?

DRE: Um...

ART: I guess I will?

AUSTIN: Alright. That sounds like a Sway to me? Presuming that [ART: Yeah.] you're doing it in a- in a way that's not like commanding? You're not, like, ordering people to do stuff.

ART: No, just like:

(As *Sovereign Immunity*) Hey... Something's wrong in here.

AUSTIN: Yeah yeah yeah. Totally. Then you are- We are still risky standard. Right now, that is a 1d6. Is anyone helping?

JACK: Um...

KEITH: 1d6, huh?

AUSTIN: Uh-huh.

KEITH: [*sighs*] That feels like I should help.

AUSTIN: Okay. Take a stress. Actually wait, what is your- Who has what here? I just want to make sure that everyone is- That I'm right on how many points everyone has with everybody else. So, uh, ev- SI has a one with everybody. Phrygian has a two with Kalar and a one with everybody else. Kalar has... a two with Sovereign Immunity and a one with everybody else. And then Figure, you have a one with everybody, correct?

DRE: Yeah.

AUSTIN: Alright, cool.

DRE: [cross] And so is it one to take- One to assist. Okay. Gotcha.

AUSTIN: [cross] It's one- It's one to- To assist, yeah yeah yeah. Except for people who have two with that person. So Phrygian, it would cost two to give Kalar- to assist Kalar, but you would give Kalar two point- or two bonuses and likewise Kalar, it would cost you two to help Sovereign Immunity.

JACK: Right.

AUSTIN: Um... [cross] So yeah.

KEITH: What is this- What is this roll for again? [cross] Just to make sure.

AUSTIN: Bringing- Bringing the guards in and jumping them. Right?

KEITH: Got it. [cross] Yeah.

ART: Well, [cross] this is just the bringing in part, right?

AUSTIN: [cross] I think it's both. I think we roll that together.

KEITH: Is this potential- Is this potentially a group action?

AUSTIN: Sure. We could do it as a group action, [cross] if you'd rather that.

DRE: [cross] Oh yeah, it could be.

KEITH: Is that a way- 'Cause three jumpers. [cross] One faker.

AUSTIN: [cross] Totally. The thing that- The thing that you're doing there is... The thing you're doing there is increasing more dice, uh, potentially putting more stress on the person who is leading the group action. Up to you. This is on the table for sure. The character-

KEITH: [cross] 'Cause you take stress for everyone who fails, right?

AUSTIN: [cross] Correct. Exactly. Exactly.

KEITH: Okay. [cross] Right.

AUSTIN: So you would immediately get more dice presumably, right? I'm gonna get- Let's see: Sway. SI has one. Phrygian has...

ART: No, everyone else has zero. [cross] I just checked.

AUSTIN: [cross] Oh my god. Okay. So that would be [Keith: [cross] Oh, because I have one for...] three people rolling 2d6, taking the lowest, and then [laughs] [cross] SI taking stress from any failures.

JACK: [cross] That ain't good.

KEITH: [cross] Right, it's Sway to get them in not- It's Sway to get them in, not Struggle to jump them.

AUSTIN: Yeah, I think it's the- Uh... I guess the question- [DRE: Can-] Uh, I guess it could be Struggle to jump them. How easy do we think it is to just get them to come in? Probably... Probably [cross] pretty easy.

DRE: [cross] Can I-

KEITH: [cross] Pretty easy, right? It's their job to guard.

DRE: [cross] Can I also propose maybe a thing that gets them in easier?

AUSTIN: Sure.

DRE: Um, than me, like faking sick or whatever. What if we, like, set off an explosion in here and then be like, "Oh my God, we've been hit by the artillery."

AUSTIN: [cross] Sure.

KEITH: Yeah. Or even just like- like, feed smoke under the door.

AUSTIN: Yeah. Either of these works. What are you declaring to do that?

KEITH: [cross] Yeah.

DRE: Uh, like item-wise?

AUSTIN: Yeah, yeah, yeah.

DRE: Um, I suppose... Let's see...

KEITH: Demolition tools, maybe? [cross] Or placed explosives?

DRE: [cross] Yeah, probably destruction tools... or demolition tools.

AUSTIN: Yeah, dem-

DRE: Yeah, let's do placed explosives. [cross] That sounds fun.

AUSTIN: That's good. Yeah. Brick of moldable, explosive putty with a timer or remote detonator. Never quiet. So it will be [cross] loud.

KEITH: [cross] But do we wanna do- Hold on, now, now, here's the- We have introduced a new wrinkle, which is: our plan is to put this on the opposite side of the room from us so that we don't get exploded and then call the guards in to be like, "look what just happened." Could we just put it on the door and blow up the guards and the door at the same time? [cross] Is that-

JACK: No, because we want the disguises, we want the Star Wars bullshit.

KEITH: [cross] Right, we want Star Wars.

AUSTIN: [cross] And also, they are not outside of the door. They're outside of a door that is outside of the door.

JACK: [cross] Then I flip it down the hall, right?

KEITH: [cross] Got it, okay.

AUSTIN: Yeah, totally.

KEITH: Okay.

AUSTIN: But you can do this. You can do the placed explosives. [cross] Someone de- Someone declare- Who's declaring the placed explosives?

KEITH: [cross] Yeah. Put it on the corner of the ceiling where it would make sense.

AUSTIN: Yeah. Uh, it looks like Figure already has. Alright, well now it's a Wreck.

DRE: Yep. [cross] I got two in Wreck.

AUSTIN: [cross] Or I guess, no, now it's a Struggle, because the thing that we're doing is the Struggle, is the beating them up once they come in, right?

KEITH: Right. And the- [cross] the explosives is just an item, not a roll.

AUSTIN: [cross] God, I don't know. I think it's- Ah, hoo.

DRE: [cross] Is there- Is there a set up here? Can you do a Set-Up Action?

AUSTIN: [cross] You could- You could do a Set-Up Action with the Wreck. Yeah, I would let you do a Set-Up Action with the Wreck.

DRE: [cross] Yeah, so I set up the Wreck and then...

AUSTIN: [cross] And then... Yeah yeah yeah, I like that. So yeah, you go ahead and do a Set-Up Action with Wreck. When you make a Set-Up Action, you are weakening an obstacle or empowering an ally with a success. Any squad mates that follow through on your action have improved position or increased effect. You choose the benefit based on the nature of your ploy. So- So yeah. Give me a- What is your Wreck?

DRE: Two.

AUSTIN: So 2d6. Uh, this is still risky standard. This could sell break bad with a failure, [cross] just so you know.

DRE: [cross] Yeah, that's fine. Yeah yeah yeah.

AUSTIN: That's a six.

DRE: Ah well, [*relieved exhale*] hoo.

AUSTIN: Alright, so [cross] are you setting this up as risky great or controlled standard?

KEITH: [cross] Couple of sixes in a row, that's nice.

DRE: Uh, risky great.

AUSTIN: Okay. So, uh, I- I will- I will, like, honor that great, assuming you get it, by- by making the rest of the kind of infiltration a little bit easier. Um... So the- the explosion goes off, the door flies open... You know, stuff is scattered, screens break, um, there's smoke everywhere. Uh, you're coughing because of the explosion. You don't even have to fake it. [laughs] You know? Um...

KEITH: Right.

AUSTIN: The guards are already in by the time you can even call for help. Um,

(As guard) What's going on here? Is everyone alright? Were you struck?

KEITH:

(As Phrygian) [dramatically] Oh, the ceiling- It just happened. We don't even know what happened. Ahhhh.

AUSTIN: [laughs] Um, give me a... Who is struggling here?

ART: Is the Struggle a group action?

AUSTIN: [cross, laughing] Maybe. It can be.

KEITH: What was it? It was a- It was a Set-Up. So it's only one, right? Or unless you can set up [cross] a group action.

AUSTIN: [cross] You can set up a group action. You can totally set up a group action.

KEITH: Okay.

AUSTIN: Um, and everyone's got Struggle. So it's up to you if [cross] you wanna-

DRE: I feel like thematically, this makes sense as a group [cross] action too.

AUSTIN: [cross] Yeah, agreed. So who's leading it? Who's ready to take on the stress from failures?

ART: ... Um... [cross] I don't have any stress, I'll do it.

KEITH: [cross] Does anyone have less than two?

AUSTIN: SI does. Alright. SI leading this. Everyone roll your- your Struggle, uh, risky great. Uh, we got a one from S- We're not- That's not the roll. That's how many Sovereign Immunity's

rolling, one, Phrygian is rolling two, Kalar is rolling two, Figure in Bismuth is rolling two. So lots of- Lots of big swings here coming. Alright, that's not a failure. That's good. That's a fail-

DRE: [cross] Also not a failure.

AUSTIN: [cross] Yeah, uh-huh. We got one failure here from- from Phrygian so far.

KEITH: Yeah, three and a one.

AUSTIN: And, okay, so it's a mixed success, is the highest you've gotten here. Uh, but that's a success nonetheless. I'm going to...

ART: And it's one stress for one failure?

AUSTIN: It's one stress for one failure, correct. Uh... [cross] I believe that's true.

KEITH: [cross] Okay.

AUSTIN: So that's- that's well done. Listen. Um, so I'm just double checking that that's right. Yeah, totally. Uh, more efficient, certainly, in some ways, right? Uh, based on the roll. I guess it could've gone really bad, but, um, you beat the shit out of them. However, uh, because, of it being a mixed success, um, you know, their- their radios buzz almost immediately and it's like,

(As *guard*) What- what was that explosion in block C? What's going on?

And I'm advancing the alarm by two. Um, you can choose to resist this consequence if you'd like to.

KEITH: ...I think we should consider resisting that.

JACK: Yeah, I think so. It's not a big clock, is it?

ART: [cross] Yeah.

AUSTIN: It's not. Only two more and it'll- it'll get filled.

ART: Alright.

AUSTIN: Who's resisting? SI is the person who led that attack or that- that [cross] thing. Alright, that's a-

ART: Yeah, I'll resist. Um, I think I'm just gonna- Can I- Yeah, I'll resist the consequences.

AUSTIN: Okay. So give me a, uh... Give me, um, 3d6, 'cause that's your Resolve. This is a Resolve resist. I'm guessing you're picking up the mic and talking into it, or the- the radio.

ART: Yeah, I'm just gonna try to, like,

(As *Sovereign Immunity*) It was nothing.

AUSTIN: *[laughing]* Right. "Stand down." *[Jack laughs]* It was nothing? Is that what you're going with? Wait. *[laughs]*

ART: Um... *[Keith laughs]*

DRE: *[jokingly, as guard]* "Must have been my imagination."

AUSTIN: Uh-huh.

ART: Yeah. Um, I don't know, what's- what's a- what's a- what's a plausible excuse here? Um...

JACK: It was like artillery hit. No casualties or...

ART: *[cross]* Yeah.

(As *Sovereign Immunity*) Artillery hit, no- no casualties, no damage. *[cross]* Everything's fine, how are you?

KEITH: *[cross]* We're all fine here.

AUSTIN: *[cross]* Yeah yeah yeah. Oop. I did not mean to move the map. Whoops. We're good. Uh... YO! *[everyone laughing]* WHY DID YOU WASTE THAT ROLL?

KEITH: *[laughing]* Woah.

JACK: *[laughing]* Holy shit. *[cross]* Triple six.

KEITH: Is that the best roll in the history of Friends at the Table?

AUSTIN: Art just rolled three sixes.

DRE: Don't you clear *[cross]* stress?

AUSTIN: *[cross]* You definitely clear a stress. A hundred percent.

DRE: *[cross]* Yeah.

AUSTIN: Yeah. I wish- I wish I could give you more.

KEITH: Yeah, we throw- we throw you a party. *[Austin laughs]* We do a pizza party.

JACK: *[laughing]* In-game, right now.

KEITH: The guards come in and *[cross]* they're like, "you did such a good job. You guys can just go in."

AUSTIN: *[cross]* Jesus Christ.

ART: *[laughing]* "Here's the thing you wanted"... I'll take negative one stress *[cross]* if you want.

AUSTIN: No, just take- just take, just take the- Yeah, god damn. Um, the- Yeah, so whatever you say is like,

(As guard) Roger that. Stay safe, make sure the VIP's are secure.

Um, and- Yeah, you- you get-

JACK: [*jokingly, as guard*] Hey, remember the code to the safe on [*Austin laughs*] the third floor? It's 2149.

AUSTIN: [*laughs*] ...Um, so yeah, you clear your stress. Your stress is cleared. That's good. And- and you're able to put on these guard uniforms, um, and, you know, take- take their key cards or whatever else they have on them, right? Um, in fact, that's what I'm- that's what I'm giving you. You have a key card for a quarry access from, you know, south gate, which is with the thing that you're in now. Um, which means there must be a door somewhere that takes you into the quarry from here.

ART: [*cross*] Yeah, let's try to walk towards that.

KEITH: [*cross*] Sounds like to the west.

AUSTIN: [*cross*] Yeah... How are you- Yeah. How are you getting around this base... as you're looking?

JACK: We've lifted-

KEITH: How- how many costumes did we- did we get enough-

AUSTIN: No, you only have two. That was-

JACK: No.

KEITH: So we just have two guards pretending to escort two...

AUSTIN: Yes. Yes. Yes.

KEITH: Yeah.

AUSTIN: Which is not nothing right? Like that- [*cross*] that plays in some ways.

KEITH: [*cross*] No, that's great. That totally plays.

AUSTIN: [*cross*] Oh, sorry, I did not- I did not mean to delete the, uh, the alarm clock, so I have to bring it back. It just didn't fill up, you know?

JACK: [*mock sincerity*] Oh no, Austin. [DRE: Yeah, yeah.] I'm afraid the rules [AUSTIN: Ah, I see.] of the game [*cross*] say that if you accidentally delete a clock-

KEITH: [*cross*] Yeah, when you get that third six...

AUSTIN: Okay. So I can put down a different clock then is what you're saying? Instead of alarm.

JACK: No, no, no, [cross] it's only one at a time, it still counts as... [laughs]

DRE: [cross] Yeah. Yeah!

AUSTIN: [cross] 'cause I can do that by GM fiat. Uh-huh. [laughs]

JACK: No, you filled the clock slot. [cross] It's kinda like an overflow...

AUSTIN: [cross] [laughing] I see. Yeah, I got it. Uh-huh. Alright. [cross] So you're out of the- out of the panic room.

KEITH: [cross] It's a five step clock now.

AUSTIN: You're in the middle of the southern gate facility. You're looking for this door. What's that look like? How are you exploring? What's the- how- You know, what's the vibe?

JACK: Um...

AUSTIN: How do you find this place?

[30:00]

KEITH: I think we got to be a little- little... We have to be inconspicuous. That's sort of the- We can't, like, be poking around in different rooms, maybe?

ART: Yeah, we gotta...

KEITH: We gotta be sure.

DRE: I mean, should we just make a beeline for the direction of the quarry?

AUSTIN: The general, like, "I think we came in this way, that means we'd have to turn this way", that sort of thing?

DRE: [cross] Yeah.

JACK: [cross] Right.

KEITH: [cross] Yeah.

AUSTIN: Alright, are you being sneaky? Are you being- Are you being inconspicuous via a Sway? Are you rolling- What are you rolling here, is the question.

JACK: I'm very good at Prowl. [cross] Um... But I think that- Because...

AUSTIN: [cross] You want to lead a Prowl action? Or I guess that wouldn't be leading a Prowl action, right?

JACK: I'm probably not wearing a disguise unless there was a Talonite- [cross] Unless one of the guards was a Talonite.

AUSTIN: [cross] There was not. They were all- They were both people. They were both humans, rather.

KEITH: It sounds like- It sou- It would sound- It makes the most sense for Kalar and [cross] Figure to not be wearing disguises.

AUSTIN: [cross] Though actually, I think this- Yeah. And I think that this would be a- I actually think this would also be a group action because you all need to... be sneaky if you're being sneaky. I think as a Sway or something, if you were like, I'm going to talk my way to the door, then you could have someone who is talking as like the- the main person, but that wouldn't be a group action. You know what I mean?

JACK: [cross] Sure.

KEITH: [cross] Do we need to be sneaky if we've got these disguises? [AUSTIN: Yes.] Can we be [cross] instead sure-footed?

AUSTIN: [cross] These disguises allow you to be sneaky in the sense that you would be able to talk your way there, because you have two people in uniforms. [KEITH: Right.] Do you know what I mean? [cross] You're going to bump into other people-

JACK: [cross] But some people have little white circles above their head.

AUSTIN: Right. You're gonna bump into other people. If you didn't have those guards, they would immediately be like, what the fuck are you doing? You're suspicious to me. By having the uniforms-

JACK: [cross] They'd probably just kill us. [laughs]

AUSTIN: [cross] It opens up that- Right. By having the uniforms, it opens up the possibility of you walking around openly and then can be- [KEITH: Got it.] If you're confronted, you know, talking your way through it. [pause] Um, so yeah, who's doing what, what are you doing?

KEITH: Well, my... my Prowl is okay. I have one. I have two in Finesse, if that helps ever.

AUSTIN: It does if you're, like, trying to pickpocket something or, you know...

JACK: Secretly draw a pistol.

AUSTIN: Secretly draw a pistol, sure.

KEITH: Yeah.

AUSTIN: That is the biggest-

ART: Does anyone have good Survey?

JACK: I was also thinking about Survey. I only have one in Survey, but we could, um... we could- we could bump that number up by helping or by, you know, [cross] spending stuff, taking a devil's bargain.

AUSTIN: [cross] Pushing, or whatever. Yeah, totally.

KEITH: Yeah, I also only have one in Survey.

ART: 'Cause Survey seems like how we find the way out.

JACK: Find the- Yeah.

AUSTIN: Yeah.

KEITH: Yeah.

AUSTIN: You could do Survey as a set-up to something else?

ART: [pause] Like a Survey into a Prowl?

AUSTIN: Yeah. Which would- [cross]

JACK: [cross] Yeah. That sounds great.

AUSTIN: Which would either give you a greater effect or maybe in this case, what I imagine it would do would be giving you better positioning? Because you'd be like, alright, not only do we know where we're going, but we're gonna be- we're going to take a sneakier route or something. On the other hand, Set-Up Actions do have con- can have consequences. So there's a degree to which- Oh, here's what I'm going to give you for both that triple six, but also for, uh, getting the disguises. I think you're now in a controlled position. So you do have [cross] a little leeway here because of getting those disguises.

JACK: [cross] Ohh, right.

KEITH: [cross] Ooh, nice.

AUSTIN: That's a good way of mechanizing that. So, yeah, so I think a Survey here would totally- so, so who is surveying? What are you rolling?

KEITH: [pause] I guess it's either Jack or me... I'll do it.

AUSTIN: Alright. What is your... You have one right now. Is anyone helping?

KEITH: I have one.

JACK: Uh, yeah, I'll take a stress and help.

AUSTIN: Okay.

KEITH: That's 2d6?

AUSTIN: 2d6. *[pause]* *[grimacingly]* Ooh.

KEITH: Three- Oof.

AUSTIN: That's a failure, so, with a control-

KEITH: *[cross]* Oof, I'm rolling bad today.

AUSTIN: Yeah, that's not- that's not good. Uh, Art's triple six really, I think *[Art chuckles]* made it- made it really rough. Um, so because it's a controlled consequence, you can always- I basically think like you're, like, sneaking around, like, peeking at things, like, doing your best to try to make, you know, make things make sense to you. And you hear some guards *[KEITH: Yeah.]* walking your way, which prevent you from better surveying the place.

KEITH: Right.

AUSTIN: Which means the action has failed. Uh, the chance for that chosen action to work has passed. You can use a different action here to overcome the obstacle, uh, or it can be attempted again at a worst position. So you can stay and try to roll that again, uh, but it would be risky this time. So you can continue to Survey, uh, for the set up or you could eject from this plan because *[KEITH: Would-]* of shifting back up to risky if you- if you try it again.

KEITH: Uh, let's... I don't think I should do that. I don't think I should do it.

AUSTIN: Yeah.

KEITH: Um...

AUSTIN: ...So you could just- you could just instead, kind of, stumble your way around sneakily? Uh, or you could go ask someone again. That's another way, like, "Hey," *[laughing]* but I do think-

KEITH: "Hey, where's the room to the quarry again?" *[everyone laughs]*

AUSTIN: "I'm really confused."

KEITH: "I'm new. That's why you don't recognize me." *[laughs]*

JACK: ...Alternatively, you know, um, with three Prowl, I just break away from the group and-

AUSTIN: You find it.

JACK: And try and sneak my- sneak my way in. Yeah.

AUSTIN: Mhm.

JACK: Draw- draw people in. Um...

AUSTIN: You could do that. And then, you- you do have a thing that lets you- y'all do have communicators with each other. One of your *[cross]* upgrades, as a reminder-

JACK: [cross] Yeah, we have those cool...

AUSTIN: Yeah, those experimental comms, which lets you use teamwork with any squad member regardless of distance separating you.

JACK: [cross] Yeah.

KEITH: [cross] This sounds like an okay...

JACK: I think I'm going to do it. I think it's like...

AUSTIN: [pause] Yeah.

JACK: Yeah. I think... I think it's just this moment of like, you know when you see a box or somebody moving very, very heavily and suddenly, [AUSTIN: Yeah.] and then they just turn on a- on a dime [cross] and you're like, oh wow, they can actually-

AUSTIN: [cross] This will be risky. Just as a reminder, because you do not-

JACK: Yeah yeah yeah.

AUSTIN: Okay, so 3d6, risky... risky standard, unless you're getting- I don't know how you'd be getting help. Um, you tell me if you're getting helped by someone else distracting or something, I guess? If anyone wants to help, but you could also just roll 3d6. 3d6 is pretty good, right?

JACK: Yeah, it seems alright. Let's give it a go.

AUSTIN: Alright. 3d6. Let's go. [pause] That's a six. Um, so yeah. You-

JACK: Just like an owl.

AUSTIN: [enthusiastic] Yeah.

JACK: Dead silent.

AUSTIN: Prowling through the str- the halls.

JACK: Through the streets.

AUSTIN: Through the streets.

JACK: Of Gotham.

AUSTIN: Yeah. Uh-huh. [laughs] You find your way to a door that connects- that has like a- you know, a heavy- it's like a, kind of like heavy institutional doors that has those like really loud buzzes when you scan a card and it goes like BZZZ and it goes like kuh-clink and then you open it and it's, like, really heavy. It's one of those doors. And you in fact, see a group of other guards moving through it. Uh, opening it, going through, out into the quarry. And then another group comes through the other way. So you've identified this place, for sure. Um, you can- uh, the other folks can- can come join you here, um, by rolling their own Prowls I'm guessing? Or

else by being ready to roll something else when they bump into one of these other groups that are walking their way. Um, but you- you have it now and you could go through it yourself right now. If one of them had given you the key card or whatever, you know?

JACK: Yeah. Oh, I mean, let's do that. Uh, let's- let's have the key card just so that I can, kind of, get out of this corridor [cross] and into the bigger space, and try and-

AUSTIN: [cross] Yeah. And into the- Into the quarry. Yeah. Done.

JACK: And get a description of- of what- what we've got going on here.

AUSTIN: Alright. So... You go through that door. You wait for a moment, when no one is there, you go through the door and you just see miles and miles of quarry below you, right? You step out to-

KEITH: [laughs] I swear to God, because this is Friends at the Table, you said miles and miles, and I thought that these were two brothers, [AUSTIN: Oh my God.] both named Miles [everyone laughs], that I was supposed to remember who they were.

AUSTIN: Yeah, no.

KEITH: And there they are: Miles and Miles.

AUSTIN: [laughs] No. Miles and miles of quarry below you, you know, stretching in every direction with spotlights down on them. Um, a lot of the construction machinery has been moved away from the edges of stuff as this attack, this feint, uh, continues. And here you can see more, uh, directly the shape above you that's- that is flying around and running, uh, kind of counter-uh, you know, as a, as a sort of, um... what's the word I'm looking for? Uh, when like a jet releases like, flares to counter incoming missiles and shit? There's a word for that. Um, anyway, that-

DRE: Chaff?

AUSTIN: No, there's like a more general term- Countermeasure.

DRE: [cross] Oh, yeah yeah yeah.

KEITH: [cross] Right, yeah.

AUSTIN: [cross] Who's running it as a countermeasure to this incoming artillery strikes, shooting out the missiles and the artillery shells of the sky. And it is a giant, like- It has the shape- It seems to in this moment, have the shape of a giant red, uh, eagle. It's a- it's some sort of mech that has taken, like, huge, metallic eagle wings, um, that is sweeping across the sky at night, shooting these down. You would know who this is, Kalar, I would say.

JACK: Oh shit. What have we got?

AUSTIN: You specifically know because you are from the border with Apostolos, right? And two, [JACK: Yeah.] you don't like- you don't like, um, war Divines, right?

JACK: Absolutely not.

AUSTIN: And do you know when you don't like a thing, like ideologically, and something exists, that is, like, the perfect spotless version of it that like, seems to counter all of your complaints? As in "well, how can you not like this? Look at- this guy is great. How do you not? You know what I-" Like one of those?

JACK: [cross] Ohhh. Uh-huh.

AUSTIN: This is the Divine Valour. Um, which has been- [Jack exhales] you know, Valour is a- is a Divine that's been in Apostolos for a long time. Uh, and we'll wrap back around to something here in a second, I promise. And currently, it is piloted by, um, someone named, uh, Xiphion, who also goes by- And this is- this is weird. Um, Xiphion also goes by Zig'ell Barbos. And he takes he/him pronouns and zig/zig's pronouns. Normally when an Apostolosian becomes, uh, a- an elect, they give up their Apostolosian name and they give up their Apostolosian pronouns. Zig has done neither of those things. Has- has taken the elect named Xiphion, but zig has taken- has not given up the- the Apostolosian culture.

And also to be clear, uh, is a trans man. Uses he/him. Um, you know, was- was born and assigned they/them according to the way Apostolos works. Took he/him. He is- I'm face casting him as Dev Patel with like, anime red highlights. [Jack laughs] Um, and because he is Apostolosian, he also has these kinds of like special, like, you know, the- you know, the scales Apostolosians have? But his are red. Um, and they run from like the neck [JACK: Ooh, wow] and chest down- down his body, uh, down his arms. And you know, that he is a rising star. He was a rising star in the Apostolosian military, who first worked as a Lieutenant under Cas'alear, your Cas'alear, um, as a member of the Sword Breakers. And then last year was transferred to work, uh, in another group. Uh, you don't know where he- who he's working for at this moment, necessarily.

Um, it's weird that he's here. You know, that he is- he is, kind of, fondly called the Red Roc. R-O-C, like a big eagle. Um, that is kind of like his- his like, nom de guerre. Um, and, uh, it's weird that he's here. Uh, it's weird that he's defending this place. This is Kesh territory. Apostolos is at war with Kesh. This is a Curtain place. The Curtain is at war with the Pact, which on Partizan is largely represented now by Apostolos, and by, uh, Columnar-

JACK: [cross] Yeah, I was gonna say-

AUSTIN: So it's weird that zig is here. Um... but, there he is. And the mech that he's piloting is the- is the Divine Valour. And the reason I say that, it's, uh, that there's a degree of like, ugh, this fucking poster child, Valour is in some ways, everything Motion isn't, right? Motion forces you to fight. Valour and Xiphion, um, convince you to. Uh, inspire you to. Convince you that- that the thing that you're fighting for is a noble cause. Defends the people who- who work for him. Um, you know...

ART: Is that really different?

AUSTIN: This is the- I mean, no, right? This is the thing I'm doing. *[laughs]* Um, but is in the- in the minds in- in the- in the, kind of the mind of the people of this world, right? You look at an army led by Valour and- and most people go, "yes, good." You look at an army led by Motion and you go like, "well, it gets the job done." And that kind of, "I wish it could all be like Valour."

JACK: *[cross]* It's a little frightening to me.

AUSTIN: *[cross]* "It's a little frightening to me, but they're- you know, they're fighting for what we need." Uh, but, but, you know, you look at- I wish it could all be- *[sighs]* If only there was another Valour out there." You know? Um, and you know, also that this- this is a transforming mech, right? It's in an eagle mode right now that it can land and look dope, you know? I'm very much imagining something in the vein of, for the Gundam fans out there, this is a Sazabi, this is a- this is a Sinanju. This is like big red, you know, hero slash villain mech, uh, who- which has like really nice, interesting, kind of, curves and- and almost like an armor- an armored look, very professional, very officer-like, but it can transform into this big eagle form, um, to kind of zip around the battlefield.

And it's here. Above you all, which is scary, I think, because again, you don't- I mean, you knew you were coming into unknown territory, but Divines *[JACK: Yeah.]* are Divines are Divines, and this is a big scary one. And it means that you also know that the other mechs here, of which you can see some, um, are- uh, are especially scary because that means, you know that they'll be inspired right now. Um, the long and short on the other mechs - we can get to them if they come up more - is that there are some artillery ones at Point Citrine, at the kind of dead center. Um, and they've begun firing back into the jungle to the South, trying to like, you know, triangulate based on incoming fire where they should be shooting at. Um, and then moving up against, and- and, you know, onto the huge walls are basically - without getting into like, you know, the model names and stuff that you can find in the episode dossier in the description - um, sniper mechs, and also these like, mechs that have huge tower shields that protect the sniper mechs and- and, you know, um, perform kind of hand to hand, close range, melee range stuff.

[45:00]

AUSTIN: There are dozens and dozens of these things, right? Like this is- *[JACK: Jesus.]* This is an army. You- you went into an army base in a real way. Um, what you also see from here is that there is absolutely, in the distance through the snow, a tunnel that goes into the mountain at Point Diamond. That intel seems right. You don't know what's there. You don't know how to get across this huge open space. Um, you know, all of this place is well lit. Um, you know, you'll have to find shadows to dodge between if that's your plan. Uh, but there is, you know, there's a lot happening here, for sure. Um...

JACK: Okay, *[AUSTIN: So...]* I'm going to feed that all back to them. This is kind of- this is kind of good news for Kalar. This is- this is more... approachable. We are entering more his area of comfort here. Um, even if that is a terrifying Divine and like a hundred mechs, it's better than disguising yourself as somebody.

AUSTIN: I want to say you've met Xiphion, Kalar. And I just wanna zero in on this a little bit, because it's just like... the most charming and endearing person. Younger than you. Younger than you for sure. Right? Um, visited your village after a battle at some point, to bring supplies like water and food from Apostolos because they didn't want you to get caught up in this. This is like, early days of the war type shit. You know what I mean? [JACK: Yeah.] This is- this is- this is, you know, when he was working with Cas'alear specifically. Um, and just, you know, the- the- the picture of chivalry. Um...

KEITH: Ugh.

AUSTIN: Yeah. Uh- huh.

KEITH: Nothing's worse than the- than the guy that everybody's wrong about.

AUSTIN: I don't know. Listen... you'll have to talk to him.

JACK: [*cross*] I think, you know... yeah. It's a weird memory for Kalar, right? [AUSTIN: Yes. Yes.] Like, yeah. Kalar's response to this is- is not, well, this is the guy I hate the most. [AUSTIN: Uh-huh.] It's...

KEITH: [*pause*] Hey, sometimes the guy that you hate the most isn't the guy that annoys you the most.

AUSTIN: Yeah, uh-huh. [*cross*] True.

JACK: [*Dre laughs*] [*cross*] It's kinda- yeah. I think Kalar is able to look up at Valour and- and go, yeah, maybe there's something- maybe there's something to this. Um, which is- which is- it's a very shameful thing to think, [AUSTIN: Yeah, totally.] I think.

AUSTIN: Um... Anyway, you report this back. [JACK: Mhm.] Meanwhile, inside-

JACK: Fucking Divine.

AUSTIN: [*laughs*] Are y'all making your way to the door also?

KEITH: [*pause*] Uh... yeah.

AUSTIN: Are you doing this by prowling? By talking your way through?

KEITH: Wow, I sure have not had much luck rolling, so I don't know... [*Austin laughs*] I mean, if I don't Prowl, the idea is I will, for sure [*cross*] run into someone.

AUSTIN: You're going to bump into someone. Yeah. Right. Because otherwise you'd be prowling to not run into someone. Do you underst- You know what I mean?

KEITH: Does my move here come into play? Reflex is "when there's a question about who acts first, the answer is you". Does this help me stay out of- out of [*cross*] sight?

AUSTIN: It would help you respond if you get caught sneaking.

KEITH: Okay.

AUSTIN: Or if someone- You know, you could have the first word in the conversation, *[laughing]* if that's a thing you wanted, you know what I mean? [KEITH: Yeah.] Um, but it does not provide you a mechanical bonus, *[cross]* like a plus one, you know?

JACK: *[laughing]* "Stop".

KEITH: Right... Okay. I'm going to rely on- I'm going to rely on Finesse.

AUSTIN: Okay.

KEITH: Is that stupid?

AUSTIN: What is- Wh- What are you doing? Is this sneaking?

KEITH: Finesse- No, Finesse, [AUSTIN: Oh, okay.] Finesse would be- *[cross]* I don't think so.

AUSTIN: Oh, so you were like- Are you going to try to sneak attack someone to get through basically?

KEITH: Well, I was thinking that Finesse if I got stopped Finesse would- would let me like, grab-grab, or even pickpocket a like- like "I'm supposed to be here" card.

AUSTIN: *[cross]* You have a security card.

KEITH: *[cross]* Like a security thing, 'cause I'm wearing the guard uniform.

AUSTIN: *[cross]* You *have* a security card. Yeah.

KEITH: Well... But I wasn't sure if I had clearance for this area.

AUSTIN: Yeah yeah yeah, absolutely. But you have to talk your way through because you're strangers in a place that's- that does not get strangers.

KEITH: Right. I can't talk my way through.

AUSTIN: Uh-huh. You can. You can roll those dice. Like, you can push yourself to get dice. You can do whatever. You could also fight your way through. Like I'm- I'm- you know?

KEITH: Yeah. That's f- that's fair. I'll Prowl. I'll just Prowl.

AUSTIN: Okay, good. Again, everyone who is not there has to do something. So is this a group act- is this a group action then? Is everyone prowling together or are you all figuring out a different means of getting there, because you're all good at different things?

ART: Well, I was also planning on prowling, so we might as well do it as a group.

DRE: Yeah, I'm probably going fail that roll.

AUSTIN: And you want to pass that stress off and allow yourself to succeed at it because it's a group action. Do you know what I mean? That's the kind of benefit of the group action is, it would be a success instead of a failure where I get to tick clocks or make hard moves, right? Does that make sense?

KEITH: Oh, wow, between- Okay, so I've got- I've got one in Prowl. Sovereign Immunity has one in Prowl. Figure has none in Prowl.

AUSTIN: Could push- Could push themselves to get [cross] one if they wanted.

KEITH: Right. So we've got- Right, so we've got... We only need this to succeed once [AUSTIN: Correct.] and we have between three and six dice to do that with, but that's going to be... that's going to be at least-

AUSTIN: That's some stress. [cross] You're looking at stress.

KEITH: [cross] I mean, at lea- [pause] We're looking at stress. [AUSTIN: Yeah.] It's probably at most three stress, right?

AUSTIN: At most three stress. Exactly. [Dre makes uncertain sound] That's totally right. Yes.

KEITH: Okay.

AUSTIN: Barring a consequence from a four or five that you then resist.

KEITH: Oh, barring- Also barring taking two to push yourself.

AUSTIN: If you- Right right right right right. Yes. Figure is pushing- is going to- If Figure pushes, that's two. Also, who's leading?

DRE: Yeah.

KEITH: Alright. Alright. I'll lead it. [cross] I'll lead the group action.

AUSTIN: [cross] You'll lead it. Okay. Alright. And Figure, you're pushing?

DRE: [cross] I will push myself.

AUSTIN: Okay. Give me your rolls. Uh, you are controlled, also. Remember, because of the- the guard uniform.

KEITH: Yeah.

AUSTIN: And that's... That's a no from Dre.

KEITH: Okay.

AUSTIN: That's a no from Art. That's a three.

KEITH: So I have to do it.

AUSTIN: Gotta do it.

KEITH: Or I don't, whatever.

AUSTIN: *[laughing]* Yeah.

KEITH: Um, I've- I've lost Roll20 there again.

AUSTIN: Uh-huh.

KEITH: Slash roll 1d6.

JACK: Kalar glancing back at the door.

KEITH: Six. *[everyone cheers]*

AUSTIN: There you go. There you go. Um, so take two stress, Phrygian.

KEITH: Yeah, I've already given it to myself.

AUSTIN: Yeah? Nice. Uh, that six is real good. So yeah. Uh, this is like one of those things where again, every few seconds, there is like, some noise gets made, um, by- by either Kalar or SI or someone kind of like peeks down a corner and then you're giving them like the hand. "Yo, we're good. We're good. Everything's good. And you keep on moving." You know what I mean? Um, "yeah, I gotta go. I gotta, I gotta go. Yeah. Okay. Bye." Yep. Like that style. *[Keith laughs]* And you get- you get past. You take the stress from having to do that, but you manage to get to the door and out into the quarry. So yeah, y'all have gotten through this zone.

KEITH: It's rare that, that- for me, at least, that not- that potentially failing something gives me actual stress as a human, *[AUSTIN: Uh-huh.]* but that was one.

AUSTIN: You got through though. And here you are. The quarry is in front of you.

KEITH: Yeah.

AUSTIN: Point Diamond is across *[cross]* a few-

KEITH: *[cross]* La- Last mission too.

AUSTIN: Yeah. *[cross]* Well, stress- it's stressful-

KEITH: *[cross]* Something about playing Phrygian, I get all the stress for real.

AUSTIN: Phrygian has different stakes, I'd say, than like, Leap, you know? It feels.

KEITH: Yeah.

AUSTIN: The four of you were together again inside the quarry space. You can see your destination ahead. You can again see these- these, uh, the artillery mechs firing from Point Citrine. Um, and you can- you can hear troops moving above you. Not literal Troop units, but

you know, other- other mechs moving above you in the top of those walls. Um, moving into position, you can hear the kind of like, uh, sound of- of high energy, ri- or high powered rifles being shot into the dark? It's loud out here.

And you can see that there are guards on foot moving around, also around the perimeter to try to like, get things into position. So you do have a limited window here, let's say. Also, you know that you moved past- You also *know* that you've moved past, um, cameras, for *sure*, inside of the facility. It's just that [KEITH: Right, right.] it didn't immediately raise suspicion. Um, but you know. It's weird that those people showed up in the camera and also- like in the hallways and also in the- the looped safe room. So eventually someone is going to notice.

JACK: How far away is, um... So I assume we are sort of about here-ish?

AUSTIN: Let me just do some quick, uh... some quick check here, just in terms of just how many things are here. Let's see. Uh... What is- Let's see... It's three high schools away. [Jack laughs] Oh, that's- And that's just as the crow flies.

JACK: Right, yeah.

AUSTIN: Do you know what I mean?

JACK: We got, like- we got like, raised stone blocks. [AUSTIN: Yes.] We got, you know- I'm picturing like [KEITH: Really-] Black Rock Quarry vibes where it's just like-

AUSTIN: Yeah yeah yeah. [cross] And yeah, just-

KEITH: So... So really we're looking at almost two airports.

AUSTIN: You're looking at almost two airports. You're looking at almost two airports here. Oh, wait. And that's as the crow flies. That's as the bird- That's as the- the airplane at the airport flies. [laughs]

KEITH: Almo- [old-timey vendor voice] "Almost two airports here."

AUSTIN: Uh-huh.

KEITH: [cross] [laughing] Get your- Get your-

JACK: [cross] So we're looking at a small English town.

AUSTIN: Uh-huh.

KEITH: [old-timey vendor voice] "Get your almost two airports here."

AUSTIN: And- And your options here are very much like, do I descend down- For people who can't see the map, um, there are... between them and Point Diamond, um, if you- if you look at the- if you're looking at the- the U, Point Diamond is dead center of the middle of the U at the top, basically. Right? Um, it's almost as if the U is a W. If you imagine the U as a W, the top of the middle point of the W is where Point Diamond is. They are on the right side of the U - or the

W - and have to get across up to the middle. And between them and it is two giant quarries, and then a smaller one, uh, kind of cutting up the ground. And they have a few pathways through that, that they could try to walk down. But presumably, I mean, those pathways are super well lit. People are moving around on them, you know, et cetera.

KEITH: Okay, so let's- Process of elimination, let- let's walk there. Why can we [JACK: No.] not do that?

JACK: Fucking guards everywhere.

AUSTIN: That would be continued Prowl rolls. [JACK: Lights.] That would be some increasingly difficult Sway rolls. I think you're in a risky now because you're- you have, uh, you have south gate Point Beryl entry point guard uniforms. Not, you know, in the- in the Hitman, uh, analogy, [cross] you don't have the-

JACK: [laughs] [cross] Yes.

KEITH: [cross] It's dark out though.

AUSTIN: It is dark, but I'm saying, in terms of doing a Sway or something- At this point, those guard uniforms aren't helping you anymore. You're in a- You're in a zone that need different guard uniforms for this, right?

KEITH: Right. Um, now, are there guards down in the quarries? 'Cause we could go [cross] as the crow flies.

AUSTIN: [cross] You could go down- You could go as the crow flies. Totally. You don't know because the quarries are deep and darker. Uh, and there's movement because you know people are moving the construction equipment into safer places down there, for instance, right? Um, but-

DRE: I mean we could steal some of that construction equipment.

AUSTIN: You could steal some construction equipment. Here's the thing that I'm gonna- Someone give me just a Gather Information roll. Whoever- who's the person who's like, "I've been around construction equipment before."

JACK: Me.

AUSTIN: Uh, okay. Uh, give me a, uh, Survey. [pause] It's Gather Information, [JACK: So I got a-] so it's okay if it doesn't, if you fail, it's not- no consequences.

JACK: Uh, roll 2d6 and take the lowest.

AUSTIN: Yeah.

KEITH: Oh, don't you have one, I thought, in Survey?

AUSTIN: Oh, you do have one in Survey.

JACK: I do.

AUSTIN: So let's just take that first die. [JACK: Oh.] That's a six. Boom.

JACK: Yeah, that's a six.

AUSTIN: Um, the... There is... There's a clear divide between the types of construction equipment that is here. Um, there is a.... There's a lot of really old stuff here that clearly has not moved in a long time, stuff from generations and generations before you were alive. The newer stuff seems like extremely newer stuff. This year type stuff. And it's not- The stuff that's being moved is not quarrying stuff. This isn't dig- These aren't diggers. These aren't haulers. Um, these are constru- They're building something somewhere here. Um...

JACK: Hmm.

AUSTIN: Uh- Yeah. I think that that's- You got a six, so you can have a f- you can have follow up questions here, if you want.

JACK: Can we see where they are building the thing?

AUSTIN: Yeah. So what you're- What you end up seeing is that there are tunnels in many of these quarries that go underground to something else. Um, but you're not sure what. Um, and so, based on where you see those tunnels, it actually looks like maybe there is something under Point Citrine. Um, and in fact, I think at this point you can see that there is like... I'm just going to give this to you. There is something like a missile silo or something. Like not an actual silo, but you know, the underground silos that have those like protective barrier- like covers on top. Do you know what I mean? That then would open so that a missile could launch out. Like a- like a [cross] door-

JACK: [cross] Like a big rocket could launch out at the- [AUSTIN: Yeah. Yeah. Exactly.] like at the end of a Fortnite event or-

AUSTIN: Yes, exactly like that. Or the real world where rockets exist also, unfortunately. [*Austin and Jack laugh mirthlessly*] Exactly like that.

JACK: Um... And what's the split, as far as I could tell, between-

AUSTIN: There's a-

JACK: Does it seem like most of their construction is finished? Oh, sorry. That most of their digging is finished and they're constructing now? Or is it- is it [cross] more of an even split.

AUSTIN: [cross] The digging has not been happening forever. There is no digging implement [JACK: Oh shit.] that has dug anything in hundreds of years. That shit is rusted [cross] and old.

KEITH: [cross] Does that mean... Does that mean these quarries are like, full of snow?

AUSTIN: No, the quarries have been kept up. So like, you know, there's probably bulldozers to like, move the snow around, for instance, right?

KEITH: Okay.

AUSTIN: [cross] Uh, also there- or heating stuff, you know what I mean?

JACK: [cross] But whatever this is-

KEITH: Yeah.

JACK: Whatever this is, isn't a quarry anymore.

AUSTIN: Yeah. You- I- Kalar, you immediately go like "this hasn't been a quarry in any of our lifetimes."

JACK: This is a building site. This is a very big building site.

AUSTIN: That's what it looks like from here, at least. Yes.

KEITH: [cross] So... This-

JACK: [cross] Okay. This is bad fucking news. I'm going to [laughing] pass this on to everybody.

KEITH: Well- Or is it good news? Because we don't have to go to Point Diamond anymore. We can head into one of these tunnels.

[1:00:00]

AUSTIN: You can go into one of those tunnels. Sure.

KEITH: [cross] We could very easily go into a tunnel.

JACK: [cross] Yeah, we could go into one of those tunnels. There could be something under there. [AUSTIN: Mhm.] Um, it's bad news because it means that the mission parameters have changed. We've been briefed to expect something being dug up. That was a hundred years ago.

AUSTIN: Or more, yeah.

JACK: Yeah.

KEITH: I thought it was just, like yesterday that we were... given that. [Jack and Keith laugh]

AUSTIN: Boo.

JACK: You know what this is, Austin? This is like when you, uh, you're playing like, Age of Empires or StarCraft or something, [AUSTIN: Yeah.] and you see the- their early base briefly with a scout and then the fog of war descends. And you just have that preview image of what their base is like [AUSTIN: Mhm.] until you roll up, and it's suddenly like, 40 times bigger and a completely different thing.

AUSTIN: Yeah.

JACK: Um... Okay. Yeah, I think infiltrating the tunnels and trying and using them as- as... It's rough, right? Because... If whatever is down there is more- is actually *[laughing]* more risky than remaining on the surface, we might've just fucked ourselves.

KEITH: *[cross]* Right.

AUSTIN: *[cross]* Yeah... You got a six, so if you want one more followup question, you can have it here.

JACK: Yeah. Um...

AUSTIN: Or if you want to save it and ask it when you get somewhere else, you could do that too.

KEITH: What's in the tunnels?

JACK: *[cross]* Yeah... I'm gonna- *[laughs]*

AUSTIN: Sure. Sure, yeah. Listen, if you want to save it and ask it when you're like, a little closer- I will give you that. Um...

KEITH: Yeah. *[cross]* The good news that the tunnel brings, is if we get-

AUSTIN: *[cross]* Or, if you wanna, I- I'll give you- Yeah, no, that's- that's fine. Go ahead.

KEITH: If we get caught- If we get caught up here, we get caught by a lot of people. If we get caught in the tunnels, that feels like, *[JACK: Right.]* escapable to me. *[Austin makes uncertain noise]*

JACK: Or- Or like the whole choke point vibe plays both ways, right? Where like, the danger is that we are in an enclosed space with them. Like the Joker says in Watchmen, you know, we're not locked in *[Dre laughs]* with you. *[AUSTIN: Right.]* You're locked in with me.

AUSTIN: Yeah.

KEITH: Right.

AUSTIN: *[deadpan]* "Hahahahaha," he says. *[everyone laughs]*

JACK: "Hahahahaha." *[pause]* Um, yeah, okay, uh, what's our nearest tunnel? This isn't my question. This is just...

AUSTIN: Damn almost got you, like a evil genie.

JACK: *[laughs]* Like a- Like the Joker.

AUSTIN: *[cross]* Yeah, there's a- One of those tunnels is- Right, there's a tunnel across this, um... like it's- it's- If y'all are here- Hm, let me get the right tool.

JACK: *[cross]* *[laughing]* Zero point one feet.

AUSTIN: [cross] Y'all are here. [laughs] Yeah. If y'all are *here*, um, I think that there is one that you can see. It's kind of weird based on where all this- I guess actually the closest one is that there's one like *here* on the southern quarry thing. Do you know what I mean? [cross] To your south.

KEITH: [cross] Okay. It's like half a high school, maybe two thirds a high school?

AUSTIN: [cross] Like half a high sch- [uncertain noise] About two-thirds a high school away. Yeah.

KEITH: Yeah.

JACK: Okay. [cross] I think- Yeah.

AUSTIN: I don't know how long a high school is by the way, I'm just, you know...

KEITH: [cross] We all know how big- Every- High schools are just- We all get it.

DRE: [cross] It kinda depends on the high school.

JACK: [cross] Wait, you don't have the-

KEITH: [cross] It's your- It's subjective. It's everyone's high school that they went to.

AUSTIN: Uh-huh.

JACK: Mhm.

KEITH: And the airport that they've been to.

AUSTIN: Uh-huh.

KEITH: And I think that even though those are different sizes for everyone, it's roughly still scalable.

AUSTIN: ...So you go into the tunnels.

ART: I mean, it works, right? Like how long does it take to walk the length of a high school? I don't know, five minutes?

KEITH: Yeah.

ART: How long does it take to walk the length of an airport. I don't know, [cross] forty-five minutes?

KEITH: [cross] Forever.

AUSTIN: Right, yeah. Yeah.

JACK: [cross] Yeah. Yeah. Okay. Um... Is the tunnel entrance covered by a light or [cross] something?

AUSTIN: [cross] Oh yeah, it's lit. A hundred percent.

JACK: Is it covered by a light that I could attempt to turn off? To- to give us some [cross] cover of shadow to get into the...

AUSTIN: [cross] How would you do that?

JACK: Or- Are the lights mounted on buildings? [cross] Or on, uh, watchtowers? Or-

AUSTIN: [cross] There are- There are some freestanding lights. They're freestanding, like, yeah, w- There's some watchtowers throughout and there are also some freestanding, like, lights that have big poles, you know? That go up and are like, powered to point down.

JACK: Right.

AUSTIN: Um, and some of those are above the quarry and some of them are below- are like, in the quarry space and some of them are attached to like, the walls of the quarry pointing downward or pointing across. Um... It's hard to ID like, where is the one good light here? Um, I guess with that Survey, um, I would say that there is a light from across the way? Like this wall- the southern wall pointing down and across at that specific...

JACK: Oh, sure.

AUSTIN: You know what I mean?

JACK: Yeah... Okay. Um, if- if folks start making their way towards the tunnel entrance, I can get up there and try and get that light off. I feel that falls fairly within Kalar's skillsets in terms of verticality. Um... So that you could have some cover to get into the thing. And then I could maybe glide down, uh, [AUSTIN: Yeah.] after I've done that.

DRE: Okay.

JACK: This is too high for me to fly to, Austin, right? I'm going to have to sort of like-

AUSTIN: Oh yeah. Oh yeah.

JACK: Flutter up to it from like building to building.

KEITH: [cross] Shimmy.

AUSTIN: [cross] But it's not even building to building is the thing, it's like, it's a wall. You know what I mean? Um, you'll- you'll have to find a way into the wall and climb u- I think you could get- Hm. I'll say that there is like, you- There are handholds for you, if you can get over there, you know?

JACK: Sure. [cross] Right right right.

KEITH: [cross] Didn't you climb spires? Wasn't that your job?

AUSTIN: Yeah. [cross] Yeah, exactly.

JACK: [cross] Yeah. Uh-huh. Yeah, definitely. I was just thinking that if this was like a Metal Gear Solid watchtower with a light on the top, [AUSTIN: Mhm.] that's just a jump. That's- That is within Kalar's [cross] flapping range.

AUSTIN: [cross] Right. Right, right, right. I see what you're saying. Yeah. I think you'll have to- [cross] I- I- It's a very high wall.

JACK: [cross] This is a one hundred foot wall.

AUSTIN: I think you'll have to- It's not a hundred feet up, this- the spotlight, but it's high enough that you'll have to find some handholds. You'll have to roll a di- roll some dice, [JACK: Yeah.] you know? Whatever. [JACK: Yeah.] Anyway, you're in risky- risky position-

JACK: I love to do that.

AUSTIN: Or do you want to sneak over there? Also hey, listen, once you're up there, could you glide down? Yes.

JACK: Yeah, absolutely. That's- That's wings, baby.

AUSTIN: That's wings. [cross] So this is a Prowl?

JACK: [cross] Um... Yeah.

AUSTIN: Alright. 3d6. Risky standard. Everyone else just hiding out until- until he gets back? [cross] Okay.

ART: [cross] Yeah.

AUSTIN: Big Kalar sneaking mission here...

JACK: ...Bird, this is a sneaking mission. [Austin laughs] Um... 3d6.

AUSTIN: Hey, it's a six. So yeah, you get over there with little- with little, uh... You know? Um, without any- without bumping into anybody. Little to-do.

JACK: It's just like, very wide shot of tiny figure climbing wall.

AUSTIN: Yeah. Uh-huh. Um, and- and yeah, climb up and I'm just going to let this roll forward so we can get- get moving. Uh, yeah, you- you managed to like, get over there, sneakily climb up this thing without being spotted. And then, and then are you breaking it? What are you doing? Are you snipping a wire? Basically? This is not a [JACK: Oh no, uh...] Security system, you know what I mean? Or not with a six, it isn't. [laughs] So yeah, you- you-

JACK: I think like, breaking it with a big bird foot, [cross] just like, kicking the glass in, and- Yeah.

AUSTIN: [cross] Love it. The talon just goes into it. Boom. Breaks. The lights, you know, dim for a second and then turn off, uh, inside of the- or pointed at the, uh, the tunnel. There are still other lights, you know, around, but not at the tunnel itself. Uh, and then you- you glide down.

Are you gliding back down to where everyone else is? Is everyone else getting into position to kind of get to that other spot? To go into the tunnel?

JACK: I'm gonna aim for the tunnel, [*cross*] I think.

AUSTIN: [*cross*] Okay, you're just gonna go right there, everyone else meet you there. [*pause*] So we're again at a point where- Do you- Do you try to- Does the group try to Prowl its way forward? This is what a sneaking mission looks like.

ART: Now, is there a Sway version of this [AUSTIN: Yeah.] [*Keith laughs*] where we try to just like, sell the idea that we're panicked by the attack and just running and screaming?

AUSTIN: Sure. There is that. That seems dangerous to me, but sure.

KEITH: Oh, this all seems dangerous to *me*.

AUSTIN: [*cross*] Yeah.

ART: Yeah, what- Is there a- What doesn't seem dangerous here?

AUSTIN: Yeah, fair. Fair. Uh, so yeah, do you want to lead that? Do you want to be the person who's yelling and screaming? In your bad- [KEITH: Well-] In your bad Pacino wig?

KEITH: So this is- What-

ART: [*doing Al Pacino impression*] "Hey, I'm screamin' over here!" [*Austin laughs*] That's not Pacino at all. [*Jack laughs*]

AUSTIN: [*laughing*] No, that lands. That lands.

KEITH: What do you think you're going to be rolling here, that would be more [*laughing*] helpful than just prowling?

ART: I have more dice in Sway than Prowl.

AUSTIN: Do you? No, you don't.

KEITH: No, you have the same.

AUSTIN: You've got the same.

ART: ...Then I guess it should be Prowl.

KEITH: Yeah. And then I have none in Sway and then, uh, I think Figure also has none.

AUSTIN: Yeah.

KEITH: We're- We're a one... We have one out of three [AUSTIN: Uh-huh.] people in Sway.

AUSTIN: Alright, then that sounds like [KEITH: Um...] another group prole- Prowl. [*laughing*] Group prole.

KEITH: [cross] Now, if you wanted to- If this was gonna [ART: Group prole.] be a Consort and we did it by say, "Hey, we're wa- We're going down here, everyone."

AUSTIN: [cross] "We're walkin' over here."

KEITH: "We're h- We're going down into the hole, everyone!"

AUSTIN: [cross] Yeah.

ART: "Hey. *I'm* walkin' over here."

AUSTIN: [cross] Yeah. Uh-huh.

ART: That's what it is when it's- Or is that Command?

AUSTIN: That's Command, for sure. [*Keith laughs*]

JACK: Have I made this any easier for them by turning the [cross] light off?

AUSTIN: [cross] Yes. I think this puts them in a- in a- uh, a control- let's say- Mm. God, it's not a- it's not a controlled position. Let's say that was a Set-Up Action. How about that? Uh, which I guess would have- [JACK: Yeah, alright.] would have- Yeah. So yes, that could either be a controlled position or a great effect. Um...

KEITH: What does a Set-Up Action get us again?

AUSTIN: Either controlled- Either better effect or better position.

KEITH: [*garbled noise of acknowledgment*]

AUSTIN: Huh?

KEITH: I'm going to say... We want- We want position, right?

AUSTIN: [cross] Alright, so let's go to controlled. Controlled, uh, standard... for this Prowl.

KEITH: [cross] And this is a group- another group action.

AUSTIN: [cross] Are you doing this individual or are you doing like, a group action? Yeah, what are you doing?

KEITH: Who's taking the stress this time?

AUSTIN: Good question. SI has no stress.

ART: I'll do it.

AUSTIN: Yeah.

ART: Yeah.

AUSTIN: Alright.

ART: And then we'll get consequences and I'll triple six it.

AUSTIN: *[cross]* Yeah, uh-huh. *[Jack laughs]*

KEITH: Nice. Let's rely on that. *[Austin and Keith laugh]*

ART: *[cross]* Yeah, that's my plan.

AUSTIN: *[cross]* Alright, gimme your- your Prowls. Figure, are you pushing yourself again or are you just going to roll 2d6, take lowest?

DRE: I'm just going to *[cross]* take the lowest.

AUSTIN: *[cross]* Alright, good. This fucking gang of thieves is unbelievable.

DRE: *[pause]* See! It worked out great.

AUSTIN: Oh- Yeah, that's a success. That's a success. Mixed- Two mixed successes so far. Let's see if we get the- Let's see if we get the full- the full one. No...

KEITH: *[cross]* No.

ART: *[cross]* No. So I take one stress?

AUSTIN: You take one stress from yourself, and there are consequences here. Um...

KEITH: *[cross]* Controlled consequences, at least.

AUSTIN: The control- So again, you could back off of this. If you don't like the consequences that I'm about to tell you, you could decide, hey, let me just go about this a different way. Or you can of course say, we're going to do it this way, that we're going to take the consequence... Uh, or resist- Sorry, *[cross]* resist the consequence and get triple sixes. Right. Of course.

ART: *[cross]* No, I'm gonna resist the consequence and I'm gonna roll three sixes.

AUSTIN: Of course. Um, I-

JACK: That's the plan, Austin.

AUSTIN: Oh, right. I forgot that that was the plan. Uh... I think that the, um... the- you're going to get that alarm to tick up as someone- someone spots the three of you climbing this ladder... And shouts- uh, shouts at you to stop. Um...

KEITH: And of course we don't.

AUSTIN: Of course you don't. So how are you resisting this?

KEITH: Can we be polite? Say "no, thank you"?

ART: *[laughing]* Yeah, "no, thank you. *[Keith laughs]* We're gonna keep going."

AUSTIN: *[cross]* "We're gonna keep going."

DRE: "I got to do some stuff. Sorry."

KEITH: Yeah.

AUSTIN: You're shouting various things, so it's a Resolve check. That's 3d6. Give me- Give me your- Not a check, but that's- how much stress does this cost you?

ART: I've heard your note *[AUSTIN: Uh-huh.]* and no.

AUSTIN: *[laughing]* I see what you're saying. I can tell you really believe this.

ART: Um...

AUSTIN: 3d6 to resist.

ART: Well, but which-

AUSTIN: Resolve.

JACK: God, I can *[cross]* tell you really believe this. *[laughs]*

AUSTIN: *[cross]* Alright, take one. Uh-huh. *[laughs]* Home Movies, everyone should watch it. Um... One- One stress, that's not too bad. You rolled a three, four, five. That's kinda cool. Um...

ART: *[cross]* Yeah, it's a straight.

KEITH: *[cross]* Hey, a straight. So what do we get from that?

AUSTIN: Nothing, unfortunately. The only- We're only-

ART: This. This is what I- This is what we get. This *[cross]* acknowledgement that it was neat.

AUSTIN: *[cross]* That it was- Yeah, *[laughs]* exactly.

KEITH: Now has anyone done- Has anyone done, uh, a tabletop role-playing game with Yahtzee rules?

AUSTIN: Almost certainly. Almost certainly.

KEITH: That sounds fun as hell.

AUSTIN: You get into this tunnel system. And it, quickly, is overwhelming. Um, but you're able to- Eh... It's overwhelming.

KEITH: In what way?

AUSTIN: There are lots of side paths that go to other places here. Um...

KEITH: Got it.

JACK: What are these tunnels made of? Are they like [cross] stone tunnels or have they had stuff built into them?

AUSTIN: [cross] They're all- Yeah, they're- So there's a point at which the stone gives away to metal. And metal gives way to, like- And maybe by using that, you can kind of tra- track your way a couple of places. In fact, here's what I'll say: you quickly realize some of these are made out of more recent materials, um, of the sort that could withstand high temperatures, uh, and maintain insulation and c- and- and carry, um, let's say carry information through them? Through like, you know, circuits in the walls and, you know, electrical lines, communication lines. And some of them are just old stone walls. Those are clearly very old walls. In general, the metal stuff seems to head west. The rock stuff seems to head north.

KEITH: Mm, metal new, rock old.

AUSTIN: Right. Metal going to Point Citrine, rock headed towards Point Diamond... generally speaking.

KEITH: And the new stuff was out here, but the old stuff was out here?

AUSTIN: New and old are mixed together up- up above.

KEITH: Right.

AUSTIN: [cross] You also very quickly are going-

KEITH: [cross] Well, I was thinking-

JACK: [cross] Oh god.

AUSTIN: You are going further underground, for sure. Um... So, keep that in mind.

KEITH: So, what do we think? Met- go metal?

JACK: [cross] Do we... I think we split up.

KEITH: How- Can I roll? [DRE: Ooh.] Can I roll a, uh... not fucking Discern Realities, [Jack laughs] Gather Information?

AUSTIN: Here- Here at this point... given the fact that you're already past the gates, [Jack: Oh!] You're- all that, you could roll to Survey or something, but you'd be making an action roll where there could be consequences from failure because you're so close to things that could break bad.

KEITH: Okay.

JACK: I think I have a question for you, Austin.

AUSTIN: Oh, you do. You do still have a free question. It's true.

JACK: Um...

AUSTIN: [cross] For that previous Survey.

JACK: [cross] Is there something of value to us that-

AUSTIN: ...Go ahead, what were you saying?

JACK: Oh... Is there something of value to us at both points? Or, uh, just at one?

AUSTIN: Yes.

JACK: Essentially what I'm saying is, was there something at-

AUSTIN: [cross] Both. You overhear... a guard. You overhear a couple of things. One, the metal is pretty clear, there's something to the west. Whatever they're building is- [JACK: Right.] Whatever they were building is at Point Citrine, or presumably is at- it was at Point Citrine. Or Point Citrine, underneath it is what they've built. Um, but you overhear someone say,

(As guard) Is the facility-

You know,

(As guard) Is the mountain facility secure?

And someone else goes like,

(As second guard) Yeah, nothing.

AUSTIN: And that's... And that's that.

JACK: Okay, good. So it's not- Like my- my concern was that [cross] whatever is at Citrine-

AUSTIN: [cross] They say something else too. I'm giving you one other little thing. They go,

(As guard) This week of all weeks.

KEITH: ...Damn.

JACK: It *is* a Hitman level. [Austin laughs] Yeah, my concern was that, like, whatever is at Citrine was dug out of Point Diamond and Diamond is now obsolete.

[1:15:00]

AUSTIN: Right. That does not seem to be- Well. That does not *seem* to be the case. There seems to be- [JACK: Okay.] Their security is still at Point Diamond. Or at least they said, is- is everything at- at, you know, in the mountain site. They would not say Point Diamond. That's not their term, [laughs] [cross] but, you know, in- yeah yeah yeah yeah..

JACK: [cross] No, that's Gucci's term. [laughs]

AUSTIN: *[cross]* They say the mountain facility, so...

JACK: *[cross]* Okay, I think we've got to split up.

AUSTIN: ...Alright.

KEITH: Wait, wait, we've got to split up?

DRE: Yeah.

JACK:

(*As Kalar*) I think we want to hit both. I don't think we have time to hit both. Look, Phrygian, I don't like it.

I think Kalar glances up at the ceiling as though he can see Valour, [AUSTIN: Yeah. Yeah, totally.] uh, through the ceiling up above.

(*As Kalar*) I don't like this. We don't have time. Um, I think- I think we got to split up. We set a- We set a time. We synchronize our watches. We meet up somewhere. Um...

KEITH:

(*As Phrygian*) What are the teams?

JACK:

(*As Kalar*) Well, uh, we're gonna want someone who's good at prowling and *[laughing]* we're gonna want somebody who's-

What's the best split here? Okay. Well, we want a *[cross]* sneaker-

KEITH: No one is good at prowling but you.

JACK: Okay. That's fine.

KEITH: Maybe Kalar- Maybe Kalar and, uh, Figure together, so that at least someone has some Prowl. And then, um, Phrygian and, uh, Sovereign Immunity because between us, we each have one.

ART: *[cross]* Okay.

JACK: *[cross]* Okay. And, uh, let's- let's take a- let's take a stab that Citrine, being the newer place, might have more technology. Who has a better chance at interfacing with technology like via engineering or something?

KEITH: *[cross]* Not a chance.

DRE: *[cross]* I have one in Engineer and two in Study.

JACK: *[cross]* I also have one. Okay...

AUSTIN: So that breaks up that- Oh! [cross] so then you're saying-

KEITH: [cross] I do have two in Study.

AUSTIN: Yes. Mhm.

ART: I don't have any Engineer.

AUSTIN: Do you have any Study?

KEITH: Okay.

AUSTIN: You've got one Study.

ART: I have a Study, yeah.

KEITH: [cross] Okay, so-

JACK: [cross] So let's send- Mm.

KEITH: ...I think you're right. I think you're right, Jack. I think it's me and Art to mountain-mountain base.

AUSTIN: Yeah. That's right. I think that that's correct.

JACK: And Figure and I go, uh...

AUSTIN: Citrine.

JACK: Uh... Towards the new base.

AUSTIN: Yeah.

JACK:

(As Kalar) Alright, everybody. Good luck. Um, this has been really stressful. I think we've done very well to get this far.

KEITH: Yeah. And if- Call me if I'm not back in an hour.

JACK: [laughs] Okay.

AUSTIN: Uh...

KEITH: Is that it? Are we done?

AUSTIN: [cross] I'm gonna leave- Let's- I'm going to leave on one- one [laughs] little thing here, which is Kalar, as you're giving this big speech, it's not even a speech, but these- these kind of like, alright, here's what we're going to do. Um, you- [sighs] ...There's like this echo of a feeling, um, that feels a little bit like... First- At first it's like, oh, am I being affected by Valour? By Valour's presence? Is the courage I'm finding here, like runoff from being near Valour? But then

there's another- [KEITH: Yeah.] there's another sense of it that feels like... Valour... is- Or that Xiphion perhaps, zig has walked this before. Has done this infiltration before. And so part of why you're getting this runoff is that Valour's strength already walked these halls once. And you're like, following the ghost of a previous infiltration. Um...

JACK: This is- this is a very bad feeling, right? Because there's- [AUSTIN: Yeah...] there's a large part of this also has to be, am I overthinking this? [AUSTIN: Totally. Totally.] Like, am I getting in my own head [cross] about this?

AUSTIN: [cross] A hundred percent. A hundred percent. It's not lost on me that like, Valour is a big red bird and you're a big bird person. You know what I mean? Like there is a- [laughs] there- there is something very fun about that.

JACK: I think that's also not lost [AUSTIN: Yeah.] on Kalar as well, right? Like, Kalar is like, that thing looks like me. [AUSTIN: Yeah.] Um, and even if that doesn't have a- sort of a direct mystical power, I think Kalar is like, am I getting in my own head thinking that it looks like me? [AUSTIN: Totally.] Am I- You know?

AUSTIN: Um, so that's one thing. So then, let me just reiterate, you and who are going where? You're going Citrine with-

JACK: Figure.

AUSTIN: You and Figure [cross] are going to Citrine?

JACK: [cross] Are going to Citrine.

AUSTIN: And then Phrygian and, um, and Sovereign Immunity are going north to Point- Point Diamond. Um, I... I'll leave you on- the other half of this team on this, which is, as you're going down these stone hallways, there's a point at which... There's a- There's a point at which it feels as if the stones here have been... As if new- new hallways have been made, but not new as in there's technology and metal and these are new construction. It feels as if new hallways have been made by way of erosion. It's like a river ran through here, uh, or waves crashed against it. Very carefully to dig new tunnels. It's damp here still somehow... It feels a little haunted. And I think Phrygian, you f- you know that this is the touch of a Branched.

Um, who wants to- who wants to kick things off here? Who- Who's eager to- to turn the page? Now that we've split the fucking party. Classic manoeuvre.

KEITH: Classic good idea.

AUSTIN: [cross] Right. Yeah. Brilliant, always.

DRE: [cross] Uh... What's- What is it like for Kalar to be in an underground base looking for, we don't know what with a person that he thinks is a spy? [laughs]

AUSTIN: Yeah, good question.

JACK: *[laughs]* Spies love to go into underground bases and steal things, so I think Kalar... I think Kalar feels confident, uh, in the... Kalar believes, I don't know whether or not this is true, that he is stronger than Phrygian, so isn't particularly- uh, sorry, stronger than the Figure. So isn't particularly worried in the moment. *[cross]* I think what is beginning to-

KEITH: *[cross]* Yeah, that's right. Not Phrygian.

AUSTIN: *[quietly] [laughs]* Oh my god.

JACK: *[laughing]* No, Phrygian could turn Kalar inside out. *[everyone laughing]* I think, you know, what is beginning to dog, uh, Kalar's thoughts at the back of his mind, is that at the culmination of this mission, um, there is going to have to be a question about, you know, what to do with the information that the Figure is gaining right now.

DRE: Mm.

AUSTIN: Right, we should note that part *[JACK: Which is uncomfortable.]* of the way you received, uh, the Crysanth Kesh ideogram is that you got it from the Witch in Glass, AKA Clementine Kesh. And part of the deal was that Clem and the Reflecting Pool would be able to take, uh, you know, some part of whatever is recovered here, whether that is- or, you know, specific technological power or- or monetary gain or just glory. That was part of what had been negotiated during the- the kind of, um, pre-mission phase. And the Figure obviously is here to- is someone who can report back on exactly what all that is, in a way that- that the Witch will- will trust.

JACK: How is the Figure feeling about being in, uh... in a series of underground tunnels with a- with a birdman?

DRE: *[laughs]* I don't- No, that part doesn't bother them. Um... I think they would probably take this as an opportunity to ask Kalar some questions. Um... And I- I think- I don't think they beat around the bush. I think they just kind of say, um,

(As The Figure in Bismuth) Kalar, would you mind if I asked you something?

JACK:

(As Kalar) Uh, sure. Uh, is- is now a good time? I mean, we're sort of... sort of keeping our eyes out.

DRE:

(As The Figure) Uh, I'm able to use my eyes and mouth at the same time.

JACK:

(As Kalar) ...Good one. Yeah, go ahead.

DRE:

(As *The Figure*) What... is everyone's resistance to the Witch?

JACK: [pause] [laughs] I think Kalar just sort of like, stops in the tunnel, and turns and looks at, uh, at the Figure. And sort of shrugs and says,

(As *Kalar*) She's a war criminal.

DRE:

(As *The Figure*) Like specifically or generally, or...?

JACK:

(As *Kalar*) ...What do you mean, has she done war crimes or...? You only need to do one really.

DRE:

(As *The Figure*) I guess a better question is... directly or indirectly?

JACK:

(As *Kalar*) ...Does it matter?

DRE:

(As *The Figure*) ...I'm not sure.

JACK:

(As *Kalar*) ...You know, everybody here is involved in the war. Everybody on the planet is involved in the war, whether or not they're down in tunnels like us or they're sipping tea in palaces in Cruciat. Um, Clementine decided that she wanted to move from the latter to, uh, to the former, and in doing so, as I understand it, I- you know, I wasn't in her immediate proximity. But it seems like she, uh... she- she condemned a lot of people to death and, uh, and pain in the process.

DRE:

(As *The Figure*) It is strange because... [long pause] I don't... I don't think you're lying and I don't doubt what you say... And she's far from a perfect person. She can be childish and short-sighted at times, but... it's hard for me to equate... what I've seen her do for others and for me with a war criminal.

JACK:

(As *Kalar*) Look, we're getting outside of my pay grade here. [Austin laughs] I mean, you- [sighs] you can talk to SI if this is kind of what you want to talk about. I'm not prepared to sort of hedge the morality of those who seek to, you know, harm the societies and

people I care about? I... [*sighs*] If you want to hash that kind of stuff out and talk to Gucci.

DRE:

(*As The Figure*) [*cross*] Has she-

JACK:

(*As Kalar*) I'm here to like, steal something.

DRE:

(*As The Figure*) Oh, I am also here to steal something. But [*cross*] has she- has she done that to you?

JACK:

(*As Kalar*) [*cross*] This is part of the problem. Hm?

DRE:

(*As The Figure*) Has she done-

JACK:

(*As Kalar*) Harmed people I care about?

DRE:

(*As The Figure*) Yes.

JACK:

(*As Kalar*) ... [*indignantly*] She pushed a great prophet from the top of a ship that she stole through false pretenses. She created a war so she could have a good shot at stealing a cool car. [*pause*] This is beside the point. You know, anybody who sat in the winter palace in Cruciat is no friend of mine.

DRE:

(*As The Figure*) ...I understand. I apologize for distracting us.

JACK:

(*As Kalar*) That's fine. We've got work to do.

AUSTIN: [*laughs*] Um, and, uh, I think it's- it's around this moment when you hear something that startles you. And it's the sound of your own voices echoing back, having been carried through the, uh, the maze-like tunnels underneath the Chasmata quarry, and you realize in this moment that perhaps someone else will have heard that as well. Because you've just done an

extended talking sequence underneath or during a sneaking mission, I'm advancing the alarm clock by two. Uh, you can try to resist this if you want to... Um, but you know, listen, people are probably listening in here, um, as your voices echo through.

DRE: Hm.

AUSTIN: That was more than just a few short words. [*Dre laughs*]

DRE: What would it be to resist this?

AUSTIN: Um, you know, what is the- what is the equivalent of trigger discipline on one's voice? Which is to say, how do you make sure that you don't ever tip too- too loud? [DRE: Mm.] Kalar specifically got pretty heated while talking just there.

DRE: Yeah.

AUSTIN: Pretty passionate about describing Clem. Which again, like it's- it's- You're in small, you know, cramped caves basically, [*laughs*] that carry- that carry sound quite a far way. Um, so I would imagine that that would be... that would be from either of you a Resolve check, to have kept your- your... I lean towards Kalar because it was Kalar who- because the Figure is like, the picture of calm [*laughing*] always.

DRE: Sure.

JACK: Like genteel, [*cross*] sort of.

AUSTIN: [*cross*] Yeah. Yeah, exactly. To a fault, right?

DRE: Yes.

AUSTIN: [*cross*] As just- as just described.

DRE: [*cross*] I very much pitched it to Austin as- Yeah. I'm just asking questions. I just want to understand, [*Austin laughs*] I don't understand why everybody's getting upset. [*Jack laughs*]

AUSTIN: Yeah, exactly. Exactly.

DRE: He was unfortunately *that* kind of social studies teacher.

AUSTIN: Yeah, totally. Totally. Um... So yeah, so- so that would be from Kalar, I think Resolve. Resolve. Resist.

JACK: So I'd roll two dice and choose the lowest?

AUSTIN: [*cross*] Choose the... lowest, 'cause you-

JACK: [*cross*] 'Cause I have no- I have nothing in my re-

DRE: [*cross*] No, it's highest?

AUSTIN: No... Or... No, 'cause Kalar has zero Resolve.

DRE: Ohhhhhh.

AUSTIN: So 2d6 take lowest would be- And then subtract six, six minus the lowest. Yeah.

DRE: [cross] Or we can keep the alarm.

AUSTIN: [cross] Or you could- Or you can keep the alarm at two. People are on the lookout. They heard some voices.

ART: [jokingly, as a guard] "Do you hear somebody yelling down [AUSTIN: [laughs] Yeah.] there, like really kind of getting into it?" [Dre laughs]

AUSTIN: [jokingly, as a guard] "Did someone just say Clementine Kesh?" [Jack laughs]

DRE: [jokingly, as a guard] "Must've been my imagination."

AUSTIN: [jokingly, as a guard] "Huh. Just a box."

But yeah, Kalar, if you want to resist it, you can, [cross] otherwise, you can let it ride.

JACK: [cross] Oh god.

AUSTIN: I'll note that Kalar, of course, has one extra stress box, which means that you couldn't stress out all the way on this one. Um, I guess you couldn't do that anyway without that, 'cause you- you have- you're only at three. But boy, it could- it could break bad, huh?

JACK: I can't take the stress. [AUSTIN: Okay.] I- I cannot...

AUSTIN: Mhm. I feel you.

KEITH: Isn't there, I mean... I know that it was- uh, it was, um, Kalar being loud, but couldn't Figure have been like, "Hey, by the way, be quiet."

AUSTIN: I... [cross] [sarcastically] That definitely would have made- Oh yeah, that definitely would've made Kalar quieter. [laughs]

[1:30:00]

KEITH: [cross] And that could be the resistance roll.

AUSTIN: [cross] "Hey, you be quiet."

DRE: Yeah, definitely the best way to like, tell somebody who you just asked, "hey, why are you mad about a war criminal?" [AUSTIN: I will note-] is to- "well now just calm down, calm down." [Austin laughs]

KEITH: Well, in- Normally you'd be right to be sarcastic, but you are in a sneaking mission. It's not- [AUSTIN: Yeah. Yeah.] Like, Kalar is a professional.

AUSTIN: If you wanna- If you want to- uh, to roll it instead, Kalar, go ahead, or, uh, sorry, uh, Figure, go ahead. But I do need to hear what that sounds like and hear what Kalar's response is, and- and think about the way in which that would refigure the conversation that happened just now, because is this just the same stuff, but quieter? Or does Kalar's tone also change because of that note?

DRE: I- I honestly can't think of a good way to justify that in fiction.

AUSTIN: Okay... Also your stress is not much better, frankly.

DRE: *[cross]* We're the same.

AUSTIN: *[cross]* Your dice are- Your dice is- are better. There's a better chance *[DRE: Yeah.]* that you would not go hard on the stress, is the thing... Anyway.

JACK: So I think it's just a- like a shrug. I think it's just Kalar just like, is clearly fucking pissed *[AUSTIN: Mhm.]* And has- And has realized that he was the cause of - well, not the cause - has realized that he was the, uh, instrumental *[AUSTIN: Right. Right.]* voice here, but is angry at the Figure. Uh, and so just sort of turns on his heel and stalks off, like, talons clicking against the stone floor- or the metal floors.

AUSTIN: Yeah. Yeah. Um, let's- let's bounce up towards the northern half of the quarry as, uh, as Phrygian and SI get closer and closer to Point Diamond. How are things going up here? What are you on the look out for? What do you expect to find? What do you- How are you going about this- this incursion?

ART: ...I mean, I'm- I'm really half-expecting to walk into a face full of guards, just any second. *[AUSTIN: Mhm.]* Every- Every curve is... You know the like, carefully looking behind- behind like, a corner, but like, what would you really do if there's just a person standing there? So like...

AUSTIN: Yeah. *[Jack laughs]* So prepare.

ART: Just sort of like... checking it out, you know?

AUSTIN: Yeah... Um, Phrygian?

KEITH: Stealth gaming. Third- When you use the third person camera to peek around the corner.

AUSTIN: Yeah. Uh-huh. *[laughs]*

DRE: *[cross]* Yeah. *[laughs]*

AUSTIN: Yes, absolutely. Like, uh, this game doesn't really have the thing where I can lean on the wall, but I can just wait at the corner and spin the camera. Yeah. Perfect.

KEITH: Yeah.

AUSTIN: Um, to your surprise, you ended up finding not only fewer guards as you go this way, but less sign of, um, folks coming through in general, or I guess what I would say is- You know, I don't know to what degree you're... giving me- Give me a Gather Information check here, someone. Um, no- So not an Action roll, but just a Fortune roll. No- no risk of failure here.

ART: Just a- Just a- Just a die?

AUSTIN: I- Probably a Study. It sounds like a Study or a Survey would both work.

KEITH: I can do a Study. That makes sense for me. I got a two there.

AUSTIN: Let's do it.

ART: Sounds great, go for it.

AUSTIN: Hey, that's a six. Alright, [KEITH: Nice.] so remember you get a follow-up question here, if you want. Um... It's clear that this was... You get the impression that this was a, uh, tunnel used for a previous attack. And part of that is that you see in the dust on the ground or the- the kind of- imprinted into the ground, the- um, the imprint of many boots, uh, as if like a covert operations team had stomped its way down this- this hole. You also see like, occasionally the sign of like, uh, black powder against the wall from where gunfire was exchanged. You see, uh, the- the mark of kind of close range, like scrapes against the wall. You find some- some blood at a certain intersection. Um, but in general it feels like what this is, is someone chose to tunnel their way into this facility towards Point Diamond. So that is- that is what you've picked up here. Um, and- and-

KEITH: Okay.

AUSTIN: I guess attached to that-

KEITH: And this is- These are old marks.

AUSTIN: Not that old.

KEITH: [cross] Not that old, okay.

AUSTIN: [cross] Not a year- not a year old. Not, you know-

KEITH: Not as old as these tunnels seem.

AUSTIN: A hundred percent newer than these tunnels. This is a new tunnel and there are a few other new tunnels that you come across. Um, like, you know, historically new in the sense that like, most of these tunnels are decades or centuries old. This is not even a year old. This might be from a month ago, maybe sooner. Maybe more recently.

KEITH: [pause] So okay, so, just so that I can get my sort of sense of place here, [AUSTIN: Yeah.] Citrine is where the newer tunnels looked like [cross] they were?

AUSTIN: [cross] Correct. Yes, and you're like *here*.

KEITH: [cross] That's the metal, and we're in the stone.

AUSTIN: [cross] Yes, that's the metal, Citrine is, and you're the stone. You're kind of in this big, you know, penta- pentagonal structure to the- or not structure, but underneath that quarry to the north of-

KEITH: But the part of the tunnel that we're in is still like newer stuff that looks like it's [AUSTIN: Correct.] tunneling from Diamond to Citrine.

AUSTIN: Or the other way. [cross] One or the other.

KEITH: [cross] Or the other way.

AUSTIN: Yes.

KEITH: [cross] And there's big-

AUSTIN: [cross] Ah, in fact, I would say- I would say some of them also go out in different directions. It's as if there were, um... you know, I think with- again with a six, I'll give you this: it's as if someone... I'm just gonna just draw on the map really quick. Um, it's as if someone got in somewhere around where you got in, then came up and then dug out in various directions, as if to let other people in. Do you know what I mean?

KEITH: [cross] Mhm.

ART: [cross] Eurgh.

KEITH: We don't [cross] like that?

ART: [cross] I don't like the implications here.

AUSTIN: No?

KEITH: Oh, what do you feel like the implication is?

ART: I mean... Nothing good would do that. I mean, I'll tell you my immediate fear, and I tell you this not knowing what happened in the other game, so it'd be like, "that's impossible, idiot" is, uh- I would use my- my army of zombie robot- [Austin laughs] my zombie slaves to dig the tunnel into the military base I wanted to get into. I understand that they're not z- they're not robots. They're not even really zombies, but you know [cross] what I mean.

AUSTIN: [cross] Eh, they're- Yeah. Yeah. Uh-huh. I gotcha.

JACK: Are we talking about the Black Century?

AUSTIN: We're talking about the Black Century.

ART: [cross] I am, yeah.

KEITH: [cross] Yeah. Yeah.

ART: If I needed to [JACK: *[laughing]* Okay.] get through a bunch of rock and I had a zombie army, those zombies would dig that tunnel for me.

KEITH: Okay, well, there we go. Is there anything familiar about- Is there anything familiar about the- [Jack laughs] *[cross]* the, uh, the battle scarring here?

JACK: *[cross]* *[laughing]* There's a- There's a distorted synth sound.

AUSTIN: There- There is- So- So the thing that- The only thing that, um, comes to mind for you Phrygian is- And you have experience with the Black Century, you have experience with Motion, you have experience [KEITH: Yeah.] with the Pact stuff. Like, um... This is like, high level military shit, but like, you- you- Let's find- Let's say you find a- uh, a bullet shell. A casing. You know like, oh, this is the sort of round that the Pact soldiers use. Um, you couldn't- You couldn't say all the way to, this is the Black Century, but this is a Pact of Necessary Venture, um, incursion for sure. This is a Pact mission [KEITH: Okay.] came through here.

JACK: *[sarcastically]* Oh, great.

AUSTIN: Mhm.

JACK: And sooner than us.

AUSTIN: *[cross]* Sooner than you.

KEITH: So this is- This is Pact here, sooner than us.

AUSTIN: Yeah.

KEITH: Dealing with Curtain shit.

AUSTIN: Dealing with Curtain shit. Yeah. This [KEITH: Okay.] is one of the many times at which the Pact and the Curtain have come into a more open conflict in the last few months, since- uh, since the- the Curtain revealed themselves down in Oxbridge. Um, and announced themselves to the world and announced the Pact to the world and declared kind of open war. And I'm going to say like, you know, at this point, the other thing that you notice here is just like, you have come across less and less guards as you come this way. There are less "alright, hold up, let's wait." And soon enough, you're at the kind of... entry point to Point Diamond.

You're one of many, uh, places that kind of comes into a single central entry point to Point Diamond? That opens up and is its own kind of checkpoint. Um, and it seems like a... The way I would describe it is, it is a- a large cavern mouth, um, that is below the higher levels around it. Like, if you look at the map, you see that there's like a big walkway in front of it. Um, but you're coming into the- like, the side of the walkway. Again, I'll draw just a little line here- or not the side of the walkway, but you're like- you're like, boom. You're like coming in like that. Do you see what I mean? Um, so it's almost as if- It's almost as if everything else is a ramp leading down into the Point Diamond dig? The Point Diamond, like *[cross]* cavern?

KEITH: *[cross]* Is this hook- is that what you just did? That- That hook at the top?

AUSTIN: [cross] That hook, yeah, at the top.

KEITH: Okay.

AUSTIN: And there are some other holes. There are some other like tunnels or doorways that come into that. But at that point, all of those- those entry points unify. So again, it's like- it's like almost like, uh, coming in- You came in the ground- You came in like, the basement level of a mall, uh, where everyone else was coming in from an escalator going down. Does that make sense? Or like a ramp going down or something like that?

KEITH: Yeah.

AUSTIN: Uh, and in front of you is, um, kind of like, old fashioned secur- [laughs] security. There is some like, bulletproof glass. There are some- Uh, like- with like, a kiosk, almost like a security kiosk? There are some metal detectors and then there's just like a security gate that has been closed. Uh, there's two of them, one on each side of this- of this kind of security booth and metal detector thing. And this is just literally like a gate that comes down from the ceiling, um, on each side of this thing. What do you do?

KEITH: Um... Maybe there's a- Hey, maybe there's just a key card around.

AUSTIN: Yeah? You gonna look around for a key card?

KEITH: Yeah, yeah. We'll do a- What do we think? Maybe another- Is the- Is it worth doing another, uh, Gather- Gather Information?

AUSTIN: At this point, this would be an Action roll, not just a raw Gather Information roll. You could Study or Survey, uh, the scenario to- [KEITH: Okay.] to look for stuff. Um... But that would be a... Let's say this is a risky standard.

KEITH: Okay, yeah, I'll Study that- that little behind the glass room.

AUSTIN: Uh, you cannot get into that room. That room is between two gates. So there's a gate, then there's that room and [KEITH: Gate.] then a series of metal detectors, then another gate.

KEITH: Got it.

AUSTIN: Like big- you know, big metal gates that come down from the ceiling and then like, lock at the bottom, you know?

KEITH: Yeah.

ART: Yeah, you just want me to like, break it? Do you think if we broke it, it would set something off?

KEITH: Yeah. I mean, it depends how good you [laughing] rolled to break it. How... quietly you can break?

ART: Oh, I don't have anything like that. [KEITH: Um...] I have- *[laughing]* I have break it more. I can- I can perform a- uh, a feat of- of physical force that verges on the superhuman, which doesn't sound like quietly break this door.

KEITH: Yeah. Is there- How, uh... What's the dis- distance? Is this finessible for me?

AUSTIN: This is- This is- Keith, I've been begging for you to look at Finesse, yes. Finesse is exactly the skill for this. Which is- Which is like lockpicking. Finesse [KEITH: Yeah.] will do that for you.

KEITH: Yeah.

AUSTIN: Um, if you wanna like, look down at the- at the lock and like, try to figure out how to- You'll need *[cross]* something to do that.

KEITH: *[cross]* God, it's really just a *lock* lock, huh?

AUSTIN: It's a lock, yeah.

KEITH: It's a lock. *[cross]* Yeah. I can just pick the lock. Right.

AUSTIN: *[cross]* It's a series of locks, do you know what I mean? It's a- It's a few locks you'll have to pick. Um... [KEITH: Yeah.] That would also be risky standard. You'll need to declare some sort of gear to do this. Burglary gear. Lockpicks, uh, for instance. Um, but- but yeah.

KEITH: Yeah, let's see. Ooh, what *[cross]* is subterfuge supplies? Oh, that's props and makeup.

AUSTIN: *[cross]* Also, as a reminder, everyone- everyone- We alr- You already should have that declared already. Everyone should have those declared.

KEITH: Um... I should have- I thought it was- I thought it was dis- something with a disguise.

AUSTIN: Yeah, sub- Isn't that subterfuge? Yes.

KEITH: Yeah. I thought- I just thought it had supplies- disguise in the name, but it has disguise *[cross]* in the description, basically.

AUSTIN: *[cross]* In the description, yeah yeah yeah.

KEITH: *[cross]* Uh, okay. So...

AUSTIN: *[cross]* So yeah, go ahead and- and declare burglary gear and then give me the Finesse.

KEITH: *[cross]* I am declaring... and a Finesse.

AUSTIN: *[cross]* Risky standard.

KEITH: *[cross]* That's gonna be a twofer.

AUSTIN: [cross] Is anyone pushing? Is any- Or are you pushing? Do you want any help?

ART: You want me to help? My help is,

(As *Sovereign Immunity*) You know, you could just break it. [Austin and Keith laugh]

JACK: "Does this help?" [laughs]

ART:

(As *Sovereign Immunity*) [cross] Is this helping?

AUSTIN: [cross] SI could help by like, watching guard, telling you to be quiet whenever like a guard comes by above. You know, stuff like that.

KEITH: Uh... I- I think I got this one, but if you wanted to help, I won't turn it down.

ART: ... No, I'm gonna save the stress to-

KEITH: Yeah.

ART: What if we need it?

AUSTIN: Yeah, [cross] fair.

KEITH: [cross] Yeah, I- I agree.

AUSTIN: ...So 2d6.

KEITH: [quietly] Number of dice, two. Submit. [pause] [laughs]

AUSTIN: What's- [cross] What has four eyes?

KEITH: [cross] Pair of twos!

ART: [cross] Oh shit, that's not good.

JACK: [cross] Not great.

AUSTIN: Uh, a snake wearing glasses eyes. [Jack laughs] Um, you rolled two twos. So, uh... it was like four eyes, you know? Um, that's [KEITH: Yeah.] not good. And that was risky, right? So-

KEITH: Yeah.

AUSTIN: Um... You get the first lock open. The first, like, gate opens up.

KEITH: Right.

AUSTIN: And as soon as it does, the, um... Hmm, do I want the al- is this the alarm going off? Uh, the alarm- the alarm goes off. You can resist this consequence, but you hear, you know, klaxons light up and- and [cross] alarms sound.

KEITH: [*cross*] I *please* will resist it.

AUSTIN: Okay. [*cross*] This is a-

KEITH: I believe that this is Prowess.

AUSTIN: This is definitely Prowess.

KEITH: So that's a 3d6, so not bad.

AUSTIN: Not- Not bad. Watch your fucking stress though, dude.

KEITH: How many- How much stress can this give me?

AUSTIN: Five.

KEITH: ...It *can* give me [*cross*] five-

AUSTIN: [*cross*] If- You'd have to roll three ones though.

KEITH: Right. Okay. So [*cross*] it is-

AUSTIN: [*cross*] It could- You could lose a stress here. You're rolling three dice. That could be two sixes, and you lose a stress.

KEITH: Yeah. I'm rolling- Yeah. [AUSTIN: So-] And I know that I'm gonna roll...

AUSTIN: Yeah, totally.

KEITH: ...that many.

AUSTIN: [*laughing*] Mhm. [*pause*] So 3d6 to resist.

KEITH: Uh... Four.

AUSTIN: So two. So take two stress.

KEITH: Okay. Not the worst.

AUSTIN: Not the [*cross*] worst.

KEITH: [*cross*] Not good!

AUSTIN: You- You feel it just as it's about to snap the- the alarm, like "Uh! Wait! Mm. Ah. Mm." And you stop there. And the alarm does not sound. You open up the first one. Um, and at that point, you're able to- to go into the- uh, the glass room.

KEITH: I wish- I wish I remembered anything from that lockpicking guy's YouTube to say [*Austin laughs*] about lock- locks.

AUSTIN: Yeah. [*cross*] I'm not instructive.

KEITH: [cross] Trapped- Trapped in a false gate.

AUSTIN: Yeah. [laughs] Uh-huh. Exactly. Um... And you go into the little room and that little room does just have a key for the next lock, uh, in it.

KEITH: Okay.

AUSTIN: Or a button or something, you know?

KEITH: Binding. That's the word that I'm looking for.

AUSTIN: [cross] There you go.

KEITH: [cross] Calmly saying that it's binding.

[1:45:00]

AUSTIN: There you go. And as you pull that one up, you get this sense of like, dread as you stare into- As you open the second lock and lift that gate, there is that like, loud sound of industrial lighting coming on, that like ka-chunk ka-chunk ka-chunk ka-chunk, as in front of you a row of fluorescent lights, um, kind of begins to turn on inside of the facility that you're entering into, of which you have no map, you have no direction, um, and which seems, at first at least, to be a- uh, a broader, uh, quarry dig than what you've seen, uh, before- I guess not broader, 'cause outside, the quarry digs have been- are huge, it's just the tunnels that run underneath them are not. Here, it's as if you're open- you're stepping into a very wide tunnel, a tunnel that could like- be like a- you know, a six lane highway or something, right? Just- And that just goes in front of you and then turns off to the right after about... you know, you know, uh, let's say- let's say a hundred paces. Uh, so you- And up until then, it's just like- it's just cold stonework. Maybe there's like, you know, a couple of- a couple of forklifts. Um, there's probably some sort of like, other types of, um, vehicles for [KEITH: Mm.] moving a heavy- heavy, you know, stone, uh, towards to the front, up to the [cross] ramp and stuff like that.

KEITH: [cross] Digging- Digging stuff.

AUSTIN: But digging stuff and moving stuff. Again, most of this stuff seems very old. This stuff seems better upkept than the stuff that was ups- up above in the quarries- the unused quarries. Um, let's zip back down to z- to Citrine. Um, y'all have gotten a little bit closer and as you're like peeking, um, you know, around corners and stuff, you, uh, quickly notice that there are some people who are not just guards here, um, but seem to be like, folks in what you would say are dressed like scientists, right? This is like classic lab coat slacks or- or full body like, you know, haz- not hazmat suits, but you know, like, uh, [cross] people who are-

JACK: [cross] Like a mask, maybe.

AUSTIN: Like a mask and- and sort of a tighter fitting, uh, you know like, laboratory suit, one piece, you know that- that-

KEITH: Yeah, science clothes.

AUSTIN: Science clothes, you know.

KEITH: We've all seen 'em.

AUSTIN: *[cross]* And those folks-

JACK: *[cross]* Wearing like a- a turtleneck.

AUSTIN: Right, sure.

JACK: 'Cause it's cold.

AUSTIN: 'Cause it's cold. And those folks are going deeper towards Citrine. And you- you overhear a pair of them say, um,

(As scientist) I think it's this way.

And- and clearly are headed towards some particular point. Um, and- and eventually you just hear where they are as you hear, um, you know,

(As PA system) All non-security personnel, please head to your nearest lockdown bunker.

AUSTIN: And they are- they are going to their own panic rooms, which have been built into presumably the facility you're headed towards. And I'm just gonna give this part of it to you, which is like, eventually you step forward and- there's a draft of air that you feel. You feel like the- the pressure change? You know the difference between standing in like, a hallway and standing in a big open, like, auditorium basically? That times a hundred, as you step out and see before you a- a pair of huge vertical holes in the- in the ground that go deep. One of them is empty, uh, except for scaffolds built all around it, including a number of laboratories or a number of like, um, rooms, you know? They're- They're not all labs, uh, built into the side of these walls that are kind of down alongside of it.

And the other one is filled with a spaceship with a rocket, um, that is currently literally- You see people leaving some of the scaffolding around that, uh, who are like hooked up on- on, you know, um, safety- safety harnesses and stuff, to make sure that if they fall, they don't fall to their deaths, and are literally coming back onto the scaffolding to try to go into one of these nearby safety bunkers. The security personnel though, are spread out all across this place.

And these folks look different than the ones who are upstairs. Most of these folks have on these like, black masks with a very distinct visual, um... iconography, which is- there's almost like a, uh, pentagonal five- five LED lights, um, on these big black, like, heavy metal masks, um, that are- that are... I'm imagining it as a- as a vertical pen- you know, pentagon basically, where it's like, you know- I can't- *[laughs]* I'm pointing at my own face. You cannot see my face. Where it's like one, two, three, four, five, right? But maybe a little tighter than that, so it's- it's less tall. I don't know if you can even see those dots, but you get what I'm saying, right? And those folks have big, heavy, dark, uh, you know, uh, assault rifle type weapons out. They're- They're paired in groups- Or they're grouped in groups of three. Um, and are on the lookout for- for, uh, anyone

who- who would try to do any sort of like, you know, attack. So they are on guard here. They are- They're not looking for you particularly, the alarms have not gone off. You are still in- in a risky position, but you're not in any- No one is like, "hey, they're going to come through this way," or anything like that. So you- you still have control of the situation in a sense. What do you do? Also, hey, there's a big spaceship. There's a big spaceship-

JACK: [cross] Yeah, I was gonna say-

DRE: [cross] Yeah.

AUSTIN: [cross] But you'll have to- you'll have to get closer or do some sort of Study check to learn more about it.

JACK: Is the way we should be reading these two sort of vertical holes as- as launch bays? Or is this, uh, just a- a large hole that also happens to have a spaceship in it?

AUSTIN: It is very clear these are both- These- these two holes were built for the same thing. [DRE: Okay.] Um, whether that's a [JACK: Launching something-] launch bay or a dry dock, I guess, again, you'll have to make a roll for.

JACK: But these holes are *for* the spaceships, [AUSTIN: Yes, yes.] rather than something at the bottom of this hole has been visited by a spaceship. [Dre laughs]

AUSTIN: It would be very remarkable, um, I think, to have built this such, that it's only- it's perfect for this one type of spaceship to land in or something, [JACK: Yes.] you know? Without it [cross] also being a place where that would be meant to launch from, do you know?

JACK: [cross] Is this a Saturn Five? Sure. Are these like Saturn Five type vertical sort of rockets?

AUSTIN: No, I'm actually imagining them [JACK: Or rocket.] as a little bit rounder than that. Um, not rounder. Like- uh, like fuller. These are- these are, um... Again, this- You'll have to make a roll to get a better picture of this. You're looking at one angle of one [JACK: Yeah.] spaceship, right? So you'll have to [DRE: Sure.] get into a position to learn more about what this- what this looks like.

JACK: [cross] [sighs] I think Kalar-

DRE: So [cross] in order for me to try and pull off a Study roll on this, we have to be in a better position than where we are.

AUSTIN: Uh... [cross] Corr- Well, yes.

KEITH: [cross] Well, the Study roll would be an Action roll, so it would include moving.

AUSTIN: [cross] Yes, that is correct. Yes. Yes, as Keith says.

DRE: Okay.

AUSTIN: So you- you could make that Study roll to- to learn more. Um, but to do that, that would be an Action roll, which as Keith said, would put you into- into harm's way if- if you- if you went- if it went bad. [DRE: Okay.] Because what you'd be doing by studying is getting closer and that's, you know, you know how it goes.

DRE: Right. Yeah.

KEITH: By- By that- If one of you is good at Prowl, that might be...

AUSTIN: It'd be a great Set-Up Action, for instance.

JACK: Yeah, I could, um... I could set up a Prowl for- uh, for Figure.

DRE: [cross] Okay.

AUSTIN: [cross] So actually the way that would work would be weird because that would be you prowling, not Figure prowling to get closer, right? Um, but then could you do some sort of fun... thing where, like, you're describing what you see to Figure who is- [cross] Do you know what I mean?

JACK: [cross] Yeah, okay.

(As Kalar, in a low voice) I'm walking up.

AUSTIN: Yeah. [Dre laughs]

JACK:

(As Kalar, in a low voice) There's like a five-pointed pentagram.

AUSTIN: Right, exactly.

JACK: [laughs] Um... Yeah. I think- So I think that Kalar just, you know, touches the- the little communicator on his, uh, neck and calls out to- quietly, this time- calls out to, uh, Phrygian and SI and says,

(As Kalar) We found a spaceship, deep underground, some kind of a big launch bay. I'm going to try and get in close and Figure and I are gonna try and interpret what it is. How are things- How are things with you?

ART:

(As Sovereign Immunity) No spaceships.

KEITH:

(As Phrygian) Two gates.

JACK:

(As Kalar) Okay.

DRE:

(As *The Figure in Bismuth*) Uh, there's also- [cross] There's also a lot of guns here.

JACK:

(As Kalar) [cross] Great, sick. Yeah.

KEITH:

(As *Phrygian*) There's nothing much over here.

Wait, is that true?

ART:

(As *Sovereign Immunity*) Well, kind of creepy tunnels. The tunnels here are creepy.

KEITH:

(As *Phrygian*) Yeah. We're really getting a creepy vibe.

ART:

(As *Sovereign Immunity*) Bad vibes over here.

JACK:

(As Kalar) Okay. Sounds-

[laughs]

(As Kalar) Sounds good. Be brave. Uh, we're gonna- we're gonna pop in and take a look. We'll let you know if we get into any trouble and, uh, yeah, you let us know if you need any help. Again, I don't really know how to get to where you are, but, uh, it's good to... good to keep in touch. Alright, Kalar out.

KEITH: You know, Phrygian might like the tunnels.

JACK:

(As Kalar) [cross] Alright, Figure-

KEITH: [cross] They might remind me of being Deck Seven.

JACK: Oh. [laughs]

KEITH: [cross] Yeah, it's really-

ART: [cross] Well, do you have an affinity for just everything that's creepy? That's a-

KEITH: It's really homey down here.

ART: Mm.

KEITH: No, not everything that's- It just has to be- It has to be creepy and have hallways.

AUSTIN: *[laughs]* Alright, so-

ART: Is a tunnel a hallway?

AUSTIN: Let's-

KEITH: It's a dirt hallway.

AUSTIN: Let's- uh, let's make this- this Prowl check, if that's how we're going about it.

JACK: Yeah. Uh, so this is- uh, this is 3d6-

AUSTIN: 3d6, risky standard.

JACK: Risky standard.

AUSTIN: Oh yeah. You can push yourself. You can get help.

JACK: Um... I think I'm good, but this is kind of- this would be kind of good. What sort of a position are you in for helping, Figure?

DRE: Um... *[cross]* I'm at three stress right now.

JACK: *[cross]* Stress-wise, or, you know...

DRE: So like, not terrible. I guess that just costs me one, right?

AUSTIN: Yep, just costs one.

JACK: It might be worth saving it for a- for a more critical roll. For- *[laughs]*

DRE: Yeah. *[cross]* Well, 'cause how much do you have in Prowl?

JACK: *[cross]* For a better roll. *[Austin laughs]* I have three. I have three Prowl, which is- which is pretty good. Um...

DRE: That's pretty good.

JACK: So maybe better to save it. Yeah. Alright.

AUSTIN: Alright, 3d6.

JACK: Here we go.

AUSTIN: ...Hey, that's a six. There you go

DRE: See, you didn't need my help.

AUSTIN: Boom. Alright. Yeah. You get- You- you managed to get across. There's some- There's definitely some like, needing to jump up and down between different, you know, uh, scaffolding levels [cross] as you get closer.

JACK: [cross] Yeah, like falling silently.

AUSTIN: Yeah. Um, and... Are you- Are you then- So now you've made it there. You've made it there in a pathway that, frankly, uh, the Figure in Bismuth could not take, uh, because they have- they're much- they're just ge- they're- have a bunch of bismuth on their body that makes them heavy, [cross] they can't make those jumps.

DRE: [cross] Figure too big.

AUSTIN: Yeah. Figure big. Um... [laughs]

JACK: No wings.

AUSTIN: But you can now help describe things from this alternate location, um, which gives- which gives, uh, the Figure in Bismuth either a- uh, a better position or a better effect on this- on this roll.

DRE: Um... [cross] So we're already-

AUSTIN: [cross] Risky standard is where we're at now.

DRE: I'm going to take better position, I think.

AUSTIN: That makes sense. Which is interesting because it means you're almost getting the, like... It- Maybe it's even more than that, it's now... It's- Kalar can see where the guards are from that position. And he can kind of give you the like, "hey, hey, hey, hey, hey, you have to move on. You can't stay there. A guard is gonna- is gonna come- that- that stairwell", you know?

DRE: Yeah.

AUSTIN: Um...

JACK: It's like a cooperative stealth game.

AUSTIN: Yeah, exactly, exactly. [Dre laughs] Um... So now Kal- or, uh, Figure, you can go ahead and give me the Study check.

DRE: Is this controlled standard?

AUSTIN: Controlled standard.

DRE: Okay.

AUSTIN: 2d6.

DRE: Oof. [cross] Glad I took controlled.

AUSTIN: [cross] Those are two f- That's- That is two failures. Yeah. So, uh, again, this is a situation where if you would like to, um, back the fuck off and take a different- a different tack here, you can. The action failed and the chance for that chosen action to work has- has passed. A different action must be used to overcome the obstacle, or it can be attempted at a worse position. So you could also try it again, just at a risky position. Um, I don't know how- how else you could do it without studying at- at- uh, and stay at controlled. Um, I guess maybe you could get close- You could- You could shift over to Survey, um, or you could get close enough to Engineer it. You know, you can like get hands on to try to learn stuff [DRE: Yeah.] about the ship by engineering. Um, but... Or, you know, you could ask someone [laughing] something with Command or Consort. Um...

DRE: [cross] "Hey! You there with the gun! What's this rocket ship do?"

JACK: [cross] "Hey, what's that spaceship?"

AUSTIN: [laughs] Exactly. Yeah, exactly. Uh, or- or it can fail and I can give you a consequence, you know?

DRE: Um... I kind of want to try re-rolling it [cross] at risky standard.

AUSTIN: [cross] At risky. Okay. Let's give me- give me that risky standard roll then. Which is like, literally the way we frame this is, Kalar, you see guards coming and the Figure says, "wai-w- I almost got it. I almost figured it out. I- It's starting to make sense to me," or whatever, you know?

DRE: [cross] Okay, a four.

AUSTIN: [cross] That's a four, that's a mixed success. Um, so, I am going to advance that alarm clock by two. You can resist that in a second, if you want to, but for now at least, I'm increasing it. What you learn here, with a mixed success, uh, is, this is a- um, this is a personnel carrier. This is a- Of a sort- that's kind of rare to see this deep in the heart of the Principality. Maybe this is your history teacher in you knowing this, once you put it together. But it's basically the sort of like troop transport that you only see at the front. Um, th- the front against the Branched. This thing carries, you know, hundreds and hundreds of troops. Maybe- maybe more than that. Potentially thousands. Um, and... it is a- uh, one of the rare vehicles that with the right equipment can break orbit by itself. It does not need to go through a launch loop. It does not go- need to go through- uh, you know, it's- it has its own onboard launch mechanism, basically.

DRE: Gotcha.

AUSTIN: And, um, you know, the other thing I'm gonna give you here is, yes, there was another one of these and it lifted off already. [cross] It's already gone.

DRE: [cross] Okay. I was gonna ask that.

AUSTIN: Yes. So there was already one of these here, it's gone. It's hard to know *[sighs]* I'd say more than that with- with this. Um, and yeah, I think- I think with that- with that four, what happens here is someone sees you looking. Someone sees you and Kalar, and- and hits the alarm, uh, unless you resist that. And I think that that resist is probably a Prowess to stay out of sight.

DRE: Yeah.

AUSTIN: With you it doesn't matter, 'cause it's two no matter what, right?

DRE: I will- Yeah, I'll try to resist.

AUSTIN: Okay, 2d6. Take a-

[2:00:00]

JACK: Can I help?

AUSTIN: Not on resists, no.

JACK: On a Resistance roll? *[cross]* No? Okay. I'm helping morally. Like moral support.

AUSTIN: *[cross]* You could- You could- No, no no no. If- If this was- Yeah. If this was harm or something, you could take the harm instead, but no.

DRE: Uh, two... *[cross]* Heyyyyy.

AUSTIN: *[cross]* Hey, that's a six! Take no stress. Good resist. Um... Alright. So yeah, you duck out of the way at the last possible second, the alarm continues not to go off. You don't know what they're carrying in that thing. You don't know if there already are people on board. You don't know, you know, where it's going. This is all information that might be useful to you to find, and whether that's on board or in one of these other rooms, we'll find out. Um, let's zip back up to Point Diamond.

You've kind of turned the corner at this point, and, uh- the- of that long hallway and pretty quickly you see that this thing goes off in a couple of different directions. And I'm just going to give you very quickly that many of them are dead ends in a way that seems... too- dead ends too quickly. Do you know what I mean? Um, again, I think this is the- To understand what that means, you'd have to roll, um, but it's- but it's- you know, there's like, sort of like, oh, this is the communications, uh, wing of this- of this secondary quarry. There's nothing here. Um, hey, this is a tunnel that's supposed to lead us to a vein of rare earth minerals. And then you like, go down that- that thing's like, oh, there's supposed to be some- some cobalt down here, according to the signage. There- No, it just stops. It just hits a hard- a hard wall where it's just- the digging stopped.

[\[TANAGER. PERFECT. TOUCHPAPER.\]](#) by Jack de Quidt begins playing]

AUSTIN: You don't know if that's, like, an aborted dig, or if they were wrong about the information or what, but- but that keeps happening down here. And instead you keep getting

funneled deeper and deeper. Is there anything you want to look for specifically at this stage of the quarry?

ART: I mean, I want answers. Why is this happening? What's happening here?

[\[TANAGER. PERFECT. TOUCHPAPER.\]](#) plays to end]