

PARTIZAN 10: DESERT SQUIRE - RIPOSTE

Transcriber: Cole

AUSTIN: Hey, everyone, it's Austin here. And before we get to the episode, I just want to make a quick request. Could you please go fill out the form— the poll at tinyurl.com/fatt2020. So tiny URL dot com, slash fatt twenty twenty. That'll take you to a form, like a poll, that you fill out about some info about our upcoming live show. We're trying to figure out things like, where you would want to go see us, how far people would be willing to travel, whether or not other events being nearby would help you make that decision, how long the show should be, how much a ticket price should be, what type of bonus stuff you'd be interested in. Stuff like that.

We've already gotten a ton of great responses from people who follow Twitter feed, but we know that we have listeners who don't necessarily use Twitter, and so we wanted to make sure to put this at the top of the episode, also. You know, we've done a bunch of— we've done two live shows before. Both of those were tied to events. It was SHUX and GenCon. We'd loved doing those. But, you know, part of the reason that we, um— we have the Patreon because we'd like to do some other stuff, right? And it's a little bit different when you can control a venue, when you have time in the venue ahead of time, when you can put the venue not just, you know, in a big convention surrounded by a bunch of other things.

So— so, you know, really quick— I guess attached to this is, if that's cool, if you— if you're happy that we're able to do that, if you want to help us do other cool stuff, you can go to friendsatthetable.cash to support us and support the Patreon. If you've been enjoying Partizan, let me tell you one more time that there's a ton of good attached Partizan stuff. Kind of the drawing maps episodes we've been doing— or that I've been doing, talking about the prep that goes into all these sessions, talking about the worldbuilding and all that stuff. So that's friendsatthetable.cash.

And because so many people did that, we're now doing a live show. And to make sure we do a live show in the right place and make sure that we have the right ticket prices and stuff like that, any— any added info on your end would be good. So you can go to tinyurl.com/fatt2020. Please know that we're also considering other venues. There might be a follow up poll. We're considering other prices. Like, everything is still up in the air right now.

We thought we had some pretty good ideas, and we still have some pretty good ideas, but even just the results we've gotten so far from this poll have been really good and eye-opening for some stuff. So, more— you know, the more people fill out that poll the better this is for us, and therefore for you. Alright, I'm gonna get out of the way and let this episode play. Peace.

(recap)

AUSTIN: Your job is basically going to be— and Clem, this is kind of in your hands in terms of, like, what you do from the moment that you accept this mission, you need to ensure that the

Disciples of Gur Sevraq make it from the west end of the Prophet's Path to the kind of east coast of that side of the continent. And that is where you are guiding them—

[Jack de Quidt's "[TANAGER. PERFECT. TOUCHPAPER.](#)" begins playing]

AUSTIN: Or that is where they are going. You're not guiding them. You've not been contracted for this mission cause an important note here is, you can't be found out to be members of Stel Kesh. Because if you do, Apostolos will think, "Oh, yeah, it's true. Stel Kesh moved into the Prophet's Path." Which is not good. It's a long way. This is — this is, like, not a day travel. This is a pilgrimage. This is a multi-day thing. A lot of the Prophet's Path is desert. There's lots of dunes; there's some canyons. Like, you're walking through some pretty hostile— you're moving through some pretty hostile terrain. You know that the Disciples of Logos Kantel have weapons and stuff. Like, they have some security guards. There is clearly a head of security there.

Keith (as LEAP): Okay. Now, Aleel is someone who you have to take... her what?

Austin (as ALISE BREKA): If I were to write about a dashing, daring, brilliant... dare I say, handsome pirate who encounters, by chance, The Song of Partizan, I would say that he would take those rings. Not because they're valuable, but because they would open the door to an entire new world of opportunity. Even if you only heard one in ten conversations, maybe it would give you an up. [pause] Not you. Not you.

Keith (as LEAP): Right. One. Give one enough.

Austin (as ALISE BREKA): [crosstalk] The hypothetical. Would give one.

Austin (as THE BLOSSOM): Had you heard that Gur Sevraq calls himself a miracle worker? Did you know that the word miracle is not about doing something, it's about seeing something. The word "mirror" and the word "miracle" are not too different. If someone were to steal a miracle worker, kidnap one, take one away, it might simply be... so that they, too, can see but wonder.

SYLVIA: I think I'm gonna tell them, like,

Sylvia (as MILLIE): Hey, there's something going on with that storm down there. It looks like it's being directed in some way, or at the very least, it's not moving in a way that we're able to predict.

Jack (as CLEMENTINE): Thank you.

Keith (as LEAP): M... so we go around it?

Sylvia (as MILLIE): I mean, like... it's the ground people who decide that.

Keith (as LEAP): Okay. What do we do? [Austin laughs]

Sylvia (as MILLIE): I don't know, man. I think we look at stuff until they meet me to shoot somebody.

Keith (as LEAP): Okay.

[music ends]

Jack (as CLEMENTINE): Sovereign, a word, please.

Art (as SOVEREIGN IMMUNITY): Mm.

Jack (as CLEMENTINE): I just received word from Ver'million. That sandstorm in the distance, it appears to be unnatural.

Art (as SOVEREIGN IMMUNITY): Okay. Um... it's a group call. It's not important. [Austin breathes a laugh] Um... okay. I don't—I don't know how we move a pilgrimage.

Jack (as CLEMENTINE): Have you spent any time speaking to the leadership?

Art (as SOVEREIGN IMMUNITY): No, I— I am worried they'd recognize me.

Jack (as CLEMENTINE): Well, perhaps I could—I could go and introduce myself.

Art (as SOVEREIGN IMMUNITY): Then they'd—they'd recognize you.

Jack (as CLEMENTINE): I—I have some experience. Um... I'm my mother's daughter in some respects. I would welcome your counsel and your presence.

Art (as SOVEREIGN IMMUNITY): Mm. Okay. Let's do it.

Jack (as CLEMENTINE): Yes, I was just wondering whether or not, um, your scouts had uh— had received any information about the sandstorm.

JACK: And just, like, gestures ahead out towards this thing, like, rolling in the distance.

Austin (as AVAR): If our scouts had—the sand— there's sandstorms all the time, bud.

Jack (as CLEMENTINE): Yes, this one seems to be behaving, um...

Austin (as AVAR): This one?

Jack (as CLEMENTINE): —strangely.

AUSTIN: They're like squinting at you.

Jack (as CLEMENTINE): I'm a meteorologist.

[Sylvia laughs]

Austin (as AVAR): You're a meteorologist. I— oh.. Okay, wait.

AUSTIN: And like reaches down— actually does not reach down; just calls out and says,

Austin (as AVAR): Hey! Hey, has anyone heard anything about a... yeah, sandstorm? Yeah, we— we already— it's accounted for. I mean, we changed— we changed course a few hours ago. We're still on the path, you know, close enough, but...

Art (as SOVEREIGN IMMUNITY): [whispering] Tell them about the— tell them that it moves.

Jack (as CLEMENTINE): I don't know whether or not the sandstorm would agree with you there. Um, it seems to have changed course to match us.

AUSTIN: Give me a roll.

Jack (as CLEMENTINE): If my calculations are correct.

AUSTIN: This is a roll. Oh!

JACK: Mm.

AUSTIN: Love to see a two and a three.

ART: Woo.

AUSTIN: That's— you, know, okay.

JACK: Keith, what was that you were saying?

AUSTIN: [laughs] Uh, [reading] "On a one or a three, the pilot falters. They can press on by seizing a risky opportunity or withdraw and try a different approach and action." And I think this is just pretty straight up. Avar like, stops and, you know, lets some people walk past them, and,

you know, the convoy doesn't stop when they stop. But they stop with you and they cross their arms and they go.

Austin (as AVAR): You're not a meteorologist.

AUSTIN: And at which point you can either—

Jack (as CLEMENTINE): No.

AUSTIN: —choose a different path.

Art (as SOVEREIGN IMMUNITY): [whispering] Don't say you're Clementine Kesh. Don't say you're Clementine Kesh. [Jack laughs]

AUSTIN: You can either choose a different path— either— this either becomes risky, right?

JACK: Right.

AUSTIN: Or you can back off and try a different approach cause you're still in controlled. So it's up to you. Or wait, you were not Swaying anyway, right? You were just doing Consort.

KEITH: That was Consort, yeah.

JACK: Yeah.

AUSTIN: Oh, that's even worse then. [laughs] Then they go,

Austin (as AVAR): Well, you're not a— you're not a meteorologist. That's obvious.

AUSTIN: We do that whole bit. And then and then they go,

Austin (as AVAR): Why should I trust anything from someone who would start with a lie?

Jack (as CLEMENTINE): You're right. I'm sorry. We got off on the wrong foot. I. I just— I just saw the sandstorm and worried for... my father!

AUSTIN: [quietly] God. [Sylvia laughs hard]

Jack (as CLEMENTINE): He's old. He's...

[Art/Sovereign Immunity begins coughing]

Austin (as AVAR): Continue.

Art (as SOVEREIGN IMMUNITY): [coughs] So much sand.

Jack (as CLEMENTINE): It's difficult for us. We've seen many— as I'm sure you have— we've seen many sandstorms in our home in the east. And when this one began to behave in a way that... surprised me, I feared for him first and then for the caravan second.

Austin (as AVAR): This—

Jack (as CLEMENTINE): I'm sorry. I thought that maybe by saying that I was a meteorologist, you'd do you believe me. But I should have led with my elderly father.

Art (as SOVEREIGN IMMUNITY): People don't listen when you tell them stuff because you're old. [Austin and Jack laugh]

AUSTIN: [amused] This is a— this is a Sway. [background laughter] This is a Sway.

[Art continues to pretend cough]

AUSTIN: Um... I think this is risky. I think it has to be. Risky standard. Um... you're a zero at Sway. [pause] Right? Or do you have Sway?

JACK: No.

AUSTIN: No, you don't have Sway. Good. I'm glad between the two of you, you don't have any Sway. I love it.

JACK: No. See, I thought what was gonna happen would be I would tell a lie, and then you would just move on to some other bad consequence.

AUSTIN: [amused] No!

JACK: But it turned out that the bad consequence was making me roll Sway.

AUSTIN: Yes. [Sylvia and Keith laugh] Yes, you have not convinced them that this is a serious thing and that you're not, like, some sort of weird spy or killer.

JACK: No, I thought they'd basically say, "Fuck off. Off you go."

AUSTIN: No, you're lying to the chief of security. [laughs]

KEITH: [laughs hard] Okay.

JACK: I'm going to push my—

ART: Um—

JACK: Well— sorry.

ART: [resigned] Yeah, you should do that. [Sylvia laughs]

AUSTIN: You gonna help, Sovereign?

ART: Yeah.

AUSTIN: Gonna take another—

ART: I'm helping with my wonderful acting talent.

AUSTIN: I got it. I heard the cough. That was a good cough. You do that yourself.

ART: Yeah, it's— I'm doing my own foley over here.

AUSTIN: Great.

ART: Hold on, I'm about to fall down a flight of stairs. [banging noises can be heard]

AUSTIN: Great. Good. That's like—

KEITH: He's great.

AUSTIN: It's like Hollywood. That's what we should— Oh! We didn't do callsigns! Fuck.

SYLVIA: Oh shit.

AUSTIN: Let's finish this roll, and then we have to talk about callsigns.

JACK: Okay. Um...

AUSTIN: So right now, you're at 1d6 from Sovereign helping you with a very realistic cough and also falling downstairs stairs.

JACK: And I can push my—

ART: [crosstalk] So many stairs in this desert! [Austin laughs]

JACK: [amused] And I can push myself to get another... die.

AUSTIN: Mhm. You sure could.

JACK: Okay. Um... Spend two stress. Yeah.

AUSTIN: Okay. You're back up to five stress.

JACK: Mhm.

AUSTIN: Love to see it.

KEITH: Well, at least we did that scene.

AUSTIN: Uh huh. True, worth it. So you're gonna roll 2d6. Risky standard.

JACK: Uh huh. Sway.

AUSTIN: Sway.

JACK: Risky.

AUSTIN: Yep, standard.

JACK: Standard. 2d6.

AUSTIN: That's a four. A four is not the worst thing. [Sylvia laughs]

JACK: [amused] The other one is a two.

AUSTIN: Uh huh. No, the pilot—

ART: Which is the worst one.

AUSTIN: [reading] "The pilot does it, but there is a risky consequence."

JACK: Yeah.

AUSTIN: So they like, unfold their arms. And they say,

Austin (as AVAR): There's a sandstorm?

[someone whispers “fuck”]

Austin (as AVAR): And it's coming? You say it's unnatural? What's that mean?

Jack (as CLEMENTINE): It moved. We moved earlier, and the sandstorm moved to match us.

Austin (as AVAR): How did you see this, and our scouts didn't see this?

Jack (as CLEMENTINE): I have an interest— I— Look. When I said I was a meteorologist—

Austin (as AVAR): An interest?

Jack (as CLEMENTINE): —what I really meant was that I took a couple of classes in meteorology.

Austin (as AVAR): Okay. [breath a small laugh] Alright. And you could tell that there was a sandstorm then because what? The air got damper or something?

Jack (as CLEMENTINE): I could see it on the horizon, and then I could see it change direction very suddenly.

Austin (as AVAR): Why could you see it, and our scouts couldn't see it, is my question.

JACK: I thought they said earlier— I thought they called back and were like, “A sandstorm? Yeah. We've seen it.”

AUSTIN: Right. But then they did not know that it's changed directions. That is new information.

Art (as SOVEREIGN IMMUNITY): [whispering] It's because of my cough. It's because— I— You could tell because it's affecting my breathing.

[Austin and Sylvia laugh]

Jack (as CLEMENTINE): Well, it's a number of things. Um... it was always something I had an aptitude for. And also my father... his cough develops in the...when weather— when a weather front approaches. [strongly] I'm not saying that any of this is good. I'm not saying that it's plausible! I'm just concerned.

Austin (as AVAR): Alright, well... You know what? Fine. We're gonna be very careful. And we are gonna see if we can avoid it. Thank you for bringing— What's your name?

Jack (as CLEMENTINE): Alice. Alice Midwinter.

Austin (as AVAR): Alice Midwinter, hobbyist meteorologist.

[Keith laughs]

Jack (as CLEMENTINE): Something like that.

Austin (as AVAR): And your father?

Art (as SOVEREIGN IMMUNITY): Uh—

Jack (as CLEMENTINE): Autumn.

ART: Great.

Austin (as AVAR): Autumn Midwinter.

Art (as SOVEREIGN IMMUNITY): Autumn Midwinter.

Jack (as CLEMENTINE): Yes.

Austin (as AVAR): Oh, thank you for visiting us during the pilgrimage. Uh, yeah. I'll see what I can do.

AUSTIN: I'm starting a clock. [laughs] I'm advancing pilgrimage by one because instead—

JACK: Jesus.

AUSTIN: —instead of multiple, which is good. But it's like, you're slowed— everyone's slowed down now to try to avoid this— this sandstorm. But I'm also starting a second clock. You can resist this if you— if you'd like to, Clem. But this clock—

JACK: [shouting from afar] I've done enough!

AUSTIN: Huh?

JACK: I've done enough.

AUSTIN: You've done enough. Yeah. This is another six step clock called, "Discovered." [Austin and Jack laugh] And that's gonna get one tick.

KEITH: Wait, so you're—you're still deciding to not resist that?

AUSTIN: The discovered?

JACK: I'm—

KEITH: Yeah.

JACK: I'm not resisting that.

KEITH: Okay.

AUSTIN: It's a six step clock. You got some time before it—

ART: [crosstalk] One step—

JACK: [crosstalk] Clem is—

ART: —after our flawless performance?

JACK: Yeah. Clem is mortified.

AUSTIN: Yeah. You got a mixed success. That's the— it's mixed.

KEITH: Honestly, it makes the Oscars yesterday look foolish. [Austin laughs] That's how good that performance was.

JACK: "I'm a meteorologist." "No, I'm not. My dad is?" "No, I'm not." [Austin laughs] "I went to school?" "What?!" "He coughs."

KEITH: "I'm a hobbyist meteorologist, my father has a cough, and both of us noticed the sandstorm moved."

JACK: "At the same time—"

AUSTIN: This is a—

JACK: "—before you're scouts."

AUSTIN: —nineties college rock song. That's what this is.

SYLVIA: God!

AUSTIN: [laughs] Hobbyist Meteorologists. Yeah, uh huh. Great.

SYLVIA: Yeah. I love that Pavement deep cut.

AUSTIN: [laughing] Yeah, I was gonna say exactly that. Exactly that. There's—

ART: I think it sounds more like a They Might Be Giants song.

AUSTIN: I almost went They Might Be Giants. I'm want to be honest, I couldn't decide between—

KEITH: [singing] "She was a hobbyist—"

AUSTIN and KEITH: [singing] "—meteorologist!" [Keith laughs hard]

AUSTIN: Yeah. Uh huh, yeah. Exactly that.

SYLVIA: [resigned] Okay. Yeah.

AUSTIN: Exactly. Oh you could go Belle and Sebastian though. Right? Cause you could, like, slow it down. [Sylvia laughs]

JACK: [amused] "Dylan in the Movies."

AUSTIN: Yeah, "Like Dylan in the Movies."

KEITH: Are you saying that Belle and Sebastian is essentially They Might Be Giants, but slow?

AUSTIN: [laughs] But sad, yeah. Uh huh.

KEITH: [singing slowly] "Mesopotamia."

[everyone laughs hard]

KEITH: "Sargon, Hammurabi, Ashurbanipal and Gilgamesh~"

AUSTIN: [cross talking with the song] This song basically exists. [laughs] God. Alright. We have to keep playing this game. The—

KEITH: [singing] "Mammals!"

AUSTIN: The core problem hasn't been fixed which is, this is going to keep happening. Um, I think there's actually a degree of— you know, an hour later the convoy stops. Because they can't seem to— an hour later, the convoy stops and then starts going the reverse direction.

[Jack sighs] Which is always bad because they're like, "Wait, no, the sand storm is still coming for us. We can't just outwalk it. We can't just, like, walk around it." And— and for Leap and Millie that is increasingly clear, this thing is closing in.

JACK: [amused] Are they just like, "What the fuck are those two down there doing?"

AUSTIN: I don't know. What are they doing?

SYLVIA: Uh, well— Hm. I have a couple of questions.

AUSTIN: Yeah.

SYLVIA: The first thing I want to say is, do we want to make sure we don't forget about call signs again?

AUSTIN: Call signs. Thank you. I'm sorry.

JACK: Oh!

AUSTIN: Very important. Very important. We did this on the other side.

SYLVIA: Yeah.

AUSTIN: And I don't know if the same rule applies here because it's a different social dynamic. On the other side, the group named— they gave everybody a call— they gave each other call signs because that's the way real pilots do it. A pilot can't choose their own call sign. They need their— their comrades to give them the call sign. And that means sometimes it's embarrassing. In this case, I know it's a different social dynamic. But— but I'm curious how we wanted to call signs. Because this could definitely be that scene from Reservoir Dogs where you're assigned names and complain about them, because that's the sort of power Clem wields. But also, if the table wants to come up with their own call signs with each— for each other, that's also fun.

JACK: I'm fine with either.

SYLVIA: Yeah.

ART: On my sheet, I have the call sign that I believe I had in my previous life.

JACK: Oh, damn!

ART: And I don't know if it's, like, worth insisting upon.

KEITH: What is it?

ART: Uh, S.I. Brightstar, which is the Kesh-given call sign from... the first run.

AUSTIN: I— I think I— I think I'm drawing a line in the sand saying no one can name themselves.

ART: Okay.

AUSTIN: Or only Clem can name herself because that is the social dynamic here. But no one can be allowed to just come up with their own. As much as I do like S.I. Brightstar. I also worry that has that—

KEITH: [crosstalk] And she already has named herself also.

ART: I'm putting that in a parenthetical, and it's worth having for archival knowledge.

AUSTIN: Totally. And also it's worth knowing that we have a Whitestar and a Brightline, and that you've walked down the middle combined. Combining.

JACK: [laughs] Oh, that's very good.

AUSTIN: So definitely worth having on hand.

JACK: Oh, okay. Yeah. Um, I think it's, like, late. Like, an evening. I don't know whether or not this has happened.

AUSTIN: Yeah, Let's say it's already happened.

JACK: Yeah. And over the short range comms Clem says.

Jack (as CLEMENTINE): For this mission, I have decided to allow you to decide upon your own call signs. Not individually. You may name each other. My call sign is Belltower.

JACK: And there's just silence.

Keith (as LEAP): You just said we couldn't name ourselves.

Sylvia (as MILLIE): Yeah. Wait, hold on.

Jack (as CLEMENTINE): I can.

Sylvia (as MILLIE): What?!

Keith (as LEAP): What?

Art (as SOVEREIGN IMMUNITY): Are you— are you calling a theme?

Jack (as CLEMENTINE): No, I don't make the rules.

Keith (as LEAP): Smelltower.

[Keith and Sylvia laugh]

Jack (as CLEMENTINE): That call sign has been denied. I plugged it into the Kesh database.

[Austin laughs]

Keith (as LEAP): No, you didn't.

Jack (as CLEMENTINE): And I'm afraid it said—

Keith (as LEAP): Nope. Sway failed.

Jack (as CLEMENTINE): Any others?

Art (as SOVEREIGN IMMUNITY): Um—

Sylvia (as MILLIE): Helltower?

Art (as SOVEREIGN IMMUNITY): We could call Million "Debutante."

SYLVIA: Wow!

AUSTIN: Oooo, debutante's not bad.

SYLVIA: *Wow!* I am fine with it. Character wouldn't be. [laughs]

ART: You could veto.

AUSTIN: That's how it be sometimes.

SYLVIA: Mhm.

AUSTIN: What—

ART: If you don't think most call signs are commentary on whatever the pilot did with they were drunk one time, I think—

SYLVIA: Oh my god.

ART: —you're just helplessly naive. [Austin and Jack laugh]

AUSTIN: What is—

ART: Allow me to use the documentary, Top Gun.

AUSTIN: Uh huh.

SYLVIA: I'm trying to think of something ring related for Leap now.

AUSTIN: Oh my god. Yeah, I don't know enough about rings. You ever think about how you don't know enough about rings?

ART: I don't think there's a lot to know about rings, is there?

KEITH: There's a band. There's an—

SYLVIA: Band. That's your name.

AUSTIN: Uh huh.

KEITH: —inset. Is that what it's called? An inset?

AUSTIN: Yeah. There is an inset.

JACK: You could name yourself after a type of gem?

AUSTIN: You could.

KEITH: Yeah.

ART: Or like, ring bearer.

AUSTIN: Ooo.

ART: Like the wedding thing you let small children do.

JACK: From that book? From the book about the dwarves, Ring Bearer? Where they have to go drop the ring in the mountain?

SYLVIA: Oh, that's why—

ART: Yes, the famous wedding book.

SYLVIA: That's why Leap was asking about magical rings.

ART: [crosstalk] The Return of the King.

KEITH: The famous wedding book, Return of the King. Is that what you said?

AUSTIN: Return of the Rings.

ART: Yeah.

KEITH: Oh, okay.

ART: Um...

AUSTIN: Ring bearer kind of— kind of slaps, but I'm— I'm up to hearing—

JACK: Ring bearer is kind of great. Debutante and Ring Bearer as the uh—

AUSTIN: And Belltower.

KEITH: Belltower.

JACK: —and Belltower.

KEITH: I thought— Hm.

JACK: Also Sovereign Immunity just naming everyone is really funny.

AUSTIN: "I give you— I grant you allowance to do this everyone," and then just Sovereign Immunity, the one that's closest to you, does it? Great. [Art laughs]

SYLVIA: I did, like, have a bad one in mind for Leap, but I think it's going to get vetoed immediately.

KEITH: What's the bad one?

SYLVIA: Was boomer? Cause you make things explode.

AUSTIN: [groaning] Oh my god.

KEITH: Oh no. Not— I mean, the character doesn't know. I'm vetoing it.

SYLVIA: Yeah, no, I know. That's what I'm saying.

AUSTIN: Yeah.

ART: I recently learned that all of the hobbits in Lord of the Rings have— have real names.

AUSTIN: What?

ART: Because Tolkien translated the Hobbit language into English.

SYLVIA: [incredulous] No.

AUSTIN: What?

ART: Yeah.

KEITH: [crosstalk] So, like, you could translate—

JACK: [amused] Just called like Steven and stuff?

KEITH: —Samwise into Hobbit.

AUSTIN: No, no, no.

ART: Right.

AUSTIN: Are you saying it the other way?

ART: Samwise has a real name that—

AUSTIN: The English name.

ART: —that means Samwise. And so he translated it. But all the hobbits have real names.

AUSTIN: No, they don't. What? It's Samwise.

SYLVIA: What?

ART: No, it isn't.

SYLVIA: They have, like, pronunciations in Hobbit or whatever?

AUSTIN: No, no, no. No, no, no, no, no. Art is saying—

ART: [crosstalk] It's not pronunciation. They're whole name—

AUSTIN: Samwise is already in the language of hobbits. And that we would translate that to something else.

ART: No, no, no, no, no.

AUSTIN: Oh.

ART: Samwise has been translated. They all have real names.

AUSTIN: I see. Samwise is the English version.

JACK: It's like Dwarf Fortress. Just called like— Jellinplus.

KEITH: Their real names: Frodo is Maura. Sam is Ban.

AUSTIN: Shut—

KEITH: Pippin is Razar¹. [Austin laughs] And Merry is Kali.

JACK: Razer. Razer gaming accessories.

KEITH: It might be Razar [ray-ZAR] or Razar [RAY-zar], but it's R-A-Z-A-R. So it's Maura, Ban, Razar and Kali.

ART: In like one of the— the appendices to the Lord of the Rings, it's like, "Oh yeah, none of these are their real names. I translated them from Hobbit."

JACK: [laughs] No, you didn't. He's called Samwise.

AUSTIN: I hate this.

KEITH: Should have stopped after the first one.

¹ The wiki entry lists his name as "Razanur."

JACK: Yeah.

KEITH: Hobbit— The Hobbit's good. The first one? That's good.

AUSTIN: He wrote that later. Didn't he?

KEITH: No, The Hobbit was first.

AUSTIN: Is Hobbit actually first?

KEITH: Nah, he wrote it for his kids, and then he did Lord of the Rings.

AUSTIN: Hm. okay.

KEITH: And, like, The Hobbit is a book. And then Lord of the Rings is like, what if I wrote— and everything else he ever wrote was like, "What if I did Wookieepedia, but for my— that one book that I did that was good?" [Austin laughs]

SYLVIA: Get 'em.

KEITH: It's just all too much. It's way too much.

SYLVIA: Get him!

JACK: So we need a name for Sovereign Immunity, right?

AUSTIN: Yes.

JACK: I'm— I'm letting you pick.

KEITH: T— tall—

JACK: I'm being magnanimous.

KEITH: Tall— Tall Guy.

AUSTIN: Tall Boy. [laughs] Like from Riverdale. [Keith laughs]

SYLVIA: Yeah.

KEITH: Who's Tall boy? [Art breathes a laugh]

AUSTIN: Tall Boy from Riverdale.

SYLVIA: Uh, I— Anything I could say about Tall Boy would spoil things about Riverdale.

AUSTIN: Tall Boy— Well, he— We could say that he is plainly—

KEITH: Oh! I remember Tall— I know Tall Boy. Yeah, I watched that far.

AUSTIN: He's played by Scott McNeil, who anime fans will know as a voice actor. Did you not know this?

KEITH: No.

AUSTIN: Did you ever watch Gundam Wing?

SYLVIA: Oh my god! Wait!

AUSTIN: He's Duo.

SYLVIA: [crosstalk] Who did he voice?!

AUSTIN: He's Duo.

SYLVIA: [shouting] No fucking— I need a minute.

AUSTIN: Yeah. [laughs]

KEITH: Oh my god.

AUSTIN: Tall Boy is—

SYLVIA: This is like— this is like running into someone you dated in high school—

AUSTIN: [laughing] Uh huh, basically.

SYLVIA: —like ten years later for me, I'm having a fucking— I need a minute.

AUSTIN: He was, like, Piccolo for years. He's like a real voice actor. And also he happened to be—

SYLVIA: Oh my god!

AUSTIN: He happened to become a gang member in Riverdale. And you can—

SYLVIA: I'm not going to be any help now for this call sign discussion.

AUSTIN: I'm sorry. I'm sorry.

SYLVIA: I'm— I— Wow.

AUSTIN: Tallboy is very funny for— for Sovereign Immunity because of being big. But I would hear— I would hear other options.

ART: I just like the implication that people are still watching Riverdale.

AUSTIN: You are! You're the— You're watching it. You're people.

SYLVIA: I think he means in PARTIZAN.

AUSTIN: Oh, yes. I see.

ART: Yeah, no. I'm— I'm watching Riverdale. [Austin laughs] Riverdale is great. This season doesn't make any sense, but that's all the seasons.

AUSTIN: Just throw 'em out here. Let's just— let's just throw out some suggestions.

KEITH: Riverdale.

AUSTIN: Yeah. [breathes a laugh]

SYLVIA: Archie.

AUSTIN: Jughead. What is Jughead?

KEITH: Did uh— Art, is Sovereign Immunity— Sovereign Immunity isn't related at all to the Lambic House people, right?

AUSTIN: Yes.

KEITH: Yes?

ART: Yeah, yeah, yeah.

AUSTIN: Yeah, he is.

KEITH: Jughead works.

AUSTIN: [amused] Why? What? Why did Jughead work and Tall Boy not then? Tall Boy is like a beer size.

KEITH: Well, you can— Oh. Well—

ART: Yeah.

KEITH: And then— Okay. Well, I assumed that they put beer in jugs and not in tallboys.

JACK: How 'bout like Trappist or something? Like a— like a brewing monk or something? Um, Brew— Brewer.

AUSTIN: Brew— Brewmeister.

JACK: And it's in— Brew— Brewmeister,

ART: Hoppy.

SYLVIA: Yeah,

AUSTIN: [amused] Hoppy.

KEITH: Yeast Man.

AUSTIN: [firmly] No.

SYLVIA: Ugh, [Austin groans, Keith laughs] I—

AUSTIN: Oh, please. It's a Yeastman. [Keith continues laughing]

SYLVIA: Ugh. [Jack laughs] We're not Hideo Kojima. We can't do this. [pause] "My name is Yeast Riseman, and I'm here to— [Austin laughs again] fight Metal Gear!" [Art laughs] Uh, I had, like, the— I'm trying to mostly think of two-syllable words.

AUSTIN: Yes.

SYLVIA: Cause I remember on that episode, you said those were better. And I jumped to like Tenure because he's been doing this shit for so long.

AUSTIN: Ooo. Tenure's good.

JACK: Oh, damn. Tenure is really good.

AUSTIN: Done. Swish. Fill it in, Art.

ART: Tenure. T-E-N-U—

SYLVIA: T-E-N-U-R-E.

KEITH: And— and when we're dunking on you, we can call you Tenure² because you're a farmer, and it's like manure.

AUSTIN: It's like— Yeah.

SYLVIA: Got 'em.

KEITH: And it's spelled the same way.

AUSTIN: Great. Good.

ART: Not just like Ten-year because old.

AUSTIN: Right. No. Not like ten year, like old. Ten year olds are young, Art. [Keith laughs]

ART: But ten years is a long amount of— Ten years we'll all be older. [Keith laughs again]

AUSTIN: Says you.

SYLVIA: Yeah, says you. Watch me! It's not gonna happen.

AUSTIN: [laughs] Alright. So—

KEITH: I'm not wrong, right? Tenure and manure are spelled the same way?

ART: No.

SYLVIA: [quietly] I don't think so.

AUSTIN: No, tenure—

KEITH: But I mean, not lit— not a hundred percent. [Austin laughs]

AUSTIN: Tenure is T-E. [crosstalk] Uh, T— No.

² Keith pronounces the end of tenure like the end of manure.

JACK: [laughing, crosstalk] It's just the same word.

SYLVIA: Oh, no. wait. No, yeah.

KEITH: crosstalk] But they— both end with— it's—

AUSTIN: [crosstalk] N-U-R-E. Yeah.

KEITH: N-U-R-E.

AUSTIN: Yeah.

KEITH: Tenure... Tenu— Tenure³.

SYLVIA: I thought there was an extra 'E' in there.

AUSTIN: It's not Tenure. No, it's—

ART: It's a ten...

AUSTIN: Tenure.

ART: There's no 'A.'

AUSTIN: We're gonna move on.

KEITH: Manure is not... manure⁴.

AUSTIN: We have to continue.

KEITH: Okay.

ART: [crosstalk] No, manure [MAN-yur] is something different.

AUSTIN: [crosstalk] Oh my god.

KEITH: [crosstalk] Fine, so it's Debutante— What was mine?

AUSTIN: I've already written it in. It's uh— it's Ring Bearer.

³ End pronounced like manure.

⁴ End pronounced like tenure.

JACK: Ring Bearer.

Keith (as LEAP): Ring Bearer, Debutante, Tenure⁵, and Smelltower. Which actually, they work together.

AUSTIN: Uh huh. Right. Because of the smell. Sure.

Sylvia (as MILLIE): The smell tower is full of tenure. That's why it's so stinky.

AUSTIN: Great.

KEITH: In character.

SYLVIA: This is what we were doing.

AUSTIN: I know. Yeah. Yeah.

SYLVIA: —the first like three days.

AUSTIN: Yeah, exactly. Yeah.

SYLVIA: I have a quick question about the location of the sandstorm in relation to where we are on the map. If you could just like— cause we're like—

AUSTIN: It's east. It's east.

SYLVIA: Okay.

AUSTIN: It's like the direction you're going. Yeah.

SYLVIA: But how— how far away from the front of the thing is it?

AUSTIN: Close. It—

SYLVIA: Like, close enough?

AUSTIN: It will be there today.

SYLVIA: Okay.

⁵ End pronounced like manure.

AUSTIN: This is not days out.

SYLVIA: Okay.

AUSTIN: This is— this is the— there is— So as the sandstorm approaches, like, I think for— for Clem and Sovereign Immunity, like there is a small degree of panic entering the people. Like, entering that kind of vibe of— Cause you're not supposed to go backwards. Like, you're just not supposed to. [laughs] That's a bad sign. But the— it seems as if— what people— what the word is spreading is, like, “Oh, we just have to go back and take shelter until the sandstorm passes cause we can't avoid it. It's too late to avoid it. We tried to avoid it, but it's coming this way. So we're gonna try to go back to where there are, like, some low hills. And we're gonna go, like, hide behind the hills basically and wait for this thing. And, like, bunker— or hunker down until this thing passes” is basically what's being said.

SYLVIA: So I have something I kind of I'm thinking about doing, but, like, we can— I want to get people's input on. So one of the things here is that we shouldn't be discovered because we don't want Apostolos knowing about Kesh involvement.

AUSTIN: Yes,

SYLVIA: I am in an Apostolosian mech though.

AUSTIN: True.

SYLVIA: And I was thinking that if someone's able to go check out this sandstorm and see if there is anything causing it, it would probably be easier for the person who's mech is like not an immediate give away. So I was thinking I could run down there in Stray Dog and, like, see if there's anything causing this. And if not, I guess we're shit out of luck, and we have to wait for it to pass. But, you know.

AUSTIN: Yeah.

Does that work for people, or does anyone be like, “No, don't do that”?

JACK: That sounds great.

SYLVIA: Alright, cool.

AUSTIN: Alright. So that sounds like a Survey to me.

SYLVIA: Alright. I'm gonna push myself for this.

AUSTIN: Okay.

SYLVIA: So that will be 2d6.

AUSTIN: 2d6. This is risky standard.

SYLVIA: Alright.

AUSTIN: As you approach this— this giant sandstorm, for sure. I'm tryin' to see— I'm looking to make sure there's nothing else that gives you a bonus here. But I don't think it does. No.

SYLVIA: I don't think I have anything that could, uh—

AUSTIN: You will get XP from this when we do XP later because—

SYLVIA: Oh, wait, I'm take— I'm—Am I— I'm pushing myself in my mech, right?

AUSTIN: You are. But then you wouldn't be running— If you're— if you're—

SYLVIA: Right. Cause it's a pilot action.

AUSTIN: It's a pilot action. So— Or you could use Scan. And if you scan, then you're pushing yourself in your mech.

SYLVIA: I'm way worse at that.

AUSTIN: Yes. Okay.

SYLVIA: We're sticking with Survey.

AUSTIN: So this is like, you go— you kind of like, drive out a little— or, you know, you ride out a little bit and then you hop out—

SYLVIA: Yeah.

AUSTIN: —and start to survey.

SYLVIA: Okay. That's a two and a three.

AUSTIN: [quietly] Fuck. It sure is.

SYLVIA: I'm gonna mark that stress.

AUSTIN: Uh huh. Oh, I love— I love to see a complete failure. Um—

SYLVIA: Mhm.

KEITH: [laughs] Rude.

SYLVIA: Hey, I mean, that's not the first time someone's said that to me.

AUSTIN: [laughs, then groans] Oh. Brutal.

SYLVIA: Ba-Dum Tshh.⁶

AUSTIN: Oh, terribly! Now I feel—

SYLVIA: Nah, I'm good. I'm fine.

AUSTIN: —miserable.

SYLVIA: You're fine.

AUSTIN: Okay.

SYLVIA: It is the first time someone said that to me. You're fine.

AUSTIN: Okay. Good. Phew. [amused] I'm glad I'm the first.

SYLVIA: Yeah, no worries.

AUSTIN: And hopefully— hopefully the last.

SYLVIA: Fingers crossed.

AUSTIN: Alright. So uh... two things happen. Maybe you've heard this before.

SYLVIA: Classic.

AUSTIN: Uh huh.

SYLVIA: I've heard that one a lot.

⁶ Sylvia makes the noise of a drum which is commonly used after a joke is told.

AUSTIN: The first is that before you can even— it's not a sandstorm. Like, it's not. Cause a sandstorm moves— like, the sand is being blown by the wind. This is like the sand is being lifted off the ground... in— in sequence. Do you know what I mean?

SYLVIA: Yeah.

AUSTIN: So it's not like the grains of sand behind it have to push the new ones forward. It's like something's pulling it forward. And way quicker than you imagined, the sand is, like, moving in on you and you're going to get moved to a desperate position. That's one of the consequences. You can resist these individually if you want to.

SYLVIA: Okay.

AUSTIN: The second is that a shot rings out. And through the sandstorm— which I'm gonna keep calling a sandstorm even though I just said it wasn't technically one— you see, like, all the sand vacuumed in— or, like, there's a hole appears. Do you know what I mean? Like, imagine the ridiculous anime effect of—

SYLVIA: Mhm.

AUSTIN: —suddenly there's a hole in the like— a solid hole in the middle of this sandstorm as a sniper round flies past you and towards the— um, the convoy where it instantly takes the head off of one of the two troop units.

KEITH: When you say troop units, you mean one of those mechs.

AUSTIN: The mechs. One of the two mechs.

KEITH: Yeah.

SYLVIA: Okay. I—

KEITH: Damn! Big gun.

SYLVIA: Does my radio still— I guess I should—

AUSTIN: So you're not resisting either of those? Just want to make sure before we move on.

SYLVIA: No, I'm—

AUSTIN: okay.

SYLVIA: I'm not. I'm fine being put in a desperate position.

AUSTIN: Okay.

SYLVIA: And I think it's very cool and dramatic if a troop unit gets its head shot. Sorry.

AUSTIN: Totally. And that does happen. Yeah, no, no, no. The troop unit's head falls to the ground. People start screaming. Go ahead on your radio.

SYLVIA: I'm— Cause I don't know that that happened. I'm just gonna be like,

Sylvia (as MILLIE): Yeah. So we've got a hostile presence out here. Probably could use some backup over by the sandstorm. Thank you.

KEITH: Who is this to?

SYLVIA: Everyone? I'm assuming it's like a team channel, but if not—

AUSTIN: Yeah—

KEITH: I wasn't sure if maybe it's specifically to me—

Jack (as CLEMENTINE): [crosstalk] Debutante?

KEITH: —or specifically to them. But yeah, it's everyone that makes sense.

SYLVIA: Nah, yeah.

AUSTIN: Mhm.

Jack (as CLEMENTINE): Debutante, we are under attack. A troop unit has been de—

AUSTIN: Has been what?

Jack (as CLEMENTINE): We are under attack. A troop unit has been decapitated.

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

AUSTIN: [laughs] Perfect.

Sylvia (as MILLIE): Oh, cool. I think I have an idea about who might have done that. We'll report on my findings later.

SYLVIA: And while I'm saying this, I'm getting my sniper rifle out.

Jack (as CLEMENTINE): Millie. Millie!

AUSTIN: [amused] Oh, my god. You went from Debutante to Millie the second that she was like—

SYLVIA: Yeah.

AUSTIN: —"Alright gotta go."

Sylvia (as MILLIE): What? What? What is it?

Jack (as CLEMENTINE): You can't just say, "I'll tell you later."

[Keith laughs]

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

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

[everyone laughs hard]

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

KEITH: [laughing] Unbelievable!

SYLVIA: I would like to try and locate this person with the scope of my rifle.

AUSTIN: Alright. This is— The scope of *your* rifle.

SYLVIA: Yeah, I mean—

AUSTIN: Yeah, okay. No, that's fine.

SYLVIA: [crosstalk] Yeah, I do. Cause we— we—

AUSTIN: [crosstalk] You have— This is the thing you're good at.

SYLVIA: We established that Millie was also out of her mech—

AUSTIN: Yes, a hundred percent.

SYLVIA: —when the shot rang out.

AUSTIN: Yes.

SYLVIA: So I'm kind of picturing her using the mech as cover.

AUSTIN: A hundred percent. Give me a— Now that you are— you're— Hm I think this would be a Survey or a Hunt. I think I'd give a greater effect to the Survey. I'd give you great effect with Survey and standard Hunt.

SYLVIA: Okay.

AUSTIN: But desperate— desperate... and then whenever those effects are. I say Hunt, because when you hunt, you track targets and attack over great distances. It's both of those things.

SYLVIA: I am— I am gonna go with Hunt, and I'm actually gonna push myself again on this one.

AUSTIN: Okay. So that is—

SYLVIA: So that'll be three dice.

AUSTIN: —3d6 desperate standard. Yes. Okay.

SYLVIA: Um, that's a three, a three, and a four.

AUSTIN: Fuck. These rolls aren't good. Milie.

SYLVIA: Remember when somebody mentioned how many sixes we were getting?

AUSTIN: [jokingly] Someone. Uh huh. Yeah, I do.

KEITH: No, I don't remember that.

JACK: I think their words were, "It can never stop." [Sylvia laughs hard]

AUSTIN: [groans] God.

SYLVIA: It's fine.

AUSTIN: God. Okay. So... [exhales] you're already at a desperate. A desperate consequence is not a fun thing to do.

SYLVIA: No, it's not.

KEITH: Realistically only one sixth of all dice rolls are gonna be a six, so. [pause]

AUSTIN: Yeah, I guess that's true. I guess that that's accurate. Um, a.... second shot is fired. And this one slams into the— the Stray Dog, which is your— which is your mech, Millie.

SYLVIA: Okay.

AUSTIN: This is a desperate consequence. Fuck. That is at level three damage. {Sylvia exhales} I mean, you know, why would this—

JACK: Jesus.

SYLVIA: I would like to resist that.

AUSTIN: Alright, so it would be the level three damage, “Beheaded.” So just— I'm gonna write that down for now, and we can clear it if you— if you clear it.

KEITH: Yeah.

AUSTIN: You can resist this a couple of different ways, right?

SYLVIA: Okay.

AUSTIN: And I'm gonna— I'm gonna bring up various options you have here. Right now, you've declared heavy cannon, right?

SYLVIA: Mhm.

AUSTIN: And that is the only thing you've declared.

SYLVIA: Yeah.

AUSTIN: The thing you should know you can do is you could declare armor, which is heavy. It's two whole slots. But if you spend armor, you can reduce the damage. Um... I don't remember if it's firm reduce; all the way reduced or if it's a— Also, wait, wait. Don't— don't— You should not have “heavy cannon” marked. You should have “fine heavy cannon” marked because it's a fine heavy cannon.

SYLVIA: Oh, okay. Oh, I didn't see—

AUSTIN: Yeah, yeah. You're over here.

SYLVIA: I'm really—

AUSTIN: No worries. The other thing you can do is resist with quirks.

SYLVIA: Mhm.

AUSTIN: And the way that works is that it is four— it costs four quirks minus whatever your— your vehicle action, like, attribute is. In this case, it would cost you three quirks—

SYLVIA: Okay.

AUSTIN: —because you have 1d in each. I don't know how you resist this with— I don't— er, what are your quirks? Your quirks are...

SYLVIA: A lot of these are like, overwhelming sensors, a hidden firing brace, double jointed limbs, or a telescopic lens. So I think I am actually gonna mark the armor. [Austin hums approvingly throughout]

AUSTIN: Okay, yeah. My only thing— my other thing here is just like, wait, you're... You are outside of the mech, so it's not like you're piloting it and can, like, dodge.

SYLVIA: Yeah.

AUSTIN: I'm going to— and I'm just gonna read this here from the— from the book,

AUSTIN: [reading] “Whether armor completely negates or only reduces harm or damage depends on the tone of your campaign. A campaign with a more adventurous tone will have armor that completely negates even the worst injuries, allowing for pilots who can heroically shrug off repeated attacks. A grittier campaign’s armor may reduce the harm or damage taken by only one level, so getting hit at all will be an ongoing concern for the pilots. If you aren't sure how effective armor should be, reducing harm or damage by two levels is a good middle ground.”

AUSTIN: I think that's what we'll do. So I think it's—

SYLVIA: Okay.

AUSTIN: —it's one damage. It's— er, instead of three, a three level damage, it's a level one damage. And it is... I think your sensors get like a shot. You know, their sensors are made even worse.

SYLVIA: Yeah.

AUSTIN: So it's "Scrambled." One damage. Scramble.

SYLVIA: I do want to point out how scary that is because the cockpit of my mech is in my head.

AUSTIN: True. Yeah. Uh huh.

SYLVIA: Um—

AUSTIN: But you succeeded.

SYLVIA: So—

AUSTIN: You succeeded.

SYLVIA: Yeah.

AUSTIN: Which means you get a clear picture of what is happening here, which is important—

SYLVIA: Okay.

AUSTIN: —because it's going to allow you, fictionally, to make decisions. How do you see them? Is it— is there like, a mode on your— on your, uh.... your scanner, your binocular things that, like, reveals heat signatures? Is it like—

SYLVIA: [hesitant] Yeah.

AUSTIN: What's the visual here? As you see these things?

SYLVIA: I like the idea— I like the idea of it be, um— it having a scope that's got a couple different settings, and, like, one of them specifically being, like, heat signatures.

AUSTIN: Totally.

SYLVIA: Like, it's... and... I think it's very difficult to figure out because of all the sand, but obviously you can describe what they actually look like, but when— I think it's just like, "Oh, that's a solid object."

AUSTIN: Yeah.

SYLVIA: "That is bigger than everything else. Just stay on that until you can get a clear view."

AUSTIN: Yeah. A right. So you see... you see three figures in your scanner. The first is— all three of them, I mean, I think maybe even— even with your scanner, you just— like, it checks the... like a database or something and gives you, like, a general idea of what the mechs you're up against are. You don't necessarily get, like, a model number, but you are able to be like, "Oh, this is a Columnar build. This is, like, made by the Zenith Fund." And all three of them are. They're all prototype mechs.

One of the things about Columnar stuff is like I've always imagined it as being... They're always like... or at the higher end, which these are, they are the most things— they are the most Gundam looking things, or, like, they're Gundam meets Eva. Which is to say they're, like, really marketable. You could imagine yourself buying toys, and also, at the heart of each might beat a living thing. You know, there's some twist to it that is always like, "Oh, they're exploiting some sort of technology to do this that is either appropriative or— or, you know, explicitly cruel, or, you know, they've crossed some sort of line to get the effect that they're doing. And these are three Columnar mechs, which again, is a surprise since you expected Orion to show up. Though maybe that surprise will change quickly.

The first one that you notice is just kind of like a simple two— you know, bipedal mech that just has, like, a rifle. That's not a— this is not the sniper. This one's, like, running. This is like an infantry mech, right? It's just like— it's— it's a mech that runs, and it's running kind of behind the sandstorm, so it's the furthest away. But as it's running, you can see that your— It's— it's like flickering on your scanners in such a way that you're having a hard time understanding if it's one mech or if it's two mechs or if it's four mechs. You're not sure what the deal is. You don't know if that's a scanner thing yet or what, but you don't have direct eyes on. And then also cause it hasn't completely done everything that it— that it does quite yet. This is a four step clock that's on the table called "The Conjurer." And I'll add that in a second.

The second one that you see is one that you *only* see when the— when you hear a fire— a shot rings out. And it, like, appears when the shot rings out, and then it disappears. And then it appears when the shot rings out, and then it disappears. You're up against another sniper. This is the Thaumaturge. And that seems to be some sort of mech that can disappear itself. That can kind of hide itself from sight.

And the third one is, in fact, not on the ground at all. It is above the sandstorm, hidden by the sandstorm, in the sandstorm. And that is the Tempestarii. And this is like a jet that seems to be making the sandstorm happen. And it is, again, kind of protected by the sandstorm a little bit. And you can tell from your scans that it is definitely the sort of thing that could transform into a different form if— if it needed to.

SYLVIA: Okay.

AUSTIN: But those are— those are the things you got going on here.

SYLVIA: Okay. So I think I'm going to relay that to everybody else.

AUSTIN: Mhm.

SYLVIA: Be like,

Sylvia (as MILLIE): There's at least three presences here. But I can't, like, read the numbers on something that's going on with that— the Conjurer.

SYLVIA: Is that what it's called?

AUSTIN: The Conjurer. yeah. [crosstalk] Yeah. And I'll get these—

SYLVIA: [crosstalk] The one that's related to— Yeah.

AUSTIN: I'll get these on track, or on screen in a second.

SYLVIA: I think the main thing I'm gonna point out is that like... We can like...

Sylvia (as MILLIE): They are each doing different things, and if we stop one of them, the others will hopefully be less effective. But I need backup right now or else I'm not getting out of here alive.

KEITH: Okay I can help. I have a thing.

AUSTIN: What do you do?

KEITH: So I actually got this idea from reading through the text on the handy— on the handy sheets here.

AUSTIN: Hell yeah.

KEITH: You know, when we were doing character creation because I was trying to decide between Bombard and Destroy.

AUSTIN: Yes.

KEITH: And Bombard at the end there, it says, [reading] "You could use Saturation Bombardment, but Destroy might be better."

AUSTIN: Yes.

KEITH: And so I was like, “Ooo, Saturation Bombardment. That sounds great.” And then put two points into Destroy. [Austin laughs] And so I think I can— I think I can saturate..edly Bombard this area.

AUSTIN: Yeah, so you were just— you were just... Wait, where is this— where is this at here? Let's see here. Yeah, totally. Destroy would be the sort of thing where you are just like, carpet bombing... this whole— the whole of the, like, sandstorm? Is what it sounds like?

KEITH: That's where they— They're in the sandstorm, right?

AUSTIN: They're in the sand— Well, yeah. Well, they're—

KEITH: Yeah.

AUSTIN: Yeah, totally. A hundred percent.

KEITH: Yeah.

AUSTIN: Yeah.

KEITH: And I'm— And with the— you know, I'm gonna try to hit them, and I have a little bit of information, but I'm also going to try to be like, well even if I don't hit them, they're going to be not, you know, not want to be where the bombs are.

AUSTIN: Totally. For the record, for people listening, there are now a billion clocks on screen. [Keith laughs] There is the “Pilgrimage” clock, which is at three of eight. You need that to get to eight to succeed. You have a clock that's at one, one of six; that's “Discovered.” That's you being discovered as it being agents of Stel Kesh. Then there is the “Thaumaturge,” which you don't know where the Thaumaturge is. And so there is both the “Thaumaturge” clock, a four step clock and then the “Locate Thaumaturge” clock. It's also a four step clock. Then there's a “Conjurer” clock that's a four step clock.

KEITH: Yeah. Yeah.

AUSTIN: That's not that many. You could take out the Conjurer pretty quickly, but there is also— Conjurer is doing something.

JACK: [laughs] This one's bad.

AUSTIN: That's a four step clock. That's a clock that will go up... That's a clock that will go up under other circumstances. And finally, there is a “Tempestarii,” which is an eight stop clock. And that is the plane—

KEITH: Is that— Tempestarii is that— that's the—? Okay. Yeah.

AUSTIN: That's the plane that seems to be causing the sandstorm itself.

KEITH: Yeah.

AUSTIN: You're gonna do Destroy. You're gonna do carpet bombing. What's this look like? Cause you're in your mech. Your mech has, like, some sort of like mortar type thing, right?

KEITH: Yeah. And—

AUSTIN: Or like artil— like a— I forget. We figured out the exact thing. But like a howitzer.

KEITH: It's a... howitzer. Yes. It's a howitzer.

AUSTIN: Yes. Yes.

KEITH: Which is sort— it's like in between a mortar and a cannon, in terms of its arc.

AUSTIN: Sure. Right.

KEITH: So— and so I assume that it's sort of doing two— I should click off something on my vehicle gear, right?

AUSTIN: Uh, yeah. You— you will need to do that. Let's see here. You have a....[thinking noises] That would be a heavy cannon, for sure.

KEITH: Heavy cannon? Yeah. Okay. So—

AUSTIN: Definitely. The thing you're describe— to do Destroy— to do a carpet bombing— [lightly laughs]

KEITH: Yeah.

AUSTIN: —to do Saturation Bombing—

KEITH: So I think what this is doing— this is like— this is a... it's like— it is a feed of bombs that sort of like, almost like a what if a— what if a, like, a repeater— a repeater rifle was a heavy cannon.

AUSTIN: Mhm.

KEITH: But also these bombs are like— like grape shotting.

AUSTIN: Sure.

KEITH: In like, they're turning into multiple bombs.

AUSTIN: Right.

KEITH: Like, breaking apart. So it's one giant cannon that's shooting multiple things at once repeatedly in order to cover a wide area.

AUSTIN: Okay.

KEITH: So.

AUSTIN: Do we think this is a heavy cannon, or do we think this is a rack of missiles or rockets?

KEITH: Um, we could call it that. Yeah, we could call it a rack of missiles or rockets.

AUSTIN: Because I feel like the thing with heavy cannon is specifically, it's designed for penetrating heavy armor that has a low rate of fire. That to me sounds like Millie's—

KEITH: Yeah, okay. That works for me.

AUSTIN: —like, uh, Millie's anti-armor sniper rifle.

KEITH: Yeah.

AUSTIN: Whereas a rack of missiles or rockets, which is only one—

KEITH: Great.

AUSTIN: —is that— is only one load. Feels more like what you're doing here.

KEITH: Yeah.

AUSTIN: Which is like a bombardment, you know?

KEITH: Right. Yeah.

AUSTIN: You're blasting a lot of stuff. Okay. So give me—

KEITH: It could— It could also be Spotlight or Flare Mortar and just ignore the mortar. It's like— I don't know. This is a weird—

AUSTIN: [crosstalk] Nah, go with—

KEITH: [crosstalk] I guess it doesn't exactly have—

AUSTIN: That's just about illumination basically. But yeah. Let's go ahead and do—

KEITH: Yeah.

AUSTIN: Let's go ahead and do rack of missiles or rockets.

KEITH: Okay. Yeah.

AUSTIN: Rockets are very similar in nature. They're unguided explosives. So.

KEITH: So yeah, you know, hoping to hit some— something.

AUSTIN: [crosstalk] Yeah. Give me a Destroy.

KEITH: [crosstalk] Or maybe a Disrupt? I don't know.

AUSTIN: This is— this is— this is— You are still risky. Risky standard.

KEITH: That's fine. I can risk.

AUSTIN: Yeah. Not quite a desperate yet.

KEITH: No. [pause] Although... Am I... am I outnumbered or drastically overmatched by a foe?

AUSTIN: Not yet. That will happen—

KEITH: Not yet? [crosstalk] I'm not outnumbered yet cause I don't know where I am?

AUSTIN: [crosstalk] Only because you haven't engaged yet. Yeah, exactly.

KEITH: Right. Okay.

AUSTIN: We have set up that you are in one of your hidden routes, right?

KEITH: [crosstalk] Right. It would— it would— I mean—

AUSTIN: [crosstalk] I will say—

KEITH: I wouldn't even do it right now anyway. But eventually, I will be outnumbered or drastically overmatched.

AUSTIN: Yeah, I will say if you want to— if you want to, you can always offer yourself to move into a desperate position to get a bonus here. You could say, “I'm gonna move into a desperate position so they'll get a greater effect.” I'm willing to make this desperate great.

KEITH: Um...

AUSTIN: Which would literally be you being like, “I'm exposing myself in this— to retribution.”

KEITH: Roll a desperate act— Yeah, let's do it.

AUSTIN: And I know that because you get a bonus. You have Daredevil, which gives you a bonus to desperate actions. That's— that's a particularly attractive... offer.

KEITH: Yeah. Yeah. I'll— I'm gonna do this. Yeah.

AUSTIN: Okay.

KEITH: So I now have 3d6?

AUSTIN: Correct. Yes.

KEITH: Okay.

AUSTIN: So 3d6 for... and that's before— you're not even pushing yourself. I'm guessing?

KEITH: No, I'm not.

AUSTIN: And Millie, are you not helping?

SYLVIA: Um...

KEITH: [crosstalk] You could be sighting. You could be calling off sights. Yeah.

SYLVIA: [crosstalk] Yeah, I could— Yeah, I was thinking I could be a spotter here. Yeah.

AUSTIN: Okay. Just take a— [crosstalk] take a stress and give...

SYLVIA: [crosstalk, quiet] So, that's one stress for me, right?

AUSTIN: Leap, do you want +1 die? Do you want better effect? Do you— I guess you can't do better effect cause you're already at—

KEITH: Can't do better effect. Yeah.

AUSTIN: You're at desperate great. Do you want better— better positioning or an extra die then?

KEITH: Better position would bring me away from—

AUSTIN: From desperate. Put you back at great.

KEITH: Desperate, so no.

AUSTIN: Yeah, that would— You need to be in desperate to get that bonus. Yes.

KEITH: So, it's— so my choices are one more die...

AUSTIN: Just one more die. Yeah.

KEITH: Okay. I thought maybe there was a fourth one.

AUSTIN: No.

KEITH: Okay, so 4d6. That works for me.

AUSTIN: Yeah, go for it.

KEITH: Six!

AUSTIN: Oh my god!

SYLVIA: Oh my god!

ART: Oh my god!

KEITH: [loudly] I said— I told you the sixes wouldn't end! Come on. That's my third six today.
[Austin laughs in the background]

SYLVIA: Yeah, okay. What are the three numbers you rolled before that, Keith?

KEITH: One, one, one?

SYLVIA: Okay.

KEITH: But it doesn't matter cause I got the six. It's right there. I can see it.

AUSTIN: Millie— Mille, good job supporting. Good job— good job helping your bud.

SYLVIA: Yeah.

KEITH: Thank you.

AUSTIN: Cause that's that six.

KEITH: Yeah.

AUSTIN: That's that fourth number.

KEITH: Yeah. Those first three are if— if no one was telling me where they were exactly. [Austin laughs]

AUSTIN: If Leap was just like—

KEITH: It was like, "Yeah. Maybe someone should tell me where they are." Exactly. [Sylvia laughs]

AUSTIN: [jokingly as Leap] "East, right?"

KEITH: East, yeah.

AUSTIN: I guess there's a lot of Easts. "It's all east over there. I'll just shoot there." Awesome. Yeah. So that's a— that's a great— that's a great hit. So I'm gonna incre— I think... [sighs] I will let you— I'll let you apply this actually on a— on a great.

KEITH: Okay.

AUSTIN: What do you— I think— So it's pretty clear that Tempestari⁷ is the one doing the... It's actually Tempestarii— Tempestarii is doing the... the big desert sandstorm.

KEITH: Right.

AUSTIN: But you tell me where you're— where you want to put these blasts. You get three ticks, basically.

⁷ Austin pronounces the end of this like [ary] instead of [ary-eye] as it should be.

KEITH: I get three ticks.

AUSTIN: Yeah, on a great success.

KEITH: Okay. Um...

AUSTIN: And I want to be clear, this is almost me giving you, Keith, the option to put this somewhere more than— more than it is Leap—

KEITH: Yeah.

AUSTIN: —dialing in an attack. Do you know what I mean?

KEITH: So—

AUSTIN: It's almost like you— I'm giving you the camera here—

KEITH: Yeah.

AUSTIN: —to show what gets hit.

KEITH: And... and because it's me—

AUSTIN: Uh huh.

KEITH: —I know Conjurer is doing something.

AUSTIN: Yeah.

KEITH: And if Conjurer is doing something, that's probably bad.

AUSTIN: Probably. In fact, I'm gonna tick this just because time is moving. I'm ticking "Conjurer." Every time someone— every time Conjurer—

KEITH: Even if they just got hit with three bombs?

AUSTIN: Conjurer is still doing something. Uh huh. Yeah.

KEITH: Okay.

AUSTIN: This is just a countdown basically for every action that we take. So yeah— so yeah, I— But I will also advance— it sounds like what you're saying is let's advance Conjurer by three.

KEITH: All three. Yeah.

AUSTIN: Yeah, totally. Then yeah, like, the bombs come spiraling down through the sandstorm and manage to land where Conjurer is at the back. And I think we get— we get the sort of like... cross communications, Starfox-style, you overhear the enemy comms, and I think this is maybe the first time you get a glimpse at who maybe you're up against here, as... this person whose name is Swansea— er sorry now. Swansea's not in this. This is— Is this A-tek? Let me see. [thinking noises] This is... One second.

KEITH: It's Mara, Can, Razar and uh...

AUSTIN: [laughs] And still Samwise, actually. It's just still Samwise, the last one.

KEITH: Samwise, yeah.

AUSTIN: Alright, so Tempestarii is that person and... Okay. Yeah. No, that's— that's right. Yeah. This is— this is Swanse. Like the— like the Welsh town. And they are a Columnar, and they say like,

Austin (as SWANSEA): Callister, I'm under heavy fire!

AUSTIN: And you now know, Keith, that you are up against House Callister—

KEITH: Uh huh.

AUSTIN: —which is the Stel Orion house of former Columnar pirates who—

KEITH: Callister Drive?

AUSTIN: Callister Drive. Yeah. Callister Drive Callister, which is a Tier 2.

KEITH: Who is a contact of mine.

AUSTIN: Who is a contact of yours. Exactly. And the—

JACK: Hm.

AUSTIN: The Conjurer kind of falls back for a second and like tries to get— get to cover of their own. The person piloting this again is called Swansea. So Swansea directs their Conjurer that direction.

KEITH: I don't like— I don't like Callister.

AUSTIN: Callister as a sell out. So, yeah.

KEITH: Yeah.

AUSTIN: Understandably. What's going on with you, Clem and Sovereign Immunity, as shots rang out in the distance and the sand gets closer ever still?

ART: Great question. I have no idea. [pause] I don't know how to help.

AUSTIN: A dilemma.

JACK: Um... how close am I to the troop unit that has been targeted?

AUSTIN: I think you were really up there, weren't you?

JACK: Oh, so this is happening like— This is like, um—

AUSTIN: It was like—

JACK: The scenes are, like, back to back to back.

AUSTIN: I think there had been some time, but I don't know that you would have repos— I mean, it's up to you. Would you have spent that time repositioning inside of this long convoy?

JACK: No, I don't— I don't think so.

AUSTIN: Then yeah. Then we'll be able to have you still be up there, basically.

JACK: Hm. Okay. What does Avar do when the shot rings out?

AUSTIN: Uh, Avar— Avar, as soon as that first— that troop unit's head falls off— and thankfully the troop unit's cockpits are not in their heads— Avar rushes to Gur Sevraq and grabs him and begins to escort him backwards away from the sandstorm. I think we get that great moment of Gur Sevraq making eye contact with the both of you, as... as he and Avar move backwards. Not move backwards, but run, you know, with the rest of the group now going the other direction.

ART: Better have been an eye contact of "thank you." We were— we were right.

AUSTIN: I don't know. Do you— How do you read expressions on this spider robot head? I think it's like, it's—

ART: I mean, I assume that in the future, [crosstalk] people know how to read expressions on spider robot heads.

AUSTIN: [crosstalk] Fair. Yeah. You know what? You're right. It's not, "thank you," but it is... tt's a sort of like— I guess, Sovereign, you know this sort of religious— the religiosity in this look is the sort that you've given people as if to communicate like, "You were in the right place." [pause] You know?

ART: Hm.

AUSTIN: It's a— it's a leveraging of authority of a particular type of authority.

JACK: Yeah. Okay. What here is going to be... most—

AUSTIN: I swear to God I thought you were gonna say "evil." I swear to God. [Keith and Austin laugh]

JACK: No. Austin, one— [laughs] [crosstalk] Austin, I have a new move.

KEITH: [crosstalk] What did you actually ask?

AUSTIN: I got bad news for you, *Clem*. [everyone laughs] Uh, anyway...

JACK: What here is going to be the most useful? This is partly rhetorically.

AUSTIN: Yeah.

JACK: Like, our goal is... ensure that...

AUSTIN: Your main goal is ensure that this pilgrimage can complete, right?

JACK: Yeah, but if Gur Sevraq's life is threatened—

AUSTIN: Yeah.

JACK: —we are—

AUSTIN: To extract. To extract them.

JACK: Yeah, Okay. I guess I point at Gur Sevraq and Sovereign and say,

Jack (as CLEMENTINE): You with him.

JACK: To just be like, on them.

AUSTIN: Yeah, yeah, yeah.

JACK: And I am going to... I think draw a gun.

AUSTIN: [laughs] Perfect.

JACK: And—

AUSTIN: You do have a tiny gun. That's a thing in your— in your character sheet.

KEITH: Oh, draw like take out.

JACK: [amused] Yes. Yes. I could also mark—

AUSTIN: [amused] Draw in the air with your finger, a gun.

KEITH: Or like in the sand.

AUSTIN: Yeah.

KEITH: Like, "Find one of these." [Keith, Art, and Austin laugh]

AUSTIN: [joking] "Quick."

JACK: I'm trying to think like— I'm trying to think of like... in what way do I make myself useful? Which is an important question for Clem to ask herself constantly.

AUSTIN: All the time. Yeah.

JACK: I think I'm going to follow the guard— the guards—

AUSTIN: Yeah.

JACK: —that have stayed behind.

AUSTIN: Yes. No, I think—

JACK: Presumably. I think Avar and Sevraq are heading back down the caravan.

AUSTIN: Exactly.

JACK: And Sovereign is following them. And—

AUSTIN: And then there is, like, a line being drawn up, basically. Like a defense— defensive perimeter.

JACK: [crosstalk] Yeah, yeah, yeah, I think—

AUSTIN: You know, around some rocks and stuff.

JACK: Yeah. I was thinking of, like, spreading out to prepare for an attack.

AUSTIN: That's exactly what's happening. And then I think you can hear the troops from behind now moving up towards the front to replace the fallen troop. And I think the troop without the head is also still operational. You just— you look up and see that the troop has like— the pilot has opened the cockpit and is just looking out—

JACK: Oh, that's amazing. Yeah.

AUSTIN: —with, you know, the open cockpit. It's holding this big— I guess it's not holding a rifle cause that's not how the troop works. The troop just has the guns built into its arms. And so it's, like, aiming those and is actually just, like, firing pot shots at this point in that direction.

JACK: Just like a person wearing a helmet, and...

AUSTIN: Yes. And I think around then, you hear the like— you hear Leap begin his bombardment of— of this thing. And you get people yelling like,

Austin (as UNNAME GUARD): Third contact! Third contact!

AUSTIN: Or not. third, second contact. Third party, you know?

JACK: Yeah. Um... okay. I'm going to try and... I'm going to try and command. I'm going to say— I'm going to say,

Jack (as CLEMENTINE): Troop units! There are friendlies in the sandstorm.

JACK: I don't know what's the easiest way to communicate, "We've got people out there," or "There are people out there."

AUSTIN: That sounds right. You've—

JACK: Yeah.

AUSTIN: You communicated that well enough. That's a comm—

JACK: I just want to make sure it's not like a monkey's paw situation where—

AUSTIN: [crosstalk] No, I got you. I'm not gonna make you roll for that quite yet.

JACK: [crosstalk] —they suddenly start thinking we're shooting at them.

AUSTIN: But like, are you trying to convince them not to shoot?

JACK: I'm trying to convince them to be... I'm trying to— I'm basically trying to say that bombardment that we heard—

AUSTIN: Yeah.

JACK: —was—

AUSTIN: Was us.

JACK: —was force— was our forces working in the sandstorm. Not “Don't shoot,” but maybe, “Be more careful.”

AUSTIN: Okay. I think—

KEITH: Do you— You can get the information on what kind of mechs these are at this point, right?

SYLVIA: [crosstalk] Yeah. I was actually gonna—

KEITH: [crosstalk] You have that they're Columnar mechs.

AUSTIN: [crosstalk] Yeah, yeah, yeah. You can— you can call them off.

KEITH: Yeah.

AUSTIN: You can call them out and explain it to them. Yeah.

JACK: Yeah, absolutely, I think— I think Clem just runs down the list. Like,

Jack (as CLEMENTINE): We have three Columnar built mechs, one rapidly moving strange unit, one sniper who moves invisibly, and one, uh, unit that is creating the sandstorm high above. There are two friendly units in the sandstorm.

AUSTIN: Ryrira— who is the... dark-skinned, or brown-skinned with kind of curly, you know, puffed-out blond hair, who is also Avar's partner— she is like,

Austin (as RYRIRA): Who the hell are you? And how do you know these things?

KEITH: [joking] "I'm a meteorologist." [Keith, Jack, and Austin laugh]

AUSTIN: [amused] "A hobbyist meteorologist." [Keith continues laughing]

Jack (as CLEMENTINE): My name is Midwinter, I'm secondary security.

Austin (as RYRIRA): Secondary— Alright, wel... Fine. Everyone fan out. Don't cluster. Makes you easier to hit. Um.. secondary security, how many people you got?

Jack (as CLEMENTINE): Uh, one additional with me. Two out in the sandstorm.

Austin (as RYRIRA): Two out in the sandstorm. Are you with the Song?

Jack (as CLEMENTINE): [pause] Nope. No. I assume that—

AUSTIN: Do you even know the Song is here?

JACK: [laughing] No, I don't think so. I think— I think... I think... Yeah, no, I don't think Clem has any idea that the Song is here.

AUSTIN: Perfect. Perfect. Good. Sovereign Immunity, you know the Song is here because very quickly you were joined by the security of the Song, who just kind of like... you know, how your whole plan was to embed yourselves in this group very casually, and that they didn't do that at the top? They've done it now... Very quickly, all around Gur Sevraq and you, the Song's security falls into place and, like, match's step with Gur Sevraq's own security— with Avar and the rest— in such a way that it's like, "Oh, they're doing— they're doing, like, social camouflage without... which is instantly— it's as if the loudest people in the room became the quietest people in the room."

JACK: Oh, so grim.

AUSTIN: And all of them, including the Song have like— are now all running together with Gur Sevraq towards the rear of the convoy, which I guess is sort of the front of the convoy since now everyone's running in that direction. [amused] But you get what I'm saying. So that's a thing that's happening. Avar, I think, gives you a look as y'all are kind of hustling and is like,

Austin (as AVAR): That cough cleared up, huh?

Art (as SOVEREIGN IMMUNITY): [coughs] Ahem.

[Keith, Jack, and Austin laugh]

Art (as SOVEREIGN IMMUNITY): [coughs again after a pause] It comes and goes.

AUSTIN: Perfect. Good. Alright. The storm is getting closer and closer. What are you— This is kind of an open play at this point. If someone has other things they want to start doing, let me know. In fact, like, I think the bit— the first bit of that's— I think actually what we get is this amazing moment of the sandstorm hits the canyon you're— you're kind of in— or, like, the low— Canyon suggests a tightness that is not there. It's like a wide valley, is actually— not— it's not a wide valley, cause a valley can be very wide. But it's like in between a very tight canyon and a very wide valley. [amused] Do you know what I mean?

SYLVIA: Yeah.

AUSTIN: It's wide enough that you could fit a convoy in it comfortably. It's not, like, tight. It's not like, "Oh, I can't move my shoulders." But you also couldn't play a game of football in it, side to side. You know? Or maybe you could play exactly one game of football in it going across the valley, and that is it. Like, a hundred yards across. And...

KEITH: I don't get out of bed for less than two footballs in a row.

[laughs] Exactly. The... the sandstorm hits, and it's like— it's all of this whirling sand. and then it just kind of goes quiet for us. It's like, [makes wind sounds which stop]. And everything is quiet. And then you hear another shot come through, and the sniper is off in the distance continuing to try to pick— I think it, like— it hits the other troop in the shoulder, at this point. Someone do something.

KEITH: I have a question about sand.

AUSTIN: Yeah.

KEITH: How does the sand affect how the mechs are moving?

AUSTIN: It's not— it's not good. This is all bad.

KEITH: Okay. I have good news that I hope will give me great effect.

AUSTIN: Okay.

KEITH: One of my quirks is "Cartilage, tissue, synovial fluid."

AUSTIN: Mm, mhm.

KEITH: It's basic— it's basically my quirk that is— this is a— this was made by an equiaxed person.

AUSTIN: Yeah, yeah, yeah. Mhm.

KEITH: And... [crosstalk] so I think—

AUSTIN: [crosstalk] Or this is literally the thing the Columnar did with the equiax technology, right? Is like, they're— a person can't— people aren't allowed to do this anymore, but our war machines totally can.

KEITH: Right.

AUSTIN: Or, I guess in this case, it's an ambulance, which is not a war machine. But you know...

KEITH: Right. Yeah. So it's— it's better at moving through sand. It's—

AUSTIN: Totally.

KEITH: It's like a person—

AUSTIN: Totally.

KEITH: It's almost like a person's legs because it has, like, a liquid in the joints that keep sand from getting in there, and there's, like, cartilage and tissue that help it move... like, you know, flex like a machine can't.

AUSTIN: Yeah. This— you will get it, but you have to spend that quirk to do it.

KEITH: Okay.

AUSTIN: That is like you push your— When you're in a vehicle, you push yourself with— not with stress, but with— but with quirks.

KEITH: Um, so can— can I pitch a— maybe a group action for me and Millie?

AUSTIN: Yeah.

KEITH: Is that how— Can you do a group thing with only two people?

AUSTIN: Yeah, yeah. You totally can.

KEITH: So I want to—

AUSTIN: [crosstalk] Uh, you— you may want to talk to Clem about it, cause Clem is actually very good at group actions. But go ahead.

KEITH: Okay. Well, so my plan was to hold one of these mechs in place with a maneuver and have Millie snipe it.

AUSTIN: So, like, do—

KEITH: Or whatever.

AUSTIN: That to me— that to me is not a group action; that is a setup and a follow up. [clears throat] For sure.

KEITH: Okay, a set up follow up? Is that—?

AUSTIN: Yeah, yeah, yeah.

KEITH: Okay.

AUSTIN: Or you could just assist Millie. But it sounds like, [reading] “When you make a set up action, you’re weakening an obstacle—”

KEITH: [crosstalk] Well, I’m far away, so I figured that the maneuver would be part of it.

AUSTIN: Yeah, yeah, yeah. Well, that would— that’s what makes it a set up, right? [reading] “When you make a set up action, you’re weakening an obstacle or empowering an ally. With a success, any squadmates that follow through on your action have improved position or increased effect. You choose the benefit based on the nature of your play.” And that’s exactly what that sounds like to me. It would be, you do that to give Millie greater effect or a better position. Cause Millie is in a desperate position still. You both are, but— but you— Millie, does not get the good bonuses you get from being in a [laughs] desperate position.

KEITH: Right. Yes. So— so I’m going— I’m using Maneuver.

AUSTIN: Yes.

KEITH: I’m using Daredevil.

AUSTIN: Yep.

KEITH: I'm pushing myself with my quirk.

AUSTIN: Yep. So that is... And your manoeuver starts at one, right?

KEITH: Um... yes.

AUSTIN: And then, so that is that. Then you're— you get the plus one from Daredevil, so that's 2d6. And then you're burning a quirk. So that's 3d6 desperate... It's a set up, so standard. But it's— it's still a desperate roll.

KEITH: Got it. So I'm at—

AUSTIN: [crosstalk] So what—

KEITH: [crosstalk] —I'm at 3d6 total.

AUSTIN: What is the specific thing you're doing visually? I just want to make sure I get this on my— in my head.

KEITH: Um—

AUSTIN: Is you're, like, maneuvering to— you're, like, being a distraction? Or you're drawing them out? Or you're—

KEITH: I am. I am running in the sand in a way that the—

AUSTIN: Right.

KEITH: —that the other mechs can't do.

AUSTIN: Can't keep up with and can't—

KEITH: Right. Like even if—

AUSTIN: Right.

KEITH: —even if they're fast in the sand still, I'm faster because I have— I have this ability to... um— [crosstalk] run ability build.

AUSTIN: [crosstalk] Are you specifically targeting... You're just kind of getting their atten— you're doing this in a way that kind of opens them all up, or is it the, specifically, Conjurer? Is the ground based ones versus the flight one?

KEITH: Yes, I'm— I'm focusing on Conjurer.

AUSTIN: Okay, cool. Give me— give me your roll then.

KEITH: Unless— and we can edit this out— unless the something the Conjurer is doing is awesome, and I shouldn't stop it.

AUSTIN: Nah, it's fine.

KEITH: Okay.

AUSTIN: I'll show you what it does even if you fail.

KEITH: Okay. So yeah. That's what I'm doing.

AUSTIN: That doesn't mean— that doesn't mean the bad thing will happen; I'll just show you— I'll tell you what you've stopped, you know?

KEITH: Alright. So I'm at three... [typing]

AUSTIN: Yep.

KEITH: —3d6.

AUSTIN: Daredevil. Yep. Yep. Yep. 3d6.

KEITH: Six!

AUSTIN: That's a six. Look at that.

KEITH: [whispers] [???

AUSTIN: So that means you increase— [Sylvia laughs] if you want to, you can increase Millie's uh... positioning or effect.

KEITH: I'm going to pos— positioning.

AUSTIN: Okay. So—

KEITH: Yeah.

SYLVIA: Yeah, thank you.

AUSTIN: So Millie comes out of desperate and into risky, as the Conjuror's attention shifts to you. You get, like, a bunch of shots come your way, Leap, but they miss because you're just, like, so maneuverable in the sandstorm in a way that no one else is. And again, like, this doesn't make any sense physically, but we're in— it is high tide, the perennial waves are fucking with things, and we're also in the part of the Prophet's Path where sound is bad— Or sorry, where things are— where they are anomalies and things are weird, so sound is bad. It's, like, silent in the middle of the sandstorm. Like, as you move in, it's silent. You still have ra— you still have radio, like, close— close range with Millie. I think once you're in the sandstorm, actually, you lose connection with everyone outside of it. But the two of you are in it, and can still hear each other. And so it's just like— it's like— it's like a radio in space, right?

KEITH: Yeah.

AUSTIN: Like, it's dead silent, but it's like, [makes a radio sound] “Alright, I'm setting them up,” you know? Like that style of thing.

KEITH: So basically, you're saying we're referencing The Mummy trailer again.

AUSTIN: [amused] Right. Yes. We were once again— Pan, pan, pan. [Keith laughs]

SYLVIA: [groaning] God.

AUSTIN: [laughing] Uh huh. Um... so go ahead, Millie. It sounds like you're gonna take a shot.

SYLVIA: Yeah. So I'm thinking at this point, I probably have the better luck at getting the Conjuror now, right?

AUSTIN: Oh, definitely. This is— this is—

SYLVIA: Yeah.

AUSTIN: You've given... you're at um... again risky standard at this point, for sure.

SYLVIA: Okay. So I am... I'm in my mech for this, I think.

AUSTIN: Yep.

SYLVIA: And so I'm going to just try and take the Conjuror out um—

AUSTIN: Take the shot.

SYLVIA: —with my heavy cannon.

AUSTIN: Yeah, this is— that's a— that's probably a Bombard because—

SYLVIA: Mhm.

AUSTIN: —Bombard is for what you do outside of human sight, which I think this is beyond human sight, for sure.

SYLVIA: Yeah. And I'm going to spend my Telescopic Lens to push myself.

AUSTIN: There you go. Push yourself. 3d6.

SYLVIA: So that's 3d6.

AUSTIN: Yep, you got it.

SYLVIA: Okay. And if—so this is— I mean, it's one clock here, but I've got a fine heavy cannon; does that affect things?

AUSTIN: That would increase your effect. So you could be risky great.

SYLVIA: Okay. Risky great. Alright, awesome. Three total.

AUSTIN: Yep, 3d6. Oh my—

SYLVIA: That's a one, a two, and a one. Um... "The sixes just don't stop," apparently. [Austin groans in amusement] But my roll didn't even add up to that. So...

AUSTIN: [groaning] Oh, buddy.

KEITH: I feel like I'm pulling my weight.

AUSTIN: [laughs] Whoo! Uh, it's—

SYLVIA: I went and did something. {Keith cackles} Everyone else was just looking at the sandstorm like, "Oh, that's cool. I wonder what that thing's deal is?"

AUSTIN: Oh my fucjking god. Alright. So... I've said it before, you know, I'm gonna say it again...

SYLVIA: Two things?

AUSTIN: Two things happen at once. The first is that I'm ticking the Conjurer clock one more. Conjurer released— like, you pull this — you should take this shot, and you just miss. Like, the sand is getting in the way, even though you had this opportunity. Like, you are fire— you're

trying to fire a sniper rifle in the sand, and I think part of it was maybe you thought that the sand... you're like, "This isn't a real sandstorm so I don't have to account for wind."

SYLVIA: Mhm.

AUSTIN: But for whatever reason, this is— Your shot still went wide. It didn't go wide in the direction you expected. And so Conjurer is going to advance one here. So that's one of the things. And again, you could resist this, but that would cost you some quirks. The second thing is that the...um, I'm gonna start a clock. [breathes a laugh] I know. You're thinking, "How?"

SYLVIA: Yeah.

AUSTIN: "How can I... Like, why would I do this?"

SYLVIA: Austin, I'm never thinking that with you.

AUSTIN: Thank you. I appre—

SYLVIA: I'm always like, "Oh, that makes sense."

AUSTIN: I appreciate it.

SYLVIA: When it comes to clocks.

AUSTIN: Great.

KEITH: Two clocks happen at once.

AUSTIN: How— how do I even want to do this? This is such a messy thing. Um...

SYLVIA: Oh good.

AUSTIN: I wish a clock could go three directions. [Keith laughs] Hm.

ART: What's the third like—?

KEITH: Can— can it not?

ART: Like out?

AUSTIN: Yeah... uh, maybe. Alright.

JACK: Mm.

SYLVIA: Oh, wow.

AUSTIN: I'm starting...

ART: Thaumaturge, Thaumaturge, Thaumaturge .

AUSTIN: I'm starting—

KEITH: I made the joke— You'll remember I made the joke, “Two clocks happen at once,” but actually what happened was three clocks happened at once.

AUSTIN: [laughs] Uh huh.

JACK: [amused] So, for people at home. We now have one, two, three, four, five, six—

AUSTIN: This— don't read—

JACK: —seven, eight, nine— [laughs]

AUSTIN: [laughs] Yeah.

JACK: —ten clocks. Uh, one, two, three, four, five of them feature the word, “Thaumaturge.”

AUSTIN: Okay, well I'm changing those.

ART: Well, that's just copies, right?

AUSTIN: That's just copies. Yes.

KEITH: Oh, okay. [laughs]

AUSTIN: Uh huh. Uh huh.

KEITH: Okay.

ART: I thought that, too, and then I figured out that Austin clearly just copied this clock.

AUSTIN: That is exactly— That's how I do all my clocks.

SYLVIA: Yeah.

ART: You have a clock— a clock file.

AUSTIN: I got a clock file here.

KEITH: Which is why when there's one wonky clock— I guess these are— these are images that you've uploaded or—

AUSTIN: These are images from... that were provided by Austin Ramsay. And I want to say— I want to say that they were originally made by... I'm gonna just check it real quick, under player resources. Um... Damn. You know what? I don't— I don't— Oh! So here— here we go. Oh! Austin Ramsay made those. They're good. That's fine.

JACK: There are one hundred percent more clocks on the screen than there are labeled cities on Partizan.

AUSTIN: That's true.

KEITH: [laughing] My— my—

ART: Hey, what does Gur mean?

AUSTIN: Gur Sevraq. Gur is Gur's first name.

ART: Oh.

AUSTIN: So I have three clocks. I'm starting a race.

JACK: Oh no.

AUSTIN: It was gonna be a tug-of-war, but a race is more fun.

KEITH: Can we get an SI-Gur clock?

AUSTIN: That's R.E. Rapid Evening. That's the left one.

KEITH: Oh, okay.

AUSTIN: That's y'all.

ART: Oh, I thought that was Resident Evil. I thought you were gonna introduce zombies.

JACK: Resident Evil Gur.

AUSTIN: ReSI⁸. I'll do ReSI as if it's— [laughs] Uh, I'll do ReSI, which stands for Resident Evil if you're in the UK or Resident Evil Sovereign Immunity if you're on Partizan. [Austin and Keith laugh]

KEITH: Wait. But what— Wouldn't Sovereign Immunity want a separate ResE-Gur?

AUSTIN: Well, no. Because Sovereign Immunity is just gonna take it for y'all. Like, Sovereign Immunity doesn't have, like, an extract that is separate just for him. You know?

JACK: Ah, he doesn't get on a special plane.

KEITH: So we are— Our thing is prevent Nideo and Orion from kidnapping—

JACK: [crosstalk] Wh— hang on.

KEITH: —and then Sovereign Immunity is also you do the kidnapping.

AUSTIN: Yeah. I mean—

KEITH: I understand.

AUSTIN: Go ahead, Clem. You go ahead.

JACK: Who the fuck has shown up? Who— who's new?

AUSTIN: Uh... Who— I don't know. You tell me. Who here is new? No one here is new. Orion is— is Stel— is House Callister. Is represented by House Callister.

JACK: So these are these three... sandstorm mechs.

AUSTIN: Those are three mechs. Nideo is the Song. Is Song. Is— is—

JACK: Oh, fucking—

AUSTIN: Who is here not—

JACK: [amused] Brilliant.

AUSTIN: —not just to fuckin' walk the path. Why the fuck would she be here for that?

JACK: [agreeing] No.

⁸ Austin is pronouncing this like [rez-ee].

AUSTIN: She doesn't even believe—

JACK: [crosstalk] All of her crew is now surrounding—

AUSTIN: [crosstalk] She doesn't even believe any of this. Right.

KEITH: I kind of expected to be able to get the ring before this broke off like this.

AUSTIN: [laughs] Uh huh.

KEITH: That was my plan.

AUSTIN: Well. I know that was your plan.

KEITH: I didn't— I didn't realize that it would get goin' so fast.

AUSTIN: You know, if the sixes had kept on rolling, maybe we'd be in a different place.

SYLVIA: Yeah. [pause] If only.

AUSTIN: I'm going to advance the Orion-Gur clock by one as the sandstorm begins to take over the convoy. It's a race.

KEITH: Yeah.

JACK: Austin, can we get a map update? Or are we still really here?

AUSTIN: You're all really there. Yeah, that's—

JACK: Okay.

AUSTIN: Do you see the— I did update it. There's a little red X there now indicating that's as far as you've made. [Sylvia laughs hard]

JACK: [amused] Yeah, no, I just didn't know if that was a while ago.

AUSTIN: No. That's it.

JACK: We've made it up— [laughs]

AUSTIN: You're in a canyon, you know.

JACK: We've made it about—

SYLVIA: If anything we'd be further back now. Like.

AUSTIN: [laughing] Yeah, do you want me to move the X back?

JACK: Yeah. We've made it about a fifth, generously, of the— [laughs] Uh, god.

AUSTIN: Mhm.

JACK: Great. Okay.

AUSTIN: At least you haven't been discovered yet. What do you do? Sovereign Immunity, let's look at you for a second here. I think you've probably gotten— I think the Song starts to say,

Austin (as ALEEL VERDICATE): We have secure transport. Follow me and we'll all get out of here alive.

Art (as SOVEREIGN IMMUNITY): It's a trap!

AUSTIN: You just say it?

ART: Uh huh.

JACK: [laughs] From the Clementine Kesh School of—

ART: I'm infamous!

AUSTIN: You are infamous. Oh, you are... You are *infamous*. [laughs] You know who knows your face probably would be... [laughs again] the pope of Partizan. [Keith laughs]

ART: Yeah. Probably.

AUSTIN: Um.

ART: But I'm hoping that my street cred is gonna be helpful here.

AUSTIN: Yeah. What do you— what do you—

JACK: So—

AUSTIN: What are you doin' here?

JACK: Hang on. Real quick. Can we just go over what people currently think of The Farmer?

AUSTIN: Yeah, The Farmer is bad.

JACK: Because he stole...

AUSTIN: The Princept.

ART: A religious figure?

AUSTIN: Not just a religious figure.

JACK: Okay, so—

AUSTIN: The— the Emperor. The highest of highs.

JACK: From us.

ART: All Emperors are religious.

AUSTIN: From the Empire. From everybody. The Princept is called the Princept, partially because it has the word “prince” in it. And the prince is loyal to something greater than them. And in this case, it's the people of the principality. And that's bullshit, again, obviously—

JACK: Just everyone.

AUSTIN: But the idea is, the Princept is everybody. Even if the Princept might be from Stel Kesh and House Kesh or whatever, who the fuck cares, the Princept is what is the embodiment of the state. Is the physical, living embodiment of the state which we worship.

KEITH: I mean, even after that, sedition is, like, basically the worst crime you commit as far as governments are concerned.

AUSTIN: [laughs] Yes.

JACK: [laughs] So they're not hot on him.

AUSTIN: Yeah.

JACK: There's been no cooling off period.

AUSTIN: There's been— there's been a thirteen year cooling off period or something. So there has been a cooling off period.

JACK: Great.

AUSTIN: But, you know, Sovereign Immunity—

KEITH: It's a hot fire to have to cool off.

AUSTIN: It's a hot fire.

JACK: Yeah.

AUSTIN: If Sovereign Immunity was not a Sovereign Immunity... if Sovereign Immunity was not literally a “*sovereign immunity*”— [laughs; Keith and Jack laugh] the words that emphasize the degree of protection he is offered, that is an exception—

JACK: He would be dead.

AUSTIN: He would be dead! He would be dead. He'd be all the way dead.

KEITH: It's kind of surprising he's not dead anyway.

AUSTIN: It's incredibly surprising, but it turns out Stel Nideo has a lot of influence. And one of the things they can do is keep their people from being killed. It's like, you don't get to become a Sovereign Immunity overnight. One of the reasons I think, Art, you made this character old is, like, it takes a long time to get to this rank.

ART: Mhm.

AUSTIN: So, you know, tenure.

KEITH: Tenure⁹, for all the good's it's done you here.

AUSTIN: [laughing] He kind of has tenure, yeah.

ART: Tenure, but for laws.

AUSTIN: For laws. Exactly. [laughs]

KEITH: [laughs] Yeah, I put my time in. Now it's kind of the purge for me. [Austin and Keith laugh]

⁹ Keith once again rhymes this word with “manure.”

SYLVIA: That— that's just rich people, Keith.

AUSTIN: That's just— Yeah, that's— the lesson of those movies is that's just rich people all the time.

KEITH: I haven't seen any of them.

AUSTIN: Oh, you should watch The Purge. Anyway, what the fuck are we doing?

KEITH: [crosstalk] Uh—

AUSTIN: Well, who put all these clocks on the screen?

KEITH: I think Sovereign Immunity was gonna do something.

JACK: It's a trap.

AUSTIN: You— Yes, Sovereign Immunity—

ART: And I just announced that the Song was trying to trap... Gur.

AUSTIN: Uh, that is a roll of some sort here. That's a Command or Consort?

KEITH: Yeah, seems like a Command.

ART: It's probably Command.

AUSTIN: Yeah.

ART: Oh, that's not me.

AUSTIN: What is your end—

ART: Here I am.

AUSTIN: What is your goal here? What is the result— what does a six look like for you here?

ART: Um... they— they don't go with Song.

AUSTIN: Mhm.

ART: And give me a chance to kidnap them.

AUSTIN: Great. Risky standard, let's say. And it's— it's— What are you using, Consort or Command?

ART: Command. I think— I think it was—

AUSTIN: You think it's— Do you think that this is inciting fervor? Cause you have that move where you can spend your spark to push yourself while inciting fervor, instead of using stress?

ART: I'm not sure this is fervor.

AUSTIN: Okay. You're not taking that angle. You don't want to reframe it so that this is a religious thing, for instance, or a righteousness thing?

ART: I think it's just— I don't think— I think... I mean, I guess it wouldn't because that's why you roll dice, but like, would that really work? Like.

AUSTIN: I don't know. Probably not. You're right. Probably not. Give me a— [Art laughs] I mean, this is where you roll dice.

ART: If I'm gonna incite fervor right now, it's gonna be against me.

AUSTIN: [laughs] Alright. Well, Command is a 1d6. You're gonna push yourself.

KEITH: The way that this is Consort though—

ART: I might—

KEITH: —is that it is sort of like, you know, putting a dog in between two owners to see where it wants to go. Except those two owners are kidnapers. [Jack laughs]

AUSTIN: [laughs] That is true.

JACK: Um, I don't want to take the possibility of me being able to help off the table, if that's something you would be interested in. I also don't want to step into a scene that you don't necessarily want, Clem in.

ART: I don't—

JACK: I am happy to be where I am most helpful.

ART: I don't want to spend *your* stress instead of mine cause I only have two

JACK: Okay. That's— Yeah, that's a good point.

ART: But I need to still be able to push myself later when I need to... use acts of strength or be a small gang.

AUSTIN: Right.

ART: Cause I don't think any amount of superhuman strength I exhibited right now would really help me.

AUSTIN: Only if you were— decided to, like, go all the way violent and that seems—

JACK: Yeah, lift this truck.

—that seems like a bad idea.

ART: [amused] Yeah. “It's a trap! I'm so strong!” [Sylvia and Keith laugh]

AUSTIN: Oh god.

ART: “That's how you can tell!” So I'll push myself.

AUSTIN: I'll offer you a collateral die if you let me take the “Discovered” clock once.

ART: Um...

AUSTIN: Just give you an extra die. You're only at one of six on the “Discovered” clock.

ART: Oh, I'll take that. I figured I was already fucked when I— [crosstalk] drew so much attention to myself.

AUSTIN: It's more the group, “Kesh is involved” thing— [crosstalk] more than the... “you specifically” thing. You know?

ART: I'll take it, yeah.

AUSTIN: Yeah, alright. 3d6. Give me that—

ART: Two? Two of six? That's nothing.

AUSTIN: Uh huh. Three— Give me—

KEITH: That's only a third.

ART: It's barely more than one.

AUSTIN: [amused] Uh huh. So 3d6, risky standard. That's a four.

ART: It's a four.

AUSTIN: It's not bad. I think— I think Gur Sevraq lifts up their hand. You know, kind of breaches the... the kind of layer after layer of robes that is over them and says,

Austin (as GUR SEVRAQ): Hold.

AUSTIN: And Avar kind of moves in position to be kind of back to back with him and, like, raises a rifle up to their— to their chest and... I think at four... [laughs] At four, I'm going to advance that "Discovered" clock by two more. So now you're at four of six. [Jack laughs]

KEITH: Wow, that goes up real fast.

Yeah, it does. I get to tick some clocks here on a risky— on risky rolls. You can resist this if you'd like to, but the thing that's being said here is the Song says

Austin (as ALEEL VERDICATE): You should not trust that man. That man is a traitor to our entire principality.

KEITH: Seditious.

Austin (as ALEEL VERDICATE): That man is The Farmer.

Art (as SOVEREIGN IMMUNITY): It's true.

KEITH: That sounds like a six. That doesn't sound like a four.

AUSTIN: That's a four. Cause the thing that's discovered here is about— is Kesh here in [crosstalk] the Prophet's Path.

KEITH: Oh, I understand. Yeah, sure.

AUSTIN: Not about Sovereign Immunity. You just say, "It's true"?

ART: I mean, that is who I am.

AUSTIN: Check this out. I'm going to increase the "RE-Gur" clock by one, as Gur Sevraq then points... another limb comes out from under there, from the same side as the hand that's already come out. And this one's kind of long and spindly and just points in your direction. And

Avar begins to move both you and Gur- in that direction. Gur Sevraq has, like, a cool spider body thing going on underneath there. Just— just—

ART: Great.

JACK: You're talking like, Fallen Arms?

AUSTIN: No, we're talking like, spindly metal... like, clink-clink-clink-clink. That's what it would— that's a sound it would make if they were walking on metal.

JACK: We're talkin'— we're talkin' Fallen designed by Guillermo del Toro.

AUSTIN: No, no, no, no. Way smoother than that. There is something retro futuristic about Gur Sevraq's body—

JACK: Oh damn.

AUSTIN: —that we— that is— that is... We've had it— we've had a synthetic that's had a similar body like this before in Twilight Mirage. There was a character named Soft Stone, that had similar, like, long spindly— Do you know what it— Um, you know what it looks like? Portal... the robots in Portal. The turret guns in Portal.

JACK: Oh, the turrets, yeah.

AUSTIN: You know the turrets I'm talking about?

JACK: Uh huh.

AUSTIN: I'm gonna have to—

JACK: I'm not frightened of them.

AUSTIN: I have to look at— I have to look and see if that's true, actually. One second. Yeah. You just look at their legs. That style of, like, sharp, slightly rounded... pointy— Like, if you look at just their legs, they look like swords. And that is what it is that comes out of Gur Sevraq's, like, under Gur Sevraq's robes, and like, as if to say like, "We're going with Sovereign" upon hearing that you are The Farmer. And Avar says,

Austin (as AVAR): My boss is a fan of your work.

Art (as SOVEREIGN IMMUNITY): Hmm. It's been a long time since I did that. But.

Austin (as AVAR): Can you do it again?

Art (as SOVEREIGN IMMUNITY): Of course.

ART: [whispers] I don't know that I can.

KEITH: Are they saying, "Can you do a kidnapping of the Princept again?"

AUSTIN: Well, can you do... Farmer, what are you— what do you— what is like— tell me the— what do you think you're known for among seditionary... like, forces that are spread throughout this galaxy and are almost instantly stomped on normally?

ART: I mean, I... I wasn't instantly stomped on, I held off the— the ruling bodies for some time.

AUSTIN: Yeah. For like a year.

ART: Yeah.

AUSTIN: That's a long time.

ART: And it's a long time, especially like— it's basically a siege, right?

AUSTIN: [laughing] Yeah. And you killed a bunch of people. So. [Keith cackles]

ART: Killed a bunch of people.

AUSTIN: Yeah, let's not forget. Um, alright. Let's jump ahead here. Clem, I think we're getting— we're getting to a pretty good moment here, which is, the sand has covered everything. You are now in the middle of this thing. You've now slipped into a desperate position as you're in the sandstorm. And I think we just get... we just get that shit that is like, a robot is walking towards you through the sand. The silhouette is there in front of you. This is— this is the Conjurer that has advanced because Millie missed that shot. And it's kind of flickering in the sand. It's ike if a silhouette could flicker, that is happening. What do you do?

JACK: I'm looking at my character sheet.

AUSTIN: It's just like, right in like— I can so clearly picture this of like, your dead center in the shot looking— you're just a little person— and this is a big robot, you know? And it's actually— it's actually a small robot compared to, like, the troop. The Conjurer is only a light mech, but it's— that's still, you know, thirty feet or something, you know?

JACK: Yeah.

AUSTIN: So that's still very tall.

JACK: Has it seen me?

AUSTIN: You're— Yes, but not in a way that's like, “Ah, Clementine Kesh.”

JACK: No, no, no. In the sense that like, there is a human figure in the— in the—

AUSTIN: Yes. You're one of many human figures though that are at this kind of front line. And I think instantly, you know, people are trying to send small arms fire its way, but that doesn't seem to be doing anything.

JACK: No. Hmm...

KEITH: Sorry, is this, um... Conjurer that they're firing at?

AUSTIN: Yes, this is Conjurer.

KEITH: Is that— Yeah.

AUSTIN: This is the Conjurer. Yeah, yeah, yeah.

JACK: It's tough, right? Because, like, I'm trying to think of what is a cool image for a character to do, and also what Clementine would do.

AUSTIN: Uh huh.

JACK: Like, the first thing I'm looking at here is like, I have climbing gear in my thing. And I'm like, “Oh, climb on the mech and fight it like Titanfall.” But it's like, this is Clementine Kesh.

AUSTIN: This is Clementine Kesh.

JACK: When she heard a gun go off in her first mission, she fell on the floor.

AUSTIN: Yeah. I'm looking at the things you can do and the tools at your disposal. One thing that you— one thing that hasn't shown up yet is your— your cohort of toughs. Who you could attack with.

JACK: Yes, that's true.

AUSTIN: Which could be fun.

JACK: Yeah, and I think that is— I think that splits the difference between like... I think Clem is braver than just turning tail and running back into the caravan here.

AUSTIN: Mhm.

JACK: Like, I think she made a call by being like, "I'm going to try and stand with this firing line."

AUSTIN: Right.

JACK: But I don't think she's brave enough to assault the mech head on—

AUSTIN: Right.

JACK: —in the same way that Smack Talk or somebody would.

AUSTIN: Right. You also have Rally, which is [reading] "Spend two stress to do one of the following: compel additional directions, you may spend one stress per direction, direct an unaffiliated crowd to perform an action, have an unaffiliated crowd commit violence, prevent an unaffiliated crowd from causing damage." And I think you could use that in conjunction maybe? With— with commanding your cohort to do— to do well here? I would let you do that.

JACK: Which would... which would let me do what? Which would let me...

AUSTIN: So the way commanding— the way cohorts work is like— it's almost like... I wouldn't say that they're a vehicle, right? But you can roll Command to make a cohort do something, the same way that you would roll, like, Hunt to shoot a gun. And in this case, I think you'd be using Command to do— to try to do damage to Conjurer. And I'm saying if you— if you spent two stress, you could compel the rest of these soldiers to kind of stand their ground instead of breaking and fight alongside your crew and give you a bonus.

JACK: Damn. Yeah. Okay. I think— I think I would take— I would take that, um... I know it's a heavy stress cost—

AUSTIN: It is, yeah.

JACK: —but I like the narrative implications of rallying. I think Clem is someone— Clem is an officer in the book, and Clem is someone who sees themself... pictures themselves as a leader.

AUSTIN: Mhm.

JACK: And so I think that... the tradeoff to taking the stress or it going badly is that if it goes well... Clem has kind of stood on the front lines as an Officer.

AUSTIN: Right.

JACK: So I'll take two stress and activate my Rally power.

AUSTIN: Okay, and then...

JACK: And I will also try and command my cohort—

AUSTIN: Alright.

JACK: —of toughs.

AUSTIN: Yep, and again, toughs are described as “killers, bouncers, warriors, et cetera. And this particular tough... A.O. Rook and— and a group they're in— I guess does the cohort... [thinking noise] Let's see. We should— I should have given cohort—

JACK: I'm rolling Command for this, right?

AUSTIN: Yeah, you're definitely rolling— rolling Command for this. Give me a second to figure out the dice and stuff.

JACK: Sure, sure, sure.

AUSTIN: I think we gave co— we gave A.O. “loyal” and “eager,” right? I don't know why it's not written here. Now it is.

JACK: Yeah, I think so.

AUSTIN: Loyal is, “Can't be bribed or turned against the squad.” Eager is “Will act without orders for the squad's best interest.” That does not come into effect right here.

JACK: Definitely.

AUSTIN: But could— could in the future. [reading] “When a cohort is sent to achieve a goal covered by its expertise, it rolls its quality to determine the outcome. If the action is outside of its expertise—” blah, blah, blah. I believe you can also just roll Command. I'm ninety— I'm like, ninety-nine percent sure that this is true. I'm gonna just say it's— I am— I'm—

JACK: We just, like, narrate based on that Command result.

AUSTIN: Based on your roll. Exactly. So you're starting at two, Right? You're—

JACK: Oh wait! Although it says that they— My leader skill means that they continue to fight when they would otherwise break. They're not taken out when they suffer level three harm.

AUSTIN: Oh, that's useful.

JACK: Which implies that there is some kind of harm mechanic there.

AUSTIN: Oh, there is absolutely a harm mechanic.

JACK: Oh, okay.

AUSTIN: A fail— a failure here could harm— could *absolutely* harm them.

JACK: Yeah, okay. So—

AUSTIN: They're like people. You know, they are people.

KEITH: [crosstalk] They're like people or they are people?

JACK: [amused, crosstalk] They're only like people.

AUSTIN: They're like people in that they are people. Yeah. Mhm.

JACK: Okay. I have two Command.

AUSTIN: Okay. Take another... I'm gonna say take another one from activating the rallying the troops that are part of the pilgrimage. So it's 3d6.

JACK: Okay.

AUSTIN: And then— and then roll that. 3d6, desperate standard. Desperate cause you're in the sandstorm, and you're facing a giant robot that's a higher tier— tier than you.

JACK: Yes. Okay. 3d6.

AUSTIN: That's— that's a four.

JACK: Oh my god.

AUSTIN: That's a four. That's a success. It's a success.

JACK: Okay, I saw the three first.

AUSTIN: I know, I know, I know. Uh, des— a four on a desperate is still kind of rough. And you're gonna have to tell me if you're gonna try to resist the effect. But first, tell me what happens. Tell me how you get the success, which will destroy the Conjurer before it does something. Tell me what that looks like as A.O. Rooke leads your group of toughs, which is only a handful of people at this point and the crew you rally. Tell me what— tell me what the success looks like here.

JACK: I think that like— do people here know... No one has any idea what the Rapid Evening is?

AUSTIN: No.

JACK: At all.

AUSTIN: No.

JACK: Like, that would be like— that'd be like, if there was a secret society on Earth called the like—

AUSTIN: The Rapid Evening, Jack. No one knows— no one listens to us.

JACK: Yeah. And I just— [laughs] No, what I mean is it's like, it wouldn't mean— it wouldn't mean anything to these people.

AUSTIN: Right. Correct. Not yet.

JACK: Okay.

AUSTIN: You could change that.

JACK: Yeah. That's true. I mean, I suppose what Clem does is... raises her gun, which is just like a tiny— I haven't announced that she has a pistol or anything yet, and I— I will if I need to roll like—

AUSTIN: What is she wearing, by the way?

JACK: —personal attack rolls. Oh god, she was wearing—

KEITH: You were wearing, like, a cloak, right?

AUSTIN: Yeah.

JACK: She was wearing, like, a disguise. But now I really don't want to miss the opportunity of giving Clem, like, an outfit.

AUSTIN: Yeah. Uh huh.

JACK: Let me look at my sheet of Clem outfits.

AUSTIN: Mhm. [laughs]

JACK: Oh! What if it is— what if it is that bomber Cara Delevingne outfit with the lapels, the white lapels?

AUSTIN: Oh, yeah, sure. Love it.

JACK: But with a coak— with a cloak or something that is now being blown in the sandstorm or whatever. And I think Clem draws her pistol and says,

Jack (as CLEMENTINE): Stand fast for Partizan.

[Keith laughs]

JACK: And then says,

Jack (as CLEMENTINE): For the Rapid Evening!.

JACK: And there's just the sound of, like, feet or— or I don't know what. Is A.O. in a mech?

AUSTIN: No, no, no, no, no, no. They're— they're people. They have— they—

JACK: Oh yeah. Then just—

AUSTIN: The toughs just roll through with guns and, like, rocket launchers and shit.

JACK: Just feet pouring from... like, the rocks around us. And just like a bunch of strangers to these people—

AUSTIN: Oh totally.

JACK: —just emerge and take the firing line and then just open fire on the— on the approaching Conjuror.

AUSTIN: Yeah. And I think this is the moment we kind of start to see what it could have done, which is— I mean, it opens fire back at you. And I think one, this cohort is going to take some

damage. That cohort is going to drop from— from “healed” to “weakened,” as a number of people get caught by shrapnel.

JACK: Okay.

AUSTIN: Um, and I'll change that on the sheet in a second. The second thing is you are gonna— I'm basically— I'm basically doing that desperate consequences thing that is, take a level three harm, but I'm spreading the harm out as it goes to both them and also directly to you.

JACK: Yeah.

AUSTIN: As you get lacerated, a level two harm, um... on your— on your body, as this thing just gets wildly firing. And then also what it's— what it's doing is, you see it's releasing these, like, little hover disks as a last ditch effort. You don't know what they are. They're— I say little; they're little for a robot. They're big for you. They're like truck sized hover disks, like round... like Frisbees or something.

JACK: Oh my god.

AUSTIN: And each of those projects, both visually and sensor-wise, like, a second Conjurer. And it was, like, getting ready to basically duplicate itself a number of times to make it very hard to understand which one was it for real. And also, I think maybe this is part of where the damage comes from is, also each one of those things is a big hover mine. So it's— it looks like it's one of— it looks like it's another Conjurer, and also, if you get close to it, it blows up. And I think, you know, one of those gets caught by one of the troops, one of the two troop units that are here. You know, they were also obviously firing into the sandstorm, and you ordered everyone to start firing. And yeah, I think it catches one of those in the leg and that produces a bunch of shrapnel. And so just, like, rocks and metal go everywhere and catch you pretty badly. So take the level two—

KEITH: Does it set off a chain reaction, or is it just one?

AUSTIN: It's only the one. I mean, this thing blows up. This thing then explodes. The Conjurer is dead. Long live the Conjurer.

KEITH: Is it leaving behind these mines?

AUSTIN: No, I think it all— they all blow up, right?

KEITH: Okay, got it.

AUSTIN: A dedicated salvage unit could come through and pick through this thing. You know, I think the... the... Broun would absolutely be like, “Alright. How do I— how do I— how do I get

something out of this immediately?" But for now, this Conjurer is dead. Alright. Let's go back to Millie and Leap on the front lines here.

KEITH: Sure.

SYLVIA: Yeah.

AUSTIN: What are y'all up to as we have this invisible mech, and we also still have this floatie jet mech that seems to be causing a ruckus?

SYLVIA: But the sandstorm sort of died down now cause the Conjurer's taken out?

AUSTIN: No.

SYLVIA: No? okay.

AUSTIN: Tempestarii is the one doing—

SYLVIA: Oh, Tempestarii is. Right.

AUSTIN: Tempestarii is the one causing the sandstorm.

SYLVIA: Right. And that's— that is the one flying above it?

AUSTIN: That is the jet that's above. Yeah.

KEITH: Tempestarii?

AUSTIN: Tempestarii, which is apparently a type of weather magic that people believed in.

SYLVIA: Alright.

KEITH: Yeah.

SYLVIA: [sighs] Alright.

KEITH: Magical fitzroy.

SYLVIA: Do you have anything that you wanted to do, like, straight away, Keith? Cause I'm still kind of trying to think now.

AUSTIN: I'll just note, you don't have to kill these mechs to get Gur Sevraq out of here. But if your goal is to get through to the Prophet's Path, you probably do have to at least drive them away or— or convince them to leave or whatever it is, you know?

KEITH: Yeah. Tempestarii is not shooting at us, it's just causing this sandstorm.

AUSTIN: Thus far. Yeah. Uh huh.

KEITH: Right.

AUSTIN: Now that Conjurer is gone, who knows what this does, right? We'll see.

KEITH: Right. Well, it is seem— It does seem like... you know, the boss, kind of.

AUSTIN: That's cause it has an eight step clock. Yeah.

KEITH: Right. It's twice as— twice as much.

AUSTIN: Yeah. Well, it's actually equal cause the— Thaumaturge is tough cause Thaumaturge is invisible, and you have to fill that "Locate" clock first. So.

KEITH: Right. Um... God, and then I also just fuck off and try to get that ring, too.

AUSTIN: You could fuck off and try to get those— get that ring, those rings, who knows. You know?

KEITH: Right. Yeah.

AUSTIN: As many more rings [laughs] as you can use the Ring Bearer.

KEITH: Yeah, I am the Ring— yeah. I have— Okay, where— Positioning, I guess.

AUSTIN: Yeah.

KEITH: Where am I in relation to the...

AUSTIN: [crosstalk] Here, let me— I'll—

KEITH: —caravan and— and Millie. Am I between those two, or am I in front of both?

AUSTIN: Well, I'm gonna— I'm gonna sketch it out for us real quick, if that— if that's okay. It'll take me... thirty seconds. And I'll move you over.

KEITH: I can— I can handle that.

AUSTIN: Boom. Slide y'all over here. Let's say that this is the canyon, right?

JACK: Yeah.

AUSTIN: To the north, you know, up here is, like, mountains, right?

JACK: Yeah.

AUSTIN: To the south, there's more— there's mountains over here also. Right? The convoy is— is all through here. It's like, this whole— this whole zone, right?

KEITH: Yeah, yep.

AUSTIN: The... I think the way this is going is, there is, like, a boom, boom spaceship landing— this is way too big, but pretend that that's tiny— at the very rear of the thing, which is where... and I said spaceship; that's not true. It's like— it's like a— like a—

KEITH: Speeder?

AUSTIN: —hover speeder. Uh, it's a flying— it's like a jet that has landed at the rear of the— of the convoy where Nideo, where the Song is trying to get Gur Sevraq. And so I suspect that we have... let's see. Let me just— let me just draw some letters here. [typing noises] "S. I."

KEITH: Just to put this to scale from here to there—

AUSTIN: To where?

KEITH: That's like a football field, maybe.

AUSTIN: That's a football field. Maybe.

KEITH: You could maybe get off one football in a row.

AUSTIN: You could get off a football game there.

KEITH: Right.

AUSTIN: Yeah. Then you have way up here I think you have... where, like, this is— this is the... whatever the name of that mech is, Tempestarii. And then— and— and the invisible one, Thaumaturge. [typing noise] That's spelled wrong. I don't care. I've been guessing that Millie is, like, down here? Like sniping... you know, like, from the hills? Was that right? Millie~ boom.

SYLVIA: Whereabouts? Like here?

AUSTIN: There? Yeah, that's exactly—

SYLVIA: Yeah, yeah.

AUSTIN: You nailed it. Perfect. And then, Keith, I've been imagining you're back a little bit. Leap is like, here where I've just put Millie's name again. There we go, Leap. And then like... Clem and the Conjuror were like here-ish, you know?

KEITH: Okay.

AUSTIN: Does this make sense?

KEITH: Yeah.

AUSTIN: I've drawn— so for people listening, all the way on the right, Tempestarii, Thaumaturge. Directly south of them, Millie in the hills. Leap, you know, a third of the— a quarter of the screen over to the left.

KEITH: Yeah.

AUSTIN: Clem in the middle, about a third of the way through the screen. SI and Gur Sevraq, about three fourths of the way across away from them.

KEITH: Yeah.

AUSTIN: And this is condensed, and you know, it's all bullshit anyway. But this is general placement. Let's say.

KEITH: Okay. So... I want to ask if this is— if this is possible for an outcome. I want to use... I want to use Destroy. I wouldn't— and— but my goal isn't as much to do damage, as it is to try and corral an invisible sniper.

AUSTIN: Yeah, totally.

KEITH: Is that— I can do that?

AUSTIN: I think that that is... Yeah, I think— Yeah. I like that as a concept here. Totally.

KEITH: Right.

AUSTIN: Your goal here is to kind of like... eliminate— like, process of elimination slash push someone towards a direction. Totally.

KEITH: Right, yeah.

AUSTIN: Yeah, I'll— I'll allow it.

KEITH: Okay. And I kind of want... In terms of like— Can— Actually, can we see the other map again real quick?

AUSTIN: Oh, yeah, sorry. Apologies. [whip noise foley] There we go.

KEITH: Sort of. I want to sort of do that in a— in a sweeping direction from like... from there— How do I draw a line like you were doing before?

AUSTIN: I don't even know if players can, but just—

KEITH: Okay.

AUSTIN: I know what you mean. You mean like... boom?

KEITH: From there, like, pushing into this direction.

AUSTIN: Okay. So you're like—

KEITH: So like, it goes from this general area—

AUSTIN: —sliding it this way.

KEITH: Yes. Yeah.

AUSTIN: Gotcha. Yeah.

KEITH: And, like, trying to corr— like, towards Milie.

AUSTIN: I'm going to say out loud, there is danger here because you— it's a sandstorm, and you don't know where there are civilians. And so firing into that sandstorm at this point—

KEITH: Oh, I thought they were all— I thought they were, like, all down there.

AUSTIN: Some of them have. I mean, and se— and security forces and the cohort that Clem just ordered in to fight. I just— I'm putting it out there that like—

KEITH: Okay.

AUSTIN: —using indirect fire weapons is a risk. I mean, let the six roll— sixes roll. But yeah.

KEITH: Yeah, yeah. Um... Hm. I could also— my other thing... I could— Here's— here's another one: Maneuver. I could put myself in a desperate position.

AUSTIN: Mhm.

KEITH: I'm actually— I'm still— Am I still in a pos—

AUSTIN: You're still in a desperate.

KEITH: Okay, so I am— I'm already in a desperate— I'm already exposed. Can't get worse. So what if I just try and get it to fire at me?

AUSTIN: Yeah, totally. That— Yeah.

KEITH: What if I just try and, like, run around until—

AUSTIN: You can make yourself as— Yeah. Give me—

KEITH: A target. Yeah.

AUSTIN: That's— that's definitely a Maneuver, and it does not put people— other people in that same degree of— of risk, for sure.

KEITH: Yeah.

AUSTIN: That's a— Right now, you're Maneuver is only one.

KEITH: Okay.

AUSTIN: Do you get help from someone? Do you— do you burn another quirk?

KEITH: I'm going to... Um... Can I get a... collateral die?

AUSTIN: A collateral die, sure. Always, always. Um, [blows lips while thinking] I am going to... Let me take a look at something really quick. Hm, how hard do I want to go on that? That's probably too hard. Uh, I think... I think the easy one here— or the most— the most— not easy, but— I will click, or tick that— the “Discovered” clock one more time. It's at four. Four of six. So you're getting there. Running around and making a lot of noise—

KEITH: Yeah.

AUSTIN: —positions yourself in the sort of space—

KEITH: That's true.

AUSTIN: —where people can watch you.

KEITH: Can you resist the consequence of a collateral die?

AUSTIN: No.

KEITH: Okay. You have to accept it. That's— that's the way that those work. Yeah.

AUSTIN: How about help from Clem or Millie?

AUSTIN: Clem or Millie could totally help you. Tell me how.

KEITH: Scat— Like, watching for footprints—

AUSTIN: Right, like— Right, right, right. “You— y'all look while I blah-blah-blah. While I try to draw out fire.”

KEITH: Yeah, totally.

SYLVIA: Yeah, I could— I could do that for sure.

AUSTIN: Alright.

SYLVIA: I think it makes sense.

KEITH: This could also even be a group action if Clem can lead a group action.

AUSTIN: It totally could be.

JACK: I can, um....

AUSTIN: Uh, leading group action is very stressful. Or can be very stressful.

JACK: It is super, super stressful, is the thing.

KEITH: Oh, okay. [laughs] Nevermind.

JACK: And also in the real world, too.

KEITH: Yeah.

AUSTIN: True, Uh-huh. Absolutely.

KEITH: [quietly] So hold on. If you're... [regular voice] Okay, I... Yeah, I will still do... I will do it with help from some— from somebody, if someone wants to offer that. I'll do it— I mean, I'll do without help, but if I can get help, that'd be great.

AUSTIN: [laughs] Millie, go for it.

SYLVIA: I— I'll give you the help.

KEITH: Okay. Alright.

AUSTIN: So Millie, mark another stress. You're at four stress.

KEITH: So now I get— I get 3d6 from Daredevil.

AUSTIN: What's the other...? Oh, right. Daredevil cause you're in desperate. Yes. Totally.

KEITH: Yeah.

AUSTIN: But as a reminder, you do get minus 1d to any resistance rolls for any consequences against this thing.

KEITH: Right. But I also get plus 1d resistance.

AUSTIN: Yeah. Yeah. You're resist— well, you'll spend one fewer quirk, not... Yeah, that's— that's cause you're in a vehicle. But go ahead. So it was at 3d6.

KEITH: Okay, yeah.

AUSTIN: 3d6, desperate standard. [pause] This is—

KEITH: That's a crit! I crit. I crit'ed it.

AUSTIN: Unbelievable. It's unbelievable.

SYLVIA: Wow!

KEITH: Yep.

AUSTIN: I can't believe it.

KEITH: Yeah. Sorry, I will— I will be taking apologies for saying that— [laughing] the sixes don't stop.

SYLVIA: No! No! You're hoarding all the sixes. It's not fair that one percent of the Friends of the Table players gets ninety-nine percent of the six rolls. [Keith laughs harder]

AUSTIN: Oh my fuck— what's this— what's a crit look like here?

KEITH: Do I get— do I— do I heal stress?

AUSTIN: Yeah, you heal some— I'm checking. I'm checking. Let me just see. [Sylvia laughs] You normally heal stress. You know, you heal stress from a crit on a resistance role.

KEITH: Oh.

AUSTIN: In this case— in this case, you get increased effect. So that moves you from a standard to a great—

KEITH: [crosstalk] It's now great effect.

AUSTIN: —to a great affect, which means I'm going to— “Locate Thaumaturge” goes up to three, which is fantastic. Give me a— tell me what this looks like. You just— you're just dancin' on 'em out there.

KEITH: Yeah, I think, um... so “Locate” is up to three out of four, so not fully located yet.

AUSTIN: Not fully located, but very close.

KEITH: Yeah. So I think, in a literal way, I'm running circles around it.

AUSTIN: Yeah. Uh-huh.

KEITH: I think like— like, it's— Oh, so... I found— I saw the footprints.

AUSTIN: Yeah.

KEITH: And I turned, and they turned, and I turned, and, like, all of a sudden—

AUSTIN: Yeah.

KEITH: —there's, like, somewhere in this small area.

AUSTIN: Mhm.

KEITH: And we're just, like, not exactly sure exactly where yet.

Yeah. And I think we're going to get these close-ups on the person firing. Like, if we go inside. So at this point, I'm going to reveal Callister Drive Callister who is not in this mech. Callister is in the— is in the jet mech— is in the— the Tempest— Tempestarii. And Callister— I guess first let's reveal the pilot of— of the... Thaumaturge who is A-Tek. Um, A-Tek Callister presumably? I guess actually, I know what A-Tek's last name is. It is not Callister.

JACK: American teens against crime. [Keith sneezes loudly]

AUSTIN: Bless you.

JACK: Bless you.

KEITH: Thank you.

AUSTIN: [indistinguishable first word] —the A-Tek come, uh... [indistinguishable]

KEITH: The name of— the words American teens against crime would be 'Sneeze.' [Austin and Jack laugh]

AUSTIN: Like, out devil. [Keith laughs] A-Tek is Michelle Rodriguez— is played by Michelle Rodriguez, but dressed in a way I don't think I've ever seen Michelle Rodriguez, which is as a butler. What if Michelle Rodriguez was a fancy, black waistcoat wearing, ribbon tie, butler with hair slicked back? And she is Callister Drive Callister's, butler-slash-bodyguard. But also, we know— we, the audience, know— is also like... holding the leash— is also kind of like pointing the gun at Callister's head a little bit. Because— because she represents kind of the establishment of Orion who knows that you can only let a pirate go so far. The pirate himself, Callister Drive Callister, the first time we see him, I wonder if we even know it's him. Because he's wearing— wearing as a strong— you know that— Did you know Callister directly?

KEITH: Yes.

AUSTIN: Okay.

KEITH: I directly knew Callister. Callister was a pirate that I knew.

AUSTIN: Right. Tell me what Calister's robot face looked like real quick. [pause] Real quick. Broad. Just grab a thing.

KEITH: Okay.

AUSTIN: Cause it doesn't matter anymore.

KEITH: It— [laughs] Oh my god. Um.. Callister had like— almost like... like a snout.

AUSTIN: Love it. A snouted robotic face.

KEITH: Yeah.

AUSTIN: Callister Drive Callister now looks like *Inside Llewyn Davis* era Oscar Isaac wearing this... Versace jacket.

KEITH: [amused] Sorry, Sylvia, what was that?

SYLVIA: No, I— That was nothing! That was... nothing. [Keith and Jack laugh]

AUSTIN: [amused] Uh huh. Uh, wearing—

SYLVIA: [yelling] Fuck off!

AUSTIN: Wearing—

SYLVIA: Don't do this! [Keith laughs more]

AUSTIN: Wearing this men's baroque satin lapel dinner jacket. Um... which is beautiful, I think. And thirty-four hundred dollars currently because of fashion is—

KEITH: Holy shit.

AUSTIN: —the worst.

KEITH: I was looking at— I was looking at— I was trying to— I was looking at an appliance— or at furniture stores, I was like, "Oh, this is the nearest furniture store near me. Let me see what they're selling. I'm looking for a small table." It was twelve hundred dollar—

AUSTIN: Yeah.

KEITH: —for this small wooden table.

AUSTIN: It's all the worst.

KEITH: Things are crazy.

AUSTIN: Things are very expensive out there. The world is bad. He is... he is— he was not equiaxed. A thing I want to under— underscore here for you is, when you knew Callister, he was not an Equiaxed. And I don't think he— I still think he is. I don't think adapting a humanoid face... or human face and a fleshy face makes you, Equiaxed. I think Equiaxed a particular culture, right?

KEITH: Right. Yeah.

AUSTIN: But he's wearing a human face now. He's wearing a very hot human face.

KEITH: Right.

AUSTIN: In fact, this is the second time we've cast Oscar Isaac—

KEITH: He's using Equiax tech.

AUSTIN: Right.

KEITH: Right.

AUSTIN: This is the second time we've used— I don't even know if it's Equiaxed tech. It might be Orion's version of Equiaxed tech, right?

KEITH: Right.

AUSTIN: [crosstalk] You'd have to ask him about this.

KEITH: [crosstalk] Which was stolen by the Columnar, then sold.

AUSTIN: Well, so this is the thing, as we know that Callister came over— the reason that they're wearing— [self-mocking] they're wearing— they're piloting a prototype Columnar mechs is that they fucking stole 'em [laughs] from Columnar and then defected to Orion because they were gonna get a cool house, right? "They" being Callista's whole clique—

KEITH: Right.

AUSTIN: —not just Callister, himself. This is the second time— I wanna shout out Oscar Isaac. This is the second time that we've had Oscar Isaac play a space pirate for us.

KEITH: Who was the first space pirate?

AUSTIN: Sylvi, obviously you recall?

SYLVIA: Yeah, I do! [a bang can be heard]

AUSTIN: Diego Rose...

SYLVIA: [amused] Yeah.

AUSTIN: —was a member of the Yersinia Fleet¹⁰, back in— back in Counter/WEIGHT. Um, I—

SYLVIA: In Counter/WEIGHT.

KEITH: Yeah.

AUSTIN: Yeah. Jack and I were talking about this earlier. I messaged Jack, and I was like, “Jack did— did we ever cast Oscar Isaac in anything in this?”

SYLVIA: We did. But... use him again.

AUSTIN: He deserves it.

SYLVIA: It's fine. I don't mind.

AUSTIN: And I think it's not type-casting.

KEITH: He can be in two things. He's in, like, things all the time.

AUSTIN: Right. I think this is like, he was a minor character before. Maybe he'll still be a minor character. But, you know, it's like a fun nod.

SYLVIA: Yeah.

AUSTIN: Anyway, as your dancing circles around A-Tek, which is A hyphen T-E—,K I've written here. Maybe that's her call sign. I don't know. She's getting very frustrated. And she's like,

Austin (as A-TEK): Callister. This fucking guy!

AUSTIN: And Callister goes,

Austin (as CALLISTER): Wait— wait a minute. Hey—

¹⁰ Yersinia was actually the flagship of the Odamas Fleet.

AUSTIN: And like, opens a com channel to you, Leap, and goes,

Austin (as CALLISTER): Leap?

Keith (as LEAP): Mmm.... Mmmmm....

Austin (as CALLISTER): This is a private channel, buddy. We can talk.

Keith (as LEAP): Yeah. [pause; Austin laughs] [meekly] Callister?

Austin (as CALLISTER): Yeah, it's Drive.

Keith (as LEAP): C— Yeah, C.D.?

Austin (as CALLISTER): C.D. [pause] E.L.? Holy shit!

Keith (as LEAP): What are you doin' here?

Austin (as CALLISTER): What are you doing here!?

Keith (as LEAP): Um... Merc shit.

Austin (as CALLISTER): Yeah, you fucking merc'd one of my guys. Merc shit.

Keith (as LEAP): You— you merced some— someone else, to, right?

Austin (as CALLISTER): Are you with the colony?

Keith (as LEAP): Which— what colony is...

Austin (as CALLISTER): [disbelief] Which colony— The Equiaxed.

Keith (as LEAP): Oh, I mean, I'm not currently with them.

Austin (as CALLISTER): Oh, I would've thought if you were— Why you on Partizan then?

Keith (as LEAP): Merc shit. Just Mec shit.

Austin (as CALLISTER): Okay.

Keith (as LEAP): Mercenary. Not—

Austin (as CALLISTER): No, I got you.

Keith (as LEAP): Yeah.

Austin (as CALLISTER): Listen. [pause]

KEITH: Meanwhile, I'm running. I'm still—

AUSTIN: Yeah, of course.

KEITH: —going in circles. [laughs]

AUSTIN: Yeah, A-Tek— [makes a sound of a gun being cocked and fired twice] Boom! [Keith laughs] You know? Like. [laughs] And— and Callister is just like, hovering above it all in this— in this hover jet, bl— you know, blasting sand every which way. Um,

Austin (as CALLISTER): Listen. Let us run— let's run this thing, and then we'll catch up afterwards. Get out of here.

Keith (as LEAP): No, no, I've got to do— I also have to do this job.

Austin (as CALLISTER): How much?

Keith (as LEAP): I have to do my—

Austin (as CALLISTER): What are they paying?

Keith (as LEAP): [unsure] Lea— leave.

[Sylvia laughs]

Austin (as CALLISTER): Leave? [Jack laughs] This is a big payday, bud.

Keith (as LEAP): That's not what I meant. But if you could, though...

Austin (as CALLISTER): If I could pay you?

Keith (as LEAP): No, no, if you could leave. [laughs]

Austin (as CALLISTER): What did you mean then?

Keith (as LEAP): Nothing. Never mind.

Austin (as CALLISTER): Mm. [pause] I feel like we've missed— I feel like we've crossed wires here.

Keith (as LEAP): Yeah. What is your job? Why are you doing this?

Austin (as CALLISTER): Uh... This is a secure channel, right?

Keith (as LEAP): Yes.

AUSTIN: Austin says, is this a secure channel?

KEITH: Yeah, sure.

AUSTIN: Okay.

Austin (as CALLISTER): You know those Bittenbach guys? Scientists.

Keith (as LEAP): Yes, I've heard of them.

Austin (as CALLISTER): They think this... religious dude... and he knows where there's some good stuff. Like a real payday. Big, big, big. You know, like—

Keith (as LEAP): Okay.

Austin (as CALLISTER): —scientist-type shit. And if we could give them this guy, he can lead them there.

Keith (as LEAP): Why?

Austin (as CALLISTER): Smash and grab.

Keith (as LEAP): Right.

Austin (as CALLISTER): Beep-bop-boop.

Keith (as LEAP): Why are you— why— why give— if this guy's got a big payday, why you giving? Why are you giving 'em up?

Austin (as CALLISTER): What do you mean, why am I giving? Cause I— I don't give a fuck about science shit. What I care about is getting paid.

Keith (as LEAP): But what's good about a big payday is a big payday.

Austin (as CALLISTER): Right. But yeah, this is one of the situations where a hundred dollars in my hand, you know, a thousand dollars in someone else's hand, they're going to pay me five hundred. You know what I mean?

Keith (as LEAP): Right.

Austin (as CALLISTER): And also being a part of Orion kind of means, like, you just keep getting those paydays.

Keith (as LEAP): Right.

Austin (as CALLISTER): They keep comin'. I keep doing shit; they keep paying me shit.

Keith (as LEAP): Yeah.

Austin (as CALLISTER): It's good to see ya.

Keith (as LEAP): Yeah.

Austin (as CALLISTER): Or— or hear ya, I mean. You know, we... we gotta keep doing this, so...

Keith (as LEAP): Yeah, we gotta keep doing this, too.

Austin (as CALLISTER): Listen. If you just backed off a little bit, I could make it worth your while. [pause]

Keith (as LEAP): Like how?

Austin (as CALLISTER): You gotta be working a game? You gotta be working a con. You gotta be working a long term deal, you know?

KEITH: I— Okay, here's the thing. Out of character, I don't want to get more discovered.

AUSTIN: Mhm.

KEITH: And I'm afr— I'm worried about talking to— Cause, but like—

AUSTIN: Callister— I'm—

KEITH: —who the fuck knows Rapid Evening shit?

AUSTIN: I'm giving you the Austin Walker— I'm giving you the Austin Walker seal of— my hand is over my heart, I'm giving you the peace sign with my other hand— Callister is not looking to out you as part of Stel Kesh. Callisters doesn't know you're part of Stel Kesh.

KEITH: Right.

AUSTIN: Callister is looking to get you, Exeter Leap, to back the fuck off and throw the game, so to speak.

KEITH: Right.

AUSTIN: Right? Like, "Hey, sometimes you lose a fight, right?"

KEITH: Yeah.

AUSTIN: "Not even take a dive, just pull back a little bit. Maybe run another scheme while we're doing this." Um, and—

KEITH: I mean, that was my plan after the— after the discovery, I was like, "I've kind of done my part. I'm going to go get this ring."

AUSTIN: Gonna go get this ring.

KEITH: Yeah.

And... and I mean, I'll just lay out what— what he is offering to you here, is like: one, he's offering you— he's offering you two big things. One is... long term, he's saying "You can call a favor for me, and I'll help you do something big." Which would— which would give you a tick on your drive clock. So that's one. Two is he says straight up, like,

Austin (as CALLISTER): Do you even know about the Equiaxed here?

Keith (as LEAP): No, what?

Austin (as CALLISTER): I can put you in touch.

KEITH: Did I even know they were on Partizan?

AUSTIN: No, you had no idea.

KEITH: Yeah.

Keith (as LEAP): I didn't even know they were on Partizan.

AUSTIN: He's like,

Austin (as CALLISTER): Yeah, they figured this would be a good place to come hang out, you know?

Keith (as LEAP): It's not.

Austin (as CALLISTER): I wish— Well... not out here, you know?

Keith (as LEAP): [laughs] No. Yeah.

Austin (as CALLISTER): But in general, I feel like, you know, you catch some sun. I've had a good time.

Keith (as LEAP): Okay, here's the thing. Here's the deal. You're ready? I'm in jail. I'm in prison.

Austin (as CALLISTER): You're in jail— No, you're in a mech. In a battlefield, bud

Keith (as LEAP): No, it's com— it's complicated. I'm doing— I'm technically. this is my sentence.

Austin (as CALLISTER): Oh..... oh.

Keith (as LEAP): So I can't— Can you meet me halfway?

Austin (as CALLISTER): What's that mean?

Keith (as LEAP): I have a side thing. I can—

Austin (as CALLISTER): Here today?

Keith (as LEAP): Here today.

Austin (as CALLISTER): Yeah.

Keith (as LEAP): If you— if you can— if you ping Thaumaturge, the Thaumaturge—

KEITH: Thaumaturge¹¹?

¹¹ [tha-mah-ter-gee]

AUSTIN: Thaumaturge. Yeah.

Keith (as LEAP): If you ping— if you can ping the Thaumaturge and get me that favor, I can go do my other thing. I can't get anybody else to back off. I'm not leading shit right now.

AUSTIN: Um, I think we get like, the cut-in of A-Tek being like,

Austin (as A-TEK): Hey, boss? Boss, wh— what's going on up there? Haven't heard from you in a second.

AUSTIN: And Callister is like,

Austin (as CALLISTER): Well, one second. One second, Leap. [louder, to A-Tek] Uh, everything's— everything is extremely good. Everything is a hundred percent okay up here. [Keith laughs] We're— I'm just— Aerial coverage. Sandstorm. Phwoof. It's goin'. You gonna line up that shot, huh?

AUSTIN: Switches back over to you. I think you're gonna give me a roll here.

KEITH: Alright.

AUSTIN: This feels— this feels like a Consort.

KEITH: This is Consort. I'm gonna push myself.

AUSTIN: Alright. That brings up to 2d6. This is— this is risky standard

KEITH: Okay.

AUSTIN: I think it's—

KEITH: My mech is in a desperate position, but my body is not.

AUSTIN: Your— your body is not. Or your person— your conversational person is not.

KEITH: Right.

AUSTIN: You know?

KEITH: So I'm at 2d6?

AUSTIN: Yeah.

KEITH: Hmm... What's my— what's my collateral die here?

AUSTIN: I think you're collateral die here... is that... you let me— Hmm. Hm, hm, hm, hm. Oh, I think this is— this is a pretty like, honest collateral die in some way, which is, I get to tick the Orion-Gur clock one, as they advance further.

KEITH: Yeah.

AUSTIN: Okay. Mercenary is right. So that's 3d6 for you.

KEITH: Look, my drive isn't "Make sure—"

AUSTIN: I know. I know.

KEITH: "—the Rapid Evening gets Gur."

AUSTIN: [laughs] I know.

KEITH: Alright. So we get "Locate Thaumaturge." I get a favor.

AUSTIN: Yep.

KEITH: They get a tick on the "Gur" clock.

AUSTIN: Yeah.

KEITH: I get an extra die.

AUSTIN: Roll those dice.

KEITH: Roll d36.

AUSTIN: Roll d36, risky standard.

KEITH: That's a four.

AUSTIN: That's a four. That's a success. It's a mixed success. Um...

KEITH: Do I get caught? Do I get clocked by the Thaumaturge?

AUSTIN: I think you get— I think there's two pings, right? I think, yeah, that's exactly right. The first— there's two pings: the first ping is me hitting you. The second ping is you hittin' the ground.[Keith and Austin laugh] No, the first ping is he goes,

Austin (as CALLISTER): Yeah. I gotcha.

AUSTIN: And then pings the Thaumaturge. And at the same moment, like, everyone's map lights up— it's like, "Oh, there's the sniper." You've got it— you've got the, like— the signature down.

KEITH: Yeah.

AUSTIN: And then the second— the second that that happens, you get a level two harm, which is... Um, hm. What happens when— when a heavy sniper round slams into the side of your— your ambulance mech? Um, let's see. Just punctured, let's go with?

KEITH: Okay. So—

JACK: Perforated.

AUSTIN: That's level tw— perforated. God.

KEITH: So I can resist this?

AUSTIN: You can resist this.

KEITH: With my quirks.

AUSTIN: Correct.

KEITH: Right? That's how this goes?

AUSTIN: You can resist this with your quirks. But that's—

KEITH: But we have Forged in the Fire, so I do get plus one to resistance rolls.

AUSTIN: Well, you're not rolling. This is just exhaust one fewer quirk.

KEITH: Okay. So it's one instead of two?

AUSTIN: One instead of— Well, it would be...Yeah, it would be two to— to resist this. And so it'd be one, yes. Correctt.

KEITH: Okay.

AUSTIN: Yeah. Do you wanna do that?

KEITH: Yeah.

AUSTIN: Then I'll drop that— Yeah, so that'll be— What's— what's it look like? How does—

KEITH: Wait, what— Let me make sure. So I'm resisting it.

AUSTIN: Mhm.

KEITH: If I didn't resist it, I would take damage. But I am resisting it—

AUSTIN: [crosstalk] You would take level two damage—

KEITH: —so it's quirks.

AUSTIN: —so you're gonna— Yeah, so it's quirks.

KEITH: We— do we go in? Do we go into each thing with full quirks?

AUSTIN: You have to spend a resource to roll to clear quirk's. Which you did last time, and you only got to clear down to one. Or maybe you didn't clear at all.

KEITH: I think I didn't clear at all. [crosstalk] Cause I only had—

AUSTIN: [crosstalk] Yeah, you had “explosive speed.”

KEITH: [crosstalk] —I only had one. I only used explosive speed.

AUSTIN: [crosstalk] You were like, “Ah, I'll roll the dice.” Yeah, exactly.

KEITH: Yeah.

AUSTIN: So, yeah. You still have “common parts” and “focused design.” I feel like common parts makes sense here.

KEITH: Common parts. Yeah.

AUSTIN: Right? [crosstalk] It's like, “Yeah, I get hit—”

KEITH: Shoots off some stuff, yeah.

AUSTIN: But like, who cares? That shit's replaceable anyway, right?

KEITH: Right.

AUSTIN: Cool. Um, but yeah, y'all now have it. You now have— I'll just like— here's the sequence.

KEITH: Yeah.

AUSTIN: Here is where we're at here, and maybe we— we bring this to close.

KEITH: I know how— I know how this sequence ends on my end though.

AUSTIN: I bet.

KEITH: Yeah.

AUSTIN: Well, just visually right now, Millie, you see where the Thaumaturge is. Clem, you can see where the Thaumaturge is. Like, it kind of flickers into existence. It's another silhouette here inside of the— inside of the sand. As Callister, you know, has— has basically revealed it to you all. Or at least to— has revealed it maybe to— to Leap, who then can reveal it to everybody. In the back of this convoy, again, Sovereign, you, Gur, and Avar are kind of squared off at this point against Nideo— against not Nideo, but against the Song of Partizan. Aleel. Aleel, uh.... Predicate. And then, is there a third party here? I guess that that's the kind of— that's the gist of it right now. Um, does anyone want to do one last thing before we wrap up and come back to it... soon?

KEITH: I have one thing to say, and it's,

Keith (as LEAP): Ah, I need to back off. I got hit.

[Jack de Quidt's "[TANAGER. PERFECT. TOUCHPAPER.](#)" begins playing]

AUSTIN: [breathes a laugh] God. A.O. comes over the comms.

Austin (as A.O. ROOKE): You alright?

Keith (as LEAP): I think I'm good. I just need to check on something. I've gotta go over to the hill.

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

Keith (as LEAP): Uh, nah. I'm— I— I just need to... do a system diagnostic.

AUSTIN: What here is evil?

SYLVIA: Fuckin' Christ.

AUSTIN: [laughs] Ahaha.

[Music plays out to finish]