

PALISADE 02: Into the World Pt. 2

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AUSTIN: PALISADE is a show about empire, revolution, settler colonialism, politics, religion, war, and the many consequences thereof. For a full list of content warnings, please check the episode description.

[RECAP]

AUSTIN: Though you have been here at the bottom of the Diadem, the vast abandoned mega-city that was scraped alongside Palisade's entire equator thousands of years ago, neither your eyes nor your sensors have fully adapted to the depths of the darkness here.

[MUSIC INTRO - "[Nothing is Stationary](#)" by Jack de Quidt BEGINS]

AUSTIN (as MATINEE): I think something's moving out there. Yeah, we got—we got a—

AUSTIN: And like, kind of enhances an image. You get the great shot of someone moving from the body of one of these fallen mechs. Their eyes light up in the dark as they make eye contact with you—the Blue Channel, as it slowly hovers towards them.

SYLVI (as CORIOLIS): Oh, hello! Hello, hi. We're just—we're here on a scouting mission, we don't mean any, um... We're—we're not with the Bilats.

AUSTIN (as GUCCI): When you descend to the Fundament node, we're sending over seven rail lines that need to be switched. It's a simple logistics program. Insert it, run it.

Secondary objective: we believe those Twill have been recently moved off of their home in Greenfield. You are to offer them replacement; we believe your ship will be big enough to carry a number of them to safety. Confirm?

ALI (as BRNINE): Uh, yeah. Yeah, confirmed.

AUSTIN (as GUCCI): Confirmed.

AUSTIN: The wide hangar doors at the bottom of the funicular open. You're on a hill, looking down on an impossibly green valley, home to a small village, lit with dappled daylight by an impossible arrangement of large mirrors and lenses affixed to the sides of this impossibly tall man-made canyon.

And opposite your hill, on the other side of the village, on a different hill, there is a group of four Bilateral mechs, the ones that you felt, coming down that hill towards the village, while fighting what I can only describe as: what if a knife was a dragon?

DRE: Mm!

SYLVI: Hell yeah!

KEITH: I know one really good way to get those robots to stop advancing on this town. So, I mean, if someone wants to simultaneously try and evacuate this town while I try to kill the robots...

SYLVI: I'm gonna take out that one.

AUSTIN: Perfect. You say, "I'm going to take out that one," and what everybody else heard was, "community cooperative discovery restoration!"

[ALI SNORTS]

DRE: Good.

AUSTIN: Because one of the things Cleave does is it befuddles spoken language. So your comms are fucked right now.

[END RECAP]

[MUSIC INTRO ENDS]

AUSTIN: Okay, so just to recap, you were sent down here to find a link-up to the train system, a thing called the Fundament node. You emerged from the elevator, the funicular, and you saw this really beautiful valley and a village about to be ruined by four mechs fighting a knife-dragon. Phrygian took down one of the mechs, the Kesh Hauberk, that has the like, unicycle leg and the chains. Coriolis is engaged with the Ploughs, the sort of like, soldier-settler construction Altars, and then the infantry soldiers inside of the Gueridon, the sort of like, walking siege tower, are shooting at the dragon. And then you saw your target, the—again, the Fundament node, or like an access point to it, to the north up against a wall a couple of miles away.

Brnine, Thisbe, Figure. Any of you breaking off to head toward your objective, or is this now like, we're all in on trying to deal with this situation?

JANINE: I was gonna say, like, I—I was trying to find a reason for Thisbe to divert and jump in the fray, and like, I could kind of get there, but I think the truth is that, like, what she sees as her mission right now isn't impeded?

AUSTIN: Right.

JANINE: Like, normally, in a situation where she's getting into a fight, it's because that fight is on the way—

AUSTIN: Yep.

JANINE: But like, this is a situation where she can just keep going, and also other people have this fight under control, so whatever impulse she might have to intervene is like, 'well, they're doing it, so I need to complete this mission.'

DRE: Mhm.

AUSTIN: Right.

ALI: Yeah.

AUSTIN: And like, truly one of your things is 'fighting is not my purpose.' Right? Obviously, there's more to that hook than that—

JANINE: Well, oh—yeah, 'fighting is not my purpose' doesn't mean Thisbe's going to not—going to shy away from a fight. What that line means is that right now she sees it as—right now fighting is her purpose, but it's not her 'purpose' purpose, I guess.

AUSTIN: Mhm. I get it. Brnine, what were you going to say?

ALI: Yeah, I was just going to say, I've been thinking similarly in terms of like, Brnine's utility here is being a little guy who can sneak past this to sort of go for the A objective, and I don't know if that's like, via a team-up with Thisbe, or if like, hop into like, a little utility vehicle that's like next to the elevator, or something.

AUSTIN: [CHUCKLES] That's very fun, too. Yeah, yeah, yeah. I think that that's—I think Mow—Mow, presumably, is also with you, Thisbe, going towards the A objective. Which, because it's Gucci, is probably the Avocado Objective, or the—

[ALI CHUCKLES]

DRE: Oh god.

AUSTIN: —Applesauce Objective, something like that. Right? So. So yeah, you could ride with Mow, or I love the idea of you taking a little, like, a hover-truck next to Mow. You know?

JANINE: So I actually—a thing that—maybe I'm wrong.

AUSTIN: Mhm?

JANINE: Did I give myself the Propulsion Suite, like my body?

AUSTIN: Oh, yeah.

JANINE: Can I just fly? Okay.

AUSTIN: Yeah.

[ALI CHUCKLES]

JANINE: I think I thought I was picking for Mow—

AUSTIN: Oh, no, that's you.

JANINE: —and then I realized afterwards, like, 'oh, I'm—I picked it for me, okay.'

AUSTIN: Yeah, yeah, yeah, that's—that is you.

JANINE: I would have picked something else if I'd realized that, but lesson learned. I'll know that going forward, but Thisbe can just fly today. [CHUCKLES]

AUSTIN: Thisbe can fly today. I mean, what's that—is it like a jet boot situation? What is it?

[SYLVI LAUGHS]

JANINE: Yeah, I think it's—well, not jet boots, but I—[CHUCKLES] not jet boots, but rocket garters.

AUSTIN: Oh, rocket garters. Yeah, yeah, yeah.

DRE: Hell yeah.

ALI: Mhm.

JANINE: Just like a little, like—

SYLVI: Oh my god.

JANINE: A little jet strapped on each thigh.

ALI: Uh-huh.

AUSTIN: Yeah, I gotcha. Yeah, that's good to me.

SYLVI: Where do I get those in real life?

[ALI, AUSTIN, AND JANINE LAUGH]

ALI: Is this like a 'I ride with Thisbe' situation, then? Or is it like the three of us—

AUSTIN: [CHUCKLING] Where do I get a T-shirt that says 'I ride with Thisbe'?

[ALI AND KEITH LAUGH]

AUSTIN: Yeah, I don't know. It's up to y'all. Is Thisbe carrying Brnine? What is the Thisbe—Brnine relationship like in this moment—in this moment of time, broadly? Because I feel like it left on a rough note in some ways. Or a difficult note. An unresolved note.

[PAUSE]

JANINE AND ALI: [SIMULTANEOUS] Yeah.

[ALI LAUGHS]

AUSTIN: Damn.

KEITH: I have a comment on this.

JANINE: Um—

ALI: Oh? [CHUCKLES]

[AUSTIN LAUGHS]

KEITH: Earlier last night and today, I was listening to, like, the first Phrygian episode from PARTIZAN—

AUSTIN: Mhm.

KEITH: And there's a part where I offer to help, and Broun is like 'I start ordering Phrygian around like they're Thisbe.' And like—

ALI: [LAUGHING] Did I say that?

KEITH: [LAUGHS] Being like, 'come with me, but also, it's not—'

[SYLVI LAUGHS]

KEITH: Or like, 'can you help me with this', but also it's not like a 'can you help me with this', it's like a command.

AUSTIN: Yeah, I remember this. I remember this.

KEITH: And then, like, I—you tell me to inspect the wall, and then Broun is like, 'do you know the word inspection?'

[ALI, AUSTIN, AND KEITH BURST INTO LAUGHTER]

DRE: [CHUCKLING] Jesus.

AUSTIN: Broun is so toxic.

SYLVI: Oh my god.

KEITH: And—yeah. Oh, god, it was so funny.

[ALI CONTINUES LAUGHING]

AUSTIN: This is when you were driving around Oxbridge, right? And like, doing—going up to like—yeah, yeah, yeah. I remember this.

KEITH: Yes, yeah. Tapping the walls, yeah.

ALI: I remember being, like, condescending, but like, also sort of like, opening up about being like, 'so you're a scientist, right?'

KEITH: Yeah. Well, that's—was my response when you asked if I knew the word 'inspection'. I said 'I'm a scientist.'

[ALI LAUGHS]

AUSTIN: Ohh.

KEITH: And you're like, 'oh, that's cool.' [LAUGHS]

ALI: Yeah. It was a moment of bonding, yeah, yeah, yeah. Um...

AUSTIN: Uh-huh.

[SYLVI LAUGHS]

DRE: [CHUCKLING] Solid.

ALI: Anyway. [CHUCKLES] Me and Janine spoke about this very briefly yesterday in just trying to determine out vibes, and I think like, what I'm going for with Brnine at least is like, the feeling of when you see a friend after years and they like, really want you to like—[LAUGHING] they're like—they want to like, show you that they're better?

[AUSTIN GROANS]

ALI: They want to be like, 'come to my place, like, it's really clean, and I have a nicer apartment, you know, like I'm—'

AUSTIN: [GROANS] Well like, this is the thing—we haven't said this here, right? That like, Thisbe, what have you been spending your time doing in the last five years? Because you've not been on the Blue Channel the whole time.

JANINE: Thisbe—no. Thisbe has been in hiding, and I imagine, like, some of that might have been on a planet, but I think the majority of it was probably in like, ship-loading bays and like, hydroponic farms, and like, doing a lot of manual labor in places where Millennium Break could keep her out of sight, because she's extremely distinct, and, despite the fact that she's wearing a fun cloak, you can't just put a cloak over her and have people not be suspicious.

[10:11]

AUSTIN: [CHUCKLES] Right, she's still a big—

KEITH: Fun, fun men cloak.

AUSTIN: Yeah, yeah, yeah. She's still a big, like, ram robot.

JANINE: She's big, and like, the cloak cannot cover all of her distinctness.

AUSTIN: Yeah.

JANINE: It's just not how it works. And also, you know, Mow, to a degree, in combination with her, had a risk of being distinct, hence the new paint job, of just like, 'make him look as utilitarian as possible so he'll just blend into the background. If we do have her like, farming or whatever, we can—and we see someone suspicious coming around the ridge, we can, you know, hide her and then leave Mow out, and no one will think it's weird.'

So she's been—I think just like, around, going where she's needed, and this is the sort of the thing that I mentioned to Ali yesterday, was like, I think the reason she's on the Blue Channel is because she heard that they, like, needed people, and she didn't—you know, in her mind, she didn't say, like, 'I want to go do that,' she said, 'maybe I would be useful there.' Like, she basically said like, 'would I be useful?'

AUSTIN: Right.

JANINE: And that's her way of saying, like, 'assign me.' But like, I—it's like, sad to say it, but like, I think her relationship with Brnine right now is like—[EXHALES] Brnine is like everyone else, to Thisbe.

AUSTIN: Hey, I'd love you to create a new Gravity Clock with Brnine.

[ALI LAUGHS]

AUSTIN: And it should say 'Brnine is like everyone else.'

[DRE AND ALI CHUCKLE]

SYLVI: God.

JANINE: What I mean by that is like, Brnine doesn't have a place of privilege.

AUSTIN: No, I get it. [CHUCKLES] Yeah.

ALI: Uh-huh.

JANINE: And like, arguably—arguably, Brnine didn't—like, you know, Thisbe wouldn't have said before that Broun had a place of privilege.

AUSTIN: Uh-huh.

JANINE: But, you know, they did. And in this situation, it's just like, 'well, Brnine is a person that I know...'

AUSTIN: Right.

JANINE: But there's sort of nothing else there.

AUSTIN: "Gravity Clocks represent relationships and attachments you have with people and with groups."

[ALI GIGGLES] [JANINE CHUCKLES]

AUSTIN: "They're not measures of how much someone loves or hates you, they're countdowns to when a relationship is challenged, confronted, or addressed. What this looks like is up to you and the other party. It might be an admission that you want a different kind of relationship, a commitment to things continuing as they are, or you accepting that the relationship should be over entirely, but it should be significant."

“Gravity Clocks don’t have to be positive. They are for star-crossed lovers just as much as fierce rivals meeting on the battlefield time after time. If it seems like the forces of the universe are dragging two people together often, it might be gravity.

“Gravity Clocks are six-segment clocks and start empty. They are shared between two players, or a player and the Director representing a Director character, or a faction/group, and represent their relationship and how those characters see each other. When a clock advances, it advances for everyone involved. They are both sharing the same clock and the same progress.

“You don’t need a Gravity Clock for everyone you meet. You should save them for your character’s relationships you want to focus on and explore in play. For this reason, you may only be part of three gravity clocks at a time, as well as one for your rival, should you require one. When you make a Gravity Clock with one of the Director’s actors or a faction/group, you’re showing the Director that there’s someone you want to engage with often in play.

“When you start a new Gravity Clock, choose a word or short phrase that sums up the relationship and give it a value of +1. Whenever you make a move involving the other party of a clock, you may add the clock’s value instead of the normal trait or value. If you do so, advance the clock. You can start a new clock whenever it feels appropriate.”

We’ll talk about what happens when they get filled later, but basically, you can change the relationship, you can commit to it as it is, or you can abandon it entirely. A thing I really love about this game is stuff like the sentence “they’re not measures of how much someone loves or hates you, they’re countdowns to when a relationship is challenged. Challenged, confronted, or addressed.” A similar thing for me in this game is that the risks you take can be done to your Altar or to you directly. It’s not—there is no—you know, *Beam Saber* was a game about hiding behind your mech. Your mech could take damage, could take—instead of you taking Stress, your mech’s Quirks got damaged or whatever, if you might recall that. That is not the case here, because it’s modelling something—it’s modelling a different metaphor.

It’s modelling the sort of narrative structure of, you know, mecha anime and adventure anime more broadly, which is to say, when we spend screentime showing your sensors getting fucked up, or showing your mech’s shoulder being shot in, or showing you becoming, you know, distracted because you’re thinking about your past, or showing you being anxious because you’ve smelled magic on the air, all of those things are about a narrative clock ticking in a way, and about you being put into more and more harm’s way. And I really love that it’s thinking in this sort of metaphor of the narrative space, also with moves like B-Plot, which we talked about earlier, where, you know, you could—a B-Plot—a support character could just be off baking a cake somewhere, and the action could cut away to them baking a cake, and that could be important for the game flow, and for the events happening, you know, on the battlefield still, because that’s the way stories get told in this format.

So I really love that Gravity is not about—it’s not ‘you shouldn’t have a Gravity Clock with Brnine because you’re not that tight with Brnine right now,’ it’s that we as players are interested in the Brnine–Thisbe relationship, and at some point we should reassess what that relationship is. You know?

So Brnine, you should also write this down. 'Thisbe thinks of me as like I'm everybody else,' or something like that, you know?

ALI: [LAUGHS] My Gravity Clock would be like, 'I'm glad Thisbe's back.'

AUSTIN: But it should be—it should be the same thing as—effectively, right? In this case.

ALI: No, no, no, I know, I know, just, in terms of like, reflecting—

AUSTIN: How you feel about—yeah.

ALI: Yeah, the two versions of this relationship. And I guess this is also an important thing in what I was talking about with Janine, because I feel like it's also like, an in-character misconception.

[AUSTIN HUMS]

ALI: Because part of what I asked Janine was like, in terms of like, how much agency did Thisbe really have in terms of where she was stationed.

AUSTIN: Right.

ALI: And, if, you know, we have five years of Brnine sort of building this career as a captain and like, also having to go through the thing of like 'well, I'm not able to pull Thisbe's personnel file if I'm trying to do XYZ, or if the mission calls for whatever,' so it's just like, been this span of time where like, they weren't thinking about each other.

AUSTIN: Mhm.

ALI: So, yeah. [CHUCKLES]

AUSTIN: [EXHALES] Well, you know, irony of ironies, as the two of you begin moving north towards your objective, it's you two who suddenly can talk to each other again as you move out of the range of whatever befuddlement aura the knife-dragon is emanating. And suddenly you can hear each other again and make sense of one another. And partly, you can just tell this because your communications click back on. You know, your radio signals reconnect.

Anything else here before we check in on Figure in Bismuth who hasn't gotten to do anything yet? And we'll follow back up with Thisbe and Brnine as they get to the objective, but I feel like—yeah, let's leave you on this other note. Your communications are able to connect again, and also you pick up a figure up near the place that you're headed, where it says 'Fundament node'. It is the same woman who was seen in the battlefield wreckage above, now trying to access this thing that you are also racing towards.

Figure in Bismuth. Sorry for saying 'figure' twice and it wasn't you one of those times.

DRE: That's okay.

AUSTIN: I have to get used to it. I always say 'person' or 'silhouette' or something, you know?

DRE: Mhm. Um—[EXHALES]

AUSTIN: So what are you up to, Figure?

DRE: Well, so, do I see Broun—like, can I tell that Broun is like, leaving and going with—

AUSTIN: I think you mean Brnine.

[ALI CHUCKLES]

DRE: Brnine. Yeah, sorry. Yeah, no. Who's that?

ALI: [CHUCKLING] It's okay.

AUSTIN: Which, really quick, I just want to be clear—Brnine uses 'Brnine' now in the ship too, right?

ALI: Yeah, like, one hundred percent. Yeah.

DRE: Yeah, yeah, yeah.

AUSTIN: Like, they're not—yeah. So, Figure, yes, you do see Brnine going away with Thisbe north towards the objective.

DRE: Okay. Then I—I mean, I think Figure anyway would be going towards the objective, but doubly so.

AUSTIN: Okay.

DRE: Because that's—that's where like, the commander is going.

AUSTIN: Gotcha. Alright. So the three of you, then, begin heading north, leaving Cori and Phrygian to kind of deal with the dragon and the village and all the rest of this. So let's swing back over to those two. Phrygian, have you moved up closer, or are you staying in sniper range while Cori and the Chariot Mk. 2 stay in melee range?

KEITH: That's a good question. How many are left? Are there still like three, or four—

AUSTIN: There are three left, and there are—so there are three left, and then also there is the dragon. There is the Cleave wyvern or whatever it is.

KEITH: Well, maybe also a good time to clear up something about The Beast Within—

AUSTIN: Mm.

KEITH: The text of it says... "You may roll Defy to release this ancient power and enter your Ascended form. While Ascended, you count as Tier 3 and can go toe-to-toe with Astirs [AS - ters]." Or 'Astirs' [a - STIRS], I'm still doing that.

AUSTIN: It's fine.

[20:00]

KEITH: “All your Miscreated gear is accessible to you and counts as Tier 3 while Ascended. On a 10+, bla-bla-bla...” Oh, no, I guess that’s not where... “Once you run out of Hold, you transform back into your original self at the end of the scene—”

AUSTIN: Yes.

KEITH: “—retaining any dangers.” The scene is—

AUSTIN: [OVERLAPPING] So you would stay—you would stay your size for the scene.

KEITH: You just can’t do any more Hold.

AUSTIN: You wouldn’t get more—you can’t spend the Hold anymore, yes.

KEITH: Right. And you can’t—

AUSTIN: You don’t immediately shrink back down or anything.

KEITH: And you can’t intentionally shrink back down and reroll?

[DRE CHUCKLES]

AUSTIN: Uh, I would say no.

KEITH: Okay.

AUSTIN: The rule does not say you can do that, so.

KEITH: Right. Right. So that’s sort of the thing is, I was trying to figure out—I can’t redo it, but I also don’t have to go back.

AUSTIN: Correct, yes.

KEITH: I can just be a normal mech without my bonus moves.

AUSTIN: Totally.

KEITH: Also, this is kind of funny, when you pasted the “on a negative—on a 6 or less, Hold one, the Director chooses” list, you copied some other class’s things—

AUSTIN: Oh.

KEITH: —and it was all bizarre and way wrong, and I was like—

AUSTIN: [LAUGHS] Apologies.

KEITH: ‘Wait, none of this—they don’t know that we’re in a meeting? What is this one?’

[AUSTIN LAUGHS]

KEITH: [LAUGHS] I was like, this can't be right. So, yeah.

AUSTIN: Oh, I think it was—was it the Diplomat, maybe? Maybe that was the—'cause I—I think I bas—so I had to build this sheet, because this sheet is—this playbook is so new that it isn't in the—it's new and it's a fan playbook, right?

KEITH: Right. Yeah.

AUSTIN: So it comes with something else. Yeah, was it—was it—"There's no risk of ambush or interference." Yeah.

KEITH: [OVERLAPPING] "There's no risk of ambush or interference." Yeah. I was like—

AUSTIN: [LAUGHING] "Third parties aren't privy to the contents of the meeting."

[KEITH LAUGHS]

AUSTIN: [LAUGHING] That's such a funny—I've turned into my big—my super robot mode, and third parties aren't privy to any meetings I'm in.

[ALI LAUGHS]

KEITH: [LAUGHS] It's just like, everything was actually kind of positive, but also kind of irrelevant.

AUSTIN: Right. I would be theoretically choosing one of those if you failed. If you roll the dice that way, and I go, 'hey, don't worry, there's no risk of ambush or interference.'

KEITH: Right. [LAUGHING] Yes. Yeah. Third parties are not privy, don't worry, to you rolling a 6.

AUSTIN: Everybody—yeah, you rolled a 3, but don't worry, everybody's willing to discuss in good faith. Yeah, uh-huh.

KEITH: Yeah. [LAUGHS]

AUSTIN: Thank you for fixing that. Very funny. Alright, so what are you doing? So, yeah, are you closing this, are you staying in sni—you're fairly range-focused, right?

KEITH: Yes. I noticed that our big robots were very melee-focused, and so I took a ranged weapon and a sniper weapon. And, um... The thing I'm deciding between is that my Buccal Outpocket, one of its tags is Bane.

[AUSTIN HUMS]

KEITH: Which means that I can, without penalty, use it against enemies of a tier higher than myself.

AUSTIN: Correct.

KEITH: Which would be good against this dragon, but I don't know what's going on—I don't

want to start shooting at the dragon.

AUSTIN: Also, I would say you would need to get rid of the Deflated tag, or the Deflated Risk, before using it.

KEITH: Maybe that's what I'll do, is I'll Cool Off.

AUSTIN: You'll Cool Off. Do you want to read me what Cool Off says over on the 'moves and rules' page?

KEITH: Yeah, Cool Off. Okay. Here we go. "When you take a moment in safety to cool off or help someone else do the same, declare a Risk you want to get rid of and roll whatever Trait seems most appropriate. On a 10+, you or they erase a Risk or untick Overheating from an Astir [AS-ter]—" An Astir [a-STIR], oh my god. "On a 7-9, as above, but you—as above, but your moment of safety is interrupted."

AUSTIN: This feels Defy to me.

KEITH: Yeah, yeah.

AUSTIN: In that like, you're trying to like, reflate yourself. Is that a word?

KEITH: Yeah.

[SYLVI LAUGHS]

KEITH: Inflate.

AUSTIN: No, I think it's reflate. 'Cause—

KEITH: I think it's reflate.

SYLVI: Yeah. Reflate sounds right.

[AUSTIN CHUCKLES]

KEITH: Yeah. De-uninflate.

JANINE: I don't want to pocket-shame, but this is all gross.

[AUSTIN AND KEITH LAUGH]

AUSTIN: So yeah, give me 2d6 plus Defy.

KEITH: Yeah, +2, in my case.

AUSTIN: Mhm.

KEITH: That's a 12.

AUSTIN: That is a 12. So, yes. Go ahead and clear—what's—tell—hm. It just goes back to

normal. We don't have to get—Janine just said—

KEITH: Are you sure?

AUSTIN: Janine just said it's gross, we can just say it goes back to normal. Right?

KEITH: Okay. We don't want to do—

AUSTIN: Nah.

KEITH: —earmuffs and I'll be gross?

AUSTIN: No, I think you're good—I think we can fill in the gaps.

KEITH: Okay.

JANINE: I just—I don't even know how you content warn for like, sack descriptions and stuff, you know?

AUSTIN: I'll figure it out.

[GROUP LAUGHTER]

KEITH: [LAUGHING] Well, you don't do it like that!

DRE: [OVERLAPPING] "CW: Sack Descriptions" is how you do it.

SYLVI: No, no, I think you do it exactly like that.

AUSTIN: PALISADE—

KEITH: Just so everyone knows, on this season of Friends at the Table, we're going hard into sack descriptions, so.

AUSTIN: PALISADE is a season about revolution—

JANINE: [OVERLAPPING] It's the sack season.

AUSTIN: —colonialism, war, and sack descriptions.

JANINE: Deflating sacks.

AUSTIN: Deflating sacks. Yeah.

KEITH: Yeah.

[ALI GROANS]

SYLVI: We've got to stop saying 'sack'.

AUSTIN: Check the content warnings.

[JANINE LAUGHS]

KEITH: I will say, playing the Miscreated intersects issues of medical horror, body horror—

AUSTIN: Yeah.

KEITH: So it is—I think I am playing the sack class.

[SYLVI AND DRE STIFLE LAUGHTER]

AUSTIN: I mean, we made a decision here, like—genuinely. Genuinely, we should say, we considered also, instead of doing the Miscreated, we—you know. When we were doing our like, pre-production meeting, you were gonna play a different class.

KEITH: Yeah.

AUSTIN: You were going to play the Advocate, which is a sort of druid-esque class.

KEITH: Yeah.

AUSTIN: It also is a person who can become big using a move, and taking like an Astir form, basically, an Astir form, an Altar form for us—

KEITH: Yeah, yeah. Both very Phrygian.

AUSTIN: Yes. Both very Phrygian in different ways. The alt—the Advocate was really focused on the idea of like, having a relationship with the environment or nature or your surroundings in a real way, and also you could become a big robot. And then the Miscreated literally—so, it says, the thing that you were saying was, “The Miscreated intersects with issues of medical horror, body horror, disability, and plurality, so be mindful when playing. Mechanically, the Miscreated is considered a support playbook, so they have access to Quarters,” da-da-da... But specifically, there’s this notion of like—here we go.

“There’s something powerful and monstrous within you. Perhaps the authority created you to be a super-soldier and you defected, or you experimented upon yourself to become something greater than you were in order to participate in this ceaseless war, but deep down within, there is a being just waiting to unleash devastation on the battlefield.” One of their magic descriptions is “a mess of neon wires and caustic tubes,” your moves are named things like “The Beast Within” and “Transgressive Body” and “To Thine Own Self Be True”, and, you know, there’s a move—I don’t think you have this move, but there’s one that’s “Your transformation is horrifying. When you use The Beast Within, everyone who can see you takes a Risk, including allies. You can give up a Hold to shield one person from the Risk.”

So like, this is a book—this is a playbook much more about the social position of being othered, right?

KEITH: Yeah.

AUSTIN: In a body that changes and expresses itself in new ways. We don’t have to get

into—we don't have to keep getting into other moves that you don't have yet, but like, a lot of them are about additional different forms or other stuff—you know, you have a move you haven't used yet that could be part of this, you know? So.

KEITH: Yeah. The vibe of it also is very, like, fictionally similar to the Branched in general.

AUSTIN: Yes, that's exactly what I mean. Yeah. I mean, I—you know, I don't know that I've said this in as many words, but like, the Branched for me are culturally about something like, but somehow even more expansive than, like, gender euphoria. Right? Like, it is 'I could be anything. I could be a grove of trees. I could be a bedroom other people sleep in. I could be—I can express myself in this whole, massive, incredible way, and that's been taken from us, and instead, I have to be—I have to be diplomat form or war form.' Right? Envoy form is what we called it before, right?

KEITH: Yeah.

AUSTIN: 'I have to be one of these instrumentalized utilitarian forms, because if I don't do that, they will fucking crush us. We have figured out—'

KEITH: Right. Because part of the thing about the Branched is being from—being a totally—totally outside the Divine Principality, having, you know, very alien—literally—ideas of what—of like, what would be the form that they would most want to take, like—

AUSTIN: Correct.

KEITH: You know, often times those being sort of like, normatively horrifying forms.

AUSTIN: Right, like—the thing that I always talk about is like, if you saw a cockroach out of the corner of your eye. That feeling that you might get, or if you touched a hot stove by mistake, or if you took a sip of something that you thought was—you thought you were about to sip some iced tea, but instead you were sipping a really hoppy beer. And so you were expecting the really smooth drink, and instead you hit the really rough hops, that's what it is to see a Branched for the first time, for people in the Principality—

KEITH: Yeah. Thinking something is Coke, but it's actually coffee.

AUSTIN: But it's—exactly that feeling, right? And it's—fucking good—that is, for the Branched, it's like, 'yeah, I'm the thing I want to be, fully, fully.'

[30:00]

And, you know, part of the thing about living with more Bra—like, I suspect it's the case that part of the reason you don't have that move is right now it's not that scary for Broun—or, hm, I did it. For Brnine to see you transform. You live with Brnine at this point. Brnine is acculturating themselves to you. In fact, every character in this—at this table, is really focused on being a person who is trying to figure out what the fuck their deal is in terms of their Hooks and in terms of their playbooks.

I haven't recorded the intro to this yet, but the thing I have written down is like, the phrase for the season. Right? You know how we've had "we could have made them look like anything, but we made them look like us," we've had "we thought we were building mirrors, we were setting fires." For this, right now, according to PALISADE intros—PALISADE—"Season 8 Intros: PALISADE" Google doc, the thing I have written here at the bottom is "we have held our breath and closed our eyes, we have tied ourselves down with rope and wire, we have calculated retrograde thrust vectors, we have moved against the tide in perfect rhythm, but when you—"

KEITH: That's literally the checklist to fire Buccal Outpocket.

AUSTIN: That's what you gotta do.

[KEITH CHUCKLES]

AUSTIN: "But when you look back, you cannot stop it. Nothing is stationary." Right? This is the season about the inability of standing still. The impossibility of remaining one thing forever. And in fact, that that should be a good thing, or could be a good thing, if not for the conditions and contexts we are forced to live in. So, Phrygian, you reflate yourself, and it is a moment of beauty [CHUCKLES] in my mind.

KEITH: Dre in the chat asked, "sack color?"

AUSTIN: Oh, I missed this.

KEITH: I'm gonna say it's a viridian sack.

ALI: Ooh.

KEITH: This is a silvery sage, sort of slightly pastel, sack.

AUSTIN: [OVERLAPPING] Whenever I see—

SYLVI: Viridian sack is sort of—

JANINE: [OVERLAPPING] I thought you were going to say pesto. Slightly pesto sack.

[ALI SNORTS] [AUSTIN LAUGHS]

KEITH: Slightly pesto! There's a little—there's some pine nuts in there.

JANINE: Yeah, right?

AUSTIN: Whenever I see someone make a Friends at the Table name generator, it always comes up with names like Viridian Sack.

[DRE CHUCKLES]

SYLVI: Yeah, Viridian Sack is like the mistranslated name for Ver'million Blue.

[GROUP LAUGHTER]

AUSTIN: Oh, lord. [CHUCKLING] Um, Cori, what do you do?

SYLVI: Um... I feel like... The Ploughs are still a problem, right?

AUSTIN: Yeah, the Ploughs are still a problem. The Ploughs are still a threat, uh-huh.

SYLVI: Yeah, I'm gonna keep fighting these fuckers.

AUSTIN: Uh-huh. Yeah. So you've smashed one's, like, halo, apart, and at this point I think that one has now switched to its big bulldozer kind of maul. And is like, swinging at you and dodging, you know, you're engaged at this point, in that way. And, again, you can continue to hear the communications between these groups, that like, they can't make sense of one another, but they're starting to try to send other types of messages, they're trying to like, figure out a way to communicate despite the wyvern's presence here. And also, I would say, in the background, the big table mech is like, shooting up at the wyvern. That fight is still happening, we just, you know. It's not our focal point. So, are you gonna try to follow up on the one that you'd already hit once?

SYLVI: I think so. I think that that makes the most sense for me, like, I might as well capitalize on the risk I've given this.

AUSTIN: That sounds good.

SYLVI: So I have a question about the Altar—one of the Altar, like, equipment things I have here?

AUSTIN: Yeah.

SYLVI: 'Cause it was—we were like, kind of unsure of it when we first did character creation, but I think we sorted out that Input Channel, which is “make a chosen move with plus Channel,” means you select one type of move—

AUSTIN: You select one move at the beginning of—when your character created, yes.

SYLVI: Cool. So I've done that with Exchange Blows.

AUSTIN: Good idea.

SYLVI: Yeah, so—

AUSTIN: And your Channel is currently 3, because you haven't pissed off Devotion at all yet.

SYLVI: No, I'm a—I'm a perfect little sweetie. Um... So I'm gonna fuckin' bash this guy's brains in. [LAUGHS]

AUSTIN: [LAUGHS] Alright. That sounds—

SYLVI: Yeah.

AUSTIN: You've got a big sick mace, is the thing that you have, right?

SYLVI: Yes.

AUSTIN: You have like, a morning star and a shield.

SYLVI: It's a morning star, yeah.

AUSTIN: Which is nice, because it also—that has the tag Defensive, which, let's not forget about that—

SYLVI: It does.

AUSTIN: —because I believe that can come up... gear tags.

KEITH: Lets you reroll a, um—an attack roll, but not the Strike Decisively, the other one—

AUSTIN: Exchange Blows.

KEITH: Exchanging Blows, yeah.

AUSTIN: It does, yeah. “Defensive is excellent for keeping foes at a distance, parrying their blows, or suppressing them.”

SYLVI: Wow.

AUSTIN: “Once per scene, you may reroll a failed Exchange Blows roll.” So that could come up here. So go ahead and give me your—

SYLVI: That could come up here.

AUSTIN: 2d6+3.

[PAUSE]

AUSTIN: It does not need to come up here. You have got—you have rolled a 10.

SYLVI: I got a 10.

AUSTIN: So, when you roll a 10 on—actually, do you want to read me Exchange Blows over on the Moves tab of our sheets?

SYLVI: Yeah. One second, I'm switchin' tabs.

AUSTIN: I getcha.

SYLVI: Um... There we go. A-ba-ba... where's Exchange Blows on here? Oh, there it is. “When you Exchange Blows with foes capable of defending themselves, roll plus Clash or Talk.” Or, in this case, Channel. “Whichever is more appropriate, and advance a Gravity Clock if you have one. On a 10+, either your opponent takes a Risk, or you take a Risk and put your opponent in peril. On a 7-9, both you and your target are forced to take a Risk.” I think I'm gonna take the Risk here. The Risk—[SIGHS] Exposed was what immediately jumped in the mind, it feels like a

little more vulnerable than I'm thinking here.

AUSTIN: Mhm. I still think that that—that could still work though, because—

SYLVI: Yeah.

AUSTIN: I'm imagining part of this is like, you're going—it's one of those things where you're taking like, a big hit and there's, like in fighting game terminology, you have—fuck, I've already forgot. What's the phrase? What's the phrase for like, you—what do you—

SYLVI: It's a meaty. Is that anything?

AUSTIN: No, but what's the—no, it's a word—it's a very, like, fundamental word in fighting games, where it's like, your recovery, like—your 'in recovery' is long. Right?

DRE: Wake-up?

AUSTIN: Your wake-up—no, not wake-up. There's another word for this. This is gonna kill me.

DRE: Uh... I don't know.

AUSTIN: It's fine.

SYLVI: It's fine.

AUSTIN: You're just vulnerable after a big swing, and you're like, your hit frames are very out there right now.

SYLVI: Oh, yeah, yeah, yeah.

AUSTIN: You know what I'm talking about.

SYLVI: I do know what you mean. I don't know if recovery frames is the right thing, but.

AUSTIN: It might be right, but. So yeah, that makes perfect sense to me. And what are you giving the... the thing that you're hitting? Which again, is a Hauberk.

SYLVI: So, if it's a—I thought I was attacking the Plough.

AUSTIN: [OVERLAPPING] Or no, it's not, sorry, it's a Plough, it's a Plough. My bad.

SYLVI: Yeah. Um... I think that this hit is going for the—you described the sort of, um—oh, one sec, let me write down those—you described the sort of stained glass chest that it has—

AUSTIN: [OVERLAPPING] Like the stained glass cockpit? Yeah, yeah.

SYLVI: So I think I'm gonna give it the Peril Shattered.

AUSTIN: You find that it is—you shatter it. I'm giving it Shattered. It is now defenseless. But, you do find it to be a more resistant material than you expected. You hit it once the way you expect to need to hit it, and it doesn't shatter. And you have to hit it with a follow-up blow that breaks it

open and reveals the pilot inside. The pilot, you get like a look at them, and it's a little like looking in a mirror. Not because they are a cute pink-haired girl—

[SYLVI LAUGHS]

AUSTIN: —but because they have the same level of devotion. They—or maybe not devotion, maybe it's more like they're devout, right? They are committed to this, what they're doing. They like—their—you know—you see them working the controls, and they take the two steps back, and in the same way that you have your wings that represent your connection to the Divine that you're connected to, you see them open their mouths and like, a little burst of fire. Like, they go [EXHALES] and like, fire comes out of their mouth.

SYLVI: Oh my god.

AUSTIN: Mhm. And their eyes light. And, like, take a step back, and are gonna, you know, continue this melee with you.

Alright, Thisbe and Figure and Brnine, you make your way to what I would call a much smaller elevator, or like a similar doorway, your mechs will not fit down this one. This is just, you know. A doorway to a—you know, I actually think it's like, one of those like, sliding grate elevators, do you know what I mean? Like an old building—

ALI: Mhm.

AUSTIN: Like a vintage early 20th century elevator where you have to like, slide the little grate away. It's one of those. And you are yet again waiting for the elevator to come back up, because the person who was in front of you who you've been chasing directly or indirectly this whole time, has already taken it down and it's—you hit the button to come down—actually, you know what? I actually think that it is probably not just a thing you are allowed to hit a button to access. This is a classic 'you need some sort of security code or key card' situation in order to access the Fundament node.

[DRE HUMS]

AUSTIN: That is not a thing that's just undefended. What do you do?

ALI: How far do—like, how far is this person from us?

AUSTIN: They're down the elevator shaft. So they're—

ALI: Okay, but that's like a story, two stories?

AUSTIN: It's—I think it's probably more like five stories.

ALI: Okay.

AUSTIN: You—Thisbe might be able to jump this and be safe. Thisbe—Thisbe tough, you know?

JANINE: I can fly—I also fly now. I fly right now.

[ALI CHUCKLES]

AUSTIN: Thisbe fly now, so yeah. So you could rip this gate open and then jump down there—but, again, it is—

DRE: We can also blow this gate up.

AUSTIN: You totally could.

[40:00]

ALI: I mean, I'm willing to do some hacker stuff on the—just to make the elevator work. For us to be safe.

AUSTIN: Up to y'all whether you want to—yes, it's up to y'all how you want to handle this. If you want to break down the wall, or do you want to be a hacker and get in hack-wise.

DRE: Captain?

JANINE: Is there merit to both?

[ALI CHUCKLES]

AUSTIN: Yeah. Yeah, I think there's merit to—I think there's merit to either. Different merit for different things, you know? Yeah, I think—it sounds like everyone's looking at you, Brnine. Mow certainly turns and looks at you.

ALI: [LAUGHS] Yeah. I think I—

AUSTIN: Okay.

ALI: I have like, a little—

AUSTIN: Yeah, what's it look like? What's your—

ALI: —pocket computer that I, like, plug in some like, weird little thingy into a device.

AUSTIN: Yeah, I feel like, by the way, we're still in the world of big push-buttons and clicky-clacky keys and—

KEITH: I just love a pocket computer.

[ALI CHUCKLES]

AUSTIN: —and, you know, a touch screen can still only do one—well, here's what I want to say. I think last year, right after developing and showing off the Altar, Exan—at that same show, Exanceaster March was like “And one more thing.” And took out a Palm Pilot—

[SYLVI LAUGHS]

KEITH: Oh, the Steve Jobs thing.

SYLVI: He did the fucking Steve Jobs iPhone thing?!

AUSTIN: Yeah.

SYLVI: Oh my god.

AUSTIN: And it's a touch screen that can do three different things, instead of one thing.

[KEITH LAUGHS]

ALI: Woah.

AUSTIN: It can run—it can run three different types of program total. It's like you can do your taxes on it, you can check the weather, and you can send an email, and that is it.

DRE: Ooh.

[ALI CHUCKLES]

SYLVI: Oh my god.

KEITH: I think I'll take the clicky-clacky keys.

AUSTIN: Yeah, uh-huh. Big same.

ALI: Yeah, I—I think one of those compact, like, keyboards basically—

JANINE: I posted one in PALISADE, and I want to go back to this.

ALI: [CHUCKLING] Yeah.

AUSTIN: Oh, yeah. This is great.

JANINE: I think I had this exact one because like, my dad got it, but then the thing broke, so I just like—it still worked, but it wasn't like good for working with. So I just fucked around with it.

AUSTIN: Mhm.

JANINE: I would go back to this in a heartbeat.

ALI: This is a Sharp Q—ZQ-570M, according to this—

AUSTIN: Has 256 kilobytes of memory.

[KEITH SIGHS]

ALI: Let's do it.

JANINE: And it's multilingual.

KEITH: Yeah.

AUSTIN: It is multilingual.

[ALI CHUCKLES]

KEITH: God, look at how—so much space dedicated for a calculator.

[ALI AND JANINE CHUCKLE]

AUSTIN: Yeah, it's wild.

KEITH: What an absolute—

AUSTIN: The word “sync” appears on this twice, which I love quite a bit.

ALI: Imagine this with jumper cables attached to it.

AUSTIN: Yeah, yeah, yeah, uh-huh.

ALI: And you like, had to open like, a computer panel and hook them on.

JANINE: In the option port slot?

AUSTIN: Yes, exactly. I think this is probably Weather the Storm, but with Know? Does that sound right? You're being think-y?

ALI: Yeah.

AUSTIN: What's your Know?

ALI: So that's a $2d6+1$?

AUSTIN: That is a $2d6+1$.

ALI: Can I, um... I just feel like I have all these points. Can I like, give myself advantage here?

AUSTIN: Using Tactical Genius?

ALI: Tactical Genius?

AUSTIN: No, I don't think you can, because you're supposed to be advising or supporting someone from—

ALI: From afar. Okay, sure.

AUSTIN: From afar, uh-huh.

[ALI CHUCKLES]

AUSTIN: You know, you could give yourself a Confidence roll using Asepsis if you want to tell me how you have Asepsis hooked into this shit.

[ALI LAUGHS]

AUSTIN: I feel like that might be overkill, but I wouldn't say no.

ALI: You know what? Asepsis, you're a great pal, I'd love to have you on the crew.

AUSTIN: Do you talk to As—does Asepsis talk to you at this point? Is Asepsis—

ALI: It's so weird—I've been thinking about—

KEITH: It whispers, right?

ALI: [CHUCKLES] That's a—like, I don't know how much of it is, like, verbal communication, and I know that we've talked about this, and we don't want it to be like a, like a Divine—Cadent relationship—

AUSTIN: Mhm, mhm.

ALI: But there is—[CHUCKLING] there's kind of a quid pro quo happening here, in terms of the like, Hooks.

AUSTIN: Yeah. It explicitly has whispered in your ear something. So I'm kind of curious—like, so again, specifically, you have a Hook that is “verify the integrity of anyone you let on the ship.” Is that a thing that just placed its hooks in you—is that just a thought that came to you one day, or was it something that Asepsis—how—can you point to the moment you started believing that, and if so, was it an active thing that Asepsis convinced you of, or was it a thing that just kind of quietly took root?

ALI: Hmm. I feel like... [SEARCHES FOR WORDS] When we—when we sort of came to this, we were thinking of like, you know, maybe there was one time when there was a spy on the ship or whatever, and Asepsis sort of sniffed that out, so I wonder if it was like, not quite like a verbal situation, but it was like—Asepsis sort of like, refusing to work—

AUSTIN: Interesting.

ALI: —as a way to like, signal what they—what it saw in, like, a crew member, or like, a Millennium Break person who came onto the ship that ended up being like a double agent or whatever.

AUSTIN: Right.

ALI: And now, through Brnine solving that situation—

[DRE LAUGHS]

ALI: —and, um... having Asepsis sort of reactivate after that—

AUSTIN: Right.

ALI: It became like, a learning experience. Through that, but not, like—

AUSTIN: Through that—that experience is what led you to that. It's not [LOUD WHISPERING] “Hey, hey, hey, hey, hey.”

ALI: [LAUGHS] Yeah.

AUSTIN: “Don’t trust that motherfucker.”

ALI: Yeah.

AUSTIN: Okay.

ALI: Unless there’s some like, ASCII screen or whatever, like, green bot text that [LAUGHING] Asepsis does—

AUSTIN: Oh, that’s fun, too, though. You just getting like, texts from it—

JANINE: ‘Ass-y’ screen?

AUSTIN: I think it’s ‘ask-y’. We’re talking about ASCII art? A-S-C-I-I?

ALI: [LAUGHING] Yeah, yes, yeah.

AUSTIN: I see why you would say ‘see’.

SYLVI: I like ‘ass-y’.

[ALI AND JANINE LAUGH]

JANINE: I’m just saying, saying ‘an ass-y screen’ sounds a little bit deprecating to a screen. It’s probably a fine screen.

[ALI LAUGHS]

SYLVI: I don’t know, that thing you linked has kind of an ass-y screen, Janine.

AUSTIN: It does kind of have an ass-y screen.

[ALI LAUGHS]

DRE: Mhm.

AUSTIN: Okay. Well, what did you—did you roll? Did you succeed? You didn’t roll yet. You’re—

ALI: No. I am—this is all to say that I think it would—I don’t think that I am calling—

AUSTIN: You think it would be a little much to—

ALI: —on the power of the Divine to—to help me with this elevator.

AUSTIN: Okay. [CHUCKLES]

ALI: [LAUGHS] It would be upset with me if I did that.

AUSTIN: Yes.

ALI: I rolled a 1d6, so—

AUSTIN: Oh my g—

ALI: I'm gonna roll one more, yeah, yeah.

AUSTIN: Oh yeah, roll one more d6.

[ALI CHUCKLES]

AUSTIN: Jesus. I was like, oh my god, did—no.

[PAUSE]

AUSTIN: 4, 5, 6, 7.

ALI: That's still—

AUSTIN: No, that's a 7. That's a—4 plus 2 is 6, plus 1 is 7.

ALI: Okay.

AUSTIN: So. Can you read me from that same place I keep making people read from, "Weather the Storm"?

ALI: Yes. Weather the Storm says: "When you Weather the Storm, do something safely under pressure—to do something safely under pressure, roll plus Know to make it through quick—with quick thinking or an ace up your sleeve. On a 7-9, you succeed at some cost. It'll keep you occupied for longer than you thought, the Director will ask you to make a difficult choice, or you'll burn a point of Spotlight as you take a dramatic action."

AUSTIN: Ooh, interesting. I don't think this is that dramatic of an action, you know what I mean? So I think the—the choice that you have to make here is yes, you can get people on board, but what you can't do is stop it from sending a signal down to let whoever's down there know that someone has summoned the elevator and that it is gonna be coming down. So you can do it this way, but you will be sending a signal down there, being like—you know, it'll go 'ding'. They'll look up at the elevator and it will say 'going up!' You know what I mean?

ALI: Right, sure, sure, sure.

AUSTIN: You can't stop that, so. Is that okay? Are you going forward with that anyway?

ALI: I think so. I think like, fictionally, I was already—I was sort of fictionally picturing Brnine, like, working on this thing, but also doing the like, captain thing of like, you know, 'we might run into someone down there, they've been non-lethal up until this point,' like, 'don't engage,' um... And I think to Figure and Thisbe, this is sort of—they're not like, [LAUGHING] the part of the crew that I would have to worry about this with.

AUSTIN: Right, right.

ALI: But it feels worth saying.

AUSTIN: Yeah, that makes sense. Okay. You load yourselves in, and it is a little cramped in here, Thisbe, like, I know you're very tall, so—you probably come up to about where the, you know, roof of the ceiling, of this elevator is. But you're able to like, you know. Be a little—kneel down just a little bit to be a little more comfortable. And there is no floor option, there's no—you know, it's taking you down to the Fundament node. And when you do, the doors open, and you find a person pointing a gun at you.

It is not the woman you have been chasing, but it is another person with moss covering parts of their skin, but who otherwise looks like a mostly human figure. There's no extra arms, there's no—you know, I guess, actually, maybe the, um... da-da-da... no, I think that that's right. I think it's basically a human. And he goes, um...

AUSTIN (as GUNMAN): Who are you? What's your business here?

AUSTIN: And has like, a rifle. Or probably just—probably a shotgun. Like, a really low-tech—maybe even homemade-looking shotgun pointed at you. What do you do?

DRE: Uh... let's see.

[ALI CHUCKLES]

DRE: I'm gonna charge him and try to disarm him.

AUSTIN: Oh, boy. Okay. That, to me, sounds like Clash.

DRE: Mhm.

AUSTIN: Give me a roll. Or, to me—I guess actually, what I should say out loud, is not Clash, that to me sounds like Exchange Blows. You're exchanging blows with a foe capable of defending themselves, you're gonna roll plus Clash. What's your Clash?

[50:02]

DRE: Yep. 2.

AUSTIN: Alright. Give me a—I guess give me the 2d6+2.

KEITH: That's good Clash.

AUSTIN: Yeah.

DRE: The Figure rolled a 4.

AUSTIN: Nope, did you not—

DRE: Double 1s, baby.

AUSTIN: Did you roll a 4? Oh, I see. You did in fact roll 1–1.

KEITH: That's really...

DRE: Yes.

AUSTIN: Does anybody want to aid or Help or Hinder, here?

KEITH: I'm not even there, right? This is like—

AUSTIN: No, you're not. This is not—this is down an elevator five floors underneath you as you fight robots above.

KEITH: Yeah, yeah.

DRE: Quick, shoot a gun through the floor. It'll work.

SYLVI: Use your sack again!

[KEITH AND JANINE CHUCKLE]

AUSTIN: God.

JANINE: I'll Help or Hinder.

AUSTIN: How? What are you doing?

JANINE: Um...

AUSTIN: Give me a picture.

JANINE: I'm gonna be honest, I don't think this person maybe was expecting a Thisbe in the elevator.

AUSTIN: Yeah, fair.

JANINE: I think Thisbe's also eager to get out and stand up straight, and a threat being there means that I think she is pretty hot on Figure's heels in terms of like 'okay, let's—we're dealing with this now.'

AUSTIN: Mhm.

JANINE: I—so I think she's like, rushing into the fray basically, immediately kind of behind them, being huge and weird.

AUSTIN: Being huge. Okay, give me—you don't have a clock with—a Gravity Clock with The Figure at this point.

JANINE: No.

AUSTIN: So I think you instead—oh no, right, sorry, there's this whole other checklist. Have you

spent meaningful time together before this Sortie with The Figure in Bismuth?

JANINE: I mean, the—

AUSTIN: You've been on the crew together.

JANINE: Does last season count?

DRE: [OVERLAPPING] Yeah.

AUSTIN: Yeah, I think so.

DRE: Yeah.

AUSTIN: A hundred percent. So take +1. They are not part of your Hooks, so there's nothing there, and you've not Helped or Hindered—you've not Helped or Hindered—they have not Helped or Hindered you previously in this session, so go ahead and take... take—or roll 2d6+1. I've also just read further and have realized that we did something wrong before, or it failed before, so it didn't matter, I think, maybe. [CHUCKLES] So.

[JANINE HUMS]

AUSTIN: So give me the 2d6+1.

[PAUSE]

AUSTIN: Oh. Rough.

DRE: Let's gooo.

AUSTIN: These rolls are brutal today. 2+3+1.

JANINE: I do also have—

KEITH: Yeah, what's going on, everyone?

DRE: We're just levelling up.

AUSTIN: Yeah, we are just—

JANINE: I have a Hold on advantage for that moss thing, but I don't think either of those apply here, right?

AUSTIN: I mean, you do know this person is one of—this person has the moss on them, right?

JANINE: Yeah.

AUSTIN: I would take—I would consider acting against that person with advantage, you know for instance—you know for instance this is not a trained soldier. Right?

JANINE: Yeah.

AUSTIN: This is not someone who is from the Bilateral Intercession, this is a homemade weapon that they don't necessarily have, like, military experience using. I would go ahead and—if you want to spend it, you can spend it, and roll one more d6. And this is gonna chain in a very funny way, probably.

JANINE: I think it's worth trying.

AUSTIN: Yeah, try it. All you need is one more to make this potentially change, so.

[JANINE CHUCKLES NERVOUSLY]

AUSTIN: Or one better than a 2 or a 3.

JANINE: Wait, that's not—[CHUCKLES]

AUSTIN: That's not it. That's close.

[PAUSE]

JANINE: Wow.

[AUSTIN GROANS]

AUSTIN: A 2. So, no. That's a—this is another—[CHUCKLES] this is another miss.

KEITH: [EXHALES] Wow.

AUSTIN: This is brutal. In fact, I think, you know. I can be very—

JANINE: Mark Spotlight or whatever it is.

DRE: Mhm.

AUSTIN: Mark a Spotlight, and both of you take the Peril—and I mean peril here, because you've rushed into shotgun blasts—what's a good one for getting shot in the chest?

DRE: Perforated.

AUSTIN: Oh, Perforated. I remember that one. That's a classic.

DRE: Uh-huh.

[ALI SCOFFS]

AUSTIN: I actually don't know that this is actually Perforated for both of you, though, because I don't think it probably—I don't know that it would have actually gone thr—ah, maybe at this range it would have. Yeah, take Perforated, both of you.

JANINE: I also have Protective Runes?

AUSTIN: What do those do?

JANINE: I don't know. [CHUCKLES]

DRE: Oh yeah, I have a Shield Brooch.

AUSTIN: What do—do they have a tag associated with that?

JANINE: It says "Protective Runes: 1 Ward."

AUSTIN: 1 Ward.

DRE: Yeah. Mine is a 1 Ward as well.

AUSTIN: So, what Ward says under positive tags, if I could—why won't—it won't open. Oh, I'm looking at the wrong place, that's why. Positive tags, here we go. A Ward says: "You may use this tag once per Sortie to reduce an incoming source of harm from a Peril to a Risk, or from a Risk to nothing." So instead of being Perforated, you can spend your Ward to drop it to a Risk of your choice.

DRE: Oh, sure, yeah.

AUSTIN: What do you want to change Perforated to?

DRE: Oh, um... Let's see. So basically, like, I still take the shotgun blast, but my Ward kind of like, shields me from—

AUSTIN: Yeah, it can be whatever—yes. The thing still happens—I mean, what is your—where's your Ward come from? It comes from an item called...

DRE: The Shield Brooch.

AUSTIN: Yeah, that sounds like a shield.

DRE: Honestly, though, I think like, in fiction, I just think of it more of like, 'hey, I'm made of, like, rock.'

AUSTIN: Yeah, sure. You want to change that to—

DRE: So like, the first hit—

AUSTIN: —to Rock Body or something? [CHUCKLES]

DRE: Sure, yeah, uh-huh. So I guess—Dazed feels like, too strong, but it's like—

AUSTIN: No, I think—

DRE: I can't think of a shorter word for like, 'got the wind knocked out of me.'

AUSTIN: Dazed makes perfect sense to me as a Risk.

DRE: Okay.

AUSTIN: That doesn't have to be a Peril. You know?

DRE: Okay.

AUSTIN: So yeah, go ahead and take Dazed. How about you, Thisbe?

JANINE: Um... Scuffed? I'm trying to think of like, what that would—hm.

AUSTIN: Yeah, like, the physical thing is Scuffed, but what's the—Scuffed—this should make it eas—I mean, I think that's fine, because again, part of what a Risk is is not materially necessarily it means you're weaker. It just means we're that much closer to real damage being done to you. So I think Scuffed—it's noticeable, the marks, you know, have—maybe they still breached the shield, but didn't do enough damage to hurt you, but you can see where they, like, you know, splashed against your metal—your ceramic frame. You know, the dude cocks the gun again and points it back up at you, and says:

AUSTIN (as GUNMAN): How about you? You want some?

AUSTIN: But before he can pull the trigger again at you, Brnine, you do see the other figure behind him, the woman you'd been following, the Qui Err who has now become part of the Twill, or she's descended from the Qui Err, she has like the Qui Err four arms and head nubbins vibe going on, and she's like:

AUSTIN (as TWILL WOMAN): I don't think they're with the Bilats. Calm down.

ALI (as BRNINE): Woah, woah, woah, we're definitely not Bilats. Good evening.

[AUSTIN LAUGHS]

ALI: [CHUCKLES] Brnine is putting their hands up.

[KEITH CHUCKLES]

ALI: A very important character design note about Brnine is that when they are on ground level, they wear an armored shirt and overalls, and when they're in space, they wear an anime flight suit.

AUSTIN: Very important note.

ALI: [LAUGHING] So.

DRE: Mhm, mhm.

ALI: Right now in the overalls, in their Millennium Break captain's jacket, but it's reversed, the—[LAUGHS]

AUSTIN: So you can't see?

ALI: The Millennium Break logo, you can't see it. Regardless.

ALI (as BRNINE): Hey. We were just trying to get out of that fight up there, and we're—we're—we were sent to investigate this facility, and I, you know—

AUSTIN as (GUNMAN): Who sent you?

AUSTIN: You can also tell, as they're talking to you, they're like standing in a way that's like, the two of them together are making sort of a visual wall separating you from seeing what's behind them. Basically, the end of the hallway, it opens up into a circular room. And you can see that there's some sort of console, like, descending from the ceiling, and there's sort of like a conversation pit, you know what I mean?

[SYLVI CHUCKLES]

ALI: Sure.

AUSTIN: Like, it dips down in the middle of the room. And it is plush in there, it is not—this is not a clean, slick, empty—there is like, carpeting in this hallway. You've stepped out into a room that is like, furn—or an area that is furnished. There are framed paintings on the wall. It's wood-paneled here. To say it's a conversation pit is probably not—it's probably—it's closer to right than wrong, you know?

ALI: Sure, sure, sure.

AUSTIN: Like, 70s carpeting, you know?

ALI: Yeah. Um, can I do a quick Dispel Uncertainties just to get a vibe check of how...

AUSTIN: Totally.

ALI: ...honest I feel like I can be?

AUSTIN: Let me tell you something about this. You can always roll dice.

[ALI GIGGLES]

AUSTIN: I will always say, yes, roll dice.

ALI: Okay, you know, just checking. Because I feel like the pause is here, and like, I think that it's worth testing Brnine's knowledge in terms of like, how honest they really feel like they can be about being Millennium Break—

AUSTIN: That's good.

ALI: How do you read that? And like, if I get a success, what's going on with that pit, you know what I mean?

AUSTIN: Yeah. I would actually say that that might be Read the Room and not Dispel Uncertainties.

ALI: Okay, sure.

AUSTIN: Which, you might be—I don't know if you're worse or better at what, but. Read the Room is: "When you Read the Room to get an instant—" or, sorry, "to get an insight on your situation, roll plus Sense." And that's—

ALI: Okay, I have an equal Know and Sense, so.

AUSTIN: Okay, yeah, yeah, yeah. Know is a little bit—is a *little* bit more 'I know this thing from my experience.' And I guess I could justify it going either way here, but I think that if you're trying to like, read their body language or whatever, you know?

ALI: Okay, yeah.

AUSTIN: For instance, 'how does blank really feel' is a Read the Room question, and I think that's part of what you're trying to get to.

ALI: Sure. Okay, yeah.

AUSTIN: And that is an 11, look at that.

ALI: An 11.

AUSTIN: Okay. So you get 3 Hold. You have the questions that are under Read the Room you can ask. You can also hold this Hold for the rest of the scene, which might be useful.

[1:00:05]

ALI: Oh, this is fantastic. Okay, so, number one off the bat, what is being overlooked or obscured here?

AUSTIN: Oh, yeah, absolutely. Um, does your—is it your scouter that like, is able to help you see this? Is it like—

ALI: Oh, maybe. Maybe it's like one of those things where it's like a—like an image sort of like, scanner or whatever, that sort of sees the corner of a thing and is like 'zoom-in zoom-in zoom-in this is a—'

AUSTIN: Enhance, yeah. [MIMICS ELECTRONIC STUTTERING] *Da-da-da-da-da*. Yeah, uh-huh.

ALI: 'This is a teddy bear behind the *Phoenix Wright* thing or whatever.' You know what I mean? [LAUGHS]

[DRE AND SYLVI LAUGH]

AUSTIN: I do. I know exactly. In this case, you see, um... a body.

ALI: Oh. That's too bad.

AUSTIN: You see a—well. You see a... it is a—has Brnine met a Delegate yet? One of the sort of—we met them back in the *Wagon Wheel* game, they are like slivers of a Divine that the

Principality—I mean, they're primarily in Kesh territory now, but the Fabreal Duchy used as like, servants and slaves, where they like, took the body of—or they built a body, and then like, shaved a bit of a Divine off so that they could be servants for them, maintaining some of the, you know, the brilliance of a Divine, but also rendering them many and even more servile. Getting around the idea that they had to be treated with respect, because now they're not actually the Divine, they're just a, you know, a descendent thereof. So it's one of those bodies. So that is that, and that body is hooked to that central console right now.

ALI: Oh, wow, okay.

AUSTIN: That body is like green—like a dark forest green with some like gold, you know, elements here and there. You know, like the elbows are gold, and there's like a gold head stripe, and you know, stuff like that.

ALI: Yeah, I was going to say that I think Brnine has probably, maybe, probably only briefly, but maybe interacted with the Delegate that we saw in that game, which was like the line cook?

AUSTIN: [OVERLAPPING] Yes, August. August Righteousness, yeah, yeah, yeah.

ALI: Yeah.

AUSTIN: Who runs one of your—maybe this is a good time to mention this, one of your other groups is part of the Cause. In *Armour Astir*, the party is one faction inside of a group called the Cause. Normally, you would name it, but we decided the Cause is actually unnamed at this point. It's undercover. No one knows that the Cause is actually joined up together. It's not just Millennium Break, it's also all these other groups on Palisade at this point. And they're divided into factions that are combined other parts—you know, combined Millennium Break plus local groups, and the person you're talking about is from the group called Grey Pool, which includes the—no, sorry, they're not from Grey Pool, they're from—fuck, what is the—where did I write this down? This is bad. Give me one second. I want to make sure I get this right. They're from Jade Kill. That's where they're from.

ALI: Oh, great.

SYLVI: Hell yeah.

AUSTIN: Anyway. Ali, it's a Delegate. You know what a Delegate is.

ALI: Yeah.

AUSTIN: You've probably worked with August Righteousness, you've probably met some other Delegates.

ALI: And this is a body?

AUSTIN: It's the body of one, as far as you can tell.

ALI: Okay. Still have two more Hold.

AUSTIN: Still have two more Hold. And you can save those if you want to, or you could spend them right now. You know? You can—up to you.

ALI: Oh, your Hold lasts until you leave the current situation or it changes significantly.

AUSTIN: Correct.

ALI: I do think that there is—it's worth asking, where do my Hooks pull me here?

[AUSTIN HUMS]

ALI: And I think that's specifically like, because I think the Hooks sort of like—'I believe that Millennium Break can change lives,' do I think that I can be honest about this and like—

AUSTIN: I think you do.

ALI: Okay.

AUSTIN: I think in this moment—you're a little concerned about the Delegate body, but you're—they move with the urgency of people who have been hurt by the Principality.

ALI: Okay.

AUSTIN: They pull the trigger because they know that if they don't, the Princi—if you're the Principality, you would just kill them. Right? And so, they are people who, you think, if you can prove to them that you're Millennium Break, they would stand down.

ALI: Okay, sure. I think in that case I'm gonna hold my final Hold, and then because I've hold that, I can just ask another question later?

AUSTIN: Yep, a hundred percent. You got it.

ALI: Okay. I think in that case, Brnine, still hands up, is like:

ALI (as BRNINE): Hey, hey, hey. They were just trying to disarm you, nobody has to get hurt here. We're with Millennium Break. You can ask me any questions you want. But we were just sent here to check things out.

KEITH: This is where some Talk on the team might have come in handy.

AUSTIN: Yeah. I think that the—I think—do you get—you do get advantage when you act on the answers to what you asked. You will need to roll—I'm gonna say that this is, yeah, this is plus Talk, for sure.

ALI: Okay. But plus advantage so that's still a 2d6+—

AUSTIN: So it's 3d6.

ALI: 3d6.

AUSTIN: It's 3d6 plus whatever your Talk is, which is minus 1—no, what is it?

ALI: Which is nothing. Okay, yeah.

AUSTIN: It's nothing? It's zero?

ALI: Yeah.

AUSTIN: Brnine is basically no negatives, just not a ton of positives. Right?

ALI: Yeah, well, they're—yeah. There was something about like, pulling—we've seen Brnine be bad at Talk for so long.

AUSTIN: [LAUGHING] Yeah, we sure have!

[KEITH LAUGHS]

ALI: But like, five years passed. [LAUGHING] You know what I mean, like?

AUSTIN: Five years passed, right.

KEITH: Five years isn't enough to become sociable.

AUSTIN: Well, they're not.

ALI: It's enough to become neutral sociable, right?

AUSTIN: Mhm.

ALI: Like, especially if that was like—they've become a leader and a captain, and like, have to be.

KEITH: Oh, okay. You're saying 0 Talk is your improvement.

ALI: Yeah, yeah, yeah.

KEITH: Gotcha, yes.

ALI: From like a -2 in what we saw in PARTIZAN.

AUSTIN: That's a big jump. It is.

KEITH: Oh my god. Was that really what it was?

ALI: Well, you tell me. [LAUGHS]

[KEITH AND SYLVI LAUGH]

ALI: [LAUGHING] 'Cause I think there's some evidence. Anyway, I've rolled 3d6, I've gotten a 9.

AUSTIN: You've gotten a 9. You've gotten a 9. Yeah, that's not so bad. But you—

KEITH: Ooh, nice. Second or third not-failed roll today?

AUSTIN: Mhm.

[ALI SNORTS]

AUSTIN: Both you—and this is Exchange Blows—both you and your target are forced to take a Risk. What is the—I'm gonna give them the Risk, it sounds like maybe Trusting makes sense to give to them at this point. They are not—they're not gonna like, let you run rough-shot over this place, right? But you're both like, in a way, taking a risk to be like, 'okay. Let's open ourselves up to each other.' That is a risk to do, and I want that represented almost mechanically as a Risk on both of our sheets. Does that make sense?

ALI: Yeah. I'm—so, I'm adding Vulnerable to my sheet.

AUSTIN: That makes sense. I will let you know that both of these characters are now defenseless against you, because they've put Trusting up. So they don't have any more defense—there's no defenses. If you wanted to hurt these people, if you wanted to Strike Decisively you could. I feel like that would be mean, but.

ALI: Okay.

AUSTIN: Gun lowers. Says:

AUSTIN (as GUNMAN): [GRUMBLES] I'm sorry. Now what do you want?

ALI (as BRNINE): As I said, we're here on a mission for—

ALI: [CHUCKLES] No.

ALI (as BRNINE): We were sent on a surveillance mission to this facility. There's a thing over there, a node of some sort. We just want to check it out, we're not here to hurt anybody. Uh, what are you here for? What's up?

[STIFLED LAUGHTER]

AUSTIN (as GUNMAN): It doesn't concern you. Y'all should just keep on moving.

ALI (as BRNINE): W—

AUSTIN (as GUNMAN): Go back up and go back to your fight, I have nothing against you.

AUSTIN: And the girl who—I would say that now that you've seen them in the light, he is probably 48. She's in her early 20s. And she's like:

AUSTIN (as TWILL WOMAN): [ASIDE] Millennium Break could help us.

ALI (as BRNINE): Millennium Break *can* help you. We have kind of a overlap of priorities here, we're gonna have to learn to share the space. If you don't mind.

AUSTIN (as TWILL WOMAN): Let's show them—

AUSTIN: And she moves to like, reveal to the three of you that there is this Delegate body that's connected to this console. And she just starts walking back that direction. And he, I think, sighs and is like, 'fine.' You know? Begins to walk that way too.

DRE: Sure.

AUSTIN: And as you get there, you see the body that was, you know, still, begin to move. And the lights that are its eyes begin to light up. Let's quickly go back up to the fight above. How are things going?

SYLVI: I mean, I'm doing pretty well.

AUSTIN: Mhm.

SYLVI: I guess I do have two Risks right now, actually.

[AUSTIN HUMS]

KEITH: I'm doing very well as well.

SYLVI: I do think I'm winning, though. [CHUCKLES]

AUSTIN: Yeah. I think it seems like it's going okay, in my—I'm looking here, it looks like it's going okay. Your sniper rifle is back and ready to—or, sorry, apologies, your Buccal Outpocket is reloaded. Right?

KEITH: [CHUCKLES] Yep.

AUSTIN: You've Cooled Off, you've managed to do that.

KEITH: Mhm.

AUSTIN: Are you taking another shot, are you closing the distance, what's your play?

KEITH: Uh, yeah, I'm gonna take another shot.

AUSTIN: What are you shootin' at?

KEITH: Alright, so we've got—we've got several—

AUSTIN: We got three things left. We have two Ploughs up, one of them's really hurt, one of them is—

[1:10:00]

SYLVI: You can Strike Descisively on one of them.

AUSTIN: You can Strike Decisively on it if you wanted to.

KEITH: Okay.

AUSTIN: The other is completely fine, and is actually at this point, has launched a sort of grapple—like, almost like an arbalest bolt into the dragon, the wyvern, the bladed wyvern—

KEITH: Okay.

AUSTIN: —and is trying to like, haul it down to the ground as best it can.

KEITH: And has the dragon done anything significant since we've been here?

AUSTIN: It's been attacking the other two that we haven't been paying attention to.

KEITH: Okay.

AUSTIN: What I will tell you is both of the other things do—are supposed to have Ward, and it has dealt with those. The energy dome on top of the Gueridon has been busted open, the Ploughs are able to give allied units Bane or Ward—

KEITH: Ooh.

AUSTIN: I think one of them spent Bane to let it hurt the dragon, or the wyvern, and then the other one gave the other one Ward, and that Ward was also broken. Right? So, it has been doing damage to these things.

KEITH: Okay. Um... Now, I have been Cooling Off, has my Optic Camo come back?

AUSTIN: Um...

KEITH: Into effect?

AUSTIN: I don't—yeah, it has access.

KEITH: I've been standing still.

AUSTIN: Yeah, you could totally go back into having—uh, yeah, but I—you know what, I think that the Optic Camo would, but they are now searching for you on sensors. So I wouldn't just give you sniper—like, a free shot again, the way we did before.

KEITH: Sure.

AUSTIN: You'll have to roll. You're in an engagement now in a way that they know, you know?

KEITH: Yeah. Okay. So, um... I think that... the—I think that I really want to take out the thing that is attacking the dragon.

AUSTIN: Okay. The other Plough.

KEITH: I don't know if this encounter is gonna end with us having to turn our guns on this dragon—

AUSTIN: Uh-huh. Great question.

KEITH: But if I can take out one of these enemies, and accidentally help the dragon, I'm going to take that chance.

AUSTIN: Right. I see what you're saying. Yeah, this is—welcome to Palisade.

KEITH: Yeah. You know, I don't think it's going to hurt to help the dragon, and it might help to help the dragon.

AUSTIN: I thought to myself, self, how can I communicate that this is a season where sci-fi and fantasy meet?

[ALI CHUCKLES]

AUSTIN: And what I thought was, a mech should fight a dragon. [LAUGHS]

DRE: Mhm.

KEITH: And another mech should—

AUSTIN: [LAUGHING] Should interfere.

KEITH: —intentionally not fight that dragon.

AUSTIN: Yeah, uh-huh.

KEITH: Um—

AUSTIN: So this, again, is going to be Exchange Blows.

KEITH: I don't know, should I try and use my last Hold to Strike Decisively?

AUSTIN: You could. You could. It's really powerful. That move is so good.

KEITH: Yeah.

AUSTIN: Again, you can spend a Hold to Strike Decisively against someone and take a Risk, right? Isn't that what it is, or no?

KEITH: It's take a—yeah.

AUSTIN: It's 'take a Risk to Strike Decisively.'

KEITH: [OVERLAPPING] I also have to take a Risk, yeah. Take a Risk to Strike Decisively.

AUSTIN: It's not a bad idea.

KEITH: It's not a bad idea. It's not a bad idea, and because it's not a bad idea, I am going to do that.

AUSTIN: Okay.

[DRE LAUGHS]

ALI: We're back, baby.

AUSTIN: Give me your Clash.

KEITH: Okay. And this is a normal one where it's just a normal Defy roll, I don't have any advantage or—

AUSTIN: Well, it's against a—it's against—you're Divine, right?

KEITH: Yeah. Yep.

AUSTIN: It is... Mundane. So yeah, you don't get anything here, there's no—Divine—

KEITH: No, if it's Mundane, I'm Elemental, so I get—

AUSTIN: Oh, you're Elemental. You're Elemental.

KEITH: Yes.

AUSTIN: You're not—right, right, right. Yes, yes, yes.

KEITH: Right. So I do get Confidence.

AUSTIN: You attack with Confidence. I believe that that's true, yep.

KEITH: Yep. Okay, and I've got my macros here. That's a 12.

AUSTIN: Unbelievable.

DRE: Wow.

AUSTIN: Love to see it.

SYLVI: God damn.

DRE: That's where all the rolls were.

AUSTIN: That's—that's where all the rolls are.

KEITH: I've found myself another one-hit K.O.

AUSTIN: Again, this probably looks similar, and let's give it a little extra color.

KEITH: I have some color.

AUSTIN: Go ahead, give me your color.

KEITH: So, I think that not only does the bolt from my sniper rifle destroy this mech's hands—

AUSTIN: Ooh.

KEITH: It slices clean through the grappling hook that it was using, and the mech goes, essentially flying down—

[AUSTIN LAUGHS]

KEITH: —into the ground, and just—just absolutely explodes.

AUSTIN: Mm. Mhm. I love this. This is great. It explodes, you know, I think the pilot manages to get the like, stained glass cockpit doors open, but then the explosion happens, and like, I don't think they got out. In response to this, the dragon, like, the wyvern, you know, sweeps up in a way, and uses the, like, the grapple—like, the actual hook as a whip to whip down at the Gueridon. Which is like, taking some hits.

KEITH: Yeah.

AUSTIN: At this point, that thing already has a Risk on it from this fight, and in what I can only call a move of desperation, it does something unexpected, which is, it launches from its sort of side, like—it's not like a drawer opened, it's more like there's a porthole that opened, and it fires what at first looks like a big torpedo. And it goes up along the side of the hill opposite the one you came down on the other side of the Twill village, and it kind of like glides along the ground, just a few meters above the ground, and then when it reaches the top, it kind of like skids to a halt, it pops some air breaks as if from nowhere, you know, they kind of almost emerge from the side of this kind of tube that it shot off, and then this pneumatic tube sound, you know, you can hear loud in the distance, almost like a pipe letting out steam or something, and then a bunch of little doors pop open on the sides of this almost torpedo-like object. Again, as if from nowhere. As if they just like, from solid matter.

And a bunch of troops, a lot of Frontier Syndicate troops get out of there, and begin to kind of stumble away. You imagine this is normally used in attack situations, you could like launch infantry behind enemy lines with this, or maybe even into an enemy ship, but in this case they've used it almost like an escape pod to escape this, you know, this minion of Cleave. And I think maybe you get the, you know, image, the final shot of them is one of their members, maybe their leader, she kind of looks down over this valley and the Fundament wall, and kind of does like a scan with some sort of like, special, you know, like, special binocular-scanning type vibe, classic sci-fi stuff, and kind of takes it all in, then like looks down at the scanner to see if she got something of value, and then kind of like turns, and with a—not quite a skip, but like, you know, the need to be fast, the feeling like, 'okay, I have to get this somewhere,' disappears over the distant hill, going the opposite direction of the way you came in originally.

KEITH: Damn.

AUSTIN: Cori, the only thing left to you at this point is a staggered and shattered Plough, and an increasingly under-served Gueridon. What do you do?

SYLVI: So, I—move-wise, I think I am gonna just end up Striking Decisively.

AUSTIN: That sounds right.

SYLVI: I do have a little bit of flavor here of, um—

AUSTIN: Please.

SYLVI: Because the communication is still weird, I think I'm trying to—I'm repeatedly asking 'do you surrender?' but it's like—

[AUSTIN GROANS]

SYLVI: It's like, 'do you want concessions?' or something. Like, it makes no sense.

AUSTIN: Yeah. Uh-huh.

SYLVI: And I think when—

DRE: Just asking 'do you have it?' over and over again.

[AUSTIN LAUGHS]

SYLVI: Yeah, pretty much. Actually, I have a question. Because I can see this pilot. How—like, are they around the same age as Cori? Cori is like, very early 20s.

AUSTIN: Yeah, for sure. For sure. This is—this is—I've written down that these pilots are lay acolytes, right? They are people who are not even fully in the sort of Divine church structure, right? They haven't been—they haven't fully—you know, the Elects, especially for Nideo, end up with very religious elements, and the Elect for Nideo is chosen from great pilots among the army, or among the kind of Altar force at this point. And so, all of them eventually become kind of initiated, right? But this is someone who hasn't even been initiated yet. So they're probably young—how old is Cori?

SYLVI: I've been picturing Cori as like 21, 22. Like, very young.

AUSTIN: This is like 18-19.

SYLVI: Okay, yeah.

AUSTIN: You know what I mean? This is like—

SYLVI: Yeah, that was the age I almost made Cori before being like, 'people might get weird if I have an 18-year-old doing war crimes.'

AUSTIN: Mhm.

SYLVI: Um... [CHUCKLES]

AUSTIN: Let me tell you something about the world, though, real quick.

SYLVI: Let me tell ya!

AUSTIN: 18-year-olds do war crimes.

SYLVI: Most—a lot of the war crimes. [CHUCKLES] A lot committed by teenagers.

AUSTIN: Uh-huh.

SYLVI: And this one—this is no exception. [CHUCKLES] I think—I'm not gonna aim for the cockpit when I swing the mace again.

AUSTIN: Okay.

SYLVI: I think that there is like—there is a part of her that's like, 'well, if I just hit—'

AUSTIN: Now wait a second. Now wait a second.

SYLVI: Hm?

AUSTIN: Now wait a second.

SYLVI: I know. Impunity, right?

AUSTIN: Impunity!

SYLVI: I know.

AUSTIN: 'You are a sword! Strike down our adversaries with impunity!'

SYLVI: Well, I'm still striking it down. [CHUCKLES] I'm just striking it down in the head and not the chest. This—you—you really set me up for this.

AUSTIN: Uh-huh.

KEITH: Do I detect a hint of punity here?

SYLVI: I will—fine. I'm gonna fuckin' turn this kid into red mist.

AUSTIN: [LAUGHING] Oh my god.

[KEITH LAUGHS]

AUSTIN: I mean, you could—

SYLVI: Do I roll this with Channel again, or is that once per session?

AUSTIN: Wait, what's the plus Channel—oh no, that's, that's—you—hmm.

SYLVI: For Exchange Blows. Or is this Strike Decisively, right? So this would be Clash.

AUSTIN: This is Strike Decisively, right, you don't—this is Clash. Correct, correct.

SYLVI: Okay.

AUSTIN: Which your Clash is only +1. Which is great. Isn't that fun?

SYLVI: Mhm.

AUSTIN: You're really good at hurting people with Channel. When you bring the Divine Devotion through you, you can make them defenseless, but when it's time for you to pull the trigger and Strike Decisively, that's on you.

[1:20:00]

SYLVI: I—yeah. No. I'm very happy with how the mechanics have worked out for Cori.

AUSTIN: Mhm.

SYLVI: I rolled a 10. [CHUCKLES]

AUSTIN: [CHUCKLES] Well... you said red mist, not me.

SYLVI: Yeah, you know the—I'm thinking of a very specifi—there's like, I can't remember which *Dark Souls* it is, there's like a counter with a mace where you just basically, like—

AUSTIN: *Boom! Boom boom boom!*

SYLVI: —shove it right—yeah, like, dig it right into their stomach, and then like—

AUSTIN: Yeah. Uh-huh. Yeah.

SYLVI: —another hit that like, sort of knocks it back.

AUSTIN: You do that big—yeah, that big swing where your body actually turns with it, yeah, yeah, yeah.

SYLVI: Yeah, like home—home run swing here.

AUSTIN: Seeing this, seeing the—having already deployed their soldiers, the Gueridon pilot, who also is from the Frontier Syndicate, which is to say, a little more cynical, fundamentally, you know, like, that's a group of people who betrayed the Columnar to come here because of like, [LAUGHING] business opportunities, right? All of their cities are named things for like, various business opportunities, or business terminology, and so—

KEITH: Like there's not enough business on Columnar.

AUSTIN: Yeah, exactly. Exactly. And so, they begin to retreat back to the north. I say north, that's not right. West is actually right, looking at the map. Further away from this little village, this little green area, and onward to try to like, get out of the rage of this force that showed up and kicked their asses unexpectedly. I think at this point the wyvern just goes up and like, lands on one of these lenses that is redirecting the light down here, you know? That's kind of like, shining the sun down to this village, and it just perches up there. And it's just out of range enough that your comms come back to where they're supposed to be.

You do not get the impression that it is like, a defender. You get the impression that it happens to have been here. And maybe to sell that, it destroys one of these lenses unintentionally. Right? It like, lands on one of them, and just like, cuts through it, and then like, [GARBLED OUTCRY], you know, and then goes and lands on a second one, right? And like, lays across it. Very gently, not to protect it, but because if it puts too much pressure or weight into one place it will break. You know? This huge mirror just comes dropping from 40 stories up and shattering on the ground. You know? But, hey. You did it. You saved this village. Nice work. Below.

SYLVI: I'm a hero!

AUSTIN: God. Unbelievable that you've made someone they put on a poster for Devotion. Just fantastic.

Below, the body has begun to move. And as it does, there is the sound of like, an error. There is like a—I'm trying to think what would this sound like. What's a machine from fi—hm. I actually think it's a really soft—it's like a soft tone. It's like a Brian Eno UI sound. You know what I mean? It's like a Windows 95—it's not like the *bump!* It's like, what if you could make a nice sound—I know that Brian Eno literally made that sound, but what if you could make an error sound that's a little calmer than that? That's a little like, 'an error is happening right now.' You know? And I think it says, 'Memory limit reached.'

KEITH: The Windows shut-down sound is kind of like that, the old one.

AUSTIN: Oh, it is kind of like that.

KEITH: [MELODIC] *Blum-blum-bum-bum.*

AUSTIN: Yeah, it's like that. That's what it is. And it's like, 'Memory limit reached. Aborting operation.' And the body moves, and comes to, and is like:

AUSTIN (as DELEGATE BODY): [SLURRING] Par... tial...

AUSTIN: And the younger of the two Twill says:

AUSTIN (as TWILL WOMAN): I think we did it?

AUSTIN: And y'all don't know what's going on.

DRE: Yeah, I was gonna say, did what?

AUSTIN: And you're not being filled in.

ALI (as BRNINE): What do y'all got, uh, goin' on over here?

AUSTIN (as TWILL WOMAN): [SIGHS]

AUSTIN: Looks up.

ALI (as BRNINE): I'm a little bit of a tech guy.

[SYLVI LAUGHS]

AUSTIN: Oh, you're a little bit of a—oh my god.

[KEITH LAUGHS]

AUSTIN: Thisbe, you still have some like, resonance-y things going on, right? Like, in terms of being able to like, sense similar life-forms, or old—like, that style of—you had some psychic shit happening back in the day, right?

JANINE: Yeah, I don't really have that represented in any abilities right now, though.

AUSTIN: Well, you have—

JANINE: I mean, other than my Internal Codex.

AUSTIN: And you have—well, what's that say? What is that? That's—

JANINE: "Internal Codex: Take advantage to Dispel Uncertainties related to your original purpose."

AUSTIN: Totally. And you have a Channel score.

JANINE: Yes, yeah.

AUSTIN: And it's worth saying that Channel is just like, the—only pilot classes, only channelers have Channel, and Channel lets you do a thing called Weave Magic, which is when you just fucking use magic in this game. Like, the thing says like, "When you invoke your magic to crumble a bridge, attune yourself to mystical orbs at the center of the galaxy, or otherwise do something taxing with your power, you're attempting to Weave Magic. When you do so, roll Channel." So I'm not saying you should roll Channel here, but you do still have that capacity in this way. And you feel something tremendous come online, and I use that word because like, that is what's happening, and Thisbe is in a position for where like, 'come online' is the proper metaphor, I think, it's not like 'oh, something has been born,' that's a different—that's not what beings like you do. Right?

JANINE: Mhm.

AUSTIN: Not that this is a being exactly like you. And they look up to you, the two Twill, and I think the younger one, whose name is Kriminel Kollage, says:

AUSTIN (as KRIMINEL KOLLAGE): We resurrected Palisade.

KEITH: That's big.

AUSTIN: You still have 1 Hold.

ALI: [LAUGHS] I do still have 1 Hold. Would I know—would I—

AUSTIN: Would you know what?

ALI: Would I have heard Palisade used—

DRE: Damn.

[KEITH LAUGHS]

ALI: Yeah, come on.

AUSTIN: Never.

ALI: [CHUCKLES] Yeah, I've never heard Palisade used in a sentence like that. In my life.

AUSTIN: No, Palisade's a place, yeah.

ALI: Yeah.

AUSTIN: Uh-huh. And—

JANINE: It's like saying 'we woke up Canada.'

AUSTIN: Yeah, uh-huh.

JANINE: That's like, huh?

[SYLVI LAUGHS]

AUSTIN: And the body begins to stand up, and you get a better look at this. It's a Delegate frame, you know, it's a wide-shouldered body, it's like, um... You know, I would imagine that someone built this body, that some, you know, baron of the Duchy built this to, you know, do heavy labor. Wide shoulders, you know, there's no muscles, but the cabling is taut and powerful. But also, it's a little dinged up. It's clear just from looking at it that wherever they got it, it was not necessarily the body of a, you know, top-of-the-line, well-maintained Delegate. So it's a little like, I imagine maybe the—I'm imagining it as having like, a single glass light eye unit, sort of, almost like an LCD screen, but like, half of it's busted. I think one of its elbow joints creaks when it stands up. Or when he stands up, now. And he says:

AUSTIN (as DELEGATE BODY): Where am I? Who are you?

AUSTIN: And I think you see the face of the two people who thought they resurrected a planet, fall a little bit. And begin to like, go and look over the console to see if they fucked something up.

KEITH: Just to cover our bases, were we supposed to call Gucci?

AUSTIN: No, you're supposed to use this node that they're using to, uh, do whatever they're doing, to quickly reroute a bunch of trains.

[ALI LAUGHS]

AUSTIN: So you could still go do that right now. Now would be the moment.

ALI: It's funny because I was about to be like, 'yo, can I text Gucci real quick?' [LAUGHS]

[DRE HUMS]

AUSTIN: I mean, it would actually be really hard to, this deep.

ALI: Yeah, yeah, yeah.

AUSTIN: I mean, actually, you could use this system, potentially, to do it.

ALI: Mhm. Um... yeah, I don't want to go so far as to say I don't want to be involved with this, but I am certainly, um... out of the loop here.

AUSTIN: Mhm.

ALI: And I kind of—there's only so much assistance that I can provide to this situation that the people who created it... you know.

AUSTIN: [CHUCKLES] Uh-huh.

[DRE HUMS]

JANINE: Sorry, what did it—I was gonna say, did it ask, like, 'where am I?' Was that the—

AUSTIN: It did. Yeah. He did.

DRE: Yeah.

JANINE: I think Thisbe would just directly answer that.

DRE: Yeah.

AUSTIN: By saying?

JANINE: You're at the—well, I mean...

AUSTIN: Fundament node, is what we called it. Uh-huh.

JANINE: This is why we need notes. 'We're at the bottom of the elevator at the—at the Fundament node. In the Diadem. On Pal—on Par—Pal—[LAUGHING] Palisade.'

AUSTIN (as DELEGATE BODY): What's the Diadem?

AUSTIN: Person clearly doesn't know what the Diadem is.

DRE: Sure. Hey, I—hey, Figure hates this.

[AUSTIN HUMS]

DRE: As someone who has very torn feelings about being resurrected against their will.

AUSTIN: Mhm. Mhm.

[1:30:02]

DRE: So I think Figure—

KEITH: Maybe this is a ‘please resurrect me’ chamber, we don’t know.

DRE: Maybe. Hey, and you know what? If that’s the case, I’m cool with it, but, uh... Figure kind of stalks over to where the two people are, and asks:

DRE (as FIGURE): What are you doing?

AUSTIN (as KRIMINEL KOLLAGE): We’re—[SIGHS]

AUSTIN: The older guy is like, working on the console trying to figure out what happened. Kollage, Kriminel Kollage, says:

AUSTIN (as KRIMINEL KOLLAGE): [STAMMERING] We—we found this place. We found that it had a—[FRUSTRATED] a back-up, it had—Palisade was still alive here, and we thought if we could bring it back, it could help us—it could help us get back—get the Bilateral—get the *planet* back.

DRE (as FIGURE): What does that even mean?

AUSTIN: Palisade, Partial Palisade, goes and sits down on one of the 1970s conversation pit couches, and does a big sigh.

AUSTIN (as PARTIAL PALISADE): [HEAVY SIGH] I think I’m puttin’ it together. What’s the Bilateral—Princip—what? Invaders?

ALI (as BRNINE): Yeah, basically.

AUSTIN (as PARTIAL PALISADE): Hegemony?

ALI: Uh... yes? Would I say yes to that? No, that’s—no.

AUSTIN: No, yeah, definitely. I mean, I don’t know what you know about the New Earth Hegemony.

KEITH: But you might just recognize the word Hegemony, and be like, ‘yeah, the Hegemon.’

AUSTIN: [OVERLAPPING] Yeah, which is the Hegemon—yeah, exactly.

ALI: [LAUGHS] Well—I think Brnine knows enough to, like—

AUSTIN: You would know enough now because you’re part of the Cause, the Cause has literal New Earth Hegemony people in it.

ALI: Right, and also, even moreso, like, Brnine has lived in war their entire lives, right? Like, it...

AUSTIN: Right, but the NEH is so... gone.

ALI: No, but I mean in terms of being like—not to like no-sell this, but to be like—to, you know, focus more on the former than the latter in terms of like—

AUSTIN: Yes, yes. Meaning.

ALI: 'Yeah, no, they're invaders. People are coming to hurt people.'

AUSTIN: Mhm, mhm. Mhm. He's like:

AUSTIN (as PARTIAL PALISADE): I guess it didn't work. [DEEP SIGH] What is this body you put me in?

AUSTIN: And the guy at the console is like:

AUSTIN (as TWILL MAN): It's called a Delegate, it's like a—it's just a chassis. It's just—I—it's what we had available.

AUSTIN: And Partial Palisade says, uh—just nods slowly.

KEITH: Damn, they were trying to get a full Palisade and they got a partial?

AUSTIN: Uh-huh.

KEITH: Damn.

DRE (as FIGURE): So when you say you're trying to fix this, what are you doing?

AUSTIN: She says,

AUSTIN (as KRIMINEL KOLLAGE): We thought if we could bring Palisade back online, he could help us control the trains, and the weather, and make sure that we had a new place to—[FRUSTRATED SIGH] You know. If we have the planet, they don't have the planet. If the planet's here helping—you don't know. You don't know anything. Huh.

ALI (as BRNINE): Well, they're—they're still gonna physically be here with guns and stuff.

AUSTIN (as KRIMINEL KOLLAGE): You don't understand. If we—if he was who he used to be, he could control all that stuff, and maybe we wouldn't be—

AUSTIN: And Palisade shakes his head, and says:

AUSTIN (as PARTIAL PALISADE): You think this is the first time people came to take the place over? We did our best. We didn't win.

AUSTIN: And like, turns to y'all, because it's very clear to you that you don't know the situation, and he says:

AUSTIN (as PARTIAL PALISADE): I don't know where y'all are from, but I am from a place called the Divine Fleet. And it was in trouble. And we had a bunch of plans. How to get out

of that trouble. And me and a few other folks got it in our head that we would stop running from trouble, and settle down. But we had a taboo, which was: you're not allowed to settle down anywhere that ain't yours. And so, I decided to *be* theirs. And it was pretty good for a while, and then... and then people came, new people came, and we tried our best to make space, and somewhere along the way... I don't know. I don't remember.

AUSTIN: And that is the truth of Palisade, is that it is the corpse of a Divine, part of whom you are talking to.

SYLVI: Let's fucking go.

DRE: Mhm.

KEITH: Hell yeah.

SYLVI: I love when we got living planets.

AUSTIN: A new type of living planet, not quite Quire or Sigilia.

SYLVI: Mhm.

DRE: Yeah.

AUSTIN: And yeah. So, I guess, what do you do at this point?

ALI: Yeah, I don't wanna—I mean, the people here have something going on, but can I like, just kinda sneak around and use that node thing?

AUSTIN: Oh, to do the train thing?

ALI: Uh-huh.

AUSTIN: Yeah, uh-huh, uh-huh. Yeah, I think, you know, given what has just happened, I think everyone is kind of busy trying to figure out their side of it, or these two folks are, and so I think that they happily kind of scoot over. They look at you like, at this point they have no right to tell you what you can't hack into, you know, given what they just did, and so they give you access to the console and it's a very straightforward thing. You're not actually hacking in, they've already done all the preliminary, like, getting into the system stuff, so I'm not making you roll to do that. Instead, yeah, you're able to connect in and—do you have like, the list of places Gucci told you, like, written down on a piece of paper, or have you just memorized it? What type of person is Brnine?

ALI: Oh... I think that's a Palm Pilot list.

AUSTIN: Oh, that's a Palm Pilot list, okay.

[ALI CHUCKLES]

AUSTIN: Palm Pilot makes a little beep, and then, yeah, you're able to go through and input all

of those things all at once. And in general, like, you know, I know that you're, like you said, sort of a tech guy. You have—you're able to like, poke around here a little bit and see that this thing, this Fundament system, is able to connect to a bunch of other stuff, some of which was kind of retroactively hooked into it. Like, all the Diadem stuff that's down here was hooked into this system after the Fundament system itself was built, presumably going back a very long time, given Palisade's history. And you're able to see here, too, that there's a way for you to actually just open up an alternate hangar route near where the Blue Channel is, if you wanted to like, bring that down here for ease of access.

ALI: Sure.

AUSTIN: So, I imagine that's like—you know, you can imagine like, another different, big—like, even bigger hangar bay door opening, and the Blue Channel slowly moving through it down an even bigger funicular somewhere, and appearing well above the knife-dragon and slowly making its way down this deep, deep, deep, deep canyon and landing somewhere outside of the little village. And I don't know, maybe we just zoom out there, we don't have to like, get particular here, but—I mean, I guess one question for me is, do you follow up on the other order Gucci gave you, which was to help these folks get out of this deep pit and find, you know—we'll talk about finding them a new home in the future maybe, but for now, do you commit to letting them onboard and getting them out of the Diadem?

ALI: Yeah, I think that this is like a, 'walking home back to the village,' like, kind of away.
[CHUCKLES]

AUSTIN: Yeah, like, you know, the credits are playing underneath—do you know what I mean? Like, it's that style of like, zoom-out of the little village, and everyone has come back up the elevator, and has walked back towards the little central place where all the mechs are destroyed and, you know, not all of them, not everybody's mechs, just the Bilat mechs. I have one final question for you as I peer over at your sheets here. Let's see.

ALI: Now hang on.

AUSTIN: Yeah. You have a Hook, don't you?

[ALI CHUCKLES]

AUSTIN: About bringing people onboard. I just wanted to make sure I remembered this exactly right.

[ALI HUMS]

AUSTIN: It says "verify the integrity of anyone you let on the ship."

ALI: Sure.

AUSTIN: What's that look like with all of these people who just had a big fight outside their village, and also these two people who you just almost got into a fight with?

ALI: There—okay, there's letting on, and then there's letting *on*, right?

AUSTIN: Oh, I see.

ALI: Like, this is just an Uber situation. They're not joining the crew—

[MUSIC OUTRO - "[Nothing is Stationary](#)" by Jack de Quidt]

ALI: This isn't a long-time, term situation—

AUSTIN: This says "verify the integrity of anyone you let on the ship."

ALI: Well... [CHUCKLES]

AUSTIN: So is this like—but are they like—are you keeping them like, in the cargo hold? Are you—are they quarantined on the Blue Channel?

ALI: What's a quarantine? It's the biggest space on the ship.

AUSTIN: [LAUGHS] Oh, Brnine's back, baby.

[ALI LAUGHS]

[1:40:00]

AUSTIN: Alright. Well, uh... Cool. Alright. Next time we'll zoom out a little bit as we bring Art and Jack in to do our first conflict turn. Some big things on the way.