

[LIVE AT THE TABLE: FEBRUARY 2019 \(PART 2\)](#)

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SYLVIA: I have it written down but maybe just for the livestream audience do you want to just remove the thing around my Ritual of Contingency-

AUSTIN (over Sylvia): Yes, good call. Good call-

SYLVIA (over Austin): So that's off the table?

AUSTIN: Good call. I'm also just trying to move Teasel's mech thing, there we go, forward. Boom. And then yeah, I will get rid of the Contingency. Boop, there we go.

SYLVIA: Thank you.

AUSTIN: Yeah. "Risks clear between scenes, yeah," says Weregazelle, "Unless there's some weird reason you wouldn't be able to fix that specific thing." Sounds good. Cool. And this is a situation, here's a- here's actually another situation, is getting rid of, because because, the Astir mech, the Hallow Astir -- [cough] excuse me -- ran out of ammo in that one last thing; is that ammo back, do we think? Or is that a thing you need to get a resupply on?

SYLVIA: I'm not entirely sure.

AUSTIN (over Sylvia): I bet that would be a resupply because the thing that you did was, "losing- use- losing use of the weapon until you can rearm," yes. So I think you would need to rearm at this point to get that back. Is that a roll that you can just make, is that like- let me see. It's on Downtime, certainly. [pause] Oh, is this a thing that you can do, Brightline? Can you rearm people? Is it that that requisition one?

ART: Um? No, a weapon- oh yeah-

AUSTIN (over Art): Yeah.

ART: -I can, I can replace lack of ammo.

AUSTIN: What's that- how do you do that? What's that look- do you want to do that, one, I guess.

ART: I mean I can do this as many times as I can roll Gear and have Supply, and I have plenty of Supply right now.

AUSTIN: Cool. So then yeah, I think it's like the mechs are now- are like situated, near the, the door to the next zone, so to speak. I don't think it's a door, I think it's like a big wall that you have to like, leap over. But that gives you some degree of like control. And then yeah, there is something moving on the other side of that wall. Or there's like, there is some, some

sort of signal. And then yeah, Brightline, you can, whenever you want to give me a 2d6 plus one for your Surprise Requisition. [pause] That is a six-

ART (over Austin): Ooh, that was bad.

AUSTIN: That's a two and a three and a one; that's a six.

ART: So I guess it doesn't work.

AUSTIN: Yeah, does it not? That's interesting. Yeah, here's what I think happens is, do you like shoot out a, uh, like a clip, so to speak, for this gun?

ART: No, it says, it reveals that I had the thing prestocked.

AUSTIN: Ooh, interesting. So, it's just not in fact prestocked. Do you go to like activate it, or do you- maybe it's just, maybe this is a situation where the move failure is not actually tied to the move, specifically. The move failure is like, as you're waiting to like check to see if y'all have supplies to move forward, the- that rumble from the explosion, uh, you hear something on the other side kind of respond to that explosion. You hear that- you hear the same sound as the explo- Barter's explosion, but from the other side, as if something was echoing that back. Like a- like something was mimicking that sound.

AUSTIN: God, I said Brightside instead of Brightline, fuck. Mr Brightside. [Dre giggles] Or maybe Weregazelle did, that's still good. Um. Yeah, a quick note from Weregazelle is, you could go pick up an- like Barter's gun that Barter dropped, and still have a gun, so. [Sylvia makes an interested noise] You could do that. In fact, anybody could pick up anything that- ah, I guess the other Con-cons all got away except for the first one, so if someone wanted one of those like ballistae, they could also do that.

SYLVIA: I mean, I need something while this is down, so, what did Barter have that I can-?

AUSTIN: Barter had, I will tell you the stats in a second. Barter had, do do do... A gun. [slight laugh] A, Forced Repeater, Ranged Magic. It's like, a level three. It just, it's basically the same thing you have, except it doesn't have limited, it doesn't have two handed, and it doesn't have Bane. Which means it can't hurt bigger things.

ART: I can try that roll I just did to give, to give you Bane, but, we'll [??? - 4:42].

AUSTIN (over Art): Let's wait 'til another scene, and you could, you could reroll on another scene and it could be something that's like- there's an- I can think of other ways in which you could have pre, like, seeded this area with something or something, you know. Let's read that move really broadly, so that there's, there's kind of interesting fiction stuff there. So yeah, there's something on the other side and it seems to have noticed you. What do you do?

0:05:00

AUSTIN: I like this group, like, the mechs huddled together.

JANINE: Is this a situation where I could reach out to Perennial?

AUSTIN: Sure. How do you do that? There's- there is a move that you do, right, but what's that-

JANINE: Raise- is it like, Dispel Uncertainties-

AUSTIN: Yeah, Occult Lore.

JANINE: And then I would use like Occult Lore?

AUSTIN: Yeah, Occult Lore is, yeah- You, "When you consult your patron for useful information, you may Dispel Uncertainties with plus Channel. If you do so, on a seven to nine, the information is still directly useful, but using it would cause some unforeseen complication, entering or beneficial to your patron-" entertaining.

JANINE: *Entertaining-*

AUSTIN: Entertaining.

JANINE (laughing): Or beneficial to your patron.

AUSTIN: Yeah, uh huh.

JANINE: Important difference.

AUSTIN: Yep, absolutely.

JANINE: Yeah... So I think that that, I think what that looks like is... Maybe there is another like, to, to the other people in the group it sounds like, it sounds like what Briar heard when, when, when Teasel was like, signalling that she understood, which is just like, the channel opens and then the channel closes.

AUSTIN: Right. Right.

JANINE: But it's like, maybe like the channel opens, there's a bit of a hum, and the channel closes? And it's not actually, it's not actually Teasel hitting a switch, it's just kind of like the, a thing that happens when she's attuning. Maybe like her glassy antlers change colour a bit?

AUSTIN: But they're not mood antlers?

JANINE: No no, no. They're more like, they're more like, fiber optic or like it's, you know, it's like a...

AUSTIN: Yeah, I gotcha, I gotcha.

JANINE: Like, cheap gift store looking kind of thing.

AUSTIN: Yeah. Yeah. Uh, quick question for Brightline: what colour was the hat when you realised you forgot to load the extra ammo?

ART: Yellow.

AUSTIN: Good. Go ahead and give me a Channel roll, Teasel.

JANINE: Okay, good old Channel roll.

AUSTIN: Alright, that's a nine,

JANINE: That's a nine.

AUSTIN: That's not bad. So on a seven to nine, the information is still directly useful, but using it would cause some unforeseen complication or entertaining- uh, entertaining or beneficial to your patron. So. Here's what would be very entertaining. She responds to you, and— are you asking a question to her, basically?

JANINE: Yeah, I'm asking like, do you know anything about what that second, what that echo, what that response was?

AUSTIN: She says,

AUSTIN (as Perennial): They got bored. All of the, the little machines the humans put in the air, around the centre of the universe -- not all of them, but some of them -- they got bored.

AUSTIN: And describes that the nanomachines meant to absorb the energy of the supermassive black hole, and all of the stars being consumed therein; some segment of them got bored one day, and developed consciousness, and created some sort of nanomachine mimic beast. All in this one sector -- you know how I said like, "oh, if you go out into the open, you'll get burnt," like, beyond the shielding on this station?

That's because the nanomachines that were supposed to be absorbing all of that energy and light, and converting it and making it safe for anything beyond this part of the, like where the, the kind of like nanomachine sphere was, have instead come to this section of the map, and become like, a living machine, that like, is composed of countless small nanomachines, but also any piece of equipment that it has absorbed. So, you know, it's like, refrigerators, and vents, and wiring, and everything else. But the heart of it is- are these

countless nanomachines. And what she tells you that's useful, but that would entertain her, is,

AUSTIN (as Perennial): It can't see very well. In fact, small things, small bodies, like yours, could walk right past it. So long as they didn't make too much noise with their feet. It's a long walk, but I trust you could do it well.

AUSTIN: And like [engine noise], that hum in your bone. Bones, not one bone, in general, bones. So yeah, you could get out of your mechs here. And walk across this server farm that goes for, you know, a mile. As this strange creature effectively looks for you-

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AUSTIN: -and listens for you- not looks, listens for you. And then you'd be in the next zone, where there's anti-ship cannons, and you could theoretically disable them by hand. You'd have what you need, but you wouldn't have your mechs.

JANINE: Okay. Uhhh.

AUSTIN: You relay this information to the rest of the squad, I'm guessing?

JANINE: Yeah. But probably in a way that's weird and cryptic.

AUSTIN: Okay. What's that sound like?

JANINE: I'm- I'm trying not to just make this character Tharja, but it's hard.

AUSTIN: You know who's a cool character? Tharja.

JANINE: Yeah, she's real fucking cool [Agreement from Austin]. Yeah, so I, I think the thing that Teasel says is basically...

JANINE (as Teasel): She says if we get out of our Astirs, we can just walk in. We have to be quiet, but we could do it. If we don't, the... cloud?

JANINE (laughing): I don't know what to-

AUSTIN: Yeah, I've written "Nanobeast," but she would not have said that.

JANINE: Probably not.

AUSTIN: Oh, there is one other important thing she tells you about it, because you did succeed, which is,

AUSTIN (as Perennial): Whatever you do, don't let it touch your machine. Our connection would be distanced, and that wouldn't be nice.

AUSTIN: It can separate pilots of Hallows from their Divines.

JANINE: Okay. I also-

AUSTIN (over Janine): Though I guess-

JANINE (over Austin): -tell them this then.

AUSTIN: Say that again.

JANINE: I'm, I'm also gonna, gonna convey that, that's a very important detail.

AUSTIN: Though I will note actually, Gold-

DRE: Yeah, no, I'm good.

AUSTIN: -your Perfect Sync means you- if it hits you, you'd be fine. I mean if it *hits* you, with like, a giant, you know, piece of metal, you would not be fine, but if the nanocloud hits you, it would not desync you.

JANINE: This is still a thing for, for me and Cerise to be worried about for sure.

AUSTIN: Oh yeah, oh yeah, big, big big big, big big *big*, big, big time, yes.

JANINE: Yeah. So yeah,

JANINE (as Teasel): They, they don't see well. And could disrupt our connections. If we pass them quietly, outside of the suit, or outside of the Astirs, then, I suppose those risks would be lessened.

DRE (as Gold): So your plan is we get out of the things that give us any and all tactical superiority and walk on our tippy toes?

TEASEL: We're not going to have much tactical superiority if the cloud of nanomachines detaches Cerise and I from Perennial.

GOLD: 'Kay. So you all-

TEASEL (over Gold): What if-

GOLD: -do the tippy toes...

TEASEL: Yes, I'm wondering... If Cerise and I pass through first, outside of our Astirs, and then you followed at some distance. Because they would certainly see you, although I suppose we wouldn't be able to do much to help you in that case.

GOLD: Yeah. Well, wouldn't you want me to go first? So that they'll follow me and then you all can just move through?

TEASEL: I think they would be more likely to notice anything following you than preceding you.

GOLD: You're underestimating how much noise I can make.

TEASEL: No, I'm just saying, if someone... If someone stomps down a hallway, and someone else is walking quietly behind them, I'm already looking at the hallway.

CERISE: The, this thing goes off sound, yeah? That's what we've... So, my illusions, I- *[AUSTIN makes thoughtful noise]* not all the time, but, sometimes I can make them make sound. We could always try that.

TEASEL: That's true.

AUSTIN: Brightline, do you have any thoughts here?

ART: I mean, I think this sounds a little bit like nonsense.

AUSTIN (laughing): *[Picture noise]* You said that and then I fucked up and hit the snapshot tool in my PDF thing, *[Janine laughing]*, so it was as if I hit a rimshot, but of the sound of a camera snapping *[Janine, Dre and Sylvia laughing]*.

SYLVIA: Uhh, thanks Cap.

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ART: Um. I do think it's a bad idea. To get out. But like, I'm also not on the ground, I don't have the information that you all have.

JANINE (as TEASEL): I also have hooves which can be very small and clicky and are not the best silent, uh...

AUSTIN (over Janine): Oh, you have like a, you have like a spacesuit that stands it, for sure.

JANINE: Okay, but like hoof silencers, got it.

AUSTIN: Yeah, uh huh.

ART: That's what they're called, that's the brand name. *[Austin, Janine and Dre laugh]*

DRE (as Gold): I don't know, boss man, you're the eye in the sky, and you're the one with the pockets, so...

AUSTIN (laughing): Gold just loves pockets. They ran out of pockets on the-

DRE (over Austin): Well, 'cause that's where the money is.

AUSTIN (laughing): No no, I know, but I love the version of this [Sylvia and Austin laughing] where it's just like, "people with pockets, you know that they got it, you gotta listen to [SYLVIA: Yeah] people with pockets."

ART: You know they're smart, because they've got stuff to put places. [Austin laughs]

ART (as Brightline): Yeah, I think, um, I really think you should try it, but I think you should be ready to, to retreat. Don't get too comfy in there.

DRE (as Gold): Hm.

JANINE (as Teasel): I don't think there's a particular risk of anyone getting comfy.

SYLVIA (as Cerise): Alright, are we getting out of the mechs then? Or-

SYLVIA: I'm not sure which plan we decided on there, because we just kind of like...

AUSTIN: It sounded like getting out of the mechs. The thing that I still have a question on is, does- is Gold going first to distract it, or are y'all sneaking across, and then Gold is gonna try to like, blitz past it?

JANINE: I thought we were doing the illusion thing.

AUSTIN: Oh, are you doing the illusion thing?

SYLVIA: We could do the illusion thing, yeah.

AUSTIN: You could do the illusion thing.

SYLVIA: [laugh] Yeah, I can, I can do that now, we can try to do that now. I think- I don't know if I need, like, a visual in there, especially if I'm specifically trying to get a decent enough roll to make sound [AUSTIN: Right], visual components even, out of it, but I would happily...

JANINE: We're also still gonna be making sound ourselves, right, just the other sound will be louder?

SYLVIA: Yeah, it, it- My idea was basically like, basically magic ventriloquism, to- not talking, but to throw the [Austin laughs] sound like, across the side so there's footsteps on one side, and we're on the other side.

AUSTIN: Right.

SYLVIA: Yeah.

JANINE: Could we couple that with some weird magic shit that I could do?

AUSTIN: You would, you could help on that roll, basically. To make that [JANINE: Okay] a better thing, I would let you do that, for sure. You both know Perennial, you know, you're both mage people. [SYLVIA: Okay] Do you want to try that, do you want to do it?

SYLVIA: Yeah.

AUSTIN: Totally.

SYLVIA: Guess I'll...

AUSTIN: So, first, Teasel, give me the 2d6 plus two for the Gravity with Cerise. [Sound of clicking] Ten, so again, plus one to uh, to you, uh...

SYLVIA: Cerise. So that brings my title, my total modifier to plus three, right?

AUSTIN: To plus three, yes. What's it look like to help channel- or I guess we can paint it once it's done, but, but, start thinking, I guess, Janine, about what it looks like for Teasel to help Cerise. [Noise of discomfort from Sylvia] Never mind!

SYLVIA: I got a five- I rolled two ones [Sigh from Janine] so I got a total of five. [DRE: Urgh] The only, the only numbers I've rolled today on my dice are five, six and one.

AUSTIN: Un-believable! [Dre laughs] How?!

SYLVIA: [Sigh] You know. So...

AUSTIN: It goes-

JANINE: I'm still good though, right?

AUSTIN (heavily): Yeah, you're still good. The illusion goes wrong, for you. You do, you do, create illusions that can be heard, very loudly. Every move you make is echoed, extremely loudly. And I don't even just mean the mech. Like, you move to, like- you move inside of the mech's cockpit, and it's just like, everyone around you can hear as you, as you kind of like move around inside of your seat.

SYLVIA (as Cerise): [Sigh] Alright, change of plans-

AUSTIN (over Sylvia): Take the risk, take the risk, "unsubtle".

SYLVIA (laughing): Okay. Great, I don't know how to communicate now, without alerting it any more [AUSTIN: [Giggle] You-], because I was going to say "I'll be the decoy".

AUSTIN: You could be the decoy now, that's true.

DRE: So is it, it's just that mech, it's not all of us?

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AUSTIN: No, it's only- based on the, based on the, the roll that- Teasel got a ten, so Teasel isn't affected, you weren't as part of that roll, so, yeah, I'm not gonna make that, yeah. There's definitely, in the cockpit- or in the bridge of, the, Constellation Class, uh, what was the name of the flower again? It was a cool name. Uh, Hell- uh, Hellebore, the Ivory Prince – you can hear, there's like feedback from the speakers, whenever, whenever Cerise does or says anything. Also shoutout to Simon Sweetman for this fucking rad drawing of this mech.

DRE: Right? It's very good.

DRE (as Gold): Alright, so, we can't do quiet, so what if we just do double fast and loud? [Sighs from Janine and Sylvia] Can it chase two things? I guess just cough once for yes and cough twice for no.

AUSTIN: Or you could start doing the Teasel thing of opening and closing comms to communicate.

ART: Mmm. Once for yes and twice for no.

AUSTIN (laughing): Yeah exactly!

SYLVIA: Oh my god.

AUSTIN: Would even that be echoed, though? Also I think the visual thing is the same thing, I think you created six illusions of yourself and you do just have ninja gaiden shadow step all on top of yourself. Do you know what I mean?

SYLVIA: Yeah. Okay yeah, I really like that.

SYLVIA (as Cerise): What we could do,

SYLVIA: and this is all with heavy reverb, because Cerise is talking and saying this,

SYLVIA (as Cerise): Is I go on one side [Agreement from Austin], Gold goes on the other [Agreement from Dre], and then, we try and make it so at least Teasel makes it through unnoticed. And that way if I get grabbed, we have at least one mech connected with Perennial still. [AUSTIN: Yeah] Like, in reserve, because she- I don't

know if Teasel's going to be taking it, like going on foot or going in it, but, either way, I'm just trying to minimise the amount of resources we're putting at risk here.

DRE (as Gold): Yeah. Don't worry, I won't let you get grabbed by the goolies. [Choking laugh from Sylvia, long grumble from Austin].

DRE: Oh, you're mad at that one Austin? Yeah? You're mad at that one? Okay. [Grumble continues]

AUSTIN: Here's a note; you could try to cool off, here, [SYLVIA: Oh, true.] Cerise. "When you attempt to vent heat for- from an Astir, to calm yourself from spiralling emotions, or otherwise attempt to return yourself or something else to relative focus, you are trying to Cool Off. When you do so, declare a Risk you want to get rid of, and roll whatever trait seems most appropriate; probably Defy or Core. On a plus- on a ten plus, you erase a risk; on a seven to nine, you erase a Risk but your moment of safety is interrupted."

SYLVIA: Okay. I do want to do that, but I kind of want to know what we're doing before I attempt it [AUSTIN: Yeah], just because of that seven to nine, [AUSTIN: Oh yeah.] consequence.

AUSTIN: Alos, I should note, you could do that for somebody else, so if someone else was better at clearing, clearing Risks, you could- if someone had a move that did that, that's a thing that you could also take advantage of.

SYLVIA: Now here's a question.

AUSTIN: Yeah.

SYLVIA: I'm ass- I'm gonna, I mean I don't know if this will work, but my Ritual of Mending, would that work here, or is just purely for physical damage to the Astir?

AUSTIN: Hmm. It's modules, weapons or limbs on your Astir.

SYLVIA: I, I assumed as much [AUSTIN: Yaaaahh], but I figured I'd ask.

AUSTIN: I- yaaaah, only because, let's see.

SYLVIA: Well, it's directly affecting me, the illusion.

AUSTIN: Yeah, it is.

SYLVIA: So I don't really want to fudge that too much.

AUSTIN: Yeah, I'm going to say no in this case. I appreciate- like, it's not a bad... Yeah, yeah. You could use the ritual of mending to fix your gun if you wanted to retcon that to be a damaged gun instead, but I do kind of like the idea of you picking up Barter's rifle, and

beating stuff with that. I kind of like that as part of the progression through the game, you know?

SYLVIA: Yeah, for sure. Okay, I guess the only thing is like, are you guys... what- are you guys comfortable with us being, doing this sort of like double distraction thing, or do we want to try something else, or what- or otherwise I'm going to try and turn off my echo here.

DRE: Yeah, I think I'm good with that plan. And I think we're also getting close to just not getting off the boat. [laughing]

AUSTIN: Yeah, agreed.

SYLVIA: Yeah, that's a good point. So I'm just gonna roll this.

JANINE: Yeah.

AUSTIN: I appreciate it. So go ahead and give me the roll then, to- what are, what are you using to do it? I guess it's, is this Channel, to like, get rid of the magic, basically?

SYLVIA: Well, this, that's for piloting-

AUSTIN: No, but I'm saying-

SYLVIA: I mean, if it's just the- for the magic, then, yeah, I'm going to take it.

AUSTIN: Yeahh, do it to get rid of this magical effect, yeah, you could do that. With the note that again, you could cool off and roll a seven to nine or a failure and some shit would go bad.

SYLVIA: Yep.

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AUSTIN: But this is a plus two, right? Ayy!

SYLVIA: That's a thirteen! And a- a five and a six plus- and a plus two.

AUSTIN: So, yes. So you manage to, to, to dispel this effect, basically. What's that look like, is it, is it- how do you summon the power of Perennial, here?

SYLVIA: Oh, I mentioned, when I did the first ritual, that Cerise keeps a bunch of like, plants and stuff in her, like, place on the ship. I think maybe she's got like, compartments and stuff in the mech itself, with ritual components, [AUSTIN: Cool] and then she's basically doing a mini-ritual in there to try and like, dispel this whole thing. [AUSTIN: Love it] Which I'm sure is really easy to do when you're seeing six of your hands while you're it.

AUSTIN: Right, and also- six of your hands, plus anything you touch becomes multiplied in that same way, so you're putting down you know, a, a bone or something that's part of this ritual, but there's five of them around it, so it's actually really tough to do this. But you pull it off, even at a- even if I was like, "no you don't get your plus two," you still would have got an eleven. So nice work. And then yeah, the sounds and the images disappear, and it's just, it's just you. Alright. Get off this boat. What do you do?

DRE: So what is in this, can we see anything that's- you said that there's vertical mass servers?

AUSTIN: Yeah it's, it's, it's- you know the, it's, you know those- this first area was just a bunch of like randomly placed things, this next one is like rows and rows of big servers, that are connected into like a labyrinth of, of, of like a server farm basically.

DRE: Okay. Do we know like, what these servers are...

AUSTIN: They control, or they, they have information in them about this big station, about- you know, they're basically doing- it is the server that's supposed to control this batch of nanomachines. So, I mean at this point, you know, it's not doing what it's supposed to do.

DRE: Alright, so I'm going to wreck it, is what's happening.

AUSTIN: I guess maybe one way to think about it is maybe this is the brain of this big machine, of this nano machine, nano cloud.

DRE: Yeah, okay. I think uh, if we need to make a noisy distraction, then I'm going to, try and like, just knock one of these over.

AUSTIN: Okay, totally. They're big, they're as big as mechs, they're as big as like, they're walls, you know? [DRE: Yeah] So. We're having fun drawing. Alright, who goes first-

DRE: Oh, hey, drawing some portals.

AUSTIN: Who hops over the wall and confronts the nano cloud?

DRE: I mean, I don't mind going first, since I'm- like I can get hurt by it, but I can't be the, I'm not going to be-

AUSTIN: That's a good point. Disconnected.

DRE (over Austin): Instantly disconnected, yeah.

AUSTIN: Cool. So, I think this is Weather The Storm. Is there anything for team shit, let me see. Is this another Engage, what is this? I've read so many fucking mech games in the last week, that I'm like...

DRE: It's all blending together?

AUSTIN: Yeah I read this, I read All Systems Normal, I'm reading Lancer. I'm saving Beam Saber because it's, it's one I'm super excited about, and I want to like, not- I don't want to read it and fall in love all the way, you know what I mean, and be like "oh well". I want to try everything, genuinely, without-

ART: Well, Spring's over!

AUSTIN: Right, exactly. Listen.

ART: Everyone's, uh, let's see, fine.

AUSTIN: Everyone's fine. The End. You know we, yeah. You know, there's ways to do it, but- no team stuff, alright, cool. So then yeah, I don't think this is a new engagement roll, because we're mid mission already, but yeah, I think this is a Weather The Storm roll then. [DRE: Okay] And I bet you it's- what are you doing, you're not trying to be sneaky, you're trying to be fast, right? [DRE: Yeah] Fast and loud? That's Thrust then, right?

DRE: Okay, and so I do- I get a plus three to that, right?

AUSTIN: Three rust, three Thrust rather. And... I'm trying to think if there's anything else here that's worth-

DRE: Nah, I don't think there is.

AUSTIN: You don't have anything else for like...

DRE: Nah, I don't think so.

AUSTIN: No, no, no, okay. Cool.

DRE: Most everything else is, I have to have a Peril or Danger to stretch yourself. (??? 29:30)

AUSTIN: Right- oh, the other one I want to make sure is, there's nothing you can do with your mana, your ma-na. Nah. I guess you could, you could- no, I think you're good.

DRE: Okay. [In a 'meh' voice] That's a 10.

AUSTIN [Triumphantly]: That's a 10. So yeah, I think you like, leap up onto the ne- this next big dividing wall between the section you're in and the next one. And you immediately see it prowling the halls of the labyrinth of servers, of massive servers. And it is moving.

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AUSTIN: It's kind of like... It goes from- it kind of picks up garbage all around it, and the halls of this massive server farm are filled with things that it's destroyed in here before, of things like space debris that have landed here, broken hulls of ships, things it's dragged up from other parts of the station; it's like a dragon with its hoard, almost, right? And, as it moves through the hoard, of like metal trash, it becomes various shapes made of them, and then sometimes it drops everything and becomes this cloud that like, psshew, goes all over the place and moves down the various hallways- [cough] excuse me. And upon hearing you, it drops everything, and swims in your direction. And picks up a couple of things, and drops them, and then it is, it is kind of after you at this point. I'm gonna add a new shape, a new silvery shape. It is on Gold's back, is on their back. Not literally, like it's following them. What are the other two- which direction are you going, top? Gold?

DRE: Umm.

AUSTIN: Middle? Bottom?

DRE: I'll- yeah, I'll go bottom.

AUSTIN: You tell me.

DRE: I'll go bottom.

AUSTIN: Alright.

DRE: I'll go bottom.

AUSTIN: So. I'm going to link these two things up, dah dah dah, group. There we go. So yeah. They're, they're- this thing is with you, and you're kind of out in front of it, zipping past it, and it has- you have its attention. Cerise and [cough] Teasel; what are you two doing as it, as this thing is chasing after Gold?

SYLVIA: I mean, I think I want to get in there too.

AUSTIN: Alright. Yeah, I mean it's, it's- I'm guessing you're getting across, I just don't know what that looks like. Are you charging across, are you hoping that this distraction just opens it up for you?

SYLVIA: I think it's more the latter, I think it's just trying to- especially 'cause, I think Cerise is really scared about losing the connection [AUSTIN: Yeah], so she's just gunning it.

AUSTIN: Okay. So you also give me a Thrust. Unless you want to use the Ritual of Channelling.

SYLVIA (laughing): I mean, I have better odds if I do, so I'm going to.

AUSTIN: Go for it. That's why that move exists, that's why that ritual is there.

SYLVIA: Oh, I should, remove that Risk too, before I forget. From the, uh, illusion. There we go. Alright. [Whowp from computer] That's ten.

AUSTIN: Hell yeah. I actually was going to give you a plus one forward, I'm also going to give Teasel a plus one forward on this. Because of the successful distraction that Gold is providing. So you're gonna, I'm just going to put you up here, like you're crossing to the north. Teasel, can you also give me an under, an Under the Weather, a Weather The Storm.

JANINE: Uhh, yes. I do that with, with, my plus three again, right? My Channel?

AUSTIN: Yes. Plus one fro- an additional plus one forward, from the successful- so plus four.

JANINE: Alright, so plus four then. [Whowp from computer]

AUSTIN: Twelve! Hell yeah. So I'm going to say that the two of you immediately get across, Teasel and Cerise. But this thing is definitely on you, Gold, like it- you have its attention, and it is a big old fucking thing. I separated these two things in a weird way, oh boy, what the fuck did I do? Uh- bwup, okay, it's just like this now, okay, it's fine.

JANINE: Why are there two? Why just- why not just have one grey sticker?

AUSTIN: I did have one- it, it's got weird, it got weird, it's a weird space nanocloud, okay Janine? Okay? [JANINE: Alright, alright. Alright! Hm.] I'm communicating some things about it. Roll20's weird. So yeah, I think you're getting to like the last rack of rows here, Gold, and then it's, it's zeroing in on you. And in fact, actually, what it does, thank you, Roll20, it splits into two, and half of the cloud cuts in front of you, and the other half is behind you. And the part behind you is slowly picking up cords, and metal wheels, and it's becoming a big- it's like mocking you, because it's a mimic, and it becomes your shape, except instead of having a, so it has like the big jet booster leg type shape, but instead of having a, a lance, it has like a spinning saw that is comprised of the, wheels- it almost looks like a giant hubcap, basically, but it has spinning sharp edges on it, and that's being revved up like a chainsaw, while the cloud in front of you is just like, menacing you, basically, and trying to provide a wall to prevent you from walking forward. Almost in a sense it's like, not daring you, but it's like

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AUSTIN: "Hey, if you're gonna walk through, you're gonna have to walk through me."

ART: Do you want some, do you want some help?

DRE: So I was actually thinking, I do want to radio Brightline. And I want to ask, specifically, if the carrier sensors can pick up any sort of, still active or charged, like, energy sources from any of these wrecked ships that are in this, kind of like, junkyard thing.

ART: I don't even know what that is.

DRE: And I don't know if that, like, mechanically looks like me doing a, Read the Room? And just asking for like a Help or Hinder roll from Brightline, but...

AUSTIN: That would work for me, I would be good with that.

DRE: I wasn't sure if there was anything mechanic that Brightline can do.

AUSTIN: Or if there's a specific roll- you know what, it might- mmm. So wait, what exactly are you trying to get from this?

DRE: I want to see if I can find like- so you said there was a bunch of like, wrecked ships-

AUSTIN: Yes, everything, totally.

DRE: And stuff in here?

AUSTIN: Totally.

DRE: If there are any active reactors?

AUSTIN: Sure.

DRE: I want to cause a big boom explosion.

AUSTIN: Yeah yeah yeah, I gotcha.

DRE: To try and take out this cloud.

AUSTIN: Let's do that as, so you need, you need, you need Brightline to ID it basically, for you, is that what you're asking for? Not to like take the shot? Hmm.

ART: I mean that, that might be Coordinator?

DRE: Although-

ART: If I can roll [AUSTIN: Yeah] Help or Hinder, I can get plus two.

AUSTIN: Yeah, that would be a-

DRE: Taking the Shot could also work though, 'cause then I could like, lure it into a specific place.

AUSTIN: So, I think that there's no way that Brightline could get the shot, without putting the Ivory Prince in, in harm's way from [DRE: Okay] the cannons still, otherwise, they would- the ship would have just driven you out here. Or, gone up high and sniped this thing, right?

DRE: Sure. Oh yeah, totally.

AUSTIN: But, I think Coordinator is right, I think you're right, so that would be a plus two. To Help or Hinder. Sorry, it would be- roll your plus two-

ART: Roll plus one, right?

AUSTIN: Roll plus one- or is it plus two? Wait, what do you, what do you have with each other? Just one, so yeah, roll Gravity [DRE: Just one] plus one, but if you succeed, you'll be giving a plus two. So 2d6+1. Hey, that's a 12!

DRE: Nice.

AUSTIN: Nice work!

ART: I'm giving you a plus two, it seems that the sensors do pick up on a thing.

DRE: What colour is your hat? How do you feel about my plan?

ART: It's a, it's a deep blue, it's a... [AUSTIN makes a considering "mmm"] it's like a calming blue.

AUSTIN: Nice.

ART: Ocean blue.

AUSTIN: I think that the, that the sensors- Rennari kind of pulls up the sensor map thing, and it's like, it scans- it kind of does like a filter pass, one after the other, where like you kind of get the holo- holographic map of all of the ships, and then you have to counter out for ships that have reactors, and then you have to counter out with ships that have *active* reactors, and then you have to counter out, like filter down for like ships that have active reactors that would cause a big enough explosion to damage this thing, or distract it. And you do, and you find one, and it's actually not that far away, because that was a- or I guess, that's the Help. The part that's going to be tough is you actually succeeding on this. There is- do you see this like little zone of servers in here? Gold? Right- like right in front of you, up and around. If you can lead that thing into there, there is the engine of a ca- of a carrier that fought in some long past, you know, war or skirmish here. And it's still active and it's lodged in there. But you have to guide it in there, so that's going to be another Weather The Storm [DRE: Okay], for sure. Because- it's not like a, you know... You know, maybe it's a... In a sense it's Strike Decisively. I actually think, given what this is, is like, what you've done is make it defenceless. Right? You've found a weakness for it. That's really cool. So I think this might be- are you trying to kill it or are you just trying to distract it?

DRE: Umm...

AUSTIN: Or like knock it out of- are you trying, are you trying to- sorry, are you trying to, incapacitate or otherwise remove the threat [DRE: Yes], according to the fiction.

DRE: Yes, yeah.

AUSTIN: Then I think it's Strike Decisively.

DRE: Okay. Which is...

AUSTIN: Ah, it was, it is Clash, by default. [DRE: Okay] I don't think you- you don't have a thing that gives it, you don't get another Channel bonus or whatever, right?

DRE: I don't think so, no.

AUSTIN: And yeah, if you had a Peril you would get a plus one ongoing [DRE: Okay]... But yeah.

DRE: And do I still get the plus two?

AUSTIN: Plus two, yeah, so a total of 2d6+4, 'cause your Clash is already a plus two.

DRE: Hey, a ten.

AUSTIN: That has not showed up on my screen yet. I believe you.

DRE: It's a one and a five and a four.

ART: Can confirm, is ten. [Dre laughs]

AUSTIN: I'm going to refresh.

DRE (laughing): Yeah, that's weird that it's not showing up for you.

AUSTIN: There you go, there's that ten; a one, a five and a four.

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AUSTIN: Wow, that four really, really came in, in...

DRE: Uh huh.

AUSTIN: Wow, every little bit of it. So what's this look like, as you guide this thing and trick it? And also what's it look like to set off this, to set off this engine when you have a, a lance?

DRE: So I think it's... The ship that I want, to make this big enough, I want to imagine it's just a big, like capital ship, like really big and sprawling. So I think I'm almost like- I'm leading this like, you know, amorphous cloud through like a bunch of twist and turning hallways. And as I'm going, I'm kind of like, marking- I'm knocking off like, like safety valves or like restraining valves that are like throughout the ship.

AUSTIN: That's cool. You're like lancing them one after the other [DRE: Yep] as you go past it. And there's no way for this thing to know that's what you are doing. Love it.

DRE: And so yeah, and then I like, I think I have it twist and turn enough, and then I get to the core. And I think I just fucking puncture it with my lance.

AUSTIN: Alright. How do you get out of this thing? I mean I guess you made this roll, so just tell me how you got out of it before it explodes.

DRE: Oh, I mean it's, it's the scene of like, you know, I'm screaming down a hallway with this giant, tech cloud behind me, and also a giant fireball.

AUSTIN: Uh huh. Are you telling, are you telling Teasel and Cerise to get over the next wall? Before this explosion hits?

DRE (laughing): Uh, yeah probably. Yeah. Saying "you should go fast, I've got this thing completely, completely consumed."

AUSTIN: God, great. Teasel, Cerise?

JANINE: There's the little beep, and then the pause, and then the boop.

AUSTIN (laughing): Good. [Dre laughing] Cerise?

SYLVIA: [laughing] Uh. I don't even know how to react to it. [AUSTIN: Uh huh] Like, there's just so much going on.

AUSTIN: But you do move ahead?

SYLVIA: I do move ahead, yes. Cerise doesn't say anything, she's just like, "uh- Du- Okay!"

AUSTIN: And then yeah, we get the shot of, of the High Price getting out of the, of the pits of this capital ship, and escaping. And as the explosion consumes the dust cloud. Who knows if it's dead for good, you know? Things like this, they find their ways. But for now, it is out of your way. And you climb your way over-

JANINE: Looking forward to House Dust-Cloud. Moving to the next season.

AUSTIN: Fuck. You know, there could be worse things. That could be cool- I, I genuinely-like, I've said this before, there are five- there have to be five houses, for reasons. And I know what four of them are. I know what, I know what two of them are; Kesh and, and Nideo. I don't know what- I have a good idea for the other two, I'm pretty sure I know what they are, I'm just not sure what state they are in, necessarily.

JANINE: I'm just picturing like a refrigerator in a dress uniform.

AUSTIN: And then, yeah, and the fifth house.

JANINE: In their Stellaris portrait.

AUSTIN: It's the um-

JANINE: Like a refrigerator person.

AUSTIN (laughing): It's good.

JANINE: Like a magnet on the face.

AUSTIN: The- Pro ZD... What is the fucking fake- Chairem anime. Have you seen those videos? They're very good.

DRE: Yes. [Laughing]

AUSTIN: Okay, good. People should look up Chairem. Like a chair. Anyway. [Dre still laughing in the background] You climb over this wall, and you are very happy to see what you see. Which is; two gigantic anti-ship cannons, that are very tall, they're taller than this wall, and they're just kind of scanning space. Presumably there are two paired ones below the kind of- the shelf. But there- they all go into like, the middle here. And that's it. This is just like a big cannon area. And there's AI controlling the cannons. And, there's- that's it. And nothing's aiming at you, there's nothing shooting at you. There's just these big anti-ship cannons. What do you do? And once you destroy them, the ship can come closer. [Pause for some time]

DRE: Uhh.

AUSTIN: Dre in the chat says "[Common is very excited about the AI running these cannons.](#)" Yeah. It's a bit of a Microsoft fucking TED Talk ad, about how excited he is about these cannons. "AI"... I don't have a joke I'm too tired, I don't have a like, a good rhyme about-

DRE: That commercial is a joke, right?

AUSTIN: That whole commercial is a fucking joke, yeah. [Imitating Common] "AI, how high?"

DRE (Imitating Common): "Tomorrow is Today."

AUSTIN: "Time to die." Yeah! Urgh.

DRE (as Gold): I mean, so, do we just blow these things up?

SYLVIA (as Cerise): I mean we've got to disable them somehow, so... It's that or something else. Maybe we can break them more subtly, but we should break them in some way. [Dre giggling]

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AUSTIN: Yeah, uh, Cerise, is this one of those things where it's like "this motherfucker", like this is why I don't work with Hounds, because...

SYLVIA: I think it's kind of like, "well shit, my cool big explosion moment got kind of overshadowed" [AUSTIN: Aww], and uh, yeah, no, it's definitely a pride thing. Like it's definitely like, "I know what I'm doing more than this guy-" or this person; sorry, I forgot neutral [AUSTIN: Yeah] pronouns for Gold, my bad.

AUSTIN: No worries.

SYLVIA: Are there like terminals for the anti-ship cannon or anything? Like, is it- or is it controlled purely on the inside of them.

AUSTIN: It sounds like you are trying to, ah, determine things about the world.

SYLVIA: It does.

AUSTIN: I think that that would be a Read the Room, in this case, actually.

SYLVIA: Okay; I have a zero in my- in Sense, so this is just straight 2d6. [AUSTIN: Uh huh] Unless someone wants to, help me look, for how these things work?

AUSTIN: Brightline, are you back on sensor duty?

ART: I, I guess- yeah.

AUSTIN (over Art): Or is there anything else you could do here, hm?

ART: I mean it's like, we're running out of space so the hold becomes less useful.

AUSTIN: Yeah. True, true.

ART: I don't know how I advise or support you in looking for something though...

DRE: Could you have intel documents or something about how these cannons work?

SYLVIA: Yeah.

AUSTIN: Ooh, that's interesting.

SYLVIA: Schematics or anything close to that even.

ART: Uh, sure.

AUSTIN: Yeah, I like that.

JANINE: Even at the very least like, practical captaining experience about where you put your cannons and whatnot, like...

AUSTIN: You know about cannons.

ART: Yeah, you point them at stuff and they shoot.

AUSTIN: [exasperated] Take plus one forward, I guess.

SYLVIA: So glad this guy's in charge. [Austin giggles]

ART: I mean you put them on the side- the problem is we're talking about knowledge that I personally don't have. [Sylvia laughs]

AUSTIN: God.

SYLVIA: Alright, that's a plus one?

JANINE: Never stopped Adaire, I'm just saying.

AUSTIN: That's a plus- yeah, 2d6 plus one. [Sylvia laughs] Yeah, true enough. 2d6 plus one.

SYLVIA: 2d6, right? Well I got a six anyway.

AUSTIN: You got a six. You did get a six.

SYLVIA: So...

AUSTIN: Oh boy. [Anguished noise] I guess technically someone can still help. I actually don't know if, Weregazelle, if in the rules you are, this is a game where you can help after the fact, or only before. I tend to default to after being allowed, because it, it opens up more possibilities for teamwork. And I, I guess technically Brightline's, um, tips, tactical genius hold, does not- it doesn't say as if you did Help or Hinder.

JANINE: It's true.

ART: It's also the best part is that the move stipulates that the things I'm saying are genius.

AUSTIN (laughing): It does. [Dre giggles]

ART: So they are.

AUSTIN: It does say that.

ART: No matter what it is, or how obvious it is, it's blowing your mind. It's in- it's in the rules.
[Austin laughs]

JANINE: I could-

SYLVIA: Oh god.

AUSTIN: What were you going to say, Janine, real quick?

DRE: Yeah, go ahead.

AUSTIN: I want to make sure.

JANINE: I'm rolling to help, I've had good luck- well, no- well... I've had good luck helping, but the helps I've done have not had good luck.

AUSTIN: Mmm, okay.

JANINE: But...

AUSTIN: Go ahead.

JANINE: [amused] Okay. 2d6 plus two?

AUSTIN: Is that your gravity with, Cerise, yes, totally. [JANINE: yeah] [Roll20 bloop noise]
Are you just also looking at the- Okay, so this is good.

JANINE: Well that's an eight.

AUSTIN: That's an eight, which means that you are susceptible to, to whatever happens. But, because it's an eight, you get Cerise's roll up to a seven. And, on a seven, you... Read the Room. And it means you hold one, you can ask one for one here. [Reading from the rules, quickly] "Who has the upper hand here, who is defenceless here, what is being overlooked here, what does X really feel, what is X's real intentions? How is X at Risk of- at Risk or in Peril?"

SYLVIA: I'm torn between the, "how is X at Risk or in Peril," with X being the cannons, or "what is being overlooked here," if people at the table have any input there. I feel like they're both kind of, two routes to the answers I'm looking for, but... you know, I could be wrong.

AUSTIN (peacefully): Ask what's in your heart.

SYLVIA: Yeah, I think I'm going to ask how are the- no, I'm going to ask what is being overlooked here, because that feels like, I don't know, that's the, the anxiety in me, I gotta ask it; what's being overlooked, what have I missed that's going to get me? [Austin laughs]

AUSTIN: Um, so, you're- at this point, you're still looking at the schematics and stuff, right? Or are you on your feet, like what are you, where- what is the- how are you reading the room, so to speak?

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SYLVIA: Oh, I think- [sigh]

AUSTIN: Like have you approach- or not on your feet, like approaching the cannons? The answer's whatever you want it, it's just a matter of how I'm framing this specific shit.

SYLVIA: I kinda- Yeah I think- I think... I think it is getting closer in the Astir, and then like, Cerise is thinking about getting out of it if she needs to get a closer look [AUSTIN: Right] but she really doesn't want to.

AUSTIN: Yeah, okay. Um... So. It's two things. The first is, is, that- you know, the first is like a small thing, which is just like, "oh, I don't need to separ- I don't need to turn these off one by one, there's a central circuit, we cut this circuit in the right place, we can, we can- only one person has to go do this", do you know what I mean? This isn't going to be a situation where you have to go from one to the other and risk hitting some alarm or something. Like you find the place where you can just, you can just cut these off.

AUSTIN (continued): The second is, they have better scanners than you do. And, they have, they notice that there has been something- you're like looking at their logs: There is something, not approaching the ship, but just outside of your ship's sensor range. Which is very far away still, which gives you a lot of wriggle room and time here. There is a second capital ship, and a Divine. Further out from the station. So there is something- and it's been there. It arrived tailing you. And the only way it could be tailing you is if it knew where you were going already.

AUSTIN (continued): Which then begs the question- or maybe it doesn't beg the- it introduces, the, uh, piece of information for you. Which is: you know that Barter was sent here by someone. So, that means that someone- and like specifically didn't want you to advance. So. Who is this group that's watching you, or this Divine that's watching you? And, what are they hoping to get out of all of this? They- that Divine is too far out of the gun

range, for it to be shot the same way that the ship is. Like, the gun range has a much bigger sensor range than it does a firing range.

AUSTIN (continued): Like, it couldn't- this person couldn't have tailed you, because your ship would have noticed- couldn't have directly tailed you, you know, couldn't have followed you. Because, because, the Ivory Prince has good sensors. So the Ivory Prince would have noticed if it was actually being followed. Instead, it was clearly someone who just knew where the Ivory Prince was going, and stayed far enough behind that it's waiting for whatever happens here to happen. Or, is going to strike at some moment.

SYLVIA: 'Kay. I mean, I'm immediately relaying that to Brightline, cause I need- there's a whole crew on that ship that [AUSTIN: yes] we should probably try and keep safe.

AUSTIN: Yeah. What do you do with the guns?

SYLVIA: Well- so there's part of me that's like, we could tamper with these in a way to have them, like... I had this idea, where it's like, try and mix up the signals where it reads our ship as something else, and then, when this ship is in range, it could read that as something else.

AUSTIN: Yeah, totally. I think that's not a bad idea. That's a good idea.

SYLVIA: Okay. I'm just trying to think of how I go about doing that--I'm trying to decide if there's a magic way to do this, or not, because...

AUSTIN: Right. So, I'll say that this is like, dead- ha, this is dead metal. [SYLVIA: Okay] This is not, this is old tech, this is not Divine tech, this is not- this is gross Earth shit, you know? And like, there might be a magic way on your side, but this is not like, "ah, I'm talking to the machine".

SYLVIA: Um. Yeah. This- hmm. I'm just looking at my moves and I'm got this-

AUSTIN (over Sylvia): But, but- No go ahead, what were you going to say?

SYLVIA: I was just going to say, I was going to ask, since it's old tech, would that fall under mundane craft and building under my Consult Literature move?

AUSTIN: Oh, it totally would. It [SYLVIA: Okay] absolutely fucking- and military tactics, the two things you have. [SYLVIA: Yeah] Yes. It's absolutely mundane craft and building. Yeah.

SYLVIA: Okay, cool.

AUSTIN: That means you have almost perfect records of, and you- and, and two- oh, you know what, I should have given you a third one of these things, because it's "One, you have almost perfect records of, and two, you have extensive information on-" you- do you want to pick a third?

SYLVIA: Uh, yeah. I think I'll go with enchantment and spellcraft, [AUSTIN: Okay] just because Cerise has been leaning into that a lot.

AUSTIN: Totally. Is that the one you have perfect records of?

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AUSTIN: Or is that the one, or do you only have extensive information on it?

SYLVIA: You know, I think that's extensive. I think the one that she actually has a perfect record of, just from her background and stuff, is actually military tactics.

AUSTIN: Yeah, that makes sense.

SYLVIA: Yeah.

AUSTIN: Cool. So yeah. So I think given that, you can just do this. [SYLVIA: Okay] With mundane craft and building. So yeah, what do you, what do you make- how do you reprogram it?

SYLVIA: I think it's got something to do with like, because this is old tech, I'm imagining it works off, like frequencies of some sort?

AUSTIN: Sure.

SYLVIA: And I think it's about just changing the way the system reads those frequencies? And changing like, the way it reads the Ivory Prince from like...

AUSTIN: Right.

SYLVIA: Like a bogie or whatever they call it on sensors [AUSTIN: Yeah, uh huh] to like a friend- friendly. I don't know why I went full Top Gun there, but, it happened.

AUSTIN (over Sylvia): Don't, it's perfect. Cause- cause New Earth Hegemony is extremely full Top Gun, come on. So yeah, it-

SYLVIA (over Austin): Okay. And then, vice versa for the other one.

AUSTIN: Yeah, totally. So then, it does that, and you see that it registers you all as friends, which means, hey, Ivory Prince? You can start moving forward. [Pause] And, as you move closer, I think this is- hmm, okay. Perennial whispers in your ear again. This is not Cerise, this is Teasel. And she says,

AUSTIN (as Perennial): Well done! Thank you for bringing me with you. Now, before the others go forward and destroy this thing, carry me to it. This is not something that should be wasted. And certainly not by the Divine Principality.

JANINE: Um. Where specifically does she mean here?

AUSTIN: So at this point, there is, there is, a big door at the end of this, like, section, that is going to the power terminal. And, I think, it, it like, is clearly, like it's shut, as something powerful and good. There's a doorway that has glowing light behind it that is starting to shimmer through, you know?

JANINE: Then, I think- there's no real reason for it but, it's, the thing that feels right, is that I think Teasel hops out of her Astir, and like, dainty little, little hoof feet [Austin laughs] in the space suit or whatever, hit the ground, and she just sort of starts like-

AUSTIN: Walking that direction.

JANINE: Trotting forward.

AUSTIN: Yeah.

JANINE: Yeah.

(Austin and Janine overlapping)

AUSTIN: Hey Teasel's going-

JANINE: I say-

AUSTIN: Go ahead.

JANINE: I was going to say, I say trotting cause like I think- I imagine her taking like, a lot of very quick small steps rather than like, big strides. [Agreement from Austin] It's just-

AUSTIN: Yeah. Yeah. Teasel's heading for the door, which is the mission, so it's not like, I don't know that there's anything worrying at this moment, you know? Do the rest of you follow?

DRE: Yeah, I mean... Seems like things are under control, and like you said that's the mission, so.

AUSTIN: Yeah. And, the door opens. And, it's a gigantic door, there's a little door next to it, so maybe the gigantic door doesn't open, the little door opens. And you walk inside, and it's, you know, a big- it's like a big glowing orb of light that has like weird things spinning around it, and there's a bunch of terminals all around, and you're able, you know- I think Perennial is able to translate stuff for you, and there's a bunch of computers. And to some degree it's like, well, what do you do here? And, Brightline, you're able to like land the ship here at this point, I'm going to draw the ship and have it land. I'm not going to draw the ship, but- you know what the fuck I mean. Nope, that's backwards. [pause]

AUSTIN: So what do you, what's the plan? You kind of have a bunch of options in front of you now.

JANINE: Urm... I feel like Teasel is going to go straight for that orb.

AUSTIN: Yeah, sure.

JANINE: Like, she's a witch, and it's a big orb.

AUSTIN: It is a big orb.

JANINE: [Dre and Sylvia giggling] So, I don't know. Again, it just feels like the thing to do.

AUSTIN: Mm-hm. Though- and, I think that's how it feels, also, do you know what I mean? Like, that is, how Perennial is making you feel. "Oh yeah, bring me to the orb." What was the- well I guess here's my question is like, were you going to destroy the- as a team-

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AUSTIN: Has- was there a decision, that was like, we're going to destroy this thing or we're going to take it over, or we're going to... whatever. I guess maybe- yeah, I want to know what the plan was, at this point.

DRE: For me the plan is whatever the person paying me said it was.

AUSTIN: Good call. Good answer. I mean, maybe good answer, but if Gold had some plans of their own, that would also have been fine, but, you know.

DRE: Yeah but, I don't... Yeah.

AUSTIN: Yeah. I gotcha. It's a mission. Cerise? Brightline?

SYLVIA: I think Cerise is mostly focused on just getting this away from like, our opponents, [AUSTIN: Sure], like our foes, as opposed to like, destroying it or keeping it. [AUSTIN: Yeah] As long as it's not in their hands, she's satisfied.

AUSTIN: Sure. Captain Brightline?

ART: I think--I think I would, would have thought this is a salvage mission.

AUSTIN: Okay. Okay. The--so I think that means like, the salvage teams and engineers on your ship begin to like, prep their spacesuits to go out and connect to the rest of the crew. But, Teasel, I think now is maybe a good time to use, uh, Weave Magic.

JANINE (laughing): Uh huh.

AUSTIN: I'll read from the Weave Magic section, just so that we're all on the same page. But I think that this falls into Weaving Magic. This book does the thing I really love where it breaks down the moves, and like, actually breaks them down with some GM notes, and stuff like that, you know. "Weave Magic; when you invoke your magic to crumb- to crumble a bridge, try to attune yourself to an Astir, or otherwise attempt something taxing with your powers, you are attempting to weave magic. When you do so, roll plus Channel. On a ten plus you manage to Channel power the way you desired without ill effect. On a seven to nine you succeed, but with some cost. Your GM will ask you to settle for less, take a Risk, or make a difficult choice. In Armour Astir, magic is typically channelled through an Astir or used to produce magical objects. More formal uses--in the form of spells and so on--have fallen out of use somewhat. When you try to twist your magic ability into the desired results, then you're not picking results from a list, you're weaving magic. It's tiring to use your magic in this way, unless you're attuning."

AUSTIN: Like some- GM notes; like some of the others, this is a pretty straight forward move. If they're trying to do something with their magic, and you think it's something within their ability, they're trying to weave magic. Attuning to an Astir or a familiar to use it requires a weave magic roll, and it's also the only use of this move that isn't tiring in a noticeable way. Overuse of weave magic should visibly exhaust characters, and make it tough for them to operate. This is the trade off for how wide and varied the use of this move could be." And then there's some examples.

AUSTIN: So yeah, this is going to tire you out, but, a couple of things. Did you already roll it? No, you didn't, right?

JANINE: No.

AUSTIN: That was- okay.

JANINE: I was waiting for you to finish talking.

AUSTIN: So plus three, on this roll. And, Perennial is going to spend one of her influences here, dropping her down to plus two. I can do that, right? Yeah, I can do that. To plus one, rather, influence on you. And that is helping and hindering- no, helping you. It's to give you a plus one to this roll.

JANINE: Okay, so 2d6 plus four?

AUSTIN: 2d6 plus four.

JANINE: Okay. That's an eight.

AUSTIN: That is an eight. So. When you get a seven to nine you succeed-

JANINE: Can I-

AUSTIN: Yep?

JANINE: I just want to say- I have a really specific image for what touching this orb looks like.

AUSTIN: Yes, please tell me what touching the orb looks like.

JANINE: So I imagine she's touching it like, not with the full hand, but like, she has, she has her hand in like a pointing motion, and sort of touching a fingertip to it. But not in a way where it's like, "oh I don't want to touch this," in a way that's just like a, very like... It should convey delicacy and precision more than hesitation.

AUSTIN: Mmh, totally.

JANINE: But also, specifically like the, the moment of contact I'm picturing a lot of like, basically any Studio Ghibli film that has mu- magic in it. You get that moment where a character is doing something very magic-y and their hair like fluffs up and their eyes get really really big in a way that's kind of like a little scary. Like, Howl does this really well. Where's it's just like, a little bit too intense, a little bit too keen.

AUSTIN: Yeah. So, the- that happens. And then I'm going to ask you to make a difficult choice, because it's a seven to nine. If you do this, if you follow through with it, and you can feel Perennial- Perennial is like... Out in space, Perennial's- the, the, the leaves and flowers on Perennial's body begin to wither and fall to the ground. It's like ash, falling, purple ash, down onto the space station, as she moves from that body into this new one, this giant space station at the centre of the galaxy.

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AUSTIN: It starts to take on, the orb starts to take on a purple hue. And if you continue, not only the orb, but much of the light around this entire area will take on this bright purple hue -- almost lavenderish hue I guess. And that will be immediately noticeable to those, to those nearby blips on the radar, on the guns. And they will know that you have begun doing this. So, you will be seen, is the risk. Not the Risk, but the difficult choice. Do you continue?

JANINE: Oh yeah, totally.

AUSTIN: Okay.

JANINE: I mean, Perennial asked her to.

AUSTIN: Yeah, yep, totally. The orb begin- To Gold and Cerise, are you, are you just watching as this happens?

SYLVIA: Yeah, I guess my question is do I, I don't- I guess my connection's weaker so I wouldn't feel it as much?

AUSTIN: It's just different, right, you just don't- I mean you could try to open a conversation here, or open a connection. But, based on the way you described it, it is a different thing. Right? You feel Perennial moving. I think, like, we get the hallmark of your ritual again. The winds start blowing, the- plants start growing in here. So you know that Perennial is on some shit right now.

SYLVIA: Okay.

AUSTIN: Rosarium Rennari is like,

AUSTIN (as Rosarium): Captain, um... Strange things are happening...

AUSTIN: And the map is just like, overwhelmed with energy. And there's like, [pew], there's like sparks in the bridge.

[Dre sneezes]

AUSTIN: Was that Art sneezing?

DRE: No that was me.

ART: Nope.

AUSTIN: Oh, okay.

DRE: Sorry.

AUSTIN: Captain, you're not, you're not taking any action here?

ART: It's hard to make these powers...

AUSTIN: Just in general? Without looking at the powers. I can add something to really make- give you some stuff to focus on, which is, your special sensors do have new blips on them. As, off in the distance, off on the horizon, new forces arrive. There is-

ART: Alright, that seems, that seems a little more-

AUSTIN: Yeah, your speed?

ART: Direct, yeah. Alright, um...

ART (as Brightline): You're, you're all in danger. [sighs] How defensible do you think your position is?

DRE (as Gold): I mean, defensible against what?

ART: Uh, great question. What are we seeing? What, what does this look like?

AUSTIN: Good question. Off, in the distance, I think you see it as stars, begin to be covered up by it, right? So you're literally seeing the silhouette as you look off, away from the galactic core, out into the darkness, where countless stars exist. And it takes you a second to understand what it is. First you recognise a familiar, familiar silhouette. You're all, you know, you're militarily trained, Cerise is militarily trained, so you recognise the shape of a Constellation Class cruiser, instantly. And you know that means that it's another House cruiser.

AUSTIN: What you don't expect is what's behind it. As star after star is covered up by a strange shape that you think at first is humanoid, maybe like a person--it must be a Divine--holding out their arms. But then you realise that the arms have a very specific shape, and that they are not actually standing still, they're moving back and forth, they're flapping. It is a massive, bird-like Divine. Imperial in its posture. Empyrean is here. The Divine of House Nideo. And it moves closer and closer with each flap.

ART: To them or to us?

AUSTIN: To you. It is coming with them.

ART: Er, let me, let me clarify again. To where-

AUSTIN: Oh, y'all are basically together at this point. Like, you're in the same, you're in the same- it's coming down this long pathway towards you, do you know what I mean? It is not- your crew, the ship and the mechs, the mech team, are basically in the same zone at this point, you know? I'm not going to find a good eagle silhouette, what the fuck am I thinking. Here we go, boom, got it. Giant firebird.

SYLVIA: Ooh. Oh.

AUSTIN: Uh huh.

1:10:00

ART (as Brightline): They have a Divine.

SYLVIA (as Cerise): Okay.

DRE (as Gold): That's bad.

AUSTIN: And a spaceship, but that spaceship is not as bad as the Divine.

SYLVIA: We... Okay, so we need to- we could use the cannon to start firing, and maybe try and get out of here?

AUSTIN: Uh yeah, so. I mean as soon as they get into range, the cannons lock on and begin to take- and begin to fire. The, I think that the ship pulls back. But Empyrean is Empyrean, and is like, evaporating blasts as it's coming closer. But it- even it is kind of hovering here and waiting to see what sort of shit- like, I don't want to un- I don't want to erase the anti-ship cannon like, hack, that's really good, so it's bought you some serious time.

SYLVIA: Okay.

ART: And just to make sure.

AUSTIN: Yeah.

ART (as Brightline): None of you think that you could like, potentially do something that would really fuck up this Divine?

DRE (as Gold): Well, I mean.

AUSTIN: So, couple thoughts, in terms of mechanics. Divines are tier 6, they are the highest tier, they're higher than any individual tier that's here. There are two things that you can do, to fuck up anything that's a high tier. One is, you have a tier 5 gun, on the Hellebore and Ivory Prince. But it has Bane, which means it can hit one tier above. So it can actually hurt it, if you get a good direct hit. That means putting yourself at Risk, and it is a tier higher than you, which means it can, it can try to take you out, instantly. It's- that's a big danger, right, like?

AUSTIN: Two is, you could theoretically give, you have the "Surprise Requisition" thing-

ART: Yeah.

AUSTIN: Which adds Ruin tag for one shot or strike. So, you could give someone the Ruin tag to start picking away at it.

ART: And I have one more hold, so an ally can appear in a place they're needed-

AUSTIN: That's true.

ART: Which could be an advantageous position.

AUSTIN: That's true. I will say it will be very hard to win this fight outright, in this moment. I think Perennial says that, too, as Perennial's moving into this system. I think she says,

AUSTIN (as Perennial): All you need to do is give me time, and they'll never take me, or this station. Ever.

AUSTIN: And this is about buying time. This is about giving Perennial time to come into full control of this machine that the New Earth Hegemony built eons ago.

ART: Okay, so I, I want to shoot, and I want to requisition someone Ruin.

AUSTIN: Alright. What are you doing- In which order? And also, how- what's the shooting look like, here? Do you just lift off, the- in the ship?

ART: Yeah, I guess so.

AUSTIN: And like, move between these big giant cannons, and kind of use them as cover, I guess?

ART: Yeah right, we kind- we sort of like swing around?

AUSTIN: Mhm [Positive].

ART: I've never really... Mm. I've never really thought about how to, shoot a magic sniper rifle from a [Austin laughing] spaceship before.

AUSTIN: Yeah. It's like a big main cannon, right? And you have to-

ART: Yeah.

AUSTIN: Oh, I know, you have to look at... It's just like, I can think of a couple of ways... "Anime captain yelling on spaceship." [Dre laughing] Just type that here... You know, there's like- I could just click a lot of various things here. I bet this Space Captain- I don't want to spoil Space Captain Harlock. Who's that, who's that character who yells and has that goofy voice in that Gundam? Dre?

DRE: You're going to have to be a lot more specific.

AUSTIN: "Gundam Seed yelling."

JANINE: Is his name like-

DRE: Oh, I didn't, I didn't watch Seed.

JANINE: Tomato Firehose or some shit?

AUSTIN: That's it, Tomato Firehose. Uh, it's one of the Gundam Seed captains, [DRE: Yeah, I-] she has a really great yelling voice. You'll get there eventually because, because Great Gundam Project will.

DRE: Nah man, I tried Seed and I, I can't.

AUSTIN: Suffer with me. [Sylvia laughs]

DRE: Alright, well, if you're doing it, sure. [Dre and Austin laugh]

AUSTIN: You just, you just have to stand up on the bridge and say something really, inspirational or yell.

ART: Sure.

AUSTIN: Like, you're firing a gun at a god!

ART: Yeah, yeah, I'm thinking about it.

AUSTIN: They're less gods now than in Twilight Mirage, in a sense. I will say a touchstone for me for Season Six Divines is a game that came out last year called, um, John Madden Football 2019- No. [Laughter from Austin, Sylvia, and Dre] Called Ni No Kuni 2, in which there's this premise of the Kingmaker, which are these-

1:15:00

AUSTIN: These like, ancient powerful creatures, like dragons or- there's a bunch of mythological things that you could- if you can convince them that you're powerful enough, they will like, basically become loyal to you, and in doing that give you the power and the, the, kind of... what's the word I'm looking for... I guess, authority, to call yourself a King. And so...

JANINE: There's a volume of Petshop of Horrors you should read if that's a thing you're into.

AUSTIN: Sure, please, link me. Or tell me where to get it.

JANINE: We'll work it out.

AUSTIN: And, so I kind of- there's like an element this season where I kind of want them to feel a little bit like mythological creatures, in that sense, and to have those relationships be different. Like, in some cases, and I think that this is one of those cases... So, you know that this is not just a Nideo ship, this is the ship of Caust Nideo, C-A-U-S-T Nideo, who is the ruler of the Nideo house, of House Nideo, and Empyrean is like his pet. It's sick. Like, as someone- even as someone who is more on the Kesh side of things than the old Divine Fleet sense- side of things, you know that Nideo's, that Caust Nideo's own, you know, ancestors, would hate this about him. Even they, who like, began to change their faith years ago, would not want this sort of like- Divines shouldn't be, shouldn't be leashed in this way. And so, people are really mad about this in the chat, just so everyone listening at home on the archive knows. Don't worry, people here are mad. I will remind people to go back to listen to the end of Twilight Mirage where I teased this exact specific thing. They rebuilt Empyrean and took control.

ART: So. I want you to know-

AUSTIN: I should note that this eagle- one more thing. This eagle is *the* symbol of the Divine Principality. It is on every flag. It is this, it is a big black eagle, with sharp lines. So.

ART: Okay. I just want you to know that in like 90 seconds you're going to be mad at me.
[AUSTIN: Uh huh] I just want you to be prepared for it emotionally.

AUSTIN: Not- okay.

ART: So I think we start with the like, where the hat is like this glowing, like orange of surprise and- [Austin laughs]

SYLVIA: God.

ART: Fear as the thing comes in. And Briar like, is trying to assess the situation. You know when you're, you're trying to just take in information too fast.

AUSTIN: Yeah.

ART: And you realise that you're not like, noticing anything?

AUSTIN: Yeah.

ART: And you see Briar take a breath, and start to, to like, to really take in what he's seeing. And the hat cools down, [Austin laughing in the background] and goes to a nice aquamarine. And we get a close up of a narrowing eye. Says:

ART (as Briar Brightline): Looks like it's time for Caust to pay the price.

AUSTIN: God fucking damnit.

SYLVIA: Fuck right off.

DRE: I hear somebody driving away in a car, they're so mad at the Caust line-

AUSTIN: Yeah it's me, I got to go everyone. Thanks for uh, [quickly] twitter.com/austin_walker. Friendsatthetable.cash, bye.

DRE [quickly]: Pandora.

AUSTIN: Pandora- [laughing from Austin and Sylvia] Oh, they're going to get so much advertising out of us, fuck!

ART (as Briar Brightline): Fire on that Divine.

AUSTIN: Alright, give me a roll. This is... Whoof, one second, I had to clear my eyes. Why have I lost- oh, I'm looking over my left side of the screen and not finding things because it's all over here. So this is definitely, um, Exchange Blows. And, I'm just making sure- do you have anything that's like, "Roll Crew-" do you roll Crew to do this? In Command- yeah, you can roll Crew to, because your, your Clash is -1, you do not want to roll your Clash for this.

ART: Right, but because I'm using the, the, the carrier's armament, so I can roll Crew.

AUSTIN: Yes. So 2d6 plus two. I don't think anyone can help you here, unfortunately, right?

SYLVIA: I was going to ask if I could with the, the cannon at all, with like covering fire or something?

AUSTIN: Oh, yeah, totally. Totally, totally. So yeah, do you want to relocate and- you've relocated and you're like, aiming the cannons in a special way? Yeah, give me a Gravity roll to help.

SYLVIA: That's a plus two-

AUSTIN: Yup, 2d6 plus two.

SYLVIA: With- yeah, okay. That's a f- two ones! That's four.

AUSTIN: Yikes! Yikes!

1:20:00

AUSTIN: One of the cannons is destroyed. One of the four cannons is just blown out of the sky, as, as Empyrean launches these like, like, slivery feathers, that like- there's like- So. It launches these feathers but they're not big feathers, they're little feathers, but all of them are on incredibly long thin wires, and so they enter this thing, and there's like thirty of them, it's like [arrow being fired foley], and then they charge up. And boom, it blows up. And then it retracts those feathers. And it's like, it's just a tonne of them, and it's charging up these big, almost like shotgun-blasts of, almost like tazer line, basically? But super long distance. From a range that you could not have fired- eh, I guess you have a sniper cannon, so, so yes, the Ivory, the Ivory Prince could have done that, but, but... Anyway.

AUSTIN: So no pluses anything for you, Brightline. Make your roll, 2d6 plus two. And you are extremely in the danger zone, Cerise. Alright, seven. This is rough.

ART: I think you mean that's a success.

AUSTIN: It is a success. It is a success! "On a seven to nine, both you and your target are forced to take a Risk." So, I think the, the Risk that- what's the Risk you're making it take? Or I guess am I deciding those- here's a question for you, Weregazelle. I know it says that the

player who the Risk is hitting should have agency over what the Risk is. Is that me, in the case of Empyrean?

ART: I'm going to take this rules query to run to the facilities.

AUSTIN: Yeah, you go ahead and run to the facilities, and I will look at this. [Pause] "The person who is taking the risk decides it." So yeah, I think the Risk, that Empyrean takes here is... Does anyone have a good idea here? I actually think- here's what it is. It's "zeroed in." Your shot- uh, Art's not here. I shouldn't say this yet. [Pause] How's everybody doing today?

SYLVIA: Eh, pretty good.

JANINE: Yeah.

SYLVIA: This has been pretty fun.

AUSTIN: Yeah! This game is cool.

JANINE: Yeah!

AUSTIN: I'm really enjoying this.

SYLVIA: Yeah.

JANINE: The, uh, chapter of Petshop of Horrors I was thinking of was also one of the chapters that got animated in like the 90s. So it's like episode four of four, basically, is the kirin episode.

AUSTIN: Okay. I will look into it.

JANINE: Yeah.

ART: Alright.

AUSTIN: Welcome back.

ART: So it looks like you decide the Risk?

AUSTIN: I decide the Risk on Empyrean, but you will decide the Risk on, on yourself. Empyrean gets "zeroed in", as the Risk. Your sniper shot hits, and it gives guidance to the other cannons. So, every time that, that, as Empyrean continues to move closer, it is still under fire. And not just under fire, but they're going to start hitting, instead of missing, as it moves around. What is the Risk that you take?

ART: Um... Does anyone have an idea?

AUSTIN: I think “tethered” would be fun. I think like, it gets those, those hooks in you, and you’re not going to be able to just easily get away unless you cool off to clear that Risk.

ART: Sure, yeah. And it’s worth noting that any Risk that I, uh, take, is- affects the entire carrier itself and the crew.

AUSTIN: Right. Good, good. Love it. I’m going to make sure of something before we move on. Not that it especially matters... In terms of rules, but... Let me just double-check something. “Punching up”. Okay. Yeah, so.

AUSTIN: [Pause] Inside, what are y’all doing? I think, I think at this point like... Oh, I guess one thing that happens is because that first gun is destroyed, actually, now that I think about it, the, the ship can also start to move a little closer. So it is now getting closer and also doing some like, covering fire, ground fire at y’all. Inside, Perennial is continuing to try to get-

1:25:00

AUSTIN: get the, her transfer complete. I’m going to start a clock for that. Just a short clock, a four step clock.

JANINE: Does that tie me up at the orb, or is that happening independent of me at the orb?

AUSTIN: You being at the orb will advance it faster.

JANINE: Okay.

AUSTIN: With- you can roll to make it go faster, basically.

JANINE: Alright.

AUSTIN: Or, you can go back out and help. It’s up to you. Like, you can help on defence, or you can help on offence. So, ah- you can help hack, not hack but-

JANINE: A lot of it is defence.

AUSTIN: Yeah, exactly. Yeah, it’s true. You have different-

JANINE: I’m going to stick on the orb.

AUSTIN: Okay. Do you want to- so, you could... What could you do? You could- oh, I zoomed all the way out, and I can’t see anything any more. I think you could probably magic again, to try to advance this thing a little bit quicker, with the risk that, a failure could- there could be another cost. And also the failure being it hurts you to Weave Magic. [Agreement from Janine] I think if you Weave Magic again, you will take Tired as a Risk.

JANINE: Um. I mean, I think I’ll keep it up.

AUSTIN: Okay.

JANINE: I'll do a magic.

AUSTIN: Give me a Channel.

JANINE: 2d6 plus three?

AUSTIN: Yeah.

JANINE: 2d6 plus three [Roll20 dice roll noise] That's an eight.

AUSTIN: That's an eight. So, take the Risk "Tired". Which is one Risk. The- so. But it does advance, it advances again. So you're getting there. And it's getting more and more purpley. It's getting more and more like lavender. The energy is glowing more and more. Gold and Cerise -- I guess Gold, because I know Cerise you're helping Brightline with something. Gold, what are you doing? In this moment.

DRE: Hmm. So we have, their other ship is also rolling in as well, you know, with that cannon?

AUSTIN: Yeah. And it's as strong as the, the, Ivory Prince is. So like, that's dangerous.

DRE: Tier four, five, six?

AUSTIN: Tier five, yeah.

DRE: Hmm. So I don't have anything I can hit that with.

AUSTIN: Not right now. Um. How many hold do you have left? I mean again, you could always do something smart, right? There's-

DRE: Right.

AUSTIN: Your weapons can't hurt it, but there are ways to make- put things in Risk besides weapons. Fuck!

DRE: What?

AUSTIN: Nothing. You have to come to this on your own. I guess-

DRE: I mean, I just had the thought of like, "man, I wish I didn't blow up that weird cloud thing," because maybe that's something we could use.

AUSTIN: That's true, that's true. I would say look at your moves.

DRE: Okay. Sure. [Pause] Hmm. Are you telling me to go ask somebody to step outside of a spaceship Austin? [laugh]

AUSTIN: I kind of am. I want to know what happens! And what would it be to make that try-like, fuck!

DRE: I don't even... I don't know what is the more confounding conversation here, trying to do Face To Face with a Divine or with a capital ship.

AUSTIN: I don't think it would work with the Divine.

DRE: Yeah right.

AUSTIN: The Divine is always already face to face with you.

DRE: Yeah, yeah, because you're asking-

AUSTIN: And this Divine does not have a pilot, or if it does- it might. I don't know yet. Like I genuinely- we could make this decision right now, on call. And it wouldn't, it wouldn't- I think based on what we said before about Nideo, Caust Nideo using this Divine as a pet, it probably doesn't have a pilot. But also, maybe it does, and it's- that pilot is also like, a servant at best. You know what I mean? Where that is not a good relationship between the pilot and, and their boss. Either Emphyrean or, the... But the bigger question is "do Divines need pilots" in the Divine Emphyrean. Or the Divine Principality. Are- "do they have pilots?" I don't want to give that up necessarily, but I kind of feel like it's like, is that like the chief Hallowed? Like the best- whoever the best servant, pilot, knight, whatever is gets to pilot the Divine, but that's not necessarily the Divine's... The Divine's loyalty is not to the pilot, it's to the house, or to whoever's in charge of the house, and that *sometimes* is the, is the ruler of the house, is the pilot of the Divine, but not always?

1:30:00

AUSTIN: The way that you would have some ancient rulers would take to the battlefield, but others just would not, because why would they? You know. For my part I kind of like the idea of there being like, a chief knight who would be piloting the Divine. So maybe you could do this to that. And also, would maybe work better than against the head of the second biggest house in the Divine Principality.

DRE: Right.

AUSTIN: "Debate me!" Hitting a fucking lance on the side of a, of a space ship ineffectually. [Dre laughing] Just like, slamming it!

DRE: You know this makes you a coward intellectually!

AUSTIN: Yeah. Good note, Weregazelle says; “might be worth remembering that all the Astirs still have a full stock of mana,” which means that you can use the subsystem still, whenever you want. And subsystem is great. It says “you can ward away one source of incoming physical harm, like a firebolt or a rock from a trebuchet.” We’re playing a weird game. “You could divine your situation, asking one question from the Read the Room list. Or you could disperse away excess energy, removing the Risk ‘Overheating’.”

AUSTIN: I’ll note this really quick, ‘cause it’s sick, but it’s not going to come up in this game. So Art is playing as the captain, who is not a Channeller. There are two types of classes in this game, there are Channellers and there are Support. The Channellers are Arcanist, Witch, Imposter and... Paradigm?

SYLVIA: Paradigm.

AUSTIN: Paradigm. Paradigm, is that right?

SYLVIA: I think it was Paradigm.

AUSTIN: Who’s like a Paladin almost. Support is like Captain, there’s like a mechanic or technician, engineer-y one- Scout, and Diplomat. And they’re all cool. The thing that separates them is that the Supports can’t use mechs, they can’t Channel, they don’t have magic. And so they don’t only- not only can they not use mechs, that means they can’t use the subsystem move. Instead they have this other move, called B-Plot, that says, “when you leave to attend something else, rather than be involved in a sortie, name one or two non-player characters that accompany you, and hold three. During the sortie, you may spend it one for one to do the following; improve the result or a six or under by another player to a seven to nine, but complicate things for yourself; deny an NPC from appearing during a sortie--they’re busy, possibly with the same thing as you; spend some time- spend some time and take a downtime action; or cut away from the sortie during a moment when time is precious, giving everyone room to think.” It is literally the cut-away in an anime to what the B-plot is. It’s so good, I love it so much. And I love it as a way for that character to go off and do downtime actions, or just do other things that don’t have anything to do with the big fight sequence, but still provide the players in that fight sequence with some benefit. And I love it because it’s playing with the rules of the genre rather than the rules of the simulation. It’s not trying to- or it’s, it’s simulating genre not combat, you know what I mean? It’s simulating the part of a mecha anime where you cut back to the people at the, you know, space castle or whatever, and you’re like “wait a second, if the rival pilot is in the space castle, then that means they’re not going against the protagonist in this fight.” Or, it is just like, you get a shot of the, of pilot being like “ah, if only I had a moment to figure things out,” and then it cuts away and they’re effectively figuring things out during the cutaway, you know. It’s great. Anyway, what do you-

ART: I want to promise you, if we do this for a long term campaign, I will never be anywhere as boring as a space castle.

AUSTIN (laughing): Damn.

ART: I will be in fantastic places.

AUSTIN: That are not space castles.

ART: Roller discos...

AUSTIN: Oh, so good.

ART: Fancy cafes.

AUSTIN: Great, good. So what are you doing, Gold?

DRE: [Dre's dog barking in the background] Oh god, listening to my dog bark, presumably.

AUSTIN: Hey buddy, hi.

DRE: [Laughing] I think Jasmine just got home so she's barking at the door. I mean, yeah, listen, if you're going to let me go, try to go Face To Face with whoever's flying this Divine, sure that sounds fun.

AUSTIN: So here's what I'm going to say. I think you need to Weather the, Weather the Storm first, to get close enough, right? This has to be... This is like, the music kicks in, we're getting the montage, we're getting Cerise on the cannons, we're getting Brightline firing the main gun and dodging incoming shots as the Ivory Prince gets tethered and pulled forward, and the energy starts flowing through the feather shot. We get, uh--I keep wanting to say teal--Teasel continuing to channel Perennial into the system.

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AUSTIN: And then we get Gold getting back in your mech and launching and like, dodging-trying to dodge incoming fire. So. I think that this is Thrust, right? It's Thrust or it's Glance.

DRE: Um. It's Thrust.

AUSTIN: Yeah, okay. Then go ahead and give me a Weather the Storm with Thrust. Your Thrust is plus two? Three! Plus three.

DRE: Three, yeah.

AUSTIN: Yes.

DRE: A nine.

AUSTIN: That is a nine. I should have asked before if anyone was helping. 'Cause you're one away from a ten.

JANINE: I feel like I'm tied up.

AUSTIN: You're tied up.

JANINE: But I don't know if that's... yeah.

AUSTIN: Yeah, I think you're tied up, for sure.

SYLVIA: I mean I could. It's only going to be a plus one to it, but I could try.

AUSTIN: But you're at a, Dre's at a nine now, so that would push to a ten. So.

SYLVIA: Yeah, I meant like, my Gravity is only a plus one-

AUSTIN: Ah, I see what you're saying.

SYLVIA: With, with Gold is what I'm saying.

AUSTIN: Right. Right- the only person who has a plus two with Gold is...

SYLVIA: Teasel.

AUSTIN: Teasel, yeah.

SYLVIA: I mean, I'll do it.

AUSTIN: Give it a shot. 2d6 plus one. I don't think there's another way to get that benefit.

SYLVIA: Boom, that's a six.

DRE: Buddy.

AUSTIN: Buddy.

DRE: Hey, you finally rolled a four. Look, you did it.

SYLVIA: Hey!

AUSTIN: Hey. You- Collect 'em all. Fuck. Alright. So, I think, at that moment, the... Alright, here is the cost of your failure, Cerise, is- when, when- the second that, that Empyrean and whoever their pilot is notices what's happening, and that, and that like, there's this other mech coming in, and notices- sorry, notices that you are firing guns, that you're tied into that, it fires off another like, row of these feather missile things, into the body, the already withering body of, of Perennial. And, instead of doing the thing where it's like, charging up to explode, you can see that it's like, almost like, sucking energy out this way. And, it is going to

try to inter- it is going to try to kill Perennial, with- just by breaking the Divine inside the shell, before it can complete this, this trans- this transfer. So I'm going to start a second clock and advance it once. That is the death of Perennial. So you know, just fun things. And that's at one. Don't fail too bad here.

AUSTIN: Okay, so meanwhile, at the Weather the Storm, you got a nine, which means you're able to do the thing but at a cost. I'm going to ask you to, I'm going to ask you to take a, to take a Peril, actually, instead of taking a Risk here.

DRE: Just 'cause of the, uh... the tier.

AUSTIN: The discrepancy is so different. Like, you're not even a carrier. It's one thing when it's a carrier. Like, it's a one tier difference there-

DRE: Right.

AUSTIN: but this is a fucking three tier difference. This is a Peril. What's the Peril you take?

DRE: Hmm. A Peril is something that like, I would have to like, fix outside?

AUSTIN: Yeah, it's like downtime to fix it.

DRE: Yeah. Um...

AUSTIN: Oh!

DRE: I mean is losing, is losing my lance enough?

AUSTIN: Yeah, that's good!

DRE: Okay.

AUSTIN: You could also-

DRE: Like I think like I, I'm juking through stuff, but I have to like, use my lance to block an explosion or something-

AUSTIN: Yeah, I love that so much.

DRE: And it just gets melted.

AUSTIN: Yeah- oh! It's one of those things, it- you block it, but it's the feathers with the tethers on them... I didn't mean for that to rhyme. And it yanks back, and the fucking lance flies out of your hand, and then it's charged and it explodes. Do you know what I mean? It's like literally, you're charging forward, you block with it, it yanks it forward, we get the slow

shot of you going kind of up and to the left, and then it pulls further up and to the left, and then it explodes. But then you charge through the explosion and get closer.

AUSTIN: What I was going to say is you could also burn your Mana here to, to, protect that, to ward away one source of incoming harm. But maybe you want to save that, now that you're getting closer.

DRE: Eh, yeah.

AUSTIN: Take that Peril, so mark a Peril, and say "lance destroyed" or something like that.

DRE: Okay.

AUSTIN: And now you can talk it out. Or not talk it out, Face to Face. I need to figure out a name for this fucking pilot. I actually don't need to, they don't need to fucking tell you their name.

DRE: Yeah.

AUSTIN: Phew. Worldbuilding can come later. [Dre and Art laugh] Not at 11:58pm on a Friday where, where I lived through layoffs.

DRE: Woof.

AUSTIN: Yeah.

1:40:00

SYLVIA: Buddy.

AUSTIN: Uh huh! Um... So Face to Face; when you leave- so how do you leave it, is it like, cockpit opens and you step out into like the, the open like, you know I'm talking about? The cockpit like folds open and you can walk out onto it.

DRE: Yeah, and I mean it's probably- you know, because the only way for me to be disconnected from my mech is to physically remove myself from it, I mean, it's probably also powered down.

AUSTIN: Right. But it- how does- does it hover in place somehow?

DRE: Urm-

AUSTIN: Or do you land it on something really tall?

DRE: Ooh, I like that.

AUSTIN: Okay.

DRE: Like just one of these fucked up server towers? Yeah.

AUSTIN: [Agreement] On a ten plus- so roll plus Talk. “On a ten plus, NPCs will leave their, their Astir to face you, PCs must Weather the Storm to refuse. On a seven to nine they’ll leave, but choose one; take the Risk entangled, take minus one forward to your interactions with the other channeler, you are separated from your Astir temporarily. PCs may choose whether to leave their Astir or not. If they do, they pick one of the above for you,” blah blah blah. Again I’m looking, is there any way to help here, and I don’t know if anyone can help you.

DRE: Nope.

AUSTIN: Alright.

DRE: And yeah, I’ve got my, plus one to Clash now-

AUSTIN: Good.

DRE: But that’s not what this is.

AUSTIN: Well, that could come up later, who could say?

DRE: Right.

AUSTIN: I’m just checking, just double checking, triple checking, there’s no other way to get a bonus to this roll.

DRE: Mm-hm, I don’t think so. Eh it’s fun.

AUSTIN: It is fun!

DRE: You know, it’s- we do fun things here.

AUSTIN: We do fun things here.

DRE: A seven.

AUSTIN: That’s a seven! Phew. Yo, rolling dice, it’s- it’s intense out here! Yo! “On a seven to nine, NPCs will leave their Astir to face you, but you chose one: take the Risk entangled, take minus one forward to your interactions with the other channeler,” so, to this pilot, or “you are separated from your Astir temporarily.”

DRE: I would love to be entangled, Austin.

AUSTIN: Okay. Okay. What would make this entangling for you? Is it just that you're here? Is the pilot someone you know? Is, it, just like, like- is it just that you're caught in the moment of being- of talking?

DRE: Hm... I think this might be the first time that Gold has been this close to a-

AUSTIN: Yeah.

DRE: A Divine of, you know, of the... why am I forgetting the name of the faction that we hate?

AUSTIN: Uh, the Divine Principality.

DRE: Yeah. I think this is the first time they've been face to face with a Divine Principality Divine? And they are-

AUSTIN: Yeah. In this way, specifically, too, right?

DRE: Yeah. And they are kind of awestruck.

AUSTIN: Yeah, I love it, write it down; Risk, entangled. Which puts you only one away from being defenceless. Right?

DRE: Ah, that's fine. That's fine.

AUSTIN: Oh wait- I don't- did you write down the first one?

DRE: I'm working on it right now.

AUSTIN: Okay, no worries. So yeah, just mark the Peril and then, like that one- yeah, you got it. Actually, no, it's- so it's, I'll move it. Boom. It's this next Risk. 'Cause it's basically, the way that this is set up-

DRE: Oh, I see, yeah.

AUSTIN: It's like one two, one two, one two. It looks- these are autocomplete sheets, and in the autocomplete PDF it's a little more clear, because of where the fields are. So yeah, cool. What do you say? As this person gets out?

DRE: Austin. Can I use my mana, even though I'm not in my...?

AUSTIN: Yeah!

DRE: Okay. Um. How is this person at Risk or in Peril, right now in this moment?

AUSTIN: Oh my fucking god. [Pause] You sense it for a moment. The leash is loosened, on Emphyrean. And Emphyrean does not like them particularly much.

DRE: They don't like the pilot?

AUSTIN: The pilot. They don't like being leashed, at all. But like- and, you know, I'm not saying this is, "and then the leash is cut, or severed," here?

DRE: Right.

AUSTIN: But if you could somehow encourage Emphyrean to side with you in this moment, it would at least give you the edge you need here.

DRE: I think Gold, like, kinda cocks their head to the side.

AUSTIN: Yeah.

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DRE: And is like,

DRE (as Gold): Okay. Well, now, that the, now that the kids' table is out of the way, I guess you and I can talk.

DRE: And is looking at the Divine. Is looking straight past and through this pilot.

AUSTIN: Right. Alright. Is this like code in a sense?

DRE: Oh, no.

AUSTIN: Like, you're not s- Okay. Okay.

DRE: No, this is, like picking up on that tension.

AUSTIN: Yeah.

DRE: And just being like, "Yeah, I don't want to talk to this schmuck either."

AUSTIN: Right.

DRE: "I want to talk to you."

AUSTIN: Okay. And it's like- so I think it caws. Brightline, fucking Emphyrean is cawing. But the- I think at this moment we know, we get the cut-in of Caust Nideo like, you know, not even shouting orders. I think, I think sitting in a throne inside of this ship, and like, communicating just by eyes, just by like looking at different people who are like, "yes of

course,” and gonna go like look into this. But, the main ship, their capital ship is closing closer. And is getting closer to yours.

AUSTIN: I don't know why I made your ship a big yellow block, and I made their ship a spaceship? But here we are!

ART: Yeah, uh huh.

AUSTIN: What do you do? [Pause] Here you go, I fixed it.

ART: [Quietly, slowly] How's everyone... doing?

DRE: I'm great, Art, how are you?

ART: Well, like, who would really love some Ruin, here?

AUSTIN: Probably... um, Cerise, right? Because-

ART: That was my guess, yeah.

AUSTIN: Yeah. If only because Teasel's caught up inside.

ART: And...

AUSTIN: And Ruin gear- I mean, we could do like a much darker turn here. Where this whole thing is a ploy to get Emphyrean killed, but...

ART: Sure. Alright.

ART (as Brightline): Cerise. You'll find that I, um, I prepacked you with some, some bigger ordinance. We'll bring that online right now.

AUSTIN: How's that roll going to go? What is the roll?

ART: It's going to go great.

AUSTIN: It's 2d6 plus Gear?

ART: Yeah.

AUSTIN: Your Gear is one? Alright.

ART: Mm-hm. And I failed it last time which means I'm due.

AUSTIN: Mm-hm. That's- that's how luck works. [Laughing]

ART: [loudly] Oh my god. [Austin laughing]

SYLVIA: You shouldn't have said anything! If you didn't say anything...!

DRE: You were due for something! You were due for something.

AUSTIN: Oh my god! [Laughing]

ART: I rolled fucking snakeeyes!

JANINE: Snakes only have two eyes, Art. [Austin laughing]

SYLVIA: Well, this is sci-fi.

ART: Well, this is snake eyes plus one. It's snake eyes with a plus one bonus...

JANINE: Yeah, sure. It's a, it's still a one.

AUSTIN: Whatever you say captain, whatever you need to- worst captain! What happened? Unbelievable!

ART: I'm just bad at the Requisition part.

AUSTIN: Yeah! This is- urgh. This is- on the message boards for this anime, people are like "Yeah, I don't know about Brightline, they're really just trying really hard not to do Cass again, even though it's the same voice actor. So they made it so that every time a Plan was supposed to Come Together, it didn't."

ART: Yeah, this plan is not coming together.

AUSTIN: It's not! Fuck. Phew. Make a move as hard as I want, huh? Um. I think as you're like, trying to set that plan into play, the, the ship just gets fucking rocked, as the main cannon of the rival ship opens fire on you, and you're going to take a Peril here. The Peril on the ship- I mean, I think they go for, they go for it. They knock out your main cannon. Your main gun has been destroyed.

ART: Sure. Well...

AUSTIN: Uh huh. And again, we get Caust Nideo, who is so hard for me not to think in terms of things like Escalflowne, but also in terms of things like the bullshit outfits from the very first episode of Star Trek: The Next Generation that Q wears. Like the big red ridiculous headwear stuff, you know what I'm talking about? If you do a search for "Q Star Trek".

1:50:00

JANINE: Yeah.

AUSTIN: But also then, you do a search for “Escaflowne outfits.” And you just combine them, you know? Boom. Boom. Love it. Love it. “Escaflowne villain,” is really what I want here. Just, love it, just [this motherfucker](#) but less blue hair. I think just like that long face, with the little tear and the earrings. But then also just, urgh, red-

JANINE: His name’s Folken, okay?

AUSTIN: Uh huh.

SYLVIA: I’m 100% watching Escaflowne when we’re done here tonight. It’s so good.

AUSTIN: It’s good. It’s on a streaming service, isn’t it? It’s on-

SYLVIA: Yeah it’s on- the series is on Crunchyroll.

AUSTIN: Yes, yes, yes. Alright. So that’s no good. Let’s check in real quick with Teasel. Going to Teasel.

JANINE: Heyy!

AUSTIN: How you doing, buddy?

JANINE: Uhhh-

AUSTIN: You’re tired, right?

JANINE: Yeah... I’m gonna be more tired soon-

AUSTIN: I think-

JANINE: ‘cause I think I need to really fucking-

AUSTIN: Yeah, I think this next-

JANINE: [slight laugh] Really lean in here, at this point.

AUSTIN: I think this next one will be a Peril, if you do it-

JANINE: Yeah.

AUSTIN: This’ll- yeah. But... Which is less easy to knock out. Which will be Exhausted.

JANINE: But, what else are you gonna do?

AUSTIN: What else are you gonna do? Give me the roll. [Keyboard sounds] That’s a ten-

JANINE: That's a ten.

AUSTIN: Holy shit. Which means you're not, in fact, Periled. But I will say actually, you have to take Risk Tired here. It's a second Tired Risk-

JANINE: Yeah.

AUSTIN: But it's not a Peril, which means if you can get through this scene you'll be fine.

JANINE: I do want to say this also looks cool. I want to say that-

AUSTIN: What's it look like? Tell me what it looks like?

JANINE: Teasel puts- you know, she's done with the one finger thing. Now it is like both hands on this orb. It is like, again, the really intense like, "Ghibli character who is fucking with magic and maybe shouldn't be" face.

AUSTIN: Yeah.

JANINE: And there is also like, you know when you are sort of driving on a road at night and it's really sn- it's like not really snowy, but there's a bit of snow on the road. And it gets caught up in those little like, wispy like dust-devil-y things that look kind of almost like smoke?

AUSTIN: Mhmmm.

JANINE: As you're sort of driving along the road? I want to say like that, but it's like coming off the end of her antlers? I had to really search for an image that wasn't vaping for this effect. [Snort] But it's like a sort of wispy smoke trail that is going up along her antlers and then sort of, spraying off the backs? Tips? Ends?

AUSTIN: It's very good. It's very good. And here's the other thing I'm going to give you, is, you did get a 10 here. So even though I'm giving you this Risk, I'm going to give you a little bonus effect here, because, GM fiat, which is, I'm healing Perennial. I think, your connection here pulls more of her onto the machine, into the space station, but also, you're able to detach the bits of the, the, the feather, especially now that Gold has distracted Emptyrean and their pilot. So like, you're able to push the feathers out of Perennial.

AUSTIN: Um. I guess we wrap back around to you, Gold. You going to talk to, you going to roll to talk to this ancient, magic, machine god?

DRE: Yeah. How is, uh, how is the other pilot reacting to me-

AUSTIN: I think like-

DRE: Calling them kids' table?

AUSTIN: I think draws, like, some sort of weapon here? At you, saying that, and to like point it at you? What's a cool magic weapon that Empyrean- um. Some sort of fire shit probably, right? Some sort of cool fire sword? It's a fire sword. It's like a lightsaber but instead of light, it's just like, [fire starting noise].

JANINE: It's fire?

AUSTIN: It's fire.

DRE: Okay. Alright.

AUSTIN: Also, it's, it's, yeah. It's in space, which means it's actually like, you can see that it's spitting oxygen out? Into space, so that it can catch fire. And it like, it bends as it moves. Do you know what I mean? Like it's not, it's not solid the way that a lightsaber is. But they point it at you. And, and they say like,

AUSTIN (as Empyrean's pilot): Strong words from a Hollow hound. What do you want?

AUSTIN: They don't realise that you're not talking to them.

DRE (as Gold): Yeah, you're right, I'm a hound. I have fought, and scrapped, and pretty much put myself up against anything and anyone that was stupid enough to ever call me that. But the other thing I am,

1:55:00

DRE (as Gold): is from Earth. And I grew up hearing stories about how these Divines basically wrecked my people. So even though I've fought *pretty much* anything, and either kicked its ass, or gave as good as I got -- when I saw you in the sky, I went cold. 'Cause I knew I couldn't fight this. But I have to say, I uh... I don't feel as cold now, seeing what's inside. And it's not because of your little, you know, your little marshmallow toaster over there.

AUSTIN: I think this is Strike Decisively Talk.

DRE: Agh, yeah. I would love to try and get that plus one Clash, but I don't- yeah. Yeah. No, it's not.

AUSTIN: It's not Clash. I'd love- I know, I wish I could give you that plus one Clash here, but it isn't. It isn't. It isn't.

ART: Um.

AUSTIN: Go ahead. Yeah.

ART: Could I help?

AUSTIN: How? Yeah.

ART: As just like another- do I just like know dirt? Do I just like...

AUSTIN: Yeah. Of course.

ART: "Say this word."

AUSTIN: Sure.

ART: "It's what his dad said."

AUSTIN: What's the- well, okay. [Dre and Janine laughing]

ART: "When he left."

AUSTIN: You got to give me more.

JANINE: What?

AUSTIN: You got to know dirt. [Dre laughing]

ART: I might know that!

AUSTIN: I mean the dirt here would be about something to encourage Emphyrean to fuck up this pilot, in this moment of weakness. Right?

ART: Sure.

AUSTIN: Which maybe... Is that like, is that like a call to its morality? Or to what you knew Emphyrean was once. Or, to how pathetic this pilot is, or Nideo is?

ART: It's like, Emphyrean, come get your man? [Austin and Dre laugh]

AUSTIN: Right.

ART: Like, this is, this is pitiful, this is beneath you?

AUSTIN: Yeah. Give me that for real.

ART: Alright. This is the worst part of Lives, is that it exposes how much time I need.

AUSTIN: We all need it, we all need it.

DRE: Yeah, it's hard.

AUSTIN: I just take it for weeks before we record. [laughter] [Long pause]

ART (as Brightline): This is embarrassing for you. The other houses are going to hear. He's not... He's not worthy... And he's letting himself be talked like that by a mercenary. You can do better. Can he?

AUSTIN: Give me a Gravity.

ART: I don't mean that, that's like, I'm trying t...

AUSTIN: No, I know. [Roll20 chat sound] That's a ten. Nice work. So plus two on your roll here, Gold. 2d6 plus two.

ART: We're good, like I like-

DRE: [loudly] BLEUGH. [Laugh from Sylvia, groan from Janine]

AUSTIN: Fuck!

DRE: Well, Gold- it was fun playing Gold for a while! [laughs]

AUSTIN: I mean no, no no no, I think we learn something here. This is the failure. And it's so much worse than, you didn't convince the eagle god to kill the pathetic pilot. We learn that all the rumours, about how Nideo keeps a pet Divine, are wrong. And I think the much more terrifying fact is that Emphyrean bought the hype. It's not on a leash. It's happy to fly-

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AUSTIN: The worst flag. It's proud to be on the flag of a growing empire. And I think, what it communicates to you, it caws, and then, it, I think speaks with voice imperial, in all of your minds. And it says,

AUSTIN (as Emphyrean): However far beneath me he is, you are ten times that. Disloyal. Foolish. Without history or an understanding of outcome.

AUSTIN: And it caws again.

AUSTIN (as Emphyrean): I remember being beaten down by those who lived here once. Killed!

AUSTIN: It caws.

EMPYREAN: Never again. We were persecuted, driven to the ends of the galaxy. Told that we were less than men!

AUSTIN: And it caws.

EMPYREAN: Never again. I will not be victim. I will be victory itself. And you have given up your opportunity to fly with me, Brightline.

AUSTIN: And it releases hundreds of feathers, all across the battlefield, and they all begin to explode. You're going to need to take a Peril here, I think. Not Brightline, who rolled a ten, but Gold, for sure.

DRE: Yeah.

AUSTIN: Tell me what it is. Also I want to underscore something super- like, again, not my job to examine my own work, but I absolutely want to be clear that this is an empire that is pretending to be a victim, right? Like, is using the language of the persecuted, intentionally, because they fucking suck. This- sorry, it is the last Peril in line there, that you need to fill in.

DRE: Oh yeah, of course, yeah. [laughs]

AUSTIN: So you are now, you are now defenceless. What is the Peril for you?

DRE: I mean-

AUSTIN: Is it physical, is it emotional? 'Cause it could be, it could be this. It could be.

DRE: And you said it, it's basically, it's, it's being very destructive right now?

AUSTIN: Yeah, oh yeah.

DRE: Well, I mean I'm separated from my Hollow. I can't control it.

AUSTIN: So then, yeah-

DRE: I think it- I think it's blown up, and I'm tossed away in the explosion.

AUSTIN: Totally. Oh, mm, Ian says, can you use Mana to nullify the Peril? Not from Empyrean at full blast.

DRE: And I already used mine anyway.

AUSTIN: Oh, did you burn it? You burned it.

DRE: Yeah.

AUSTIN: Okay. Right right right, okay. So yeah, then yeah. So then it is, it is- I mean, if- I'll say you're able to like, you land still up on the top of the one of these server banks. But yeah, you can mark that's like, that the, that, High Price is out of action or something. You know, destroyed. Um. Phew. There is one hope here. Hey Teasel?

JANINE: Hey!

AUSTIN: One more time.

JANINE: One mo gain.

AUSTIN: One more again, please. What is it, Channel? 2d6- you know what.

JANINE: Yep.

AUSTIN: And I think it's gonna- here's, here's a fun one. I think that, on this one- this is the last one, right? I think that she is going to burn her last influence to help you. So you get another plus one. So 2d6 plus four.

JANINE: Now I have to think of what this looks like. As I roll here.

AUSTIN: Uh-huh.

JANINE: That's a thirteen!

AUSTIN: Fuck! God damn.

JANINE: Okay. So I've already gone- okay, I've already gone both hands-

AUSTIN: Uh-huh.

JANINE: And I've already got the vape horns. [Austin laughs] So I think, okay, I think the thing that happens is, um... A pentagram's really cheesy, but it is like some sort of symbol.

AUSTIN: Yeah.

JANINE: That probably- that means something to them, but I don't know that we have a concept for it right now.

AUSTIN: Yeah, that's fine.

JANINE: But it's some sort of elaborate symbol, like sort of traced in light, that appears at Teasel's feet, or under her little, lil' hooves. And I think it-

2:05:00

JANINE: Appears with like a very noticeable pop, kind of thing.

AUSTIN: Yeah.

JANINE: It's not like it fades, it just like, kind of a... it's a physical kind of thing when it shows up. I think her, oh, she's in a space suit so I can't say her skirts are all ripply and cool.

AUSTIN: You could have oxygen in here. You could- we could have, this place could be fine for you to not be in a space suit.

JANINE: Okay. It's just cool if her skirts are all ripply-

AUSTIN: Yeah, agreed.

JANINE: And like flowy and floaty.

AUSTIN: Yeah.

JANINE: And... I think very briefly the smoke effect that's flowing off of her horns solidifies into like, kind of an extension of her antlers. So her antlers are just suddenly three or four times more.

AUSTIN: Yeah.

JANINE: They are probably a lot actually like the body that Perennial is leaving behind.

AUSTIN: Right.

JANINE: So they are, there's like a floral quality to them and they are just like, all these like sprigs and branches so it goes from looking like this organic thing to being like a, like a tree or like some sort of very plant-y thing.

AUSTIN: Yeah. Can I tell you one other thing that happens?

JANINE: Yes.

AUSTIN: Is, Perennial remembers old things, and knows lots of things. Perennial is perennial, right? Everlasting, returning. That's what Perennial is all about. And so, there is something else added to your antlers. Which was something that was lost for a long long long long time. Or at least nearly lost. And maybe you'll have to go somewhere special, down the line, to figure out what the fuck it is and how to use it right? But... The Chorus Bond is etched into your, into your antlers. Which is not that hard for Perennial to do now that she is in control of all of the energy of the universe.

AUSTIN: Which I guess means that at this point, Teasel is a stratus, which is neat. Does it glow more, does it like- what's the moment that it's clear that Perennial is there.

JANINE: Hmmm. Maybe it glows less?

AUSTIN: Ooh, yeah, it returns to-

JANINE: Or like, it's- like it's been like brighter brighter brighter, and then it dims to a more ambient light.

AUSTIN: Yeah. Yeah. And, I think, like, what we get is the, the, like... Almost like a flash of lightning, here? As the nanomachines from around this area, the ones who are not part of the beast -- but maybe the, maybe the nanobeast actually crawls its way back up here, I don't know -- but like, they form a, a, line for lightning to strike down, and it strikes down between Gold and Empyrean. And then again, and there's just like these blasts of lavender light, that begin to separate Empyrean and the rival ship from y'all. To give you distance.

AUSTIN: And it's clear, to them, that, even though maybe she has not taken complete control of the entire thing yet, and is, is not necessarily in complete control of all of the faculties offered therein, it is not theirs. And they will lose this fight if they stay. And so, after this huge like, blast of, of feathers, it- Empyrean pulls back. And then so does Caust Nideo's ship. And, I think, you know the second thing that, that she does, is kind of like, brings the Ivory Prince down, to the ground, using these nanomachines. And like, makes sure that everyone inside is safe, like the nanomachines spread across this entire sector and begin to like, heal people, and perform medical aid, and begin to repair your ship Gold, or your mech, Gold. And they give, they give Cerise's Hallow more ammo finally.

SYLVIA: Oh my gosh! Oh! It stressed me out so much!

AUSTIN: Totally. But you can be relieved that this was neither a suicide mission nor a failure. There is the matter of the fact that Perennial is not going to like, report to Mr Brightline going forward. And so we can talk about this in a more abstract way in a second, but, really quick, how is- what does everyone do?

JANINE: Oh, do I need to take a third... 'Cause I was...

AUSTIN: No, no, they're wiped out, right?

JANINE: Oh, okay.

AUSTIN: You're clear. Everyone clears all their shit.

2:10:00

AUSTIN: This is, this is the end of the Ghibli movie, right? Where it's just like, phew.

SYLVIA: I don't know like a big thing that Cerise is doing, but I think she's checking on Gold when they get back-

AUSTIN: Yeah.

SYLVIA: And like, co- being way more complimentary than they've ever been about their piloting.

AUSTIN: Yeah.

SYLVIA: Being genuinely really friendly to them. And happy that they're back.

AUSTIN: That's really good.

SYLVIA: Yeah.

AUSTIN: Brightline?

ART: I don't... I think this is more about just like, making sure, you know... we lost architecture here, you know? Or the people who were in those parts of the, like...

AUSTIN: Yeah.

ART: I don't have time to...

AUSTIN: Have-

ART: To worry about right now, I have to worry about the stuff that happened.

AUSTIN: Yeah. I think we, I think we get the shot of Perennial talking to, to Teasel, since Teasel's the primary interlocutor there. And- but we get them watching all of these things, and seeing you move from sector to sector on your ship to make sure people are okay, and like taking care of- and we see Gold and Cerise talking to each other and like, becoming buds. And Perennial says like:

AUSTIN (as Perennial): I chose the right people. You were all so very fun to watch.

AUSTIN: And that was to Teasel specifically.

JANINE: Oh, um. Where am I?

AUSTIN: In the- with the orb.

JANINE: Okay, still, okay. I didn't know if we were doing a wrap up montage. She's not in her mech so I can't do the "beep-boop"!

AUSTIN: You go to, and you're like "ah fuck, I can't-" But you, okay, here's the thing, what if you could but with your new stratus powers? You don't know how to use them at all yet, but you like, "fuck I want to beep-boop."

JANINE: Oh, I- mm- I think she, I think she maybe like taps her nail on the orb twice, just like a little [tapping noise], and like smirks a little bit, because- I can't, because I can't give up Tharja completely.

AUSTIN: No, that's fair.

JANINE: Because Tharja is good.

AUSTIN: Tharja is good, I like Tharja a lot. And then, yeah.

[Wrap Up]

AUSTIN: We can abstract out here. What I think, one, is: word spreads. Horizon becomes a real thing. By the time that we get to season six, Horizon will be a factor, and will be a group of people, whether they are public or private, whether they are, you know, openly resisting the Divine Principality or whether they are, you know, on a smaller scale, still under cover, and building, building things? In some ways I imagine them feeling a little bit like the Rapid Evening of COUNTER/Weight? In a, in a weird twist around, right?

AUSTIN: The second thing here is, we can talk about this as we do future games, but I think that like this is the first step of the Hypha and Strati coming back into the world, to some degree? Less than- the Hypha, the Hypha culture is not going to come back, right, but now we have another name to add to the list of people who know how this thing works, or who can partially start to figure this back out.

AUSTIN: The third thing is we know what Hounds are, we know what Hollows and Hallows are, and we know that like, I don't know, like, there has to be some dope descendents of Gold who become rad- a rad mercenary company, for sure, right? I mean fuck, I think I know what it is now, to some degree, but like, I can't- I'm not gonna spoil it yet.

AUSTIN: And I think we also just like, the biggest, the biggest question here is like, "okay, what happened, what does, what does Perennial do with this?" And the, the answer might surprise you. Because it is not, um... I guess I can describe the thing I have in mind. Do you remember when, this is a big Twilight Mirage spoiler. This is a big Twilight Mirage spoiler. I'm gonna give you another five seconds to stop listening until you go listen to Twilight Mirage. It's not a big- it's a big spoiler, but it's not like an endgame spoiler, it's a midgame spoiler.

AUSTIN: Do you remember when Quire was like "no more guns?" Perennial does that. But not in the same way. Quire, it had real magic in a way. And it was like, "hey, guns just don't work any more." Perennial has what is effectively a tonne of energy that can be blasted out into the world-

2:15:00

AUSTIN: and then recharged. And so every now and then, Perennially... [people sigh and laugh quietly] Things just get blown the fuck up as a wave of energy spreads throughout the galaxy. It's not like- they don't get blown up, I think. I think that they like fall into disrepair. It's like a mass scale EMP. And people get hurt this way. But Perennial also, because the bulk of military technology is in the hands of this empire, it slows things down. I think maybe this ends up being the "why are there no touch screens" anymore, "why are things like the way they are," less, expli- less multifaceted, less magical, is, what Perennial did was basically sever this specific type of Divine magical technology from the rest of the world. Or from, from things that- it can't be specific, you know, is not able to send these nanobots throughout the entire galaxy and police it, and that's not what she wants to do anyway. She just kind of puts a brake on the expansion of the Divine Principality. She kind of lowers the level of technology in general.

AUSTIN: Because you can make technology that's resistant to it, you can make stuff that's hardened. But you can no longer- you can't make the stuff that looked and felt like the Ivory Prince did. Not for- or you could make it, but it's always going to be at risk that one of these blasts is going to hit. And maybe they become like waves, like maybe it's even less like, once every generation, and it is more like once a season. One of these waves will hit. In some ways I kind of want them to feel like our Minovsky particles for Gundam fans out there. Which is like, "yeah, I don't know, you fucking can't shoot missiles any more because there's these particles in the air." And I'm not saying that there'll be no missiles in season six, there probably will still be missiles to some degree. But it is just like a, descaling of the level of technology.

AUSTIN: We've gone from Belgard can connect to things via mind, and like, can like zip around and like heal everything and, there's perfect, there's no loss of recycling, or there's no loss of material while recycling and healing things. To being like, "yeah that sounds like uh, mythology. No, Divines are just big machines. No, this is just like a big good computer," you know?

AUSTIN: So- and, and maybe Divines are maybe the one expectat- or the one, uh, thing that breaks this rule, to some degree? In some special way, you know. I already know what a number of those Divines will end up doing, or looking like, and some of them are like, "wow, those are still really cool," but that degree of technology is brought back down to being something... You know, I think I'll say openly, like stylistically, a little bit more in the Battletech realm than in the Escaflowne realm, you know? Which means, though, that, you know, Battletech, also something with counts and houses and with, with, courts and space castles. Um. [amused] Sorry, Art, I know you hate space castles. But, yeah.

ART: It's just a boring place to go.

AUSTIN: I see. You can be at a space castle, you just don't want to go to a space castle.

ART: Right.

AUSTIN: Understandably. So yeah, I think that's one more big part, one more big step towards season six. That was really really fun, I really enjoyed that. Weregazelle, this game rules, I'm excited for you to finish it. There's a lot of really cool stuff here. Thank you for sending a, for sending me links about it a couple of months ago, and letting me be like "hmm."

AUSTIN: I will say that something really fascinating is, I didn't plan to use this game for this, for this story. I had this, like idea of, the group that wants to go stop the new- the, the Divine Principality from using this thing. But in my mind it was like, "ah, this is gonna be like hard scifi, so it's going to be Beam Saber or Lancer or, or All Systems Nominal." But then as I was reading them, I was like, "I think the one that I could more, more easily run with and do cool shit with immediately, is Ar- Armour Astir." And it turned out to be the case. And also I really liked the fantasy stuff here. It was really really fun. So. Weregazelle, Briar Sovereign, thank you.

AUSTIN: Where can people, where can people go to find this game? There's a, there's a tinyurl, isn't there? Let me find it, one second. If you go to tinyurl.com/armourastir, it's armour, astir, A-R-M-O-U-R, A-S-T-I-R, you will go to the, uh, the current rules that have like a link out to the quick start, and reference stuff, and feedback forms. So, you should go check that out.

2:20:00

AUSTIN: Where can people find you on the internet, Art?

ART: They can find me on twitter [@atebbel](https://twitter.com/atebbel), they should probably be watching [@onesongpod](https://twitter.com/onesongpod), and if they're around tomorrow, tomorrow from the live game, not tomorrow from later-

AUSTIN: Yeah.

ART: At around like noon or one pm Pacific, Jess and I are going to stream some Kingdom Hearts Three.

AUSTIN: Ooh!

ART: I don't know any plot for Kingdom Hearts-

AUSTIN (quietly): Okay.

ART: And uh, Jess responded when I asked her if she wanted to do this with "What's a Kingdom Heart-"

AUSTIN: Oh my god.

ART: And I have kept all of that information from her, so we're going to really do a, we're going to really get into this from, from a nowhere spot. I'm gonna even say, I don't want any of you on this call to say anything about what Kingdom Hearts is-

AUSTIN: I won't, I won't.

SYLVIA: Ah, nope.

ART: For fear that it will bleed through my headphones.

AUSTIN: Hi, Jess.

SYLVIA: My lips are sealed.

AUSTIN: Great.

ART: Oh, she couldn't hear that, so maybe you could have said something, but. [Sylvia laughs]

AUSTIN: Sylvia-¹

ART: So that will be at mixer.com/HipHoptimus, or you can follow me on twitter and I'll, I'll link it out.

AUSTIN: Amazing. Urm, Sylvia, how about you?

SYLVIA: You can find me on twitter [@captaintrash](https://twitter.com/captaintrash), and you can also listen to my other show Emojidrome on iTunes or Google Play. Switched it up at the end, did it the other way at the beginning.

AUSTIN: And you can find, you can find Friends at the Table on Pandora. [laughs] How about you Janine? [Sylvi laughs]

JANINE: You can find me on twitter [@bleatingheart](https://twitter.com/bleatingheart).

AUSTIN: And Dre.

DRE: Hey! You can find me on twitter [@swandre3000](https://twitter.com/swandre3000).

AUSTIN: Follow me on twitter [@austin_walker](https://twitter.com/austin_walker), you can follow the show at [@friends_table](https://twitter.com/friends_table), and you can support the show at friendsatthetable.cash. Thank you for playing- for hanging out for this long long long stream. It was really fun, I really needed this, this was really energising for me. You want to do a clap?

¹ The name in the audio recording is no longer in use, hence the audio/transcript discrepancy.

JANINE: Yeah.

SYLVIA: Yes, I need to get-

AUSTIN: On 25?

SYLVIA: [Time.is](#) up still.

AUSTIN: Let's do 30 then, 30.

DRE: 30.

SYLVIA: I'm good now.

AUSTIN: Oh, okay. 30, 30, 30.

SYLVIA: Yeah. [Clap]

AUSTIN: Alright. Have a good night everybody, thanks for hanging out.