

PALISADE 08: The Canvas of Dreams

Pt. 3

Transcriber: Iris (@sacredwhim)

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

[RECAP]

AUSTIN (as GRIESEL): So we're going to start recruiting locally, right? New people? So it doesn't all fall on, you know...

AUSTIN: And Decario's like—

AUSTIN (as DECARIO): Of course. We have our—you know we have our best people out there spreading the word. Your daughter's doing a great job.

AUSTIN: Griesel says—

AUSTIN (as GRIESEL): It'll be like, uh... dispersed? The effect will be dispersed.

AUSTIN: And Decario says—

AUSTIN (as DECARIO): Exactly. Once we start recruiting locals, there'll be more followers for Devotion to draw on.

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

AUSTIN: Gem is moving towards the rear of the train cars. And you see her kind of push past some people, look back at you, and then try to make her way into the next train car. When she makes eye contact with you—you have all sorts of sensors going, right?

JANINE: Yeah.

AUSTIN: She does not have the warmth of a human body.

SYLVI: So I like, try and cut through the arms. I think it doesn't work. And then I like—I stab it and break my sword off in the mech. [CHUCKLES]

AUSTIN: Incredible.

AUSTIN (as "EM"): And so that is the last of the ramparts. And I think that's the whole castle. I'm pretty—I don't—

AUSTIN: Looking out over the ramparts, squinting at something that looks like a theater, maybe?

AUSTIN (as “EM”): I don’t know what that is.

AUSTIN: Says the guest you have found yourself burdened with.

KEITH: Phrygian barely looks—this was—I wanted small talk and this was long talk. This was like—

[AUSTIN AND ALI CHUCKLE]

AUSTIN: Big talk, yeah, uh-huh.

KEITH: Phrygian was like, ‘I’m gonna go to a party, I’m gonna talk to some people—’

[AUSTIN LAUGHS]

KEITH: —and the first person that I talk to is absolutely draining me.

AUSTIN: Mhm.

SYLVI: Uh-huh.

KEITH: I have no desire to figure out what this thing is.

AUSTIN (as LATTICE): We came together, we came as an—an archive, in the final days. We feared—the Fleet was being destroyed, and we saw ourselves, we pushed our minds into steel, so that something would be left behind. A snapshot, a recording, some mention of what regular days would be like. We are living memory, we are—we are the Refrain. We are what happened once and will again. We left the Fleet. I left the Fleet. I was alone in the Fleet. I left the Nobel. We were conquerors. I left the Nobel. I did not wish to be a conqueror. I fled as far as I could. I came here, to the Fleet, and found the Fleet would be conquered, too. I fled. I came with... Palisade. Palisade and Antiquity, and the others, I came here, and... we were crushed. We were crushed, and we won’t be again.

[END RECAP]

[MUSIC INTRO ENDS]

AUSTIN: Welcome to Friends at the Table, an actual play podcast focused on critical worldbuilding, smart characterization, and fun interaction between good friends. I’m your host, Austin Walker, and joining me today, Andrew Lee Swan.

DRE: Uh, hi, you can find me on Twitter at [@swandre3000](#). I’m still very flustered from a conversation you will maybe hear at some point. [CHUCKLES]

AUSTIN: It’s good. I don’t know if that one’s making the cut. Janine Hawkins, joining us.

JANINE: Hi, I’m at [@bleatingheart](#) on Twitter.

AUSTIN: [CHUCKLES] Wow, okay.

JANINE: I'm not flustered at all.

AUSTIN: Nope.

JANINE: That was a normal conversation.

AUSTIN: Yeah, I mean, kind of. Sylvi, Sylvi Bullet is here.

SYLVI: Hi, I'm Sylvia, you can find me everywhere online [@sylvibullet](#). That's Sylvi without an E. I should clarify that. You can also follow us on—

AUSTIN: Oh, right, sure.

SYLVI: TikTok, [@friends_table](#), and [twitch.tv/FriendsattheTable](#) where we've been doing a lot more video content lately.

AUSTIN: That's true. That is a hundred percent true. Keith Carberry.

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

AUSTIN: And Ali Acampora.

ALI: Hi, my name is Ali. You can find any of the music featured on the show at [notquiteareal.bandcamp.com](#). And we're still on Twitter at [@Friends_Table](#) if you use Twitter. But don't do that anymore.

AUSTIN: That is a hundred percent true. You can support the show by going to [friendsatthetable.cash](#) if you've been enjoying this season. Check us out there, we've been doing a bunch of stuff. We just about, as of this recording, have another Bluff City in the bag. I think we're probably one short recording away from wrapping that up, which is exciting. And we have—Ali, you just recorded your first Gathering Information, right?

ALI: Yeah. Yeah.

AUSTIN: What was that—what's that? What's that about?

ALI: I sat down with Keith and Janine to talk about adapting characters into *Armour Astir*.

AUSTIN: Mhm.

ALI: And we talked a lot about like, humanity, and—

AUSTIN: Oh.

SYLVI: Damn.

ALI: Thisbe and Phrygian's like, you know, place in social structures.

AUSTIN: Exciting.

ALI: And I think it was really fun and good.

KEITH: It was fun and good.

JANINE: Yeah.

AUSTIN: Hell yeah. Alright. So you—

KEITH: We're fact-checking plugs now. I don't know if you noticed.

[ALI AND JANINE CHUCKLE]

AUSTIN: [CHUCKLES] Okay. Yeah, that's good. I'm glad. That saves me time in post-production from when I would have gone to each of you individually and had to say, 'is that true? Did you talk about that?'

KEITH: Yeah. Mhm.

AUSTIN: But I haven't heard this yet. I'm excited to hear it once it's out. I'm not going to hear it yet. We are continuing our game today of *Armour Astir*. Our goals are to portray a world entrenched in conflict, to let the players make a difference, to connect the magic and the mundane, and to play to find out what happens. We are continuing our Sortie of "Operation: Midnight Lapidary". High level, what's happened so far? What's a thing that's happened to each of you? Let's go around the table. [CHUCKLES] Thisbe, what are you up to?

JANINE: So, I messed up some train tracks.

AUSTIN: Yeah.

JANINE: And then I grabbed a train.

AUSTIN: Mhm.

JANINE: And then I jumped in the train—

AUSTIN: Mhm.

JANINE: —and shot a little cannon.

[SYLVI CHUCKLES]

AUSTIN: Shot a little cannon, that's true.

JANINE: Shot a little cannon.

AUSTIN: I'm gonna move you onto like, that part of the train, and I'm gonna bring the Mow token out so that Mow is still represented on the table. You know?

JANINE: Sounds great. I just want to state, I have—I know what I'm doing next, and I'm super excited about it.

AUSTIN: That's exciting to me, personally.

JANINE: Yeah. Yeah.

AUSTIN: Alright, so you're doing that. Figure in Bismuth, what are you up to?

DRE: Uh, blowing things up.

AUSTIN: Yeah, you like, were up—you did some like, AOE chain grenade shit. Right?

DRE: Mhm. Yeah.

AUSTIN: That was fun. Running this mission long-term, your goal—you have that special secret goal of kidnapping Gem, the target that you're going after—

DRE: Mhm.

AUSTIN: Supposedly, an Orion, a Stel Orion, like, gem magnate, precious minerals magnate. Cori, what are you up to?

SYLVI: Well, one, I had to come to the fight—

AUSTIN: Right, right.

SYLVI: —because I was at the—I was blocking the car transport route, which they didn't use.

AUSTIN: Mhm. They did not.

SYLVI: As evidenced by all the train talk.

AUSTIN: Yeah.

SYLVI: And then I got in a fight with a—was it a Vambrace?

AUSTIN: It was a Vambrace.

SYLVI: Was that the—yeah, I just wanted to make sure I had the model right.

AUSTIN: Yep.

SYLVI: Which resulted in me cutting off one of its arms after a bit of a struggle, and my sword breaking. If I'm remembering correctly.

AUSTIN: Mhm. Yes. I believe that you currently have—I guess I should have said this for everybody here. You have two Risks. What are your two Risks right now?

SYLVI: My Risks are Off-Balance and Dazed.

AUSTIN: Right. And then you've given the Risks, I think, between you and the Figure in Bismuth, you have managed to give a number of Risks here. The train is Slowed Down, Split, and Melting, which means that it is defenseless. It can be—it can have a Strike Decisively

moment against it before it tries to pull away. The Vambrace is now defenseless. It has Off-Balance, Scorched, and Disarmed. And then the guards on the train that Thisbe has been fighting are Disoriented from the loud, terrible explosion of the hidden cannon. And then the two Bouquets also have Melting, maybe, or Scorched, from the explosion of the chain—what's the actual thing called, Dre? What's the actual weapon that you used called?

DRE: Uh, let me check my sheet. Explosive Chains.

AUSTIN: Right. Explosive Chains. Love that. Yes. So they have been fucked up a little bit. And they're a lot weaker than the—they are side characters, versus the Vambrace being a quote unquote 'main character.' I didn't say this at the time, but the pilot of the Vambrace does have a name. The Vambrace is being piloted by someone named Tenn, Tenn Alpenglow, who is like, the personal knight and bodyguard of the viceroy of Palisade, Marian Colver, who, Keith, you did a intro for the Road to Palisade as that one time.

KEITH: Mm. Yeah, yeah, yeah. Yeah.

AUSTIN: This is the guy who said you can't colonize your own home. [CHUCKLES] A miserable—

KEITH: Right. Your cousin's cousin.

AUSTIN: Yeah, if you asked your cousin's cousin, yeah, uh-huh.

KEITH: Yep.

AUSTIN: He's on this train too. He's the little shitty bureaucrat we keep seeing. And so he's also on that train, and probably also running away along with Gem deeper into the depths of the train. So that's the—that's the this part of the game. Phrygian, what have you been up to?

[10:03]

KEITH: Um, I met a little freak.

[AUSTIN LAUGHS]

KEITH: I met an absolute weirdo who's saying stuff, you know, very 'the cock crows thrice' kind of guy.

AUSTIN: [CHUCKLING] Yeah, uh-huh.

KEITH: And couldn't get away from him. And eventually tried to—gave up on my dream of having a normal conversation at a party, and went to find Brnine.

AUSTIN: Mhm. Who you did find, and Brnine, what are you—what are you coming back from at this point?

KEITH: We haven't played me finding Brnine. We just—we ended at the finding.

AUSTIN: No, we—y'all came out, y'all left the place. Y'all haven't talked since it, because I did specifically say that it was like, the theater itself vanished very soon after.

KEITH: Right.

AUSTIN: So I definitely didn't move the camera forward, but y'all haven't talked.

KEITH: Okay.

AUSTIN: And Jess—you know, y'all talked, 'cause Jesset was there, and Jesset talked to both of you, and Jesset was like—I don't know, he said some shit. You know?

KEITH: Maybe that's true. Maybe I talked.

AUSTIN: It was very brief.

KEITH: Yeah.

AUSTIN: Brnine—

ALI: I think Jesset gave Phrygian a sympathetic look.

AUSTIN: That did happen.

ALI: Is what happened. [CHUCKLES]

[KEITH HUMS]

AUSTIN: That did happen.

ALI: Anyway, what I've been doing at this party is I fumbled introducing myself to Cori's dad, 'cause he was involved with some shady shit—

[SYLVI CHUCKLES]

AUSTIN: Mhm.

ALI: —and then I fumbled trying to recruit a monster/the Nobel figure that hangs out inside of that monster.

AUSTIN: Yeah.

ALI: The Nobel is named Lattice. I don't know which, um...

AUSTIN: Affliction.

ALI: Affliction.

AUSTIN: This is the Affliction Refrain.

ALI: Okay.

AUSTIN: R-E-F-R-A-I-N, like the, you know, part of a song that returns, or like, if you don't do something, you refrain from doing it. So something that returns, or something that you stop doing. The Affliction Refrain. Um, cool. We should come back to this fight, I think. Because it's—a thing worth noting here is your Alert is at 2 of 4. [CHUCKLES] Thisbe, it sounds like you had something ready to go.

JANINE: Yes.

AUSTIN: Is that correct?

JANINE: Uh-huh. It is correct.

AUSTIN: Last we talked, there were some guards in front of you. They had been dazed and are, I think, less—because of that, they don't have the group advantage on you at this point, because they're acting as kind of independent operators instead of as like, a big cohesive unit. So what are you doing?

JANINE: So the thing I'm going to do, what's—so what's happening is they're kind of like— I'm currently, like, boxed in.

AUSTIN: Mhm.

JANINE: I'm being like, crowded.

AUSTIN: That is literally the—

JANINE: Yes.

AUSTIN: —danger you have, the Risk you have. Yeah.

JANINE: Yeah. My Risks, my Risks are Kinked and Boxed In.

AUSTIN: Mhm.

JANINE: So the thing that I'm going to do is I'm going to remember that I am a robot the size of a car inside of a train.

AUSTIN: Yeah, you're big. Uh-huh.

JANINE: And that I also have rocket feet at the moment.

[DRE HUMS]

AUSTIN: Right. You do.

JANINE: And instead of letting them chase me, I am just going to rocket forward and kind of like, put my arms out and try to—you know, I was gonna like mince my words a little bit, but I think she's trying to crush as many of them against the side of the train car as possible.

AUSTIN: Oh my god.

SYLVI: Let's fucking go.

DRE: Let's go.

AUSTIN: Let's go. It's Thisbe time. Crack open a cold one, folks. It's Thisbe time.

[JANINE AND ALI CHUCKLE]

AUSTIN: That sounds like—and here's a thing worth saying—they are, these are extras. These are not even side characters. You only need one Danger against them to make them defenseless. You can now roll Strike Decisively against them, allowing you to try to take them out altogether. So, “when you're lining up the perfect shot against an opponent who can't defend themselves, delivering a scathing dismissal of their character using irrefutable fact, or otherwise engaging someone who is defenseless, you are Striking Decisively. Roll Clash here. On a 10+, you will strike true, and they will be forced to retreat, or otherwise be removed as a threat per the fiction.” On a 7 to 9, we'll see what happens.

JANINE: Do I get any kind of bonus for using my Propulsion Suite?

AUSTIN: I think you have advantage because of the Aerial for sure, because you're dashing forward at them as they're all stunned from the loud and bright explosion of your hand cannon. Your ‘literal inside of your arm’ cannon, I guess. So yeah, take advantage, which means you're going to roll 3d6 plus your Clash.

JANINE: Hell yeah. Which is 2.

AUSTIN: And take highest. Yeah. This is what you're good at. So 5, 8, 10. Tell me what it looks like as you take them off the board.

JANINE: So I think this is Thisbe, um, just kind of like, folding her arms in front of her face, kind of like they tell you to do if you're in a plane crash. [CHUCKLES]

AUSTIN: Mhm.

[SYLVI CHUCKLES]

JANINE: Just to, just—basically to make that area flat, right?

AUSTIN: Right.

JANINE: To make that area flat and even to just get as much coverage as possible. And then she just fuckin'—instead of being on the back heel—again, they're kind of expecting her to be on the back heel, because she has been.

AUSTIN: Mhm.

JANINE: She just very suddenly, like, tilts forward, I think in what would be an unnatural way because that Propulsion Suite is kicking in, she's not on her feet anymore. And just fuckin' goes. And there's probably, from the ext—I don't want to get too gross on the interior. From the

exterior view—

AUSTIN: Uh-huh.

JANINE: There's probably a very loud sound. The—I imagine like, the outside of the train car, like, bulges.

AUSTIN: Uh-huh.

JANINE: There's like a big crunch, and a like, 'what the fuck was that' kind of moment for everyone outside?

AUSTIN: Uh-huh.

JANINE: And that's probably all we need to say about it.

AUSTIN: Oh yeah. I think so.

SYLVI: I ride with Thisbe, bro.

[AUSTIN AND JANINE LAUGH]

AUSTIN: Go ahead and get rid of your "Boxed In" Danger.

JANINE: Hell yeah.

AUSTIN: Mow's Risks are still Kinked Up, but you're no longer Boxed In for sure.

JANINE: Yeah, yeah.

AUSTIN: And again, with everybody cleared, you can now see clearly that Gem, along with Kenneth Marian Colver, the viceroy of the planet, has moved in a very—of Kesh, of the planet—has moved, they've both moved into this third car that I've just moved off the track by mistake. This kind of vault that has—it's kind of like a, you know, a luggage car filled with a bunch of other stuff. Big, you know, there are no more mechs back there, but this one is like, for personal goods. And through the kind of empty hallways now of this train, as everyone else has fled out, you can see that both of them are there, and that Kenneth Marian Colver is like, yelling at Gem. Like, not yelling in a authoritative way, yelling in a like, [FRANTIC] 'what the fuck is going on? What are you doing? What are you supposed to find back here? We should get the fuck out of here!' Like, that type of yelling. And she seems to be completely cold and calm and collected, despite the explosions and violence all around her.

Cori, the last time we talked to you, you were in a sort of death fight with the Vambrace. You're both doing kind of—you're both in kind of rough shape, all said.

SYLVI: Yeah.

AUSTIN: But they are in a rougher shape than you. Oh, wait, didn't we—didn't we roll to get the Kill and did it not work? Is that what happened?

SYLVI: I believe it didn't work.

AUSTIN: I'm gonna double check your rolls. Eh...

SYLVI: I know you used a Ward at one point.

AUSTIN: Is that what I did, is I used the Ward to prevent the Ki—no...

SYLVI: Yeah, to reduce the Peril to a Risk, I think.

AUSTIN: [OVERLAPPING] That would have reduced the Peril to a—or that would have reduced one of them. But I—but if you got to roll, if you got to roll Strike Decisively, that would have been—you would have had to have gotten them that far down to begin with. So I did use Ward to get rid of—to drop it from a Peril to a Risk, but I'm looking at your rolls. Do I have to go to the tape to make sure that we don't fuck this up? I might have to.

SYLVI: I'm...

AUSTIN: 'Cause I'm looking at successes from you over here. You know what I mean?

SYLVI: Yeah.

AUSTIN: Um...

SYLVI: In my eyes, that's all I have.

AUSTIN: Damn.

DRE: Sure.

AUSTIN: True.

SYLVI: You know, you learn from your losses.

AUSTIN: Mhm.

SYLVI: Put that on time.is. So I'm looking at it too, and there's this 3 plus—

AUSTIN: 3 plus 3 plus 1.

SYLVI: 3 plus 3 plus 1, which I think is what my—oh, I'm jumping around so many sheets right now.

AUSTIN: Yeah, yeah, yeah.

SYLVI: I'm pretty sure +1—yeah, +1 is what my Clash is on this.

AUSTIN: Oh, you got it. You got it. Because, remember, your blade broke. That's what happened.

SYLVI: Right. I stabbed it. And then my sword broke.

AUSTIN: Right, yes. Yes.

KEITH: Right.

DRE: Oh, yeah.

AUSTIN: And we focused in on that, and we didn't spend a lot of time on the actual kill.

SYLVI: Yeah.

AUSTIN: Which I don't think you get the proper—you get the blade in, the blade breaks off, you cut yourself free. Remember?

SYLVI: Yeah.

AUSTIN: You cut yourself free from the bear hug, and basically cut all the remaining arms off in such a way that you've disabled this mech from this fight, and here, when you do that, your—we'll just come back in on this. It drops to its knees, and then a, the—you make eye contact with the pilot in the other seat, who is a veteran, who's like the, the sort of like—not poster child, because that suggests a youth, but like, the sort of like textbook example of a veteran knight. Hair all greyed, you know, a well-groomed beard. Clearly someone who enjoyed this little conflict, though said very little. In fact, I think maybe in this moment, at, you know, just says like—

AUSTIN (as MECH PILOT): Well played, young combatant.

[20:00]

AUSTIN: And then pulls the ejection cord, and then the like, chest piece of the mech pushes forward and then launches. Or actually, probably from the rear, like, leans forward and then shoots the ejection pod out. And is going to fire like a—maybe already shoots a sort of flare up into the air. Do you have any way of stopping this thing from signaling that it's gone down? What's your ranged weapon stuff?

SYLVI: I only have melee stuff.

AUSTIN: Can you fly or anything?

SYLVI: I don't have any ranged weapons. No, I don't have any ranged weapons.

AUSTIN: Okay.

SYLVI: I built this to be a bruiser, tank-y mech.

AUSTIN: Mhm.

SYLVI: Who needs guns when you've got big smashies, right?

DRE: I mean, I got big smashies and guns, so.

SYLVI: Well, fuckin', look at you, fancy.

AUSTIN: Well, Figure, then, this kind of like—like, flare pod, is shooting up into the sky. Are you in a place to try to shoot it down? Before it goes off?

DRE: I think so.

AUSTIN: Alright.

DRE: I mean, I'm kind of—I think I'm still, I hadn't moved my token, but I feel like I'm like, in this general area.

AUSTIN: Yeah. You definitely are. This is not a Clash, but I do think this is like a, an Act Under—not Act Under Fire—Weather the Storm, you're trying to stop something bad from happening to you, which is that alert clock continuing to rise.

DRE: Sure.

AUSTIN: So, I think that's a Defy, probably.

DRE: Okay.

AUSTIN: Or, you know, I would hear an argument for other stuff, but it's not—it's either Defy, Sense, or Talk per the move.

DRE: Yeah, yeah, yeah.

AUSTIN: And I think those are all either plus 1s or negative 1s for you, right?

DRE: Um... So, here—I haven't—we—I haven't asked this, and I'm not quite sure how it works. When do I get to roll Channel for things?

AUSTIN: You can roll—so, Channel gets used for a particular move. And this is a thing that I think everybody should be thinking about. There's a move called Weave Magic that only pilots, only channelers, get—that's like their special thing, along with subsystems. That's tied to being a pilot, being a channeler in the system. It says... let's see. "When you invoke your magic to crumble a bridge, attune to mystical orbs at the center of the galaxy—" Hmm. Who did that? Someone on this podcast, in fact, did that once. "—or otherwise do something taxing with your power, you're attempting to Weave Magic. When you do, roll plus Channel. On a 10+, you manage to channel power the way you desired without ill effect. On a 7 to 9, you succeed, but your invocation is twisted in an unexpected and dangerous way. In *Armour Astir*, magic is typically channeled through an Astir—" or for us an Altar— "imbued into potions through alchemy or forged into objects by enchanters and artificers. More direct uses in the forms of spells and such have fallen out of use somewhat. When you try to twist your magic ability into desired results, then, you're not picking a spell from a list, you're Weaving Magic. It's tiring to use your magic directly in this way. Expect to take a Risk or even be put in Peril if you test yourself in this way multiple times during a Sortie." So yes, you would be pulling on the power of Perennial in order to Weave Magic, which would potentially drain you and could potentially, you

know, things could break bad. Things could break bad no matter what, right? That's games.

DRE: Right, yeah.

AUSTIN: But break bad in a different way, so.

DRE: Okay.

AUSTIN: But also, it would be interesting to see you do that. So yeah, you could—Weave Magic is another great catch-all for channelers, which—

DRE: Right, yeah.

AUSTIN: What is your Channel at right now?

DRE: It's at 2.

AUSTIN: Because your Channel goes up whenever you are—

DRE: Whenever I take a Danger.

AUSTIN: Whenever you take a Danger. That's very fun.

DRE: Yeah, so it starts at 1—

AUSTIN: Right.

DRE: —and because I have a Danger, or a Risk right now, it's up to 2.

AUSTIN: It's up to 2. Right. Yep. So, are you gonna use that, or are you gonna try to just use your regular +1 Defy for Weather the Storm?

DRE: Well, if you give me an option to do something that could look cool, but make it go worse, that's always the option I want to take.

AUSTIN: Friends at the Table, baby.

DRE: Right. I would love to figure out what it looks like for me to be using like, Profane magic in that way.

AUSTIN: Yeah. What's it—

DRE: Or Perennial magic, I should say.

AUSTIN: Yeah. So, Perennial magic, we've seen it—we've mostly seen it in—we've seen it in a few ways. The earliest version of it we ever saw was when someone was, again, quote, attuning themselves to mystical orbs at the center of the galaxy when we saw Teasel Mode do a bunch of weird blood magic shit. Had like, a cool blood sniper rifle at one point. All sorts of wild witchcraft-y shit. Then we, of course, saw a lot of the Witch in Glass stuff throughout the kind of back half of PARTIZAN. We saw lots of stuff tied to the Russian sage/also some nervous

system-y, you know, vibes. And then of course we see you, right? And the other people that the Witch in Glass has brought back using Perennial's magic, with the sort of what the *Armour Astir* book calls Arcane Augments, these artificial limbs and organs, which in your case are crystalline. I believe they're always something in this sort of less mechanical or more magical-ish sense, right?

DRE: Yeah.

AUSTIN: So. So, yeah.

DRE: Well, so, I'm wondering if what it looks like then is that—because my ranged weapon, I've just named it a Magma Launcher, mechanically, it's just the stats from like the standard, like, two-handed mech rifle.

AUSTIN: Right, it's like Two-handed and Infinite or something? You don't have to load it? Right?

DRE: Yeah, and Ranged. Yeah.

AUSTIN: Yeah.

DRE: And so like, in my head, that looks like that—like, literally, I'm launching like, molten rocks from my mech.

AUSTIN: Right. That's fun.

DRE: And I'm wondering if what would make this Channel, as opposed to just like Defy or Clash or something, is that this is less precise and more reactive. So instead of like, Figure lining up a shot, like a precise shot to take, it's almost as if like, maybe I hear, like, Cori yelling about this flare going off—

AUSTIN: Uh-huh.

DRE: And I don't even react, but The Devil's Two Front Teeth does. And I almost picture it as shooting off like—oh, what am I thinking of? Like flares, like from a fighter jet.

AUSTIN: Right, right.

DRE: So it's just like, shooting flack up into the sky, trying to just like, wipe this thing out.

AUSTIN: I want this to come from something that isn't the Magma Launcher, because—

DRE: Sure.

AUSTIN: Your Magma Launcher is sheathed right now.

DRE: Yeah.

AUSTIN: And we don't—again, we're not playing *Lancer*. We're not playing like, *BattleTech*.

DRE: Yeah, yeah.

AUSTIN: And we don't have to think too, too hard about the, like, tile-based movement and stuff. But an important thing in the balancing of this game is, Magma Launcher is a two-handed weapon. That means that you need both hands free to use it—

DRE: Yeah.

AUSTIN: —and you need to sheathe it or unsheathe it depending on when you're using it. And you were *just* using your Explosive Chains instead.

DRE: Yeah. Well, so, what I was picturing—

AUSTIN: [OVERLAPPING] And so, where does it come from? Yeah, go ahead.

DRE: What I was picturing was that it is not—it is not the Magma Launcher.

AUSTIN: Right, okay.

DRE: It is almost like, like chunks just explode off the back here.

AUSTIN: Oh, that's cool.

DRE: And so I would—the pitch I would make as to like how this could go bad—I haven't talked about what the inside of The Devil's Two Front Teeth Cockpit looks like.

AUSTIN: Mm-mm.

DRE: Like, take the *Escaflowne* cockpit and make it even more claustrophobic.

AUSTIN: [CHUCKLING] Okay.

SYLVI: Oh.

DRE: Like, there is not—there is not much there. Like, I don't even think Figure sits. I think like, Figure is like—

AUSTIN: You're like, standing in there.

DRE: —is like, standing. It's almost like, locked in like the *Vitruvian Man*.

AUSTIN: Right.

DRE: With like, a screen right in their face.

AUSTIN: Miserable. Love it. Fantastic.

DRE: Yeah.

KEITH: Love a standing room only mech.

DRE: Mhm.

AUSTIN: [LAUGHS] There's a—I've been replaying *Anthem*, you might know. I'm done doing that now, but—

[SYLVI LAUGHS]

DRE: Your favorite game that you've put 50 hours into?

AUSTIN: My favorite game. There is a—45.

[SYLVI CHUCKLES]

AUSTIN: There is a moment when you can get into your little exosuit, and it's—it is the most claustrophobic thing in the world to me. It like, makes me shudder when you—the first person animation for getting in there. People should go look that up because it's just a nightmare. It's just too tight. It's too cramped. Eugh, it makes me feel terrible. I like flying around in that game, though. Alright. It sounds like we are ready to make this roll.

DRE: Yeah. Let's do it.

AUSTIN: 2d6 plus 2 for your Channel.

DRE: And I don't think this is using Speed, so.

AUSTIN: No, it's like quickness, but it's not lining up a shot, and so it's not Speed.

DRE: It's not Speed.

AUSTIN: Yeah, exactly.

DRE: Let's go. 10.

AUSTIN: Ooh! There's a 10. Yeah. Alright. You knock this thing out of the sky, and it is draining to do this. You feel it in your body a little bit as the armor pieces shoot off the back of your mech, your Altar. I'm not giving you a Risk for this or anything, but I would if you did it a second time.

DRE: Yeah.

AUSTIN: If you drew on this a second time. The two Bouquets step back from you in like, partial terror, as if what's happening here is—as if you've scared them, because you have.

[CHUCKLES] Because you shot part of your back off in order to shoot down an emergency flare. And they are now just like, basically firing their guns in your general direction as they both try to retreat and regroup south past the kind of bottom half of the train. Cori.

SYLVI: Mhm.

AUSTIN: What—

KEITH: Sorry, are the Bouquets—the Bouquets, are those the minions or is that—was that a different—

[30:00]

AUSTIN: They are—they are not—they're not—well, okay, well, minions work with Afflictions. So, you already—[CHUCKLES]

KEITH: Sorry, not—sorry, not—I meant extras, is what I meant.

AUSTIN: No, those are the—they are side characters. They're kind of like in between main characters and extras.

KEITH: Okay.

AUSTIN: They each need one more—

KEITH: Okay.

AUSTIN: One more Danger on them to make them defenseless.

KEITH: Two instead of one?

AUSTIN: Two instead of one, correct. Thisbe—or, I said, sorry—Cori.

SYLVI: [CHUCKLES] Yeah.

AUSTIN: What are you doing now that you've kind of freed yourself up from the main fight against the Vambrace, who I'm just going to kind of put over here and turn upside down?

SYLVI: Yeah, um...

DRE: [CHUCKLES] He go sleep.

AUSTIN: Yeah. Boom.

SYLVI: [LAUGHS] I just saw that you turned it sideways.

AUSTIN: Mhm.

SYLVI: So like, mechanically, I think what I want to do is just like, Cool Off—

AUSTIN: Yeah.

SYLVI: But I also, just like mission-wise, like objective-wise, what am I—like, what's on the table for me to do here? Like, the train seems stopped now.

AUSTIN: Yeah. So the big thing is there are supplies on the train—okay, the train could try to get away still.

SYLVI: Okay.

AUSTIN: It is not—it is defenseless and it has been split apart, but theoretically it could come back over, re-hook itself, or try to re-hook itself, or the magnet lenses—I mean, we've been

talking about this as if the front train is an engine, but if it's a maglev train, that might just—the power might come through the rails themselves. So some backup power could come on and they could try to get away. So you could try to put a finishing hit on the train. You could start trying to get the supplies I talked about. Remember there's like, supplies that Grey Pond could use to fix up two of your other Cause factions, if you could steal like, the fuel rods that are being transported here. So you could try to like, get those ready to go. And most importantly, you could try to help by preventing the escape of code name Gem, your target, who is currently, again, in this kind of third—the third compartment, which also is where some of those supplies are. So.

SYLVI: That one here that I'm pinging?

AUSTIN: Say again?

SYLVI: The one that I'm pinging?

AUSTIN: Yes, that exact one. Yes. Yes, yes, yes.

SYLVI: Cool. I mean, I should go make sure that the objective is secured.

AUSTIN: I'm gonna make that yellow so that we can know it's that one.

SYLVI: Oh, perfect.

AUSTIN: Yeah. Cool. So what are you gonna do?

SYLVI: I can see the little dotted line on my mini-map leading me right to it in my mind's eye.

AUSTIN: So what are you gonna do when you—oh, wait, but are you doing that or are you Cooling Off?

SYLVI: Um... Yeah, I do have two Risks right now.

AUSTIN: Mhm.

SYLVI: And I feel like just taking care of—

AUSTIN: Actually, wait, do we have—right, you don't—the third one wasn't a Risk, the third one was your weapon was destroyed, but that's not a Risk, yeah.

SYLVI: My weapon broke because it was fragile.

AUSTIN: And I think to get both—let me see. Let's read from Cool Off. We haven't Cooled Off yet, right? In-game, really?

SYLVI: Yeah, I was just looking at it if you want me to read it.

AUSTIN: Please do.

SYLVI: "When you take a moment in safety to Cool Off or help someone else do the same,

declare a Risk you want to get rid of and roll whatever trait seems most appropriate. On a 10+, you/they erase a Risk or untick Overheating from an Astir. On a 7 to 9, as above, but your moment of safety is interrupted.”

AUSTIN: Perfect. Yeah. So what do you think—

SYLVI: Yeah, I feel like—

AUSTIN: —this would be to clear those up?

SYLVI: Um... Now I'm not entirely sure for, like—because both of these are like, you just need to take a minute to settle yourself more than anything.

AUSTIN: Mhm.

SYLVI: Or like, get your bearings back.

AUSTIN: You have Dazed and Off-Balance, right?

SYLVI: Yeah.

AUSTIN: To me that sounds a little like Defy?

SYLVI: I mean, I'll take it. That's my best one.

AUSTIN: It could be Sense, too.

SYLVI: Mm... I like Defy.

AUSTIN: Defy is the ability to resist pressure and power through adversity, so I feel like that's a little bit of you being like, '[EXHALES], okay, I'm good, I'm good, I'm good,' you know?

SYLVI: Yeah, through like, 'shaking it off' type of thing.

AUSTIN: Exactly. Yes.

SYLVI: Yeah, okay.

AUSTIN: So 2d6 plus 2.

[PAUSE]

SYLVI: That's an 8.

AUSTIN: That is.

SYLVI: That's a 1 and a 5, so.

AUSTIN: That is in fact an 8. So what happens on a 7 to 9? If you have it in front of you.

SYLVI: Oh, I believe that on a 7 to 9, my moment of safety is interrupted.

AUSTIN: Mhm.

SYLVI: I'm also going to clear Dazed, because I think getting interrupted while Off-Balance is a little more fun.

AUSTIN: Mhm. I agree with that. In fact, I mean, I would say...

SYLVI: I guess they're similar enough that—

AUSTIN: Yeah, they're—well, I'm trying to see if it's—one second. Da-da-da-da-da. Yeah, I think that that makes sense to me. So yeah, take—get rid of—get rid of that one, and then, unfortunately, I mean I think that the—as you're trying to clear your head, you get that like, heavy pulse of Devotion, like, pressuring you, as if to tell you you're missing something, right? Like, there's almost like a Newtype flash moment here, right?

SYLVI: Okay.

AUSTIN: Of you being like 'oh, shit,' but it's actually like, a moment too late. It's not telling you—it's not saying 'oh, look, you can stop this thing.' It is, unfortunately, someone actively succeeding at something that you don't want them to, and your eyes across, or your scanners across the field here, see this further south Bouquet slam up against the train station, which is kind of hidden under Thisbe's token right now. So let me move that. And, you know, pulling some sort of big emergency switch, which does again push that alert up by one. So you do get to Cool Off, but in doing so, and what it feels like Devotion is telling you, is that you shouldn't have wasted time on this. You should have continued to work on what you needed to work on. There's time to Cool Off later, right? What's the—what's the one that I'm thinking of? 'Your first priority is to spread the reach of Devotion no matter the cost.' You know?

SYLVI: Ah, yeah. Mhm.

AUSTIN: So you have thought about the cost too much in this moment, and the alert goes up by 1.

SYLVI: Damn.

AUSTIN: Let's get one more thing from Thisbe here and then maybe we'll check in on the party. Thisbe. What are you doing?

JANINE: I think Thisbe's gonna go after Gem.

AUSTIN: Okay. Charges ahead, presumably. You are—this is a bigger car, because this next car is a—is again, like, a storage and transport car more than a personal, you know, transportation car. And so, you get to—you get to really stand up all the way here and feel tall and big. And you can see that, again, as this viceroy protests, she is at the trunk of—when—she's at a trunk that the camera recognizes, and it is the trunk that we saw the supposed Lost Duchess, Constantina Malady, present to Gentian, the Elect of Crusade, the Divine Crusade. And here is that trunk, and here is Gem kneeling over it, and working its clasps as if to open what it is. We did not see what was in it before, but here she is trying to open it. What do you do?

JANINE: Um... Can you describe the clasps?

AUSTIN: Uh, they're just—you know, imagine a big, you know, like a big luggage trunk, you know? With like, brass clasps, you know?

JANINE: Oh, okay.

AUSTIN: Like a classic 18th, 19th century, you know, piece of—

KEITH: Who doesn't have a good trunk?

AUSTIN: You know, yeah.

JANINE: I think I try and shoot her in the arm. [CHUCKLES]

AUSTIN: Okay. [CHUCKLES] Give me a—give me a roll here. Give me a—which, by the way, should be signaling something, because if you were trying to do this to Kenneth Marian Colver, the viceroy of Palisade, I would tell you to do harm as established, because he would not know that you were getting the drop on him.

JANINE: Yeah.

AUSTIN: But she, who as I recall had like, a different—like, submolecular appearance to you, does know that you're closing in on her, so go ahead and give me a Exchange Blows. Which I think will be Clash again.

JANINE: Okay. Do I also get advantage on this because I'm shooting her with my Quintessence Cannon?

AUSTIN: What's that have? What's the tags on it?

JANINE: Ranged/Ruin, Hidden, Limited, and I've used it once.

AUSTIN: I don't—

JANINE: She would know it's not hidden now, though.

AUSTIN: She would know it's not hidden now, yeah. I don't think that you get that—I don't think you get that as much. And you're the same ta—you're the same tier as her, so Ranged and Ruin don't actually cancel out.

JANINE: Okay.

AUSTIN: You're Arcane. So maybe that could potentially—one second, let me check. It does not.

JANINE: And I have an Alchemical Core, but I don't know what that would do.

AUSTIN: So you have an Alchemical Core, which means you could either be—I want to say Mundane or Arcane as your type, as your approach on ground—you are Arcane, which means

you're good against Divine-powered things.

JANINE: Ah, okay.

AUSTIN: She is not that. You know?

JANINE: Okay.

AUSTIN: But she is also not Mundane, which means she doesn't get a tier advantage on you here, which is nice, so.

JANINE: True.

AUSTIN: So, yeah. Just roll it straight. 2d6 plus—

JANINE: 8.

AUSTIN: Oh, plus—oh, do you not have Clash? You're zero Clash?

JANINE: Oh, sorry, I forgot my Clash, which is 2. [CHUCKLES]

AUSTIN: Yeah, Clash is 2, so that's a 10.

JANINE: So that's 10.

AUSTIN: So, you—the round you hit her with, I'm gonna give her the Risk—I mean, actually again, as always, when you get a 10 on these, you can either give her a Risk or give her a Peril and take a Risk yourself. Which are you doing?

[40:14]

JANINE: Um... I will give her a Peril and take a Risk myself.

AUSTIN: Okay.

JANINE: I feel like the Risk should be like, Depleted, like the cannon is Limited, right, you know?

AUSTIN: Yeah. Yeah. Let's make it not as bad as Depleted, let's make it like—like—

JANINE: Overheated, or—

AUSTIN: Overheated or Low Charge or, you know, something like that, that's more focused on like a temporary over-expenditure versus a permanent depletion.

JANINE: Okay.

AUSTIN: 'Cause to me, Depletion feels like a thing you need a real time to recharge. And she, on—what type of Peril are you looking to give her?

JANINE: Um... hm.

AUSTIN: I will tell you—I will describe what happens when this cannon shot hits her, and then maybe we can... It shatters her arm, and that's not supposed to happen, but as she is hit, the sort of skin of her body, and even the clothes retract inwards, to reveal to you the person that I guess you would have probably seen like, newspaper photos of, of Constantina Malady. Who is, again, this legendary figure—this legendary duchess from myth and from prophecy, you know, the sort of like, 'King Arthur will come again' type figure, and she has a glass body like the Fabreal Duchy's—all of the Fabreal Duchy's leadership does, her head has a sort of like, I imagine her, like, glass head has like, Maleficent-style horns made of glass, and that's where the the glass—what's the mark called again? On glass? Where like, you can see the—where, like, the blower was producing them, you know what I mean? There's like the little, like—there's like, a little kink in any piece of glass that's been blown that shows that that's the place where it was being created, and one of the horns has that, but she otherwise is this, like—and again one of the touchstones for me for what these folks look like is Phi from *Zelda*, that style of like, fully, like, shiny body, this glassy body, but maybe more see-through than blue. And they also have like—we've said this before, but like, weird-colored oils in their bodies. So she shifts and becomes that, but the thing you see is that that's not truly her, either. So her arm gets shattered here, maybe that's a perfectly fine Peril for her to take, is Shattered, or something like that, but even this is not her true form, and when you do take the shot, the viceroy then jumps between you and she, and is like 'That's—that's the Duchess! What are you doing?!'

[SYLVI LAUGHS]

AUSTIN: As if this means anything to you. Let's go back to the party.

JANINE: Oh, wait, I have to give her a thing.

AUSTIN: Oh, I was gonna write down—yeah, what do you want it to be?

JANINE: Um... What's a, like, version of like, structurally compromised?

AUSTIN: Good question.

JANINE: Especially for like, glass, you know?

AUSTIN: Mhm, mhm.

JANINE: Like a step down from shattering.

AUSTIN: Cracking?

JANINE: Oh, yeah. That'd be good.

AUSTIN: Something like that?

JANINE: Yeah.

AUSTIN: Okay, cool. Partygoers.

KEITH: Mhm.

AUSTIN: General Mourning is—has taken the stage back in like, the restaurant, or not the restaurant, but the sort of like—I guess it's kind of a restaurant. What do you—like, not a cafeteria. Reception hall, I guess. And is like, you know, getting ready to give this talk. Is there anything y'all want to talk about with each other or with any NPCs here before she delivers her big, like, speech about being here?

KEITH: I mean, does Brnine want to talk about the theater? That's pretty a big thing we kind of ended right as it was happening.

ALI: [CHUCKLES] Um, yeah, I mean, I think Brnine is willing— isn't like, cagey about what happened, right? But is talking about it in like a weird—I think like, the first thing Brnine said post-that scene was just looking at Jesset and saying 'I fucked up.' [LAUGHING]

AUSTIN: Right. Right. Yeah.

ALI: So, you know. I think they're in a way right now, but like, not—I don't know that they're initiating the conversation beyond that, like, first, like, 'oh, let's go inside,' and trying to shake it off, but if you have questions or want to play the scene, they would be forthcoming.

AUSTIN: Yeah, I'm frankly more interested in that conversation than the General Mourning speech, and kind of feel—you know, the General Mourning speech is just gonna be like, 'we're glad to be here, we're happy to help however we can, it was important that our, you know, our collaboration is more than just militaristic, the heart of the Twilight Mirage is collaboration and aid and mutual, you know, mutual aid,' and blah-blah-blah-blah-blah, and that's like a boring speech to give, because it's really by the numbers, and I'm so much more—am much more interested in the quiet conversation happening in the back while that happens, you know? So if y'all want to have that convo, I think—Jeset can be there too, but I'm more interested in how you talk about what just happened, and more broadly about what's going on, than that.

KEITH: How did it disappear, Austin? Did it just fade away?

AUSTIN: It just sort of faded away, yeah. Like, you know, the mists kind of claimed it.

KEITH: Right.

KEITH (as PHRYGIAN): [WHISPERING] What was that?

ALI (as BRNINE): Hm?

KEITH (as PHRYGIAN): What was that?

ALI (as BRNINE): What Mourning just said, or...?

KEITH (as PHRYGIAN): No, the building.

ALI (as BRNINE): Oh, oh, oh. Um, it, um... [SEARCHING FOR WORDS] I think, um—you've heard of the Afflictions, right?

KEITH (as PHRYGIAN): Yes.

ALI (as BRNINE): Yeah, I think it—I think it was—

KEITH (as PHRYGIAN): They have minions.

ALI (as BRNINE): Yeah.

[SYLVI LAUGHS]

AUSTIN (as JESSET): Is that what we're calling them? Minions?

KEITH (as PHRYGIAN): We're calling them minions.

AUSTIN (as JESSET): They're minions.

DRE: [QUIETLY] Banana.

ALI (as BRNINE): Yeah.

ALI: [LAUGHING] Shut the fuck up. We're reclaiming it.

KEITH: [CHUCKLING] You're fired. Dre's fired.

[AUSTIN AND ALI LAUGH]

AUSTIN: Dre is not fired.

KEITH: I was given permission to fire.

AUSTIN: This is the—no—[LAUGHS] Keith is the Stargrave of Palisade who can fire one person.

DRE: You know what? Harsh but fair.

AUSTIN: If we're gonna reclaim 'minion', we can't do banana jokes, okay?

DRE: You're right, you're right. I'm sorry, I'm sorry.

AUSTIN: That's not reclaiming.

DRE: I'll do better.

AUSTIN: I appreciate it.

SYLVI: This fucking respectability politics bullshit.

[AUSTIN AND ALI LAUGH]

ALI: I mean, are we reclaiming it, or are we being like, we're minion-heads now?

AUSTIN: We're not minionheads!

[KEITH AND DRE LAUGH]

ALI: 'Cause I thought that we were reclaiming it. And we're not minion-heads.

KEITH: I think that we should be able to reclaim minions and also steal the IP at the same time.

[AUSTIN LAUGHS]

ALI: Okay. Sure, sure, sure.

DRE: Sure.

AUSTIN: That is the Millenium—right, burn thrones, yeah. Uh-huh. Right.

ALI: Oh, okay. Okay, okay.

AUSTIN: Our minions now.

ALI: Okay, okay.

AUSTIN: [LAUGHS] Janine in the chat says 'Brnine-nana.'

[DRE AND KEITH LAUGH]

ALI: Two thumbs up.

KEITH (as PHRYGIAN): They have minions.

AUSTIN (as JESSET): Was this one of the minions, or was—do you think it was the thing itself?

ALI (as BRNINE): I don't know, it was a big—it was a big thing. How do you know the difference?

AUSTIN (as JESSET): That's a good question.

KEITH (as PHRYGIAN): I—yeah, I don't know.

ALI (as BRNINE): I guess the person that I spoke to—

ALI: Did the person that I speak to say—

AUSTIN: They described themselves as being the Affliction, or part of the Affliction.

ALI: Okay.

KEITH: Yeah, I think they gave you a name. I think they gave you, like, six names.

ALI: That sounds like a—[CHUCKLES]

AUSTIN: [CHUCKLES] I gave you some names.

ALI: —an Affliction to me.

KEITH: Yeah.

[SYLVI CHUCKLES]

ALI: But I don't know that Brnine would know that.

KEITH: The Affliction is having too many names.

[ALI CHUCKLES]

ALI (as BRNINE): I don't know the—I'm not—I'm not a scholar of this stuff, right? I just was in a theater.

KEITH (as PHRYGIAN): Right.

ALI (as BRNINE): And there was a person there that I spoke to, and—

KEITH (as PHRYGIAN): Are we in—you are not acting like we are in trouble, but I heard that the Afflictions were monsters that stole people.

ALI (as BRNINE): Well, am I stolen?

AUSTIN (as JESSET): Yeah, but who told us that?

KEITH (as PHRYGIAN): I don't know.

ALI (as BRNINE): It seemed chill. I mean, it was—it was kind of a—they wanted me to join them, I was kind of like 'why don't we talk about Millennium Break, though,' and it just—it didn't—it was kind of... if I—

KEITH (as PHRYGIAN): Were they friendly?

ALI (as BRNINE): Yeah.

KEITH (as PHRYGIAN): Okay.

ALI (as BRNINE): I'm gonna—I'm—if I see that person again, I'm probably gonna, like, apologize.

AUSTIN: Hey, you have a new gravity clock.

ALI: [LAUGHING] I do have a new gravity clock. And I have to—this is a first draft of this.

AUSTIN: Yeah.

ALI: Because 'I should apologize to Lattice' is not a good gravity clock if I could just do that the next time we talk.

AUSTIN: Right, but you're gonna get a Lattice/Refrain gravity clock out of this is the thing.

ALI: Yeah. I think the like final that I want to get to is like, 'I want to understand Lattice,' maybe?

AUSTIN: Sure, sure.

ALI: But I'm gonna work it through.

AUSTIN: A thing I like about this is, and we talked about this off-mic, you were really bad at talking to them, [CHUCKLES] you have a plus zero in Talk.

ALI: [CHUCKLES] I'm neutral at talking.

[50:00]

AUSTIN: Sure. Now you're better at it, because a gravity clock starts at plus one, you're instantly rolling plus one die on any future conversations with them, because you can use that instead when it's related to the person, so that's a fun—like, because you're interested—

ALI: This is—you know what? I think Brnine has learned the the importance of forming emotional bonds.

AUSTIN: Yeah. Love it.

KEITH: Wow.

ALI: And you can either—[LAUGHS] roll plus zero for the rest of your life, or you could invest in relationships.

DRE: Damn.

AUSTIN: Fuck.

KEITH: Wow.

AUSTIN: Makes you think.

ALI: [CHUCKLES] And I'm thinkin'.

[SYLVI LAUGHS]

AUSTIN: There's a point during this little conversation that General Mourning says something to the effect of like 'noble, you know, I've been a foreigner and a noble, da-da-da-da, Blue Channel and Captain, Captain Brnine,' and everyone turns and looks at you and claps, [LIGHT CLAPPING], but it's like you've missed something about what was said about you a moment ago.

[ALI CHUCKLES]

KEITH: Phrygian claps.

AUSTIN: Good, good. Brnine, everyone's looking at you and clapping [LIGHT CLAPPING] about something—

KEITH: All the little Phrygian hands on the Phrygian mask are—

AUSTIN: [CHUCKLING] Oh my god.

ALI: [GIGGLES] Can I do a—can I just do like, a wave? Like a—

AUSTIN: Yeah, sure.

ALI: Yep.

AUSTIN: Pick up your dice. [CHUCKLES] No, I'm not gonna make you roll to do a little wave.

[ALI CHUCKLES]

AUSTIN: [CHUCKLES] Yeah. You do a little wave. You—

ALI: I do a little wave, and then once it feels like people have sort of looked away, I elbow Phrygian.

KEITH: I'm introducing a new accessory for Phrygian—

AUSTIN: Uh-huh.

KEITH: Phrygian didn't have this before, Phrygian has this now. They take out a little notepad and write—they write "Afflictions = friendly?" Question mark.

[ALI AND AUSTIN CHUCKLE]

AUSTIN: Perfect. Good. At this point, I think, you know, Mourning has finished the speech and says—

AUSTIN (as GENERAL MOURNING): For now, let's eat and drink and take some pride in the wins that we have earned tonight.

AUSTIN: And again, you're like, 'what wins are you talking about? Like, I don't—did you—like, what?' And now it just goes back to being a dinner, and a hangout, and there's live music, and the terrible spy continues to try to prod their way forward, but otherwise the sort of—the evening is going to be this for the rest of the night, unless something changes, which, you know, it might. Anyone else want to do anything at this party before we bounce back to the fight?

KEITH: Whose house is this?

AUSTIN: It's a castle.

[ALI AND SYLVI LAUGH]

KEITH: And just no one lives here?

AUSTIN: It's the Dim Liturgy's castle.

KEITH: Okay.

AUSTIN: It's their—it's like a—it's really a monastery castle. Do you know what I mean?

KEITH: Right.

AUSTIN: And it's—really what it likely is, is an old castle that was built by the Fabreal Duchy for—actually, it probably predates them, right? 'Cause this is—this was a Rapid Evening sleeper cell, and I describe it less as a castle, it's more like a manor, right? So it's—it was an ancient Rapid Evening, you know, base of operations, that was, you know, hidden in one of their—their sort of almost steampunk-adjacent, you know, Gregorian—not Gregorian, Jesus—Georgian-style manors that over time just became their kind of—the base of this weird prophecy cult that kind of forgot that they were ever secret agents, and started just kind of being weird prophecy people, you know?

KEITH: Uh-huh. Yeah.

AUSTIN: So it's theirs.

KEITH: Okay.

AUSTIN: There's no like—there was no noble who ran this place, or anything like that, you know?

KEITH: And Phrygian should have a pretty decent grasp on the Dim Liturgy, they're part of the Cause, technically?

AUSTIN: They're part of the Cause, yep.

KEITH: I—

AUSTIN: They're specifically part of Violet Cove, yeah.

KEITH: Yeah, I would know what Rapid Evening is, right? Phrygian maybe knows about the Crystal Palace? Is that something that's like—

AUSTIN: Uh—

KEITH: Maybe not general knowledge, but is like, specific knowledge?

AUSTIN: Crystal Palace is not necessarily general knowledge, no.

KEITH: Okay.

AUSTIN: You would know about the Divine Past, but I don't know that you would know that the Divine Past was once Crystal Palace, I don't know how out in the open that is. In fact, I know it's not out in the open, because inside—at least, inside of the Principality, they've mythologized their own origins such that it's not part of that story. Their story is not 'we used to be a secret agent group that—'

KEITH: Sure.

AUSTIN: ‘—and, you know, a theocratic utopian fleet, and then we combined and became awful,’ you know, they think about the Twilight Mirage as almost a prehistorical Eden that they came from. They talk about it that way, at least. You know, did Crysanth Kesh know who Crystal Palace was? Yes, a hundred percent. But does the general public? Not really, and inside of the Cause and inside of Millennium Break, I think it’s ‘question mark, question mark, question mark’ about that.

KEITH: Right.

AUSTIN: The people who are here, generally speaking... You know, the Dim Liturgy predates the the stuff in Twilight Mirage, and their understanding of their own history has been so fucked up that they don’t know what it is. Theoretically, you could have some groups that came here and stayed behind that would have history records of what Crystal Palace was, but also it was five thousand years ago. That’s a lot of time to kind of lose that. And so I just don’t think it’s general knowledge, necessarily.

KEITH: Okay.

AUSTIN: You know that they believe that this text that they have is holy, and that it’s true, that it understands the future, that predictions can come out of understanding it, and that it—maybe you understand that it was the remnants of some ancient prediction engine, some ancient living oracle, you know?

KEITH: Yeah.

AUSTIN: But I don’t know that you have—that you can draw the direct line.

KEITH: I think—okay, castle, it’s a very conspicuous place, the Dim Liturgy I find confusing, not that I don’t understand them, I just think that they’re strange. The spy who’s been following me around all night—Phrygian, also, as far as I know, neither Brnine nor Phrygian really know why we’re here. Phrygian, probably even less so. Like, why are we at this party and not at the fight?

AUSTIN: You’re here to meet the other people of the Cause and to welcome the people from the Twilight Mirage here.

ALI: Yeah.

KEITH: Okay. So this really is just a—

ALI: It was built as a meet-and-greet. Like—

KEITH: It’s really—and it really was. Like, we really were meant to meet and greet.

ALI: Yeah.

AUSTIN: Yeah.

KEITH: Okay. Well, I feel that I haven’t met or gret, so—

AUSTIN: Mm.

[ALI AND SYLVI CHUCKLE]

ALI: Do—we're still trying to shake the spy?

AUSTIN: I mean, yeah, basically.

KEITH: Yeah.

AUSTIN: Yeah. Uh-huh.

ALI: I had just the stupidest idea of how to do that.

KEITH: Okay.

ALI: And it was to ask Phrygian to dance. [CHUCKLES]

KEITH: Okay.

AUSTIN: That would shake the spy.

KEITH: That would shake the spy. Three's a crowd.

ALI: That would shake the spy.

AUSTIN (as "EM"): You got—y'all don't do three dances here? You don't do three dances? You don't—you do two dances. You don't do three dance?

KEITH (as PHRYGIAN): We do two—we do two dances, yeah.

AUSTIN (as "EM"): Okay, okay, okay, that's fine.

ALI (as BRNINE): Wait, three dances versus two dances, what?

AUSTIN (as "EM"): Three dance is when three people dance. We do three dances.

KEITH (as PHRYGIAN): Three, yes. Right.

ALI (as BRNINE): Oh.

AUSTIN (as "EM"): It's blessed to do three dance.

KEITH (as PHRYGIAN): I was told it was cursed to do three dance.

AUSTIN: No, no, no, it's blessed to do three dance. But two dance is fine. Two dance? It's fine.

[ALI CHUCKLES]

DRE: Yeah, it's not good or bad. It's just fine.

KEITH: It's just fine.

AUSTIN: Right. It's not cursed or blessed.

ALI (as BRNINE): Yeah, I gotta—I gotta talk to Phrygian real quick, and I know Phrygian loves this song. Right, Phrygian?

KEITH (as PHRYGIAN): Right, yeah.

KEITH: What's the song?

ALI: Well, see—what's the party—it—you know.

SYLVI: I have been dying to know.

AUSTIN: Great question.

[ALI CHUCKLES]

AUSTIN: I think that this is a real 'the Twilight Mirage people said don't worry about it, we'll take care of food and entertainment,' and again, the Twilight Mirage is the Twilight Mirage, so it's like—you know, six years ago, I would have said it was hyperpop as a way of gesturing at stuff that the world wasn't quite ready for yet, but like, 100 Gecs have put out a second—have put out a label album at this point. You know what I mean?

[ALI CHUCKLES]

AUSTIN: We're done with that being—you know, we're on the other side of hyperpop being, you know, cutting edge. So like, you know, we even talked about this with the Columnar stuff and like, the stuff that was like using Perennial Wave to like, fuck up music. Whatever the Twilight Mirage is doing has to be more extra than that, so I don't know. What is—what is the emerging music—I guess it would be—it would be—they would have brought stuff that they think is established good universal music that they want to share, so it probably wouldn't be like, performance art up there. It would be—or if it is performance art, its performance art that's withstood the test of time inside the Twilight Mirage. I don't know. I'm happy to open it to the floor, if people have Twilight Mirage music ideas.

ALI: Well, I—

KEITH: I think it's arc-based math rock.

[1:00:00]

AUSTIN: [EXHALING] Okay.

SYLVI: I was gonna say nightcore, so, I don't know.

AUSTIN: Nightcore math rock sounds cursed as shit, and so, I don't—

ALI: [CHUCKLES] I was also thinking of just like a four—like, a four—what do you call that? A

string quartet?

AUSTIN: Like a quartet, yeah.

ALI: Yeah.

AUSTIN: I don't think—but that's not the Twilight Mirage vibe to me.

ALI: Sure.

AUSTIN: Twilight Mirage is—you remember the last musical thing we saw in the Twilight Mirage was 3T doing, like—

ALI: Right, yeah, yeah, yeah.

AUSTIN: Collaborative, on-the-stage—

ALI: But also this has like, weird corporate wedding vibes.

JANINE: Remember—

AUSTIN: That's just because the vibes are so broad here that we're trying to find a middle ground, you know?

ALI: Sure.

JANINE: Remember when that K-pop girl group, I forget which one, did that thing where they all—they put out like, commercials where they're all playing an instrument?

AUSTIN: Yeah.

JANINE: On like, a weird light stage? What if they're—the Twilight Mirage version of a quartet is just like, there are four people who are playing music, but somehow they're getting swapped out and interchanged?

AUSTIN: Oh, I love this.

JANINE: On some sort of weird stage thing?

AUSTIN: What band was that? I just messaged you about this, or talked to you about this within the last month.

JANINE: It was one that I liked and I just don't remember.

AUSTIN: Well, because then the album came out and it was nothing like that. Remember?

JANINE: Yeah, yeah.

AUSTIN: It was just like a straight up K-pop record, which is fine, but. This is gonna kill me, not remembering who it is. Anyway, yeah, I like the idea of it being a—of it being a quartet where the members of the quartet are constantly switching in some interesting way. That's fun to me.

I'm trying to figure out who this band is and I'm just not gonna be able to find it, I just need to give up on it. It's fine. It's fine. Yeah. So yeah, and I imagine it's like—actually, if we're gonna get to string quartet, we're going to get to string quartet by way of like, shoegaze, since that is the vibe musically of this season.

[ALI CHUCKLES]

AUSTIN: So it's like, you know, what if My Bloody Valentine was doing string quart—like, the op—you know how like, string quartet albums exist, and are miserable, and are just like, 'what if a string quartet played this Radiohead song?' This is the opposite, which is like, what if My Bloody Valentine was playing classical music, but like, had all the most fucked up pedals you've ever heard in your life?

SYLVI: Oh. Yeah.

KEITH: I have a—okay, not to spend too long on the music—

AUSTIN: Us? Never.

KEITH: Okay. I bought an album recently called—why is it not on my—I have my bandcamp open but it's not—I don't see it. It was called—I believe it was called—ah, fuck. Okay, well, anyway, I'll tell you what it was. It was a series of—like, it was a collaboration between different composers doing like, really discordant violin pieces, and it was mostly duets, but I can imagine very easily this album, but being put through a bunch of shoegaze-y pedals, and as a quartet. So there's like, also like a viola and a cello there or something.

AUSTIN: Love it, yeah. Yeah. So yeah, that's the vibe. What's your dancing like?

KEITH: Um...

AUSTIN: I found it. I found it, I found it. Janine, I found it. I found the thing. It was Wonder Girls.

[ALI GASPS]

JANINE: Ah, yeah.

ALI: Ohh, sure.

JANINE: Yeah.

AUSTIN: It was these teasers that they did for the lead-in for for this album, and they each had like, one video of each of them playing one instrument, like there was one on drums, there was one on bass, there was one on, you know, guitar, et cetera.

KEITH: Here we go. *A Lunch Between Order and Chaos* by String Noise. That's what it's called.

AUSTIN: 'String noise' is my nickname for Phrygian.

KEITH: [LAUGHS] So, yes, we've got—we've got string n—we've got really shoegaze-y string

noise, and, um... does it have a beat under it?

AUSTIN: Yeah.

KEITH: I will grow and shrink to the beat. That is how Phrygian dances. Phrygian—

AUSTIN: Fantastic.

[ALI LAUGHS]

JANINE: Phrygian is in Oddballs?

KEITH: Phrygian is—Phrygian is like the iTunes visualizer.

AUSTIN: Are you having a conversation dancing, or are you all just dancing?

KEITH: Yeah, I'll have a con—well, Ali said that she had a conversation, or maybe that was just to get the spy to go away.

ALI: Oh, no, I mean, this was—I was gonna, um... I had the idea of dancing in my mind, and I was like, 'oh, this can socially benefit Phrygian.'

AUSTIN: Right.

ALI: Is why I—

AUSTIN: By separating out the spy, yeah. That's not a bad idea.

ALI: I guess I can be like—

ALI (as BRNINE): Who the fuck is that person?

KEITH (as PHRYGIAN): A spy, I think they are a spy.

ALI (as BRNINE): A spy? You think that's a spy?

KEITH (as PHRYGIAN): Well, I think that they're in the Dim Liturgy.

ALI (as BRNINE): But—

KEITH: I need to backtrack. Phrygian doesn't know that this person's a spy—

AUSTIN: Correct.

KEITH: Except that they give off spy vibes, and that I listened to the faction game.

AUSTIN: They give off—yes, if you haven't listened to that, you might be like, 'this is just a weirdo.'

KEITH: Right.

AUSTIN: So yeah, I don't know that you know they're a spy, but you know that something is off.

You succeeded on some rolls.

KEITH: I—you said that I could tell that they were trying to get information from me.

AUSTIN: Yes, that is true. That's true.

KEITH: And that's what I will tell Brnine, is that—

KEITH (as PHRYGIAN): They were trying to get information from me. I think they're from—I think they're Dim Lit—I think they live here. I think this is their home.

ALI (as BRNINE): What kind of information?

KEITH (as PHRYGIAN): They wanted to know who I worked for, they wanted to know why I was here, they kept saying that what I was saying was right.

[AUSTIN LAUGHS]

KEITH (as PHRYGIAN): Which—but in a way that was wrong.

ALI (as BRNINE): I feel like if you were invited here, you know not to ask other people that sort of shit.

KEITH (as PHRYGIAN): That's—I agree, yeah. So I don't know why they did that. And I didn't—and also, they really were talking a lot.

ALI (as BRNINE): You—did you like, lie to them or were you just cagey, or...

KEITH (as PHRYGIAN): No, I just didn't say a lot, yeah.

ALI (as BRNINE): Cool. Okay. Cool.

KEITH (as PHRYGIAN): They gave me a tour.

ALI (as BRNINE): Yeah?

KEITH (as PHRYGIAN): Yeah.

KEITH: Was there anything interesting—can I use a—can I, um—ooh. Can I Read the Room, but from a room that I was in before? Can I realize something about a room that was interesting that we went to?

[ALI CHUCKLES]

AUSTIN: What do you—just tell me what you realized. No one's like—no one was trying to hide anything from you here.

KEITH: Well, I didn't realize any—I just want to generate something useful to tell Ali about my time with this guy that we kind of glossed over.

AUSTIN: Right, I'm telling you to go for it. You tell me what you found.

KEITH: Let's see, uh—

AUSTIN: With the note that like, nothing here is being explicitly hidden from you. I guess that's not true, because there was—maybe we should roll for it, because we do know that there was that Devotion conversation you overheard. Right? Or that Brnine overheard, about that.

KEITH: Yeah.

AUSTIN: So yeah, let's—we can go ahead and roll for it. We can invent something cool here. Go ahead and give me a Sense. Or—

KEITH: Should it be Dispel Uncertainties, Read the Room?

AUSTIN: Uh... I think—it's always a weird line between those two, right?

KEITH: Yeah. I would s—

AUSTIN: Read the Room, when you're trying to figure out what side da-da-da-da—I think it's probably Dispel Uncertainties, right?

KEITH: Yeah, I was thinking that because I'm not really asking these set of questions, I really just wanna—

AUSTIN: Yeah, if you're trying to explain what mysterious thing you've encountered is, you're Dispelling Uncertainties.

KEITH: Yeah.

AUSTIN: So roll plus Know.

KEITH: Okay.

AUSTIN: Which, what's your know?

KEITH: 1.

AUSTIN: And that is a 6.

KEITH: Yeah.

AUSTIN: On a 7 to 9, da-da-da... Alright, yeah, you did not even get a 7 to 9 here. What is the thing that you wandered into that—it's interesting to me that you—we're now, like—it's interesting because it's like, I can give you a fail here, and it has already happened, and you didn't know it happened. Right?

KEITH: Right. I failed, you know, two hours ago.

AUSTIN: Mhm. I think it hits you that you did reveal—you were like, you're talking through the places you went to with Brnine, and you're talking through the like, conversations you had with Em, this potential weirdo who's been following you around, and you're like 'yeah, and then they

showed me the like, the grand hall, and then they showed me the reception area, and then they showed me the library,' and you're talking about like, what the conversations were in each of those, and you realize in retrospect that you did mention being part of the Blue Channel, and that like, you revealed a few other, like, key details that like, 'oh, shit, they did get me to talk. They just didn't—it didn't—I didn't realize I was talking. I didn't realize I gave up part of my identity.' I mean, obviously your identity is Phrygian and [CHUCKLING] your glasses say Phrygian—

[KEITH AND ALI CHUCKLE]

AUSTIN: But like, at some point they got you saying shit about a mission you'd been on, or about a place—you talked about being in the Diadem recently. You talked about the pretzel shop. You know? Whatever that is—

KEITH: Yeah.

AUSTIN: You slipped up and said something that does identify who you are. I don't know that you—you tell me if you tell Brnine that you realize that in this moment, but you did dispel uncertainties. You dispelled their uncertainties about you. I am going to advance a clock.

KEITH: I did hit my Spotlight advancement.

AUSTIN: There you go. Love that for you.

KEITH: Can I take center stage and immediately gain an advancement?

AUSTIN: Sure.

KEITH: Can—

AUSTIN: I will note really quick that, reminder that there's a—you can—if you do that knowing where you're gonna spend the move immediately, you get advantage. So you might want to save it until then.

[1:10:09]

KEITH: Hm, okay, that's interesting. I'll tell you what I was going to do, which is—

AUSTIN: Sure.

KEITH: Like—

AUSTIN: Actually, it's not even advancement—sorry, it's not even advantage, it's Confidence.

KEITH: Oh, that's even better.

AUSTIN: If you make a move, you may act with confidence to use it right now.

KEITH: Um, the—what I was going to do was have this guy whose name I actually don't remember—

AUSTIN: It's Em, the—

KEITH: Em, right.

AUSTIN: Their real name is, or his real name is is Marlon, Marlon Styx.

KEITH: Yeah. I was thinking of having Em like, basically cause a scene and like, reveal whatever I had revealed, but like, loudly, and maybe not—maybe not, like—maybe not intentionally, maybe still, like, being kind of weird and kind of friendly, but I thought maybe having us be sort of exposed in that way might be fun to do in the middle of this party where people are dancing and having fun. But saving it—

AUSTIN: I mean, that still sounds like a move, so that doesn't sound—like, you would have to roll to do that, right? I'm guessing—like, what's the thing you were going to try to do?

KEITH: Oh, it—well, it just—it just says, when you level up, it just says, like, take center stage and immediately gain an advancement. I wasn't going to do anything, I was just going to be center stage, because I thought it'd be fun.

AUSTIN: Right, but that doesn't mean an NPC would—I was just curious how you were gonna get Marlin to do that.

KEITH: Um...

AUSTIN: If there was a thing—do you know what I mean?

KEITH: Well, he's just been bugging me all night, like—

AUSTIN: No, I get it.

KEITH: —so I thought maybe he would just do it on his own.

AUSTIN: Oh. You have—no.

KEITH: No, he's not going to do it on his own?

AUSTIN: Be a weirdo? To like—

KEITH: He's been a weirdo all night!

AUSTIN: Right, to you.

KEITH: Yeah.

AUSTIN: Because of how he's trying to get information from you.

KEITH: Right.

AUSTIN: Which we now learned he did.

KEITH: Right.

AUSTIN: So.

KEITH: So he doesn't want to use any of this information right away. That's fine.

AUSTIN: No, I—what's the—the information—no, the information—he's a spy, right? He's trying to get information to feed it back home.

KEITH: Well, he's a spy, but he's—right now, I thought the problem with Em was that he's already turned—and he's genuinely part of the Dim Liturgy, currently.

AUSTIN: He is, and also he's still reporting stuff back home. This is the thing about him being a bad but also good spy.

KEITH: Okay. I thought the idea was that he was—he had stopped doing that, but may choose at any time to resume.

AUSTIN: He is still gathering information, you know?

KEITH: Yeah.

AUSTIN: So. So maybe he's not sending home the clearest messages, but he's not not in contact with them, per the last thing, as far as I recall.

KEITH: Okay.

AUSTIN: We did not—Jack did not lose the BIS's spy among the Dim Liturgy, you know?

KEITH: Right.

AUSTIN: It's just that that spy has been somewhat compromised by his new beliefs, so.

KEITH: Right. Alright, well, we can move on.

AUSTIN: Okay.

KEITH: And I'll save this.

AUSTIN: Train fight. What's going on, train fight?

ALI: Oh—

AUSTIN: Oh? Yeah? Uh-huh? Brnine?

ALI: Sorry. [LAUGHS] I kind of wanted to figure out a way to spend a Hold before we went back to the train car.

AUSTIN: Oh, sure, that makes sense to me. Because y'all both have Hold left.

ALI: Yeah, I still have 2.

KEITH: Oh, I may have spent my Hold. I think I spent my Hold last week.

AUSTIN: You did not spend your Hold. You have 3 Hold.

KEITH: Oh, I didn't spend it?

ALI: No, I think you spent one because you gave people Confidence, and I used the Confidence.

AUSTIN: Yes. Yes. You spent one—

ALI: So you should have two left.

AUSTIN: You should still have two left, Phrygian.

KEITH: Oh, sorry, I'm talking about the Hold that we that we got from our—

AUSTIN: You still have—I think you end up still having—or no, maybe you spent that on the look around thing. You did a look around at some point.

KEITH: Yeah.

AUSTIN: A discovery thing, and I think you used that one then, but you still have—you still have two remaining B-Plot Hold.

KEITH: Right. Yes. I do have my B-Plot Hold.

AUSTIN: Yes.

ALI: And this might be the structure of this particular mission, because like, we don't have a sense of the NPCs that we might later in the thing, but like—

AUSTIN: That's exactly right, yeah.

ALI: Deny an actor from appearing from a Sortie, this just isn't the sort of...

AUSTIN: Yeah, if you deny an actor from appearing in the Sortie because they show up here? Uh-oh.

[ALI LAUGHS]

AUSTIN: You've brought someone who shouldn't—which is totally viable, right?

ALI: Right, right.

KEITH: Gem.

AUSTIN: You could make it so that the Cause attacks this get-together at this moment and you deny my ability to bring other NPCs—you know what I mean? Like, that's totally viable.

ALI: No, I'm good. That's interesting, but—[LAUGHS] no.

[SYLVI LAUGHS]

AUSTIN: But the next time you do a B-Plot that's like, you're undercover in a, you know, Principality city or something—

ALI: Right. Or we, you know, we have a sense of like, an antagonist, right?

AUSTIN: Yes. Exactly.

ALI: And I'm like, Austin, don't put this guy in the Sortie. [CHUCKLES]

AUSTIN: That's exactly it, yes. Exactly.

ALI: So I guess I want to complicate things for myself, and give the player Confidence on their next move.

AUSTIN: Okay. I think you get a text from Gucci.

ALI: Oh.

AUSTIN: Now, finally. No longer left on read. And it says "I'm sorry."

ALI: Um... the—[LAUGHS]

KEITH: Your relationship is fucked.

SYLVI: Seems fine.

KEITH: You two have a terrible relationship.

[AUSTIN STIFLES LAUGHTER]

ALI: Shut up.

JANINE: This is very like, 'texts you get before the room explodes' energy.

ALI: [LAUGHS] I'm gonna send back a question mark, but it's gonna be the emoji that's the red question mark with the red exclamation point.

[SYLVI LAUGHS]

AUSTIN: Oh, I love that. You get the grimacing face back.

[ALI GIGGLES]

AUSTIN: Teeth—[SHARP INHALE] you know?

ALI: Uh-huh.

AUSTIN: You get—

ALI: That I famously sent to Jesset?

AUSTIN: Right, that you sent to Jesset, you get it back from Gucci now. And you get "they

wouldn't let me tell you until it happened." Alright, train fight.

SYLVI: Oh, god.

AUSTIN: The bouquets are now having, you know, kind of gotten their shit together again, are just laying down fire at Cori and Figure. The Bouquets, as a reminder, are kind of the workhorse unit made by Stel Orion's Adamant Arms and Artifice. They are our AK-47. And they are really good at just laying down fire. They also, like, your lava gun, Figure, have a gun that has Infinite as one of the tags, and are extremely good between the two of them of just trying to pin y'all down and stop you from helping here. I'm just gonna straight up need both of you to make a Weather the Storm unless—unless all you're doing is being pinned down. To do anything at this point, you need to Weather the Storm to try to make some maneuvers here.

SYLVI: Okay.

AUSTIN: So. You could also just like, hang low, but.

SYLVI: I am absolutely doing that.

AUSTIN: Okay. What's it look like? And they're like, doing like, the firing line type of thing of like, one of—I mean, they both have Infinite. So actually, they don't need to do that. They can both just hold the fucking trigger down. And again, I want to remind that all of the different magic types have a sort of sense thing going on, and so for Stel Orion's it's taste. As the the rounds, these like, Perennial bullets get fired from these guns, there's some sort of taste filling your mouth, what is it? What's the taste that you associate with Perennial magic that is this kind of corrupted, profane, you know, the Bilateral Intercession Principality version of the magic?

SYLVI: Oh.

DRE: Oh, god.

SYLVI: I got an answer, but then I realized it's a smell.

AUSTIN: Mm.

DRE: I had an answer and then I realized it was very upsetting.

AUSTIN: Give me the upsetting one. If you think it's right, give me the upsetting one.

DRE: No, I think it's right. I think I'm just—I don't—I'm worried about personally upsetting us, and then also people listening, so, content warning, dental stuff.

AUSTIN: [OVERLAPPING] We'll have content warnings. Yep.

DRE: I remember the taste in my mouth when I chipped a tooth.

AUSTIN: Mhm. Me too.

DRE: And that is the first thing that came to mind.

AUSTIN: You f—it is like a heavy taste in your mouth at this moment. Cori?

SYLVI: Um—

AUSTIN: Because this is a personal thing, and sometimes there's overlaps, you know what I mean? But you will always have this flavor in your mouth when this type of Principality magic is being used.

SYLVI: Hospital food.

AUSTIN: Hospital food, ew, gross. Love it. Fantastic. Can y'all write this down under notes on your sheets just so you have it?

DRE: Sure.

AUSTIN: So that I have it too? Love it.

DRE: What type did you say this is?

AUSTIN: This is Profane magic.

DRE: Okay.

AUSTIN: Orion, specifically. So yeah, you're gonna be pinned down here unless you're able to Weather the Storm and make a maneuver here. Cori, it sounded like you were definitely doing that.

SYLVI: Mhm.

AUSTIN: What are you doing to try to get yourself out from under this suppression?

SYLVI: I mean, I have a shield. Like, I'm trying to hide behind my shield and sort of like, use it to get from cover to cover, because I know it's not, like—not going to weather like, the entire thing by itself.

AUSTIN: Right.

SYLVI: Like, it's not going to be able to take all those hits without some sort of damage to it.

AUSTIN: Right.

SYLVI: But I could use it to mitigate the majority of what's going on when I'm outnumbered by them.

AUSTIN: Yeah, that makes sense to me. So yeah, give me a Weather the Storm.

SYLVI: That's a 12, baby.

AUSTIN: That is a fuckin' 12. Look at that. Yeah, so your shield, between your maneuverability and your shield, you're able to move kind of freely under their fire here without much trouble.

How about you, Figure? What are you doing as they're trying to pin you down?

DRE: I think what I do is I just try to put the train between me and them.

AUSTIN: Okay.

DRE: So I'm just like, flipping back over to the other side of the train.

AUSTIN: It's—you're much taller than the train, so you would have to get low to the ground to hide behind it.

DRE: Yeah, okay.

[1:20:02]

AUSTIN: It's one of those things that a flat 2d map can kind of, you know, hide sometimes.

DRE: Mhm.

AUSTIN: The train is long, but it's—and it's—it's taller in the compartments in the rear than it is up front, but it's still—you're like a 60 foot tall mech, you know?

DRE: Sure, sure, sure.

AUSTIN: So even if it was 30 feet tall, most of your torso would be up.

DRE: Okay.

AUSTIN: You could still kind of duck behind it some, I'm not going to take that away from you as a thing, but that's—I want to make—be clear that that's the posture you're taking if you are.

DRE: Yeah, and you know, the more I think about it, that's not what Figure does. Figure just charges straight towards them.

AUSTIN: Interesting.

DRE: And so I think it is very much like the fuckin', like, anime thing of moving so fast *Dragon Ball Z* that you're just kind of like, seemingly appearing and then reappearing at spots in the animated version of this.

AUSTIN: Right. Let's—that to me sounds—

DRE: Like, just dodging and weaving.

AUSTIN: Yeah. That to me sounds like you are making a move that relies on your speed.

DRE: Yeah.

AUSTIN: Give me a Defy with advantage.

DRE: Okay. That's—yeah. I was like, what do I roll?

AUSTIN: So it's 3d6 plus 1, yeah.

DRE: And then I was like, right, Defy. Duh. [CHUCKLES]

AUSTIN: The nice thing about recording so many of these in a row is it's like we're gonna get this board system in our heads.

DRE: Yeah, we're getting there. Wow!

AUSTIN: Bruh!

DRE: Bro. Bro, bro, bro, bro, bro, bro, bro, bro.

SYLVI: Sorry for taking the good roll.

DRE: No, it's fine.

AUSTIN: 2-1-1-1.

DRE: I was due. I had been rolling really well.

AUSTIN: Even if you added those all up, [CHUCKLING] it's still a failure.

DRE: No, it's great.

AUSTIN: If you didn't take only 2 of the 3. Uh... huh. Yeah. You do that, like, charge ahead shit, and—

KEITH: Uh—

AUSTIN: Yeah, go ahead.

KEITH: I have something.

AUSTIN: Uh-huh?

KEITH: Ali just gave someone Confidence.

AUSTIN: That's true. That's true.

KEITH: That could be a 12.

AUSTIN: That could be a—no.

KEITH: 13.

AUSTIN: Because it's—is it turn—I guess it would be, right?

KEITH: It turns 1s into 6s.

AUSTIN: It turns all 1s into 6s.

[ALI LAUGHS]

DRE: Oh, shit.

SYLVI: God damn.

AUSTIN: Let's double check. I'm pretty sure you're right.

JANINE: Sick.

AUSTIN: I'm double checking.

JANINE: Sick and that rules.

AUSTIN: That is so sick. Yeah, treat—it is “treat any dice of a 1 as a 6 instead.” That is in fact a 13.

KEITH: Yep, that's a 13.

AUSTIN: That's B-Plot, baby. Right there.

DRE: Mhm.

AUSTIN: You're in their grills. You are ready to go. You want to go ahead and Exchange Blows with them?

DRE: [CHUCKLING] Yeah, sure, why not?

AUSTIN: Are you continuing to use your Explosive Chains?

DRE: Yeah.

AUSTIN: Alright.

DRE: I think this is like, wrapping bits and pieces, like, one around the ankle, one around the wrist, starting to pull them towards each other.

AUSTIN: Mhm. Love it. Give me a—give me a—

DRE: Clash, right?

AUSTIN: This is a Clash for sure, yeah. They are also Profane, so again, no additional bonuses here.

DRE: Buddy.

AUSTIN: Now that is a 6. Unfortunately.

DRE: It's fine. Yeah, no, it's fine. Let's go.

AUSTIN: You closed in so tight on them like it wasn't a thing, and I really think that you—you

made a good maneuver here. You tied one of them up with the chain, and then the—you're ready to like, ignite it or whatever, and the other one reveals that besides this roundless rifle, this kind of infinite long-ranged, you know, assault rifle thing that they have, they also have this other important weapon, which is that, like, almost wrapped around their necks, almost like—I imagine almost like an airplane pillow, do you know what I mean? Like, that style of—or like a cushion, you know what I mean? Like a neck cushion that does the wrap-around? They have these kind of big bulky collars, and those are—both of those have a pneumatic lance in it. So as you pull tight and taut on one of them, the other one is right up on you, and does this pneumatic lance punch. It's almost like there's like a spike, you know, think of like a—in a lot of mech fiction they talk about like, pile-drivers or that style of like, heavy pneumatic piston that fires forward. Not a ranged weapon, a melee weapon that just slams into your back. This is—the tags on this are Drain 2, Mounted—which is how they're able to use it while also holding these rifles—Reload, so it's gonna take a second to use this again—Decisive, and Bane. Neither—Bane isn't going to come into con—into effect here, and I don't think—I don't think Decisive will either, because you're not at three tags.

DRE: But Austin.

AUSTIN: Yeah, uh-huh?

DRE: Can I remind you that my chains have the Dangerous tag?

AUSTIN: They do. Trying to hurt yourself here, huh?

DRE: Once per Sortie, the Director may upgrade a Risk you acquire while using something Dangerous to a Peril. I'm just reminding you of what you've got.

AUSTIN: I appreciate it, Dre.

DRE: Uh-huh.

[SYLVI CHUCKLES]

AUSTIN: You do want to keep playing as the Figure in Bismuth, right? That's not—

DRE: Yeah, I do.

AUSTIN: Okay. Yeah, okay.

DRE: I only have one Danger. I'm not like, about to die. Right? Mechanically, that's how that works. I have to have multiple things.

AUSTIN: Yeah, you have to have three Dangers before I can make you Bite the Dust, and even there Bite the Dust is not 'you die' necessarily, unless we've decided together that that's the right maneuver in this moment. I am just double-checking to make sure that Decisive—oh, right. Okay, yeah, Decisive is—yeah, Decisive is just for Strike Decisively, I'm right about that. Alright—

KEITH: Yeah, Defensive is for Exchange Blows.

AUSTIN: Yes, which we talked about last time, too. Yeah, I think the—I'm gonna—

DRE: I mean, I can tell you what it is.

AUSTIN: Yeah, it's upgrade a Risk. I'm gonna ignite the explosion from the chain. What are you gonna say?

DRE: Sure.

AUSTIN: That's where my brain goes.

DRE: I mean, you're hitting me in the back, right?

AUSTIN: Mhm.

DRE: You already said that—

AUSTIN: Oh, you already busted the armor off there.

DRE: Uh-huh. Yeah.

AUSTIN: Uh-huh. Yeah. Well, this is just turnabout's fair play, Figure in Bismuth. Take the Peril Scorched as you're not just—I mean, god. No, it says it's just an upgrade. I'm not going to give you two things at once here. So—I'm going to give you just the Peril 'Scorched' as what happens is the sort of like, fuel that runs, that you like, that you use to ignite the explosive chains, the like, fuel canister that would normally be protected by the armor gets pierced by this pneumatic lance, and it just explodes, and the mech, like, your mech is now on fire as the fuel spreads across its body and begins to burn, and you're inside, and it's not pleasurable. We're not going to zoom in any tighter. You go ahead and take Scorched. The Peril 'Scorched'. It's bad. This ain't good. And this is the reason that this clock advances.

This huge—there's this like, huge explosion, because all of your fuel got hit at once here, that's just like a plume up in the sky. It's not a—it doesn't—it's not a mushroom cloud, or, in fact, it doesn't have a round character. It has a vertical—it's like a stripe of light and fire that has almost a purple, a pinkish-purple Perennial quality, just ignites straight up into the air like a beacon, and that will tap our multi-sided alert up to the cap. And the second it does, sirens start to blare across—it's almost like the nearest, you know, base has its sirens blare, and then the one after that the sirens blare, and the sirens blare past that, and like, anybody inside of this entire region suddenly is hearing the sort of like, air raid warning sound playing. And at the party, briefly, you see—Brnine, you see August Righteousness step away to take a call. Um... Thisbe.

ALI: I know that guy. I like that guy.

AUSTIN: Yeah, well—yeah, uh-huh. Sometimes you like people who do things that maybe put your people at risk. Thisbe, you were in the middle of trying to capture your target.

JANINE: Yes.

AUSTIN: How's that going? What's going on here? Kenneth Marian Colver, the viceroy, was

[CHUCKLES] foolishly trying to stand between you and Gem/the person who seems to be the the Lost Duchess Constantina Malady. What do you do?

JANINE: I don't know that I would even acknowledge the dude between us.

AUSTIN: Mhm.

JANINE: Because I can't imagine if I walk towards him, that he would just stay there, and even if he did, fine, I'll step on him. Like, what's gonna happen?

[AUSTIN CHUCKLES]

JANINE: Because the thing I want to do is grab Constantina and take her outside, and then stuff her in Mow's cargo compartment. And, like—

AUSTIN: You're gonna—this is another multiple rolls thing, I think, for you, because—

JANINE: Yeah, yes.

AUSTIN: You're definitely—you're definitely going to need to deal with both—I mean, he's a very frightened person. We'll see how the roll goes. I'm not gonna, like—you're not at disadvantage because there's two of them, but he's still in the fiction in this moment, right?

JANINE: Mhm.

AUSTIN: So give me a Exchange Blows as you try to grab her. This is just like, a march forward, right? You're just—

JANINE: Yeah, this is like, trying to pick her up like a sack of potatoes kind of thing.

AUSTIN: Yep. Mhm. So yeah, Clash +2. 2d6 plus 2. That's a 12. You knock him the fuck out the way—

[DRE LAUGHS]

AUSTIN: And then yeah, you can, again, give her a Peril, or—and yourself a Risk, or just give her a Risk. She currently has the Peril 'Cracked' or 'Cracking'.

JANINE: Um... I think I... hm.

[1:30:01]

JANINE: Can I use my shielding to deflect a Peril in this situation, or is that only in situations—

AUSTIN: You absolutely can.

JANINE: Okay.

AUSTIN: Yep, you have Ward—you have Shielding Module - Ward, right?

JANINE: Yeah.

AUSTIN: And Ward says “you may use this tag once per Sortie to reduce an incoming source of harm from a Peril to a Risk, or from a Risk to nothing.” This is an incoming source of harm, so you could totally use that.

JANINE: Okay, then, I would like to give her a Peril and not take a Risk myself. Using my Ward.

AUSTIN: Okay. Mark that you’re using the Ward. And what is the Peril that you’re giving her as you try to lift her up with with your arms?

JANINE: Un... Snared?

AUSTIN: That’s fun. Yeah. Totally. Especially since, don’t you have—your like, actual hand-to-hand thing is like, the sparking touch, right? You can like, flow energy out of your hands at her. Or like, you know, you kind of—

JANINE: Is it? Do I? Where does it say that?

AUSTIN: General Gear, Sparking Touch 1, Melee, Bane.

JANINE: Where’s General Gear?

AUSTIN: You also have that grappling hook. It’s right under your Incandescent Gear on your sheet.

JANINE: Oh, I totally—yeah, yeah, yeah.

AUSTIN: Yeah, yeah.

JANINE: Yeah, that’s true.

AUSTIN: Mhm.

JANINE: I can do that. [CHUCKLES] I totally forgot.

AUSTIN: Mostly that’s a—having Bane means that you can hurt a tier four thing, or you can go hand-to-hand with a tier four thing—or, sorry, you’re a person, you’re not a mech—a tier two thing [CHUCKLES] without it being—without being penalized for it. Which is important, because as you do this, the thing that you’re able to shield yourself from, as you begin to lift her, small tendrils, thin cables, but they’re almost like—they’re almost like long lizard tongues or something, they’re thin physic—they almost, actually, they look like those little—those little, like, the fish that kind of hide in the sand and poke their like, long tube legs up? Or bodies up? Do you know what I’m talking about? I don’t know if those are eels or what. Like, little like, you know, sea snakes that hide in the sand.

All, like, a ton of these begin to like, extend and protrude out of her body, made of this kind of liquid glass, and she looks up at you and makes eye contact in this moment, and her eyes are twirling. Like, it’s the space where her eyes should be where they’re the kind of glassy—the kind of glassy eye, like, area, not quite a socket because there’s no depth there, just the kind of—the indentation of where eyes would be on a human head. And they begin to change colors and

twirl, and it's very funny that she's doing this to you, because you are not human, right? And you imagine that this effect—

JANINE: Yeah, it's like she's trying to Hypnotoad me, and that's not gonna. [CHUCKLES]

AUSTIN: There's a degree of that, but there's also a degree of like—I don't know that I—she will begin to talk to you, as you lift her, and as these kind of like, tendrils begin to whip at you. Is your shield like, literally like an electromagnetic, like, shield thing around you? What is your shield? What's preventing these things from hurting you as they snap at you?

JANINE: I think we'd originally described it as kind of like an energy barrier.

AUSTIN: Yeah.

JANINE: Because I remember the scene where Thisbe—god, it was kind of like a—I leveled up mid-mission and I thought that narratively it'd be interesting if Thisbe like, took this big hit, and then afterwards, like a second afterwards, her shield flickered to life and she's like, 'oh, right, that's a thing I used to be able to do.'

AUSTIN: 'I have that.' Yes. Yes. So as these things are trying to snap at you and breach through the shield, and as you're kind of holding her at a little bit of a distance to prevent those snapping things from getting in on the shield, she begins to grow in your hands. And she was tier one, now she's tier two. And as she grows she says—

AUSTIN (as GEM): I was like mist held in evening's dark concrete. How could you think to contain me?

JANINE: Am I supposed—should I answer that? [CHUCKLES]

AUSTIN: I don't know, you tell me what Thisbe's reaction is to this strange growing shape that she's holding.

JANINE (as THISBE): I do not think to contain you. I do contain you.

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