

PALISADE 04: I Would Like to Help You

Pt. 1

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.

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

AUSTIN (as NARRATOR): I don't remember it in words at all. I just have images, and they're all tangled up like photographs stapled to a line of rope, turned back against itself in a broken pulley. So as I reach out for the cable and I try to draw the pictures down, they get stuck. And if I move slowly, the rope stops, but if I move quick, they rip and tear, and I get frustrated, because I know my mind is meant to smoothly lift things higher, to sift sense from sensation, to leap from image to action, so that it isn't thought at all when my arm reaches out in front of someone else, it's faster, it's love.

So all I have is these fuzzy photographs, but maybe that's enough. I remember hands lightly gripping fingers, I remember luggage, I remember puzzles. I remember a child flicking a flashlight from my rear windows. I remember seeing things get smaller as I grew colossal, pulling myself tight, becoming overgrown, splitting my body into cliffs and canyons, and I remember fog, I wanted fog so badly and I could never get it right. I have black glimpses of those early nights, it was heaven-dark, beauty-dark, continental dark—see, when you're big, it's dark in another way, 'cause you're dark, too.

And then thousands of pictures that all look the same, and that's not a complaint. No, that's not a complaint. Birthday dinners, geese in rivers, Tuesday afternoons, waves on shorelines, sweeping brooms, the color in the sky. The color in the sky. The color in the sky. It was a warning. The color in the sky. The Twilight Mirage scrawled across a whiteboard by hands gloved in the same leather as the boots atop my skin.

And the truth is that the images that come after that grow indistinct, and I can't tell if that's a choice, or an outcome, 'cause when I reach up and pull on that rope in search of the worst that followed, it spins away, and all I'm left with is portraits and landscapes. He turns over a seashell and calls back to his brother. She writes their name on an envelope and makes really sure it's sealed. The storm creates a mudslide, and it's a joy to see how soft I am. She hangs up the frame on the wall and laughs 'cause it's empty.

[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 am your host, Austin Walker, and joining me today, Ali Acampora.

ALI: Hi, I'm Ali Acampora, and you can find me over at [@ali_west](#) on Twitter.

AUSTIN: Andrew Lee Swan.

DRE: Hey, you can find me on Twitter at [@swandre3000](#).

AUSTIN: Keith Carberry.

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

AUSTIN: Janine Hawkins.

JANINE: Hi, I'm Janine, you can find me at [@bleatingheart](#) on Twitter and Cohost.

AUSTIN: And Sylvi Bullet.

SYLVI: Hello, I'm Sylvi, you can find me at [@sylvibullet](#) everywhere. And you can find the Friends at the Table TikTok at TikTok dot—is it—it's [@friends_table](#) in there, right? I started saying it and then I like, lost my confidence halfway through.

KEITH: [@friends_table](#) at TikTok, yes.

SYLVI: Cool.

AUSTIN: Yes. We'll get it one day, we'll all just have it.

SYLVI: I was also going to plug the Twitch, and I was like, well, the Twitch is [twitch.tv/FriendsAtTheTable](#), where you should go, because we've been streaming a lot more lately.

AUSTIN: We have.

DRE: Mhm.

KEITH: Oh, and you know what's packed to the gills? Is the YouTube.

AUSTIN: The YouTube.

KEITH: Which is [youtube.com/FriendsattheTable](#), which has almost all the VODs that we've had from the past few months in there.

SYLVI: So, I was gonna say for video content, there's no underscore, but the TikTok kind of throws—

AUSTIN: Right.

SYLVI: There's no real easy—

KEITH: I know, there's no easy way...

AUSTIN: [OVERLAPPING] Can we change the—

SYLVI: [OVERLAPPING] If you think of a mnemonic device to remember this, DM me.

AUSTIN: Can we change the YouTube—or the TikTok to match—can those two match each other?

KEITH: Maybe.

AUSTIN: Hm. Okay. I guess we'll find out. Play to find out what happens.

JANINE: Also, can we just shout out for a second that some of the *Golf With Your Friends* stream—

AUSTIN: Mhm, mhm.

JANINE: Keith's been doing some delicate but impactful editing on—

AUSTIN: Yeah, yeah.

[DRE LAUGHS]

JANINE: —including some other perspectives and stuff, and it's very—it's good.

KEITH: Yeah. Yeah, those videos—

AUSTIN: Mhm.

KEITH: Those videos are all, like, audio-levelled to sound better than the Twitch version, and then a few of them have little bonus edits in there also.

AUSTIN: Yeah, it's great. It's fantastic. You can support us by going to friendsatthetable.cash on Patreon. A quick note, Patreon seems like they're getting rid of goals. Not tiers. Not 'hey, I'm on tier number whatever, I'm on the \$5 tier,' those are staying the same. But—

KEITH: Goals are different.

AUSTIN: Goals are 'hey, if we make it to blank dollars a month, we will do blank,' and they're gonna get rid of those.

KEITH: Right.

AUSTIN: We committed that if we hit \$30,000 on our goals, we will do a *Hunter x Hunter* show, a limited run Media Plus Club, whatever we're gonna call that show, we are going to do that even if it doesn't say that we're gonna do that on the page anymore.

Also, there are tiers for getting your name shouted out on our—inside of content. One being the weekly Bluff City relisten, which is happening over at twitch.tv/FriendsAtTheTable every weekend, I believe is what we're aiming for. In fact, as we're recording this, Art is nobly setting up the first Bluff City episode to be listened to a little bit later today. That will be in the past by

the time you hear this by a few weeks, because of how we record in advance. [CHUCKLES]

But there will be other ones to listen to, and if you support at the \$15 level, your name will get a shoutout, and there's a form that we sent out to that tier, and to the \$50 tier, to give us the name that you want shouted out there. Because we don't assume that someone's Patreon name is the name that they want to see shouted out. As we said in the big announcement thing, don't include, like, jokes, like—give us your name, the name that you want to be shouted out. We're not trying to use it as like a—you're not buying a shout-out. You're not buying an advertisement, you know?

SYLVI: We're not doing AGDQ over here, okay?

AUSTIN: Exactly. We're not doing AGDQ, we're not—

SYLVI: We're not gonna read out something about killing animals or whatever the fuck they do over there, I don't really watch speedruns.

ALI: What?

AUSTIN: They love to kill animals over on the speedrun community.

DRE: What?

AUSTIN: Yeah, yeah, yeah. They—

KEITH: What is—oh.

JANINE: No, it's a *Metroid* thing.

SYLVI: [OVERLAPPING] There's like a *Metroid* thing.

AUSTIN: [OVERLAPPING] It's a *Super Metroid* thing.

KEITH: AG—okay.

JANINE: It's fine.

DRE: Like, in the game. Okay.

AUSTIN: It's fine. Don't worry about it.

SYLVI: Yeah.

JANINE: Yeah, it's—you kill...

KEITH: I didn't know what AGDQ was. I thought this was like a show that they were do—now I get it.

JANINE: God. [CHUCKLES]

AUSTIN: [CHUCKLING] It's a show where they kill things.

JANINE: Yeah.

[KEITH LAUGHS]

AUSTIN: No, so yeah, so please go ahead—just letting people know to go check their emails if they are at that \$15 or \$50 tier because there is a form that you should fill out. Or don't. You know, if you don't want to get shouted out, that's fine. You know? Sometimes I don't want to be shouted out.

KEITH: Right.

AUSTIN: Alright, we are continuing our game of *Armour Astir* today. As always, we have some goals that we like to pursue, and those 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.”

I'm gonna start the way that—today we're doing downtime. Today is our first downtime episode, which is exciting, because we're coming off of a season that—where we kind of had to like, shoehorn in downtimes a little bit, and it's nice to be back in a system—and I like, you know, there's a lot I like about *HEART*, and I don't think *HEART* necessarily needs a downtime, but *Armour Astir* has an *explicit* downtime, and I love an explicit, straight-up, ‘you're in the downtime’ phase.

I'm gonna read from the book, just to get everybody on the same page, because maybe this is the first time you're listening to a game with downtime scenes, which you shouldn't be, because you should go listen to *PARTIZAN*, [CHUCKLES] which had downtime scenes.

[DRE CHUCKLES]

AUSTIN: But if you're here anyway, because you just want to be part of the zeitgeist: “Between Sorties, characters have time to themselves on the Carrier to rest, recuperate, and do their own thing. This is referred to as downtime. And during downtime, scenes are played out, each focused on a different location on your Carrier. Downtime scenes are similar to conflict scenes, but each is led by a different player who may invite others into it. Downtime scenes don't need to be elaborate or long. They can be as simple as describing some actions you take. They may continue to invite other characters into the scene as it plays out, and other players may force their character into a scene at the cost of one of their tokens.” Tokens are important. I'll explain what they do now-ish.

“Every player gets to lead a scene each, and also gets two tokens to spend during any player's scene for further benefits.” So, if Ali is holding a scene, like ‘hey, I want to have a conversation with somebody, and I'm going to play the Social Space or Private Quarters scene,’ there's a little list of other benefits that other players can spend their token on during that scene to get their own little benefit. Their own little—the benefits tend to be things like healing Risks or Perils from previous adventures, advancing long-term projects or Gravity Clocks with one another, preparing for the coming mission, stuff like that. So, players get two tokens each to spend on any player's scene for those benefits, including their own. So if they—so if Ali did a Social

Space or Private Quarters scene, that comes with a default bonus, and then Ali could also spend a token during that bonus, or during that scene, to get one of these other listed bonuses, which we'll talk about when we get to these scenes.

"The Director—" me— "also takes one token per other player. When they spend theirs, they may refocus the scene for a moment and spend them on behalf of the authority to show members of it having their own downtime that is imposing the opposite option's benefit on the players where appropriate."

[10:06]

So I can, for instance—in the same way that you can spend a token to give the first roll you make in the next mission advantage, I can spend tokens to give people disadvantage.

"Additionally, you may choose to frame your scene as a failure, and not take the benefit described. If you do so, you may choose another player to gain an extra token for this downtime. First, though, everyone should take a moment to check in. When you finish a Sortie and return to the Carrier—" which in our case is the Blue Channel— "to figure out what's next, it's time to check in with each other not as your characters, but as players. Is everyone happy with how the game has gone since the last downtime? Has everyone remembered to clear any Risks they gained during the last Sortie? Does anyone want to discuss the safety tools you're using and maybe amend any lines or veils, et cetera? Does anyone have any thoughts or comments on how the game is progressing, and what they might want to see more of—more or less of? After you've checked in, everyone can then choose and play their downtime scenes."

So, high level, or easiest, first one here, is: did everybody remember to clear their Risks and—just Risks, Perils stay. But Risks should be gone at this point.

KEITH: I did not clear them, I remembered that we were supposed to clear them—or I remembered that we probably cleared them and didn't have to do anything, but I didn't want to erase them by mistake, and then be...

AUSTIN: Mhm. Go ahead and erase Risks. If anybody has any Perils, which I don't think anybody does, those would stay, but otherwise we're good.

KEITH: [MUTTERING] Why do I keep Googling this?

AUSTIN: Does anybody have any questions on stuff that's going on, or want to talk about any of this other stuff that we've talked about here, that I just talked about with check-in, any questions about how the campaign is going, any thoughts or like, desires that—things we want to make sure we get on-screen that we haven't already talked about off-mic?

KEITH: Um, I have a quick sort of structural question about...

AUSTIN: Mhm.

KEITH: Millennium Break and our—and the larger stuff going on. I happened—I was listening to the first Phrygian and Kalar downtime from PALIS—or, from PARTIZAN—

AUSTIN: Mhm.

KEITH: And, god, there was such a funny scene in there where Valence had just died—

[DRE LAUGHS]

KEITH: And it was Thisbe trying to—[LAUGHING] explain to—

[JANINE CHUCKLES]

AUSTIN: Uh-huh.

KEITH: Thisbe trying to tell Broun that—

JANINE: “Operant Valence is died.”

ALI: Mhm.

AUSTIN: Uh-huh.

KEITH: “Is” died, yeah. It was “is died.”

AUSTIN: Uh-huh.

KEITH: You said—the immediate thing before you said “is died” was “I just need to deliver this straight.”

[GROUP LAUGHTER]

DRE: The first and last time on Friends at the Table.

KEITH: Oh my god, it was so funny.

JANINE: Mhm.

AUSTIN: Uh-huh, uh-huh.

KEITH: But the other thing that was happening in that downtime is—I don’t even remember the details exactly of why, but Gucci was really mad at us.

AUSTIN: Yeah, that sounds like her.

KEITH: For having gone, like, off-mission, and kind of saved the day, but it was not—it was off-mission, so Gucci was mad, and had like, taken away our ability to pick our own missions, essentially, was what happened. And because I’m having a—I just—basically I’m like, what is the situation between Millennium Break and whatever the sort of upper, you know, hierarchically in the rebellion here—

AUSTIN: The Cause here.

KEITH: What is going on?

AUSTIN: Yeah. I think you—frankly, you are being left out in the dark in terms of what goes on behind closed doors at this point.

KEITH: Okay.

AUSTIN: But, you know, from a storytelling perspective, what we've seen already is Gucci is not calling the shots in the way that she certainly seemed to be by the end of some of the Millennium Break stuff. It seems like there is an ongoing council being led by various members of the people here on Palisade, like August Righteousness, who's leading the group Jade Kill up in Joyous Guard, you can kind of see—are we on the map? I don't remember if we're on the map or not.

SYLVI: Yeah.

AUSTIN: I think we are. Up on the north here, this kind of green-ish one, that's the group of Delegates who kidnapped the Duke during the *Wagon Wheel* game. So like, he is a key leader of the Cause, along with representatives of Millennium Break like Gucci, along with members of basically all of the on-the-ground Palisade stuff. You know, there's probably someone from the Dim Liturgy, who we met in the last faction game that just happened, the conflict turn that just happened; there's probably someone from the kind of pirate faction that we haven't been introduced to yet onscreen, but we know it exists, which is called Car—what was it called—Carmine Cove or something like that, I forget what Jack named it, I'm double-checking here. Carmine Bight, B-I-G-H-T, that's what it is. Violet Cove is the other one.

And so that is—you know, those people are making decisions at the highest level, at this kind of strategic level, and then they're delegating down to people to make decisions at the more tactical level, which I think includes both, in some cases, someone like—the leaders of these individual factions, right? So like, you might get a mission from—communicated to you from Gucci, or communicated to you from August Righteousness in the future, we'll see, and then it'll be up to y'all as a group to figure out how to achieve that thing. You know?

KEITH: Yeah.

AUSTIN: And then below that, you can imagine that like, especially for the more straight-up military groups here, there's also further deep-down things. Right? You're a pretty small unit compared to some of these. Right?

KEITH: Right.

AUSTIN: So like, there is the—there's Grey Pond, which is a combination of Oxblood Clan, Company of the Spade, and Concrete Front people, people from the Shale Belt, who are rebellious, and those—there's probably, you know, thousands of those people. You know what I mean? And so you can imagine—

KEITH: Right, yeah, yeah, yeah. Yeah. There's like, big mining communities and—yeah.

AUSTIN: Exactly, exactly. And a lot of them are just literally living in the—there's this kind of system of caves called Sinder Karst, S-I-N-D-E-R K-A-R-S-T, to the north of the Shale Belt,

almost right up against the deserts of the Caldera Stretch where Joyous Guard is, and those people are like, literally doing the—I think I mentioned this last time, maybe it was in the faction game, but they're doing the like, the Sierra Madre, you know, Cuban revolution thing of like, they're just like in those fucking caves, and in those mountains, and they're being supported by people from local villages, and they are like, good fucking luck getting them out of there. You know? The Divine Crusade is this giant, you know, order scale mech that is made of like, this incredibly powerful and strong and also beautiful stained glass, but like, that's not built to go get people out of caves. [CHUCKLES] You know?

KEITH: Right.

[DRE CHUCKLES]

AUSTIN: And so, they're having a really hard—Nideo is having a hard time closing in there and getting them out. So that is like, an example of how that's going. Does that make sense in terms of the overall structure?

KEITH: Yeah. One sort of addend—quick, like, add-on to that, we're a much smaller group. We're almost like, in terms of size, insignificant compared to some of these other groups. But at this point, what is—within this sort of array of different factions, what is our reputation like?

AUSTIN: You are guerillas, right? You are the thing that—you will be picked—so I guess I should say this here. Cause has eight factions—no, six factions—in it, and everybody has a different type, a different like, kind of—I almost said genre of faction.

[SYLVI LAUGHS]

AUSTIN: But a sort of specialty, right?

KEITH: Yeah.

AUSTIN: And so, Grey Pond are suppliers. You know, what they're doing with those mines is they're mining shit. Right? And they're producing supplies, and they're getting stuff out into the world so that you can repair your stuff. You are guerillas, which means according to the game, you oppose with ambushes and scattered force, and you make other things vulnerable for other people. Right?

Case in point here, by the way, and I'll just kind of pivot a little bit into, like, kind of set-up stuff here, unless people have other big questions, but let me just say this one, which is—if you, over on the PALISADE sheets, spreadsheet, click on “Authority/Divisions,” you will see that the Diadem Grav Train now has 1 Grip on it. Your actions in the last session, briefly giving over control of the train system to the Cause, has allowed there to be this first point of Grip taken of the grav trains as the Cause kind of starts to figure out ‘alright, how would we take these over if we didn't have the Fundament node access? How's that system fundamentally work? How do we get in there?’ And then also just like, ‘hey, we did a heist. We did a bunch of train heists on the same day.’ That means the Grip is slipping away from the Bilateral Intercession, or from the grav trains held by the Bilateral Intercession.

So your—I think your reputation is positive. I mean, you're a bunch of weirdos—

KEITH: Right.

AUSTIN: But like, you're a bunch of weirdos who get shit done, and who open up the door for other people.

KEITH: They talk—people talk about us? These bigger groups are like, 'Millennium Break, blah-blah-blah, this is what they're up to.' Or are we just—

AUSTIN: I mean, I think one of the—the biggest thing for you, frankly, is you have a Tier 5 Carrier.

KEITH: [OVERLAPPING] Yeah. Yeah, we have a huge thing, yeah.

[DRE HUMS]

AUSTIN: You have the Blue Channel, which is part of why you get to be small. Right? Jade Kill does not have a Tier 5 Carrier.

KEITH: Maybe they have like, a bunch of Tier 4s.

AUSTIN: They have a bunch of Tier 3 Astirs.

KEITH: Tier 3?

AUSTIN: Or Altars.

KEITH: Okay. Right.

AUSTIN: They have a bunch of—maybe they have a cool Tier 4 something. You know? Maybe they have a giant Tier 4 cannon that helps keep, you know, people at bay from coming to get them, right?

KEITH: Right.

AUSTIN: And they also have—they're also like, they are the military type, they are the ones who oppose with direct force and assault, but they are not, like, I mean—

[20:02]

KEITH: But the Blue Channel is like, a big deal.

AUSTIN: The Blue Channel's kind of a big deal, yeah.

KEITH: Yeah.

[ALI SNICKERS]

AUSTIN: Now, do people know it's Tier 5 because it has Asepsis on it? I don't know. I don't know if people know that.

ALI: Probably not. [CHUCKLES]

AUSTIN: Probably not? Yeah, you're not—you're not—mm-mm. Okay. Good to know that. Good to know that.

KEITH: Doesn't it say on the side, it says 'The Blue Channel,' and then right under that, subtext, it says, 'The Home of Asepsis.'

[AUSTIN LAUGHS]

KEITH: In like little, like, down home script.

AUSTIN: Right, with like—with—

SYLVI: In smaller text it's like, 'you know that one Divine, the creepy cleaning one.'

[KEITH LAUGHS]

AUSTIN: [LAUGHS] It all has quotes around it, like it's the slogan.

KEITH: The quote, yeah, the quote—that subtext—the quote is underneath that in slightly smaller text, and it says 'you gotta be pure!' [LAUGHS]

[ALI LAUGHS]

AUSTIN: Uh-huh.

SYLVI: A different font for each of these.

DRE: A Tier 5 Carrier is not a home without a Divine.

[AUSTIN AND KEITH LAUGH]

AUSTIN: Which, okay, let me—let me—okay, let's—I mean, again, anybody else want to talk about check-in stuff, or do we want to—can I go into a sort of state of the board before we get into scenes?

SYLVI: That was what I was gonna ask, so. [CHUCKLES]

AUSTIN: Awesome. Perfect. So, let's start with things happening around the world and how you're hearing about them. Because my guess is we just recorded that faction game, people probably haven't had a chance to listen to a 4-hour faction game yet, it was really good, people should go listen to it, it was fantastic, there is some stuff in there that I think is like, top-shelf Friends at the Table. Jack delivers a speech that blew me the fuck away. Art had an incredible—debuted five incredible characters. Like, so good.

So, here's some high level things. Here's one that's like, very close to what y'all did. You have heard—I guess like, Cause spies or intelligence is reporting, that the Frontier Syndicate, the kind of third member of the Bilateral Intercession's occupation here, reports that Frontier is investigating the Fundament nodes now. They understand that this is a thing that exists, they

sent word back, there was a scene of a member of Rose River trying to stop word from getting out, but at the end of the day it got out about the idea that there are these things that are like, deep in the belly of the planet. Or maybe they're not all deep in the belly of the planet, right? Maybe they're Fundamental in a more metaphorical sense that lets you control huge parts of what the planet is and does, and so now they have a project, they kicked up a project called "Harvest the Fundamental Nodes," so that's a six-step project that they'll be working on.

The—another thing that happened is, hey, it seems like it is like, festival season on Palisade. People all over the planet have been like, doing, you know, harvest plays, or doing, you know, like—there's been a lot of like, community outreach happening from... somewhere? And what this represents is the deployment of a new plan from Stel Kesh. And specifically from the Paint Shop. You see this big—right in the middle of the planet basically—I guess the Temple of Threshold is kind of the middle of the planet, but northeast of that at Steeple Catterick, this big mountain, north of Greenfield, there's a place called the Paint Shop, which is sort of a like—[SEARCHING FOR WORDS] the front that it puts on is that it's sort of a bohemian artist's colony, or like—

[SYLVI SCOFFS]

AUSTIN: There's like a real, like, mid-20th century, actually, like, Fluxus, you know, Warholian workshop style of—or, not workshop, what's Warhol's thing called? The, um—it's not called the workshop. This is gonna kill me.

KEITH: Is it not called the workshop?

AUSTIN: Maybe it is. Maybe I'm right.

KEITH: You said 'workshop,' and I went like, that's totally right.

AUSTIN: Fuck. Maybe you're right. Maybe you're right. Anyway, you know what I'm talking about, right? The sort of like, you know, an artist's collective that gets just kind of, you know, everyone's collab—

SYLVI: Is it the Factory?

KEITH: The Factory, yeah.

AUSTIN: The Factory. Thank you, thank god. Thank you, the Factory. But really, that isn't—that is a front for the Bilateral Intelligence Service, which is the new renamed Curtain. And they've rolled out a project called—I believe it's called "Adagio in G."

SYLVI: Oh my god.

AUSTIN: I like, don't even want to tell you what it is, because Jack's pitch on it is so good, and if you haven't heard it yet, I don't want to spoil that, but I kind of have to, to give you the stakes, right?

KEITH: Sounds like Phrygian's cousin.

AUSTIN: It does. They're putting—they're trying to put Palisade on cycle. Does anyone remember what 'on cycle' means from Twilight Mirage?

KEITH: No?

SYLVI: No?

AUSTIN: The Principality of Kesh used to be on cycle. Everyone played a role all the time, and they did everything that was already scripted, for their whole lives, forever. And if you started to break from that, you would be inducted into the Rapid Evening and shipped off to the edge of the Principality where you could defend everybody interiorly being on cycle. This is what they—this is what—how the Rapid Evening and the Principality of Kesh worked in Twilight Mirage.

And the leader of the Bilateral Intercession—sorry, the Bilateral Intelligence Service here on Palisade, thinks it would be a cool idea if we got everybody on cycle. Playing a role, living by a script that they didn't even know they were living out. And so, they've begun to kind of pursue that in small ways. Partly by getting people to literally play roles in, again, things like local harvest plays and religious ceremonies, partly through bigger cultural product—projects like a collaboration with the Frontier Syndicate's sports events, so like, if you can get everybody to show up on Sunday in your team's colors, and they make that a key part of their lives, they will just start doing that every Sunday, and then they'll be on cycle. They'll be doing the thing that you want them to be doing every Sunday.

KEITH: Who is it that wants this? They sound weird.

[SYLVI LAUGHS]

AUSTIN: The Curtain. The modern version of the Curtain.

KEITH: Oh, the Curtain, oh, the Curtain, yeah, that makes sense. Okay.

AUSTIN: Yeah, uh-huh. The Bilateral Intelligence Service. They're not called the Curtain anymore, that was a very—the optics on that name just really shit the bed, you know? So.

SYLVI: It's the bis that are doing it?

AUSTIN: Uh-huh. That's right. They love to dress up in weird outfits and play parts, so that's us, baby. [CHUCKLES]

[SYLVI CHUCKLES]

AUSTIN: So that's going on. It's scary, it's a big weird project. They were being most directly countered by the weirdos at Violet Cove who are all—it's the Cult of Devotion people, and it's the Dim Liturgy, which are a bunch of people who are kind of—what if Nostradamus was basing all of his prophecies and predictions on the Divine Past/Crystal Palace's last big, you know, transmission, basically?

KEITH: So they're like, 'oh, we've got a different cycle that we like.'

AUSTIN: That is exactly right, yes. And I, again, those scenes are great, if y'all get time, you should go listen to that episode, because there are some really good—it's not even spy vs. spy shit, it is truly like, [CHUCKLING] fake prophet vs. fake prophet shit.

And then the last big thing worth shouting out here is—and it might be part of this, because one of the things that seems to have been prophesized was the arrival of—I don't remember the exact phrasing, but like, a woman on a white horse will show up. And in the middle of a sort of picnic—it's part picnic, part holding court, that big Divine I talked about before, the Divine Crusade, who is made of stained glass, and its Elect, the Elect Gentian, was holding court out in the Bontive Valley, the kind of, you know, bread belt of the planet, and, you know, was doing the sort of classic politic-ing and, you know, lots of banter between various members of that group, and in the middle of that happening a woman on a white horse seemed to emerge as if from nowhere flanked by a retinue. And that woman was a member of the Fabreal Duchy. And seems to, at least claims to be, a long-lost duchess named Constantina Malady.

[SYLVI SNICKERS]

AUSTIN: She is like, the sort of person who you—she's like a folk story. You know what I mean? Long-lost in that sense. Long-lost in the sense of like—I don't even have a—we don't have a modern vers—like, if Johnny Appleseed came back.

[SYLVI AND KEITH LAUGH]

AUSTIN: If he was like, 'oh yeah, I finished planting all those trees, I'm back now.'

SYLVI: It's like the, um—the like, people who claim to be like, descendents of the Russian, like, empire, before that fell.

AUSTIN: Mhm. Mhm. That's—yeah. Exactly.

JANINE: The fake Anastasia. Ana-whatever.

AUSTIN: The fake Anastasia. She's a—yes. This is exactly it. Yeah. A hundred percent. And she's like 'I'm here, I'm back to take over the throne.' Which is a big deal, because you might recall this, the Duke, the current duke, is being held captive.

KEITH: The kidnapped duke? Okay, yes.

AUSTIN: The kidnapped duke, yes, is being held by Joyous Guard and by the Reunion, by Jade Kill, up in Joyous Guard, which gives them a degree of political power. You know, the Fabreal Duchy and the Bilateral Intercession have kind of written that guy off anyway, but he's still a hostage. Right? He's still someone that like, they would want back. The Fabreal Duchy would like the Duke back, please.

[30:00]

[CHUCKLES] But now there's this new one who showed up and claimed to be the actual duchess, the duchess of legend, of yore and lore, and so maybe they don't need this duke

anymore. And so that happened, also.

KEITH: Who made this prediction that a woman in white would show up?

AUSTIN: Either and/or both the final predictions of the Divine Past, aka Crystal Palace, and/or the people at the Paint Shop, the people at the Bilateral Intelligence Service, who—

KEITH: Oh. Right. I was just thinking of how easy would it be to just say ‘hey, a woman in a white horse is gonna show up,’ and then just get your own woman in a white horse—I mean, it’s not that hard to find a white horse.

AUSTIN: It’s not that hard. And this is the damn thing, isn’t it? So, you know? And suddenly the prediction seemed to be true, and that starts to make people make some decisions.

KEITH: Yeah.

AUSTIN: As part of all of what I said, and this is I think the last thing I have in terms of catch-up, you’ll note on the Cause screen that Violet Cove and Rose River are both tapped. That means that they have been used, and it means that they cannot defend—they can’t, like, do any big actions until they’re untapped. There are a couple of ways to get someone untapped. You know, as always, the fiction is if you do it, you do it, so if you said, ‘hey, screw this next mission we’re being sent on, we’re actually gonna go help Violet Cove get back on their feet. We’re gonna go help Rose River with some new supplies, and to help them, you know, get prepped for whatever their next mission is,’ that would happen, we would play that out as a regular mission or whatever, and we would untap that.

But there are other ways, right? One is that Grey Pond can do that in a conflict turn—they did not get to do that, otherwise those two factions might be untapped at this point—or you can use downtime, certain downtime moves, to help tapped factions. You can be like, ‘hey, I’m gonna use my downtime move to go—’ or ‘I’m gonna use a token,’ is actually what it is— ‘to help this faction get back on its feet.’ And I forget which one that is specifically, but it’s in there somewhere. I’ll do a search after and find it.

So that’s the high level. That’s all the stuff that’s been happening. And I guess more zoomed in on y’all, when we—where we left off at the very end, y’all had been—you’d finished turning the trains into—towards these ambushes, and you had been witness to the arrival of someone who is openly using the name, now, Partial Palisade, who seems to be some part of the Divine Palisade who makes up the body of the planet, or who made the body of the planet 5,000 years ago. Or, longer than that, sorry, because it would have been—it would have been much, much, much longer than that, right? Because it would have been when the—it would have been, I want to say 6,000 years ago, I forget what I said last time. Before the Twilight Mirage existed. Predating the Twilight Mirage, actually. So. So, yeah.

The other big thing at the end of the last session is you took on some of the people from that Twill village. Gucci asked you to bring some of those folks on board. Not Gucci’s decision, that came down from someone Gucci talked to who you could not hear, who is like, ‘hey, yeah, also, the people who are forced down into the Diadem, can we get them out and help place them

other places?’ That was kind of a request. And so in some ways, you can use that as a—so, first of all, they’re on-board. Brnine, I believe you left them in the cargo hold?

ALI: Wh—where do you put people in this ship? You keep—[LAUGHS] You keep asking like that’s a bad thing.

[AUSTIN LAUGHS]

ALI: And you just—it’s just efficiency.

AUSTIN: Uh-huh. Yeah. Okay.

DRE: It’s better than like, the brig.

JANINE: You either put people in the cargo hold or you put them in Phrygian, there’s nothing in between.

[ALI AND AUSTIN LAUGH]

DRE: Oh, dear.

ALI: Yeah, Phrygian, you got a school gym you can turn into for these people to hang out in? [CHUCKLES]

AUSTIN: Oh, god. You got some cots to become?

KEITH: [RELUCTANT] Eh...

[ALI AND SYLVI LAUGH]

KEITH: I mean...

AUSTIN: Phrygian said ‘nah, actually.’ So, my point being—

KEITH: Can’t they just use the cargo hold?

ALI: It’s—you know?

AUSTIN: My point being, there’s a—this is a group of people. There’s probably 30 or 40 people who are in your cargo hold, then. They are—most of them left the shitty ad hoc village that they built at the bottom of the Diadem after being forced there by the Frontier Syndicate, because they don’t want to live there. They want to live places where they can see the sun all day without relying on a poorly-made collection of lenses and mirrors. And they don’t necessarily know where they would like to live, because the place that they live, the place that is their home is now, again, Frontier Syndicate territory, it’s Greenfield, it’s this big beautiful open plain that Frontier Syndicate took over to turn into a bunch of start-up campuses, is basically what they turned them into.

But for now, a number of them are being placed—you know, wherever there is space, wherever there is Cause-allied territory to take them in, and that means that you can kind of bounce

around the map here as you want to, with us kind of hand-waiving the idea that the Blue Channel is flying high, you know, out of range of—you know, moving around the radar or whatever of the Principality during this downtime, trying to get to, you know, go along safe routes, to help drop people off in various places.

I will say that there is—some of them are being left off near the Crown of Glass, near Clementine Kesh, the Witch in Glass's home, because that's where the most territory is that is outside of the control of the Cause, but she is not explicitly—she is an ally, but she's not a member of the Cause. Right? We've talked about this. She's letting, for instance, the Figure in Bismuth work with you directly, but y'all are not—she is not—she is not listening to the—when Gucci calls her and says 'hey, we need you to do blank,' you know how Clementine Kesh responds to a call like that. You know? Which is to say, 'I decide what I do.' And then probably doing it anyway, and then just kind of taking credit as if it were her idea to begin with. So you can kind of be anywhere here. I've moved your little blue token, your Blue Channel token—

DRE: Ooh.

AUSTIN: —back to just the Blue Channel on the compass, on the legend of the map, so that can kind of move around. Right? But again, you drop some people off at the Crown of Glass, and in fact, I suspect there's some other scenes there. And I will say there is probably one other big event that's going to happen here at some point, and I'll just—I think I'm just gonna save it for later. Maybe after we get our scenes in. Because it'll help frame some of what's happening next. Though I guess that's a question, right? How much do you know about what's happening next so that you can make scenes around it? Let's—can we talk about what these scenes are at a high level, what your options are, and then we'll—and then maybe we'll talk about it?

DRE: Yeah.

AUSTIN: Alright. So there are one, two, three, four, five, six types of scene, of downtime scene, that you can do, and then there is a thing that you do at the very end called Plan and Prepare, that is about rolling some dice to see—to see how well the next mission starts off. Sort of like an engagement roll for that next mission.

The six ones that you can do during downtime are Command Deck or Briefing Room, which is the player who leads that gets to add a bonus die to that Plan and Prepare roll, and they frame a scene around that while other people can either aid in that by spending their tokens, they can heal other factions by explaining how they helped other factions—they can untap, I said heal—they can untap other factions, they can learn something interesting about the upcoming mission, or they can—they can volunteer to roll, in the future, the Lead a Sortie roll, which again is sort of the, like, real engagement roll that we'll do at the beginning of the next session. And you'll take Confidence when you do that.

There are Social Space or Private Quarters rolls, which is 'hey, I want to hang out with somebody and help them out.' They will—you can clear a Peril of emotional or social origin with them, and you can advance a Gravity Clock with them and have a scene, right, you're talking to people, and then anybody who wants to during that scene can spend a token to again clear

someone's Peril the same way, to give someone—[CHUCKLES] it literally says “encourage or demoralize” someone, giving their first move during the upcoming Sortie advantage or disadvantage, you can spend time with somebody, advancing your Gravity Clock, or you could rewrite a Hook or press someone else to do the same.

There is Fade, the third type, which is spending time with someone either on the Carrier or nearby, getting a point of Spotlight, which gets you closer to a level up, as a reminder, or an advancement, and advancing a Gravity Clock with someone, and you can spend a token to do the same thing, if you're not in the scene, or if you want to do it twice, maybe, in the same scene.

There is Infirmary or Hangar, which you can guess. That's a scene about clearing mechanical or physical Perils from your character, or your Altar, and again, you can spend tokens to both do that, and to advance Gravity Clocks, and to work on long-term projects by using what's in the Infirmary or the Hangar, [CHUCKLES] or you can discard the rest of your downtime stuff and just rush into a Sortie. We technically would still play out downtime, but we would—

[40:27]

DRE: Right.

AUSTIN: You basically get to roll Lead a Sortie with Defy instead of what you normally roll it with, and you take advantage by being very headstrong. You know, this is like the ace pilot saying ‘screw this, I'm doing it myself,’ and like, rushing off in front of everybody else.

There are Hallways or Listening Post scenes, which are sort of like eavesdropping scenes. You can start or advance a long-term project, or take advantage on the next Sortie based on what you've overheard, and other players or, again, yourself, you can spend a token to get that bonus, or to improve your Plan and Prepare roll, or to have a heated conversation with someone you have Gravity with, advancing that clock, or to barge in on what was overheard, causing trouble for someone involved.

[DRE CHUCKLES]

AUSTIN: And then finally, there's Somewhere Nearby, which is ‘hey, we gotta get some stuff.’ You roll a d4 to see what resources you can muster up, and you get gear or equipment with the total value of that result, and you can spend tokens to increase that result. So like, y'all who've had to make weapons and Altars and stuff in the system, know that there's like a tag trade system where like, tags cost one or two points, and then—or they give you one or two points, ‘cause they're negative. You can kind of roll dice to get some tag expenditures for temporary one-use, you know, one-mission items, basically. So if you're like, ‘we really need, like, a super-shield, so that we can like, withstand the incoming artillery fire,’ you could use Somewhere Nearby to do that, for instance. And again, Gravity Clocks, long-term projects happen there, and then also, my favourite thing here is “you can spend a token to run into trouble. Resolve it with moves as usual, and see what you learn.” So that's kind of just a catch-all ‘I really want to go do some shit and find out something.’

[DRE CHUCKLES]

AUSTIN: So those are the six big ones. And then again, at the very end of that, we will do Plan and Prepare, which is “when you review orders for the next Sortie, you’ll go over scouting reports and maps, or otherwise attempt to prepare the crew for what comes next. You are trying to Plan and Prepare. You roll 2d6 plus any extra dice earned during downtime scenes, and compare the results to the strength of the division that your next Sortie will target.”

Divisions have either 3 or 5 Strength, and you will need to roll a 6 to beat a 5 Strength, or a 4 to beat a 3 Strength division, and when you—for every result that’s above that, and we’ll go over this again at the time because this is not the way a normal roll works. This is more like a *Blades in the Dark* roll than a traditional 2d6 plus stat roll. This is you’re building a dice pool. So for instance, if you did Command Deck, you would add a d6, and so you’d roll 3d6 when it’s time to Plan and Prepare. Right?

[DRE HUMS]

AUSTIN: So it’s a little bit different than a traditional, like, *Powered by the Apocalypse*, 2d6 plus stat roll. And then for each success you get there, you get one of these awesome bonuses, like, you will have an opportunity to untap a faction during the Sortie. You will have a risky opportunity to fell a pillar with zero Grip during the Sortie. You will have a risky opportunity to secure an outcome from a faction, like getting one of their little bonuses, in the middle of the Sortie, et cetera. So. Again, we can talk about that when we get there. But those are the six big things. I think we should just jump into scenes, and I can sit on the stuff for—the next mission stuff, until we get to Plan and Prepare, which feels kind of like the right moment for it.

So, all that set up done, where do we want to start? And I think when we start, we should go over whoever picks their—whoever goes first, we should go over your Hooks and stuff, so that we’re all on the same page. Who wants to kick things off? What’s the first downtime scene we get?

JANINE: I have one.

AUSTIN: Sure. Thisbe. Can we talk about—what are your current Gravity Clocks and Hooks?

JANINE: Yeah, so, my current Gravity Clocks, “Brnine is like everyone else. They are not a uniquely privileged operant.” That is my one Gravity Clock right now.

AUSTIN: Mhm. And that’s at +1, that hasn’t changed at this point, so.

JANINE: Yeah. And my Hooks are “my presence is a liability to my operants,” “I must strive at all times to demonstrate my utility,” and “fighting is not my purpose, but there’s nowhere else for me until the fighting is over.”

AUSTIN: Great.

JANINE: So—[CHUCKLES]. The thing that I want to do for my scene is, I think Thisbe is in the cargo bay, like, taking care of people. And like, to be blunt about it, I think it absolutely has

something to do with the fact that they're like, plant-adjacent people. And like, the, you know, it's—I don't think she thinks of it as like 'I am tending crops,' but I think there is definitely something of like, 'well, I understand how to help them a little more than understanding how to help—' like, it's a little easier for her to understand what they need.

AUSTIN: Mhm.

JANINE: Or a little—not even—you know, 'cause I think she has a decent understanding of people at this point, but I think there's like, a confidence in understanding.

AUSTIN: Yeah.

JANINE: Where like, she understands, like, 'oh yes, they want sunlight, they want to spread out, they want—' you know, like, these are things that she can really concretely understand. So, yeah, I think what's happening is she's basically like, hanging out in the cargo bay, just like, seeing what people need, like making sure, you know, they have someone to go to.

AUSTIN: This actually, to me, sounds—yeah. This sounds, to me, like you're starting a Gravity Clock with this group of people, which is—which, also, it also feels like Social Space, which is “the leading player talks it out with another player and clears a Peril of emotional or social origin from them, or they spend time with someone they have a Gravity Clock with, advancing it. They frame a short scene around this either alone or with invited characters.” And I think this is—I think you can—based on what you were saying just there, this feels like a Gravity Clock with the Twill, as a people, and not just—

JANINE: I wanted a point of Spotlight, though.

AUSTIN: Oh, okay. So this is Fade. I see what you're doing. Yes, yes, yes.

JANINE: Yeah. [CHUCKLES]

AUSTIN: Okay. I think that's fine. That's “the leading player describes somewhere on the Carrier or nearby that they pass time, gaining a point of Spotlight and advancing a Gravity Clock if they have one with someone that joins them.” So you could still do both of those things, if you'd like.

JANINE: Okay.

AUSTIN: “They frame a short scene around this, either alone or with invited characters.” I want to give you a little bit of something here, which is like—one of the things that I think you pick up is that the two people who you, you know, encountered trying to resurrect Palisade himself, Kriminel Kollage, and then Veston Vicinity, whose name I don't think I gave you, V-E-S-T-O-N V-I-C-I-N-I-T-Y, and Palisade himself, they all seem a little—ostracized is probably too strong. You get the impression, and maybe overhear some things, that make it clear that this was a wild idea that Kriminel had, and not necessarily a thing the whole community was excited by, the idea of resurrecting Palisade. Not that they're being mean to them, but it's like, 'alright, we have this on our plates now, too.'

Thisbe, I think the specific thing was very much like—that was a folktale. The idea that we could

bring the planet back to life was a folktale, not a real thing. You know, this was not a sort of group that had a sort of like resurrection myth, necessarily, it was a story—it was a story and not a belief. Right? If that makes sense. So there are folktales, but that folktale is not the same thing as like a tightly-held—the tightly-held beliefs of these people are about things like care and bringing in people who need help, and sharing the things that you have, both literal and metaphorical, and metaphysical.

Another thing worth saying here is the thing that unites all of these people is the interesting moss and the photosynthetic aspects of who they are, but there's a huge range of what they look like otherwise. There are people who, like Kriminel Kollage, have close relations to the Qui Err in Twilight Mirage, but inside of just this small group of a few dozen of them, there are also synthetic people who have the moss growing on them, there are people here who look more like—there's like a Talonite, like, Kalar, or Kitcha Kanna, there are all sorts of other people who the thing that's unified them is this connection to this moss stuff. And then their broader belief of bringing people in, and, you know. Communal care, and stuff like that.

I think it's probably also worth quickly saying that like, from a bird's eye view, like ideologically, you know—I keep talking about the Twill being like, 'they bring people in, they bring people in,' and that's part of what they believe, but like, that's not—you don't just bring people in on a random afternoon, you know what I mean? You have to live a different way. You have to live a way.

And so for them, I'd say that like, the thing that comes across, and maybe you pick this up just as you're bringing them from place to place, I think of them a lot in conversation with or, you know, using elements of the slow movement, the kind of cultural slow movement, which, I don't know if you know that stuff.

[50 : 22]

The high level on that is just like, 'hey, let's stop rushing to do things, let's stop trying to be as efficient as possible, as productive as possible, in every little thing that we do.' You know, maybe there's still a task that, you know, you still need to feed people, and so we better make sure we get the harvest in in time, that's I think still generally fine, you find the right amount of time for a thing, but what you're not trying to do is like, emphasize speed in the creation of everything, and then also kind of in a cultural mode where like, 'hey, I'm not chasing fashion trends week to week or month to month or even year to year, I'm making stuff that will last for a long time. I'm sticking with that stuff.'

In education—you know, there's an entire philosophical thing called slow thought, which I've only hit from the angle, because now there are people who do like, Deleuzian and Derridian stuff that is like, 'oh, slow thought has some overlap with this, with my stuff, let's look at that.' And you know, slow thought is exactly what it sounds like, where it's like, 'hey, what if, you know, you create time for yourself to work through stuff? What if you create time before you make a claim about something and instead get yourself to a place where you can be playful with the concept? And like—and not rush to a conclusion?' And all this stuff, of course, runs in the face of capitalism, it runs in the face of a million other things—I mean, part of this, it's worth saying, is

like, I think ecologically and agriculturally, they have a lot of perma-culture practices, they have lots of like, biological reciprocity and sustainability and, you know, not trying to, like—they're not churning out crops for economic reasons, they're creating systems that function, and trying to fix those systems.

This is gonna be one of those things where I'm just gonna like, do a little bit of exposition really quick, because it's worth saying this about them, and I don't know that it will ever show up, but like, that's not a thing they were great about at first. That's a thing that they did learn when some Qui Err came here, you know, 5,000 years ago. They showed up and like, helped figure out some of the perma-culture stuff, you know, maybe they already had some of the cool moss stuff that they were doing, but like, the kind of broader sociological, or sorry, ecological stuff that we know the Qui Err had some expertise in, they brought that, that was like a really simple illustration of like, 'hey, what did the Twill learn by bringing this group in, by collaborating with this group, by finding a way to integrate those groups together?' And, you know, again, like, this is about these groups actually, truly, integrating, and not the Qui Err showing up and being like, 'this is our space now,' or even 'hey, you have to let us in,' so much as like, neighbors become family. Right? Over time, inside of the right circumstances, and thankfully, the Twill, their whole thing as part of their slow movement stuff is about kind of creating the right circumstances.

Of course, [CHUCKLING] that doesn't help when Exanceaster March shows up with guns and demands the land that you're on. There are limits to what that can bring you, and one of those limits is sometimes you run into imperialists, and you need answers for that. Right? So. Anyway. Do you want a deeper conversation, is this something you strike up with people, or is this kind of just a snapshot of Thisbe in your mind?

JANINE: Um... To be honest, I don't know that Thisbe would really seek out conversation beyond, like, 'is there anything you need?' Like, you know.

AUSTIN: Right.

JANINE: Or if someone looks like they're lost, or like, needs someone approaching them and being like, 'hey, I'm here if you need things,' like, it is, in my head, just like a very sort of broad image of Thisbe being like, attentive, and sort of like, nurturing.

AUSTIN: Mhm.

JANINE: But mostly just like, making her presence useful to this group.

AUSTIN: Yeah. This makes sense to me. Cool. And I think that that's like—you know, I think that they're happy to have someone down here, you know, getting them—making sure that they're comfortable, giving them drinks, et cetera. As you—you know, we don't need to be specific on all of this, but like, as you drop some of them off up at Joyous Guard for instance, you know, one of them gives you a big hug.

JANINE: Aww.

AUSTIN: You know? One of them says that, you know, she's gonna write you letters. You know?

So like, they very much are happy to have had this personal touch. Awesome. Alright. While we're here, does anybody else want to do the thing that you can do during this scene, which I believe is the same thing, right?

[DRE AND KEITH LAUGH]

AUSTIN: "Pass time—" yeah, "pass time as above" is the one thing that you can spend tokens to do during a Fade scene. Which again, would advance a Spotlight, or give you a point of Spotlight and advance a Gravity Clock if you have one with someone that joins you.

KEITH: I like the idea of advancing a Spotlight. I also like the idea of the Twill.

AUSTIN: Mhm.

[DRE HUMS]

AUSTIN: As a reminder, everybody gets two tokens. So make sure that you keep track—

KEITH: Not quite everybody. One of us gets three.

AUSTIN: Ah.

DRE: Oh, is that you?

JANINE: I get three if my robot's fucked up. But only if my robot's fucked up.

DRE: Oh.

AUSTIN: You get three *if* your robot is fucked up?

JANINE: I get a third that I can only spend on repairs for Mow.

AUSTIN: Got you. Got you. That makes sense.

DRE: Ah, okay.

KEITH: Oh, okay.

DRE: That's cool, though.

AUSTIN: That is cool.

KEITH: The Miscreated playbook has the B-Plot bonuses.

AUSTIN: Right.

KEITH: And one of those bonuses, which I took, is +1 downtime token. So I have three.

AUSTIN: There you go. So you have three. And then also a thing worth saying is, I believe, Coriolis, you get a bonus downtime scene altogether.

SYLVI: Yeah. If I want to do my little youth group pastor vibes.

AUSTIN: Uh-huh.

[JANINE CHUCKLES]

SYLVI: 'Cause it has to be like, proselytizing, basically, in some way.

AUSTIN: Yeah, well—yeah, yeah, it—

SYLVI: Well, it's—I guess it's a little vaguer than that. It is, like—

AUSTIN: It is.

SYLVI: —discussing the spiritual well-being of people, or just like, just talks about faith, shit like that.

AUSTIN: Yeah, it's "as you discuss your faith with another or give religious service of some kind."

[DRE CHUCKLES]

SYLVI: Yeah.

AUSTIN: "You may perform an extra Social Space or Private Quarters move," which, again, is useful, because again, that clears emotional or social Perils, or it advances a Gravity Clock, or Gravity with somebody, and produces another opportunity for people to spend tokens, including yourself, on other stuff as listed.

SYLVI: I will say, I don't have any Gravity Clocks with anybody.

AUSTIN: You should get some.

SYLVI: I should do that.

AUSTIN: Anybody can declare Gravity Clocks whenever they want.

SYLVI: Okay.

AUSTIN: They're just a way of saying 'hey, I'm interested in having a relationship with somebody,' and it can be with—Gravity can be with a player character, an NPC, a group of people, a faction. So, for instance, we—I mean, you kind of already have one in a sense, with Devotion, because of your tenets, and like, that already tracks that a little bit, but if you, for instance, wanted a separate one for the Devotees, or the Cult of Devotion specifically, I think that that would be a good one. You know what I mean?

SYLVI: Yeah.

AUSTIN: For instance. And also, at some point today, I really want to talk to you about what it feels like when you reach out to Devotion, because we kind of did an out-of-character touch on

it where I sort of chided you into killing someone.

SYLVI: That's true.

AUSTIN: But we didn't talk about what that felt like for Cori. Do you know what I mean?

SYLVI: Yeah.

AUSTIN: Like, what's it feel like when Devotion puts pressure on you, et cetera? We can answer that now, but really quick, I want to make sure, are we—Thisbe, were you good with that being the end of that sequence, and anybody else—

JANINE: Yeah.

AUSTIN: Does anybody else want to jump in on this Fade sequence to spend a token? And if not, we can keep moving.

KEITH: I am gonna do it.

AUSTIN: Okay.

KEITH: I'm gonna go and hang out with the Twill and with Thisbe.

AUSTIN: Okay. What's that look like? For Phrygian. How's Phrygian help out? I'm assuming a lot of how Thisbe helps out because we've seen Thisbe in kind of service roles and aid and care roles in the past across various things, but I'm curious for Phrygian.

KEITH: Yeah. Well, so, first, I do have a quick question—I know that Thisbe was gone for a while, and we talked about it last session, but how long has it been since Thisbe's been back?

ALI: So, if I said that the Blue Channel got stationed on Palisade six months ago—

AUSTIN: Mhm.

ALI: And it's been five years since PARTIZAN, probably six months ago.

KEITH: Okay. So, I've essentially, of the six years that I've—that Phrygian has been associated with Millennium Break, I've spent one of those, book-ended, six months each, with Thisbe.

[1:00:00]

So not a stranger, obviously. But like, you know. I kind of imagine that Phrygian's been around this whole time for everyone else that's been around the whole time. But I don't feel like that means that I would be like 'oh, Thisbe is a stranger to me.'

So, ignoring that, Phrygian is definitely, like, um... kind of, um—can come across, anyway, as cold in like a different way than Thisbe sometimes can, where I think Thisbe is like enthusiastic about, like, finding something familiar that she can help out with that isn't fighting. I think Phrygian is more curious about the Twill, who they are, what they've been doing underground, why they were underground, what their sort of general vibe is, and maybe also sort of including

Thisbe in that, like why—being like, ‘oh, Thisbe seems enthusiastic, maybe, about this, in a way that I am unfamiliar with.’ Maybe also curious about that. So I think like, Phrygian is helpful and curious.

AUSTIN: Yeah. I love that. To me, that sounds like we should have that conversation a little bit with Thisbe and Phrygian, unless y’all are happy to leave it in the abstract and just kind of summarize some points. But.

JANINE: I do feel like we’re kind of overdue.

AUSTIN: Yeah, let’s have ‘em.

JANINE: There hasn’t really been a lot of like, conversation there, and also, like, I think Thisbe is probably one of the few people who is absolutely indifferent to Phrygian’s whole vibe.

KEITH: True, yeah. Yeah.

[DRE HUMS]

JANINE: Is just like, you are what you are, you know?

KEITH: Yeah. Part of that is also, I think, the sort of—the indifference that Thisbe seems to have for a lot of, like, you know, people stuff, if that’s—maybe that’s—

JANINE: Yeah. She doesn’t, like, usually seek stuff out. I think, which is probably why stuff the Twill is—stands out, because she’s willing to make the first move there, whereas normally she’s a little more reactive.

KEITH: Yeah. I mean, evidenced in we were going over the Gravity Clocks and the, like—I mean, one of the biggest burns I can imagine coming from Thisbe is saying that Brnine is like everyone else. [CHUCKLES] From someone else that might not be such a burn.

JANINE: Yeah.

AUSTIN: Let’s—here’s a way in here, I think, is just like, a Twill comes over to you who is mostly synthetic—not Columnar synthetic, pre-Columnar, you know, Twilight Mirage synthetic—comes over and is like:

AUSTIN (as TWILL REFUGEE): Hey, I’m sorry to bother you, but the water filter on the thing you set up, it’s clogged again. Could one of you come help us? We don’t wanna break it, you know? And we’re kind of worried if we try to fix it ourselves, we could break it.

KEITH (as PHRYGIAN): Thisbe, can you drain?

JANINE (as THISBE): What?

[DRE LAUGHS]

KEITH (as PHRYGIAN): I can drain.

JANINE (as THISBE): What do you mean drain?

KEITH (as PHRYGIAN): You know, unclog.

JANINE (as THISBE): If necessary.

KEITH: I look at the—do they have a name, Austin?

AUSTIN: This is Sprox, S-P-R-O-X.

KEITH: Sprox?

AUSTIN: Yeah.

KEITH: I look at Sprox like, you know—

KEITH (as PHRYGIAN): Sprox, say if it's necessary.

AUSTIN (as SPROX): Necessary for us to have water?

JANINE (as THISBE): If it's clogged. Is it clogged or is it broken?

AUSTIN (as SPROX): I don't—it's—I don't know.

KEITH (as PHRYGIAN): Yeah, okay, let's go fix it.

KEITH: I take out an arm, but it's like a drain snake.

AUSTIN: Oh, sure.

KEITH: It *was* an arm. Normally it's an arm. And it's sort of spinning in a way as to be like, 'this is how I'm going to do this.'

AUSTIN: You know, those are rolls here, right? So you tell me, how's it go? What's going on with this busted water filter?

KEITH: What's it made out of?

AUSTIN: [HUMS CADENCE OF "I DON'T KNOW"]

KEITH: Okay.

AUSTIN: Brnine, what's the water filter made out of on your ship?

ALI: You know, stuff. [CHUCKLES]

AUSTIN: Yeah, it's made out of stuff.

KEITH: Okay.

[SYLVI LAUGHS]

KEITH: Well, it's loud then. Yeah, okay, it's loud, but it works. Yeah, it—you know, I pull it out, but it's a gunk of—it's a clump of gunk.

AUSTIN: Oh, it's all—yeah, it's all gunk.

KEITH: It's hair...

[DRE GROANS]

ALI: Leaves.

JANINE: What—why—

KEITH: Plant—maybe some Twill plants got in there.

DRE: [OVERLAPPING] Leaves, yeah.

KEITH: Maybe it's dirt and, I don't know, high pollen count on Palisade.

JANINE: You can just say the filter's clogged, that's—[CHUCKLES]

[ALI LAUGHS]

AUSTIN: Keith's going gross-o mode this season.

DRE: Yeah.

KEITH: What do you mean?

JANINE: Why would there be hair in it? Why is the water full of hair?

ALI: Because there's more people than usual.

KEITH: That's—

SYLVI: I mean...

KEITH: That's what happens every time you clean a drain, it's full of hair.

JANINE: [OVERLAPPING] That's not what a water filter—but it's not a drain, a water filter's not a drain, it's the opposite of a drain.

[ALI LAUGHS]

AUSTIN: I think this is—yeah, I think there's been a confusion about what I mean when I say “water filter.”

KEITH: So you're saying you're putting tap water into a filter.

AUSTIN: We're saying that there is a filter before it hits the tap. We're saying—

DRE: [OVERLAPPING] It's like a Brita filter.

JANINE: [OVERLAPPING] Yeah, like you load up a bunch of water from a lake, and then you have filters—

AUSTIN: Right.

KEITH: From a lake.

JANINE: And then you have filters to like, make sure it's drinkable, it's potable.

AUSTIN: Right.

KEITH: I know that anytime there's a water filter—

AUSTIN: Uh-huh.

KEITH: It's full of hair. I know this.

[ALI LAUGHS]

DRE: That is true, you're not wrong.

JANINE: No!

[KEITH LAUGHS]

JANINE: He is wrong!

AUSTIN: He's wrong on this one.

DRE: I don't know.

JANINE: When is your Brita full of hair?

KEITH: But that's different—this—you said this came from a lake! [CHUCKLES]

JANINE: When is your lake full of hair?

AUSTIN: [OVERLAPPING] Whose hair is in the lake?

KEITH: Houghton's Pond's full of hair.

JANINE: What?

AUSTIN: What?

DRE: Yeah, I guess, Keith, you're thinking of a drain as opposed to a filter.

AUSTIN: Yes.

DRE: I think is what's happening here, maybe.

JANINE: Yeah.

KEITH: Okay, then it's full of like, ducks and fish.

ALI: What?

[DRE AND JANINE LAUGH]

SYLVI: Oh, there's a fish in the percolator.

JANINE: Oh my god. [CHUCKLES] I just—

[ALI CHUCKLES]

KEITH: I asked for specifics about the drain, and about the filter, and no one gave them. So, I decided what it is—

AUSTIN: Well, we thought we were all on the same basic page!

KEITH: If we've got a big hose that's going into a lake to suck up a reservoir of water that then goes through a filter—

JANINE: Hang on, look, I can—

KEITH: It's got ducks and fish in it.

JANINE: No, listen, okay, I'm gonna link you to a water filter.

AUSTIN: Uh-huh.

JANINE: For you to look at. [CHUCKLES]

[ALI CHUCKLES]

JANINE: I'm gonna put it in Palisade.

AUSTIN: That's the name of our chat where we talk about—

JANINE: I'm not heated about this because my dad used to sell water stuff. It's unrelated.
[CHUCKLES]

AUSTIN: Oh, it's unrelated. Uh-huh.

JANINE: So this is one of those water filter drinking straws where you have—you'll have two filters.

KEITH: Yeah.

JANINE: You'll have a filter for large particles, which would be like sand and stuff. And then you have a filter for smaller things, like germs and whatever.

AUSTIN: So where do the ducks go?

KEITH: Well, okay, so—

JANINE: [OVERLAPPING] The ducks aren't even—wouldn't even come in. There's—

KEITH: So this is—this is—

DRE: [OVERLAPPING] That's a large particle.

JANINE: [OVERLAPPING] Ducks are large particles, they're—

AUSTIN: The filter would have stopped—you're saying that an earlier filter would have stopped the ducks from entering.

JANINE: [OVERLAPPING] I imagine there would be—I imagine much like, you know, when you have like a fire—like a firefighting plane or whatever, there is probably some sort of thing that keeps you from like, sucking up a shark or whatever, right, like?

AUSTIN: Mhm.

[DRE HUMS]

JANINE: Probably? I guess smaller fish wouldn't make it out, like—

DRE: Can I make—can I make a proposal here that might fix things for us? Maybe it's not that you have to unclog the filter, you have to change it.

JANINE: Yeah. That makes sense to me.

AUSTIN: This is why I was leaving it really open. I was like, the filter doesn't seem like it's working, we can't get water out, et cetera.

[JANINE CHUCKLES]

AUSTIN: Really? And also, really, this was just an opportunity to let Phrygian and Thisbe talk to one another—

[JANINE AND ALI LAUGH]

AUSTIN: —while they're doing a little background task, while we play the tinker animation.

JANINE: I'm sorry. I just couldn't—I could not let that lie. [CHUCKLES] It was just—

AUSTIN: No, no, no, no, no, no, I'm—no, it's fine. I'm just saying.

JANINE: [CHUCKLING] It was like, deep, on my part, a problem.

AUSTIN: [OVERLAPPING] The part of this I want to—

DRE: [OVERLAPPING] [CHUCKLING] Now they're arguing about whether a duck is stuck in it or not.

AUSTIN: The part of this I want to zoom in on is the [CHUCKLING] Thisbe and Phrygian getting to chat with each other while they do a little task.

JANINE: Okay.

KEITH: Look, in order to get enough water for a ship...

JANINE: You're gonna have to suck up a few ducks.

DRE: [OVERLAPPING] You gotta break a few ducks.

KEITH: You just gotta be a little bit more indiscriminate than a str—than a river straw.

[DRE CHUCKLES]

JANINE: [OVERLAPPING] You're gonna have to suck the ducks.

SYLVI: Excuse me?

[KEITH LAUGHS]

ALI: We gotta—[CHUCKLES]

AUSTIN: We gotta keep moving. Alright, so it sounds like we're gonna go with abstract with this scene and not really zoom in anymore.

[DRE AND ALI LAUGH]

AUSTIN: We're not. What do you all talk about while you're trying to repair this filter?

JANINE: Uh...

AUSTIN: And Sprox is here too, watching. Sprox is like:

AUSTIN (as SPROX): I'll try to figure out how to do this so we don't have to bother you next time and we can just handle it ourselves.

[DEVICE BEEPING IN BACKGROUND]

KEITH: Oh my god. Shut up. Sorry. I'm—talking to the beeping. [LAUGHS]

[GROUP LAUGHTER]

DRE: Yeah, Sprox. Shut up.

AUSTIN: [OVERLAPPING] Damn. Shut the fuck up, Sprox.

DRE: [OVERLAPPING] Shut up, Sprox. Get outta here.

KEITH: Can you hear the beeps, or did I say 'shut up' to nothing?

JANINE: I heard the beeps.

AUSTIN: [OVERLAPPING] You said shut up to Sprox. This poor tool.

JANINE: No, no, no, we heard the beeps. We heard the beeps.

KEITH: Okay, okay, okay.

JANINE: I wonder if Thisbe's like, narrating as Phrygian does it, just because she knows they want to learn. So she's like, you know—

KEITH: Yeah.

JANINE: 'See how you twist the thing, and then that comes out, and—' you know.

AUSTIN: Mhm.

KEITH: 'You need this kind of screwdriver to take the mesh off.'

AUSTIN (as SPROX): Oh, okay, I see.

KEITH: Make sure to get the hair out.

AUSTIN: Gotta get the hair out.

DRE: The duck hair, yeah.

AUSTIN: Yeah, get all the duck out.

JANINE: Does Phryg—I wonder if like, does Phrygian just like, recognize it as hair because it's like, fibrous or something? It's like, that's more or less what—like, I'm covered in hair. Like, it's cables. [CHUCKLING] Like, is it that kind of thing?

[SYLVI CHUCKLES]

KEITH: Yeah, it's all hair. Anything shaped like this is hair.

[AUSTIN LAUGHS]

DRE: Sure. Yeah.

SYLVI: I love this show.

AUSTIN: Mhm.

[DRE AND KEITH LAUGH]

AUSTIN: Alright.

JANINE: Everyone's eating spaghetti. 'Hey, I see everyone's eating some hair.'

[AUSTIN LAUGHS]

KEITH: Some hair.

SYLVI: Mm!

JANINE: Dish me up a plate, mm-mm!

KEITH: It's just wheat hair. You got wheat hair, you got plant hair, you got head hair.

DRE: I mean, they do call some pasta angel hair.

KEITH: Angel hair, it's right there in the name.

JANINE: Mhm, mhm.

SYLVI: Oh my god, stay away from Cori.

[1:10:00]

AUSTIN: [LAUGHS] Alright, I don't—it doesn't feel like we're gonna get more here. I don't think y'all—is that—

DRE: Yeah, the only thing I was gonna bring up, but I don't think it works here, is just—I don't think we have put on screen the Gravity Clock that I started with Partial Palisade.

AUSTIN: We haven't, no.

DRE: And I think that that's—

AUSTIN: Which is, what is the text of that?

DRE: Yeah, well, the reason I brought it up is because it relates to the two Twill that we met, whose names I'm double-checking really quick, and now I can't find the tab.

[AUSTIN HUMS]

DRE: Veston and Kriminel. And my Gravity Clock with Partial Palisade says: "Palisade and I were both resurrected against our will by people who won't fix their own problems."

AUSTIN: Mm. Mhm.

KEITH: They won't even change their own water filter!

DRE: Exactly!

AUSTIN: No, that person was not involved. Again—

DRE: Yeah.

AUSTIN: They—this—Sprox was not involved in this scheme.

DRE: Yeah, yeah, yeah.

AUSTIN: Yeah, do you want to spend a token and get that scene and advance that clock, and

take some Spotlight, or do you want to save your tokens?

DRE: I think I'm gonna save it. Because again, like, that is specifically, I think, about those two?

AUSTIN: Right.

DRE: And so I don't know, like—yeah.

AUSTIN: Well, it's about—sorry, it's about Partial, not about those two, right?

DRE: Yeah, for sure. Yeah. And so I don't—

AUSTIN: The clock is with *him*, it's not with them, right? So.

DRE: Yeah. Yeah. Yeah, so I don't think it would make sense to use it here.

AUSTIN: He's here.

DRE: Mm. Okay, then what's—

AUSTIN: All three of them are here. That's what I was saying. They're all here, they're just kind of being like, left to their own devices off to the side.

[DRE HUMS]

KEITH: The devices are Game Boys.

AUSTIN: They're kind of being like, again, I don't think it's like—it's not like they're not being allowed to sit with other people. I think everyone's a little like—like, they did it, they went and tried to do it, and Palisade himself does not necessarily look, you know. Again, yeah, it would be like—it would be like saying, like, 'yeah, we're going to go find the lost—' you know, 'we're gonna go find a god,' and the god comes back, and the god is like, you know, in a white t-shirt. And sweats.

[ALI CHUCKLES]

DRE: Sure. It's 'what if god was one of us?'

AUSTIN: What if god was one of us and looked kind of tired, you know?

DRE: Yeah, just a slob, like one of us.

AUSTIN: Just a slob like one of us, just a stranger on the bus, et cetera. Yeah, uh-huh.

[DRE CHUCKLES]

AUSTIN: So yeah, so he's around to talk to.

DRE: Yeah, I think—hm. I do like that. I just—god, I don't know what—

AUSTIN: How do you kick a conversation like that off?

DRE: Right.

AUSTIN: Let's—again, we don't need—we can invent a scenario for conversations to happen during downtime, right? So like, if you're like, 'oh, I need a moment with Palisade, with Partial Palisade alone,' I think that that's a—we could just invent that. We could just say that happens.

DRE: Yeah. Is Partial he/him?

AUSTIN: Partial is he/him, Kriminel Kollage is she/her, and Veston is he/him.

DRE: Okay.

AUSTIN: I believe that was right for Veston.

DRE: So what is—I know you said like, Partial's just kind of like, hanging out, right? But like, is there anything you can think of specifically that he would be doing during this time?

AUSTIN: I think that he is probably doing the classic thing you get in genre fiction when someone is, you know, brought back from out of time, which is like, trying to read about the world that he's in. He's like, he's asked for like, a data pad to read up on the Divine Principality and history. And what's tough for him is there's stuff that he—especially when it gets into like, the ancient history of the Divine Principality, right?

DRE: Mhm.

AUSTIN: When it talks about their origins, there's stuff there that he knows is wrong, but he doesn't know what's right. You know what I mean?

DRE: Oh. I think—I mean, that makes perfect sense as a conversation that like, Figure would want to be involved with.

AUSTIN: Mhm, mhm. Yeah, I think you like, literally see him reading a popular history book. Do you know what I mean? Or like a classic—you know what I mean? Like whatever the—what is the—[CHUCKLES] whatever the equivalent is. I mean, I guess that's the thing, right? It's like, there wouldn't be *Guns, Germs, and Steel* in this world—

DRE: Right.

AUSTIN: But something of that, you know, to that degree. Maybe there would be by now. It's been five years. Maybe someone has written that or has written, you know, uh—

DRE: Well, and—I mean, how long has it been since—

AUSTIN: Actually, actually, sorry, sorry, sorry, sorry, sorry. I think there's absolutely *Guns, Germs, and Steel*, which is the one that is like, you know, trying to explain why the Principality succeeded the way it has. And that's probably someone tied to, you know—who is the Alise Breka of history, you know? That style of, you know, popular mass audience, you know, counter-historical work.

DRE: Sure.

KEITH: Someone from—someone from Serious Reading.

AUSTIN: Right. Exactly, right? Yes, yes. Maybe—maybe qui—not quite as centrist as that, but still not fully revolutionary, you know?

DRE: Partial Palisade in a corner, just muttering, ‘do you *have* it?’

AUSTIN: ‘Do you have—do I have what?’

SYLVI: ‘What the fuck is Germany?’

[DRE CHUCKLES]

KEITH: Someone from the back of the room shouts, [EMPHATIC] ‘*do you have it?*’

[DRE LAUGHS]

AUSTIN: ‘Why do they keep doing that?’ Anyway, so yes, you see him reading what is a fairly—again, not ‘popular’ as in everybody’s read it, but ‘popular’ as in written for a popular audience, written for a mass audience, right—book.

DRE: Mhm. And you’re like, saying, like, that that’s probably recent-ish?

AUSTIN: Recent-ish, but enough that you would—you didn’t stop knowing and caring about history, right? When you began—

DRE: Yeah, totally.

AUSTIN: Right? So, you’ve probably read this book.

DRE: Okay, yeah. Um... I don’t know if I—if I—hm. I’m trying to think of like, do I have something specific to frame this scene with? I mean, I do think it is probably a scene that involves—maybe it starts off with Partial Palisade like, asking Figure questions, right? Like, Figure comes over and sees like, ‘oh yeah, I read that book. Here’s the parts that are true and here’s the parts that are iffy.’

AUSTIN: Right, well, and then, and then—yeah, I think that he says:

AUSTIN (as PARTIAL PALISADE): Alright, but then what about this part where it says—where it says the beginning of civilization as we know it came out of the Twilight Mirage? That’s just not true.

DRE (as FIGURE): It’s—wait, it’s not?

AUSTIN (as PARTIAL PALISADE): No? No, the Twilight Mirage was—I was there when it was made.

DRE (as FIGURE): Okay, can you—hold on a second.

DRE: And I think Figure like, runs off somewhere, and then they come back and they have a notebook, and it's probably a way too small notebook. [LAUGHING] Like, for the size they are now.

AUSTIN: Right, right.

DRE: And they are laboriously like, taking notes. They're like:

DRE (as FIGURE): Okay, wait, okay, so like—hold on, start over. Where did—where does what you know diverge from what you're reading?

AUSTIN (as PARTIAL PALISADE): Um... Uh, the Fleet? It doesn't even say the word Divine Fleet in here. There was a—there was a—you know, Divines aren't—we didn't—we—[SIGHS] not 'we,' 'we' is confusing for you. There was this thing called the Divine Fleet.

DRE (as FIGURE): Okay.

AUSTIN (as PARTIAL PALISADE): And it came together as a way of finding unity between people of both organic and synthetic type, and Divines. And we had a pretty good run. But there were Divines before that, there were people before that, and the Mirage came at the end of that, more or less.

DRE (as FIGURE): So—

AUSTIN (as PARTIAL PALISADE): I wasn't even in it at that point, but they did it, you know, not so far from here, as you can see.

DRE (as FIGURE): Okay, but so, where did the Mirage come from?

AUSTIN (as PARTIAL PALISADE): Emphyrean.

AUSTIN: Who you know, Dre, as Imperium, with an M instead of—it was an I and an M, like, you know, Imperium, not Emphyrean like the way Emphyrean was said in the Mirage.

DRE: Yeah.

AUSTIN: You know. Celestial.

DRE: I mean, I think I just say that.

DRE (as FIGURE): Oh, oh, you mean Imperium.

AUSTIN (as PARTIAL PALISADE): Imperium, no. Imperium is different. It says here Imperium is Stel Nideo, big kind of conquest, colonial Divine, that's not Emphyrean. Emphyrean was—Emphyrean was like an eagle, you know? Free. Exploratory.

DRE (as FIGURE): Wait, like—like, literally like an eagle, or?

AUSTIN (as PARTIAL PALISADE): I mean, yeah, in some ways.

DRE (as FIGURE): Like shape, like shape.

AUSTIN (as PARTIAL PALISADE): Sometimes.

DRE (as FIGURE): Some—

AUSTIN (as PARTIAL PALISADE): There were wings.

DRE (as FIGURE): Wait, so they—they changed shape?

AUSTIN (as PARTIAL PALISADE): Divines can do a lot of things. Anyway, Empyrean is the one who made the Twilight Mirage to help hide the Divine Fleet when the attack started. Well, a little after the attack started, after the attacks had really bitten into the fleet, after we left, so, I mean...

[1:20:06]

AUSTIN: And I think maybe this just goes on, right? Comparing notes and—

DRE: [CHUCKLING] Yeah.

AUSTIN: The thing that ends up happening is like, you go like, 'well, who all left with you?' And Palisade says:

AUSTIN (as PARTIAL PALISADE): I don't know exactly.

AUSTIN: And it's like there are gaps. There are gaps, and there are elements, like, you know, Partial really remembers when the New Earth Hegemony showed up onto Palisade, to, you know, use it as a launch pad into the Mirage—which, by the way, this is a really good opportunity to really, really make something very clear. Because I saw some confusion about it after the first episode, which is: Palisade is not in the Div—is not in the Twilight Mirage. It's *near* the Twilight Mirage. It's near enough that it can be a springboard into the Twilight Mirage, a place where you can, you know, ready your forces and get them ready to go in, which is how the New Earth Hegemony used it. It's how Advent used it. And then, likewise, it's how the Divine Principality used it to go out into the galaxy from the outside of the Twilight Mirage. But it is not inside of the Mirage. Time here is not as condensed as it is in the Twilight Mirage.

An important thing to remember is it's only been 500 years since the season, the Twilight Mirage, *inside* of the Twilight Mirage. Out here it's been 5,000 years, and weird long years, as we know, [CHUCKLES] because of the way time works in the Principality, and how the length of a year has changed over those 5,000 years. I don't have the exact math on how many Earth years it's been, but, you know, probably more than 5,000 at this point.

KEITH: I have a question based on this.

AUSTIN: Yes.

KEITH: Which is, you know, the *Orbital* game—

AUSTIN: Uh-huh. Uh-huh?

KEITH: The boundary of the Twilight Mirage was expanded.

AUSTIN: It was, but not enough.

KEITH: Not enough—

AUSTIN: Mourning showed up to stop it from—General Mourning showed up to stop the expansion of the Twilight Mirage from reaching Palisade. But it got close enough.

KEITH: But has it compressed time on Palisade more?

AUSTIN: No. It has not—because Palisade is not inside of the Twilight Mirage.

KEITH: No. Well, I thought it was, uh...

AUSTIN: It's at the edge. Sometimes, sometimes the Twilight Mirage laps at Palisade, right? But it's not in the Mirage.

KEITH: Okay.

AUSTIN: The Brink is called the Brink because it's at the very edge of the Twilight Mirage.

KEITH: Right.

AUSTIN: Right?

KEITH: So there's no like, gradient where it—it's more like there's a line.

AUSTIN: I think that there is—there is a gradient. That gradient is, like, in the system, but it's not—Palisade is not inside of that, right?

KEITH: Gotcha.

DRE: Mhm.

AUSTIN: Again, sometimes it laps at Palisade. There might be days where it gets Mirage-y, you know what I mean?

KEITH: Okay.

[DRE CHUCKLES]

AUSTIN: But, you know, it is like a shore. It is at the very—it is on the other end of the—you know, the Brink is an offshore, you know, rig, an offshore oil drilling rig. You know what I mean? It's definitely, you know, in the ocean. Palisade is the boardwalk, right? You can see the ocean, but unless it floods, you're not in the ocean. And the rest of the galaxy is deep inland. Nowhere near the ocean. You know? So it is not timey-wimey here yet. The plan that the Devotees had was to use those Mirage bombs to get Palisade into the Mirage directly. To do what, you're not

really a hundred percent sure outside of, you know, to get people here faster, and to support it, and blah blah blah blah.

That time difference, by the way, is why the Devotees are here, largely. And there are not other forces from the Twilight Mirage here yet. Because they got here quick. They left immediately. They were sending people here during the *Orbital* game, while General Mourning was still trying to get things together on her side. So, we'll talk more about that later, actually. So yeah, I think that that's the bit of the conversation. And as part of that, I would say, you know, mostly this is just you getting to like, talk to Partial a little bit. But I do think—

DRE: Yeah.

AUSTIN: Do you let the conversation move into other matters, or do you stay on history?

DRE: Um... yeah, I mean, are you saying that because you think at some point, like, [LAUGHING] Partial gets sick of me grilling him?

AUSTIN: I'm asking—no, no, I'm asking because I want to know if you're able—do you bring up the core of your clock with him, which is that 'we were resurrected against our will?'

DRE: Yeah, I think so. I mean, I think it's—it probably is a transition into this conversation of like, it must really suck to come back unexpectedly into a place that you thought you had left behind. And you have to relearn all of this.

AUSTIN (as PARTIAL PALISADE): I mean, I didn't think I left it behind. I wasn't thinking anything. I wasn't anywhere. The last thing I remember was fire. And then you all. I'm not saying I—I'm not saying I wanted these particular people to bring me back. I'm not even saying I'm sure I'm happy to be here. I have an impulse and a desire to help people. And I feel kind of bad, because I don't feel particularly good at that right now. And I don't feel like I... I don't feel like I can live up to what they thought I'd be. But I can't say I'm... I can't say I'm mad that I have the opportunity again. I can say I wish they could have done it under better circumstances. And sure, I wish I could have said yes, but I couldn't, because I was dead. I guess I don't even know that I'm me. Maybe they're tricking me. What do you think? I'm just a regular old robot, and they whispered in my ear, and they said—

DRE (as FIGURE): No, I don't think they're tricking you.

AUSTIN (as PARTIAL PALISADE): 'Oh, you're a god, you're a Divine,' et cetera. No, probably not.

DRE (as FIGURE): No. I mean, you shouldn't feel guilty that you feel like you can't do something that was asked of you that you didn't even get a choice to be asked for. Does that make sense?

[SYLVI LAUGHS]

AUSTIN (as PARTIAL PALISADE): I don't feel guilty because they want something I can't give 'em. I feel guilty because my whole life was about trying to give people things, and

give myself to things, and I ran out of myself to give. And in a way, it was easier then, because I knew the parts I had to give away. And now I keep reaching for things that aren't there. You know, they're trying to have trouble with the water right now. They're trying to fix that. [SCOFFS] I was the lake, you know? And now I don't know how the filters on this ship work.

DRE (as FIGURE): Well, what do—what do you want to do?

AUSTIN (as PARTIAL PALISADE): Boy, I want to get some sleep. And then—

DRE (as FIGURE): Oh—oh, I'm sorry.

AUSTIN (as PARTIAL PALISADE): No, you're good. And then I want to figure out how to be of use, I guess. This Bilateral Intercession seems like no good. I think y'all have the right of it. I know how to throw a punch. I know how to dig a ditch.

AUSTIN: Does a little shrug, you know?

AUSTIN (as PARTIAL PALISADE): Anyway, thank you for talking to me about the book.

DRE (as FIGURE): Oh, no, thank you. I will let you get some sleep. But if I can help with anything, I would like to help you.

AUSTIN (as PARTIAL PALISADE): Right back at you.

AUSTIN: And I think gets up to go see if that water filter is fixed and if there's any, you know, 'I need a drink.' Alright.

DRE: So—

AUSTIN: That is one move down, one scene down. Go ahead, what's up?

DRE: I know I spend one of my tokens to do that.

AUSTIN: You spend one of your tokens, correct, so you still have one left.

DRE: Does that—so does that mean I get the same benefits as the Fade scene?

AUSTIN: You get—yeah. The way that it is written is, "pass time as above," which in this case means you do the thing that it says above, which is gain a point of Spotlight and advance a Gravity Clock if you have one.

DRE: Okay.

AUSTIN: So, yes.

DRE: Gotcha.

AUSTIN: For that matter, if Thisbe and Phrygian, you actually would like to have Gravity with each other, you could and could advance that, with the note that you can only ever have three Gravity Clocks plus a rival clock at a time. So if you don't want that, you don't need to take one.

JANINE: I might save mine. I've only got one left.

AUSTIN: Yeah, that's fair.

DRE: Oh, wow.

KEITH: I don't think I have any right now.

AUSTIN: Yeah, Thisbe, again, you have Brnine, and now you have the Twill, right?

KEITH: Yeah, I'll think on it.

AUSTIN: You could take one with the Twill, also, here, if you would like, it's up to you.

[1:30:02]

AUSTIN: Alright. Who has a scene next?

SYLVI: I do have a small one if people are waiting.

AUSTIN: Yeah, let's go, Cori. What's up?

SYLVI: So I wanted to do—I think I'm reading this right—Somewhere Nearby?

AUSTIN: Mhm.

SYLVI: Which is “the leading player rolls a d4 to see what resources they can muster and acquires gear or equipment with a total value up to the result.”

AUSTIN: Yeah.

SYLVI: And “spend extra tokens or tap factions to increase the result by another d4.”

AUSTIN: Yep.

SYLVI: I wanted to do—I wanted to go—she wanted to go check out the battlefield.

AUSTIN: Oh, interesting.

SYLVI: Part of it is, ‘oh, fuck, I gotta go get my cape.’

AUSTIN: Oh my god. [CHUCKLES]

SYLVI: This is—you know.

AUSTIN: So yeah, you're gonna go back and pick your cape up. You're gonna pick over both the battlefield where the—where Cleave was, and you were fighting the Bilats.

SYLVI: Yeah.

AUSTIN: So this is like, maybe during, while the Twill are being, like, escorted onboard the ship.

SYLVI: I was going to say that exact thing. Like, I think this is happening while—

AUSTIN: Perfect.

SYLVI: Like I can see the Blue Channel, like, in the background, like, having people like roll up onto it, is in my head.

AUSTIN: Yeah, that's exactly the vibe, a hundred percent, yeah.

SYLVI: Yeah.

AUSTIN: Yeah. Cool. "The leading player rolls a d4 to see what resources they can muster, and acquires gear or equipment with a total value up to the result. They may spend extra tokens or tap factions to increase the result by another d4, or trade objects with the Valuable or Treasure tags for +2 or +4 respectively." You don't have any of those, but maybe in the future. "They frame a short scene around this either alone or with invited characters. During the scene, anyone may choose to spend a token to choose one: 1) Buy or trade something for value as above." So again, roll d4 and see what you can muster. "Start or advance a long-term project, describe what your work looks like; spend time working or in the field with someone you have Gravity with, advancing it; or run into trouble; resolve it with moves as usual and see what you learn." So let's go ahead and start by rolling that d4.

[PAUSE]

SYLVI: That's a 2.

AUSTIN: So that's a 2. So that means you can get up to two tags, up to a +2 on tags, I don't know if you remember how that system works.

SYLVI: Vaguely. [CHUCKLES]

AUSTIN: It begins on page 68 of the book. As a—you know, a good way of illustrating this is maybe just looking at one of the things that somebody has as like, a reminder.

SYLVI: Yeah.

AUSTIN: And maybe to explain—it's worth explaining this to the listener just to like, give you a broad system.

SYLVI: So I have a question of like, what on my sheet would be an example.

AUSTIN: Yes.

SYLVI: So like, how many tags would, for example, my Ruin Blade of my Altar have? That's—Ruin is one—

AUSTIN: So, read to me what—yeah, go ahead.

SYLVI: Decisive, Fragile, and then is Drain also one? So is that a 4 or a 3?

AUSTIN: So the way this actually works, if you go ahead to page 68, Tags and Gear—or no, 67 is Tags and Gear, 68 is Tags. There are positive tags and negative tags. Ruin is a really good positive tag, because what it does is let you, like, hit two tiers higher, without any sort of disadvantage.

SYLVI: Okay.

AUSTIN: So that's a—it's a—your Ruin Blade 3 is a Tier 3 thing, but that means you could hit up to a Tier 5. Let's say you were fighting another Carrier like the Blue Channel that was Tier 5. You could—despite it only being a Tier 3, you could attack it without being at disadvantage despite being lower tier than it. Right? So that is actually a +2 tag. Right? Decisive is a +1 tag because Decisive says that it's "precise and powerful, excellent for ending fights, and once per scene, you may reroll a failed Strike Decisively when using it." So at that point, you're at +3. But then it's Fragile, which means that it is—I'll read from the book here—"easily broken either by shoddy design or frail materials," and it's Drain, too, which means it takes two of your total power, which means, actually, your power right now is listed at 3, I'm gonna drop it down to 2, because it should be a 2.

SYLVI: Thank you.

AUSTIN: Uh-huh.

SYLVI: And then, so I—so this—

AUSTIN: [OVERLAPPING] Oops, I made it 32, which is also wrong. [CHUCKLES]

SYLVI: No, no, I'm incredibly strong. Leave it at 32.

AUSTIN: You're strong, uh-huh. 2, there we go.

SYLVI: We've installed hacks.

AUSTIN: Yes.

SYLVI: I've modded *Armour Astir*.

AUSTIN: Yes. So at this point, in other words, you can go make a piece of—a ta—a piece of gear that totals +2 from this set of tags.

SYLVI: Okay.

AUSTIN: You know what I'm saying?

SYLVI: Yeah, and this could also be, like—this wouldn't have to necessarily be mech gear, I just picked that as an example.

AUSTIN: Right, exactly. You could also—

SYLVI: Just to be clear with the listener.

AUSTIN: Yes, exactly. You could instead, in that like, big Tags and Gear thing, there are other examples of just like, if you want a dagger or a bow, or if you want some sort of piece of gear, we could talk through, like, a grappling hook is Tier 1 gear.

SYLVI: Oh, wow.

AUSTIN: Here is a thing that is Fragile, like—Invisibility Cloak 1, Fragile, Valuable, right? 'Lets you be invisible' is one of its tags. We'll talk through what that is if you want like, a more general piece of gear. We could also write down that you have these two tags and fill in the—this +2 worth of tags, and fill in the gaps later if you want to.

SYLVI: Yeah.

AUSTIN: I'm happy to play it almost like, as if it's like, you know, adventurer's gear or a piece of gear in like, a *Forged in the Dark* game where you kind of fill it in as you go, you know? I'm happy to do that unless you have something in mind, in which case, let's figure out what it is.

SYLVI: Um, I'm trying to think something through, but I—so this—

KEITH: I have a gear—

SYLVI: Oh.

KEITH: I have a gear-related question if I can.

AUSTIN: Totally.

KEITH: So I, obviously, on my sheet, I have what is called gear, but it's actually my body.

AUSTIN: Uh-huh.

KEITH: Does this move work for me?

AUSTIN: Yeah, you can still just go find stuff.

KEITH: I can go find—I can go find stuff? Okay.

AUSTIN: Yeah.

KEITH: But it would be like an actual weapon that it would be.

AUSTIN: It would be a thing, yeah, you're not adding something—

KEITH: Right.

AUSTIN: Again, this is temporary stuff. This is not—

SYLVI: You're not growing something.

AUSTIN: Right, you're not—right. I mean, your playbook might have stuff that lets you add new gear, right? That's actually for you. In fact, I believe there is something that lets you... let me

see.

KEITH: I don't remember something like that.

AUSTIN: Yeah, maybe it's just—maybe it's just letting your person-sized gear become Beast Within-sized or something like that.

KEITH: Yeah, that totally hap—that's a default thing.

AUSTIN: But—but no, you—

KEITH: It morphs from Tier 1 to Tier 3 when I grow.

AUSTIN: Right. You would just go make a—you would just go find stuff, real, like, regular stuff, correct.

KEITH: Okay. Yeah. If I did—if, just for fun, me as the player didn't want to use regular stuff, is that something I could start a clock for? For—

AUSTIN: Exactly what a clock is for, a hundred percent.

KEITH: Perfect.

AUSTIN: Yes.

KEITH: For increasing the tag count of something that I already have, or finding and getting a new...

AUSTIN: If you wanted to upgrade a thing, or yeah, or invent a new piece of gear for yourself.

KEITH: Yeah.

AUSTIN: That is exactly the sort of thing that a long-term project helps with.

KEITH: Incu—incu—the word's 'incubate' a new piece of gear.

AUSTIN: Mm, I hate that you say it like that, but sure.

SYLVI: Mhm. So for this scene, I have like—I have like, a beginning of it that is very clear in my head, and we can go from there, I don't know—if anyone else wants to be there, that would be great, but sort of just come if you like. I think it starts with—actually, it doesn't start at the cape, it starts where I fought that other mech. I think I'm just like, staring at this, like, slumped over, like...

AUSTIN: Yeah, the cockpit broken open.

SYLVI: I think specifically it's like... I'm picturing this thing face down, the cockpit.

AUSTIN: Ah.

SYLVI: There's glass of the cockpit on, like, bloodstains and shit. And Cori's just sort of staring

at it for a little while. And I've decided—

AUSTIN: Uh-huh. Oh, it's time to check your pulse.

[ALI CHUCKLES]

SYLVI: Oh, yeah, yeah, yeah, for sure. Oh, I got a thing about the pulse checking, but it'll come up.

AUSTIN: When you see this, does your pulse change or is your pulse stable?

SYLVI: If I were still in the Chariot, it would be stable, but because I'm on the ground, it is quickening.

AUSTIN: Okay. What—damn, so you are—you're looking at this from on foot. This isn't—interesting. Okay.

SYLVI: Yeah, I'm on foot.

AUSTIN: Then yeah, you feel your pulse quickening. Which, you tell me what you f—what's Cori—

SYLVI: It's the—that is actually the feeling that it was when I hesitated.

AUSTIN: Interesting. Okay.

SYLVI: 'Cause you—most of the time, things just feel sort of like, calm, like, by the numbers, when I'm fighting in my mech. And then when, all of a sudden, when I start doing something that would go against the prescripts, it's like the adrenaline production went from like, 0.3% to like, 200%. It like, just jumps astronomically until you're forced to make an action, basically.

AUSTIN: Great. Love it.

SYLVI: But so, we get her just like staring at that for a little while, and then... Is—so, could I actually request anybody to be here? Because I have something silly that she's about to ask.

JANINE: I'll be there.

SYLVI (as CORIOLIS): Thisbe, can you take a picture of me?

AUSTIN: Oh my god.

SYLVI: And then poses in front of the downed mech. [CHUCKLES]

JANINE: Are you just like, handing me your smartphone or whatever?

[ALI CHUCKLES]

SYLVI: Yeah, pretty much.

AUSTIN: Oh my god. Thisbe, how do you—

JANINE: Yeah. Thisbe can do that without asking a question, even. Just, 'yes,' snap.

AUSTIN: How do you frame this? What's the emotional content of this photograph?

KEITH: And also, how do you frame this? What is the visual composition?

[ALI CHUCKLES]

AUSTIN: That is what I'm asking. That is literally what I mean when I say.

KEITH: Oh, okay.

JANINE: Have you pre-selected like, a filter?

SYLVI: No, I think she's gonna go into her, like, SNOW afterwards and just like, play through and see which one looks best.

JANINE: Ah, yeah, yeah, yeah.

SYLVI: I think that this is—it is almost propagandistic, you know? She is like, doing—

AUSTIN: Oh, no, sorry, I was asking Thisbe. Because Thisbe's taking the photo.

SYLVI: Oh, Thisbe, okay.

AUSTIN: Yeah. Unless you're micromanaging. [CHUCKLES]

[KEITH CHUCKLES]

SYLVI: No, I'm just posing next to the, like—I think next to the like, caved-in head of it—

AUSTIN: [MUFFLED] Oh my god.

SYLVI: Doing the little—there's a Devotion salute that I figured out.

ALI: Yes!

AUSTIN: Oh, good.

[JANINE GROANS]

KEITH: We've gotta get—we've gotta—

SYLVI: Which is checking the pulse with two fingers, and then your elbow pointing straight out to your side.

AUSTIN: Straight out to—

SYLVI: And standing up straight, like very rigid, like—

[1:40:00]

AUSTIN: Checking your pulse, which arm is where? Give me—paint me a—

SYLVI: Right hand, checking your pulse. Your left hand is at your back.

AUSTIN: Alright. My left hand's—

ALI: Also, wait, neck pulse or wrist pulse?

SYLVI: Neck.

AUSTIN: Neck pulse, okay.

ALI: Okay, okay.

KEITH: Neck pulse, 'cause the—

AUSTIN: Yeah, I was trying to do this with my wrist pulse, and I was like, I can't do this.

SYLVI: Yeah, no, I'm not doing the like, 'ice in my veins' basketball taunt.

[AUSTIN AND ALI LAUGH]

SYLVI: That's—she only does that when she plays pick-up.

AUSTIN: God. Cori getting the 3-pointer and then the whole bench popping off is incredible, though. [CHUCKLES]

SYLVI: Yeah. [LAUGHS]

AUSTIN: We should get basketball on screen today. Anyway.

SYLVI: We should.

AUSTIN: Alright, so you're—yeah. One arm behind your back, other arm up at your your neck, checking your pulse.

SYLVI: Up on the neck, yeah.

AUSTIN: Yeah, but like, but like—not severe, but like, you're in a—it is a salute, or it is a—you're at attention, in a way.

SYLVI: Yeah, it is—it is like, this is like 'oh, I'm gonna send this back to the—' [CHUCKLES] I'm gonna—when I send this back to the Violet Cove, they're all gonna be like, 'holy shit, this is great.'

AUSTIN: Uh-huh. So, yeah, Thisbe, how's this shot? How are you—you have any techniques here? Is this vertical or horizontal, is this...

JANINE: I think it is exactly—how did Cori hand me the phone?

SYLVI: Um—

JANINE: Or the camera device? [CHUCKLES]

[ALI CHUCKLES]

AUSTIN: Yeah, it's a camera device. Remember—

SYLVI: Camera device, yeah.

AUSTIN: Even the most advanced touchscreens from the Frontier Syndicate can do up to—those devices can do two things at once. So it could be a camera—

JANINE: The 1998 digital camera that shoots in one megapixel.

AUSTIN: Exactly.

SYLVI: I honestly—

AUSTIN: Uh-huh.

SYLVI: I love the idea of it being like, somewhere between like, the disposable, with the like, the little wheel that you turn that's like, kind of clicky, and then just like, a big old-school camera that—and it makes a big, like, *foomf!* When it goes off.

[JANINE CHUCKLES]

AUSTIN: Oh my god, that's so good.

SYLVI: It's all—even though it's all digital.

AUSTIN: Uh-huh.

JANINE: Then I think it's gotta be landscape, right?

SYLVI: Yeah.

AUSTIN: Sure, sure. Love it.

SYLVI: Now they're gonna turn this shit into postcards.

AUSTIN: So what were you saying, Janine, you were saying how was it handed to you?

JANINE: Well, I was wondering like, if it was a device where landscape or portrait or—

AUSTIN: Gotcha, gotcha.

SYLVI: Yeah.

JANINE: You know? 'Cause with a phone, I think Thisbe would have taken it portrait. But with a camera—

[SYLVI LAUGHS]

AUSTIN: With a camera...

JANINE: Yeah.

SYLVI: I love that. [CHUCKLES]

AUSTIN: Does it feel like a war photo? Does it feel like propaganda? What's the photo Thisbe takes? What's the vibe? If you saw it in a newspaper, what would your emotional response—what type of emotional response would it generate?

JANINE: I mean, that's hard to answer because, again, I don't think Thisbe like, changes any settings or does anything with intention. It is just—

AUSTIN: So then it is like a very cand—it is a candid photo in a sense, then. You're not like purposefully making the mech seem—

JANINE: [OVERLAPPING] Well, no, because Cori's posing.

AUSTIN: No, but you know what I mean. Sorry, candid is the wrong word. You're not like m—you're not like, kneeling down so that Cori seems taller. You're not—

JANINE: Oh, no, absolutely not.

AUSTIN: You're not framing the situation—you know what I mean?

JANINE: Actually, given how tall Thisbe is, the angle's probably kind of weird.

[ALI CHUCKLES]

AUSTIN: Right, yeah. You're like, looking down a little bit on Cori, but the mech is still so big that it still dominates the frame.

JANINE: It probably just like, fucks up the scale a little bit. Like, it's probably a little bit [CHUCKLING] confusing to look at.

AUSTIN: Mhm.

SYLVI: There's like—

KEITH: Normally, you know, you might look at a photo like that and say, like, well, obviously the subject is too small, but it might help the propagandistic element of it to show how absolutely massive—

AUSTIN: Right.

KEITH: —the robot is next to Cori.

AUSTIN: Cori and Goliath-type vibes where like—

KEITH: Right, yes.

AUSTIN: Yeah.

JANINE: Or people might say ‘this looks fake.’

[AUSTIN AND KEITH LAUGH]

AUSTIN: Amazing.

KEITH: There’s no Photoshop!

SYLVI: [LAUGHING] Everybody commenting on Cori’s Instagram that she Photoshopped it.

JANINE: They were faking photos long before Photoshop, Keith. They’ve been faking photos since the beginning.

SYLVI: Yeah.

AUSTIN: Yeah, uh-huh.

KEITH: No, every photo before 2001 is real.

AUSTIN: Oh, okay.

JANINE: They used to fake them with just like, straight-up paint.

AUSTIN: [LAUGHS] Doing quite literal paint-overs.

JANINE: Yeah.

AUSTIN: Alright. Any other—do you—you’re—

SYLVI: Oh—

AUSTIN: Go ahead.

SYLVI: I do know what the item I think I get is.

AUSTIN: Okay, perfect.

SYLVI: I think it is something that I find—I think I find it among the shattered glass. I think it’s something—it’s like on-ground gear is what I’m thinking.

AUSTIN: Mhm.

SYLVI: I’m trying to nail down the specific tags, but I think it’s basically—have you—do you guys know what, um—oh, are they called an infinity match or an endless match? I’m trying to rememb—an infinite match.

AUSTIN: Oh, yes. Yes.

SYLVI: It's like—

AUSTIN: I love this.

SYLVI: Like, imagine a little tube and then you pull it out, and it'll spark—it's like this metal thing, I'll link a photo.

AUSTIN: It's like a metal—it's like a metal matchstick that as you pull it out of the thing, it strikes and lights.

SYLVI: Yeah.

AUSTIN: It has like a fuel—

KEITH: Oh, this is sort of like in that genre of like, trench lighters.

SYLVI: A little bit, a little bit. I think this one is a kind of—like it works like that, but I'm thinking it's got more like, firecracker-y, like, 'can distract people' vibes. I'm gonna nail down the tag specifically—

AUSTIN: Sounds good.

SYLVI: But I remember this pilot being sort of like, associated with some sort of fiery Divine, and I was like, what could I do with that? And this is what I've decided to do with that.

AUSTIN: Mhm. Love it. So yeah, so you now have a—yeah, yeah, yeah, I think specifically they were piloting a Divine, or a—sorry, an Altar that was divine—designed and made by the Divine Consecration, in the forge of the Divine Consecration.

SYLVI: Okay.

AUSTIN: So yeah, there's some sort of like—you know, I think it actually has this sort of very religious-looking—not logo, but like, an imprint on it, like a brand, on the actual, like, device itself, that has like—I forget exactly how I phr—how I—what the letters are. I think it's the Blessed—the Blessed Armory of Consecration. So it's just like, BAC, and those are like, arranged in like, a sigil, almost, on it.

SYLVI: Mhm.

AUSTIN: So yeah, that's—that's—and it is just a match, is that what it does, is it lights?

SYLVI: Yeah, I might give it some more like, practical things when I land on tags for it, but for now, yeah.

AUSTIN: Yep, sounds good. And think—since it's gear and not like, a weapon, think about uses more than thinking about, you know.

SYLVI: Mhm. I—yeah, I was thinking, like, having it be sort of like an illuminatory device or something, like if—yeah.

AUSTIN: Cool. Love it. That's great. Yeah.

JANINE: Can I spend a token and also get—find a thing?

AUSTIN: Yeah, roll d4.

JANINE: Okie dokie. [PAUSE] There's a 1. [CHUCKLES]

AUSTIN: Ooh. It's only a 1, which, again, you take some negative tags, you can get some wild shit there. But you can feel free to also come up with something that is one tag worth of good, you know?

JANINE: I wanted to get like a—like a grappling hook-type thing.

AUSTIN: Yeah, I think that that's—I think one tag being 'hey, you can grapple with this grappling hook' is totally—I mean, that literally is—grappling hook—

JANINE: What would the tag for that be?

AUSTIN: —allows you to climb or grapple. It is in the—there is an example Tier 1 thing there. And I think that's fine.

JANINE: Oh, perfect, perfect.

AUSTIN: Yeah. Yeah, so I think just—yeah, 1 is probably— +1 is enough for that based on what it says. Tags generally are more for—like, the plus one, minus one stuff generally is more for weapons, and getting a +1 is enough for—to get you to this, I think, so. Before we actually end the scene, I am going to spend one of my tokens—

KEITH: [WHISPERING] Oh no.

AUSTIN: —to advance a long-term project of the Authorities, actually. Which is, as your group begins to leave here, as the Twill have, you know, gone into the Blue Channel—you know, I could imagine maybe a couple decided to stay behind, but I think that they probably just don't want—this is not a place that means something to them deeply. You know what I mean? This is—this is not where they are from. And once it's clear that you have moved out, you know, we see time pass, days move on. We eventually get another shot of this place, and a group of Frontier Syndicate mechs moving in, and I'm going to advance the Harvest the Fundament Nodes clock by one as they begin to investigate this further, and try to—try to learn what these things are and whether or not they can be put to use. So, a team of scientists and new Altars descends here, and it's a bigger force this time. It's enough to scare off the sort of the minion, the—I don't want to say minion. The pawn of Cleave.

ALI: Let's reclaim 'minion,' okay? You can say minion.

AUSTIN: Okay.

DRE: Yeah, let's reclaim 'minion.'

SYLVI: Yeah!

KEITH: Yeah!

DRE: Yeah!

AUSTIN: I don't think we can beat the Minions. The Minions are huge.

ALI: But we know it's not a little guy.

DRE: [OVERLAPPING] Not with that kind of attitude, we can't.

SYLVI: [OVERLAPPING] But they don't own it!

ALI: [OVERLAPPING] We know it's a dragon. We can just say 'minion.' [CHUCKLES]

AUSTIN: No, people are gonna think of the Minions.

ALI: Minion is a functionally important word, and I'm not giving it up to Bob and Al, and [LAUGHING] whatever the—

AUSTIN: You know their *names*?

SYLVI: Do you know their *names*?

KEITH: [LAUGHING] I had no idea that—

AUSTIN: Ali—

SYLVI: Hold up.

DRE: [OVERLAPPING] Wait, is that the—wait—

[ALI AND KEITH CONTINUE LAUGHING]

AUSTIN: [OVERLAPPING] You already gave it up to them. You already gave it up.

DRE: [OVERLAPPING] Is that the names of the Minions?

KEITH: I didn't know they had names, and I saw *Despicable Me* 1.

AUSTIN: [OVERLAPPING] That movie made a *billion* dollars. That movie made a *bill*.

[ALI CONTINUES LAUGHING]

AUSTIN: We don't get—they took it from us.

SYLVI: [LAUGHING] Look at what they took from you.

DRE: [OVERLAPPING] You know what, no, we gave it to them. We gave it to them.

KEITH: [OVERLAPPING] New Patreon goal, \$35,000, we retake 'minions.'

DRE: [CHUCKLING] By force.

KEITH: [CHUCKLING] Yeah, we take it back by force.

AUSTIN: Unbelievable. The minion of the Affliction Cleave is, this time, driven away by the forces of the Frontier Syndicate. The Frontier Syndicate descends on this place again, in force. More than just the one weird table mech this time. But it is just the Frontier Syndicate, this is—this is not a multifaceted attack. The news about what was down here really just got back to the Frontier Syndicate, and so Exanceaster March and his minions are the ones—his minions—are the ones that make their way down here at this point, trying to, you know, get what they can out of this place.

[1:50:12]

There's like a cool, fucking quad-legged kind of mobile work-station mech that sets up down here, and they just kind of like, set up shop, basically, and turn this place into a makeshift research center as they try to figure out what the Fundament node is, and how they can make it work for them.

So that's one of my five tokens. Can we do a token check? Who has how many tokens left at this point?

KEITH: I have two tokens.

ALI: I have two tokens.

AUSTIN: You have—neither of you have—

JANINE: I have one.

DRE: I have one token.

SYLVI: I think I—wait, didn't—I used mine to roll, right?

KEITH: Yeah.

AUSTIN: You did not.

KEITH: Oh.

AUSTIN: No, you used your scene.

SYLVI: No, because I didn't—

KEITH: Right.

SYLVI: I didn't add any, yeah. So, I have two.

AUSTIN: Correct. You did not spend any tokens to—which, by the way, I guess, Thisbe, you could have spent another token to add to that roll, or tapped a faction to add to that roll, but you

got what you were looking for, a grappling hook, with what you rolled. So, I think that you're good. You know?

KEITH: So, I should say then that I have two tokens and a scene.

AUSTIN: Right.

DRE: Wait, don't you only have one?

AUSTIN: Wait, no, you spent a token.

KEITH: I start—I have three.

AUSTIN: Oh, you started with three. You started with three.

KEITH: So I have t—yeah.

DRE: Oh, that's right.

AUSTIN: So Phrygian has two of three left.

SYLVI: Keith is once again power-gaming.

[ALI CHUCKLES]

AUSTIN: Uh-huh.

KEITH: I—

AUSTIN: Brnine has—you said—you—Brnine, you said you have two left?

SYLVI: [QUIETLY] I'm joking.

ALI: I have two and then one scene.

[DRE CHUCKLES]

AUSTIN: And one scene. Phrygian still has your—you still have your scene.

KEITH: Yeah.

AUSTIN: Uh... Sorry, I'm typing. Thisbe, you spent one token and—and your scene, right? So you have one token left.

JANINE: Correct.

AUSTIN: And Figure, you spent one token. So you have one token as a scene.

DRE: Yes. Mhm.

AUSTIN: Correct. And Cori, you spent your scene, but you have your tokens.

SYLVI: Mhm.

AUSTIN: Okay, cool.

KEITH: I have a question, now that we've done a little bit of Cori stuff.

AUSTIN: Mhm?

KEITH: What does—what does the—what does Millennium Break/especially the folks of the Blue Channel know about Devotion and the Cult of Devotion?

[PAUSE]

AUSTIN: Um—

KEITH: If anything.

AUSTIN: Yeah. Very little. They're from the Twilight Mirage. They seem like they don't want the—they're here—they're supporting people, right? They have, they have—you know? What did you just see? You saw Cori, a soldier from the Cult of Devotion, bash in the face of a Bilateral mech.

KEITH: Right.

AUSTIN: You tell me what you, personally, think of like, the religious parts of it. I think that there's probably some baggage around the fact that they worship a Divine.

KEITH: Yeah.

AUSTIN: But not everybody in Millennium Break—there are people in Millennium Break who worship Divines, right?

KEITH: There are. Well, the thing is the last time we saw them, they were sort of kind of kidnapping people, and—

AUSTIN: We certainly did see that. You know who didn't see that?

KEITH: —and definitely explicitly brainwashing them.

AUSTIN: Well, no, they weren't brainwashing anybody.

SYLVI: That's fair.

KEITH: They weren't—are you sure? Weren't they?

AUSTIN: Brainwashing is a term that doesn't really mean anything.

KEITH: Okay.

SYLVI: Yeah.

KEITH: They were doing something magic. Weren't they doing something magic?

AUSTIN: Pushy had a particular magical experience with the Divine Devotion, that threatened Pushy to not get involved. But the people who were there were overwhelmingly there because they wanted to be there, and believed in a project, and were getting social needs met. Which tends to be the thing about cults, right? Is it's the same thing that is any religious—many religious, not any, but many religious organizations rely on fulfilling social needs, providing a lot of rapid, you know, emotional, positive, you know, endorphin release type stuff. Thinking about love-bombing and stuff like that, but we didn't even see them doing much of that, you know? They had a cookout, is what we saw them do, and we saw them being part of a military plan to invade Palisade, and fight the Bilateral Intercession.

They certainly seem to have big picture plans that I would not necessarily think are well thought-out or positive for other people, but I think that that's not necessarily apparent. Cori, have I misrepresented anything that we did in that game?

SYLVI: I mean, we're heroes, is what we are. So.

AUSTIN: Uh-huh.

DRE: True, yeah, yeah, yeah, yeah, yeah.

AUSTIN: I think a lot of the weirdness is that it seems like to be part of the Cult of Devotion is to break away from much of your previous life; is to, you know, lose connection with those people, and to treat a lot of what you do as very secretive; is to give yourself over to rituals that are hard to explain to other people; and is to give over control, or to trust that you're being guided correctly by people who are often not particularly transparent, right? You're getting a lot of opaque direction to work on projects that you're hoping are for the best. We also saw specifically—and this is—this is, I would say, the clearest, you know, 'hey, what's going on here' thing? They were working with the Divine, comma, Arbitrage. [CHUCKLES]

KEITH: Yeah.

AUSTIN: Who is now allied with the Frontier Syndicate here on Palisade. But people—but *people* didn't see that relation—you know, Millennium Break didn't see that relationship, right?

KEITH: No.

AUSTIN: The camera saw that relationship.

KEITH: Right, that's what I meant by 'we', I meant the human people.

AUSTIN: Yeah, yeah. Yes, so that is—that is that. But Millennium Break, I don't think—I don't think that they can necessarily untangle the the Cult of Devotion from the Dim Liturgy or any of these other—the pirates of Rifle Island, you know, there's all these different groups here that, fundamentally, what we know is they don't want the Bilats here, and they were not conquering the galaxy, last we saw.

KEITH: Yeah.

AUSTIN: Unlike the Principality, right? So yeah.

KEITH: Okay, so I'm just—I'm, as Phrygian, I'm putting this under 'least concerned,' then, you know?

AUSTIN: Yeah, I mean, Phrygian—

KEITH: For now.

AUSTIN: Yeah, for now, right? I mean, you certainly understand that Divines are very powerful and very scary.

KEITH: Yeah.

AUSTIN: And have done a lot of damage to people you know and love, or I don't know if you love them, [CHUCKLING] but people you know, certainly. And I think maybe you don't necessarily know the difference between 'what's a Divine in the Twilight Mirage' vs. a Divine here, do the terms mean the same thing, is there differences in how they—how they—

KEITH: There's Divines fighting the Branched in the—that war.

AUSTIN: Yeah, a hundred percent. Yes.

KEITH: Right. So, yeah.

AUSTIN: But they're—but you've never you've never encountered a Divine from the Twilight Mirage—

KEITH: No.

AUSTIN: —and you don't know if they're the same, you know?

KEITH: Oh, okay. I under—I got you. Yeah.

AUSTIN: You get what I'm saying? You know, so. We know they are, of course, both the same and different because that is how things work, right?

KEITH: Yeah.

AUSTIN: We know that Arbit is a much different type of Divine in the Twilight Mirage than the sorts that operate here. But Devotion kind of seems like a regular old Divine that we are familiar with, in many ways. I guess we've never seen the body of Devotion directly, right? I don't think we did. We just saw the visions and the conversations in that *Orbital* game.

KEITH: Right. Yeah, I think so.

AUSTIN: I think so.

KEITH: Okay, so, you know, then barring a scene where Phrygian is pre-concerned about Devotion, which they're not right now, I'm going to do my very quick—god, which was the—which was the thing here that lets me start a project?

AUSTIN: You can start a project most directly—it depends on how you're doing it, right?

KEITH: Yeah.

AUSTIN: Hallways or Listening Posts lets you start a project based on something you overhear.

KEITH: Mhm.

AUSTIN: You could spend a token in a number of other scenes, like Somewhere Nearby, what we just did, to start a long-term project. You could start a project with a token during an Infirmary or Hangar scene.

KEITH: Okay.

AUSTIN: And you can—is there any other ones that you can do that with? Let me just do a quick search. Let me just do a quick search for 'project' on this page. Make sure I'm not missing anything. So yeah, Infirmary or Hangar, or Hallways or Listening Posts, or Somewhere Nearby. Only Hallways or Listening Posts lets you do it as just 'I'm declaring the scene.' The other ones are you have to spend a token to do it.

KEITH: Okay. Well then, yeah, I guess I'm—I would like to do, because I think it makes the most sense out of a bunch of sort of medium—these all sort of make medium sense to me.

AUSTIN: Uh-huh.

KEITH: In order to, like—Somewhere Nearby, I don't really need equipment; Infirmary or Hangar, I don't need to be there anyway. So the only one that—where the actual meat of the scene makes sense for me is Hallways or Listening Posts. Why me listening to someone will give me—

AUSTIN: Well, what's the project? Let's start with the project and work—

KEITH: I'm going to incubate—

AUSTIN: Oh, you want to start making a cool weapon?

KEITH: I want to start making a cool weapon, yeah. Or gear, you know, gear. Whatever.

AUSTIN: You know—yeah, yeah, yeah. it might be as simple as simply you were there when Thisbe and Cori came back with some stuff.

KEITH: Oh. [LAUGHS] Yeah, that's a great idea.

[2:00:00]

AUSTIN: Right? And you overheard it and were like, 'oh, I could make myself some new stuff. I

should make some stuff for whatever we got going on soon.’ You know?

KEITH: Yeah, yeah.

AUSTIN: Alternatively, it could be something else, like you overheard something about the upcoming mission, and that made you start thinking about making something.

KEITH: Yeah, let’s go with that, because that’ll give me a chance to spend another token on Plan and Prepare.

AUSTIN: So maybe, actually, a thing that would be fun to do with this is to have you overhear something about the impending mission. That gets everybody—anybody who wants to spend towards that, like, it kind of feels like, ‘oh shit, we should start getting prepped for whatever this new thing is,’ right? And that would give you an opportunity to justify both ‘why are you starting a long-term project to get new stuff’ and anybody who wants to spend a token to get that bonus on Plan and Prepare could spend it here for that bonus, you know?

KEITH: Yeah. Yeah. Okay, so—

AUSTIN: Um—yeah, go ahead.

KEITH: What do we—what do we need to know about the next mission?

AUSTIN: So maybe—so maybe—where do you overhear this? Is this like, while you’re landed somewhere? Is this—

KEITH: I can tell you exactly what is happening when I overhear this.

AUSTIN: Please.

KEITH: I am—

[DRE CHUCKLES]

KEITH: [CHUCKLES] —the studio apartment.

AUSTIN: Oh my god. Well, the thing is no one’s going to be in that studio apartment talking about your next mission.

[SYLVI LAUGHS]

DRE: I don’t know.

KEITH: Who would know?

AUSTIN: Who’s gonna be there talking about it? That knows?

KEITH: Anyone that wants a bowl of cereal.

[ALI LAUGHS]

AUSTIN: Right, but no one on the ship—the only people on the ship who would know about it are the player characters, who don't know about it yet.

ALI: I can—okay. Let me f—I—

DRE: No, but that's why it's the perfect trap.

ALI: I can frame this. Do you want me to frame this? This is fine.

KEITH: Okay.

ALI: So what happens is, is that the reason Brnine hasn't used any tokens yet, is because they've been sort of off-ship, doing like, a Gucci check-in.

AUSTIN: Ah. Yes.

ALI: Brnine returns to the Blue Channel, like—

AUSTIN: With this information.

ALI: —is getting a call from Gucci, which is like a 'oh, one more thing, I forgot to mention this,' or like a 'make sure you don't forget this, even though we talked about it a bunch—'

AUSTIN: Yes. Uh-huh.

ALI: And like, Brnine is like, moving through the cargo bay, like, avoiding all of these groups, and just like, happens to like, open a door [LAUGHING] that they see—

AUSTIN: Right. And steps into the studio.

ALI: In it, like, 'oh, this is a quiet room. That's cool. I—this is my ship, I should know everything in it.'

AUSTIN: Uh-huh.

ALI: But like, in the franticness of just being like 'I need to stand somewhere alone for a second,' walks into Phrygian—

AUSTIN: Yeah. Perfect.

ALI: [LAUGHING] Closes the door behind them.

KEITH: 'Walks into' as in enters, not 'walks into' as in—

AUSTIN: Correct. Yes. Yes.

ALI: Yeah. [LAUGHS]

DRE: Sure.

SYLVI: Uh-huh.

DRE: 'Man, I just need a room where I can do whatever in, and this seems perfect.'

[KEITH LAUGHS]

AUSTIN: Yeah, I get it. Yeah.

JANINE: 'Oh, look at all this cereal here. These boxes aren't even opened.'

[AUSTIN AND ALI LAUGH]

KEITH: 'Oh my god, these—the library shelves are full of mysteries and historical fiction.'

AUSTIN: Yeah, uh-huh. [LAUGHS] That's the mood you're in today.

KEITH: Yeah.

AUSTIN: Okay. So then, here's what I'm going to tell you. Brnine, that—the reason we didn't do that other scene as a scene, is because like, nothing happened in it. Right? You dropped off the—some Twill. Gucci was very, like, couldn't—wouldn't say things to you in that wherever you were, right? Was like, 'we'll give you some mission update—' you know, 'we'll give you a mission update as soon as we can, but I'm not gonna—I can't say anything right now.' You know? It was very like, 'everything's good. Don't worry about anything.' Then you get a call that is like 'hey, I'm on a secure channel. Can you talk?' From Gucci. And then you go into the—into—

ALI: Phrygian.

AUSTIN: Then you go into Phrygian to talk.

[ALI, DRE, AND SYLVI LAUGH]

KEITH: I knew we could get there.

AUSTIN: We got there. And then you put Gucci on speakerphone [LAUGHING] for some reason so that—

[ALI LAUGHS]

AUSTIN: So that Phrygian can hear. No, Phrygian can probably hear just fine, right? Being a room probably means you have really good hearing? Question mark?

KEITH: Big ears, yeah.

[DRE LAUGHS]

SYLVI: God.

ALI: It's the fly on the wall thing, but you get to be the wall too.

KEITH: Yeah.

AUSTIN: But you're the—right. Yeah. Uh-huh.

KEITH: Wall for a fly.

[ALI CHUCKLES]

AUSTIN (as GUCCI): Brnine—er, Blue Channel—no, Brnine—[STAMMERING]

AUSTIN: Like, very clear she isn't sure what mode to be in.

AUSTIN (as GUCCI): Hey.

ALI (as BRNINE): Hi, hey.

AUSTIN (as GUCCI): This next one's—this next one's gonna be tricky.

ALI (as BRNINE): Great.

AUSTIN (as GUCCI): Um—

ALI (as BRNINE): What do you got for me? Us?

AUSTIN (as GUCCI): I'm gonna need you to be in two places at once. And this hasn't come down quite yet, so when it comes down official, I need you to act like it's news, you know? I'm not supposed to be telling anybody anything about this one, but I know it's gonna be a little tough, so. Okay?

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

AUSTIN (as GUCCI): Um—we have help coming. We have a new—we got some people on the way from the Twilight Mirage, and there's gonna be a whole thing. A meet and greet, someone from every—every squad is going to be there, every unit. I think Jesset might be there, even.

ALI (as BRNINE): Oh.

AUSTIN (as GUCCI): And we need to, you know, welcome the new folks aboard, make sure they feel comfortable, and, you know, integrate the leadership, and that whole thing. And you have to be there for that, or someone from the ship does. I'm gonna nominate you, it's your ship. Also, there's a a simple hit and run, um... Which, I—

AUSTIN: Very clear that she's like—

AUSTIN (as GUCCI): It's a simple hit and run. Over in the valley, the Bontive Valley, and we need your people on that. Next week there's going to be the new coronation of the so-called Lost Duchess, and lots of VIPs heading that way. And I can't tell you why, but you're going to need to send people to disrupt one person from getting there. They'll have a small retinue of mercenaries with them. Knock out the mercenaries, make sure they don't get there, whatever that means, and you'll have done your job. Get your people out safe. Or, your people will have

to get out safe, but you won't be there, because you'll be doing the meeting—

ALI (as BRNINE): Partying, right, yeah, got it.

AUSTIN (as GUCCI): Yeah, mhm.

ALI (as BRNINE): You want me to go to a party instead of robbing a bunch of—that's fine. [IRRITATED SIGH]

AUSTIN (as GUCCI): I—Brnine, you know that if it was up to me, we'd save the partying for later, but—being general—

ALI (as BRNINE): No, no, no, you know, you know, pathways to success, right?

AUSTIN (as GUCCI): That's the name of the book I wrote, yes.

[ALI LAUGHS]

SYLVI: Fuck off.

ALI: Great. [LAUGHS]

AUSTIN (as GUCCI): [EXHALING] Cool.

ALI (as BRNINE): Gucci, you can count on us. Blue Channel has your back.

AUSTIN (as GUCCI): And remember, when we call later with this officially, act like it's news. But get started figuring some stuff out.

ALI (as BRNINE): Mhm. [BADLY FEIGNED SURPRISE] Whoa, there's gonna be a coronation?

AUSTIN (as GUCCI): [MUMBLING] Oh my god.

[SYLVI LAUGHS]

AUSTIN (as GUCCI): Yeah, just like that.

ALI (as BRNINE): Great.

AUSTIN (as GUCCI): I cannot stand you sometimes.

[ALI LAUGHS]

SYLVI: Oh my god.

AUSTIN (as GUCCI): Oh, you're gonna, um—you know what? This I'll leave as a surprise. Just for that one.

ALI (as BRNINE): Okay.

AUSTIN (as GUCCI): Talk soon.

ALI (as BRNINE): Aye, aye. Wait, I'm the captain.

AUSTIN: Click.

[KEITH, DRE, AND ALI LAUGH]

SYLVI: Incredible.

AUSTIN: So yeah, you hear all that there. And, yeah, feel free to start a long-term project. On that—and just generally, you know, Phrygian, like, again, this sort of stuff happens a lot. You're not given all the details. Sometimes Gucci sneaks you some extra details, but sometimes not. Being a little more flexible, having some, you know, extra—something extra up your sleeve would not be a bad idea, I would say. And this is the type of mission you get a lot, too, where you're like 'go disrupt someone's transport,' you know?

KEITH: Yeah.

AUSTIN: And then, always, there's some bullshit, right?

KEITH: Right.

AUSTIN: There's always some other thing that no one accounted for, whether that is the arrival of the minion of some Affliction, or the—there's more defense than you thought there would be, or the VIP isn't actually there, or you have to figure out which the VIP is because there's actually five people there, you know?

KEITH: Yeah, yeah.

AUSTIN: So. So, yeah. Brnine, are you spending a token for any of these things or also—

ALI: Yeah, I think this is an easy token spend for me. I guess the one that makes the most sense is "discuss how this info will factor into the Sortie" at a d6.

AUSTIN: Yep.

ALI: I think playing that scene was discussing it.

AUSTIN: Yep. Totally. A hundred percent.

KEITH: Yeah. For sure.

ALI: [LAUGHING] So I think—maybe, maybe what Brnine does—maybe there's—because there's a breakfast nook, so there's like a little—there's like a little table to sit at.

KEITH: Yeah.

AUSTIN: Mhm.

ALI: I think maybe Brnine actually does the, like, 'I'm not a dipshit' serious thing of like, pulling out their little pocket computer and like, projecting an image of the Palisade map, and starting to do the work of, like—you know, 'when I present this to people, what sort of, like—' you know, methods of, like—[CHUCKLES]

AUSTIN: Sure.

ALI: It's like the football board of being like 'here's my circles and Os and—' [LAUGHS]

SYLVI: Yeah, you're—you're John Madden-ing.

DRE: Telestrator, yeah.

AUSTIN: Yeah, yeah, yeah, yeah, yeah, I gotcha. Love it. Fantastic.

DRE: Just write 'boom' in big letters over the mission objective.

[ALI CHUCKLES]

KEITH: I'm also—I think I already mentioned this, but I'm going to also use a token to add that d6.

AUSTIN: Cool. So you get two +2d6 on that roll. That's useful. As a reminder—

SYLVI: Can I ask a Phrygian question when we get the chance?

AUSTIN: Go ahead.

SYLVI: What happens if you speak in room form?

KEITH: So—

SYLVI: Is it like coming over like a PA system? Like, how—what's it seem like, you know?

KEITH: So I have a couple answers to this question. The first one that I was thinking about earlier was that I've got a journal on the shelf, and if you open it up, it'll write to you.

[AUSTIN LAUGHS]

SYLVI: Oh, I love that.

AUSTIN: I love that.

DRE: Mhm. That's good.

AUSTIN: That's so good.

KEITH: But I think—I think that like, sort of—you know, if this were a movie, and you needed like a VO thing, and it couldn't just be writing, or someone somewhere said like, 'we need this to be audible, you can't just have subtitles for this,' then it would be like—you know, any sort of, you know, mouth-shaped hole—

[2:10:14]

DRE: Uh-huh?

KEITH: —appliance that like, like an—if there's a microwave, like, the microwave door could open or close, the fridge, like the—you know, anything like that could move back and forth and generate—yeah.

SYLVI: [OVERLAPPING] Yeah, yeah, yeah.

DRE: [OVERLAPPING] Sure, yeah.

AUSTIN: [OVERLAPPING] Yeah, we all know. Yeah, yeah.

DRE: No, I've seen *The Brave Little Toaster*. I know what you're talking about.

[AUSTIN LAUGHS]

KEITH: Oh, perfect, yes. *Brave Little Toaster*, yes. That's what it is.

AUSTIN: Amazing. So, the thing—Keith, you were talking about like, how long should this be, this long-term project. It really depends on what you're trying to build.

KEITH: Okay.

AUSTIN: Values—and I should have said this part before, but it's not listed in Somewhere Nearby, it's under Acquiring Equipment—Equipment like weapons, Altar parts, and so on have a starting value equal to their tier. A Tier 3 object has a starting value of 3, et cetera. Then the tags increase or decrease it from there, but the tags actually need to even out, unless you're—unless you're—you get the bonus from the roll, right? Is my read on this. Right? So that like, if you rolled a +2 on the thing before—Sylvi, you rolled that +2, you actually have—I'm just making sure I'm reading this right. Um, da-da-da... Yeah, with value up to the result, so yes. Basically, you have to count the tier towards the tags, right? So your Tier 1 thing can have one—it's actually a +1 tag, Sylvi. And Janine, it's fine that your thing is a 1, because again, the grappling hook is just a grappling hook. It's in the book as a valuable 1—as a Tier 1 gear, so that just works. So Sylvi, you basically have like, one bonus tag to play with.

SYLVI: Okay.

AUSTIN: And it's human size. It's Tier 1. You're both looking for Tier 1 things, but if you had been looking for Altar-scale things, Tier 3 things, you would have had to have started at a Tier 3, basically. You know what I mean? You'd have to have started at rolling a 3, because that is, that is how—that is the base cost for anything at the size of a mech, is 3, you know?

KEITH: Mhm.

AUSTIN: And so, Keith, I think for you, that's—we have to think about that, right, like? Which is—we're starting at 1, and I think the smallest long-term project clock is four, and then we would say like 'hey, do you want it to be a little bit bigger than that?' That would be a five. If you want it

to be bigger than that, it would be a six. You know? And then the tags just need to even out, or plus one tick of the clock for another +1 on the tags. Do you know what I mean?

KEITH: Yeah, okay.

AUSTIN: So what are you trying to build here?

KEITH: So I had two, like, really basic ideas, like barely even ideas, and that would be to remove one of my negative tags from an already existing piece of gear.

AUSTIN: Mhm.

KEITH: So either removing Slow from the Buccal Outpocket, or Messy from Caustic Breath.

AUSTIN: Gotcha.

KEITH: Another idea, thinking of the—the hit and run—I might have gotten mixed up. Is it—did—is it supposed to be a kidnapping?

AUSTIN: All that Gucci said was—and again, this is not the official—you know.

KEITH: Okay.

AUSTIN: This was Gucci communicating colloquially 'just make sure this person doesn't get there.' To the coronation.

KEITH: Doesn't get there. Okay.

AUSTIN: Yeah.

KEITH: We're like, really good on melee weapons, which is why I don't have a melee weapon, because everyone else has between one or two melee weapons besides me. [CHUCKLES]

AUSTIN: Mhm.

[DRE CHUCKLES]

KEITH: So I don't think we need that. So I think it would be—it would be—it would be a piece of gear—like a non-weapon piece of gear that I have not—that I think I would conco—I would have to concoct it.

AUSTIN: To do what?

KEITH: Oh, just like, to be useful.

AUSTIN: Oh, like a generic—some piece of gear.

KEITH: Yeah, like I had a—yeah, I just don't have the—I just don't have the ideas.

AUSTIN: If you want to start with just 'hey, let's get rid of the negative on one of—'

KEITH: Messy is a really tough one for Caustic Breath.

AUSTIN: Oh, yeah. Uh-huh.

KEITH: So that's sort of what I was thinking, getting rid of Messy on Caustic Breath.

AUSTIN: Sure. Work on your breath being a little less messy.

KEITH: Yeah, yeah.

DRE: Mhm.

AUSTIN: Yeah, I would say that that's a—that that is a five-step clock.

KEITH: Okay.

AUSTIN: Or—yeah, I would say it's a—I would say that that's a five-step—eh, you already have this gear, right?

KEITH: I already have it. I already have it.

AUSTIN: So it would be a four-step clock instead.

KEITH: Okay. Yeah.

AUSTIN: That is the smallest a clock gets. So, let's call that a four-step. And that would be—[CHUCKLES] the clock would be 'making your Caustic Breath less messy.' What does working on that even look like?

KEITH: Um, great question. Well, I—I think maybe we can tie this back to being the room. Like, I think that you—

[DRE CHUCKLES]

KEITH: I think it requires a different kind of breathing than—you know, Phrygian is someone who is used to doing multiple different kinds of breathing.

AUSTIN: Right.

KEITH: You know, having taken several different long-term forms over the course of their life.

AUSTIN: Sure.

KEITH: Sometimes having been—you know, having been their, you know, true form out in the Branched sections of space, having been the sort of—what do we call it in PARTIZAN? The, like, the diplomatic—

AUSTIN: The diplomatic and war forms, basically. Yeah, yeah.

KEITH: [OVERLAPPING] And the war forms. I can't remember if there's any other—

AUSTIN: [OVERLAPPING] 'Envoy forms' is what we call it.

KEITH: What was it?

AUSTIN: Envoy. Envoy?

KEITH: Envoy. Envoy, yeah.

AUSTIN: Yeah.

KEITH: So those different, you know, being the—being a smaller room than Deck 7—also Deck 7.

AUSTIN: Right, also Deck 7, the last time you were a room.

KEITH: Yeah, the last time I was a room. That was a bad—this is—I'm kind of reclaiming being a room with this.

AUSTIN: I gotcha, yeah.

DRE: Sure.

KEITH: Because Deck 7, that wasn't a—that wasn't a good one.

AUSTIN: I love that for you, actually. That's great.

KEITH: Yeah.

AUSTIN: Yeah, you were ba—you didn't like being Deck 7—

KEITH: No.

AUSTIN: But you were like, 'that does—I don't—what if I could—what if I could figure out a different type of room I did like being?'

KEITH: Right, 'if I could be a room that I liked, what kind of room would that be?'

AUSTIN: Yeah.

KEITH: So—

AUSTIN: [CHUCKLES] I genuinely like it. I genuinely love this for you. This is a—I'm—

KEITH: [CHUCKLES] Yeah, yeah! This has always been part of it.

SYLVI: Listen, I have—you just change the word "room" to "boy," and I have had these conversations with transgender people I know. So, like...

[ALI AND KEITH LAUGH]

AUSTIN: Welcome to the Branched, baby!

KEITH: So, I think that has—just, all of these different kinds of breathing that I've done, and especially this newest kind, I think this is like, basically breath training for—

AUSTIN: Mhm.

KEITH: —for not spewing caustic breath particles on my allies.

AUSTIN: I—yeah, that's—it's a good thing to work on.

KEITH: Yeah.

AUSTIN: Alright, tick a box. You're working on your breath training. Fantastic.

KEITH: Um... where are those boxes? [CHUCKLING] Here we go.

AUSTIN: Oh, you know what, I should—I—

KEITH: Is this a Gravity Clock, do I just put a—or should I—

AUSTIN: No, make an—just add a little thing in notes for now, and I'll see if I can bring over a—an extra—

KEITH: Okay. I already—

AUSTIN: Is it in...

KEITH: I already have a bonus clock for a different thing, which is start—I still—we need to talk about this, because I don't really know how to use it.

AUSTIN: I found it, I found it.

KEITH: "Start a bonus clock—bonus Gravity Clock with yourself. Every time it completes, instead of gaining an advance, you may detail a new Ascendant form, and a unique piece of gear it has access to." So would it—would it be just the—a Thine Own Self Be True clock? Is that what that would—it would just be—I already have this as a move.

AUSTIN: You do already seem to—well, that would be for a new piece of gear, not modifying what you already have.

KEITH: Right, right. Okay. So—

AUSTIN: My guess is you probably should have already checked that clock once.

KEITH: Well, okay, so it says—it says, um—

AUSTIN: When you have a clock with yourself—

KEITH: It says that—

AUSTIN: Can you read it—read it one more time and read it slowly.

KEITH: Yes.

AUSTIN: So that we can all—okay.

KEITH: “Start a bonus Gravity Clock with yourself.”

AUSTIN: Okay.

KEITH: “Every time it completes, instead of gaining an advance, you may detail a new Ascendant form and a unique piece of gear it has access to, with tags that add up to value 2.”

AUSTIN: Love it.

KEITH: Which, to me, says that I *could* gain an advance—

AUSTIN: No.

KEITH: —because it says I *may* detail a new Ascendant form.

AUSTIN: No, it says “instead of” gaining an advance.

KEITH: Okay. But this is separate to like, Spotlight, and—

AUSTIN: Oh, I s—right. Well, every Gravity Clock, when you complete a Gravity Clock, you can take an advance.

KEITH: Okay.

AUSTIN: I was saving that for when we got to that, but when you fill out a Gravity Clock—

KEITH: Yeah.

AUSTIN: Like, so when it goes from—you know, each Gravity Clock has six spots in it. When you fill it up, you can either redefine the relationship, taking an advancement, starting a new Gravity Clock and increasing its value to—by one, from like, +1 to +2. So like, let's say—like, what's a Gravity Clock we definitely already have? Let's say—oh, so, actually, Dre, for instance, you did this—I'm gonna correct you on this one.

DRE: Oh.

AUSTIN: You increased your Gravity Clock with Partial to +2. That is not what you do. You add another—

DRE: Oh.

AUSTIN: You add another little thing to it. Every Gravity Clock is a clock, right?

DRE: Ohhh.

AUSTIN: And so you—it starts at +1, and then as you fill it in more and more—you see what I mean?

DRE: Ohhh, okay. Yeah, yeah, yeah, yeah, yeah.

AUSTIN: As you complete the six-step clock, you get a chance to either redefine it—so you could, for instance, Figure, rewrite “Palisade and I were both resurrected against our will” when that hits six, right? You could commit to the relationship increasing its value by one, and taking an advancement in the same way, but then you lock in what it is.

[2:20:00]

So you say, ‘this is it. This is our—this is our big final—this is how I feel about you forever. This is—we’re locked in on this.’ And at that point, you could, when you take an action that ends the relationship, like sacrificing yourself for your beloved or betraying the person you’re supposed to be loyal to, succeed as if you rolled a 10, and cross out the clock forever, or you could abandon the relationship when it fills up all the way, taking an advancement and erasing the Gravity Clock, freeing up a new spot, freeing up a spot for a new one.

So you could either advance it by one, lock it in, and letting it be a sort of a resource you could then spend for a free +10 whenever you end the relationship, or abandoning it and writing in a new one. So, Dre, you need to advance that four more times to advance to hit one of these things.

DRE: Yeah, yeah, yeah. Gotcha.

AUSTIN: Phrygian, you should have one for yourself. You should have that bonus one for yourself.

KEITH: Okay.

AUSTIN: Your own self be—[CHUCKLES]. You’ve written “own self be clock,” which is excellent.

[KEITH LAUGHS]

DRE: That’s pretty good.

AUSTIN: It’s pretty good. And then there are certain times when you make moves that will advance Gravity. And any time that those would advance Gravity with someone else, but you’re there, you do it. So, did you Exchange Blows last game at all?

KEITH: Yes.

AUSTIN: Did you, or did you only Strike Decisively?

KEITH: I only struck decisively.

AUSTIN: You did.

KEITH: I was super decisive last game.

AUSTIN: You’re super decisive. So that does not advance Gravity Clocks, whereas when you

Exchange Blows, you do advance Gravity Clocks.

KEITH: Okay.

AUSTIN: I would say that this thing you're doing makes sense fictionally to also tick this clock.

KEITH: Okay.

AUSTIN: So go ahead and tick this clock by one.

KEITH: Boom, one.

AUSTIN: Got it. So now, yeah, you'll see it slowly begins to fill in. Alright.

KEITH: And it—are we saying this is separate from the long-term proj—

AUSTIN: This is separate from the long-term project.

KEITH: Okay, gotcha. So I'll write it in notes.

AUSTIN: I'm saying this—I'm saying this ticks the clock because when you do it, do it. And you being like, 'hmm, how do I be a version of myself that doesn't hurt my friends?' Is one hundred percent you ticking a clock with yourself about who you are inside of yourself. You know?

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