

[COUNTER/Weight -01: Secret World Gen Episode](#)

Transcriber: ren [happierstories#8865] [0-1:00:29] & the dread biter#0090 [1:00:30-3:39:46]

ALI: But like—

DRE: I went to a mushroom fair, like three weeks ago.

AUSTIN: *Yeah*, you did!

DRE: [cross] It was good! [someone sneezes]

JACK: [cross] Is this true?

AUSTIN: Gettin' all shroomed up.

DRE: Yeah! No, it was a—it's like the time of year when like these, these mushrooms that grow up alongside the Appalachian Mountains start to come in, [AUSTIN: Uh-huh.] and so it's just a bunch of like, mountain men bringing their mushrooms to sell.

AUSTIN: [chuckling] All right, that sounds pretty okay.

DRE: Yeah, it was pretty cool! And then I ate 'em, after sauteeing them in some butter, because if you eat 'em raw you get really sick.

[pause]

KEITH: [distant] "Hey, wh—hey, what do you think about maybe eating one of this—this is fungus growing out of the ground, you wanna eat that? [close to mic] Make sure you cook it first. [cross] They hate us.

DRE: [cross] I wonder who like, ha—first had the idea to eat a weird looking thing that came out of the ground.

JACK: Well, [cross] they lasted for about forty-five minutes.

KEITH: [cross] Like, straight away, like the first guy. [AUSTIN laughs] The first guy on the first day saw something weird and tried to eat it.

DRE: 'Cause I'll send you a picture of this mushroom I ate and it does not look like something you should put in your mouth [cross] and/or your tummy.

AUSTIN: [cross] Yeah, but like, *nothing* looks like you should eat it.

ALI: Yeah.

DRE: [cross] This—this especially weird.

ALI: [cross] Like everything is weird until you eat it.

AUSTIN: [cross] All food is—like, everything in the world is weird.

JACK: [firmly] No. [KEITH laughs] No, I disagree.

KEITH: Yeah, every—[JACK: Cherries.] yeah, all things are [cross] fucked up.

AUSTIN: [cross] No, ch—no, 'cause cherries literally look a lot like other things that will kill you.

JACK: Oh, that's true. [cross] Yeah. You're not wrong there, actually.

AUSTIN: [cross] Like—! There's nothing in the world that looks—really truly...

KEITH: Yeah, one lateral move left from a cherry and you're dead.

JACK: Oh...

ART: Not hurt. Not hurt yet.

DRE: What about like...bread?

AUSTIN: Bread isn't natural, Dre.

KEITH: [cross] Yeah, bread isn't natural.

AUSTIN: [cross] Someone had to take a grass that came out of the ground, [DRE: Okay, that's fair.] mush it up a whole bunch, [cross] like I don't even know—that—

DRE: [cross] Okay! I didn't know we were only talking about natural things. Okay.

AUSTIN: That blows my mind even more. [KEITH: Yeah, yeah.] The idea that someone could come up with bread is...

KEITH: Someone figured out bread.

AUSTIN: Holy shit! [claps] And then they [JACK: What about—] learned how to leaven it, they learned how to, how to make it...

DRE: Yeah, the...

AUSTIN: [cross] **What!**

ALI: [cross] Wait wait wait.

DRE: [cross] The yeast part is the part that blows my mind.

AUSTIN: That's—whuh [sputtering] [makes blowing mind sound]

KEITH: And then they figured out that if you put cheese on ground up cow in between the bread it's fucking great.

AUSTIN: Well, they figured out how to do cheese! Too!

KEITH: They figured—yeah—

ALI: [cross] Yeah, cheese!

DRE: [cross] Yeah.

KEITH: They pulled the thing from the cow and made it all old and weird!

AUSTIN: Right. And then they killed the cow. [laughter] And ground that up.

KEITH: [laughing] They killed—[laughing harder]

[DRE laughing]

JACK: [cross] "Nice work, cow." Bam!

ART: [cross] I don't think this is all as miraculous as you guys think.

AUSTIN: Hey, Art's here!

[ALI giggles]

KEITH: Art, hey, Art, isn't food fucked up?

[Music starts - "[The Long Way Around](#)"]

AUSTIN: Hey everybody, welcome to Friends at the Table, an actual play podcast focused on critical worldbuilding, smart characterization, and fun interaction between good friends. We are as always, presented by streamfriends.tv and runbutton.net. I am Austin Walker. Joining me today for this new endeavor that we're taking part in, are the same old crew, basically. Keith Carberry.

[ART laughing]

KEITH: Hi, hey, what's up, what's going on, how you doin'?

AUSTIN: Art Tebbel.

ART: Yo.

AUSTIN: Nick Scratch.

NICK: Hello!

AUSTIN: Uh, who's next? Andrew Swan.

DRE: Hey, Austin.

AUSTIN: Ali Acampora.

ALI: Hey!

AUSTIN: And Jack de Quidt.

JACK: Hi there.

AUSTIN: So like I said, we're doing something new today. If you've been listening for the last, I guess, seven or eight months now, how long have we been running?

KEITH: Oh, years and years.

AUSTIN: Oh—yeah, if you've [ALI laughs] been listening since the very beginning. Ages ago.

DRE: I think seven months is about right.

AUSTIN: I think that's about right. Especially from when this will eventually come out, which will be June, probably, right?

KEITH: Something like that, yeah.

AUSTIN: Okay.

KEITH: Although at that point, it'll be closer to nine or ten months.

DRE: Yeah, 'cause we started in October, didn't we?

AUSTIN: [cross] Something like that.

KEITH: [cross] No, I thought we started in September. [AUSTIN: It was definitely—] It was in Oct—it couldn't have been October—[DRE: Oh, that's right.] 'cause I was already moved out of my new apartment.

AUSTIN: [cross] Right, right.

DRE: [cross] Yeah, I didn't start till October, that's why [AUSTIN: Dre missed the first—right.] I'm thinking that you all started earlier. That's right.

ART: [cross] We're all dying.

AUSTIN: [cross] So—

NICK: [cross] When I came out the womb, the doctor slapped my butt,

[Music fades out]

—and then they handed me a microphone. [DRE laughs] and they said, "Hey, you're on this actual play podcast."

[AUSTIN laughs]

ART: [cross] That's saying something, 'cause you're older than the rest of us.

NICK: [cross] And I said, "Wah."

[light laughter]

AUSTIN: And that was the first Fantasma—[cross] characterization.

KEITH: [cross] It's actually really, [DRE: Yep! [laughs]] really impressive that the rest of us were able to record prenatally.

AUSTIN: [laughing] It is! It's amazing, we're fantastic. So, we—

ART: I'm not sure Keith's parents had met yet.

AUSTIN: Oh, boy. So, we are...we've wrapped up the first season of Friends at the Table, which was a podcast of *Dungeon World*, and we are now moving into what I'm kind of thinking...[sighs sharply] I've been thinking about it as like, an off-season show? But like, also maybe it's just

season two. Maybe it's fair to just call it season two. We're not done with *Dungeon World*, we're not done with those characters, but that game is autumnal for me.

KEITH: Done with Hella.

AUSTIN: [laughs] You know, a lot of people are done with Hella. I've seen Twitter.

KEITH: I'm kidding, I'm—

AUSTIN: Everyone loves Hella.

ALI: Hella's number one. Please.

AUSTIN: Mm-hmm.

[DRE cracks up]

KEITH: But I do wanna say—

NICK: No, ever—[KEITH: Real quick, the first...] everyone's done with Fantasma. But me.
[AUSTIN chuckles] I have some plans yet.

[light chuckling]

KEITH: The first episode of *Dungeon World*, of *Friends at the Table*, came out September 12th!

AUSTIN: Okay.

ALI: Oh, wow.

DRE: Dang.

JACK: I was in a house with noisy dogs.

AUSTIN: Mm-hm!

ART: Never forget.

DRE: That's right, I remember that.

AUSTIN: So, we are now moving onto a new thing, which is a lot more experimental, I think, than even *Dungeon World* was. I say *Dungeon World* was experimental for us because we ended up doing this, the weird two party system. You know, like they have in the States. Um.

KEITH: Yep.

[ALI giggles]

AUSTIN: I don't know who...okay. So now we're gonna do something even more experimental than that. Starting today, we're going to [cross] begin worldbuilding—

KEITH: [cross] Introduce a third party.

AUSTIN: Third party! Still in *Dungeon World*, just like, way far away from the planet that *Dungeon World* takes place on. It's like a [Wizardry](#) game.

DRE: Am I Ralph Nader? Is that what we...?

AUSTIN: Yes.

DRE: Okay. Nice.

AUSTIN: Andrew's playing Ralph Nader, this is...great. I'm Dennis Kucinich. Okay.

KEITH: Bob Dole's running again?

AUSTIN: [amused huff] So. We're gonna do a game called *Mechnoir*. Which is a hack, like an official hack of a game called *Technoir*. Which is a kind of cyberpunk, hardboiled detective film noir...kind of story game. Very similar in some ways to something like *Dungeon World* or *Apocalypse World*. A little bit more structured in terms of the stakes and in terms of the structure of play, but also a little less structured. Because it's a game that asks me as the GM to come up with things on the fly and in an even more.. you know, in an even quicker way. Right? Like, in *Dungeon World* there's still a lot of prep that I did, and I'll still do prep here, but in *Mechnoir* it's going to be a lot of like figuring out what's happening at the table live in a way that kind of replicates the structure of a film noir narrative. But also, there will be giant robots there.

[ALI: Mm-hm.] You know, when I pitched *Dungeon World* originally for Friends at the Table, I gave you all like a bunch of kind of keystone ideas to think about. I said like, "Oh, think of it as Wes Anderson does Tolkien, or does fantasy." I said, "Think of it as kind of Adventure Time-y but a little more serious." I said, of course I said, "Autumn, not Winter," right? Like that was the kind of key phrase for us. There's lots of media that I hope to draw on here. Obviously I'm a big anime, mecha fan. So there are obviously a lot of Gundam shows that come to mind for me here? Things like [08th MS Team](#), and [0080: War in the Pocket](#), the kind of like lower-powered Gundam shows especially. Also film noir, like [The Third Man](#), I think is really high up on my list for that? This kind of Cold War era film noir. Lots of questions about loyalty and about who's really pulling the strings, you know, behind the scenes. And of course, shows like [Cowboy Bebop](#), right? Like this is going to be a sci-fi, cyberpunk film noir mashup and that's what—that's, y'know, *Cowboy Bebop* is already doing that. Except we'll have giant robots

involved. That's not the experimental part. The experimental part is, you might have noticed, there are still seven people on this podcast. [cross] And that is too...

KEITH: [cross] Yeah, this is the most voices I'll have had to edit at once. Ever.

AUSTIN: Yeah. Ever. So, we—there's no way we could do a game that is completely just—one party of doing cool noir shit. Like as much as I would like that. It would just be a mess and no one would have enough attention given to them, and the plot would just fall apart. *Mechnoir* is also just not built for that. So what I ended up doing, and if you follow me on Twitter you may have seen me asking about solutions for this months ago, but—I'm going to run two games. One game—or, we're going to play two games. One of them isn't even going to be me running it, really. But one of them's gonna be *Mechnoir*. On that game, Art, Ali, Jack, and Keith will be playing characters in a world we're gonna develop today.

On the other side, there's going to be a kind of higher tier game, where Andrew, Nick, and I kind of—pull the strings on the different factions of the world, using a different game. A game called *Stars Without Number*, which is a tabletop game focused on kind of like, space-faring adventure stuff. We're throwing out all of the space-faring adventure stuff and only using this one thing that's sort of a GM tool to figure out what the factions are doing in this world, and that—that GM tool isn't even built to be multiplayer, but like, fuck it, we're gonna do it in a cool multiplayer way. And we'll talk about that in a little bit. And on that level, we're going to be doing the kind of like, if you've seen shows like Gundam, or just in general, any sort of military shit or spy shit, any sort of espionage stories, the kind of like—when the camera turns back to Headquarters, and gives you the look at what the bureaucrats are up to or shows you kind of what—you know, how the big picture is influencing the little picture, or how, vice versa, how the events that happened in the small scale adventure trickle up into the larger sociopolitical and military conflicts? We're going to be focusing on that stuff, bouncing from perspective to perspective, doing lots of abstract storytelling and some specific you know like embodied scenes too. And we're also going to be using this kind of interesting—it's almost like a board game or a strategy game? To play out how the factions of the larger world, kind of fit together, and how they fight, and then hopefully that stuff will lead to really interesting effects at the ground level.

We'll see. Again, it's really experimental. None of these systems were really built to interact in this way, but I think we can do it pretty well. There's another thing that we're using *Stars Without Number* for. Part of what makes *Stars Without Number* a really cool system is that it has a system for building sectors of stars. Star sectors, you might call them [chuckling]. And randomly generating planets. And we're gonna get to that in a little bit, because I have a whole bunch of stuff set up where we can kind of build the star sector that we're going to be playing in. But first, I wanna talk about like, just general stuff.

Right in front of you all right now is an image of the galaxy. This is an artist's rendition of the Milky Way. You can see where the sun is, our sun, which is just you know to the I guess galactic north of the Orion Spur, just at the very—kind of the galactic north tip of the Orion Spur. And that kind of leads sort of into the Sagittarius arm, which then eventually hits the Perseus arm. This

is—a huge amount of space. This is like, infinitely big in terms of like—[chuckle] This is so big, I don't have words for how big this is. Like, we [DRE laughs] we can't convey how big the Milky Way galaxy is. And so, it's like, silly to say it takes place all over here. But—what I do think, what I would like to think about here is, I think I want this game...I'm pretty sure I want this game to exist where the Sagittarius Arm and the Perseus Arm kind of hit. I'm trying to click on a thing so I can show you, but instead I'm moving the map around. Like a doof. [quietly] Why is this...why..?

ART: Hey Austin. What are you talking about? Where am I looking at this?

ALI: Oh...

AUSTIN: Oh my god, Art. [KEITH: Roll20?] There's a fucking link in the Skype.

ART: [affronted] There isn't!

AUSTIN: There super—[ART: I checked.] It's there twice.

ALI: Hold up, I—

ART: Still don't see it. Nope. Nope.

ALI: Art, Art, it's okay.

AUSTIN: [mumbling] Why am I not, why is this not letting me...? [sighs] Please let me click on this stupid thing. Dear, dear map thing. Oh, let me move this back, maybe. Now can I click on..?

KEITH: Oo, nice ping.

JACK: That was me.

KEITH: Oh.

AUSTIN: I'm trying to click on a circle that I drew, once. And it won't [cross] let me.

NICK: [cross] Are you on the right layer?

AUSTIN: Yeah, I am. Oh, you know what? No I'm not, 'cause I moved it to the GM layer. There we go. Right. Now...there. Okay.

JACK: Oh, Jesus, okay.

AUSTIN: So!

KEITH: 'Cause that circle's far away from where [cross] I thought it was gonna be.

AUSTIN: [cross] Oh, yeah. It's super far away. [ALI: Yeah.]

Because that's where the Sagittarius Arm—so. There is some more stuff here that I kind of have in mind. This is what we kind of talked about in Skype, a little bit, over the last couple of months?

KEITH: Mm-hm.

AUSTIN: I should also, I just realized I should give the phrase that I have in mind for this game. And that kind of, will set the tone a little bit more for all the questions that we have going forward. You know, the *Dungeon World* game's phrase, its kind of key word was, "Autumn, not Winter." Here, it's a phrase that's spoken by a character—no one will probably ever say this in the actual play, but I think it's important for me to say it now so that we have it in our heads when we think about what the stakes are and what kind of themes we wanna touch on. It's, you know, in reference to these giant mechs: **"We could've built them to look like anything, but we made them look like us."**

Because I think there's something really weird and uncanny about the fact that we tell these stories about giant robots that look like people. And like, in those worlds, that would be really—there's something weird there. There's something weird there that those shows very rarely address. Not never, some shows absolutely do, but many of them do not. And that's fine, like I don't—I'm not upset at those shows for not doing it, but if part of *Dungeon World's* campaign was like, us tackling some of the unspoken shit in Tolkien, this is going to be tackling a bit of that stuff here in mech stories and space stories, and you know even in film noir, which often—it, y'know, it takes place at a point of kind of big sociopolitical change? And often technological change? That stuff just kind of sits in the background. Here, I want it to be in the forefront. We're going to be thinking about the ways technologies interact with us, and the ways we think about technology, and stuff like that. So those are some of the big ideas I wanna hit.

So yeah. This is the map. And that little zone there is where I would like the game to take place in. The thing that we talked about a little bit on Skype was that I think that there are...I think that this is a cold war game. I think this is a game that takes place during a cold war.

[15:00]

And I have a few big picture ideas that I'm really interested in. I think that there are two main factions, or—maybe three? Maybe it's one from the Sagittarius arm, one from the Perseus arm, and then one from the further north of the Perseus arm, where it like—where those two arms kind of hook into each other and become one? But there's also another thing that I like, which is—and this is the thing I don't think I've talked to you guys about at all—but I like the notion that both of those galactic empires, or whatever, originated in—from Earth. Right? These are, forever and ever and ever ago, were both—can trace themselves back to Earth. And maybe one

of the things that separates them is why they—one left the Orion spur, and one stayed behind. I don't know what that is yet.

The second thing is, you were talking about the lines that you were seeing on the map before? Those...are these red Xs...over what are called the galactic bridges. Galactic bridges kind of actually run, in real life, between these galactic arms. Between like the Sagittarius arm and the Perseus arm, between the Orion spur and the Perseus arm. Those are like collections of stars that make it—that would theoretically make it possible to move—if you could. If you had spaceships! Which, like, we don't. Not like these.

KEITH: Well, you guys don't.

AUSTIN: Great. [DRE laughs] You would be able to move from the Orion Spur and the Perseus arm. I really like this notion that at some point, a group of people moved to the Perseus arm, and then colonized that whole arm, while a different group was colonizing the Orion Spur and the Sagittarius arm? And over a history of thousands and thousands of years, destroyed those worlds in between the two. In like the most dreadful, terrible way. And the most recent one was still a while ago, right? Like this furthest to the north one, the one that's like up there? Was destroyed a while ago, and now, once again, these two cultures are coming into conflict, or coming into contact, and the question is, what sort of relationship will they have? It's not an open war. But it could be, and that's kind of scary. Because the last few times it happened, lots and lots and lots of people have been killed.

That's all I got. I don't know what these empires are like. I think the one goofy thing I really want is I want to import a set of things that we said when we used to play [Titanfall](#) a lot, which is I think one of these groups has mechs called Divines, and one has mechs called riggers. I think that's it. [cross] I think that's our guiding principle.

KEITH: [cross] Ah, yeah that's the best.

[ALI giggles]

Did we talk about that in Skype, or was that just in my head the whole time?

AUSTIN: I think we did, I think we did.

DRE: I definitely remember Divines coming up.

AUSTIN: Yeah. And I think that that paints one of these factions in a completely different light than the other. I even kind of like the idea that it's not just, "Oh, they're calling them Divines," but there is something—faintly religious [ART: They're worship—] about them.

Yeah! Yeah. I like the notion of a culture that thinks of these weapons of war as being actual—either representations of something deified, or actually deified themselves. You know?

JACK: [cross] So, are those—

ART: [cross] But are they still built? Should we talk about that?

AUSTIN: Let's jump to that in a bit. Like, let's start—I actually wanna start with something from another game [laughs lightly] that we're stealing something from, which is *Microscope*. One of the things that I really love about *Microscope*, which is a game about worldbuilding, is that early on in that game, everyone gets to say something that they don't want to be in the game, and they can also say something like, "Oh, here's a thing I would love to include." So let's start there, just for the sake of comfort and interest, like—is there anything anybody really doesn't want to come up in this world?

[long pause]

Sounds like no. [ALI chuckles] But. So, examples here are things like, you could say, "Oh, I don't want magic in this world." Or like, "Oh, I don't want lasers. Like I just don't want—that's not a thing I'm interested in." I'm not saying that we should do that, I like lasers a whole bunch, [DRE chuckling] I'm pro-lasers. [cross] But like—

KEITH: [cross] Lasers are—lasers are a lot of fun.

AUSTIN: But like saying "no lasers," completely changes the tone of this game, right?

KEITH: Mm-hmm.

DRE: Sure.

AUSTIN: Completely. So it's like those sorts of things. And it can be either actual stuff, like *stuff*, or conceptual stuff, right? Like—I said I wanted it to be a Cold War game, but we can just as easily say like—we can say like, "Well, I don't wanna talk specifically about communism," right? Again, I'm not saying not to do that, y'all know me, but [light chuckling] that's the sort of stuff that we could say. Like, "No," or we could say like, "Oh, I really wanna talk about this," or "I really wanna include this image." So are there any things like that that come to mind...?

KEITH: [cross] I just sense—

NICK: [cross] I don't want "lasers" spelled with an s.

AUSTIN: You want them with a z.

ALI: What!

NICK: With a z, yeah.

AUSTIN: [amused but just barely] Hmm...Maybe one of the factions calls them "lazers" with a z.
[ALI giggles] [cross] They're the same...

NICK: [cross] Okay.

DRE: [cross] It all started—

KEITH: [cross] That's a real sticking point, yeah.

AUSTIN: That's the war! There it is!

NICK: Alright, how 'bout—[chuckles] Here's a serious answer for real.

AUSTIN: Okay. Yeah.

NICK: I think it would be cool if we stayed away from...[clears throat] like, huge epic battles, with like, [AUSTIN: Yeah.] thousands of mechs?

AUSTIN: Sure. Absolutely. I'm with you on that.

NICK: Because I kinda wanna—like, I wanna keep the mechs...powerful. And special.

AUSTIN: Okay. Like in other words, like—a group of four or five is a terrifying thing. Even.

NICK: One is a terrifying thing.

AUSTIN: Right. Okay. Yeah.

NICK: Four or five is like, that will destroy a world.

JACK: [cross] Well, cause we're gonna have mechs, though, 'cause like...

AUSTIN: [cross] Oh, so you're going way—yeah, that's—I think that's a little too strong, in the sense that like, there are probably going to be two in the party. Do you know what I mean?

NICK: Okay. Well!

AUSTIN: But I think—but, I could easily see a hundred destroy a world. Do you know what I mean? Like des—like, blow up a planet.

NICK: Sure.

AUSTIN: But like—

NICK: Oh, well, no, yeah, [cross] I didn't mean...sorry.

ART: [cross] Like literally destroy a world. Like turn it into dirt.

AUSTIN: Oh, right right right. Sorry, I didn't realize that you were being hyperbolic. [humorous] Because, you know, I was just [ALI giggles] talking about the *actual* destruction of stars and planets, so I wasn't sure if you were—that's, yeah.

NICK: Right, oh, okay. Well, I actually didn't know that you meant the literal destruction of a planet, either. [laughs] [AUSTIN: Right, no, so—] When you were talking about that, I thought you meant like, you know, the contents of it, [cross] the societies and everyone on it.

AUSTIN: [cross] No, no, I—so, this image that I have of the bridges between the Orion Spur and the Perseus arm, those bridges being destroyed, it's sort of to me—the image that I have in mind, the sort of like—you know when there's a forest fire, one of the ways that you can stop a forest fire is by starting a new one? To burn off the path, you know what I mean?

JACK: Mm-hm.

AUSTIN: The image that I have is that one of these empires did something multiple times, detonated a sort of device, that would consume the whole arm if left to be—left to burn. And so, the other side had to do this terrible thing of like, trying to evacuate as many people as possible, and then—cutting off that like incoming wave of destruction by sending one back at it to kind of cut it off at the pass. Like we are talking about huge, galactic level destruction, that throws things into complete, you know—disarray. [NICK: Okay. Sure.]

But that's all happened a long time ago. Not like—no one's forgotten. This is like the opposite of the Erasure. Right? Like the Erasure, in *Dungeon World*, was like, "Hey, something bad happened. We don't know." This is like, "No, this bad thing happened multiple times. It's really terrible. And it can't happen again, in a weird way. Because we're done with this bridge shit. Like the bridges are gone, now we're just connected? And if someone does something like that again, it's going to be so, so much more devastating." You know?

NICK: Sure.

AUSTIN: That's like the only plot thing I have. So again, anything else that anyone thinks...But I do genuinely like the idea, Nick. Like I am—I like a lot of mech shows. I tend to like the ones in which mechs are thought of as being like individually really powerful. [NICK: Yeah.] But, not like—like, so, I like *Gundam: 08th MS Team* because those are fights between like little handfuls of units of mechs. Or something, again, like uh...*0080: War in the Pocket*, where like the big concluding fight is between a total of four or five things, right?

NICK: Sure.

AUSTIN: Whereas something like [Gundam Wing](#), where it's like, "Oh, this one robot can destroy hundreds and hundreds of enemy robots," is like...

DRE: Yeah.

AUSTIN: I get—I was a teen once too, and that's pretty badass, but like, that's not [DRE laughs] super interesting from like a character level, necessarily? Like. Or I guess it [NICK: Right.] could be. It definitely could be, but it kind of goes against the kind of noir setting I think I wanna build.

KEITH: It makes it harder [NICK: Yeah.] when there's seven of us.

AUSTIN: [laughing] Right. Exactly. Exactly.

ART: I have a thing.

AUSTIN: Sure.

ART: I don't think I want [Star Wars](#) stuff.

AUSTIN: So like no lightsabers.

ART: Or like, or like—spaceship fights like that.

[pause]

AUSTIN: So what would you like instead?

ART: I—I've just always thought, like...I dunno. That just doesn't—that feels very...big to me. [cross] I'm looking smaller.

AUSTIN: [cross] Yeah, like a little operatic, and not like...

ART: Yeah.

AUSTIN: Yeah.

ART: Like, if we're gonna have like ship combat—and I'm not even sure we do, right? Like fighting in spaceships seems super hard.

AUSTIN: Yeah, sure.

ART: But like...you know, I'm thinking more [Star Trek](#)-esque. [AUSTIN: Okay.] And like, old *Star Trek*, too, like, you know, it's more like, we're gonna line up and just shoot things at each other.

AUSTIN: Or do you like, like sub combat? The way like old *Star Trek*—I don't know how many old *Star Trek* you've watched, but like some of my favorite old *Star Trek* episodes are the ones in which the starship Enterprise is just a submarine. And like,

DRE: Yeah.

AUSTIN: The distances are hard to understand, and like everything—there are enemies that are like, hard to detect, and—space is a big, dark place, and it's hard to like [ART: Sure.] to stay targeted on something like that. So almost more naval combat, but not even big naval combat? Naval combat of like a...kind of like—again, I think submarine combat is the thing that comes to mind the most. Like, where are they [NICK: Yeah.] out there?

Or—maybe this world also has big battle stuff? But like, this game certainly won't.

NICK: There's absolutely sections of *Wrath of Khan* that you could like...

AUSTIN: Yeah.

NICK: ...pick up, change some bits around, and it could be *Red October*.

AUSTIN: Right, exactly. Yeah, I think—*Red October*, I think *Red October* [ART: Yeah.] and not Battlefield LA. [cross] Or whatever that fuckin'—

ART: [cross] Yeah, I'm into that.

NICK: [cross] Right.

AUSTIN: Whatever that terrible movie was.

ART: Battlefield Earth?

AUSTIN: Tha—no, the other one. The Los Angeles one.

JACK: Um, [Battle: LA](#)? Was it called *Battle: LA*?

DRE: I think it was called [cross] *Battle: Los Angeles*.

JACK: [cross] It was the thing with Aaron Eckhart.

AUSTIN: What a bad name.

ART: *Escape from LA*.

AUSTIN: No, not that one. [ALI and DRE laugh] I'm pro-*Escape from LA*. That's a bad movie, not as good as New York, but I'm still pro-LA. [pause] Alright, so that's a good one. I like that one. Like we're not going to have....As much as I love TIE fighters, this isn't a TIE fighter [ALI: Yeah.] game.

JACK: I'm really—conflicted about this. So I think it's something that I'm definitely putting on the table to talk about [AUSTIN: Sure.] as opposed to putting on the table to veto?

AUSTIN: Sure.

JACK: [inhales] I really don't know how I feel about magic.

AUSTIN: Yeah, me either.

DRE: Yeah.

AUSTIN: So, the—I will say that part of the thing that we're using for worldbuilding that generates planets includes some psionic stuff? Um, and—[JACK: Y'see—yeah!] and I don't know how to feel about that stuff, and if it comes up, we could just, in the point, say like, "Uh, no, we're gonna turn it to something else." But I'm curious what people think of it.

JACK: It's hard, right? I think—from my perspective, I would be pro-magic if we found a way to do it that felt cool and technological and cyberpunk-y and [AUSTIN: Right.] interesting. You know, almost in the, *Shadowrun* sense?

AUSTIN: Yeah, I actually—I've come around really hard on *Shadowrun*'s use of magic. I spent a long time kind of like, [affecting a bluthery tone] "I wish *Shadowrun* was just straight cyberpunk and there was no magic in it." Mostly because William Gibson told me to say that, right. Like William Gibson is really anti-*Shadowrun*. And I think he's missing something interesting, which is...in *Shadowrun*, there is technology running right up against magic, and both of those things are fucking magic, in that setting. [JACK: Mm.] What the technology does is effectively magical, just as magical as casting a fireball.

But the *world* reacts so much differently to magic than it does to just hackers. [JACK: Yeah.] Or to cybernetic arms, or to weird gene splicing. That stuff is all natural and normal, and magic, which is in that setting, quite literally *natural*, is both fetishized and feared. And that's really an interesting thing to play with, with when it comes to like how society reacts to things that are fundamentally similar, but culturally have different connotations. So if we do something that is magical or psionic or whatever, I wanna be able to tackle it in a way that's meaningful?

JACK: Mm-hm.

AUSTIN: Y'know, this is super obvious, but if we do the Force, it has to be the *KOTOR II* Force and not [JACK and ALI chuckle] the *Star Wars: The Phantom Menace* Force, if that makes sense.

KEITH: I mean, I'm just glad that I'm not the first person to say "KOTOR II" on a recording.

AUSTIN: [laughter] You always know, with me and Keith, it's gonna come up, it's gonna be one of us.

ART: This might be—it might be too fine-grain for this right now, but I kind of... You know, if we have two factions, and one of them worships their technology...

AUSTIN: Right.

ART: ...that should—probably not be the magic-y faction?

AUSTIN: [slowly] Right. You think that's a little too on the nose.

ART: [overlap] I think it's a little too on the nose.

JACK: [overlap] Well—

AUSTIN: [overlap] I—I don't—I actually don't—

ART: It also walls me off from just making Space Hadrian, which is [AUSTIN and ALI laugh] which is always in the back of my mind, [cross] the thing I should push myself away from.

AUSTIN: [cross] I also—yeah. I don't know that I like the notion of like, "Oh, one of these factions is magical, and the other one's [JACK: Yeah.] technological"?

AUSTIN: If it's in the world, I want it to be in the world, and like...

JACK: I think we can do a more interesting thing with the war, than just like, "These people are Muggles, and these people aren't."

AUSTIN: Right. Yeah.

ART: Well, but there's—there could be a stark difference in how their society treats them.

AUSTIN: Right. It—so the thing for me that I've been thinking about, the kind of like—the side that calls them the Divine, the Divines instead of just whatever... I really like them as almost an extension of like Creswellian thought? That like...

JACK: Hm!

AUSTIN: They're literally just worshipping technology at this point. They're just, such technofetishists, [NICK: I like that.] that they just become, that those—[DRE: Yeah.] y'know. You know, we pilot our mechs because—"We pilot these things that are technological because technology has given us everything." You know? "Technology is our god, and we've let it rise to that point, and we're happy about that." Maybe more—

NICK: "Technology has allowed regular people to become gods."

AUSTIN: Right. Right. And so why shouldn't technology itself be a god now?

NICK: Right.

AUSTIN: So to pilot a Divine is to be a high priest. You know? Or to be a paladin, right? Like there is a sort of like—

[30:00]

but not to, not to a distinct god in the distance. To the god you're piloting.

JACK: Mm. Yeah.

AUSTIN: Like, you are the avatar of that—you give it motion. Which is weird and interesting. I think that we can play with that. I also—we did talk about this, briefly in the Skype, that one of the, you know, the differentiating factors between these two factions is going to be that one of them can directly trace themselves back to the Sun? That like, the Sun, Earth, is still in their empire, and they take pride in that. And it's not the center of their empire, necessarily, like maybe it's a terrible place, but it's still theirs. It's like Jerusalem, in a way. And like, it's important for them to have it, even if it's not their—the forefront of—you know, again, it's like Europe in the Crusades, having taken Jerusalem. It's important for them to have had it, you know, culturally and religiously, and all that. But it's not necessarily the seat of power.

Whereas the other group has left it behind and is probably a little proud of that. Again, we're talking like—thousands and thousands and thousands and thousands of years, so it's almost just cultural memory at this point, and not like—no one's dad fought in the Battle of the Sun. [laughs] Y'know? [ALI giggles]

NICK: Yeah.

AUSTIN: [overlap] So, okay—

NICK: [overlap] So—

AUSTIN: What were you going to say, Nick?

NICK: But like—tech—I mean. Technically though, everyone would be from Earth. [cross] Like everyone's—

AUSTIN: [cross] Right, but one group still has it, yes. Yes.

NICK: Sure, sure, okay.

AUSTIN: I think—except, except, I do kind of also like this notion of like, there being a third faction to the north of this point. And I don't know what that looks like. I don't know...Like are there aliens in this world? Here's a thing we can decide on: are there non-humans?

DRE: [cross] Nope. No.

KEITH: [cross] Ah, I do like when things have non-humans...

NICK: I—if they're aliens, I think it would be cool for them to be...*real* fucking alien.

AUSTIN: And not just—[cross] green people?

NICK: [cross] Like—and not—right. [AUSTIN: Okay.] Not *Star Trek* aliens. Like, maybe they don't even have physical forms, or—[AUSTIN: Okay.] you know.

ART: [cross] But yeah, like—

NICK: [cross] A way to communicate with us, even.

AUSTIN: Okay. I think we can [cross] play that up.

NICK: [cross] Like, I want them to be unknowable.

AUSTIN: Right.

DRE: Well. I mean, that's [ART: Another face thing.] also early *Star Trek* aliens.

AUSTIN: Right, like the [cross] the aliens in the caves.

DRE: [cross] Before, like Klingons and Vulcans and stuff.

AUSTIN: Not the aliens who have, right, who have...

DRE: Yeah.

AUSTIN: Yeah.

DRE: Or that [JACK: Yeah.] alien that's just...augh, I forget what it's called. It's like Q? Or something like that?

AUSTIN: Q is, [cross] yes.

NICK: [cross] Q, yes.

DRE: [cross] It shows up in like every *Star Trek*.

AUSTIN: Yes. Q is a *Star Trek* alien. There's a whole race of them and they're all really weird! Um...

DRE: Yeah.

NICK: Yeah. But no, it's—

JACK: I think—

NICK: I mean—like not—even different than Q though, like I don't want them to be...because Q is [AUSTIN: Meddlers?]-yeah, Q is that very *Star Trek* thing of like. Like there were five different Qs in the [AUSTIN: Right, right.] original series [chuckling] over the course of the show. And it was all like, you know, the human ant farm sort of thing.

AUSTIN: Right, right. You want this to be so alien that it's not even...It may be not interested in us, but like again, just like—[sighs lightly]

NICK: Yeah, it's just a force that's there.

AUSTIN: Okay. [cross] I think we can...

NICK: [cross] Like, if they are—interested...

ART: [cross] But that's—but that's like—interesting, but not present, right?

AUSTIN: Right, that's the thing, is that just like, [cross] might...

ART: [cross] Like how does that—that doesn't—that's not—that's like an idea and something to talk about, but it won't be—it like by definition won't be in the game, right?

AUSTIN: Or in the small game. It might still show up in the big game.

ART: Mm.

AUSTIN: That's the [cross] thing, right?

NICK: [cross] Yeah. No, but like, maybe—you know, maybe the, um...It could potentially still interact. Like, for example—maybe they exist, you know, uh—just out of phase, or something. And they're this strange terrifying creature that doesn't—like they're sentient, but they don't—

AUSTIN: We don't talk to them.

NICK: Like may—we don't talk to them, maybe they don't even know we're here, but they still have to share the same resources of the galaxy.

AUSTIN: So like just a natural—what they go through their lives doing can still impact us, because it turns out [NICK: Yeah.] that they also want the resources that are on the planet, or whatever. But they're not traveling through spaceships, they don't have uniforms, they don't have—or if they do, we don't—it's just not recognizable to us. They are truly capital-A Alien and not—

NICK: Yeah.

AUSTIN: —blue skin alien.

JACK: [cross] I think perhaps—

NICK: [cross] Like maybe—this is just an example, but like, maybe they do a thing that causes...earthquakes.

AUSTIN: Sure.

NICK: I dunno. Just as part of their daily routine.

AUSTIN: Just [cross] their being, that is how they are.

NICK: [cross] Not daily routine, but—like yeah.

AUSTIN: Like a galactus—like.

KEITH: We brush our teeth, they are on the Richter scale.

AUSTIN: [chuckles] Right. Like Ultimate Galactus versus...regular old Galactus who has a face. Just like, uh, it's just a force. It's just a thing in the world, there's no reasoning with it because we just reason in completely different ways.

NICK: Right.

AUSTIN: Jack, you were going to say something, though.

JACK: I quite like the idea that maybe sometimes we do interact with them, and we interact with them in quite...ah, what's the word I'm looking for? Corporate ways? But like, astonishingly rarely. Like, you know, like maybe the biggest bank [AUSTIN wheeze-laughs] in the sector employs one of them as its accounting machine.

AUSTIN: So then we're slipping into something else, which I don't dislike, which is—it's not that we can't communicate, it's that it's incredibly costly to communicate.

JACK: Yeah, I think I could go [cross] with that.

AUSTIN: [cross] That's it's not, it's not...

NICK: [cross] Yeah!

AUSTIN: Like, Bill from down the block is never going to talk to a Thirboid or whatever they're called. But like—

KEITH: No, no, they're called Thirboids.

AUSTIN: [laughs] That's it!

JACK: In fact, the prime minister might not even talk to a Thirboid. [cross] But!

AUSTIN: [cross] Right, right. But like...

JACK: If you have seventy trillion credits and a team of scientists [cross] and a Thirboid,

AUSTIN: [cross] You may be able to have one on [JACK: Yeah. Yeah.] retainer. But like—because you're giving it something that is so much vaster than that wealth. It's not the wealth that they—you're not buying it—you're not like, "Oh, here's a beer. Here's a good salary." You're giving it something...you've ma—oh! Is this the connection? Is this the magic?

KEITH: Just touch money. No, they hate touching money.

NICK: Maybe.

AUSTIN: Is the thing that magic people can do—connected to how these weird aliens are in a different phase of life or a different phase of being, and like—you don't just need the...alien nearby, you also need in your employ someone who can like actually see that part of existence, and...

NICK: So...so if you can use magic, you're, um...the...ugh. I would be a lot wittier if my brain worked? [cross] Consistently?

AUSTIN: [cross] Yeah, that's everybody. [DRE laughs] Don't worry about it.

KEITH: Conduit? We talkin' about conduits?

NICK: Um.

AUSTIN: I think he was gonna make a joke, [cross] but he missed the r—[KEITH: Oh, ok.] he lost the...

NICK: [cross] No, that—yeah, it was gonna be a joke.

AUSTIN: The reference.

NICK: [forlornly] It's gone.

AUSTIN: It happens.

ART: Wouldn't that also mean [cross] like, everyone who has magic...

NICK: The video game with the girl and the ghost.

ART: ...is like really rich?

AUSTIN: Probably. Or really locked down, or really, you know.

NICK: Or in the employ of someone really rich.

AUSTIN: Right. Or enslaved—like we haven't even figured out what the fuck magic means yet.

DRE: Yeah.

NICK: Right.

AUSTIN: Okay, so anyway—this is at least one—there are those aliens. Do other peop—are there also...So here's two things: one, are there also other sorts of aliens, or is every sort of alien this type of unknowable thing? It almost feels like they're like *Persona* demons at this point, like.

JACK: Part of me wonders if they are all unknowable, except they're all unknowable in different ways. [chuckles] You know?

AUSTIN: Right, that's kinda what I meant when I said [NICK: Yeah!] *Persona* demons, right? Like it's not that there are...that there's a race of aliens. It's that there are things that we think of as alien to us, and each of them is [cross] even actually unique.

JACK: [cross] Oh! Or maybe—or maybe, what I was even thinking is that there are races of aliens, they're just on planets, you know, light years [AUSTIN: Oh! Sure sure sure.] upon light years away. And there just happens to be like two of them here.

AUSTIN: Right, right.

JACK: And they are super weird and unknowable. In the same way that like cats and dogs are both furry? But they're completely different animals?

AUSTIN: [amused] Right.

JACK: What if these aliens were completely different animals but shared that bizzare, knowable nature?

AUSTIN: Or just like, "Oh yeah, those are nothing like us." [JACK: Yeah.] "And there aren't many of them." It would be like never seeing a koala your whole life, or never seeing a kangaroo your whole life, and then seeing one, and being like, [apprehensively] "Ooo. Hmm. Okay. That's—okay."

JACK: [monotone] "Is it gonna save me from an emu?"

[AUSTIN and DRE laugh]

KEITH: "Or is it gonna give me syphilis."

AUSTIN: Right. Yeah, who knows?

JACK: [amused] It's the two options. One or the other.

AUSTIN: Um, okay. Anything else...?

KEITH: I mean, I don't—[cross] I don't particularly...

AUSTIN: [cross] And also none of this is—like, all of this is negotiable.

KEITH: Yeah. I don't particularly mind...like, aliens that are, non-humans that are like, knowable and we can communicate with them and maybe they're just around? Like there's something about that that—I mean, there is a way where that could be handled where it becomes a focus in a way that maybe we don't want the focus to—

AUSTIN: So I'm gonna help us out by—I was gonna make a statement. I'm gonna move us over here, where actually maybe this will start to make a little more sense. I just moved us over to the sector map.

JACK: Oh god.

DRE: [cross] Woah.

ALI: [cross] Oh!

JACK: [cross] Oh god, I'm getting board game flashbacks.

AUSTIN: [a little exasperated] Okay. So, this is part of the pre-prep that I did. These are the stars in the sector that this game is taking place in. I don't know what's on them yet, part of what we're gonna do today soon is figure out what's on these things.

JACK: [cross] This is amazing.

KEITH: [cross] Uh, blue dots are on them.

AUSTIN: [now fully exasperated] Right. Great. Uh, [DRE snickers] in my mind, there's kind of a divide here...[low] Let me just do a quick, like, bullshit thing. [regular volume] Like, I think...everything to the left of this is one empire, everything to the right is a different one. I think our game ends up taking place in like...[low] where's my shade button, here we go. Ah...[regular] In like, this area, maybe? Somewhere in between? Or somewhere else in between here, I'm not sure yet. But this space here seems like the most potent, because it's kind of—it's like, a hex away, or two hexes away, from both the left and the right of this.

And one of the things that I'm kind of—again, you can kind of imagine this kind of southwest area and the southeast as being the two different arms. And then like, but like, what the fuck is above...above *this* line? Right? What're—what's up there? Are there people there? Are they people from these two empires, or could they be people or aliens or something else to this—to the rest of that arm, where that arm gets combined and has existed for, you know, a long time, uncolonized by these two empires.

ART: Am I the only one who doesn't see that—oh there it is.

DRE: There it is.

AUSTIN: Sorry, I didn't—sorry I didn't finalize it. There we go.

JACK: What are the, um. What are the large white dots indicating?

AUSTIN: Those are—these are all stars that—each of these stars will have at least one interesting planet there.

JACK: And what about empty hexes?

AUSTIN: Nothing.

JACK: Nothing? Okay.

AUSTIN: Nothing. The rules in the...[sighs] So, *Stars Without Number* is a thing where, here's another thing we have to decide on. *Stars Without Number* is one of the many games that has ancient alien technology in it.

NICK: No.

AUSTIN: And, and—yeah, I'm pretty anti-it, also.

DRE: Bad. No.

AUSTIN: And...that is part of how it determines how far you can travel? How far *things* can travel? And we might have to tinker with it to make it work the way I would like to, because in *Stars Without Number*—and this only matters for the kind of big picture faction game, but also for the way we think about this little sector of the universe. There are two different engine types, or three different engine types? It's like, oh, some of them can go three blocks, and some of them can go six blocks.

I think I want it to be—the most anything can go is two. And most things can only go one. So like—you can go [NICK: You mean—] from...505 to 605 easy, right? But you can go—you need something real special to go from there—from 505 to any of these other ones that are around here. So it's—you know what I mean? Does that make sense?

KEITH: Yeah.

DRE: Yeah.

NICK: Um, no, [cross] is it like you need to go to...?

ART: [cross] Is that like at all possible, or...?

AUSTIN: To like—because of refueling. Right? Like you just can't—

NICK: Okay.

AUSTIN: You can't make bigger jumps than that. Like there's no way to go from 106 to 505. Or it would take you...incredibly long or whatever. Whoops, I didn't mean to move that. That's the thing I did not—

ART: Well, you could go from 106 to 104, [cross] 104 to 304—okay.

AUSTIN: [cross] Right! Right. That's exactly it. Yes. But again, you even might need something special to go from 106 to 104. Whereas it's easy to go from 0008 to 0108. P.S., I hope I'm going to put a video—I think I'm just—part of the reason I'm doing video of this, Keith, is so that we can get—capture this, and then put this [KEITH: Mm-hmm.] on Youtube. 'Cause I think that'll help make this a little more clear.

KEITH: Yeah. I mean, we're—yeah. You're right.

AUSTIN: So that's why I'm OBS-ing. So yeah, uh...My question ends up being so what's the north of here? If the colony—if these two empires have only colonized the kind of...the east and west half of this? [mumbling] Whoops, that's the wrong color. Let's go to red. I got light blue, actually. But whatever. There we go. [regular voice] If the two empires have only colonized east and west here, if 303 and 304 are kind of our Berlin, in this Cold War...what—and we're gonna find out more about these planets in a bit. Like I don't know what's on any of these planets yet. But I do like the notion that there's a third faction somewhere in this. That is a faction. Maybe not a galactic empire, maybe [cross] something else.

JACK: [cross] I mean—I say it, and I'm not happy as I say it, 'cause it's not my favorite trope, but we might get somewhere interesting with it?

AUSTIN: Uh-huh.

JACK: [cont] But what about a sort of...frontier? [chuckles] Space frontier?

AUSTIN: But like—the thing that's—the thing about that would be like...You know, a frontier exists because it's the—it is like the fingertips of a colonial power.

JACK: Yeah.

AUSTIN: What if we invert that a little bit and make it not like the frontier in that sense, where it's...

KEITH: The back-tier.

AUSTIN: Right, the back-tier. Uh. [laughs] What if it's instead of being like, "Oh, these are people who are like, out on the Outer Rim, and trying to, you know, explore the wilderness!" What if it's people who are in fact just like, happy not being in a weird colonial empire? Or, something more like, um...kind of like, Holy Roman Empire-era Germany?

[45:00]

Just like, a bunch of petty kings?

JACK: Yeah, like city-states, [cross] like city-states or something.

AUSTIN: [cross] Like city-states. Yeah.

ART: [cross] I like that.

DRE: Yeah! I could—

KEITH: Just like, kings that won't let anything go.

NICK: That's cool.

AUSTIN: Yeah.

DRE: Yeah. And I could see, like—[cross] a way we could justify that, too...

AUSTIN: [cross] Still loosely tied together. But not—[DRE: Yeah.] do you know what I mean?

DRE: But I think that [KEITH: That probably—] could tie back into like, what you're saying with how hard it is to get there? Like, it's [AUSTIN: Yeah.] only people who have the type of money to travel there, and then also be, petty kings to like employ people to make that trip with them.

AUSTIN: So do—are those people then from these original empires? Or are they from something else, further up?

ART: I wanna think it's like—it's a mixture, right? Like, maybe a guy in 0300 can trace back his lineage to one of the rulers of, y'know...Left Half over here.

AUSTIN: Right.

ART: But like 0700...claims to be descended from a line of reptile kings, right?

AUSTIN: [laughs] From the center of the galaxy.

[ALI giggles]

ART: Right.

AUSTIN: Oh, I actually kind of like that as the literal opposite of the other alien thing. Right? Which is—and now we're just falling back into *Dungeon World*. But—what if there were other people in the world here who were just like, "Oh no, yeah, we're hum—" Like, "We're not humans, but we're basically. We're all just Humans."

ALI: Yeah—

AUSTIN: "We come from this other place—" Like on top of—so there are the unknowable aliens here, and we will get those for sure. But then also just like, people. And they're people. They're not...blue people. They might have weird hair color or something, but they're people! They're just humans.

NICK: Sure.

ART: And I don't even wanna assert anything about ancient lizard people, I just think that's a funny thing for a king to say, like [AUSTIN: [laughing] Kings—] "Yeah, that's why I rule here. I'm a lizard person."

AUSTIN: Right. I'm the lizard—

[JACK chuckles]

ART: He just looks like a dude, but like, [AUSTIN: Right.] y'know. He's got an army, he says he's a lizard person. He's a lizard person.

[KEITH laughs]

AUSTIN: "He puts lizards in all his shit, like I'm not gonna tell him he's not a lizard person."

ART: Yeah, I mean...It's not worth dying over.

KEITH: "Have you met the lizard king of Maxor 3? Oh, you mean Tom?"

AUSTIN: Yeah. [ALI giggles] [NICK, DRE and AUSTIN laugh] Ah...hoo. So yeah, I think that works. I think that that's—

NICK: Yeah.

AUSTIN: —that's our kind of, split the difference. And I like them as kind of mysterious and also...It also encourages me to keep one of these sides as just being Germanic. Right? Like, when you have two sides in a galactic conflict...one of them almost always falls off into like. Space Germany.

NICK: Yeah.

AUSTIN: Whether that's Space Nazis or Space, like, Kaiser Wilhelm, they're there. So, we're still gonna have Space Germans, they're just to the north. And they're just like, they're just Holy Roman Empire Germans.

KEITH: And some of them say that they're different types of lizards.

AUSTIN: Right. [chuckles] [DRE laughs] They're all lizards, they'll just—"I am the Space Chameleon King!" [more chuckles, from KEITH and JACK] Right.

DRE: Maybe some of them are amphibians.

AUSTIN: Okay, yeah, I don't wanna. You're right, you're right. Who knows.

KEITH: You can tell because they don't have the forked tongues.

AUSTIN: [laughs dryly] All right, I'm gonna move us back over to the big picture map. To the galaxy map. Um. Okay, so it sounds like we have at least some basic ideas of what's happening in terms of what our interests are and what we wanna like not have. We didn't really finish what we think about magic, but we'll get there. I think we'll figure that out as we keep going.

KEITH: It's very easy for me to say that I want magic in there, just 'cause I think that magic is fun, but also...like, I get that it...

AUSTIN: I—yeah.

NICK: [cross] I was gonna suggest..

KEITH: [cross] Like I get why no?

NICK: I was gonna suggest, maybe like, what about *Dune* magic? Or—and also, by extension, *Dune* quote-unquote “aliens”? Where it's people that have altered themselves so much that—[cross] Like, the Navigators, or the Mentats or something, you know what I mean?

AUSTIN: [cross] Oh, yeah, there's definitely—There are absolutely going to be altered people. I mean, that just comes with cyberpunk too, you know?

NICK: Mm-hmRight. Yeah.

AUSTIN: And that's built in—that will be built into the kind of world generation stuff that we're gonna get to in a bit.

NICK: But in *Dune*, like the, you know, the abilities of the Mentats.

AUSTIN: Right right right.

NICK: Or the Bene Gesserit, like all that stuff is absolutely presented as magical, but.

AUSTIN: Mm-hm.

NICK: In a lot of ways, it's—like, the Bene Gesserit are using genetic technology.

AUSTIN: Right.

NICK: ...to further their...

AUSTIN: But I guess—I wanna make sure...We need to decide, right now...is there also, on top of the people who like are saying, "Yeah, I basically have magic!" And like, naw, dawg, you have a cool glove. Are there also...is there magic? Is there a thing...do things happen without physical cause?

NICK: Well—but what I'm saying is, at some point, it just becomes indistinguishable.

AUSTIN: No—it does, but I wanna make sure...it does in the setting, right? But for us right now, I need to know if there is something in the world that makes things move that isn't—that we can call "not physics". Do you know what I mean?

NICK: Yeah.

AUSTIN: 'Cause I think there—there's of course, again, there's going to be altered humans who do claim that what they do is magic. On top of that, is there also magic? [cross] Is there also—

ART: Not Physics is a pretty good name for magic. [ALI and AUSTIN laugh] It behaves really well in a lot of ways? Like he's a No Phys? Love it.

AUSTIN: Love it. Ship it.

NICK: Yeah. [ALI giggles]

AUSTIN: I think, so my thing is that I think that like...[sighs] Enough of our source material tinkers with and plays with the idea of magic or something magic adjacent? Like Ali can back me up here that like Gundam is filled with what they call Newtypes. Which, again, they kind [DRE: Yeah.] of say, "Oh, no that's just—you're in space long enough, and like some people evolve in different—" Like, naw dawg, you had a weird psychedelic dream. Like you had—[ALI laughs] you saw a dead person. And like—that's a lot different than like, using your gravity glove to make things float. You know?

KEITH: Yeah, I guess [NICK: Sure.] at the end of the day, a lot of my favorite things still have magic in it.

AUSTIN: Right. Okay.

ALI: Yeah. [cross] But i—oh.

AUSTIN: [cross] Fuck it, let's leave magic on the table at least. Let's not—unless, what were you gonna say, Ali?

ALI: I was gonna say that I prefer the idea of magic just being like, this cultural consideration.

AUSTIN: Okay.

ALI: Like, it's all technology, [Skype sound] [AUSTIN: Oop.] but like, a group of people think that it's...something else.

JACK: Yeah, I—

AUSTIN: We lost Art just now.

ALI: Oh.

DRE: Ooh.

AUSTIN: Let's keep talking.

KEITH: [cross] Oh, we lost Art?

JACK: [cross] I could go with that.

DRE: [cross] Art's back.

AUSTIN: [cross] He's back. He's back.

ART: I'm back. The last thing I heard was Keith being like, "A lot of things I like..."

AUSTIN: They have magic.

KEITH: A lot of my favorite things have magic in them.

AUSTIN: Yeah. We decided that there is a thing at least that some people think off as magic. At the very least. So yeah, and it's definitely not vetoed. Um...Are there any other big...

ART: That's 'cause Keith cut me off.

AUSTIN: [dryly] 'Cause, yeah, you were gonna veto it. Uh...Any other stuff that we definitely want to include that's weird or interesting that we haven't talked about, or that we want to veto. [pause] It sounds like no. That's fine. We can always just come back to this, if someone does think of something an hour from now, that's totally okay. All right, so let's talk—let's talk specifics. What are these two empires like? And I keep calling them empires as shorthand, they don't have to be empires, right?

DRE: Mm.

[pause]

KEITH: Um. I think...if one of them is the weird—if one of them is the like the—

AUSTIN: [cross] Gonna call them—right.

KEITH: [cross] The “technology and we love our robot gods.”

AUSTIN: Right.

KEITH: I think that that is the one that should not be an actual empire if one of them is an empire.

AUSTIN: Okay, you think it's like, too clean?

KEITH: Yeah. I think it's like, "Oh, yeah, of course they're the empire." But [AUSTIN: Okay.] maybe they should not be the empire.

AUSTIN: What should they be?

ART: No, I think there's part of like, technology worship that does like scream democracy, right? That they could be like almost like a hyper-democracy, right?

AUSTIN: Like Geth-style, like...everything-is-hyper-automated democracy? Geth from the [Mass Effect](#) series.

ART: Yeah, everyone's like, super plugged in all the time, they're just like [cross] always voting.

DRE: [cross] Oh, yeah yeah yeah.

AUSTIN: Yeah, and it also kind of leans into what the rhetoric around that stuff always is, which is like, "No, don't you see, technology is going to liberate all of us, and we'll all be—you know, it'll be democratic and perfectly free!"

KEITH: But like I also do really love what Art just said, the idea of like voting being as casual and popular as BuzzFeed quizzes?

[AUSTIN, ALI, and JACK laugh]

DRE: Yeah.

AUSTIN: Yeah, I actually like that a whole bunch.

ART: "Find Out Which Foreign Policy Is Right For You."

[KEITH laughs]

AUSTIN: Yes. Yeah, I love that, actually. I really love that.

NICK: Like the...Oh, what was the...It was kind of like that in the USB sword game.

AUSTIN: Oh, um...

NICK: Fuck.

AUSTIN: [*Hack 'N' Slash*](#).

NICK: Yeah.

AUSTIN: Yeah.

NICK: Goddammit.

AUSTIN: Yeah.

ART: It also is kinda like [*DC One Million*](#), which is a comic book from a time that no one should've been reading comic books in.

[chuckling]

AUSTIN: No, I like it. I like it.

ART: But like, they go to the far-flung future, the 853rd century, and it's all like everyone's just plugged into the network all the time, and everything's just constantly...like, it honestly didn't look far enough in a lot of ways. [AUSTIN: Mm-hm. Yeah.] Like we are kind of like that now. But like, the network is always talking about everything that just happened.

AUSTIN: Right, right. I like it a lot.

NICK: [Transistor](#).

AUSTIN: Oh, you're talking about that one. Okay. Sorry.

NICK: Yeah.

AUSTIN: I was thinking of the other USB sword game, which is *Hack 'N' Slash*.

NICK: Wh—?

AUSTIN: *Hack 'N' Slash* is the [cross] one where you swing—

DRE: [cross] This is all strafing.

NICK: [cross] Oh! Oh! No. [laughing]

AUSTIN: Yeah, see?

[DRE laughs]

NICK: No, I—[laugh] [cross] I thought you were saying—

AUSTIN: [cross] Two USB sword games came out...

NICK: "Oh, it's like a hack-and-slash," [AUSTIN: No. No.] is what I thought you were saying.

AUSTIN: Um yeah, *Transistor* definitely does that. *Transistor* does the like, [DRE: Yeah.] every time you check into a terminal, you vote on something important. [NICK: Yeah.] Which is neat. [cross] Also that game has a good soundtrack. Fuck.

DRE: [cross] It's also...making me think of, that new Eggers—well, not new, but newest Eggers book, [The Circle](#)?

AUSTIN: Mm-hm.

DRE: Which is basically like, Eggers' like fake-Google...

AUSTIN: Yeah yeah yeah.

ALI: I feel like this faction should be the Perseus side?

AUSTIN: The one that leaves.

ALI: Yeah.

AUSTIN: Yeah, me too. I had—[KEITH: Yeah.] before we started, I had them booked as the Sagittarius side, but now that we've developed them as this sort of like, rah-rah democracy thing, I like them as—[cross] and then...

ALI: [cross] Yeah.

JACK: [cross] They're quite like, Helldivers, aren't they? To an extent.

AUSTIN: Yeah. But like—you know what, they're like Helldivers meets Columbia, from [*Bioshock Infinite*](#)?

JACK: Yep.

AUSTIN: Which is a game I really don't like very much? But [ALI laughs] what I had to start thinking about was like, "Wait, why do they worship—what does it look like to worship these gods? Why would they worship gods?" And I realized it's like worshipping, you know, libertas, equalitas, right? Like it's...

JACK: Yeah.

AUSTIN: These are gods of freedom and liberty and justice.

ALI: Right.

AUSTIN: And...I like that a whole bunch, actually.

ALI: Yeah.

AUSTIN: In fact they probably have names like that, right?

[ALI giggles]

AUSTIN: [cross] Liberty and Freedom

JACK: [cross] Wait, so—if they left democracy?

AUSTIN: Yeah.

JACK: Wouldn't, sort of, the big...you know, when a—I dunno how it works in America. Does Obama vote? In America?

AUSTIN, ALI, ART, KEITH: Yeah.

KEITH: [cross] But as a show. He doesn't...

AUSTIN: [cross] It's like a big deal.

JACK: Yeah yeah yeah.

KEITH: [cross] It counts, but it's a...

JACK: [cross] So would it be a televised event where the mechs vote? Or the piloted mechs go up and place their votes, [cross] as everyone watches and cheers?

AUSTIN: [cross] I don't think they vote—

JACK: Or do the people piloting them? Or [cross] do their pilots not even—

AUSTIN: [cross] I think—I really like this notion that like—to be in serv—it's like, to take yourself out of daily service. Or out of daily life. You—it's like the opposite of like, you know, in America, if you're a criminal, you can't vote. If you're a felon, you're not allowed to vote. Here, it's like, once you've devoted your service to...Justice. Like, capital-J that-robot-over-there named Justice. You're not a person in daily life in the same way anymore. You don't get to decide the future of the—

JACK: You're a mechanical implement, almost?

KEITH: I mean—that's almost like a clergyman vow-of-chastity style.

AUSTIN: Yeah, that's exactly what I mean.[NICK: Yeah.] It's like a clergyman type thing, right? Like [DRE: Yeah.] you're in—you're so in service to this [KEITH: Yeah.] ideal that you can't possibly be part of daily life. “As much as we all want to be, to live up to the ideal of the Divines, like—we can't, and so if you...once you step over to that side, you need to not be part of our voting process anymore.” You kind of sacrifice that. You're giving that up so that you can defend their right to do it.

ALI: I mean—

NICK: Kind of like the inverse of *Starship Troopers*.

AUSTIN: Right. Ali, what were you gonna say?

ALI: Well, like, at that point, what does a squadron of those people look like? Like, is it...?

AUSTIN: Well, one, I don't think it's like a big squad. I think it's like,

ALI: Okay.

AUSTIN: [cont] I think it's like—. I'm getting the image that these Divines really are better than riggers at this point?

ALI: Okay.

AUSTIN: A little bit like *Aldnoah.Zero*, which is like an okay mecha anime, but the one side in that has like, robots that are fuckin'—they are just like, way good. And the other side still has robots, and they're pretty good too, but—they're not as singular in power? If that [NICK: Mm-hm.] makes sense? And the people from the other side still, of course, do work together and stuff, but like—it isn't—it's a little bit more like what Nick was saying, where like, a couple of these is like, really, really, really a bad idea. Um. So like, maybe not that strong, but—and the other thing, so Ali, to your point, to your question. I think it's like—they probably...[sighs] I think that there's...

ALI: [cross] 'Cause like who...who is commanding them, and who is working under them?

AUSTIN: I think that it's...I think the image I had in my head is that they pilot them. Someone else is a sort of like...a translator, or like a priest between the Divine and a political figure. A bureaucrat. And it's sort of like...Did you start *Type-0*? *Final Fantasy Type-0*?

ALI: No.

AUSTIN: So there's a thing in that, and I'm only a couple hours into that, where there are just like, demigods and gods in that game? And like, they're kind of aligned to different factions, but like they serve at their whim, to some degree? And there are people in charge of like courting them and keeping them happy. And this isn't that, in the same way. No one's trying to keep Justice [ALI laughs] happy? But like, there is probably someone who is saying, like, "Well, we voted this way, and we think that this is why this is a Just action. You know, we would love your s—we invoke your support." Or something.

JACK: I think—hang on. Wait a second.

AUSTIN: Mm-hmm?

JACK: [chuckles] Are these Divines...artificially intelligent, or are what we're talking about in very real terms the wishes of the pilot piloting them as Justice? In the same way that you know, like [AUSTIN: Right.] in old Italian theatre, when the person puts on the mask, they *are* Columbine, or they *are* somebody.

AUSTIN: Right. I think it's—I like that second bit a lot.

KEITH: Yeah, me too. I, yeah, I [cross] went into this assuming that...

AUSTIN: [cross] They are, but I also don't—I don't want them to not be AI either. Do you know what I mean?

JACK: Oh. Are they AI in the sense that, you know, they can dodge really fast, or they can...

AUSTIN: [sighs] No, I think that they're more...I think that they—

[1:00:00]

okay. So like, this is a whole faction about the kind of transhumanist dream of letting the body go.

JACK: Mm.

AUSTIN: So like, maybe this is like, a real—there's a real melding between, between the Divine and the pilot, where the mind becomes, kind of, co-mingled. And so, it is the person who does still have a body, who does still have the...

JACK: And can leave the Divine?

AUSTIN: Oh, yeah. Definitely. But we're talking about like super-tech right, this is like nanobots and—

DRE: Talkin about Omnigears. We're talking about Omnigears, Xenogears.

AUSTIN: Right—we're talk—yeah, absolutely. Right, we're talking about whatever the most high fantasy sci-fi shit, you know what I mean? Like, oh does that sound cool? Okay, it works.

DRE: Yeah.

AUSTIN: So yeah, I like the notion of like they are at once the pilot and also become co-mingled with—another thing that it's like is if you've played [Dragon Age](#), something like, of course, Anders and Justice. But like a little more blended, a little more they become the same being. And a little—

DRE: Are there even joysticks in these mechs? In the Divines?

AUSTIN: [cross] Nah, I don't think in the Divines.

DRE: [cross] I don't think there are.

AUSTIN: I think there are like mad joysticks and buttons in the riggers, though. There's just like screens, and like switches, and...

KEITH: Yeah. And I think that plays into the original conception behind the Divines and the riggers is that the two factions in *Titanfall* where the riggers are from the...rebel side?

JACK: The IMC?

KEITH: Which is just kind of like a slapdash...sort of we-have-to—

AUSTIN: Right.

KEITH: We have to somehow stand up to this giant horrible monster of a corporation even though they both sucked.

AUSTIN: Right, they were both terrible. But! I know what you mean, yeah.

KEITH: Yeah.

AUSTIN: All right, it sounds like we have a basic idea of that side.

KEITH: [cross] Are there mechs that pilot themselves, or?

NICK: [cross] Wait, hang on.

AUSTIN: I think—

NICK: Yeah, I was gonna ask like for clarification, [AUSTIN: Mm-hm.] is it Divines have autonomy [AUSTIN: Yeah!] when they don't have a pilot?

AUSTIN: I think so. [NICK: Okay.] But I think that they—[cross] you know!

JACK: [cross] They hate autonomy?

KEITH: They hate it.

AUSTIN: I don't think they hate it, but like why use it?

KEITH: [having fun] No, it's gross, they hate it!

AUSTIN: [cross] You know—okay, so...

KEITH: [cross] Okay, yeah, I'm gonna switch it...

AUSTIN: So philosopher David Hume famously says that reason is a slave to the passions. And by that he meant—and you know, he also said you know “rationally speaking, I would just as well see half the world destroyed as the pricking of my little finger”. That like reason alone doesn’t do anything, that you need a fire. The reason can say, “oh, I need to eat food,” but you need—or the reason can get you the food, but you need that like hunger in your stomach to tell reason to act. And I think that I like this as—

KEITH: He’s also the first Sith.

AUSTIN: Right. Also the first Sith. It turns out. [laughs] Um. He’s...a good guy. I like Hume a whole bunch. [DRE laughs] I think that this is that situation, right, like what does Justice have to do with a society? Like it doesn’t—every—Justice is an ideal. It’s going to be around like forever. It doesn’t need to involve itself. Whereas like when you put a person inside of it, a person who can be moved by images and words, [NICK: Sure.] they can give it that fire to act. But maybe there are still times at which the ideal does let itself act, and maybe they—it’s not—you know, I bet you the ideal of Vengeance or something, that Divine probably acts a lot more often than Tranquility.

ART: Wait, is there a Vengeance one?

NICK: Yeah, sure, okay.

AUSTIN: Sure!

NICK: [cross] What if, um...

JACK: [cross] What happened to like it was like the virtues, and virtuousness...[laughs]

AUSTIN: Eh, you know!

JACK: Vengeance is not...But yeah, sure! [cross] That is super working.

AUSTIN: [cross] Righteous vengeance is a real thing, man! You know.

JACK: Yeah. Patriarchy.

NICK: So—so the Divine are ancient, then?

AUSTIN: I don’t think so.

ART: Yeah.

NICK: [cross] Or maybe not ancient, but—

JACK: [cross] They were like manifestations of like—

NICK: They've had multiple pilots.

AUSTIN: I don't know. Maybe!

JACK: Well like there was weather before there was an iPhone weather app, and I look at the weather app every day, you know. We live—

AUSTIN: [cross] Right.

JACK: [cross] The d—

KEITH: [cross] I just think that like yeah somebody blows up Vengeance, they build a new Vengeance.

[AUSTIN sucks his teeth]

ALI: But who's like programmed this AI [cross] to act like a god?

AUSTIN: Oh, it has programmed [ALI: Okay.] itself. Like that's again it's completely self aware, it's—

ALI: Oh oh oh, okay.

AUSTIN: In the walls, do you know [ALI: Yeah.] what I mean? Like it is the operating system of the Perseus Arm faction. Does that make sense?

ART: [cross] Where does Vengeance hang out?

JACK: [cross] Bits of the Sagittarius Arm.

AUSTIN: Where does what?

NICK: But I guess like—

ART: Where do these hang out? Like where does Justice, [cross] on its off days, where does—

KEITH: Oil bars.

[AUSTIN laughs]

JACK: Hangars! Vast hangars!

AUSTIN: Yeah.

JACK: Have you guys seen Cardington?

AUSTIN: No.

KEITH: No, that sounds like a British sweater.

[AUSTIN laughs loudly]

JACK: It is! Yeah! It is. We store mechs in it. Um. No, back when the—

ART: Woah.

JACK: Back where we used blimps, we built these massive, like enormous hangars, outside London, to store them. And now we don't use them anymore, so Christopher Nolan uses them for big effects shots.

AUSTIN: Of course he does. Of course he does!

JACK: That's where the corridor sequence in Inception was, [cross] for a long time?

AUSTIN: [cross] Sure. Okay.

JACK: I think he actually owns them. But I do super love the idea of these holy mechs being stored in vast, vast hangars with big rolling doors and everything.

AUSTIN: Except that these are hangars that can of course travel from planet to planet. [cross] They're like—right.

JACK: [cross] Oh totally! They can be picked up by spaceships.

AUSTIN: Or no—what if they just are spaceships?

JACK: Oh yeah yeah. Totally. [cross] But I mean—

AUSTIN: [cross] Do you know what I mean?

JACK: Most of the time they're landed.

AUSTIN: Right right right, exactly. But then it's like...

JACK: And you know they have a big—

AUSTIN: Just that great image of the whole thing lifting and the earth shaking [JACK: Yeah.] as the engine—[cross] which is as big as a building—

JACK: [cross] “Oh god, Justice is going somewhere.”

AUSTIN: Right. [cross] Exactly.

JACK: [cross] Oh god! There was this amazing moment when Austin and I were playing *Elite Dangerous* together, and we were in completely different [AUSTIN: Mm-hm.] places in the galaxy, because that’s how *Elite Dangerous* works. And we were trying to find each other over a period of about seven and a half hours, and over the comms, I heard Austin go “Oh my god, there’s a capital ship here!” [AUSTIN: Right.] And he’d just warped into space, and there was just this vast capital in front of him.

AUSTIN: And like there’s nothing else at that scale in that game [JACK: No.] that can move.

JACK: And he didn’t know it was gonna be there.

AUSTIN: Right.

JACK: And they’re very very rare—in *Elite*, capital ships are piloted by single named characters? [AUSTIN: Right.] And I definitely love that idea of somebody from ground level seeing Justice’s hangar, Justice’s transport taking off and going, [cross] holy shit, something’s going on! oh god.

AUSTIN: [cross] Yeah. Something’s going on. Yeah. Like almost in a Voltron-y way, or a like a—this is the closest—these are like the super robots of this thing. In mecha culture, there’s kind of super robots and real robots? And super robots are the kind of Power Rangers, Power Zords and the Mazinger Zs and all the stuff that no one ever—or like *The Big O*, right? Is. [NICK: Mm-hm.] Much more super robot than real robot. And I like that as this faction’s like...

JACK: How many of them are there? [cross] Can we set a number?

AUSTIN: [cross] I don’t know.

KEITH: [cross] So you’re talking about—this is a Planeteers vs Captain Planet situation.

AUSTIN: Yes.

NICK: Okay, so. Sorry, I still just wanna make this like really clear.

AUSTIN: Yeah.

NICK: Actually, you mentioned *Big O* [AUSTIN: Yeah.], and that makes sense. So is that kind of how they have...like kind of—

AUSTIN: Yeah, *Big O* might be like the best example of [cross] this actually.

NICK: [cross] *Big O* is a good analogy? [AUSTIN: Because.] Because like—I just wanna make sure that they're not like you know Divine is like...he sees this pilot, and or they see their pilot, [AUSTIN: Mm-hm.] and they're just like, hey buddy, what's up, [cross] wanna jump in and let's spin around the galaxy!

AUSTIN: [cross] No no no no no. No. No. It's I think it's much more—like maybe there's one of those like that. Maybe the—you know, maybe the Divine of friendship is like that. But like. [ART laughs] I think most of them are cold and indifferent, and *bigger* than this. [NICK: Sure.] And can be moved to action. Like yeah, *Big O* works really well for that, because—if people who haven't seen *Big O*—

JACK: Oh, they're like um [snaps fingers] they're like gem fusions in *Steven Universe*.

AUSTIN: No, I don't think so.

JACK: Oh no, I just meant in the sense of like here is a weird thing that emerges and is quite—is so separate from us as things? [cross] As humans?

AUSTIN: [cross] Yeah, that—yes. But the thing that I think about the—the gem fusions are fusions between things that are already impulsive and people.

JACK: Oh, that's true.

AUSTIN: Right? [JACK: Yeah.] Whereas this is—the thing I like about *The Big O* is—

KEITH: [cross] I do not even know what *The Big O* is.

JACK: [cross] Yes. Could you tell us what that is?

AUSTIN: [cross] You should watch it—you guys should watch—*The Big O* is a thing that I should have put on the list of things that...are influential for this?

DRE: I need to watch that, yeah.

NICK: [cross] Yeah, it's pretty—

AUSTIN: [cross] *The Big O* is what if Batman had a giant robot.

NICK: Yeah.

JACK: Oh, cool!

AUSTIN: I might just link the—let me see what the—how is the intro on this? [exciting intro music plays] the intro's kinda shitty. [music stops] No offense, *Big O*. [music starts again] It's basically like what if Gotham existed [quiets, drum continues for a few beats] inside of like a weird glass...like a glass dome?

NICK: Hell yeah.

AUSTIN: And everyone like forgot the past a little bit? And...Bruce Wayne, instead of dressing up like Batman—one, Bruce Wayne is voiced by Steven Blume. [ALI laughs] Two, Bruce Wayne, instead of dressing up like Batman, he like drives around in a rad limo as a “negotiator” and like shoots people sometimes, and gets into fights, and like has a cool robot lady friend? Who learns how to play the piano, and then sometimes he says like, “O, I need the Big O,” who is a giant robot. And the process of like summoning the Big O is...very much a, like, “In the name of justice, I need you.” [JACK laughs] [NICK: Great.]

JACK: That's so good.

AUSTIN: Lemme see if I can just find—I'll show you—yeah—[NICK: And—] I'm gonna link everybody to [exciting intro music starts] [cross] this is the worst video, holy shit.

KEITH: [cross] Aw man. That dude looks like such a Steve Blume character.

MUSIC: Big O! [trails off]

[DRE laughs]

NICK: Like, Big O has autonomy, but he's not a buddy.

AUSTIN: Right. They don't chat.

NICK: Right.

AUSTIN: Yes. [cross] I'm gonna—

NICK: [cross] And they have a connection. [AUSTIN: Right.] Like absolutely!

AUSTIN: Yes. [cross] But so in this—

NICK: [cross] But it's—unspoken.

AUSTIN: The thing I don't want—the thing that's different about *The Big O* from this is...that the pilots are not like...the happy-go-lucky [intro music starts again] character that—

NICK: Right, right.

AUSTIN: That whatever this character's name is.

JACK: Tell us~

KEITH: Steve Blume.

NICK: I think that was...

AUSTIN: Steve Blume. [NICK laughs] Yeah.

DRE: I think Roger?

AUSTIN: Roger, is it. Yeah.

NICK: Oh, right.

KEITH: I must have like seen this on—was this on Toonami? This was just...

ALI: [cross] Yeah.

NICK: [cross] Yeah.

AUSTIN: [cross] Yes, this was absolutely on Toonami. [Indistinct voice from *The Big O* begins playing]

KEITH: Okay.

AUSTIN: Oh, you just linked—okay. Here, I'm linked to just a video so you can see...this happening. Um. It's probably the closest to a film noir mecha show. It's a little more like I'm not a big super robot fan, I'm more of a real robot fan? But like it totally is—there are cool switches and stuff, oh, it's great. Um. So check that out.

KEITH: Oh, man, there's like a fuckin typewriter thing inside it!

AUSTIN: Yes. There is.

NICK: Yeah. I—fuck.

AUSTIN: Right, and then it says “cast in the name of god, ye not guilty.” So yeah, it’s like this sort of ridiculous...

NICK: Oh, I really wanna watch *Big O* now.

AUSTIN: You should do that! [DRE laughs] [Music cuts off] Um. Okay. So that’s that side. I feel like we have that side set, pretty well. [someone coughs] We need a name, we’ll come up with a name.

DRE: I do have one question about that side before we move on.

AUSTIN: Sure.

DRE: So we’ve talked about voting. When we talk about like hyper-democracy, is it like, are people constantly going back and forth and having dialogue on issues, or is it once you vote and ou figure out what the majority is, like that’s it.

AUSTIN: The world is too big—or the timeline is too long for it to be settle. Right, like...I think. Unless they’ve recently reached that state, like galactically recently, like unless it’s been the last 300 years when they’ve reached that, but like colonizing the Perseus Arm took thousands of years. They probably re-voted on some stuff a couple of times. There are probably—both of these sides have probably had revolutions and new changes in leadership and new developments. [DRE: Okay.] You know?

DRE: Yeah. [AUSTIN: So.] I was thinking of when Art originally brought up like Geth. [AUSTIN: Yeah. Yeah.] Like with the Geth it’s like they like determine the best course of action and that’s it. Like everybody’s just like, “eh,” and they buy in. And I know that’s like because they’re robots, they’re not people [AUSTIN: Right. Right.] but I didn’t know how far we wanted to take that.

AUSTIN: I think it’s, you know, it’s a big deal to bring something back up, maybe. You know, like you need to have a vote to just bring something back up, let alone to then [DRE: Okay!] re-vote on it. But like...

JACK: It’s British democracy.

AUSTIN: [laughs] There’s a big—unlike British democracy, people like do trust in it. [cross] Implicitly.

JACK: [cross] Yeah, right.

[DRE laughs]

AUSTIN: Um, and—[ART chuckles] I think over time...I mean, maybe this isn’t true, but like there are trends over time, and maybe those trends shift, but like...lots of the big picture stuff

has shaken out at this point. [amused] Like once you have a society that worships technology, *literally*, lots of things become easy votes. You know, like, oh yeah no, we understand that corporations are people. [cross] Y'know, we understand that—we like—all of that is—

JACK: [cross] That one over there literally is.

AUSTIN: Yeah, that one literally is. You know? [NICK laughs] The Divine of Commerce is of course...a person. Um. Except we already established that they don't get to vote, so. Anyway. Um. We have the big picture stuff for the Perseus Arm faction. One nice thing about having like the Perseus Arm and the Sagittarius Arm here is that we know that neither of them are called Duckburg. [snorts]

[Laughter]

KEITH: [cross] Wait, hold on, but.

AUSTIN: [cross] But. But.

DRE: [cross] Hey. What about the top sections?

ALI: [cross] Yeah, excuse me.

KEITH: [cross] The capital city, Duckburg.

AUSTIN: Oh, boy.

ALI: Yeah. [AUSTIN: Um.] Writin it down.

AUSTIN: Great.

JACK: [cross] Why did we call it Duckburg?

DRE: [cross] Maybe one of those unsettled north sections is Duckburg, I don't know!

AUSTIN: [rueful] I don't know why we called it Duckburg. I don't know. [ALI laughs] [cross] God damn it.

KEITH: [cross] Ah, I think I said it...because it was funny.

AUSTIN: Great.

KEITH: I think I just said it.

AUSTIN: [cross] So let's talk about—

ALI: [cross] Were we talking about ducks?

KEITH: Anyway, I'm Max, Duck King of Duckburg.

[Laughter]

AUSTIN: That's one of the northern empires, right, the northern kingdoms.

NICK: Yeah.

JACK: Yes. Totally.

AUSTIN: He traces his line back to the ancient Duck Kings of the Galactic Core. So let's talk about [cross] the other faction.

KEITH: [cross] The darkians.

AUSTIN: The Sagittarius Arm, the Orion Spur.

ALI: [cross] [stammers] Break?

ART: [cross] Can we have a break, or?

AUSTIN: Yeah, let's take a quick break. Let's take a [JACK: Yeah. Cool. I'm gonna make a trip.] let's take a five minute break, ten minute break?

ART: Fiver?

ALI: Five seems fine.

AUSTIN: Let's take a fiver.

JACK: Five to seven minute break.

DRE: Okay.

AUSTIN: Ready, break. [ALI giggles]

ART: Five to seven, a sevens. [AUSTIN laughs slightly]

ALI: [cross] Goodbye. Okay.

AUSTIN: [cross] Bye.

JACK: [cross] Okay, bye-bye.

[DRE laughs]

[quiet, small sounds of walking, doors opening]

KEITH: [whispering] Hey guys.

NICK: Hey, Keith.

KEITH: [whispering] Hey Nick, what's up!

NICK: ...Wondering why I was such a butt when I was younger and didn't like *Big O*.

[more noises]

KEITH: I—

NICK: I watched the whole damn thing, and for some reason I maintained that I didn't like it, even though I apparently super did! [laughs]

KEITH: Yeah, you watched the whole thing!

NICK: Yeah, I watched the whole—well. Yeah, I watched the whole thing—

[1:15:00]

and now I'm watching these like this youtube clip and I'm just like [enthusiastically] yeah! Yeah, *Big O*!

KEITH: [sleepy] Yeah, I still have to finish *Cowboy Bebop*.

[pause]

NICK: Where did you stop?

KEITH: Um, Hulu only had the first four episodes.

DRE: [cross] Weird!

NICK: [cross] Oh.

KEITH: ...Well, they had the first four in dub, and the rest in sub, and I was like well, I already started the dub. Not gonna switch over.

NICK: Oh, yeah, no—don't—watch the dub.

KEITH: Yeah.

NICK: The dub is what you watch for *Cowboy Bebop*.

[pause]

UGH, I'm...I had to mute Dril 'cause I don't...understand the worship. And it just bothers me now.

DRE: You don't understand the what?

NICK: I don't understand Dril.

AUSTIN: I am back.

NICK: Hello!

DRE: Looking at pictures of this...Air Force base that Jack was talking about.

AUSTIN: It's a cool Air Force base!

[pause]

DRE: I wanna live in a world [NICK: Okay.] where like we just kept going with blimps.

AUSTIN: [wistful] Blimps are pretty cool.

DRE: And [DIR-igibles] dirigibles. [dir-IDGE-ibles] Dirigibles? [DIR-igibles] Dirigibles?

AUSTIN: [cross] [DIR-igible] Dirigible [dir-IDGE-ibles] dirigibles.

NICK: [cross] Well, according to television...According to television, that's every other alternate reality, so.

AUSTIN: That's true. Yeah.

DRE: True.

AUSTIN: People love blimps.

KEITH: They're pretty good.

NICK: That really wouldn't...

DRE: What was the alternate reality World War Two game where they had like [cross] Nazi blimps invading New York?

AUSTIN: [cross] Crimson Sky. Or do you mean something else?

DRE: Crimson Sky is definitely one, but I mean something else.

AUSTIN: Do you mean the like the shitty one? That was bad?

DRE: This was a recent first person shooter [AUSTIN: Yeah.] for PS3?

AUSTIN: I think it was bad. Wasn't it bad?

DRE: Yeah, it probably was bad.

ART: I would just like to quickly point out that with almost no input from me at all, we did make a universe where there's definitely a space Hadrian.

AUSTIN: Yeah, we did. [ART laughs]

KEITH: Yeah, we basically just remade your whole thing.

AUSTIN: But like we made like Space Hadrian like...like Space Hadrian, who is completely lost, who is a paladine, right?

ART: Sure.

NICK: Yeah.

ART: And I don't wanna play that character even a little.

AUSTIN: Yeah, I don't know what your characters are gonna be, and I'm really excited to figure that out!

KEITH: Yeah, you can be whatever you want! I'm gonna be the same one, though.

AUSTIN: No...No, you're not.

KEITH: I mean, it's gonna be a different character, but it's all [cross] from the same place.

AUSTIN: [cross] It's all Keith. It's all Keith.

KEITH: It's al—yeah.

AUSTIN: Great.

DRE: It's Keith all the way down.

AUSTIN: I just want you to know Jack has—Jack and Ali have both committed to stretching their roleplaying muscles. With their new characters, who are completely different.

KEITH: I feel like I stretched my roleplaying muscles as Fero!

AUSTIN: I think you stretched your muscles.

KEITH: Sure.

AUSTIN: I don't know that it was the roleplaying ones. But you're stretching lots of muscles.

KEITH: Yeah.

JACK: [cross] Muscle.

AUSTIN: [cross] [*Turning Point: Fall of Liberty*](#). Is the name of that game.

DRE: Yeah. I just found it too. [laughs]

AUSTIN: It's a bad game, if I recall.

DRE: I'm gonna go back to looking at cool hangar pictures.

AUSTIN: Hangars are pretty good.

ART: And I guess like we haven't even talked about like what side are—who are our [AUSTIN: Yeah—] like what side are we on. [AUSTIN: Right. Who—] And I think I'm almost instantly like, we're the other side, right? We just spent all this time [cross] talking about [cross] what we're not.

AUSTIN: [cross] I...[sighs] There might be a third sort of people. Or fourth, I guess. We'll see.

KEITH: There's also nothing saying that...I mean, I guess there is a little bit saying that there can't be both in the group. [cross] There's a little bit that's like...

AUSTIN: [cross] Right! No you're right, there isn't anything saying that. Like who—maybe you're a weird...[cross] peace force between the two—

KEITH: [cross] Mish-mash?

AUSTIN: Yeah! Who knows.

JACK: I'm back!

AUSTIN: Welcome back. We're just waitin on Ali now.

NICK: What if all the players are the unknowable aliens and it's just a podcast [cross] with everyone humming, at different frequencies?

KEITH: [cross] The way that—I mean—[laughs] [DRE laughs]

[JACK hums]

NICK: The—[hums]

[DRE and AUSTIN hum]

[Ominous humming from all]

JACK: Great.

NICK: [breaks off humming]

[JACK achieves a very high pitched hum]

[Quiet laughs]

ART: Jack says back, and we took all his frequencies.

ALI: [cross] What happened to—

DRE: [cross] Can I just, uh—

ALI: What's happening? [someone laughs]

DRE: Can we cut that part up early, and just put it as a teaser for Friends at the Table season two, just us humming at all different frequencies?

[Quiet laughing]

KEITH: Yeah. [cross] Totally.

DRE: [cross] This is what you have to look forward to!

KEITH: Put some dramatic music on the background, lots of drums.

DRE: Yeah.

KEITH: Dun dun! [ART: Like a—] Friends at the Table season two! [hums at different pitches]

DRE: Or just replace...what's [cross] you know, the synth sounds at the...

KEITH: [cross] Dun dun! Save the date.

DRE: The tone to the beginning of *Star Trek*. [sings the first two notes] Just us humming at different frequencies.

KEITH: That sounded like the *Back to the Future* song to me.

DRE: You know the beginning of *Star Trek*, there's like those [cross] chimes or whatever?

KEITH: [cross] No, I don't. Nope!

DRE: Aw, really?

KEITH: Yeah.

[NICK hums the *Star Trek* opening]

DRE: Yeah, Nick knows what's up.

KEITH: Well, then *Back to the Future*'s like [sings *Back to the Future* opening] like that's the—[cross] that's the one.

DRE: [cross] Yeah, but whereas like—

ART: [cross] That's from one of those songs about a theremin.

DRE: Yeah. [laughs] [cross] *Back to the Future* gets like—

KEITH: [cross] Well, it's very difficult to—

DRE: —upbeat and excited, *Star Trek* just stays like [KEITH hums *Back to the Future* opening] low-key and mysterious. [NICK begins *Star Trek* theme] At least until the fanfare ends.

[NICK trails off]

KEITH: Yeah, I don't know shit about *Star Trek*, so.

AUSTIN: *Star Trek's* good.

DRE: Man, old *Star Trek* is [ART: Eh.] really hit or miss, but when it hits, it is *good*.

KEITH: [cross] I've seen like the first —

NICK: [cross] Wait, you mean original series?

DRE: Yeah!

NICK: Huh. Okay.

AUSTIN: When it hits, it's good. It—[DRE: Yeah] [NICK: Really?] Yeah! Absolutely. It doesn't hit every episode, like there's lots of camp, but like there are episodes that are just fantastic. Couple years ago I watched the whole thing while reading the AV Club reviews, and it was really fun. If you ever get a chance to, I definitely say do it. It's a flawed thing, but it's also—

NICK: I mean, I've seen it before. [AUSTIN: Okay.] I've seen the whole series.

AUSTIN: Oh, okay! [NICK: Uh.] No, I think that there's like—I think that there are fantastic episodes in the original series. I think there's a lot that are hot garbage. It's very [NICK: Yeah.] inconsistent. But I think there's some season two stuff that I really like.

NICK: What's an episode you like? For example.

AUSTIN: Like the one that I was talking about before, the one that's just like dope submarine combat called...I wanna do this without looking it up...I think "or terror" is in the name?

NICK: Yeah, no, okay, yeah. I know which one you're talking about.

AUSTIN: I'm gonna look at an episode list and just tell you the episodes I actually like. One second. 'Cause we're still waiting on [cross] Keith, and it's like...

NICK: [cross] I guess it's just really hard for me, because everything...that's in the original series I feel like that was good was done better later.

AUSTIN: Yeah, sure, but like I have lots of room in my heart for things to like. I don't—like—[NICK laughs] I like *Next Generation* a whole bunch. I also can like [NICK: Yeah.] bits of—uh, “Balance of Terror” is the [NICK: Yeah.] episode I was talking about, but it's actually a season one episode, and that's just like super good. Is “Space Seed” in with the...? I like some of the weird God ones. A lot. Um...

NICK: I mean, that's fine. I'm not trying to argue you into disliking it or anything.

AUSTIN: I—there—yeah. Uh, I like - yes. [NICK: Which can never.] “Space Seed” is the original con one that's also really good.

DRE: “Devil in the Dark” is okay.

AUSTIN: Yeah.

DRE: If I—I think I remember that one being decent.

AUSTIN: What's the...time travel-y one that's really good?

NICK: “City on the Edge of...”

AUSTIN: Yeah, “City of the Edge of Tomorrow.” Um, yeah! I just—going through them in that way, and really understanding them as like...working through what that group wanted to do with that show, how they were limited, the ways in which they were breaking new ground, and then the ways in which they were completely falling into old tropes is really interes—was really a fun time for me.

NICK: Yeah.

AUSTIN: Again, like i—what you have to understand is like there's nothing I like uncritically? Like, um.

NICK: No, um, yeah, [cross] I know! That's fine.

AUSTIN: [cross] You know. So it's hard to be like. Yeah. For that matter, like lots of *Next Generation* is also hot garbage. So.

NICK: Oh, yeah. No, totally.

AUSTIN: So.

JACK: Who are you waiting for?

AUSTIN: Art, maybe?

ALI: [cross] Yeah.

ART: [cross] No, I'm here.

ALI: Oh.

AUSTIN: Oh, are we all here?

KEITH: [cross] I'm here too.

NICK: [cross] Yep. We're all here.

ART: I've been here!

DRE: Just wanted to sit and talk about *Star Trek*!

AUSTIN: Uh, okay! We don't need to clap, probably, right?

ALI: No...

KEITH: No.

DRE: [cross] Did anyone stop recording?

JACK: [cross] It's fun to do!

AUSTIN: Nah.

DRE: [laughs] I agree with Jack. It is fun to do.

AUSTIN: It is fun to clap. Let's just do a three—you know what? Let's just do a three-two-one clap, for fun.

JACK: Okay, cool.

ART: [cross] Okay—

KEITH: [cross] And then, wait, can that turn into like applause? A three-two-one clap, then applause.

AUSTIN: What's—[ALI: Ooh, yeah!] okay.

AUSTIN: What are we applauding?

JACK: Yeah, all right.

KEITH: Ah, we're just really cool!

AUSTIN: But like I need to know what sort of applause to give.

KEITH: Oh, this is...[JACK: Well—] this is like [DRE laughs loudly] very serious. [AUSTIN: Okay.] This is—

AUSTIN: Award—BAFTA award-winning.

KEITH: Yeah yeah, this is BAFTA award applause.

JACK: The rock star.

KEITH: Yeah.

AUSTIN: [laughs evilly] Lifetime achievement. Okay, ready?

KEITH: All right.

AUSTIN: Three, two, one, [ART: One.] clap!

[Claps which turn into polite applause]

KEITH: [over clapping] Thank you. Thank you. [ALI laughs choked] I really appreciate just like—it does my heart good to have this [ALI: Woo!] sort of recognition [NICK: Woo!] from my friends, from my loved ones, from the people that I care about, and I [AUSTIN: Boo!] wouldn't be—I w—hey, hold on—[shouting] you in the back!

[Finger snapping noises]

KEITH: [cross] I wouldn't be here—I wouldn't be here without the support—

AUSTIN: [cross] Someone's snapping! Someone's doing jazz snaps!

KEITH: Of my friends! Um. [crinkling noise] And my manager.

DRE: [cross] You're gettin played off...

KEITH: [cross] And my dog.

AUSTIN: And the Divine [cross] Equality.

KEITH: [cross] And the Divines.

NICK: Here comes [cross] the giant...

KEITH: He was my giant robot friendship!

NICK: Ship or train, hook. [cross] For your neck.

KEITH: [cross] Hey, it's me, the friendship robot! How are you guys doin'?

AUSTIN: [JACK laughs] Oh, boy.

KEITH: Check out my huge guns! [AUSTIN laughs] And then he flexes but then he shows you guns, [AUSTIN laughs] like actual guns.

JACK: Oh! All the robots have guns, right? They like [cross] all the Divines have guns.

AUSTIN: [cross] Yes! Eh, maybe.

JACK: But what's the [AUSTIN: I don't like all—] Divine of friendship for, if it doesn't have guns?

AUSTIN: Yeah, that's true. Okay. So let's talk about the other faction. We're back.

NICK: Some of those Divine have to have sweet giant mech space swords.

AUSTIN: Oh yeah, definitely.

JACK: Yeah, absolutely.

AUSTIN: Let's talk about the Orion Spur, Sagittarius Arm [JACK: Yeah.] faction. Things we know about them. They pilot riggers. They also like the fact that they have the sun still in their empire.

DRE: Mm-hm.

AUSTIN: That's all I know about them.

KEITH: They might be an actual empire.

AUSTIN: Right, they might be!

JACK: Patriotic good ol' boys: the beginning of [*Interstellar*](#).

[ALI and AUSTIN laugh]

[DRE laughs]

AUSTIN: God.

[JACK laughs]

DRE: [cross] Yeah, it was the beat.

JACK: [cross] Oh! Actually, can we steal those robotic combine harvesters? Those are okay.

AUSTIN: [casually] That's what riggers are.

JACK: Oh, okay. [ALI laughs] Sure!

AUSTIN: Um, I actually kind of [JACK: So.] do like the notion of riggers being labor robots a lot, actually. [cross] That like—

JACK: [cross] Yeah, totally. They're Big Daddies, almost.

NICK: Yeah.

AUSTIN: Right, right, that they were built to...

KEITH: They're all—they were like repurposed?

AUSTIN: Yeah. Yeah.

KEITH: A lot of them?

AUSTIN: [cross] Like they went to dangerous planets.

JACK: [cross] and obviously they built some [cross] [???] [1:26:46]!

AUSTIN: They had to cut down big trees, they had to go into lava fields, like.

JACK: Yeah, this rigger's job is just sinking, really quickly.

AUSTIN: Right. Right.

JACK: This rigger just sinks really fast.

AUSTIN: [snorts] Um. Yeah, I like that a l—and then like, yeah, over time, also they got into conflict with the Perseus Arm crew, and also they got into—again, I think that both of these groups have existed long enough to have internal conflicts that they’ve since resolved.

JACK: Yep.

NICK: Mm-hm.

AUSTIN: So like, who knows, like maybe the...maybe the riggers were turned into weapons of war when there was a labor revolt, you know, a thousand years ago. And—four thousand years ago or something, where you know a group of exploited laborers took over. Listen, I told you I’m not gonna—no one vetoed communism, so.

[NICK laughs, DRE laughs]

AUSTIN: No. Um.

KEITH: I don’t like—

AUSTIN: I do like the notion of like laborers decided that oh yeah, these things that we’re using to dig ditches for the man, those can help us fight for our rights. But again, that wasn’t—that wasn’t yesterday, that was [KEITH: Are—] years and years ago, and now there are just more riggers, you know.

KEITH: Are there—are the riggers sentient in the same way that [cross] Divines are?

AUSTIN: [cross] No, I don’t think so.

KEITH: I didn’t think so either.

AUSTIN: They’re things you get in and drive.

KEITH: Yeah, they’re car—they’re [cross] gun cars.

AUSTIN: [cross] They’re cars! They’re gun cars. [KEITH: So—] Welcome to our new show, Gun Cars!

[ALI and DRE laugh]

JACK: Oh, I think they have some artificial intelligence. Like, [AUSTIN: Y—] I think that they—you know, in the same way that my car—my car, I don’t own a car!—in the same way that my fancy Elon Musk car [AUSTIN: Right.] could, you know, unlock the doors when I get close [cross] to it...

AUSTIN: Yeah yeah, sure, absolutely, but they're not sentient in the ways that Divines are.

JACK: Oh no no no.

AUSTIN: Yeah.

JACK: [cross] You know, the car moves up to the right height.

AUSTIN: [cross] They're Titan AI. Right?

JACK: Yeah! Yeah.

NICK: [cross] I think we need to make it—

ART: [cross] Probably a really good computer to run any of this shit, right?

AUSTIN: Yes.

NICK: Yeah.

AUSTIN: [cross] No steampunk, I'm vetoing steampunk.

KEITH: [cross] It's not just entirely analogue robot?

AUSTIN: Yeah, no. Vetoed.

[JACK chuckles]

NICK: [laughs] Um. [cross] I think we need to make it—

JACK: [cross] Season three is going to be the steampunk season.

AUSTIN: Eh...

[Chuckles]

NICK: No, season three is gonna be [Car Wars](#). If you've ever seen that before.

JACK: [laughs] Yeah...

DRE: Oh!

NICK: We'd have actual guns with cars.

AUSTIN: Right.

DRE: Car-fu.

NICK: Uh. Dammit, what was I gonna say—oh yeah yeah yeah! We need to make it clear early on here whether the rigger faction is space truckers or not.

JACK: I don't think they are. Well, um.

NICK: Okay. I'm fine with either— [???] [1:29:06]

AUSTIN: [cross] I think there are some—

JACK: [cross] Maybe they are in some way. Maybe they're [cross] like *Alien* space truckers.

NICK: [cross] You just have to...

AUSTIN: Wait. Wait wait wait. One at a time. Jack.

JACK: Yeah, no, sorry.

AUSTIN: What were you—they're alien space truckers, what?

JACK: No, no—sorry. [laughs] I'm sorry.

AUSTIN: I see what you're saying. [JACK: But what I had—] They're like space truckers from the movie *Alien*, is what you meant.

JACK: Yeah. As opposed to space truckers from the—I really don't wanna do a space western.

AUSTIN: No, me either. [cross] Ali, what were you going to say?

NICK: Right, okay.

ALI: I mean, like both sides would need that sort of [AUSTIN: Yes.] thing though, right? [laughs]

AUSTIN: Right, yes. [JACK: Yeah, totally.] Both sides would have logistical concerns that need people [NICK: Yeah, but.]—that need stuff transported.

[pause]

Yeah, like what—

JACK: I don't know—

AUSTIN: I don't want this to be—Jimmy from [StarCraft](#) isn't in this faction, I don't think.

DRE: Yeah.

AUSTIN: Or if he is...you know, that dude probably also exists in the other faction, he just doesn't pilot a Divine.

KEITH: They're not all Jimmies.

AUSTIN: Right. It's not the—right. This isn't the [Firefly](#) faction.

JACK: Or this isn't the um—

[1:30:00]

—god, what was that game that we all played together? Not all of us—the game with the—

AUSTIN: *Titanfall*.

JACK: Where you fuck the space cows.

AUSTIN and ALI: Ohhh!

[DRE laughs loudly]

KEITH: Ah, I can tell from my—from me not understanding what that means, that I did not play this game.

[ALI laughs]

ART: [cross] Yeah. Looking forward to bite into this game.

DRE: [cross] It was on the sci-fi game jam?

AUSTIN: [cross] That was a fucking great stream.

[ALI laughs]

JACK: Yeah, we did really well there. [cross] I don't think it's that.

AUSTIN: [cross] God damn.

KEITH: [cross] “Remember when we fucked those space cows?” [ALI and AUSTIN laugh] Yeah, we all do remember that! All of us remember when we fucked the space cows!—anyway, Jack, continue explaining as if we didn’t!

[Laughter]

JACK: [quietly, laughing] Okay, sorry.

AUSTIN: That was a great—that was from the [Space Cowboy Jam](#), I think it was called Til the Cows Come Home.

DRE: [cross] Yeah.

JACK: [cross] Yep. Yeah.

KEITH: Ew, gross name for what that game is!

[ALI and NICK laugh]

ART: Yeah, what?!

DRE: That—that—[cross] that scene of Ali having to read that dialogue—

ART: [cross] Is this a bit?!

JACK: No, this is not a bit.

DRE: [cross]—is in one of Run Button’s things.

ALI: [cross] [unintelligible] and that’s...

AUSTIN: Sorry. I’m sorry. It’s called [Til the Cows Tear Us Apart](#). [KEITH: Oh, okay.] Which is a better name.

KEITH: Yeah, because [JACK: Um.] the game where—yeah.

NICK: I think the other one’s better.

[AUSTIN groans]

KEITH: It’s funnier!

JACK: Okay, so I don't think *Til the Cow*—I don't think it's the *Til the Cows Tear Us Apart* space trucker, I think it's the *Nostromo* crew being woken up very slowly [AUSTIN: Mm-hm.] space trucker, at least in my mind? I don't know.

AUSTIN: So is this the [JACK: And like—] big corporate—'cause like those people work for Weyland, right? For Weyland-Yutani? In. [JACK: Yeah. Yeah.] So is this the cyberpunk side?

NICK: Yeah.

KEITH: Yeah.

JACK: [AUSTIN: Okay.] Well, what's on the other side? [cross] Columbia.

NICK: [cross] The other side's sucky...

AUSTIN: I think the other side is post-cyberpunk. It's—

JACK: What is that?!

AUSTIN: Uh, so post-cyberpunk is a genre of cyberpunk that like...assumes—so cyberpunk is like the look at how these technologies are creating...or maybe not the technology but at least the people who are using them, at least the governments that are using them, at least the corporations, that this structure of society is dystopic and broken. [JACK: Mm.]

Post-cyberpunk...tends to be cleaner. The technologies are widely available. They're no longer just—there's no longer, you know, terrible income inequality. There's still crime, there are still terrible, you know, invasions of privacy, there's still bad things, but like post-cyberpunk stories tend to deal with the people who are kind of cleaning up the—like sweeping up the remaining mess, [JACK: Hm!] after the great upheaval. Um, [*Ghost in the Shell*](#) is basically a post-cyberpunk. Especially the anime. Where like, "okay, like we're all—everything's settled now. Like, Japan in that show is functioning. You know, everyone has weird cyber brains, but like that's just everybody has them. And things tend to be cleaner and crisper. And when there is a risk of great social upheaval, it's less systemic and more individual. It's more like, "oh, this one person did something very terrible." [JACK: Mm.]

It's—I'm not a big big fan of post-cyberpunk, but I like deploying it alongside of—[JACK: Yeah.] I like deploying it in a way that can kind of...shine light on why I don't like it, obviously? You know, like, yeah, we described what the Perseus Arm group is like. Maybe they're not great. Um [laughs] it's everything's functioning, but maybe functioning isn't good enough. [JACK: Yeah] And so maybe the—

JACK: Listen. Just because you can vote every 40 seconds doesn't mean that...

AUSTIN: Right. Exactly.

ART: No, that sounds like hell, right? Everyone agrees that that—voting every [JACK laughs] 40 seconds sounds like the worst, literally the worst.

AUSTIN: [cross] Like and it makes voting feel—yes.

JACK: [cross] Yeah! Except you'd be super into it, though. You'd be super into it, wouldn't you? You know, you'd like...like we check Twitter, you'd go and just vote on like four things.

AUSTIN: Right. Right.

ART: Yeah, I need to be saved from myself, is my point, but.

[Laughter]

AUSTIN: Right. So maybe the Sagittarius Arm-Orion Spur side is the slightly more corpocratic...[JACK: Yep.] traditional [cross] cyberpunk-y...

JACK: [cross] I can go with that.

AUSTIN: You know, the—I do really like the Nostromo situation, which is like, they're space trucker adjacent. You know?

JACK: Mm-hm!

NICK: Yeah.

ART: I have a really weird pitch for them kind of historically? [AUSTIN: Sure!] That kinda like gets to like what riggers are? [AUSTIN: Uh-huh.] And we can all decide that this is stupid nonsense. [AUSTIN: Sure.] But like, I do like that like, you know, they were at one point some sort of like space agriculture thing. [AUSTIN: Mm-hm.] You know, *Firefly*-adjacent. [AUSTINN: Mm-hm.] But like that was quite a long time ago. [AUSTIN: Sure.] And then like, sort of like how things developed in our one Earth, we kind of like got this like ramp-up, right? [AUSTIN: Mm-hm.] Like people realized like, oh wait, capitalism! I remember capitalism. And then just kinda like there was a—there was an explosion, there were revolts, there might have been like a brief, you know, totalitarian communist phase, [AUSTIN: Sure.] followed by what like now is like—everyone kinda understands what Russia is like right now?

AUSTIN: Yes.

ART: Where like communism fell. [AUSTIN: Yeah.] And they privatized everything, but the way they privatized everything—led to this like oligarchy. [AUSTIN: Right.] And like what if instead of like an oligarchy, it was like a corporate oligarchy?

AUSTIN: I like it a whole bunch, actually, because it makes the—it puts the like the democracy side of the Perseus Arm in sharp contrast with the—

JACK: Yeah! I could see that working.

AUSTIN: —the corrupt oligarchy. But like. [NICK: Yeah.] Again, neither of them is clearly desirable—but also, I don't wanna—I don't think we're falling into the, both of them are filled with terrible people, Rockstar problem? Do you know what I mean, like. [KEITH: Mm-hm.] [NICK: Yeah.] There's a line in *Dragon Age: Inquisition* that I really love where someone asks Iron Bull like "Oh, but like, isn't everything weird and different up where the Qunari live?" And he's like listen, like, the woman who runs the restaurant like is still worried about if the eggs are gonna show up on time. [NICK: Yeah.] And I think that's still like fundamentally the same in both the Perseus Arm and the [cross] Sagittarius Arm.

JACK: [cross] That's a great line.

AUSTIN: Yeah, I really really love—

NICK: That whole conversation [cross] is fantastic.

AUSTIN: [cross] Is fantastic, yeah. It's really good about like—it's a really good shorthand for why lots of people do like various cultures way wrong? In [NICK: Yeah.] kind of fantasy and sci-fi literature? So yeah, I think that that's what I like here. I actually really like that, Art, so thanks for [cross] bringing that up.

ART: [cross] Are there gonna be fun little artifacts of that, like, y'know, people still remember the heroes of the revolution, even [AUSTIN: Right.] though the revolution came, went, failed. [AUSTIN: Right!] And like but like yeah. [cross] There's, you know—it still won't flesh its—

AUSTIN: [cross] And has probably been commoditized at this point.

JACK [coughs] [ART: Yeah.]

AUSTIN: Like.

ART: Like make sure to buy your Lenin gear [AUSTIN: Right. Right] for Lenin Day.

AUSTIN: For Lenin Day, yeah.

DRE: Your Che Guevara face shirt.

AUSTIN: Right, exactly. Yeah. I actually really like that a bunch. [ART: Oof...face shirt...] Um, so yeah! We need names for these things, but we can get those later, obviously.

NICK: What if...what if the equivalent of like Che Guevara is like a...fuckin...this is—I'm three for three now.

[DRE laughs]

AUSTIN: Words are hard. Words are hard. You're making a Che pun? [NICK: No.] You talking about a robot?

NICK: Uh. That...[cross] that shirt—

ALI: [cross] He was probably just thinking about...

NICK: [Max Headroom](#)! Max Headroom.

AUSTIN: Oh. Yeah, like a—yeah, just like whatever the revolution was here is definitely a sort of...ridiculous cyberpunk subversion, like [cross] through...this media.

NICK: [cross] Yeah. Like there's some [AUSTIN: I like that—] figure that was a revolutionary, and now he's a floating head selling you Coca-Cola.

AUSTIN: Right. Right. I actually like that...

ART: I kinda like the idea that like there was an Adam Smith, right, and then there was a Marx, and the Marx like displaced the Adam Smith, everyone hates Adam Smith. And then like we get to this super corporate capitalist thing, but like everyone's still like, oh, we don't like Adam Smith, we like...

[AUSTIN and ALI laugh]

AUSTIN: Right. Yeah.

ART: We like Marx. [AUSTIN: Yeah.] Now buy all this crap [cross] and work all your life.

AUSTIN: [cross] Yeah. Me too. I like it a whole bunch. Oh, here's one more thing I want for the Sagittarius Arm, though. I think that there are robotic AIs, in this world. And they're just like people. They're just—or like not *like* people, but they're just like in the world. They work jobs. Like, the Divines exist at this higher tier of hyper-technological awareness or whatever, or at least that's what people say that they do? [NICK: Mm.] But in the Sagittarius Arm, it's just like...you know, like Jim 27 is the guy who washed your car last week. [JACK: Yeah.] And like he goes home, and—

KEITH: [laughing] I like how there can be multiple people named Jim, but if there's multiple robots, [AUSTIN laughs] then they have to have a number! [AUSTIN: Yeah!] It's just like, I went

to school with four human Johns, but also I went to school with John, John 2, John 3, and [AUSTIN: But like—] John 4.

AUSTIN: Well, here's the thing, I didn't say that they had—maybe there's a bunch of [laughing] Jim 27s.

[JACK and KEITH laugh]

KEITH: Oh, this is the 27th [cross] iteration of a Jim bot.

ART: [cross] Yeah, Jim 27 is a very common robot name.

AUSTIN: Yeah, Jim 27! Like, my dad was a Jim 27, and his dad before him! Also, robots have dads? I don't know where I'm going with this! [Laughter fades] Ohh.

JACK: It's a robot dad! [cross] You know!

AUSTIN: So yeah, [cross] I like that. I think that that, again, kinda fits in nicely with our, like.

KEITH: Oh, I'd like to play a robot. That'd be fun.

NICK: [cross] What's the—

AUSTIN: [cross] Jack, I think, is playing a robot. So.

KEITH: Jack's a robot?

JACK: I'm gonna be a robot. Yeah.

AUSTIN: Mm-hm.

ALI: Where do we—

NICK: What if they're all like, they have to be unique identifiers, like login names. So.

AUSTIN: Yeah, that would totally be fine. Yeah. I—

NICK: Jim XX 420.

AUSTIN: [whispering] Oh, boy.

JACK: [chuckles] [DRE and NICK laugh] Oh, he's the worst robot. [cross] It's just...

AUSTIN: [cross] He is the worst robot. God damn it. [sighs]

JACK: His job is—[NICK: Or.] probably sticking stamps on the packages. [laughing slightly] He hates it...

NICK: Or there's the one robot that like, y'know, like picked his name and then grew up a bunch, but now he's [cross] stuck with the name...

AUSTIN: [cross] He's just stuck with...

NICK: Uh, Dr. Jerk Femur.

AUSTIN: Right. And he's not even a doctor? He was in robot medical school, but he just dropped out, so it's just a really embarrassing thing?

NICK: Oh, [cross] like it's not even that, he's just a...

JACK: [cross] Robot medical school takes the human meds.

NICK: He's just a grunt at a university IT somewhere.

AUSTIN: Right. Yeah. [sighs] [ART chuckles] Mm. Close to home, Nick.

[Laughter]

DRE: This got dark [cross] real fast.

AUSTIN: [cross] This got dark. All right. So I think we have [cross] these two factions.

NICK: [cross] Yeah, I was surprised you didn't get it from 'Dr. Jerk Femur.'

AUSTIN: No, I didn't.

DRE: [cross] Oh, I did.

AUSTIN: [cross] / didn't, it took me until [NICK: Okay.] you said that second bit. [ART laughs] Life is hard. Uh.

ALI: Where do we fall with aliens? 'Cause like.

AUSTIN: We fell with—[cross] okay.

ALI: [cross] It just doesn't make sense that there's just humans on these planets.

AUSTIN: Well, on these planets, there are. [ALI: Okay.] I think that the—so what we ended up saying was like there are aliens who are humanoid—so there are aliens that are like completely ridiculous—very powerful, true capital-A Alien, not just blue skin people who you wanna bang. [ALI laughs] And that those exist. [cross] Those exist in this region.

KEITH: And what's that—hang on, sorry, what if—that we do wanna bang.

AUSTIN: [ALI laughs] Right, we still wanna bang them. Right, sorry, I misspoke.

KEITH: I think we're all—yeah. Austin misspoke. We all agreed earlier [ALI wheezes with laughter] that we all wanna bang some aliens. [AUSTIN laughs silently] Off-mic, but it's important now that we recap the listeners.

AUSTIN: Right. [cross] Wanna bang them.

KEITH: [cross] That we all decided that.

AUSTIN: Real bad.

NICK: I wanna—[ALI laughs]

AUSTIN: [cross] We also said.

NICK: [cross] Let's come back to blue skin. Uh, in a little bit.

AUSTIN: We also said that to the north region, here, in the sector map, from their north, and again, on the galaxy map—I'm gonna—in the bottom right of this map, you should be able to see the galaxy map, do you see where I'm [ALI: Mm-hm.] pinging?

NICK: Yeah.

AUSTIN: That like—that whole arm, I think, is people who aren't from Earth, but are like, people. That's where aliens. This is where aliens.

ALI: Okay. Okay.

AUSTIN: Um. Because that's just like, who knows what the galactic core area is like? There's this whole inner ring, like, who knows. Um. I think that that's—the sort of easy way for us to have things that are aliens, but aren't—it's just not blue people everywhere. You know?

Um. And the thing that we said that like Keith suggested was like—or maybe it was Art who suggested this. Was like, oh yeah, these people can trace themselves back to—like oh yeah, my ancient history is—I evolved from a lizard race. Or whatever. But now it's just like, eh, just people.

ALI: Okay.

AUSTIN: Um. Because again, like, otherwise I feel like we go into a bunch of different directions, like...I don't just wanna do *Mass Effect* and *Star Wars*. Where it's just like, oh, this is the race of the slow-talking people. [ALI laughs] [NICK: Yeah.] This is the race of the...

NICK: [cross] Yeah.

ALI: [cross] Yeah, no. Okay, yeah.

AUSTIN: I...[NICK: Like that's—] I'm not interested in telling that story, is what it comes down—I like that story! I love *Mass Effect*. I love *Star Wars*. I like *Star Trek* a whole bunch. I'm not interested in this being caught up in that, necessarily? But I am [NICK: Right.] interested in the alien people being able to say that they're alien people and take some social—maybe, earn some social capital in that way? In the same way that someone now could say that they trace their line back to the prince of Bulgaria, you know? Royals are basically aliens. Is what I'm saying.

[ALI laughs]

NICK: I mean, like, I will always defend the *Star Trek* alien as a storytelling device? [AUSTIN: Right.] For what *Star Trek* is doing.

AUSTIN: Right, and that's just not what we're doing. [NICK: Right.] That's exactly it. Yeah.

NICK: But we're not telling—we're not like—

AUSTIN: [cross] *Star Trek* is p—

NICK: —[cross] partitioning off [AUSTIN: Right.] bits of humanity, so that we can analyze just this part.

AUSTIN: Right. *Star Trek* is using those as shortcuts to tell very specific stories about. [NICK; Right.] About big issues. I'm—no. Like that's not what our game is, so.

ALI: Mm-hm. No, yeah. [cross] Okay, okay.

AUSTIN: [cross] All right! Um. So I think we have a good idea of what that is. Are there any remaining questions about the factions or anything? Like obviously there should be a lot, but. Any pressing things, before we move on?

JACK: Oh! Um. I guess this is just sort of a...um. In its most—uh, could you go back to the galaxy map, in Roll 20?

AUSTIN: Yeah! Mm-hm.

[pause]

JACK: In its most sort of simplistic sense, then, [AUSTIN: Yes.] since these star bridges have gone, [AUSTIN: Yeah.] and obviously taking into account all of the technology that may or may not exist. [AUSTIN: Fair.] Is the only way to get from the lower end of the Orion Spur to the lower end of the Perseus Arm to go the long way round?

AUSTIN: [cross] Yeah. I think so.

JACK: [cross] To head north, all the way north, and then all the way south.

AUSTIN: Yes. Yeah.

JACK: Cool! [cross] That's cool.

AUSTIN: [cross] They're effectively different continents [JACK: Yeah.] of space, you know what I mean?

JACK: I super like that. That's really great.

AUSTIN: Or, or! There's rumor. Right like, oh, well, actually, [cross] if you go—

JACK: [cross] Yeah! And I'm sure that's probably like—I'm sure there's like a way.

AUSTIN: Right. [cross] Well, like—

JACK: [cross] But it's probably very expensive [cross], very...

AUSTIN: [cross] The way might be like, why—like [laughing slightly] look east. I bet you there's a way way down there, but like for whatever reason, everyone...I think you wanna go coreward. I think people want to go to the core.

JACK: Yeah.

AUSTIN: Of the galaxy, and that's the way to do it, y'know?

JACK: It's a bit like playing Skyrim and finding that no matter how hard you try, that mountain that's there? [AUSTIN: Right.] You are gonna have to go down by the river and by where those [cross] bandits are, to get past.

AUSTIN: [cross] Right. Yeah. Exactly.

[ART laughs]

So yeah.

NICK: What if there's...What if there's like stories of like, or like...little-kid myths of, instead of like digging through the earth of Australia [AUSTIN: Right. Right.] it's.

JACK: Hm. Mm-hm.

NICK: Like there's a—there's a wormhole!

AUSTIN: I definitely think—and that might be true. Who knows. Like let's not. [NICK: Sure.] We shouldn't answer that question. Those stories *definitely* exist, though. You're definitely right for that. Okay. Fun time now. I'm gonna link you all to a document.

JACK: It's all—

[1:45:00]

—been boring up until now. [cross] This is fun times.

AUSTIN: [cross] Yeah, [NICK laughs] this is all garbage!

NICK: Wait, actually, one—just one quick more thing. [AUSTIN: Uh-huh.] Sorry. Is that okay?

AUSTIN: Yeah, what's up?

NICK: Um...This is kind of self-serving, I guess, but this is a thing that I've been...toying around with, and it might be way too big for what we're doing here.

AUSTIN: Mm-hm.

NICK: But I have to put it out there. What if the...

[KEITH sneezes loudly]

AUSTIN: Bless you.

NICK: Oh, gesundheit.

DRE: [cross] Bless you. Whoo!

KEITH: [cross] Thanks. Sorry.

NICK: What if the cyberpunk side—the Sagittarius...

AUSTIN: Mm-hm.

NICK: ...Orion side...if they were—like what if part of that society was...like huge like body modification?

AUSTIN: [cross] Oh oh oh, like what you were talking about...

NICK: [cross] Like that's always a bit of cyberpunk. [AUSTIN: Mm-hm!] But like what if—

AUSTIN: That's what you were talking about with the blue skin. You're saying like what if that's where...

NICK: Yeah. [cross] Right.

AUSTIN: [cross] That's where like the people from that Daft Punk video are.

NICK: [laughs] [cross] Yeah! Exactly.

AUSTIN: [cross] Yeah! I'm down with that.

NICK: Or like people that maybe, you know, make themselves look like...um. You know, various...whatever. I don't know. Nevermind.

AUSTIN: [cross] No! I think that is body modding—

NICK: [cross] I don't wanna get too cartoony with it.

AUSTIN: No, it—neither do I, but like I think that there is...I think that like body modification is tied enough with cyberpunk, and if positioned correctly, ends up being one of the things that's appealing about this part of the world? Which is that people can [NICK: Sure.] remake themselves to look like what they want. Right?

NICK: Right.

AUSTIN: I talk about the [JACK: Yeah.] Sagi—go ahead.

JACK: Sorry, Sagittarius is riggers, right? [AUSTIN: Yes.] Perseus is Divines. [cross] Cool.

AUSTIN: [cross] Yes. Yeah.

JACK: [amused] We need names for these.

AUSTIN: We really do. We really do. We'll get there. Okay! I'm gonna link you all to a document.

Don't read it. Just have it.

[ART laughs]

NICK: Okay.

AUSTIN: Like don't scroll through it. Um. Stay on that first page for now, because we're all gonna do a fun thing. Which is!

JACK: I love to do things!

AUSTIN: This is...

DRE: Do things!

AUSTIN: This is a hundred different possible planets...Uh.

JACK: Jesus.

AUSTIN: That I pre-built. Um. Using the Stars Without Number system. The thing I'm going to have us all do is. We have 24 planets on this map. We're all gonna roll, one at a time, a d100? Find the planet that maps to this, and then place it somewhere on the map. Place it to one of the stars' hexes. Um.

NICK: [cross] Okay.

ART: [cross] Can I get that hex map back?

AUSTIN: Oh, are we not on the hex map? Oh, / [KEITH: No.] just went to the hex map. [cross] My bad.

JACK: [cross] This is super cool.

AUSTIN: My bad. Um...

NICK: [cross] This is like the...

AUSTIN: [cross] The reason it says not to read it is 'cause like don't—like—I don't want people just like oh wow that's a weird word! I don't—what's that mean? So. [NICK: Yeah.] And again, this is all gonna be stuff from, you know, from a game that we don't have to—we don't have to—hold to any of the weird technology or stuff that are here, we can always just tag things out.

Again, like this setting does have ancient alien tech. For our [NICK makes an amused noise] purposes, it could just be super-advanced tech. Like it doesn't have to be [NICK: Sure.] ancient aliens.

So!

JACK: Keith's just gone ahead.

AUSTIN: What did he—what? Oh. [cross] Keith started!

JACK: [cross] Keith just—

AUSTIN: Keith decided he was first!

KEITH: Oh, I—you just said roll a [cross] d100, and I did.

AUSTIN: [cross] I didn't say that. [KEITH: Oh, no?] I said, what we're going to do is, we're each gonna roll a d100. But!

KEITH: All right. I went first!

AUSTIN: You did! So. You rolled 42. [DRE laughs] [KEITH: Mm-hm!] 42 has atmosphere, breathable mix. That's good. That means people can breathe there.

KEITH: Yeah.

AUSTIN: I'm gonna pull up the thing on my side, so if there's any questions about what this shit means.

KEITH: The mix is breathable mixed with a little bit of unbreathable?

AUSTIN: No, I think it's just like [JACK laughs softly] [huffing in amusement] I think it's just like oh yeah, it's just regular. It's just [KEITH: Okay.] like Earth-style breathable mix. Uh, temperate climate. This is a good planet! You picked a good one.

KEITH: Mm-hm.

AUSTIN: And missable biosphere. Wait! That's weird! Those are bad. So, an immiscible biosphere says, "Immiscible biospheres are not friendly to humans. None of the local plants or animals are edible, and anything the colony needs to eat will have to be grown from Terran stock. Worse, it is common for the pollen and other microbial life of these worlds to be highly allergenic to humans, requiring the regular use of tailored anti-allergenicics to prevent eventual respiratory failure."

KEITH: This does not sound like the greatest [cross] planet all of a sudden.

AUSTIN: No, this—you—this took a turn! This was goin [cross] real well for a bit!

KEITH: This is a—also, this is huge!

JACK: Wait a second!

KEITH: This is a hugely inhabited planet, too!

AUSTIN: Eh, hundreds of thousands isn't that much.

JACK: And by the way—

KEITH: Hundreds of thousands on a planet where you have to take special pills to not die?

[AUSTIN laughs]

DRE: And everything tries to kill you and eat you?

AUSTIN: Yeah! Uh, also.

JACK: The baseline we set for considering this planet was great was [laughs] its breathable air?

[AUSTIN laughing quietly] There are some trees?

AUSTIN: Yeah!

JACK: And then [DRE laughs] like as soon as we hear like everything here murders you, we're like, oh no, this planet's terrible!

AUSTIN: Yeah. [ALI laughs] Uh, baseline postech for tech level just means like oh that's like the average. It's average technologies. It's [KEITH: Mm-hm.] a feral world, and an oceanic world? Is that right?

KEITH: Yeah.

AUSTIN: Uh, feral world means what you think. Oh, actually, wait, maybe it doesn't. Uh.

Oh boy! Yeah, it super doesn't! Okay. Feral world. "In the long, isolated night of the Silence—" which means like, in this setting, which isn't—we can toss that bit out, but it's like, some shit happened. Some—there was disconnection. There was a disconnect between society and this place. "—some worlds have experienced total moral and cultural collapse. Whatever remains has been twisted beyond recognition into assorted death cults, xenophobic fanaticism, horrific

[KEITH mutter in background] cultural practices, or other behavior unacceptable on quote [cross] 'more enlightened worlds.'"

JACK: [cross] Jeez! This is a bad planet!

[KEITH laughing quietly in the background]

AUSTIN: "These worlds are almost invariably classified under red trade codes." Yeah, this place is like, this is bad. Where do you wanna put it?

KEITH: Where are they—where are they getting the Terran stock from, if they're these fuckin [ALI laughs] cannibal murderers?

AUSTIN: Good question! Maybe that's a—well, we will figure that out.

ART: Maybe the Divine of Charity brings it there.

KEITH: All right. [cross] Where am I putting it?

JACK: [cross] Keith went first.

NICK: Did you just roll the Reavers?

AUSTIN: Yeah, basically.

NICK: Is that what they are?

AUSTIN: Basically.

JACK: [cross] Keith rolled—

KEITH: [cross] I can put this wherever?

AUSTIN: You can put this wherever you want, bud.

JACK: He rolled [cross] the bad sneezing planet.

DRE: [cross] Three out of three.

AUSTIN: Uh, no, you [NICK: Can I—] can't. The places you can't are the places that are circled.

KEITH: Yeah yeah yeah, I was [AUSTIN: Okay.] gonna put it—I'm gonna put it at 503.

AUSTIN: 503...okay. Um.

JACK: We don't need to remember all these, right? [cross] This is gonna come out naturally later, right?

AUSTIN: [cross] I'm gonna—I'm marking these down on my side of stuff, one second! Ch ch ch, 503! Okay! That place is terrible! That place is terrible.

[JACK chuckles]

Um, okay, [cross] who's—

DRE: [cross] But close enough we can visit!

AUSTIN: Well, yeah! Yeah, it's great! Whoops, I just launched Steam. I did not mean to do that. Steam, close. [DRE chuckles] #SteamClose. #SteamClose! I lit—I taught my—

KEITH: Steam.store.close—

AUSTIN: .close! .biz!

[KEITH and JACK laugh quietly]

Okay. Uh, who's next? Jesus christ.

ART: I'll go next!

AUSTIN: Okay, roll a d100.

Cool!

ART: 99!

AUSTIN: [cross] That's a good one.

JACK: [cross] Wow!

AUSTIN: Good roll! Good roll.

ART: Thanks! All the best planets are at the end, right?

AUSTIN: Yeah. That's how it works...

ART: All right.

AUSTIN: Okay!

ART: Planet 99!

AUSTIN: [cross] Breathable mix.

ART: [cross] Atmosphere: breathable mix.

AUSTIN: Uh-huh.

ART: Temperature: temperate. Biosphere: human-miscible biosphere. That sounds good.

AUSTIN: Yep! Uh.

ART: Uh, population: millions.

AUSTIN: Good.

ART: Tech level—tech level four: [cross] baseline postech.

AUSTIN: [cross] Baseline. Yeah.

ART: World tags: psionics worship and hatred? [cross] Hatred doesn't sound like a great thing.

AUSTIN: [cross] Okay, we'll get to that—that one doesn't! I just realized we didn't talk about oceanic, before? It's all water. The one that Keith rolled is all water [KEITH: [laughs] Jesus fucking—it's a fish bowl of murderers!] There might be floating cities—I think it's Waterworld! I think it's like Waterworld, basically.

NICK: Oh my god.

KEITH: Oh, you mean there's *no* land?

AUSTIN: It says the world is entirely or almost entirely covered with liquid water.

KEITH: Okay, so there can be like one island [cross] that has the hundred thousand inhabitants.

AUSTIN: [cross] Yeah. Yeah, exactly.

NICK: And it's mythical, and...

AUSTIN: [laughs] And Kevin Costner's there—okay.

NICK: Kevin Fish—Fishman Kevin Costner [AUSTIN: Yep.] is gonna go find it.

ALI: I mean, but also like artificial islands, cause that would be [AUSTIN: Yeah.] really cool?

AUSTIN: That would be pretty dope.

DRE: Yeah.

AUSTIN: [cross] We might not ever go to this place!

JACK: [cross] Yeah, except everybody there is punching each other always.

AUSTIN: Yep.

KEITH: And they all live on pontoons, murderous pontoons.

[AUSTIN sighs]

[DRE laughs]

AUSTIN: Um. So psionics worship is really interesting, given what we talked about with magic. Psionic worship says...“These natives view psionic powers as a visible gift of god or sign of superiority. If the world has a functional psychic training academy, psychics occupy almost all major positions of power and are considered the natural and proper rulers of the world. If the world lacks training facilities, it is likely a hodgepodge of demented cults, with each one dedicated to a marginally-coherent feral prophet and their psychopathic rantings—ravings.” I suspect, given our setup, it’s the former. Right? It’s going to be [JACK: Yeah yeah yeah.]—either—it depends on where Art puts it. Where are you gonna put it, Art?

ART: Wait, wait, tell me what hatred is first.

AUSTIN: Oh, right, hatred.

ART: And then tell me which side is which here, cause I forgot.

AUSTIN: Uh, east is rigger side.

ART: East is riggers. Okay.

AUSTIN: Yeah. Um. “For whatever reason, this world’s populace has a burning hatred for the inhabitants of a neighboring system. Perhaps this world was colonized by exiles, or there was a recent interstellar war, or ideas of racial or religious superiority have fanned the hatred. Regardless of the cause, the locals view their neighbor and any sympathizers with loathing.” [cross] So I think this has to be—

ART: [cross] 0005.

AUSTIN: Wait, where's 0005 at...I don't think it—I think it needs to be...it needs to be a border. Right?

KEITH: There's a border to that one. [cross] 0104.

AUSTIN: [cross] No, but—a border to a different culture? Right? Not just—

ART: But there aren't any. They're not like next—[cross] like if I pick 309, 509's all the way over there.

AUSTIN: [cross] Oh, right right right right. You're right. Okay! Yeah, fuck it. Let's see what this—let's see what happens with this. [cross] Let's go with it.

KEITH: [cross] Yeah, eventually someone's gonna put a...

AUSTIN: Somethin there! [cross] Yeah. Uh-huh.

KEITH: [cross] Over there.

ART: It's just the whole 4 column is empty.

AUSTIN: Oh wait, let me—where did I put...

ART: There's no border world or...

AUSTIN: Right. You're right.

JACK: Could you put a little dot on the map where the planet's been so we can see the spread [cross] as we go?

AUSTIN: Yeah, good call. Uh...doo doo doo...one second, let me get a good...let's get some colors here. Um...

NICK: Could you give an—I mean, I don't know, maybe that's information you don't want us to keep, but, you know—type the number?

AUSTIN: I've typed the number on my side.

NICK: Oh, okay.

AUSTIN: Like I'll...oh, you mean like underneath the planet. [tapping] [cross] Or the star.

NICK: [cross] I mean, like, yeah. As in, just type the number on the [AUSTIN: Yeah. Yeah.] planet as the marker.

AUSTIN: Um. The thing is—

NICK: But I don't know if—I don't know if that's...information you wanna [cross] keep from us.

AUSTIN: [cross] No, it's—eh. Not really. The thing is that I don't want you to have to refer to this big planet list every time, either. Do you know what I mean? I'm just gonna end up compiling a different list for you to see that has all of—here's what I'll do. I'm gonna post...

NICK: Oh, okay.

AUSTIN: I'm gonna just copy what I'm doing here...into the bottom of this other document that you already have open. [typing sounds] Um.

NICK: Aha! Okay.

AUSTIN: See what I mean?

NICK: Sure. Yep.

AUSTIN: And then it hates what number, Art?

KEITH: [cross] Triple—triple-0 5.

ART: [cross] Uh, 5.

AUSTIN: Oh, it hates 05. It is 04.

ART: Oh no, it hates 10—it's 05, it hates 104, right?

AUSTIN: Oh, 104.

KEITH: Oh, okay, I misheard, Austin.

AUSTIN: Okay. No, it's—we're good. Okay. Yeah, but I do wanna mark—uh, let's mark this side with—what color should we represent the different groups—what color does the Divine use?

NICK: Gold.

AUSTIN: Yeah, that's what I was thinkin. I'll do some gold-ish. There's that! And then what was the other—Keith, where did you place yours?

KEITH: About 503.

AUSTIN: 503. What color does that side use.

NICK: Greenish brown.

KEITH: Oh. [JACK, AUSTIN: No.] Yellow.

AUSTIN: But we already did yellow. [cross] We already did gold.

JACK: [cross] No no no.

KEITH: [amused] No, we did gold. That's gold and yellow.

AUSTIN: [amused] Stop it. [cross] Jack?

JACK: [cross] I could see blue. [cross] Blue.

DRE: [cross] Navy blue?

AUSTIN: Blue is fine. Yeah. [typing] [cross] 503, you said?

JACK: [cross] I'm thinking sort of like some of those Elite cockpit views.

AUSTIN: Yeah. I'm just gonna use this blue for now. Because it's [cross] the one—

JACK: [cross] Yeah, looks cool.

AUSTIN: Because this game is—or Roll 20 can be fun sometimes. All right, who's next? We're basically all gonna get to roll three times.

NICK: I'll go next.

AUSTIN: Sure. [clicks] Jesus christ!

NICK: 98!

ALI: [laughing] Oh no!

AUSTIN: Thick atmosphere, breathable with a pressure mask. Variable cold to temperate. Immiscible biosphere. Billions of inhabitants!

[JACK laughs]

KEITH: Jesus!

ART: Woah!

AUSTIN: Well like, listen. I guess, look, everybody's already wearing pressure masks, right?

NICK: Yeah.

AUSTIN: Um. [cross] Badlands world—

NICK: [cross] Oh, and like...it doesn't necessarily like—there's probably a bunch of domes on this planet. [cross] Cities or domes or whatever.

AUSTIN: [cross] Mm, I see what you're saying. Right. The actual—okay. Badlands world. “Whatever the outside—whatever the ostensible climate and atmosphere type, something horrible happened to this world. Biological, chemical, or nanotechnical weaponry has reduced it to a wretched hellscape.”

[JACK laughs]

That's good.

JACK: Oh, god. This is the worst galaxy.

AUSTIN: Oh! I have a suggestion for this one. [typing]

NICK: Okay.

AUSTIN: Um, I mean—what's the other tag?

KEITH: [cross] Regional...

NICK: [cross] Regional hegemon.

AUSTIN: [cross] Regional hegemon. Um...I think I don't. No, no. Let me see what this one—like, I know what a regional hegemon means, but I'm gonna still read the...“This world has the technological sophistication, natural resources, and determined polity necessary to be a regional hegemon for the sector. Nearby worlds are likely either directly subservient to it or tack carefully to avoid its anger. It may even be the capital of a small stellar empire.” So this is like Hell Capital...Where do you [NICK: Yeah.] [cross] wanna put it?

JACK: [cross] It seems like...It seems to me like one of the northern kingdoms, right? Almost? I don't know.

AUSTIN: It could be that! It could be the base of operations for one of these two sides.

JACK: Yeah, that's true.

NICK: How 'bout...304?

AUSTIN: That's fine. Do you think that this was a place where bad shit happened? Like. Again, I like thinking about the circled area here, 303 and [NICK: Sure.] 304, as being kind of east and west Berlin? [NICK: Right.] Do you think this is...do you think this place is terrible because of the conflict between these two sides, that has since stopped and like [NICK: Yeah.] it's peaceful now, but this place was fucking ruined by the [NICK: Yep.] last war.

NICK: Yeah, absolutely.

AUSTIN: Okay. Who—

NICK: And I kinda like the bubbles as...

AUSTIN: Yeah.

NICK: As the wall, almost.

AUSTIN: Um. Well, I mean, it's 303 and 304 are different planets, but like...

NICK: No, I know.

AUSTIN: Okay.

NICK: But I mean, you know, like [cross] I don't mean...

AUSTIN: [cross] Oh, but like symbolically, you mean. Yeah yeah yeah.

NICK: Yeah! [cross] Yeah yeah yeah.

AUSTIN: [cross] Yeah, totally. Tear down these bubbles.

NICK: [laughing] Yeah...

[2:00:00]

JACK: Oh god, we can't breathe! [AUSTIN laughs] Oh god! No, no! Quick, put em back!

AUSTIN: Um, I'm putting these as red because I don't know if one side owns each of these or what, yet. We'll figure that out. Uh, who's next?

JACK: I'll go.

AUSTIN: Oh wait, one second, let me copy 98.

JACK: Oh, Ali went.

ALI: [laughing] Sorry! I said "I'll go," and hit enter, but I was muted. I'm sorry.

AUSTIN: [cross] Oh. Okay!

JACK: [cross] [amused] No, it's fine.

AUSTIN: One second, let me...

JACK: Holy shit, Ali! [cross] You rolled 90...

ALI: [cross] I know!

AUSTIN: Wait, what did she...

KEITH: [cross] She rolled a 94.

JACK: [cross] She rolled 94.

AUSTIN: Jesus christ. [DRE: Good lord.] Uh, one second, I need to update these documents more. One second, sorry.

NICK: [cross] It's fine. Oh! Uh.

AUSTIN: [cross] What number, Jack—or Nick, what number's yours again? 304?

NICK: 304.

AUSTIN: Okay.

NICK: Yep. [AUSTIN: And...] Also wanted to say that Hegemon is my favorite hedgehog-based Digimon.

AUSTIN: Right. That's true.

JACK: [chuckles] Sure.

AUSTIN: That should be the next one you guys do, Keith. Uh. [cross] All right!

KEITH: [cross] Oh yeah. So that comes—I mean, when it comes out.

AUSTIN: Right. Inert gas. That seems like a thing you can't breathe to me.

[ALI laughs]

I don't know from gases, but, uh...

JACK: It's not very explosive, I guess, [cross] is the upside.

KEITH: [cross] I think an inert gas is like...is like helium, right? Like that's...

JACK: Uh, yeah, or like...

AUSTIN: Sure.

JACK: Like...zargon.

AUSTIN: Um.

KEITH: Yeah!

AUSTIN: It's unbreathable—yeah. It's not hostile or poisonous, but it is unbreathable.

JACK: I mean argon. Not zargon. [laughing] It's a ga...

ART: Yeah!

AUSTIN: Temperate...biosphere's [cross] okay. Tens of thousands.

NICK: [cross] [deep alien voice] Zargon is not...

AUSTIN: Oh, but it is a radioactive world, and it does have xenophiles. [ALI laughs] Cool. Cool. This place is a shit hole!

ALI: Mm-hm!

KEITH: They've kinda [cross] all been shit holes!

DRE: [cross] Most of our planets are all shit holes!

AUSTIN: I know! This has been a rough one! This has been a rough 'un! Um, radioactive world. "Whether due to a large atomic warfare unhindered by—whether due to a legacy of atomic

warfare unhindered by nuke snuffers or a simple profusion of radioactive elements, this world glows in the dark. [ALI: Ooh!] Even heavy vacc suits can filter only so much of the radiation, and most natives suffer a variety of cancers, mutations and other illnesses without the protection of advanced medical treatment.”

JACK: Jesus. We’re not in Nacre anymore.

AUSTIN: We are not in Nacre anymore. Uh...and xenophiles. “The natives of this world are fast friends with a particular alien race. The aliens may have saved the planet at some point in the past, or awed the locals with superior tech and impressive cultural qualities. The aliens might even be the ruling class on this planet.” Um. there are like no people on this planet, also. It’s tens of thousands, which is none.

JACK: Hm!

AUSTIN: [cross] Is this a planet where...

ART: [cross] [very muffled] That sounds like a northern planet.

AUSTIN: What were you saying, Art?

ART: That sounds like a northern planet.

AUSTIN: You think this is one of the north ones?

ALI: Yeah, I was [NICK: Yeah.] thinking of [ART: Huh. Now I...] 501?

AUSTIN: Okay. Um.

JACK: Right on the border line.

AUSTIN: Yeah, I’m gonna give them green. [clicking] Green for radioactive. Is there a more glowy green? Yeah. Okay! The northern planets are all gonna be green. That’s really close. [typing] 501 is taken. Okay! Who’s next?

JACK: Could someone roll for me, please?

AUSTIN: Oh, right, Jack’s nowhere near there.

DRE: I’ll roll for you, Jack.

[several seconds of typing]

NICK:[cross] I’ll roll for you.

AUSTIN: [cross] Whew! We broke out.

JACK: What a low number.

AUSTIN: Yeah, finally. All right, 20. Breathable! Warm. Immiscible biosphere. Again.

JACK: Aw, rats.

AUSTIN: Uh, tech level four. Which is baseline. Abandoned colony, secret masters.

DRE: Ooh!

ART: Ooh!

ALI: [cross] Mm!

AUSTIN: [cross] Mm! Abandoned colony. "The world once hosted a colony, whether human or otherwise, until some crisis or natural disaster drove the inhabitants away or killed them off. The colony might have been mercantile in nature, an expedition to extract valuable local resources, or it might have been a reclusive cabal of zealots. The remains of the colony are usually in ruins, and might still be dangerous from the aftermath of whatever destroyed it in the first place."

JACK: Hm.

AUSTIN: [whispering] And secret masters.

JACK: [amused noise] I love that TV show.

AUSTIN: [eerily] Secret Masters. Yeah. [ART laughs] "The world is actually run by a hidden cabal, acting through their catspaws in the visible government." That's a good word. Catspaws is a good word. "For one reason or another—"

NICK: They're a race of cat people? I don't...

AUSTIN: Yeah, there's race of—yeah, they have cat people in the government. Uh.

NICK: Okay.

AUSTIN: "For one reason or another, this group finds it imperative that they not be identified by outsiders, and in some cases even the planet's own government may not realize that they're actually being manipulated by hidden masters...."

[JACK gasps]

[KEITH gasps]

Gasp!

JACK: Okay, this sounds to me like a Divine planet.

AUSTIN: Ooh. Okay. So you think that—okay. I have some ideas.

JACK: Um...and I think it's gonna be...108!

AUSTIN: Sounds good. I like it. Do you think it's a—do you think it's a Divine who runs this place? Who's like [cross] actually active?

JACK: [cross] Ah! It could super be. Yeah, like the closest thing to a rogue AI [AUSTIN: Yeah.] that a Divine could be?

AUSTIN: Yeah.

JACK: Which is probably Hella close. But.

NICK: [cross] Jack.

AUSTIN: [cross] [huffs in amusement] Yeah.

ALI: 'Scuse me?

[AUSTIN groans]

[DRE and NICK laugh]

AUSTIN: Who's next?

DRE: [to a tune] Womp womp womp womp womp womp.

[ALI chuckles]

AUSTIN: Three, four, five.

DRE: Uh, I'll roll again. [AUSTIN: Okay.] Why not?

AUSTIN: [cross] 82!

DRE: [cross] 82!

AUSTIN: Back up into the 80s, huh?

DRE: Yup.

AUSTIN: Swingin all around.

JACK: Austin, is this—are all of these planets the worst?

AUSTIN: Yeah! Uh-huh!

JACK: [cross] [DRE laughs] Oh. Cool. Okay.

AUSTIN: Immiscible biosphere, cold, breathable mix, millions of people. Alien ruins. Oceanic world. So this is alien ruins, is gonna be one of those things that's like—

JACK: [gasps] You have to go down in a submarine!

AUSTIN: [NICK: Yep.] Oh, right, cause it's an oceanic world! Yeah.

JACK: [cross] Ah, man!

ALI: [cross] Ooh...

AUSTIN: Um.

[JACK chuckles]

We know what alien ruins are.

DRE: But you gotta like drill through a huge thing of ice to get to those. [cross] That ocean underneath.

AUSTIN: [cross] Cause it's cold. Yeah.

DRE: Yeah.

JACK: Aw, man!

AUSTIN: "The locals may or may not permit others to investigate the ruins, and may make it difficult to remove any objects of value without substantial payment." Um. What sort of alien ruins are we saying these are?

And also where are you putting it?

DRE: Uh, I think I wanna make it a...a non-Divine planet, cause I wanna see what kind of rigger comes out of a world where you have to have a giant robot that can drill through ice.

AUSTIN: [cross] Oh! That's interesting. I like that a lot.

NICK: [cross] Ah, that's cool!

JACK: [cross] Yeah, a good question.

AUSTIN: I like that a lot!

DRE: Uh, so let's do...let's do 707.

AUSTIN: Okay. [clicks] Ch, blue...

Okay. And...[typing] 707. Uh...

[typing more] Making notes. Okay. Um.

Who's next?

KEITH: I think we're back around to me, I think?

AUSTIN: One, two—no, I have to go, I think.

KEITH: Oh, you're going? Okay.

AUSTIN: One, two, three, four, five...yeah, six. Me.

JACK: [facetiously] Wait, you don't get to play!

AUSTIN: [laughs] Apparently [ALI: No.] not.

[DRE laughs]

Come on! D—wait, did we already do 90—no! 93! Jesus christ!

[JACK laughs]

All these 90s!

[DRE laughs]

All right. Breathable mix. Cold. Human-miscible biosphere. Hundreds of thousands of inhabitants. Tech level three is 20th-century technology. Badlands world. [NICK: Oh.] Civil war.

Hm. So we've already had a badlands world, which is again, things went really bad. Wretched hellscape. Civil war says, "The world is currently torn between at least two opposing factions, all of which claim legitimacy. The war may be the result of a successful rebel uprising against tyranny, or it might just be the result of schemers who plan to be the new masters once the revolution is complete." I think...it's like an active civil war.

Hm.

NICK: I like the idea that this whole planet is...like...actually just repeating history, and it's like American civil war.

AUSTIN: Y—[laughs] now you're falling back into *Star Trek*. That is just a [NICK laughs] *Star Trek* planet.

NICK: [laughing] Yeah.

AUSTIN: Um...[muttering] whoops, shoulda set that there, that doesn't need to be like that.

NICK: Well, I said I liked the idea of it. I didn't say it was a good...

AUSTIN: Really wasn't what we're doing. Yeah.

NICK: ...idea for this. Yeah.

AUSTIN: Um. God, I have so many windows and things open right now. Uh! Huh. I'll take suggestions here, if people have them.

JACK: [ART: Ah.] As to where it should be, [AUSTIN: Yeah.] or as to what the civil war is...

AUSTIN: No, as to where it should be.

JACK: Mm.

AUSTIN: Well, that too. This is another thing! I absolutely like the notion that like these—there could be a civil war on either one of these sides, and it could have nothing to do with the other side. I think it could just be a civil war between two corporations, even. Um. [NICK: Right.] In fact, I might do that. Um. 20th-century technology is really interesting, too. It's just like—

NICK: Civil war between Weyland and Yutani?

AUSTIN: Right! Exactly. I like that it's just like. [amused] A kind of a shit world. Uh, here's what I'm gonna do. I'm gonna put it in an interesting place. Um. Which is...604. Uh. Because—

KEITH: Oh, that's next to my fish murderer world!

AUSTIN: Right. [laughs] Yes.

[JACK and NICK laugh]

Um. Cause like to get anywhere from the south to the north, you have to get through 604. To get anywhere from the west over to the east, you have to get through 604. Like, it's just a shitty place to be. And...

KEITH: How do they not get technology just from people—everyone having to pass through?

AUSTIN: But like they do—you can do that! That's part of—so part of the faction turn, part of the thing that Dre and Nick and I are gonna do is going to be operating what the factions are in this world. And what they're doing. So they can totally buy better technology from those other places, or steal it. But, they can't produce it there. [KEITH: Okay.] Uh, and the reason is, it's a badlands world. Whatever factories they used to have to produce that high tech stuff, it just got wrecked.

KEITH: All they can do is make trains!

[AUSTIN laughs]

ART: So 604 is like the Chicago Airport as a planet?

AUSTIN: Yes. [JACK laughs]

ART: Like, you gotta go through there to get anywhere!

AUSTIN: Yes.

ART: And it's [cross] just awful.

AUSTIN: And it's j...it's just the worst! All right.

ART: And nothing's being generated there, but maybe someone leaves behind their iPad!

AUSTIN: [laughing] R—aw!

[DRE laughs]

O'Hare!

ART: Yeah, eat it, O'Hare.

AUSTIN: [amused huff] Keith! Gimme a roll.

KEITH: 61!

AUSTIN: [typing] Uh...Another civil war, cool! Airless or thin atmosphere, temperate, no native biosphere, *billions* of inhabitants!

[JACK chuckles]

Tech level zero, stone age technology, civil war, [ART: What!] primitive aliens.

JACK: [cross] Is this—christ.

KEITH: [cross] Okay, so this is—

AUSTIN: Mm-hm!

KEITH: This is the worst roll yet, maybe.

AUSTIN: This is the worst one.

KEITH: This is—[NICK laughs] there's no—[cross] there's no biosphere...or atmosphere.

AUSTIN: [cross] We can also...if we...we can completely throw it out, at this point. We can say like, "no, this—no. There's no people there." Or! We could give it to one of the north places. Or just say like "oh, it's basically un-colonized." Like there are primitive aliens, which this says...This describes primitive aliens as..."a large number of sapient aliens that have yet to develop advanced technology. The human colonists may have a friendly or hostile relationship with the aliens, but a certain intrinsic tension is likely." I feel like maybe the billions of inhabitants in this case are just those aliens. Um. [KEITH: Yeah.] And also maybe they're like zebras. Maybe it's a race of like zebras. Not zebra people. Just like. Just zeebs.

KEITH: Just alien zeebs?

AUSTIN: Alien zeebs.

[NICK laughs]

Um.

NICK: Well, we gotta do it now. Cause they [cross] have a great name.

KEITH: [cross] Yeah, yeah. That's gonna be 300, I think, 0300.

AUSTIN: 0300.

JACK: People keep landing there and going, damn! What are all these zeebs doing here?

AUSTIN: What are all these zeebs! Look at the—

KEITH: Maybe there's some—maybe one of them's trying to become like a zebra king. I used to—I'm the king of the zeebs.

AUSTIN: The zeebs. The zeeb king. That sounds like a slur. I don't like it. We can't call them zeebs anymore.

ART: [KEITH laughs] Okay, yeah. It's a little close to h*bes, you guys.

AUSTIN: [laughs] It is—it *really* is!

DRE: Damn.

JACK: Okay, let's just call them zebras.

AUSTIN: Yeah. It turns out—we can call em zebs! No, it still sounds, eugh...All right. Art. Oh wait, I have to mark it on the map. Mark it on the map!

JACK: Oh my god! Jesus christ.

AUSTIN: Jesus! [ALI: No...] We're gonna get all the 90s!

ART: Remember when I couldn't roll like—to literally save my [AUSTIN: Uh-huh.] life, the last time we [ALI laughs] were rolling?

AUSTIN: Yeah!

DRE: Yeah, you saved all the high rolls for this one.

AUSTIN: Mm-hm! Uh. Breathable mix. Temperate. Immiscible biosphere—lots of immiscible biospheres! I don't trust this roll. Tens of thousands of inhabitants, tech level two. 19th century technology.

NICK: [cross] What the he—

AUSTIN: [cross] Friendly foe. And perimeter agency.

NICK: Are we gonna end up with the universe that we need this to end up like? I mean.

AUSTIN: Yeah! This is fine. Nothing here [cross] is wrong.

NICK: [cross] All of these planets are like 19th and 20th [cross] [AUSTIN: No!] century technologies.

KEITH: [cross] We're also like kind of on the outskirts of both of the arms.

AUSTIN: Right, we're not in the galactic core, at all. Also, this is a really good...a really good...uh, candidate for a northern kingdom. Right?

JACK: Yeah, totally. Yeah, totally.

AUSTIN: I—Art—

ART: We don't have a really cool northern kingdom yet, though, and I want there to be one.

AUSTIN: Well, this—[JACK: Oh, we'll get one.] okay, so let me read friendly foe, and let me read...perimeter agency. Which is a cool name, I don't know what that means yet, but.

Um...[clicks tongue] Doo doo doo...

[amused] Friendly foe! "Some hostile alien race or malevolent cabal has a branch or sect on this world that is actually quite friendly toward outsiders. For whatever internal reason, they are willing to negotiate and deal honestly with strangers, and appear to lack the worst impulses of their fellows." And.

KEITH: Well, it's cause they don't have shit there.

AUSTIN: Well, 19th century isn't like that—you know! That's better than the zebra people!

KEITH: I mean, it's better than the zebra people, but they have nothing. They have rocks.

AUSTIN: They do have rocks!

ART: Yes, better than zebras isn't like a [KEITH laughs] technology thing I'm [ALI laughs] striving for.

[NICK laughs]

[Everyone sighs]

Zebras are literally wearing no clothes and just shitting wherever they feel like.

AUSTIN: Okay, I'm just gonna read this as it's written in this setting. And we will adapt it. But there's interesting things here! "Before the Silence, the Perimeter was a Terran-sponsored organization charged with rooting out the use of maltech technology, banned in human space as too dangerous for use or experimentation. Unbraked AIs, engineered slave species, nanotech replicators, weapons of planetary destruction...the Perimeter hunted down experimenters with great indifference to planetary laws. Most Perimeter Agencies collapsed during the Silence, but a few managed to hold on to their mission, though modern Perimeter agents often find more work as conventional spies and intelligence operatives."

JACK: Hm.

AUSTIN: We found out why this place has 19th century technology! [cross] 'Cause this group is...

JACK: [cross] Oh, it's cause...

ART: [cross] Yeah, I love this planet. This is a great planet.

JACK: They're so fucking [AUSTIN: Yeah.] scared of Cylons, is that why they?

AUSTIN: Yeah. Yes.

JACK: They have 19th century technology 'cause they're scared of Cylons.

[2:15:00]

AUSTIN: Just like all of the spies keep blowing up [NICK: Oh man.] all of the factories.

ART: 0700, please.

AUSTIN: [laughs quietly] Alex. Ah, sure. Yeah, I like th—oop! That's not a planet at all! This thing is being weird for me—one second, I need to like resize something. That's good enough. Okay. 0700. Yeah, I like this a lot.

Uh...Who's next?

KEITH: We're nearly out of 90s.

AUSTIN: We are! We're gonna wrap up these 90s and we'll just move on! It'll be fine!

KEITH: Chances [cross] are good we're gonna have more rerolls...

JACK: [cross] We're gonna do the 80s?

KEITH: ...cause people are gonna hit more 90s.

AUSTIN: It's interesting that they're friendly there! Do you think it's like the people on that planet are really friendly cause like *please!* Like. We need stuff! But there's this like group of secret agents who just keep it locked at that level for some reason. [cross] It's interesting.

JACK: [cross] Or the secret agents just know that they have such a grip on the area that they can afford to be friendly?

AUSTIN: Right, maybe.

JACK: You know.

AUSTIN: Yeah, maybe it's them that are—yeah. Okay, 71.

NICK: Yeah, it's like a little bit of arrogance on their part? [AUSTIN: Yeah. Yeah.] Almost?

JACK: Austin, are all these worlds gonna have names by the time [AUSTIN: Oh...] we finish with them?

AUSTIN: I—yeah! You're all allowed to come up with names, we're all allowed to come up with names for these worlds.

JACK: Oh, cool.

AUSTIN: All right, 71? Is that what you rolled?

NICK: Yep.

AUSTIN: That's a new one. Breathable mix. Here we go! Breathable mix, burning. So it's super hot, it's like a desert world. [JACK chuckle] Microbial life, millions of inhabitants, tech level 4, heavy industry, police state. Um. [JACK: Oh god. Woah.] I'm gonna read burning to make sure that it's like, oh, we can live there. At all.

JACK: [cross] So this is basically just like...

ART: [cross] Also, read microbial life, please.

[JACK laughs]

NICK: Are there good planets on this list? Like.

AUSTIN: Maybe! These are all good planets, Nick. I like them.

JACK: I think he means planets that are nice places to live in, you know, where you can sit under an apple tree.

NICK: Yeah.

AUSTIN: So burning worlds are really hot! Uh, you need [JACK: Not that one!] vac suits [NICK makes an amused noise] to live. I think this is another—ah, “rivulets of molten lead or copper might bleed from open veins on the hillsides, [JACK: Jeez.] and of the same perils that face an explorer on a frozen world have hotter equivalents on a burning one. Ash drifts, pools of molten, and superheated liquid vents can bring quick death to an unwary explorer, and the miners who inhabit such worlds must be forever vigilant against the perils of their burning home.”

JACK: Zebra rating: zero.

AUSTIN: Yeah, zero zebras here. But heavy industry and a police state! This is perfect.

JACK: Yeah, this feels to me like almost [AUSTIN: Like—] like one of the—*Dredd*—like peach trees or something.

AUSTIN: You know, like again, I wanna remind everyone like the reason *Blade Runner* and other—[sighs] the thing I always say about *Blade Runner* is, it opens with a shot of the world on fire. And then it goes to flying cars. You don't get flying cars without this burning world. Um.

NICK: Yeah.

AUSTIN: So like. [NICK: True.] That is the game we're—like it's a cyberpunk game. It is, so. With interstellar transport so limited in the bulk it can move, worlds have to be largely self-sufficient in industry. Some worlds are more sufficient than others, however, and this planet has a thriving manufacturing sector capable of producing large amounts of goods—scuse me—appropriate to its tech level. The locals may enjoy—a correspondingly higher lifestyle, or the products might be devoted towards vast projects for the [stammers] aggrandizement of the rulers.” Uh, let's wonder that in connection to police state! “The world is a totalitarian police state. Any sign of disloyalty to the planet's rulers is punished severely, and suspicion riddles society. Some worlds might operate by Soviet-style informers and indoctrination, while more technically sophisticated worlds might rely on omnipresent cameras on braked AI “guardian angels”. Outworlders are apt to be treated as a necessary evil at best, and “disappeared” if they become troublesome.”

JACK: Huh.

AUSTIN: So where's this goin? This is a good one.

NICK: Mm.

ART: This is a great planet.

NICK: Up until that last part i was actually really tempted—to be—really selfish and put it at 303.

AUSTIN: I'm hoping that we're going—there is a thing on this thing that is just cold war. And I would like that to hit. Since I go last, if we don't get a cold war—man, there are only two things on this list that are cold war, that's amazing. Uh. I would like it to have cold war. Because I think that's like the—that's the setting. Right?

NICK: Sure. Yeah!

AUSTIN: So let's save it...let's save that—that's gonna be the nice planet—or not nice, but like that's gonna be the planet that we spend the most time on. There and 304. So like, let's save that for something that really fits.

NICK: Okay.

KEITH: Um. I do wanna say—real quick, in the Google doc, one of us is an anonymous quagga, which is like an extinct zebra that looks like an alien zebra.

[JACK laughs]

AUSTIN: Oh wow, look at [cross] that! Look at that quagga!

KEITH: [cross] For real. Yeah.

AUSTIN: All right, I'm changing the name of this planet to Quagga!

[Quiet chuckles]

[cross] Not this one, but the quagga one.

DRE: [cross] Maybe that's what we named our...

KEITH: [cross] The zebra one, yeah.

DRE: Yeah, that's what [cross] the zebra planet is.

JACK: [cross] Ah! It's me! I can't see the quagga!

NICK: [ALI, DRE, AUSTIN laugh] No, we...

We can't call em Quaggans because that's...

AUSTIN: Is that already—that's already a thing.

NICK: Those are the little manatee people from Guild War 2.

AUSTIN: Oh, right.

[NICK chuckles]

Um. Oh, right, you wanted to know microbial life too. Right, Art?

NICK and ART: Yeah.

AUSTIN: Uh. I think it's just like, there's lots of little life, right? Um, let's see. Doot doot doot doot doot...

JACK: Picture a zebra except it doesn't have any arms or legs or head [AUSTIN: Right.] and it's like the size of like a tiny thing.

AUSTIN: Oh, okay. On that planet, the only natural life is...

JACK: Oh, okay.

AUSTIN: Microbial. Right? Um. So it's just alien microbes and stuff. Which makes sense, cause it's this super hot planet. Right?

NICK: Sure.

AUSTIN: Like there just isn't—there aren't big animals there. So where's this goin'?

NICK: Um.

AUSTIN: This could definitely be the industrial like backbone of either side here. [NICK: Right.] You know?

[pause]

NICK: How about—oh! Was—okay, 0005 [cross] was the one with...

AUSTIN: [cross] Yes, I just thought the same thing.

NICK: The hated...[cross] enemy, right?

AUSTIN: [cross] They hated the neighbor. Yes. You think it's—

NICK: Yeah, all right. I'm putting it at 104, then.

AUSTIN: Yeah, good call. Why do you think they hate them?

NICK: Because...

KEITH: They send mean text messages.

NICK: [laughs] They hate them because they...they see...the elite...

AUSTIN: Mm-hm.

NICK: ...uh, ruling class with all of the money, and also all of the police state...and all of the you know the working class under them...

AUSTIN: They just totally...

NICK: That have nothing...

AUSTIN: Yeah.

NICK: But...but they don't—you know, they're like—they're very...uh, kind of...modern American white liberal about it?

AUSTIN: The people on that other planet, you're saying?

NICK: The people on 005, yeah. In that they hate the whole planet because of the awful ruling class.

AUSTIN: Okay.

NICK: You know what I mean? [cross] They are not considering the people—

AUSTIN: Also, that other place is great, because that other place loves psionics and hates—like I imagine like again like a very kind of—you know, ineffective...North American liberalism is kind of like, they love—they really wish the people at 014—or 0104 were more...enlightened, but also like [NICK: Yeah.] they're over here like worshipping magic tricks.

NICK: Uh-huh.

AUSTIN: Uh...

NICK: Well, I mean, maybe that's the enlightenment that they...

AUSTIN: That they believe, yeah.

NICK: That they believe, you know. [AUSTIN: Mm-hm.] Like if only they would just [AUSTIN: Yeah.] educate themselves! On this...you know.

AUSTIN: Okay.

NICK: On this magic that we love.

AUSTIN: That we have, right. Whatever that is. Who's next?

Ali! Is next.

DRE: Ali, yeah.

ALI: [very quiet] Oh...

Yeah?

JACK: It's gonna be a 90!

ALI: 14!

AUSTIN: It's not! Look at that! [ALI: It's fine.] Breathable mix! Warm. Human-miscible biosphere, [JACK: Okay!] hundreds of thousands of inhabitants.

JACK: This is all right!

AUSTIN: Uh, tech level three: 20th century. I think you just made Earth, is actually what you did.

[ALI laughs]

It's like, but with less [DRE: Yeah.] people. Abandoned colony, which we've had before, and preceptor archive. Ooh. [whispers] What's that? What's a preceptor archive?

JACK: Space Lem.

DRE: You're gonna have to tell us.

AUSTIN: Oh, okay. It's on me? [DRE: [laughs] Yeah.] I have to do—oh...

DRE: You got the book.

AUSTIN: Okay. The Preceptors of the Great Archive were...okay, so they're—it's an "organization devoted to ensuring the dissemination of human cultural history and basic technology to frontier worlds that risked losing this information during human expansion. Most frontier planets had an Archive [amused] where natives could learn useful technical skills in addition to human history and art. Those Archives that managed to survive the Silence—" which, again, isn't a thing for us—"now strive to send their missionaries of knowledge to new worlds"—uh, this is where Lem lives. [snorts]

JACK: [cross] Yes. Space Lem's house.

AUSTIN: [cross] This is just—this is just [NICK and DRE laugh] the New Archives in space. Is what you rolled, Ali.

ALI: Um...

AUSTIN: [cross] Which is interesting!

ALI: [cross] That's also—that's really interesting 'cause it's abandoned.

AUSTIN: Well, the colony—there was an aban—right, you're right. Because—maybe this was a much bigger place before. There's only a hundreds of thousands of people here now? [ALI: Yeah.] Maybe it used to be, you know, millions or billions.

[cross] Do you think it was like—

NICK: [cross] I mean, the Erasure happened, and...

[AUSTIN snorts]

[ALI and JACK laugh]

AUSTIN: I think it might even just be like, yeah, well, we're here now. Like this thing was set up...these things were set up to ensure that skills and knowledge got out to the frontier, and like, yeah. We're here. Like everything's established...

ALI: Yeah, so um I think I'm leaning left side.

AUSTIN: Okay.

ALI: With that. [cross] Um...so...

JACK: [cross] Now we just have boxes and boxes of VHS tapes.

[ALI chuckles, then NICK]

AUSTIN: Okay, where are we at?

[pause]

ALI: Oh, I think...209, in that case?

AUSTIN: Yeah! That makes sense. It's kind of like one of the first systems that was colonized by this group. [cross] Kind of like a staging area.

ALI: [cross] Yeah, I think it's interesting that it's by... 'Cause 108 is also abandoned, and [AUSTIN: Mm-hm.] has like that secret master over there, so.

AUSTIN: Right! Interesting.

ALI: I think that could be a weird play.

AUSTIN: That could be a weird play. Okay! Uh, who's next?

DRE: Jack?

AUSTIN: [cross] Jack.

JACK: [cross] Hm?

DRE: [loud keyboard stroke] There you go, Jack.

JACK: Oh—[ALI laughs]

AUSTIN: I think we have to reroll. You can't do 99. Oh wait! No, yeah. Oh, we could do a hundred, we just plus it by one!

JACK: Sure! Cool.

NICK: Yeah.

AUSTIN: Let's just plus it—let's get this hundred. Um. Ooh!

DRE: Big hundo.

AUSTIN: Okay. Breathable mix, warm, immiscible biosphere, nothing to eat here. No human stuff to—tens of thousands. Tech four. Friendly foe, which again, inviting. Pilgrimage site!

JACK: Ooh!

AUSTIN: [whispers] Pilgrimage site!

JACK: Hey, come here and worship at this pilgrimage site. [AUSTIN chuckles] We *won't* eat you.

AUSTIN: [huffs a laugh] “The world is [DRE laughs] noted for an important spiritual or historical location, and might be the sector headquarters for a widespread religion or political movement. The site attracts wealthy pilgrims from throughout nearby space, and those with the money necessary to manage interstellar travel can be quite generous to the site and its keepers. The locals [JACK: Oh.] tend to be fiercely protective of the place and its reputation, and some places may forbid the entrance of those not suitably pious or devout.” I think we’re getting so many good planets for one side here. [laughs]

ART: That sort of makes me think like oh, we should throw it on the other side, but.

AUSTIN: Yeah, I know, but man, maybe not. Maybe it’s good to...

JACK: Well, what does a rigger pilgrimage site look like?

AUSTIN: Well—

DRE: Is it Earth?

AUSTIN: No, no, it’s not Earth. Earth’s so far away.

DRE: Okay, okay.

AUSTIN: No, but it’s probably something to do with...with...Art’s suggestion of like space Che Guevara. Right? [JACK: Yeah, probably, yeah.] Of a Nick’s, [2:26:50] like, Max Headroom. Like—[NICK makes an amused noise] this is...if it’s on that side, it has to be like—it’s a theme park!

JACK: Yeah.

NICK: [ART laughs] Oh. [cross] Yeah!

AUSTIN: That’s what it is!

ART: One with tens of thousands of employees?

AUSTIN: Yeah! That's what [NICK: Uh-huh.] the tens of thousands of permanent residents [JACK: Oh, god.] are. [cross] It's just Disney World.

JACK: [cross] It's that fucking place that we wrote about in...

AUSTIN: In—yeah. In...that game where you write. What the fuck's that game called?

JACK: Oh, it's—[cross] eating the stars.

AUSTIN: [cross] It's so good.

JACK: No, what's it called?

NICK: Uh, Elegy for a Dead—

AUSTIN: Yeah, Elegy for a Dead World. Yes.

JACK: Elegy for a Dead World!

AUSTIN: That's what this is. Uh...So it's rigger side?

[pause]

JACK: Oh! Yeah! Sorry, yeah, sure.

AUSTIN: Uh, and where?

JACK: Um...

AUSTIN: Oh, I love it. I love it. It's so good.

JACK: I think...probably...hm. Well, they're gonna want somewhere where it's kind of like...commercially viable, so I'm thinking maybe 505, 'cause it's comparatively close to the center?

AUSTIN: ...That's actually super far away from everything.

JACK: Oh, really?

AUSTIN: Yeah, so again [JACK: Okay.], the easiest—every like...the way we're gonna play this is like one tile away is easy to get to.

JACK: Oh, sure.

AUSTIN: Whereas two tiles away is really tough to get to.

JACK: Okay, what's in 604?

AUSTIN: 604 is bad.

ART: That's the O'Hare airport.

AUSTIN: That's the everywhere has to pass through there, but it's shitty. It's a badlands world, civil is happening right now, we don't [JACK laughs] wanna be there.

JACK: [amused] Okay, what about 705?

AUSTIN: [amused] I think 705 is a good one. [cross] I think that's the...

JACK: [cross] Cool. Sorry. Hold on.

AUSTIN: Uh, there we go. 705.

JACK: [quietly] Man, I have the biggest cough.

AUSTIN: Aw. Buddy.

JACK: I'm muting everything, so. [AUSTIN mutters] Just muting everything!

AUSTIN: Okay! Next!

[DRE laughs]

Is Andrew.

DRE: Yup.

AUSTIN: Oh, that theme park is dope.

DRE: 15.

AUSTIN: Oh, man! Breathable mix. Temperate. Human-miscible biosphere, tens of thousands. Small planet. Tech level four with specialties or some surviving pretech. So it's like a little bit more advanced than normal people. Not so much more advanced that it's a higher tech level.

DRE: Mm-hm.

AUSTIN: So it's still mostly tech level four, but they have a little somethin extra. And also psionics worship and psionics academy.

JACK: Oh wow. This is the place.

DRE: Is this our cool north kingdom?

AUSTIN: Oh, maybe! I could see that.

DRE: I think it has to be [JACK: This is the one...] in one of the north areas.

AUSTIN: Yeah?

Uh, there're only two left up there.

DRE: Uh...[cross] What's 0700?

AUSTIN: [cross] I mean, we could redraw that line, but like.

DRE: Yeah.

AUSTIN: Um. 0700...Art placed that one, I recall.

ART: Yeah, that's the one [AUSTIN: Oh.] with the world with the...

AUSTIN: The agency that keeps thing stuck in the past.

ART: Yeah. The planet that's afraid of Cylons.

AUSTIN: Right.

[DRE laughs]

Um. I just wanna—

[2:30:00]

—read the tech thing so that we have a better idea of what that's like, too. Uh...Ch ch ch...Here we go. "Tech level 4 with specialties is an unusual case of a normal tech level 4 world that has retained some pretech industries—" or for us some—it—"has developed their own local technical expertise beyond baseline postech in certain disciplines. Most such specialties are relatively narrow in scope; grav tech, medicine, hydroponics, force field generation, or some field of roughly similar breadth. These specialties are usually either the product of a few unreplaceable pretech manufactories or the result of some unique local resource that serves

amazingly well for the purpose at hand.” I feel like that’s like um—what’s the planet in *Star Wars* where the clones come from?

DRE: Kamino?

AUSTIN: Kamino. It’s like that sort of situation where it’s like well for whatever reason like this is the one place where we can do this one thing. I’m not saying this is a clone thing. But like that’s the sort of [DRE: Yeah.] like...this—people are going to want this planet.

DRE: The other idea I’m thinking of for this planet is like this is on the rigger side...

AUSTIN: Mm-hm.

DRE: ...and this is like...almost entirely like kind of like a military thing, where it’s like okay this is where we are creating our answer [cross] to the Divines.

AUSTIN: [cross] To the Divines. This is where the psio—like it’s [cross] a pisonics workshop, or...

DRE: [cross] Like this is their Halo 1 SPARTAN project.

AUSTIN: Right.

JACK: Huh.

AUSTIN: I actually like that a whole bunch. [JACK: That’s kinda cool.] because that also opens up some player [DRE: Yeah.] character concepts. Um.

NICK: Yeah.

AUSTIN: And—so one of the things I didn’t talk about with factions is, when we do the faction turn. And Nick, Dre and I play as factions. I don’t want the rigger side to be a faction. That’s not a faction. That’s an empire, and empires have factions inside of them. You know? So like this could be its own faction, that has its own [DRE: Yeah.] interests, separate from the greater cau—you know, the greater good, so to speak. Yeah, I actually like that a whole bunch. Do you have an idea of where that would be?

DRE: What about, eh...505?

AUSTIN: I think that’s really good. Cause it’s just out of reach of just about everything. But it is!

DRE: Yeah.

AUSTIN: Within strike distance of 304, if it has the—you know, strong enough...engines, so to speak.

NICK: There's a different kind of John 27 on here.

[AUSTIN and DRE huff]

[cross] John 117.

DRE: [cross] John 117. Yep, there we go.

AUSTIN: Christ.

DRE: Halo jokes. Boom.

AUSTIN: Good Halo jokes. [NICK snorts and laughs] Good Halo jokes.

Uh...And again, it's nice cause it's only tens of thousands of inhabitants. Okay. Who's next...? Is it me? Am I [ALI: Mm-hm!] next?

JACK: I think so!

AUSTIN: I'm next! [types]

[cross] I caught em on a roll.

NICK: [cross] Wait, where was Keith on that...Halo joke?

DRE: I wonder if Keith is [AUSTIN: Keith?] away. Cause he didn't [NICK: Keith?] answer *Star Wars* [JACK: Keith?] trivia or Halo jokes.

KEITH: Hello! Hey! My thing has [AUSTIN sighs] been muted. I answered [DRE laughs] all those things, and [ALI laughs] laughed at the Halo joke.

AUSTIN: Ah.

[DRE continues laughing]

[JACK sighs]

Oh, Keith. Uh, wait! Did we already roll this?

DRE: 82?

AUSTIN: Yeah.

DRE: Yeah, we did.

AUSTIN: Okay, cause I'm looking at it [cross] like, wait a second.

DRE: [cross] That was actually one that I rolled.

AUSTIN: I've def already done this. [DRE: Yeah.] Um.

KEITH: I might have muted for as long as Jack had that big cough that he had to do!

AUSTIN: Uh-huh.

KEITH: 'Cause I was like, ooh, I also have to big cough. I should mute.

AUSTIN: I'm looking at these other ones, and [JACK: It's contagious.] I'm going to use GM fiat to reroll. No one can stop me. [DRE laughs] [NICK: Oh, okay.] The tools work for us, we don't work [KEITH: Yeah! [laughs]] for the tools. [loudly] [cross] *God damn it!*

DRE: [cross] Now you've got an 81!

[KEITH and JACK laugh]

AUSTIN: [amused] I rolled an 81! God *damn* it!

[DRE laughs]

ART: Just roll again!

ART: [cross] Just keep ro—just pick a number!

AUSTIN: [cross] I'm gonna keep rolling. [cross] No, I'm not gonna pick a roll.

KEITH: [cross] No, this is a good one. This is a good one.

AUSTIN: It's *sort* of a good one. It's breathable mix, warm, microbial life, outpost. So it's just like one thing is there. Tech level four, friendly foe, secret masters. We've had friendly foe and secret masters so many times now.

ART: [cross] Austin, I'm thinking of a number. Just guess it.

KEITH: [cross] I know, but I like that there's secret masters for a world with like a base.

[ALI laughs]

[AUSTIN laughs, then JACK]

JACK: [cross] Any—who do you think could be running this base?

DRE: [cross] I think they can take to...

AUSTIN: It's Jim 27! He's the one!

[KEITH and DRE laugh]

KEITH: It's like the lowest puppet master of all time!

AUSTIN: Oh, boy! [laughs]

KEITH: Like!

[DRE laughs]

AUSTIN: He just like keeps stealing my food from the refrigerator!

KEITH: Jim 27, [NICK laughs] what do you think about the Illuminati? Yeah, I can see him over there. In the hood? That's him.

[JACK and DRE laugh]

JACK: Wait, but actually, hold on a second. Like, Fallout has done some really cool stuff with that, I think, in the past? [AUSTIN: Mm-hm.] With the idea of Vaults, and secret masters in Vaults. And people running the Vault are very different to people who you think are running the Vault, so I think secret masters with one colony could actually be pretty cool.

KEITH: Yeah!

AUSTIN: Yeah...

JACK: If it is just like—it's just Jim.

KEITH: [AUSTIN: Ah...] I mean, you can reroll if it's not interesting enough.

AUSTIN: I might GM fiat [NICK: Good.] and take—and use this as my opportunity to take this one cold war place and put it in.

JACK: Ah, you only get one shot at that, Austin.

AUSTIN: I know, but like—well, that's what I'm saying, is I might just say okay, of these hundred, I'm [KEITH You—] using my fiat to pick this *one*, as 303.

ART: Shouldn't that be your last one? Shouldn't you give all of us [cross] a chance to get...

AUSTIN: [cross] Yeah, you're right. You're right. You're right. You're right. I'm just gonna reroll.

KEITH: I need—hold on. But here's the thing, is that I need you to—I need you to stop saying fiat to me like it means anything to me other than a car.

ALI: Yeah.

AUSTIN: Oh, uh, fiat is like my privilege.

KEITH: Okay.

AUSTIN: It's like I've decided by my decision alone...the rules—so in role-playing games, there lots of ways to think about the game, like a bunch of people think that this—that you run a role-playing game like a simulation, and that the rules are the thing that matters most? [cross] Other people talk about—

KEITH: [cross] Yeah, that sounds boring.

AUSTIN: It's really boring. And I've played with GMs like that. Other people say like, oh, it's a collaborative thing, which is like what we do, 99% of the time, and then also, I often will say—and not just me, but lots of people say—well, the GM gets like—they can just put their foot down. Say, no, we're gonna do it this way. It's up to the GM at the end of the day, like that's what their job is. [KEITH: Mm-hm.] [cross] But you're right!

ART: [cross] I think you hear the word most often from like Ron Paul [AUSTIN: Yes.] supporters about like the fiat currency [AUSTIN: Yeah.] we have.

AUSTIN: Which is like, [JACK: It comes from...] it doesn't mean anything, it's just we've [NICK: Mm-hm!] decided it means something.

NICK: They're not talking about trading tiny cars?

AUSTIN: Oh, that's...that's a good point! They might be doing that! They are Ron Paul supporters.

[NICK laughs]

KEITH: Grey market Hot Wheels?

AUSTIN: Really thought you were gonna say Grey Warden Hot Wheels.

[KEITH, ALI, DRE, JACK all laugh]

JACK: Ah, it's the DLC we always [AUSTIN: Huh...] wanted and never got.

AUSTIN: All right, I rerolled. I rerolled and got a 78. Breathable mix. Human-miscible biosphere, temperate, tens of thousands of inhabitants. Tech level four: baseline positech—or postech. And heavy industry and a civil war! Lots of civil wars happening here.

KEITH: So is this just like a big factory?

AUSTIN: Yeah, this is just a big—

KEITH: Or two big factories that hate each other?

AUSTIN: Yeah, it is—this is just...*Team Fortress 2*...[JACK laughs] [NICK: Oh, man.] the civil war between the two man—the man brothers or whatever they're called.

JACK: Grey...blue and red and blue.

AUSTIN: Blue and red, yeah.

I think this is...oh whoops, I didn't mark 505. That's an important one to have marked.

I think this is...509. Kinda out of the way. Partially because I kind of don't give a fuck about this planet. It's fine. It's good that we have this planet! But it's not gonna be the center of our play, i don't think. All right, back around. Last rolls! [cross] Make em good!

KEITH: [cross] Oh, right.

JACK: [cross] Make it good. Try and get as high a 90 as you can.

KEITH: [amused] 60.

AUSTIN: Keith got a 60.

KEITH: Is that o—have we gotten that one, too? Oh, we got 61, I think.

AUSTIN: This is it! You got—you immediately got the [cross] roll I wanted! Swish! We should high-five.

KEITH: [cross] Oh! Nailed it! Breathable mix! Temperate! Human-miscible biosphere. High five.

AUSTIN: Boom. [claps]

ART: Tens of thousands' a small one, though.

AUSTIN: It is, but like remember there was just a war here, so.

KEITH: Yeah. Tech level four. Unbraked AI.

AUSTIN: Uh-huh.

KEITH: And cold war.

AUSTIN: Uh-huh. I think this [JACK: Perfect.] is 303.

KEITH: At 303.

AUSTIN: It's real scary that there's just an unbraked AI here.

KEITH: Yeah it is.

NICK: Unbraked is a really awkward term.

AUSTIN: I love it. I love it. [quieter] What is it, number 60? Is that what we said it was? 0303. Um. So yeah, I think this—I'm actually gonna move this—whoops. Wait, what's the fuckin number? 0303. Okay. I'm gonna slide this up to where 0304 is, so that we just have these together. Cause those are the center. This is the—that's...what our two center games are. Um, I'm gonna read unbraked AI, just so we have it.

Oh...

KEITH: Put it in the books.

AUSTIN: Put it in the books. [types] All right, there we go.

Unbraked AI says—I mean, again, we probably know what it means, but—"Artificial intelligences are costly and difficult to create, requiring a careful sequence of "growth stages" in order to bring them to sentience before artificial limits on cognition speed and learning development are installed. These "brakes" prevent runaway cognition metastasis, wherein an AI begins to rapidly contemplate certain subjects in an increasingly [NICK: Ah.] baroque fashion, until they become completely crazed by rational human standards. This world has one such "unbraked AI" on it, probably with a witting or unwitting corps of servants. Unbraked AIs are quite "insane,"—" quote unquote "—but they learn and reason with a speed impossible for humans, and can demonstrate a truly distressing subtlety at times."

KEITH: This is fuckin [Durandal](#).

AUSTIN: Right. But I really—I'm curious...I'm curious where it is, or what it is! Because that sounds like an active AI—or an active Divine to me, but it could also be an AI from the...from the rigger side [KEITH: Yeah.] that is approaching Divine status.

KEITH: I really like—cause I might have my Marathon trivia mixed up, [AUSTIN: Uh-huh.] but if I remember right, Durandal...the entire job of that AI was to open and close doors?

JACK: Mm-hm.

AUSTIN: And then it just developed into...

KEITH: And it deve—yeah. It basically opened and closed doors, and then just like was like, what about if I didn't...do [AUSTIN laughs] this?

AUSTIN: I'd prefer—I'd rather not?

KEITH: Yeah.

AUSTIN: Yeah.

KEITH: Uh, and.

AUSTIN: The Bartleby'd.

KEITH: Mm-hm. There's—has—

NICK: And then it started opening and closing doors in the metaphoric sense.

AUSTIN: Right.

[KEITH laughs]

ALI: Right.

KEITH: Yeah, there's some really cool...like, here's the path that a corroding AI [AUSTIN: Mm-hm.] takes when it, you know, turns into an unbraked AI. That I don't know if that's a Marathon thing or a thing that Marathon used.

AUSTIN: Right. Right.

KEITH: That predated it.

AUSTIN: [cross] I mean, the—

KEITH: [cross] But it could [ART mutters in background] just very well be like a, oh yeah—

AUSTIN: Marathon uses the same thing Halo does, right?

KEITH: Yeah.

DRE: Yeah.

AUSTIN: [cross] What's the fuckin—

NICK: [cross] Fuckin rampancy?

AUSTIN: Rampancy! Yes. There we go.

KEITH: Rampancy, yeah.

AUSTIN: Yeah. Yeah.

KEITH: It w—so it could very well just be like a—yeah, this is a guy—this was a robot that maintained like a water system for a factory, [AUSTIN: Right, right.] and it just decided not to do that anymore!

AUSTIN: Yeah.

KEITH: It was doing it for long enough where then that was maybe not the best choice for it.

AUSTIN: ...[snorts] Art?

[pause]

25!

ART: 25.

AUSTIN: Inert gas, can't breathe it. Temperate. Human-miscible biosphere, hundreds of thousands of inhabitants. Another perimeter agency, and heavy mining. I think at this point on our final goes we can all just say like no, let's do something else, let's reroll. [cross] This is fine.

KEITH: [cross] I can reroll mine.

ART: [cross] I sort of don't want to place another perimeter agency.

AUSTIN: Yeah, me too. I think having the one on the planet—or on the map is really good, especially [NICK: Yes.] now that we've placed an unbraked AI? It makes them really valuable, in a way. Right?

NICK: Yeah.

ART: Yeah.

NICK: Well, and like a lot of these, having multiples of them [AUSTIN: Mm-hm.] makes them less special.

AUSTIN: Yes. Agreed. Heavy mining is fine, you know, but like yeah. So let's [NICK: Right.]—gimme a reroll. This is one of the reasons I—

ART: 36.

AUSTIN: This is one of the reasons I made...I made a hundred instead of just 20, you know?

NICK: True.

DRE: Oh man!

AUSTIN: Woah!

ART: Aw, this one's fun!

AUSTIN: This one's *interesting!* Okay. Thick atmosphere, breathable with a pressure mask. Cold. Immiscible biosphere. Millions of inhabitants. Again, I'm gonna say this doesn't have to be human inhabitants. Tech level five: pre-Silence technology. This is the most advanced it is. But also, primitive aliens, and desert world.

JACK: Huh.

AUSTIN: This is the most alien we've seen, I think.

NICK: Is this *Dune*?

AUSTIN: This might be the *Dune* place.

NICK: Did you just roll *Dune*?

AUSTIN: There aren't really—are there—yeah. Yeah.

ART: I think you mean to say [DRE laughs] “thank you for rolling *Dune*, Art.”

[AUSTIN laughs]

[NICK, JACK and DRE laugh]

AUSTIN: [sighing] Oh, man...

Do you remember that *Dune* hack of *Burning Wheel* we never ran? Ugh...

ART: Remember every cool *Burning Wheel* thing we never got to do?

AUSTIN: Yeah. I—yes. I’m [KEITH: God damn it, Ron.] about to live with that dude, so. I’m gonna get to play all of the cool *Burning Wheel* games in the world.

ART: Yeah, no one likes you. Or whatever.

AUSTIN: [formal tone] Hah hah!

ART: I can’t decide if this is a cool Northern—

NICK: [cross] Wait. You’re movin in with Ron?!

ART: [cross]—planet, or if this is like...

AUSTIN: No no no no no! With a—[ART laughs] one of the dudes who works on like the *Burning Wheel* games and *Torchbearer* and some other stuff.

NICK: Oh, damn. Okay.

AUSTIN: Yeah. It’s gonna be—well, not till July, but. [NICK: Right.] Then.

So what were you saying, Art? You can’t decide if...

ART: I can’t dec—this would be like a really good 0600, [AUSTIN: Yeah.] because 0700 is that perimeter agency anti-tech [AUSTIN: Yeah.] world, so having the most [JACK: Huh.] technological world right next to it would be something.

AUSTIN: Yeah, it would.

ART: But so would like having it be like 008, like triple-08, right?

AUSTIN: Mm-hm. Yeah.

ART: Or even like 309?

AUSTIN: Uh...Yeah...

JACK: We don't know if 0700 hates tech, we just know that they don't use it, right?

ART: Right.

AUSTIN: Um. We know that they have been...specifically keeping things...

JACK: Yeah yeah yeah.

AUSTIN: ...from advancing, at least. So they might not hate it, but. Oh!

JACK: They're doing something for a reason.

AUSTIN: [cross] Yeah, we don't know what their reason is.

ART: [cross] There's some tension with that perimeter agency.

AUSTIN: But like who's pulling the strings on that perimeter agency?

JACK: [loud whisper] Secret masters!

AUSTIN: Is it these people?

JACK: Oh, man. Yeah, maybe!

ART: Oh...

Yeah, that's more interesting, right?

AUSTIN: Yeah! I like it.

ART: That just like dropping it in Divine country?

AUSTIN: Yeah. Yeah, I think that this is—this like—there's something here. You know?

ART: Yeah.

AUSTIN: Uh, 0600. 0600. Maybe in control of 0700, question mark? Okay.

[ALI chuckles]

Uh, after Art, of course, is—we should have had a system. Nick. Go! [laughs quietly]

NICK: [taps keyboard] 8—oh. Did we do 82?

AUSTIN: I feel like we've done—[DRE: We rolled—yes.] it's weird how it feels like we've done all of like—this is amazing, that we keep...

ART: I think 82 [KEITH: Well, we didn't do—] [DRE: Austin—] is one of the ones that Austin rolled and didn't wanna do.

DRE: Yeah.

AUSTIN: [cross] Was it?

NICK: [cross] Oh, okay.

KEITH: [cross] Yeah, yeah.

DRE: [cross] No, I rolled 82. I rolled [AUSTIN: No.] 82, and then [cross] Austin rolled it.

AUSTIN: [cross] And then I rerolled 82. 82 was already on our list, yeah. So this is the third time we [JACK laughs] rolled 82s!

DRE: Yep.

JACK: This is a [cross] one-in-a-hundred...

KEITH: [cross] There's *no* way of calculating those odds.

AUSTIN: No, none. [JACK huffs in amusement] It's—incalculable.

DRE: Never tell me the odds.

AUSTIN: Oh, 8!

NICK: 8!

AUSTIN: Good! Good.

DRE: Is this our first single-digit roll?

[2:45:00]

AUSTIN: Yeah, it is. Shit, I fucked up. There it is. Okay.

KEITH: I also think we rolled every single 90 but the cold war 90.

AUSTIN: Uh-huh. We did. Oh boy. Uh, hoof. This is place is shitty.

NICK: Yeah.

AUSTIN: Feel free to reroll!

NICK: Okay.

AUSTIN: Again, this is our last run.

NICK: Reroll. [types] Ugh!

JACK: Oh my god!

[ALI laughs]

AUSTIN: [laughs] Oh wait, but this one might be cool.

JACK: [cross] It's another 90.

AUSTIN: [cross] Oh my god! 91. Corrosive, temp—corrosive atmosphere. Temperate. Human-miscible biosphere—those just don't work. Uh, well maybe you roll corrosive, you can just throw away other shit. Hundreds of thousands of inhabitants. Tech level three, 20th century. And then world tags are freak weather, freak weather.

[Laughter]

JACK: Great! 10, don't do it.

DRE: Uh, you should look at 3 though, cause 3's real cool too.

AUSTIN: Hm? Oh. Wait, what is?

DRE: He also rolled a 3.

ART: 3 is pretty cool too.

AUSTIN: I mean, let's look at—let me look at 3.

NICK: Yeah, I rolled again right away, cause I thought we had already rolled 91.

AUSTIN: Oh, I see.

[pause]

Oh, that's a dope one! Let me read—see, go—okay. Breathable mix, temperate, micro—why can't I say this word, guys?

JACK: Microbial.

KEITH: Microbial.

AUSTIN: Microbial. Microbial. Life.

DRE: [emphasis on wrong syllable] Microbial.

AUSTIN: [same emphasis] Microbial life. [huffs] Hundreds of thousands of inhabitants, tech level four: baseline postech. Oceanic world and sea-going cities.

ALI: Mm!

JACK: Ooh! Ooh.

AUSTIN: Which I think it means what we think it does. Either the world is entirely water or else the land is simply too dangerous for most humans. Human settlements on this world consists of a number of floating cities that follow the currents and the fish.

JACK: Fuck. Let's do this one.

NICK: [cross] Aah!

ALI :[cross] Ohh!

AUSTIN: [cross] Yup!

NICK: [cross] Yeah. [DRE laughs] That's cool.

AUSTIN: Uh-huh! Who gets this—

JACK: It's Fishteen Minutes, the planet.

AUSTIN: [laughs] Who gets this fish planet?

NICK: Uh...

AUSTIN: Okay. I have—things to pitch.

NICK: I'm gonna make that the last northern kingdom.

AUSTIN: Yes! He traces his...[laughs] Whoever rules it, they trace their heritage back to the fish kings!

KEITH: I'm [NICK: Yep.] Ron, king of the fish!

NICK: No, wait! What if they trace their heritage back to Atlantis?

AUSTIN: Like actual Atlantis?

NICK: Well, I mean, [cross] currently, none of us know actual... but y'know.

KEITH: [cross] They say that...that's what they *said*.

AUSTIN: [cross] That's what they say. Yes. Yes. Yep! Uh-huh! Yep. Good.

KEITH: Fishlantis?

AUSTIN: Fishlantis.

[someone snorts]

[NICK laughs]

Okay!

ART: I wanna be a northern kingdom prince so bad.

[ALI and DRE laugh]

AUSTIN: Listen. That's on the table, dog. We can have that—

ART: It's not super noir, though.

AUSTIN: I don't know! Like, princes are pretty noir.

ALI: I think...

AUSTIN: Not really, but you can make it work.

KEITH: You could just be a hella noir prince.

AUSTIN: Like people with [ART: It's just—] hidden backgrounds are super noir. Right?

ART: Sure.

AUSTIN: [cross] Secrets and all that.

JACK: [cross] Game of Thrones, that famous noir show?

KEITH: [cross] You didn't like your fish dad—you didn't like your fish dad, so you ran away to become a...

AUSTIN: Right. All right.

ART: [cross] Yeah, I was a non-inheriting fish prince.

NICK: [cross] Isn't there a prince in Casablanca?

AUSTIN: Yeah, see! Yeah, totally.

DRE: Yeah!

JACK: Yeah, it's Casablanca.

DRE: Yeah.

JACK: [cross] It's Prince Casablanca.

AUSTIN: [cross] Prince Casablanca. Yeah. Him!

[ALI and NICK laugh]

Ali, you're up.

DRE: Prince Cassie.

ART: Prince Dick Casablancas.

AUSTIN: Yep! [laughs]

ALI: We got 25, right?

AUSTIN: No!

ART: I rolled 25 and then dismissed it, if [cross] you're like, "25 is awesome!" you could...

AUSTIN: Oh, it's bad. Yeah yeah. Yeah. No, 25's shitty.

ALI: 68!

AUSTIN: Did we already get 68? No, we didn't. Okay. [snorts] Invasive toxic atmosphere. Temperate. Human-miscible biosphere. Millions of inhabitations. Tech level four, freak weather, police state.

JACK: Oh, wow!

DRE: How do people live here?!

JACK: How—

AUSTIN: Millions.

KEITH: So like...you can grow stuff, I don't think to...

DRE: [cross] Can anybody...

ART: [cross] What's toxic atmosphere? Can we talk about this?

AUSTIN: Uh, so I think it's a situation where it's just like...everyone lives inside, and when they go outside they have to just like be all wrapped up. Just like everyone is gas masks and like ridiculous clothing that prevents it from—or, maybe we just reroll. And that's fine. Or we can s—

KEITH: You have to be able to wash out the toxins, because you can grow stuff and eat the food.

AUSTIN: Oh, right.

ALI: Yeah, there's a lot going on here! [cross] I don't think that I wanna dismiss it.

AUSTIN: [cross] A hell going on here. Okay.

Oh wait, so this is corrosive and invasive, is that what we said?

ALI: [cross] Invasive toxic.

KEITH: [cross] It's invasive and toxic atmosphere.

AUSTIN: Invasive toxic! Jesus. That would be...okay.

NICK: We do already have...

AUSTIN: Oh, here it is!

NICK: ...a bubble planet, though.

AUSTIN: We do. All right. [KEITH: But that one we can use...] "Invasive toxic atmospheres are composed of a substantial proportion of molecules small enough to infiltrate past the seals of most vacc suits. This infiltration doesn't harm the suit, but the molecules have to be steadily flushed by the system's purification sensors before they build up to a debilitating level. This causes a much faster bleed of air as breathable oxygen is jettisoned along with the infiltrating molecules. Most invasive atmospheres cut oxygen supply durations by half, at best." So it's just like—it's just a really—"Outdoor work is avoided whenever possible, and any failure of a suit's toxin sensors—" Oh! Maybe this is a—ooh. "Hallucinations, chronic sickness, or worse can follow." Um, so it's not—it doesn't kill you, but like it's not great.

ALI: Mm-hm.

AUSTIN: But like, again, we have been talking about places that have robots doing work. [NICK: That's true.] I bet you robots don't mind the toxic atmosphere so much.

KEITH: Jim 26 rolls up his sleeves. "Got this."

AUSTIN: "I got this."

[ALI laughs]

"I got this."

ART: And this isn't really like...even the giant bubble cities, right, 'cause the [AUSTIN: No.] vacuum seals don't work, like, [JACK: But also—] so it's not bubbles, it's just like shitty.

ALI: [cross] I mean, s—

AUSTIN: [cross] It's just sh—well, it's just like air cleaning, air filtration systems running full stop.

ALI: Yeah, like—

ART: Everyone probably gets sick a few times a year.

AUSTIN: What were you going to say?

ALI: Everyone on this planet is just tolly.

AUSTIN: Right. Yeah.

DRE: Oh, yeah.

AUSTIN: Yeah. Totally.

JACK: Also—‘cause there’s freak weather as well? [AUSTIN: Yeah, the pla—] Jim 26 rolls up his sleeves and then is just hit by lightning? Like, seven times?

[Laughter]

AUSTIN: We can decide what weather pattern it is, even. Because it’s just like some ridiculous...there’s—“Perhaps city-flattening storms regularly scourge the surface, or the world’s sun never pierces the thick banks of clouds.” Those are its suggestions. We can just come up with whatever we want, here.

ART: Well, that’s a fun thing to think about, [cross] right?

AUSTIN: [cross] Each of these—yeah. Each of these, by the way, has its own set of like suggestions of things that like could happen on each planet, which I haven’t been reading to you, because they’re dope, and I’m gonna like use them, here and there? But like one of them here is like, “oh, a friend you could have is a meteorological researcher! Or like an enemy is a criminal using the world as cover!” The places suggested include “the eye of the storm, the terraforming control room, or *the one sunlit place*.”

[Laughter]

JACK: Ah, it’s a public toilet.

AUSTIN: [huffs] Oh! Weird!

[NICK laughs]

So where do you think, Ali?

ALI: Um...what’s...

NICK: Actually, even more accurate, it’s a portapotty.

AUSTIN: Yeah...

ALI: [over the sound of something sliding around] Mm. [cross] What’s 604?

NICK: [cross] With just a spotlight.

AUSTIN: 604...[typing]

ART: 604 is the airport.

AUSTIN: Right. It's badlands, it's civil war.

ALI: Okay.

Uh...702, then? Maybe?

AUSTIN: Sure! Sure.

[typing] Come on. I want you to type for me. There we go. [ALI: [warmly] Mm.] There we go.

Okay. Uh...Is Jack next?

JACK: I think so!

AUSTIN: Yeah, Jack. So—Andrew.

DRE: [strained] One second! [typing] [satisfied sound]

JACK: [cross] 59!

AUSTIN: [cross] 59. Okay.

Another oceanic world. Lots of oceans here! This one's just like an okay place, though. Heavy industry, oceans. Baseline postech. Temperate, breathable, hundreds of thousands—or [KEITH: Forbidden.] tens of thousands.

KEITH: Salt factories!

AUSTIN: Yeah...

JACK: Cool! Yeah, like a salt world. [AUSTIN: Yeah.] Mining salt. Sure. Um, I think probably...

KEITH: Islands made of salt!

AUSTIN: The saltlands.

JACK: [huffs] I'm gonna go...106?

AUSTIN: Okay. Doo doo doo...

JACK: I'm interested in what Divine factory worlds are like.

AUSTIN: Yeah. Good call. It's interesting how it feels like the—I'm gonna have to do a count of this, after, but like it feels like there are less people in the Divine worlds.

JACK: Huh!

DRE: Hm.

AUSTIN: That might not be the case, but it really might be. So.

Wait, what number was that again? Sorry. I missed—[cross] 59.

DRE: [cross] 59?

JACK: [cross] Ah, that was 59.

AUSTIN: Yeah. I got it. And 106? 106. Okay! Andrew?

DRE: Yep! [clicks] 77.

AUSTIN: Uh...ooh! Okay. Huh.

DRE: That's interesting.

AUSTIN: Breathable mix, temperate, engineered biosphere. [JACK: Hm.] Alien civilization, tech level four: baseline postech, rigid culture, alien ruins. Is this one of the places where there is...a non—like a true alien? Is this like for real alien spot?

DRE: Yeah, I think so.

AUSTIN: I like that.

DRE: Yeah.

AUSTIN: How has the...how has the...okay, I'm gonna read—engineered biospheres “are among the rarest, as they require enormous time and effort on the part of a highly advanced civilization. Whatever life exists on this planet has been extensively altered by an alien race or by advanced pretech engineering methods. Some such worlds are paradise planets, carefully sculpted by some fabulously wealthy predecessor to suit their own tastes. Others are living forges, where the foodstuffs and refined minerals are produced as byproducts from the basic organic processes of the world's biosphere.

“Such worlds tend to be [JACK: Oh man!] fragile. Many engineered worlds are dependent upon regular stabilizing work to prevent genetic drift and adaptations that do not serve the creator’s purpose. Without regular pruning and adjustment, engineered biospheres can go badly awry. Some end up leaving nothing but genetic wreckage in their wake, while others go wrong in more subtle ways. Where once the biosphere existed to serve the inhabitants, a creaking engineered biosphere can leave the planet’s population chained to constant repair and maintenance efforts just to prevent a planetary collapse.”

JACK: That’s amazing!

AUSTIN: It’s pretty good! Um. So, who has this? Whose...who has this? Or is it free-floating? [DRE sighs] ‘Cause it could just be its own thing, but we did talk about like what it would be like to have a working relationship with one of these true aliens. Like maybe this is working [DRE: Yeah.]...maybe this is a place that’s like currently being operated by...one of the sides, but who knows where it’ll be in the future?

DRE: Right. And I think like Jack earlier I think mentioned like you know a company just had a true alien running the numbers. [AUSTIN: Right.] Like what if a company just has a true alien maintaining their biosphere.

AUSTIN: Right.

DRE: Um.

AUSTIN: Or is it like that—right. Or is this a place where like yeah, it’s the whole place is just a...like a super-farm or something, that’s being run to provide enough food for everybody in the s—you know, or something like that.

DRE: Is it too off the wall if maybe they’re just living in the capital-A Alien?

AUSTIN: Oh, like the planet is a capital-A Alien?

DRE: Yeah.

AUSTIN: I think that’s—we have—I think there’s precedent for that. Right?

NICK: I like that.

DRE: Okay.

AUSTIN: Yeah. Um. I also read rigid culture. “The local culture is extremely rigid. Certain forms of behavior and belief are absolutely mandated, and any deviation from these principles is punished, or else society may be strongly stratified by birth with limited prospects for change.

Anything which threatens the existing social order is feared and shunned.” Um. It’s a very structured, very controlled space.

DRE: Yeah.

AUSTIN: So which side? Or where? What hex?

DRE: Um. Let’s do—I like that as a Divine...

AUSTIN: Okay.

DRE: ...I think. So let’s do...003.

AUSTIN: Okay. I also like that towards the north like that, because it’s like, was this place like this before? Was this one of the like formerly it was one of these northern kingdoms? And [DRE: Yeah.] has since become under control of the Divine side? Okay. Next is...

NICK: It’s funny that we’ve taken to call those northern kingdoms, but [AUSTIN: [amused] I know.] like this is space?

AUSTIN: I know, I know. [NICK laughs] Well, lots of places have a north, right? That’s the...[cross] that’s the line.

JACK: [cross] It’s the Witcher. It’s the...[laughs]

AUSTIN: Yeah.

JACK: It’s the Witchers coming out.

AUSTIN: I think we goofed, ‘cause I think I—I thought we had...I thought it was—there’s seven of us, right? Three, four, five.

DRE: Yeah.

AUSTIN: Six, seven, eight. Nine, ten, eleven, twelve, thirteen, fourteen. Fifteen, sixteen, seventeen, eighteen, nineteen, twenty. Twenty-two, twenty-three, twenty-four—oh, you know what? Yeah. Three of us are gonna have to go more times. I miscounted. So...I don’t know who, but I’m gonna go now. I’m rolling. This is my last one, [DRE laughs] regardless.

KEITH: Mm-hm!

AUSTIN: Eh? Come on, rolls! Wait, did we already get 64?

KEITH: Probably. We probably have gotten all of them. We somehow fit a hundred numbers into 28 numbers.

[ALI laughs]

AUSTIN: Yeah, this is [DRE laughs] another...

ART: I don't think we got this one.

AUSTIN: I don't think we did, but this is another archive, I don't wanna double-dip on the archives. Those are really cool.

JACK: [cross] Well, I guess triple-dip on the archive.

ALI: [cross] Roll like a...a d50. 'Cause we really haven't gotten like [cross] the back half of it.

AUSTIN: [cross] You're right. You're right!

NICK: That's not—yeah, that's a good idea.

AUSTIN: Good call. Uh...

ALI: Do we get 18? Fuck!

[AUSTIN laughs]

KEITH: No, we got 16, no, we got 16.

ALI: Okay.

AUSTIN: Um. Uh. Mm! Secret masters, radioactive world is kind of—

KEITH: Should we—no, we got 18, go! Do it again!

AUSTIN: Wait, did we really already get 18?

KEITH: No, but we got secret masters, radioactive [cross] world already.

AUSTIN: [cross] Right. We did. Yes. We did.

All right, there we go! That's a good one. I haven't looked at it yet. I'm just crossing my fingers, hoping it's a good one...

DRE: Oh yeah. Okay! No, that's interesting.

AUSTIN: Oh, it's like a super mining world.

DRE: Yeah.

AUSTIN: Temperate—and it's just like—

ART: With no people.

AUSTIN: [laughing] Oh! Yeah! It's just s—

KEITH: Oh, this is [Moon](#).

AUSTIN: This is just *Moon*. This planet is just *Moon*.

[NICK laughs]

DRE: This is a really sad Cloud City.

AUSTIN: Ah.

KEITH: [cross] Go hang out with Sam Rockwell.

JACK: [cross] How many people are on this planet?

AUSTIN: It's just an outpost.

JACK: Oh, wow.

AUSTIN: It's just—so it's just—yeah.

ALI: Do we already ha—we already have an outpost. [cross] Don't we?

KEITH: [cross] Jack did the outpost.

AUSTIN: [cross] Yeah, but outpost is just a popula—oh yeah, we did. We ended up rejecting the outpost.

ALI: Oh, okay.

AUSTIN: Outpost just means like, a couple thousand people, I think? Let me see. I'm gonna read the actual thing that it says here. "Few hundred or a few thousand colonists...either very new...or uncolonized worlds that just happen to have a naval or corporate base on the surface." Um. Yeah, I...

NICK: Or all of them are in storage except for one.

AUSTIN: [laughing] Right. Uh...I wanna put that at 702. A lot of these like...resource worlds for the rigger side are just unmanned, and just like, lots of robots.

[3:00:00]

Uh, okay. I think we should roll to see who gets—everybody roll a d100. Top three roll—

ART: But we have six...we have six open worlds.

AUSTIN: Oh, do we—we have six open worlds?

ART: 02, 202, [cross] 704, 709, 309, and 008.

AUSTIN: [cross] Oh, okay. Yeah! And you all get to go one more time. Look at that.

ART: [cross] Everyone but me gets to roll again.

KEITH: [cross] Um, are we doin d100s or d50s?

AUSTIN: Let's stay with d50s. We're almost through. [KEITH: 46...] We can do it. I believe in us.

46...Tomb world is a good one!

KEITH: [cross] Okay, yeah! This is a—

NICK: [cross] Ooh!

ART: [cross] And also—billions of inhabitants!

AUSTIN: Woah!

KEITH: This is a tomb world and an outpost world with billions of inhabitants.

AUSTIN: They didn't say—it doesn't say alive inhabitants.

ALI: [chuckles] [NICK chuckles] Oh, boy.

KEITH: [cross] Well, I think by—

DRE: [cross] [pronouncing with the wrong vowel] Zambies!

KEITH: The word [cross] inhabit, I think, implies...

ART: [cross] I think it sorta does.

ALI: Ghost world!

KEITH: Oh, there's no magic, but there are ghosts.

DRE: This is—

ALI: Yeah!

AUSTIN: Yeah!

[ALI laughs]

DRE: [cross] Oh, it's Nacre!

AUSTIN: [cross] Welcome to Nacre.

DRE: Okay.

AUSTIN: Yeah.

DRE: [laughing] Yeah!

[NICK laughs]

[pause]

AUSTIN: [groans] Tomb worlds are really sad. [cross] Also I don't—

KEITH: [cross] I can reroll.

AUSTIN: I think we have to reroll. I don't think tomb worlds...yeah. I don't think tomb worlds plus outpost world plus [huffs] billions of inhabitants works. We should just reroll.

KEITH: 44! [laughing] [cross] God damn it!

AUSTIN: [cross] Unbelievable! Roll again, how are we hitting the same numbers? Oh my god.

KEITH: I just rolled the fuckin same thing that Austin just rolled. 7.

AUSTIN: Yes. Okay. I think we've had 7 before. [cross] I really do.

KEITH: [cross] We did 6. We did 6.

AUSTIN: Okay. We don't have 7? Are you sure? How [KEITH: [sighs] No.] sure are you? How sure *are* you?

KEITH: Okay, [ALI laughs] I'm pretty sure that we have not had this.

AUSTIN: Okay! This is an interesting one. Inert gas, temperate, human-miscible biosphere, hundreds of thousands of inhabitants. Baseline postech. Out of contact! And feral world.

ART: And a feral world.

AUSTIN: Yeah. Um. Out of contact is really interesting, actually.

KEITH: What is out of contact? I mean, I can—I know what out of contact stands for.

AUSTIN: They have been out of contact for centuries or longer. Perhaps the original colonists were seeking to hide from the rest of the universe, or something destroyed any means of communication. It may have been so long that human origins on other worlds have regressed into a topic for legends.

KEITH: Um. That sounds like 709.

AUSTIN: Uh...Where's 70...Oh. Uh! No.

ART: [cross] Our other feral world was on that side?

KEITH: [cross] It's—I guess that's closer to like the popu—like, the...

AUSTIN: Yes. That's closer to the population. I think it's 0002, or 0202.

KEITH: I think 0202.

AUSTIN: Yeah.

KEITH: [cross] That's 02.

AUSTIN: [cross] What were you saying, Art?

ART: Oh, I was just saying that our other feral world was a blue world?

AUSTIN: [cross] Okay. Yeah. Yeah. Good call.

ART: [cross] I was trying to get balance.

AUSTIN: Uh, okay, who's next? Let's just roll through it.

ART: I am!

AUSTIN: 32....Breathable mix.

ART: Get that one?

AUSTIN: Uh, no! Colonized population, regional hegemon. 20th century technology. Somehow.

[pause]

NICK: You guys gotta get a Hegemon on your Digimon playthrough.

AUSTIN: [huffs] You really do. [cross] So this is going to be—where—

ART: [cross] Have we had colonized population?

AUSTIN: We have not had that, but we have had—we do have a different regional hegemon? Where is that at. 0304. Is a regional hegemon...doot doot doot doot doot doot doot doot...Okay, right right right. That's that—right. Okay. So yeah, this could be anywhere.

ART: Uh, 0309?

AUSTIN: ...Yeah!

ART: Or would you rather triple-08?

AUSTIN: No, 309 works for me. [cross] Either one, right, at this point.

ART: [cross] Needs to be in a region, right?

AUSTIN: It does. Yeah. Yeah. Um. Yeah, let's give it to 0309. I kind of it as—and also it's what, it's colonized population? That's read what that says. I think, again, I think we know what that means, but...

Okay. The people here are not happy with it. So actually, wait, maybe this is 0002. Because it's a northern....maybe it's a colonized northern kingdom. It's like there was [ART: Oh shit.] already a planet here, and whoever took it, took it. You know?

ART: Yeah, I like that.

AUSTIN: So let's put it up here, and this used to be a northern kingdom of some sort, with interesting aliens. Oh, and what number was 77 at? Where was the last one at?

KEITH: Um...

AUSTIN: We put it somewhere. Uh, again, it was rigid culture, alien ruins?

ART: Was that 003—was that 3?

AUSTIN: I think that was...3...[typing] Yes.

Yes. It was. Okay, next?

[pause]

Uh, you're—

ART: It's Nick is next?

AUSTIN: Is it?

NICK: Oh yeah.

AUSTIN: Yeah. It is. Okay. [typing]

[pause]

JACK: Oh, Jesus.

ART: My graph's getting tiny. What's happening to my thing?

AUSTIN: Your what?

What's hap—

ART: Why—I'm too quiet. I'm turning myself a little up, Keith. [AUSTIN: Oh. Okay.] I hope I didn't just ruin it.

KEITH: No, you're fine. Hey, did you maybe just move farther away from your mic than you were?

AUSTIN: This is interesting too.

ART: Um, I went from sitting to standing. Maybe that did it.

AUSTIN: [cross] This is another—

KEITH: [cross] Yeah. You gotta keep pretty constant mic distance.

AUSTIN: This is another colonized population, but it also got failed colony population status?

JACK: Huh.

AUSTIN: Which is really interesting. I think there's like—this is the dead world. Like it's just the ruins of an attempted—'cause it was—it's heavy industry, is the other thing? Heavy mining. Maybe they just mined the world to death.

KEITH: This is Tatooine between KOTOR and...

AUSTIN: [laughs quietly] Yes.

[pause]

KEITH: [cross] Jawas findin sandcrawlers.

NICK: [cross] What if the previous...uh, inhabitants are still there, trying to like...

AUSTIN: Oh yeah, definitely. I think that that's—yeah, I like that a lot. Yeah, they're not gone. It's just like...

NICK: Right.

AUSTIN: Cool! Thanks for ruining this. [amused] Like...

NICK: Yeah.

[ART huffs in amusement]

AUSTIN: Um.

NICK: It's...Bajor, after the Cardassians leave.

AUSTIN: Right. We're just—we have all the references here.

[NICK laughs]

We got em all. Uh, sorry, I'm looking for the exact write-up on failed colony, just so we can...

NICK: I'm sorry, media has broken my brain.

AUSTIN: That's—it's almost all of us.

NICK: I can't...

AUSTIN: Um.

NICK: I'm just a Darmok. At this point.

AUSTIN: [laughs quietly]...Pick a space. I like that reference a whole bunch, [NICK laughs] but pick a space.

[ART huffs again]

NICK: I just used that reference to talk about [AUSTIN: Right.] how I talk about nothing but references.

AUSTIN: Yes. Yes.

NICK: Um. How bout...either 309 or 8. 0008.

AUSTIN: Oh wait, did we already—did I forget to mark 309? I think we just had 309. Oh no, we didn't, we [NICK: Oh, did we?] chose not to. No, we chose not to. Um. Yeah!

NICK: I like one of those two, 'cause there's [AUSTIN: Yeah.]—you know, it's possible that the neighboring planet came over and [AUSTIN: Let's give it—] said, "This stuff is ours now!"

AUSTIN: Let's give it 0008. Because that like gives it some more spaces to reach, if they can get their shit together.

NICK: Sure.

AUSTIN: Um. What number was that, again? What number did you roll—33? [cross] 33.

NICK: [cross] 33.

AUSTIN: Okay! Uh, is Jack next? No, Ali is next.

ART: Yes. [cross] Ali's next.

ALI: [cross] I'm next.

AUSTIN: [cross] Ali is next.

ALI: Um...

[pause]

AUSTIN: I think we—have 42, and we have...

ART: 42 was our first one.

JACK: [cross] That was the very first one. [AUSTIN laughs]

KEITH: [cross] How would it get 30?

[NICK laughs]

ALI: [sighs] Four, okay!

AUSTIN: Four? You got a four?

ALI: Yeah.

AUSTIN: Okay! That sounds like a good one. [less excited] Inert gas, cold, millions of inhabitants, 19th century technology, just wrecked. Just this whole place is wrecked.

[JACK chuckles]

Um. Let's give that 309, is what I'm gonna pitch.

ALI: Yeah?

AUSTIN: Because like—that's the closest spot—what's 509? Have we—we've given something to 509 already, but what is it?

ALI: 'Cause I was willing to just reroll.

AUSTIN: Uh, we can do that, but I also—I like these like remnants of shitty—of conflict. I do like able to [ALI: Oh, okay. Yeah yeah yeah.] say like, "Okay, look. This place is rough." It's also right across—

ART: Oh, so you like 309 'cause it's a border world?

AUSTIN: Right. Exactly. Yeah.

ALI: Okay. Yeah.

AUSTIN: You get what I mean?

ALI: Mm-hm.

AUSTIN: And it also kind of explains why like...that's not a place—so 309 is just a radioactive shithole, and 509 is in the middle of a civil war? And that's why 409 isn't a corridor between these two empires. Do you know what I mean?

ALI: Okay.

AUSTIN: That's why 303 and 304 are like the Cold War Berlin, because down here is just a wreck, like no one's taking over either of these places and staging any sort of assault, at least not without these terrible things being dealt with first. Um.

What number was that again? 4. Right. Uh, and...now Jack goes.

JACK: Um.

DRE: Whoa! Whoa! There we go.

JACK: [cross] Oh my god.

DRE: [cross] Shit.

AUSTIN: [cross] Wrong number.

JACK: It's a 95.

AUSTIN: Oh, did you do it out of a hundred?

JACK: [cross] Yeah. Uh.

DRE: [cross] Oh, yeah.

AUSTIN: What's 95?

JACK: 34. I think we—have we already had 34?

AUSTIN: It's unbelievable how often—I mean, it is believable. That's the thing with [JACK chuckles] random chance, right, like it hits more often than it—there are more...

ART: We have not had 34, and it's awesome!

AUSTIN: Yeah?

Tell me about 34, Art. 'Cause I'm still writing stuff.

ART: It's got a thick atmosphere, breathable with a pressure mask.

AUSTIN: Uh-huh.

ART: Temperate temperature. No native biosphere.

AUSTIN: Weird.

ART: Hundreds of thousands of inhabitants.

AUSTIN: Ooh!

ART: Tech level four. Trade hub and exchange consulate.

AUSTIN: Two completely new things!

[JACK chuckles]

[DRE laughs]

AUSTIN: [cross] Amazing!

JACK: [cross] Cool.

AUSTIN: Okay. [cross] Trade hub.

JACK: [cross] Cool. Cool, cool, cool! Wait, trade hub or train hub?

[AUSTIN laughs]

ART: Trade. With a d.

AUSTIN: Trade hub!

NICK: I mean, there's probably trains?

AUSTIN: Yeah!

NICK: Throw it in the train.

AUSTIN: "This world is a major crossroads for local interstellar trade. It is well-positioned at the nexus of several short-drill trade routes, facilities—"

JACK: Oh, this has gotta be—

AUSTIN: Yeah!

JACK: This has gotta be 704, right?

AUSTIN: Uh...where's 70...

KEITH: Yes.

AUSTIN: I've lost—oh, yeah! Yes.

KEITH: But all those worlds are garbage.

AUSTIN: [cross] Right, but like—yes!

JACK: [cross] Yeah, totally!

AUSTIN: Because this one is rad!

KEITH: Yeah, that's true.

AUSTIN: Like, this one is rad on the back of all of those shit ones. What's the other thing it had? Inter—or. What was it?

ART: Exchange consulate?

AUSTIN: Exchange consulate!

[JACK chuckles]

ART: I have no [JACK: Okay.] idea what that means, but it sounds cool.

JACK: Is it like an embassy thing?

AUSTIN: Uh—...No, it's a bank.

JACK: Oh!

AUSTIN: "The Exchange of Light once served as the largest, most trusted banking and diplomatic service in human space. Some worlds retain a functioning Exchange Consulate

where banking services and arbitration can be arranged.” Yep. This is like...yes. Um. People whose—

ART: But too bad that couldn’t be 304.

AUSTIN: It could be! If we want it to be, it could be.

JACK: I don’t know, I feel like it slots quite nicely into 704.

AUSTIN: [cross] I think this is like—

ART: [cross] That’s true, yeah.

AUSTIN: This is like the capital of the rigger people here, right?

JACK: Yeah.

AUSTIN: [cross] Like this is their home...

ART: [cross] Now we have to figure out what the Divine capital is.

AUSTIN: Where was the pilgrimage place? I think it’s that.

ART: Didn’t we make that Disney World?

AUSTIN: Oh, we did make that [cross] Disney World. Fuck.

ART: [cross] At like 705?

AUSTIN: Right. Right. [snorts] We did make that Disney...

KEITH: Also, there’s only tens of thousands of people there. Which is...

AUSTIN: Right. Right. That’s true.

KEITH: ...not like a super good capital.

AUSTIN: Well, it is if you’re like—

ART: How many people live at the Vatican?

AUSTIN: Right. Exactly. Or like at [NICK: Yeah.]...

KEITH: Yeah, but the Vatican is the capital of itself.

AUSTIN: Okay, but what about—[JACK chuckles] how many people live in...Janine would kill me for not being able to remember the name of this palace. The French palace, where Louis the XIV—

JACK: Val Royeaux?

AUSTIN: Hm! No!

ART: Versailles?

KEITH: Versailles?

AUSTIN: [cross] Versailles!

JACK: [cross] Oh, Versailles?

AUSTIN: Val Royeaux, Jack!

[JACK is laughing almost silently]

Is *Dragon Age* France!

JACK: That's what I thought you meant!

AUSTIN: No, I meant real France.

[NICK laughs]

KEITH: That is a good point, but wasn't Versailles never the real capital? It was always Paris.

AUSTIN: No, like but they lived in—

JACK: No, Versailles was the capital for fountains.

DRE: It was the palace of Versailles, yeah.

ART: Yeah, that's where the king lived, that's where the capital is.

AUSTIN: [typing] Capital of rigger people. There we go! Uh. Now...Andrew?

DRE: Yeah.

AUSTIN: Is this it?

ART: This is it. [DRE: Might be!] This is gonna be 709, no matter what it is.

AUSTIN: 36!

DRE: Wait, we already have a 36.

AUSTIN: We already—yeah, we already have a 36.

DRE: Yeah.

AUSTIN: Keep...[laughs]

KEITH: Uh, looks like [DRE: Of course!] from 1682 to 1715, Versailles was the unofficial capital of France.

AUSTIN: Okay. Here we go!

DRE: ...41. [cross] Oh, this is different!

ART: [cross] This one's cool too!

AUSTIN: This one's cool too. Where is this going again? 70...9! Interesting!

Uh, you're getting your altered people world, Nick.

NICK: Ooh!

AUSTIN: It is seismic—okay, breathable mix, warm. Microbial, tens of thousands of inhabitants. Tech level four, baseline postech. Seismic instability and altered humanity. So let's start with seismic instability. I know that we know what that means. Also, this explains why this rad planet just doesn't have more people on it. Um. "The local land masses—"

ART: Yeha, I don't wanna live in—although I guess I do live in a warm, seismic instable place [cross] now. I guess I would live there.

AUSTIN: [cross] Yes. You do [NICK and ALI laugh] literally do that. Um. Yeah!

NICK: With a lot of people with—that have a lot of body modifications.

AUSTIN: So yeah, sei—[huffs] yeah! It's true. Seismic instability, we have—that's—it's earthquake places. And then altered humans. Altered humanity. "The humans on this world are visibly and drastically different from normal humanity. They may have additional limbs, new sensory organs, or other significant changes. Were these forms of ancestral eugenic

manipulation or from environmental toxins?" I think it's like neither! They just—it's like hip. At this spot.

NICK: Yeah. [JACK chuckles]

KEITH: It's like gauges.

AUSTIN: Yeah! That's exactly it.

All right! That's our universe.

NICK: Eight ages?

ART: Woo!

AUSTIN: Uh, gauges.

ART: Woo!

AUSTIN: Oh, is that your...yes.

NICK: No, I was asking. Is that what you were...

AUSTIN: Oh, like gauging your ears?

NICK: Oh! Oh right, okay. Sure.

AUSTIN: So that's our universe!

So I've a few things left, and then we can be done. I know we've been going for three hours and thirty minutes. How are we all feeling? [cross] 'Cause I want—we're not—

[cross] JACK: I am—I am tired.

AUSTIN: We're not making characters or factions or anything else tonight. But I do want like a quick thought about you think the mech looks like. What do you wanna be as a group?

KEITH: I'm curious about what it looks like when there are people piloting mechs in a fight with people that don't have mechs?

AUSTIN: Mm-hm.

KEITH: On like...like on the same team? Like what is...

AUSTIN: Oh! Right. Sure.

KEITH: What am I doing next to Ali in a mech?

AUSTIN: Um, well like, so one thing is, this is a game that will include fights, and mechs will be—

[3:15:00]

—shooting stuff. There'll be plenty of things to do that aren't shooting stuff.

This is a game about solving—not just solving mysteries, but like following things to their conclusion, beyond just blowing stuff up. Like film noir, the solutions that you'll come to are going to be about getting yourself into trouble, knocking on the wrong door, talking to the wrong people, working your contacts, getting yourself hurt, and going after like big systems and institutions that you just can't—you would never be able to take head-on. That said, like, it would be cool if one of you could have a spaceship, and could do some cool stuff with that spaceship, or a transport, or whatever. It would also—like that would totally help.

The other thing is like, this is a game—and I didn't pitch this part of it yet 'cause I knew it would take longer and we would get into it in the character creation segment—but where characters basically...give each other adjectives? And that's how you like hurt people. Whether that's like a social hurt or a physical hurt, or an emotional hurt. So, you know, the giant robot would be able to, you know, disarm another robot—give it the Disarmed adjective. But like you with just like a pistol, or whatever, could probably Distract a robot. Right?

KEITH: Mm-hm.

AUSTIN: So like, I think the—I'm not too worried about that. I think we'll find a place. Um. So...But if you're interested in that, then I do think that that is a thing that we could look into, in terms of like, this is a group with maybe a couple of mechs, but that often goes up against—or often members of the group end up facing something that's bigger than them. You know?

KEITH: Mm-hm.

AUSTIN: Um. Do you wanna be allied to a single side here, or would you like to be separate from the two big powers?

KEITH: Um.

ART: I kinda like separate, but [AUSTIN: Mm-hm.] [ALI: Yeah.] I could be talked into it.

KEITH: I also like separate.

AUSTIN: Jack? [ALI: Yeah.]

JACK: Separate.

AUSTIN: Sounds like everybody's—

JACK: I think! I don't know. Part of my heart is with the riggers, but I think [AUSTIN: Mm-hm.] I can go separate.

AUSTIN: [cross] I think that—

KEITH: [cross] I mean, we could always change how separate we are as the thing goes.

AUSTIN: Right.

JACK: [cross] Yeah, that's true.

AUSTIN: [cross] Kind of a like a...yeah. So the thing that it sounds like here is like maybe this is a group, at your level, that is...interested in keeping things from fucking blowing up in terrible ways, figuring out what's happening behind closed doors, what the big moves are. And just like getting to the bottom of whatever's happened recently. Every new game session of this that we're gonna have is going to start with some event happening and drawing your attention. I kind of see you as like a group like freelance—or maybe like secretly sanctioned, or secretly you know...patroned...investigators, and like problem-solvers?

KEITH: [cross] Private dicks.

JACK: [cross] Yeah. Mm-hm.

AUSTIN: Yeah, but not like public, the way private dicks are. Right, like I don't know that any—maybe, maybe public! [cross] I don't know.

KEITH: [cross] Very private dicks.

AUSTIN: Just *super* private dicks. [snorts] [NICK chuckles]

ART: Stop whippin your dick out.

AUSTIN: That sounds right. Uh, and then I know that there are some loose ideas for characters. Jack, what were you thinking?

JACK: Uh, I'd like to play a robot that gives up doing what it's supposed to do.

AUSTIN: Yeah.

JACK: Past a certain point. I don't know whether or not—what exactly it is. [AUSTIN: Mm-hm] I don't know. But I want its j—[amused] originally it just painted car doors. Um. [cross] But I don't know whether or not—

AUSTIN: [cross] We have all of these robotic worlds. Like all of these worlds just run by robots now, so it's very easy to imagine that you are on one of those. You know?

JACK: Yeah. I like the idea that it's an...I don't know, maybe it's sort of like some sort of Siri component to a middle-class house?

AUSTIN: I like that a lot.

JACK: And it just [AUSTIN: Hm.] ensures that you have flour, and it [AUSTIN chuckles] ensures that you have sugar, [ALI laughs] and it ensures that you have the right amount of orange juice in your fridge, [AUSTIN: Mm-hm.] and if you don't, it goes and gets them. Um.

AUSTIN: And now it's...

JACK: It's just cross. [cross] [amused] Or something.

AUSTIN: [cross] And now it's just—yeah. And it's just on this spaceship, or this transport, with this crew, and like, no more.

JACK: Yeah. I guess, from my perspective...I'd like it to step away from at least entirely humanoid robots? I'd like there to be something quite weird about it, [AUSTIN: Okay.] in terms of what is. Largely because I don't want to play Lem [AUSTIN: Right.] and I want to play a robot that at least has some large mechanical object that it can smash things with?

AUSTIN: Okay. That's fair.

JACK: I don't know whether or not it uses that to mix cake batter or something.

[ALI and AUSTIN laugh]

ALI: So you're playing Emmanuel.

AUSTIN: [cross] Right. Instead.

JACK: [cross] Oh god! Oh no!

AUSTIN: [cross] Yeah. Uh-huh! [ALI laughs a lot] That's all you've done. [Laughter] That's all you've done, is moved sideways.

JACK: No no no!

AUSTIN: Uh, Ali, you also said that you don't wanna play Hella again. What do you wanna play?

ALI: I, um, might play a formal pop idol?

AUSTIN: I'm way into that idea!

KEITH: Yep.

ALI: I...[laughs]

AUSTIN: We already have a theme park on this...

ALI: Yeah!

NICK: Yeah! *Yeah!*

AUSTIN: Uh-huh!

ALI: Um, yeah. [cross] That's where I'm leaning.

AUSTIN: [cross] There are ways to make that work. Um.

ALI: I was like, I wanna play someone really nice, but then I was like, no! What if Han Solo used to be Beyonce?

AUSTIN: [loudly] Oh my god! [everyone laughing in amazement] That is the best sentence a human has said. Holy shit.

JACK: Nailed it.

AUSTIN: And now also has a giant robot, presumably.

ALI: Mm-hm!

AUSTIN: Yeah, [KEITH: Yeah.] okay! Dope.

JACK: [cross] [laughs] So good.

NICK: [cross] The most Ali thing I think I've ever...

AUSTIN: [cross] Oh my god. [ALI laughs] That was the best. We do dope things. Like. [DRE laughs] Oh. All right. Well, like, big shoes, Art and Keith. [cross] Any ideas?

KEITH: [cross] Yeah. Hm. Art, do you have anything?

ART: Uh, I have like a bunch of half-ideas.

AUSTIN: That's fair.

KEITH: The only thing that I—the only idea that I could have that really feels like I would be doing something different than anything I've ever done [AUSTIN: Mm-hm] is if I was kind of a bad guy. Uh. Or not a Bad Guy, but a bad guy. Um. [AUSTIN laughs] But I also like really don't wanna be!

AUSTIN: No, you don't have to be a bad guy. I'm not saying that you have to not be...you know. I generally like it when we push ourselves to do things that we're not comfortable with, like in our roleplaying, but even I like—I'm playing in this game now run by Adam Koebbel, who made *Dungeon World*, and like I'm constantly feeling myself like, ugh, I'm just playing like an idealized version of me, who's like really like a good person, even though he has like some bad stuff. And like I'm [cross] really...

NICK: [cross] Yo, that character is so rad.

AUSTIN: I love that character to death!...And he's the best, and I love him, but also I'm going to start pushing him in ways that I'm not—that I wouldn't go. Because I do want to stretch those roleplaying muscles. And just like I want the story to go in interesting ways, and part of that is like getting yourself to do things—I don't need to like lecture anybody! This whole game has been people doing that in cool ways, so. So yeah. Um.

ART: So I guess one of my—I could do...I you know mentioned that half idea about being like a...an out-of-favor northern kingdom...

AUSTIN: Prince. Right.

ART: Pseudo-aristocrat? Yeah.

AUSTIN: Yep!

ART: Uh, there's—I know this is really what we're talking about, going in new directions, but, uh, Space Hadrian? [Laughter] And, uh...

AUSTIN: God damn it.

ART: 'Cause I feel like almost none of what I did with Hadrian really looked to what it would be like if there was less gravity, or like [loud laughter] a really...z-axis?

AUSTIN: Oh. Huh!

[NICK trails off laughing]

ART: Uh, we did almost no zero-gravity work there?

AUSTIN: Oh my god.

ART: And I'm just saying, like, most Divine pilots are probably [DRE laughs] Space Hadrian! But no, I don't wanna do that at all. Uh! But I'm like—I'm sort of interested. That's...ah! [cross] The Divines couldn't [inaudible] so they just...

KEITH: [cross] You've accidentally interested yourself in it.

AUSTIN: Right. [cross] Divines are interesting!

NICK: [cross] I got an idea for a character.

AUSTIN: Wait, but you're—we're not—

NICK: That someone can—

AUSTIN: [cross] Oh. Oh. Okay.

NICK: [cross] No, I know, but like I can like pitch this. Just.

AUSTIN: Yeah, yeah, definitely!

NICK: Someone that wants it. Um. So what was the planet with the like psionic university, or whatever?

AUSTIN: Oh, yeah! That's the one—that's 503.

NICK: Maybe it's a—

AUSTIN: No it's not. It's not 503. It's 505. 5...

NICK: Maybe it's a character that's like a...upper-level but not max level professor? [AUSTIN coughs in laughter] At the psionic university, that [AUSTIN: Yeah!...]...[cross] Kinda...

DRE: [cross] Wait, this sounds familiar!

AUSTIN: Uh-huh.

NICK: Kinda like—you know, is kind of a misanthrope, like doesn't really like people that much, hangs out by himself [AUSTIN: Uh-huh.] and then gets like thrust into this, uh, group.

AUSTIN: Right. Got it. Good. I actually would be into somebody being from 505. Um. You know, I talk a lot about what the tropes of the genre are, and like, the Newtype, the psionic space pilot, the person who is like weirdly better at being a pilot for weird psychic reasons, is something that like definitely I roll my eyes at but has a place in my heart?

ALI: Mm.

AUSTIN: Keith, if you're looking to be...[cross] Keith characters?

KEITH: [cross] Le—I was just like—here's—if I was looking to be what?

AUSTIN: If you're looking to be like your character, that would totally still work there.

KEITH: Yeah, well...That's the thing is that the only thing that would like, make—the only thing that would make it more of a, oh, of course Keith is doing that, is to be from the place that's the most Jedi world.

AUSTIN: Yes.

[ALI laughs, followed by DRE]

I mean, fuckin, let's just lean into it. [cross] I think you should be...

KEITH: [cross] Yeah—I wanna lean in—but also, then we get into like, oh, what's Keith's least favorite part of *Star Wars*, is, maybe Jedi?

AUSTIN: Well like—

KEITH: But we're not—or—

AUSTIN: The thing is, we can just rewrite this to be whatever the fuck we want. [KEITH: Yeah yeah yeah.] Right, like that's the thing. You're not from there now! Right?

KEITH: Yeah...

AUSTIN: You're not—who knows what happened there!

KEITH: Yeah.

AUSTIN: We can talk about that. [cross] We know that you can—

NICK: [cross] I just wanna—

AUSTIN: —you came up at through a place that was trying to build people who could counter the great power of the Divine pilots. [KEITH: Yeah.] And. Bet you that fucked—I bet you that was weird. I bet you there's some stuff there.

KEITH: Mm-hm.

NICK: Yeah.

KEITH: There's a—there's also like the meta version of like me wanting to be my character, is also, it's useful to have a character that's able to [AUSTIN: Yeah!] make jokes in character?

AUSTIN: No. You're right. You're right. Um. I do understand that, as a GM, I do appreciate—I've said this before. I think everybody in the group brings a thing that I need to the table, so that I can like push the game in different directions, you know, and that's—I have always appreciated that. Um. What were you gonna say, Nick?

NICK: Uh, I wanted to point out that I just Darmok'd my own shit. [cross] And I'm the worst.

AUSTIN: [cross] You did. You did Darmok your own shit. That's okay. And then from Dre and Nick, you—are there any factions that specifically like appeal to you? [cross] The way I'm gonna run this—

NICK: [cross] I just made that joke, but actually, that university. [chuckles]

AUSTIN: Yeah, that university is really interesting. Um.

DRE: [cross] It's interesting to me too.

NICK: [cross] And then also...

DRE: We're gonna have to fight over it.

AUSTIN: [laughs quietly] [cross] Or I just—

NICK: [cross] Actually, the um...

AUSTIN: So, to paint a picture of how we're gonna run that other side. There's going to be like six or maybe eight factions that we look at and decide like what they do, on the kind of down turns between the main game, like the play game, missions, and like what we're gonna is like figure out together what most of them do, but then I think—we are each going to have like our one faction [NICK: Okay] that we completely decide what it does.

NICK: Sure.

[3:26:30]

AUSTIN: And so like I want us to figure out what that faction is—I'm gonna build these factions like statistically. And it's kind of a weird, neat tactics board game, almost, that plays out. Um. And then—

NICK: I also really like the Bajorans?

AUSTIN: Who are they in this, again?

NICK: The ones that were...

AUSTIN: Oh, like left behind? Yeah.

NICK: Yeah, the col—they lived there, someone else [AUSTIN: Yeah.] came and occupied them and took all their shit.

AUSTIN: Yeah.

NICK: And then left them with a mostly barren world.

AUSTIN: Yeah...Yeah, I could definitely see that—so let's think about that. I'm gonna build out what I think the best [DRE: Yeah.] like the most important factions are here, and I'll send a list to both of you. And we'll have to—we're gonna end up doing extra recording sessions here, even though it's like, so early? So the next thing we're gonna do is do character creation with the kind of mech group, so you guys should be thinking through like what your characters are, who you want them to be. And then that will also just be the first session. Like we're just gonna go right from character creation right into like a quick intro session, and then once we wrap that up—like that might take two sessions to finish recording or whatever, but once we finish that, then we'll zoom out to the faction view. And see what's happening in the greater galaxy. The greater...space sector.

[distant clatter]

KEITH: Um. In—I'm rewinding. [cross] For talking about myself.

AUSTIN: [cross] Yes. [imitates tape playing backwards] brbrbr. Yes.

KEITH: Uh, [imitates tape playing backwards] blblblbl! I remember when I was a kid I read the prequel book series to the prequel trilogy, the *Star Wars* Obi-Wan padawan series?

AUSTIN: Sure.

KEITH: And at the very beginning, Obi-Wan gets kicked out of the Jedi training academy, basically to be exiled, 'cause nobody wanted him as a student?

AUSTIN: Right.

KEITH: And they were like, "All right. Here's a lightsaber, go be a farmer forever." You get to keep your lightsaber, you have to be [cross] now just be a farmer—

AUSTIN: [cross] It's weird that they let him keep his lightsaber!

KEITH: Eh, well they were like, here's your one tool. We're giving you nothing else and we're making you love in exile on an Outer Rim planet.

AUSTIN: That's a dope tool. Though.

KEITH: It is a dope [cross] tool. [NICK laughs]

AUSTIN: [cross] They could have given him anything. They could have given him like a rake.

JACK: Shovel!

AUSTIN: [cross] A shovel. Right.

KEITH: [cross] Yeah. They could have given—well, what—do you think that there's a lot of rakes and shovels in the Jedi Academy? I think they mostly just have lightsabers.

[ALI laughs]

AUSTIN: They're not like gardening with lightsab—ugh.

KEITH: It also—he hadn't—he wasn't a Jedi knight, so he hadn't built his own lightsaber. It was probably like a training lightsaber. [AUSTIN: Okay.] Anyway.

Uh, or not a training—[cross] but or whatever...

AUSTIN: [cross] So you wanna be kicked out of this psionic academy.

KEITH: Yeah, I wanna be kicked out.

AUSTIN: Okay. I think we can work with that.

ART: Just to be clear, because it's like something you read in a *Star Wars* book, but we're still like not saying that you're just doing the Keith *Star Wars* [cross] thing?

KEITH: Yes. We're not doing that, but I also—it's the—also, the one thing that I wanna take is that I was kicked out.

AUSTIN: Okay.

ART: Keith, do you wanna have—one of us can—I assume Jack's robot doesn't have a mech.

AUSTIN: ...No.

KEITH: No.

ART: So, Keith, is it me or you who has the second mech? We should decide that because I'm gonna come up with eight characters between now and the next [cross] time we talk.

AUSTIN: I think it's Keith.

ART: [cross] Keith has the mech? All right.

KEITH: [cross] I'm the one with the mech?

AUSTIN: Yeah. The psionic people [DRE: Yeah.] are being trained to be rad mech people.

KEITH: Okay.

AUSTIN: I think! Unless they're not! Unless the psionics are like hacking into the Divines.

KEITH: [cross] Well, I mean, we could...

AUSTIN: [cross] Which is totally possible, oh man, you could be like a weird—like what if the Jedi were Shadowrun hackers, and they could just like hack into things with their minds?

KEITH: Yeah.

AUSTIN: That'd be pretty dope. [ALI: Ooh!]

KEITH: That would be pretty dope.

[3:30:00]

AUSTIN: That would also like—that's also a good picture of what you do as a person without a mech, [KEITH: Right.] against mechs.

KEITH: And if it's not that, and I do pilot a mech, where did I get my mech? Who did I steal my mech from? [cross] 'Cause like they didn't give me one!

AUSTIN: [cross] Oh well, we're gonna—well, how do you know that? They gave fucking Obi-Wan a lightsaber! Maybe they gave you—

KEITH: Yeah, but that's like a small thing, they gave you a whole mech! That's like a tank!

AUSTIN: [loud] It's a lightsaber!

KEITH: You're right, [ALI laughs] it is a lightsaber. A lightsaber could kill a tank.

AUSTIN: Yeah! [DRE laughs] Um. So yeah, we'll figure that out. I do—

KEITH: Visually, though, tanks [cross] much more scary.

AUSTIN: [cross] We can talk off-call about who has the mech. All of that is also going to be like...the character creation in this game is really interesting. And—but knowing ahead of time who wants to have a mech is a good idea.

KEITH: Yeah.

AUSTIN: Also.

KEITH: I'm not gunning for the mech, so if [cross] Ali wants the mech.

AUSTIN: I appreciate that.

ALI: I appreciate that everyone's like, okay, Ali gets one.

AUSTIN: Yeah, what—you already said [ALI and DRE laugh] you already made the best pitch you could ever make.

KEITH: Yeah, that was the—yeah.

AUSTIN: So let's start thinking about names. And...stuff for all of this stuff. I'll obviously be trying to name planets and groups and stuff, but like. In Skype, just hit me up, and say like "oh, here's a good name for this empire, write this down"? And...

ART: I'm gonna s—you're gonna have like 50 Divine names from me by like morning. [cross] I'm gonna be like.

AUSTIN: [cross] I think there might be a Divine on every planet here. On every [ART: Great.] yellow planet. Four, five, six, seven, eight, nine. Yeah, there's ten Divines in this game.

ART: I think there's 15 Divines, but—[cross] maybe five of them aren't on those planets.

AUSTIN: [cross] Or 12.

ART: Twelve?

AUSTIN: Y—maybe 15. 15 works. We'll talk.

ART: I got some—it's like I have no interest in being from that faction, but I am nothing but Divine ideas.

AUSTIN: [laughs] Sounds good. Um.

ART: And I'm like I just came up with a character concept for a Divine character.

AUSTIN: Great. Good.

ART: Which is like, so they vote so often, but they must have like someone must be their head of state, right?

AUSTIN: Pr—yeah, presumably!

ART: But like they probably go through 'em pretty quickly, like what if like this guy's like, 40? But he was like, president 15 years ago and like [AUSTIN laughs] 50 presidents ago?

AUSTIN: Right. Yeah. That's pretty good. I like that as a character.

ART: [cross] I don't know what he would do with his life.

AUSTIN: [cross] I might just steal him—he might just be in your game, if you don't play him.

ART: All right, well.

AUSTIN: All right!

ALI: Ah, well—

AUSTIN: Ali?

ART: If you think he's better as an NPC, that's [AUSTIN: Eh.] an okay call, too.

KEITH: Well, there'd be a lot of them. Because there's been 50.

AUSTIN: Right. Yeah. He'd just be another one. Ali, what we you gonna say?

ALI: Um, I was gonna say a thing I should've brought up like a hour and a half ago, but are there like—are we doing in-between stuff from these planets, like are there space colonies?

AUSTIN: There are not space colonies. There are [ALI: Okayy.]—there are—those are part of like those are at the hexes, still.

ALI: Okay.

AUSTIN: There aren't free like—so, each of the white dots is a star. You know, these aren't like—

ALI: Oh, and then the—okay.

AUSTIN: Yeah. It's not like [ALI: Yeah.] these aren't just like loose planets, you know what I mean? [ALI: Mm-hm.] Also just assume that most of these worlds probably also have other planets, just not interesting ones, right? Not [ALI: Okay.] ones that are like places you would go to to hang out.

ART: Sure, that one's Venus.

AUSTIN: Right. Exactly...So yeah. Other questions before we wrap?

All right. I'm really excited for this. This is gonna be interesting. I'm really excited to get to the first session because I think things are going to come into focus once we have characters and can kind of like see what our very specific world is. The next step for me is I have to build a sort of like six-by-six like—it's actually way more than that. There's kind of like six categories of things, and each of those is going to like help contribute to like what the exact immediate area of the mech game is going to look like. I'm basically going to build out the world of 303 and 304, with characters and places and ideas and events and stuff. And then when we play, those things are just kinda gonna come into contact in interesting ways. Ways that I didn't plan for, but that kind of emerge from the structure of the game itself.

So I have to go do that. It's gonna be a fun prep thing. But once I've done that prep, I've done the prep for the game for the foreseeable future, which is really cool. Um. And then also, be setting up the factions and stuff, and we'll come back around to that with Nick and Dre. Until then, everyone just think about their characters and think about the factions and the world and let it soak in. And go watch some like *Big O* and maybe *The Third Man*, and should listen to the mixtape I made, and. What else? Watch *War in the Pocket*. [cross] I think those are the big ones.

KEITH: [cross] Go watch *Dead Men Don't Wear Plaid*.

AUSTIN: Yeah, just—listen. There's also—you know, *The Postman Only Rings Twice*. Like there's a bunch of stuff! Um.

I'm Austin Walker. You can find me @austin_walker on Twitter. TheCalcutec on Twitch. Huh, when's this going up, Keith?

KEITH: Uh, this is going out in late June?

AUSTIN: You can find me at giantbomb.com. Uh. [snorts] That's announced at this point. [DRE laughs] I live in New York now. It's the future. Huh. Weird. [KEITH: Yeah.] Weird. My life is [cross] gonna be really weird and different by then!

KEITH: [cross] Isn't that weird? We didn't—all of us didn't—listen, the only reason we all didn't react is 'cause we've known for a couple weeks.

AUSTIN: Right, you've known. 'Cause of course you have. But like. Weird. Huh!

KEITH: Yeah.

AUSTIN: Huh! [ALI: Mm-hm.] [cross] Um.

KEITH: How's it going? How's it been?

AUSTIN: I think LA was really stressful? But interesting, I met a bunch of cool people! [KEITH: Okay.] Um, the move was weird? I had—I was in a van with my dad, or maybe a car or SUV, I don't know what he's gonna drive up here to help me get my stuff. Uh. I'm gonna be subletting somewhere, maybe? Or sleeping on a couch? [KEITH: Mm-hm.] Um. So that's—I would really like to—

ART: Crash at my mom's house.

AUSTIN: Yeah, I might be crashing with...Art's mom. Um. We'll see! I'm gonna be really interested in having my own apartment, finally, but that won't be happening for like another month, still. Not like my own apartment, but like a permanent apartment, a room [KEITH: Right.] in a permanent apartment, [cross] instead of a sublet.

KEITH: [cross] 'Cause you al—you just moved.

AUSTIN: I j—I moved like a month—like three weeks ago or something.

KEITH: Eh! That's just.

AUSTIN: Right.

KEITH: In terms of moving from one place to a whole new place?

AUSTIN: Yeah.

ALI: To another country.

AUSTIN: To another country.

DRE: One country to another.

AUSTIN: Yeah, that's true.

KEITH: Well no, I mean in present time, you just moved from your Canadian apartment to a new [cross] Canadian apartment.

AUSTIN: [cross] Oh, right, I also just moved! In—[KEITH: Yeah.] Right. Yes. Yes.

KEITH: You're like me, but from last year [AUSTIN: Yes.] not to New York to work at Giant Bomb.

AUSTIN: R—[laughs] aw. Aw. Buddy. Aw. Yeah. Where can people find you, Keith?

KEITH: Uh, you can find me at runbutton.net, or youtube.com/runbutton. [AUSTIN: Oh, man!] You can also listen to my new comedy podcast, How Are You Today, which is on iTunes and also on the Run Button channel. Um. And you can go to contentburger.biz, which is my Patreon, the Run Button Patreon.

AUSTIN: Rad. Nick, where can people find you? [pause] Nick! Where can people find you?

KEITH: Where can we find Nick?

DRE: Nick? [ALI laughs]

AUSTIN: Nick?

NICK: Hi, I was muted.

AUSTIN: Okay.

NICK: Hi.

AUSTIN: It happens. [NICK: Um.] We're professionals.

NICK: You can [laughs softly]—you can find me at nickscrat.ch. That spells Nick Scratch!

AUSTIN: Ali, where can people find you?

ALI: Um, you can find me @Ali_West on Twitter, and then also, um. The day that this episode releases is a promise I'm gonna make months before. [AUSTIN laughs quietly] You can go to friendsatthetable.net. It's gonna look totally [cross] different!

AUSTIN: [cross] Oh, it's gonna look new, and we're gonna do new stuff. There might be new art, there might be...there's gonna be all sorts of cool stuff. [ALI: Yeah!] Colors. Uh. Dre, where can people find you?

DRE: Uh, you can find me on Twitter. You can check out @swandre3000.

AUSTIN: Annnd Jack? Besides in bed soon, hopefully, because it's super late there?

JACK: Yeah. It's really [laughs] late. Um, you can find me on Twitter @notquitereal.

AUSTIN: And Art!

ART: Uh, you can find me on Twitter @atebbel and read stuff I write at comicmix.com.

AUSTIN: Thanks for joining me, everyone. Uh. Really looking forward to this. Really looking forward to seeing where it goes. Uh. As always, we would really appreciate it—

[Music starts - "[The Long Way Around](#)"]

—if you went to you—uh, not Youtube. Went to iTunes, and gave us a review there. It would really help. Especially because this might be—there might be an influx of new listeners! Which is interesting. To think about. Thanks for that, if you're doing that. And then yeah, you can also find, if you prefer to listen to this on Youtube, you can find that at streamfriends.tv. I'm gonna try to upload the video...we're gonna try to upload the video of this, so you can see the maps and stuff. But even if you—can't...then we're at least gonna take screenshots and put those at friendsatthetable.net. So check it.

ALI: Yeah, if you've been listening to this for four hours, you have that answer already.

AUSTIN: Yes. Exactly.

[Laughter]

Huh!

ART: Right, either they're like oh that was nice, or like, aw, what a waste of time shit people [laughter interrupts]

AUSTIN: It's true! All right.

DRE: Wow, that escalated quickly!

AUSTIN: [ALI laughs] Eh. Well, we know who we are. [DRE: Yeah.] Thanks for joining us, everybody. Have a good night.

[Music plays out - "[The Long Way Around](#)"]