

Twilight Mirage 14: The Value of Distance

Transcribed by Elliot @cordialement#1268

[MUSIC - "The Twilight Mirage" begins]

AUSTIN (as Satellite): Report 133.

Question for you, Primary. What do you think of as foundational to the experience of being you? I don't mean identity or preference. I don't mean your history. I mean, as a being who lives and who understands the world around you, what's first? What's the thing that would be left if you removed everything else? Taste, knowledge, the feeling of touch. What's your canvas, Primary?

For me, well, I think it's different for different beings, and mine, it's data. I can't-- I... I can't imagine I. I can't. I... See? I can't do it. I'm just... I guess I'm data all the way down. Recursive bits of information referencing themselves so often and with such complexity, compiling themselves into a shape just so, that a person emerges. But I am still a person.

I don't see the world you do, Primary, or the way that artist down there does. I don't have his vision, or the soldier's sense of space. I can broadcast, obviously, but not the way that guy with the eye can. And I couldn't be further away from the person who guides and protects that whole group. But we're all people. That only opens up a new question, though.

Each of our paintings is different. Everyone is captured in a different medium, and all of our canvases diverge. But we're still all artwork. Doesn't that mean that there's something between us in common? Something that ties everyone together. What might that thing be, Primary? And what do we owe to it?

[MUSIC ends]

AUSTIN: And then she walks up to the front door, and there's like a guard there-- or not a bodyguard, but like a bouncer, who she says like

AUSTIN (as Caliper): They're guests of the Doyenne.

AUSTIN: And the guard goes like,

AUSTIN (as the bouncer): [under breath] What? Okay.

AUSTIN: And lets y'all in.

KEITH (as Gig): [in a stage whisper] Hey, everybody seems annoyed at us.

AUSTIN: Well I mean, this guy's not annoyed at you so much as he's annoyed at her. And like, at--

KEITH: Okay.

AUSTIN: --needing to like, he's like,

AUSTIN (as the bouncer): Okay, can I get your names? And, uh, names and affiliation.

KEITH (as Gig): Uh...

AUSTIN (as the bouncer): Yeah, uh, what school?

KEITH (as Gig): Uh, Gig Kephart, homeschooled.

[DRE laughs]

AUSTIN (as the bouncer): Okay... [clears throat]

AUSTIN: And then he like turns, and

AUSTIN (as the bouncer): Announcing, uh... he/him? Mister?

KEITH (as Gig): Mister.

AUSTIN (as the bouncer): Announcing Mister Gig Kephart, homeschooled.

AUSTIN: And like you hear the turning of chairs inside to look at the entryway, and he like gestures for you to go inside.

KEITH: Alright, I go inside.

AUSTIN: Okay.

AUSTIN (as the bouncer): Who's next?

ART (as Grand): Grand Magnificent, the Collected Wisdom of the Divine Fleet.

AUSTIN (as the bouncer): [under his breath] Okay. Mister? Master? What's your...?

ART (as Grand): Just-- Just Grand Magnificent.

AUSTIN (as the bouncer): The Just Grand Magnificent.

[DRE and KEITH laugh]

AUSTIN (as the bouncer): What was the school? The... what?

KEITH: I would love to be reintroduced as Mister Master.

[AUSTIN laughs]

ART (as Grand): The Collective Wisdom of the Divine Fleet.

AUSTIN (as the bouncer): [disbelieving] Okay. Uh... The Just Grand Magnificent. The Collected Wisdom-- Collective? Collected.

ART (as Grand): Collected. E-D.

AUSTIN (as the bouncer): The Collected, E-D, Wisdom of the Divine Fleet.

KEITH: This guy's gonna get fired. This guy's doing a terrible job [laughing] at introducing us.

ART: I mean coincidentally, I am very just, so it kinda works?

AUSTIN: [laughs] Head in. He turns to Echo.

SYLVIA (as Echo): Uh... I'm... Echo Reverie. From... The Tides of Harmony.

AUSTIN (as the bouncer): Okay. Uh... Young? The Young?

AUSTIN: He's like trying to figure out if you have a title, or if you have a...

SYLVIA (as Echo): It's Echo. There's no title.

AUSTIN (as the bouncer): Did you say Kid Echo?

SYLVIA (as Echo): No, I didn't. [overlapping] Oh, Christ.

AUSTIN (as the bouncer): [overlapping] Kid E-- Kid Echo Reverie of the... [slowly] the Tides of Harmony. Head on in, Kid.

SYLVIA (as Echo): Thanks, champ. [sighs]

AUSTIN (as the bouncer): You know my name. Have we met?

SYLVIA (as Echo): You have a name tag.

AUSTIN (as Champ): Oh, yeah.

ART: He has a name tag that says Champ?

AUSTIN: Yeah. [laughing] Of course.

ART: It just says Champ? He's doing these long announcements and his name tag is just Champ?

AUSTIN: [laughing] It's weird. It's actually Champ Magnificent. Um...

[KEITH and SYLVIA laugh]

AUSTIN: Long lost cous-- Actually we'll talk about this in a second.

ART: [overlapping] Everywhere I go, people are biting my style.

[AUSTIN laughs]

AUSTIN (as Champ): Hey, you're a big'un, what's your name?

DRE: Even does a very proper military salute, and says,

DRE (as Even): Lieutenant Even Gardner of the Ever-Forward Expeditionary Forces.

AUSTIN (as Champ): [sighs] Okay. You guys have some weird names. [takes a breath] No offense. I get it, it's a big world. Uh, Lieu-- Second Lieutenant? Second Lieutenant Even Gardner. Did I invent that part? Were you-- did you say second?

DRE (as Even): No, we'll roll with it, it's fine.

AUSTIN (as Champ): Second Lieutenant Even Gardner of the [slowly] Ever-Forward Expeditionary Unit.

ART: This slowly turned into McGuirk, you know that, right? You just st--

DRE: Yeah. [laughs]

AUSTIN: Uh, I didn't-- I don't actually do an H. Jon Benjamin. I guess it's just natural.

SYLVIA: [in H. Jon Benjamin impression] These are, uh, I guess, the Doyenne.

[AUSTIN and DRE laugh]

SYLVIA: [still doing impression] Please treat them well, uh...

AUSTIN: Please treat them well. [groans] Alright. Then Champ, like, finishes-- I think he's calling into like a box that then is projecting his voice throughout the entirety of Old Gold. And then you go inside, and the gold thing continues, except it's all of the stuff has been-- not all the stuff, there's lots of gold picture frames, and lots of big gold bars that are... have nice curves in them and stuff. There's like a golden fence that has a bunch of... like ivy coming on it inside. There's like little interior gardening areas. There's a huge bar in the distance.

But other than that, it is like an old-fashioned like... not like a gentleman's club, but you know, like a society club, basically. Lots of very plush seating. Lots of very comfortable looking kind of enclosures where you can have private conversations. And then you--

KEITH: It's got a foyer.

AUSTIN: It does have a foyer. And then you also see that there are like people arriving with bags, going down side corridors, to stairwells. So there's probably also like housing accommodations here, or hotel accommodations here. And Caliper waits in the foyer for the person you saw before to show up. Who is... She'll introduce you. As he arrives, he arrives wearing his like floral print jacket, and she says,

AUSTIN (as Caliper): Ah. I'd like you all to meet the owner and operator of the Old Gold. This is Public Person.

AUSTIN: And he gives like a little nod to you all.

AUSTIN (as Public): Welcome to the establishment.

KEITH (as Gig): [overlapping] Sorry, did you say Public Person? Excuse me, did you say Public Person?

AUSTIN (as Caliper): Yes, I did.

AUSTIN: Or yes, she did.

DRE: [sighs] God, Austin.

AUSTIN: Hi.

DRE: [laughs] Back on your bullshit, huh?

KEITH (as Gig): Hi, "Public Person."

AUSTIN (as Public): Hi. Nice to meet you all. You can follow me. I'll get you all seated, get you some drinks. I believe the Doyenne has, uh, established that you'll be staying with us.

DRE (as Even): I did not know that it had been established, but I appreciate the hospitality.

AUSTIN (as Public): Do you have bags? I can get you all seated and have the bags taken care of.

KEITH (as Gig): Can I have a room that can accommodate a horse creature?

AUSTIN (as Public): A horse creature. Uh...

KEITH (as Gig): Yeah.

AUSTIN (as Public): We-- The horse creature has to stay outside, but of course, they'll be taken care of.

KEITH (as Gig): Oh, you don't have like a bungalow?

AUSTIN (as Public): No bungalows. I'm sorry about that.

KEITH (as Gig): That's fine, that's no trouble.

ART (as Grand): [overlapping] You saw this place from the outside.

KEITH (as Gig): I didn't know about like, maybe there's bungalows in the rear.

AUSTIN (as Public): Is that a joke? Is that like a--

KEITH (as Gig): No! No, I thought maybe in the back there was bungalows, or maybe there was like a door that had a sliding door out to where the stables are.

AUSTIN (as Public): There's not stables either, there's just outside near the water where we're gonna keep your horse. Is that al-- That's alright. You're alright with that.

KEITH (as Gig): I am o-- yes.

ART: [laughing] That's not a question.

AUSTIN (as Public): [under his breath] Okay. Come on in. Go take a seat. We'll see to your horse, and the rest of your machines as well. If you need anything, please just ask. It is--

KEITH (as Gig): Oh, the horse isn't a machine, by the way. He's a regular horse.

AUSTIN (as Public): I know. I meant the others who have machines, is who I was talking to in that instance, Mister, uh, Kephart?

KEITH (as Gig): Yes, exactly. Nailed it. You're way better than the door guy.

AUSTIN (as Public): Champ does his best. You know. Family friend. Gotta take care of your own.

KEITH (as Gig): He seems-- He seems really good.

AUSTIN (as Public): [whispering] Alright. Yeah, okay.

AUSTIN: And then turns and leads you in. And then, a kind of a bellboy comes over to get any sort of like bags you do have. If you have any. Did anyone bring stuff?

SYLVIA: Not really.

AUSTIN: Okay.

KEITH: Um... No.

AUSTIN: I think the bellboy does come up to you, Echo, and is like,

AUSTIN (as the bellboy): Ehm... [nervous mumbling] We have to check the... the swords.

SYLVIA (as Echo): No.

AUSTIN (as the bellboy): Yeah. Okay.

AUSTIN: And just like walks away.

[laughter]

AUSTIN: Like, doesn't even put up a fight. Um...

DRE: Did he ask any of us that have guns for our guns?

AUSTIN: No. No. Not at all, just the swords.

DRE: Okay.

AUSTIN: Uh huh.

[SYLVIA laughs]

AUSTIN: And Public Person and Saint Caliper lead you to this kind of round little alcove that has beads on it. They're probably beads of that same stained glass. And actually, as you get towards them, you notice that they are actually lighting themselves up. So not only are they that same glass that produces-- or that like will change light, because it's stained, but it also is like a kind of like a light neon, almost like a pastel neon, that's projecting this really pretty-- I'll say it's a really pretty yellow. It's almost like a sunlight on a bright day in a field of daisies or something.

Into this little side booth where Saint Caliper introduces you to two more people. She first points to-- or not points to, but like kind of does an open hand introduction to kind of like a guy in his late 20s I'd say. In my head I've cast him as this actor named Jerry Wolf who is this First Nations actor. Has like straight black hair up top that's kind of wavy and then very tightly cropped black hair on the sides. Very tall, thin face with these deep brown eyes. Big ears. [huffs] Like his ears come off of his-- kind of like young Obama ears, do you know what I'm talking about?

KEITH: This isn't the vape guy, this isn't the box mod behind the ear vape guy? This is a separate guy with big ears?

AUSTIN: [overlapping] No. That was the guy you just met. That was-- yeah. That was Person. That was Public Person.

KEITH: Oh, I totally missed you saying that was that guy.

AUSTIN: That was the guy with the floral jacket print, yeah. I guess I should've hit the vape thing harder, cause that was more memorable than his floral jacket. No, this guy is one of the other Saints, one of the other people who pilot Saints. They both pilot Saints and are called Saints. Um...

He like stands up as you approach, and does like a bow. He has on like a little throw cape over one shoulder, he has like a one-sided cape, like a half-- like an asymmetrical cape. And he's also wearing like-- he's actually wearing like a long skirt down to his knees. It's like a dark brown. And then has like a yellow sweater on top with this, like, green cape on one side. And he does like a little bow, and says,

AUSTIN (as Symmetry): Symmetry. Pleased to meet you all. You, uh, did some really great work when we all first met. Thank you again for that.

DRE (as Even): Thank you.

SYLVIA (as Echo): You're welcome. Oh.

DRE (as Even): Would it be customary for us to return your bow?

AUSTIN (as Symmetry): Go for it. You know, I'm not much for all that... that stuff. I do it cause it's customary for me to do it, but not because I expect it from anybody else.

DRE: I think Even tries, and does it awkwardly, but does it.

AUSTIN: Yeah. I think that Caliper is just like, tch. Like,

AUSTIN (as Caliper): Tch. And this is...

AUSTIN: And she gestures again to somebody who is like leaning all the way back in... in a chair.

AUSTIN (as Caliper): This is Saint Auger, our old warhorse.

AUSTIN: And Saint Auger is, um, an older person. Like, 70s? I think Caliper just straight up says,

AUSTIN (as Caliper): Saint Auger uses ve/vir/vis pronouns.

AUSTIN: And Auger then stands up and is like, huge belly, has a kind of white short fluffy hair with big round glasses. The... These like, kind of like, was a hipster ages ago? Like-- Fuck it, this is a thing I'm kind of interested in in this specific setting is like, Sculpture City is very clearly an artist colony, and a thing that we don't get a lot of is like genderqueer people in their 70s, and Auger is that. Right?

[15:07]

AUSTIN: We don't get a lot of elderly non-binary people. And so Saint Auger is like, what if someone you knew from Portland was 82?

[KEITH laughs]

AUSTIN: And when ve stands up, there's a cane that's like... I wanna say it-- it probably has a Glass handle, let's just stay on brand here. And when ve touches it, it turns like a bright green. And I think... I'm trying to think. I think at that point it's just like, Auger stands up, does a little bow, doesn't say a word, and then sits back down. And... And Symmetry says like,

AUSTIN (as Symmetry): Don't even. Don't worry about-- about Auger.

AUSTIN: Who then just takes a shot. And then says like,

AUSTIN (as Auger): Eh, don't worry about Auger. I'm fine. Pleased to meet you all.

KEITH: Everyone here's weird. They're all weird.

AUSTIN: You say that out loud?

SYLVIA (as Echo): [in response to Keith] Shut up!

KEITH: No, no. That's me, Keith. I know that it's hard to tell, cause that's maybe something that I would say out loud in the game.

[DRE laughs]

KEITH: But, all these people are being fuckin' weird and rude mostly.

AUSTIN: I think this person is just--

[SYLVIA murmurs something under their breath]

KEITH: If not to us then to each other.

AUSTIN: Auger is just being drunk, is what's-- is what's happening with that.

DRE: Alright, fair.

KEITH: Drunk and rude are not mutually exclusive.

AUSTIN: No, but I--

ART: It's a little rude to be drunk when you're meeting strangers.

AUSTIN: Ehh, you know, it's a Tuesday afternoon. Um,

AUSTIN (as Symmetry): So, what brings you here?

AUSTIN: Says Sym, which is short for Symmetry.

DRE (as Even): Uh, well, you know that we're new around here, and this seems as good of a place as any to start getting a better picture of what's going on on the planet.

AUSTIN: He nods.

AUSTIN (as Symmetry): Damn well the best place if you ask me.

KEITH (as Gig): Do you mean the city or specifically this one building?

AUSTIN (as Symmetry): The city. I mean this place ain't bad either. Some bright folks here.

AUSTIN: And then Auger like, [sighs] takes another shot, and then puts it back down, and then says like

AUSTIN (as Auger): Some bright folks. Some dim folks. Some-- some folks who think that they're the hottest shit ever born and don't know... their goddamn history.

KEITH (as Gig): Oh, who doesn't know their history?

AUSTIN (as Symmetry): Please excuse Auger and Caliper. They've been in a bit of a debate for the last week.

AUSTIN: And then Caliper is like

AUSTIN (as Caliper): I don't need to know my history. I need to know what's happening, and how to take advantage of it.

AUSTIN: And they are just like, sniping at each other, and also very clearly in the middle of a drinking contest. But like an unspoken one?

KEITH (as Gig): Is there like a-- Is this, is this okay that they're doing that?

AUSTIN (as Symmetry): [sighs] We're not scheduled to go out any time soon. We're in our own schedules right now. We're, kind of have free time. Normally what we're supposed to do with that is, uh, work on our praxis, as it were, but... These days, after that attack, I think we've all been a little bit in our feelings.

DRE (as Even): I'm afraid I don't know what you mean when you say your praxis.

AUSTIN (as Symmetry): Oh, um... You! Uh, Magnificent. Yeah?

ART (as Grand): Yeah.

AUSTIN (as Symmetry): You're an artist, yeah?

ART (as Grand): Yes.

AUSTIN (as Symmetry): So when you make things, why do you make 'em?

ART (as Grand): Oh, what a question. Um... I mean, it used to pay well, but I guess right now it's mostly for the... the need. You know, I... things-- things are in my brain that have to be in the world.

AUSTIN (as Symmetry): [laughs] You gotta let it out. I getcha.

ART (as Grand): Exactly.

AUSTIN (as Symmetry): For us, it's uh... [clicks tongue] It's about seeing ideas take form. I don't know how much you all know about what we do here, but--

KEITH (as Gig): Literally nothing. Absolutely zero.

SYLVIA (as Echo): Yeah, jackshit.

AUSTIN (as Auger): See, at least those ones admit when they don't know shit. Caliper.

AUSTIN (as Symmetry): Okay. [deep breath]

AUSTIN: Says Sym.

[DRE chuckles]

AUSTIN (as Symmetry): [deep breath] I like to think that we help bring culture to this planet. [clicks tongue] We, uh... we were lucky enough to be born in a place that has a lot of resources. And we can use those to give shape to a place that's pretty, uh, inhospitable. And we do this in big ways, and we do it in little ways. And when we do it in little ways, and we do it in our personal practice, I guess that's kind of praxis, for each of us individually.

For me, I kind of work with stability in mind. It's kind of my go-to. I think what we have here is worth defending. And it's worth growing, but not necessarily in a quick or explosive sense. I use Glass. I do some-- some work in stone. Uh...

KEITH (as Gig): Real glass or the weird glass?

AUSTIN (as Symmetry): Uh... The weird glass.

AUSTIN: He says. Like, raises his eyebrows and kind of rolls his eyes a little bit.

AUSTIN (as Symmetry): Silica vitrus. But we just call it Glass. People know. People know what you mean. No one just uses regular glass.

KEITH (as Gig): Right, yeah, we-- that's one of the things that we didn't know.

ART (as Grand): How does that stuff work?

AUSTIN (as Symmetry): It's weird, I... I don't really... Uh, I'm not an expert. Um.

KEITH (as Gig): Ask Caliper, she seems really interested in answering that.

AUSTIN (as Symmetry): Don't, uh...

AUSTIN (as Auger): No she isn't!

AUSTIN: Says Auger.

[KEITH laughs]

AUSTIN (as Auger): That's what got us started on this bullshit.

DRE: I think Even, like, gives Gig like a quick elbow.

[SYLVIA chuckles]

AUSTIN (as Auger): She doesn't give a fuck about history.

AUSTIN: And then Auger gets up and like, slams vir hands on the table and is like,

AUSTIN (as Auger): [sighs] Everything changed, a hundred years ago. Everything changed, and she doesn't give a fuck. For years, we were all just... fuckin' savages like the Mandati! And then--

KEITH (as Gig): I heard they don't like that.

AUSTIN (as Auger): Yeah, well, I don't like them. And then we figured it out. We figured out Glass, and it was a revolution. And now we got all this, and... she doesn't give a fuck about any of that. She's a privileged little brat.

DRE (as Even): How did you-- how did you figure out the Glass?

AUSTIN (as Auger): [groans] It was a genius. It was a genius who figured it out. I wasn't-- I was a little... I wasn't... before my time.

AUSTIN (as Caliper): Impossible!

AUSTIN: Says Caliper.

[SYLVIA snickers]

AUSTIN (as Caliper): You're as old as time.

KEITH (as Gig): [chuckles] Nice. Nice one.

AUSTIN (as Symmetry): It was a long time ago

AUSTIN: Says Symmetry,

AUSTIN (as Symmetry): And as far as I know, there was just... there were a bunch of scattered... artists, frankly. We thought we knew... we thought we knew what we were doing when we came here, at least that's how the story goes. We thought we were going to escape, uh, some miserable hellhole, and come to a place that was safe. We were pilgrims. And we were gonna start an artist colony. And it didn't go well, until the Crown was established. And the Crown was built with Glass, this Glass, the Glass that's everywhere now. Uh, and that was again, it was before my time, but things got a little rocky, from my understanding.

The king, uh, third or fourth of his line, was kind of a... a jerk. And that's about when I came in. Me and the Doyenne. And I guess if you're not from around here, you don't know. She was not an important person for most of her life. And then she became the most important person, as far as I can tell, on the planet. And that was through her genius. She did things with Glass that no one else has ever done. And then... She... We, uh...

AUSTIN (as Auger): Ya killed him is what ya did!

AUSTIN: Says Auger.

AUSTIN (as Auger): Killed the god damn king. [sighs]

AUSTIN (as Caliper): Don't worry about vir.

AUSTIN: Says Caliper.

AUSTIN (as Caliper): Still loyal to the old guard.

DRE (as Even): Hm. When you said that you came here, do you mean that you came from the Fleet, or... came from somewhere else on the planet?

AUSTIN (as Symmetry): I've been thinking about that. Obviously since you've... y'all arrived, we've been doing a lot of thinking, and a lot of research. We didn't sit on our hands after people from off world showed up. And, uh... I have reason to believe, yeah. The Fleet. I don't know much about it. Frankly no one does. A little bit before our time, as you might imagine. But um... yeah. Mighta been.

KEITH (as Gig): Bummer no one thought to write any of it down, huh?

AUSTIN (as Symmetry): I think it was written, and then it was hundreds of years of war. Both internal and external. There wasn't really even an internal. It was just... [blows through teeth] Listen, I... I value the practice of creation as much as anyone else here. But it was pretty foolish to let a buncha artists come down here without any structure at all. Without any plan. They thought it would be like a vacation I guess, I don't know.

SYLVIA (as Echo): Yeah, it'd be weird for an artist to come down here with no plan on a vacation, huh?

AUSTIN (as Symmetry): Yeah.

SYLVIA: And then Echo looks directly at Grand.

[AUSTIN chuckles]

DRE: Even coughs really loudly.

KEITH: I also look directly at Grand.

ART (as Grand): I'm sorry, I didn't hear anything you guys were saying. I was taking some pictures of this place.

[AUSTIN laughs]

DRE (as Even): You know, if you're-- if you're curious about recovering that lost knowledge, we might be able to help. We have the capability to basically--

AUSTIN (as Symmetry): I know, I know.

DRE (as Even): Okay.

AUSTIN (as Symmetry): Again, we've been paying close attention. In fact, if you have more questions, you might wanna speak with the Doyenne.

KEITH (as Gig): Oh, okay.

AUSTIN (as Symmetry): Come with me.

AUSTIN: And Sym gets up from the table and chairs, leaving Auger and Caliper to snipe at each other, and leads you back to the foyer. There are-- as you're leaving, there are drinks coming out for each of you. Like the same service person who asked you, Echo, about your swords, arrives with a golden tray with drinks on them. What drinks did you all want?

DRE: Um... Whiskey neat.

AUSTIN: You get one. You didn't say anything about that. Someone just read you right. What about the rest of you?

SYLVIA: Water.

AUSTIN: Alright. There's like-- It's not just a water. It is a water in a Glass-- like, capital G, space Glass-- water bottle that has Old Gold embossed on it.

KEITH: Um... fruit juice.

AUSTIN: Alright. It's like-- It's not just fruit juice. It is a layered fruit juice that has different flavor profiles that you go through as you drink it, and also it has a silly straw.

KEITH: Nice!

[DRE laughs]

KEITH: What are the flavors? What kinda flavors you got in there? Space fruit, or is it like pears?

AUSTIN: It's a mix. So like you go from a pear juice, which is like very rich--

KEITH: Love a good rich pear nectar.

AUSTIN: --to like some sort of local fruit that you've never had before, but it like, it like pings off of the pear juice in a really nice way.

KEITH: Nice.

AUSTIN: And then there's another local one, and then it's like a very fine blueberry juice. It's almost just like water, but like a little hint of blueberry.

KEITH: What is-- what's this person who's bringing us the drinks, what's their name?

AUSTIN: I'll have to look it up really quick, cause I did not name this person previously. This person's name is Kwik, with a K.

KEITH (as Gig): Kwik, what's this-- what's this second juice?

AUSTIN (as Kwik): Uh, it's-- it's jeli fruit.

KEITH (as Gig): Jelly fruit?

AUSTIN (as Kwik): Yeah, J-E-L-I fruit.

KEITH (as Gig): But fruit-- Jelly is already from fruit.

AUSTIN (as Kwik): Goes backwards.

KEITH (as Gig): What's a jeli fruit?

AUSTIN (as Kwik): It goes the other way, too.

KEITH (as Gig): It goes back-- you make fruit out of the jelly?

AUSTIN (as Kwik): Well, no, it's just already jelly, and then you make it fruit juice.

KEITH (as Gig): What... It just-- where do you find it?

AUSTIN (as Kwik): Do you wanna come in the kitchen? I can show you how I make-- this is, this is my specialty drink.

KEITH (as Gig): Yes. Yes. Yeah. Well, but like when you go out, when someone's like, "Oh, I have to go forage for jeli," where is it?

AUSTIN (as Kwik): We have farms. It's stuff from The Garden. It's, uh, it's from-- you guys aren't from around here. It's from...

KEITH (as Gig): No.

AUSTIN (as Kwik): ... The Garden.

KEITH (as Gig): The Gar-- there's one garden?

AUSTIN (as Kwik): The. Garden. The-- do you have a way of capitalising letters in your culture?

KEITH (as Gig): Yes, we have capital letters, yes.

AUSTIN (as Kwik): Okay, so it's a capital T and a capital G. The Garden.

KEITH (as Gig): Okay, so it's like The Garden-- yeah, no, I get that but like, what does it loo-- what is it, like, when I go out and I pick a fruit, there's a fruit on a tree and I grab it.

AUSTIN (as Kwik): I order it from the gallery.

KEITH (as Gig): [overlapping] How do you go get jeli?

AUSTIN (as Kwik): I have never been to one of the fruits things. Trees?

KEITH (as Gig): You don't know what it looks like? How they get jeli?

AUSTIN (as Kwik): [overlapping each other] It comes in like a big square. It's a nice big square.

KEITH (as Gig): [overlapping] Is it just coming-- is it like coming out-- it's a square of jelly? Does it grow on something?

AUSTIN (as Kwik): [overlapping] Or a cube, it's a cube of jeli. I don't...

KEITH (as Gig): It's a cube of jelly? Does it go on something? Does it grow out of something? Or do you find it? Is it like a hole in the ground?

AUSTIN: [overlapping] At some point, Grand, do you just take your drink from this tray?

ART: Yes, yes, I do.

AUSTIN: [trying not to laugh] What is it?

ART: It's a Brandy Alexander with a, with a sparkled cogniac invented some hundred, 200 years ago on the-- it makes the whole drink iridescent.

AUSTIN: Do you mean a Grandy Alexander?

DRE: Fuckin', god dammit.

ART: I do not. The Alexander part is the part named after the person who invented it, so it would have to be a-- a Brandy Magnificent.

[AUSTIN and KEITH laugh]

AUSTIN: A Grandy Magnificent, got it. Um...

[29:59]

KEITH (as Gig): Does it seep out of a tree? Is it in like a plant? Do you--

AUSTIN (as Kwik): It might be like a sap! You know, I'm not--

KEITH (as Gig): --scoop it out of a plant?

AUSTIN (as Kwik): Um...

AUSTIN: And then--

KEITH (as Gig): Is there like a cup shaped plant and you scoop it out? Is it-- I don't understand how you could fi-- Is it like--

AUSTIN (as Kwik): Come-- hey!

KEITH (as Gig): Do you have to separate it from the dirt?

AUSTIN: Symmetry is like,

AUSTIN (as Symmetry): You two can chat later. The Doyenne needs to speak with you.

KEITH (as Gig): I'll be back.

AUSTIN (as Kwik): Okay, I'll be right here. I mean, I have some other things to do, but I'll be back! Also. I'll also be back.

KEITH (as Gig): Okay, got it. I am confident that we-- I'll do a good job again.

AUSTIN (as Kwik): [overlapping] The name's Kwik, by the way! Kwik. Don't forget, Kwik.

KEITH (as Gig): I won't forget Kwik.

AUSTIN (as Kwik): Kendari. Kwik Kendari.

KEITH (as Gig): Kwik Kendari, got it.

AUSTIN (as Kwik): I have a card. I actually--

AUSTIN: And Sym is like

AUSTIN (as Symmetry): [disbelieving breaths] We... have to go.

[KEITH laughs]

DRE (as Even): Gig, we gotta go. Come on.

KEITH (as Gig): I'm ready. I got it. I got the card.

AUSTIN: Okay. And...

KEITH (as Gig): Grand Mag, try this.

AUSTIN: [under his breath] Oh my god.

ART (as Grand): It's not gonna go with my drink.

KEITH (as Gig): I-- Just try it! It's gonna be fine, you don't need a palette cleanser from a... Brandy Magnificent.

SYLVIA (as Echo): Can I try some?

KEITH (as Gig): You can try some. Try this.

SYLVIA (as Echo): Oh, this is good!

KEITH (as Gig): That's good!

SYLVIA (as Echo): Yeah, that's really good.

KEITH (as Gig): It's jeli juice.

[AUSTIN sighs]

KEITH (as Gig): It sounds like it just grows--

ART (as Grand): It sounds like it's gonna be too sweet.

KEITH (as Gig): I think it just comes out of the ground as jelly. I don't--

AUSTIN: [snickers] Oh my god that's the grossest image! Okay.

KEITH (as Gig): It was unclear.

DRE: I think Even is-- Even is like kind of walking quickly ahead of all of this. [laughing]

ART (as Grand): [overlapping] Yeah, that's--

KEITH (as Gig): [overlapping] It's like a tar pit, but it's like sugar.

AUSTIN: Oh my god.

ART (as Grand): Like oozing... earth sores?

[AUSTIN makes a revolted sound]

KEITH (as Gig): Yeah! It's like a tar-- it's like a tar pit, but it's sweet. It's like a sweet tar. I think! I don't know! Kwik was not clear.

ART (as Grand): Is it a pit or is it like little bits?

KEITH (as Gig): I--

AUSTIN (as Symmetry): I understand that you are all from off world.

[KEITH laughs]

DRE (as Even): Sym. Sym, this-- [overlapping] This is my day.

AUSTIN (as Symmetry): It is-- I just need to make it clear. I need to make it clear, briefly, before they get themselves into trouble. In our culture it is rude to talk about the earth sores. We don't do it in public conversation.

[ART muffles laughter]

KEITH (as Gig): Is that where the jeli comes from though? Just real quick.

AUSTIN (as Symmetry): [exasperated] Of course that's where the jeli comes from.

KEITH (as Gig): So I got it right! Okay. As long as I got it right.

AUSTIN: And he like leads you up some stairs, and goes to the opposite side of the building, where-- so on one side there's the balcony, and on the other side, kind of facing-- if you're facing the building on the right side, on the second floor there's a balcony. On the left side, there's just the building still. And there is a room that is-- the entire ground is covered in little Glass pebbles. They're not sharp. They're like not pebbles, even, they're like little round-- almost like ball bearings or something. And when you get there, Sym leans over and like takes off his shoes and his socks, and like stretches his feet, or his feet and toes, for a little bit. And then opens the door and heads in.

AUSTIN (as Symmetry): Shoes off, please.

KEITH (as Gig): Socks too, or is that optional, or?

AUSTIN (as Symmetry): Eh... Socks too, unless you have like a thing.

[DRE laughs]

AUSTIN (as Symmetry): If you have a thing, it's not a big deal. Like that's fine.

KEITH (as Gig): No, I don't have a thing.

AUSTIN (as Symmetry): Well, then, socks too.

KEITH (as Gig): Okay.

AUSTIN (as Symmetry): We like to keep it clean, you know?

KEITH (as Gig): Mhm.

DRE (as Even): Alright.

KEITH (as Gig): You like to keep it clean by having people's sweaty bare feet on the floor?

DRE (as Even): [sharply] Gig.

AUSTIN (as Symmetry): [sighs] I don't know where your socks have-- Okay.

AUSTIN: And he heads in, and there is in this room, it's just kind of a long, thin room that has all of these little Glass ball bearings on the floor. It's a white room, plain white room, with like padded-- I guess it's pretty clear that they're speakers kind of built into the sides of the walls. And a screen up front. And then he goes up to the screen, actually, and hits a couple of parts on the screen, which is like buttons.

And then the whole room goes dark. And it feels almost like a planetarium, where there is suddenly a feeling of... It feels like this little tiny room opens up. It's like the pressure in the room changes. And it feels like it becomes spherical, as it gets darker. And then there's like the flickering of light? And these little bits of silica lift up into the sky, or into the air, in front of you. And become the glowing body of the Doyenne, in incredible high detail. Incredibly high detail, given the fact that these are like weird little... kind of like ball bearings.

AUSTIN (as the Doyenne): I'm pleased. You've made it. Good to see you all.

DRE (as Even): It's good to see you as well.

AUSTIN (as the Doyenne): I trust you're being taken care of.

KEITH (as Gig): Some of the people here were nice.

DRE (as Even): The hospitality here has been wonderful. Thank you.

AUSTIN (as the Doyenne): There's nothing wrong with a little rudeness in your day.

KEITH (as Gig): I didn't say there was anything wrong with it. I just said, "Some of the people here were nice." Why are you balls?

AUSTIN (as the Doyenne): I'm busy. And this was the easiest way to speak with you. Tell me, what are your objectives here on Quire?

[SYLVIA lets out a strangled breath]

ART (as Grand): [under breath] That sounds like a question for you, Even.

DRE: I know, I'm actually-- I'm double checking our three directives that I have written down.

AUSTIN: Uh, three directives: Ex-Fleet people have set up shop here; you're going to bring them into the fold, bring them back into the Fleet. Two, you wanna spread the Mesh further. Three, you want to investigate rumors of a living, hidden Divine.

DRE: Alright.

ART: [stage whisper] Don't say the third one.

DRE: Yeah. Probably, maybe not even the first one. Um...

ART: Second one doesn't make any sense on its own.

DRE: Well.

DRE (as Even): We... We're here because... You know, this is really-- This planet is unique in that there's enough people living here that there's not even one culture and one society has formed, but an ecosystem of them, so... We come to understand this planet, its history, how it's come to be, and our ultimate goal is to hopefully integrate our Mesh into yours so that we can share our knowledge with you and vice versa.

KEITH (as Gig): Oh, and don't forget that a lot of people want to maybe live on here.

AUSTIN (as the Doyenne): Tell me about your Mesh.

DRE: Um... I guess this is me out of character. How is our Mesh different from theirs? Besides just that we have different knowledge.

AUSTIN: Well you haven't seen theirs at this point. So-- which is a thing that I think she knows, and wants you to describe it without that referrant.

DRE (as Even): Hm... Our mesh is... it's just an integrated part of our reality. It is both digital and physical, all at once.

AUSTIN: She begins to walk around you, like in a circle. And as she does, it's not that the kind of floating Glass balls move, it's that new ones hover up in place to replace the previous one? So it's like constantly reconstructing her as she moves around this space.

DRE (as Even): So you exist now as a physical projection to us because of these, these spheres.

AUSTIN (as the Doyenne): That's right.

DRE (as Even): In our Mesh, you wouldn't be a projection. You would be here. You might also be where you were connecting from, but you would also be here.

AUSTIN: She nods, and she says,

AUSTIN (as the Doyenne): We have something like that.

AUSTIN: And then brings her, her beady hands together, into like almost like a prayer, almost like folded hands, and then opens them up. And when she does, two-- I mean everyone here is chipped except for Echo, right?

SYLVIA: Mhm.

AUSTIN: So for everyone except for Echo, when she pulls them out, the whole room trans-- like changes? And suddenly she is there, in a dress with-- she's bald right now in this projection. And she's in like a sequined, long sequined dress that comes down to almost like tuxedo tails in the back, but like way lower? And you are all in a plain white museum. You're like in... there's like a couple of paintings to your left and right, the halls have like tile flooring that go between like kind of a marbly white, and then like a greenish stone tile. And you hear other people walking around? All around you.

Echo, you don't see that, but you do see a projection of it-- a physical projection of it all around you in the room still. And if you, like, absentmindedly even move your feet around, it feels as if the projection adjusts for you, like, moving. And as if the balls in the ground are almost like... They provide enough friction for you to stand, and for you to walk, but you're not ever moving anywhere in any direction. So it's almost like a physical-- like you've physically entered a representation of what other people are seeing here? But they are seeing it directly into their consciousness.

DRE: Can we still see Echo?

AUSTIN: Yeah, totally.

DRE: Okay.

SYLVIA: Feels like that would give me motion sickness.

AUSTIN: Yeah, totally. It almost certainly does. Like I think that that's a fair response to have. And what I'll say is like, I think you trying to do anything here would give you-- you'd have to roll with disadvantage.

SYLVIA: Okay.

AUSTIN: Especially like, this is the first time you're doing this, for sure. So.

AUSTIN (as the Doyenne): Welcome to the Gallery.

AUSTIN: She says. And then kind of begins to walk down a hallway. All of the-- let me find her voice again.

AUSTIN (as the Doyenne): All of our information, all of our achievements, all of them. Here. In the Gallery.

AUSTIN: And she like, is walking in front of you all and gesturing towards paintings. The first painting she like gestures to is of her killing the previous king with a sword. With like a long saber. While the-- while Symmetry stands, like, behind her, facing the other direction, with a gun pointing at, like, the doorway at the other-- kind of like at the far end, like in the background, basically.

KEITH (as Gig): That reminds me, why did you kill the king? I heard about that a few minutes ago.

AUSTIN (as the Doyenne): Ask him yourself.

AUSTIN: And then she like, snaps her fingers, and a man who is identical to the man who she was killing in that painting appears. Or he doesn't just appear. He like, she snaps her fingers and then a door that you didn't see before opens up, and then a little man-- not that little, like 5'5" or 5'6"-- little in the Echo Reverie school of what little means.

SYLVIA: Listen.

[AUSTIN laughs]

SYLVIA: Listen. I don't know what-- I have a skewed perception.

AUSTIN: It's fair, it's fair. Uh...

[SYLVIA chuckles]

AUSTIN: He comes out. He has like... tight cropped-- or he just has a buzz cut basically, and is wearing the Crown of Glass, the eponymous Crown of Glass, upside down on his head, and tilted a little bit? It's almost like, what if a crown could be a dunce cap? And is wearing an all-white suit with a black dress shirt, and has on white gloves, and he's like,

AUSTIN (as the king): Ah, guests to the Gallery. How may I help you? What information do you need?

KEITH (as Gig): You the dead king?

AUSTIN (as the king): That's right. I am the previous ruler of the Crown of Glass. I was dethroned after a generation of despotism and tyranny.

KEITH (as Gig): Huh. It's morbid that you're, y'know. Here. Doing this.

AUSTIN (as the king): The new Crown understood that the only way to remind people of what it meant to attempt injustice in this world was to establish a permanent memoriam for those who did terrible things. Here I am. I live to serve.

KEITH (as Gig): What did you do?

AUSTIN (as the king): Oh, a lot of terrible things. I can take you to the exhibition if you'd like.

KEITH (as Gig): I love a good exposition.

AUSTIN: And he just like, starts walking away with you, Gig.

KEITH: Okay, yeah.

AUSTIN: Alright. The Doyenne isn't stopping you. I don't know what that--

KEITH (as Gig): [loudly] Is no one else curious, by the way? Of, you know, this king?

[DRE chuckles]

DRE (as Even): You go on, Gig.

KEITH (as Gig): No? Alright, fine.

DRE: I look for--

SYLVIA (as Echo): I don't really like moving? Right now? So...

[AUSTIN laughs]

KEITH (as Gig): You-- yeah, you probably wouldn't even be able to see it anyway.

[AUSTIN snorts]

ART (as Grand): I feel like something more interesting's gonna happen here.

AUSTIN: So, I-- I'll walk with you for a second, Gig. He leads you to a side wing that is literally like a set of dioramas of the shitty stuff that this king did.

KEITH: Wait, wait, wait. I send my eye back with the rest of them.

AUSTIN: Okay, I need you to roll for that, because you're not in a physical space.

KEITH: No, I-- Do I?

AUSTIN: Yeah. You're in-- you were jacked in. You have, like, you are chipped. So I think that that is... Lifting the Veil. But you're spiked out in this moment, right? We should have dealt with that as soon as that happened. [overlapping] We talked about how it was about to happen.

KEITH: [overlapping] Yeah, we talked about how we were about to do it, and then we never dealt with it.

AUSTIN: [overlapping] Uh huh. Then we did it, and then we didn't do it at all.

[DRE laughs]

AUSTIN: Alright, so, when-- let me bring up this book here.

KEITH: So I have five checks. I have full checks.

AUSTIN: Correct. In Joyful, right?

KEITH: In Joyful, yes.

AUSTIN: So, "When you reach the last checkmark, you change that state temporarily to +1, and all other ones to -2. In order for a character to get out of that state where they are experiencing a single emotion acutely, there is a special move called Alleviate. Alleviate is a different type of move from the basic moves in terms of how it works that will be discussed later on."

I'll jump down to that now, because it's actually not that far away in terms of how far it is in this book. But first let's, tell me about how it feels to be spiked out on Joyful. Is that kind of why you were so... keen to follow the former king? Like are you just like--

KEITH: What do you mean, that I'm too... I'm too excited, and so I was like, "Y'all do whatever!" Or...

AUSTIN: Yeah. Yeah.

KEITH: Or that I'm too excited, I should watch some sad movie.

AUSTIN: Either way, it's up to you. Like talk to me about where Gig is at with the spiked out Joyful.

KEITH: I think it's... I think it's sort of a lack of impulse control.

[45:01]

AUSTIN: Okay. Yeah, I can get with that.

KEITH: And like, sort of like satisfying the, like, "I just wanna do the thing that is fun."

AUSTIN: Right. So if you-- you can have two choices here.

KEITH: Okay.

AUSTIN: Now that you have a +1 in Joyful instead of a +2, and now that everything else is at -2, you can either keep using the spiked out emotion, in which case the emotion spike is decreased each time that you use it, and then once that gets back down to 0, you get back to regular stats. So basically you need to make 5 more Joyful rolls in order for that to come back down to your regular stat. Or if you do a different thing at -2, you then may erase all emotion spikes in the spiked out state. You must still mark an emotion spike in the state you just rolled. So like if you use any of your other things--

KEITH: Sorry, can you explain that second one again?

AUSTIN: So use any of your other ones at -2.

KEITH: Yeah.

AUSTIN: It clears out the 5 spike out. But you're at -2 on that roll. So whatever you do would be at -2

KEITH: Okay.

AUSTIN: Instead of at whatever it is.

KEITH: And I can ch-- like if I wanna start being like, "Okay Joyful, Joyful," and then I'm like, "Oh actually that's not applicable anymore," I could change and then roll on that.

AUSTIN: Yes, totally. Absolutely. Yep, totally.

KEITH: Okay, so, good. So it lets me roll the way that I would like to roll. [overlapping] It's not locking me into -2. Right, yes.

AUSTIN: [overlapping] The way that you think is appropriate. Totally. Yep. Totally. So how do you feel about this?

KEITH: I feel fine about this.

AUSTIN: Okay.

KEITH: Is there anything to roll right now?

AUSTIN: Yeah, if you wanna send your eye back, I was saying--

KEITH: Oh, okay.

AUSTIN: You need to use open-- you need to use open the Veil, or whatever it's called. Might not be called open the Veil. Touch the Veil? Lift the Veil.

KEITH: Lift the Veil. Yeah.

AUSTIN: Yeah.

KEITH: Yeah, I'll do that. So I have to roll...

AUSTIN: What are you-- how are you feeling?

KEITH: Oh, that would be good. I feel... I feel like in the same state that I've been in this whole time. I don't think it's gonna change for that.

AUSTIN: Okay. So then roll 2d6+1. [pause] That is a 6.

KEITH: That's a fail. I failed that.

AUSTIN: That is a fail.

KEITH: Shouldn't've... I could've done another thing and it would've helped, but... I guess not.

AUSTIN: Yeah, no. Okay. So, Gig walks away, and no one notices-- like everyone sees you walk away. Your eye, you send your eye back, and it gets lost in the museum. Like you go back to where they are, and they're gone.

KEITH: Okay.

AUSTIN: And you can't find them. We'll come back to-- to you in a bit. Your eye is just like-- I kind of like the image of the king continuing to be like,

AUSTIN (as the king): Ah, and this is [AUSTIN tries not to laugh] where I killed 32 people because they pronounced my name wrong, and ever since then, the new Doyenne has made it so that no one knows what my name is, and no new generation will ever utter its word-- or utter its sound.

AUSTIN: And meanwhile you're like, "Where the fuck did they go?"

[KEITH laughs]

AUSTIN: Where they went was just deeper into the museum. As the Doyenne continues to kind of feel out what your goals are here. And I think in the process you kind of learn a little bit about how the Gallery is different from the Mesh? The biggest is, you're walking places. All the time. Like, you have to travel to get information in the Gallery. Even if you're not physically in one of those rooms. Like even with those of you who are just jacked into it, who've been invited into it via their link through your brain chip or whatever, you need to actually physically in your mindstate, move from place to place. And because of it, like there's a sense of gravity in the Gallery that there isn't in the Mesh.

DRE: Hm. Is that intentionally by design or is that just how their Mesh differs from ours?

AUSTIN: Are you-- are you asking, or are you--

DRE: Yeah, I'll ask that.

AUSTIN: Yeah.

AUSTIN (as the Doyenne): The design of the Gallery was arrived at after years of study and trial. There are limitations, of course, as there are for any tool, but the limitations of the Gallery are beneficial in this case. They're a restraint that reminds us of the value of distance, the value of... achieving knowledge, not just being gifted it.

DRE (as Even): I respect that.

AUSTIN (as the Doyenne): But you wanna bring your Mesh here. Funny that.

DRE (as Even): Not to replace yours.

AUSTIN (as the Doyenne): You suspect that, given the choice between instantaneous knowledge and the Gallery, people would stick with us?

DRE (as Even): I mean, I think I just met two of your people who would have very different opinions on which one they would prefer.

AUSTIN (as the Doyenne): Mmm. Fair.

DRE (as Even): I'm not even sure if I... prefer our Mesh over this. There's something, like I said there's something nice about this.

AUSTIN (as the Doyenne): That's good to know. I'm prepared to offer you the chance to extend your Mesh into the Sculpture, and perhaps afterwards, into the rest of Sculpture City, and then from there, perhaps, to the rest of our cities here on Quire. But, in exchange, the Mesh-- your Mesh, your connection to your Fleet-- will need to be... passed through the Gallery.

The first thing anyone on Quire will see when they connect to your Fleet... is us. And then if they choose to put that behind them, and go to whatever data stores you have, that is their choice. But it's my duty as Doyenne to put the work that we pursue here in front of the masses of Quire.

DRE (as Even): So that's not just... your people, but all people of Quire.

AUSTIN (as the Doyenne): As it spreads, it spreads.

DRE (as Even): It's an interesting offer, and I think I will have to... take it to our superiors.

AUSTIN (as the Doyenne): Oh, I see. You are not the dealmaker.

DRE (as Even): Not that large of a deal.

AUSTIN (as the Doyenne): Let your "superiors", you called them... let them know, when they're ready to talk, they know where to find me. I really am only interested in dealmakers. Magnificent.

ART (as Grand): Yeah?

AUSTIN (as the Doyenne): Speaking of deals...

ART (as Grand): Mm.

AUSTIN (as the Doyenne): There is a boat outside the Old Gold. [sighs] When you find time, board it and come to me. I have an offer.

ART (as Grand): Great.

AUSTIN (as the Doyenne): Is there anything else? I have much to do.

DRE (as Even): That's all I have. Thank you for your time. I'm not sure if Echo or Grand Magnificent have anything for you.

ART (as Grand): I mean, I think I have... I think we have a future plan.

AUSTIN: Your eye-- Gig says, "Anything interesting coming from my eye?" Yeah, your eye found a really interesting... whole exhibit on-- You know what? I'll just say it straight out. Your eye found one of the other... major schools. There is a school connected to the Crown of Glass that is called... da-da-da-da-da... Check here, the Crown of Glass, here we go. It is called the Theater. And it is a-- it is the school, you know-- Sculpture, the Sculpture, Sculpture City is about carpentry and ceramics, architecture, conceptual art, very physical things, very form-focused things?

But the Theater is about... light. It is an entire school devoted to the kind of, art around light, which is a really broad category. So it's kind of walking through a set of holographic art, like the stuff that Grand Magnificent and Kamala Cadence have done. You saw Janey also doing some of that in the previous episode. And then-- but also like photography, and film, and like interactive art like video games, also. Like your eye watches a couple of people in the Gallery--

I mean that's the other thing about the Gallery I should note, is there are other people in it. There are other people in it. That's another big difference from the Mesh. You can't just like deactivate other people. There are always other people in the Gallery. You just see like a bunch of kids, like, shouting and basically playing, I don't know whatever Quire's version of like Street Fighter or Tekken is, but they're playing it in this museum. [laughs] And then also like, painting. There's also like all of the-- I think it's probably just like this year's dissertation, like the thesis projects, of the various artists who attend the Theatre school. And that is-- that is what your eye is seeing right now.

Okay, does anyone else have stuff here? Questions, or?

DRE: Is there anything in the Gallery that is even remotely positive towards this old king?

AUSTIN: No.

DRE: Okay.

AUSTIN: No, there's stuff like positive towards like his great-great-great grandfather. Do you know what I mean?

DRE: Is there anything remotely negative about the current Doyenne?

AUSTIN: [clicks teeth] Define negative. You know what? I think at a certain point you also probably should roll here. This is definitely, like, you're looking for information about this culture. And it's a big-- The Gallery is like the internet, right? So...

DRE: Right.

AUSTIN: So give me, again I think this is Lift the Veil, cause you're searching for information in what their version of the Mesh is, and their version of the Veil is.

DRE: Yeah.

AUSTIN: So how are you feeling about this?

DRE: Uh...

AUSTIN: And I think-- she leaves you there. You're, I think Sym will even say, like,

AUSTIN (as Symmetry): Feel free to continue browsing at your leisure. I will be down--
I'll be downstairs when you finish up.

AUSTIN: I had to find his voice again, too.

DRE: I'm mad. I don't have a good feeling about the Doyenne, like, yeah. So yeah.

SYLVIA: Oh yeah, same.

DRE: So that's an 8.

AUSTIN: Okay. So it's an 8. "On a 7-9, I will give you an impression. On any roll, I will also ask you a question or two, and you have to answer them." So, yeah, you find some things that are negative. Like there are-- the things that are negative tend to be about her in terms of idea, and about what she be-- what she believes about art and about culture? There's a running debate about what she wants for the Crown? Like in terms of expansion.

I think that's probably the biggest debate in the Gallery. And there are definitely spaces where you could just literally go see people debate. Like see recordings of people have these debates. In fact I think you probably see one between Auger and Caliper. I think you find a public debate that they had as Saints, which is like... the kind of highest form of public debate available? Because they are both actually on paper representatives of the Doyenne? But they're still debating what her game plan is, right?

So you have from Caliper, you have someone who believes that the Crown should expand quickly and should, you know, the Crown of Glass should expand until Quire is the Crown of Glass. Until the planet itself is the Crown of Glass. Bring the Mandati under their heel, bring together all of, you know, all the different cultures into their own. There's already, you know, she notes there's already a good relationship between The Garden, which is the eastern School here, with the Scane, one of the other cultures, the one that the big otter friend that you have is from. And that they should use that as a building block to extend their reach even further, blah blah blah.

And then from Auger, you know, even though ve doesn't like the way that the Mandati live their lives, like even though ve basically said, "I don't like the Mandati, they're shitty," and said that they were savages, Auger still doesn't want the Crown to expand. Auger wants, like, a slow, incredibly steady, like culture of kind of turtling and just continuing to build the cities that are already under the Crown's control.

So it's a big-- there's like a big debate around what the Doyenne will do there, and that's kind of the big question on everybody's mind, is that we've reached the turning point. You know in like an RTS game or in Civilization, there's that moment when you realize, "Oh, I've out-teched all of my opponents"?

DRE: Mhmm.

AUSTIN: "Everybody else is still using-- is still in the Bronze Age, and I just got a gun?" [laughs] Or, "Oh, I have fighter jets, and they are still rolling around with cannons?" That's the point that the Crown of Glass is at. And people want it-- There's a lot of debate about whether or not the Doyenne will push that, and take advantage in this moment, right?

Like she-- she did help people by killing this king, and ushering in an age where it's not the Kingdom of Glass any more, right? It is-- there's still a Crown, but she's not the queen. She is this other figure, who is in place largely because of her talent. Or at least that's the story that she has managed to effectively tell, which in some ways kind of proves the point as far as she's concerned, right? Like even if all she's done is convince people that she's the best, in that way alone, she's the best. Cause no one else has convinced the masses of that.

So that's, I think, a big part of the debate. But you don't-- I don't think that you necessarily find-- you might like a few, like, [snickering] posts basically here or there that are like, [sarcastically] "Thanks, Doyenne." Right? Like, "Fuck off, Doyenne." Like basic things. But you don't find like the Resistance. You don't find like people who are plotting against her openly. That's not to say those don't exist. After all, there was an assassination attempt.

The thing that's gone unsaid by all of these Saints is that they recently lost a companion in Saint Glass. So, you know, that's... none of that is brought up. There's no one there who's like, you don't find the post that says, "Oh, we should kill her."

[1:00:00]

DRE: Right.

AUSTIN: I have questions for you, though, which is like, what does Even think about this whole experience? That very physically blends the two together?

DRE: I mean I think it's, he finds this interesting. And I think kind of nice. I don't think that he was just blowing smoke when he said like, "There's parts of this that I actually prefer to our Mesh." I think he comes from a culture that values, like, physical preservation? And so, like, the idea that there is this thing that feels even more physical, that has a heavier kind of gravity to it, is appealing.

AUSTIN: Totally. I actually have questions for everybody here, cause like this is your chance to explore this space, and see more of like what this culture is from a zoomed-out perspective? For Grand, I'm actually curious, I'd like some collaboration on like what the fashion of these people looks like. I've given a little bit here or there, based vaguely on yours and then based vaguely on, like-- I think of the factions here, these are the ones who can get closest to like, pure space fantasy. To like Destiny robes and capes.

ART: Sure.

AUSTIN: And stuff like that. But I'm curious if you have any other ideas about what people look like here, what they look like, stuff like that. I ask that because they fled-- they fled Memorious.

ART: Sure.

AUSTIN: They come from your culture. Fled is strong. Eh, no, they fled. They-- they lost faith in Memorious before others did, before Memorious died, so.

ART: I think I'm like putting too fine a point on some of this, but like... The Glass is, is what seems to be the thing? And I think that that would sort of bleed into everything a little bit, I think you would see more... not even like crystals so much, but like, I think everyone's-- everyone's jewelleries

AUSTIN: Right.

ART: Everyone's accessories would be like, you know, some sort of like zirconium, or even like, you know, more than that. Like a disco ball, even.

AUSTIN: [laughs] Right.

ART: You know, obviously not a full-sized disco ball, but you know, maybe someone is.

AUSTIN: I think maybe even we see that divided based on which of the schools they're from, and ehh, I'm just gonna reveal the names of these schools in this moment, because I think that it's like... Not silly not to, necessarily, but like... you know, you're in the museum. You're in the internet. It would be weird if you left this place without knowing the names of their multiple schools. So, there is the Garden. Let me make sure you're on the right-- okay, you're on the wrong thing. Boom, Quire. Here you go. There is... The Garden. I need to look at my-- one second.

ART: Oh. Didn't we have more squares than that?

AUSTIN: [amused] No, you did not have more squares than this. Unfortunately. Okay, so. Let me... Objects and tokens. So you see the Garden over to the east, right? You also have... At G11, you have the Factory.

ART: Uh, yes, yes yes.

AUSTIN: Over to the left, over to the west. Up north, there is...

ART: Another factory?

AUSTIN: No no no, I just-- I'm copy and pasting. That is the Theater. [pause] And then, at K19... There is... I wrote K19. There is the Desk. And I'll go over what each of these is, so you have a decent idea. One, two, three, four, five. I think that that's it. Yeah, okay. So, very briefly on like what those are, I already mentioned the Theater.

The Desk is for writing, obviously. Obviously, you write on a desk. And that is a school of poetry and literature, but also like printmaking? It is-- it is where the-- there's like a close relationship between the Desk and the Theater, where someone will do like visual art in the Theater, and then someone in the Desk will figure out how to put it on physical display in a really cool way?

I kind of think of like, it's not the difference between exhibition and creation, or like curation and creation, but definitely, it's the person's like, "Oh, I have this really great manuscript," and then the person at the Desk can be like, "Alright, I'm gonna get you really cool cover art, I'm gonna figure out really cool binding. What type of rad paper do you want?" Like they put a lot of stock-- not just literal stock, but like paper stock-- but they put a lot of emphasis on the presentational aspects of other forms of art.

The Factory is where things like machines are built, right? Like, that is where they build, the Saints are all built in the Factory. The-- any sort of tools. Any sort of experimental new types of creation tools are built there. The Gallery was probably developed there originally, or the kind of foundational element of it was there. But also just like, clocks. And robots. Of which you've

maybe seen a couple synthetic beings in the Sculpture, but not that many. And then music is also performed and kind of studied at the Factory.

And then the Garden, we've already talked about in a previous episode, is gardening, and mining, and irrigation, and kind of like the natural sciences, the agricultural sciences. Genetic engineering is there also. Also? Acting. Because there's like, the current school of thought on acting is actually very... very much about physical presentation, and the study of one's anatomy.

I think obviously there's lots of overlap between these different schools, but those are their key specialties. Like if they each have five or six, like, keystone staff members, or members of the faculty, those are what their studies pertain to. And there's like light rivalry between these different schools, but it's not like-- they are still all under the Crown. For now, at least. Who knows in the future?

So that's a big thing about like, what the state of the world looks like. Anyone want anything else while they're in the Gallery?

KEITH: I would like to see if I could find out more about the... the weird computer place that I found that had the frozen horses, that two people that I asked did not know what those horses were?

AUSTIN: Sure. Totally. I'm just gonna give you this, like there isn't anything here about it. Or, you know, maybe there is. There's like something-- there's stuff here-- well, I'll give you like the very base level is, there is stuff here about the previous cultures of the planet. But they don't really-- they don't have their head around it. It has not been a focus for them. They are not a very... They care about their own history. [laughs] And they care about what they can do with stuff from other cultures, but there's probably only a handful of people who you could find who--

In fact, maybe this is a point where, the thing that you could find here is not necessarily information, but you could use, there's a move called Link, I believe? [searching noise] It's one of those moves that we should always use and then never actually do use. To find a person. Yeah, Link.

"When you introduce a new NPC to the game by name, look, and outlook, decide how you know them and feel about them and roll. On a 10+, your relationship is in good standing. On a 7-9, it's strained or frayed in some way and they have one Faith on you. On a miss, in addition to what the MC says, they also have one Faith on you."

So you could use Link here to find like an expert in past cultures, but their work is not really on display in the Gallery.

KEITH: Okay. Yeah, I would do that.

AUSTIN: Alright, how do you feel while looking for this? Keeping in mi--

KEITH: Hm, I'll actually look at the feelings wheel for this.

AUSTIN: Alright. Break out the old feelings wheel, hell yeah.

[DRE giggles]

KEITH: Yeah, I haven't done this in a while. I feel curious... Let's see. Hm.

AUSTIN: I think that's probably right.

KEITH: What's probably right?

AUSTIN: Curious feels right.

KEITH: Cur-- yeah, but I don't see where that fits in.

AUSTIN: Ah, it depends on-- I mean I think curious is one of those ones that can go into a couple of places, right?

KEITH: Yeah.

AUSTIN: I think that's-- either, for me that's... that would be somewhere either Peaceful or Joyful depending on what that sort of curiosity is like, right?

KEITH: Yeah. I'm seeing thoughtful and Peaceful, but then... this is *fascinating*, I'm looking for [mumbling]

AUSTIN: Yeah, I wouldn't, like-- The feelings wheel is a good thing to check, but it's not something that you need to abide by. It's like, the rules are very clear that we can work-- I literally think curious could appear on Peaceful, Powerful, or Joyful

KEITH: [overlapping] Several of these. Yeah.

AUSTIN: Depending on how it's characterized? Like...

KEITH: I think I'll stick with Joyful, cause it feels like a wh-- it's sort of like a whim.

AUSTIN: Okay. Yes, like it's a--

KEITH: You know what I mean?

AUSTIN: Yeah, I gotcha. Totally. "Oh, what about that?" Yeah, totally. So go ahead and give me another Joyful, so +1.

KEITH: Yeah.

AUSTIN: 2d6+1.

KEITH: Just since no one else is spiked out, by the way, you-- we have a thing for Other in here. You can just put 1 on Other and roll Other for spiked out.

AUSTIN: That's useful. I think a lot of other people might have stats in that Other thing?

KEITH: Oh, okay.

AUSTIN: Anyway, that's an 8. So, alright. So how do you find this person? Also, do you-- what is their name, look, and outlook? Tell me about this-- this person you--

KEITH: Oh, I introduce their name, look and outlook.

AUSTIN: [overlapping] Yeah, you introduce a new NPC. Yep. By name, look, and outlook. Mhm.

KEITH: When-- Okay. Yeah, I totally did not understand, "when *you* introduce a new NPC to the game."

AUSTIN: Yeah. I think we've determined how you know about them, which is just like, you're like, "Who the fuck knows anything about my good horse, Duck?"

KEITH: Yeah.

AUSTIN: And then you find like, oh this one person is an expert-- or not an e-- is studying.

KEITH: Yeah, I probably like found a footnote or something.

AUSTIN: Yes, totally.

KEITH: Alright. Okay. Look, I'm gonna say, they've got sort of a... They have wild gray hair and then like a-- almost like a safari vest?

AUSTIN: Okay.

KEITH: Like a lot of pockets. And, um... I don't know if they use it or not-- I don't know if they're going on safaris or if they just dress like-- like if they're actually going out and exploring and finding stuff or if they're just like, "Well, I write about this sort of stuff, so I guess I should dress in

a vest. In a weird, khaki vest.” And a name... I haven’t had to come up with a name on the spot in forever. Um...

AUSTIN: Let’s see if I have a good-- if I have a good one on my notes. I’m gonna save the ones I have.

[DRE laughs]

KEITH: Yeah, it’s fine.

DRE: Safari Jim.

KEITH: Yeah, Safari Jim. It’s uh, Leaf Car-- Carthorn.

AUSTIN: Carthorn?

KEITH: Yeah.

AUSTIN: Carthorn. Leaf?

[SYLVIA cackles]

KEITH: I just started typing and that’s what came out. It’s Cart-- It’s not Car Thorn, it’s Cart Horn.

AUSTIN: Okay. Uh... Alright, so you find-- And so the problem, the thing with Leaf here-- and you got an 8, which means the relationship is frayed in some way. Leaf had been an instructure-- an instructor in the Sculpture, but was recently...

KEITH: That’s what they call instructors in the Sculpture, instructures.

AUSTIN: Instructures. [huffs] Was recently put on forced sabbatical, because the... They were like completely, he was completely-- too focused on his research, and not focused enough on teaching? I think he probably taught architecture. I think that’s probably what got him into this to begin with, was like, “Hey, what the fuck are those weird horse tombs?”

[KEITH laughs]

AUSTIN: From a purely like, architectural standpoint, that was a series of things he’d seen in a number of places. And so, when he started focusing on those, he was doing that instead of teaching basically like, Architecture 101? [laughs] Like he kept missing his classes and stuff?

KEITH: Yeah.

AUSTIN: So he's currently a little bit down on his luck, and has moved out of-- he's not on, in the Sculpture part of town anymore. He's not in the school part of town? He now lives like there, where I just marked, which is like off towards the entrance, kind of... I wouldn't say that they are like the slums or anything? But they're like-- they're not part of like where things are boppin'. They're not part of where things are.

He's kind of like renting kind of a dingy apartment. Off on kind of the outskirts of town. In fact it's close to one of the Glass mines, so it's near where you're just constantly hearing excavation happening. So yeah, write him down also. I'll also make a note. Maybe we can check in on him next time.

KEITH: Okay.

AUSTIN: Go dig into some stuff. Anybody else have anything before we wrap up here?

SYLVIA: Nah.

AUSTIN: Okay. Do you ever get your feeling for this place, Echo?

SYLVIA: Oh, no. [laughing] I think Echo's trying not to barf by the end of this.

AUSTIN: Fair. Fair. Alright. So, I think maybe we end tonight on... I guess my question for you, is do you go right to see the Doyenne, Grand?

ART: See, there's a thing.

AUSTIN: Okay.

ART: This has never been like, said out loud.

AUSTIN: I'm looking around my room.

KEITH: I'm very excited to hear a whole new set of words.

AUSTIN: Me, too. [laughs]

[DRE chuckles]

ART: Well, I mean, a lot of words combinations have never been said before. It's like if you've ever shuffled a deck of cards, it's probably in a combination that's never been before?

AUSTIN: Uh huh. Yeah.

ART: That's a fun fact for you. You're something new tonight.

AUSTIN: It is a fun fact. That's neat.

ART: So I did all of my cybernetic work off mic, and if you're a supporter of us on Patreon and you got the first data dump, you've seen it. But I don't know if it... I don't know if you've read it, Austin

AUSTIN: Uh huh!

ART: Or internalized it, but I owe some stuff to some people on the Fleet.

AUSTIN: Uh huh.

ART: I owe some cred to a mentor who helped get me my eyes.

AUSTIN: Yep, that's true.

ART: And I have a patron on the Fleet who gets first refusal on any new designs.

AUSTIN: Uh huh.

[1:15:00]

ART: So I worry about going to a meeting that might be about... work, you know?

AUSTIN: Mmm. Uh huh.

ART: I'm just making sure that that's--

AUSTIN: Uh huh!

ART: That we're doing dramatic irony here, and not...

AUSTIN: Yes.

ART: Ambush-- I'm not ambushing this on anyone. [overlapping] Here or at home.

AUSTIN: [overlapping] And also, uh--

KEITH: [overlapping] Did you get first refusal on... on Echo's thing?

ART: I don't think anyone wanted Echo's thing.

[AUSTIN snorts] [KEITH laughs]

SYLVIA and AUSTIN: Wow.

AUSTIN: Brutal.

KEITH: [distantly] Echo seemed to want it!

ART: And that's great.

AUSTIN: Here's the other thing is, I think it's probably worth that being-- The Mesh-- You are connected to the Fleet in a way you had not been previously, now. Obviously the Mesh had already been connected, you dropped the first node. But I think that was still like in the middle of the weeks there, of kind of getting situated still. And at this point, you know, especially with the leader of one of the largest cultures on the planet, there's a difference between, "Oh, I made my buddy a thing on the side," and like, "Oh, I was commissioned to do this."

ART: Yeah. I'm just making sure that that's-- that everyone knows before we go to this meeting, which I'm definitely going to.

AUSTIN: Okay, so let's get to that meeting, and I'm just going to tease that meeting before we wrap. So you go outside, and at this point it's nighttime, and all of the Glass throughout the city is in low-frequency neon mode? It's like everything still has this glow to it, but it's not like Las Vegas. It's not like overwhelming. It's as if there were, for every street, a different moon, that's reflecting light into a different color.

So on this street, it's like, you know-- I guess over the water you're going right now-- there is this like very cool blue that's cast over Grand Magnificent's face. But then, you know, on the other side of town, maybe there is this like, very kind of pastoral green, that casts across the city at night. And it's different from kind of section to section.

But here in this blue, you kind of cut across to the palace that is called the Form, right in between the Sculpture and the Crown. And you kind of reach this dock, and there's this whole land mass, this diamond-shaped land mass, that then has a second-- like a moat separating it from the palace itself. So you walk across a bridge, you're escorted by some guards, and you come to meet the Doyenne, who is in yet another different dress. This one has, like, a very high collar that comes all the way to like, her temples? And has very long sleeves, whereas many of her dresses previously were sleeveless. And she has gloves.

And there is-- you're kind of in the throne room, as it were, except that instead of there being just like a throne, the throne is like-- is a sculpture of the Form itself. Of the palace, that has been like cut into in a way that, in seeing it here in front of you, you realize that the Form itself

was already designed to be a giant throne in a sense. It just, it doesn't seem that way from the outside. It just looks like a huge tower, and then there are like two side bits to it, but now that you see this kind of miniaturized version of it, you recognize that it has always been this throne.

And she is sitting on it, her one leg over the other one, with a sort of vague disinterest, until you come in, at which point she stands up and gives you like a light bow, and then says,

AUSTIN (as the Doyenne): Tell me, Magnificent, what you think of the human form.

ART (as Grand): I could do so much with it, but-- but I don't have the tools, or even the knowledge.

AUSTIN (as the Doyenne): I can offer both. Tools. Knowledge. Time. I owe you, Magnificent. And I'd like to repay that debt by offering you the chance to build me a Saint of my own. One that represents the beauty and power of the human figure.

ART (as Grand): Oh... okay.

[MUSIC- "The Twilight Mirage" begins]

AUSTIN (as the Doyenne): Good.

AUSTIN: And she smiles, and she says,

AUSTIN (as the Doyenne): Let's get started.

AUSTIN: And like, does a few hand gestures, and the-- there are again these kind of glass balls throughout the back end of the... throne room? And they rise up into the sky, and she begins to like, doing sketches with both those and also the kind of light drawer that you have. Very loose things. But then kind of invites you to come up and sketch alongside of her.

And as you do that, if you do that, we just end on shots of the other members of the Saints looking-- I think specifically we get a shot of Caliper looking down at both of you from a second floor balcony as you begin to sketch out various ideas for what a mech that represents the human figure purely might look like.

[MUSIC ends]