

PARTIZAN 45: Operation Shackled Sun: Act 1: The Fray

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[00:00:01]

AUSTIN: It is the year 1424 of the Perfect Millennium.

It is now.

[PRIORITY. FLASHOVER. PRIORITY. by Jack de Quidt plays]

AUSTIN: In the chaos-depths of Girandole, the Pact of Necessary Venture is shackling a god to an engine, an engine that would become a star, a star that would consume Partizan. A small sacrifice, they believe: necessary venture. Because what it will earn them is clear. A new era for the galaxy, in which they would become its principal hegemons.

AUSTIN: But across the system, those few who know the dangers of this plot rally to stop them. A few hundred thousand miles away, on the moon of Partizan, members of Millennial Break ready their attack force, which will be brought up en mass into orbit by the Reflecting Pool, flagship of their dubious ally, The Witch in Glass. Meanwhile, rushing from the now repaired Partizan Portcullis: A Curtain Armada, eager to rendezvous with Mourningbride and finally leash this star system gone feral.

AUSTIN: But this climactic clash will not be won by arms alone. Throughout the Principality war is fought not only on the battlefield, but also across an emerging media landscape, one where truth is determined by salvos of propaganda, shaped by onslaughts of distraction, and interpreted by the sweet, whispered sermons of falsified prophets.

AUSTIN: And so the question is not simply “Can Millennium Break win?” It is “What does victory look like?” Will they be seen as revolutionary heroes or jealous upstarts? Compromised cynics or naive insurgents?

[A pause, as there’s also a few seconds of silence in the soundtrack — then it comes wailing back in]

AUSTIN: Can they finally break free from the gravity of the old logics in a way so confident, so stunning, that they inspire people everywhere to see the world differently, to not only raise arms, but lock them in solidarity, too?

[PRIORITY. FLASHOVER. PRIORITY. plays to its conclusion.]

[00:02:19]

AUSTIN: Welcome to Friend at the Table, an actual play podcast focused on critical worldbuilding, smart characterization, and fun interaction between good friends. I am your host AUSTIN Walker and today we are finishing our campaign of PARTIZAN, at least for now.

AUSTIN: And we are gonna play a game called *War in the Year 1424 of the Perfect Millennium*, aka *1424 P.M.* which is a hack of the game [War in the Year 3000](#) by Rufus Roswell¹, with some additional inspiration from a bunch of different games, including [Follow](#) by Ben Robins, [Fiasco](#) by Jason Morningstar and some other stuff. You can find— And if you enjoy this, what we do today... if you enjoy it, you should go buy *War in the year 3000*. Or, actually, I guess, I think it's just free. I don't even think it's pay-what-you-want; by going to <https://roswellian.itch.io/>. But while you're there you should buy something else from Rufus Roswell, who is a fantastic creator. He also did [The Giantslayer](#)² playbook, that Jack, you've been playing over the last few episodes; and then a bunch of other really Cool stuff on his page, so go do that.

[00:03:32]

AUSTIN: I'm joined today by Jack de Quidt.

JACK: Hi I'm Jack, you can find me on twitter [@notquitereal](#) or buy any of the music featured on the show at [notquitereal.bandcamp.com](#).

AUSTIN: Also joining me Art... Martinez-Tebbel.

ART: [mumbling] Oh... You...

AUSTIN: Sorry.

ART: Don't you... wanna do it again?

AUSTIN: No it's fine, just keep going.

ART: You can find me on twitter [@atebbel](#) and if you want one of our new shirts from Fangamer you can get those at [fangamer](#), and a hoodie if you are very small or very large.

AUSTIN: Because we are running out of the hoodie sizes in between.

¹ The name uttered in the podcast is no longer used.

² It's actually called *The Giantkiller*.

ART: Yeah the hoodies in between are gone but go, and if you want it and tell them you wanted, they will make it again, maybe.

AUSTIN: Hopefully.

AUSTIN: Also joining us: Andrew Lee Swan.

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

AUSTIN: Sylvi Claire.

SYLVI: Hey, I'm Sylvi. You can find me on twitter [@sylvissurfer](#) and listen to my podcast "Emojidrome" wherever you get your podcasts.

AUSTIN: Keith Carberry.

KEITH: Hi, my name is Keith J Carberry and you can find me on twitter [@keithjcarberry](#), and you can find the let's play that I do at [Youtube.com/runbutton](#)

AUSTIN: Janine Hawkins.

JANINE: Hey, you can find me [@bleatingheart](#) on twitter.

AUSTIN: And Ali Acampora.

ALI: Um, hi, you can find me over [@ali_west](#) and you can find the show over [@friends_table](#)

AUSTIN: As always you can support us by going to [friendsatthetable.cash](#). If you have enjoyed the season and you haven't kicked in to the Patreon we would really, really appreciate it, there's a ton of content there. We are in the process of catching up on a lot of that content, but we're going on a pretty good clip on that catch up. By the time this is up we might be caught up with a couple of the categories. I think it's fair to say that this is been a rough fucking year. This episode will be coming out— This episode will probably be going out at the very end of this year, right? Like, the last week of this year or something like that. And... So thank you for sticking with us this year, we really appreciate the support and I think, you know, I hope you know that we're going through it, too, here. Our process has been difficult in a way and I think all of us have struggled through it, um, but thanks for all the support for what has been a really fun season. I'm very excited to wrap it up and to see what comes next.

[00:05:52]

AUSTIN: So, um, let me just talk about this game. I guess it's worth saying on top that like, we... [chuckles] The end of these Divine Cycle's seasons always should feel a little different. They always have felt a little different. And in each case — and in now included — we've always played some game in which I hacked together two things, [chuckles] at least. Um, it's not intentional, I really just wanted to play something out of the box this year, but I couldn't find anything that quite worked. Partially because we're eight people on this call, [chuckles] and that's hard. And partially because nothing felt... really appropriate.

AUSTIN: Until I read Rufus Roswell's incredible *War in the year 3000*, which had a really interesting concept, as like a... a lens on war, I guess. Pun not intended. Because it's focus was about the ways in which... It's very much taking the "Wow, Cool Robot" meme and saying "Can I build a game around this?" Right? Can I build a game around the tension between looking at Cool robots and the messages of shows featuring Cool robots, and media featuring Cool robots; which tended to be shows that are critiquing war, or empire, or something else, right? There's a critical lens there.

AUSTIN: Um, and so, what *War in the year 3000*, and by extension, *War in the Year 1424 of the Perfect Millennium* is a [Lasers and Feelings](#) hack. [chuckles] Um, you have two stats— In fact, let me just read from the book because at this point I'd rather just go through it once and get it the way it's been written down between Rufus's original text and my editions so that we get it right and I don't have to circle back and say I missed something.

[00:07:35]

AUSTIN: *War in the year 1424 of the Perfect Millennium* is a game about how a climactic battle in an ongoing war will be understood and interpreted by the people in the galaxy. More specifically, 1424 P.M. is centered around Millennium Break's efforts to disrupt the Pact of Necessary Venture's "Operation Shackled Sun," a project meant to enslave a cosmic god with a process that would destroy the nearby, highly populated, moon of Partizan. But it could be used to play out the results of any sci-fi battle so long as the word of events— as word of the event could spread.

AUSTIN: I'll note that I will post this as a [Patreon backer bonus](#), probably for the Mapmaker tier so people who just want to grab the text from that can do that.

AUSTIN: Um, though the outcome of the battle itself will be determined in play, the game's mechanics are as much — if not more — interested in how the actions of the player character will be received by the citizens of their space empire. Play is structured into three Acts with groups of six or more, like ours. Half the players will take part in Act One and the other half will take part in Act Two, and then everyone will join for the Final Act.

AUSTIN: In the first two Acts a challenge will be presented and players will narrate scenes in turns to describe how they address the obstacle. When an appropriate moment is reached, the active player will roll dice to determine both if they succeed and how the

actions will be understood once the story spreads. Play continues around the table until every player has had two turns or until the situation feels resolved.

AUSTIN: At that point the dice are tallied and, when circumstances allow, re-rolled and the entire Act is interpreted.

AUSTIN: In the Final Act players go around the table a single time — the whole group of you — and the results are added to the previous results of the previous Acts with some mechanical adjustments. And the dice are tallied and rolled— They are not rolled in fact, a final time. This is an older draft, so just tallied. The dice are just tallied. Again, at this point a final interpretation is made according to the results.

[00:09:25]

AUSTIN: Uh, big picture. What I will say is: this is a game about the stakes of the future of Millennium Break. We've seen internal conflict about Millennium Break throughout the post-Kingdom show-series in which the question has been raised, you know, "how radical are we, how revolutionary are we, how inside of this are we, how outside of it are we." And so, as the game plays you'll be gaining points into two different stats and depending on which stat is higher at the end, or if you're close to it in equal amount, you'll— Um, that will determine one of three outcomes. And they're in the book so I'm gonna say them outright.

AUSTIN: If you end up with a high Cool Score you will— Millennium Break will be accepted by lots of people in the Principality as a potential successor state, as a force equivalent to the Curtain or the Pact of Necessary Venture, maybe not as big as Stel or as permanent as a Stel but seen as a similar force. Um, as another side that is worth rooting for, inside of this group of people who want to change the direction of things in PARTIZAN— or in the world of the Principality as it's going. That's if you have a high Cool Score.

AUSTIN: If you have a low Doubt Score at the very end of this game Millennium Break will be framed by the people of the world, the public will see them as terrorists, pirates, outlaws. People who are still within the Principality but opposed it in relation to it as internal opposition: criminal in nature, insurgent in nature, not justified or legitimate.

AUSTIN: But if you cut the middle you'll get the third ending, so to speak, which is: Millennium Break will establish itself as a totally separate party, its own sovereign nation with all of the complications that entail that. Not unified the way that... it would be, if it has kind of, you know, pushed down its current fractures and frustrations. But, at the same time, still separate from the Principality in such a way that it could really start to, you know, push a new way of life for the people that are within it.

AUSTIN: I don't know that any of those are, like, capital G "Good" endings. As Art asked [chuckles] asked me last night. I think that they are all complex endings, that all will frame

what the action in the [next season](#) of this game will look like. Which we'll get to in a year or whatever we round back from after season 7.

AUSTIN: So those are big stakes. I'll not that, like, things like "character death" can be arrived at during this game. I don't have explicit rules for that but I trust us to feel— if it feels right to talk about that stuff. You know, this is not a game where characters have a harm or something like that, or HP, but we should, you know, look down the barrel of a gun, at characters on every side of the table.

AUSTIN: You heard me mention Cool and Doubt, those are the two stats in this game. Caught in the gravity of the Principality only two stats matter: your ability to Doubt and your ability to be Cool. When you Doubt you look beyond your circumstances and the rules in the world in which you have been raised. Doubting means recognizing the ways that your revolution could be co-opted by the Empire you fight against. When you Doubt, you philosophize, reach out, question and calculate, you refuse to put on a show. Doubting means fighting against the narrative imposed by the cameras, or ducking the cameras entirely, and in turn to escape the gravity of the Principality and its narratives. It means speaking honestly outside of your mech, outside of the apparatus of War and Empire. When you Doubt, you spread Doubt about Millennium Break among the public of the Principality. On the long run, you contribute to the impression that Millennium Break is something new, dangerous and uniquely Other.

AUSTIN: When you are Cool, meanwhile, you lean into the narrative imposed by the cameras, taking advantage of the Principality's logic, domination and power. You scheme, act out, or act, make out, [chuckles] make drama, and make big moves. Being Cool means understanding the rules of this paradigm, this endless Empire, and winning at their own game. And sometimes, just sometimes, it means doing flashy things in your really, really, Cool robot. When you are Cool, you are Cool on *their* terms; and on the long run you contribute to the impression that Millennium Break is just another faction, vying for control of this powerful empire.

[00:13:58]

AUSTIN: Those are the stats. Everyone has or rather, those are the Scores. Everyone has, like in *Lasers & Feelings* (which is itself a game, I should say, by John Harper, which I didn't say it on top, shouts out to John Harper)... So, we've played a bunch of— [chuckles] two different hacks by John Harper hacks, actually, in this season: [Beam Saber's](#) also, of course, a "Forged in the Dark" game.

AUSTIN: You've one Score, which is a number between 2 and 5. If your number is low, it means you are good at Cool things, because when you roll your dice you're trying to roll *above* the number to do Cool things. If you have a high number, it means you're good at Doubt, because when you're rolling Doubt to do something, you are trying to roll under your number.

AUSTIN: On top of that your characters do have a bunch of other things: Style, Military Role, On Camera Role (which is something like: are you a hero, a villain, are you the comic relief, are you framed as the mystery character, or the wildcard, etc). Then you have a Goal, which, I think, is pretty established [chuckles] based on what these characters have been all season.

[0:15:00]

AUSTIN: You have a name, you have some Possessions, and you have a Mech, with a couple of Quirks, Style, etc.

KEITH: To be fair, a lot of characters have not been around all season.

AUSTIN: Totally, totally. But it should have Goals at this point. And also, from a listening standpoint, most of them have been around now for months of listening at the very least [cross], which is one of the things that happens with making podcasts like this.

KEITH: [cross] Oh yeah.

[00:15:23]

AUSTIN: So, let's go down the list, and talk about what your Styles, your Military Roles, etc., and your Score are. Let's start the way it's listed here! Kalar! Go ahead first.

JACK: Hello, I'm playing Anakalar... Kalar Anakalar, a bird giantkiller. My Style is "proactive."

AUSTIN: What does that mean? That's like your— the way you present yourself to the world, your vibe.

JACK: Yeah, like, he gets things done. He...

AUSTIN: Hm. Uhum.

JACK: If he encounters a problem he will attempt to go out and fix it. If he can't work out how to fix it, he will spend time trying to figure out what that even— what that first step even looks like.

AUSTIN Uhum.

JACK: My Military Role is "giantkiller," um, I am a specialist at taking down large... [sighs] Is it specifically mechs? I think yeah, like large...

AUSTIN: [cross] Hm! I think you can take down... You can still probably...

JACK: [cross] I'm also thinking, like, artillery placements, like...

AUSTIN: Uhum. Uhum. Uhum.

JACK: Destroying big things that they don't want you to destroy. My On Camera Role...

AUSTIN: War machines, probably, generally.

JACK: [chuckles] War machines! Yes. My On Character Role³ is "protective." Kalar is a bird dad and I am sure that the various cameras of the Principality... have found this out, one way or another.

AUSTIN Okay.

JACK: My Doubt/Cool Score is 4, I'm closer to Doubting than being Cool. Um, we were talking about this last night and the phrase that kept coming up from the book was: "Speak honestly outside of your mech", which I think is something but Kalar spends a lot of time doing which is just like... playing, talking, jumping around outside mechs... Um.

KEITH: [cross] Just a regular bird?

JACK: [cross] My Goal...

[ALI laughs]

JACK: Just a regular bird.

AUSTIN: Uhum!

JACK: Look, just a regular bird playing, talking, jumping around [cross] outside mechs.

KEITH: [cross] Terrorist. Just a regular bird terrorist.

JACK: Well now, hold on!

[SYLVI laughs]

AUSTIN: We'll find out, won't we?

³ They probably mean On Camera Role.

JACK: My Goal is to “reunite with my husband and children on a safe Partizan.” So, like, make Partizan safe for everyone to come back; reunite with them. Um, my Possessions are: a worn uniform; a gravity belt; which is the, sort of, inventory system that Kalar uses; a set of rations; a sidearm... Hmm, which might be my sword, my mech-killing sword.

AUSTIN: Sure, ye-ye-yeah [cross] Go ahead and write that in! Sure, yea-yea-yeah. I’m flexible on that shit.

JACK: [cross] ...and a broken bird toy — which is, like, a kids toy that Kalar has and is broken and he hopes to be able to remake one day with the people who gave it to him.

AUSTIN: Aww, very cute. Alright, what are your— What’s your— Your Mech? [chuckles]

JACK: NO.

AUSTIN: NO.

[AUSTIN & JACK chuckle]

AUSTIN: And then what are *your* Quirks since your mech doesn’t have— doesn’t exist.

JACK: Okay, Quirk number one: “nimble,” quick on my feet, agile; Quirk number two: “destructive.” When I put my mind to destroying something, I do it messily and.. and profoundly? Significantly?

AUSTIN: Yeah, that works.

JACK: And my weakness is that I am small...

AUSTIN: You are.

JACK: In comparison to the mechs.

AUSTIN: In comparison to other people: big. But in comparison to mechs: small. [cross] Not as big as Thisbe, though.

JACK: [cross] Yeah, it really reads like I’m a... How tall is Thisbe? Eight...? How tall is Thisbe, Jeanine?

JANINE: Car. Car tall.

AUSTIN: [cross] Car. Car tall.

JANINE: [cross] She’s car tall?

AUSTIN: Car length tall?

JACK: [*cross*] Like, if you put on length, right? Because I'm taller than a car.

KEITH: [*cross, indecipherable*]

KEITH: Right. Yeah.

[ALI laughs]

AUSTIN: All right, Ali, tell me about Kal'mera Broun.

ALI: Hi. Yeah. So, going down the list here. Broun's Style is "rude." [*chuckles*] Their Military Road⁴ is "mechanic." Their On Camera Role is "wildcard."

AUSTIN: Wait, that's not all you wrote here. [*chuckles*]

ALI: [*laughs*] Mhh. I didn't want to read the other into a microphone but I wrote "slash problematic face".

[SYLVI laughs]

AUSTIN: Aha!

ALI: Which, you know...

AUSTIN: That's true!

JACK: It's true

ALI: Well, it is... [*laughs*] Their Doubt/Cool Score is a 4 which is slightly leaning towards the Doubt side. I— I struggled with this a bunch because I feel like Broun is such a, like, play by their rules sort of character. But I think at the end of the day, like, trying to think of how other people perceive Broun's actions, like, it's off-putting either way. So... [*chuckles*]

AUSTIN: Yeah.

ALI: So no-one will watch Broun on camera and be like "yeah, Millennium Break seems all right".

AUSTIN: I definitely felt like the... For me part of it is like, I feel like there's a 3 Broun at the beginning of the show...

⁴ She probably means Military Role.

[ALI chuckles]

AUSTIN: ...and there's a 4 Broun now in some ways. I really think fucking with Divines is a real thing that is hard to come back for, [cross] for the Principality.

ALI: [cross] Sure, yeah.

AUSTIN: For viewers in the Principality, like capturing them and tinkering with them. [chuckles]

[ALI laughs]

AUSTIN: Not chill!

ALI: Yeah...

AUSTIN: Also, I think about Broun as being the person that— Broun is like the CIA in the sense that people who love America [cross] are like: the CIA should exist.

[ALI chuckles]

KEITH: [cross] Hmm!

AUSTIN: I don't want to know what they do. Because it would upset me.

[SYLVI laughs]

AUSTIN: But the CIA should exist.

[Everyone laughs and chuckles]

AUSTIN: And Broun is that, like, fits that need for the Principality. And I mean pre-Millennium Break Broun here more than anything, but.

SYLVI: Definitely a problematic fave.

AUSTIN: Yes.

[ALI laughs]

JACK: The CIA? Uh huh.

AUSTIN: [cross] Yeah. CIA, problema— Listen—

JACK: [*cross, ironically*] I love their whacky Twitter posts!

AUSTIN: Anyway, Broun, you want to continue? What— with your Goal? Uh, yeah.

ALI: So my Goal is to repet—

[Everyone bursts out in laughter]

KEITH: Repet?!? Repet who?

AUSTIN: Aha! What are you— Who do you petting? Who you petting again?

ALI: [*through laughter*] Give me a second

[Everyone laughs]

SYLVI: [*laughing*] Oh my god!

JACK: Off to a good start.

JANINE: [*cross*] Who did you pet before?

ALI: [*cross*] Broun's Goal is to "repay their debt to Valence / leave Partisan guilt free."

AUSTIN: Great.

ALI: Their Possessions are: "a worn uniform; the Three Cheers; a set of rations; a sidearm; and Valence's research." And then their Mech is the Three Cheers, we know and love, which— its Style is "experimental." And then the Quirks are: "hidden compartments; fast acceleration; and a bulky and fragile torso."

AUSTIN: Love it. The— the Quirk stuff comes from *War in the Year 3000* and it's like: two good things, one bad thing, and I felt like we were at the point at which we could just do that with our Quirks from Beam Saber, just to be clear. And in general, I should say, like, the— the engine of this game is from *War— War in the Year 3000*. And then the stuff that I've scaffolded around it, in terms of *tracking* what you roll, how many rolls there are, point totals and stuff, that is the stuff that I've hacked in, just for people who are curious.

AUSTIN: Umh, Phrygian.

KEITH: Hi.

AUSTIN: Hi.

KEITH: Um, so I have— I have for— for Style I have “dreamy.” This is a twist on, I think, what it meant by dreamy.

DRE: Yeah. [chuckles]

KEITH: Which is sort of like, when you see Phrygian you sort of feel like maybe you're dreaming.

AUSTIN: Dreamy in the Twin Peaks sense of a character being dreamy.

KEITH: [cross] Yes. Yeah.

AUSTIN: [cross] Though, I guess Twin Peaks has traditionally dreamy characters.

SYLVI: [cross] Yeah!

KEITH: Yeah, it's got both.

AUSTIN: It's got both. Sometimes you're the same person! [chuckles]

KEITH: Yeah. Yeah, I— You know.

AUSTIN: [chuckling] David Bowie walking into an office building that no one else— where no one else can see him, both sorts of dreamy! Yelling about some shit you don't understand! Yeah.

KEITH: I remember in high school I had to do— I didn't have to do, I elected to do— I had to write a paper and I elected to do it on lucid dreaming and I had to practice to try and— and trigger it. So when you see something, you go, oh, when this happens I'll count my fingers because a lot of times in dreams, your fingers— you'll have the wrong amount of fingers and that'll be shocking enough to your brain to make you go “oh, I'm dreaming”.

AUSTIN: Hm.

KEITH: And I imagined Phrygian as someone where you see them and you count your fingers...

AUSTIN: Right.

KEITH: ...to be like “am I literally in a dream right now?”

AUSTIN: And then what happens is you keep counting the fingers and they're keeping more of them.

KEITH: [cross] Yeah.

AUSTIN: [cross] Everyone should go to the [Bluff City's finale for the first season](#).

[Ali giggles]

AUSTIN: Very dreamy, *very* dreamy in this sense of the word.

KEITH: Very dreamy.

[Laughs]

JACK: God, that's a dreamy episode.

AUSTIN: Yeah.

KEITH: Umh. Military Role: "specialist." I almost wrote "infiltrator," but I didn't and I wrote specialist, so.

AUSTIN: Sure.

KEITH: On Camera Role. I struggle with this one too, but I put "wildcard."

AUSTIN: I think that's right. I think that makes sense.

KEITH: I think that's right, too.

AUSTIN: Yeah.

KEITH: My Doubt/Cool — well, I struggle with all of these — Doubt/Cool Score was 4. I was— My first— My gut was 3 and then I was like maybe I'll be a 2 and then I was like no... Art— Austin and Ali convinced me that I'm wrong. That I was wrong about wanting to be a 2 and then I was almost a 3 again and then I'm a 4.

AUSTIN: Now you're a 4, okay.

KEITH: Yeah.

AUSTIN: Let's commit to it. I'm down.

AUSTIN: What is your Goal?

KEITH. "To deal a blow in the war against The Divine Principality."

AUSTIN: Good opportunity right here.

KEITH: Yeah, uhm.

AUSTIN: Your Possessions are basically the same shit?

KEITH: Yeah, I got the same shit. Uh, we haven't done my Mech. Do— [cross] Do we wanna just go... Let's save it.

AUSTIN: [cross] You want to go save it? Let's save it. Let's save it for when you *debut it*, debut it. I think that's fine.

KEITH: Yeah.

AUSTIN: And we'll just list the Quirks and stuff when it's that in the name and all that stuff when it's time.

KEITH: Okay. Yeah.

AUSTIN: Figure in Bismuth, Dre. [cross] Hi.

DRE: Hey!

AUSTIN: Hi.

DRE: Sorry, I was not prepared. [cross] Maybe I should've been.

AUSTIN: [cross] That's okay. [chuckles]

DRE: I mean, I am prepared.

[00:25:18]

DRE: Okay, so, Figure in Bismuth! Their Style is "blithe." [cross] That's how you pronounce that, right?

AUSTIN: [cross] I love this. Yeah, blithe, yeah.

DRE: Uh, their Military Role [cross] is "ace pi—"

AUSTIN: [cross] Wait, do you wanna explain what that means for people who maybe have not heard "blithe" before [cross] as, like, a descriptor?

DRE: [cross] Sure... So I think, like, blithe kinda has, like... I— 'cause I had— I googled this to double check, [cross] it kinda has two meanings.

AUSTIN: [*cross*] M-hm.

DRE: One of 'em is just, like, a really happy person. But the one I'm going for is basically somebody who has a level of, like, casualness or cheerfulness that is indifferent and kinda shitty.

AUSTIN: Yeah.

[DRE chuckles]

AUSTIN: This is exactly right! It's like: Oh! Like, it's every time that y— Every time the Figure has been like... "Hey!" Like that kind of just very empty-headed "hello" that makes them seem really nice, [*cross*] is also him being kind of like...

DRE: [*cross*] Uhum.

AUSTIN: ...disconnected from the reality of the moment, right?

DRE: Yeah, yeah.

AUSTIN: Um... Likewise, all the Clem stuff, right? The— The stuff that we— we've got from that argument with Kalar in the last... that was Kalar in the last episode?

DRE: Yes, that was, [*cross*] yeah.

AUSTIN: [*cross*] Yeah, yeah.

JACK: [*chuckling*] In the tunnel, [*cross*] where we had a loud argument.

AUSTIN: [*cross*] Yes.

[DRE chuckles]

AUSTIN: Yes, so good. Uhm...What is your Military Role?

DRE: Uh, their Military Role is "ace pilot," uh, and their On Camera Role is... "asking questions".

[SYLVI and JACK sigh exasperatedly]

AUSTIN: Is that a... "I'm just asking questions", or is that a "Audience surrogate," "I'm the character who's from the outside so I'm things" so that the audience... "I'm asking the things the audience would be asking"?

DRE: I think... it is moreso "I'm just asking questions", but...

[AUSTIN chuckles]

DRE: ...my Goal is for this to tie... can we just skip to Goal? [cross] Because it— I think it ties into that.

AUSTIN: [cross] Oh yeah.

DRE: My Goal is to determine my loyalty to The Witch in Glass.

AUSTIN: Cool.

SYLVI: Hm!

DRE: Because even though the Figure is blithe, they are not, like, completely... indifferent?

AUSTIN: M-hm.

DRE: They are blithe because they are... [sighs] They are blithe because they have just accepted the way things are, and it's like: "yeah the system has problems, but... we can work within the system to fix those problems."

AUSTIN: Right.

DRE: And I don't think they have met folks like Kalar, or Sovereign Immunity, or stuff who are like "nah, we gotta break everything, [cross] and rebuild it."

AUSTIN: [cross] M-hm.

DRE: Uhm... and so at times they will be "I'm just asking questions!" but I think at other times they are genuinely like... "Oh, this is— this is a very different way of thinking and viewing the world."

AUSTIN: Yeah.

DRE: And I would like to try and figure that out.

AUSTIN: Yeah. What is your Doubt/Cool Score?

DRE: Uh, it is 3.

AUSTIN: Okay. The most Cool since, or so far. Right?

DRE: M-hm. Yeah.

AUSTIN: Uhm...

JACK: They have a head made of crystal, [cross] it is very Cool!

AUSTIN: [cross] They do... it is very Cool, it is simply Cool...

DRE: [cross] Yeah.

AUSTIN: Well, it is simply Cool, and also kind of terrifying, and this is the fun thing about this whole party [cross] in some ways.

JACK: [cross] Dreamy!

DRE: M-hm!

AUSTIN: Dream— [cross] dreamy! Dreamy head.

SYLVI: [cross] [laughs] Really makes you wanna check your fingers!

AUSTIN: Um... [chuckles]

JACK: [chuckles]

AUSTIN: Go ahead and list me your Possessions, except the last one because we'll also save [cross] your mech for an on-screen debut.

DRE: [cross] Right. Uh, the only Possessions I have are my "grav-chute," which I used in the last episode [cross], um...

AUSTIN: [cross] M-hm.

DRE: ...and my "remote vehicle control" [cross], uhm...

AUSTIN: [cross] And you presumably also have some sort of weapon, also, right? [cross] Some sort of...

DRE: [cross] I don't... know, I don't think so!

AUSTIN: [cross] Oh, really? You don— you don't think you got one...

DRE: [cross] I don't think I got a gun or anything.

AUSTIN: ...during the last, um, the last couple weeks?

DRE: ...here's the thing, I don't know if Figure can use most guns.

AUSTIN: Oh, interesting! [*cross*] Because of their hand situation?

DRE: [*cross*] I— his big... crystal fingers.

AUSTIN: Right, [*cross*] sure.

DRE: [*cross*] Yeah.

AUSTIN: Yeah, that makes sense! Interesting. Alright! Um... Let's keep on movin' then. Thisbe?

JANINE: Yeah, [*cross*] um.

AUSTIN: [*cross*] Hi.

JANINE: So, uh...

[AUSTIN chuckles]

JANINE: [*chuckling*] Thisbe... Thisbe was hard. I had to— I d— I felt like I made a lot of stuff up. Um. So, her Style is "powerhouse"...

AUSTIN: M-hm.

JANINE: Which, this— that's a thing.

KEITH: [*laughing*]

AUSTIN: Yeah, absolutely!

JANINE: Military role: "dot-dot-dot, tank, question mark"?

AUSTIN: This seems right.

JANINE: Um...

AUSTIN: Think about the stuff in the... Portcullis System where you were just like [*chuckling*] walking into the turret fire?

[ALI chuckles]

JANINE: Yeah, [cross] that's— that's exactly—

AUSTIN: [cross] That's, yeah, uh-huh.

JANINE: It's like 90% of the time, Thisbe's solution is just “throw self at thing”?

AUSTIN: Yeah.

JANINE: And that— so there's not really like— that's not really like “sniper” or [chuckling] [cross] anything.

AUSTIN: [chuckling] [cross] Well, related!

JANINE: [cross] There's not really a Military Role for that because the military is an organization of human beings... [cross] um... hm.

AUSTIN: [chuckling] [cross] Yes. Related, uh, [cross] to throwing yourself at things—

JANINE: [cross] ...Yeah.

AUSTIN: —what is your On Camera Role?

JANINE: On-Camera Role is “wrecking ball”. [cross] Uh...

[SYLVI: chuckles]

AUSTIN: [cross] Love it emotionally, love it physically, great descriptor for how Thisbe is.

JANINE: Yeah. Doubt/Cool Score, man this was hard! [cross] Um...

AUSTIN: [cross] Uh-huh.

JANINE: I think I'm okay at 3... I— I also, like, moved around a lot here, because I think it's really easy for Thisb— like, Thisbe literally is a robot who participated in the Olympics!

AUSTIN: [chuckling] Uh-huh.

[SYLVI laughs]

JANINE: [cross] Um...

[AUSTIN laughs, JACK chuckles]

[0:30:00]

JANINE: It's— and— like, it's hard to look at her— [laughing] It's hard to look at— [cross]

AUSTIN: [cross] Yeah...

JANINE: -an Olympic robot and be like [cross] “maybe this is *bad*”

AUSTIN: [cross] God...

JANINE: ...which is also why I wrote “Uh-oh, am I literally the ‘Wow Cool robot’, fuck.” [cross]
Um...

[AUSTIN, DRE, and JACK laugh]

KEITH: But what if you also helped assassinate a world leader!

[AUSTIN laughs]

JANINE: So— so that's the thing, right, is that Thisbe... literally the last time Thisbe was on screen was, she ripped someone out of their mech and threw them into space very indifferently.

AUSTIN: Yeah.

JANINE: Uh. That's... not super cool? I mean it's— [cross] it's-...

JACK: [cross] I mean...

JANINE: It's complicated? It's complicated. So I can't just give her a straight 2. [cross] Uh...

AUSTIN: [cross] There's— right, there's a-, there is a...

JANINE: [cross] There are things she's done on screen that would make people nervous for sure. [chuckling]

AUSTIN: The “2 version” of Thisbe wants to be seen as cool and heroic, and makes choices dependent on... making sure that people think that the actions that she's taking look sick. Whereas Thisbe just gets the job done in a way that can [cross] be off-putting sometimes, because...

JANINE: [cross] Yeah. Yeah, she's not like— she's not, like, scheming. She's not like—

AUSTIN: [cross] Right.

JANINE: That line about, you know, trying to use the image to your advantage or whatever, Thisbe is not doing that, but she is also not... doing the other thing [cross] either, really. Uh...

AUSTIN: [cross] Right, right, yeah. That makes sense! Yeah.

JANINE: Anyway. Uh... her Goal is to “resume the search.” She’s kind of just like... this is to her just like a, “Well, we have to do this clearly, but then we’re gonna... go back [cross] and do the other thing.”

AUSTIN: [cross] Just get through this and then go... right. The farmers. Yeah.

JANINE: [cross] Yeah.

[00:31:28]

AUSTIN: [cross] Uh...

JANINE: [cross] Uh... it’s-

AUSTIN: [cross] Go ahead.

JANINE: It’s— you know, it’s like the clean-up of unfinished business.

AUSTIN: M-hm.

JANINE: Um... Possessions, this was also difficult, so [chuckling] “a nice sarong,” um, “a personal force field and screen,” those are like part of her body, so I don’t know if they count as [cross] Possessions?

AUSTIN: [cross] Yeah! Sure. Totally. But they’re things that you could evoke in this game.

JANINE: [cross] But they seemed... worth... noting.

AUSTIN: Yeah.

JANINE: Yeah.

AUSTIN: The last one was [cross] “screen hands,” right? Is what you said?

JANINE: [cross] Um... [waits for AUSTIN to finish] “Screen hands,” not scream hands. [chuckling]

AUSTIN: [chuckling] That's a Cool fuckin' power. I got hands what scream at you. [cross] They do like...

JANINE: [cross] Save for season seven.

AUSTIN: Yeah, that's a season seven power.

[DRE and JANINE laugh]

JANINE: Um, so.... Thisbe's mech is of course Mow. [cross] Uh...

AUSTIN: [cross] M-hm.

JANINE: His Style is "industrial". Um, positive Quirks... "psionic stuff"?

AUSTIN: M-hm.

JANINE: And "unconventional fighter," like lots of "weird" weapons and adaptable... I've given him like a lot of bizarre shit over the [cross] course of the campaign, so...

AUSTIN: [cross] [chuckling] You have. It's good, though.

JANINE: Uh, remember that machine gun full of needles? [cross] That was a thing.

AUSTIN: [cross, chuckling] That fuckin ruled. Yeah.

JANINE: Yeah.

AUSTIN: [chuckling] "Wow, Cool robot!"

JANINE: Yup! Um, and the negative would be "exposed pilot," 'cause she's just sittin' on the back there.

AUSTIN: She's just out there, [cross] yeah.

JANINE: [cross] Yeah.

AUSTIN: Uh... Ver'million Blue! Millie.

SYLVI: Yes, hello!

AUSTIN: Hi!

SYLVI: So... my Style is “dangerous.” Um... I almost went with “dreamy,” but I feel like Millie acts dangerous [cross] a lot of the time.

AUSTIN: [cross] Oh yeah, Millie's dangerous.

[a few others chuckle]

SYLVI: Um, Military Role is “sniper.” That was very easy for me.

AUSTIN: Uhum.

SYLVI: Um, On Camera Role I went with “dark horse,” just because, like... the way I thought of this was that Millie's kind of been, like, away from the actual, like, movement of Millennium Break for a few months in-story?

AUSTIN: Uhum.

SYLVI: Like, including the last arc, but also before that... and so, like, she's... kind of coming back into the fold on this stuff. And is also not someone who would traditionally be seen as, like...

AUSTIN: Uhum.

SYLVI: ...a leader, I suppose? But kind of ends up being in those positions, with, like... back during, like, the Millennium Break arc, her and the soldiers and stuff was kind of like a mini thing of that.

AUSTIN: Yeah!

SYLVI: Um... my Doubt/Cool Score I went with 3, because I was able to argue for both 2 and 4, so I was like let's just do the middle.

AUSTIN: Yeah.

SYLVI: Um... [chuckles] My Goal is to “escape Motion/Partizan,” they're kind of linked so I just put them both in there. Um... Possessions are “a sniper rifle; a machine pistol” — I need both, it's important. —

[AUSTIN chuckles affirmatively]

SYLVI: “...the Stray Dog, my mech; um, the runt bot; and my cool leather jacket.” And I put a smiley face on my sheet.

AUSTIN: Good. Good Possessions.

SYLVI: Um, my Mech is the Stray Dog. Um, I put "experimental" for its Style, because I don't know how to write "transforming monster mech" in one word.

AUSTIN: Yeah.

[ALI laughs]

SYLVI: Um, and for the positive Quirks, I brought over "double-jointed limbs and hidden firing brace," and for the negative Quirk I made one of my Quirks a little worse, this was like what I was gonna do if it, like, broke down or whatever.

AUSTIN: Right.

SYLVI: 'Cause I wanted it to sound more negative, so I turned "overwhelming sensors" into "intrusive systems", um... which is [cross] sort of like... yeah.

AUSTIN: [cross] I like that turn. I like that change, and we can figure out ways to make that show up on screen, probably. [cross] Would be fun.

SYLVI: [cross] Sick.

[00:34:49]

AUSTIN: Alright. Sovereign Immunity.

ART: ...I lost my place on the sheet! [chuckles] Um...

AUSTIN: We're gonna try to do this before Art's camera... camera, mic breaks.

ART: The camera of the voice! Style: "tired." Like someone who's up all night looking at a computer.

AUSTIN: Uh-huh.

ART: Military role: "scout."

AUSTIN: Good.

ART: On Camera Role: "Michael Jordan on the Wizards."

AUSTIN: [cackles]

KEITH: [laughs loudly]

ART: If you're the right age, this is perfect, if you're the wrong age it doesn't work at all, go ask an old person!

ALI: [laughs]

KEITH: I know just enough about basketball to have thought it was funny!

AUSTIN: Yeah.

ART: He Scored twenty points a game, I mean, don't—

AUSTIN: Yeah.

ART: don't... You remember it as bad but he was— he was still a pretty good player!

KEITH: [cross] But I get what you— I get the meaning.

ART: [cross] Doubt/Cool Score: 4. Goal: "crush the stels." Possessions: "A worn uniform; Old Glory, it's the Mech; a set of rations; a sidearm; and a mech-sized scythe." The Mech is Old Glory, the Style is "antique," and the Quirks are "redundant systems; modular components; and piece of junk"!

AUSTIN: [cross] Love it!

ART: [cross] And that's positive, positive, negative.

AUSTIN: [amused] Oh, okay, I see now. Alright.

ART: Yeah. And I'm out!

AUSTIN: Nice work! Good... [applauds] yay! Good job, Art!

JACK: That was great, Art. [cross] And it was at the right volume, too!

AUSTIN: [cross] That was professional. [laughs]

ART: [laughs] Yeah.

AUSTIN: [chuckles] Alright. Play is organized into three Acts. Act One and Act Two, uh, have set challenges that you can customize and use in your games at home if you'd like. In Act One, the Pact of Necessary Venture's experimental energy fleet comes under attack by the combined forces of The Witch in Glass and the Curtain, both of which are attempting to capture it for their own uses. One of the vessels in the fleet, a large troop transport called the Bitten Bullet, houses

two Millennium Break agents: Kalar Anakalar, and... this is wrong, I've written "the Branched Phrygian" here, but that's just 'cause I misremembered shit. Uh, it's actually, uh, The Witch in Glass's right hand, uh... the Figure in Bismuth, right?

JACK: M-hm.

KEITH: [cross] Yes.

AUSTIN: [cross] Yeah, okay, boom. Who have stolen...

JACK: [cross] On a space journey.

AUSTIN: Yeah. Uh-huh. On a space journey. Who have stolen important data on how to disrupt Operation Shackled Sun. If they broadcast this information, it will reveal their location onboard and lead to their deaths. Using the ongoing battle as cover, one or two Millennium Break members must break through the fighting, rescue Kalar and the Figure, and escape the fray so that they can transmit the data to the rest of Millennium Break. In Act Two, a group of Millennium Break's best will breach the stormy atmosphere of the gas giant Girandole, infiltrate the Portcullis Gate hidden within, and attempt to stop Operation Shackled Sun directly. The final act will change to reflect the outcome of those first two Acts.

Once an act begins, uh, narrate the situation and the stakes, and then choose the character who would take lead on solving this problem. The player stages a scene, explaining where they are, what they're doing, and who, if anyone is there with them. If there is a GM when you play, the GM can play NPCs, the world, or other aspects of the story, otherwise the responsibility falls to the rest of the table.

Play continues until the character commits to doing something dramatic, risky, or unpredictable, at which point it is time to roll dice — which we'll get to when it's time to roll dice. Scenes don't need to be especially long, but they should be allowed to breathe. If the situation feels like it's turning into a series of rolls without any characterization or a development, take a breath and slow down. On the other hand, don't feel like you need to belabor your roleplay. Not every scene needs an exhaustive monologue. Don't feel bad if you have a big idea and want to develop it quickly, and then move on.

Um... uh... So, I guess to... Let me just reiterate the situation, because I haven't done that very clearly yet... and just to, like, put everything back on the table. ...Two arcs ago, the Blue Channel, Broun's ship, got to the Portcullis at the edge of the gate— at the edge of the Partizan system. Um, and went to leave, and then realized, "Oh shit, the Portcullis System is not working!" Went inside to investigate, and found evidence that there was some sort of second Portcullis System in the depths of Girandole, a giant gas gia-... [laughs] "a giant gas giant," Jesus. A gas giant, uhm... [laughs]

KEITH: Well, it could be a giant, [cross] it could be almost like a star!

AUSTIN: [cross] You're right, right. It could be, right. You're right. There are different size gas giants. A gas giant that Partizan orbits around — and that Portcullis System seems to be the one in which the Pact, many, many, many episodes ago, sent a fleet through, into the Nobel, uh, home territory, or near there, where they confronted Autonomy Itself and were obliterated. Uhm, so that's the— the half of that that the Blue Channel side of things got, the escape game got that, and that they were gonna bring something there to try to... capture the power of Autonomy Itself, the True Divine, this God, for their own uses, and the process would end up destroying Partizan, effectively turning Girandole into a giant star, from which they could suck infinite power out of. Uhm, uh, but you didn't know how.

In, uh, the Chasmata Quarry game, that part of Millennium Break found that the, uh, folks at the Pact of Necessary Venture, uh, had stormed a secret jail, that the Curtain had been running for... a long-long-long time, a thousand years, approximately, uh, and where they'd been keeping the barely alive body of the prophet Logos Kantel, uh, and had been trying to force Kantel into doing other miracles by putting them through stage performances, basically? [chuckles briefly] By putting them through complicated, uhm, uh, immersive theater experiences, and trying to, like, basically convince them that they were in different scenarios.

It seems like it had never really worked, until recently, when the half of the Verglaz Taiga became... or more than half, became jungle instead of taiga, uh, overnight. Um, having done that must have revealed where Logos Kantel was for the Pact, the Pact gets there, steals Logos Kantel, and now has brought them up to space, to this Portcullis System in the heart of the gas giant, where they are going to use Logos Kantel as a sort of... some sort of tool, to bring Autonomy Itself through the portal, through the Portcullis, where, because of this energy fleet, they will be captured — or some technology in the Portcullis, you're not sure how this is all working necessarily. That is what's going to happen with no involvement.

The Curtain has rushed through now that the gate is back open. They are arriving late, if they'd arrived earlier, they could've just stopped this, because they have a fleet big enough to do that, uh, but they don't. Um... you... have a much smaller fleet. In fact, let me just bring you over to a map. No that this is gonna be about, like, moving pieces around on a map, but I wanted to scale it a little bit here. So!

Here's... here's Girandole. It's this beautiful... it's Jupiter in ultraviolet. If you do a search for "jupiter ultraviolet", you will find the image that the players are seeing, uh... [chuckles briefly] Partizan is here, this little moon in the top left that you can kind of see, uhm... you can see that there is a big stupid looking Portcullis in the middle, that's not... none of this is to scale.

[SYLVI: chuckles]

AUSTIN: And in the North-East is the... the Curtain fleet... which I should just write. Uhm. You can tell because it's a big red... column, surrounded by smaller red columns, which I've decided is what the Curtain's, like, visual symbol is now, ever since the Red Light fell on Partizan. Um...

and then, they just have, like, one giant fuck-off ship, and then a bunch of smaller ones and mechs and shit.

There is the, uh, the fleet of the Pact, which are these five oblong vessels, plus the Bitten Bullet, which is the one that, uh, Kalar and the Figure are stuck inside of, and that's in the middle here... Um, uh, and that's also near, like, it's basically... that ship has landed on this big platform, which is the... whatever the device is that's going to capture or allow them to use whatever the energy is produced by, by this operation.

And then there is the combined fleet of the Reflecting Pool, which is the big orange one, and all the orange ships are The Witch in Glass's ships, and then these kind of V-shaped ships — I know it looks like they're going in, but they're V-shaped and going outwards — are the Millennium Break ships. Um... and they're kind of in a group. They're much smaller... [laughs]

KEITH: Okay, so the flat end is where it's going.

AUSTIN: Yes, correct. [cross] Yes.

KEITH: [cross] 'Kay, got it.

AUSTIN: It's like, they're V-shaped, and yeah, it's like, the back is the... the bottom of the V is, like, where the cockpit is presumably, right. Um...

KEITH: [cross] Yeah.

AUSTIN: [cross] I don't know what these ships look like, these are just shapes that I came up with and was like "These feel Cool! Let's do these!" [cross] Um...

[SYLVI laughs]

JACK: [cross] The... [cross] V stands for "violence".

KEITH: [cross] I like how...

AUSTIN: The V stands for [cross] violence! Yeah, m-hm.

KEITH: [cross] Presumably... presumably Partizan up there, that's just an actual moon of actual Jupiter?

AUSTIN: I believe so, yeah. Looks Cool though!

KEITH: Look how much smaller it is than the two storms down at the bottom...

JACK: [cross] God.

AUSTIN: [cross] Yeah, it's *wild*, right?! Jupiter's [cross] so big!

KEITH: [cross] Yeah, it's insane. Yeah.

AUSTIN: And then The Reflecting Pool [cross] itself is kind of in the back.

KEITH: [cross] It's a *giant* gas giant.

AUSTIN: It is a giant gas giant!

[JACK laughs]

AUSTIN: I think... I think Girandole is probably the same. Uh... so yeah! So this is the situation. Um, what I need to know, is who wants to be doing which of these two Acts? Who wants to be going for the Portcullis, who wants to be trying to rescue, uh, the Figure and Kalar. Who is like, operation break through the storm, strike team, and who is... break through the big fight, to rescue our friends, and get whatever information they have.

[00:44:00]

KEITH: You know, [cross] I've—

DRE: [cross] I assume that myself and Kalar... the Figure and Kalar are kind of, uh, pre-assigned here... [laughs]

AUSTIN: [cross][laughs] Yes, correct--

JACK: [cross] We— we— we— [laughs] We can't really choose here!

AUSTIN: Yeah, correct! So basically, the question is do we want one person on the rescue mission, or do we want two people on the rescue mission? And if so, who wants to be where?

KEITH: Um, I don't know about Art, but I feel slightly... like I should probably Kalar and Phrygian? I mean, I read Phrygian 'cause it's there, [cross] Kalar and, uh, uh, the Figure?

AUSTIN: [cross] Yeah, that's alright. Yeah.

KEITH: Because, uh— 'cause, uh, we... left them there.

[AUSTIN & JACK laugh]

ART: Yeah, uh-huh! I feel that but I— I— I've... two— two hangups there? One: my just total fear that my microphone's gonna stop working. [laughs]

AUSTIN: Uh-huh.

KEITH: Right.

ART: And two: The feeling that we should break up the... groups from the last set.

AUSTIN: Sure.

KEITH: Okay.

DRE: Yeah.

AUSTIN: Or shuffle them a little bit at least.

ART: Yeah, even just a little shuffle.

[0:45:00]

ART: But... [chuckling] I also agree that it seems like we're responsible for this.

AUSTIN: [chuckles]

KEITH: Th— Wh— Th— Hey! We're not the ones that stowed away on a big ship! We very politely accepted, uh... [cross] that we should leave!

AUSTIN: [laughs] Corrasion's... yeah, uh-huh!

JANINE: Here's, okay, so, here's a thought: Um, it feels like... for... I'm trying to think of like— I'm trying of the situation of like, us arriving from the Portcullis, like, showing up to help...

AUSTIN: M-hm.

JANINE: What is the situation where these parties do get divided, and I think, a thing that makes sense to me, Ali please correct me if I'm wrong, but I feel like— I feel like Broun is probably a solid... squad 2? Because of the... because of their... their, uh, Va— I was gonna say "Valence baggage", but you know what I mean! [chuckles]

AUSTIN: [laughs] Wow!

ALI: [laughs] M-hm!

KEITH: [laughs loudly]

JANINE: Right, like the... [cross] I don't—

AUSTIN: [cross] Oh yeah, no! That's...

JANINE: I don't remember the exact word, and I didn't wanna go through the— through the—the.. sheets!

AUSTIN: Uhuh.

JANINE: [cross] It's on the thing!

AUSTIN: [cross] Notes!

KEITH: [cross] Uh, re-pet, I think is what it was.

[AUSTIN, ALI and JANINE laugh]

JANINE: Their debt to Valence, so I feel like... it makes more sense that Broun would maybe be 2, but I'm wondering if the thing would be like, if Broun was like, "oh they need help rescuing these people, hey I'll drop Thisbe off." And Thisbe will... you know. Like, I'm wondering if that's maybe we could... how we could shake things up a little bit team-wise? If that makes sense?

ALI: [cross] Yeah...Um...

AUSTIN: [cross] There was definitely— I should just say that there's definitely time to do that shuffle or drop-off, and we can even talk about what all that looks like if we wanted to, spend time on that, but it's up to us. Anyway, ALI.

ALI: Um... yeah. I guess my impulse was that, like, if one of these missions was... flying into the middle of a planet, Broun would probably be doing that...

AUSTIN: Yeah.

ALI: ...in the Blue Channel? Um...

AUSTIN: That's there, by the way, the little teardrop thing that has the green outline 'cause that's what your drawing of the Blue Channel had, [cross] to— west of The Reflecting Pool.

ALI: [cross] [laughs]

AUSTIN: You can change the colors if you want to, I'm not sold, [cross] but...

ALI: [cross] [laughs] That's fine. Um... Yeah, but I, I, you know... You know, Thisbe... Thisbe can go out and about. Broun is not... [cross, laughs] forcing them to... yeah.

JANINE: [cross] Yeah, Thisbe's kind of like... Thisbe's kinda... here to help wherever she's the most useful... and... like, I'm open to ideas there, you know?

ALI: Yeah.

AUSTIN: M-hm.

ALI: Rescuing people feels a little bit of like a... smash and grab? [cross] [laughing] And that feels like a thing Thisbe's great at.

JANINE: [cross] Yeah that's the other thing is that like...

AUSTIN: Yeah.

JANINE: This... this feels very much like, uh, that might be... that might be the thing, yeah.

AUSTIN: So maybe, is that then... Thisbe and Phrygian? And then Portcullis team is Millie, Broun... Sovereign Immunity?

ALI: [exhaling] Oh god. [laughs]

SYLVI: [laughs]

AUSTIN: Rubbing my hands together like Birdman...

[ALI laughing loudly]

SYLVI: [cross] What? That's a great team!

ALI: [cross] [laughing] I'm fine with it!

ART: [cross] I mean, I think we have to go with any teams that— that draw that reaction, I think that has to be it now!

[AUSTIN and ALI laugh]

AUSTIN: I like it! I like it!

KEITH: Yeah.

AUSTIN: Alright! Um... Is there anything we want to talk about or frame before we— we take... one, we should take a break. Two, anyone who's in part two does not need to sit on this call, or if they do they can mute themselves and... eat food, or scroll twitter and not feel too bad. I don't want anyone to feel like they're overworked today, um... uh, uh... I would— Obviously attention is great at the table, but I'm also conscious of the fact that we do finales, and finales go long and are exhausting. Um, so. So keep that in mind. Uh, but— b— Is there anything before we do that break and shuffle things up that we wanna frame, are there any conversations pre-battle conversations that we wanna get... here.

Uh, my guess is that the Blue Channel could've come and docked on the Reflecting Pool, which... uh, the Reflecting Pool, I should note, part of the— part of the deal here— and I'll just do this abstractly, is that... um, the Reflecting Pool and The Witch in Glass negotiating with their rival, [chuckles] or you know, her rival, Gucci Garantine, um... Uh... agreed to bring the fleets of— or the weapons of Millennium Break into space, via the Divine Past, via the Reflecting Pool, because that ship, that Divine can leave the atmosphere, uh, in a way that does not need, like, the launch loop that the Blue Channel went through. Does not need the huge— any other big launch vessels or whatever. Um, uh, because that's just what a Divine can do.

But part of that was this thing that if Clem can get the Bitten B— or not the Bitten Bullet but can get the energy fleet's, like, technology, she can keep it. Um, and so I think when you got, when you landed, uh... those of you who are on the Blue Channel, you know, you definitely saw a mix of people both loyal to The Witch in Glass and from the Reflecting Pool's culture, but also a bunch of Millennium Break people here who are very confused, and often... at... kind of you know, at odds with the Reflecting Pool and the people here, so there's kind of a tense... eh, environment here, you know? I definitely think this is— this is... temporary alliance at best, uh, going into this, anyway. [cross] So that is the vibe.

SYLVI: [cross, half-chuckling] I think that Millie doesn't really get off the Blue Channel when [cross] they're at the Reflective Pool— er, Reflecting Pool...

AUSTIN: [cross] Fair. Yeah.

SYLVI: 'Cause like... I'm not gonna just walk into Clementine Kesh's house, you know?

AUSTIN: No, no.

ALI: [laughs] Yeah, I was thinking about that, 'cause it's like a very much eating crow situation for Broun and Jesset to dock here, right?

AUSTIN: Yes, big time.

ALI: Um, of being like, "Yeah, we said we're still Millennium Break, haha, hi..."

AUSTIN: [chuckles] Uh-huh.

ALI: Um... [laughing] So it might just be like... Millie, Jesset and Broun, like, playing cards or whatever inside of the Blue Channel, and then [cross] like SI shows up and it's like.. "Hey..." [laughs]

AUSTIN: [cross] Yeah. Uh-uh, yeah, yeah... I also think, uh, A.O.... I wanna say K.O. Rook, Kueen Overture Rook, is here, uh, along with A.O. Once it was time to get the fuck off the planet it was like, alright, we both have to be on that fuckin' ship, we gotta get out of here, um... but, but yeah. Anything— Anyone else have a thing, or a conversation they wanna have at this point?

[everyone is silent]

AUSTIN: Alright! So. Um, the team who is going to go rescue Kalar and the Figure — which I guess at this point is Phrygian and Thisbe — where do you wanna pick up? Where does the camera open, what is the first shot, what is— when this story gets told, how does this story open, in terms of visual image? Are you on your way there, are you about to leave the Reflecting Pool, um.

You know, for the wider angle shot I can give you... I imagine that the impending or ongoing fight between these three forces, um, takes like three different forms, and they each kind of have a touchstone in three different, um, kind of... war media... touchstones? Uh, I think one is very... um... kind of Legend of the Galactic Heroes Style space naval battles, which is just like, ships firing *huge* barrages at each other from impossibly far distances, uh.

KEITH: [cross] Uhum.

AUSTIN: [cross] These three fleets are at the far end of... of Girandole, the kind of opposite end of from where Partizan is, um, and so, you know, from a distance it's just like lasers — or not lasers, but just like... uh, you know, gunfire, you know, going across the sky, missiles, going across the sky... uh, you know, in a very scary way. Um... huge barrages back and forth between these giant vessels.

Then there is the kind of like smaller vessel submarine battle, we know that this is not... you know, we don't— we don't have a lot of vessels that have very um... what we think of as, like, far futuristic sci-fi space opera... controls and stuff, so you're not even getting... um, you're getting the Star Trek version of it where it feels like submarine combat, specifically, right? Where it's like... um... lots of shooting, and then seeing the results of shooting after the effect, and then adjusting your shots and trying to, like, dodge between sensor radars and stuff like that.

And then finally, we have the super close range stuff, uh, which is what the Hollows and Hallows are doing, um, very up close, smaller strike teams fighting in between, kind of in the spaces in between, to try to like... win sectors of space that they can move into, or being

sent very close up to try to like do damage to a ship... like a fighter jet does. That's, like, dogfighting stuff.

Um, so those are the three scales. And that's happening while this is all happening, um, and you know, I'm— we're not gonna— we don't need to zoom in on that stuff 'cause that's not what you are doing, but that is what's happening as... wherever we come in, we come in. So I'm curious if any of you have an image, and also if that's the person who wants to frame the first scene, whoever has that image, I think. Um... any thoughts?

[00:53:25]

KEITH: So, just to be clear: this is me and Thisbe on our way to...

AUSTIN: We can be— We can come in where you wanna come in here. But I think probably... part of the first difficulty should be how we break through this fighting that's happening safely. To get into [cross] the heart of this thing.

KEITH: [cross] Right.

AUSTIN: So people who can't see the map at home: the very south of the— kind of— the bottom right of the map is The Reflecting Pool: the combined forces of The Witch in Glass and Millennium Break. Then at the far east, or the far right, a big fleet from The Pact. Which is kind of two giant — I'm gonna call these capital ships — on the south and then three on the north. With a bunch of smaller ships in between. And the very northeast, the top right of the map is the giant Curtain, like, mothership... carrier thing, and then a bunch of small ships around it. And then I imagine dozens and dozens and dozens of smaller mechs and stuff around, also.

KEITH: Sorry, which are The Pact ships?

AUSTIN: The white ones.

KEITH: The— Okay. And—

AUSTIN: The Curtain is the top. Pact is the middle — the Bitten Bullet is the troop transport where... Kalar and the... Figure in Bismuth are. And that's on this middle...

KEITH: Yeah.

AUSTIN: [cross] this middle diamond with the blue outline. Gotcha-gotcha-gotcha.

KEITH: [cross] Yeah. Yeah, I see. I was zoomed in a little bit, and you know, and you were, like, there's five— there's five capital ships.

AUSTIN: [cross] Uhuh. Yes.

KEITH: [cross] And I was like: “where? What are you talking about?” When I was just missing the... Yea-yeah.

AUSTIN: [cross] It's the five, like, oblong ones... are The Pact ones.

KEITH: [cross] Yeah. Yeah.

AUSTIN: And then, yeah. So yeah. What is the— If— You're on your way, like— I guess, the first problem of this challenge is... on your side: how are you trying to get through this fray, and into where you need to rescue your your teammates — who have something very important! And I'm gonna message them what it is. But...

DRE: Hmm...!

[SYLVI chuckles]

AUSTIN: When it's... time to debut it, that'll be on them. They can't even say what it is because it's that, like, big of a deal. That if they said what it was it would put them— it would immediately be like: “oh shit! We have to stop them immediately!”

KEITH: And they're like in a cupboard or something.

AUSTIN: I don't know Yeah. Well, we can talk about that! And we could also come in on them, right? We don't have to come in on Thisbe and and... Phrygian. We could come in on Kalar and...

KEITH: Personally, I would like a snapshot of... I mean, they've been there for a while.

DRE: [cross] Oh, yeah.

KEITH: [cross] Presumably.

AUSTIN: For weeks!

KEITH: For weeks.

AUSTIN: You know, that— your ship docked on this bigger vessel! This bigger... I think it's like an energy platform. It's this diamond shape station or ship that's going to be able to absorb the power of autonomy itself. Or, like, translate it into something useful. Uh... or or keep it from expanding indefinitely, you know. Kind of like— [half-chuckling] I've imagined y'all sneaking around onboard this place for the last few, like... weeks, basically.

JACK: Yeah. Like, um... It's it kind of been good, right? Like, it's got to be one of these things where, like... I was going to say I imagine after a while a routine forms. But we are so out of our depth that uh have we just been on edge for weeks?

AUSTIN: It's up to you! What do you— How do you want to frame it? And yeah. We can come in on this then.

KEITH: There's a world also where it's so... such a big ship that it's like...

JACK: It's a— [cross] It's a *huge* ship.

AUSTIN: [cross] It is, but it did fill up compared to—

KEITH: [cross] Right.

AUSTIN: [cross] Remember, the first, like, couple of weeks it was not filled, but then it filled up and launched. And I should note: The Pact also brought people from Apostolos via the Barranca Loop and from Columnar, similarly. There are a lot of people here who were not at the Chasmata base who have since been evacuated. A lot of military personnel left, their families left with them. The Pact, like, is getting *their* people off the planet. Not to the degree that they should!

[JACK chuckles]

AUSTIN: There are still lots of Apostolosian and Columnar civilians who will die here! But they— they have brought their people up for a big military operation and basically said also bring your families. So there are...

JACK: Yeah!

AUSTIN: It's a weird— It's a weird situation.

JACK: Like, you know when you are... on a university campus before students get back from...

DRE: [cross] Uhum. Oh yes, I do!

JACK: [cross] ...vacation? [chuckles]

AUSTIN: Yeah.

[DRE laughs]

JACK: Or if you've been— Or if you've been the student and you've stayed on campus while people have gone to vacation. Or also that weird feeling of, like, being in a theme park or an

amusement park just before it opens, where you look around and you're like: "wow this is kind of overwhelming but uh I can sort of get the shape of this space." And then suddenly without you knowing it you're like...

AUSTIN: [cross] Yeah.

JACK: [cross] "oh, this is— this is just transformed by the arrival of all of these people." So, like, what we thought was a safe route from place A to place B we begin to go down it one morning and there's just, like, 40 people sitting on benches waiting for a doctor's appointment or something, right?

AUSTIN: [chuckles] Uh-huh, right!

JACK: And we're just like: "oh, I guess this is where the medical checkups are going to be happening! Guess we can never go down here again!"

AUSTIN: [chuckles] Uhum!

JACK: Or like we hide something behind what we think is a door that doesn't even open and then it... opens and a Truck comes through or something.

AUSTIN: Right.

JACK: Just... Just the space getting more and more hectic and us having to spin more and more plates to... remain unseen. And maybe we do get spotted occasionally...

AUSTIN: [cross] Right.

JACK: [cross] ...and we just have to, like, kill someone. Um...

AUSTIN: That's all. It's literally, like, Hitman for two weeks. [cross] Three weeks, somewhere like that.

JACK: [cross] Right. Yeah. Most of the time these...

KEITH: [cross] Eventually you have a pile of bodies behind the doorway.

[AUSTIN & JACK laugh]

JACK: And then that doorway turns out to be where the... [chuckles] You know. Whatever's getting stored.

AUSTIN: Right. [cross] No, I—

JACK: [cross] No I think it is like, you know—

AUSTIN: [cross] I think this is true! I think in the process of needing to bl— You know in Souls games where you... things go really bad and instead of trying to retreat you're like "I'm gonna run past everybody and try to get to the next bonfire!"

[DRE laughs]

JACK: Oh, there's absolutely a bit of that!

AUSTIN: And in doing that at some point you stumble into a room that has computers — and this is on the final energy fleet, not the uh not the just the Bitten Bullet the the ship that you were on before — but you find... You end up finding a... computer that is connected to a different database. And it's one of those scenes where you're like "wait a second, wait a second, this is— this is something!" And that is where you find this thing that you found, that is so dangerous that even broadcasting it would... would be too risky. And you will say what it is when you get— if and when you get rescued. So. So, yeah.

JACK: Hm! [cross] Cool!

AUSTIN: [cross] So yeah. How are you two planning to get to a rendezvous where you could be saved and rescued from this place?

DRE: [cross] Hmm...

AUSTIN: [cross] Let's start with with Kalar and the Figure, then.

DRE: I mean, we had talked about using the escape pods as, like, a hiding place... But— I mean, maybe that's... that is our...

AUSTIN: Hmm!

DRE: To me that is— It is easier for us to get shot out in an escape pod than it is for, like, to fight our way through to, like, the hangar and get on a ship [cross] or something.

[1:00:01]

AUSTIN: [cross] Totally!

JACK: [cross] Yeah.

AUSTIN: So then, yeah. Let's open then with: the two of you are on... Are you— You're on the— I guess, we'll just say, the big energy diamond thing. [cross] Where the Bitten Bullet's docked.

JACK: [cross] Does that have a name?

AUSTIN: I'm calling it— The whole thing is called— I've been calling it the energy fleet. Uh... I guess, I don't have a name for it because I imagine it's actually a few similar ships... in, like, a lattice? Let's call it the Lattice. You're on the Lattice.

JACK: Great.

AUSTIN: And... It is... not just this one diamond, but it's a bunch of these diamonds that are connected together... in a Lattice. Um... Kind of, one Edge touching the other with, like, ener— like, plasma jumping between them. In space. You know what I mean? Almost as if they're connected at the tops and bottoms of the diamonds and the left and right of the diamond, by these— this kind of energy field... And one of them has... I guess, not one of them. A bunch of them have escape pods.

And you're— Let's say, we come in on you one, like, deck away from the escape pod deck. And you know, people are running around, down hallways, and there are definitely... there's definitely, like, a distance to go but you've mapped this out you have the map of it in your head... Where do we come in that's interesting or scary or risky for one of you? Is this being found? Is this... trying to send a message about where you're going to be going? What is the... What is the thing that... we see... you doing as the camera comes up?

DRE: I wonder if this is a scenario where we have to be jettisoned out in the escape pod, like, way earlier than we would like to? [cross] Like, we have to...

AUSTIN: [cross] That seems fair!

JACK: [cross] That's really good!

DRE: We have— Like, we have to shoot out basically, like: "well I hope that somebody's coming for us!"

AUSTIN: Sure. So, but let's zero in on the visual of you getting to the escape pod first then.

DRE: [cross] Okay.

AUSTIN: [cross] Um... at this point then the war hasn't even kicked off yet, right? Or it's about to? Are you trying to time it to... when things are gonna pick up, [cross] so that maybe you're not noticed? Yeah.

JACK: When there'll be a strike? Yeah. Like a *War in the Pocket* type, like, move through the conflict... [cross] vibe?

AUSTIN: [cross] Right, right. Yeah! Yeah. So, do we open on claxons hitting, then? And you being like: "now is the time."

JACK: Is it a combination of that and the run to the next bonfire thing? Which is that we actually begin by getting spotted?

AUSTIN: [cross] Oh, yeah! Yeah. Let's do that!

JACK: [cross] Where it's like... A claxon rings out and a woman opens the door and goes:

JACK (as Pact officer): Get ready to— Who are you?

[DRE laughs]

AUSTIN: Love it! Well, here's where we are now, Jack! Yes. This woman who is in a Pact uniform looks at you, realizes the two... Are you— What are you wearing at this point? Are you still wearing the same clothes you're wearing weeks ago? Have you changed into other...? Have you stolen Pact uniforms? Are you...? Wat is the vibe?

JACK: I think we've stolen Pact uniforms... I think this was probably hard for both of us. [cross] I... Yeah.

[AUSTIN laughs]

DRE: [cross] Yeah. Figure cannot fit into a Pact uniform, I don't think.

KEITH: There's a... level on which it's futile to have stolen Pact uniforms [cross] for the two of you.

AUSTIN: [cross, chuckling] Uhum!

DRE: Yeah.

JACK: Yeah. So I wonder whether or not it's that we... [sighs] Maybe we have taken identifying stuff off our uniforms.

AUSTIN: Sure.

JACK: I know that um Kalar wore a Millenium Break patch. So maybe it's that thing of like "oh we're actually dressing like weirdly non-descriptly."

AUSTIN: [cross] Uhum.

JACK: [cross] Like, too non-descriptly. Where it's like... "this is not a uniform. What what are you wearing?"

AUSTIN: Yes. So, yeah. And goes to reach, I think, for her revolver, her service revolver... to pull it up. I think she's in an all-white and black uniform. It's like a white officer's uniform with a black belt, and, like, a black sash going across diagonally. Um... She has, like, purple hair up in a bun... and kind of sharp eyes... And, like, goes to reach for her gun to, you know, even before you give an explanation. You don't know she's just pulling it to hold it on you, or is gonna pull it and just shoot you. You don't know. What do you— What do you do? Let's come in on Kalar! This is your first roll! What are you doing? And are you acting? Are you Doubting or are you being Cool?

JACK: Oh boy!

AUSTIN: Are you philosophizing, reaching out, questioning, and calculating... Or are you acting, are you making drama, are you scheming, are you making big moves?

JACK: My first— my gut instinct would be that Kalar just says:

JACK (as Kalar): Stop, don't shoot. There's a bomb.

[AUSTIN chuckles]

JACK: And I can't work out whether or not that is... See, that is... very Doubty in terms of like oh Millennium break are planting bombs aboard the Lattice. But it is also: I'm lying. [cross] It's not true.

KEITH: [cross] Also, it's cool to say that.

AUSTIN: It's very [cross] slick!

JACK: [cross] It is Cool to s— It is very— Well, it is very slick!

AUSTIN: [cross] Yeah.

JACK: [cross] But also, for the average civilian I could totally see the argument being—

KEITH: [cross] Is it true?

JACK: [cross] No, absolutely not.

DRE: [cross] No, absolutely no. [chuckles]

AUSTIN: [cross] No.

KEITH: That makes it Cooler to me.

AUSTIN: I— Yeah. I don't think that this is reaching out— I don't think this is...

JACK: No. [cross] It is not.

AUSTIN: [cross] This is not connecting with her on a...

JACK: [cross] It's definitely closer to...

AUSTIN: Yes. [cross] You know...!

JACK: [cross] It's... [chuckles]

KEITH: [cross] It's gonna be very tough parsing when people mean being cool colloquially and Cool as in the— on the terms of the game.

AUSTIN: I think that those are not that dissimilar! I think that our idea of cool, and rad, and sick is pretty close to what we mean... to what would an audience watching this TV show would think if it was framed where you're the heroes. Do you know what I mean? I think that it's *not*— It's very rarely sick when you reach out to someone [cross] and try to connect to them on a human level...! [chuckles]

JACK: [cross] Yeah, if she pointed a gun at me and I said "Now hold on! Do you really think that The Pact has your best interests at heart?" [chuckles]

AUSTIN: Doubt. 100%!

DRE: I cannot believe you just insulted my profession that way Austin. [cross] I'm very... [inaudible]

AUSTIN: I'm sorry. I'm sorry!

[DRE and others chuckle]

JACK: [cross, chuckling] Oh, God!

AUSTIN: [cross] I actually do think it's sick when you go to therapy! It rules!

JACK: [cross] It is actually rad! Yeah.

AUSTIN: Um... Alright, so that sounds like... that sounds like Cool, then? It sounds like we've settled on Cool here, right?

JACK: Fuck, I suppose!

AUSTIN: [cross] Okay. When is time... Oh, go ahead!

JACK: [cross] It— It's— We're in a situation where rolling doubt *in this moment* I kind of— I kind of accidentally framed a scene where Doubt is less viable in this moment.

AUSTIN: Well. Yeah. This is this game. So.

JACK: [cross] Yeah. Aha.

AUSTIN: Yeah. When it is time to roll the dice declare whether you're rolling Doubt or Cool and state why. We've done that. You start with 1d6. Add an additional 1d6 for each of the following: One, if your Military Role, On Camera Roll, or Mech give you additional advantage.

JACK: They do.

AUSTIN: What is your— Which one and how?

JACK: Uhm... Oooh! [chuckles] I guess I could take my pick! My... My Military Role is “giantkiller.” And I think that the idea of bringing down a large ship with hidden bombs...

AUSTIN: Uhum.

JACK: ...is very giantkiller. Additionally, I have a Quirk which is “destructive.” I feel like— While, again, there are no bombs.

AUSTIN: So, you're selling it. That's what you're saying.

JACK: [cross] But I'm s—

AUSTIN: [cross] You're really— You're the sort of person who when you say this it's believable.

JACK: In part, because I almost certainly have done this.

AUSTIN: Yes. Totally.

KEITH: Right. [cross] Yeah.

AUSTIN: [cross] Okay. So that's two. And then: Two, Figure, are you helping?

DRE: Yes.

AUSTIN: How are you helping?

DRE: [sighs] If we have taken out people during the process of this to keep ourselves safe...

AUSTIN: Uhum.

DRE: I think the way Figure helps is that if this succeeds and the person kind of, like, pauses for a moment, I think Figure then just, like, cold cocks her. And knocks her out.

AUSTIN: Oh, interesting. Okay. Cool.

JACK: Huh.

AUSTIN: That definitely makes it Cool! [chuckles] That is definitely a Cool action, then. So, it's 3d6.

JACK: Okay.

AUSTIN: What is your Score?

KEITH: See, now I actually don't think it's Cool to punch people in the face. [giggles]

AUSTIN: It... [sighs] Okay.

[KEITH & JACK laugh]

AUSTIN: We can't do this.

DRE: We need to invert the rules, just for Keith! Only on Keith's rolls.

JACK: Umm. My...

AUSTIN: [cross] What is your Score?

JACK: [cross] My Score is 4.

AUSTIN: Okay. So that means you need to roll under a 4 on 3d6. Uh...

JACK: Okay. But not cumulatively. It's—

AUSTIN: [cross] Correst. Individuals.

JACK: [cross] We're talking about individual dice rolls.

AUSTIN: [cross] If you're rolling Doubt, you need one of your dice to roll a number *less* than your character's Score. If you're only Cool you need that number to go higher. And if you hit exact we'll talk about what happens.

JACK: Wait, so I need— I actually wanted to go higher than my Score, right?

AUSTIN: Oh sorry, yes you're rolling Cool, not Doubt, correct. Ye-ye-ye-yeah.

JACK: Yeah.

AUSTIN: Sorry. [cross] So yes.

JACK: [cross] So I want at least one of these die...

AUSTIN: To be a 5 or a 6.

JACK: [chuckling] The plural of dice is die. To be a 5 or a 6.

AUSTIN: Correct.

JACK: Okay.

AUSTIN: Hey, there's a 6! However, there is also a 4. So! Something special happens when you roll exact.

JACK: Hmm!

AUSTIN: If any of your dice—

KEITH: [cross] Even if you also succeed.

AUSTIN: [cross] Even if you also succeed. If any of your score exactly, then you Hedge: an opportunity presents itself that would allow you to count every die you rolled as a success, but you must narrate yourself using the opposite method than the one you chose. If you reject this opportunity the circumstances change and you need to roll again. If you roll your score a second time exactly then that die is considered a failure though the rest of the dice in the role can still succeed.

[JACK chuckles]

AUSTIN: So, if this has been your second role, after Hedging, this would have been a success because of that 6. But!

KEITH: So the idea... is that by— You can change your method from Cool to Doubt and you get to take two successes.

AUSTIN: It's not about a number of successes. It's that an oppor—

KEITH: Okay.

AUSTIN: It's that— This is almost like getting a mixed success in the sense that... the thing you wanted to do, you don't— you lose that opportunity in this moment. Or becomes riskier, it becomes harder to do so you have to re-roll for it. But if you— if instead you want to invent a way in which instead of resolving this at this point with... with Cool you resolve it with Doubt. Maybe in this case it's, Kalar, you stop the Figure from cold cocking her. Right? And *do* connect to her on this Doubt level. Or something. Then we can keep this result but it counts as a Doubt result instead of counting as a Cool result. That's important because we were going to be tracking how many Cool points and how many Doubt points you get going forward. Um.

JACK: Which, at this point so early in the game... as the game continues we are going to be wanting to adjust that number, right? [cross] But this early...

AUSTIN: [cross] Up to you, yeah.

JACK: ...it's less consequential?

AUSTIN: [cross] It's always kind of consequential.

JACK: [cross] I mean, it sets the stage! Yeah.

AUSTIN: It sets the stage. And what I'll say just to look ahead a little bit is that early scores will get multi— can get multiplied based on the outcome of the Final Act. Basically. If things go well for you in the Final Act then the... Long and short is: if you end the Final Act Cool then all previous Cool scores increase; if you end... if you win it and end it Doubt all previous Doubt scores increase; if you fail the Final Act — because unlike these acts, the Final Act can be failed — all previous scores double. Which means that... it's kind of like the Monday Morning Quarterback thing of, like, people obsessing over the road that got you there. And so... it's worth thinking about now, but also I think the fun of this game is that you could just play what you think your character would do and see how it shakes out.

JACK: Hmm. Uhum! [cross] As it stands—

AUSTIN: [cross] Also, I'm adding scores to our map just so that we can do a quick reference to them all, all the time. Just... boom. Okay.

JACK: So either I Hedge and we transform it into a Doubt roll...

AUSTIN: Yep.

JACK: ...or I— [cross] we go again, basically. Right?

AUSTIN: [cross] You commit rolling 3d6 one more time. Yep. Up to you.

JACK: What do you think, Dre?

DRE: Hmm...

JACK: [cross] 'Cause there's—

DRE: [cross] Do you think is it in Kalar's character to stop Figure in that way?

AUSTIN: [cross] You could open—

DRE: [cross] I mean, that's the— Yeah.

AUSTIN: [cross] You could come up with another way for this to be Doubt. But that was one that I suggested.

DRE: No. But, like, that was also the first thing that, like, came to my mind as well.

JACK: It's tough, right? Because, like, if Kalar stops the Figure from you know, landing a blow... I'm not sure why Kalar would... would do that...!

AUSTIN: [cross] Yeah. Then, yeah... Let's roll again!

JACK: [cross] He's not very... He's not very interested in, like, trying to reach out in this moment for any other reason than, like, maybe the strike wouldn't work or whatever.

AUSTIN: Yeah. Then— Then let's stick with it [cross] Roll one more time, then! 3d6!

JACK: [cross] Yeah. Roll 3d6!

AUSTIN: Looking for a 5 or a 6.

JACK: So, Kalar says: "Several bombs." And we roll again.

[AUSTIN & DRE chuckle]

AUSTIN: There's a 5! There you go! Still a success! A 5, and you rolled 10 Cool total. Uh... It's a fi— a 3, a 2, and a 5 — that's 10 Cool. I'm gonna mark down here... Actually, do you wanna do

that? Or you know, I'll just keep track of it! It'll be easier if I do this. So, roll one is Kalar 10 Cool. When you get successes we... interpret them, basically. If none of your dice succeed you fail in some fundamental way the table will choose and choose and answer two questions off the failure list. If one of your dice succeeds — which is what's happened here — then you partially manage it. Ask the table to choose and answer one question of the failure list and one off the success list. With two, you choose an answer two questions off the success list. And three, you, the player, you do get to choose an answer any of the fail or succeed questions — three, three of them. So...

JACK: Just fucking go for it! [cross] Ask any question!

AUSTIN: [cross] Just go for it. So. Yeah... One of your dice succeeded — which is this. Here is the succeed list:

- What did you see coming some— What did you see coming what the cameras didn't?
- Who did you get the upper hand with?
- How did they underestimate you?
- In what ways did you look awesome, competent, or flashy?
- How did this reinforce your narrative with the viewers?
- What new information or tools were revealed to you?
- How did you take control of the narrative?
- Who is there to help you when you needed it?
- What effect did your action have on those who watched?

The fail list, which we also have to pick one from is:

- What did the camera see coming that you didn't?
- What complication or collateral did your actions cause?
- How did your actions escalate the situation?
- In what way did you look foolish or clumsy?
- How did your past actions hold you back now?
- In what ways did you leave yourself vulnerable?
- How did you lose control of the narrative?
- And what did it cost you that you didn't expect it to?

Um... So. What do we think? What's— What are— What are interesting questions here?

JACK: [chuckles] Go ahead! Is it Jonathan Frakes who has those great montages of him saying...

AUSTIN: [cross, laughing] Yes!

JACK: [cross, half-chuckling] You know: “nope, it's fiction!” I really do feel like this is... you know, the montage is, Austin, after you've made a bad decision. “What did the camera see coming that you didn't?”

AUSTIN: [cross, chuckling] What you didn't... Yeah.

JACK: [cross, chuckling] “How did your actions escalate the situation?”

AUSTIN: [cross, chuckling] Yeah... Aha.

JACK: [cross, chuckling] “In what ways did you look foolish or clumsy?”

AUSTIN: Also as written in *In the Year 3000* this stuff is... I'll just read the way it's written in the original is: ask your fellow players one question off the failure list and one question off a success— the success list.

[1:15:00]

AUSTIN: Which I think means basically Jack, you would pick one of these, and we would answer for you.

JACK: [cross] Right.

AUSTIN: [cross] Because we are playing in a GM-less way. I almost want to play even more open than that, which is just, like, if someone has... If anyone on any side of the table has “one of these I think is really interesting” we should jump to it. We also shouldn't belabor this. For instance, I think one of these can be just... “Who did you get the upper hand with?” And it's fine to say “this guard.” Or “who helped you?”

JACK: [cross] Right.

AUSTIN: [cross] It's fine to say the Figure. Right? Um. So we don't need these to be deep meaningful... You know, I kind of want to avoid the slow pacing that we had with, like, *The Veil's* emotional stuff here... But I do want to say: if there's something here that jumps out to you, that's more interesting than that, we should... go with those, too.

JACK: So, I have an idea for the failure for the “what did the camera see coming that you didn't?”

AUSTIN: What is it?

JACK: It's that the escape pods launch. [cross] It's that...

AUSTIN: [cross] Oh, shit.

JACK: So, like, I picture it as like a classic sort of Halo escape pod thing, like...

AUSTIN: Uhum.

JACK: An angled wall with these, sort of... bulbous semi-circles coming out of it that are each of the escape pods. And I think the camera just has this, like, rapid montage of a variety of hands hitting the launch button. As we realize that, like, we're just too late! The escape pods are full.

AUSTIN: Yeah.

JACK: They're— They're primed and then the red lights go green green green! [cross] And the escape pods just go shooting out of the side. Yeah.

AUSTIN: [cross, imitates sounds of launching] Hwoo, hwoo, hwoo, hwoo. Yeah. Aha. Love it.

JACK: [cross] Like, our ears pop.

AUSTIN: Yeah. Exactly. Um... What I'm gonna say though is, that... Hm. I don't know! Does anyone else have a succeed one they wanna... they wanna fill in? I think here's the new information or tool. How about that? "What new information or tool's revealed to you?" Come— Coming clattering out of uh... her pocket is her ID card that lets you access parts of the ship or the station that you— the Lattice that you hadn't had access to before. It's like having a security card. You know, security clearance red, or whatever, you now have. So that's something that, you know... The ships, or the— those have launched, but now you have this card that can get you somewhere else.

JACK: [chuckles] It's kind of a trade.

AUSTIN: Yeah.

[DRE chuckles]

AUSTIN: All right um do we want to stay here or do we now want to jump to... Do we now jump to Thisbe and Phrygian seeing the escape pods launch from a distance, [cross] an thinking like: "Oh, here they are! They're one of those!"

JACK: [cross] Oh, god! Being like: "Oh, good!"

[KEITH laughs]

JACK: Well, I mean, like, just before... is the transition just, like, grab the card...

AUSTIN: [cross] Yeah.

JACK: [cross] Kalar shouts

JACK (as Kalar): Go!

JACK: And we just take off down a corridor towards a locked door or whatever.

AUSTIN: Yeah. And then, like, the door's... The door is...

JACK: [cross] Running feet.

AUSTIN: [cross] 100% Yeah, yeah. Totally. Talons on... on metal. Or whatever.

JACK: [cross] Sound of running feet over. We cut to...

AUSTIN: Phrygian and Thisbe, where are you? As you see these escape pods launch from the Lattice, thinking "our friends are on one of those — or, our allies."

[a brief pause]

AUSTIN: [cross] Do you have a ship, do you have a...?

KEITH: [cross] We're definitely still on the approach!

AUSTIN: Yeah. Do you have a ship? Do you have— Are you both in... Is Mow outfitted with a cool jetpack? How— You know, we're in space!

KEITH: Wait, is that a suggestion that we're inside of Mow?

AUSTIN: I'm asking. Well, no. There's no inside of Mow. Because Mow doesn't...

KEITH: [cross] I didn't think so. Well...

JANINE: [cross] I mean, there is inside of Mow, it's not...

AUSTIN: [cross] I guess that's true. It's not the cockpit.

JANINE: [cross] It's a gutted cockpit, but it's still— It's like a... hole.

AUSTIN: [chuckling] Right.

JANINE: Not a hole. Like, we've put people in there before.

AUSTIN: We have. [cross] You're right.

KEITH: [cross] Right.

DRE: Yeah.

[a brief pause]

AUSTIN: [cross] So, yeah. Phrygian could be inside Mow.

KEITH: [cross] How bad does this mess us up? How bad does— How bad does it mess us up that we see... that we think that we see our friends being launched away from where they actually are?

JANINE: I mean, are a bunch of— If a bunch of escape pods are launching, I don't know that it necessarily follows to assume that the people who are hiding from all of the other people on that ship [cross] would have also been in that.

AUSTIN: [cross] Sure.

JANINE: Like, you know, it seems...

AUSTIN: But that was the plan. The plan to rescue them was to be in one of— was to pick them up there. Right?

JANINE: Yeah.

AUSTIN: And so that does definitely throw a wrench at, then, at the very least.

KEITH: Small— Smaller shi— I think we're in the sma— I think we're in the smallest thing that we can be that fits me, and Thisbe, and Mow, if Mow's here.

JANINE: I mean, Thisbe and Mow can just hang off the side of the thing.

KEITH: [cross] That's fair.

AUSTIN: [cross] Yeah. I think it's some sort of delivery... you know, it's one of those...

KEITH: [cross] This is now— This now reads to me like... we're familiar with the Sonic Adventure attack on the Egg Carrier?

AUSTIN: Yeah.

DRE: [cross] Uhum.

KEITH: [cross] Except instead of Sonic standing on top of the Tornado — Or the Tornado 2, depending —

[DRE laughs]

KEITH: ...it's Thisbe and Mow... [laughs]

AUSTIN: Aha!

KEITH: [laughing] ...hanging off the side of this...

AUSTIN: We've seen one of these. These are those, like, super fast carrier things that... that Sabeeha had, trying to catch up to the Blue Channel out in space. This, kind of like, almost like a torpedo you hang on the side of but bigger, that you can attach things to. I think that that totally works here. Is Phrygian inside of Mow, then? Does Phrygian need air? I guess we don't know. We haven't talked about whether or not Phrygian needs, like, an atmosphere.

JANINE: That's a good question!

KEITH: Uhm... I would... Phrygian probably likes air...

AUSTIN: Okay! Yeah.

[DRE laughs]

AUSTIN: [cross] I think that's the way of thinking about the Branched.

KEITH: [cross] Let's say at least I— At least I like it.

AUSTIN: Cool. Yeah. Alright. So, then, yeah. I like that as a... You're going that way. Is that— Is someone in control of this thing? Or is it just, like, a direct shot or what? What is the... [cross] where do y'all...

JANINE: [cross] Where are we like launching from?

AUSTIN: The— Your fleet in the bottom... thing. Or somewhere else! You tell me! You have... you have authorship here to frame your scene.

KEITH: Uh... It might be easier to get through if we're not coming from the sort of, like, blockade direction.

AUSTIN: Uhum.

KEITH: Like, if we're co— Maybe we're coming from the moon and hitting it from the side.

AUSTIN: Ah, yeah. Acro— From Partizan, across...

KEITH: Right.

AUSTIN: Maybe — had you already launched at a certain point and are, like, on your way— you've been on your way?

JANINE: Did we, like, slingshot around?

AUSTIN: Sure. Yeah.

KEITH: [cross] Pick up speed.

JANINE: [cross] Do a U-ie?

AUSTIN: I like that. That's good.

KEITH: [cross] That's a *2001*.⁵

DRE: [cross] Could this thing be carrying my mech with it? Does that make sense? [cross] Or... Okay.

AUSTIN: [cross] Yeah, totally! If that— The thing— The version of this that we saw before had, like, five mechs on it. So, yeah.

DRE: [cross] Okay.

AUSTIN: I kind of like the idea that it's carrying whatever we need. You know, it won't get you out, because it just kind of goes — it's not a ship that you can control and turn around. It's almost like firing a bullet [chuckling] that's carrying a bunch of shit on it to get it in range. You know?

KEITH: What was the plan— Assuming that the plan had worked and they were on the...

AUSTIN: One of the escape pods. [cross] Or a—

KEITH: ...on the escape pods: how are we gonna get them onto the escape pod— Or from the escape pod onto this thing?

AUSTIN: I think, you know, I think you would have gotten out and picked them up and then flown back to the... to the fleet. The safest way possible.

KEITH: Okay

AUSTIN: Right?

KEITH: Alright.

⁵ Probably meaning *2001: A Space Odyssey*.

AUSTIN: Is my guess.

KEITH: So. I guess I'm trying to figure out what are... what could be our instinct— the instigation for being, like “no, we have to keep going to the ship. [cross] We can’t just...”

JANINE: [cross] Yeah. There's, like a— There's, like, an information gap that I'm not sure how to fill.

AUSTIN: [cross] Okay, then. We can go back then to... Let's go back to... the Figure and Kalar and see if they can fill that gap! Um. So, the two of you have this card now. Where are you going? What are you looking for?

DRE: Uh... Are we going to the hangar?

[a brief pause]

DRE: To try and find something else to, like, get us off of here?

AUSTIN: That makes sense! Do you want to frame that scene?

[a brief pause]

DRE: [cross] Does that make sense to you, Kalar?

AUSTIN: [cross] Who's there? What do you—

JACK: Oh, yeah, absolutely. Um...

[a brief pause]

JACK: Yeah. It's...

[pause]

JACK: If all the escape pods are gone — and I assume the escape pods are launching, right, because the assault is about to begin and they're trying to move like non-military personnel off the Lattice?

AUSTIN: Yeah.

JACK: [cross] Umm...

AUSTIN: [cross] Or, actually, the Lattice might be the safest place here. Because...

JACK: But then why would they be launching...

AUSTIN: I— I don't know. [cross] Good question.

KEITH: [cross] It's a mystery.

JACK: [cross] Maybe they're not escape pods. Maybe they are... small manned fighter vehicles. Like... Like little...

AUSTIN: [cross] Okay. Ye-ye-yeah.

DRE [cross] Okay, that makes more sense.

JACK: [cross] So, like manned drones, almost.

AUSTIN: Yeah.

JACK: 'Cause why would you be launching an escape pod just before a battle if you're in the safe place? Uhm...

AUSTIN: Unless there's something else happening here that we don't understand yet. But. Yeah. I don't know.

JACK: [cross, laughing] Yeah, that's true!

AUSTIN: [cross] I didn't know if you had an idea for why those earlier escape pods would have launched. Because—

JACK: No, I thought they were launching because it's like "oh, a..."

AUSTIN: A fight.

JACK: "...an assault is about to happen" Yeah.

AUSTIN: Yeah. The only reason I say it's the safest is, again, for people who can't see the map it's the thing furthest from the battle, still controlled by Pact space, basically.

JACK: [cross] Right. Yeah.

AUSTIN: [cross] It's being protected by these two kind of blockades of ships to the North and South, basically.

JACK: I could aim for the hangar! I could... It feels like the hangar is... is the smartest avenue to go down. We could also... Yeah, try and hijack something, [cross] or try and stow [chuckles]

AUSTIN: [cross] Let's— Let's stick with—

JACK: [cross] stowaway again...

AUSTIN: Yeah. Let's take on Dre, only because this is— this is now Kalar— Sorry, not Kalar. This is the Figure [cross] framing the scene.

JACK: [cross] Oh yes! You're right!

DRE: Okay.

AUSTIN: So what do you think?

DRE: Um... I do wonder if... [sighs] I don't know if... The thing I'm thinking is: with this new key card that we have, does this open us up, like, hallways or backways that previously we would not be able to access? That would make this quicker, [cross] if maybe not safer?

AUSTIN: [cross] Totally. Yeah, yeah, definitely!

DRE: [cross] Okay.

AUSTIN: [cross] So that we see that, then: you running through the hallways. Like, opening doors that you couldn't open before. Does it get you into something specific?

JANINE: [cross] I have an idea here...

AUSTIN: [cross] Maybe not just a general hanger? Uhum?

DRE: [cross] Sure.

JANINE: [cross] ...that I could suggest... I was not framing, but, like... Something, like, if a trash ejection thing got, like, left open for a suspiciously long time?

[KEITH makes a surprised gasp]

AUSTIN: [cross] Yeah. I love it.

JANINE: [cross] You know? That would be, like, an obvious, like: "Oh, that's a weird thing. Maybe that's for us."

AUSTIN: Yeah.

JANINE: And would fit a Mech, probably. [chuckles] If it was a big trash... [cross] Uh... Trash ejection thing...?

AUSTIN: [cross] Uhum. Wait, so you're saying like you could open— they could open a trash chute for you to come into is what you're saying?

JANINE: Yeah.

AUSTIN: [cross] Gotcha.

JANINE: [cross] I'm saying, like, if they had— If there was an airlock that was, like, everyone loads the trash in and then you then you get trash— and then you open the airlock and then vent it, normally you would close it and then be able to fill it up again. If they just like left it hanging open.

AUSTIN: Yeah. [cross] That's fun.

JANINE: [cross] Yeah.

AUSTIN: So do you want to... Do you think... Do you like that idea?

DRE: Yes. And I think that makes sense with the new key card, too, because maybe that was a system level thing we couldn't get to before.

AUSTIN: Totally, totally! So you find your way into that system... You find your way to... What is in that room? When you open up the trash control room, who is in there?

DRE: [sighs] I'm torn, because there's a part of me that says, like: "is anybody in the trash control room, when it's, like, combat time?"

AUSTIN: Right.

DRE: Um... But I think it's more interesting if someone is in there, as well.

AUSTIN: Yeah. I think so, too. I think there's probably just some sort of... You still have to empty the trash. Maybe the trash is empty—

DRE: Yeah.

AUSTIN: ...giant empty artillery shells but you gotta get rid of it! Otherwise, it backs up the systems.

DRE: [cross] Yeah.

AUSTIN: [cross] You know, or whatever. Whatever it is. You know: energy cells, coolant... Something like that. Right?

DRE: Yeah. So this is— I mean, this is probably somebody who's lowest on the totem pole here.

AUSTIN: Yeah. Sure.

DRE: Like, this might not even be a military trained person.

AUSTIN: Right! This is just, like... not a civilian because being in The Pact... I don't know! I don't know what the Pack's breakup is but like— or breakdown is. But yeah, that makes sense to me. Um. So, yeah. You open the door and there is a person and they are... let's say that they are... part of that... We haven't seen one of those hare-people since, like, the first Arc of this game when... [cross] God what was her name?

JACK: [cross] Oh, like a rabbit!

AUSTIN: Like a rabbit. Yeah. [cross] God, I forget what her name is...

JANINE: [cross] I also was confused for a second there [chuckles]

AUSTIN: What did you think? Oh! You thought I meant like hair? H-a-i-r?

JANINE: Like a Cousin Itt, but in space, [cross] kind of thing?

AUSTIN: [cross] Eugh, no! [chuckles]

JACK: Yes. That's— Yes. [cross] That is what I thought.

JANINE: [cross] That'd be a very hard way to look at that one. That'd be rough

[DRE chuckles]

JACK: [cross] I was excited!

AUSTIN: [cross, chuckling] I was thinking...

JACK: [cross] Season 7.

AUSTIN: Midnite Matinee. Who is the leporine, hare-like leader of Carrion Collections who came and was like: "Those are our mechs!" [chuckles] to you, Thisbe. I think it's— I think it's someone from that species. And they are... just, like, in a— You know, over— Like, coveralls... working a bunch of levers and looking at a bunch of readouts, and the door opens. And they swing around

to look at you. And they are very scared. And they, like, go to reach for an alarm. What do you do?

DRE: Um... Okay. This is very much the choosing Doubt or Cool so I just want to double check here...

AUSTIN: Yes. While you do that I'm going to emphasize— or I'm going to say something else which is an important rule here. Which is: we keep track of every roll that happens... whether it was a success or— *and* whether it was a success or a failure. This is because later on when we're revisiting this Act at the very end and doing our, like, tallying up successful roles can be spun: you can re-roll the roll, to get a different result even if you...

You can't change it from Doubt to Cool or vice versa, but say you don't like the numbers you got. You want to really try to juice it. Maybe you got 1, 1, 5. And you would much rather have, you know, 4 5 6, or something like that, because you want more Cool points — you can do that with successful rolls. So I'm writing down— That process is called Spinning because it's, like, you later on telling the story, or you know, spinning the story a slightly different way. Um... You don't know how it's going to be received, necessarily, but you can give it a shot. And so, I'm writing down Spinnable for that first roll that Kalar did. 3d6, 10 Cool, Spinnable. So second roll here. Figure. What are you... What are you doing?

DRE: Um... I think Figure just holds up the key card.

AUSTIN: Hmm...

DRE: As, like:

DRE (as Figure in Bismuth): Wait-wait-wait! We were ordered to come here!

AUSTIN: Umm. What is that? Is that Cool or is that Doubt?

DRE: I mean, I think it's Doubt

AUSTIN: [chuckles] Okay.

DRE: Uum... Because I think what is... I think, like, again, Figure's probably initial reaction is to, also, like, use physical Force to stop this.

AUSTIN: Uhum.

DRE: But I think there's— They see— Like, they kind of instantly recognize that this person is maybe... Again, they're military but they're not, like, a hardened, like, officer or Soldier.

AUSTIN: Sure.

DRE: Like, they're literally just taking out the trash.

AUSTIN: Yeah.

DRE: and I think that gives them enough kind of, like, pause to, like: "is there another... is there another option?"

AUSTIN: What is the way...

[1:30:00]

AUSTIN: So, I think you say that and they stop. We should get to, like, the bit where you have to do something. Because that's I think we'll zero in. Because they go like:

AUSTIN (as Trash Ejector Attendant): Your order— Uh... Where are your uniforms?
Wha— What are you doing?

DRE: [cross] Uhh...

AUSTIN: [cross] Let's say they buy that first lie. Right?

DRE: Yeah, sure.

DRE (as Figure in Bismuth): As you can probably guess, uniforms aren't really in ready supply for... bodies like ours.

AUSTIN (as Trash Ejector Attendant): I hadn't really... I hadn't really thought about that, but sure. Yeah. I mean, my stuff is custom, so...

DRE (as Figure in Bismuth): Oh!

AUSTIN (as Trash Ejector Attendant): Eh— I wasn't bragging, I was just saying I had to wait...

DRE (as Figure in Bismuth): No, I'm— We should talk about this later because, um... we understood that you needed help.

AUSTIN (as Trash Ejector Attendant): Uh... I could use extra hands!

AUSTIN: Give me a roll! This is the roll! This is the—

[DRE chuckles]

AUSTIN: Give me th— Give me your Doubt! What is your Score? Your Score is uh 3.

DRE: [cross] 3. Yes.

AUSTIN: [cross] So this is Doubt. You need to roll a 1 or 2 on 3d— Or, sorry! Are you getting help? And what— Are you having any bonuses from your Roles?

DRE: Uum...

AUSTIN: Your Role being “ace pilot” or “asking questions” [chuckles]

DRE: Can can I use “blithe”?

AUSTIN: You cannot use your Style. [cross] You're only using it... Yeah... Uhuh.

DRE: [cross] Okay, you can't use your Style.

JACK: [cross, glibly] Just like: “oh I'm just a little rubbish person!”

[AUSTIN & KEITH laugh]

JACK: “Don't worry about me!”

AUSTIN: Uhum!

JACK: “I'm made of Rock.”

[others laugh]

DRE: [laughing] God...

[KEITH is still laughing]

DRE: I'm wondering if there is a way to make “asking questions” be this?

AUSTIN: Totally! What does that look like?

DRE: [sighs] I think because in a way like Figure *is* this person.

AUSTIN: Uhum.

DRE: Um... Like, they are this person who's just kind of, like, doing whatever and never really stopped to think about why.

AUSTIN: Do you do that on, like— On Screen? We don't have to we don't have to go beat by beat here but are you, like: “so how long have you been stationed here? Are...” You know...

DRE: Yes. [cross] Yeah. Yeah.

AUSTIN: [cross] “What do you think about this Lattice thing? What have you heard about? Blah-blah-blah.”

DRE: Like, maybe at some point he asked, like: “So who sent you?” and, like, Figure’s like:

DRE (as Figure in Bismuth): Man, I don't know! They're, like— They're all the same. I can't keep them straight.

AUSTIN: [chuckling] Sure, sure. Yeah.

KEITH: [slightly from a distance] Above my pay grade!

[DRE chuckles]

AUSTIN: So that's another bonus. And then Phryg— Or not. I keep saying Phrygian here! Kalar, are you helping?

JACK: Absolutely! Yeah.

AUSTIN: How?

[a brief pause]

AUSTIN: That's not that was not a “Hpf, how??!” That was just, like, give me a beat. Tell me how you're doing it.

JACK: Just, like, I think, you know, I think— I think Phrygian is saying... Oh my God! [chuckles]

KEITH: [unimpressed] Wow.

JACK: [laughing] I think the Figure— I think it's— Keith, it's a very compelling name! There's something dreamy about it!

KEITH: There is something dreamy about it! This is not my only character that people call other characters!

AUSTIN: Uhuh!

[DRE laughs]

JACK: [cross] I think, you know, I—

KEITH: [cross] I'm now two for two.

AUSTIN: [cross] Tell me what Lem or Fero is doing!

KEITH: Yeah.

JACK: [chuckles] I think that the— I think that the Figure is, like, you know: “that's above my pay grade.” and Kalar's like:

JACK (as Kalar): [morosely] Yup.

[AUSTIN & SYLVI laugh]

JACK: And the Finger is like, you know: “hard to get uniforms for people like us.” and...

AUSTIN: Yeah.

JACK (as Kalar): [cross] “Yeah. Sure is!”

AUSTIN: [cross] Are you— Do you talk about being a steeplejack on Partizan? At all?

JACK: Uh... I think, you know... No!

AUSTIN: [cross, chuckles] Okay.

JACK: [cross] I think what happens is that I think that... the person working here says, you know: “my uniform was custom.”

AUSTIN: [cross] Uhum.

JACK: [cross] And Kalar goes:

JACK (as Kalar): Well, that's— That's great!

JACK: And just hefts a big thing of rubbish onto his shoulder and just begins to tip it. Just, like, “off to work, here I am!” [chuckling] You know?

AUSTIN: [chuckling] Okay, alright!

KEITH: [cross] It's like doing things...

DRE: [cross] Clocking in!

KEITH: Doing things that look like you maybe would have been ordered to do it, like, separating shell casings and... [cross] For, like, these are the clean ones and these are the dirty ones?

JACK: [cross] It's just like...

AUSTIN: [cross] Yeah.

JACK: "Don't really want to talk here but I'm agreeing with everything you're saying..."

AUSTIN: [cross] U-huh!

JACK: [cross] "...definitely agree with everything my friend here is saying. Where do you want me to put this big thing of aluminium cans?"

AUSTIN: [laughs] Alright, 3d6! Ughh...

DRE: Those are all bad.

AUSTIN:: Those are all— Whoa, that's a full failure, isn't it!

DRE: Yep.

AUSTIN: Uh-huh.

[JACK chuckles]

AUSTIN: Alright! So, it's 3D—

JACK: It's a 6 4 5! It's a straight!

AUSTIN: It is a straight!

KEITH: It is a straight! Do you get anything for straights in this game?

AUSTIN: Only when they're successes! [laughs] And what you get is the same thing you get during any success!

[DRE chuckles]

AUSTIN: Um. So, when you full fail a role, there is no Hedge here, there's no chance to spin this the other way... When you fail you fail in some fundamental way. The table will choose and answer two questions off the table— off the failure list! Here's “what the camera saw coming that you didn't”: as soon as you came in and you didn't have the right Uniforms on, and didn't give a good answer, this person this... this leporine person hit a silent alarm.

DRE: Hm.

JACK: [chuckling] Fucking hate silent alarms. Nothing good ever comes from silent alarms for us!

AUSTIN: A-a! Nope! So that— the camera sees that that button press, here. I think it's like a foot button, not a... not an under table button.

JACK: [cross] A pedal.

AUSTIN: [cross] It's like a panel on the ground. You know what I mean? So that's one. Anyone else have a good one here?

KEITH: Uh. Yeah. I like “how did your past actions hold you back now?”

AUSTIN: Hmm. Oh! [chuckling] Does the person, like, recognize something on the ID card that...

JANINE: I was gonna say do they have photo ID?

AUSTIN: It's probably not photo ID, but maybe there was some sort of— Because otherwise I think I think that Kalar and the Figure look very silly for trying to present someone else's photo ID... [laughs]

JANINE: What if it's like an officer's ID or something?

AUSTIN: [cross] It's an officer's ID!

JANINE: Like, if it's someone who's a person who would *never* show up in the trash room!

AUSTIN: Yes, I love that.

KEITH: And being like: “I don't know just following orders!”

AUSTIN: [laughs] Yeah!

JANINE: And it's like a lance-corporal, major, [cross] senior, general, sergeant, like ...

KEITH: [cross, laughing] Yeah. "It says you're a colonel!"

AUSTIN: [laughing] Aha! Yeah, exactly!

JACK: [cross] "Where do you want these dead bullets?"

DRE: [cross] He's just a man of the people, you know!

AUSTIN: [cross] A-ha!

JACK: [cross] Yeah.

AUSTIN: And here's an interesting thing here, right— is, you failed that role, right, but it was 15 points in Doubt! And that is locked! You don't get to reroll that later! That's— You've got a lot of Doubt there despite failing the roll!

DRE: [cross] Okay.

AUSTIN: [cross] Because this is about how this looks! And so the failure is for us to interpret narratively in these first two Acts. And the Final Act failure means something more than that.

KEITH: [cross] Yeah.

AUSTIN: [cross] Because you're going to need more successes than failures... Uh...

KEITH: But broadly, it just adds to a tally.

AUSTIN: Correct. Exactly.

KEITH: Like, a failure that's a lot of Doubt is the same [cross] as getting a success with a lot of Doubt except that narrative changes.

AUSTIN: [cross] Yes. Exactly. The narrative changes. And you can't re-roll it at the end of the Act, basically.

KEITH: [cross] Right, right.

AUSTIN: So, you've got a lot of Doubt here. And I think the thing that... we now see is, you know, you do you keep the thing open but we then get a shot of [chuckles] soldiers running down hallways towards you. Um. But maybe that happens at the same time that the... one of the trash chutes stays open long enough for Thisbe and Phrygian to see it. So Phrygian and Thisbe do we want to come back to y'all yet? Is that enough of a signal for you to be like: "wait a second that's weird"?

JANINE: Yeah, I think if it...

AUSTIN: Or is there even a could you— could they even, like... Morse code you with the trash.

KEITH: I actually... We— I almost said the exact same thing earlier when we were setting it up and I was like: “ah, door’s open. That makes sense!” So I think either of those things work.

AUSTIN: [cross] Okay

K [cross] I think.

JANINE: I think if the door opened but like no trash came out.

AUSTIN: Yeah.

JANINE: That’d also be a fairly quick, like: “well, they didn’t— they didn’t need to do that. [cross] So, what th’ fuck”

Aa [cross] Uhum. Alright. So let's then come back on that on Thisbe and Phrygian. You've seen this. We know that soldiers are coming down the hallways towards them. What do you do? Who takes the lead here... with this challenge?

JANINE: Um. I was gonna say I think Thisbe and Mow would be cool, like, if the thing passes close enough to just fucking leap off? Um.

AUSTIN: [cross] Yeah.

JANINE: [cross] I don't know if Phrygian's, like, inside Mow? Is that what we decided or is Phrygian...

AUSTIN: I think we decided that. Yeah.

JANINE: [cross] Inside its... Okay.

AUSTIN: [cross] Uhum.

KEITH: [cross] Yeah.

JANINE: [cross] That'll probably be the way to go, right?

AUSTIN: [cross] Uhum.

JANINE: It's like jumping from one truck to the other truck?

AUSTIN: Yeah. I think that makes sense. [cross] And then...

JANINE: [cross] But also, you're on a robot?

AUSTIN: Yeah. And then is... the mech of... the Figure like tethered to Mow or something like that?

JANINE: Yeah, I like that.

AUSTIN: Okay. Cool. [cross] So you leap off...

KEITH: [cross] So we could just— We just leap right onto the door of the... thing...

AUSTIN: Of the trash shoot, basically?

KEITH: [cross] Of the trash chute, yeah.

JANINE: [cross] Yeah.

AUSTIN: [cross] You think this is a roll? Do you think this is like a neat enough thing to just do the roll here?

JANINE: I've got— This seems like a fucking r—

AUSTIN: This is tough!

JANINE: This is not the part of the story you leave out!

AUSTIN: No, totally!

JANINE: The part where we jumped into the trash chute [cross] with a mech tied to a mech?

AUSTIN: [cross] Yeah. From...

KEITH: [cross] You know it didn't occur to me that it would have been a roll, but it does feel...

[AUSTIN chuckles]

KEITH: It does feel right to ask for one, yeah.

AUSTIN: Yeah, I think this is a roll. This is a—

KEITH: [cross] Yeah.

AUSTIN: [cross] Thisbe are you... you're jumping, right?

KEITH: [cross] My... My...

JANINE: [cross] Yeah.

KEITH: I will say, before we do the roll!

AUSTIN: Aha.

KEITH: 'Cause... I will say that... where I thought there was going to be a roll was when we walk in and be like "Oh! Hey, look! It's Kalar and Figure! Oh! Hey, look! It's someone else and some guards!"

AUSTIN: I— We don't even know we're gonna get— we'll see how this goes! [cross] Right?

KEITH: [cross] We'll see, yeah.

JANINE: [cross] That's so true, actua— That is true.

AUSTIN: Let's do this jump! Because this jump is, you know— We still have a bunch of rolls to do on this act. [cross] So we have plenty of time here.

JANINE: [cross] Yeah.

KEITH: [cross] Yeah.

AUSTIN: You leap off... Is this Cool or Doubt? How you do this? It's hard for me to imagine it's not Cool... But...

JANINE: [cross] Yeahhh...

AUSTIN: [cross] 'Cause this is some Metal Gear... fucking wild...

JANINE: [cross] Yeah...

AUSTIN: [cross] ...on-site procurement type bullshit.

JANINE: Yeah...

KEITH: Yeah.

AUSTIN: Okay! Are you... Or, any of your Roles helping you with this?

JANINE: Um...

AUSTIN: "Tank" or "wrecking ball"? Or your Mech? Is Mow helping you with this somehow? Hmm.

JANINE: I mean, Mow's the one doing most of the work, right?

AUSTIN: True. Yeah. I'll give you one for that. I didn't know if you wanted to lean into "tank" or "wrecking ball," and make this particularly heavy... like, landing or something, you know?

JANINE: I don't know how... Hm.

AUSTIN: [cross] It's dangerous.

JANINE: [cross] I mean, I guess the force of, like, having to fling— flinging yourself—

AUSTIN: [cross] True.

JANINE: [cross] Like, you need to do that from a certain speed to... Otherwise, you're just gonna— It's gonna take, like, an hour. [chuckles]

AUSTIN: Yeah.

JANINE: Like, you can't just step off...

AUSTIN: And you'll keep going forward, [cross] presumably, because of the momentum.

KEITH: [cross] Well, the flip side... I mean, we are in space. So, there's... We don't need to be heavy or light, right?

AUSTIN: No, but the momentum...!

JANINE: I'm talking about momentum, yeah. Because— We don't— We also don't know when that door is going to close...

AUSTIN: Yeah.

KEITH: [cross] Sure.

JANINE: [cross] So, like, getting there quickly would be like a strength thing...

AUSTIN: [cross] I like it!

KEITH: [cross] Okay.

AUSTIN: [cross] And then, is anyone helping?

KEITH: I can help.

AUSTIN: How you helpin'?

KEITH: Um... I... I guess I'm inside of Mow... It just sort of felt like I could help.

AUSTIN: Yeah.

KEITH: I guess.

AUSTIN: We're close enough that also if... [cross] Kalar...

KEITH: I'm a sci— I could calculate a trajectory.

AUSTIN: Oh! Yeah! I think that that makes sense with how you do things! Yeah. Let's do that.

KEITH: Yeah.

AUSTIN: You've calculated the trajectory. You're the one who said "jump now at this angle" or whatever. [cross] Right?

KEITH: [cross] Right. Yeah. Uhum.

AUSTIN: I like that! Okay, 3d6! You want to get over a 3. A 4, 5, or a 6 here.

KEITH: Oh, Thisbe's a good one to roll this!

AUSTIN: Yeah.

[a brief pause]

AUSTIN: Hey! There you go!

JANINE: [cross] A 2, 4, 5!

AUSTIN: [cross] That's a full succ— Or, it's not a full success. It's a... But the 4 and 5 are both successes, there's no Hedge here. So, when you get two successes... which you've just done...

KEITH: Ooh, wait! So Cool, you want to get above and Doubt you want to get below?

AUSTIN: Correct. Yes.

KEITH: [cross] Got it.

AUSTIN: Which, I will note, and the book does note this! Hey, you might note that because acting Cool requires you to roll above your score it's easier to wind up with more Cool points than Doubt ones. This is intentional and a representation of the gravity of imperial logic. The Principality is a system meant to sustain itself through conflict, and as such it is incredible at reframing conflict towards its ends. Even violence done against The Principality in the name of justice can be turned into a message about the importance of the Empire, either through making insurgents look like cartoonish villains or by reframing them as the exact hero as The Principality may have needed at the time. So... You know, that's... that is intentional. That Cool is easier to get than Doubt. And that is a flip for the original rule as written by... Rufus... Roswell. So! With two successes... you managed to do it! Choose and answer two of the questions off the success list. You may ask for input from the table. What do you think, Janine? What are the— What are the two success questions you like here?

JANINE: Ummm... One... I think... What did— So, “what did you see coming that the cameras didn't?”

AUSTIN: Uhum.

JANINE: I think, maybe the doors do start to close...

AUSTIN: Ooh...! Okay.

JANINE: But Mow... have big arms...!

AUSTIN: Uhum!

[DRE & KEITH chuckle]

JANINE: And... [cross] I think—

AUSTIN: [cross] Mow has big arms.

JANINE: I think there is that moment of, like... right as they're getting to it they start to close. And it's just, like, Mow holds the doors open. Swings...

AUSTIN: [cross] Yeah.

JANINE: [cross] Swings the body in.

AUSTIN: [chuckling] Aha. It's sick! Yeah.

JANINE: You know, maybe... tugs the tether in... but holds the doors open long enough that they can get their shit in.

AUSTIN: Cool.

JANINE: Um.

AUSTIN: Also, just want to note that I think that... that the Figure's Mech is, like, always presented in shadow here. We haven't seen it on camera yet, either. Maybe it even has a tarp over it. [chuckling] Can we have a tarp over it?

KEITH: [cross] That's gonna be an expensive tarp!

DRE: [cross] I was gonna say, maybe it's just in a big container.

AUSTIN: [cross] Oh, yeah!

DRE: [cross] Like, it's just in a big shipping container, or something.

AUSTIN: [cross] Yeah! I love that! That's really good! I love it!

JANINE: I mean, the other version of this is that, like, as the camera's doing this the camera shifts to inside of this airlock as Mow comes in, the rope is hanging out, then it switches to outside the airlock as the rope... as the cord is pulled. And there's, like, just, like, a big thing that blocks the camera.

AUSTIN: [cross] Yeeaah! Totally!

JANINE: [cross] And then you get, like, the door shutting behind it.

AUSTIN: Yeah. I love it. Um.

JANINE: That kind of thing.

AUSTIN: Alright! So what's the second thing that you... that you get from the success? What's the second question?

JANINE: Umm... [cross] Probably "who did you get the upper hand with?"

KEITH: [cross] I have a qu—

JANINE: Sorry, Keith, what were you gonna say?

KEITH: Oh, I just had a— I had a question suggestion but I like that one, too.

JANINE: What was your question suggestion?

KEITH: "What effect did your action have on those who watched it?"

JANINE: [chuckles] I think that's probably the same in this case as "who'd you get the upper hand with," right?

KEITH: Yeah. Yeah. [cross] I think it is.

JANINE: [cross] 'Cause no one— No one in that room was probably expecting this particular thing to happen!

AUSTIN: [cross] Right! Right!

KEITH: [cross, chuckling] Yeah, pretty much!

AUSTIN: It's like: "YOO!" [chuckles] What is— "What is happening?" So, yeah. Is Mow just in this big room now? Like we've been— We've been talking about this control room, but it's also the room that has the airlock in it. Right, presumably? And now in the airlock is a big gorilla mech? [chuckles]

JANINE: Yeah.

AUSTIN: Okay! Then, yeah, I think that they are... overawed... And "they" include the guards who've now come into the room, begin to raise their guns and then drop them as they see Mow stand up, kind of at the far side of this trash, like you know release... room. Having made his way in.

[1:45:12]

JACK: It's like: "There's a gorilla in this trash room!"

AUSTIN: Yeah! Uh-huh!

[KEITH laughs]

AUSTIN: And it's bigger than all of us put together!

JACK: "Fuckin' gorilla in here!"

KEITH: Potential side benefit is that we've now cleared out... this little area of the ship from guards who would come if something happened!

AUSTIN: Sure, [cross] they're all here!

KEITH: [cross] They're already here!

AUSTIN: Yeah, aha! Um. Okay. That was 11 Cool spinnable. So, guards are here, guards are stunned... you know... Everyone's in the same building, in the same room. What happens? Who goes next? I guess, Phrygian, we haven't— you haven't done a roll yet. You could save your two roles for later in this sequence...

KEITH: [cross] Yeah.

AUSTIN: [cross] But if you have a thing now, now would be a time!

KEITH: Um. I guess it's hard to tell if this is immediately, like... a fight. I mean, they've given up! They've...

AUSTIN: They're stunned. I don't think they've— like, thrown their guns on the ground, yet.

[JACK chuckles]

AUSTIN: That was a roll to get inside. [cross] That was not a roll to win the fight. Right?

KEITH: [cross] It was a roll to get inside. Yeah. Um... Huh.

JANINE: I wonder if there's— Is there, like, a... override in the airlock itself to unlock the thing that would get us into that main area with the people?

AUSTIN: Oh! I think that you've gotten— I think that you've been able to do that if you want.

JANINE: Okay.

AUSTIN: Like, I do. [cross] I think that... I think that...

JANINE: [cross] So we're— So we're just in there?

KEITH: [cross] Yeah. We're just in there.

AUSTIN: You're in the mix. Yeah.

KEITH: Um.

AUSTIN: I think this is, like— My question for Phrygian is, like: alright, your way out is here. You have some people facing you. Are you going to... How are you going to get yourself out of this situation? Are you doing it by fighting these people? Are you doing it by, like, talking your way out? Are you doing it by, like... running? Are you doing— You know what I mean. What's the... [cross] What's your play?

KEITH: [cross] Uhm.

AUSTIN: Again, unless someone else wants to use their second roll for this set of things. Because, again, we've eight rolls total, two from each person in this first...

KEITH: If anyone ha— If anyone has an obvious, like, “well, obviously, we should fight” or “obviously, we should not fight these people right now” thing? Um... Then feel free to hop in. I guess that I'm leaning, like... just locking them up in here. “Sorry, you're in the trash room today!”

[AUSTIN chuckles]

AUSTIN: So just leaning on them with the upper hand of having Mow here?

KEITH: [cross] Yeah.

AUSTIN: [cross] Before they can even get it in their heads that they could, like, shoot *you*. Just be like: “we won! We did it! We won already! [cross] This is already a win!”

[DRE laughs]

KEITH: Yeah. Yeah. Yeah. Just insist that— Yeah. This is— Yeah. You've surrounded— “I take it you've all surrendered...!”

[AUSTIN chuckles]

AUSTIN: Is this Cool or Doubt?

KEITH: I don't know.

AUSTIN: I— I think I can hear an argument for either way! I really think this is on the line! Right?

KEITH: Yeah.

JANINE: Is it, like, a shipping container that they might have moved trash from other parts of the ship? And— Like, an empty shipping container that you could, like, march them into and put a padlock on it?

AUSTIN: [cross] Yeah totally!

JANINE: [cross] And then it's kinda like dubious. 'Cause, like, what if someone just ejects them?

AUSTIN: [cross] Totally.

JANINE: [cross] They probably won't. But, like, that's— They're just in there. They need help!

AUSTIN: [sighs] God. Miserable.

KEITH: Yeah, I don't think anybody will eject them.

AUSTIN: [cross] Do...

JANINE: [cross] Well, someone's still gotta find them.

AUSTIN: Do you lock up the... You also lock up the... the person who hit the alarm.

KEITH: Yeah, what a snitch thing to do!

AUSTIN: Uh-huh! Sometimes the dice roll like that and you end up with a snitch!

KEITH: Yeah...

AUSTIN: Um... Give me... So. Yeah. What do you think this is? Are you— I guess, the way I would— I would say this is: how do you— how does Phrygian do this? With what tone? With what... You know, when the camera sees this, does this look like a clever heroic thing that you're doing? [cross] Or...

KEITH: [cross] No, I think it's confusing!

AUSTIN: Yeah.

KEITH: It happens very quickly! It's, like...

AUSTIN: Yes.

KEITH: Like, it's still... It's still wild. People are in shock. Like, it's weird that it's— It's weird to have assumed— It's something you, like, you later you go: "was that weird?" [laughs]

AUSTIN: "Was that—" Yeah! "Was that—" [laughs]

KEITH: I could— I didn't even have time to think it was weird while it was happening but I think that was weird!

AUSTIN: Yeah. "We just assumed the fight was— There was no fight? There was no...?"

KEITH: Yeah!

AUSTIN: "Huh!" Do we think — again, watching the cartoon of this — like, do you think they just don't have a budget for a fight in that sequence? What happened there?

[KEITH laughs]

AUSTIN: Um. Yeah. I think that that's... that's Doubt. Give me a... Give me a Doubt! So it's one from you doing that. Right. One just for anything.

KEITH: Right.

AUSTIN: What is your... Do you have a... Do you have a Role? Or a... something else that would help you here? [cross] I guess, it's your Role.

KEITH: "Wildcard."

AUSTIN: Yeah! This is a "wildcard" thing!

KEITH: [cross] That's wildcard!

AUSTIN: [cross] I think we just described what a wildcard is! "Did that just happen? What's just— What is happening?"

KEITH: Yeah.

AUSTIN: [cross] And then I'm guessing you're getting help.

JACK: [cross] "They come out of the trash chute!"

[AUSTIN & KEITH laugh]

AUSTIN: [mumbles] "...They come into the trash chute! Put us in a cargo... like, a trash container that had already been emptied out and..." In fact, are they gonna get put back— Is it, like, a...

JACK: [cross, chuckling] God!

AUSTIN: [cross] Is it that being put back into a pneumatic tube? It's like when a pneumatic tube shows up you empty out its contents [chuckles] and then you put the empty back in?

JACK: [chuckling] They just load them all in?

AUSTIN: Load them all in, [cross] launch them back up!

JANINE: [cross] I'm imagining it... like a...

KEITH: [cross] Like a firefly in a glass jar?

AUSTIN: [cross, sighs] Oh, god.

JANINE: Has anyone ever been to... I don't know if this is a Canada thing, or if there are these things at otherwheres, but, like— Otherwheres. Whatever.

[AUSTIN chuckles]

JANINE: [laughs] Other places! There's, like, a beer... You know, beer stores have, like, those roller... there's, like, a long roller conveyor belt, and they'll put the case of beer on it [cross] in the back and then they roll it out in the front?

AUSTIN: [cross] Yeah.

JACK: [cross, chuckles] Oh, sure!

AUSTIN: Yeah. Totally. 100%

KEITH: I've never seen that.

AUSTIN: It's like— It's like an old school... [cross] conveyor belt.

JACK: [cross] They have it in that, like, um Airlines, too... On the security thing.

AUSTIN: Yes.

JACK: [cross] As you go through security.

JANINE: [cross] Oh, yeah.

AUSTIN: [cross] That's a—

JACK: The things that you roll the...

[DRE chuckles]

AUSTIN: You roll your luggage on onto...

JACK: [cross] Your little thing, yeah.

AUSTIN: [cross] ...sometimes. Not when it's like a grocery checkout, like, black — whatever that material is — but, like, literally the roly ones. The metal roly ones?

KEITH: Okay.

JANINE: You can kind of give it a push to get it rolling...?

KEITH: Sort of like a— Sort of like a flat escalator.

AUSTIN: Not like a flat escalator.

KEITH: [cross] Okay.

AUSTIN: [cross] Because it's a roly. It's roly... It's not— Like, it's a bunch of little rolling... [cross] Imagine a bunch of rolling pins next to each other!

JANINE: [cross] Like, rattles aro— Like, rattles and clatters and stuff, it's very noisy?

KEITH: [cross] Okay, yes I totally know what you're talking about.

AUSTIN: [cross] Okay. Awesome.

KEITH: 'Cause it's the part *after* the con— the rubbery conveyor belt at the grocery store...

AUSTIN: Yes!

KEITH: ...then hits the roly pins!

AUSTIN: That roll the rest of the way. Sure. Yes.

KEITH: Yes. Okay. Yeah.

AUSTIN: So you put them on one of [laughs] those! And then are sending them away! Give me a... Oh, is that— Is anyone helping? This seems like a yes. Presumably. [chuckles]

JANINE: I'll give 'em a push!

AUSTIN: Alright, then let's... [chuckles] You've got— Thisbe's just, like, [cross] shoving this fucking container down the conveyor belt!

JANINE: [cross] In her little green or orange hat that says the beer store on it.

KEITH: [cross] Alright.

[AUSTIN & KEITH laugh]

AUSTIN: I love it! 3d6! You're looking for a number underneath 4! Ooh! You got two 4s!

KEITH: [cross] I got two 4s.

AUSTIN: So you're hedging here! So. You get the sense that they are going to resist this. Right? I think that's the thing here. You could try to commit to it and roll again, but the Hedge is taking a Cool action instead and whatever that looks like looks Cool. In the terms of the game. Which is a domineering, violent... you know, powerful — in a way that's understood by an audience as being you exerting Force... [cross] in a...

KEITH: [cross] That's if I change it to Cool?

AUSTIN: If you change it to Cool. Yeah.

KEITH: And otherwise, [cross] I get to re-roll 3d6?

AUSTIN: [cross] You could re-roll 3d6! Yep!

KEITH: I'm gonna re-roll 3d6!

AUSTIN: Stick on Doubt. Alright. 3d6.

KEITH: Okay. I think it's... I think it's, like...

AUSTIN: [cross] Yeah.

KEITH: [cross] I think it's, like, mild protests and I'm just sort of like... like... shushing, or...

AUSTIN: [makes shushing sound] Shh... shh... sh...

[KEITH laughs]

AUSTIN: Just go ahead! Yeah.

[JACK chuckles]

KEITH: Or, I guess, like, batting inside, maybe, like, curtly answering their questions about, like: "what?"

[AUSTIN chuckles]

AUSTIN: Well, you got a success here! Right?

KEITH: [cross] Yeah.

AUSTIN: [cross] You've got a 1 and a 2. So it's two successes. You've got a 1, 2, 6. Which is 9 points in Doubt; that is also spinnable, because it's a success. I need to— I need to— I have two versions of this document open and one of them's at the bottom and one of them's at the top so I can see different things...

KEITH: [cross] Oh, yeah. Me too.

AUSTIN: [cross] Except that I keep scrolling them up and down, both of them! It throws me off!

KEITH: Yeah, me too!

AUSTIN: Okay. Phrygian. 3d6, 9 Doubt, spinnable. What are your two... questions you would like to... answer? Same list that Thisbe had last time. When you succeed.

KEITH: Yeah. Um... Well... I think they're— I think there's sort of, like, an obvious setup here in "how did you take control of the narrative?" Where this was about to be a fight...

AUSTIN: Yeah.

KEITH: Until we showed up and rolled them away inside of little tubes.

[JACK chuckles]

AUSTIN: [chuckles] Uh-huh! I like that! That's fine! [cross] Again...

KEITH: [cross] And this is, like, you know. This is a population of guards. These are the guards of this area.

AUSTIN: Yes.

KEITH: If it's not a substantial— This is now a less guarded... [cross] part.

AUSTIN: [cross] Part of this place. Yes, totally. Um. Alright. I like that! So, wai— Was that both of them? Was that only one?

KEITH: That was just one. [cross] That was just one.

AUSTIN: [cross] Okay.

AUSTIN: Any other— You have a second one here.

KEITH: Uhm... I have a sort of weak-ish one if someone has a better one.

AUSTIN: Um. I like the idea of... I have an answer for “what did you see coming that the cameras didn't?” Uhm...

KEITH: Okay, what's your answer?

AUSTIN: Which is that there is, like... [cross] You're gonna know...

KEITH: [cross] It's funny that I don't know what I saw coming.

AUSTIN: [chuckles] Right, I know!

[DRE & KEITH laugh]

AUSTIN: I think it's a threat that's about to make itself clear, but that is... You will now know it's here in a way that you wouldn't have known it was here until it was— not too late, but until it was, like, time. You know what I mean?

J. Right. Yeah.

AUSTIN: Which is... Do you remember...? I think the only person here, character-wise was Thisbe who heard this once before. Um... But... Dre was also in this game. Do you remember the Cadenza from Imperium's Plume? Was the... kind of grapple hook mech that made, like, violin sounds? Whenever it, like, flew through the air? And that was in the Orzen mission. You might not remember it. But that's a thing that happened and it was sick. Um, you hear that same violin sound, except it keeps growing until it's a roar.

And player— or people listening to the show would recognize it from the *Armor Astir* game in Road to Partizan: that is the screech of the Divine Imperium — which once was known as Empyrian, forever ago — as it launches from The Curtain Fleet to the north. And... brightens the entire... you know [chuckles] area around it. It's this giant firebird. But you hear this echo and, like, reverberate through the halls. And you're able to kind of steel yourselves, knowing that a Divine is about to fucking show up. And... not [chuckles] And not have that surprise you as a firebird slams into you... from the North. Or, slams into these ships from the north, right?

KEITH: Is this— Is the reason they're slamming into the ships because this is a... [cross] Curtain... Divine? Yeah. Okay.

AUSTIN: [cross] Oh, this is a Curtain Divine. This is it. One of the big Curtain Divines showing up.

JACK: So they're not even attacking us right now!

AUSTIN: [chuckles] No!

JACK: [cross] I mean they are but, like... You know.

AUSTIN: [cross] I mean... Yeah. Yeah. You're in the middle of— Again, when I... In my GMing notes I have this whole area just called The Fray. I think this is just a fucking mess of combat that you're gonna try to like... It's like a Star Wars fight is happening.

JACK: [cross] It's kicked off now!

AUSTIN: [cross] But your objective is not to win it, it's to get the fuck out! Yes, exactly! Exactly. Yeah. [laughs] Alright! Um. So, I'm almost imagining it like... you know the opposite...? You know when a shadow passes over something in fiction? Where it's like “oh shit, something big's above us”? You know what I mean?

KEITH: [cross] Yeah!

AUSTIN: [cross] It's like the opposite. Where it's something bright passes over you...?

KEITH: [cross] Oh, not like a little shadow?

AUSTIN: [cross] It's like the light— No, not like a little shadow. [laughs] A little shadow passes by. But it's like a... column of light passes over the fleet — the energy fleet, the Lattice — as the Divine Imperium begins to kind of orbit around it and try to figure out its way of doing lots of damage. It hasn't started yet. It's about to. What do y'all do?

JACK: [cross] Oh, god...!

AUSTIN: [cross] Are you launching back out? What are you doing?

KEITH: Do we need anything else here?

AUSTIN: You have the thing you need. Which is on a data disc... Not even a data disk. I think it's a big data briefcase... held by...

KEITH: [cross] Gotta be a big disk in that briefcase!

AUSTIN: [cross, chuckles] ...either Kalar, or... I think the whole thing is a file. Do you know what I mean?

KEITH: Okay. A briefcase shaped file.

AUSTIN: Yeah. You know— When I say a briefcase I just mean: you have to— you have to fuckin— It has heft to it. You know?

KEITH: [cross] It's a thigh drive instead of a thumb drive.

AUSTIN: [cross] It could be smaller... Right, it is! Yeah. I think... [laughs] that's exactly right!

[KEITH laughs]

AUSTIN: It's like— It's like something, like, the size of a pocketbook or something versus being the size of just a little USB thumb drive. You know? Um. And Kalar and the Figure know what's on it, but they haven't said it yet. You know, maybe they should wait until they're free of this area. But I don't know. It's up to them.

JANINE: [cross] I'm not askin'!

AUSTIN: [cross] What do you do? Yeah. Aha.

[JANINE sighs with apprehension]

JACK: All the shadows on the ship must be moving is something I realized.

AUSTIN: [cross] Yeah!

JACK: [cross] Like when you swing a light over something and all the Shadows move?

AUSTIN: Yeah.

JANINE: Like, it's not just the brightness it's like... It's like the room kind of tilts.

AUSTIN: Yeah.

JANINE: Wait, does the light shine through, like, stuff?

AUSTIN: No. No. [cross] But it it...

JACK: [cross] Windows.

AUSTIN: Yeah. Windows. Yeah. Sure it does.

JANINE: Okay.

AUSTIN: But I was just— It is the thing of, like... It's a moving light source, so tall things would cast different shadows as it moves around. I think right under it it's like noon. It's like a noon that moves across the space station. You know?

[a brief pause]

JACK: We gotta go! Right? We just— We just have to get out!

AUSTIN: Is that what Kalar says?

JACK: Yeah. I think Kalar just kind of just says like:

JACK (as Kalar): Fuck it! Let's go! Um... Anybody here need anything? From here?

JACK: Because I guess the other thing is that, like... We've sort of been— We must have sent a message to be like: "here's where we, are come rescue us."

AUSTIN: Uhum.

JACK: So this can't have been completely out of the blue.

AUSTIN: Ye-ye-yeah. This is a planned op for sure, right?

JACK: Yeah. [cross] Like, we knew they were coming.

KEITH: [cross] [partly in character] There was something about sending the other data that was dangerous in a way that communicating...

AUSTIN: [cross] Correct.

JACK: [cross] Oh yeah.

KEITH: ...generally was less dangerous.

JACK: [partly in character] I know what it is! [chuckles] We can't tell you what it is... now.

[DRE giggles]

JACK: Um... Yeah.

KEITH: [partly in character] Are you bragging?

[JANINE chuckles]

JACK: [partly in character] It's good to have... You— You want us to get off this ship!

KEITH: [partly in character] I did anyway!

JANINE: Yeah. We should... Uh... I have a... This is a question for... Dre.

DRE: Yes?

JANINE: Does your mech have, like, a propulsiony thing? Is this... I don't know anything about your mech.

DRE: Uh. Yes.

JANINE: Okay. So is this the thing where we unveil your mech and then it's a reverse of our entry? Which is that your mech tows Mow?

DRE: Um... Yeah... We could do that.

AUSTIN: Does the light pass over the container with your ship inside— or your Mech, and suddenly it's reveal— Or— The container opens, or if it's not in a container just the light reveals what it is? At this moment?

DRE: I like the idea of, like, the container, like, popping-opening.

AUSTIN: [imitates a pressurized container opening] H-qhoo... Yeah.

DRE: Like, this— Yeah. [cross] Yeah. Aha.

DRE: [cross] They do, like, the hiss and the hydraulic release and like the sides just kind of fall down.

[2:00:04]

KEITH: Some steam, some dry ice in there.

AUSTIN: Yeah.

DRE: Yeah!

KEITH: For effect! We knew!

DRE: Yeah.

AUSTIN: What— What is it? [cross] What's it look like?

KEITH: Yeah, what's in there?

DRE: Ah. Alright so this is The Will of The Witch. Uh...

AUSTIN: Fucking ace name!

[DRE laughs]

AUSTIN: I fuckin' love it so much!

JACK: It's a great name!

DRE: Whenever I'm trying to name something for Friends at the Table and I send it to both Austin and Jack and they're both like: "Yeah! That's a name!"

[AUSTIN chuckles softly]

DRE: I'm like: "alright, cool. Alright. Good. We did this!" [laughs]

JACK: Rock and roll!

DRE: Um. The Will of the Witch is big. It is very big. Um... And... [sighs] It looks like... Okay, you know how characters in, like, Final Fantasy VII on the PS1 are like blocky polygons?

AUSTIN: Yeah!

KEITH: Yeah.

DRE: What if you took the Tower Knight from *Demon's Souls*...

[AUSTIN starts clapping]

DRE: ...and did it as blocky PS1 polygons?

[JACK chuckles]

AUSTIN: Let's go!

[JANINE laughs]

JACK: [cross] That's so good!

KEITH: Hold on, I gotta— I have to google Tower Knight.

AUSTIN: Yeah.

JACK: Picture of big knight, right? [cross] Like a—

AUSTIN: [cross] Yeah. It's a—

KEITH: [cross] It is just a big knight, yeah.

AUSTIN: [cross] That's just a big... Just a fuck-off knight!

KEITH: [cross] Oh it's like a knight that's the size of a tower.

AUSTIN: Yeah. Aha.

KEITH: [cross] It's extremely literal.

AUSTIN: [cross] It has a big tower shield... Yeah.

DRE: Uhum.

KEITH: It's not the Knight *of* a Tower.

AUSTIN: It is also... Well... Sort of that, also. But yeah. Uh-huh.

DRE: [cross] Uhm...

AUSTIN: [cross] Anyway, I love it.

DRE: It has a big shield, like— But it's not holding the shield I think it's just welded, like, onto its forearm?

AUSTIN: Okay.

DRE: Because it uses both of its hands to hold just a... just a *big* fucking hammer.

[AUSTIN sighs with adoration]

DRE: Very much *Monster Hunter* or, like, Smough from *Dark Souls* hammer.

AUSTIN: Gotchou.

DRE: Smough is one with the hammer, right?

AUSTIN: [cross] Ye-ye-yeah, yeah. Yeah. Yeah.

DRE: [cross] Smough is the one with the hammer, Ornstein is the one with the... Okay.

AUSTIN: Smough?⁶ Smough?⁷ I've never known.

DRE: I don't know.

AUSTIN: But yes.

DRE: I've always said Smough,⁸ but I don't know.

JACK: Smough.⁹

AUSTIN: Smough.¹⁰

[JANINE & DRE laugh]

DRE: [cross] That's the— That's *The Hobbit*.

AUSTIN: [cross, with exaggeration] Ownstein and Smough.¹¹

JACK: [with exaggeration] Hi I'm— Hi, I'm Smaug!

DRE: Wait, isn't Smaug the dragon [cross] from the...?

AUSTIN: [cross] Yes.

KEITH: [cross] Yes, Smaug is the dragon from *The Hobbit*.

DRE: Alright.

AUSTIN: Alright. Yeah. I love it! I love it.

KEITH: [cross] Wow!

⁶ Pronounces it like “dough.”

⁷ Pronounces it like “smog.”

⁸ Pronounces it like “smog.”

⁹ Pronounces it so it rhymes with “mouth,” with a hard “g” at the end (like in “rig”).

¹⁰ Repeats the previous pronunciation.

¹¹ Repeats the previous pronunciation.

AUSTIN: [cross] And it has some sort of propulsion system? Okay! Well what are your... What are your Quirks on this thing?

DRE: Its quirks are... Uh. The positive Quirks are: “explosive acceleration; [cross] and enormous weaponry”

AUSTIN: [cross] Well, there you go!

DRE: The negative Quirks are that it is a “hulking monstrosity.” I think...

AUSTIN: I lo— I love it!

DRE: ...when we were planning this Mech I basically said to you Austin, like, this thing is slow but it's also incredibly fast the way that, like, an NFL lineman is fast.

AUSTIN: Yeah.

DRE: They cannot run, like, a 5K in a great amount of time, but you would not want 10 yards between you and it moving at its utmost speed.

AUSTIN: [cross] Right. Right.

DRE: [cross] Because it would be horrifying.

AUSTIN: I love it. Um...

ART: If you want to run away from them you want to be three miles away to start. [laughs]

[AUSTIN & DRE laugh]

DRE: [cross, laughing] Exactly!

KEITH: [cross] Fast twitch! You've got a fast twitch mech!

AUSTIN: [laughing] Yeah.

DRE: Uhum!

AUSTIN: God! Alright. Um... So that's... So that thing is able to lea— You're able to launch away. Here's a real fucking silly question because I know we don't want to burn roll — we only have four more rolls in this Act — but is the process of revealing this thing a Cool roll [laughing] by default?

[JACK: chuckles]

DRE: I mean, yeah. Probably.

AUSTIN: Right?

JANINE: Hm...

DRE: It's— It's a cool fucking rob— [laughs]

AUSTIN: [cross] I'll let you do...

JANINE: [cross] But what's the failure state of that?

KEITH: [cross] It takes a long time to open the door.

JANINE: [cross] And if it's a failure is that something we want to explore?

AUSTIN: Yeah! It takes a long time to open the door! It takes a long time to get on board and launch away or something. Right? I guess you're right, though. It's not risky. It's not it's not risky or whatever. So, yeah. What are you doing with this thing? Is it trying to get distance before the fight begins?

DRE: Um... yes. Or... I mean, it's either clearing distance or it's just basically, like, I am the head of the battering ram.

AUSTIN: Right.

DRE Um. And I'm clearing [cross] your way.

AUSTIN: [cross] You're clearing the way. Right. Because... as the— you, like, have your shield up as fire starts to come in, basically? And you're, like, blocking the shots from hitting you and Mow as you do this. Or something.

DRE: [cross] Yeah.

AUSTIN: [cross] I love this. Alright. Well that... Is that Cool or is that Doubt?

DRE: That's Cool.

AUSTIN: I think this is all Cool, unfortunately. Um. Not unfortunately. It is what it is! Uh... Alright! Your Score is a... What are you, a 3?

DRE: [cross] 3.

AUSTIN: [cross] You're a 3. Your Mech is helping you with this? [chuckles] I think it is fair to say. Is anyone else helping? Also, where are people? Kalar, are you onboard Mow now? Are you in the empty cockpit of Mow? The gutted cockpit of Mow?

JACK: Is that pressurized?

AUSTIN: I believe it would need to be.

JANINE: [cross] I think it is...

AUSTIN: [cross] I guess it might not be!

JANINE: 'Cause it's— I think it's pressurized because the big thing with it is just that it's like a car with the seats taken out. Right?

AUSTIN: [cross] Right.

JANINE: [cross] That's the way you've always described it. Or like the back of someone's minivan?

AUSTIN: Uh-huh.

[DRE chuckles]

KEITH: [cross] Hmm...

JANINE: [cross] It's still, like... if you don't have...

JACK: [cross] Oh I love that vibe, yeah!

KEITH: [cross] Growing up, my minivan was not pressurized!

[AUSTIN chuckles, JACK laughs]

JACK: Only a pressurized minivan, please!

AUSTIN: Oh, you know what, though? Here's the thing: even if it hadn't been previously, the Company of the Spade would have pre— would have done a work-over [cross] on all your shit to prepare it for this stuff.

JACK: [cross] Oh! To prepare to get people out!

AUSTIN: Which is the same for the Blue Channel crew when we get over to y'all! Definitely-definitely had work done to make sure you have some shielding or something for your mission. Um.

JANINE: I mean, the other thing is also that Mow is sort of an industrial, like, farming robot and you have to imagine that when you have a farming robot in space part of that is going to be on planets that aren't necessarily hospitable, maybe.

AUSTIN: Uhum.

JANINE: Like, that are good for farming but not good for people walking around breathing?

AUSTIN: Sure.

DRE: Yeah. I mean, you could also... Kalar could also come into The Will of the Witch, as well.

AUSTIN: True. Which is definitely pressurized. Sure. I don't know how big the cockpit there was. If that's more or less comfortable — [cross] sticking a second person inside of a gutted cockpit versus an un—

JACK: [cross] I think there's something...

AUSTIN: ...a non-gutted one.

JACK: I think there is something weirdly uncomfortable about climbing into the Will of the Witch for Kalar.

AUSTIN: Hm.

JACK: [cross] So I think that he's...

DRE: [cross] Well, I don't see the problem.

[DRE & JACK chuckle]

JACK: So I think that he's gonna climb into the back of Mow instead, and have it be this real, like, oh you're in the back of a...

[DRE laughs]

JACK: A minivan. Or, like, in a truck. Or you're, like, you know...

AUSTIN: [cross] Great.

JACK: [cross] Riding in the open back of a truck and, like, bracing yourself against the thing to try and stay upright.

AUSTIN: Yeah. Yeah.

JACK: [cross] Because it's, like—

KEITH: [cross] “This is a very awkward elevator, I'll take the next one” sort of...

[AUSTIN laughs]

JACK: Yeah!

DRE: [cross] Yeah!

JACK: [cross] Like, one of these is, like, the figure of a soldier carrying a hammer; and the other one is a repurposed farming vehicle.

AUSTIN: Yeah.

JANINE: [cross] Gorilla.

JACK: [cross] And I think that— I think he is... Hm?

JANINE: [chuckling] Refurbished farming gorilla.

[KEITH laughs]

JACK: A repurposed farming gorilla. Yes. [chuckles]

AUSTIN: Yeah. Uhum.

JACK: Close in on the face of one of the people in the pneumatic tube: “Stan, was that a gorilla?”

[AUSTIN & JANINE laughs]

KEITH: A silverback tractor.

JACK: “My... Did they have a gorilla?” Um. Yeah. I think that Kalar is smart enough to be like: “there is no appreciable difference between these two things. They are both being used as weapons of war.”

AUSTIN: But.

JACK: But in this moment: better to get into the one that was a tractor, basically.

AUSTIN: "I'll take the damn gorilla!" Yeah.

[DRE & JACK laughs]

AUSTIN: A gorilla out of context.

[DRE laughs]

KEITH: Also: hard to judge someone who wants to take a ride in a gorilla!

AUSTIN: Yeah. Alright.

KEITH: [cross] It's pretty sick.

AUSTIN: [cross] Is anyone helping... Figure during this?

JACK: [cross] I kinda feel—

KEITH: [cross] Sorry, what is the action, again? Wat is the actual thing we're doing flying?

AUSTIN: [cross] Like, flying through the flak that is now being shot up at the... at the Divine Imperium. To, like, force your way through the fire into clear air, basically.

JACK: I don't think I can help!

AUSTIN: No.

KEITH: You know, my— I know we're not playing *Beam Saber* right now, but my maneuver is pretty good. I could do that.

AUSTIN: How— But how would you be... Because you're not piloting either of these things, right?

KEITH: No, but I— you know, I've got a sense. [cross] I can be a lookout. I've got— I've got...

AUSTIN: [cross] So it's like pointing things out a little bit?

KEITH: Yeah, I've got awareness! [cross] You know...

AUSTIN: [cross] So you *are* The Will of the Witch, then!

KEITH: Yeah. I'll say yeah.

AUSTIN: Okay.

KEITH: I have no— I have no reason to not be.

AUSTIN: Alright! Then give me 3d6! You want high here. You want higher than three.

[a brief pause]

AUSTIN: [exhaling] Fff...

DRE: [frustratedly] Ah!

AUSTIN: Well, it's Hedging though! Right?

DRE: [cross] Yup.

AUSTIN: [cross] So you get two threes. You can either, and this is nice because you could just re-roll and stay on Cool or you could Hedge here. And... The opportunity to... What is the opportunity for a Doubt here? Um. I guess it would be to just simply try to disappear or something, right? No big dramatic reveal. No... debuting the... the mech that we just saw and heroically protecting your friends with it. But, like, slinking away... as if no one ever knew you were here. Or doing your best to, or something like that.

Unless someone else has a good idea for what a Doubt here could be. You can go really broad the other way and say your Doubt here is sending a message and saying: "we're just trying to leave. Let us leave! We're not combatants!" [chuckling] You know? You can go that way and trying to, like... you know, argue your way out.

[pause]

DRE: [sighs] Huh... This is a very, like— I feel like this is a perfect and effective illustration of why this game is interesting...

AUSTIN: Uhum.

DRE: Because I have been waiting a literal *month* to debut this mech! [chuckles]

AUSTIN: Yeah.

DRE: And you telling me: "Yeah, we take all that back!" I'm like: "Oh, but it's so cool!"

AUSTIN: We can— Listen, you can re-roll it! And...

DRE: [cross] I think I'm gonna re-roll.

KEITH: [cross] Yeah.

AUSTIN: [cross] You still have a— Okay. Then give me a re-roll. 3d6!

[a brief pause]

KEITH: [cross] I think all...

AUSTIN: [cross] Let me give you the reason! Can I— Before you do that roll! Let me give you the rea—

DRE: Uhum.

AUSTIN: I should be giving you a cue for why you would make the Doubt. Right? Which is that before you hear the sound of Imperium screeching again there's *another* call from another big bird mech, as the Red Roc himself Xiphion... appears in the Divine Valour.

JACK: [cross] This guy rules!

AUSTIN: [cross] A giant transforming red... like, it's called the Red Roc, R-o-c, like a giant eagle. Or that's actually Xiphion's kind of, like, nickname, in a sense. Um... For the people who were not in the Chasmata game and who therefore have not yet heard... [chuckles] who Xiphion is.

Xiphion's also known as Zig'ell Barbos. He uses he/him or zig/zig's pronouns. Zig is a... an Apostolosian who is just, like, hot shit... extremely charismatic... believer in the cause in a way that is deeply naive. Formerly worked with Cas'alear Rizah. Now works with Laurel and Cassander and Motion as a member of... the Apostolosian military. Um... Is facecast as Dev Patel with sick red highlights. And also has, like, red aposilician, like, fish scales across zig's shoulders and neck and arms. Um.

Is very just, like, all the way to your heroic officer type. You know? And is now charging towards you?!? [chuckles] In a way that— You are not the target! Imperium is the target. But you were caught in the middle. So that is why is Doubt a better play. You know? But you can still roll it. But that is— that is the prompt for why you're Hedging.

DRE: [cross] Aahh!

KEITH: [cross] So there's two Divines out there now!

AUSTIN: Mm. Uhum! Two big bird Divines! And about to hit each other!

KEITH: Two Big Bird Divines?

AUSTIN: Big Bird is here. [chuckling] Big Bird is a Divine now!

DRE: I'm gonna re-roll it because there's something I realized about Figure that I don't think I've shared even with you over text, Austin.

AUSTIN: Sure

DRE: Which I was trying to figure out what is the justification for this reincarnated history teacher to be, like, a hot shit pilot.

AUSTIN: Yeah.

DRE: That's not, like, magic or whatever...

AUSTIN: Yeah.

DRE: [sighs] I think he used to be the equivalent of a... like, VR-sim war reenactor guy.

AUSTIN: Oh my fucking god.

[DRE laughs]

JACK: [cross] And a history teacher!

KEITH: [cross] So he's like— He's like a civil war reenactor, but VR pilot shit.

JANINE: [cross] Woaaaaow.

DRE: [cross] Uh-huh. Yep. Yep. Yep. Yes.

AUSTIN: [cross] I fucking love it. So much.

KEITH: [cross] This is *War Game*. You're doing war games?

DRE: [cross] U-huh!

AUSTIN: [cross] Yeah, this is so good! What a...

DRE: And so, the thought of flying for real with two Divines in the airspace...?

AUSTIN: Yeah.

DRE: Couldn't— Can't pass that up.

AUSTIN: This is like— This is Cool! This is *Coo*! This is a capital C Cool, and it's like in that way that people sometimes talk ab— “You don't want to miss this! This is a historical moment! This is a— This is a big deal! People are going to talk about this!”

DRE: [cross] Yup.

AUSTIN: [cross] “You're gonna be part of History by being in the crowd!” Etc. So, yeah. Let's let's give me that Cool roll, 3d6! Alright, that's a 4! You got— [chuckles] You got a single success!

[DRE chuckles]

AUSTIN: A 1, 2, 4! [cross] Seven Cool points!

KEITH: [cross] Hey, is a... Can you Hedge twice in a row?

AUSTIN: [cross] No.

KEITH: [cross] What happens if you roll...

AUSTIN: [cross] If you—

KEITH: [cross] What happens if you roll...

DRE: [cross] You fail.

AUSTIN: [cross] You fail.

KEITH: You fail?

AUSTIN: Oh, no. Don't fa— That roll is a failure. So if that was the only—

KEITH: [cross] Wow. Okay.

AUSTIN: [cross] If you don't have another— That die was a failure. If you don't have another success it's a failure.

KEITH: So. Tie does not go to the runner.

AUSTIN: Correct. Tie Hedges once, fails twice. Yeah.

KEITH: That's what they say!

AUSTIN: That's what they... That is what they always...! They are always saying this!

KEITH: They just always saying "Hedges once, fails twice."

AUSTIN: Uhum. [chuckles]

[KEITH chuckles]

AUSTIN: So you succeed with one! Which is that 4. What is the... What is the one question here? Because this is a... Alright. We haven't— Right, these right here. Or is it one thing? Is that what we said? [cross] God...

KEITH: [cross] Is it one from each?

DRE: [cross] It's one from both, right?

AUSTIN: It's one from both, correct. Yes.

KEITH: Yeah.

AUSTIN: Um... Let's see.

[a brief pause]

KEITH: Uh. I like uh the second one for fail.

AUSTIN: Which is...? Ahh!

KEITH: "What complication or collateral did your actions cause?"

AUSTIN: Good question! What is it? Any ideas?

DRE: Hm...

AUSTIN: Does it just draw attention to you? In a way that's, like...

JACK: Yeah.

DRE: [cross] Is it—

AUSTIN: [cross] Yeah.

KEITH: [cross] Especially with the doubling down on doing it the Cool way.

DRE: Yeah. Does it also just escalate the battle a lot, quickly? Because now suddenly there is, like, very noticeable...

AUSTIN: [cross] Right.

DRE: [cross] ...enemy forces, like, close to the very middle of the Fleet?

AUSTIN: [cross] Millennium Break here now, too...

DRE: [cross] So not only... Yes.

AUSTIN: [cross] ...and The Witch. Yeah. Aha.

DRE: And maybe, like, in a very bad way our two quote/unquote "allied forces" try to rush into the middle as well.

AUSTIN: Yeah. [cross] It pulls that closer in.

DRE: [cross] Because maybe that they think there's some sort of breakpoint there. That there wasn't.

AUSTIN: I love that. Yeah. So it pulls the forces of Millennium Break and the Witch in Glass closer in. On the other hand when you succeed ask these... "In what ways did you look awesome, competent, or flashy?"

[2:15:00]

DRE: I mean, what ways did I not?

[AUSTIN & JACK laugh]

AUSTIN: [laughing] The part where you drew your allies in closer to dying!

KEITH: Oh, but if you stopped watching right before then...!

AUSTIN: It looks sick!

KEITH: [cross] It looks sick!

AUSTIN: [cross] It looks sick as shit!

DRE: Uum... Is there... Do either of the Divines have, like, projectiles they fire? Because maybe they fire a projectile and [cross] I hit it back with my hammer.

AUSTIN: [cross] Oh! That's so good! What is it?

JACK: [cross] Argh!

AUSTIN: What is it? I think we know that the... Imperium from *Armour Astir* could shoot feathers that, like, exploded. Like, if... Almost like feathers with needles on the ends that would, like, pierce things and then count... then, like, you know: tick-tick-tick, boom. [emphasizing] Tick, tick, boom. [cross] Tick. Tick. Boom.

KEITH: [cross] Ah, it was like... a Supercombine.

AUSTIN: Yeah. Like a Supercombine from *Halo*. [cross] When you hit— When you have a Needler. Yeah.

KEITH: [cross] From *Halo*. Yeah.

AUSTIN: I got— We're— I'm with you.

KEITH: Yeah.

DRE: Is it the anime thing where, like, I've got the shield in front of me?

AUSTIN: Yeah.

DRE: And they're all hitting and exploding? And I'm pushing through, and then as I push through the second to last one...

AUSTIN: Yeah!

DRE: I smack the very last one back with the hammer.

AUSTIN: Yeah, totally. Do you knock it back into Imperium, or do you knock it into Valor?

DRE: Oh, that's a good question!

AUSTIN: Uhum.

DRE: Probably... [sighs] I get— Is Imperium more explicitly the quote/unquote “bad guy” here?

AUSTIN: They're both. They're both. I mean, God. Good question. One second. [sneezes]

JACK: [cross] Bless you!

AUSTIN: [cross] I think Figure... Thank you. For the Figure these are both capital G good Divines...

DRE: [cross] Yeah.

AUSTIN: [cross] ...in the sense that they're both so... This is like if you— If a child wrote down their favorite Divines these are the types of Divines who would show up on the list. Because they are so traditionally representative of the *best* of the military might of the Principality.

KEITH: They're also, like, the epitome of the exact thing that the Figure just tried to do.

AUSTIN: [chuckles] Right! Exactly! Yes!

[DRE laughs]

AUSTIN: There is a mirroring happening here! And then a reverse mirroring with Kalar! Right? Who is a big bird but hates this shit.

KEITH: Not that big, though!

AUSTIN: Not as big as these giant— These giant— Yeah. I should note: Valour is smaller than Imperium. Imperium is, like, the size of a ship that would be able to contain multiple Valours in it. So Valour is a much smaller bird, but also a quicker one. And also can transform into a humanoid... [cross] mech, that...

KEITH: [cross] Well, we all know that the best bird of all time is the peregrine falcon: very small but extremely fast.

AUSTIN: [cross] Very small, but very fast. Uhum. Sure.

DRE: But they're... [cross] they're not allied with each other, right?

AUSTIN: [cross] No, they're— they're fighting each other. You just got caught in the middle. Yeah.

DRE: Okay. So, yeah. I think it's... I'd knock that feather into Imperium.

AUSTIN: Okay. Cool. Knock it right back! Boom! Blows up.

DRE: So just— Just further, kind— Wait.

AUSTIN: Uh-huh?

DRE: Because— Wait. Was it... [cross] Was it Imperium who was shooting at us?

AUSTIN: [cross] It was Imperium who was shooting those feathers. Yeah.

DRE: Okay, then no. I think I shoot it— I hit it back at Valour.

AUSTIN: [cross] Okay. So you, like—

DRE: [cross] Just to further, like, draw them into each other.

AUSTIN: [cross] Gotcha. Okay. Good. Good, good, good. Alright. Well, now you're just fucking in it. This is now... The battle has... taken you over in some ways. Right? Um. You're now surrounded by incoming fighters from both sides. Mechs are clashing all around you.

And in kind of big broad sweeps the two giant bird Divines are, like, you know... blasting away people or, you know, slamming into them. Bouncing between— Valour's, like, literally doing the thing of, like, turning into a bird flying at one person, transforming into a Mech and, like, landing some sort of Cool melee blow with a beam saber, and then jumping off and turning back into a bird... And flying towards another person. And repeating, you know.

And they're getting closer and closer together. Zig and the Divine Imperium — whose pilot we don't know yet, and who I don't necessarily have a good call for yet — is getting closer and closer. And that's... fucking popping off. God! Who could it be? It would be Cool if that we already— I don't think it's anyone we know because... they weren't in system already. So. Yeah.

JACK: Is there that sensation that you get, like, with the tracer fire everywhere, of, like, every— everybody on the different hierarchies of this battle are fighting each other and one above and below them?

AUSTIN: Yes. Yes.

JACK: So, there's, like, the medium-sized ships are trying to take potshots at the divines while also fighting the other medium-sized ships...

AUSTIN: Yeah.

JACK: [cross] Like, right down to the little drones we saw earlier...

KEITH: [cross] Who are being fought by the smaller ships.

AUSTIN: [cross] By the mechs and who are also fighting each other. Yeah. Exactly that. Yeah. Totally.

JACK: Just awful!

AUSTIN: [cross] Yeah.

JACK: [cross] Just things catching fire. Falling.

AUSTIN: Yeah.

JACK: God.

AUSTIN: [cross] It's a lot.

KEITH: [cross] Or floating.

AUSTIN: Yeah. Aha. Or, like, falling into the atmosphere, right?

KEITH: [cross] Right.

AUSTIN: [cross] As the ships get destroyed and your engines cut out and... being pulled into the gravity of Girandole. Yeah.

KEITH: [cross] Right. Yeah.

JACK: [cross] It's just like Girandole covered in comets. Like, below us.

AUSTIN: Yeah. Totally.

JACK: Is that a comet? Is a comet a thing burning up? Yeah, right?

KEITH: [cross] No. I mean...

AUSTIN: [cross] No.

ART: [cross] No, a comet's, like, a persistent thing.

JACK: [cross] Oh. Hi, Art!

AUSTIN: Yeah, comets are just out there — yeah, Art's here. Um... [chuckles]

ART: [cross] Just sitting here with comet facts.

JANINE: [cross] Is that right? Is that the one that's burning up?

JACK: [cross] We cut to our comet specialist... [chuckles] It might be a meteor! Yeah.

[DRE laughs]

AUSTIN: Yeah.

JACK: [cross] What is our...

JANINE: [cross] I think meteor is out in space, but meteor— meteorite... is the one... that's, like, entering the atmosphere, or something?

JACK: [cross] Ooohh...!

AUSTIN: It's a meteoroid! [cross] There's also a meteoroid.

KEITH: [cross] I think that— I think that a meteorite I think is a smaller... meteor.

AUSTIN: Hm... Anyway!

KEITH: [cross] But it wouldn't be any, it would just be debris.

AUSTIN: [cross] It's one of the meteors. Oh, wow! There's a sick GIF of this on... [chuckles] wiki. I'm gonna post it in here.

KEITH: I think in order for it to be a meteor we have to not see that it came from a ship that was just up there.

AUSTIN: Sure. Aha. It's debris is what it is. Anyway. Yeah, okay. Let's keep moving! Who wants to frame one of these scenes? We got three left... [cross] as you try to escape this place.

JACK: [cross] Where are we going?

AUSTIN: [cross] Good question!

JACK: [cross] Is our goal back to The Reflecting— Kalar banging on the inside of Mow, like, you know...

[AUSTIN chuckles]

JACK: Like, knocking on the inside of the door. Just, like:

JACK (as Kalar): Where are we going? What's the plan?

KEITH: Ooh...! Um.

KEITH (as Phrygian): We definitely are taking you back—

KEITH: Oh, I'm in a different ship.

[DRE chuckles]

AUSTIN: You could be on comms. Y'all have the special comms.

KEITH: Okay. We're— I think we gotta go back to The Reflecting Pool.

AUSTIN: Yeah. I think that that makes sense.

KEITH: That's where everyone's stuff is.

[AUSTIN chuckles quietly]

JANINE: Everyone's shoes and jackets.

AUSTIN: Uhum.

KEITH: Yeah. Everybody get their mittens? [cross] It's cold in space!

JACK: [cross, chuckling] Their mittens?

JANINE: Lunch bags...

JACK: It *is* cold in space. [chuckles]

JANINE: Backpacks...

DRE: Oh, I left one of my mittens in my cubby.

AUSTIN: [cross] Fuuuck.

KEITH: [cross] Yeah.

JANINE: Pencil case.

KEITH: Who knows... Who knows... I mean, the Figure and Kalar know. But who knows what the Figure and Kalar have been subsisting on for three weeks!

AUSTIN: Stealing food, probably. Right?

JACK: [cross] Stealing food. Yeah.

KEITH: [cross] Yeah.

JACK: It's not been... It's not been good.

KEITH: [cross] No.

JACK: [cross] But also a ship that big... You know.

AUSTIN: Yeah.

JACK: There's food.

KEITH: Yeah. There's food. Not a balanced or regular diet.

AUSTIN: [cross] No...

JACK: [cross] No.

KEITH: Or probably sleep schedule?

JACK: [cross] Definitely no.

JANINE: [cross] Think of how many times at a workplace and/or a living space you've left half an energy bar just somewhere, and then you don't know where it went, you're just, like, ah whatever.

JACK: Well, that's because the Birdman and the Crystal person took it!

AUSTIN: [chuckles] Aha!

[AUSTIN & KEITH laugh]

AUSTIN: Kalar, then! Are you— Is there a thing that you could do here where you're calling out for help from someone else? Is there a... Is there something else you could be doing here? I mean, you don't have to! We can end this once it makes sense to have ended an Act. We don't need to go through all eight rolls, right?

JACK: [cross] Sure!

AUSTIN: [cross] So, maybe we're only one roll away from that! But if you had a thing you wanted to do here — and, again, part of this is... gaming the system, and trying to push and pull on [cross] where the totals are. Right?

JACK: [cross] Yeah. Right. Yeah. Lemme...

JANINE: [cross] I actually have a... just a thing worth mentioning about Mow that would be relevant to someone inside of Mow, probably.

AUSTIN: True!

JANINE: Mow has that psionic shit. So if there— So I wonder if you could, like, use that in some way to fuck people up? Like, I scream into it a lot. You don't have to do that. But... [chuckles, cross] you know... There's...

JACK: [cross] What?

[AUSTIN & JANINE laugh]

JACK: [chuckling] What are you talking about?!?

JANINE: So, one of Mow's— One of Mow's things, that Mow has... Like, it's a Quirk, but it's also just, like, built into what he is. He has a "psionic amplifier." And a thing that I've done — and repeatedly — with it is basically use it to scream and confuse people very loudly.

JACK: Hmmm...!

JANINE: I'm just saying, if you wanted to like do something to fuck up all these people that are around us that's a that's an avenue through which you could perhaps Act. Because you're in that cockpit. Which is gutted, but you could probably still tap into that system.

[a brief pause]

JACK: That's very— That's a very generous opportunity to scream. But I... [chuckles]

[JANINE & KEITH laugh]

JACK: [chuckles] I don't know if that's really Kalar's *deal*.

JANINE: Uhum.

JACK: At this time. Like, I think— I think I'm definitely, like... we don't need to be involved in this fight any more than... is necessary. Right? Like... [cross] trying to...

KEITH: [cross] You don't wanna use a psychic gorilla to talk shit to the Divines?

[a dumbfounded pause]

JACK: [very quietly] Well, if you put it like that...

JANINE: But, it's a psychic gorilla...

[everyone bursts out laughing]

AUSTIN: Yeah. Yeah.

DRE: That sounds cool, right?!?

KEITH: [cross] That sounds pretty cool!

AUSTIN: [cross] You know, you say it like that... I mean...

JACK: Um. I don't— I don't think so. No. I'm looking at the totals right now. So we're at— And these numbers are gonna [cross] potentially get messed around further...

AUSTIN: [cross] Aha.

JACK: ...but we're at like 21 plus— We're at 28 Cool. Plus 15... plus 24 Doubt. So we're actually pretty even right now.

AUSTIN: Uhum. At the end of the Act we will subtract— Or, again, we can reroll certain things. Anything spinnable can be re-rolled. Which is a lot of these things! If the player wants to reroll it. And then... And then we would subtract the lowest from the highest. You know what I mean? The way you would, like, in *Fiasco*. So. What do you say? We have a 28 Cool right now and 24 Doubt, or something like that?

JACK: [cross] Yup.

KEITH: [cross] That sounds like a lot of Cool! I didn't think that we had that much Cool.

AUSTIN: You do! [cross] Math's all right here!

JACK: [cross] We have 20— we have 26... We have... 21 Cool.

AUSTIN: Oh. No!

JACK: 27...

AUSTIN: 28?

JACK: [cross] 28 Cool.

AUSTIN: [cross] You were right the first time.

JACK: [cross] Yeah.

AUSTIN: Yep. 28 Cool, 24 Doubt. Yep. Right now.

KEITH: Um. This... This "Figure, 3d6, 7 Cool, spinnable"...

AUSTIN: Yeah.

KEITH: Wasn't that a failure?

AUSTIN: No, it's right here! You just succeeded at this!

KEITH: Oh, okay.

AUSTIN: 4. Figure has a 3 in... Also, that wouldn't matter. It would still be 7 Cool. Because it doesn't matter if it's a success or a failure. It just matters if it's spinnable.

DRE: Right.

KEITH: Okay.

JACK: Is there anything I can do... Again, the answer here really might be "pass." I'm just trying to think if, like, is there anything I can do here to prep for this information potentially falling into Clem's hands? Is there something I can do to obfuscate it, or...

AUSTIN: Oh, yeah! Do you want to, like, begin a... Do you want to have your shot being inside of Mow you're beginning to to create a like locked channel with— or, a locked transmission with the Blue Channel to give over this data?

JACK: Yeah. Absolutely. Actually, that's a really good idea. Yeah. Um —

AUSTIN: [cross] You open up the briefcase thing, it has a screen on it and you plug in your transponder or whatever?

JACK: Yeah. Oh, man! Is there a screen or is it just a file?

AUSTIN: It's just a file, maybe. Yeah. Yeah. But how do you— How do you transmit it, then? What's the device? [cross] What's the...

JACK: [cross] You read it.

AUSTIN: Oh, do you just open up the thing? Okay.

JACK: I use my transponder and...

AUSTIN: Uhum. [cross] This is gonna draw— Uh-huh!

JACK: [cross] Oh, man! There's stuff here... Yeah.

AUSTIN: Um. Do you want the list of what it is?

JACK: [cross] Yeah.

AUSTIN: [cross] Because it's just 50 words.

JACK: Okay.

AUSTIN: Here you go. I'm just gonna link you to this.

[a brief pause]

AUSTIN: I don't know what words you got, and you can skip any you don't like. You don't have to read them all. But, you know, get the effect that we've done a few times here!

[a brief pause]

[JACK exhales]

AUSTIN: And also, how do you prime it? How— When you open up this channel to Broun. presumably... Broun? Broun, are you there?

ALI: Yes I am. Hi.

AUSTIN: Hi.

KEITH: [cross] Hi!

AUSTIN: Broun you get a call.

KEITH: I keep forgetting that anyone else is here.

[ALI chuckles]

AUSTIN: Yeah.

JACK: Oh, man. I think... How secure is this line?

AUSTIN: [cross] It's... It's the system that—

JACK: [cross] Oh! That's the—

AUSTIN: Go ahead.

JACK: I mean, maybe I just ask that:

JACK (as Kalar): Broun, how secure— This is Kalar. How secure is this line?

[a brief pause]

ALI: Um, very, I assume. Austin I'm assuming the thing that you were just gonna say is it's like the thing that Broun developed, right?

AUSTIN: Yeah. [cross] Totally. Totally.

ALI: [cross] Okay. So, yeah.

ALI (as Broun): Extremely.

KEITH: Biased source, though.

[ALI laughs]

AUSTIN: Uhum. [cross] Yeah. We'll see how this roll goes, won't we!

JACK: [cross] God...!

[a brief pause]

ALI: [cross, half in character] Do you have your settings correct?

AUSTIN: [cross, chuckling] It's as secure as your 3d6 is!

[KEITH laughs]

JACK: Broun, do you have a pen?

ALI (as Broun): Um...

ALI: [laughing] And you hear in the mic just fucking shit moving around.

ALI (as Broun): Yes. Hi. Yeah. Hey.

JACK (as Kalar): Okay, take this down:

JACK: Just the sound of gunfire...

[ALI & AUSTIN laugh]

JACK: ...or tracer fire. And then... Yeah. And then I think Kalar starts to read! Uh. And I think...

[a brief pause, then AUSTIN laughs]

JACK: I think I'm just going to give you half of them!

AUSTIN: Ohh!

ALI (as Broun): Only half! Okay.

JACK: Yeah. I think only half! Uh... And so I think— But Kalar doesn't say that. [chuckles] This is me, Jack deciding to only give you half the words.

ALI [chuckling] Okay.

AUSTIN: Uh-huh.

JACK: And I think Kalar just says:

JACK (as Kalar): Take these down! IMPECUNIOUS. FRACAS. HUBRIS. [cross]
APOSTATE. FOOLPROOF. FLAMBOYANT.

ALI (as Broun): [cross] Wait. Wait!

JACK (as Kalar): INCISE. Broun, are you getting this?

ALI (as Broun): What are you saying?

[ART laughs in the distance]

JACK (as Kalar): Broun.

[ALI chuckles]

KEITH: [cross] Art laughing really small... [KEITH laughs]

JACK (as Kalar): [cross] Write this down!

ALI (as Broun): Okay. Hubris. I— Okay. [cross] Start again from there!

JACK (as Kalar): [cross] APOSTATE. FOOLPROOF. FLAMBOYANT. INCISE. RELAPSE. OBSTREPEROUS. Like noisy or loud. PERMEATE.

[ALI & AUSTIN laugh]

JACK (as Kalar): FECKLESS. With an “f.” IGNOMINIOUS. CANDID. LUCUBRATE. I don't know what that means. THRIFT. DUD. FERRET. Like, the sort of cat-like thing.

[AUSTIN laughs]

JACK (as Kalar): INTRANSIGENCE. REPINE. SOBER. EGRESS. Opposite of exit. HIGHBROW. ASTRINGENT. DISCOMFORT. ARDUOUS. Have you got that?

ALI (as Broun): Yeah. Lucubrete is about studying.

JACK (as Kalar): Okay, great! Thanks.

[AUSTIN laughs]

JACK (as Kalar): Um. Stay well! Do not... *Do not* let those fall into anybody else's hands! I will provide you with the rest when I can.

AL Uhmm...

[ALI chuckles]

JACK: And just ends the call. [cross] Uh. And now let's...

AUSTIN: [cross] Jack, you should screenshot that list so that we don't lose it

ALI [chuckling] Please. Thank you.

JACK: [cross, chuckling] Yeah!

KEITH: [cross] It's very sensitive information.

AUSTIN: [cross] Yeah, it is.

[a brief pause]

JACK: [cross] Um...

AUSTIN: [cross] Well— Okay, give me a roll on this! Was this Cool or Doubt?

JACK: [cross] Yeah! Now, let's roll! Yeah! Um...

AUSTIN: [cross] The thing it is... feels like Doubt.

JACK: [cross] This is Doubt.

AUSTIN: Yeah. Because we know what— Do you want to say what it is, or do you want to say what it is?

[a brief pause]

JACK: I'll say half of what it is!

AUSTIN: Okay.

[2:30:00]

AUSTIN: [cross] Which half?

JACK: [cross] This is... a...

KEITH: Middle half. Leave off the... [chuckles briefly] first and last quarter.

[AUSTIN chuckles]

JACK: This is a spoken... code phrase that will let us do something very significant. [chuckles]

AUSTIN: Yeah. Okay. I like this. Alright! Well, your Score is a 4. So you need a Doubt. So you need a 1, 2, or 3. Is anyone helping? I guess Broun is helping. So that's a help. Uh... What are your— Do any of your Roles help you here?

JACK: Yes, I'm "protective."

AUSTIN: Yeah! Uh-huh! You were— Yeah. You're protective from what you just did, too! So, yeah. Give me a... Give me 3d6! Alright. We get the dreaded Hedge! um I think the Cool thing here is transmitting all of it and saying out loud exactly what it is. [cross] Which you...

JACK: [cross] Like a— Just being very, very excited.

AUSTIN: Yeah.

JACK: Just being like: “look what we have!” [chuckles]

AUSTIN: Yeah.

KEITH: When it's a Hedge...

AUSTIN: [cross] No. Right, yes.

KEITH: [cross] ...it's a re-roll to do the same thing or you can just *do* it when if you change.

AUSTIN: You could just succeed immediately accepting that it becomes a Cool roll. Yeah. I guess I haven't written down here *exactly*... but I would imagine it's just that one die changes. So the one and the one would still be successes, also. So it would be a full success. You know?

KEITH: [cross] Got it.

JACK: [cross] Jack rolled 1, 4, 1. So, both of those would be successes, the four would also become a success instead of a Hedge, and you would get a full success. A full Cool success. Because I think not being safe about this and lording over... you know, being so confident about it... having a silver bullet — you know what I mean — is the Principality thing to do here.

JACK: Yes. Absolutely. Um. But there— The— The argument for keeping it as Doubt, [cross] right, is that it's, like...

AUSTIN: [cross] Yeah.

JACK: [cross] ...what do you do when the golden ticket falls into your hands.

AUSTIN: Right.

JACK: The temp— This is actually, they're like fighting against... I think it's no surprise that Valour is in the sky... [cross] around Kalar at this point.

AUSTIN: [cross] Oh, yeah. Yeah.

JACK: Um. Where it's like: "well, what—" "everybody would be excited to get this — are you going to make the choice?"

AUSTIN: Yeah.

JACK: And I think I'm gonna re-roll.

AUSTIN: Alright! Give me the re-roll!

AUSTIN: [cross] Ough!

JACK: [cross] Oh, whoops! That's a 2d6!

AUSTIN: [cross] You rolled two failures! Give me one more die! Those dice are already out!

JACK: [cross] Can I not roll all again?

AUSTIN: No. You can roll one more die!

[JACK laughs]

[a brief pause]

AUSTIN: [cross] Hoohhh!

JACK: [cross] Ohhh!

[KEITH whistles approvingly]

JACK: That's a 1.

AUSTIN: That's a 1. 5, 5, 1! 11 Doubt points enter the... the score here. But you have to choose one failure and one success question here. We have to choose those, because... Because that's only one success. Hooh, that was a close one! That was a close one. What do we think? What's the failure? What's the success? Ehm...

[JACK giggles]

AUSTIN: How does this— How does this reinforce your narrative with the viewer?

JACK: It's... It is pushing against The Principality, right? Lke— First, it's, like, you managed to *get* this thing, which you did by stowing away at great personal risk; [chuckles]

AUSTIN: Uhum.

JACK: ...and then once you had it you... you moved carefully, you moved... like, responsibly...?
[chuckles, cross] I don't know.

KEITH: [cross] Doubtfully.

AUSTIN: Uhum.

JACK: Doubtfully.

AUSTIN: Yeah. Um.

JACK: This is the opposite of the commander who finds the, like, in the movie who always finds the extremely dangerous alien weapon and rather than using it carefully just says: "well this will be good for the US Military!"

AUSTIN: [cross, chuckling] Yes!

JACK: [cross] And you're just like: "what? No! What?!?"

AUSTIN: [chuckling] Stop it! Get some help. Um! Yeah.

[DRE laughs]

AUSTIN: I love it! So what is the failure one?

ALI: I... I was gonna ask: "in what ways did you leave yourself vulnerable?"

AUSTIN: Good question. God!

[JACK inhales deeply]

AUSTIN: It was fundamentally a success — which means it can't be that someone else pops on the [cross] comms as like...

[ALI chuckles]

AUSTIN: "Huh. I have those words now, too." You know? But...

JACK: Dang, those words sound good! [cross] Right.

KEITH: [cross] Well...

AUSTIN: [cross] Those sound like good words!

KEITH: There's the reverse of that which is that now the only other person that has them is Broun. Not even the people with Kalar have the words.

AUSTIN: Right.

KEITH: It's like it's possible that it would have been *more* helpful to have given it [cross] to more people.

AUSTIN: [cross] To everybody. Right.

[a brief pause]

KEITH: [cross] I don't g— I don't know what it is!

AUSTIN: [cross] How... Yeah. I think that it is not as true as it is for Broun. Ri— It would be very helpful for Broun! I mean, actually, I think it would be useful for anybody in the situation's your in. So maybe that's kind of true. You are... You are leaving yourself vulnerable because you're not sharing your strength. If that makes sense. Right? Um...

JACK: Right. But—

AUSTIN: That's something.

JACK: But that at the same time is a protective measure, right?

AUSTIN: Yeah.

JACK: Which is that, like...

AUSTIN: Yeah.

JACK: I have 100 words. Broun has 50 words. I'm probably planning on giving Clementine 50 words.

AUSTIN: [cross] Oh you're splitting it up!

KEITH: [cross] Oh, you're not literally—

DRE: [cross] Hmmm...!

KEITH: You actually do— did only give half!

AUSTIN: Oh, Ye-ye-yeah.

JACK: Yeah.

KEITH: Okay.

AUSTIN: Ye-ye-yeah.

KEITH: [cross] I thought that— I thought when you use said that—

JACK: [cross] I'm trying to protect myself from Clementine.

KEITH: When you said that I thought what was happening was you were gonna give Broun— You were gonna give Broun everything, and then only explain part of what that meant to us.

AUSTIN: So, wait. Here's my question for you, Jack! What do you think happens when Broun needs those other words?

[a brief pause, someone chuckles]

AUSTIN: I thought there was going to be a second delivery mechanism. Like, a second time... I guess we'll find out! [cross] I guess maybe when Broun reach out!

JACK: [cross] Or is it that— Is it that— You know... Yeah. Is it that, like—

AUSTIN: You nee— [cross] They're gonna need all of them.

JACK: [cross] I'm trying to do that thing where you, like, distribute the key though. Right. Where it's like...

AUSTIN: [cross] Right.

JACK: The safety of the key is if the... Because we are about to land on the Reflecting Pool.

AUSTIN: Yes

JACK: And Clementine is gonna say: "what is it?"

AUSTIN: [cross] Right.

JACK: [cross] And I'm going to say:

AUSTIN: Here's what it is. And...

JACK: But!

AUSTIN: The only way to use it [cross] is for you and Broun to turn the key at the same time.

JACK: [cross] I'm— You're not going to be able to use it.

AUSTIN: Basically.

JACK: But then that— But then it's like... [deflated] Yeah.

AUSTIN: We can— We'll— We can technologically make it work! [cross] You have this—

JACK: [cross] Make— No, maybe I do it— Maybe I do it backwards. Maybe I do do it backwards! Which is that I give Broun everything...

[a brief pause]

AUSTIN: [cross] I like— I like the premise...

JACK: [cross] I just— I don't want Clementine to have the full code phrase, is the thing!

AUSTIN: [cross] Yeah! I like— No! I like the— I like the thing that you've done! I do like— I do like the idea of splitting. I think that is how you— I think... This to me is the way you've left yourself vulnerable is: when it comes time to turn the key on this thing that you have you need Clementine Kesh to turn her end of it, too. That's a big vulnerability.

SYLVI: What could go wrong?!?

AUSTIN: [cross] But I love it.

JACK: [cross] Now checking in with uh Clementine Kesh correspondent...! [chuckles]

AUSTIN: And and we know, Jack, we know that Clement—

JACK: [cross] We know...

AUSTIN: [cross] Where the Reflect— What we know is the Reflecting Pool can absolutely deliver this part of the mechanism to this... to the target. What it's time to do it.

JACK: [cross] Yeah.

AUSTIN: [cross] Because of Past relationships. We know that that's possible. So. We're good.

JACK: Yeah.

AUSTIN: We're good. I like this. I like this a lot. This will become clear in moments after we're out of this fucking battle. So let's come back to the battle! Again, we have— We're at roll seven of eight! We could probably do this in one final roll. If that's a thing people want. And, again, if we want to extend it further than that we can. But: caught between the two of these things, does anyone want to do something to try to get away? Phrygian or Thisbe.

JANINE: Wait. Who... How... How many rolls...?

AUSTIN: Two each.

JANINE: What? Okay.

AUSTIN: Everyone gets two in an Act. [cross] In the first Act.

KEITH: [cross] Max.

AUSTIN: Max. Yeah.

JANINE: Then how do we only have one left?

AUSTIN: I said— What I said was... you could get away in only one more roll!

JANINE: [cross] Oh, okay. Okay.

AUSTIN: [cross] An Act can end when it makes sense to end it. It doesn't have to be all eight things.

JANINE: And who...? I have a roll left, right? [cross] Or no.

AUSTIN: [cross] You have a roll and Phrygian has a roll left. Yep.

KEITH: Yeah. I don't particularly feel like there's anything, like, leaping out at me to do.

AUSTIN: Sure.

KEITH: Like, it feels like we're flying back.

AUSTIN: Yeah. [cross] You're in the middle of this fight still.

KEITH: [cross] There's not much complicating that.

AUSTIN: Um. And so I think— I mean, the thing that's complicating it is the fight is still around you. That last Kalar roll happened in the midst of it all, and so one final push to get through it is what we need, I think.

JANINE: I was going to suggest laying down some discouraging fire?

AUSTIN: Sure.

JANINE: Uh. [cross] I...

AUSTIN: [cross] Mow just spinning around and using one of his... "unorthodox weapons"?

JANINE: Yeah. Mow's getting towed so I, like, would— Are we still are we behaving as if we have whatever loadouts are... [cross] our mechs had last time we, like, equipped them?

AUSTIN: [cross] You do whatever you want. You had time. You had time to reload shit.

JANINE: 'Cause last time I played Mow, Mow had missile launchers!

AUSTIN: That's true. Mow did.

JANINE: Um. And just... you know. So the idea of, like, if someone's getting too close just being, like... just fully spraying them to kind of... This feels like one of those things where, like... [sighs] you maybe want to go after the easier targets?

AUSTIN: Uhum.

JANINE: Or the targets that seem like you're most likely to... to: one, catch up; two, overtake;

AUSTIN: [cross] Uhum.

JANINE: ...three, get a reward. Like... I just want to make it seem like they're not worth the trouble. You know?

AUSTIN: That makes sense. Ye-ye-yeah. Alright. Um. Is that a Cool or a Doubt?

JANINE: Um... I feel kind of... cheap for continually picking Cool...

AUSTIN: I think that's...

JANINE: [cross] But...

AUSTIN: [cross] I don't think that that's cheap. I think that that is true.

JANINE: Yeah. It's— Yeah. That's what this character has always been, right?

AUSTIN: Yep.

JANINE: Like, I've built her like this from the start of, like, just being... a wrecking ball. [chuckles]

AUSTIN: Yeah. Totally. Alright. [cross] Mech is helping, so that's—

JANINE: [cross] People like looking at wrecking balls.

AUSTIN: They do. That's 2d6— [chuckles] It's fun to see them— Go on YouTube!

JANINE: Yeah.

AUSTIN: Look up wrecking ball destroys things! It's good.

JANINE: It's like a guy who has one that's shaped like a fist and they just drop it on stuff!

KEITH: Did we talk about before... This is— Whatever. Did we talk before about grain silos collapsing? Like watching people demolish grain silos? Yeah.

JANINE: [cross] I feel like we have...

AUSTIN: [cross] We haven't, but it looks sick. Yeah.

KEITH: [cross] It's so Cool! [chuckles]

AUSTIN: [cross] If we have, it— It's very Cool. Uh. 2d6 right now. I'm guessing you're helping here, Figure? To continue to fight your way through this? [cross] Yeah.

DRE: [cross] Yeah.

AUSTIN: Okay, so 3d6 Cool. Looking for a 4, 5, or a 6. Or as many of those as we can get. [cross] Hey, two of them!

JANINE: [cross] I got a 5 *and* a 6.

AUSTIN: A 5 and a 6. That is a success. You get to pick and answer... what, two questions from the... succeed... thing.

JANINE: Okay. Um... I think "how did they underestimate you?" is a pretty straightforward one. Weird... Two... We're two robots. We're two just, like, loose... [cross] You know, like... [chuckles]

[AUSTIN chuckles]

KEITH: [cross] Tethered together, floating through space.

JANINE: [cross] It's two loose mechs with, like, a robot hanging off of one of them...

[AUSTIN chuckles]

JANINE: They just shot out of a trash chute...!

AUSTIN: [cross] Yeahhh...

JANINE: [cross] Like, I think—I think definitely people were, like, “we just pick ‘em off how, hard could it be?”

AUSTIN: Yeah.

JANINE: “They came out of a trash chute. One of them looks like a gorilla. It'll be fine.”

[AUSTIN chuckles]

JANINE: [cross] Uhm...

AUSTIN: [cross] Turns out: not so much.

JANINE: Turns out, like, missile launchers and stuff, and...

AUSTIN: Yeah.

JANINE: ...slightly better equipped than one might think.

AUSTIN: Turns out.

JANINE: Um.

[a brief pause]

JANINE: Let's see... Uhh...

[a brief pause]

JANINE: I mean, the other easy one is like “what effect did your action have on those who watched it?” Um. I think it's probably, like, a similar effect to when we busted into the trash room, right? Which is just people are like “what am I looking at? What do I do about this?” Like, that sort of... It's not necessarily deterrent but it's delay. Because it's just, like, you don't fully understand what the best approach is, because you have not exactly encountered the situation before. You know?

AUSTIN: Mm-hmm. Uh-hmm. Um. Alright. Do you think that you cleared this? Phrygian, I guess, do you want to do another roll? Do you want to frame a scene here? Simply so that you can continue to try to spin the outcome of this act.

KEITH: God, we're so heavy on Cool.

AUSTIN: Uh, yeah. I haven't done the total math yet. But it does seem like that's... Oop, did not mean to move that! Move that back, pleeease! And then...

KEITH: Well, let me... let me just look at... If you're only... Um... If something jumps out at me... Because if I were to spin it I would be trying to spin it towards Doubt.

AUSTIN: Uhum.

KEITH: No... I don't know! I just don't— I just, I— I'm having trouble complicating, like, riding home.

AUSTIN: Yeah. Fair. Um. You know, if you wanted to we could have something after you get back. The original *War in the Year 3000* has some prompts, and that includes things like: “what victory are you celebrating? How are you healing wounds after your last loss? What fight is brewing among you? How are you going to test a new tech you've been developing? What news has your new arrival brought? What do you do to unwind in the quiet moments?”

So we don't need— It doesn't need to be tied to this particular challenge necess— Or it can be tied in the sense that it's in the shadow of this; it's a cooldown; it's a transitional thing. Um. Things like that, if you wanted to [cross] frame a scene like that. Right?

KEITH: Right. Like, if you wanted to frame the delivery to Clementine Kesh scene we could do that. You know? But we don't need to do that if you don't want to. Clementine. Not Clementine Kesh. Not a Kesh anymore.

KEITH: Oh, this is a good question! I missed exactly— So why are we giving Clem half of this code?

AUSTIN: I think because Kalar suspects she'll demand it, right?

KEITH: Hm.

AUSTIN: As part of, like, letting you on board, and... [chuckles]

JACK: I think she's going to demand... Well, I mean... [cross] She won't let us do this without any of the code. I think Kalar is trying to broker... half of it. Right?

AUSTIN: Well... Right.

JACK: Like, use it as a bargaining chip.

AUSTIN: From the jump that deal that y'all made in that last session was that The Witch in Glass and The Reflecting Pool would gain anything... any... you know, profit or a half of any profit gained from this. Not literally profit, but anything positive, The Witch in Glass would get her cut. Right? Um.

JACK: Yeah. [cross] Right.

AUSTIN: [cross] I think that Kalar is saying that is part of that original deal.

KEITH: Um. So, we talked about this before but, like... If Leap was here Leap would try to, like... get Kalar to forge the data, so that we can keep it and not have to give it to Clem.

AUSTIN: Right.

KEITH: But Phrygian's here, and no one has ever tried to make a case to Phrygian why anyone would be concerned about Clem.

AUSTIN: Sure.

KEITH: It just hasn't happened.

KEITH: So I have no motivation to do that.

AUSTIN: [cross] Yep. That makes sense.

KEITH: [cross] I don't— It doesn't even it doesn't even register as a problem that Clem would have...

AUSTIN: Cool.

KEITH: ...these... these codes.

AUSTIN: Yeah. I—

KEITH: So.

DRE: I have a question.

[2:45:00]

AUSTIN: Yes.

DRE: Kalar, was there any time during...

AUSTIN: [whispering] Oh, yeah...

DRE: ...our stay together... where a conversation could have been had that, like, planted seeds of doubt in Figure's head? And maybe Figure becomes the person who... who does what you're kind of talking about, Keith?

JACK: I mean, probably not a direct conversation. I don't think Kalar...

DRE: Hm...

JACK: I think the conversation in the tunnels went so badly that Kalar is like: "I'm not wasting my breath trying to... um..."

[AUSTIN & KEITH chuckles quietly]

JACK: [half-chuckling] "You're just gonna— You're just gonna 'only asking questions' to me again, and I'm not super prepared to answer your questions." I think where it does happen though is that... I wonder if Kalar and the Figure's actions on the ship embody why Kalar despises Clementine and the system that she stands for? Where it's like a lot of... It's sort of, like, living as the revolutionary as much as it is, like, a big speech about, like "this is why we're revolutionary..." [cross] Um, where it's like...

AUSTIN: [cross] I mean, we'll see what this cool score is! Let's not talk about... [chuckles] how... what the ideological component of what you've done looks like, yet. Do you know what I mean?

JACK: [cross] Yeah.

AUSTIN: [cross] Remember, this just ended with...

JACK: [cross] I mean, that's exactly it, right? Which is that, it's like...

AUSTIN: Yeah, go ahead.

JACK: It's— But at the same time, I don't think... I don't think Kalar is the kind of person to... Kalar is not the kind of dad to sit down with his kids and say: "now I'm gonna tell you about why tyrants are bad."

[AUSTIN chuckles]

JACK: So much as he is to live his life in a way that makes it clear why he thinks tyrants are bad?

AUSTIN: Right.

DRE: Yeah. I think... Because my idea for this— And this is generally I'm asking if Kalar is the person who would... who is willing/able to have this conversation. I think there is very much a point where... Like, there is a turning point where Figure's "I'm just asking questions here" goes to, like, "genuinely, I'm trying to ask questions here" and it's— is Kalar... Again, is Kalar able or willing to be the person that has that conversation, or is Kalar the person who's like "dude go fucking Google this stuff. Come on."

[AUSTIN chuckles gently]

DRE: Like... [chuckles] "You have to do some of your own work here."

AUSTIN: Um— For me the thing that I would say... Again, maybe I'm wrong. Jack, you can correct me here. But, like, based on that previous fight it does not seem like enough... I would like to see more from Phrigia— Or, sorry. From— I did it again! From the Figure. [chuckles] From the Figure... learning about this.

DRE: [cross] Yeah.

AUSTIN: [cross] I don't think one conversation in a closet is enough to turn your loyalty.

JACK: And I also don't want to have it off screen in the shi— In the bowels of the ship!

AUSTIN: [cross] Yeah.

JACK: [cross] Like, I wonder if they're— I wonder if there are some conversations where it's like...

AUSTIN: [cross] For me this opens the door. I think this opens the door for that conversation in the next season.

JACK: [cross] Yeah, totally.

AUSTIN: In a way that we should leave the... It seems to me like the Figure should leave this *questioning*... More than... decided.

DRE: Right.

AUSTIN: Gen— Like, this is the switch from... “I’m just asking questions” to like “wait, maybe I should maybe I should answer some of these fucking questions I’m asking.” Right? Um. We don’t need that scene! We can end this arc— this Act right now. And I think that’s acceptable. You know? Um. If— As long as Phrygian doesn’t have another scene that... Keith wants to do. [cross] Or Keith...? Okay.

KEITH: No. No, I don’t— I don’t think I do.

AUSTIN: So, at this point everyone has... Everyone has at least one roll that is spinnable. Do you want to try to get different outcomes here? Um. Here’s what I will tell you. On 3d6 the average, I believe, is a 10 or an 11. They’re about equal. So, if you wanted to re-roll, those are the— that’s kind of gives you what your basic odds are. And you kind of see this here, right?

We got a 10 Cool. We got an 11 Cool we got a 9 Doubt. We got that 7 Cool. You could try to get that to be higher, probably, with a re-roll. 11 Doubt. 13 Cool. Those are all spinnable. There’s also a 15 Doubt that’s *locked*, that will not change. Because it was a failure. So... Looking at your own rolls.

This is an individual choice that you make: whether or not you want to make those re-rolls. You can obviously ask the table, but... But you as an *individual*— This is sort of you later on, when you tell this story, this part of your story, you being like: “and then I did this.” And you can— You can never change the action that you did but you can give your best attempt to try to spin it one way or the other.

Who knows whether or not that catches. Whether or not that feels like you just trying to be humble or you trying to oversell something. Which is why you only get one chance at re-rolling this, right? And you don’t get to know whether or not you’re gonna get a higher or lower score outside of just knowing that how odds work. You know?

KEITH: I’m— I’m gonna lock mine in.

AUSTIN: Alright so you’re locking in your 9 Doubt. Kalar, are you going to try to re-spin this 11 Doubt?

JACK: Um... I don’t... think so.

AUSTIN: Then we have a Doubt total.

JACK: Wait, wait...

AUSTIN: No? Okay.

JACK: You can attempt to get a lower or higher result. [cross] Right.

AUSTIN: [cross] You just roll the dice. And it could be lower or higher. You're not— There's nothing you do to do it. Right? You're not— There's no...

JACK: [cross] And the average is 10?

AUSTIN: [cross] You just make the decision: do I try to spin this? The average is 10 or 11. About equal on a 3d6. They are equal.

JACK: [cross] So, the— The— The—

AUSTIN: I said "about equal." It's equal.

JACK: These are real pretty... pretty heavy rolls, right? Like, the... No. I think I'm— I think I'm staying.

AUSTIN: Alright. Yeah. Both 10 and 11 have a 12.5 chance on 3d6. Um...

KEITH: [cross] What happens if you fail? Does it just not switch?

AUSTIN: [cross] Well, that means 35 Doubt. It's not a...

KEITH: [cross] Or is there a new penalty?

AUSTIN: There's no penalty. You're just rolling, you're just spinning the story. Whatever happened, happened.

KEITH: Got it.

AUSTIN: It's just later on when you're telling this story... Or when someone else is interpreting your actions you're kind of opening it up to being respun.

JACK: I'm, like, trying to do the maths...

AUSTIN: [cross] It's 35. Is...

JACK: [cross] As we're...

AUSTIN: Is our Doubt.

JANINE: Yeah.

AUSTIN: Uhum.

JANINE: It's also tough, because, like, I... it's... You know. I feel like it— I feel like when I'm playing *Fiasco* I have a better handle on the outcome I want versus the outcome I don't. Um. Whereas here... I'm not really sure...?

AUSTIN: Is this a Thi— [cross] To some degree, that feel—

KEITH: [cross] That's funny. I never feel that way in *Fiasco*.

AUSTIN: That feels right about *Thisbe*, though. Right? This is not a— *Thisbe* is not concerned in this way, right?

JANINE: Yeah. I mean, that's— So that's the other thing is that, like, *Thisbe*'s not gonna spin anything! [chuckles]

AUSTIN: Totally! Then let's lock 'em!

JANINE: *Thisbe* doesn't spin stories!

AUSTIN: [cross] Yeah.

JANINE: [cross] She just says this is the thing that happened! [chuckles]

AUSTIN: Yep! Locked! So that leaves us with the *Figure's* and with *Kalar's Cool*. Although— Their remaining *Cools*.

DRE: I will lock mine.

AUSTIN: Both of yours are locked. *Figure*! Or, sorry, *Kalar*! Your final *Cool* — your 10 *Cool*. That was already locked, that one. Right.

JACK: Okay. So what's the current total?

AUSTIN: Alright. [cross] Let's see...

JACK: [cross] I'm just— I'm reading the rules here about “resolving Acts.”

AUSTIN: Uhum. You're looking ahead? Which is smart. [chuckles]

JACK: Yeah! We're playin— [chuckles]

AUSTIN: We're playing. Alright. Right now with your 10 — your roll number one 10 — you've 41 *Cool*. Which would leave you with a total here of 6 *Cool*. Because 41 minus 35 is 6.

JACK: Is there a... We don't... Okay.

AUSTIN: For people who are listening: at the very end of the game based on... Actually, I already said this, right? Basically, the outcome of the Final Act these earlier totals — whatever the *total* total is, not the 41 and 35, but the— when you subtract the lower from the higher one, which would leave you with 6 Cool in this case — that has a chance of being doubled. Based on the outcome of the Final Act. If the Final Act...

Let's say this turns out to be 6 Cool. The Final Act win is a success — and as a Cool success — then this six becomes 12. Which could make or break falling into one of the three categories at the very end. Right *now* the point differentials on that final count is 20. You have to be within... You have to be on either side of 20 to get the middle... The what I'm calling “the leap ending.” [chuckles] There's also “the burn tables ending.”

[someone chuckles]

KEITH: [cross] That's the...

AUSTIN: [cross] And— Or the— Sorry. There's “the burn thrones ending” and “the build tables ending.” “Build tables” is mostly Cool. “Burn thrones” is mostly Doubt. And that middle — which right now is 20 on each end, but I... I'm debating 15. And I know it's like we're in the middle of doing a playtest, and I should *lock* that, but I'm kind of open to talking through it a little bit.

JACK: [cross, chuckling] Austin, are you gonna Spin your game design...?

[ALI chuckles]

AUSTIN: [cross] Listen! I ran so many fucking test things here! And it's just so hard to know what people really do until you playtest, right? So, like... Until you actually play test with actual people who have actual interests. You know?

JACK: Right. So, essentially, it seems like the question that we're talking about here is by re-spinning this 10 Cool...

AUSTIN: Uhum.

JACK: I could potentially bring down the Cool total of this...

AUSTIN: Of this Act.

JACK: I mean, I could... I could also make it [cross] bigger.

AUSTIN: [cross] Bigger. You could! This is the risk!

[a brief pause]

AUSTIN: Which, again, with Kalar it's so easy to imagine Kalar trying to, like, downplay it and then people, like, back-slapping and be like: "argh! He's so humble!" You know what I mean? It's so easy to imagine the way that story morphs *because* you try to downplay the Coolness of it.

[a brief pause]

AUSTIN: [in a raspy voice, with intensity] "You met this officer and you looked her dead in the eyes and then... and then... You know, you set her up and then the Figure [cross] knocked her out!"

JACK: [cross] "Fuckin' gorilla showed up!"

AUSTIN: Yeah. Aha. "The gorilla—" You know what I mean? Exactly!

JACK: I mean, I— I think that this is compelling enough to actually make an argument for spinning it, [cross] right?

AUSTIN: [cross] Just to see!

JACK: [cross] As that, like...

AUSTIN: Yeah.

JACK: Without spinning it we don't get this.

AUSTIN: [cross] So, let's spin it! 3d6!

JACK: [cross] So this is a roll 3d6.

AUSTIN: Uhum.

KEITH: And you're spinning what? [cross] Towards what?

AUSTIN: [cross] Oh, my god!

JACK: [cross] Whoa!

AUSTIN: 13! Goes up by 3!

AUSTIN: Uh-huh.

KEITH: Wha— Wait. What went up?

AUSTIN: It's Cool.

JACK: The Cool.

AUSTIN: Uhum.

KEITH: Cool went up.

JACK: Right. Yeah. So this is exactly what... This is exactly what you described, right?

AUSTIN: Uh-huh.

JACK: Which is Kalar saying:

JACK (as Kalar): We just... we went in. We tried to complete the mission as best as we could.

AUSTIN: Uhum.

JACK (as Kalar): And we were trying to get out.

JACK: And people say: "Yeah. It was fucking cool!" [chuckles]

[AUSTIN laughs]

AUSTIN: Exactly.

JACK: So now the total...

AUSTIN: So now the total Cool...

KEITH: [cross] 44?

AUSTIN: [cross] When you get another... 44. Uh-huh. So 44 minus 35 is 9 Cool. Right?

JACK: Yeah.

KEITH: Yeah.

AUSTIN: Alright! So!

KEITH: "9 Cool" sounds like a new kind of gum.

[AUSTIN laughs]

KEITH: Like...

AUSTIN: [chuckling] It does.

KEITH: With a lot of marketing money.

AUSTIN: You're totally right! Um... After Rolling dice, interpreting the outcome is playing out... ta-ra-da-ra-ra. We've already done all this. I'm skipping this stuff because we've done some of it, so I'm not going to read word for word what I've done here. Um. Or written here. Um. We've done this. We've done this.

As a table, talk through how you think people feel about your actions both as a group and as individuals, guided by this result. I think we kind of know. Right? It was Cool! It was... It was... You were dynamic and heroic in a way that is excitin— You know, it was not blown out of proportion, necessarily. You're still within that, like, window of being restrained and not being... You know, you didn't decide to fight the Divines head-on, right? [chuckles]

DRE: Right.

AUSTIN: Um. But I think it still comes across as mostly the sort of story that... You know what it feels in line with this? Like, HORIZON's storytelling. The way that HORIZON talks about their... their exploits. As being almost, you know, fable-like and heroic in that sort of... that sort of way. If that makes sense.

We don't need to belabor this, but if people have other ideas for how this element, this act was received by people — as it's fictionalized by Elise Breka, as it's turned into a part of a documentary by Zola, as the story spreads from colony to colony, or planet to planet — please let me know. If there's any details that get, you know, emphasized.

JACK: I think the only thing that I have to add is that, like, there's definitely just some, like, spectacular exaggeration. Right?

AUSTIN: Uhum.

JACK: Like, people... Someone goes outside of a mech at some point...!

AUSTIN: Shoots a rocket at one of the...

[JACK laughs]

AUSTIN: Either Valour or Imperium while holding onto the side of Mow.

JACK: Yeah.

AUSTIN: [cross] "There was a fight!"

JACK: [cross] Kalar screams into the psionic thing. [chuckles]

AUSTIN: Yeah.

SYLVI: There's just, like, people getting stuff mixed up from, like, the story of Thisbe fighting...

AUSTIN: [cross, sighs] Yeah... Yes!

SYLVI: [cross] Sabeeha with this.

JACK: Oh, yeah!

AUSTIN: Yeah! Aha. "Well, I heard that the robot climbed outside..."

[ALI giggles]

AUSTIN: "...ran over to another Mech, grabbed the pilot...!" And it's like, "well, that did happen, just not here!"

[DRE giggles]

AUSTIN: It's the versions of all the different Paul Bunions!

[AUSTIN, SYLVI: & DRE laugh]

DRE: God!

[JACK chuckles]

AUSTIN: [softer] Go back to that one!¹² [laughs]

JACK: Well, I'm from the Alise Breka Times...

AUSTIN: Right!

JACK: ...and I say...

AUSTIN: Yeah.

[[PRIORITY. FLASHOVER. PRIORITY.](#) by Jack de Quidt plays]

¹² This is an allusion to the pilot episode of their proposed patreon show, [Random Article](#).