

Sangfielle 18: What Happened at Bell Metal Station Pt. 2

Transcriber: robotchangeling

Austin: *Sangfielle* is a series that draws on elements of dark fantasy, horror, and gothic fiction. As such, a list of content warnings will *always* be made available in the episode description.

Austin: Your crew, the Blackwick Group, was woken up in a start. The people who were guarding it had been clubbed, knocked out, and the big egg sac itself had gone, had been taken away. Half of the Blackwick Group went up into the mountains, but there was something else that happened soon after that egg was found missing, which is the Grand Cormorant Limited left, heading east first and then south into the night. In the middle of the night, we're talking about like 3 a.m. hours, right?

[Music begins: [Sangfielle](#) by Jack de Quidt]

Austin: And so while the other group is off tracking down that egg up in the mountains, y'all have been asked to go try and track down that train which is heading south. You don't know where it's going, but if it's going south, chances are that the people who will know where it went are the Bell Metal Band. The Bell Metal Band are one of these loose Shape Knight gangs. They have built this structure that is sort of like a train roundhouse, built around the tracks, from which they can take scrapings of passing trains, from which they can snipe at passing trains or drop big heavy anvils on them to try to knock something off the side. And then when something gets knocked off the side or when they manage to scrape some paint away, they study it.

Austin: I think maybe the first thing you see is dust kicking up into the air, and you hear someone yelling as the sun slowly begins to rise on Last Rest Station. And you hear the sound of some sort of creature or creatures chittering in the early morning light. There is a sound of gunfire, just a single shot, and then more slamming sounds.

Keith (as Lyke): It's our cavern confreres!

Austin (as Agdeline): Imagine seeing you here. I didn't get a chance to thank you for fixing me up before.

Austin: Says Agdeline.

Austin (as Agdeline): But a pleasure to see you again, albeit under strange circumstances.

Keith (as Lyke): We noticed you in a fight.

Austin (as Agdeline): Oh, we were not in a fight. Our...it's hard to say if Katonya is an escort or if we're her escort, or...

Austin: And Katonya, who is this big cleaver, says:

Austin (as Katonya): I have hired you to take me south. That is our relationship.

Austin (as Katonya): Ah, you are drawing the Course.

Art (as Duvall): I'm not familiar with that term so much. You said it before.

Austin (as Katonya): The Course.

Art (as Duvall): Yeah.

Austin (as Katonya): It runs through Sangfielle. It runs through everything. Under it.

Art (as Duvall): Mmm.

Austin (as Katonya): It is the pulse of the land, except the un-pulse.

[music ends]

Keith: I just want to note that the conversation between Duvall and the cleaver whose name I'm forgetting...

Austin: Katonya.

Keith: I take Tombo out to watch this—

Austin: I forgot about Tombo.

Jack: Tombo!

Keith: Because Tombo I feel is always up my ass about the nature of luck.

Austin: Uh huh. Do you want to remind people who Tombo is?

Keith: Tombo is my brightly colored fish in a jar who's always arguing with me.

Austin: How could I have forgotten?

Keith: I put him on a different page and so I forgot about briefly.

Austin: Yeah, yeah, same. Uh huh, you gotta pull him back on the resources thing. Make him a d2 resource.

Jack: God, Tombo is such a good name.

Keith: Tombo is priceless.

Austin: You're right, I get it. Also d2, though. [Keith laughs] So yeah, you hop back up to get your leg fixed up here, presumably, Pickman.

Jack: Yeah. I'm...

Austin: Or maybe Lye gets off the train to...or not the train, the cart.

Keith: Yeah, I hopped off to help.

Jack: I was picturing Pickman leaning against the body of the train car or crouched against the body of the train car.

Austin: Yeah.

Jack: But I would like to... [sighs] What's the exact use of the technology domain, Austin?

Austin: What do you mean by use? Domains color or open—

Jack: Right.

Austin: A place is a domain. You don't just roll a domain ever, you know?

Jack: No, because I was thinking to myself what I really want to do here is...oh, I can make an argument to do compel technology here and try to guide the Shape or compel the Shape into moving us through this safely.

Austin: Uh huh?

Jack: It's weird, right? Because my gut instinct was I should do a discern here to figure out what's going on.

Austin: I see, yeah. Mm-hmm, mm-hmm.

Jack: But I think from Pickman's perspective, she doesn't really need to know—what she knows here is that the Shape is pulling some shit.

Austin: Yeah.

Jack: And perhaps in a Shape Knight crew, she would have a specialist who could discern.

Austin: Yeah.

Jack: But I think she's just like, well, look. I'm a Shape Knight. I'm the only Shape Knight here. The track is doing something weird. I'm gonna try and compel it to...

Austin: I love this. Compel is very interesting here versus something else, right? I feel like if you used delve—delve is progress into dangerous or unknown territory—that's about navigating what's in front of you, making sure the right switches are flipped, et cetera.

Jack: Mm-hmm.

Austin: Through perception and skill. Using compel opens you up in a different way, but also could be more...you know, this game does not have tiers of success in that way, but it does have me deciding what an outcome is, [Jack laughs] and so even though there's not limited/standard/great, you can kind of see what I'm saying here, right?

Jack: Yeah.

Austin: I think it's riskier in many ways, even though I'm not gonna make it...hmm. I'm not gonna make it risky. I'm not gonna make it a risky roll. So this is compel technology. Do you have anything else that gives you a bonus on this sort of thing?

Jack: I don't think that I do.

Austin: No.

Jack: I'm trying to see if I have anything on my sheet here.

Austin: I don't see anything.

Jack: No. Mostly once it starts going bad is when my stuff starts kicking in.

Austin: Yeah, yeah.

Jack: So I'm rolling three d6 here.

Austin: Mm-hmm.

Jack: Does anybody...hmm.

Keith: Sorry, what are you rolling for?

Jack: I'm trying to compel the Shape or the track to behave, basically, to get us through this mess of snarled up lines.

Keith: Okay. I could help.

Jack: Would you accept help, Austin?

Austin: Yeah, what you're saying is pretty magicky to me. I guess, unless it would...tell me what your compelling looks like.

Jack: I think what it looks like is a firm deliberate fearlessness in the face of what it is trying to do, so I think Pickman takes a lantern from the handcart. I keep calling it a handcart even though it's powered by bicycles.

Austin: I mean, it is...I mean, they are called handcarts. That is what they are called, even the ones that were pedaled, for some reason.

Jack: And just walks in front of the handcart very slowly, holding the lantern up ahead of her. And just watching the track and making a presence of herself on the track as this handcart comes rattling.

Austin: Mm-hmm.

Jack: I picture a real...is his name Roger Deakins, the Coen Brothers' cinematographer?

Austin: Yep. Yeah, yeah, yeah.

Jack: A real wide Deakins camera shot of the handcart on the left of the screen and this massive armored shape in front of it carrying a lantern, just moving slowly. So I think yeah, just asserting myself to the Shape.

Austin: It's interesting, because I feel like getting help doing this, you have to give me a really compelling image. Because otherwise it feels almosts like you're...

Jack: Just delving.

Austin: Part of the compelling...right, well, more importantly, to compel in that way, your force of personality is your argument in a sense, right? You're basically saying: [firmly] "Back up. I'm here. I'm going to walk through you."

Jack: Yeah.

Austin: "And you're going to let us do that."

Jack: And just walking through is not enough.

Austin: And the second that you're like, "and so is my friend," it's like you're actually losing part of the argument by needing backup, do you know what I mean? But if Lye had a fun way of supporting you in this that isn't just "I'm there too," I would consider it.

Jack: Some sort of asserting...

Austin: But if not, three d10.

Art: If you need swarms of anything, I'm here for it. [Austin chuckles]

Jack: Walking with her eyes shut, trusting...

Austin: Mmm.

Jack: Well, not trusting the line, but making a statement that I anticipate the line will behave.

Austin: Mm-hmm.

Jack: What else? I think of Shape Knights as using fire a lot, and so drawing a flaming...lighting a pitch torch alight and dragging it along the rail alongside her. It's tough, right? 'cause you can't really...

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Austin: Yeah, is there...you know what? You've taken up point, so to speak, but if someone takes up the rear with a torch or something, even though the suns are up at this point, right? That's kind of interesting. There's a sort of...you've set up a convoy to insist that you're going, you know what I mean?

Jack: Yeah.

Austin: Not a literal convoy, but you and then the car and then someone at the back—

Jack: Yeah.

Austin: —as punctuation to this group you're leading through this mess of tangled tracks.

Jack: Taking the chalk from a pouch on her belt and marking one of the railway...what are they called?

Austin: Mm-hmm.

Jack: Planks? The massive wooden struts that the railway is built on.

Austin: Oh, those, yes. Yes. You're not drawing the Shape on it, you're just marking it.

Jack: No, I think if I drew the Shape at this moment, we'd just get run over by a train or something. [Jack and Austin laugh]

Austin: That'd be very dangerous. Oh yeah, it'd be dangerous, let me tell you. Okay, give me that roll. So yeah, who's taking up that rear slot? Who's walking behind the handcar?

Keith: I can do it. Is this the help roll? I can do that.

Austin: Yeah, this is helping.

Keith: Yeah.

Austin: Alright, so add a...oh wait, I don't know that you can, because you don't have compel or technology here.

Jack: Ooh.

Keith: Oh.

Jack: Duvall, do you have technology?

Austin: It would have to be Duvall who has technology, yeah.

Art: Alright.

Austin: Alright. So, Duvall back there with a torch, walking forward, trying to help impose your group on the Shape. Give me your roll here, which is again one from normal then compel then technology then a plus one from Duvall. Four d10. Let's see.

Jack: Ah! Beautiful. That's a nine.

Austin: That's a nine. Full success. And an eight after that, so good. Even if it had been risky, you would have succeeded. Yeah, I think that there's a strange thing here, which is more than once you hear the switch flip.

Jack: Mmm.

Austin: You know, the track switch.

Jack: Deathly silence.

Austin: Yeah, and then *ka-clunk*, and you can see the track go from taking the handcar off to the side to moving it forward instead. This is a slow process, this walk you're doing, so it takes you the better part of a day. You know, I think there's a lot of opportunity...and again, this is why you get to check that also, Lyke, is all day you're just talking it up with Katonya and the Toll Collectors. [Jack chuckles] And it's nearly sunset by the time...in fact, it is sunset. Let's say the suns are beginning to set by the time you make it to seeing the metal bell, or sorry, the Bell Metal building, the Bell Metal Station on the horizon. The twisted, snarled tracks do not stop, and in fact they get denser and denser the closer you get to this thing, but you see that at this point you could actually disembark and walk the rest of the way even, probably.

Jack: Yeah.

Austin: And then...I'm gonna say...do you do that or do you just try to ride the rest of the way? Just give me the image. This is not a *gotcha!* moment.

Jack: I want to bring these Shape Knights this handcart.

Austin: Okay. As you get closer, in fact, to the Bell Metal Station, besides all of the tracks twisted in on themselves, there's something else you notice, kind of just at the horizon line. You see three overturned train cars, which you cannot imagine that the Bell Metal Band has managed to do that themselves, because that's a big task. You know, the engines haven't turned over, but the cars have. And then looking more closely, you see that there is some scrap and debris out there in the mix too. And from looking, I guess maybe even at this distance, you can see that they've been impacted by something, and soon enough you find out what that something is. The suns dip beyond the mountains to the west, and off to the east past the horizon maybe one of those is still up, and so the shadow from the east is still cast very long. The east and the south, there are no mountains there in front of you, but the others have dipped beyond the horizon, the mountains. Somewhere in those shadows, you see movement across one of these train lines, these swirling train lines. It comes up over, let's say, that western horizon underneath the shadow being cast from the east of this station. It's moving so fast it's hard for you to even see it, and it's a train engine. It's a big train engine. It's a full scale...it's larger than the last train we saw onscreen. It's larger than the *Grand Cormorant Limited*. Jack, months ago you sent me images of train engines exploded. Do you want to describe what those look like?

Jack: Yeah, the inside of a steam train engine contains, you know, feet upon feet upon feet of tiny metal pipes, that I guess are used to route water through the engine in a way that keeps it warm or doesn't give it danger or whatever.

Austin: Mm-hmm.

Jack: If these explode, which they do sometimes, the front part of the engine just bursts into a writhing horrible mass of metal tendrils and pipes, and they're terrifying things to look at.

Austin: I've posted two images of what that looks like in the chat here, and you can find these by just doing "steam engine explode" or "steam train explode." You'll find images of these. It's nightmarish, because they're just...it's like tendrils coming off the face of a train. And that's what's happening at first here. The tendrils are flying out all over the place, almost like feelers, as this engine—

Jack: Oh, they're moving?

Austin: And there's no cars on it. It's just the engine. They're moving. They're feeling all over the place. And then...it's in the distance for you. In the moment after you see it and are able to like, "oh, that's not good," the moon comes up over the horizon, and as its light hits the front of these tendrils, instead of wavering all over the place, instead of trying to feel out—it's as if it's lost, right? It's as if it can't make sense of the world. When they're wavering all over the place and touching things and trying to touch the train tracks, it can't make sense of where it is. So it's almost as if it's using whiskers, right? To be like, okay, what's my place in the world? And as the moonlight comes across this shadow and lands on it, they all come to a sharp arrow-like shape. And the front of this train takes on the shape and face of a wolf.

Jack: Shit.

Austin: And you can hear it slam on its own brakes and twist and turn to redirect itself, and almost more like a cat about to pounce, you see that it begins to stalk closer and closer to the station, closer and closer to the Bell Metal Station. And then finally, it lets out a howl like a wolf and slams headfirst through the western wall of Bell Metal Station. As it approaches, you hear yelling from the station, gunfire coming down from a Shape Knight up in the bell tower yelling in the distance. You know that the Bell Metal Band is not a big group of people. We're not talking about dozens of people. It's like four people there at any given time. [chuckles] And they have a very special train knocking on the door. This is...Jack, when you first pitched me these trains, you said that there was a hierarchy, right?

Jack: Mm-hmm.

Austin: That there were regular trains and then there were duke trains and then there were, you know, god trains at the very top. And there was this other type of train that was between the duke and the god that were just special trains that didn't quite fit into the hierarchy because they were unique in some way. They weren't just reporting up to the god train necessarily, they were off doing their own thing or were strange in some other way. This is the *Red Zephyr*, and it is one of those.

Jack: Oh, how far are we away from Bell Metal?

Austin: You're there. You're functionally there, right?

Jack: Shit.

Austin: You're five minutes out, walking.

Jack: So this thing has basically set upon the station that we are just about to arrive at.

Austin: Yeah. This werewolf train has come to kill everyone here.

Jack: Mmm.

Austin: Seeing is rush forward, seeing as its wolf face takes shape...and I mean, the wolf face is made of these pipes and these pipes gain heat as it moves and begin to heat up to the degree that they turn red.

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Jack: Huh. Has this ever happened before? Have we seen trains attacking trains?

Austin: Not as far as you've seen or know.

Jack: Okay.

Austin: Not as far as you know. You know, normally when I give an answer to a question like that, you know my answer is like, well there's always exceptions, right?

Jack: Yes.

Austin: There's always edge cases. You don't know of any. Such is the Shape, you know? The Shape is the Shape.

Jack: Do you think it's something that's been talked about hypothetically in boiler rooms of like, what if there's a train out there that's killing other trains? But we've never seen any evidence of it or...

Austin: I think what you've probably gotten more of is "I wish we had a train." [Jack laughs]
"Think about what we could do. Just run it head on."

Art: Yeah.

Jack: Yeah.

Austin: Right?

Art: Honestly. Who's in charge here?

Austin: Yeah. [chuckles]

Jack: Well, it seems like it might be Chantilly Scathe, and that's not going great.

Austin: [laughs] Yeah, we'll find out, I suppose. I suppose.

Keith: Does it still have tracks?

Austin: It isn't clear if it still has tracks, 'cause there are so many tracks.

Keith: Okay, fair.

Austin: So like, could it be flying around, you know— or not flying around, but gliding around on those tracks at hyper fast speeds using some sort of train track feet talons on the rails? Could it be using soap shoes? Maybe. Who could say? If you get close enough you could tell, but also it's very big, so bad news all around. This is a new train to you, correct, Pickman?

Jack: I believe so.

Austin: Okay, yeah.

Jack: I was actually gonna say. Have I heard of the *Red Zephyr* before?

Austin: I don't believe so, no.

Jack: That's very concerning.

Austin: Yes, because it seems strange enough that you would have at least heard word, you know? So who knows?

Jack: Oh, it's one of those things as well where Pickman knows there are probably trains of this caliber out there in the world, you know?

Austin: Mm-hmm.

Jack: And I think Pickman would be foolish to be like, "I've seen all the trains there are."

Austin: Right, right.

Jack: But just in terms of how easy their day is going to be and how threatened their lives might be—

Austin: Yes.

Jack: I think that she is afraid to see a train of this caliber and not recognize it, because she's like, "Oh fuck, what's this?"

Austin: Yeah, absolutely. You saw one last thing, which is you saw the Shape Knights of Bell Metal Station, the Bell Metal Band, or members thereof, fighting this train, shooting at this train from atop the station itself. In my mind, the station is sort of like a large...we've talked about roundhouses before on the show, in PARTIZAN, these big round train...it is a station, but it's like...in real life, they're low to the ground and have a train platform that can rotate to send trains out to various tracks. Here, there is only...and I can just kinda...give me a second, I can move you over to a map where you can see the gist of it, basically. But there is a tall circular tower that they've built here specifically so that they can...what's the word I want to say here? So that they can, again, snipe down at it. They can take readings or whatever. They can poke away at it over the course of like, every time a train swings by, they kind of swing at it a little bit from the safety of the height of this circular tower. Here, let me move you over to this other map. So here there is this giant circular tower that has, in the middle of it, empty space on the ground floor, enough space to move from this northwest-southeast line and then the north-south line. And I would say that it's probably, I don't know, seven floors up? Eight floors up? Maybe more, closer to ten floors up. And that is where you saw people running around on a series of rafters on the outside, or not rafters, but a balcony, the metal balcony on the outside of this building, up at the top basically. Maybe there's a few other levels underneath it, sort of like scaffolding underneath where people can move around, almost like...what do they call them on a ship? You know, the people that jump around on the nets and...

Jack: Rigging?

Austin: Yeah, the rigging of it. Whatever the people who do that stuff on a boat are called. There's a name for that.

Jack: They're on the Obra Dinn. I figured out who they all were.

Austin: Yeah, yeah, exactly. [laughs] And yeah, so you see them shooting. You see some people throwing stuff. Someone throws down some sort of firebomb at this weretrain, the *Red Zephyr*, and the *Red Zephyr* howls as the fire hits it, but it continues to slam its hands against the foundations of this building. Alright, well, you're here. On this little map, I've put you at the northern end of it, all the way up top. And I'm gonna say the *Red Zephyr*, which I should just make...bop bop bop. And it is on the western wall, at this point, slashing away with metallic claws. I imagine the wolf form of this, or the werewolf form of it, is a blend of metal and flesh, but specifically the metal I imagine is kind of...it's not a big unified metal. It's scraps riveted together, long pistons that are moving across arms and legs, lots of patchwork in this form. And it's huge. It's huge. This thing is ten stories tall, the building is ten stories tall, and I think that this giant werewolf train is also...not ten stories tall, but four or five stories tall. It's up there. Forty feet?

Keith: That's tall. That's taller than a train normally.

Austin: Yeah, it's big. It's big. All said, in the shape of a person, it's like forty feet tall.

Jack: Jesus.

Austin: Yeah.

Keith: But then also long like a train.

Austin: Well no, now it's a person, so it's tall instead of long.

Keith: Oh, okay.

Austin: You see what I'm saying?

Keith: Oh, so it's not...okay, gotcha.

Austin: When it is in its werewolf form, it is a werewolf made of metal and blood and...or, I guess I don't know if it's blood. You didn't cut it open. But metal and organic material and smoke and fire. But it's just a werewolf. It's just a very big werewolf.

Keith: Right.

Austin: And when it's in its train form, it's a train.

Keith: Yeah. I was picturing it still horizontal, like its head was down at the tracks and its feet were the end of the train down further, but I get it now. It's standing up.

Austin: Mm-hmm. So, what do y'all do at this point? I think Katonya...ha. Katonya, who you remember has this big animal bone scythe thing, like a jawbone scythe, stands upright on the platform that's being pushed on the cart, and looks out into the horizon, very clearly sizing this thing up to try to decide if what she has is right for the job, you know?

Jack: I mean, I think Pickman looks at her weapon and looks up at *Red Zephyr*—

Austin: [chuckles] Uh huh.

Jack: And there's probably just a distant explosion and shouting.

Austin: Mm-hmm.

Jack: And just says:

Jack (as Pickman): What are you planning to do?

Austin (as Katonya): Find its tendons and cut them. Yes?

Jack (as Pickman): Send it scurrying off back to the south?

Austin (as Katonya): Or west. I do not know where a thing like that is from.

Jack (as Pickman): Okay, I'm just making sure that we've got the same...we've got realistic expectations going in here, you know what I mean?

Austin (as Katonya): Yes.

Jack (as Pickman): Alright.

Austin: She reaches back to one of the many trunks that are on the back of this thing and slams her fist against it like the Fonz hitting a jukebox, [Jack laughs] and it opens up to reveal a large...what it is is a cannon that she picks up with her left hand. And it's under arm, do you know what I— and it's just a cannon. This isn't a gun that I'm describing as being cannon-like. It is a cannon.

Art: Like a boat cannon.

Austin: Like a boat cannon that has effectively a grip coming out of it, like imagine you had a really big pawn from chess, a giant one that you welded on top of a cannon so that you can grab it like a pistol— or, not like a pistol grip, 'cause you're holding it underhanded, but like that. And she picks that up, and then she has the big scythe over her shoulder, and then hops down from the train cart thing and begins to walk towards this thing.

Keith: Sick.

Austin: The whole train cart shakes as she jumps off of it. [Jack laughs] She's very big.

Jack: She's a—

Keith: I feel like she was really prepared to fight a train, and we were not.

Austin: Yeah. That's fair.

Keith: Or I would have a cannon too.

Austin: I mean, that's her job, right? Yeah, uh huh.

Keith: Yeah. Well, it's one of our jobs too, kind of.

Austin: [chuckles] Yes.

Jack: She's a devil, right? Or...

Austin: No, she's ojantani. She's a cleaver.

Jack: Sort of a werewolf versus werewolf situation.

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Austin: Mmm, it's hard to say what a cleaver is really, right? A cleaver is...you're not wrong. You're not wrong that there are werewolf elements of cleavers, for sure. She is, I would say, less consistent than the *Red Zephyr*, [Jack laughs] where you can point to it and go, "that's a weird biomechanical werewolf!" With her, you go like, there's a bunch of stuff happening here in terms of parts of bodies going on there, you know? And more still that you have not yet seen underneath the armor and cloaks and all of that shit, so. As a reminder, her skin is pitch, is like oil, right?

Jack: Oh yeah.

Austin: She has a big—

Keith: Bubbling.

Austin: Yeah, bubbling pitch. And she has a long snout with sharp teeth instead of the oxen face.

Keith: Does she leave a residue?

Austin: I don't think so. At least not that you've seen, you know? She's wearing clothing and stuff.

Keith: Right.

Austin: So she has boots on and stuff like that.

Keith: Not dripping.

Austin: Correct. You know, I think she begins to march south. You can hang back and see how it goes, or you can... you can do anything you want to do here.

Keith: Yeah.

Austin: You could suggest a different course of action. You could flee. [chuckles] You could do whatever you want.

Keith (as Lyke): Well, I think it's important that we ask the question: why are we doing this? It seems extremely—

Austin: Does Lyke ask that in character or are you asking this to the table?

Keith: Yes, I'm asking in character.

Jack: I think Pickman just shrugs, and says:

Jack (as Pickman): Duty.

Keith: [sighs] That's such a tough one, 'cause there's no...I can't just go "it's not," 'cause it's yours.

Austin: Because it literally is her duty, yeah.

Keith: Right. Well...

Jack (as Pickman): You can go home.

Austin: Duvall, do you have thoughts?

Art: I think this pause is completely in character.

Austin: Uh huh.

Art: I think Duvall just has a slight tilt to his head.

Jack: Can I take a quick look in the remnants of the cart that Katonya left behind to see if she's got anything there that might be useful?

Austin: I think that it's mostly supplies for long-term maintenance of her gear.

Jack: She hasn't got another one of that cannon?

Austin: No. She has some extra ammo for that cannon in there, probably, and maybe different types of ammo. There's grapeshot in there and various other...a net that she can shoot or something. But there's lots of oils and blade sharpening stuff. There's probably another set of more civilian clothing, let's say. There are some medicinal herbs and all sorts of rations for the

trip, stuff like that. The stuff that you have in your sheets, right? A weird skull in a jar. I don't know what that is. Who knows what that is?

Jack: Oh, she's got a d6 resource?

Austin: Yeah, a hundred percent, right? Like she is a player—

Art: Is it in fluid or is it a...why is it in a jar?

Austin: Yeah, it's in fluid. Let's say it's in fluid. Yeah.

Art: Gross.

Austin: Uh huh.

Jack: You've gotta keep it quiet. When the liquid's in its mouth, it can't speak.

Austin: There you go.

Art: Mmm...

Jack: Yeah, I think Pickman just takes off her cowl and folds it and puts it in the thing.

Austin: Mm-hmm.

Jack: And bolted onto her chest is what looks like a goats head, basically, and this is Pickman's helmet.

Austin: Mmm.

Jack: She takes it off, and it has holes for...it sort of closes around her face, rather than being something that you put on over the top.

Austin: Yeah.

Jack: And it has holes for the horns, but there are metal guards for her horns that clip around them.

Austin: Yeah.

Jack: The helmet is the same color as her armor, but there is metal detailing of flames licking up the helmet and up around her horns. These aren't real flames, it's just metalwork. And yeah, she turns and looks back at Lyke and Duvall and just says:

Jack (as Pickman): Come on, then.

Jack: And just starts walking towards Katonya, walking towards Bell Metal.

Art: I think Duvall shakes his head and starts following, sort of snaps out of it.

Austin: Mm-hmm. Lyke?

Keith: Yeah.

Austin: I think Agdeline with the Toll Collectors says:

Austin (as Agdeline): You can always stay here and help us guard her belongings, if that's more your speed.

Keith (as Lyke): No, if they come back with any cool stuff that I didn't get a chance at, then I'll be pissed about it. [Jack laughs]

Austin: Alright. You know, the shots continue to ring out from above. At some point, someone pours some hot oil from the top of the station. There are, at this point, I think you can see three people running around up on the rafters and the scaffolding above Bell Metal trying to—

Keith: So you're saying someone poured hot oil onto...*Red Zephyr*?

Austin: *Red Zephyr*. Yeah, like the way you would if you're defending a castle, you know?

Art: Mm-hmm.

Keith: Right. Okay. Well, I have something.

Austin: You are not right there yet—

Keith: Okay.

Austin: But if you want to open with this, that's also fine. If you want to...paint me the picture.

Keith: Okay. Maybe I'm getting—

Austin: I guess that's the thing. You're getting close enough, and...

Keith: Maybe I'm presuming too much, that someone hasn't already done this.

Austin: No, no, no. I know what you're about to do. I get it.

Keith: Okay.

Austin: I just think it's funny to go from the person who's dragging their feet [Jack laughs] to the person who fires before Katonya even can. Which I'm fine with!

Keith: Well, I'm not here to be a drag.

Austin: Right, but let's do it then. I'm fine with this. Tell me what you want to do here as the...you know, you all come around the edge of this large tower so that you can get close enough to see, because the scale of this map is obviously not to scale, but you are walking down south from hundreds of yards away.

Keith: Yeah.

Austin: So you have a good view of this thing as you get closer and closer to it, but then you have to either go directly at it crossing the other train line here—

Keith: Yeah.

Austin: Or else get up against the building and slowly move your way around it using it as cover, but either way that you do it, you end up there. And Katonya effectively does the thing that's the equivalent of cocking a cannon, which maybe it has some sort of strange pneumatic pull on it. Before she can even use it, what do you do?

Keith: And I think you're right, I did go from zero to sixty here, but I have this new thing. Okay.

Austin: Yes.

Keith: Lyke goes, ah, I'm sort of dragging my feet on this. Sees the oil, right? Goes, "oh, I have something I can do." I think this is in character. The same thing that happened to me happened to Lyke.

Austin: Right, right. [chuckles]

Keith: Which is, I have a thing. Oh, I'm having an idea, that could be something. And the idea that I had, was that I got a new move called the Fire of the Red King.

Austin: Mm-hmm.

Keith: "You have tasted the dreams of the Red King. His breath as fire, his blood as molten gold. This spell causes your unarmed attacks to gain the ranged tag as you conjure flames on the clothing and bodies of those nearby. Each successive unarmed attack you inflict on the same target increases the size of your stress dice against that target by one step until the end of the situation."

Austin: Can I ask you: what is this spell that you do and how did you come to it on your trip down here? And where is that power coming from?

Keith: Do you remember in the first episode I tried to explain my fire thing that I thought I figured out? I maybe blew up a school with it?

Austin: You blew up a school, but I don't remember what it was. What is it that you figured out?

Keith: It was a new way of making fire.

Austin: So...yeah, but what is it? What is that way? Give me some color, besides red.

Keith: Um...well.

Austin: The description from the book talks about pulling from the dreams of the Red King—

Keith: Yeah.

Austin: Who is sort of a dragon-type figure.

Keith: Right.

Austin: But are you doing that or is there another source of this power?

Keith: Well, I feel like I've always struggled with the major moves from this playlist.

Austin: I know, yeah.

Keith: 'Cause they kind of come out of nowhere with the Lovecraft shit.

Austin: Mm-hmm.

Keith: Really out of nowhere. And so...

Austin: But is it...we know that the move that lets you walk into any temple is tied to the Boundless Conclave and that collection of gods.

Keith: Right. Yeah.

Austin: Is this another god thing? Is this more of a you have a certain set of reagents you're combining in a more alchemical way? Is this some sort of Sangfielle strange heartland chaos stuff?

Keith: Yeah, I—

Austin: Is this...

Keith: Your middle one is...

Austin: Only because I want to know what breaks— if you fail this, I need to know what breaks bad, you know what I mean?

Keith: Yeah. I think that this is a physical...I mean, this is like physical magic, right?

Austin: Mm-hmm.

Keith: There's a point where you've got stuff. I mean, you've used the word already, reagents, right?

Austin: Yeah, yeah.

Keith: These are things that are magic that you do something that in the real world might look like chemistry with.

[Timestamp: 0:39:59]

Austin: Right, right. But you're getting an effect that's so far beyond what chemistry could do that it's magic.

Keith: Right. That is right, yeah.

Austin: So are you covering your hands in something? Are you...what is the...

Keith: I think it's an epoxy.

Austin: Okay.

Keith: It's not goop like epoxy, but I've got a thing on each hand, and it's not until you get it on each other, that you've got it.

Austin: Right, it's like that gum from Mission Impossible 1, a movie that everyone should watch because it's great.

Keith: Is there explosive gum?

Austin: Yeah, there's explosive gum.

Keith: Okay. Yeah, I remember that.

Austin: The red side and the blue side, and he puts them together and slams them against the window, and the window blows up.

Keith: Yeah, yeah, yeah, yeah, yeah. Yeah.

Art: Yeah Austin, we all remember every prop from Mission Impossible 1, a 25-year-old movie.

Austin: It's a great movie.

Keith: [laughs] [??? 0:40:40]

Austin: That movie fucking rules. People should watch that movie.

Jack: A lot of Mission Impossible movies are good.

Keith: Yeah.

Jack: Not all of them, but a lot of them are good.

Austin: Not all of them, but a lot of them are good.

Art: Nope, they're all good.

Austin: Even the bad ones have good stuff in them in my opinion.

Art: Uh huh. There's no bad one. You're describing nothing.

Austin: [laughs] Okay, okay. So do you [claps] clap your hands together to do this? What's the...how do you do the thing?

Keith: Okay, so, here's what it is. You've got a slick material that goes on one hand.

Austin: Uh huh.

Keith: And the other hand heats up magically until my palms start to sweat.

Austin: Mmm.

Keith: And when I rub the sweat into the other material: fire.

Austin: And you're...are you dealing it like you're flipping a card out? How are you then...are you holding it like a fireball and then throwing it?

Keith: Oh. No, once they get onto the hands, it's on the hands. It's on both.

Austin: And then how do you deploy it as a ranged weapon?

Keith: Magic.

Austin: Mmm. What's that *look* like?

Keith: It looks—

Austin: Is it a beam? Is it a ball?

Keith: No, it looks like a—

Austin: Is it a...dagger?

Keith: No, it is a projectile. Not like a bullet, but like a...

Austin: Like a ball?

Keith: Eh, like a ball. Yeah, it's like a ball.

Austin: So you're making like a little fireball. You're holding it in your hands.

Keith: It's like a fireball. Yeah, yeah, yeah, yeah.

Austin: And then you're whipping it like a football.

Keith: Mmm, let me look at the thing. Do I like this? What's this say?

Austin: It's just ranged. It's a ranged—

Keith: I "conjure flames." I like that more. There's no projectile. It conjures flames on clothing and bodies.

Austin: On other people. So you're...even though the reagent is on your side, you're somehow drawing a connection to other people around you.

Keith: Yes. Yeah, yeah.

Austin: Summoning that fire at a distance.

Keith: Yep. I like it. It's fun. It's goofy.

Austin: It's very goofy.

Keith: It's magic.

Austin: Uh huh.

Keith: My hands are where the fire is, but it shows up over on you.

Austin: Right. If I zoomed in with a microscope, would I see something connecting the two? Or is this just spooky action at a distance? Is this just pyrokinesis? I know it's silly to try to find the physical manifestation... 'cause if you had said, "oh, it's a god," I'd be like, "oh yeah, sure, it's a god," but now that we've got epoxy involved—

Keith: Yeah.

Austin: I want to know how it works, 'cause my brain is bad.

Keith: Right. So my—

Austin: And because I want to know what to do if you completely fail this roll.

Keith: I will give you two answers.

Austin: Yes.

Keith: And the first answer is that I'm being slightly dodgy because I think that there's a point where Lyke goes, I've got it so that it works, and that's the important bit.

Austin: Yes, right. Yeah, yeah, yeah. Sure.

Keith: Like, I got it. I don't need to figure out what's...

Austin: What's happening, sure.

Keith: That's for the mages in the school to do.

Austin: [laughs] Right.

Keith: They can figure out if there's a thread that connects the thing.

Austin: Sure.

Keith: So that is my in-character answer.

Austin: Yes, I like that. We don't need— that's fine by me.

Keith: Okay.

Austin: That's fine by me. And if it fails, that gives me a lot of canvas to work with.

Keith: Got it.

Austin: And who knows, if it fails right now, if we'll answer that or we'll just do something else. Who could say?

Keith: This is junk mage style.

Austin: Yeah. Junk mage style.

Keith: Yeah.

Austin: Are you doing...speaking of junk mage style, are you going to sacrifice to cast a spell from this class with protection by destroying a resource with the occult domain?

Keith: I'm so excited to finally do this.

Austin: Okay.

Keith: I've had it literally before...I didn't pick it, it comes with me.

Austin: Yes.

Keith: So yes. I have Sacrifice: "Before you cast a spell you can opt to destroy a resource with the occult domain. Roll the resource's dice. The amount rolled is added to your protection value against stress incurred during casting the spell."

Austin: Perfect. So, what are you destroying? I guess with the occult you have the vial of cursed ink, which is a d6.

Keith: Yeah, yeah.

Austin: And you have a box of probably useless magical trinkets, which is a d2.

Keith: Yeah. I'm absolutely doing my vial of cursed ink.

Austin: Okay.

Keith: Which also came with me.

Austin: Yeah.

Keith: So.

Austin: So, do you drink it? Do you smash it? Do you cover your hands first in the cursed ink?

Keith: Hey, cursed ink. That's the original stuff. That's the first bit of the epoxy.

Austin: I got you. Sure.

Keith: Yeah.

Austin: Yes. I got you.

Keith: We're retconning it.

Austin: Destroy it.

Keith: Okay.

Austin: And roll a d6 to see how much protection you get from it.

Keith: Delete vial of cursed ink. Lock that. Okay. Slash. Six!

Jack: Ooh!

Austin: That's six! That's very good.

Keith: That's the whole of it.

Austin: So you have six protection from this, which is fantastic.

Keith: Yeah.

Austin: Given that this could...given what you're up against is all I will say.

Keith: Right. Yeah, yeah, yeah, yeah. And if it wasn't—we've moved so far away from it—the idea is to ignite the hot oil.

Austin: Right, sure.

Keith: Right. I know I never said it out loud.

Austin: Right, sorry, yeah. We both got there without speaking it.

Keith: Yeah.

Austin: It's now covered with hot oil. You have a fire spell.

Keith: Mm-hmm.

Austin: Hey, won't that make you do extra damage? And I'm gonna say it actually will. It will step up your damage if you succeed from your base d4 hands to a d6, which is good.

Keith: I think it might be d6 to d8.

Austin: Your base hands are d4.

Keith: My base hands are d4, but I think Fire of the Red King ups it. Maybe it doesn't. I might be wrong.

Austin: No, there's an upgrade that does that.

Keith: Oh, gotcha.

Austin: That you can now go get, now that you have the major, if you want.

Keith: Got it. Yeah.

Austin: So. Alright. Go ahead and give me...I think this is kill, 'cause you're trying to kill it.

Keith: Right.

Austin: And occult 'cause it's a spell, or technology because of where you are and what the train is.

Keith: Got it. Okay.

Austin: So, my guess is that's occult for you?

Keith: That is occult, and...

Austin: And I'm gonna say you take mastery, because Katonya's gonna go in on this thing as you do this.

Keith: Got it.

Austin: So that gives you a little extra wiggle. Does anyone--

Keith: Ooh, and it's risky.

Austin: It is— oh, oh, it's risky alright. [Jack chuckles] It would be risky otherwise. I'm not going to combine those to make it dangerous here.

Keith: Yeah, yeah, yeah.

Austin: But fighting this thing is risky period, and that's at this distance, you know?

Keith: Yeah.

Austin: So go ahead and give me a kill. Is anyone helping? I guess is a question, with the note that you won't have that six protection.

Art: I have no idea what that would even look like.

Austin: You know, attacking it alongside.

Art: We'll get to it. I don't know how to do...I don't know what to do here.

Austin: Okay. That's fine. You'll have, yeah.

Art: I don't work on this scale yet.

Austin: Yeah, I get you.

Jack: I mean, I think I should help. I think the duty aspect of it is...it's exactly this, right?

Austin: Yeah.

Jack: So, you know, I am prepared to offer a die and take the consequences.

Austin: Alright. Great. So then...

Jack: It's just cover. I'm just providing cover for...

Austin: Oh, that's fun. You're just standing in front?

Keith: Maybe I can get a little closer.

Austin: Yeah.

Jack: Yeah.

Austin: As you get closer, you feel pressure on your body. That's all I'll say for now. You're not so close that it's hurting you, but...

Keith: Okay.

Austin: You feel something in you.

Keith: Like gravity?

Austin: Yeah, let's say gravity, similar to gravity. Not gravity, but...

Keith: Similar to gravity.

Austin: It's like...yeah. There is a...yes. So go ahead, and that is...how many dice is this doing to be for you? Base one plus occult. You don't have kill, so that's two, plus mastery is three, plus help is four, four d...

Keith: Minus the top one from risky.

Austin: Well, yeah, you'll roll risky and we'll get rid of it. So four, but then we'll get rid of...

Keith: Eight.

Austin: Hey! Oh, you would have gotten a ten otherwise. Success, take no stress. Risky. Alright, do ur d6 damage. Oof.

Keith: Two.

Austin: Hate to see a two.

Keith: Yeah, hate to see a two.

Austin: You hate to see a two. The oil catches fire. The entire thing is covered in the oil and now covered in the fire, and for a moment, you're like, "Yes, fuck you *Red Zephyr*!"

Keith: But...

Austin: But.

Keith: Next time I do this attack, it's a d8.

Austin: That's correct. Unfortunately, it seems as if nothing has happened from this.

Keith: Okay.

Austin: Which lets you know it has at least two protection, as it turns to look at you as the werewolf form, and shoves one hand against the lower levels of this tower, as if to...it's almost striking a pose at you, but you realize it's stabilizing itself so that it can turn back into train form and charge at you in just a moment. What do y'all do?

Jack: Okay. I'm gonna prepare to board it as it charges.

Austin: Ooh. Okay.

Art: Oh!

Jack: Which is, you know, in theory something that Shape Knights have some familiarity with doing.

Austin: Yep.

Jack: Which is like, how do I get on a moving train?

Austin: Mm-hmm.

Jack: This is presumably a little trickier because it's *Red Zephyr*.

Austin: Yeah.

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Jack: Or *The Red Zephyr*. But yeah, my plan is that classic video game boss trick where you're like...you know?

Austin: Yes.

Jack: It's gonna charge me, and I'm going to...I think Pickman has a rope looped around one of her arms.

Austin: Yeah.

Jack: And she's just going to try to get on top of it in train form.

Austin: That sounds like an evade or an endure to me. In fact, you're going to need to make an endure roll as you do this, regardless of what your action roll is here, because that's how the *Red Zephyr* works. But tell me first how you're doing it, and we'll see—

Art: If I help, can I end up on the train too?

Austin: Yes, absolutely.

Art: Or do I have to do it separately? Okay.

Austin: Yeah, totally, totally.

Jack: I could hoist you onto the train, you know?

Art: Mm-hmm.

Keith: Mmm.

Jack: It could be like...it's the reverse—

Austin: But how is that...if that's happening, then Duvall's not helping you.

Jack: Oh shit, you're absolutely right. Yes, that is the opposite of helping.

Austin: That is, yes. You'd be helping Duvall onto the train.

Jack: I can burn equipment as resources, right, Austin?

Austin: In what way? To what end?

Jack: To power my Vermissian armor.

Austin: Oh, using your Iron of the Shape or whatever the name of that move is?

Jack: Yes, yes, Iron of the Shape.

Austin: Yes.

Keith: This seems like an important one. Sorry to interrupt, Jack. Can two help? I cannot remember.

Austin: It depends on the situation.

Keith: Okay.

Austin: I'm gonna say in this case no, because you are doing this thing.

Keith: Right.

Austin: You were just blasting it, and now it's all you can do to just get out of the way.

Keith: Sure.

Austin: You don't have time to formulate a counterattack here.

Keith: Yeah.

Jack: Essentially, I have this skeletal broadsword, which is a d8 die.

Austin: Mm-hmm, mm-hmm.

Jack: And I can burn d8 resource or higher to activate my armor.

Austin: Mm-hmm.

Jack: Or activate a bit of my armor. I guess my question is: can I use equipment as a resource?

Austin: Yes, absolutely, yes. So you'll destroy this—

Jack: What tag does this skeletal broadsword have?

Austin: I think it's fair to call that occult, because it's...

Jack: It's from some waterlogged skeletons.

Austin: 'Cause it's from some waterlogged skeletons, yeah, it's from some...in the terms of the Heart, it is from some...I guess I could actually just check this. It is from some skeleton courtiers according to this book, and I believe that they are...I guess this says they're warren, but I think ours are more occult, given their situation, you know? Yeah, I'm gonna say occult. So yeah, you can use it for this.

Jack: Okay, so that's my first step. I am going to burn this resource, literally burn it in my armor, just toss it into the furnace on the armor.

Austin: [chuckles] You have to slowly feed it in or does it...how quickly does it burn in the furnace?

Jack: Pickman breaks it over her knee.

Austin: Okay.

Jack: And just throws the two pieces in. You know.

Austin: [laughs] RIP to this cool sword, but...

Jack: Yeah, you know.

Austin: Mm-hmm.

Jack: What you gonna do?

Art: Get yourself a skull jar.

Keith: It's fine. Kill some more skeletons, intimidate them into giving a new sword.

Austin: Yeah, uh huh. [chuckles]

Jack: Yeah, exactly! And I'm gonna use this to gain the skill endure.

Austin: Okay. Good call, is what I will say. That's what this move does, just so you know.

Jack: There's no way to mark this temporary.

Austin: Just write...in the Knacks, write "temporary," or write "this session" or something.

Jack: Oh, yeah.

Austin: For people who don't know, the move says that "when you consume a resource with technology, cursed, or occult domains by augmenting or repairing your armor, roll the resources die and choose one of the following." You're not rolling the die in this case, because you're not choosing to remove stress or inflict stress. You are instead using the d8 resource or higher, "gain access to a skill or domain for the rest of the session," which is very good.

Jack: Yes. Real quick, do you have a name for the train they killed, Austin?

Austin: I don't have a name, no. I was leaving that to you.

Jack: That's what this move is called. It's called Iron of...I think I have a name for it, but I just need to open my...

Austin: Ah, okay, I see. Gotcha, gotcha.

Jack: ...list of Shape train names.

Austin: Gotcha. Okay, so you gain that, and that's what you're doing in this moment. And then it's charging at you, so yeah, this would be an endure, an endure technology.

Jack: God, I love to endure technology. Every fuckin' day of my life.

Austin: In fact, you're going to need to make two of these to do this. One is just from being this close to the train. It is...and I'm gonna say to Lyke, for Lyke and Katonya, they can get far enough away that they don't need to make...what I'll tell you is there are two endure rolls, depending on how close you get to this thing. There is getting near it, and there is getting *very* near it. The very near it one, which you're gonna roll, I'm just gonna make you roll that one for this, basically, right? I'm gonna say Lyke and Katonya are at the very edge of the risky endure roll. Because you're going all the way up to it, you are going to just make the dangerous one, but both of those are there, and this is a thing you're learning about this broad encounter which is dangerous, truly dangerous. And we'll talk about what that endure roll looks like. That is separate from the "I'm getting on board this thing" roll. [Jack chuckles] This is how deadly this thing is. This is what the book calls a Legendary Adversary. This is real shit, so.

Art: I might be abandoning my plan to get on this.

Austin: Uh huh. Because, Duvall, you can help get on, but you're going to also have to make the dangerous endure technology roll if you get on.

Art: Mm-hmm.

Austin: So that is unavoidable to get on this thing.

Art: And if you have fewer than three dice and you roll dangerous, do you automatically get zero? Or do you...

Austin: I believe you take...you roll two and take lowest, I believe. It's one of those things.

Art: Well, because it's drop two highest, but if you only have two, it's the same as risky?

Austin: I believe that that's correct. I'll double check it really quick, but I believe it's...yeah, if the dice pool is reduced to zero or fewer...okay. "If the dice pool is reduced to zero or fewer, roll one d10. Succeed with a cost on ten. Otherwise, fail."

Jack: [dismayed] Oh.

Austin: So the only way to succeed—

Art: Mmm, I'm not getting on this train.

Austin: Uh huh. It's dangerous.

Art: So I'm willing to help from here.

Austin: I mean, the thing is, you could fail that and just take the L, you know? You could go into it knowing you're probably going to fail it and take that stress.

Jack: Yeah, it's not...there's a chance, but it's not like the train will kill you instantly if you fail.

Austin: Correct. You'll get a lot of stress.

Art: Sure.

Austin: Or you'll get some amount of stress. I will roll the stress dice for the train, you know? Maybe it rolls low. Maybe you get one. It's possible. In any case, Pickman is trying this. Duvall, do you want to somehow help the part of getting on but not you getting on yourself? Is it getting on— I guess literally getting close to it hits first. Standing next to it as it charges at you, making that endure check is the more...it literally hits you first, Pickman, before you even have an opportunity to get on board it. Which, I want to be clear, there is stuff on board this train. This train has...there is something happening here for sure. So this is not an impossible thing, you know? Again, you could just eat this stress. This is a thing that could happen. Or you could succeed, because you have endure, you have technology, so that's two dice. You don't have anything else, right? You don't have mastery from anything, unfortunately. You don't have...

Jack: Yeah. Okay. Yeah, I'm prepared to take this risk.

Austin: Alright, so that means...you only have two, so you're prepared to drop your two highest, which means you're going to roll one die.

Jack: That's a...yeah.

Austin: Unless someone helps. Or, no, again, this is the one that no one can help. This is an individual everyone has to do this one. So give me one die.

Art: Alright, and I'm gonna go. I'm gonna go too. I'm gonna...

Austin: Right, right, okay well then that means you...again, we're gonna do the endure to be near it first, which means you have to individually roll that one.

Art: Alright, I'm ready to, yeah.

Keith: And that's all of us.

Austin: Are you also doing it now?

Keith: Oh, no, sorry. I thought there was...

Austin: You're saying hypothetically if you were also doing it.

Keith: No, no, no. You said I can't do it. I probably shouldn't do it anyway.

Austin: Listen, if you decide you want to stay still and join in this group, I guess I'll let...I was kind of giving that to you so you wouldn't immediately have to face this thing down, but...

Keith: No, no, no. I'm good.

Austin: If y'all decide as a group to do it, you can do it as a group.

Keith: I think I should stay back here with our cleaver friend.

Austin: With your cleaver friend, yeah, who seemingly is not getting on board at this point.

Keith: Right.

Austin: But...

Art: I've gotta get on that train, and I've gotta fill it with bugs. That's the plan.

Austin: That's the play. Okay.

Keith: I'm taking my cues from the giant with the cannon.

Austin: Yeah, uh huh, fair. Alright, so then both of you are gonna roll one d10, and you're looking for a ten. [chuckles] Hey, look, that roll did the right thing.

Keith: Zero effective dice.

Austin: Art rolled a four. Zero effective dice.

Jack: [dismayed] Ooh!

Austin: That's still a failure.

Jack: Okay, yep.

Austin: That's still a failure. That's still a five. Five, ten, five. You lose the ten and one of the fives.

Art: I'll tell you, I was really hoping to roll a six. That was what I really wanted.

Austin: Oh, yeah, that would have been great.

Jack: Oh yeah!

Austin: That would've been really good. Alright, so this is Art. You're gonna take four mind stress. Actually...yeah, let's say mind, as this thing...

Art: [alarmed] Oh, my stress is so high!

Austin: Yeah, what's your stress at?

Art: I mean, splendid.

Austin: Oh, that's...

Art: [laughs] My stress is now ten.

Austin: Oh, your stress is now ten. That's not good.

Jack: [laughs] Oh no.

Austin: And then Jack, you're gonna take...or, Pickman, you're gonna take four echo stress.

Jack: Shit. And I have no echo protection.

Austin: You have no echo protection. For Duvall, this is just incredibly scary to you at this point.

Art: Yeah. Well, I just get through this situation, and then the bugs will eat my stress and fear.

Austin: [chuckles] Oh yeah, no big deal. We'll see if it lasts that long at this point. Hey, minor fallout. Okay.

Art: Minor fallout, who even cares?

[Timestamp: 1:00:00]

Austin: [chuckles] Great. Jack, can you also roll your fallout check? What is your total?

Jack: Four.

Austin: Alright, no fallout for Pickman. But I will say something in a moment to you, Pickman. Let's say...huh. This is kind of mean. I guess all of these are a little bit mean in some way. I think that you...you know the thing you just said, Art? Where you're like, I'll just wait until the bugs? The bugs will deal with it.

Art: Eat my fear.

Austin: Yeah. You're gonna take this thing that...it's written to be about alcohol, but for you it's not alcohol, it's you can't wait until you get home and let the bugs eat your stress. And so you're doing zero processing at this point. There's a fallout here called Take the Edge Off, and I'll read the full version of it. It says: "You can't get your head right until you have a drink or something stronger." In this case, the something stronger is the bugs have to eat your stress. "Until you reach a landmark with access," in this case to enough space and time to let the bugs eat your stress, you're gonna roll two dice when you mark stress to mind and pick higher.

Jack: Oh, it's the opposite of dangerous.

Austin: Yes.

Art: Wait, but does...but they still are gonna eat the stress.

Austin: When you get there, yeah, uh huh. But for now...

Art: Well, but...mmm.

Austin: What's up?

Art: "At the beginning of each situation, clear all mind stress."

Austin: Yeah. You'll have to get to a new situation.

Art: Oh.

Austin: Yeah.

Art: What's a situation?

Keith: Combat encounter.

Austin: It's bigger than a sequence. So yeah, this isn't too bad for you. Alright. The thing to remember is as long as you're in a situation, you're going to continue gaining stress, though your mind clears here.

Art: Oh yeah, I'm basically done.

Austin: Yeah, you're at six stress still, even reducing that four. Pickman, you get no fallout, but that echo...you can feel...remember I talked about the gravity before? Or not the gravity, but the pressure? You can feel it as if someone's gripping or pushing into your flesh, or pushing out of your flesh? Your body begins to bruise all over as if from nothing underneath your armor. You can feel it as you move because it's sore, you know what I mean? But it has not coalesced into fallout at this point. So that's just being near it. Now, try to get on board it. This is dangerous.

Jack: It's bearing down.

Austin: Yes.

Jack: It's making a horrid shriek.

Austin: It's howling at you again. It's like a train whistle that turns into a howl.

Keith: Is there a door in its foot?

Austin: In its foot? No, it's a train now. It turned into a train.

Keith: Oh, it turned back into a train. I missed that.

Austin: It transformed back into a train to charge, yeah, yeah, yeah. And so it's charging them. There's a huge cow catcher up front that...I guess actually at this point, that whole front of it, the cow catcher has become part of its wolflike face. Maybe the front of the engine is in fact still a kind of wolf's head with a huge gaping mouth, you know? Are you trying to lasso up on the side? Like dodge to the side and jump up as it passes? Is that the sort of vibe you're going for?

Jack: Anything that will let me frame this as endure instead of evade.

Austin: Yeah.

Jack: I think it's like...it's almost like trying to catch it.

Austin: Yeah.

Jack: Just take the blow, take the...is the word inertia?

Austin: Yeah, sure. Yeah.

Jack: On the armor as it just comes barreling towards me.

Austin: Ooh.

Jack: And just go, alright. I've clung onto this thing.

Austin: Yeah, sure. And Duvall, how are you doing this?

Art: Oh, I thought I was out now. I thought I was...

Austin: No, that was just getting near it. That was just the, I'm incredibly close to it—

Jack: Just like, oh this sucks shit.

Austin: It has some sort of echo field. It has some sort of terrible field around it that hits you. Duvall, a note is: Pickman got hit with the echo. You did not. You got hit with mind stress here. That was not a mistake. There is a reason for that, for now at least.

Art: Well, but that seems above my...

Austin: Yeah, absolutely. Yeah, yeah, yeah. But for the listener.

Art: I was gonna try to help by trying to...

Austin: Yeah, we talked about helping. Helping works. So yeah, what do you...how are you helping?

Art: By being discordant, by trying to release a...

Jack: Ooh.

Austin: Ooh.

Art: By trying to have a high pitched noise released by some bug or another, some...

Austin: Yeah, that's good.

Art: Some screeching cricket chirp or cicada hum or...

Austin: Yeah, yeah.

Art: You know, fill in whatever thing about bugs creeps you out here.

Austin: Kind of throw it off its game to give you the opportunity to...like, maybe it hits the brakes for just a second, it's so high-pitched and annoying the sound, or it throws all of the clean lines of the Shape into even further disarray. Okay. I like it.

Art: Yeah.

Keith: Big train, big ears.

Austin: So you can help on this. Yeah, sure. So then yeah, Pickman, you're rolling endure plus technology plus the help plus one, so go ahead and add that in. Still dangerous, but that's gonna give you I think two dice worth of...

Jack: Yeah.

Austin: You know, four minus two, basically, so.

Jack: Uh huh.

Art: [sympathetic] Ooh!

Austin: Ugh, ten, nine, four, two. You get rid of the ten and the nine. You're both going to take a lot of stress again.

Keith: That's so rough.

Austin: It is. It is a lot. It is a lot again.

Keith: And that's because this is dangerous?

Jack: Yeah.

Austin: It's because this is dangerous. You lose two, yeah. Art, take six again.

Art: Why is mine first? [Jack laughs]

Austin: Well, okay. Let's roll the second one. You tell me. Who wants six, who wants three?

Art: Well, I have to roll twice and take the higher one.

Austin: That's for mind. This is blood.

Art: Oh, it's not mind?

Austin: Getting on board is blood, yeah.

Jack: I will take the...

Austin: I guess both of you have one blood protection, right?

Jack: Yep.

Austin: Because being near Pickman gives you one blood protection, Duvall, and Pickman just has one blood protection.

Art: Mm-hmm.

Austin: So that's five and two, I guess. You tell me who takes the brunt of it.

Jack: I'll take the two. [laughs] Oh, I mean, I'll take the five.

Austin: Uh huh.

Jack: There's a thing where I can take people's stress onto me, but in a situation like this...

Austin: Yeah.

Jack: I don't want to take seven stress.

Art: Wait, can we talk about it for a second?

Jack: Yeah.

Art: I'm gonna get fallout anyway.

Austin: So you're saying "fuck it, give me the heavy shit."

Art: Right.

Austin: 'Cause if you get two, you'll be at eight.

Art: And that's still...

Austin: The difference there is you're really opening yourself up to major fallout if you take the five, because you'll be at eleven total stress.

Keith: Right.

Art: And I guess I'm really overrating two thirds.

Keith: And I think you're underrating how bad the major blood fallouts are versus some of the other kinds.

Jack: Mmm, true.

Keith: I mean, they're all bad, but.

Austin: That's a rough one.

Art: Whatever. I'll have a new character next week. [Jack laughs]

Austin: That's true.

Art: [laughs] Oh, these major blood fallouts are bad!

Austin: They're bad.

Keith: They're so bad, yeah.

Jack: Truly. I'll take five.

Art: Okay!

Austin: You could also get major blood fallout here, just so you know! [chuckles]

Jack: But within the fiction as well, Pickman taking the brunt of this makes a lot of sense.

Austin: Yeah, it makes sense. Yeah.

Keith: Damn. I'm so glad right now that I don't have a duty. [Austin and Jack laugh]

Austin: Alright. So, give me your fallout test, Pickman.

Jack: That's a minor fallout.

Austin: Take minor fallout, okay. And then Duvall, do the same. Add the two, and take the...

Jack: And I'm gonna clear blood stress as a result.

Austin: You're gonna clear blood stress.

Art: Ay!

Austin: Ay! Duvall, no—

Art: That's the first time I've succeeded on a fallout check!

Keith: Great roll.

Austin: Look at that. No fallout.

Jack: [laughs] Congratulations.

Austin: Is it the first time? Is it really the first time? You've never...yeah, god.

Art: I don't know. I feel like I've failed a lot in a row. I'm sure it's not true, but it feels a certain way.

Keith: Oh, no, you have gotten a lot of fallout.

Austin: This is a hundred percent true, yeah.

Keith: Take it from someone who was rolling fallout with you a lot and never getting any.

Austin: [laughs] That's simply true, isn't it?

Keith: Yeah.

Art: I'm saying it might be my second time.

Austin: Right, yes, yes. God. I think that you're gonna take...mmm. Hmm. I'm gonna give you an option. Either you are Battered: "Your dominant hand is injured. You can bandage it up and stop the bleeding, but it's of limited use for the time being. Any offensive actions you make in combat become risky. Any tasks that require fine dexterity are out of the question." You tried to get onto a moving train, and it fucked up your hands bad and your muscle. You're just in so much pain, that the idea of carefully going through papers or something is out of the question, right? Or you're Furious: "You're hurt, short-tempered, and perceive slights everywhere. You cannot help another character by adding dice to their roll. Ongoing." Which is it? Is it that the pain itself is too much for you? Or is it that the pain has caused you to externalize anger in such a way that limits your ability to help other people? The irony being...or not irony, but the thing that's happening is you're taking that pain no matter what—

Jack: [chuckles] Yes.

Austin: But by externalizing it as anger, you're able to focus, you know?

Keith: If I can—

Austin: Keith, what were you going to say?

Keith: If I could add something to this...

Austin: Mm-hmm.

Keith: I can heal someone once. I think that I could do the hand thing, but I don't think I could make you not angry.

Austin: True. I think that's true.

Jack: Yeah, I think I'm gonna take the physical pain as well, because something I've been thinking about a lot with Pickman is it sucks if you've got a tank who's...

Austin: Yeah. Yeah.

Jack: Like a tank role who says "but not right now."

[Timestamp: 1:10:08]

Austin: Yeah, totally.

Jack: You know, I'm a tank, but not in this instance.

Austin: Yep.

Keith: Right.

Jack: Like, the role of a tank is to go, "Whoof. Okay."

Austin: Yeah.

Keith: The train beat the tank, and now it can't tank.

Austin: Yeah.

Jack: [chuckles] Yeah, and now it can't tank. So I'll take this minor fallout. This is called Battered?

Austin: Battered, yeah, Battered.

Jack: You cannot do fine tasks.

Austin: Mm-hmm.

Jack: Fine motor tasks.

Austin: And also you attack...

Jack: All offensive actions.

Austin: All offensive actions are risky. So even if you were at distance, even if you were sniping at this thing, it would be risky. Your hand...

Jack: Pickman doesn't know what ranged weapons are.

Austin: Absolutely. Even if you were dropping a big rock from the top of this tower, that would be risky still, right?

Jack: [laughs] Yes.

Austin: Alright. You manage, though, to pull yourselves inside. There are, I'm gonna say, three cars on this train, and you immediately find yourself disoriented, not to the degree that you take any sort of fallout from it, but it is a disorienting place to be. You're able to make sense of it because you're calm and keeping focused. Do you remember, Pickman, when you had Hex Eye, the fallout that made you see into different worlds?

Jack: Mmm.

Austin: It's sort of like that, or it's sort of like when Chine saw the Course and things kept changing rapidly. As you move through these cars and as you blink and turn and look away and things leave your vision, as you return they're changed. And sometimes it's just furniture's in a different place or decorations in a different place or the wall's a different color, but sometimes it seems like it's moving through different times of...or different places, maybe. Different times of day. Here's a thing. As you're in there, sunlight comes through one window and moonlight comes through another one. Or if you turn, it changes from being a midday afternoon inside to being deep in the night to being in the middle of a dust storm. It's as if every possible outside is visible from inside in wild, unhinged time. But this is also true for what's inside, though I think you're able to quickly identify a set of different types of places and decorations and modes of placeness that are here. Sometimes on the inside, it's furniture and accoutrement of what I guess you would note as being ojantani in nature. Duvall probably is the person who has the most experience with seeing different types of furniture and decoration over the years, because he comes from means. So the ojantani stuff is shiny, curved light wood stuff, pastel floral art, some glossy religious iconography. The ojantani have...I guess you would think of them as avatars of the deities. They have a vast pantheon of deities, and the avatars of those deities walk in society and are even part of the hierarchy of existence, so there is an avatar of the god of medicine and that avatar works at a hospital somewhere, you know? So there's all those icons of those sorts of gods. But then you blink and change, and then it's the sort of dust and metal and utilitarianism of...I guess you recognize this, Pickman, of the Shape Knight training center? It has that sort of hard concrete. And I guess I'm projecting a little bit here or imagining that there's a sort of...brutalism by way of utilitarianism, right? Brutalism not as an ideology,

brutalism as we had to get this building up quick so there's lots of hard edges and exposed surfaces.

Keith: Right. We had a lot of concrete.

Austin: Yeah, we had a lot of concrete, exactly. Concrete stops trains, or it gets in their way, it's heavy. And then sometimes there is a...and, again, I think this is probably more Duvall than Pickman, but there's definitely a Sapodilla style, the beachside luxury, the marble and sandstone tropical vibe happening here sometimes. And all of this is blending together. And then finally there's also a section that is kind of deep brown leather, brown wood, dark green and gold wallpaper, and you don't place that anywhere. There's cigar smoke in the air sometimes. This is a strange blend of places as you move through these train cars. But you're on board now. No one else is on board. And there aren't any gandies in here, and there aren't any passengers. And it doesn't seem to be attacking you beyond just the pressure of being here, which again, Pickman, you feel that pressure directly. Whereas Duvall, maybe the bugs are helping you here, you're not sure, but you're not feeling it like that. What are you doing on board?

Art: I would like to release the swarm.

Austin: What's that mean?

Art: I would like to send my little—

Austin: Uh huh.

Art: Biological, biomechanical bugs out—

Austin: Uh huh. And just have them go to work?

Art: And I would like them to go to work, to wreck some stuff.

Austin: Alright.

Art: Pull some wires out.

Austin: Yeah, uh huh.

Art: Do the little gremlin thing.

Austin: [laughs] Alright. What is that...that is a kill d4 weapon, right?

Art: Yeah.

Austin: So that means you're gonna roll kill plus technology, since you're inside of the train.

Art: Alright.

Austin: Plus one, so that's three. This is...I guess you're inside of it. Once you're inside of it, it's not trying to hurt you at this point, so I'm gonna let you roll those dice. Whether that changes, it could change, you know?

Art: Why is is plus one?

Austin: You start with...it's not plus one. I'm just saying you have one die.

Art: Okay.

Austin: So that's a total of one plus one plus...wait. It's technology...

Art: Just two.

Austin: You don't have kill. You don't have kill.

Art: I don't have kill.

Austin: Right. So yeah, give me two dice. Are you helping— oh, too late, I guess. Wait, wait, wait, you still had dangerous.

Art: Oh, I still had dangerous.

Austin: Unclick dangerous and then reroll it.

Art: It's just standard?

Austin: It's just standard. I'm debating whether it should still be risky, because you're inside of a sort of train werewolf. Jack, what do you think? You think inside of here at this point...I think it'll tick up to more dangerous depending on how rolls go. That's what I'm gonna say. I'm gonna say it starts at standard. You got on board. You suffered through those two dangerous rolls to get on board. I'm gonna say at this point, with no rolls yet, it's standard.

Art: Alright.

Jack: Yeah, I think also it's...from the *Red Zephyr's* perspective—

Austin: Yes.

Jack: It's sort of like...Shape trains absolutely know when people are on board them.

Austin: Mm-hmm.

Jack: At the same time, a bunch of people on a tower are trying to throw oil and rocks. There's a woman with a cannon. There's a mage trying to set it on fire.

Austin: Yes, yes. There's a lot going on outside. Yeah, alright. You got a nine, so no stress. Go ahead and give me your attack roll here, which again is d4 spread ranged. You don't have anything else that boosts that, right?

Art: No. I have sixes turn into tens. That's my plan on boosting. [chuckles]

Austin: Yeah. I'm not giving you a bonus for this, but I will let you know the protection doesn't work for it inside here.

Jack: Hey, what if Duvall kills a train?

Austin: Oh my god.

Jack: Well, no, hold on. [laughs]

Austin: That's not happening in any way. You rolled a one.

Keith: That's low.

Austin: Your fascination with luck is very fascinated right now. Ha. These bugs go out, they're gnawing on things, trying to break down parts of the train presumably. And the second that begins to happen, you hear *click-whoosh*, *click-whoosh*, *click-whoosh* as the windows begin to open, and they begin to be vacuumed out into the world outside as it tries to clear them away, and they're disappearing. You know, you have a sense for where your bugs are. That's one of the moves you have. And they're falling into whatever the different times and places are outside the various windows. One falls away into the middle of the night somewhere. Another falls away into a jungle that's being passed by, et cetera. So. You do one damage to this incredibly powerful train. That wasn't working.

Keith: Not to be a...not to be the thing that I'm doing, but it has protection, right?

Austin: Not inside, I said.

Keith: Oh, okay.

Austin: It does not have that heavy metal wall protection, yeah.

Keith: Gotcha, gotcha.

Austin: Uh huh. Which is good.

Keith: Huh. That's interesting.

Austin: Yeah. Pickman?

Jack: I'm gonna make for the engine.

Austin: Okay.

Jack: The front.

Austin: Yeah. As you're doing that, I'm gonna make you roll for that when we...actually, I'll let you get there for free, but as you move through it, you know how the walls and the interior I said was changing before, now it begins to solidify in a single style, and that single style is bones.

Jack: Oh shit.

Austin: It quickly begins to feel like you're moving through a living thing as you get closer and closer to the engine room. We're gonna cut back outside. Lyke, how you doing as your friends got on board?

[Timestamp: 1:20:12]

Keith: Um...ambivalent.

Austin: Let me give you a little more reason to be ambivalent.

Keith: Okay.

Austin: The *Red Zephyr* at this point catches onto one of the westerly tracks, the twisting turning ones, and begins to just head away. [Jack laughs]

Keith: Head away from me?

Austin: With your friends on board.

Keith: Wow.

Austin: From you, from the tower, from Bell Metal Station. From above, you see someone waving down at you.

Keith: Right.

Austin: And they're like:

Austin (as Shape Knight): [shouting triumphantly] Whooo! [Jack laughs] You scared it away!

Keith (as Lyke): [shouting back] My friends are on there!

Austin (as Shape Knight): Huh? [Art and Jack laugh]

Keith (as Lyke): My friends! My friends are on that!

Austin (as Shape Knight): Come on up! Got a beer on me!

Keith (as Lyke): No, I said my friends are on there!

Austin (as Shape Knight): [pause] Your...one more time?

Keith (as Lyke): [slowly] My friends are on the train still!

Austin (as Shape Knight): No, I don't blame you for anything! You come on up and I'll get you settled.

Keith (as Lyke): No, I'm trying to— I'm ambivalent!

Austin (as Shape Knight): What did you call me? [Jack and Art laugh]

Keith (as Lyke): No, never mind.

Art: I don't think anyone's ever yelled "I'm ambivalent," before. [Austin and Keith laugh]

Keith (as Lyke): I'm ambivalent in the traditional sense! Not in the colloquial sense!

Austin: Katonya—

Jack: I'm feeling too conflicting!

Austin: Katonya says:

Austin (as Katonya): Give me a second.

Austin: And kneels down and begins to aim the cannon up as if a mortar and then begins to fire at this train as it heads west. Inside the train, it begins to shake as cannon fire begins to shake the train as it lands from quite a distance here. It's not going full speed, because it has to go

through this twisty pattern at this point, but you know, I think even you can tell it's heading in a direction. Alright. What were you going to do in the engine? I guess I should describe what it looks like here. What do you think an engine should look like?

Keith: Loaded question.

Jack: Shape trains have controls, but they...you know, they're their own masters in that regard, so you could pull levers and turn wheels but they probably wouldn't do anything.

Austin: Yeah.

Jack: There's a step, there's a low staircase down to a furnace underneath.

Austin: Mmm.

Jack: There's a thing to blow the whistle. There are windows looking outside, maybe.

Keith: You're saying the engine has vestigial controls.

Jack: Well, I don't know. I don't know if they work. I think Shape Knights have probably...it's like pushing the B button to catch the Pokemon. I think there are Shape Knights who are like, "turn the wheel and it *will* affect the train," and there are other people who are like, "doesn't do shit."

Austin: Yeah.

Jack: But given that...didn't you say that *Red Zephyr*, at least when it's not in the moonlight, it's whole boiler is fucked?

Austin: The front of it is messed up, and it's like the tentacle mode. The boiler is exploded, but it's not just hard metal pipes. It's like they feel around like tendrils.

Jack: Oh yeah. Are they out of moonlight now?

Austin: The moon is out now, so no.

Jack: Oh, okay. Sure.

Austin: It is in that wolf head mode still at this point. But inside that engine room, which again is like the inside of a body more than the interior of a train, there is...you reach what you might call the organ compartment. [Keith laughs]

Jack: Hmm.

Austin: And there's just a bunch of stuff going on in there, bud.

Jack: Of fleshy and of...

Austin: Yeah, and veiny and...you don't even know what some of it is. ??? like that's a heart, that's a...those might be lungs. There's two different— more than two. There's probably like five different things across this entire front engine room that inflate and deflate the way lungs do or the way...what do you call that? In a...like bellows, you know?

Jack: Oh, yeah.

Austin: And in fact, some of them just look like bellows, but you're like, mmm, is that skin? I can't tell.

Jack: This is right on the border between the Structure and the Course, right?

Austin: Oh, it sure is. Yeah.

Jack: Where it's like, on the one hand, all this viscera is very something Pickman would associate with the Course.

Austin: Yeah.

Jack: But at the same time, one thing that she knows about the Structure is it can mimic this stuff.

Austin: Mm-hmm.

Jack: Or it can walk around on the edge of this.

Austin: Yeah. And it's so easy to close your mind...the other thing is, here, things are not changing. Throughout the rest of this train car, you walked through one that was a dining car and then you closed your eyes for a second and opened them and you were in a freight car, you know? So here it's stable, which makes it feel more like the Structure or the Shape.

Jack: What's the sound like in here? Can I still hear the rails underneath? Or...

Austin: Yeah, you still hear the rails underneath. You hear a sort of wet, the wet sound of life, you know? Pulsing, streaming. Again, Course-like in that way.

Keith: Sloshing.

Austin: Sloshing.

Jack: To my immediate sight, is there anything here that Lye Lychen-style it would make sense for me to take? Or would that be a more intense...

Austin: This is a discern roll.

Jack: Yeah, yeah.

Austin: And this is risky.

Jack: Mmm.

Austin: Duvall, are you there to help?

Art: Yes.

Austin: Okay.

Jack: Good, 'cause I do not have discern. [Keith laughs]

Austin: Okay, but you do have technology.

Jack: Yes.

Austin: So discern, technology. You don't have discern, so technology plus one, risky. Technology, yeah, yeah. There you go.

Jack: So it's blank, technology, plus one, risky.

Austin: Yes. Let's see.

Jack: Ooh boy.

Austin: Two.

Art: Wait, wait. It shouldn't be risky.

Jack: No, it is risky.

Austin: Why shouldn't it be risky?

Art: Oh, you did say risky.

Austin: Yeah, it's risky. It's risky now.

Art: Mine wasn't.

Austin: You tried to attack it with bugs. Now it's risky in there.

Art: But there's a ten there, Austin, if it's not risky. [Keith laughs]

Austin: I said it was risky. You attacked it with bugs.

Art: It's a ten.

Austin: Maybe if you'd come right here instead of attacking it with bugs, it would not have been risky.

Keith: I like how the way it's represented in Roll20, it looks like the twos are surrounding and attacking the ten.

Austin: [laughs] Uh huh.

Jack: [laughs] Yes.

Austin: Devouring it.

Art: And they won.

Austin: Uh huh. That's a shame. You're gonna take d8 stress.

Jack: Fucking hell.

Austin: And that is echo stress. Six echo stress.

Art: Ooh boy. Ohh.

Austin: Bringing you to ten. I'm gonna need you to roll fallout test, my friend. You are at ten stress, huh?

Jack: So what I did was I rolled a twelve versus ten.

Austin: Whooo, look at you!

Keith: Wooow.

Austin: Look at you!

Jack: That's no fallout. Pickman just looks at it and goes, mm-hmm.

Austin: Oh, I'm sorry. I forgot you got help on this.

Jack: [laughs] Oh no!

Austin: Take three, and now that you're in here and that you've attacked—

Jack: Wait, who gets three?

Keith: Art.

Austin: Duvall takes three echo here.

Jack: Yeah.

Art: Well, now I need to roll a twelve.

Austin: You do.

Art: Ugh, can I just go home? What's...

Austin: I mean, you can jump—

Art: Do I have a move for that? Can I just go home?

Austin: Yeah, let the bees control you. Get me out of here. [chuckles] This isn't a delve technically, but, eh.

Art: Oh!

Austin: Only minor! Only minor. Only minor fallout.

Jack: That roll's incredible, though.

Austin: Yeah, one. You rolled a one. If you had rolled higher than a six, you would have gotten major fallout.

Art: Yeah, I know that high is bad, except for of course the twelve.

Austin: Exactly. Here...hmm. This is fun. Tell me about what your home life is like before you set out, before you started doing this, before you were...

Keith: A bug man.

Austin: A deep apiarist. Yeah.

Art: How far before?

Austin: All the way before through right before. Show me some images of...give me some Aldomina images to start.

Art: I mean, I think you have a young Duvall playing with his siblings, and then you have a teenage Duvall watching his older siblings inherit more and more things.

Austin: Mmm.

Art: And looking around like, oh there's nothing here.

Austin: Yeah.

Art: And then you have early twenties Duvall setting off on a...I was gonna say—

Austin: Did you leave anybody behind that you felt like you miss or that you were close to before you left?

Art: Probably five or ten people like that, I mean.

Austin: Give me a—

Art: There's probably at least few family members that he was close to.

Austin: Yeah.

Art: And friends from school and around the way. Maybe not around the way, but. [Austin laughs] It's a city of devils. But, you know.

Austin: What was school like for you? Can you give me a detail about the school? Is there a school uniform you wore? Was there a...

Art: I'm imagining a very...it's not like a prep school—

Austin: No, but you went to like...

Art: But that's the touchstone I have.

Austin: Right, you went to like...

Art: Like a boarding school.

Austin: Yeah.

Art: Like, you know, ties and vests and shit. Is vests right? I don't know. [chuckles]

[Timestamp: 1:30:00]

Austin: Hanging from what you think is maybe a strange ribcage on the ceiling is an old school tie. What colors was your school?

Art: Um...red and gray?

Austin: There's a red and gray striped tie just by itself, hanging, as if it was always there, as if someone left it there.

Art: That's the colors of the character sheet I was looking at.

Austin: Yeah, that's fair. [Art laughs] You have the echo minor fallout Deja Vu: "You notice minor elements of your past life appearing in the Heart, as though it is reading your mind and adapting itself to your expectations. The GM tells you what happens." The old self—

Art: Pfft. That's what you're doing anyway.

Austin: What do you mean?

Art: That's just the game.

Austin: Yeah, well.

Art: You tell me what happens.

Austin: [laughs] That is it for now, is this, yes. [Art laughs] That could upgrade in the future is what I'll say. Be careful. You be careful.

Art: Sure. Bad things are happening, I don't know.

Austin: Yeah. And that tie is there. That's not a thing you're imagining. So Pickman, a tie is...Duvall looks up and sees this necktie, [chuckles] and you do the same, and there it is. But I'll note too Pickman, because you still got all that echo stress, you again feel that pressure on your skin. And at a certain point you realize it's not just someone gripping you. It's someone— or not *someone*. It doesn't just feel like a hand gripping you. It feels like someone is writing, pushing into your skin with their finger or with a— I almost said a hammer. Like something metal is pushing down into your skin and rubbing back and forth and writing something, and you can't tell what. I mean, you could make a discern roll again, to see what it says.

Jack: How risky would that discern roll be?

Austin: It would be risky again.

Jack: I don't have discern.

Austin: 'Cause you're letting this person hurt you, you know?

Jack: Yeah. No.

Austin: But more importantly, because you failed this main discern roll, you do not see anything here. What you see and feel is...I mean, you tell me what you see and feel, but what you see is a mess of places or a mess of things, a mess of organs and...you no longer can make sense of the...if when you first walked in you were like, "Aha! That is the heart of this mechanical beast, and I will slay it or take it for my own," you now are no longer convinced that any one thing could be central to the being that this is.

Jack: Huh. Uh huh.

Austin: You know? Starfish-like.

Jack: That's the nature of the beast.

Austin: Yeah, uh huh, yes. Yes.

Jack: Okay.

Austin: Rough one.

Jack: It's a rough one.

Austin: But I'm playing it honest. I'm playing it honest. Y'all jumped right to it.

Jack: Yeah, no, I mean, we boarded a Shape train.

Austin: You sure did. And you know without any doubt that it is leading you now away. And one way you know that is the cannon fire is growing distant. You are leaving it behind.

Jack: I was thinking about this, given Pickman's past, having been trapped on a train.

Austin: Yeah.

Jack: And I think that, you know, twenty or thirty years ago, this would have been Pickman's idea of hell.

Austin: Yeah.

Jack: Just of like, this is...I would rather die than have this happen to me again.

Austin: Mm-hmm.

Jack: But I think that...you know, rather than this being a process that we see in the character on screen in this story, that process of recovery or of coming to terms with this horror was a massive part of Pickman's training and of Pickman's experience. It was a real "I have to get back on the horse that threw me," type situation.

Austin: Mm-hmm, mm-hmm.

Jack: So I think there is a bit of their brain that is screaming "not this again," but they've felt this before.

Austin: Uh huh.

Jack: They've boarded trains that have run away before.

Austin: Right. And so does she just re-center at this point?

Jack: Yeah. Just a deep breath.

Austin: Yeah.

Jack: And yeah, I think she rests the barrel of the espignol against, you know...who's to say?

Austin: Who's to say?

Jack: Before the previous roll, she'd have pointed it at the heart, but now she doesn't know.

Austin: Yeah.

Jack: Just rests it against some viscera point blank.

Austin: Yeah.

Jack: And says...god, what does she say? I think she just says:

Jack (as Pickman): *Red Zephyr*, I compel you.

Jack: And I'm gonna try and roll to...I guess intimidate this train? This is like an opening salvo, right?

Austin: Mmm, mm-hmm. Mm-hmm.

Jack: The Shape Knights know they can't kill trains, so...

Austin: So you are not pulling the trigger here, you are threatening it via...

Jack: Yes, but like we've talked about before, where these threats don't actually make sense if you're not prepared to follow up.

Austin: Yeah.

Jack: Pickman is absolutely prepared. This isn't a bluff.

Austin: But is this compel or is this kill? I guess it doesn't matter. You have both.

Jack: Yeah. It's compel because if I were rolling kill, I'd pull the trigger.

Austin: Yeah, yeah, exactly. Alright, so then, compel technology. Still risky. Are you helping, Duvall?

Art: No.

Austin: Yeah, fair. And I don't think you get a bonus to this from anything.

Art: [laughs] I'm also not doing anything.

Austin: No, I mean—

Jack: Just standing there looking at a tie in your hand.

Austin: Yeah, yeah. I'm gonna delete this bone sword, by the way, because we've used it.

Jack: Oh yeah, totally.

Austin: Alright.

Jack: Sorry to the skeletons.

Austin: Yeah, I was just trying to see if you had anything else. Eh, you know, that's what it was for. Alright. God damn. Oh. Yeah, I guess you're not pulling the trigger, so this would have been

risky anyway. It's fine. Compel, technology, so that's three, but it's gonna be risky, so you're gonna end up with...

Jack: Two.

Austin: Yeah, so go ahead and give me a roll.

Jack: Oh my god!

Austin: Risky is no joke. Risky is no joke.

Jack: Yeah, no, risky is...

Austin: Two, three, eight. [softly] Oh my god. Also, I just want to emphasize, this is probably the highest damaging thing you've been up against ever.

Jack: Yeah.

Austin: So I'm gonna roll another d8 for damage to you. Hey, it's only one. Take one in echo.

Jack: You keep putting it into echo, huh?

Austin: That is—

Jack: I can't go any higher. My echo is...

Austin: Oh, you can go higher than ten.

Jack: I can put higher in, but the up button no longer works. [laughs]

Austin: Oh, incredible. [laughs] Well, give me a fallout test. Eleven.

Jack: That's minor fallout.

Austin: There's a minor fallout.

Jack: That's about what I expected. Gonna clear that echo.

Austin: [sighs] Well, here's...yeah, well. Let me read how something works really quick though. I think what's gonna happen is... [chuckles] This is about to be very bad and gross. I'm gonna give you a heads up. Bug gross time. Hey, do you remember...so you say, again, you say, "I compel you," right?

Jack: Yeah, by name I think.

Austin: *Red Zephyr*.

Jack: I think the vibe is an exorcism.

Austin: Yeah, yeah, yeah, totally. Well, guess what? It really truly is, because after you say that, you begin to wretch.

Jack: Ooh!

Austin: And things begin to pool up out of your stomach and out of your goat mouth and begin to fly around the room. They are the bugs that previously flew out the windows that Duvall released. [Jack laughs] They have, as if done a trick of street magic, they've reappeared inside of you and are flying out of your mouth here.

Jack: Well, no, not yet! Not yet! They're flying out of my mouth against the front of my helmet.

Austin: Oh.

Art: Oh!

Jack: So Pickman fumbles against the back of her helmet.

Austin: Yeah.

Jack: Pulls the helmet off really quickly, throws it to the ground.

Austin: Uh huh.

Jack: Coughs bugs.

Austin: Hey, Duvall? Take d4 mind stress. "Anyone who sees this and isn't ready for it, marks d4 stress to mind."

Jack: I mean, they're his bugs.

Art: Who would be more ready for it?

Jack: Yeah, he's— [laughs]

Austin: You could not be, because you don't feel them. They're not yours anymore, and that is terrifying. They're the *Red Zephyr's* bugs now.

Art: Oh my god.

Austin: Well, I was gonna say roll d4 again, because you're supposed to roll twice and pick highest, but...

Art: I will if you want, but it seems foolish.

Austin: Roll it for fun.

Jack: Have I even taken fallout or am I just vomiting bugs over here?

Austin: That is the fallout. The fallout is Exodus: [Art laughs] "You wretch up a handful of writhing creatures." Et cetera, et cetera, et cetera. "And anyone who sees this and isn't ready for it, marks d4 stress to mind."

Jack: Okay.

Austin: It's an immediate fallout.

Keith: It's funny that this—

Austin: You rolled four twice! Unbelievable!

Keith: It's funny that this is the one you picked after this is also the first time that Duvall is not helping.

Austin: Yes, uh huh.

Keith: And is trying to avoid consequences. [laughs]

Austin: Here we go. Take four. There it is.

Art: Oh! Oh...

Austin: There's major fallout. There's major fallout there.

Jack: [laughs] I'm sorry.

Art: Well, I'm clearing all my stress first. That's what I'm doing. I'm getting some numbers down.

Austin: Yeah, get rid of that. Get rid of all that. God, these are all brutal. My instinct is actually to immediately upgrade deja vu, even though that's echo and not mind.

Art: Mmm.

Austin: Which is fascinating. So I think actually...I know you took this in mind, but I think I'm going to give you a major echo. I'm gonna upgrade your minor deja vu. We talked about your school. I don't know if with have a name for that school. I don't even know what you studied necessarily. But Duvall, do you know someone? Is there someone...having asked you a few minutes ago now and maybe you've thought on this, is there someone important from your time at school to you who comes to mind?

Art: Um...

Austin: Like when you see that tie, who was it that jumped to mind, you know what I mean? That sort of thing.

Art: Yeah. I'm struggling to come up with a poshy enough name. Like, what is the first name of a posh devil, you know?

Austin: Yeah, yeah, yeah.

Jack: I got one for you.

Art: Yeah, go for it.

[Timestamp: 1:40:00]

Jack: Jolyon, spelled J-O-L-Y-O-N.

Art: Great.

Austin: Sure. Jole? Jol?

Jack: Jolly?

Austin: Jolly? Jolly.

Art: Jolyon.

Austin: Yeah, what's their deal?

Art: You know, the friends you meet in boarding school. [trailing off] I've never been to boarding school.

Austin: I don't think any of us.

Art: My mom did.

Austin: Oh.

Art: She hated it.

Austin: Yeah.

Art: So it's a bad frame of reference.

Keith: Seems like they all do.

Austin: Yeah.

Art: My mom was the only Jewish student at an Episcopalean boarding school.

Jack: Oh wow.

Austin: Oh my god.

Keith: That's rough.

Austin: Woof.

Art: [laughs, sarcastic] Yeah, it was great.

Jack: Powerful woman.

Austin: Yeah, yes, absolutely.

Art: You know, we probably played whatever the devil sport is. Field hockey, I think. [others laugh]

Jack: Historic field hockey.

Austin: [laughs] Historic field hockey!

Art: [laughs] Historic field hockey.

Austin: And they do call it that, yeah.

Art: They do, yeah...but most people's grandparents don't remember it. It's...

Austin: Uh huh. Weird.

Art: It's a really aggressive tact. You know, a study friend, but I think the reason they resonate with Duvall is when Duvall found himself kind of falling out—

Austin: Yeah.

Art: —of this idea of society, they were sort of doing it too.

Austin: Oh, interesting.

Art: So it became a...let's, you know...

Austin: Let's skip class and go get high together.

Art: Yeah, or let's...I was gonna say key the headmaster's car. That's not a thing.

Austin: That's not a thing.

Art: Or horse startling.

Austin: Horse startling, yeah.

Art: You know, go and startle the horse.

Austin: But like that style of—

Art: Childish pranks.

Austin: Yeah.

Art: Childish horse pranks.

Austin: So this is like high school era then, basically?

Art: Yeah, I imagine this is...

Austin: Teens?

Art: Teens.

Austin: Jolyon? Jolyon? Jolyon appears and is just...you know, it's hard for me to not pull on a certain trope of...

Keith: Covered in chains?

Austin: [laughs] Yeah, uh huh. You know, the sort of...you already set this up as kind of a posh schoolboy, but now we've aged up a little bit, which means in my mind this is a Gatsby side character, you know?

Jack: Oh.

Art: Mmm.

Austin: This is a...Ryan Phillippe would have played this character in the early '90s. Now I don't know who it would be, because I'm bad at movies. Or that style, you know what I mean? That sort of fashion is being applied here. They're not gonna call you "old sport," but this is the vibe.

Jack: Oh, why not?

Austin: But they might call you "old devil." [laughs]

Art: Sure. And I guess it's worth noting, they would say Leo.

Austin: [intrigued] Oh, they would call you Leo.

Art: They wouldn't say Duvall.

Jack: Huh.

Austin: Leo is great. I love this. They say...so, from the door, and as you turn to look back as the door opens into this engine room, you look back at the engine room and all of the viscera, all of the gore has vanished and we're back into an engine room when you look back this way. And they say, now similarly aged to you, they say:

Austin (as Jolyon): Leo, you old devil. What are you doing here? Come on, let me fix you a drink.

Art (as Duvall): [bewildered] Okay.

Austin: Hey, Duvall? I need you to answer me one more question.

Art: Yeah.

Austin: How was it that Jolyon died?

Art: Oh... [thoughtful sound] I would say came into a debt to some unsavory sorts, you know?

Austin: Yeah, yeah.

Jack: Ooh.

Austin: Yeah.

Art: You know, they don't have contracts.

Austin: [chuckles] Right, yeah. Mm-hmm.

Art: So, you know.

Austin: Right. Things just break bad that way.

Art: Yeah.

Austin: So, you are taking the *major* echo stress, The Life Not Lived, upgrades Deja Vu: "You meet someone from your past who should, by all rights, be dead. Immediate." And they lead you back into the train car, which in their presence seems to stay the same. I'm guessing, Pickman, you go with.

Jack: Yeah, if only out of fear for Duvall.

Austin: Oh, sure, yeah, uh huh.

Jack: I don't think I'm affected by the magical charm of this, right?

Austin: It's not magical.

Jack: I don't think I'm affected by the charm. What I mean to say is: is it realistic to say that Pickman's first reaction is "I'm not buying any of this fucking shit. I'm gonna just go keep an eye on my guy."

Austin: Yeah, I think that's fine. But like, the—

Art: Come on, what's gonna happen? The train's gonna have a horse? [Austin and Jack laugh]

Austin: To be clear, it is magical in the sense that the heartland is working here.

Jack: Oh yeah.

Austin: And something weird with the Shape or the Structure is happening, you suspect, or *Red Zephyr* directly, or with the bees, the bugs. Something weird is happening, but it is not an illusion. This is not a delusion of Duvall. You know, like the tie.

Keith: They are really here. Yeah.

Austin: They are really here.

Jack: Yeah.

Austin: Whether they are them, whether whatever, that's all up for grabs. Especially—

Jack: In the same way that the tie was here.

Austin: Right. In the same way that the tie was here, here is a person from Duvall's past who should not be here. You don't know that person, but Duvall's reactions probably say a lot.

[Music plays: [Sangfielle](#) by Jack de Quidt]