

PALISADE 24: An Impossible Ideal Pt. 3

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Opening Narration

Austin: PALISADE is a show about empire, revolution, settler colonialism, politics, religion, war, and the many consequences thereof. For a full list of content warnings, please check the episode description.

Recap

Austin: One of them is, uh—it's hard to know how to read it. Partly it looks like arms, partly it looks like walls, partly it looks like, um... partly it looks like a womb. It's enveloping a group of—a set of images of people, bringing them in close.

[Music Intro - "[The Stellar Combustor](#)" by Jack de Quidt begins]

Austin: This is the Divine Loyalty, which was a working member of the Divine Principality when you were around, originally. There's a sort of humanoid face to it, and the humanoid face is on its side with its eyes closed, resting. And this ends up being like a—this is a recurring thing, now that you've seen it. Like, oh, these are all like... resting or dead Divines, is like, how they're being drawn. Divines can't die,

right? We know this about the Divine Principality. But that's how they're being depicted here, is either at rest or dead.

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Austin (as **Midnite**): Cori, take a breath. Don't be so eager you get us into trouble.

Sylvi (as **Cori**): I'm breathing just fine.

Austin (as **Midnite**): You see how you got quieter? It worked.

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Ali (as **Brnine**): Oh, we got this, guys. Eye on the prize.

Austin (as **Routine**): I'm gonna die from heat.

Ali (as **Brnine**): No, no, no, no. No, no, no, no. No, no, no, no. We're—we got this. We're—home stretch.

Austin: The ship is peeling.

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Janine: I don't think we have an intention of killing a bunch of scientists.

[**Dre** laughs]

Austin: Sure.

Janine: Right? Everyone?

Sylvi: [insincere] Totally.

[**Keith** laughs]

Janine: Right?

Sylvi: Yeah, uh-huh.

Austin: Now, wait a second.

Keith: Hold on.

Austin: Now, wait a second, Cori.

Sylvi: Mhm.

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Austin: Deep at the bottom of this, there is a long—like, a long humanoid Divine body with its hands on its chest holding a sword. You know, like, picture a classic medieval sarcophagus, you know? With like, a king holding a sword on its chest, you know, on his chest, you know what I’m talking about? Picture that, but a Divine at the bottom of this lake. It’s sort of like a—again, like a lake garden or a water garden, basically, with, you know, kind of some trees and stuff around the edges, but then also just a lot of like, water lilies and lotuses, and there are frogs jumping around in here, you know, and there are fish in this water. And at the bottom of it is the corpse, question mark? There aren’t supposed to be corpses? Of Divines, of a Divine.

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Austin: The people who work here at this furthest, most inner ring, are directly, totally wired up with cybernetics to cool them constantly. You know, there’s a degree to which to live here is to—is to die here. You might not die from the explosion of the sun. You probably won’t. Most people who work here are—die alone in their sleep at 48 or whatever. A very stressful job, but they’re here forever.

[Music Intro - “[The Stellar Combustor](#)” by Jack de Quidt ends]

Introduction

[03:42]

Austin: Welcome to Friends at the Table, an actual play podcast focused on critical worldbuilding, smart characterization, and fun interaction between good friends. I am your host, Austin Walker. Joining me today, Ali Acampora.

Ali: Hi, my name is Ali Acampora. You can find any of the music featured on the show at notquitereal.bandcamp.com. Um, and I guess you can find me—you can

google A More Civilized Age. Actually, don't do that. Just go to .net, and [Sylvi chuckles] [chuckles] I'm over on [@cartoonmeat](#) at Cohost.

Austin: Andrew Lee Swan.

Dre: Hey, you can find me on Bluesky. I'm @swandre3000 over there. You can also find me on our Twitch channel, [twitch.tv/FriendsAtTheTable](#), most Monday nights.

Austin: Most Monday nights. Uh—sorry, that was like a “TNT loves drama.” You know what I mean? Like one of those?

Dre: Oh, yeah.

Sylvi: Yeah, no. I love it.

Austin: Like, “USA has character. We have—we got characters.”

Janine: But like, you put a little more Mr. Satan in it.

Keith: [cross] “Very funny.”

Dre: [cross] Characters welcome, baby.

Austin: “Characters welcome.” Yeah.

Sylvi: There's TBS, “very funny.”

Austin: Uh-huh, yeah. My voice did dip down to a little Mr. Satan. I don't think I have that octave.

[Janine chuckles]

Dre: Yeah, come join me on our Twitch channel as I reenact every episode of Royal Pains.

Austin: Great. Perfect.

Sylvi: God. [chuckles]

[Dre laughs]

Ali: Wow.

[**Austin** laughs]

Austin: Keith Carberry.

Keith: Hi, my name is—

Austin: That's—we can't go down that rabbit hole, Dre.

[**Sylvi** and **Ali** laugh]

Keith: My name is Keith Carberry. You can find me on Twitter at [@KeithJCarberry](#). You can also find me on Cohost at [@KeithJCarberry](#). You can find the Let's Plays that I do at [youtube.com/RunButton](#). We've been doing a lot of podcasts. Do you like the Run Button podcast? You should, it's really good. You should listen to that. We have three of them, I think, up in the last couple weeks. Which you can also find on your RSS—whatever you're listening to this on, you can find Run Button on. Unless it's Spotify, and in that case, what are you doing anyway?

[**Sylvi** laughs]

Austin: What are you doing anyway? Janine Hawkins.

Janine: Hi, I'm Janine. I'm @bleatingheart on an assortment of social networks. I think the one I like the most right now is Cohost, but I still look at Twitter every day because I can't help myself. Yesterday I posted a ASMR squirrel hand puppet video on Cohost, and I think it's very funny.

Austin: It's good. Good reason to follow.

Janine: That's all I got going on. Yeah.

Austin: That's fair. Sylvi Bullet, also joining us.

Sylvi: Hi, I'm Sylvia. You can find me on most social medias [@sylvibullet](#). Just search that in there, and if you see some emo girl posting, that's me. You can find our TikTok at [@friends_table](#). Check it out. It's cool.

Austin: You can find me at [@austin](#) on Cohost. You can support the show at [friendsatthetable.cash](#). You can listen to me on another podcast. If you're like "Austin doesn't talk about Catholicism and fantasy stuff anymore," you can go listen to Shelved by Genre, a podcast I've been doing with the ranged tux folks—Ranged Touch folks, not the ranged tux folks. There's—no one's wearing tuxedos, not one person.

Dre: Mhm.

Keith: They're not shirting over there.

Austin: We are not shirting over here. And we're doing The Book of the New Sun. We've completed Shadow of the Torturer. By the time this comes out, we'll be in the middle of the second bun—second bun. The second book, Claw of the Conciliator. [coughs] I'm still coughing, but also it seems like I'm just saying the wrong words. So, that's good. Does anyone know if there's any Afflictions nearby that would be fucking up with my—fucking my words up? Because that's how it feels right now.

Today we are continuing our game of Armour Astir by Briar Sovereign. Our goals are "to portray a world entrenched in conflict, to let the players make a difference, to connect the magical and the mundane," and "to play to find out what happens." Um, so, where do we want to pick up? How are people doing?

Sylvi: Oh gosh. Interesting question.

Austin: Yeah.

[Dre hums]

Keith: I think I'm doing okay.

Austin: Okay.

Ali: Sweatin' a little bit.

Austin: Oh, sweatin' a little bit.

Dre: Yeah.

Austin: Yeah.

Sylvi: Do we wanna, like—

Dre: [cross] I think the three of us are doing great.

Ali: Stressful time, you know.

Austin: Mhm. Sylvi, what were you saying? Do we want to do what?

Sylvi: I was gonna say, if we need—do we need to like, sort of take stock of where the two sides are? But I feel like—

Austin: I think that makes sense, to some—

Sylvi: Okay.

Austin: Let's do a quick version of that.

Sylvi: Yeah.

Austin: You do your side, Sylvi.

Sylvi: Oh, cool. Um, so, we went to the moon, [**Austin:** Oh.] and when—there were some bad guys—okay, I'm gonna stop doing the bit now.

[**Ali** and **Dre** chuckle]

Sylvi: So we went into the moon and there's—is it Nidean forces that are here that we're dealing with?

Austin: It is Nidean forces here, yeah.

Sylvi: So we've been fighting Nidean forces. There is a Divine that I can't remember the name of that is creating these—

Austin: This was—oh, right. The—yes. Correct. There is—that is—

Sylvi: Yeah. We just discovered this. This was an end of session thing.

Austin: Yeah, that was Consecration. The Divine Consecration is up on the surface of the moon still.

Sylvi: Mhm.

Austin: You know, one of the many Nidean bases here on Chimera's Lantern.

Sylvi: And we got into a scrap with some Nidean forces. We kind of got the jump on them, thanks to, um... Figure going invisible, and got a little banged up in the fight. I think Figure got it worse than I did, but...

Dre: I'm just Pierced, baby. It's fine.

Sylvi: Oh, okay. You're doing great, then. Nevermind. I revoke my sympathy.

Keith: Yeah, you can get pierced at the mall. It's not even a big deal.

[**Austin** chuckles] [**Ali** laughs]

Sylvi: Yeah. Like, oh, Figure's—

Keith: [cross] You can go to Claire's to get pierced.

Sylvi: I was—aw, you beat me to mentioning Claire's! I'm mad.

[**Keith** and **Ali** laugh]

Austin: Incredible.

Sylvi: Yeah. And then, like, I might've killed some civilians, it's fine. Um—

Austin: Mhm.

Sylvi: And I think that about covers it. We're looking—we're here looking for—oh, I didn't even mention the whole reason we're here. We're here looking for a new source of, like, sustenance, I guess? I don't know how to define what we're looking for, for Figure, but it'll keep Figure alive.

Keith: Figure's magic blood.

Sylvi: Figure's magic blood. Thank you, Keith.

Dre: Mhm.

Austin: Looking for Figure's magic blood. Figure is, of course, undead, effectively, brought back to life from—by the Witch in Glass's control over Perennial magic. And that means that she has a lot of control over—over Figure, over the Figure. And that is not great, because when you—when you have all your sustenance in—from one person and that person is a nightmare person, well, they can be nightmarish to you. And so, yeah, trying to find another source of sustenance and power and life for the Figure in Bismuth. Or I guess just the Figure, not the Figure in Bismuth anymore.

Dre: Mhm.

Austin: Real quick, on your side, who has Risks or Perils? We should update those if we need to.

Sylvi: I have one Risk, Impaled, and one Peril, Severed.

Austin: At this point, Risks can clear, because that scene is over, and because you have time to cool off and get rid of, you know, de—disimpale yourself.

Dre: Okay.

Austin: Perils stay. I believe, Figure, you still have a Peril, right?

Dre: Yes. I have the Peril of Pierced.

Austin: There you go. Great. Uh, Brnine and Phrygian.

Keith: One more thing about the other side. You're inside the moon, right? But also the inside of the moon is—seems like the inside of a stomach?

Sylvi: Yeah, there's like, some tummy action going on on the map there. **[Keith:** Yeah.] I don't know how else to really describe it.

Dre: Yeah.

Janine: It kinda looks like, um—

Sylvi: [cross] Another detail I forgot is that Thisbe has been put in command—oh.

Janine: Yes.

Sylvi: What's it look like?

Janine: I was gonna say, it kind of looks like in biology class when they ask you to draw the inside of a cell.

Austin: Sure.

Sylvi: Yeah. Oh my god, we gotta find the mitochondria.

Janine: Like, this is the Golgi apparatus and the mitochondrial—the squiggly one.

Keith: [cross] Oh, we love the Golgi apparatus.

Dre: Mhm.

Janine: One of those two is squiggly.

Austin: Yeah. Yeah. Yeah, there's a lot of squiggles in here.

Janine: Mhm.

Austin: It's like, a chalk outline of an alien internal organ system.

Keith: Yep.

Austin: There's a lot going on here. You've run across some things that feel divine, at least. The Garden of Souciance that you're currently in, this kind of lake interior to the moon. You ran across some tooth monsters that seem to be divine and potentially robotic. At least, they responded to robotic type talking. And you found a—there was like a big—a bunch of mosaics of what looked like dead or resting Divines. And then, again, the Garden of Souciance that you're in straight up had a dead Divine in the bottom of the lake, effectively, you know, arms crossed, in the sort of like, buried king way. And then the Nidean base camp you messed up also had previously been a—like a chapel or something, and was being used as a base camp, it wasn't just actually always a base camp. Alright. Other side.

Keith: We had a long flight in from outside of the space station that involved, um, dodging lasers Catherine Zeta-Jones style.

Austin: Yep, mhm.

[Ali chuckles]

Keith: Trying to not overheat because we got our air conditioner cut off, and it's really hot, 'cause we're next to the sun. Trying to get—not to get noticed by sensors. I turned into a big heat-repelling—I ate the ship and made it so that they didn't burn up [Sylvi laughs] in there, is basically what happened.

Sylvi: Woah.

Austin: I guess that's true, but I think, specifically, you turned into the coldest, most distant part of the universe.

Keith: Right. That happened—that happened after, yes. Yeah, that's—

Austin: Oh, you're right, you're right, you're right. Sorry.

Keith: I went from one—I went from one to the other, yeah. That's okay.

Austin: Um, though the first thing wasn't eating it. The first thing was that you were like a sol—

Keith: I surrounded it with like, a big—

Austin: You were a solar sail. Remember? You kind of blocked it.

Keith: I was like a solar—that was the—that was to like, get the—sort of the texture and the motion of it.

Austin: Ah, I see. But you did wrap the whole ship.

Keith: Yes, I did wrap around it, if not entirely, then mostly, yeah.

Austin: Okay, I did not realize that at the time. Okay.

Ali: Thanks for the shade, man. [chuckles]

Austin: Mhm, mhm.

Keith: No problem. Uh, yeah, and I did—I did sort of become the deepest, darkest, coldest part of the universe in order to block the ship when we went inside for the first time [**Austin:** Yes.] to the space station, because we went in through the vent that sort of like, was the sun gasses exhaust, [**Austin:** Uh-huh.] presumably extremely, extremely hot. And probably would have died otherwise.

Austin: Almost certainly would have.

Keith: And I used—I used my—I used that move. I actually thought—I was thinking the entire time in the back of my head, like, should I have read that Soldier move at the very beginning of the episode? Probably, right? There's no reason to disguising it.

Austin: Did we not read it?

Keith: No, I did read it.

Austin: Oh, yeah.

Keith: But I was sort of like, should we have held that back until it was time to do it? But I have that—I took that Soldier move that gives me three successes on any move. But, unfortunately, before the next downtime, you perish.

Austin: Ah, that was the trade-off.

Keith: And I used one of my moves to do that last thing.

Austin: Mhm. That is correct.

Keith: Anything I missed, Al? Did we do—did anything happen when we got inside? I don't think we did anything, actually.

Ali: It's very hot, so we both took the Risk—all three of us, Routine is also with us.

Austin: Routine is with you, yeah.

Ali: We took the Risk "Feverish".

Keith: Yeah. That was outside, though, right? That clears to this point, or no?

Austin: No, at this point, that's—the feverish situation has continued.

Keith: Okay.

Austin: You're going to die from burning alive at this point, unless things change. So. Uh, so there's that. You also learned that the people who work deep inside have all been modified in some way, on this most interior ring, have all been modified in some way, various ways, either—either humans who have become cyborgs, or Columnar who have become Equiaxed, in order to survive the terrible heats of this place. And that they live here until they die, basically. This is their lives forever. Which, you know, fuck empire, I would say.

Chimera's Lantern

[16:20]

Austin: Uh, let's—let's start over on the other moon, and—or, not the other moon. This isn't a moon at all. This is a sun.

[**Sylvi** chuckles]

Austin: Let's start on the moon, on Chimera's—

Sylvi: What is a sun if not the other moon?

Ali: Mhm, mhm.

Austin: Wow, true. What is the—you know, a sun is sort of the moon of the center of the galaxy, I think. You know? In some ways.

Sylvi: Woah.

[**Dre** hums]

Austin: Um, what's going on over here? How are y'all doing? Oh, I guess another important thing is the garden, the Garden of Souciance, seems to be projecting this

sort of like, clarity, this sort of aura of clarity or focus that allowed you to strengthen or loosen a Hook. And so some of your Hooks changed, as we discussed last time.

[Dre hums]

Austin: And that's where you are now, this kind of underground lake that's kind of lit in this way that I'm imagining being like phosphorescence, and like deep—or not deep, but kind of like a bright blue, an underwater blue, kind of lighting this entire place. Lots of, you know, the water, the lighting from the water reflecting up onto the sides of these giant cave walls.

Remember, this place is huge. It's big enough for all of your mechs to fit in here. So like, it is not a small space, you know? Even getting across this lake will take you a little bit of time. Even in your mechs. I think Midnite has, you know, is doing some repairs on her little mech thing, her little robot, and like, sitting near the water. What are the rest of you doing?

Dre: Hmm.

Sylvi: I don't know if I left my mech.

Dre: Yeah, I don't think I did either. I think I am very impatiently and anxiously awaiting for us to be able to move again.

Austin: Yeah, I think you can. I think you're good to go whenever. I—there's nothing keeping you here at this point.

Dre: Okay.

Austin: But I didn't know if there was any conversation, if you were gonna take a moment here to talk about which direction you're gonna go in, or generally what the—what the vibe is.

Sylvi: Yeah, I don't know if Cori's starting any conversations after what she just did, so...

[Austin hums]

Sylvi: She probably just like, has her mech pull its spear out and then is just like, waiting to go.

Austin: Mhm. Oh, the thing you just did was—

Dre: [cross] You're just being the lightsaber kid over there.

[**Austin** chuckles]

Sylvi: No.

[**Dre** chuckles]

Austin: The thing you did being kill a bunch of people who were retreating.

Sylvi: Uh, yeah—hm.

Austin: And who specifically had stopped to listen to Thisbe say that she would let them live.

Janine: Yeah.

Dre: Oh, yeah.

Sylvi: But—but—but Devotion said...

Austin: Ah.

Sylvi: Um...

Janine: Mhm?

Sylvi: So, um...

Austin: Mhm.

Sylvi: Uh, you see...

Austin: Uh-huh. What had happened was—

Janine: If Thisbe had [**Sylvi** laughs] a greater capacity for sarcasm, she would have taken a picture in that moment.

Sylvi: Oh!

Austin: Oh.

Janine: Like when Cori asked her, “take a picture of me.”

Austin: [cross] There’s no one to send it to anymore. You know?

Janine: Oof, yeah, true.

Austin: Mhm.

Sylvi: You know?

Austin: Mhm.

Sylvi: It’s—we all do things to cope, and—

Dre: Mhm.

Ali: Mhm.

[**Janine** chuckles]

Austin: Oh, is that what that was?

Dre: Yeah.

Janine: Mhm.

Sylvi: She’s dealing with a lot of emotional turmoil, and—

Austin: Good. Good, good, good.

[**Janine** hums]

Sylvi: I’m—I’m gonna stop digging.

[**Austin** and **Janine** chuckle]

Austin: I think Midnite, then, is like,

Austin (as **Midnite**): Alright, all clear here. Where are we headed?

Dre: Uh...

Sylvi: I think south, right?

Dre: Yeah. This seems like a ending point of sorts.

Austin: What does? What did you just point out?

Dre: Oh, sorry. I pinged on the map of the like, the top of this triangle down here, at the very south.

Austin: Sure. Yeah.

[**Sylvi** hums]

Sylvi: [laughing] Oh, I don't think that's the ending point, Dre.

Austin: I don't know that anything here—yeah, I don't know. I don't know what do you call an ending point.

Dre: Oh, sure.

Sylvi: No, that's fair.

Austin: You know?

Dre: I guess the point—

Janine: I would have thought maybe like, the biggest gut part.

Sylvi: There?

Dre: Well, yeah, but we'll pass through there on the way there.

Sylvi: Oh, is it tummy time?

Janine: I guess that's true, yeah.

Dre: Yeah, it's tummy time.

Austin: It might be tummy time. So you're gonna head south and then—and then you're gonna like, go across this lake, and then down this kind of like, elbow turn, and up towards the tummy?

Sylvi: Yeah, I guess we could retrace our steps, but do we want to?

Austin: You don't want to walk through the—

Dre: No, what if there's fun things in the elbow?

Austin: —the place where you killed people. You just want to keep moving forward.

Sylvi: I mean, I'm in a mech. I'm not gonna see it. They're—that's so small to me now.

Dre: Yeah, Austin, that's old stuff.

Austin: Okay.

Dre: We're trying not to look in the past, so...

Sylvi: Yeah, why are you bringing up old shit?

Janine: We didn't look at—

Sylvi: Why are you bringing up stuff that happened fictionally five minutes ago?

Janine: We didn't look at that base camp, though, and not to like, metagame, but Austin was like, "did you want to look around?" And you're like, "no." [chuckles]

Austin: No, I don't—it's not—it ain't that. I'm just truly—I'm just trying to get in your heads, you know?

[Ali hums]

Dre: That's mean. I guess—

Austin: I'm just trying to figure out what y'all are up to.

Dre: The map that we got, it doesn't like, name—

Janine: [cross] If we were taking a break—

Dre: —any of these other places, does it?

Austin: No, it's just this—

Dre: Okay.

Austin: Yeah, no, it does not.

Dre: Okay.

Austin: And like, you don't know that this place is called the Garden of Souciance. This is just me doing sick, you know.

Dre: Oh, okay. Okay.

Janine: Mhm, mhm.

Austin: You're doing a dungeon crawl, so all these rooms have sick names, you know?

Dre: Yeah. Souciance.

Austin: Mhm. Alright, so, going across the lake. Do your mechs swim?

Sylvi: Mine flies.

Austin: Your flies. Yours flies.

Dre: Oh, is the—so—

Janine: No. [chuckles]

Dre: Does the lake take up the whole area?

Austin: Yeah, the whole area, yeah. It's like a shore on the northern end, and then a shore on the southern end, yeah.

Dre: [hums] Okay. Huh.

Sylvi: Can I just like, carry everybody across, make a couple trips?

Austin: Make a couple trips, that's fun. Yeah. Totally. A hundred percent. And like, I think there's also something fun in the idea of the shot of like, if any of them wanted to like, walk across the bottom, you know?

Dre: Oh, sure.

Sylvi: Ooh.

Austin: Being shadowed by this giant corpse of a Divine is also kind of fun. You know, if these things are fine with being in space, then they're probably fine with being underwater, you know? So, I'm not gonna—I'm not gonna—

Dre: Oh, yeah. No, let me walk through—I wanna—I'll walk through the lake.

Across the Lake

[22:05]

Austin: Yeah, okay. Then yeah, we get, you know. You already in a gigantic mech being, you know, completely, again, shadowed by this—overshadowed by this giant body of a Divine, which as far as you can tell is dead. Like, there's no motion. There's no response to you walking right past it. [**Dre** hums] And again, Divines don't die. Divines aren't allowed to die in the Divine Principality, so. Then, yeah.

Dre: Do we know which Divine it is?

Austin: It's Souciance.

Dre: Oh, okay.

Austin: Yeah. But you don't know that Divine. That's not a Divine you ever heard of.

Dre: Sure, yeah, yeah, yeah.

Austin: And it doesn't have like, a sign on it that says Souciance, right? But I don't know that like, you have a database of all the Divines, you know?

Dre: Yeah, yeah, yeah.

Austin: But yeah. Just a big weird humanoid machine buried under some water. You pop up on the other side of the shore, you fly over, and find your way into a dark tunnel. This one has none of the lighting from before, and the mosaic work here that has lined the rest of the tunnels fades very quickly, as if this might have been such an old tunnel that it hasn't been—they were—the mosaics were applied so long ago that they've had more time to deteriorate and decay. Make your way around the little elbow, a little turn, hard hairpin here, and start making your way back up. All you have is whatever lighting you can provide, or whatever, you know, night vision you have, which probably still has some fall-off, and you can tell already that the place you're moving towards is a massive space. It goes deeper in every direction. Which is to say that like, you come in—you come out of this hallway and start to go down stairs.

Dre: Ooh.

Austin: Huge, massive staircase that is—that is, like, sized for huge things. It's not sized for humans, it's not—it's sized for mechs and things bigger than mechs. So your machines can walk down these stairs. You don't know what you would do if you were on foot here, right? And I'm not saying you're going down the stairs yet, you can tell me that, but that is the scale of this place. And it's taller somehow than the rest of the the places here, and it's—it seems wider. Again, the scale in this place seems wrong. There are moments that just feel off. For someone like Thisbe, your scanners sometimes have—are confused about how far something is from where you are, right? There are ways in which you'll be standing completely still and the hallway you're in will say that it is 50 meters across, and then also that it is 20 meters across, and that's not right. So something about space is wrong in here. Again, it is bigger on the inside, and that does not work.

What do y'all do as you come to this giant space? That, again, it's a big staircase, downward, can't quite make out anything in the dark with the lighting solutions that you currently have.

[Dre hums]

Janine: Um—

Dre: Is it—go ahead, Janine.

Janine: I was gonna say, like, I feel like we should do, like, a—not a size, or like a scan in that sense, but kind of like a “where’s powers here?”

Austin: Where is powers here?

Janine: Where’s, like—

[**Dre** and **Sylvi** hum]

Janine: Where’s—is there, you know, like, what—

Sylvi: Dr. Evil frequently asks that.

[**Dre** chuckles]

Janine: What other information do we have—[chuckles]

Sylvi: Sorry. [chuckles]

Janine: What information do we have other than like, the scale of stuff?

Austin: Yeah. Well, what are you using to try to find that? Is this like a—are you like, scanning for something? Are you opening up your Channel, your magical sense? Are you using some other sort of thermal detector, or, you know—what’s this look like, actually?

Janine: Yeah, um... hang on, I have to [chuckles] double-check something.

Austin: Mhm.

Janine: Okay. I... I wonder if this is kind of like the built-in surveying stuff we’ve talked about Thisbe having to some extent, like, because part of that would be yes, how far is this thing from that thing? How big is this space? But I think the other parts of it would be like, is there water here? Is there, like, a buried power line?

Austin: Yeah. Is there something buried, is there—yeah, yeah, yeah.

Janine: Is there—like, what direction is north?

Austin: Yeah.

Janine: Like, lots of sensors for like, magnetism and all kinds of weird bullshit. Which might be—oh, I don't know. You tell me what that might be.

Austin: You're—are you trying to use Internal Codex here, “take advantage to Dispel Uncertainties related to your original purpose”? Because it sounds like that to me.

Janine: So I'm kind of torn, because—I'm torn because I have Internal Codex, which is for Dispel Uncertainties, which relies on Know. But I also have Sense, and I don't know which is which.

Austin: I guess that's my—yeah, that's a good question. I—there's two different things happening, right? Sense would be “I'm really gonna dial in these sensors, I'm really gonna extend my range, and zoom in on the wav file, you know, and like, really look at all of the data.”

Janine: Mhm.

Austin: I think using Internal Codex and Dispel Uncertainties would be you going deep on the previous knowledge you have from being the thing you are, from having the experiences you have. You're going deep on the internal memory you have and your internal database, instead of going deep on the—turning the gain up on the microphone, you know?

Janine: I think it's the other thing, then. I think it is turning the gain up on the microphone, [**Austin:** Okay.] because I don't know how much this conforms to anything that—I was gonna say Sylvi—[chuckling] that Thisbe has, like—

[**Austin** chuckles] [**Sylvi** laughs]

Janine: —like, knows.

Austin: Right. That's fair.

Janine: So I don't know how much she could rely on like, shit she, you know, has experienced before.

Austin: Yeah, yeah. I think that's fine. Alright, then give me a—so then, instead of being Dispel Uncertainties, you are reading the room to get insight on your situation. So roll Sense, 2d6 plus 1.

Janine: Okay.

[pause]

Austin: That is a 12. A 6 plus a 5 plus a 1. Hold 3.

Janine: Hell yeah.

Austin: And you can spend that Hold one for one on the questions in Read the Room. As a reminder, I think most of you still also have that bonus Hold—

Dre: Yeah.

Janine: Mhm.

Austin: —for playbook moves from the downturn—or the downside—the downtime. Words. Words are hard.

Dre: And you said that is for either standard moves or playbook moves?

Austin: It's basic moves or playbook moves, correct.

Dre: Okay, gotcha.

Austin: Which unfortunately means Soldier moves do not count, a thing that I thought was the case, and then double-checked, and Soldier moves are not playbook moves. Those are explicitly not from a playbook or a basic move.

Keith: That would be so strong, though.

Austin: It'd be so strong, Keith.

Dre: Yeah.

Austin: Keith, I really, it was—I was having a conversation with Jack, and Jack was like, “you think it's gonna blow up?” And I was like, “oh, well, they have all this other

stuff that's going on that they have on their side." And one of the things I was about to tell them was like, "and they can use the Soldier move another time." And I was like, "wait, is that true?"

Keith: Yeah. I—

Austin: "Oh, it's not a playbook move." Yeah.

Keith: Luckily, for my own sanity, I never thought that that was the case, so...

Austin: Yeah, yeah.

Keith: I did not have to be hit with a massive disappointment.

Austin: It's a bad one. It would be a bad one to lose that, yeah.

Keith: Yeah, it would be a bad one to, like, think I had four this whole time.

Austin: Mhm. Alright, so what are you asking from these questions?

Janine: One, what is being overlooked or obscured here?

Austin: You dial something in right in your vision. Again, partly it's just like, make it more sensitive, make it more sensitive, there's not enough light here.

Janine: Mhm.

Austin: Do you have an idea for visualizing how Thisbe enhances her vision in a place as dark as this?

Janine: Um... I mean, is she just like, cranking up the ISO?

Austin: Yeah, I think she's cranking up the ISO. Maybe she's introducing extra light into the room, you know?

Janine: Yeah.

Austin: Turning on her own internal flashlights to like—and balancing them in a special way that gives you—

Janine: I mean, ISO also comes with like, oh, there's noise, so you wouldn't want to [Austin: Yeah.] have high ISO on all the time because it affects the fidelity of what you're seeing, you know.

Austin: Totally, totally, yeah. But I think it's like, more than that, because you have to roll for it, right?

Janine: Right, yeah.

Austin: I imagine, Thisbe, you're constantly up and down the ISO for regular visibility. I didn't know if you had like, a special idea on that. It's okay, whatever. I don't—you know. You're just zeroing in on it.

Janine: Floodlight on Mow's shoulder, I don't know. [laughs]

Austin: Yeah, whatever it is. Yeah, floodlight on Mow, plus something that's like—maybe it's like a—[Janine: Yeah.] maybe it's like a floodlight on Mow that doesn't give you away. Maybe it's like you're broadcasting a certain light spectrum that doesn't show up visually, you know, without also turning on—

Janine: Oh, sure it's like a... UV or something.

Austin: [simultaneous] It's like UV or like—yeah, yeah.

Janine: Yeah.

Keith: Lower the shutter speed.

[Janine chuckles]

Austin: Also, you lower the shutter speed. You do all the tricks. You do all the tricks, you know?

Janine: Mhm.

Austin: You've been watching YouTube and learning about photography.

[Sylvi laughs]

Janine: Yeah. [chuckles]

Austin: Learning about the triangle, you know?

Discovery

[31:30]

Austin: So, you see hanging from the top of this cave, upside down, a humanoid figure.

Dre: Hm.

Austin: Like a bat, asleep, its wings around it. And its wings—under its wings, you can see the lumps of its arms. Or maybe just the lumps of its body that feel misshapen. Um... it's, it's... withered, and—seems withered, wrinkled, and in parts, maybe skinless? And I say skinless because this doesn't read like a robot to you. This reads like something biological. It has long, scraggly hair that has faded in color, it is—it has splotches on its skin, it's angular in ways that are grotesque, you know, elbows sticking out a little too much. Fingernails long, like claws, dirty. And it is, nevertheless, somehow authoritative, maybe even regal, in its corruption. Its eyes are open.

Janine: Gross. Eugh.

Sylvi: Is it looking at us?

Austin: It is looking at you.

Janine: Uh... hm. Um... uh... [laughs nervously]

Sylvi: Yeah, uh-huh.

Janine: Um...

Dre: And this is—we're still here, right?

Janine: [cross] I think that changes the questions I'm gonna ask somewhat.

Austin: Yeah, sure. Yeah.

Sylvi: Oh yeah, you still have a bunch of questions.

Austin: [cross] Sorry, where'd you ping?

Dre: Are we still where our little icons are?

Austin: No, you're like—

Dre: Okay.

Austin: You're close enough to—you're at the entrance. You're at the entrance to this place.

Dre: Okay.

Austin: Because you—otherwise, you wouldn't have seen the stairs. Right?

Dre: Okay.

Austin: The stairs go down and you couldn't have known that.

Dre: Gotcha.

Austin: Yeah, sorry, I just didn't move you all up.

Dre: No, you're good.

Janine: Um... how—

Austin: You're not down the stairs yet, though.

Janine: How does the bat monster really feel?

[**Dre** laughs]

Austin: Good question. It is sizing you up. It would like to know if you have been hurting—if you're part of the invading force that the other beings here have been fighting against. It doesn't think much of you. It thinks it could kill you pretty easily

Sylvi: Well, I think the same thing, so.

Janine: Oh, gosh.

Sylvi: I don't say that. I don't say that.

[**Janine** chuckles]

Dre: Well, no, but you used those killing powers to kill the other people that it's apparently mad at, so...

Janine: That's true.

Sylvi: We're probably chill. We're besties.

Dre: Besties.

Janine: Yep, we're friends. We're all friends here.

Austin: Mhm.

Janine: Um—

Austin: And again, I think that you get this simply through killing intent, you know?
Like—

Janine: Yeah.

[**Sylvi** laughs]

Austin: You know what it is to be sized up by something large and dangerous.

Janine: Where can I find the powerful stuff? The power?

Austin: Oh, you're looking at it, buddy.

Janine: Ah.

Austin: Emanating with power. Power of different types. There's a moment where—[chuckles] I think—I think Midnite Matinee pukes.

Janine: Oh.

Austin: And she's like,

Austin (as **Matinee**): [retches] Sorry, I lost—I lost my footing.

Austin: And you realize that this is the source of gravity for this whole place.

Janine: Oh.

Dre: Oh.

Austin: There is like—this thing is this place. You're not literally inside of the big bat monster, right? But there is something recursive and strange happening here. You may as well be inside the big bat monster.

Janine: Uh... I think the way that I relay this information to everyone is that I turn around, and I point up at the desiccated bat person...

Austin: Uh-huh.

Janine: And I say,

Janine (as **Thisbe**): I believe we are here to see them.

Dre (as **Figure**): Are you sure?

[**Austin** chuckles]

Janine (as **Thisbe**): They seem quite powerful, and I do not think they will attack us unless we provoke attack.

Sylvi: Putting my sickles away.

Dre (as **Figure**): So are we—do we just go say hi?

Janine (as **Thisbe**): I suspect that doing so would demonstrate a less hostile intent than whatever the Nideans approached with.

Dre (as **Figure**): [hums]

Janine: God, does Thisbe say “the Nideans”? That doesn't sound very Thisbe, but I don't know what else she would say.

Austin: It doesn't sound very Thisbe, yeah. Stel Nideos, maybe, or...

Janine: Yes.

Austin: Yeah. Who's making a move here?

Dre: Yeah, are you gonna make me go say hi?

Janine: I do think Thisbe is looking at you, yeah. It's kind of like, okay, brought you to the blind date.

Dre: Yeah, I don't know how you anxiously, like, edge forward in a mech, but somehow... [laughs]

Austin: Yeah.

Dre: Um...

Austin: You make your way down these stairs?

Dre: Yeah. I... I wave?

Austin: Yeah, okay. Um—

[**Janine** laughs]

Sylvi: I am—this is—okay. Have fun.

[**Janine** laughs] [**Austin** chuckles]

Austin: As you reach the bottom of the stairs, which again, massive mech-sized stairs—bigger than your mech even, right? Like your mech has to—it feels like you're a little kid walking down stairs. [**Dre:** Mhm.] You know? Walking down adult-scaled stairs. [**Dre:** Yeah.] And as soon as you're on that, there is a like, a—[mimics bursts of air whooshing in rapid succession] as—I guess not lamps—torches, sconces, around the entire center of this room light with a dim orange light, and the doors to this place... It's not that they close, but huge tapestries fall in front of each of them. They're closed. It will take some doing to get past these tapestries, but they're not doors or gates. They are tapestries featuring similar drawings of the various Divines that you saw in mosaic work throughout this place.

And in this moment, this being descends from above, and lands on a gigantic throne that is nevertheless too small for it. And it reaches down behind the throne, which it's spun to face you, it's like on a dais that can spin, and it produces a shackle, and it shackles itself to the throne. Its hair is stringy and hanging in front of its face now.

You can see its face in the dim light. It is tortured. It is shifting. It's shifting between faces, somehow. Sometimes it looks insectoid more than human, [**Dre**: Hm.] and it says,

Austin (as **Batlike Being**): [hoarse] Who comes to the court of the Chimeric Cadent?

Austin: And we'll come back here in a second.

The Stellar Combustor

[39:30]

Austin: What's going on in the Stellar Combustor?

Keith: Sweatin'.

Austin: Sweatin'. Y'all waiting for a tram? What's your plan here?

Keith: Um... Do we, like, have any general bearings of, like...

Austin: Yeah, you know—so you're in the inner ring.

Keith: Yeah.

Austin: You are in—I mean, I'll just—I will mark it here, I guess, actually. This is kind of worth doing. You are in—let me turn it on. Go to GM mode, or GM layer, and then make these visible. One, four, two, you—oh, that's wrong. Map layer, there we go. Do you see where it says "one", kind of in the middle here?

Keith: Yeah.

Ali: Uh-huh.

Austin: That is the general kind of section of the ring that you're in. You're in number one, [**Keith**: Right.] number two is kind of to your southwest, number four is ahead of you.

Keith: So we're near where we would have crossed over if we had gone through.

Ali: Mhm.

Austin: More or less, yeah. I've been rotating these, basically, as we've been playing. So when you, like, lose time, I've been moving them, you know? And you went in through the extractor, and the extractor is number one here, the sort of solar extractor, right?

Keith: Uh-huh.

Austin: Then—so the transfer just happened, right? The transfer basically happened to this place during the last term, right? You can see the way that the ring moves, Four was just here, right?

Ali: Mhm.

Austin: Four is the transfer, One is the solar extractor, Two is the batteries and stuff, and Three is the—so, Three, on the opposite side of the sun, right? 180 degrees from where you are, [**Keith:** Yeah.] is where there is, like, the central engineering department, like, the place where there are buttons and levers for what this thing is, right? Where you would go and—I don't know. That's probably the place that you're most likely able to shut it down through a combination of hacking and controls, and, I don't know, whatever the rest of your plan is, you know?

Keith: Right.

Austin: The battery stuff, I could imagine you doing something there too, but it will take—it's harder to do it there, because all that is is a battery, it's not—and that can be repaired, you know what I mean? If you're trying to blow up the whole thing, I don't think you'll be able to do that just at the batteries, right?

Keith: Mhm.

Austin: And if you damage the batteries, and then they send in an explosion, an explosion signal, the sun will still blow up, [**Ali:** Yeah.] which would still kill a bunch of people. It wouldn't kill all 25 star systems, right?

Keith: Right.

Austin: Because it won't have done the big charging super explosion thing, 'cause the batteries will have been destroyed, you know? The stored energy will have been destroyed.

Keith: Right.

Austin: But it would kill—

Keith: Best case scenario—

Austin: Yeah, uh-huh.

Keith: —we don't die in the sun fire.

Ali: Mhm.

Austin: No.

Keith: And by "we", I mean everyone in the solar system.

Austin: Sorry, no, no, no. If the thing blows up in any way, if it—sorry, if the explosion goes off, even if you've destroyed the batteries, this whole system is toast. The sun has blown up.

Keith: Right, yes.

Ali: Right.

Austin: Right, yes.

Keith: And that is—it would be ideal for that to not happen.

Dre: Sure.

Austin: It would be straight up ideal for that not—

Ali: Uh-huh.

Austin: It would be ideal for that not to happen in any way, [**Keith:** Right.] not even the "it only blows up the Palisade system" way, you know?

Ali: Yes.

Keith: Sure, yeah.

Austin: Yeah. Mhm. So what do you—what's the play? What's the plan? Do we want to talk about some stuff?

Keith: Yes, we need—we gotta talk—we gotta figure out the heat thing.

Austin: Yeah.

Ali: Mhm.

Keith: I think that's first. Obviously, we came in with the idea that we would be cooling ourselves with the radio, but that's not—that's not working out.

Austin: [cross] A sentence you said out loud in such a way that makes me wonder if you'd said it out loud previously.

Keith: Yeah. Yeah, yeah, yeah.

Austin: Okay.

Keith: Hey, we're in the future.

[Ali chuckles]

Austin: Mhm.

Keith: They got all sorts of stuff in the future.

Austin: They do.

Keith: They got bat freaks that are the moon that they're in.

Austin: Uh-huh.

Ali: Uh-huh.

Keith: They got big robots.

Ali: We have sprinklers now. Is that not a water radio? [laughs]

Keith: Yeah!

Austin: A water radio—a sprinkler would not protect you from the sun.

Ali: Yeah. Uh-huh. No, that's fair. Uh-huh.

Austin: A sprinkler won't protect you from being in a house on fire, most of the time, actually.

[**Ali** and **Keith** chuckle]

Ali: Uh-huh.

Keith: Well, you know, I'm—the—conceptually, you know, the idea is that you're creating some sort of field that can be filled with properties, and the two properties were invisibility and cold air. You know, there's some—there is some sort of field that's affecting people in a short distance. That's sort of the—that is the concept. But it—but, you know. We now need—we need to find something else.

Ali: Mhm.

Austin: Yeah.

Keith: Um...

Austin: Well, and I think the thing is, off-mic, [**Keith:** Yeah.] you said, "can we change one of these things that we were gonna bring?"

Keith: Right. Yes.

Austin: And I don't think you can change the one you haven't announced yet, because you now know that that one doesn't help you.

Ali: Mhm.

Keith: That is true, but—

Austin: And that's not—

Keith: But you changed one that was going to help us. So—

[Ali chuckles]

Austin: And you had the choice there to say, “well, instead of invisibility, it’s cooling.” And I think I would still give you that choice. You can have a cooling radio or an invisibility radio. You cannot have a cooling invisibility radio, and you cannot change your third thing to a thing that it wasn’t already, because now you know that it doesn’t work.

Keith: Okay.

Austin: Do you know what I mean? I think it’s much more interesting to have you have this third thing that you have, that you may have said before, you may not have said before, that suddenly you’re like, “ah, shit, all these people are cyborgs that are very noticeably, not just regular people in, [Keith: Yeah.] you know, Kesh uniforms.” They’re not humans, right? They’re not—or they’re humans, but they’re—they are, they have noticeable tubing and stuff, [Keith: Yeah.] And so our disguises are not going to cut it.

Keith: I can look like I’ve got tubing, no problem.

[Ali chuckles]

Austin: You might have other problems. It’s the not having tubing that might be the problem for you. You got to get the rest of it, the rest of it going.

Keith: Yeah.

Ali: Can I borrow some of your tubes, man? [chuckles]

Austin: I mean, you got two more uses of that move, so.

Keith: I don’t know—I mean, this is—Phrygian is so abstract [Austin: Yeah.] as a body that it’s hard—it’s hard to say like, definitely, no, I can’t take some of my wires and make it look like, you know, me and Brnine have tubes.

Austin: Right. No, yeah.

Keith: That's definitely doing something, [**Austin:** Uh-huh.] [**Ali** chuckles] but it would be difficult to say, like, with all the things that I've done that I can't appear to have tubes. So—

Austin: No, what I'm saying is for you, the problem is not having skin. It's not having—

Keith: Right.

Austin: You have the tubes.

[**Ali** laughs]

Keith: Well, this is—so then, this is the thing—okay. So we have disguises. That's the thing that we maybe have or haven't said.

Ali: Yes.

Austin: Yes.

Keith: So this is—this was always like, a thematic, you know, Ali was very clear with me. [**Ali** chuckles] I want to rip off my face like Face/Off or in Mission Impossible.

Ali: Uh-huh.

Austin: And they're different—that's different. In Face/Off, it's—you're not ripping it off, like, as a fun thing to do in the middle of a fight.

Sylvi: No, they go through surgery for that.

Austin: They go through surgery. I don't think you want to go through surgery.

Keith: Well, then Mission Impossible. No, no, I don't want to go through surgery.

Austin: Yeah, yeah, yeah.

Keith: So—

Austin: You do want to have the Face/Off moment of being someone you're not, certainly.

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

Austin: Yeah, uh-huh.

Keith: Which, unfortunately, Phrygian literally has a move for, but I didn't take it.

Austin: I mean, so I should say that really quick, too. Part of the reason I'm being kind of a hard-ass on this is—I'm not being a hard-ass, right? Like, Armour Astir is not Blades in the Dark. You didn't get gear that you can then figure out what it is later. You're supposed to have bought particular pieces of gear, right?

Keith: Mhm.

Austin: And/or taken different moves, right? There's—

Keith: Yeah. Well, I had no opportunity to take this move. And again, I will say we did try to take something that would cool us down.

Austin: I know, I know.

Keith: Okay.

Austin: But I'm just saying that part of the thing of like, coming up with something on the fly like—Artificer has two different moves that are about that, right?

Keith: Right.

Austin: Or like, the Diplomat has two different disguise-related moves. And so it's like, enforcing that that is valuable means not giving it to people who don't have the move, right?

Keith: Right.

Austin: I'm just exploring—I'm explaining to the listener why I'm being particular about it. And also, fundamentally, I think it's really funny to show up with Mission Impossible masks [Ali chuckles] and then realize that everybody has tubes in their body, or is a robot, right?

Ali: Yeah.

Keith: Right. Yeah.

Austin: That, to me, is—there's the drama. TNT, we love drama.

Keith: Yeah.

Ali: We do love drama.

Keith: So we—so the masks was always like, well, we've got this extra thing. We've got an extra slot. Let's make it masks 'cause that's fun.

Austin: Right.

Keith: Now, I still—I want to keep them. I like the masks.

Ali: Yeah.

Austin: Okay. Okay.

Keith: But they were never—they were never, like, the most important thing in the mission. So it felt easy to be like, "oh, well, if we can't have the invisibility radio also be a refrigerator..." [chuckles]

Austin: Right. Well, so that's what I'm saying is, if instead—

Keith: "Then we can maybe do something else with..."

Austin: —what you want is a mobile coolant unit, I'm happy to give you that. You haven't used the invisibility thing yet. You knew it would be hot here.

Keith: Right.

Austin: I think changing that up [**Keith:** Yeah.] is more fair game to me than—

Keith: That's true. Oh, sorry. This is the other part of it is like, if—because we were thinking about this earlier, like, 'cause that would—

Austin: [cross] Because you didn't end up using it, right? You didn't—

Keith: Well, we didn't end up using the invisibility radio on the ship.

Austin: Right.

Keith: But like, if we always had a cooling thing, it—

Austin: Oh, you're right.

Keith: —it sort of makes the trip over here not really make sense.

Austin: [cross] Make no sense. Yeah, you're totally right.

Keith: Yeah.

Austin: So, yeah, I think you might be stuck here and you have to figure out some cooling stuff ASAP.

Ali: Yeah.

Austin: There is a—you know what? There is another option that we've never thought about in this outcome, [**Ali** chuckles] which is Brnine, Routine, and Phrygian could die here.

Austin: Uh-huh.

Austin: And it doesn't blow up because you're just—you're all dead.

Keith: Yeah. Oh, no, we thought of that. [chuckles]

[**Ali** laughs]

Austin: Oh, did you? Okay.

Keith: Yeah, Ali and I thought of that.

Austin: I think they would still blow it up. I think—well, then we're really in that situation, right? Where it's like, do the people who work here report that they found intruders who died from the heat—

Keith: I think no.

Austin: Knowing that if they do, the—I mean, they've already agreed to work here.

Keith: There's always one—there's always one—there's always someone who would do that, but I think that most people are like, "I think I'd rather work here than be exploded right now."

Austin: Exploded. Yeah, yeah, yeah.

Ali: Yeah, yeah.

Keith: Anyway, so yes, this is the dilemma.

Austin: They would be playing, like, a Crossroad in a game of Kingdom over this. Right?

[**Ali** and **Keith** chuckle]

Keith: This is sort of the... yeah. [chuckles]

Austin: One guy being like, [laughing] "we gotta tell the Stargrave."

Keith: Yeah.

[**Sylvi** laughs]

Ali: Is that what we do after this? Just find, like, the most intense game of Mafia on itch.io and fucking—[laughs]

Austin: [laughs] Right.

[**Keith** laughs]

Sylvi: Oh my god.

Ali: [laughing] —play the staff of the Stellar Combustor?

Austin: God. Miserable. Miserable.

Sylvi: Wait, no, I think she's onto something.

[**Austin** and **Ali** laugh]

Austin: God.

[Ali groans]

Austin: No, like, this is one hundred percent the sort of—this is the thing, is like, we've played Fiasco by Jason Morningstar a lot, but the rest of the games that Bully Pulpit Games makes is exactly about actual historical moments like the one we are describing. You know?

Ali: Uh-huh.

Austin: I promise you we can go find one of their games that is actually about the guy who refused to hit the button and send the nuclear missile. You know?

Keith: Yeah.

Austin: For sure.

Keith: Yeah.

Austin: Anyways.

Temperature

[51:21]

Ali: Can I—can I find, like, a data port or something to attach Asepsis to, to find, like, the temperature of where we are? Like, if we need to move out of the room that we're in.

Keith: Can you use Asepsis to lower the temperature?

Ali: I don't know about that, 'cause—[chuckles]

Keith: I put that in one of our chats, but that's something. We could try to hack in and lower the temperature.

Ali: That—I mean, that's possible. I think what I was saying is like, if there is a temperature-controlled space [**Austin:** Mhm.] within 20 to 30 feet of us or whatever. [chuckles]

Austin: And then you just stay there? You've got to move far. You have to move to the other side of the sun.

Ali: Well, I'm just like, trying to... [laughs]

Keith: You're trying to buy time.

Ali: I'm trying to get us—yeah.

Austin: You've found the coolest place you can find without hooking Asepsis up to anything, right? Like, I'll—Routine has a temperature scanner.

Ali: Okay.

Austin: And it's like, maybe, yeah, over there is a little cooler. We're still going to die here in three minutes. We have to do something.

Ali: Okay.

Austin: I'm not saying no to trying to hack into things. We can talk about what that looks like.

Ali: Mhm.

Austin: Yes, there are data ports. You know, we're in—

Keith: Let's put the AC on in the fan. I mean, in the tram.

Ali: Okay, yeah.

Keith: Get on the tram, lower the temperature of the tram while we're on it.

Austin: So what are you trying to do here? You're trying to hack into the system.

Ali: I'm trying to cool off. [laughs]

Austin: You're trying to cool off.

Keith: We're trying to cool off.

Austin: Okay. And you're trying to do that by putting Asepsis into the Stellar Combustor.

Ali: Yeah. [chuckles]

Keith: Yeah.

Austin: Okay. Sometimes I just want to say a thing out loud.

[Ali laughs]

Keith: It might not even be the last time that happens.

Janine: What the fuck?

Ali: I'm trying to initiate a dice roll. [laughs] That's what I'm trying to do.

Austin: Yeah, no, I get it. I get it. I just—again?

Keith: Well, we bought a refrigerator at the store, they told us that it worked, and then we got here and it didn't work!

Ali: Yeah, it doesn't work. Um... yeah.

Austin: "Vigil City is the densest urban settlement on the moon, and yet every morning it is spotless. Give thanks to Asepsis's swarm of robotic servants." I'm just checking things that we've written about Asepsis before on this podcast, that's all.

[Ali chuckles]

Austin: "Cleansed and purified," quote unquote, "Vigil City with its army of micro-mechanical servants until Millennium Break knocked it down for the count, and until Kal'mera Broun took some of its parts to study in their free time." Just looking at things that we've said about Asepsis.

[Ali laughs]

Keith: Well, what was the last thing that we said about Asepsis?

Austin: Most recently?

Keith: Yeah. On the downtime.

Austin: Let's see. "The final living remnant of a Divine who pursues its particular vision of purity at the cost of everything else. Kept, studied, and utilized by Captain Calvin Brnine."

Keith: That doesn't sound like last downtime.

[**Austin** hums]

Keith: The last thing that happened was Brnine specifically spending time with Asepsis to be like, "don't be so—don't be so weird."

Austin: I'm looking at my camera as if you can see me.

[**Ali**, **Sylvi**, and **Dre** laugh]

Ali: Yeah, uh-huh.

Austin: We did a season about this, Keith. You had your Asepsis. You know how I feel.

Keith: I didn't have my—I didn't have—that's different.

Austin: [scoffing] Okay. It was different.

Keith: It was totally different.

Austin: Alright, let's roll the dice.

Ali: I mean, I could use like, a normal hacker and—

Keith: At this point, it's like—

Austin: [cross] There are advantages to using Asepsis, for sure.

Keith: It's like, I'm not just gonna to shrug my shoulders and say, "well, I guess we just die of heat exhaustion."

[**Ali** chuckles]

Austin: No, I get it. I just want to make sure that we are—

Keith: I got to keep saying ideas until you say one of them is fine.

[**Ali** chuckles]

Austin: I am showing you—none of them are fine. None of them are fine. They're all risky.

Ali: Uh-huh.

Austin: I'm making sure the risks are clear, because if I don't, you'll be like, "well, wait a second. Why did Asepsis take over the Stellar Combustor and now is threatening to blow up everything?"

Ali: Right.

Austin: Right? So...

Keith: I mean, surely the—surely the air conditioner is on a separate—

[**Ali** chuckles]

Austin: Let's roll the dice.

Ali: Yeah, let's do that.

Austin: What do you—are you using your Asepsis move?

Ali: Um, let me look at what my Asepsis move is. My... "You acquire something—a tool, a ship upgrade, a [chuckling] caged malevolent sentence."

Austin: Oh!

Ali: "For each of the below drawbacks you give it, you may—"

Keith: For each of the what?

Ali: "Once per Sortie, you may act with Confidence." And then I think the—what I was going to do was—is this like a Weather the Storm, or is this a Read the Room?

Austin: This is probably a—this is a Weather the Storm.

Ali: Okay.

Austin: Yeah, I think so.

Keith: And it's—it's Asepsis's storm that we're weathering.

Austin: It's—yeah.

Ali: Right, or I could do it as a plus Know and just use Brnine's, like, um... uh...

Austin: Right, yeah. Regular old—yeah.

Ali: [laughing] Sidekick that I've been describing them having.

Austin: Mhm. You could try to start hacking in yourself.

Ali: Yeah.

Austin: And there are limits, there are—like, genuinely, doing it well with Asepsis means a different thing than you doing it yourself. Right?

Ali: Mhm.

Austin: I know what these both mean on success. I can feel them.

Ali: Okay. I'm gonna roll a 2d1.

Austin: 2d6 plus 1. Right?

Ali: [laughing] 2d6 plus 1. A 2d1 would be really bad.

Austin: So you're doing—you're doing yourself.

Ali: Plus Know.

Austin: Plus Know.

Ali: Instead of plus Crew.

Austin: Okay. Alright. 2d6 plus 1.

Ali: Um, yeah.

Austin: Okay.

Ali: Is there a—do you want to assist? I guess you can assist afterwards.

Austin: You can assist afterwards.

Keith: Yeah, yeah, yeah, I can assist after.

Ali: Okay.

Austin: 13. Wow.

[Ali laughs]

Keith: Beautiful. Unbelievable.

Ali: Great, great.

Austin: Perfect roll from Brnine, 6 plus 6 plus 1.

Ali: Imagine how good my dog would have done that for me. There's nothing scary about it. I don't know what you're talking about. We have a great relationship.

[Sylvi laughs]

Austin: That would have been a little different. Alright.

Sylvi: Oh, my god. [laughs]

Austin: So, here's what I think this looks like. There is only but so much cooling in this thing. Right?

Keith: Yeah.

Austin: And you can—

Keith: It's not designed to make someone comfortable.

Austin: It's not. Exactly. Like, it's truly—you could never be comfortable here. You could make it to where you're alive and still feverish, but not dying, by keeping—by

redirecting cool air to wherever you are, right? Now, you can't do that—you can't stay conn—you're plugged into this thing. There's no Wi-Fi on this. You know what I mean?

Ali: Mhm.

Austin: So, what I think you can do is set a sort of schedule you have to keep. You can move the one safe part of the station around, and you'll know where it will be. And you'll know—you'll have the sort of like, "alright, in one minute, we have to be at blank." You know what I mean?

Ali: Mhm.

Austin: You can program this as long or as short as you want. You could say like, "and then we're gonna spend five minutes in this hallway," you know? But you can't—

Keith: Then we'd have to redo it.

Austin: Well, no, I'm—well, yeah. You could re-hack in. That would be a different roll.

Keith: Right.

Austin: What I'm saying you could do is right now, set yourself a—

Keith: Oh, I gotcha.

Austin: It's like programming your AC and saying, "okay, turn on in this hallway now. Turn on in this hallway now. Turn on"—you know what I mean? You're not turning it on, you're just shifting it around.

Ali: Mhm.

Austin: You could also do something else with it, but that's my pitch for what you could do. If you have another idea, I would love to hear it. But there really is only so much to go around. And using this method, I don't think you would set off any alarms in terms of like... Like, someone tomorrow might be like, "now, wait a second. The air got moved around weird here," you know?

Ali: Mhm.

Keith: Right.

Austin: But you got a—

Ali: Or if we fail another roll, this is a thing that's on the screen, yeah.

Austin: A classic thing that someone might notice. Exactly. Exactly.

Ali: Yeah.

Austin: And actually, the thing I just said would be bad, because they would know exactly where you're going next, because they would have seen the air conditioning routine you've plugged in. So maybe don't do this. Maybe do your own thing.

Ali: [chuckles] I mean, it feels like our stock is going up. This isn't a bad... this is a step towards progress.

Keith: Right. We already passed the roll.

Austin: Uh-huh.

Ali: Uh-huh.

Keith: I mean, I like it. The only thing is that if there's a problem and we get off time, [Austin: Yep.] then we've got to redo it.

Ali: Mhm.

Austin: Or hurry up.

Keith: Or hurry up. Or slow down.

Austin: Slowing down, I think you would end—right, I guess if you hurried up ahead of it, right, yes.

Keith: Right, yeah.

Austin: If you have to run or something, yeah.

Keith: Right.

Ali: Oh, sure.

Austin: That'd be a problem.

Keith: Better problem than it outpacing us, but still a problem.

Ali: Mhm.

Keith: I mean, I like that. I mean, you know, maybe there's something more—we could do something more extreme. Like we could Superman 3, the—you know, skim a degree or half a degree off of every other quadrant and stick it into like, the 10 quadrants that we really—10 quadrants. 10 sections that we really need more permanently. That's something.

Austin: Mhm.

Keith: That would be maybe more risky.

[loud typing]

Ali: Yo, Phrygian.

Keith: Yeah.

Ali: Do your math stuff and let me know—[laughs]

Austin: Oh my god.

[Sylvi laughs]

Ali: I need a schedule.

Sylvi: I love the foley work.

Ali: [laughing] Thank you.

Austin: Yeah, I was like, who is typing? And then I was like, oh, it's Brnine. Brnine is typing.

[Keith laughs]

Sylvi: Yeah.

Austin: On their sidekick, by the way, which—

[Ali continues laughing]

Keith: Really—some really nice switches on the sidekick.

Austin: Cherry blacks on the sidekick.

Keith: Yeah.

Ali: This is a Logitech nothing.

Keith: Extremely low profile cherries.

[Ali laughs]

Austin: Yeah, uh-huh. So which of those two are you doing? Are you doing the “we’re gonna skim from everywhere and make a hallway for ourselves”? Or are you doing the rotating skim schedule?

Keith: Um—

Ali: I feel like we should do the schedule because we have such big ground to cover.

Austin: Mhm.

Ali: And—

Keith: Yeah.

Ali: If—we have the potential to do the roll again.

Austin: Right, sure.

Keith: If we’re on the tram, presumably it’s the tram that has the cooling.

Austin: Mhm. That’s a good part.

Keith: So we are gonna be moving with the tram for a while.

Ali: Mhm.

Austin: Yep, yep.

Keith: Who knows how long, literally, but. I mean, I don't know.

Austin: Oh, yeah, and—

Keith: Maybe that's something—maybe we could find the train schedules in here.

Ali: Does it have one of those—Austin, I don't know how often you take the Long Island Rail Road. And I know that everything I say into a microphone is risky. But like, you know how like, when you're on a train and the conductor has its own little space, and you like, close the door?

Austin: Yeah, yeah, yeah, I know what you're talking about.

Ali: I feel like—'cause like, we're invisible. And like, we don't have a ton of movement. And if we're gonna be on this tram for a long time...

Austin: The four—the three of you and this little refrigerator are not gonna fit into the tram's [Ali chuckles] conductor's compartment.

Ali: Sure, sure, sure.

Austin: Also, I don't think there are—I think this is an air train situation.

Ali: Okay, yeah.

Austin: You know what I mean?

Keith: No.

Ali: It's like a—

Austin: I mean, I guess, is there a conductor on the air train?

Ali: It's like a Disneyland monorail situation.

Austin: Yeah, I don't think that there's much in the way of...

Keith: You have a monorail up there?

Austin: Um...

Keith: Down? Down there, I guess? Could be down.

[**Sylvi** laughs]

Ali: That's a Disney World exclusive thing, I'm sorry.

Austin: Yeah, I'm looking at the air train and like, it's just big compartments you shuffle into. You know?

Ali: Okay.

Austin: I don't think that there is a—I know what you mean, but...

Ali: Is there a—is there a, um... like a sign of some sort? [laughing] Like a—like a wet wet floor note cone over here.

Austin: A what?

Keith: So you want to—you want to put like, a “do not disturb” sign where we're hanging out?

Ali: Yeah. [chuckles] Uh-huh.

Sylvi: Like a maintenance sign, I think is more...

Austin: That's a different—wait, you're saying while you're hacked in, what you would like to do is start putting—

Ali: Oh, I—we—sorry, the conversation was moving towards us, like, being on this tram while it's moving.

Austin: Oh, you're not on the tram yet.

Ali: Okay. Okay.

Austin: You gotta go get to the tram.

Ali: Okay.

Austin: There are people waiting at the—at the station to move on that tram, you know?

Keith: Yeah.

Austin: We gotta make some more rolls. We better get that invisibility refrigerator up and—

Ali: [laughing] Phrygian, we gotta catch this train right now.

[**Austin** and **Sylvi** laugh]

Keith: Well, we also—it's—we—we're gonna catch the tram, but we gotta—we can pick which tram is gonna be the cool tram.

Ali: Mhm.

Keith: And then we're golden.

Austin: Mhm.

Ali: I don't know how—yeah.

Austin: I think they run probably every hour. This is a—they're not—it's not a constant tram, you know?

Keith: Right. Okay, well, let's hurry and get on this tram and not wait an hour.

Ali: Yeah.

Keith: I'm learning this as I'm looking at the—how to schedule things.

Austin: Yeah.

[**Austin** and **Ali** laugh]

Keith: “What do you know, this is the last tram for an hour. Okay, you’re right, let’s go.”

Austin: Are you go—which direction are you going?

Keith: Um, left.

Austin: Are you going—yeah, so you’re going down towards battery, not up towards transfer, right?

Keith: Yeah. We’re out—we’re outbound.

Austin: Right. Okay. Yes.

Ali: Okay. So we’re going... Four-Three.

Austin: [cross] Towards Two.

Keith: Right.

Ali: Towards Two, okay.

Keith: It’s counterintuitive that going from—oh, no, yeah, yeah, yeah. That’s definitely up—that’s One. Okay, I see. I see the one.

Austin: Yeah, One is in the middle. But the reason that it’s—it is kind of counterintuitive. The reason that it’s marked like this is it’s rotating upright. And so...

Keith: Yeah.

Austin: Number two will be in the center next, right?

Keith: Yeah.

Austin: At the next, like, beat or whatever.

Ali: Mhm.

Keith: Yeah.

Austin: That’s why it’s like this. Anyway.

Ali: And that's Battery, and then, where we want to go, [**Austin:** Yep.] and then, what's Two again?

Austin: Battery is Two.

Ali: Oh, okay, okay. And then Four is—

Austin: Three is where you want to go. Four is the transfer. Like, it's like the—the concourse that connects to the rest of the rings.

Ali: [cross] Oh, okay, yeah. So—so we're definitely going Two. Okay, yeah, yeah, yeah.

Austin: Yeah.

Ali: Yeah, yeah, yeah.

Austin: There'll be the most people—I think it's just generally... You will probably run into the most people at Four, period, in general, right? Four—

Ali: Mhm.

Keith: Because of the transfer.

Austin: Because of the transfer. And also, Four is gonna be where you're gonna get, like—even on this ring, if you want to go get a Slurpee, it's gonna be on Four. You know what I mean?

Ali: Right, yeah.

Austin: It's not a fully featured... You gotta get all the way out to the first ring if what you want is, like, some R&R, right?

Keith: Yeah.

Austin: But Four is where you're gonna get the Hudson News. You know what I—[chuckles] you know what I mean? You're gonna get—

Ali: Don't tell me about slurpees right now, man. I'm heatin' up.

[Austin laughs]

Keith: Yeah.

Ali: I gotta get out of here. [laughs]

[Dre laughs]

Austin: Ohh.

Keith: Do they have—do they have ham—

Austin: It's so fucked up that we're so funny in the middle of the highest-intensity thing.

[Ali laughs]

Keith: Do they have savory slurpees? Do they have ham slurpers?

Ali: Oh—

Sylvi: Oh, god.

Ali: Excuse me?

Keith: That's—we were talking about that last time. The burger shakes?

Janine: Ew.

Keith: Or some places call them ham slurpers?

[Ali laughs]

Austin: [cross] We gotta cut. Cut. Someone.

Janine: [cross] Ham slurpers? What the fuck?

Sylvi: "Ham slurper" was not the term used.

[group laughter]

Austin: I'm losing my mind.

Keith: Some places call them burger shakes, some places call them ham slurpers.

Janine: That's—

Austin: The next roll could end the season!

Sylvi: [laughs] You know what? I hope it does.

Janine: “Ham slurpers” is TikTok NPC shit. “Thank you for the ham slurper!”

Austin: [laughing] Thank you for the ham slurper!

Ali: [laughing] Gang gang.

Austin: [laughs] Gang gang.

Janine: Gang gang!

Sylvi: Solar combustion so good!

[group laughter]

Austin: [laughs] [muffled] Solar combustion so good. Oh, no...

Janine: No spicy!

Austin: Must—[laughs] Is that your response to the solar combustor icon? Is “no spicy!”

Keith: [cross] I don't know enough about what this is.

[raucous group laughter continues]

Austin: Mustard Red definitely does this. Mustard Red is on NPC TikTok.

Ali: Yeah.

Sylvi: Oh, my god. [laughs]

Ali: [sighing] Yeah.

Austin: It's just the Divine, Arbitrage putting in the money, too. The Divine—[chuckles]

[**Ali** laughs]

Austin: You know how Timbaland turned out to be in the—

Ali: [laughing] This is too—this is too—

Austin: Okay. We're too—people who don't know, just say "thanks, I'm glad I don't know," and move on with your lives.

Ali: Yeah.

Sylvi: Oh, so I shouldn't link Keith?

Austin: You should link Keith.

Keith: Yeah, I have to know. I have to know because of the show.

Ali: The most sexual Divine in the—[laughs]

Austin: [cackles] Alright.

Ali: Uh-huh.

The Tram

[1:06:53]

Austin: How are you getting to the tram?

Keith: Feet.

[**Dre** laughs]

Austin: Is it—it's time? Is it invisibility fridge time?

Keith: Yeah, yeah, yeah.

Ali: Yeah.

Austin: Alright.

Keith: We're doing—we're, you know, we're like, left foot, right foot, left foot, right foot.

Ali: [chuckles] Uh-huh.

Austin: Uh-huh. There are six people waiting for the tram. Not that many.

Keith: Okay.

Austin: And there are—let's say there are another three on the other side. Actually, there's ten on the other side, right? Not that many. And this tram stops at a number of places throughout the ring, so it's not just there are four stops, you know what I mean? But there are—actually, you know what, maybe that's wrong. Because there would be the one on—basically, you know what? I think the way it works is that there is—there is like one on the north—there's one on the furthest sides of both, right? And so you're at the closest part—let's just call it east and west. Alright? Does that make sense?

Ali: Mhm.

Austin: Like, towards Four and towards Two. Towards Four is east, towards Two is west. Does that make sense?

Keith: Yeah.

Austin: So there's a tram that just runs between One and Two back and forth, and there's a tram that runs between Four and One back and forth, right? And so you're on the one that's going to Two. That's what you've decided.

Ali: Mhm.

Austin: And so there's that one, and I think that one is just—there's the six people on the thing waiting to go on that tram, basically. I think—ah. Is that silly? There's probably just one tram that goes all the way around, right? Like, there shouldn't—

Keith: Because it's a ring, so...

Austin: It's a ring. Why wouldn't they just put it on—yeah.

Keith: Yeah.

Austin: Let's just say it's one. And maybe there is one that goes in both directions on each one. It's just like a subway platform. That's easier. So, yeah. So there is—there are six people on your platform, there are three people on the—sorry, there's three people on your platform. There are six people on the other side, waiting to go up to Four. More people ready to go up to Four than are on your side. This part, I don't think, is even a roll, right? Just getting to the platform, being quiet. You have to be quiet. It doesn't dampen the sound, right?

Ali: Mhm.

Austin: And you wait for the thing to show up. Now, here is where I think we have to think about a dice roll. The tram shows up. You are sweating. It's not comfortable right now, right? You're gonna be sweating this whole time. You're gonna be feverish until you're out of here. The doors are gonna open on this tram, and you can tell as it's passing you, there are a ton of people on this tram because it just came from Four. It just came from the transfer.

[**Keith** hums]

Austin: So those people are getting off here. And you have to sneak on, and not bump into anybody, and not break your fridge, which is fragile, by the way, if I remember correctly.

Keith: Yeah.

Austin: What's this look like? Who's making the dice roll?

Keith: Um... So, I think that, um... you know, I've—

Austin: Also, can you see each other?

Keith: Ooh.

Austin: You're invisible.

Keith: That's a great question.

Austin: Can you see the machine?

Keith: Oh, yeah. We got the cl—we got the radio clips on. Yeah, yeah, yeah.

Austin: Oh, you got the radio clips on. What's the radio clip look like?

Keith: Yeah, everyone that's clipped—well, it's uh—it's sort of like a—it's the, um—it's like the Bluetooth receiver.

Austin: Okay. Everyone trusts Bluetooth, so.

Keith: So it's what receives the invisibility.

Austin: Right, right.

Keith: But they're all on the same, like—

Austin: Channel.

Keith: They're the same device. So they—yeah.

Austin: Right.

Keith: So they can see each other.

Austin: Okay. And they can see the box. They can see the fridge.

Keith: Yeah.

Austin: The radio.

Keith: Yeah, yeah, yeah. The radio. Um... It's—and it is AM, because the range is not that great.

Austin: [chuckling] Okay.

[Ali chuckles]

Keith: [laughs] I think it's, you know, uh... Trains get crowded, obviously.

Austin: They sure do.

Keith: And the more crowded a train is...

Austin: And like, not everyone's getting off of this train either, right?

Keith: Right.

Austin: Because this is the one from Four. These people just got here.

Keith: Right.

Austin: This is the first stop. There's still two more stops to go that some people are gonna be riding.

Keith: Yeah.

Austin: You know, or I guess there's one more stop. Because if you're going the other direction from Four, you would have just gone right from Four to Three.

Keith: Right.

Austin: So there's still half of the people are staying on board this train, you know?

Keith: Yeah.

Austin: Actually, more than half. Because most people don't come to the solar extractor. **[Keith starts]** Most people are going to either two or three.

Keith: Well, but then wouldn't that mean that they're getting off now? Because that's where we are. We're at—

Austin: That's what I'm saying. You're at the solar extractor. That's where the least people on this train are.

Keith: Oh, sorry, sorry. What I'm thinking of is, the people who would be getting off here would be the people who are trying to transfer to other rings, which theoretically would be a lot of people, right?

Austin: No, because, the—oh, oh, no, no, no. They would have gotten off at—they would have gone to f—this train, this tram is coming from Four, [**Keith:** Right.] which is the transfer.

Keith: Oh, okay.

Austin: So they were just there.

Keith: Gotcha.

Austin: That's why it's so big.

Keith: Right. Okay.

Austin: No one would have come this way that got—

Keith: But it's rotated since. That's what's—that's why I'm seeing—

Austin: Yeah, correct. That's why Four—

Keith: —One as the transfer spot.

Austin: Right. One is at the middle, but it's not a transfer dock, correct, yes.

Keith: Right, yeah. Even though they're crossed, it's not transferable right now.

Austin: It's not—there's—that—all that entire thing is not there explicitly so they can—

Keith: [cross] Won't be until it's back at Four again.

Austin: Exactly. So that they can watch everybody who goes from one ring to another on, [**Keith:** Yeah.] you know, twice a day or whatever, you know?

Keith: Yeah. Well, eventually a train gets so compact that you can't help but be pressed up against someone. But until that point, everyone is trying to sort of, you know, get their two inches from, you know, of space, [**Austin:** Mhm.] so that they're not crammed in. And I think—I think that we've just got to like, find that slice.

Austin: And hope that no one else decides, oh, look, a big empty slice for me to go stand in.

Keith: Yeah. Or the—we could go the total other way, [**Austin:** Uh-huh.] and go somewhere that is so cramped that you don't even notice that, like, the thing that you're bumping into isn't even there.

Austin: Right. You're like, you think it's just the person next to you is bumping.

Keith: Right.

Austin: Right. Which is it?

Keith: [sighs] Obviously, I think the second one is worse, [chuckling] because it's much higher risk.

[**Ali** chuckles]

Austin: Mhm.

Keith: It's definitely higher risk to intentionally put yourself in the way of everyone and hope that they think that they're bumping into someone else when they're bumping into you.

Austin: Right.

Janine: You could also just like, put something gross on the floor. Everyone will avoid it.

Ali: This is what I'm saying. Funny sign. Wet floor sign.

Keith: Yeah, we can have another crew member throw up.

Ali: [laughs] Okay.

Keith: Routine's—not Routine.

Austin: Routine—

Keith: Midnite's already thrown up, right? So let's make Routine throw up.

Austin: Right, right.

Ali: No...

Keith: And we'll stand in it.

Janine: That's how it works, though, on public transit [**Keith:** Yeah, yeah.] is like, if it's—if there's like, water on the seat, no one's gonna take that risk.

Keith: Look. This is—this is the—we are risking the life and death of the galaxy—or of 25 solar systems.

Ali: [laughs] Uh-huh. Someone's gotta ralph.

Keith: If someone has to shit on the floor to make it happen...

[**Ali** laughs]

Sylvi: Jesus christ.

Austin: In this heat?

Ali: Alise Breka's—

Janine: In this economy?

[**Austin** and **Keith** laugh]

Sylvi: Oh, wow.

[**Austin** groans]

Keith: Everyone give it a—everyone will give a wide berth.

[**Ali** chuckles]

Sylvi: [chuckles] Alise Breka's "Wide Berth" is a different book.

[**Keith** and **Ali** laugh]

Keith: Well, this is—

Austin: Gallows humor tonight, folks.

Dre: Did I miss the group chat where everyone was like, we're just gonna get fuckin' high [laughing] before we record the podcast?

[**Austin** laughs]

Keith: I'm like this every week!

Austin: Yeah, I think people are—I think people are punchy. For reasons.

Ali: It's a stressful time.

Dre: It is.

Janine: Yeah.

Austin: This is a Weather the Storm. This feels like [**Keith:** Yeah.] Defy to me.

Ali: Mhm.

Keith: Oh, there is one more idea, and Ali, it was the thing that you said like five minutes before we actually went to the tram, which is, can we find a, like, wet floor sign, or out of order sign or something.

Austin: Right.

Ali: Yeah.

Austin: Um... I don't know, let's roll a die. Let's roll a—let's roll a luck die.

Keith: [chuckles] We're gonna roll an idea die? That's rare.

[**Ali** chuckles]

Austin: I mean, like, could you find one? You know, I'm not gonna make you roll—

Keith: Oh, you're saying roll a die to see if we can find a sign.

Ali: Okay.

Austin: If you happen to find a sign, right, like?

Keith: Yeah.

Austin: I don't know. I don't think—like, let's say you're on a subway platform.

Keith: Yeah.

Austin: That you'd never been on before.

Keith: Yeah.

Austin: Could you find one of those?

Keith: Right. I could roll—

Austin: And the answer is like, probably not, but... maybe.

Keith: Yeah. But maybe. Is—

Ali: I'm rolling a 1d2.

Keith: Is this a—

Austin: No, no, it's not a 1d2. It's not a 1d2.

Keith: Is it a Read the Room?

Austin: I mean, I guess this is the thing. I'll let you Read the Room.

Keith: Right.

Austin: If you want to Read the Room.

Ali: Okay, sure.

Austin: I was trying to prevent you from having to roll dice in that way. Right?

Keith: Okay, sure.

Austin: But yeah, you could Read the Room or Dispel Uncertainties to try to find it properly. I don't think you could Dispel Uncertainties. I don't think you're clarifying the unknown by—or answering a question in that exact way. I think you would be [Keith: Mhm.] reading the room to get insight, probably.

Keith: Yeah.

Austin: I guess while you are hacked in, you could Dispel Uncertainties to be like, “and where’s the sign storage?”

[**Keith** chuckles] [**Ali** laughs]

Keith: Um... No, I like—I like your chance. I’ll take your chance die.

Austin: Alright. This is a 5 or a 6 on a 1d6.

Keith: Okay.

Austin: Or a 3 on a 1d3. You tell me how you want to roll it.

Keith: We’ll do the d6.

Austin: Okay. 5 or a 6 on a 1d6.

Keith: 5.

Austin: Hey! That’s a 5.

Ali: Let’s go.

Keith: Sometimes you find a sign.

Austin: Sometimes you find a sign.

Ali: Sometimes you find a sign.

Austin: What’s the sign say?

Keith: [laughing] “Someone pooped here.”

[**Ali** chuckles]

Sylvi: “Shitty seat.” [chuckles]

Keith: [laughing] It’s not a sign. It’s a plaque. It’s a commemorative—

Austin: Okay.

Keith: [laughing] It's a commemorative plaque.

Austin: This is a real giving yourself homework situation. I said, "what could it say?" And you said "nothing useful."

[**Keith** continues laughing]

Sylvi: [laughing] You said "poopy pantses."

Keith: Um... [laughs]

[**Dre** laughs]

Ali: [laughing] Keith.

Keith: Okay. Okay, okay.

[**Keith** continues laughing] [**Sylvi** laughs]

Keith: Um, no, I think it's a... I think it's a, um... It's like a wet floor, wet seat sign.

Austin: Wet floor, wet seat.

Keith: Wet floor/wet seat. You don't want to—no one wants to sit on a wet seat.

Austin: Well, it's like, really scary in this situation if something's wet, right? One, you're on the space nuke.

Keith: Yeah.

Austin: Two, nothing stays wet here.

Keith: Right, so what is it?

Austin: It's so hot. So what could it be that's resisting evaporating? Uh-oh, don't go near there.

Keith: Yeah.

[**Ali** hums]

Austin: I'll give you advantage on this roll to Defy—well, you don't—sorry, I won't, because you have to place it first. But then what I will do is say you can ride the tram, because no one will come near you. You still got to get in, and you got to find the place, and you got to set it up—

Keith: Okay.

Austin: You have to slip it—'cause, wait, it doesn't have a radio clip on, does it?

Keith: No, but—

Austin: Do you like, keep it inside your jacket?

Keith: What if I told you that, of course, the radio came with four clips?

Ali: [laughing] No.

Keith: What, it comes with three clips? That's weird.

Ali: We have these disguises. Somebody should move out of the cloak.

Keith: [cross] I can do it. I can duck out, I can take off my clip, I can look like I have tubes. I can look—I can look like an Equiaxed.

Austin: Uh-huh. This is what—yeah.

Ali: This is defiant.

Austin: Oh, it's defiant, alright.

[Ali laughs]

Austin: Are you gonna spend a Soldier move on this?

Keith: No.

Austin: Okay. Defy Danger. And this is what? This is you're putting on—what does this disguise look like?

Keith: This is, like—this is like a jumpsuit, this is like a—

Austin: Tom Cruise face. Uh-huh.

Keith: This is a Tom Cruise face. This is a jumpsuit. It's a, like, um—it's like a work cap.

Austin: Yeah. Yeah, yeah, yeah. I got you. And then tubes. You have your own tubes, your own cables.

Keith: Right. Yeah, yeah, yeah. I just slacken up—

Austin: Which are close to tubes, yeah.

Keith: I just slacken up the wires and you know, have it—you know, when you pull a shoelace weird, and you get it kind of sticking out.

Austin: Yeah.

Keith: I do that, like, kind of like on my neck and stuff.

Austin: You kind of peeked ahead at these people to be like, "I kind of get how the cables and the tubes work."

Keith: Yeah, yeah.

Austin: But you're going human. You're not going Equiaxed. You're going human.

Keith: Right. Yeah.

Austin: Okay.

Keith: Yeah.

Austin: I'm just asking.

Keith: Um, am I going Equiaxed? I think that I can—I think that Phrygian, like—you take a glance at Phrygian, [**Austin:** Right.] they look more Equiaxed than they look human.

Austin: Sure, but you can put on this—you're putting on this Mission Impossible face mask.

Keith: But I have—yes, but I do have a very—I have a face-shaped face, so.

Austin: Right, right. You do.

Keith: I might as well do the human mask.

Austin: Okay. Defy Danger.

Keith: I almost just typed—

Austin: How—okay. And so you're leaving behind—you're walking, the tram pulls up. The doors open. "Watch the gap." People get off.

Keith: Yeah.

Austin: People are about to get on. You go on ahead of the invisible people? Or do you all go on together, but Phrygian has the clip off in this moment?

Keith: I think it's together. I could even be... Yeah, it's definitely—no, I've got to go on first, because no one can see that the sign isn't there until I put it.

Austin: Right. And then everyone else is rushing over to you, and then you're putting the clip back on and disappearing in plain sight.

Keith: Yeah.

Austin: And everyone—and hopefully no one's noticed. You've waited until everyone coughs and looks the other direction or something.

Keith: Yeah.

Austin: A kid starts breakdancing. And they're like, "oh." That's not happening. That's not happening on these trains. No breakdancing.

Keith: Yeah.

Austin: There's also a big sign that says "no dancing."

Keith: "No dancing."

Austin: Alright.

Keith: The priest says that dancing is a sin.

Austin: That's right.

[Ali chuckles]

Austin: 2d6 plus your—

Keith: 3? 3d6? This is the—from the sign?

Austin: No, no, I said the sign does not give you advantage.

Keith: Oh, it's not.

Austin: The sign is what's making it possible for you to keep this thing all the way through from One to Three [Keith: Okay.] without anybody coming over to stand near you.

Keith: Okay.

Austin: I think that's what it's getting, but you're—like, carrying the sign isn't giving you extra [Keith: Yeah.] advantage on this.

Keith: Sure.

Austin: Well, without this maneuver, you would be in trouble, because you'd have to continue to try and pass people.

Keith: Right, we'd have to Weather the Storm the whole time instead of Defying it here.

Ali: Mhm.

Austin: At least once per little side, right? But...

Keith: Yeah.

Austin: Let's do it. 2d6 plus—

Keith: 3.

Austin: What's your—is that what your—

Keith: Defy, yeah.

Austin: Your Defy is?

Keith: Yeah.

Austin: Yeah. 2d6 plus 3, that's a good roll. Let's see. It's a good dice—good stat.

Keith: 14.

Austin: That's a good roll. 14.

Ali: [quietly] Oh my god. [exhales]

Keith: [relieved exhale]

Austin: You head in. Everyone's looking at you like, "huh? What?" You put the sign down. What's your—do you do a little gesture at everybody?

Keith: Uh, this is like the look and, like, sort of... it's like a motionless nod, you just sort of give a sort of like, "I see you" sort of nod.

Austin: Mhm.

Keith: Like the "I passed you in a hallway and we live in the same building" kind of like, "hey" nod.

Austin: Mhm. Yeah. Now, thankfully, this has not set you back because you're just on the tram. The tram—this tram has the AC.

Keith: Yeah.

Austin: But I will let you know that if it wasn't for the tram, you would be behind schedule right now, because you stopped to look for that sign. You know?

Keith: Yeah.

Austin: But, you know, I'm giving it to you, you set the tram up for the AC.

Keith: Right.

Austin: The AC is pumping into that tram.

Keith: If we missed this tram, or gone on a different car—

Austin: Oh, you're done. You'd have to go hack it again.

Ali: Mhm.

Keith: We'd have to go hack it again, yeah.

Austin: Yeah, yeah, yeah. A hundred percent. A hundred percent. And then at that point, you're like, oh boy, it's extra risky because—

Keith: And we have to wait an hour, so we'd have to find somewhere safe to wait for an hour.

Austin: Mhm. Mhm. And now, Brnine—

Keith: This is the first—this is—this looks like spy movie stuff. This is like, finally we did something that, like, you look at someone and they look at you and they acknowledge you, and then they sort of look away and you're gone.

Austin: And you're gone. "Wait a second, I thought I just saw—who put the—must have slipped into the other train car."

Keith: Right, yeah.

Austin: You know? Yeah.

Keith: Just a thing that your brain deletes because you're—because you're not expecting—who would break into this place? We'd blow up the universe.

Austin: Yeah. Yeah, okay. Let's go back to the moon.

[**Keith** exhales]

Chimera's Lantern

[1:23:10]

Austin: Did you think about what you might say to the Chimeric Cadent, Figure?

Dre: Boy. I don't—correct me if I'm wrong, my memory is bad.

Austin: Yeah, yeah.

Dre: I don't remember anything about chimeras or the Chimeric Cadent in...

Austin: This is all new to you.

Dre: Yeah.

Austin: I mean, you know this is called Chimera's Lantern.

Dre: Sure.

Austin: You know that that's the name of the moon.

[Dre hums]

Sylvi: Ohh.

Austin: Yeah. Kind of just straightforward.

Sylvi: Yeah.

Dre: Gotcha. It's the moon's Cadent, got it.

Sylvi: Cadent—hey, am I right in remembering that Cadent was like, a very important figure in the Twilight Mirage?

Austin: It sure was.

Sylvi: And the Divine Fleet specifically?

Austin: Yes, the Cadent was the head of the the religion known as the Resonant Orbit, which was also the effective government of the fleet, the Divine Fleet, [Sylvi:

Right, yeah.] from which the Divine Principality was partially born, eventually. The Divine Fleet became the Divine Free States, the Divine Free States became the part of—half of the Divine Principality at its origin, the other half being the Principality of Kesh, hence the Divine Principality. The—during that process, the Cadent was sort of made secondary in power back then. There was a whole attempted coup, there was a bunch of shit. You know? Twilight Mirage happened a long time ago. I don't expect people to like, care about who the Cadent was then. There was, of course, also another Cadent. There was the one who had ice powers, the Waking Cadent, who showed up and was like, "y'all are fucking everything up. I have mean feelings about everything."

Keith: Oh, yeah, the Waking Cadent. I forgot about the Waking Cadent.

Austin: Mhm.

Dre: Mhm.

Austin: Yeah. Uh, none of the Cadents we saw were bat people, I would say.

Dre: It's true.

Austin: Let alone giant bat-people modeled loosely after that big skeleton from [chuckles] Dark Souls 3.

Dre: Sure. Austin, now, it would be funny as fuck if while the other party is trying to not, like, sweat to death, [Austin: Yeah.] you gave us a big bat monster that also had ice powers.

Austin: That would be so funny. That'd be really funny. I mean—

Dre: Do we need to like, take five for you to revise this and—or are we good?

Austin: No, I mean, I can just give a thing ice powers. Boom.

Dre: Okay.

[Ali chuckles]

Austin: They got ice powers.

Dre: Ha ha ha ha.

Keith: This is the ice powers that he took from us last game.

[**Dre** laughs]

Austin: Yeah, uh-huh. That's right. Yeah. High Lord Wolnir is the Dark Souls boss that I'm very much like, [**Dre:** Oh.] yeah, this is that motherfucker. What if—what if—I'll timestamp link y'all, but y'all can look it up, you know, on your own—on your own times at home. You know, sometimes a big skeleton shows up, and this isn't a skeleton, this is just a desiccated corpse with bat wings, and—again, up close, there are parts of it that also feel insectoid, including bits of the leathery wings occasionally straight-up become, like, the sort of, um... glistening thin translucent insectoid wings, you know? It's like it moves between bat leather and, like, insectoid—in fact, I think now that you're this close to it, too, you can see pretty straightforward that—you know the mosaics I've been talking about?

Dre: Mhm.

Austin: They are from—they are parts of this. The places that looked like they were skinless are in fact like, chitinless. There are big giant bits of broken insect chitin all around the floor of this massive throne room, basically, that fell off of the Chimeric Cadent. And at some point, this is the type of thing that was used to decorate the mosaic gyratory and the other mosaiced walls here.

[pause]

Dre: Huh.

The Figure - Part 1

[1:27:21]

Austin: Uh-huh. Anyway, seems like you were asked a question. It was just like, “who are you? What do you want? What do you want with the Chimeric Cadent?”

Dre: Yeah. Oh, boy. I know what I want. I don't know how to put it in, like, in character words.

Austin: Let's start, maybe, then, with "who are you", right?

Dre: Yeah.

Austin: This is kind of what was asked primarily.

Dre: Sure.

Dre (as **Figure**): I'm the Figure.

Austin (as **Chimeric Cadent**): The Figure. How did you find me, Figure?

Dre (as **Figure**): In a library, on the planet of Palisade.

Austin (as **Chimeric Cadent**): Whose library?

Dre: What was that place called?

Austin: The Isle of the Broken Key, the Glass Archive. It was the Glass Archive.

Dre: Okay, then yeah.

Austin: It was the—as a reminder, it was like the last kind of memory, the last, like, backup of an ancient prediction engine called Crystal Palace.

Dre: Okay. Then yeah, I say the Glass Archive.

Austin (as **Chimeric Cadent**): Why shouldn't we kill you where you stand, Figure?

Dre (as **Figure**): Well, I did not come here to seek violence in this place.

Austin (as **Chimeric Cadent**): No, only power, I assume.

Dre: You said that the Cadent is like, shackled here?

Austin: The Cadent seemed to have shackled—

Dre: Itself?

Austin: Yeah.

Dre: Okay.

Austin: To the throne, which, again, is this giant thing, but is, you know, a third the size of the Cadent?

Dre: Yeah.

Dre (as **Figure**): I only seek enough power to remove my own shackles.

Austin: This, to me, sounds—

Dre: Oh, good.

Austin: —like you are engaging someone in debate, or trying to bring someone over to your side.

Dre: Mhm.

Austin: I think I need you to Exchange Blows with Talk [**Dre:** Sick.] as you try to bring the Chimeric Cadent onto your side.

Dre: Okay. I'm gonna roll, and then if it goes real bad, I have an idea.

Austin: Okay.

Dre: 'Cause I'm negative 1 with talk.

Austin: You sure are. So that's 2d6 plus 1. That's a 7. 6 plus 2 minus—

Janine: [cross] You've still got your Hold, right? To ask questions and stuff?

Dre: Um, yes. I don't think I get any questions out of this, do I?

Austin: No, this is just traditional—this is Exchange Blows. Like, this is a fight at this point, right?

Dre: Yeah, yeah, yeah.

Austin: So, on a 7 to 9, both you and your target are forced to take a Risk. I think that the Chimeric Cadent is taking the Risk "Curious" at your answer. What Risk are you taking, Figure?

Dre: Boy, that's a great question. Um... god. Uh... Unsteady.

Austin: Hm.

Dre: I didn't know what to expect coming up to this moon.

Austin: Mhm.

Dre: It is—it certainly was not any of this. Yeah, “has the ick.” That's—[laughing] yes, Janine.

Austin: Yeah. That was a good one.

Austin (as **Chimeric Cadent**): We were priestess, and queen, and goddess, and dream. We have been deceived many times by those who told us they simply wanted to remove their shackles. Why should we trust that gaining power from this place, you won't use it to shackle others?

[pause]

Dre: Is there, um... is there any roll that is enabled or bettered by, like, using one of your Hooks to fuel it or direct it?

Austin: So, let's talk about Hooks. The way Hooks work is that when you take an action that requires you to sacrifice, outgrow, or otherwise conclude one of your Hooks, cross that Hook off permanently. You may then immediately take an advancement and act with Confidence if the Hook was Deep.

Dre: Okay. Um...

Keith: Take an advancement regardless, and act in Confidence if it was Deep, or both of them are only if the Hook is Deep?

Austin: I believe that that's correct.

Keith: Okay.

Austin: I do believe that's correct, because of the way the comma is. The comma here is "you may then immediately take an advancement," comma, "and act with Confidence if the Hook was Deep."

Keith: Yeah, that makes sense.

Austin: So that's—that's the way my grammar sense makes sense.

Dre: Yeah. I would like to sacrifice my Hook, or I guess outgrow my Hook.

Austin: Mhm. Which one?

Dre: "I've lived two lies, I would happily die for the truth."

Austin: Well, and that's a Deep Hook.

Dre: Yeah.

Austin: So feel free to take an advancement.

Dre: Mhm.

Austin: If you want to pocket that for now—

Dre: Yeah.

Austin: I think that's fine for the situation at hand, figure it out later.

Keith: I do have a vague memory—this is—this might not be applicable, but it might. I have a vague memory of something in the book that's like, if you, like—if you, like, take an advancement in the middle of a Sortie, you—

Austin: This is correct.

Keith: If you take a move immediately, you get Confidence on the move, on using that move right away?

Austin: On using that move, yeah. Though Dre already has Confidence because of the—

Dre: I already have that, yeah.

Keith: Oh, I thought that one was Confidence and one was, uh—

Austin: Advantage?

Keith: Advantage.

Austin: I'll double-check it.

Keith: I could be—I could be wrong, and it could be both the same, and then it wouldn't matter. But if you do have a move that you want to take, then you can move right away.

Austin: I suspect—my suspicion is—yeah, we'll talk about it off-mic.

Keith: Yeah, yeah, yeah.

Austin: But I will double-check it really quick. Uh... Yeah, I don't see that here. I think—I suspect it might be—that might be getting full Spotlight or something, also.

Keith: Mhm.

Dre: [hums] Okay.

Austin: I'm not sure. Yeah, Spotlight. "Once you have six Spotlight, you may spend it at anytime to take center stage, and immediately gain an advancement. If you make a move, you can act with Confidence to use it right now." So, yeah.

Keith: Okay.

Austin: That's only from that, though.

Keith: Okay, yeah.

Austin: Not for... So, having outgrown that.

Dre: Yeah.

Austin: What do you—what are you now doing?

Dre: So, the Chimeric Cadent basically says "how do we know that you won't then use your power to shackle others?"

Austin: Shackle others, yeah.

Dre: Yeah.

Dre (as **Figure**): I have lived—well, I’ve lived one full life and I’m living a second. And I spent so much of this second life only focused on the person who shackled me. It wasn’t until very recently that I thought much of or remembered much of my first life. But what I do remember is that even as someone with very little power, that is what I did. Unknowingly, but nonetheless, I shackled many young people. I have lived two lives, and it would take a third to make things right.

Austin: Alright, with Confidence. Let’s see that, uh—that Exchange Blows with Talk.

Dre: How does Confidence work again?

Austin: 1s count as 6s.

Dre: Okay.

Austin: 2d6 plus—or it’s 2d6 minus 1. Right?

Dre: Yep.

Austin: [sympathetic exclamation]

Dre: Woof.

Sylvi: Wow.

Austin: Unfortunately, a 2 and a 5. Not great.

Dre: Okay, hold on.

Austin: Uh-huh.

Dre: Now, I’ve got an idea.

Austin: Mhm.

Dre: I still have—

Keith: [cross] Oh, that 1's a 6.

Austin: That's not—there's no 1.

Dre: That's a minus 1.

Keith: Yep, that 1.

Sylvi: Oh, so it's minus 6.

Dre: Yeah, so it's a negative 1, let's go. [laughs]

Austin: That's not how it works.

Sylvi: Circles back around, success.

Dre: So I've got that plus 1 Hold that you said can be used on the regular moves, and then class moves?

Austin: That is correct.

Dre: Okay, I have 2 Hold out of 3 in my Hot-Blooded move.

Austin: You sure do.

Dre: So I'll use this to get a third.

Austin: Yep, which reads?

Dre: "When you Heat Up, Hold 1. You may spend 3 Hold gained in this way to succeed at a move as if you had rolled a 10 plus."

Austin: Boom.

Sylvi: Ooh.

Janine: Sick.

Austin: I love that. What's that look like?

Janine: Wow.

The Figure - Part 2

[1:35:51]

Austin: What do you—I mean, I think that you immediately sense doubt in such a thing. I think—I think, in fact, the Chimeric Cadent says,

Austin (as **Chimeric Cadent**): Three lives? It took you three lives to know not to shackle others? It took us three lives to learn that even one spent shackling should have—no. No second chance.

Austin: And at this point, just tell me what that hot-blooded response looks like. I mean, I think, maybe goes even further and says,

Austin (as **Chimeric Cadent**): You've given us all the evidence we need. Remain still, we will keep it from being painful.

Austin: And begins to lift one of its massive hands as if to squish you like a bug. So how does your hot-blooded auto success stay the Chimeric Cadent's hand?

Dre: [hums] [quietly] Oh, boy.

Austin: Give me some hot-bloodedness.

Dre: Yeah.

Austin: Again, this isn't a dice roll. You've succeeded. I just want to know what it looks like.

Dre: They say,

Dre (as **Figure**): If what you feel and say you believe is true, then I don't deserve it to be quick.

Dre: And they slump to their knees on the floor.

Austin: And they slam their hands down around you, and, you know, huge, loud, echoing, you know, stop. And it—if anybody had been, you know, close who was not a giant mech, would be, you know, completely have lost their hearing for the

next—for a while, right? And then they close their hands around the Devil's Two Front Teeth and lift you up to face them. And their eyes are like jewels. Despite it all, you look closer, [chuckles] and they begin to peer into you. They move you around like a doll, or a mirror. They're looking for bits of themselves in you. And also, are... sensing something.

Austin (as **Chimeric Cadent**): We almost believe you, but you carry their scent on you. Our ancient enemy. You bring them here. Iconoclast.

Austin: And they drop you to the ground from a hundred feet up.

Austin (as **Chimeric Cadent**): The mark of the worst of us. Those who would reject materiality in pursuit of an impossible idea. Those who could not see compassion because of philosophical desire. You are a bomb, even if you don't know it.

Austin: Unfortunately, they have sensed the Usher of Truth on you.

[Dre hums]

Austin: Something that you sense on you, too, as in this moment, nearing the last moment that the Witch in Glass still has control over you, she reaches from below and begins to pull at you. We've talked a lot about gravity here. We've talked a lot about the literal sense of being pulled in different directions. Your head is being pulled back. You can feel it bending backwards, further into the cockpit, as if a leash is being tugged all the way back on Palisade, trying to pull you home. Pull you back to her side.

Austin (as **Witch in Glass**): Where are you?

Austin: She asks.

Austin (as **Witch in Glass**): I have such powers to share.

Austin: She says.

Austin (as **Witch in Glass**): I've unlocked dreams themselves.

Austin: I feel for Figure, but—

Dre: Yeah, sure.

Austin: You're kind of caught between two very strange sources of power right now.

Dre: Mhm.

Austin: Though also, I guess I'd say, it's not clear that the source of power—like, the most powerful thing, the thing that controls the power here, is the Chimeric Cadent. But I wouldn't go so far as to say that you get the sense that you'd be trading one master for another.

Dre: Yeah.

Austin: This seems like someone who is not as interested in that, given all of the talk about not shackling other things, you know?

Dre: Mhm. Am I able to physically resist and move?

Austin: Yeah. Yeah, yeah, you can totally still move, but there is the sense of being pulled. You can still talk, you can still plead your case. And again, just to reiterate, it is unfortunate that your current master, the Witch in Glass, and then your previous encounters with Kenneth Marian Colver, who'd made a deal with the Usher of Truth, means that you quite literally have been a portal for the Iconoclasts before.

Dre: Yeah, yeah.

Austin: And this figure, the Chimeric Cadent, who now claims to have been three different people—

Dre: That's fun.

Austin: —seems to have been an ancient enemy of the Iconoclasts.

[Ali hums]

Dre: Okay.

Keith: I mean, that's a good sign.

Austin: Yeah, no, totally.

Dre: Um, what Risk did they end up taking?

Austin: Their first Risk was—oh, wait, you didn't—right, right, right, because you got a 10 on the second one, right?

Dre: Yeah, so they have to take another Risk.

Austin: So they do have to take a Risk here. I think—I think Ruminant. They are now deep in their own thoughts about their own past. [**Dre** hums] They are ruminating.

Dre: Well...

Austin: And maybe even turn their back to you, right? They, like, shuffle around, shuffles around the throne, you know?

Dre: Mhm.

Austin: A little King Vendrick here, too, pulling on all my Dark Souls stuff, right? The throne itself, like, screeches. The shackle, you know, tying it to this big body, and it dragging across the ground.

Dre: [hums] Yeah, I just, full thr—if I can still use my mech.

Austin: Yeah.

Dre: I full throttle just, like, take off towards the Cadent, screaming,

Dre (as **Figure**): Don't let her take me again.

Austin: [hums] Alright. 2d6 minus 1. Oh, Figure.

Dre: Mhm.

Austin: Let's see.

[pause]

Austin: [exhales] 7.

Dre: So we just got there.

Austin: Just there. So yet again, you both take a Risk.

[**Ali** chuckles]

Dre: Mhm.

Austin: And because of the nice flexibility of this, I think that there is—you were rolling Talk, right?

Dre: Yeah.

Austin: But I do think that, you know, they turn and swat you away, and crumple your engines behind you, you know, as you hit the ground. So take Grounded as your Risk. You know, you could bang those dents out, you could rewire, you could maybe like, re—go to, like, the backup engines or something, [**Dre:** Mhm.] if you wanted to, after you get to cool down, but you are Defenseless, and so is—so is the Chimeric Cadent, who—sorry, you should have taken—you should—I always forget that you give Risks to yourself. My bad.

Dre: Oh, that's fine.

Austin: So if you want something else, you could take it.

Dre: Nah, crumpled is good. Or Grounded is good, yeah.

Austin: Love to hear crumpled. Or Grounded, yeah. Yeah, I don't think you've been crumpled. I think that might be too hard. [**Dre** laughs] That might be too brutal. And I think here, we have Sympathetic is the one that they take, their third, making them Defenseless. Um... do they give you more here, do they... Yeah, I know what they say.

Austin (as **Chimeric Cadent**): So desperate for a third life. Here, in the one place that death is sacred. Are you sure you wish to live again, Figure? Or like the Divines here in this tomb, would you simply prefer to rest? We will guard you. You have earned that.

Dre (as **Figure**): I want to make it as right as I can.

Austin: Alright, Strike Decisively.

Dre: Oh, yeah. Boy, that's—

Austin: When you Strike Decisively against someone who's Defenseless, roll plus Talk.

[**Dre** laughs]

Austin: Minus 1.

Dre: Ah.

Austin: 5 plus 2 makes 6.

Janine: Can I help?

Keith: Jeez.

Austin: How—

Sylvi: Yeah, can we—

Austin: How do you help?

[**Sylvi** chuckles]

Janine: I've been like, biting back. I feel like when Figure got crumpled, Thisbe would have dismounted Mow and like, tried to go over and like—I don't know. Like, I have this image in the moment, it's—it reminds me of like, in Nier: Automata when there's like, the little robot trying to take care of the other robot that's dead.

Austin: Uh-huh, yeah.

Janine: And being like, "I need to bring the water," and like—[laughs]

Austin: Uh-huh.

Janine: There's, in my head, just like a—just like, maybe like a chunk or something came off the Devil's Two Front Teeth [**Austin:** Yeah.] and Thisbe's like, "oh, we have to pick that—we can't leave that behind." Like, if we have to leave really fast, if this breaks, like, real bad, we can't leave that behind. It's important—

Austin: God, did it lose one of its teeth?

Janine: Aw.

Austin: Did one of its teeth break off?

Dre: Yeah, yeah.

Austin: That's kind of fun. Yeah, okay. I'm happy to have you both, like—I think the whole crew running down there is quite good. You know?

Janine: Mhm.

Austin: Everybody running down to Figure's side in this moment. I'm trying to remember who has—who's helped Figure before in this run, in this thing. Because, as always, Helped and Hindered is "you've spent meaningful time together before this Sortie," "is part of one of your Hooks," and "they've Helped or Hindered you previously this Sortie." So it was—Figure, have you helped anybody this—

Janine: [cross] The whole reason we're here is to help Figure.

Austin: No, I know. But you know what I mean.

Janine: Yeah.

Austin: The move "has Figure Helped or Hindered anyone else" [**Dre:** Oh...] gives you—would give you another bonus to the roll.

Dre: I think yes, but now I can't remember.

Keith: There's definitely been helping on that side. I just don't know who was doing it.

Austin: There's been helping on this side, for sure, yeah. I can't quite remember either.

Dre: What do you roll when you're helping?

Austin: It's—it's what I just said. It's 2d6 plus "have you spent time together," so it's at least a plus 1.

Dre: Okay.

Austin: Then it's "are they part of your Hooks," which would be plus 2, [**Dre:** Yeah.] and then it's "have they Helped or Hindered you yet this thing."

Dre: Gotcha.

Austin: Uh, and—

Dre: Fuck, I don't remember.

Austin: I think you—you went down the big hole. Classic.

Janine: Mhm.

Dre: Mhm.

Austin: You—when would you have helped? It would have been in the big fight, probably, that you helped with, right?

Janine: The invisible appearance stuff.

Austin: The invisible appearance stuff. What's the invisible appearance stuff?

Janine: Like, being invisible and taking the heat of the first strike.

[**Dre** hums]

Austin: Yeah, I don't remember. I don't think that they Helped or Hindered.

Dre: Yeah, I'm not seeing anywhere else where like, somebody rolled something and then I rolled right after.

Austin: That's what you'd be looking for. That's what you would—[**Dre:** Yeah.] that's exactly what you'd be looking for. So I think it's plus 2. I think it's gonna be 2d6 plus 2. Or, sorry, I don't know if that's true. Does anybody have a Hook with Figure? Is Figure covered in one of these Hooks? I guess, yes, "my presence is a liability to my operants." Figure is one of your operants. So...

Janine: Okay.

Austin: So yeah, 2d6 plus 2.

[pause]

Janine: That's 11.

Austin: That's an 11.

Dre: Friendship.

Austin: So, that means that you get one more die to roll with advantage. You basically get advantage here, Dre. So you're gonna roll one more die, you need it to be a 3, 4, 5, or 6.

Keith: Good luck.

Janine: Make it happen.

[Dre exhales]

Janine: You got this.

[someone grimaces]

[Dre laughs]

Janine: What the fuck?

Keith: Ooh, boy.

Dre: The dice don't want it, man.

Austin: That's a 2.

Dre: I—hm.

[Austin hums]

Keith: There is something.

Dre: I have a question.

Austin: Mhm.

Dre: This doesn't count as a roll I made in my mech, does it?

[**Sylvi** laughs]

Austin: You're in your mech. I mean, what's your—

Janine: You are, right?

Dre: Just—just from using Heat Up. [chuckles]

Austin: Wait, what do you mean?

Dre: “When you push your Astir to its limits and start to Heat Up, you may take Overheating to retry a roll.”

Austin: Oh, no, you have not pushed your Astir to your limits here.

Dre: Yeah, yeah, yeah.

Austin: No, I appreciate it.

Dre: I don't know, it's pretty crumpled, Austin. [laughs]

Janine: It got dropped and broken.

Keith: I thought that you dropped “crumpled” for Grounded.

Janine: I just picked up its teeth and it's called—it's called the Teeth and I got its teeth out here.

Austin: Sorry, but that's not what this roll was. Right?

Janine: Eh.

Dre: Yeah, yeah, yeah. No, you're right.

Austin: I'm just being, I—listen, tell me if I'm wrong.

Dre: No, you're not.

Austin: Is that how—I don't know how the move works. I'm asking you how the move works, yeah.

Keith: I don't know—I don't know Figure's—

Dre: I think Figure is pushing themselves to the limit, but that is different than pushing their Astir to it.

Keith: Ah.

Austin: Yeah. That is what I was asking, yes. Yeah.

Keith: I don't know Figure's moves, like, back and front, but there is one quick thing that you could go back and do that would get this.

[Dre hums]

Keith: And you could give yourself 1 in Talk and that—

Austin: Yeah.

[Dre laughs]

Keith: —that 2d6 minus 1 could be a 2d6. And that 6 would be a 7.

Austin: Yeah. I—

Dre: You know what's funny is that before we started this, I thought I was gonna put my extra plus 1 from Let Loose into Talk, and then I was like, "mm, no, I'm gonna put it in Sense."

Austin: Wow.

Dre: Yeah. It's great.

Austin: Incredible.

Dre: It's great.

Austin: Incredible. Yeah. On a Strike Decisively that you miss, let's see. I'm just gonna double-check that there aren't special rules...

Keith: What's your Spotlight at, by the way?

Austin: Great question.

Dre: Uh...

Keith: Because this is—there's a couple of failed rolls in here. You might—

Dre: Oh, boy. Yeah, I have not—I need to... so, let's see.

Austin: You should go—you figure that out, yeah. On a—

Keith: You might have a second level up.

Dre: Oh, it's 2 Spotlight.

Austin: Yeah.

Dre: So, one away.

Austin: One away.

Keith: Ooh, one away.

The Figure - Part 3

[1:50:39]

Austin: Um... This is the—you know, here's—it's as simple as this. The—you have the sympathy of the Chimeric Cadent. You are moments from being gifted what you want. And the Witch in Glass feels it.

Dre: Mhm.

Austin: And so, the pull on your neck becomes tighter and tighter. The concrete that has been your body, the top of your head, that kind of dark gray, begins to snap and crack. I need you to go ahead and make a roll we don't make very often here.

Dre: Bite the Dust.

Austin: I need you to Bite the Dust. Can you read what Bite the Dust says?

Sylvi: Oh, no.

Dre: Yeah. “When something dangerous slips through your defenses, you’re caught off guard, or someone delivers those perfect words to tear you down, you’re at risk of Biting the Dust. When you do so, roll plus Defy.”

Austin: Roll plus—what’s your Defy?

Dre: Plus one.

Austin: Plus one.

Dre: I was getting it mixed up with Clash.

Austin: 2d6 plus 1.

Dre: Alright. Okay, alright.

[pause]

Dre: Bwuh.

Austin: “On a 10, they miss, hesitate, or you’re saved by sheer luck.”

[Janine exhales]

Austin: “You rally and clear a Risk if you have one.” What’s it look like?

Janine: Wow.

Dre: [sighs] I don’t think it’s—I ever said that I needed a specific physical body to be free.

Austin: It’s true. You still have not won this fight, though, Dre.

Dre: I know.

Austin: Uh-huh. I think I know where you’re going, but...

Dre: Mhm.

Austin: What if we don’t see inside the mech for a moment?

Dre: Yeah, that's fine. [exhales] So what I'm doing here is basically, I'm—that's me resisting the Witch.

Austin: The Witch. You still have to Strike Decisively. You gotta give it one more try.

Dre: Sure, yeah.

Austin: And so, like—

Dre: I'm just trying to think of what it looks like for her to miss or hesitate.

Austin: Oh, yeah, yeah, totally. I mean, I think you overpower, right?

Dre: Yeah.

Austin: But I don't know if there's more. Is there light, is there?

Dre: No, I don't think there's more.

Austin: Yeah.

Dre: I mean, maybe it is—maybe it is that she pulls out chunks.

Austin: Yeah.

Dre: Of Figure.

Austin: Yeah.

Dre: But not Figure.

Austin: Yeah. It's like, I think we get the wide shot of the mech, and we hear a snap, and we're not sure if that was Figure breaking or the leash.

[**Dre** hums]

Austin: You know?

Dre: Yeah.

Austin: For a moment.

Dre: Um...

Austin (as **Chimeric Cadent**): What is it you want from us? What power do you seek, then?

Austin: And in some ways, this is still a test. Which is why you're still rolling Strike Decisively and not just saying, "hey, can you change my playbook to x?"

Dre: Sure. Yeah, yeah, yeah, yeah, yeah. Boy, what would it look like to Strike Decisively with Channel?

Austin: That's fun.

[Dre laughs]

Austin: I don't know. I mean, it isn't—it truly isn't one of the options, to be clear.

Dre: Okay.

Austin: You—

Dre: Hey, it just says whichever's—oh, it says Clash or Talk, whichever is more appropriate.

Austin: It says Clash or Talk, it does, yeah.

Dre: Yeah, yeah, yeah. Okay.

Austin: Mhm.

Dre: [exhales] Gosh, my gut says Figure actually just attacks.

Austin: Wow. Just, as like... Really? After all this?

Dre: I—[sighs] it's not like a—it's like, desperation and frustration, and just like—

Austin: Are you speaking while saying this?

Dre: No.

Austin: Really. Okay.

Dre: I mean, screaming, probably.

Austin: Right, right.

Dre: But like, fuck this, man.

Austin: Mhm.

Dre: If I'm just gonna be just yo-yoing back and forth between two ultimate powers,
[**Austin:** Mhm.] I don't give a fuck about a third life, then.

Austin: Mhm.

Dre: Get me out of here.

Austin: Give me a roll. This would be with Clash.

Dre: Yeah.

Austin: So 2d6 plus 2.

[**Dre** laughs]

Janine: Okay. Yeah, of course.

Austin: Of course.

Sylvi: Wow.

Dre: 6 plus 6 plus 2.

Austin: On a—

Sylvi: Where was that, like, 20 minutes ago?

Austin: Good question.

Dre: It was right where it needed to be.

Austin: “On a 10 plus, you strike true. Director characters are killed, forced to retreat, or otherwise removed as a threat per the fiction. Player characters should Bite the Dust.” So, what's the attacking look like?

Dre: I mean, of those three options, I think it is, um...

Austin: No, I know what—I mean, I think I know what it is on my side. But what's—just tell me what the attacking looks like.

Dre: [exhales] Not with any weapons.

Austin: Yeah.

Dre: Just like, there is probably, actually, when Figure first takes off, there is an explosion because they just floor the throttle.

Austin: Mhm.

Dre: And what's left of those crumpled up engines just kind of like, explode.

Austin: Yeah.

Dre: But they use that momentum to like, launch forward.

Austin: Mhm. After swinging a few times and charging into them, and they're stepping back, and the throne is being dragged across the ground, and they finally catch you, and they pull you close to their chest, and kneel. And the Chimeric Cadent is crying in three voices echoing on top of one another. It's deeply uncanny to hear. And they make you an offer. They could maintain the power you have now. It would come at a cost. You could stay the Impostor as a playbook here.

Dre: Mhm.

Austin: They could break the chain completely, ensure that the Witch in Glass, the Usher of Truth, the Iconoclasts, Perennial, are separated from you, that you have the same current, you know, flame of life, spark of life. But it would be up to you to keep it going. There'd be no fuel. There'd be no going back to heal it. This is a playbook called the Tempest. You could maintain your connection to Perennial, but break the Witch's position between you and her. The Chimeric Cadent believes deeply in the relationship between humans and Divines, and would happily help you move to a different position with Perennial, becoming the Wither, a playbook from the Armour Astir: Encore book. Or, you could accept death in a new way, the way that the

Divines here on the Chimera's Lantern do, and become more of an emanation than a husk. Becoming the Revenant.

Dre: What would that mean for Clem if I became the Wither? And became closer to Perennial?

Austin: Clem would—that's a great question. I don't think that you know. If what you're asking is, could the Chimeric Cadent separate Perennial from Clementine...

Dre: No, that's not—

Austin: Okay.

Dre: I guess you just said I would be closer—

Austin: To Perennial.

Dre: —to Perennial than Clem is.

Austin: Yeah. Well, you would be—you would no longer be mediated.

Dre: Okay.

Austin: You would no longer have the mediation between you.

Dre: Gotcha.

Austin: Right now, you're being moved by Perennial's power, right? You know, listen, I would love to actually have a character who can talk to Perennial in this game. Let me tell you, [**Dre:** Mhm.] it'd be sick, because Perennial knows some stuff. I would be happy to have that be on the table. And I do think that it would be an opportunity for things to shift, right? Because Clem just got this Iconoclastic power, right? Does not have, necessarily, the power of... of... I could imagine a world in which she accepts that power, the Usher of Truth's power, this idealist dream power, instead of Perennial's power, turns on her. I'd have to talk to Art about this a little bit, obviously.

Dre: Mhm.

Austin: Art is playing Clem this season. I can also imagine a world where I do make that decision on my side, because Perenn—because Clem getting the Iconoclasts was kind of Perennial's maneuver here, to some degree.

Dre: Yeah.

Austin: And so maybe Perennial decides to spin up another—someone else, you know?

Dre: Mhm.

Austin: You would have a direct connection with Perennial as the Wither, for sure.

Dre: Yeah. Is... I know we talked about this the other day, [**Austin:** Mhm.] and I am changing my mind on something.

Austin: Mhm.

Dre: Is the Ordained also an option in that?

Austin: Oh yeah, I did forget the Ordained.

Dre: Yeah.

Austin: The Ordained is an option, correct. And the Ordained would be to carry forward as the Ordained of the Chimeric Cadent, right?

Dre: Oh.

Austin: The Ordained—yeah, uh-huh. Specifically, right?

Dre: Tell me more.

[**Sylvi** laughs]

Austin: So, the Ordained is a playbook from 106th Astir Squadron, codenamed Almoner and Ordained, which is by Yuri Runnel. Oh, Yuri Runnel and August Orion. August Orion, fucking great name.

Dre: Yeah.

Austin: I need to put that in my brain.

[**Sylvi** laughs]

Austin: They make stuff together as Witchbreak. They make really great playbooks. I believe, Janine, you're playing another playbook from one of their fan expansions. The Ordained says, "it takes back-breaking labor to reach the heights required to be entrusted with the honor of caring for such a sacred artifact. It comes with responsibilities to maintain, and a reputation to contend with. The raw desire roiling within the artifact made deciding to continue bearing this role easier than you'd like to admit. As the Ordained, you've been entrusted with the power to defend the weak and seek justice for the fallen. Use it or relinquish it to someone willing to act."

And you start with a move called Reliquary, which is one of your faith's most precious relics. You make vows to the relic, you write them down, and then as you break the relics, or break—sorry, as you break the vows, because something requires you to make those vows, the relic actually gives you more power, because you've found something more important in your moment than the particular vow you've taken. And then it's a bunch of like, cool cleric-y stuff, you know? On top of that. It's like, a really fun sister class to the... Cori, your class was the Paradigm, is that right? Yeah, it's like, more cleric than paladin, you know?

And yeah, it would be this—it would be what the Chimeric Cadent believes, which, I mean, you know, here in, you know, its breast, held against it, it flows through you, right? You see a lifetime. And the Chimeric Cadent has a very particular experience of time, because, um, [chuckles] it's composed of three things. Partly, it is the body of a Divine that is as old as the Divine Fleet. Partly, it is the Waking Cadent, who was herself someone who originated, or seems like she originated at the beginning of the Divine Fleet, and then disappeared for a long time, for thousands of years, tens of thousands of years. And partly, it is the body of Signet, the excerpt of Belgard.

Dre: I was wondering.

Sylvi: Oh, shit!

Austin: So this is also—this is the three of them as one, having been stitched together. And part of their unique perspective on time is that all of them have lived a long time even before the events of Twilight Mirage. And partly, they left the Twilight Mirage 5,000 years ago in outside time, and they've been here for the 5,000 years.

Dre: Oh, god.

Austin: And they were the ones who helped the people on the planet fight against the burgeoning Divine Principality on Embarkation Day, that you learned about on the Isle of the Broken Key. Remember, like, the moon power stuff, they all came down and tried to help, and tried to kick these people off, and they did the best that they could, and then they watched as a massive empire still spread through the galaxy.

[**Dre** hums]

Austin: And the thing that they offered here is the thing that they always promised they would offer, which is the chance for Divines to be free from their masters. And in the particular case here, this is the one place in the galaxy where Divines can come and rest and die for some amount of time. You know? A thing that the Divine Consecration would love to do is dig up a bunch of Divines right now, and force them back into service.

Would love to find the body of Souciance down in the lake that you saw them in, right? And force them back into the Divine Principality, you know? And deprogram them from whatever has happened to make them feel like they shouldn't serve anymore. Consecration would love to dig up the body of Dissent, would love to dig up the body of Barricade, would love to dig up the body of Felicity, would love to dig up the body of Sagacity, would love to dig up the body of Bounty who only died five years ago. And was, you know, brought up here to rest after giving its life. Would love to dig up the body of Loyalty, a Divine so ancient that it's seen the galaxy threatened two or three times now.

[pause]

So, yeah, that's who you would be representing. Feel free to think about this, Dre. We don't need to answer this right this second. You know?

Dre: Yeah, sure. Sure, sure, sure.

Austin: In fact, we should go and see if there's a season still.

[Ali scoffs] [Dre laughs] [Janine chuckles nervously]

Dre: "I picked the—" kaboom.

Austin: [laughs] Uh-huh.

[Janine laughs]

The Stellar Combustor

[2:05:00]

Austin: Alright, you've made it to door number three, where you're going. You've made it past two, no one came over to where it's—they said it was wet. Some people looked at it and was like, "I don't see that it's wet."

Keith: [chuckles] That's worse.

Austin: Maybe you had to like, scooch deeper into the corner a little bit, but you were fine.

Keith: One of us goes, "that's worse."

Austin: [chuckles] Uh-huh.

[Ali laughs]

Austin: Um... and you're here. A—you know, a sort of [chuckles] tumor of hallways.

Keith: Gross.

Austin: It's bad. It's—you know, this is the heart of one of the worst things the Divine Principality does.

Keith: Yeah.

Austin: And I don't think that it's like, too on the nose to be as visual about that as possible, right? You look at it, and it's a knot of hallways and cabling and engineering rooms, and it's messy, and it makes no fucking sense. And they can't—you can't—it's a Gordian knot.

Keith: Yeah.

Austin: Like, it's—they couldn't make it look pretty.

Keith: You know what—

Austin: All their work, and they couldn't make it look fucking pretty.

Keith: One of the worst buildings I've ever been in is the, like, English and Language building at UMass Boston, which they, like, very openly describe as having been designed to be riot-proof in the early 70s.

Austin: Oh, my god.

Ali: Oh!

Austin: Yeah, this is it. This is exactly it, Keith. Yep.

Keith: And it's like, I know where everything is, and it's still a pain in the ass to get from one place to another.

Austin: That sense of, like, "I need to be on the other side of this wall, [**Keith:** Right.] and there's no door between here and the other side of this wall, [**Keith:** Yeah.] because they want me to walk 50 feet that direction, or, you know, 50 yards in that direction, before I then go down another door, and then come back this way." It would have been easy for them to put one extra door in here. They chose not to for the reason you just said, right?

Keith: Mhm, mhm.

Austin: It's hardened. It's a hardened facility. It's meant to be a pain to walk through, right?

Keith: I mean, they've had, like, you know, how, uh—how many years had it been in, you know, 1974 since the idea of riot-proof architecture had even been thought of? Palisade, they thought of it 150,000 years ago—

Austin: [laughs] Right.

Keith: They've been practicing. [laughs]

Austin: Yes, and have been—and have been iterating. They've basically figured it out. You know?

Keith: Yeah, they've perfected it.

Austin: Yeah. And here you are.

Keith: The perfect bad hallway.

Austin: Yeah. Where are you going? Where does your schedule put you?

Keith: Left, still.

Austin: No, you're all the way there.

Keith: Oh, we're at Three.

Austin: You're—yeah, again, the thing that I was giving you was, you have the wet sign.

Keith: Gotcha.

Austin: It says, "don't come over here." Because you succeeded with that, no one's gonna come over here for the entire...

Keith: Gotcha. Alright, well then, we're getting off.

Austin: You know. You getting off? Where are you going?

Keith: Is anyone else getting off?

Austin: Yeah, everybody else is getting off here.

Keith: Everyone who didn't get off at Two.

Austin: Correct. And I guess—yeah, that's about it, right? Because anybody who would be going from Two to... I guess, maybe, some people got on this one to go to Four instead of—

Keith: Right. Instead of the inbound.

Austin: Because it was here. You know what I mean? It was like, "fuck it, let's get on this one. It's equidistant."

Keith: Yeah.

Austin: "Let's go towards Four via Three instead of via One." You know? It's a loop.

Keith: Um—yeah. So, the thing that I want to say is that we should go, like, in the direction that people aren't going in to find a little place that's, like, you know, less full of people. But we had to schedule this out—

Austin: You had to schedule this out. And that's—

Keith: So we don't know where people are going to be going, so I can't tell you based off of that.

Austin: Right, yeah. You could have built yourselves in a little, like, regroup moment. But also, you've been standing still for half a day [**Keith:** Yeah.] as this thing zips you around the sun, you know?

Keith: Right, yeah, right. So I think, you know, I think, uh... Yeah, I think a little—a regroup room sounds fine, but again, there's no way to have known ahead of time if there was gonna be people in there.

Austin: Correct.

Keith: So, like—if we've given ourselves 10 minutes in a nearby room, then I think that we just take 10 minutes in a nearby room or whatever.

Austin: Yeah, I'm fine with that being where we pick up, you know?

Keith: Um—

Austin: You've found some mostly unused space that's easy to get into. Maybe you found a room that didn't have doorways, or that didn't have—all these places have doors.

Keith: Yeah.

Austin: That's the thing, right? None of these places—it's riot-proof, like you said.

Keith: Right.

Austin: You know, it's hardened in that way. Maybe you just found a hallway that is a dead end, you know?

Keith: Mhm.

Ali: Mhm.

Keith: Um, is, uh... I mean, there's a—do we—do we know, like, where the terminal is that we want to shut this thing off?

Austin: No.

Keith: Like, there's no...

Austin: You did not get that intel. So what I'm saying, basically, here, is, you have the... I don't know. You tell me how do you want to—how do you—let's think about this place like this, and I'll just draw a very goofy thing on top of the sun, and we'll call it... We'll say that it—we'll pretend that it makes sense, right?

Keith: Sure.

Ali: Mhm.

Austin: Let's go here to the map layer. Let's grab the rectangle. It's like this. Boom.

Keith: Now, this is a slice of the circle.

Austin: This is a tiny slice of the circle, exactly.

Keith: Right.

Austin: Let's just do this. It's six sectors [**Keith:** Okay.] that you could pump the AC into, right?

Keith: Right.

Austin: And you begin in this bottom left sector. This is the tram, you know, that you came in here, right?

Keith: Okay.

Austin: And you can move to any one of these sectors, but it's, you know, think of these lines—think of this as an abstract space, because again, the actual hallways are a nightmare, you know? It's not one room, one room, one room.

Keith: Right.

Austin: These are the big AC sectors that you are able to pump [**Keith:** Mhm, mhm.] cool air into, you know? And so, yeah, you don't know where in here is the quote unquote "terminal," if such a thing exists. That would be something you'd have to research.

Keith: Um...

Austin: And also, let me just add numbers to these, just for the sake of it, so that we can talk. For people listening at home, I've made two columns of, uh...

Ali: Three squares.

Austin: Of three squares each. And now I've numbered them. You can see these numbers, right?

Ali: Uh-huh.

Austin: One, two, three, four, five, six, right? One in top left, two top right, three mid left, four mid right, five bottom left, six bottom right.

Keith: And we're in Five.

Austin: And you're in Five. You came into Five.

Keith: Ali, do you have anything in particular besides just generally, like, I guess it's time to figure out how to figure out where that thing is?

Ali: Um, yeah, that was my impulse. Um... whether it's another, like, hack thing to see where the power is being [**Austin hums**] diverted to.

Austin: Mhm.

Keith: Or from.

Ali: Or from, yeah.

Keith: I guess something that we know from how we arrived is that all of the exhaust from the intake is being funneled out of that vent that, like, you know, the sun volcano shooting out the side of the space station.

Austin: Mhm.

Ali: Mhm.

Keith: So maybe there's a trail from there...

Austin: That's mostly going to the batteries, right? That's the thing that that's going to.

Keith: Not to, but from.

Austin: No, I'm saying it's going from the extractor to the batteries.

Keith: To the batteries.

Austin: It's charging those explosive batteries.

Keith: Got it.

Austin: Yeah. Which I'm using as shorthand, it's not a battery, but you know what I mean.

Keith: Right.

Ali: Mhm.

Austin: It's storing the energy of the sun, so it's effectively a battery.

Keith: Um... let's see.

Austin: So you do your—I'm just saying that because you already do know where that particular thing is going, I'm not—

Keith: Yeah, yeah, yeah.

Austin: I wouldn't, you know.

Keith: So that wouldn't—okay. Um, well, um.... I don't know. My—part of my instinct is like, can we glean anything from the signs? Like, this is a very...

Austin: This stuff is—this stuff is—we are in AR world here.

Keith: People are wearing goggles.

Austin: People—people have been cybernetically enhanced.

Keith: So they know where to go because they've got a map in their head.

Austin: These are blank hallways for you.

Keith: Yeah.

Austin: Yeah.

Keith: Um...

Austin: And it's like a—it's a particular thing, right? Because it's not—it's not live. They've downloaded into their heads. Because remember, there's no Wi-Fi here.

Keith: Right.

Austin: They're like—they're like, running the overlay from memory.

Keith: Mhm.

Austin: So they're—again, it's hardened, right? It's—it's—you couldn't hack someone's eyes here to tell them they're—I mean, you could plug into their head and do it, I guess. That doesn't seem like a thing either of you do.

Keith: No, I've never done that.

[Ali chuckles]

Austin: I'm not telling you that would—I'm not saying that because, like, that's a thing you'd be thinking of doing, I'm just trying to paint the picture here, right?

Keith: Mhm, mhm.

Ali: Right, yeah.

Austin: This is...

Ali: It's the, like, Clone Wars "oh, I found a droid head." And we don't do that.

Keith: [chuckling] Sure.

Austin: Right.

Ali: Yeah.

Keith: I mean, we hacked into a computer to do the...

[Ali chuckles]

Keith: That's not, how much—what is a droid head, but a computer that is also a guy?

Ali: Mhm. Yeah. Um...

Austin: Is this just a "find a place to hack into a wall again" type situation?

Keith: Yeah, but it just—I don't know, it just kind of sucks to do it twice in a row.

Austin: Well, and it seems harder to do here, right?

Keith: And it seems harder to do here.

Austin: I don't know that there is just a loose—where you were was like, okay, this is the solar extractor, [**Keith:** Right.] you can find the computer screen. This is a tough place. This is a place that's been built to not let that happen. You know?

Keith: Right.

Austin: You know when you're watching one of these movies and you're like, why the fuck would they just have a data port on the wall?

[**Ali** laughs]

Keith: Yeah.

Austin: They don't, here.

Ali: Do we want to maybe tail the people who came off the train? Not as like, a “murder and hack them” sort of situation, but in a—

[**Austin** laughs]

Keith: Don't—

Ali: In a, like, they're working. They're maintenance people.

Austin: Mhm.

Keith: Don't close doors before you—[laughs]

Ali: Yeah. [laughs]

Austin: Mhm. Yeah, I mean like, did you basically build something into your schedule that's like, “this is trailing time. We're gonna walk from sector to sector and see what we see to try to piece together where people are going.” Because that's the other thing. You can't—if you're following someone and they're going to number three, but you moved the cold to six—

Keith: Right, but we moved—yeah, yeah, yeah.

Ali: Mhm.

Austin: —you're gonna take another Risk when you go to three. You know?

Ali: Right, yeah.

Keith: But we have—this is a new scene and we've been in the thing for—we're still feverish.

Austin: No, you're feverish. You're feverish in here forever. That's—that's what I said, yeah. There's not—you can't get it under feverish in this place.

Keith: Okay.

Austin: It's that hot. You're permanently at risk.

Keith: That was—to be fair, that was before—I'm not saying we should change it, I'm just saying this is why I assumed that was before we did the AC trick.

Austin: It was not.

Keith: It wasn't?

Austin: I said after that, that you're going to keep feverish because you can't get it cooler in here.

Keith: Um... then, um... I don't know. Should we...

[Ali starts]

Keith: Okay, I mean—let's—we've got a schedule.

Austin: Mhm.

Keith: Do we want to—Ali, do we want to just pick, like, two rooms? Let's just—you know, let's just do—let's just say that we—that our schedule took us on a quick tour of these six, and—so that we can get a peek in every corridor.

Austin: Yeah. So, I'm not gonna make you roll to go from corridor five to three, three to one, one to—

Keith: No, but you are gonna make us roll for what we're going to be doing there, which is reading the rooms.

Austin: Correct. Well, I'm gonna make you roll to do it without being spotted once.

Keith: Okay, sure.

Austin: Right? So I do need a Defy Dan—or, sorry, I do need a Weather the Storm to just do it, and then I'll need a Read the Room, which you can use as you want to. You know?

Keith: Yeah, yeah.

Ali: Mhm.

Austin: So, who's Weathering the Storm?

Keith: This is a Defy?

Austin: Oh, yeah.

Keith: I'm defying.

Austin: You're defying.

Keith: I'm the defy—I'm defy guy.

Ali: Okay.

Austin: You're—ah, defy guy. So, 2d6 plus 3, is that right?

Keith: Yeah.

Austin: Okay.

Keith: Ooh.

Austin: 2, 1—2 plus 1.

Sylvi: Ooh.

Keith: Ali, some help on there, maybe?

Ali: [laughs] I would love to assist you there, yeah. I would love to do that.

Austin: What's that look like? Tell me what this looks like.

Ali: Um...

[Dre chuckles] [Sylvi whines]

Ali: I should have given you Confidence.

Keith: Oh, maybe. But that's—that would have—

Ali: But...

Keith: That would have caused problems for you then, right? Yeah.

Ali: Yeah. Or Asepsis, yeah.

Austin: It would have.

Ali: What is a—what is just the roll before I say this out loud? I just want to check that.

Austin: This is 2d6 plus 1 if you've spent meaningful time together.

Keith: Yes.

Austin: You have.

Ali: Okay, yeah.

Austin: Plus 1 if they have Helped or Hindered you previously this Sortie.

Keith: Yes.

Austin: Have you?

Keith: Yeah, during the first episode, we each helped each other.

Austin: Okay.

Ali: Okay.

Austin: And then plus 1 if they're part of one of your Hooks.

Keith: Also, yes.

Ali: Okay, yeah.

Austin: Is Phryg—no.

Ali: No.

Keith: Yeah, we did—last time that I got help, we determined that “the crew put their faith in me, so I must prioritize their safety.”

Ali: I don't know—oh, oh.

Austin: That's correct, that's correct.

Sylvi: No, I do remember that.

Ali: Okay, then a plus 3. Okay.

Austin: Yep.

Ali: Um, how am I helping? Describe what you're doing?

Keith: Well, I guess it dep—

Ali: Oh, this was just to move through—

Keith: This is to move between rooms. I mean, it could—we could go—like, it could be a sort of high stakes, but silly thing. Like, it could be like, oh, you slipped up on a really, like—like, on a really dumb thing. And, you know, like, I was holding a door open for too long and people were coming, and were gonna see the door being held open, and so you had to, like, pull me through and pull the door shut. Or it could be something actually bad, like, **[Ali chuckles]** I'm gonna walk into someone or I'm gonna cause—shit, who is with us?

Ali: Routine.

Keith: Routine to like, drop the...

Ali: Oh, yeah.

Keith: No, don't say that. It's fragile. We weren't gonna drop it. We never even thought of that.

[Ali laughs]

Keith: [laughs] That was never on the table. I can't cause you to drop things.

Ali: Yeah, taking that out of the air, yeah, yeah, yeah, we were not gonna drop it, it was not—yeah.

Keith: [cross] We weren't gonna drop it, no one's gonna—[laughs]

[Ali laughs]

Keith: Actually, Routine's doing better than ever at holding it.

Austin: Mhm.

Ali: I do like the thing of like, oh, there was a close call.

Keith: Yeah. This is like, you're watching my corners.

Ali: There was a person in the room.

Austin: Yeah, yeah, yeah. Yeah.

Ali: Yeah, uh-huh. I'm pressing enter.

Austin: I don't think you helped last time, Keith.

Keith: Are you sure?

Austin: We gotta figure this out. I'm looking, you never rolled after Brnine.

Keith: Well, does it—I could have done it before, but probably wouldn't have.

Austin: You didn't.

Keith: Are you—I swear that we both helped.

Austin: No, why would you—

Keith: Well, let's see where Brnine—

Austin: Keith, Brnine, Keith, frisbee.

Keith: Brnine definitely failed a roll. I know that that's true.

Austin: I do see that. Brnine did fail a roll.

Keith: Yeah, right here. 2d6—I guess I don't know when this was. But 2d6 plus 2, 2 plus 2 plus 2 plus 2, equals 6, and then I roll 2d6 plus 3.

Austin: Yeah, but that's after—but that was after you rolling. That wasn't Brnine helping you?

Keith: No, I rolled after. Brnine and then me.

Austin: So Brnine—so you failed. You got a 5 last time and then Brnine didn't help you after?

Keith: Oh, I...

Austin: Because that's what that would read as.

Keith: Uh, yeah, I don't know. I don't know what...

Austin: I don't think that that happened.

Ali: Yeah, if it's a plus 3, that would have been me.

Keith: I mean, we can roll it with the plus 2.

Austin: 'Cause here's the other reason—here's the other—wait, wait, wait. The other way we know, Keith, is if you helped and succeeded?

Keith: Yeah.

Austin: What would have happened? Brnine would have rolled 1d6 to make an advantage.

Ali: Mhm.

Austin: That does not happen.

Keith: Oh, that's true.

Austin: Uh-huh.

Ali: With a plus 2 instead of a plus 3, then this is a 9, and this is a 10.

Austin: It's a 9, which means that you get the—you can roll this advantage dice, but Brnine will be implicated in the result. That's all it means.

Keith: It's—

Austin: That's the difference. Because you rolled a 5 plus 2 plus 3, so it would be a 5 plus 2 plus 2 instead.

Keith: Right, yeah, yeah, yeah. That's—

Ali: Yeah.

Austin: So you can do the advantage roll. It just means Brnine will get caught up in whatever this is anyway, which, kind of hard to imagine that they wouldn't.

Ali: Yeah.

Austin: So, 1d6. You're looking for a 2.

Keith: Yeah. Oof.

Austin: [quietly] Oh my god.

Dre: Oh.

Sylvi: Wow.

[Ali laughs]

Dre: Soldier move, tell 'em.

Austin: Keith rolled a 1. Keith rolled a 1. Keith rolled a 1. So, someone is turning the corner. I mean, this is the thing that's gonna—the actual thing that's happening here is you're trying to move from from one sector to another sector.

Keith: Yeah.

Austin: And the fridge has to be lifted, you have to lift it off the ground.

Keith: Mhm.

Austin: They have—you know when you're walking down a hallway in one of these fucking places, and then instead of letting there just be a ramp, or just the floor, like, at an incline, they just straight up put, like, a doorframe that you have to step over. And when you lift it up and put it back down, it's fragile. And something shakes a little loose. And your invisibility cloak is gonna fucking break. Your invisibility radio is breaking.

[Music Outro - "[The Stellar Combustor](#)" by Jack de Quidt]