

## The Road to PARTIZAN 05 : Ech0 & dusk to midnight

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**Austin** (as **Gur Sevraq**): This is a message to you, who listens. You must trust me, because we are friends. You just don't know it yet. The Divine Principality offers you progress. But Imperial Futures are only ever stolen presents. I offer you more: I offer you actualization.

My name is Gur Sevraq, and I have stolen the future.

With this Divine, I can finally answer an eternal question, asked eternally: Are we caught in a cycle? Is there more to us than there appears, or is there only this, our pathetic greed and violence, ever recurring.

We believe we have mastered history, learned to draw its shapes in beautiful arcs of our own design. We have spent eons changing our bodies, our minds, our culture. We made flesh into hard metal so long ago that the return to soft tissue became novel. We flattened to the apparent heights of our hierarchies, we twisted time to our ends, we colored our skins into skies, turned skies into seas, made sea solid and thinking.

But from the wide perspective of the Future, each of these changes was superficial, a decoration on the line of history. Whether crystalline or chrome, towering or dispersed, whether drawn in gunpowder black or the blues of heaven: We only ever sketch one shape: The shape of Empire.

And God has whispered to me: *Learn another, before I erase this one.*

I am Gur Sevraq, and I have stolen the future. Walk the prophet's path with me, or suffer God's attention.

### Timestamps:

#### **ECH0:**

[\[00:11:48\]](#) - Rules, Character- and World-building

[\[00:42:04\]](#) - Start of Play: First Mech

[\[0:52:38\]](#) - Second Mech

[\[1:00:16\]](#) - Third Mech

[\[1:09:24\]](#) - Final Mech

**dusk to midnight:**

[\[1:22:55\]](#) - Rules, Character- and World-building

[\[1:46:29\]](#) - Start of Play: Round One

[\[2:17:46\]](#) - Round Two

Note: all timestamps have been taken from the audio-only file.

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

**Jack:** Hi, you can find me on Twitter [@notquitereal](#) and buy any of the music featured on the show at [notquitereal.bandcamp.com](#).

**Austin:** Art Martinez-Tebbel.

**Art:** Hey, you can find me on twitter [@atebbel](#) and you can listen to One Song Only, our in-hiatus Kanye West podcast that will soon return-

**Austin:** [*crosstalk*] He started a church-

**Art:** -to crown Otis champion.

**Austin:** - so I'm a little worried about things.

**Keith:** Sorry, *excuse me*?

**Austin:** We can talk about this another time, Keith.

**Keith:** Hi, wait – hi , my name is Keith J Carberry. You can find on twitter [@keithjcarberry](#), you can find the Let's Plays that I do at [youtube.com/runbutton](#), and I'm currently looking for a new, weird church. [*Austin laughs*]

**Austin:** Anyway, we are here on the road to Season Six, continuing our set of live stream games, our live games, that will be bridging the gap between the end of Twilight Mirage and the beginning of the game season that will come after Spring in Hieron. We are gonna do a couple of vignettes today. There was a – in the time since the last season six game, road to season six game, and now, two people ran a big mecha game jam, emotional mecha game jam, filled with great tabletop stuff. I think there's also a digital version of it, which I've not actually checked in on – yeah there is – and there are like, y'know, ten things on that one but there are a hundred and seventy seven entries into the emotional mecha jam, which you can find by going to

[itch.io/jam/sad-mecha-game-jam](https://itch.io/jam/sad-mecha-game-jam), or you can click the link that's in the description below. Also, please like and subscribe.

Shout outs to John R Harness and to Takuma Okada – Takuma Okada is one of the Friends at the Table fan discord mods – for being the organisers and hosts of the emotional mecha jam. And shout outs to the *[laughs]* one hundred and seventy-seven games in this list. I um, I asked people on Twitter for what their faves were, I looked at all of those, I looked at another twenty since then, I've probably looked at a total of 40 games from this list, and by no means are the ones that I pulled out for tonight my faves. Like my, by which I don't mean – fuck off.

**Keith:** *[laughs, does a haughty Austin impression]* These are by no means my favourites! *[Jack laughs]*

**Austin:** *[laughs]* These are by no means my - what I mean is, there are a lot of games here that are not – that wouldn't fit for tonight. So for instance, I'm not gonna just make the three of you listen while I play DC's plot Armor, a single player game where you plot out a thirty-two episode mecha anime season by yourself.

**Jack:** Jesus, let's do it.

**Austin:** It's great. I've thought about doing it by myself as like another, different stream. Or there's like some great two player games, um, that I have on the sides here. But like, we have four people on this call. Let's play with four people and play some stuff that can support that, or at least can support near it. Uh, Today, we're gonna look at another step on the Divine Principality's move towards a kind of galactic dominance, which is where we're gonna start at the beginning of season 6. The Divine Principality, at this point in time, has kind of slowly begun to move south-west where they don't see too much resistance.

Today's game is going to be looking at how the Divine Principality started to move south and hit the Orion Conglomerate, or the descendants thereof, and those of the Automated Diaspora. Which is gonna answer some questions about the state of those two things. I kind of have an idea in my mind, but I want to float it by y'all to see what you think, um, because they're kind of big things. Again, it's been so long since Counter / Weight. So, so, so, so, so long. I think in those intervening years two things, but two similar things, happen to these two great powers. One is the Orion Conglomerate eventually fell in on itself and became a kind of loose amalgamation of, almost like, corporate warlords. Um, y'know, all of these corporations which once were this big conglomerate that were effectively an oligarchic state become a collection of micro-states. Or I mean, they're still giant states, it's still space *[laughs]* – y'know what I mean? Space is big. Um, but they become a fractured place. Something that is actually in distinction to something like the Divine Principality, which is itself fractured, but is unified around an ideology and around a prince.

And I think the same basic thing happens to the Automated Diaspora, but for different reasons. If the Orion Conglomerate falls in on itself because a bunch of like, money-hungry warlords / executives decide they hate each other and want a bigger cut, I think the Automated Diaspora is almost, um, more a sort of like egalitarian and anarchic like, move. Where like, 'oh, different communities have different desires and different needs'. And bit by bit they realise like, 'oh well, since we're not constantly under threat anymore, maybe we don't all need to be part of the same single massive state. The galaxy is huge! Look how big this is. Like, why are we all— why do the people up here care about the people down here? They have different needs'. And slowly splits apart also and so, if it's cool with y'all, have this sort of like more fractured thing where there's still kind of maybe cultural overlap, but a much less unified thing than what we saw in previous seasons.

**Jack:** Yeah. That sounds good to me.

**Austin:** Okay. So the thing that I— I, uh, want to kind of play out today are three vignettes about the conflict that emerges between the Divine Principality and these two powers in the south. And because they're vignettes, these are not gonna be telling the big picture story, but they are gonna be kind of painting in the gaps and seeing what it looks like— what kind of war, and conflict, and life looks like before, during, and after this period. Um, I have three games that I've picked out, and I've put them all in our private Patreon folder for those of us in the call.

They are— and I'll pull them over here— they are: Ech0, a game by Kai Poh and Elisha Rusli [*roos-li*] or Rusli [*russ-li*] um, which is a game about children playing among the wreckage of giant mechs and finding the recording of a pilot. I think that these children are members of the Divine Principality, and what they're finding is a remnant from during the war.

I wanna play dusk to midnight, a GM-less story game for 2-5 players about doomed soldiers, which is a game by Riley, who is a fan of ours. Shout outs to Riley. It is a game about a group of mech pilots slowly either committing to their— their kind of strong feelings of heroism and kind of doomedly giving themselves over to their cause once and for all, or burning out and losing hope and deciding that maybe their ideals aren't worth their lives.

And finally I want to play [Epitaph](#), a game by Dante Douglas, who disclosure has written for Waypoint before, and has — I have worked with closely. And this is a metal as fuck game in which some people write an epitaph for a giant mech pilot, um, and kind of in doing that learn the history of the mech and the pilot, and what happened. I think this is a game about people in the Divine— uh, either in the Divine Principality or in the Diaspora— as a Divine dies. What do y'all think on these three, and which ones kind of appeal in terms of what to do first?

**Jack:** So, I think I want to start with either Ech0 or with dusk to midnight.

**Austin:** Okay.

**Jack:** I'm not sure which. Part of me is worried that if we do dusk to midnight first and tell a story about a war, and then go to Ech0, we'll just be exploring similar things that we did in the first game.

**Austin:** Yeah. Yeah.

**Jack:** It'll be like, 'oh, we found the gravestone of the person we just met—

**Austin:** Right.

**Jack:** —and they can explain to us about the war we just saw'. Uh...

**Austin:** One thing to note is we'd be —we could be seeing different things, right?

**Jack:** Yes.

**Austin:** Um, in terms of where it's set and who's pilot is it? Is this a pilot from a- which side of this conflict, right? So like, if we decided dusk to midnight is about a group defending, y'know, the OriCon, working for a corporation, we would be painting a much different world probably than the one that we paint with Ech0.

**Jack:** Yeah.

**Austin:** But, but maybe we'd would have to just be very cautious or thoughtful about that, y'know?

**Jack:** And I'm fine with that. I guess the question is: which game do we want to lend context to the other game?

**Austin:** Right, totally. Um -

**Keith:** I have a small thought, which is that if I was — if I was planning out, like, a movie, and I had three vignettes to fit inside a movie—

**Austin:** Yeah.

**Keith:** —I would probably start with, before moving to like the looking directly at war, I would definitely start with some kids who are looking at a bunch of broken pieces.

**Austin** (overlapping): The ruins of the war, yeah, yeah, yeah.

**Keith:** It just feels like how that would go.

**Jack:** Yeah.

**Austin:** Y'know what? Maybe here's what we do. We start with Ech0, and then we go to dusk to midnight. Hmm. The thing that I'm realising is like, there is an interesting bookend with Epitaph and Ech0. 'Cause both of them are looking back at a war that's happened.

**Jack:** Yes.

**Austin:** And I like those either as bookends or as sequential. Like, either one works. You wanna start with Ech0?

### [00:11:48] – ECH0: Start of Play

**Jack:** Yeah, I'm happy to start with Ech0. I think Keith's right about like, yeah, what does the camera come in on, and it comes in on ruin.

**Austin:** Yeah, and I like it comes in on children. Yeah. On, well-

**Jack:** *[laughing]* Ruin and children.

**Austin:** Ruin and children. We'll see the degree to which ruin is here.

**Keith:** The intersection of ruin and children.

**Austin:** Yeah. Let's — let's just —

**Keith:** Childruin. *[Austin laughs]*

**Austin:** I'm gonna move this over here so that you can see the screen again. And the other thing I'm gonna create a blank page, because Ech0 is a map-drawing page — or game. One thing is, we need to decide where this is gonna take place. But- I guess we'll get there in a second. Let's just dive in to Ech0. Again, a game by Role Over Play Dead, uh, by- which is Kai Poh and Elisha Russel— or, not Russel, Rusli *[russ-li]*, Rusli *[roos-li]*. Again, apologies for pronunciation. Uh, okay!

[reading] 'Ech0 is a GM-less storytelling game for three or more players. A land at peace. Scars of a great war have healed over the decades. Children play among the wreckage of giant mechs of war. They find a ghost. A mind of a dead mech pilot, backed up in a tiny Ech0 drive just before death, lodged in the dirt and long forgotten. It regales them with stories of the great war that once ravaged the world. In exchange, it asks that they reunite it with its fallen mech and final resting place. Pilot' — or, player one is a pilot. 'You are a ghost, power is failing, you can never go home. All that's left is to find where you fell'.

Um, I'll go over what all these are, and then we'll decide who is what. 'The Pilot will tell their children their name, their unit, their serial number, their last mission, what they loved most about the past and the people that they left behind; whether you came from this land or another country, or even another planet.' It would be either- in our world here, it would probably be either

this land or another planet. And then children: the rest of us will be playing with children. 'Tell the pilot: what are your names? How old are you? What were you doing when you found the Ech0 drive? Playing, school field trip, scavenging for scrap? How do you know each other? Are you schoolmates, best friends, family, sports team?' And then, from there we will go on to describe our world and our home town, and begin going on some journeys.

So, who would like to be the pilot, and who would like to be the children? Ah, a little more description as to like, what those roles are. The children as we play will be kind of describing what the world looks like, and picking out kind of what has happened to the world, and where once there is conflict, now there is something else. And then the pilot will, interpreting that stuff, describe kind of what had happened there, what they feel about it given the context of the war that they were in. And eventually, you will of course find the mech the pilot was looking for. Does anyone strongly wanna be a pilot – the pilot? Cause if not, I'm happy to be the pilot and let y'all be the children.

**Jack:** I'll be a pilot.

**Austin:** You'll be a pilot?

**Jack:** I'll be a pilot!

**Austin:** Okay. Jack de Quidt is our pilot.

**[0:15:00]**

**Austin:** Alright, so what is your name — I'm going to get notes going, give me a second.

**Jack:** Oh jeez, we're just going?

**Austin:** We're just doing it. What- this is what we do!

**Jack:** Okay.

**Austin:** This is the thing it is. Um... Everyone should start thinking up kid names. The rest of us. Good names for kids.

**Art:** Good names for kids...

**Keith:** Good names for future planet kids.

**Jack:** I wonder if there are any websites on the internet that would help us with naming children?

**Austin:** Nope.

**Art:** No.

**Austin:** Turns out, no. Okay, pilot. We need your name —

**Jack:** Ah- oh, no, carry on.

**Austin:** Name, unit, and serial number.

**Jack:** Okay, so uh, my name is Marianne Perfect.

**Austin:** Great name. Spell Marianne for me?

**Jack:** M-A-R-I-A-N-N-E.

**Austin:** Gotcha. Marianne Perfect. Your unit?

**Jack:** I am, ah... *[sighs]* I am a — I don't know military units super well.

**Austin:** Me either.

**Jack:** I'm a— an artillery woman.

**Austin:** So, like, an artillery —like, mechanised artillery?

**Jack:** Yeah. Mechanised Artillery Perfect.

**Austin:** Oh wow, it's named after you.

**Jack:** No, no, that's my full rank. I'm introducing myself.

**Austin:** Oh, gotcha.

**Jack:** Like you would say, Lance Corporal Stevens.

**Austin:** Right, gotcha. And your serial number?

**Jack:** My serial number is 71-74.

**Austin:** Got it. Great. Um, what was your last mission?

**Jack:** I was sent to, ah — I was sent to destroy a bunker from the inside.

**Austin:** Mmm.

**Jack:** I was told to leave no trace of it.



**Austin:** It's a great mission for a mechanised artillery unit. We'll have to get to — why is someone whose job is to hurt things from very far away being told to get inside of something to destroy it? [*Jack: mm-hm.*] Interesting. Um, what did you love most about your past life and the people you left behind?

**Jack:** Ah, my husband. I had a long and happy marriage. We met in, uh, training academy, and I loved him very much. We didn't have any children, but that was fine. And I had a beautiful house.

**Austin:** Did you come from this land or from another planet?

**Jack:** I came from another planet.

**Austin:** Okay. Children?

**Keith:** Hi!

**Art:** Hi.

**Austin:** That's us.

**Keith:** Yeah.

**Austin:** What're your names?

**Keith:** I've got a name. First name, last name, both names?

**Austin:** Whatever name you use.

**Keith:** I, uh- Tarpon Gitch [*Art, Jack, and Keith snort with laughter*].

**Austin:** T-A-R-P-I-N?

**Keith:** T-A-R-P-O-N.

**Austin:** Tarpon. Tarpon.

**Keith:** Tarpon.

**Austin:** Gitch?

**Keith:** Gitch. G-I-T-C-H.

**Austin:** Got it. Love it. Uh... Art?

**Art:** Oh hi, Calamity Tranquil here.

**Austin:** Got it. Calamity Tranquil. And then I'm Keaton Jerf? [*Jack laughs*]. Finally getting to use this old-ass name, Keaton Jerf. I think y'all just call me Jerf. Um, how old are we all? [*pause*] I am seven.

**Jack:** Ah, Jerf is a-

**Keith:** I'm seven and a half.

**Art:** Seven and three-quarters [*Austin, Jack, and Keith laugh*].

**Austin:** Great. What were we doing when we found the Ech0 drive?

[*pause*]

**Keith:** I was winning a game of hide and seek.

**Art:** I agree. You were cheating at a game of hide and seek. [*Jack and Keith laugh*]

**Austin:** Were you — Alright also, real quick, pronouns for these characters?

**Jack:** Marianne is she/her.

**Austin:** Uh-huh.

**Keith:** Tarpon is he/him.

**Art:** I'm — I don't — I'm struggling to figure out what — who I would name Calamity Tranquil.

**Austin:** Is this a Calamity Jane descendant?

**Art:** Oh, almost certainly not.

**Austin:** Okay, well.

**Keith:** Well actually, the odds are that probably. Right?

**Austin:** Is it? Is it —is that the odds?

**Keith:** Yeah. You know the further away you get from someone, the more likely you are an indirect descendant of them. That's how that works.

**Austin:** Oh, is that— yeah? Okay, y'know what: yeah, that makes sense. Did Calamity Jane have any kids?

**Art:** Great question.

**Austin:** Cause if not, no. [*Jack laughs*]

**Art:** That would really limit the possibility.

**Austin:** Two children.

**Jack:** She had two children?

**Austin:** She had two children.

**Jack:** She was like a gunslinger, right?

**Austin:** Yeah, yeah.

**Keith:** Yeah.

**Jack:** Damn.

**Austin:** Two daughters.

**Jack:** What were they called?

**Keith:** Well they were called Cala – [*cackles*], Calamity Calm [*Austin laughs*], and Calamity Raucous.

**Jack:** Wow.

**Keith:** And obviously Calamity Tranquil is a descendant of Calamity Calm.

**Austin:** It looks like Jean and Miette.

**Jack:** Oh, Miette is a good name. How's that spelt?

**Keith:** Calamity Miette.

**Austin:** Miette, M-I-E-T-T-E.

**Jack:** Wow, I've written that down.

**Austin:** Um, it could be- I guess it could be Jean [*like Jean-Paul*], no Jean [*like denim*]- I'm gonna say Jean [*the second one*], 'cause that's great, 'cause that means her daughter's name is Jean Jane.

**Jack:** I don't think—

**Austin:** Or these are fake names.

**Art:** [*crosstalk*] No, I think Jane was a first name.

**Austin:** Oh, right. Canary was her last name.

**Keith:** [*crosstalk*] Yeah, we've established that it's Calamity is the name that gets passed down.

**Austin:** Why would she decide to be Calamity Jane and not Calamity Canary? Great names. Just- they're both great.

**Art:** And with no disrespect intended to my mother, I think we can all be happy that she didn't go for Calamity Martha, her actual first name. [*Keith laughs*]

**Austin:** Right, uh-huh. God. Calamity Jane is a mononym, good catch Kara in the chat.

**Jack:** So, what are your pronouns Art?

**Austin:** Yeah.

**Art:** Um, I'll go she/her for this. It does seem more right.

**Austin:** Okay. [*crosstalk*] I'm gonna go — I'm gonna go with they/them.

**Art:** I'm really just reading the Calamity Jane Wikipedia page right now.

**Austin:** Alright, we're gonna close that and focus on the game. Alright, we're a bunch of kids. What the fuck were we doing when we found Marianne Perfect's drive?

**Keith:** I was winning a game of hide and seek.

**Austin:** Right, we talked about that. Hide and seek. You were cheating. I misspelled 'seek' there.

**Keith:** I was not cheating. I was winning!

**Austin:** Were you win- How were you— hmm, how do we know it's cheating?

**Art:** It's out of bounds. You can't be over there.

**Keith:** I was not out of bounds! Every time I hide, no one could find me until they gave up, and that means that I was winning.

**Austin:** How did we know each other? I'll be honest, I wasn't doing a good job of seeking. I found a really shiny rock.

**Keith:** Oh, I was losing 'cause I **wasn't trying**, yeah, okay.

**Austin:** I wasn't playing. Do we go to school together? Are we cousins? Are we —

**Keith:** We're cousins who go to school together.

**Austin:** Alright.

**Keith:** No, I don't wanna do cousins.

**Austin:** You don't want to do cousins. You don't want a family bond.

**Keith:** I'm rejecting — I have too much cousin shit going on.

**Austin:** Okay, fair. Are we —

**Art:** Maybe this is like — maybe we're like, Scouts?

**Austin:** Oh, that's fun. I like that.

**Art:** Like, this is Scout camp. We sold a bunch of cookies and now we're here.

**Austin:** And now we're here.

**Keith:** Wait, is it an official Scout camp, or did we just start calling ourselves 'Scout camp'?

**Austin:** Did we— We sold cookies. We bought cookies. Then we marked them up and sold them. I'm changing — No, we're young, we're just very —I was like, 'maybe we're too young to be scammers'.

**Keith:** Yeah, it's cartoon young.

**Austin:** [*crosstalk*] We're cartoon young.

**Keith:** Cartoon seven-year olds are like real-life fourteen-year olds.

**Austin:** [*crosstalk*] They're scammers, for sure. — We bought cookies. And we marked them up because we said that we were selling it to become Scouts, or for our Scout program. People asked us, 'which Scouts?;' we got very vague about it.

**Keith:** Yeah. We're saving money for Scout's honours.

**Austin:** Right, and then we just bought a bunch of Scout patches from a local shop or an internet dealer. [*Keith laughs*] And made our own sashes. And are wearing them. We've just decided — self-appointed Scouts.

**Art:** Do you think cookies have gotten better?

**Austin:** I think they got worse, and then they got a little bit better again.

**Art:** Mmm, you don't think like there's some good cookie technology?

**Austin:** I think it was probably lost in the war.

**Keith:** I think it's a lot easier to get average cookies, but harder to get better cookies.

**Austin:** I think that's true. I think good cookies are probably what nobles eat in the Divine Principality. Alright, so —

**Keith:** Do we wanna — There are probably other Scouts with us. I mean not like, literally with us; it's probably not just us three. There's probably more that we roped into our weird thing.

**Austin:** Maybe, maybe. But like, they're not gonna be showing up and talking. So...

**Keith:** Right. Well I was just, y'know? Just flavor.

**Austin:** Yes. Yeah, I'm with you. I think it's maybe a bigger thing but like, the three of us are who found the ECH0 drive. You know?

**Keith:** Yeah.

**Austin:** I think I found it. I thought it was a shiny rock, and then we're debating whether or not Tarpon cheated, and I've hit a button, or I've — y'know — inserted — made some sort of thumb motion on the rock. And in fact it was not a rock, it was just a dirty, weird, like holographic drive. And it started projecting a vision of Marianne Perfect. So this is when Marianne Perfect, you show up and give us your name, unit, serial number, and mission. Does that just play as just like a recording- like, what is it?

**Jack:** I think you think it's a recording.

**Austin:** Right.

**Jack:** I think it's like that moment when you get to a friend's answerphone message, and their answerphone message is so lifelike that you think you're talking to them.

**Austin:** Yeah.

**Jack:** Except it's the inverse of that, where, y'know, Perfect arrives and states her name, unit, and serial number, and then just kind of waits.

**Austin:** *[laughing softly]* Right. Well, here's what you're waiting for. *[reading]* 'Children, teach the pilot about your world. The ECH0 drive can speak and hear, but not see, so be their eyes. Start by making a map, marking where you found the drive. Was it a cave, a beach, an orchard?' I'm gonna bring this over now to a new blank page. I'm gonna zoom out on it, and I'm just gonna

make a big shape. [*Austin laughs*] That's not what I wanted. I wanted to make a big funny-looking shape, and instead I just made a box. *brr-rah-rah*- Here we go. And here is the amount of area that we are familiar with as kids. Where did— someone ping where we found Marianne.

**Art:** I was so zoomed in, I'm -

**Jack:** Yeah, I was extremely zoomed in.

**Austin:** Oh, was it —

**Keith:** You were probably — we were probably, like, only a little bit outside the town or village or whatever.

**Austin:** Sure.

**Keith:** Like, outskirts, but not dangerous outskirts for seven-year olds.

**Austin:** Yeah. Do you want to mark where that is? And I'll- that way we'll also know how to mark where the village is.

**Keith:** Um... I like this corner.

**Austin:** Alright, sure. So you wanna do, like, town here?

**Keith:** Yeah.

**Austin:** I'm gonna mark that with a little red circle. That's where we found it. Boop. We found you here. So, there's a town near here. Um, what do we know about this town? I mean I guess I'll ask the question the game wants to us to ask now, which is: Is this a high-tech or low-tech world? Having come through the other side of this war, and knowing that the Divine Principality's also has — is, y'know, a descendant of the Principality of Kesh, which famously left a lot of worlds limited on their technology, this could go either way, basically. Is our world as we see it high-tech- sorry, is it advanced or low-tech?

**Keith:** Important question.

**Art:** Mmmm.

**Austin:** Yeah. As we answer this, basically, this opens up different possibilities for the way we describe the world, and the things that happened here. Also, I'm gonna change this to hexes, because I think hexes are cool.

**Keith:** I chose where we were, and also, what we were doing when we found it, so...

**Austin:** True. Alright, I'm gonna say it is... I'm looking ahead a little bit. I'm gonna say it's advanced. With the note that advanced means... like, it doesn't mean cyberpunk. I mean I guess the rolls could get us there. But I think it's like, advanced in a fairly... green-advanced world way, y'know? I don't think this is an industry world. And in fact, that's how I'm gonna start by describing the area around us, Marianne, is, um, y'know one of the questions specifically here are 'are there windmills?' And I think there are windmills, but I think that they are- I think that's maybe out where we are. We're out in a green area. But we are, uh, like hills and um — that's not what I want- hills and *[sighs]*... Why would we have found a mech that no one else had found yet?

**Art:** 'Cause it was out of bounds.

**Austin:** Okay. I know – I know that – mmm.

**Keith:** It was out of bounds. *[laughs]* It was way out of bounds! It was probably like a rocky area.

**Austin:** Okay.

**Keith:** I mean, we thought it was a rock. It was probably around a bunch of rocks. Like, actual rocks.

**Austin:** Right, we didn't find the mech, we found the- right, right. We didn't actually find the mech. We found the— the-...

**Keith:** Drive core?

**Austin:** The drive core, right. So yeah, maybe it was the opposite. Maybe this area we're at now is only recently this kind of nice park area, y'know? In fact, I'm gonna colour it in such a way that it makes it look like a big park area, and less like just a square.

**Keith:** I mean, if we're gonna play hide and seek again, and I'm gonna win again, then we should at least do it in the new place that no one's ever been.

**Austin:** Sure. That no one's ever- right, uh-huh.

**Keith:** If we're Scouts, we gotta scout!

**Austin:** So yeah, it's like a park. It's like a natural park then, right. There's some hills, there's some trees, there's some rocks, um, but it's probably pretty safe. And the thing that I want is, there are these windmills, and there's just like, a new type of windmill I saw a video of yesterday, um, which are... like, not spinny windmills. Let me find out what they're called again. Vortex bladeless windmills that are just kind of like, big vertical things. They look like- they just look like strange Dark Souls obelisks.

**Jack:** They just wobble around?



**Austin:** They just wobble. They're bladeless.

**Keith:** What makes them wobble?

**Austin:** The **wind**.

**Jack:** The **wind**, Keith.

**Keith:** The **wind** makes them wobble?

**Austin:** Uh-huh.

**Keith:** And how?

**Jack:** [*crosstalk*] The wind makes everything wobble.

**Austin:** What do you mean, how?

**Keith:** And how does that help?

**Austin:** Here we go.

**Jack:** Well, presumably the wobbling is moving some kind of dynamo, is powering some kind of dynamo.

**Keith:** I guess what I'm — I guess what I'm saying is-

**Austin:** [*crosstalk*] You're saying, 'why not blades?'

**Austin:** Well -

**Keith:** [*crosstalk*] Why not blades? 'Cause, the way that I understand the windmill to work—

**Jack:** [*crosstalk*] Have you seen this shit? It's cool as hell!

[*Austin laughs*]

**Keith:** —Is that it's got a thing to spin the windmill to make sure it's facing the wind, and then the wind moves these blades, but this seems like it- I don't see how this is generating anything—

**Austin:** [*crosstalk*] It wobbles!

**Keith:** — more efficiently than a blade does?

**Austin:** It requires fewer materials and less land area. And then also, there's a thing where it says birds don't get hurt either. Oh, those are also cool too. Someone in the chat just posted [these](#) up. It's not these; these are also dope.

**Keith:** Okay, alright, it requires fewer material, it doesn't kill birds, it takes up less land area.

**[0:30:00]**

**Austin:** [crosstalk] Oh my god. I'm just drawing.

**Keith:** But how much less efficient is it? [At the image linked in chat] That's sick, though. That looks like it kills a lot more birds.

**Austin:** It does. It does.

**Jack:** That's the bird-killing one.

**Austin:** [sighs] I swear I didn't — this isn't what I meant for... ah, I'm gonna draw these, these are windmills. They're wobbling, that's why they're in different directions. [laughs] That one is wobbling a lot. God.

**Jack:** So what's the circle? The circle is where you found me?

**Austin:** Where we found you, yeah. So it's this big wind farm that we found you in that we're playing— nope, we're *Scouting* in, we're not playing, this isn't playing. Alright. We've decided if it's advanced or low-tech. Pilot, was the world as advanced back then as it is now? Has it regressed?

**Jack:** It has progressed.

**Austin:** Mmm.

**Jack:** This was a battlefield.

**Austin:** That's probably why we found you here. [Jack laughs] [reading] 'Children, choose one home town or more from the advanced or low-tech options, or roll a die.'

**Art:** [chanting] Roll. A. Die.

**Austin:** You wanna roll a die? Okay, give me 1d6.

**Austin:** Alright, 5. 'Towers and great halls of government and commerce.'

**Jack:** Wow, this is why you roll dice.

**Austin:** Keith, do you wanna roll one more too?

**Keith:** I'll roll one, yeah. Let's – same, 1d6?

**Austin:** Yeah, 1d6.

**Keith:** Alright... 4.

**Austin:** Alright, and 4. 'Mining mechs and digging machines toil in a quarry'. Okay, so here's what we know. We know that we have a town that is towers and great halls of government and commerce. Given that, I'm gonna make this town bigger. I'm gonna make it like, **this** big. And then we also now know that there are mining mechs and digging machines toiling in a quarry. So I'm gonna add the quarry somewhere, also. 'What scars on the land, and on the adults, show the impact of the final war? How have they faded, how much damage remains'? How far— how long ago do you this war was? I think we're pretty far removed if we're at windmill territory time.

**Jack:** Yeah, we're like— we're talking centuries, right?

**Austin:** Yeah, I think so.

**Art:** Way after Windmill Territory Time Jazz was killed. [*Austin and Jack laugh*]

**Jack:** That guy is great. Is it— should we say three centuries?

**Austin:** Yeah. Three hundred years after. I'm adding a quarry here. Boop, there's a quarry.

**Keith:** What do we mine in the quarry?

**Austin:** Good question. Do we know?

**Keith:** On a green planet, what are we mining?

**Art:** Rocks?

**Austin:** Art, I really need you to tell me everything you know about quarries. [*Austin and Keith laugh*] Right away.

**Art:** Okay. Couple things — first thing I know about quarries, they often have swimming holes. That's a thing I know about quarries...

**Austin:** Okay.

**Jack:** Uh-huh. Uh-huh. This is from the seven-year olds guide to quarries, right?

**Art:** Mm-hm. Always look out for a swimming hole at your local quarry. Two, quarries are... rocky.

**Austin:** Uh-huh. Got it.

**Keith:** Uh-huh.

**Art:** Dangerous. They're dangerous, don't let people go to the quarry by themselves.

**Keith:** But I thought there was a swimming hole there?

**Art:** Sometimes. But like, it's a dangerous swimming hole.

**Austin:** Gotcha.

**Keith:** Okay. Got it.

**Art:** There's like— people, like- someone's definitely drowned at your local quarry. And I **think** that the movie / book IT has a lot of scary things happen at the quarry.

**Keith:** Yeah. Scary things happen all over the place in that book.

**Austin:** I would like to not go to the quarry, ever, if possible, thank you. I don't think we know what they mine there.

**Art:** Maybe they're just—

**Keith:** We're seven. Yeah okay, good point, we don't know what they mine at the quarry.

**Art:** Maybe they're mining water from the swimming hole?

**Austin:** Maybe. We shouldn't go.

**Keith:** Maybe they're **mining** their own business. [*Keith and Austin laugh*]

**Art:** Ooooooooooooooooooh-

**Austin:** Marianne, these are the first people you've spoken to in three hundred years. Um, yeah, here's- the way I wanna go is, we forgot. Like, the people— our generation certainly doesn't understand what war actually is. Even our parents... I don't think they remember what it's like to not be living inside of a successful empire. When I say 'successful,' I mean a conquest-driven, like, y'know? Especially if this like a big government town. I think we're at the very least very bougie kids. If we're living in a city where there is towers and great halls of government and commerce... I guess maybe that's not true, maybe we could be— I don't know who does the mining. I don't know if there is like a, mining — if there is a working class here, or

if this is more of a — like, they're mining mechs, so maybe there aren't that many actual mining jobs.

**Jack:** Or is it automated?

**Austin:** Right, is it completely automa— if they're mechs, then they have pilots, is the important distinction.

**Jack:** Yes. What do we call— do we just call them robots at that point?

**Austin:** They're robots, yeah. Robots can also have—

**Jack:** Absolutely.

**Austin:** —but mechs specifically designate someone with pilots.

**Jack:** I think in all of our seasons we've had robots who have sapience, and robots who don't, in the same story.

**Austin:** Mm-hm. Mm-hmm. Definitely. Alright, so, we have some basics here. There will be more added to the map as we play. Journey: each in turn, we're gonna go on a journey. Each of us in turn leads the group to a mech, a mighty wreck that lies silent, disarmed, and harmless. This is us being like— I guess, Marianne, you should tell us that you want to find your mech.

**Jack (as Marianne):** Children— this is not a recording. Children.

**Keith (as Tarpon):** Oh my god, this recording is being really weird.

**Austin (as Keaton):** We should take this to an adult.

**Jack (as Marianne):** No, no, no. No. I must be reunited.

**Keith (as Tarpon):** I agree with the recording.

**Austin (as Keaton):** With who? My name- my name's Keaton.

**Jack (as Marianne):** Keaton, it is a pleasure to meet you. My name is Perfect.

**Austin (as Keaton):** I think it's pretty good-

**Art (as Calamity):** [*crosstalk*] I still think this might be a recording.

**Austin (as Keaton):** I think it's pretty good, but I wouldn't say it's perfect.

**Keith (as Tarpon):** What was it again?

**Jack** (as **Marianne**): I'm Perfect.

**Keith** (as **Tarpon**): [crosstalk] Jesus Christ. Yeah.

**Art** (as **Calamity**): Wow... People had some ego back in the day, huh?

**Keith** (as **Tarpon**): [laughs] Yeah. Put this rude rock down.

**Jack** (as **Marianne**): I am Perfect, and this is not a recording. I must be reunited. **Please** do not take me to an adult.

**Austin** (as **Keaton**): I'm gonna take you to an adult.

**Keith** (as **Tarpon**): [crosstalk] Can we start this from the beginning? What was it saying at the start?

**Austin** (as **Keaton**): Yeah, I'm gonna — where's the restart button? I'm gonna find a pin and see if I can put it in and see if I can hit the reset button.

**Jack** (as **Marianne**): No, no, no, no, no. I've awoken from centuries of slumber.

**Austin** (as **Keaton**): What's that?

**Jack** (as **Marianne**): It's where you sleep for a long time, and you do not know what has happened.

**Austin** (as **Keaton**): Good morning.

**Jack** (as **Marianne**): Good morning. [beat] Keaton—

**Keith** (as **Tarpon**): Do you eat breakfast?

**Jack** (as **Marianne**): [to Keith] What is your name?

**Art** (as **Calamity**): Oh, we got some cookies we could sell you.

**Keith** (as **Tarpon**): [crosstalk] Yeah, do you have any money?

**Austin** (as **Keaton**): [crosstalk] How much money do you have... cookies?

**Jack** (as **Marianne**): My currency is long dead.

**Austin** (as **Keaton**): I'm sorry to hear that. Sorry for your loss.

**Keith** (as **Tarpon**): Yeah.

**Jack (as Marianne):** It's okay. I understand it may be difficult for you to hear. Please reunite me.

**Keith (as Tarpon):** No, we can hear you fine. [*Austin laughs*]

**Art (as Calamity):** Clear as day.

**Jack (as Marianne):** Children, I have a new directive. You must bring me to an adult.  
[*Art, Austin, and Keith all howl with laughter*]

**Austin:** I put the—

**Keith (as Tarpon):** I disagree—

**Austin:** Wait, wait. Shh, shh. I put the rock down.

**Austin (as Keaton):** Huddle up.

**Art (Calamity):** Alright.

**Keith (as Tarpon):** We have to vote on this.

**Austin (as Keaton):** I don't think we should— I don't think we should take her to an adult now.

**Keith (as Tarpon):** Now, or like, ever?

**Austin (as Keaton):** Not right now.

**Keith (as Tarpon):** Not right now?

**Austin (as Keaton):** If she wants to go to an adult she might get us in trouble. She might say that we did something bad.

**Art (as Calamity):** Yeah, especially— I mean, she seems kinda mad.

**Jack (as Marianne):** I cannot see. [*Keith laughs*]

**Art (as Calamity):** It's fine. Everything's fine.

**Austin (as Keaton):** Everything's okay.

**Keith (as Tarpon):** We're bringing you to an adult.

**Jack (as Marianne):** Thank you.

**Keith** (as **Tarpon**): [*whispering*] I'm not saying we that we're doing that, I'm just saying that—

**Austin** (as **Keaton**): We should find her mech.

**Art** (as **Calamity**): Yeah, we gotta— we gotta-

**Keith** (as **Tarpon**): [*whispering*] I could be the adult. I could do my adult voice.

**Austin** (as **Keaton**): [*whispering*] Oh, that's a good idea. Yeah, do that.

**Art** (as **Calamity**): [*whispering*] Yeah, do your adult voice.

**Austin** (as **Keaton**): [*whispering*] Do your adult voice! [*Louder*] Okay, we found an adult!

**Keith** (as 'adult' **Tarpon**): [*Keith switches to his impression of an adult. Keith / Tarpon's adult voice is deeper and louder than his regular voice*] Children! What are you doing over there?

**Austin** (as **Keaton**): Hi, we found this rock. It's a recording, mister—

**Keith** (as 'adult' **Tarpon**): You found a recording in a — in a rock?

**Austin** (as **Keaton**): That's right.

**Jack** (as **Marianne**): I'm not a recording. To whom am I speaking?

**Keith** (as 'adult' **Tarpon**): Hmm. I'm...

**Austin** (as **Keaton**): [*whispering*] You can use your real— you could-

**Austin**: I cover up the rock with my shirt.

**Keith** (as 'adult' **Tarpon**): Tarpon... Gitch... I'm Tarpon Gitch. [*laughs*] I'm Tarpon Gitch, the adult. [*Austin laughs*]

**Jack** (as **Marianne**): My name is Marianne Perfect, mechanised artillery woman. Serial number 71-74. I have been slumbering for centuries. Please reunite me with my mech.

**Keith** (as 'adult' **Tarpon**): Wow.

**Jack** (as **Marianne**): I'm sorry? [*Austin laughs*]

**Keith** (as 'adult' **Tarpon**): What a wild story.

**Jack** (as **Marianne**): Well, I suppose if you think of it like that.



**Art** (as **Calamity**): Yeah, we're good kids. We brought this right to you.

**Keith** (as 'adult' **Tarpon**): Wow, children like you—

**Austin** (as **Keaton**): Hey mister, can I have a cookie?

**Keith** (as 'adult' **Tarpon**): Yes, of course you may have a cookie.

**Austin** (as **Keaton**): [*Austin does cookie-eating Foley*]

**Art** (as **Calamity**): Oh, those look like great cookies.

**Keith** (as 'adult' **Tarpon**): Do you need a cookie, recording?

**Jack** (as **Marianne**): Ah, I cannot eat, neither can I see. Tarpon, may we speak in private?

**Keith** (as 'adult' **Tarpon**): Away from the prying eyes of these children? Yes, of course.

**Art** (as **Calamity**): Okay, we're going now!

**Keith** (as 'adult' **Tarpon**): [*whispering*] Shh. You guys have to shhh. You guys have to shhh.

**Austin** (as **Keaton**): [*whispering*] Okay, okay. Wink.

**Art**: Oh, my foot stomps aren't coming on the recording. [*Foot stomps can be heard*] [*Austin and Keith laugh*]

**Keith** (as 'adult' **Tarpon**): Okay, recording, they're gone. You may say what you need. [*Austin and Art laugh quietly*]

**Jack** (as **Marianne**): I was separated from my mech. And I was destroyed in an inferno. The pain of that parting has lingered with me for centuries. Can you help me relieve it, even though— I regret to inform you that I did not fight for your people.

**Keith** (as 'adult' **Tarpon**): Wow, this is messed up. I'm really sorry

**Jack** (as **Marianne**): The pain lingered with me for centuries. In time I forgot the burning, but not that of being separated from my mech. Can you please reunite me?

**Keith** (as 'adult' **Tarpon**): Can you hold on one minute? [*Laughter*]

**Jack** (as **Marianne**): One more minute will not hurt.

**Keith** (as 'adult' **Tarpon**): Okay. It might be two minutes. It'll be a very short amount of time.

**Jack** (as **Marianne**): It will be an instant.

**Keith**: (as 'adult' **Tarpon**): Yes.

**Keith** (as **Tarpon**): [*whispering*] Okay, like, I — I like, *do not* know what to do.

**Art** (as **Calamity**): [*whispering*] Oh my god, that was **so** fucked up.

**Keith** (as **Tarpon**): [*whispering*] Yeah. But, like, I don't know what— I don't know what to do.

**Austin** (as **Keaton**): [*whispering*] We should help her!

**Art** (as **Calamity**): [*whispering*] Yeah... but like—

**Austin** (as **Keaton**): [*whispering*] I know where there's that big mech.

**Keith** (as **Tarpon**): [*whispering*] But she... she said- she said that she was fighting against us.

**Austin** (as **Keaton**): [*whispering*] So what? That's *cool*.

**Art** (as **Calamity**): [*whispering*] It's over.

**Austin** (as **Keaton**): [*whispering*] Think about— think about...

**Austin**: What's, like, the— what's the hot show in this world?

**Keith**: Probably something about Scouts. Probably some sort of Scout show.

**Austin**: Yeah. It probably is.

**Austin** (as **Keaton**): [*whispering*] Think about in, in the Justice Super Scouts. Think about how cool the bad guys are. They're not that bad!

**Keith** (as **Tarpon**): [*whispering*] Yeah, but they have mechs, that, like, hurt people.

**Austin** (as **Keaton**): [*whispering*] Right, but we— any mechs here have definitely been... they don't hurt anymore 'cause they stopped, 'cause they don't have pilots.

**Art** (as **Calamity**): [*whispering*] Yeah, it's probably... it's probably just junk, like everything else here. For all I know the mech is a wind turbine.

**Austin** (as **Keaton**): [*whispering*] Oh... wait a second. If we bring—

**Keith** (as **Tarpon**): What's a winterbine [*purposely mispronouncing wind turbine*]?

**Art** (as **Calamity**): No, not— mmm.

**Austin** (as **Keaton**): [*whispering*] If we bring- if we bring her to the right mech, think about how much we can sell it for. Then we can get all the Scout supplies we need!

**Keith** (as **Tarpon**): [*whispering*] Wait, why can't we sell the mech without her in it?

**Art** (as **Calamity**): [*whispering*] No one is gonna buy a mech from a bunch of kids.

**Keith** (as **Tarpon**): [*whispering*] Maybe we should ask, like, your brother?

**Austin** (as **Keaton**): [*whispering*] I don't wanna talk to my brother.

**Keith** (as **Tarpon**): [*whispering*] I don't wanna talk to your brother, but, like... it's like halfway between an adult and not getting an adult.

**Art** (as **Calamity**): [*whispering*] No, we don't any— we can do this.

**Austin** (as **Keaton**): [*whispering*] We're Scouts!

**Keith** (as **Tarpon**): [*whispering*] We can do— yeah, we *can* do this. Yeah, we can do this. Yeah.

**Austin** (as **Keaton**): [*whispering*] Go tell her we can do this.

**Keith** (as **Tarpon**): [*whispering*] We— but like, we can-

**Art** (as **Calamity**): [*crosstalk*] [*whispering*] What is finding a mech, than Scouting?

**Keith** (as 'adult' **Tarpon**): Recording.

**Jack** (as **Marianne**): Yes.

**Keith** (as 'adult' **Tarpon**): We can— I can do this. The children can— we're letting the children do this.

**Jack** (as **Marianne**): Were I able to cry—

**Keith** (as 'adult' **Tarpon**): Okay, bye now. [*Austin laughs quietly*]

**Jack** (as **Marianne**): Were I able to cry, I would. [*Keith and Austin laugh*]. But my last tears were centuries ago. Let us begin.

**[00:42:04] – First Mech**

**Austin:** [reading] ‘Children, each of you in turn leads the group on a journey to a mech. A mighty wreck that lies silent, disarmed, and harmless. Choose a description and a fate, or roll a die for each, then mark it on the map. Any child can add details to fit the story. How large was the mech? Humanoid, or bestial? Colours of the armour, if there are any? Thrusters, wings, specialised limbs? Pilot, what do you remember of this mech? Friend or foe’- oh, I guess we’ll remember this first- or, later. Let’s roll this, roll these dice. Who wants to go first? Who is the first person who knows where there is a mech to take Marianne?

**Keith:** I think Art said that...

**Austin:** Yeah, Calamity?

**Keith:** Calamity?

**Art:** Yeah.

**Austin:** Give me two dice rolls. 2d6. — 4: ‘someone built a house around this mech. The torso acts as a load-bearing pillar, an amazing living room display’. And then—

**Art:** That is dope.

**Austin:** That is dope. Uh, and—

**Jack:** [*crosstalk*] It’s so cool. This is what I saw and I was like, ‘we should play this game’.

**Austin:** Uh-huh. And then, six- so that was the description of the— [*Keith sneezes*] and then, uh, I should note also **that** was the one where I saw it and was like, ‘we have to be advanced,’ because that is not on the low-tech one. 6 on the fate table is: ‘it’s a treasured monument. Armour cleaned, markings repainted. People leave flowers, wreathes, and offerings.’ This makes sense—

**Art:** No, it was a 3.

**Austin:** Oh, sorry. Sorry, sorry, sorry. Disregard what I just said. Instead, it is the opposite. ‘Covered in graffiti, anti-war slogans, colourful stripes and checker boards, lover’s names layers after faded layer.’

**Art:** So it’s also like an abandoned house?

**Austin:** I guess, or is it just like— the side of the house? I mean, it could be gigantic, right?

**Art:** Yeah, I guess it could be—

**Austin:** *[crosstalk]* Like, if it's like the size of—

**Art:** It could be so big that we're not very smart for not noticing it before. *[laughs]*

**Austin:** Or, it could be clear that it's, like, 'oh yeah it's a mech, but we've built... we've built housing around it.' Like, um, it could be like an apartment building, where at the centre is just this gigantic thing. Or it could be abandoned. It could be a spooky abandoned house.

**Art:** I like spooky abandoned house. It feels a little more on-brand right now, but...

**Austin:** *[crosstalk]* Yeah, you draw — draw it somewhere on the map.

**Art:** Um... what does a spooky abandoned house look like?

**Austin:** Well, it should look like a mech first, right? So, maybe draw like a — I guess, again, is it a humanoid mech? Is it a — like a hypercat? Is it a four-legged giant mech? Like what if it's a four-legged quad-leg mech, but the top of the mech is above the house? Do you know what I mean? Like, the four legs are the four columns are the four columns at the edges.

**Jack:** Oh, wow...

**Art:** Hey Austin, I really need you to adjust down my ability to draw in Roll20.

**Austin:** Okay, okay.

**Art:** I just think you just need to, like— this is gonna be a lot simpler than that.

**Keith:** I mean, Austin drew a field of sticks, so... *[Austin laughs]*

**Jack:** They are wobbling, though.

**Austin:** They're wobbling. I made them wobble.

**Art:** So it should probably be closer to us, right? I don't want to get too far out.

**Austin:** It's up to you. Draw it where you wanna draw it. We have hoverbikes.

**Art:** *[pause]* Do we?

**[0:45:00]**

**Austin:** I don't know if we have hoverbikes. We have bikes. We have bikes that have a little— you know how you can put like, baseball cards in and make them go like, click-click-click? We have them where we have, like, a little circle device, like a little sphere thing that has a hole and it— where it goes vmmm-vmmm-vmmm-vmmm, so it **sounds** like a hoverbike. Is this the house?

**Jack:** Where are you— where are you drawing this?

**Austin:** It's north—

**Jack:** [*crosstalk*] Is it just this little square.

**Keith:** [*crosstalk*] Here?

**Austin:** Yeah.

**Keith:** Uh, I'm trying to— Is it this? Is it that? Is it?

**Austin:** Yes.

**Art:** Oh, don't ping in the middle of drawing. [*Keith laughs*] You're pinging the same colour I'm drawing.

**Keith:** Oh, yeah, it's a constantly exploding...

**Austin:** Oh, this is good, this is good.

**Keith:** For me, it's black.

**Jack:** I don't see what he's doing yet, I'm curious. Oh, I see what he's doing.

**Austin:** Uh-huh. Love it.

**Jack:** Simon, Simon Stålenhaag, please if you're listening—

**Austin:** Please... God, that is so much of what this game feels like. This game is a very big Simon Stålenhaag vibe. We should play Tales from the Loop, God.

**Jack:** That game is supposed to be good as hell.

**Austin:** It's good, I've played it. I did a— I did a play, it was good. Alright. So... Children, we've done this. 'Any child can add details that fit the story, how large was the mech'... so, very big?

**Art:** [*crosstalk*] Alright, I'm done.

**Austin:** Or, like, is this a Rook, or is this Order, or is this somewhere in-between?

**Art:** I mean, it's two and a half times taller than this... uh, house.

**Austin:** Is this a single family home?

**Art:** Yeah, I think so.

**Austin:** Alright, so it's like a— it's like Gundam sized. It's like a, uh, it's like, y'know.

**Keith:** Big. It's big.

**Art:** Two stories and an attic?

**Austin:** Yeah. Two stories and an attic. So yeah, you drive— we bike, we hoverbike our way there. As far as you're concerned, Marianne Perfect, we **do** have hoverbikes, because all you can do is hear us. So...

*[Art, Austin, and Keith all make a mixture of sounds -hums, clicks, and wooshes- that continue through this next exchange]*

**Austin (as Keaton):** *[shouting above the noise]* We're almost there!

**Jack (as Marianne):** What are these vehicles?

**Austin (as Keaton):** We're on hoverbikes.

**Jack (as Marianne):** Why are you still here, child?

**Austin (as Keaton):** 'Cause I know where the mech is!

**Jack (as Marianne):** Can you put, uh... Tarpon, back on?

**Austin (as Keaton):** Uh, yeah. Um... Mister, the recording wants to talk to you again. Mr. Adult.

**Keith (as 'adult' Tarpon):** Oh... Yes...? *[Continues hoverbike impersonation]*

**Jack (as Marianne):** Tarpon, this is a journey that is difficult and tragic. And I fear that it is not a place for children. Why have you brought them?

**Keith (as 'adult' Tarpon):** Actually, I have to go. They're gonna take you by themselves.

**Jack (as Marianne):** Wait, Tarpon.

**Keith (as 'adult' Tarpon):** Yes?

**Jack (as Marianne):** Tarpon, we move through the bones of centuries past.

**Keith (as 'adult' Tarpon):** *[short pause]* Me too. *[Art, Austin, and Keith all laugh]*

**Jack:** And the recording doesn't speak for the next minute and a half.

**Austin:** So, I need to retcon something. *[laughing]* I don't think we have devices attached to our bikes. I think what we have is **our mouths**. I think three kids go whoom-whoom-whoom-whoom. *[Everyone bursts into fits of laughter]*

**Jack:** Oh, god.

**Austin (as Keaton):** *[sighs]* So we're here. It's big. It's like a big person with a diamond head. Is this yours?

**Keith (as Tarpon):** Yeah, did you used to live in a big person with a diamond head?

**Jack (as Marianne):** I did not live inside my mech. My mech and I moved as one across the battlefield. It was not a home. It was a skeleton.

**Austin (as Keaton):** This one's not a skeleton.

**Art (as Calamity):** *[crosstalk]* Okay, but where did you sleep?

**Keith (as Tarpon):** Yeah, wouldn't **you** have been the skeleton if you were inside?

**Jack (as Marianne):** It was an exoskeleton. Child, I slept at home. In a bed I shared with my husband. I had two beautiful—

**Jack:** Oh no I didn't have children. *[Austin laughs]*

**Keith (as Tarpon):** It's been a long time, it's okay to forget stuff.

**Jack (as Marianne):** I had two beautiful cats.

**Austin (as Keaton):** *[together with Art]* What were their names?

**Art (as Calamity):** *[together with Austin]* What were their names?

**Jack (as Marianne):** One was a Siamese named Elsbeth. And one was a Calico named Michelangelo.

**Austin (as Keaton):** I have a cat named Mayonnaise.

**Keith (as Tarpon):** What was their fur length?

**Art (as Calamity):** Mayonnaise is a dope cat.

**Austin (as Keaton):** Thank you.

**Jack (as Marianne):** I — I. This is not my body. Their fur was short to medium length.



**Keith** (as **Tarpon**): Dope.

**Jack** (as **Marianne**): I miss them very much.

**Art** (as **Calamity**): Oh, I got bad news about those cats.

**Jack** (as **Marianne**): What is the bad news about those cats? [*Austin and Keith laugh*]

**Art** (as **Calamity**): Um—

**Keith** (as **Tarpon**): I mean, put two and two together.

**Art** (as **Calamity**): They... were... bad while you were gone. [*Austin and Keith laugh*]  
Everyone knows about those cats. They don't listen. They don't— they eat their food at all hours.

**Keith** (as **Tarpon**): They meow at night when they don't actually need anything.

**Art** (as **Calamity**): Oh, those cats. The meowing. Michelangelo is a meow-er. More like Meowchelangelo, am I right, everyone? [*Austin laughs*]

**Austin** (as **Keaton**): Anyway, is this yours? Do you remember this one?

**Jack** (as **Marianne**): No. This is not mine.

**Austin**: 'Pilot, what do you remember of this mech? Friend or foe, hero or craven, how did it meet its end? How do you feel about its final resting place?'

**Jack** (as **Marianne**): Describe it to me a little further. I cannot see.

**Austin** (as **Keaton**): It's big and blue, it has a diamond head. Um... it's like a-

**Keith** (as **Tarpon**): Oh, it's got an arm that's about to crush this house!

**Austin** (as **Keaton**): Brmmmm... Brmmmm... [*chanting*] Crushing houses, crushing houses, crushing, crushing, crushing houses. [*Art and Keith make rumbling noises*]

**Art** (as **Calamity**): [*crosstalk*] [*chanting*] Crushing houses, crushing houses-

**Jack** (as **Marianne**): [*crosstalk*] There were many-

**Austin** (as **Keaton**): - Crushing, crushing, crushing houses!

**Art** (as **Calamity**): I'm gonna, [*mumbles*] I'm gonna crush it.

**Jack** (as **Marianne**): There were many of these, and I would destroy ten or fifteen with a single blast from my shoulder-mounted cannons. Each was piloted by between five and

ten people. So, counting, I maybe destroyed one hundred or two hundred men and women with each blast. I despised these creations.

**Austin** (as **Keaton**): [*crosstalk*] [*softly*] Wow...

**Jack** (as **Marianne**): I despised the way they moved across the landscape, and the sounds they made while doing so.

**Keith** (as **Tarpon**): These— have you seen the Super Scouts?

**Jack** (as **Marianne**): My greatest joy was the moment when my incendiary fire would meet the diamond-shaped head, and from a distance I would be able to witness the blue of the diamond turn first to green, and then to black.

**Austin** (as **Keaton**): Someone drew a butt on it. [*Austin and Keith laugh*]

**Jack** (as **Marianne**): This and all things were a moment of joy upon the battlefield.

**Keith** (as **Tarpon**): Did you ever see the Super Scouts pilot?

**Jack** (as **Marianne**): I beg your pardon?

**Keith** (as **Tarpon**): The Super Scouts. It's a really cool show.

**Jack** (as **Marianne**): What is your name, child?

[*pause*]

**Austin**: Oh, shit.

**Art**: Tarp- oh, shit. [*Austin laughs*]

**Austin** (as **Keaton**): [*whispering*] Reverse it!

**Keith** (as **Tarpon**): Tarpon Gitch Junior!

**Jack** (as **Marianne**): Ah, you are his son.

**Keith** (as **Tarpon**): Yes. He has entrusted you to me.

**Jack** (as **Marianne**): Oh, he left, didn't he? I forgot about that.

**Keith** (as **Tarpon**): Yeah, he left. Yeah.

**Jack** (as **Marianne**): It made me so angry that for a moment I saw only blackness, and heard only the sound of waves. But I have moved past that.

**Keith** (as **Tarpon**): I thought you always could only see blackness?

**Jack** (as **Marianne**): I see colours, I do not see the world around me.

**Austin** (as **Keaton**): [*Keith laughs*] Um, I have a question.

**Keith**: Wait.

**Austin**: Uh-huh.

**Keith**: Are we looking at the map?

**Austin**: Uh-huh. Calamity, did you **just** do this?

[*Art has drawn the Cool S onto the side of the mech's chassis*]

**Art** (as **Calamity**): I'm sorry, I-

**Jack** (as **Marianne**): [*crosstalk*] What is happening?

**Art** (as **Calamity**): It's just got so much graffiti on it, I didn't think anyone would notice.

**Jack** (as **Marianne**): What is happening to the mech?

**Austin** (as **Keaton**): Will you just-

**Keith** (as **Tarpon**): Nothing, it's exactly— oh wait, no, you hate this mech—

**Jack** (as **Marianne**): Children, be careful.

**Keith** (as **Tarpon**): We're drawing on it.

**Austin** (as **Keaton**): We're drawing on it. We put the Super Scout symbol on.

**Keith** (as **Tarpon**): Yeah. [*laughs*]

**Austin** (as **Keaton**): That way people would know it's a good one.

**Jack** (as **Marianne**): Children, is the diamond head intact?

**Keith** (as **Tarpon**): There's a butt on it.

[*There isn't, but Austin quickly draws one*]

**Jack** (as **Marianne**): Intact means 'not destroyed'.

**Austin** (as **Keaton**): It's not very tactful. Heh.

**Keith** (as **Tarpon**): It's, yeah, it's tactless but intact.

**Austin** (as **Keaton**): It's a butt. I put a butt on it.

**Keith** (as **Tarpon**): There's a butt on it we drew a butt on it.

**Austin** (as **Keaton**): It's a butt. Boop. *[laughs]*

**Keith** (as **Tarpon**): Someone drew a diamond head on its butt.

**Austin** (as **Keaton**): I didn't do a good butt, but it's there, it's a butt.

**Jack** (as **Marianne**): Oh no, I think something is happening to your hoverbikes. Perhaps we should leave? *[Art laughs]*

**Austin** (as **Keaton**): That's okay, I know where there's another mech. So I can take you to that one and maybe it's yours.

#### **[0:52:38] – Second Mech**

**Austin**: Uh, and we hop on our bikes! I'm gonna roll 2d6 also. *[Keith does bike Foley]* Oh, I rolled two sixes. So...

**Art**: Nice.

**Austin**: Alright, um... description. Yeah, crit 12. *[Art does some more bike Foley]* Alright.

**Keith**: Crit!

**Austin**: Oh, wow, okay. So, I'm gonna take us into— so I'm gonna draw a little map, a little like, directions here— boop, we went that way. And now I'm gonna take us into... y'know what, I'm gonna take us up and around the big government town, cause there's like... out here, there's another, different, um... it's like, uh, this is town centre, right? And this is like the museum district over here. So I take us around the edge of the town wall, which I guess exists. And then, I take us to this kind of elongated area here, that is kind of like, museum park. All the museums are here. Because it is: 'this mech is bolt upright on its feet, almost new, displayed in a public square outside of a museum or perhaps a military academy.' I think it's a museum. I don't think it's a military academy.

Uh, and then: 'it is a treasured monument, its armour cleaned, its markings repainted. People leave flowers, wreaths, and offerings.' Um... and I think this is going to be... it's smaller, and this is gonna be the eight-legged — or, actually quad-legged — four-legged mech. And it's just like up on a, um, I guess we come to a stop, we- its— I don't know what the museum is, I don't know that I know how to read yet. But there's like a big plaque underneath the mech. Uh,

and there are, y'know, flowers left at its feet, and there are— there's a big, like, museum behind it. I'm gonna draw this mech.

*[Austin draws a purple, four-legged mech that has a missile launcher attached to its head]*

**Jack** (as **Marianne**): Where have you brought me?

**Austin** (as **Keaton**): We're at the— we're in front of the museum. There's a big mech here. It's purple.

**Keith** (as **Tarpon**): Yeah.

**Jack** (as **Marianne**): There is a museum?

**Austin** (as **Keaton**): Mm-hm.

**Keith** (as **Tarpon**): Yeah, there's a museum.

**Art** (as **Calamity**): *[crosstalk]* It's called... we call it the mech-seum.

**Jack** (as **Marianne**): Why do you call it that?

**Austin** (as **Keaton**): 'Cause of the mechs that are here.

**Keith** (as **Tarpon**): The mech's there.

**Jack** (as **Marianne**): Ah.

**Keith** (as **Tarpon**): This one's cool!

**Art** (as **Calamity**): It's pretty cool.

**Keith** (as **Tarpon**): It's pretty cool. It's like a hypercat or something.

**Austin** (as **Keaton**): It's a spider-bot.

**Keith** (as **Tarpon**): It's a spider-bot? It looks like it has a cat head I thought?

**Austin** (as **Keaton**): Okay, it does. It also has that. And it has like, rockets. And then it also has, like, extra arms that have little pincers that you can't see yet 'cause— *[snorts]* 'cause of being a recording I guess.

**Jack** (as **Marianne**): How many arms does it have?

**Keith** (as **Tarpon**): It has jet boosters!

**Austin** (as **Keaton**): It has jet boosters and rocket packs.

**Jack** (as **Marianne**): How many arms does it have?

**Austin** (as **Keaton**): It has claws... and it has a big windshield.

**Keith** (as **Tarpon**): Do the pincers count as claws— or arms, I mean?

**Jack** (as **Marianne**): How many arms does it have?

**Austin** (as **Keaton**): It has a very serious face drawn on it.

**Jack** (as **Marianne**): Is there an adult nearby?

**Austin** (as **Keaton**): No...

**Art** (as **Calamity**): No.

**Austin** (as **Keaton**): Just us!

**Keith** (as **Tarpon**): Oh, I think I see my dad coming!

**Austin** (as **Keaton**): Oh, your dad is here at the mech-seum!

**Jack** (as **Marianne**): Excellent.

**Art** (as **Calamity**): Oh yeah, your dad loves the museum.

**Keith** (as **Tarpon**): Yeah, he loves it 'cause he works here.

**Austin** (as **Keaton**): He's the— the chaplain.

**Keith** (as **Tarpon**): He's the-

**Austin** (as **Keaton**): [*crosstalk*] [*laughing, briefly dropping his kid voice*] Did I say chaplain?

**Keith** (as **Tarpon**): [*crosstalk*] [*laughing*] You said chaplain.

**Art** (as **Calamity**): [*crosstalk*] He's the chaplain to the museum!

**Keith** (as **Tarpon**): [*crosstalk*] He's the museum chaplain. Um...

**Jack** (as **Marianne**): Children, a museum is a place where artefacts are kept. There is not usually a priest.

**Keith** (as **Tarpon**): You haven't been alive in hundreds of years. You do not tell us what our home is like!

**Art** (as **Calamity**): [*crosstalk*] You — I — We don't run the museum.

**Austin**: We are a very religious society, and I bet canonically there is definitely some sort of priest.

**Keith** (as **Tarpon**): And, and, you don't even know what's going on because the museum chaplain is in charge of the, um... the pants exhibit. He collects all the pants. That's why he's the chaplain.

**Jack** (as **Marianne**): I beg your pardon?

**Keith** (as **Tarpon**): Chaplain?

**Art** (as **Calamity**): [*quietly*] What?

**Jack** (as **Marianne**): Hand me over to your father.

**Keith** (as 'adult' **Tarpon**): [*resuming his adult impression*] Hello. Oh, over there, is that my son?

**Austin** (as **Keaton**): Yeah—

**Keith** (as **Tarpon**): [*crosstalk*] Yeah, it's me!

**Austin** (as **Keaton**): [*whispering*] Okay, good. Good job!

**Keith** (as **Tarpon**): [*whispering*] Thanks.

**Art** (as **Calamity**): [*whispering*] Good job.

**Austin** (as **Keaton**): Hi Mr. Chaplain.

**Keith** (as 'adult' **Tarpon**): Hello. [*laughs*] It's — please, just call me Tarpon. [*Keith audibly begins moving closer to the mic*] And I'm walking over towards you now.

**Austin**: I'm holding the rock, giving with thumbs up. [*Keith laughs*]

**Keith** (as 'adult' **Tarpon**): How's the rock mission going?

**Art** (as **Calamity**): Great.

**Jack** (as **Marianne**): I fear I have traumatised the children.

**Art** (as **Calamity**): No.

**Keith** (as **Tarpon**): No. Yeah, no. I thought about it, we're fine.

**Austin** (as **Keaton**): We're good.

**Art** (as **Calamity**): We're all good!

**Keith** (as **Tarpon**): Do you want to see the Hypercat spiderbot?

**Austin** (as **Keaton**): Hypercat spiderbot is— it's important, right Mr. Tarpon?

**Keith** (as 'adult' **Tarpon**): Yes, it's the centrepiece of our museum, apart from the pants exhibit.

**Austin**: [*laughs*] I give Calamity a look and shrug.

**Keith** (as **Tarpon**): I think — [*whispering*] guys I think chaps are pants.

**Austin** (as **Keaton**): Oh... right.

**Art** (as **Calamity**): Oh... yeah, the pants exhibit.

**Austin** (as **Keaton**): We got the best pants in our pants exhibit.

**Jack** (as **Marianne**): I am afraid of this mech. This mech fills me with a fear I have long forgotten.

**Keith** (as 'adult' **Tarpon**): What's wrong with the rock?

**Jack** (as **Marianne**): I am afraid.

**Keith** (as 'adult' **Tarpon**): How come?

**Jack** (as **Marianne**): I do not quite remember. I believe-

**Keith** (as 'adult' **Tarpon**): [*crosstalk*] Oh, that sucks— I think we love this mech.

**Jack** (as **Marianne**): I believe these mechs were mass-produced.

**Austin** (as **Keaton**): What's that mean?

**Jack** (as **Marianne**): [*crosstalk*] Perhaps this is the only one left. It means they made millions of them.

**Keith** (as **Tarpon**): [*crosstalk*] They're produced big.



**Jack** (as **Marianne**): Ships spewing millions out into the sky above the planet.

**Austin** (as **Keaton**): I spewed last week 'cause I don't like milk.

**Keith** (as **Tarpon**): Yeah, your mouth broke bad.

**Art** (as **Calamity**): [*crosstalk*] It was all over the planet let me tell you.

**Keith** (as **Tarpon**): You had a nasty ralph.

**Jack** (as **Marianne**): Millions... They say that from the surface you could not see the sky below the moving arms of these spider units.

**Art** (as **Calamity**): [*crosstalk*] Sometimes I can't see the sky but mostly 'cause it's cloudy.

**Jack** (as **Marianne**): I was stationed on an artillery platform. Two and a half kilometres, orbiting this planet. I would stand upon the deck and I would rain fire down below. And I would smile. [*pause*] But these spider units seized our ship, and drove me down to the surface.

**Austin** (as **Keaton**): I was about to ask 'cause if you were up in space that's pretty far. And I thought, 'well if you're up in space how did you get down here?,' but I guess...

**Jack** (as **Marianne**): [*crosstalk*] I fell.

**Austin** (as **Keaton**): I guess... the spiderbots. Did they have webs?

**Art** (as **Calamity**): Mm, good question.

**Keith** (as **Tarpon**): Yeah.

**Austin** (as **Keaton**): I don't—

**Keith** (as 'adult' **Tarpon**): Oh, excellent question child.

**Austin** (as **Keaton**): Do— do you know Mr. Chaplain?

**Keith** (as 'adult' **Tarpon**): Oh, no, no, no. Very curious!

**Jack** (as **Marianne**): Who are you?

**Keith** (as 'adult' **Tarpon**): It's me, Tarpon!

**Jack** (as **Marianne**): Chaplain—

**Keith** (as 'adult' **Tarpon**): [*crosstalk*] Same voice! Yes, Tar— Chaplain Tarpon. [*Art laughs*] [*pause*] Same voice I've always had, definitely.

**Jack** (as **Marianne**): Chaplain.

**Keith** (as 'adult' **Tarpon**): Yes?

**Jack** (as **Marianne**): Can you ease my fear?

**Keith** (as 'adult' **Tarpon**): Anything for a recording.

**Jack** (as **Marianne**): Can you ease my fear, chaplain?

**Keith** (as 'adult' **Tarpon**): Yes. Yes, is what I meant.

**Jack** (as **Marianne**): You cannot just say yes, Chaplain.

**Keith** (as 'adult' **Tarpon**): Oh.

**Austin** (as **Keaton**): [*whispering*] Say something nice. Like, like—

**Keith** (as 'adult' **Tarpon**): You... are looking nice... today.

**Art** (as **Calamity**): [*whispering*] No, not that. Nope! Say something about the spider.

**Keith** (as 'adult' **Tarpon**): The spider is, uh... squashed.

**Austin** (as **Keaton**): Right. We squashed—

**Keith** (as 'adult' **Tarpon**): We squashed it.

**Austin** (as **Keaton**): This is— this is a statue 'cause we squashed all the spiders. But we gotta remember what they looked like.

**Jack** (as **Marianne**): [*crosstalk*] You destroyed all those soldiers.

**Austin** (as **Keaton**): They're all gone. They're all gone! They're all gone now. There's only-

**Jack** (as **Marianne**): Where did they go?

**Austin** (as **Keaton**): Uh, the quarry. We put them in the quarry.

Austin: Shrug! [*Keith laughs*]

**Jack** (as **Marianne**): We must never go near the quarry.

**Art** (as **Calamity**): Oh no...

**Austin** (as **Keaton**): What's wrong?

**[1:00:00]**

**Art** (as **Calamity**): I just— I just feel like we're gonna end up at the quarry.

**Austin** (as **Keaton**): [*laughing softly*] Conveniently. [*To Marianne*] Are you okay now, are you — are you scared? I get scared sometimes.

**Jack** (as **Marianne**): I will remain afraid until I die again. Take me away from this place.

**Keith** (as **Tarpon**): Okay!

**Austin** (as **Keaton**): Alright.

**[1:00:16] – Third Mech**

**Keith** (as **Tarpon**): I know where there's a mech.

**Austin** (as **Keaton**): Oh yeah?

**Austin**: [*still doing a kid voice*] Roll 2d6 and tell me where!

**Keith** (as **Tarpon**): Yeah, it's in the quarry.

**Austin**: [*laughing*] Okay, good. Give me 2d6. You got a 5 and a 2. Alright, so...

**Keith**: Sure did.

**Austin**: [*reading*] 'Journey: we find this one lying in peaceful repose, like a giant sleeping Buddha statue at a roadside. Why is it positioned like this?' And, 'adults gather here to sing, dance, tell stories. They fly a banner to indicate a gathering is in session.' So, where is this at? Do you wanna ping it and I'll draw a line, and then you can start drawing it?

**Keith**: Yeah.

**Art**: This is gonna be the hardest we've ever had to work to convince— [*laughing*] convince her that there's no adults nearby.

**Austin**: Uh-huh! I think we catch like a big mountain-hill, and then we slide down. We go very fast. Oh it— there we go. Into the quarry. To the quarry. It's probably a road. It's like a— a road near the quarry, or is it in the quarry?

**Keith:** [*crosstalk*] Well it's 'roadside.'

**Art:** [*crosstalk*] Quarry roads?

**Austin:** Yeah.

**Keith:** Right at the border of the quarry.

**Austin:** Okay. So then, go ahead and start drawing.

[*Austin, Art, and Keith make hoverbike Foley*]

**Austin (as Keaton):** We're gonna go downhill now. Put your hands up. Put your hands up 'cause it's fun! Ready?

**Jack (as Marianne):** Hurray.

**Austin (as Keaton):** Did you ever have a bike? A hoverbike?

**Jack (as Marianne):** When I was a girl.

**Austin (as Keaton):** What colour was it?

**Jack (as Marianne):** It was gold.

**Austin (as Keaton):** Gold... They don't let us use gold any more.

**Jack (as Marianne):** Why not?

**Austin (as Keaton):** I dunno, the adults say we're not allowed to use gold any more.

**Keith (as Tarpon):** Yeah, we used to use it all the time.

**Austin (as Keaton):** When I grew up I had a big, gold balloon in my room. And then they came in and took the gold off.

**Jack (as Marianne):** That is very sad, I am sorry to hear that.

**Austin (as Keaton):** Thank you.

**Keith (as Tarpon):** I forgot about the gold.

**Austin (as Keaton):** It was nice.

**Jack (as Marianne):** One would think, wouldn't one, that you forget the things that hurt you most? That is not the case.

**Keith** (as **Tarpon**): Hmmm. Good point.

**Austin** (as **Keaton**): No, that's stupid. I remember the things that hurt me *a lot*.

**Jack** (as **Marianne**): Three hundred years.

**Austin** (as **Keaton**): That's why I don't let them hurt me again.

**Art** (as **Calamity**): Mm-hm.

**Austin** (as **Keaton**): Like when I touched the fire, or when I drank that milk and spewed.

**Keith** (as **Tarpon**): Yeah, you were off wicked big.

**Austin** (as **Keaton**): I did all of it.

**Art** (as **Calamity**): And now I never see you drinking milk any more.

**Austin** (as **Keaton**): Never again. I wish someone would make, like, a solid milk product.  
[*Art, Austin, and Jack all laugh*]

**Art** (as **Calamity**): What a dream! What a dream that would be.

**Jack** (as **Marianne**): Children, where have you brought me?

**Keith** (as **Tarpon**): We've brought you to a roadside outside a quarry.

**Jack** (as **Marianne**): I'm sorry?

**Keith** (as **Tarpon**): Roadside. Outside a quarry.

**Jack** (as **Marianne**): I am afraid.

**Keith** (as **Tarpon**): There's like, a party bot out here.

**Austin** (as **Keaton**): There's a party bot.

**Keith** (as **Tarpon**): There's like a picnic bot. It's big, and red, and it's sort of like a rectangle on top of a— of a triangle, and it's kneeling.

**Jack** (as **Marianne**): Do not bring me to a party.

**Austin** (as **Keaton**): It looks like it's dancing, to me. I always think 'that one's a dancer!'

[*Art makes a beat for the next few lines*]

**Keith** (as **Tarpon**): It's kneeling. It's kneeling!

**Austin** (as **Keaton**): Oh, let's do a kneel dance. Kneel dance, kneel dance...

**Austin**: It is, um... you think- out of, out of— um. I'm trying to think if I can ask this in-character. I don't think I can. I think— I think what I can just describe is like—

**Austin** (as **Keaton**): Sometimes people come here from the quarry to have fun.

**Jack**: Right.

**Austin** (as **Keaton**): Like, after they do quarry stuff.

**Jack**: Yeah.

**Austin** (as **Keaton**): If I was in the quarry, I would just go swimming, but... I don't know how to swim. But if I was in the quarry, they'd probably teach you how to swim.

**Keith** (as **Tarpon**): They don't do swimming lessons any more.

**Austin** (as **Keaton**): Why not?

**Art** (as **Calamity**): What?

**Keith** (as **Tarpon**): One kid fell and like, really hurt his ankle.

**Austin** (as **Keaton**): [*sighs*] Why'd one kid always— one kid always makes it bad for me.

**Keith** (as **Tarpon**): And guess which kid? It was the fucking kid that always falls. It was Chuck.

**Austin** (as **Keaton**): Chuck fell?

**Art** (as **Calamity**): Chuck?

**Keith** (as **Tarpon**): He fell, and hurt his ankle, and because he hurt his ankle they stopped doing swimming lessons one year before I was old enough to do them.

**Austin** (as **Keaton**): But that means if I fall into the water I can't swim, then I'm gonna get hurt.

**Keith** (as **Tarpon**): Well I guess they say 'just don't go in the water.'

**Austin** (as **Keaton**): But people go in the water all the time!

**Keith** (as **Tarpon**): I know, it's a bad system.

**Austin (as Keaton):** Recording, can you swim?

**Keith (as Tarpon):** Yeah, do you know how to swim?

**Austin (as Keaton):** If we put you in the water, can you swim?

**Keith (as Tarpon):** If— *[laughs]*

**Jack (as Marianne):** I will sink now, but part of my training was to swim.

**Austin (as Keaton):** Were you a good swimmer? What's your favourite swim?

**Art (as Calamity):** Yeah, what's your favourite swim?

**Keith (as Tarpon):** How many swims can you do? How many different kinds did you learn?

**Austin (as Keaton):** I can do zero swims.

**Art (as Calamity):** *[crosstalk]* All of us can do different swims

**Keith (as Tarpon):** *[crosstalk]* I can do one swim, I learned how to do the butterfly.

**Austin (as Keaton):** Butterflies are pretty.

**Art (as Calamity):** That's a really hard one.

**Keith (as Tarpon):** Yeah, that's the only one I can do.

**Austin (as Keaton):** *[laughing]* Started you on the hard one!

**Keith (as Tarpon):** I — no, I went out of my way to learn it.

**Austin (as Keaton):** Mmmm.

**Jack (as Marianne):** On the planet I came from, I lived on an island. Once, in spring-

**Austin (as Keaton):** What's that?

**Jack (as Marianne):** It is a mass of land in a body of water.

**Austin (as Keaton):** So there's millions of them?

**Keith (as Tarpon):** *[crosstalk]* A massive land?

**Jack (as Marianne):** There's millions of what, child?

**Austin (as Keaton):** You said there were a mass, and you said ‘mass’ means there’s millions of them.

**Keith (as Tarpon):** No, ‘mass’ means like it’s a rel— it’s like, it’s like a church.

**Austin (as Keaton):** Oh, there’s a chaplain. Like a-

**Keith (as Tarpon):** Yeah, did you have a chaplain?

**Art (as Calamity):** It was an — it was an aqua church.

**Jack (as Marianne):** I did have a chaplain, his name was Peter. He helped me in difficult times. Sadly, he was killed before I was deployed.

**Austin (as Keaton):** Heh. *[Laughs]* His name was **Peter**. What a silly name. *[Austin and Keith cackle]*

**Jack (as Marianne):** Why are you laughing?

**Keith (as Tarpon):** Maybe – maybe we should go draw a picture of Peter on that first robot?

**Jack (as Marianne):** *[crosstalk]* Why are you laughing?

**Austin (as Keaton):** Peener... *[Laughs]*

**Jack (as Marianne):** Why are you laughing?

**Austin (as Keaton):** It’s me, I’m Chaplain Peter! *[Keith laughs]*

**Jack (as Marianne):** Chaplain Peter was a brave man. I loved him dearly.

**Austin (as Keaton):** *[crosstalk]* Why?

**Jack (as Marianne):** Well he was unafraid—

**Keith (as Tarpon):** Hey, Chaplain Peter, how’s it hanging?

**Austin (as Keaton):** Brng, Peter.

**Jack (as Marianne):** I do not understand what you are saying, but I feel like I am being mocked.

**Austin (as Keaton):** What’s that?

**Keith (as Tarpon):** It’s like, ‘make fun of.’



**Jack** (as **Marianne**): Where have you brought me?

**Keith** (as **Tarpon**): The kneeling mech. The red kneeling mech that's sort of like, a rectangle on top of a triangle and it's sort of got like a rhomboid head and— and antenna.

**Austin** (as **Keaton**): What's a rhomboid?

**Keith** (as **Tarpon**): It's that! It's what the head's shaped like.

**Austin** (as **Keaton**): Rhomboid's the name of my big brother who I don't like. Rhomboid Jerf. [*Austin, Keith, and Jack laugh*]

**Keith** (as **Tarpon**): Rhom-boy.

**Austin** (as **Keaton**): There's an antenna on this one, so that it can send messages to people, and let them know the party is time.

**Jack** (as **Marianne**): I'm sorry?

**Austin** (as **Keaton**): It lets them know the party is time. [*Keith laughs*] I'm sorry, it lets them know—

**Keith** (as **Tarpon**): [*crosstalk*] [*shouting*] Hey, the party is time!

**Austin** (as **Keaton**): I'm sorry, I meant the party-est time.

**Jack** (as **Marianne**): I know these units. These fought alongside me. We called them Pleae-class They would guide weaker mechs into combat situations, where our units would clear out towns. Would pull up barbed wire. Would remove land mines. When I was deployed — I say deployed, when I fell from my ship and landed — I was relieved to find a unit of four Pleae mechs. And they guided me towards my target. I was very proud of them. All but one perished, and the last perished in the inferno alongside me. It was piloted by a woman named Emma.

**Austin** (as **Keaton**): Okay... did Emma like to party?

**Keith** (as **Tarpon**): Did Emma know Peter? [*Austin snickers*] [*Art laughs*]

**Jack** (as **Marianne**): Emma and I only met once, but I felt a connection between us.

**Austin** (as **Keaton**): What type of connection?

**Jack** (as **Marianne**): [*pauses*] I suppose you could describe it as... anticipation.

**Keith** (as **Tarpon**): You felt an anticipatory connection?

**Jack** (as **Marianne**): Indeed.

**Austin** (as **Keaton**): Anti-si-pat- hmm.

**Keith** (as **Tarpon**): An-tiss-ah-pat-ory. An-tiss-ah-pah-to-ry.

**Austin** (as **Keaton**): An-tiss-ah-pee. *[laughs]* Peter— you said Peter.

**Keith** (as **Tarpon**): An— no! *[laughs]*

**Jack** (as **Marianne**): ‘Anticipation’ is waiting for something that you know will happen.

**Austin** (as **Keaton**): Uh-huh. Like...?

**Jack** (as **Marianne**): An inferno.

**Austin** (as **Keaton**): Oh...

**Art** (as **Calamity**): Mmmm...

**Austin** (as **Keaton**): That means it’s hot.

**Jack** (as **Marianne**): That means it’s very hot.

**Keith** (as **Tarpon**): *[crosstalk]* That means like, **bad** hot.

**Austin** (as **Keaton**): I know where... I know where... There’s a hot place. Maybe your mech’s at the hot place?

**Keith** (as **Tarpon**): Wait, hold on. Before we go here...

**Austin** (as **Keaton**): Uh-huh?

**Keith** (as **Tarpon**): Why didn’t you describe your mech first, and then we would’ve known that it wasn’t a hypercat spider-bot or the kneeling red one, or the house one with the butt.

**Austin** (as **Keaton**): That’s a good—

**Jack** (as **Marianne**): I never saw my mech.

**Keith** (as **Tarpon**): What?

**Austin** (as **Keaton**): What?

**Art** (as **Calamity**): What?

**Keith** (as **Tarpon**): What are you- what? How are you gonna know if we find the right one?

**Jack** (as **Marianne**): In order to attune artillery unit sensors better, we are not told anything about our bodies before we inhabit them. We enter our mechs in darkness, and we leave them in darkness. All I knew about my mech was what I experienced sitting in the cockpit. I held shoulder-mounted rockets. I know this because there was a switch on my dashboard labelled 'shoulder-mounted rockets.' But I never knew what I looked like. Thus I cannot help you.

**Keith** (as **Tarpon**): Damn. Alright, well let's go to the hot place.

**Austin** (as **Keaton**): We should go to the hot place.

**Art** (as **Calamity**): Yeah.

**Austin** (as **Keaton**): What's the hot place?

**Art** (as **Calamity**): Also, I snuck away and put graffiti on the first mech. [*Austin, Keith, and Jack laugh*]

**Austin**: Thank you.

**Jack**: What did you— let's see.

**Austin**: Oh boy.

**Jack**: Oh, wow! There he is.

**Austin**: 'Peter,' and another butt. Great... [*Keith laughs*]

**Jack**: Wait, where's the second butt? Oh, it's above Peter, I see.

**Austin**: It's above Peter.

**Art**: No, those— those are stink lines, I'm sorry.

**Austin**: Oh, okay.

**Keith**: I don't think Cala— I don't think Calamity got the Peter joke.

[*Austin begins drawing a dick on the first mech*]

**Austin:** No... Calamity doesn't know about Peters. [*Keith cackles*] Anyway, what's the hot place that we know? [*pause*]

**[1:09:24] – Final Mech**

**Austin:** This is the last one. The final resting place.

**Keith:** Well...

**Art:** Do we roll again?

**Austin:** Is it a desert? Is it a... I guess we do. I guess we do?

**Jack:** No, it just says, 'child describes this'—

**Austin:** [*crosstalk*] It doesn't say, it doesn't say. Yeah.

**Jack:** Oh, it says, 'same process as above.'

**Austin:** Oh, then yes. Then yes, we do roll.

**Jack:** Which suggests yeah, we do roll.

**Austin:** Did we already do 4? If we already did one of these I will redo it. I don't wanna...

**Art:** We did do 4.

**Austin:** Oh, y'know what I like? Let's- let's, on this one, use low-tech instead of high-tech, on the thing. 'Cause that'll give us different things, presumably.

**Art:** Sure.

**Austin:** Yeah, it will. Alright, 4. 'Just a head and upper torso, the rest underground. A tunnel leads down into the hollowed-out wreck – someone's home?' And then, it is 'stripped for scrap down to the frame. The heaviest and most solidly welded parts remain, lodged deep and immobile.' So, it's someone else's home, but it's — maybe, but it's a tunnel. Oh, what if it's — I know where it is. It's back to this — it's back here, to... very close to where you already were. Uh, a hot water geyser. It's like a geyser we're not allowed to go near 'cause it puts out hot water, and that's why I said it was hot, and an inferno. Um, and— uh, there's like um— I guess it's just the head and the torso, which is why I didn't recognise it at first. Um, Jack, do you wanna draw this one? I know it says to use the thing above, but I want your mark on this map somehow.

**Jack:** Yeah! Um... okay, let's see. So... uh, ping where you picture this?

**Austin:** Um, anywhere in this green, right? Maybe like, down here, where there's the most space for you to draw?

**Jack:** Mmm. Mm-hm.

**Austin:** I mean, I could also just move a windmill.

**Jack:** Okay, let me think. Um...

**Austin:** I mean, I guess we're supposed to describe it still. So maybe we should describe it, and have you draw it?

**Jack:** Yeah, let's do that! That's really good, 'cause I don't know what it is.

**Austin:** Right, that's true about the fiction we set up. Um, so again, it says... 'Just a head and upper torso, the rest underground. A tunnel leads down to a hollowed-out wreck'. What if there's a ranger here? What if it's like, the head and torso are up top, and then below that there is—there is like an underground ranger camp— ranger base- ranger, like-

**Keith:** Ranger danger.

**Austin:** Oh, okay, what— actually, what if the whole thing is a tower? What if it's, like, a Firewatch-style tower, but then the — like, the person goes— literally climbs this now-stripped chassis to get to the watch station, which is in the head of the mech. But then, below, like they climb down and go underground, and they have their sleeping quarters underground there. That they can sleep in. Um, and it's a converted bunker.

**Austin (as Keaton):** We found it!

**Keith (as Tarpon):** Yeah, we found it.

**Austin (as Keaton):** Is this yours?

**Keith (as Tarpon):** Yeah.

**Jack (as Marianne):** Describe it to me.

**Keith (as Tarpon):** Umm... metal.

**Austin (as Keaton):** It's metal. Um, it's — it doesn't—

**Art (as Calamity):** It's big, but half a big.

**Austin (as Keaton):** It's half-big. But big.

**Keith (as Tarpon):** Yeah. Yeah.

**Art** (as **Calamity**): Big half.

**Austin** (as **Keaton**): Um, like—

**Keith** (as **Tarpon**): [*crosstalk*] Like, the inside parts are there, and the outside parts are, um... aren't. It's metal, it's a lot of metal.

**Austin** (as **Keaton**): It's just the metal inside. It's just like— and on the top, it has a big X on the top of the head. Like, it's a- it's like a head, but then it has a big X right on the top, like on the forehead.

**Art** (as **Calamity**): X goes the top.

**Jack** (as **Marianne**): I'm sorry?

**Austin** (as **Keaton**): X goes on the top!

**Keith** (as **Tarpon**): X marks the— the—

**Austin** (as **Keaton**): Top.

**Keith** (as **Tarpon**): Top.

**Austin** (as **Keaton**): X marks the top! [*pause*] And, what else? Um... it has— I think this is where Mr. Ranger is.

**Keith** (as **Tarpon**): Yeah.

**Jack** (as **Marianne**): Who's Mr. Ranger?

**Keith** (as **Tarpon**): We're all ranger danger.

**Austin** (as **Keaton**): Heh, that's a classic. Um... he takes care of the windmills, and the hills, and he makes sure we don't—

**Keith** (as **Tarpon**): And he yells at kids.

**Austin** (as **Keaton**): Like me, 'cause I go to the geyser. [*pause*]

**Jack** (as **Marianne**): I feel a kinship with this place. I feel a kinship with this place.

**Keith** (as **Tarpon**): You what?

**Jack** (as **Marianne**): I feel a kinship with this place.

**Austin** (as **Keaton**): What's a kinship? Is that a big spaceship?

**Jack** (as **Marianne**): It is when you feel at home.

**Austin** (as **Keaton**): What's the— is there a kid-ship? Wait, are you from here? Do you sleep here? You said this is your home?

**Jack** (as **Marianne**): I think it might be.

**Keith** (as **Tarpon**): That makes sense 'cause we found you like, right next to this.

**Austin** (as **Keaton**): Yeah, this is where we found you. [*Austin and Keith laugh*]

**Jack** (as **Marianne**): I'm sorry?

**Austin** (as **Keaton**): We found you here.

**Keith** (as **Tarpon**): Yeah, we were right next to it when we found you.

**Austin** (as **Keaton**): You were like, right over — I'm pointing, you can't see but — right over there is where I found you as a rock.

**Jack** (as **Marianne**): Why did you not bring me here first?

**Austin** (as **Keaton**): 'Cause this one's underground.

**Keith** (as **Tarpon**): Well, 'cause it's a hot place! Yeah, we're not supposed to go to the hot place anyway.

**Austin** (as **Keaton**): It's a hot place. Right, I forgot there's the geyser here too, right?

**Austin**: Sorry, yes, we should add a little-

**Jack** (as **Marianne**): There is what?

**Austin** (as **Keaton**): There's a geyser, there's a hot— like, schhiiwoo, schhiiwoo—

**Keith** (as **Tarpon**): [*crosstalk*] There's a geyser.

**Austin** (as **Keaton**): Geyser.

**Art** (as **Calamity**): Yeah. There's like— normally it's fine, and sometimes it goes— [*Art, Austin, and Keith all continue to make loud and unintelligible geyser Foley. Keith's Foley begins to resemble the early hoverbike Foley*] That's us riding our hoverbikes around the top of the geyser. [*Austin laughs*]

**Jack** (as **Marianne**): What explodes from the Earth? Is it poison?

**Keith** (as **Tarpon**): Nah, hot water.

**Austin** (as **Keaton**): Hot water.

**Art** (as **Calamity**): Geyser.

**Keith** (as **Tarpon**): Real — but like, way hot water.

**Austin** (as **Keaton**): [*does more geyser Foley*]

**Jack** (as **Marianne**): [*crosstalk*] It is water?

**Austin** (as **Keaton**): I think?

**Keith** (as **Tarpon**): What — what was the question?

**Jack** (as **Marianne**): Is it water?

**Keith** (as **Tarpon**): Yeah, it's hot water, yeah.

**Jack** (as **Marianne**): Is it safe to drink?

**Keith** (as **Tarpon**): Uh... no, it burns.

**Art** (as **Calamity**): [*crosstalk*] No, it burns.

**Keith** (as **Tarpon**): It's way too hot.

**Austin** (as **Keaton**): You could cool it down, maybe.

**Keith** (as **Tarpon**): You could go to the cold place and get some... ice.

**Austin** (as **Keaton**): Do you want a drink?

**Jack** (as **Marianne**): [*crosstalk*] So it is destroyed.

**Keith** (as **Tarpon**): The geyser works fine, I think, is how it's meant to work.

**[1:15:00]**

**Austin** (as **Keaton**): Is this what you were supposed to destroy?

**Jack** (as **Marianne**): [*crosstalk*] There was something here. Yes. Yes, there was something here buried deep below the Earth. I cannot remember exactly what it was, but I know it was very important. Very important to the people who lived here, the people who worked here. Perhaps it was a bomb, perhaps it was a weapon of some kind.



Perhaps it was something that was used to heat something? There was a lot of fire in my final moments.

**Austin** (as **Keaton**): Did you make it so people couldn't drink water? Why would you do that?

**Keith** (as **Tarpon**): Did you and your kid-ship break our water?

**Art** (as **Calamity**): Oh my god.

**Jack** (as **Marianne**): May I please speak to your father?

**Austin** (as **Keaton**): No! Don't— no, he's not here.

**Art** (as **Calamity**): He's at — he's at his job. He's the chaplain.

**Keith** (as **Tarpon**): [*crosstalk*] He's at work. He's at his job. He's a chaplain.

**Jack** (as **Marianne**): May I speak to your father?

**Austin** (as **Keaton**): [*whispers*] Oh, I think she **knows**.

**Keith** (as **Tarpon**): Hold on!

**Austin** (as **Keaton**): [*whispers*] She might know.

**Keith** (as **Tarpon**): [*whispers*] Maybe I could call him on the phone.

**Austin** (as **Keaton**): [*whispers*] Yeah, call him on the phone!

**Keith** (as **Tarpon**): [*whispers*] Okay. [*louder*] I'm gonna call him on the phone.

**Austin** (as **Keaton**): A phone is a thing that lets you call people!

**Art** (as **Calamity**): [*crosstalk*] Boop! Boop! Boop! Boop! That's the sound the phone is making.

**Keith** (as 'adult' **Tarpon**): [*during this exchange, Keith uses his deeper adult voice but muffles it, as if his voice is coming down the phone*] Hello, son! How can I— I'm busy at work! This better be good. [*long pause*] Oh sorry, actually— I actually don't want to speak to my son. I want to speak to my son's two friends.

**Austin** (as **Keaton**): Hey Mr. Chaplain!

**Art** (as **Calamity**): Hi!

**Keith** (as 'adult' **Tarpon**): Hey.

**Art** (as **Calamity**): How's work?

**Keith** (as 'adult' **Tarpon**): It's exhausting. I have this pair of... chaps [*laughs*] that I'm trying to score a good deal on for the — for the exhibit.

**Art** (as **Calamity**): Oh.

**Keith** (as 'adult' **Tarpon**): Yeah. Anyway, is that all?

**Art** (as **Calamity**): No...

**Jack** (as **Marianne**): No.

**Keith** (as 'adult' **Tarpon**): Oh, the rock is still there. Hi!

**Jack** (as **Marianne**): Hello.

**Keith** (as 'adult' **Tarpon**): Sorry, I never got your name!

**Jack** (as **Marianne**): I'm Perfect.

**Keith** (as 'adult' **Tarpon**): Yeah, um, [*laughs*] but I never got your name?

**Jack** (as **Marianne**): I am Perfect.

**Keith** (as 'adult' **Tarpon**): I'm kidding, I get it. Yeah, okay, got it. Yeah, Perfect. What can I do for you?

**Jack** (as **Marianne**): Tell me, was the — tell me, was the water supply here damaged some three hundred years ago?

**Keith** (as 'adult' **Tarpon**): Oh... before my time.

**Art** (as **Calamity**): People don't live to three hundred here.

**Keith** (as 'adult' **Tarpon**): Good point! I don't know anyone that's three hundred.

**Jack** (as **Marianne**): Was there a great scar upon the land?

**Keith** (as **Tarpon**): [*whispers*] Guys, I don't know.

**Austin** (as **Keaton**): [*whispers*] Say yes!

**Keith** (as 'adult' **Tarpon**): Yes. Yeah, there is!

**Jack** (as **Marianne**): [*long pause*] You're a chaplain.

**Keith** (as 'adult' **Tarpon**): Indeed.

**Jack** (as **Marianne**): I cannot ask you to forgive me for what I have done. Nor do I wish to.

**Keith** (as 'adult' **Tarpon**): Would you wish to ask? Or wish to—

**Jack** (as **Marianne**): No.

**Keith** (as 'adult' **Tarpon**): Okay... Is there anything else I can do for you?

**Jack** (as **Marianne**): Please look after your children. They have been a great help.

**Keith** (as 'adult' **Tarpon**): Yes, they are— I am... very strict!

**Austin** (as **Keaton**): [*whispers*] Tell her to buy cookies!

**Keith** (as 'adult' **Tarpon**): They're selling cookies, if you are interested.

**Jack** (as **Marianne**): I cannot eat.

**Keith** (as 'adult' **Tarpon**): Excellent deal! As a memento, even!

**Jack** (as **Marianne**): [*crosstalk*] I cannot eat.

**Keith** (as 'adult' **Tarpon**): As a — even as a memento?

**Jack** (as **Marianne**): Soon I will die.

**Keith** (as 'adult' **Tarpon**): Hmmmm.

**Art** (as **Calamity**): We've got a thing now called snack-veneirs. It's a-

**Jack** (as **Marianne**): I cannot eat.

**Art** (as **Calamity**): But it's a **souvenir** snack.

**Keith** (as 'adult' **Tarpon**): Oh, I thought it was a **veneer** of a snack.

**Austin** (as **Keaton**): Just like the front. [*Art and Keith laugh*]

**Jack** (as **Marianne**): The flower is closing.

**Austin** (as **Keaton**): The flower is closing?

**Art** (a **Calamity**): The flower is closing?

**Austin** (as **Keaton**): The flower is closing?

**Keith** (as **Tarpon**): The flower is—

**Keith** (as 'adult' **Tarpon**): The flower is closing?

**Jack** (as **Marianne**): I cannot eat. We come to the end of the day.

**Austin** (as **Keaton**): Goodnight?

**Keith** (as **Tarpon**): Yeah, we'll see you tomorrow.

**Austin** (as **Keaton**): Do you wanna hang out tomorrow?

**Keith** (as **Tarpon**): Yeah, do you wanna do a different, um, adventure, tomorrow?

**Austin** (as **Keaton**): We're doing scouting this week. It's our thing.

**Keith** (as **Tarpon**): Yeah, we're doing scouting all week, and we're gonna, um, do Super Scouts

**Jack** (as **Marianne**): [*crosstalk*] Carry me to the cockpit.

**Austin** (as **Keaton**): What's a— what's a cockpit?

**Keith** (as **Tarpon**): It's like a Peter. [*Austin, Art, and Keith laugh*]

**Jack** (as **Marianne**): It is a home. Carry me to the cockpit. The day is ending.

**Austin** (as **Keaton**): It's tall. You want us to go up there?

**Jack** (as **Marianne**): Climb.

**Austin** (as **Keaton**): If I do this, you have to give me a Scout badge for climbing.

**Keith** (as **Tarpon**): And if I do this you have to buy some of these cookies.

**Austin** (as **Keaton**): Yeah.

**Jack** (as **Marianne**): Indeed. Indeed.

**Art** (as **Calamity**): And if I do this, you need to get us some real hover- [*Austin laughs*]

**Jack** (as **Marianne**): All these things and more I can promise.

**Austin:** Climb, climb, climb, climb.

**Keith:** Climb, Yeah. Yeah.

**Austin:** Climb, climb, climb.

**Austin** (as **Keaton**): You can see everything from up here.

**Jack** (as **Marianne**): Indeed.

**Austin** (as **Keaton**): You stayed up here all the time?

**Jack** (as **Marianne**): [*long pause*] This is where I burned.

**Austin** (as **Keaton**): Oh.

**Keith** (as **Tarpon**): Burn what?

**Jack** (as **Marianne**): I burned in the inferno, child.

**Keith** (as **Tarpon**): Oh you **burn-ed**. You burned.

**Austin** (as **Keaton**): I don't like that.

**Keith** (as **Tarpon**): No. That's, like, wicked scary to me.

**Austin** (as **Keaton**): Well, you're home.

**Jack** (as **Marianne**): The day is almost done.

**Keith** (as **Tarpon**): Yeah, the flower is closing.

**Austin** (as **Keaton**): I— can I tell you something before you go to bed?

**Jack** (as **Marianne**): Always.

**Austin** (as **Keaton**): I— I just need to tell you that Calamity lied about your cats. Your cats are really good, and everyone likes them.

**Keith** (as **Tarpon**): Yeah. And also, can I tell you something?

**Jack** (as **Marianne**): Yes.

**Keith** (as **Tarpon**): Calamity lied about Mayonnaise. Mayonnaise sucks and—

**Austin** (as **Keaton**): [*crosstalk*] Mayonnaise is a good cat!

**Keith** (as **Tarpon**): [*crosstalk*] —does all the things we said your other cats do!

**Austin** (as **Keaton**): [*crosstalk*] Mayonnaise is the best cat!

**Keith** (as **Tarpon**): Everything we said your cats do, Mayonnaise does!

**Austin** (as **Keaton**): No!

**Jack** (as **Marianne**): Tell me about my cats.

**Keith** (as **Tarpon**): They're really soft and have medium-to-long hair, uh, fur, and one of them purrs really loud!

**Austin** (as **Keaton**): [*crosstalk*] One of them's Siamese. It's name's Elsbeth.

**Jack** (as **Marianne**): What did they do this morning?

**Austin** (as **Keaton**): Um, they went on an adventure to the store, and they bought eggs.

**Art** (as **Calamity**): Mmm. Everyone heard about that.

**Keith** (as **Tarpon**): And, they had their litter boxes cleaned.

**Jack** (as **Marianne**): Now tell me what my cats did this afternoon.

**Art** (as **Calamity**): We were with you this afternoon.

**Austin** (as **Keaton**): How — yeah, I don't know.

**Keith** (as **Tarpon**): [*crosstalk*] Yeah, we spent the afternoon with you.

**Austin** (as **Keaton**): [*crosstalk*] I didn't look at your cats this afternoon.

**Jack** (as **Marianne**): Tell me. Tell me.

**Austin** (as **Keaton**): This is weird.

**Jack** (as **Marianne**): Tell me.

**Austin** (as **Keaton**): I don't— [*Keith laughs*] this is actually a little -

**Keith** (as **Tarpon**): [*laughs*] Do *you* have an adult we can talk to?

**Jack** (as **Marianne**): I am afraid.

**Keith** (as **Tarpon**): Um, your cats, uh, they found the sunniest spot on the floor and fell asleep in it.

**Austin** (as **Keaton**): They took a nap.

**Keith** (as **Tarpon**): All afternoon.

**Austin** (as **Keaton**): And then they had snacks. They had really good cookies we sold them.

**Art** (as **Calamity**): Yeah, our cat cookies are great.

**Jack** (as **Marianne**): [*crosstalk*] Will you look after them for me?

**Austin** (as **Keaton**): Will we look—

**Keith** (as **Tarpon**): Yeah, I'll — we're each actually gonna adopt one, except—

**Austin** (as **Keaton**): Except for me, 'cause I already have a cat named Mayonnaise.

**Keith** (as **Tarpon**): [*crosstalk*] Right, yeah. And so now we'll be able to figure out who has the best —

**Austin** (as **Keaton**): Mayonnaise is already friends with your cats. They're best friends. They go on adventures, and they join the cat Scouts, the Super Cat Scouts, they save people.

**Keith** (as **Tarpon**): Mm-hm. And they— actually, they also went around trying to find a mech from a recording.

**Austin** (as **Keaton**): For your cats.

**Art** (as **Calamity**): But that was a recording of a cat.

**Austin** (as **Keaton**): Yeah. It went meow-meow-meow!

**Art** (as **Calamity**): Meow-meow-meow-meow!

**Austin** (as **Keaton**): Meow-meow-meow.

**Keith** (as **Tarpon**): And we all said 'we don't know what this means. You figure it out.'

**Austin** (as **Keaton**): And that was it!

**Art** (as **Calamity**): And they sprang into action! 'Cause they're good cats.

**Austin** (as **Keaton**): They're all good cats. Especially Mayonnaise.

**Keith** (as **Tarpon**): [*crosstalk*] And they all can spring really high. And not especially Mayonnaise, 'cause Mayonnaise bit me on the hand. And I didn't tell you but, it really hurt.

**Austin** (as **Keaton**): Mayonnaise bit you on the hand?

**Keith** (as **Tarpon**): Yeah, like three weeks ago, you can still see it right here.

**Austin** (as **Keaton**): I'm sorry. I'll— I'll—

**Keith** (as **Tarpon**): Do you see it?

**Austin** (as **Keaton**): I do!

**Keith** (as **Tarpon**): Yeah. It hurt.

**Austin** (as **Keaton**): I didn't know Mayonnaise bit you on the hand.

**Keith** (as **Tarpon**): It's okay.

**Austin** (as **Keaton**): I'm sorry.

**Keith** (as **Tarpon**): It was just playing rough.

**Austin** (as **Keaton**): Perfect? I mean, recording?

**Jack** (as **Marianne**): You are brave soldiers. Goodnight.

**Austin** (as **Keaton**): Goodnight.

**Keith** (as **Tarpon**): Goodnight.

**Art** (as **Calamity**): Goodnight.

**Austin**: [reading] 'Pilot, meet your end. Stoically, or in tears. Do you approve of the world that came after? Does it sadden you? Do you wonder about loved ones you will never see again'? I think we did that. 'Children, say farewell. Provide consolation. Bear witness.' I think we did that. Alright! That has been ECH0. 'Peace. Kids playing in mech wreckage. A ghost. A GM-less storytelling and map-drawing game for 3 or more players'. You can find that at- at uh, [roleoverplaydead.com](http://roleoverplaydead.com) or at the- at the [Emotional Mecha Game Jam page](#) on itch.io. And again, that was by Kai Poh and Elisha Rusli.

—Transitional music plays—



**[1:22:55] – dusk to midnight**

**Austin:** We're back, and we are gonna now play another game. This game is called 'dusk to midnight; a GMless storytelling game for 2-5 players about doomed soldiers'. I will read it. It is by Riley [@jaceaddax](#), which are familiar names *[laughs]* if you're a friend of the universe we've built. You can find it and other games by Riley [metagame.itch.io](#). Also I think Riley is in the chat; hello Riley. Uh, 'You play a squad of mecha pilots, the only ones left on your side of a long-standing war you're about to lose. You are a bastion of hope, but not for much longer. In this game, stats are a number 1-6 based on your emotional attachments, where 6 is the strongest positive feeling (confidence, love) and 1 is the strongest negative emotion (insecurity, hatred), with 3-4 being neutral, ambivalent, or conflicted.'

'Your stats are: war— your relationship to the war. Is it worth fighting? Mech — your relationship to your mech. How well can you pilot and communicate with it? Skill — you have a special ability that's helped you fight and stay alive. How do you feel about it? Plus, a bond with every other player on the team.' Um, which I think is just a number. Yeah. 'Give a number, 1-6, to each stat. You can only repeat a number once'. So we should maybe — I'm gonna — I'm gonna start — I'm just gonna put our names in real quick. There we go. Do you see it here? I see Jack on the sheet. Uh, there's a tab at the bottom of the page that says 4 player. For people who—

**Jack:** This is cool as hell.

**Austin:** Yeah, this is really cool. This sheet was made by, uhhh, by Lucy [@battlestarvalk](#). Uh, 'the boxes at the start are for you to indicate each player's name, and their mech's name. Use the big merged box to note any details about worldbuilding that you may have. There is a 1d6 featured in this game, which can be found on each sheet' — how's that work, let's- oh there, there we go. Oh that's cool, you just copy and paste here and it rolls the die. That's really cool. Awesome.

**Jack:** And it's 1 through 6.

**Austin:** 1 through 6. Again, the note here is that 1 is negative, 6 is positive. So it doesn't necessarily mean like - like, I mean it does mean your relationship with your mech can be really bad, you know what I mean? But the thing to know here is —

**Jack:** Yeah.

**Austin:** I'm gonna just keep reading the rules, that way you understand what those numbers mean. For your character also draw two sets of boxes, one labelled 'resolve', which is up here, and then one labelled 'disillusionment'. Um, uh, 'to represent your pilot's willingness to fight' — resolve is your pilot's willingness to fight the war until the end. And disillusionment, to represent their doubt in the cause. 'Decide as a group how many boxes to have per track, depending on how long you want your game to be; somewhere around 5 to 15 is good.' I'm gonna say five.

[laughs] Um, I've no idea how long this is gonna take. So I'm gonna say 5. And listen, if we get to 3 and it's been longer than we have, we're gonna wrap, uh, which is just like the way this stuff goes.

'Every round, each player will get to frame a scene with their pilot, then roll a move to determine the outcome of the scene. To frame a scene, decide who else is in the scene with you, where you are, and what you're doing. You can decide what move you want to roll beforehand to guide the scene or wait to see what happens. Either way, play to find out what happens, and be flexible enough to move with the fiction. Play out a scene, and when you feel you've reached the place where the outcome is uncertain and should be determined by a move; don't be afraid to cut it. After you finish a scene, roll the move that corresponds to the uncertain outcome. Roll a d6 and compare the stat you're using to the outcome.' This is the stuff that's important for understanding these stats, really quick.

'Subtract the smaller of the two' — so you're gonna roll a d6 to compare it to the relevant stat. So let's say you were doing a Work with Your Mech — or a — a Fraternise move. Let's say we were like, 'we're gonna go out to the bar together, and we're gonna do a skill — we're gonna see if it goes well.' You would be rolling, um... Roll a d6 and compare that stat to the out — uh, hmm. Sorry. Roll the d6, subtract the smaller number from the larger one to determine your outcome. So, for example, if you're rolling the Train Your Skill move with a skill stat of 2, and you roll a 5, your outcome is 3. Or, let's use a real one: Jack, you've set your mech skill to 1, so if you rolled a 6, and then it was a mech — you were using the Work with Your Mech move. And you rolled a 6, your mech skill — uh, score is 1, so that would give you a 5. Um, and then each of those things are basically — 1 is, if you end up with a 0 or a 1 you don't accomplish it, you fail. 'You do not accomplish your goal and get set back.' 2 to 3 is a grim success: 'you just barely don't lose.' And 4 to 5 is a success: 'you somehow beat the odds and manage a victory.'

Obviously the highest you can roll is — number-wise, is a 5, because you could roll a 6 and the lowest skill you have is a 1. So that means that there are times when having a low skill will still give you a high result. The thing that you want to worry about is these medium — is the middle. The middle is where you're gonna be like, 'uh-oh.' This is gonna almost always get you.

**Jack:** 'Grim success' is so good. It's such a —

**Austin:** [crosstalk] Grim success, yes.

**Jack:** It's such a twist on mixed success, I love it.

**Austin:** Totally. There are a lot of moves, and we can go over these as we get to it. But basically: 'Attack the Enemy: when you have a plan of attack, roll your stat most relevant to it.' So that's not set to a specific thing. That could be war, that could be mech, that could be skill. 'Fraternise', which is 'when you spend time with a fellow soldier in order to change the state of your relationship in some way, roll your bond with them. Be a Figurehead: when you participate in war propaganda. Work with Your Mech: when you work on and / or communicate with your

mech. Train Your Skill: when you work on honing your unique ability, roll skill.’ And those are the basic moves.

After everyone’s framed a scene and rolled a move, the round is over. Everyone decides which of their relationships have changed during the course of the round, and can shift up two of their stats — up to two points in either direction to reflect that. Um, I think — I think that means your bonds, maybe. Not just — ‘cause it says which of their — no, I guess relationships is everything, right? ‘Cause it’s about your relationship to your war—

**Jack:** Yeah.

**Austin:** —to the mech, to the skill. So you can — you can choose to change any of your stats up to two points — uh, two of their stats up to two points in either direction to reflect it. Um... oh, wait. Does that mean...? Hmmmm. I guess —okay, the note is as we’re doing that, as we’re doing these moves, things like, resolve, and — your resolve and your disillusionment will change based on the success of those of rolls that I just described. So like, succeeding at an attack — everybody marks one resolve if we succeed at an attack. Whereas, if we fail at an attack, then everyone marks one disillusionment. So you wanna succeed if you want to get a resolve ending, whereas you want— you don’t wanna fail to get a disillusionment ending.

‘When one of your tracks up, resolve or disillusionment, you’re out of the game. If it was a resolve track, you die a heroic death, fighting until your very last moments. If it was the disillusionment track, you finally give up and abandon the cause. If there is still more than one player in the game, stop normal play to discuss how the disappearance affects the other characters, who mark one box in the track that fits how they’re feeling and cross out their bond with the pilot who is gone. The pilot who no longer has an ability — has pilot to play can continue if they wish as a non-player character or just discuss the narrative. If there is only one pilot left, the game is over along with the war.’

[1:30:00]

‘Together, reflect on the legacy of your pilots and how you felt about the story.’ That is the game. So, I have some great – oh my **god** what a good name, Art. Jesus Christ. Art, do you wanna describe—

**Keith:** Which one? Or both?

**Austin:** Both. I mean this is great ‘cause it’s a Counter / Weight reference, sort of.

**Art:** Sort of.

**Austin:** Yeah. No, I mean—

**Art:** I thought long and hard if it was too close.

**Austin:** It's close, but it's not too close, I don't think. Um... Uh... Art, do you wanna say your character's name and mech name?

**Art:** Uh, yeah. My character's name is Memphis Longhand.

**Austin:** Love it.

**Art:** And the mech is the Queenside Castle.

**Austin:** Love it. *[laughs softly, then sighs]* Jack... *[Art and Keith both laugh]*

**Keith:** That wasn't there one second ago. I saw that come up.

**Austin:** *[crosstalk]* It was not. Yep. Uh-huh. Um...

*[A long pause]*

**Art:** *[laughs]*

**Austin:** Mm-hmm. Hmm! *[laughs]* Ah, it's good! Alright, Jack, you wanna tell me your character's name?

**Jack:** So, my pilot is called Smack Talk.

**Austin:** Great.

**Jack:** That is not a mononym.

**Austin:** Okay. Smack Talk.

**Jack:** Yes.

**Keith:** *[simultaneously]* No. It can be a mononym!

**Austin:** It can be.

**Keith:** It cannot be.

**Jack:** *[crosstalk]* And I'm proud of it. *[laughs]* And I pilot a mech called the Blue-of-Heaven, but I didn't have enough room for that.

**Austin:** Right. Uh, I don't know how we're gonna fit — I guess — I don't know where we're gonna put the pronouns here? Can you just say what Smack Talk's pronouns are?

**Jack:** His pronouns are he / him.

**Austin:** Okay. I guess put these over here. Hmm, I don't want to put them next to real names, that doesn't feel right.

**Jack:** Game notes, maybe?

**Austin:** Game notes. Yes, perfect. Uh... Alright, um... Keith. Actually I'll do mine, and then we'll come to you, Keith.

**Keith:** Okay.

**Austin:** So Jack: Smack Talk, Blue of Heaven. Uh, I am playing Lunar Leson. L — Lunar like Lunar [/loo-nar], Leson like L-E-S-O-N. And the name of my mech is the Rose-of-Sharon.

**Jack:** Great. Great. Great mech name.

**Austin:** Mm-hm. And I am she / her. Ah, Keith.

**Keith:** My pilot's name is David Talk. [*Jack laughs*]

**Austin:** Are you related?

**Keith:** I'm going with yes. I — but I guess — I'll allow Jack to veto that.

**Jack:** No, no. 100% yeah.

**Keith:** Okay, great.

**Jack:** Absolutely.

**Keith:** Smack Talk and David Talk. Um, and I pilot an HXE-44 mech.

**Austin:** David Talk. He / him? Or...?

**Keith:** Yes.

**Austin:** Okay. And—

**Jack:** [*crosstalk*] Keith, it looks like—

**Art:** [*crosstalk*] I can't edit the note section, so Memphis Longhand is also he / him.

**Austin:** Okay. So, I think, based on these names and based on who we are, I wanna say that we are OriCon. Based on just like, the names of these ships, these mechs.

**Jack:** Yeah.

**Austin:** Like, none of us picked — especially with Queenside Castle — I feel like we are descendants of OriCon. We probably work for some... some, uh, megacorporation, basically. Um... That we are, like— in my mind, the way this war kind of shakes out, is like, the Divine Principality hits hard and hits OriCon first. And when OriCon gets hit — or like the descendants of OriCon — it's a lot of like, 'Alright, well fuck off that megacorporation.' Like, 'oh — did, uh... did EarthHome get hit? Couldn't care less. Like, sorry.' Or maybe their allies get involved, but at this point these corporations — these kind of, corporate sovereign states — are happy to see their competition take a hit. And it takes a little bit too long for groups — for the rest of the groups to kind of like, 'oh, this is actually really bad.' And so, are we all from the same megacorporate state? Or have we — are we from a couple of different places?

**Keith:** Um... Well, Smack and I grew up together.

**Austin:** Right, sure. That makes sense. Obviously.

**Jack:** And for a long time, we worked at rival corporations.

**Austin:** Oooh, I like that a lot.

**Jack:** But we were cool about that!

**Keith:** Yeah.

**Jack:** Yeah.

**Keith:** We talked it out.

**Austin:** You were like, from the same planet, that planet had a couple of different major corporations, and you talked it out. Well — I thought you felt it out.

**Jack:** Yeah, we talked it out.

**Keith:** We do both.

**Jack:** We felt it out, we talked it out.

**Austin:** I gotcha.

**Keith:** We shouted out.

**Austin:** Shout it out.

**Jack:** We shouted out. Shout it out!

**Keith:** Shouted out!

**Austin:** What um — what corporations are represented here? What types of corporations are here?

**Jack:** I worked for a heating and electricity corporation.

**Austin:** Okay. Do you have for it, or should I just write 'heating and electricity'?

**Jack:** Um, they're called, um... uh, they're called... Write out 'heating and electricity.' *[laughs]*

**Austin:** Alright. Lunar Leson absolutely worked for a massive, galactic, um, florist, which is why her ship is called the Rose of Sharon.

**Jack:** *[crosstalk]* Oh, wow.

**Austin:** Like, they've just provided me with this mech. Like, this is straight up what it is. And so, um, it is called... HIGHbiscus.

**Jack:** *[laughs]* Oh, god. I'd forgotten that we had ridiculous — we could do ridiculous corporations.

**Austin:** Oh yeah, we can. We totally can.

**Jack:** Ah, okay, okay.

**Austin:** David and Memphis. Who'd you work for? Or who retains you? Y'know, like, we're all mech pilots who are in the employ of — I think like, before this war, depending on our age, I don't know how far into the war this, but people like us would have like, fought space pirates. Y'know, we would've been guards — or been space pirates, y'know? *[laughs]*

**Art:** Maybe y'all did.

**Austin:** Okay.

**Art:** But Memphis Longhand was a sports personality.

**Austin:** Oh, I love it. *[Jack laughs]*

**Art:** Played in the — the mech sports league. All-star, all-pro, future hall-of-famer, drafted into the war.

**Austin:** God, I love it. Alright so, Memphis, you were — you were a star athlete.

**Art:** Yeah.

**Austin:** I was a HIGHbiscus cargo guard. I think Memphis that is kind of your attitude, the thing you just kind of laid down on the table. Kind of, you're like — are you like the Deion Sanders of mechs?

**Art:** Yeah. Uh-huh.

**Austin:** Or the Muhammad Ali?

**Art:** Or like — or like, Bo Jackson from that cartoon about sports people from the early 90s.

**Austin:** Mmmm. Love it. Yeah. Jordon and Gretzky were also in that, right?

**Art:** Mm-hm.

**Austin:** Yeah. Uh, David. What type of situation were you in before you joined the war?

**Keith:** Um, alright, let's see. So it's a rival corporation to Heating and Electricity.

**Jack:** Ah, it's been renamed. It's been renamed. Sorry, David.

**Keith:** Sorry, YES! Power. [*Austin and Keith laugh*] [*shouting*] YES! Power.

**Jack:** Yeah, that's how you're contractually obliged to say it.

**Keith:** I'm not under contract with them. I'm under contract with, uh—

**Jack:** Yeah, you're right. Sorry, sorry. That was — sorry.

**Keith:** I'm forgetting who my contract was with, but it was with — it was with some sort of rival utility. [*Jack laughs*]

**Austin:** Oh, that's good.

**Jack:** Is it plumbing?

**Keith:** Um, Better Brighter!

**Austin:** Better Brighter. Great name. God bless.

**Jack:** God, Better Brighter is just a good character name,

**Austin:** It is also.

**Jack:** Although it's also my favourite parallel-universe Nick Drake album. [*Austin and Keith laugh*]



**Austin:** Alright, so, let's go over stats real quick. Does anyone wanna start, and also do we have any questions about people to know bonds better? Um, I'm gonna say Rose's — I'll describe my character, and then if you all wanna address bonds that's fine, 'cause I think my bonds are gonna be what my bonds are. Like, maybe one will change a little bit, but this is what it is. Lunar Leson, uh, is kind of like, no-nonsense, middle of the road — like, is honestly — like, she was a, she was a cargo guard. She was not meant — she was meant to scare off low-level pirates who were gonna steal roses, right? She wasn't a guard at a power company. She wasn't a guard at a — at like a super, y'know, fancy luxury goods company. She guarded flowers, um, and agricultural products. And not even particularly valuable agricultural products.

But she did her job alright, right? And so she's 3 war, which means she kind of doesn't believe in the war. Like, it's not that she's all the way to a 1 or she hates the war. It's like it hasn't affected her personally in a big enough way that she has strong feelings about it at the start. She's a 4 mech. She's professional. She's not like an amateur mech pilot. And she has a respectable, like, relationship with her mech. She gets along with her mech. It does what she needs. But she's not, like — if you give her a different mech tomorrow, she'd be like 'aw damn, I really liked Rose-of-Sharon.' But that would be *it*. And she's a 2 skill. Um, I don't know — we should identify what the 'special ability that helps us fight and stay alive is,' and how we feel about it is what that number is. I think that her special — her special ability is, um, is like her feeling of being duty-bound. Like, she'll stick it out. Um, and she has a 2 in it because like, she looks around now that she's around the world of war and around other soldiers, and she's like 'I don't know, other people do have special talents. Like, I'm just loyal. Like, I'm just committed to working — like, doing the hard work,' right? Like, she'll lift the heavy sacks of grain, and move them into the new place, and doesn't mind it. And that's kind of a boring skill to have, and it's kind of like — it makes her kind of feel bad.

But what she loves is her comrades. She's a 6, a 6, and a 5 with Smack Talk, Memphis Longhand, and David Talk. But I'm actually gonna switch that to 6-5-6. She loves the Talks. *[laughs]* She just loves those Talks. *[Jack and Keith laugh]* So, that is, that is— I think it's something about them being siblings makes them appeal to her. Like, there is something just nice about seeing people who already have this relationship going in. And she likes — and she likes Memphis Longhand! The only reason it's a 5 is, she's a little nervous around him. Like, he's a big star.

**Keith:** And his brother's not here.

**Austin:** *[laughing]* And also his brother isn't here. Uh, so that is Lunar Leson. Smack Talk.

**Art:** Nashville Longhand *[Austin laughs]*

**Jack:** Smack Talk is a short man. Um, he has a shaved head with lines in the side. He is pretty into the war. He believes in what we're fighting for, and thinks it's — it's, uh, good to be involved with.

**Austin:** *[crosstalk]* *[laughing]* Independence for corporations!

**Jack:** Now, look.

**Austin:** Uh-huh.

**Jack:** Here's the thing.

**Austin:** Yep.

**Jack:** How're you gonna heat and power your house?

**Austin:** I getcha. So it's a 5 in war?

**Jack:** We gotta fight for that!

**Austin:** Uh-huh.

**Jack:** We gotta fight for that. But not for Better Brighter, 'cause they suck. Um... I'm just joking around. My brother works there. I hate my mech. And I'm not good at piloting it.

**Austin:** You have a 1.

**Keith:** *[laughs]* The Talks hate their mechs.

**Austin:** They do.

**Jack:** It is too fiddly.

**Austin:** Mmmm.

**Jack:** And I feel — every time I go into it, I feel like I am being held underwater. Um... Let me out of that mech, I'll be great. But I have to be in it, because I can't breathe space air, and everybody else is fighting mechs.

**Keith:** 'Space air,' or as the Talks call it, 'water'. *[Austin and Jack laugh]*

**Austin:** Great.

**Jack:** We hate water. Ah, I have a special skill, which is that I can throw a punch real good—

**Austin:** Okay.

**Jack:** —out of my mech suit.

**Keith:** *[crosstalk]* Human punch.

**Jack:** I can throw a human punch super well.

**Austin:** Gotcha.

**Jack:** And in my mech suit I can throw a punch okay. I guess those skills are transferable.

**Austin:** Maybe your mech skill'd be higher if you actually liked it more.

**Jack:** *[sighs]* Well, we talk it out, usually.

**Austin:** Or feel it out.

**Jack:** And if you're punching someone, you're not talking it out or feeling it out.

**Austin:** Gotcha.

**Jack:** Sometimes fists have to talk, but sometimes y'know, you actually have to talk. I think Lunar Leson's **okay**.

**Austin:** Okay... 3.

**Jack:** She's fine.

**Austin:** Got a 3 with me.

**Jack:** Yeah, she's okay. I like her a little bit more than I like Memphis, [**Austin:** Mm-hm.] who I think is just a fancy sports star who wants to be a soldier. I don't think he cares about what we're fighting for, and I think he spends too much time in his mech.

**Austin:** Damn.

**Jack:** And I love my brother. We grew up together. Our paths diverged a little, but we stayed inside, uh, um...

**Keith:** Same theme!

**Jack:** Same theme! Same theme! That's what our dad said, 'same theme.'

**Keith:** Same theme.

**Austin:** Great.

**Jack:** And that's me.

**Austin:** Um... Memphis.

**Art:** Alright, Memphis Longhand. Uh, 2 in war. I was drafted. I don't like this war much at all.  
[*Jack laughs softly*]

**Austin:** Were you drafted by the league?

**Art:** Yeah, uh-huh. I think it's like, y'know when like, baseball closed during World War II?

**Austin:** Yeah. Yeah. Mm-hm. God.

**Art:** It's like that. 6 with mech. I'm great at using a mech, it's what I do for — for a living, and I'm exceptional at it. [*Jack laughs*] My skill is being famous.

**Jack:** Wow...

**Art:** And it's — it's alright. Y'know. Better than average. Um...

**Austin:** That's a good — I think that's a good skill.

**Art:** Yeah. Mm-hm. Uh, I really like Lunar Leson because Lunar Leson seems to just really enjoy all of us.

**Austin:** Yeah.

**Art:** I apparently have an unrequited fondness of Smack Talk's [*Austin laughs*] just like, enthusiasm for the cause. [*Jack laughs*] Like, I see Smack Talk like, being into this and I'm like, 'yeah! I wish I cared like that.'

**Austin:** Good.

**Art:** And then like... just — I mean I — we haven't heard the explanation from Keith yet, so I might need to massage this a little bit, but like—

**Keith:** I can give it to you now if you want it.

**Art:** But like, I think you're just too much like... Your lack of enthusiasm, that's like the reflection of myself I don't want to look at.

**Keith:** Yeah. I mean I'm even less enthusiastic than you.

**Art:** Yeah. So I look at that like, 'aw... is that'—

**Keith:** [*crosstalk*] And it's like, no, no, no, 'I'm the right amount of enthusiastic. David is too unenthusiastic.'

**Art:** Yeah. It's a 2, it's not a 1.

**Keith:** Right. *[Austin laughs]*

**Austin:** Great. Uh, David.

**Keith:** Hi, so I have a 1 for the war. And I can tell you — I can tell you that that is tied — it's tied inextricably with my 1 for my mech. My mech — my mech broke. My one that I loved broke. And so now I have this replacement thing, and I just don't like it, and I don't like being in the war. I probably didn't to begin with, but now I'm like, not even having fun in my mech *[Austin laughs softly]* that I'm — that I enjoy being in.

**Austin:** So you enjoy being in it. Okay.

**[1:45:00]**

**Keith:** *[crosstalk]* HXE-44? I enjoy being in my *old* mech.

**Austin:** Gotcha.

**Keith:** Like, yeah, I used to have — I used to be a guy and I had this mech and it was mine, and now I've — they gave me like, a replacement.

**Austin:** Right.

**Keith:** I have like a loaner.

**Austin:** Right.

**Keith:** Um... and so my—

**Austin:** What is your special skill?

**Keith:** Uh, I think that — I think that despite hating my mech, David is just sort of a natural at it.

**Austin:** Mmm.

**Keith:** Not this mech, but just at 'mech' in general. So I'm thinking I — I think that um... not like a crack shot — like, hard to hit, I guess is my special skill.

**Austin:** Okay.

**Keith:** Is that a skill? Does that count as a skill?

**Austin:** Wait, what did you say it was?

**Keith:** Hard to hit.

**Austin:** Hard to hit? Yeah.

**Keith:** Hard to hit.

**Austin:** Yeah, evasive.

**Keith:** Yeah.

**Austin:** Love it. Um, cool. Alright. So I think those are our characters — oh, you didn't give me your bonds.

**Keith:** Bonds, right. So, I have a 5 with Lunar Leson. Lunar Leson's nice, seems to always — it's always just fun hanging out with Lunar Leson, and whoever — literally anyone else is fun. Um, I don't like Memphis Longhand because I, um... it's just not my team. I like — I grew up with a different — with a different team, a better team, that I like more. And so I'm like, 'ugh, this... Memphis is from the other team, that I don't like.' Um, but even hanging out with Memphis with Lunar Leson's fun. And I love my brother.

### **[1:46:29] Start of Play: Round One**

**Austin:** Nice. Okay, so... we should jump in to a game. This game. *[laughs]* 'Every round, each player will get to frame a scene with their pilot, then roll a move to determine the outcome of the scene' — uh, to determine the outcome of a scene. 'To frame a scene, decide who else is in the scene with you, where you are, and what you're doing. You can decide what move you want to roll beforehand to guide the scene or see what happens.' I want to kick this off. And I want to kick it off with an 'attack the enemy.' I want to start, like I start most of our mech things, mid-combat. Or not mid-combat, but like *[coughs]* — I think it's me. I think it's all of us. I think it's a routine milk run type thing. I think that we are doing what I, Lunar Leson, have done a lot of, which is guarding a simple transport. Um... y'know, I'm gonna hop us — if we hop back over to the Road to Season 6 and look at this cool map again. Um, I wanna say that we are, uh, at the point at which we're playing right now, they've — the Divine Principality has like, punched in. Um... let me get a nice orange here... I'll get a nice double orange here. They've punched into Oricon like this — do you see that? If you hop back over to Roll20 real quick. *[Jack: Mm.]* And, I think we're part of a — there's a two-pronged approach that's trying to cut them off. That like, we're gonna push in on these two sides, basically. Um, and so the hope—

**Keith:** Giving them the squeeze.

**Austin:** —is give 'em the squeeze, and then we have theoretically negotiated some sort of super long distance, uh, thing with the Automated Diaspora, with a Divine there. We've like, we have — oh, I know exactly what we're doing. I've changed this whole thing. I've found a good plan to kick this off. We are actually not there at all. We're down here. That squeeze is also gonna happen, right. Uh, in fact I'll re-add the squeeze. But to do that squeeze, we need to something we haven't seen a Divine do in a long time, which is we need—

**Jack:** Open a gate.

**Austin:** We need to open a gate. So what we're protecting is a secret Divine. We have a big box, a giant box, that has a Divine in it, and we have to drive it into the middle of the Principality's, like, space. We need to drive it here, so that it can open a gate and bring in a bunch of other Divines from the — from the remains of the Automated Diaspora. I don't know what's gonna happen, but that's what our job is. So, it's not a milk run, throw it out. *[laughs]* This is a extremely important thing to start this war out for us.

**Jack:** Now look, if there's one thing we know about us, it's that we care about milk.

**Austin:** Right. We love milk. *[laughing]* It's a milk run. Um, just a very important one.

**Keith:** Operation Milk Run.

**Austin:** Operation Milk Run.

**Keith:** Undersell it, in case anybody's listening.

**Austin:** I — well, I think that's part of it, right? I actually think that we have undersold it, so it's like, I'm up front with the Rose-of-Sharon. There's this huge long space truck behind us.

**Austin (as Lunar):** *[With a slight southern accent]* Um, nothing's on my signals yet.

**Austin:** This isn't a good voice, I'm gonna throw that away. I'm gonna find a new Lunar Leson voice. I think Lunar Leson is, um — I mean, lots of places have a south. She could still be space-southern. I haven't done a good space-southern in a minute. Yeah, she's down here. Lunar Leson.

**Austin (as Lunar):** Um, nothing's on my scanners yet. This should be a simple, easy ride. *[sighs]* Um...

**Jack (as Smack):** Well, great.

**Austin:** What do your mechs look like?

**Keith (as David):** A stupid box with two stupid arms and two stupid legs.

**Austin (as Lunar):** *[laughs softly]* It's not that bad, David.

**Jack (as Smack):** *[crosstalk]* Yeah.

**Austin (as Lunar):** I think it's — as far as boxes go, it aint bad.

**Jack (as Smack):** It sucks! Your mech looks bad, and so does mine.

**Keith** (as **David**): *[laughs]* But you chose your mech — wait, did—

**Austin**: What's — what's the Blue-of-Heaven look like?

**Jack**: It's a stupid box with - *[Art, Austin, and Keith laugh]* it's like a—

**Austin**: *[crosstalk]* It just has a different name!

**Keith** (jokingly as **David**): *[crosstalk]* Shut up, that's what I'm fucking - *[laughs]*

**Jack**: It's like a — it's like a Rook, right? They're like, um—

**Austin**: Okay, but it is — Yeah.

**Jack**: It's like a — It's pretty much a — it's like a, it's like a — it's like a Rook descendant, right?

**Austin**: Yeah, I think so! Sure.

**Jack**: Just like a classic humanoid mech.

**Austin**: *[crosstalk]* Yeah. Boxy.

**Jack**: Cockpit in the centre. Boxy.

**Austin**: *[crosstalk]* Yeah. Um...

**Jack**: Kind of moving very laboriously.

**Austin**: Mine has these two gigantic round shoulders. Like, super-spherical. Um, ah, and then — and then it's like fairly small otherwise — or not small, but like humanoid in shape, has these two shoulders that open up and do something weird that I don't know what they do yet. Um, but the rest of me is basic. I just have, like, an assault rifle in my robot hands. Like, very — almost looks like I could be being held up by these two giant, circular, round, pink, shoulder orbs. What's the, uh, what's the Queenside Castle look like?

**Art**: The Queenside Castle is of course a custom Rook. Fanciest Rook you've ever seen.

**Austin**: Great.

**Art**: Um, y'know, Corinthian leather interior, all of that.

**Austin**: Uh-huh.

**Art**: It's um, it's been like hastily repainted for official use, but you can still tell that it was painted in team colours, so it's like blue and orange.



**Austin:** God, that's so good. Do you know what team you were with?

**Art:** Um, I mean it's blue and orange because of my undying love for the New York Mets. [*Austin and Jack laugh*] So—

**Austin:** They moved to space?

**Art:** The — well, I think when they're in space—

**Jack:** [*crosstalk*] Lots of places have a New York.

**Austin:** It's true.

**Art:** I think when it's space, they're back to being the Metropolitans.

**Austin:** Oh, that's good. I love it.

**Art:** Yeah, um, I don't want to pick like a location. And can I just like, ping everyone on something real quick?

**Austin:** Always.

**Art:** Um, what if Memphis Longhand, in the style of Ricky Henderson, exclusively referred to himself in the third person?

**Austin:** I love it.

**Jack:** Perfect.

**Art:** Okay.

**Keith:** Alright...

**Art:** It might get annoying, so I was just giving you guys a chance to veto.

**Keith:** [*crosstalk*] Can I change my mech to a 2 and my bond to a 1 with—

**Austin:** [*Austin and Keith laugh*] You can, yes, absolutely.

**Art (as Memphis):** Memphis Longhand doesn't care if the rest of the squad gets along with Memphis Longhand if Memphis Longhand is just here to do Memphis Longhand's work.

**Austin (as Lunar):** This is — this is why I call him Longhand.

**Jack (as Smack):** Memphis.

**Art** (as **Memphis**): Yes.

**Jack** (as **Smack**): You comfortable?

**Art** (as **Memphis**): Yeah, I'm doing great.

**Keith** (as **David**): [*crosstalk*] Yeah, you comfortable in your mech?

**Austin**: [*laughing*] You went back to 'I' immediately!

**Art**: Ah!

**Art** (as **Memphis**): Memphis Longhand's great.

**Art**: Oh, this is hard.

**Keith**: It's new. It's a new thing.

**Austin**: It's a new thing. It's a new thing.

**Art** (as **Memphis**): Memphis Longhand's doing great in here. I got a cup holder—

**Jack** (as **Smack**): [*crosstalk*] Corinthian leather?

**Art** (as **Memphis**): Oh, yeah. From the finest Corinthian cows.

**Keith** (as **David**): I have a hard-plastic bench.

**Art** (as **Memphis**): Aw, you should get that upgraded.

**Austin** (as **Lunar**): Wait, I — one second. [*sighs*] I'm getting a blip.

**Austin**: [*scanner Foley*] Blip. Blip. Blip.

**Keith** (as **David**): I heard it; I heard the blip.

**Austin** (as **Lunar**): I think we might have incoming.

**Austin**: I'm gonna roll this dice and see how the Attack the Enemy works. Attack the Enemy uses whatever skill you think is appropriate. I'm gonna say this is a mech skill. This is just — it's a routine thing, so this is not about a — or, at stat. Mech stat. Not a war stat, 'cause this isn't like, how much — we're playing this like it's just we're flying around, not like, 'this is it. It comes down to us. We believe in the war.' So, I'm gonna roll this d6 and I'm gonna subtract my mech's — or I'm gonna subtract whatever's lower from whatever's higher. It's a 6. It's a 6. My mech score is a 4. Which means, we got a grim success. 'You don't win, but you don't lose

either. Mark one resolve or disillusionment, whichever fits narratively.' Um, I think it's — is it everybody involved? I think it's everybody involved does this.

**Jack:** Well no, if it's everybody then wouldn't we all fill our tracks at the same time?

**Austin:** I think — I mean, sometimes it explicitly says, 'everyone mark.' This one doesn't explicitly say that, and so I'm not sure.

**Jack:** That suggests that it's not, right?

**Austin:** It does, but Riley is in the chat.

**Jack:** Riley?

**Austin:** Oh... I will find out — we'll find out momentarily. In any case, we should talk about what this means. So it's a grim success. What's a grim success look like? What do those blips turn out to be?

**Keith:** Well, enemies, I bet.

**Austin:** I bet. But like, what — what's — what's the—

**Jack:** [*crosstalk*] Is this a — is this a mech unit that we haven't seen before? Like on the show?

**Austin:** Um, I suspect they're probably sort of like the ones we saw in the last game, which was — which included smaller mechs that are called either haloes — or, not haloes, sorry — hollows, or, um, or Hallows.

**Jack:** Oh, yeah.

**Austin:** Right? The Hallows are — I think these are Hallows, which are kind of humanoid mechs that are in service to a Divine and have been blessed by a Divine. Um, they are, um... they are, y'know, Gundam-sized. If one walked past my building right now, I'm on the third floor of a walk-up in New York, I think I would have to look up a little bit to see it's head. Y'know?

**Jack:** Right.

**Austin:** Um, I think that these are probably humanoid, and they are probably blessed by some Divine that we haven't seen yet. And that means that they probably carry the marking of some Divine we haven't seen yet. Um... Does anyone have a good Divine?

**Jack:** [*crosstalk*] Riley. Oh, um...

**Austin:** It's just the person in the scene. So it's just me, in this case, marking, in this case. Um... Lucy says, 'make sure you take note of your roll result in the boxes.' Right, so I will mark a — round, okay, so wait — I will mark a 4 here. Because that is what I — or, is that — is the

outcome here? Is the 6 minus — 6 minus 4 is a 2, so yeah, I'll mark a 2 here. This is where we're gonna mark our outcomes, I guess.

**Jack:** How do — how does the, um, Principality name Divines?

**Austin:** So I think they continue — I think that they continue the notion of it being really broad. Um, but that means we have that same set of generations that we had in Twilight Mirage, right? Like, I think — I think in general, they're just gonna pull from whatever they want, um, the Principality is — I mean, I can debut something here that I haven't said publicly before, which is the Principality is very much about order and about, um, having — having guides by which they can keep the — align the masses. Um, and so a thing that I actually recently tweeted about to Riley, actually, [Jack chuckles] because something came up— the Principality teaches, the Divine Principality teaches with this thing called constellations. They see the world as a set of constellations.

A thing Aram Nideo wrote in the Many Stars thesis, which is this big guiding philosophical text that is equal parts kind of, like, dark enlightenment gross like return to monarchism shit, but also is this like, evolution of what we saw from the Divine Fleet and Divine Free States in their faith. Um, this idea of the resonant orbit in the Twilight Mirage, has become this new thing called Asterism, which is all about understanding the world through various constellations. And so, for instance, I'll put this on-screen for the stream, here is one such constellation in which they see the house leadership — any given house leadership — and then a Divine, and a Divine pilot, and sort of a three-way relationship. And then, everyone else looks up to the pilot of the Divine, which I think I'm gonna call the Elect. They look up to an Elect. And say, 'ah, this is what my — I should guide myself like, like the pilot of the Divine.' That is what the ideal citizen is under this house. And so there's a bunch of these that are like, related to various ways in which you — you should as live as a person.

And so, y'know, one of the things that you heard — that you hear a lot as a little kid is like, in the same way that you or I might have been told to study our times tables, you study your constellations, right? Um, and of course, the — the first constellation you're taught is a very simple one. It is not a very interesting one. And it is, the simple constellation. It is the people at the top, who then speak to the prince, and the prince listens to the people — supposedly, that doesn't actually happen but that's how it's taught. The prince is — y'know, interprets the will of the people. Then the great houses listen to the prince, and then the minor houses listen to the great houses, and then land, sea, air, and space listen to the minor houses. Uh, and then the adrift, anyone who's not a real citizen in this terrible empire, is below land, sea, air, and space. They're below the earth itself.

And so, Divines should be in this sort of space in terms of like, they should again be — they be almost dark mirrors of season 1 Divines, or Counter / Weight Divines, in that it should be again, 'oh, these are ideals to live up to.' But you should immediately be thinking about the ways in which you interpret them more like the way Order was interpreted. Or the way that Grace by the — by — Grace would be interpreted, where you're like 'Ooh, maybe there's something kind

of dark happening here.' Y'know? And it's not hard to do that, right? Is this the Divine Freedom? Is this the Divine Strength? Because those have certain dark connotations that are pretty immediate, if you are going in with that — that perspective. Y'know?

**Jack:** I mean... Yeah. What would their vanguard, sort of exploratory force—

**Austin:** Yeah.

**Jack:** To strike at what they perceive to be an important enough target to send Hallows.

**Austin:** Is it some sort of bravery? Is it Courage? Is it — like, let's twist on that a little bit.

**Jack:** The one that I always — Remit -

**Austin:** Ooh.

**Jack:** As in, like, what is the remit?

**Austin:** Yeah. Yeah, yeah.

**Jack:** Um, but I don't know if that's too vague.

**Austin:** It might be too vague for an authoritarian empire, right?

**Jack:** Right. Right, there's a lot of interpretation that you could do there.

**Austin:** *[crosstalk]* Doesn't mean we won't ever use it, but yes, exactly. It should... Um, it should carry itself in the name, y'know? Like is it Devotion?

**[2:00:00]**

**Jack:** So is it Cou—

**Austin:** So is it—

**Jack:** It might be Courage. Courage, because it's like, 'well we're sending them out. To like, get what's what.'

**Austin:** Right. Right.

**Jack:** The idea of characterising your — your front units with Courage is — says a lot about how you perceive your army.

**Austin:** Mm-hm. I like that.

**Jack:** These are brave people.

**Austin:** Yeah.

**Art:** Is it Courage, or is it Courageous?

**Austin:** It could be either at this point, we've muddled it so much.

**Art:** Alright.

**Austin:** For now, let's say Courage.

**Art:** Cool.

**Austin:** Uh, So. So, yeah. Um... and we'll have to — we should privately have a conversation about stuff like that before we get to season 6 proper so we have, like, a style guide. But for now, given the time it is, let's do that.

**Art:** Yeah, I didn't wanna — I don't wanna — yeah.

**Austin:** *[laughs]* I know what we are. So, okay. There we go. Um, I think it goes — it goes bad, right? So it's grim, and for me, I think it starts to — like, why does it go grim? We succeed, which means we get it there, it opens the gate. And I think it opens the gate, but then it is destroyed. The Divine that we've brought here, which is not Courage, presumably — though, it could be?

**Keith:** Wait.

**Austin:** Can there just be another, different Divine named Courage?

**Art:** I mean, is this Courage and Courageous?

**Austin:** It could be. It could be. I kind of like that. That one is the adjective form and one is the noun form.

**Art:** Mm-hm.

**Austin:** I like the idea of us both - of both sides stumbling into sending the same thing. What if this is why it goes wrong?

**Art:** Mmmm.

**Austin:** Is that like, 'oh yeah, we have our IFF, our friend or foe thing, set to not look for anything related to Courage or to Courageous, whichever one — whichever one is ours. Don't target that as an enemy.' And so we start seeing these blips, and it's like,

**Austin (as Lunar):** Ah, y'know what, don't worry about it. This is just — I think it's, I think uh — Courageous is just, is just —

**Austin:** I think it's Courageous. I think Courageous is the one that we are bringing. Adjectival forms feel more qualified, and feel more like, 'yes, I'm describing something. I am not a stand-in for it.' I think the Divine Principality says, 'no, motherfucker, this is Courage. This is Courage living in front of you.' Um, so we are protecting Courageous. And when we start seeing things pop marked 'Courage,' we're just like, 'yeah, no, that's fine.' And then, the fire starts — the, y'know, the incoming fire starts to hit. We deploy earlier than we want to. The gate is opened, but only a limited number of Divines are able to come through. And then I think Courageous, the one we're defending, gets destroyed in the process. But, by the time that — y'know, more Divines pass through, and we do manage to seal — get some land, or some territory, back for us. Um... that is my turn. I take a point of... I take a point of resolve. I think in watching this happen, it's made me understand that there are stakes that matter.

**Jack:** Yeah.

**Austin:** That's my turn. Um, Smack Talk. Do you want to Attack the Enemy, Fraternise, Be a Figurehead, Work with Your Mech, or Train Your Skill?

**Jack:** Um, I think I want to... hmm. I think I want to Be a Figurehead. I want to participate in war propaganda.

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

**Jack:** Um, so I think that there is a press conference.

**Austin:** Mmmm.

**Jack:** And the press conference is being held by, um, y'know, the... sort of managing director of one of the corps. [Austin: Mm-hm.] Who was associated with the kind of outfit that we were sent out in. And I think that in like a very, y'know, post-OriCon style, she's just wearing like a business suit, and is standing behind a lectern, and like, tapping her microphone to get people quiet. And — and, seated on either side of her are, um, my brother and me. [Austin: Mm.] And she says,

**Jack (as Managing Director):** Well, y'know, I'd like to hand over to — to some of the pilots who saw the tragedy as it befell, and were during the last moments of Courageous, and I'd like for them to talk about what it means to them.

**Jack:** And I think it's just propaganda. It's just, straight up, classic, um, Smack Talk stands up. Maybe there's a little bit of tears in his eyes. And he comes up to the lectern and he — he describes how sad it is, but how he knows that we are better than this. [Austin: Mm.] And how we can — we can do better than this, and we will do better than this.

**Jack** (as **Smack**): We're gonna launch an effort to flush the Hallows out. That sort of position they're gonna be able to hold. Um, and this might have been a dark day for Courageous, and I'm sure we all feel their loss in our hearts, um, but I think it's just all important that we stay together.

**Jack**: And then I recite the company slogan.

**Austin**: Which is? We don't — is this?

**Jack** (as **Smack**): Yes! Power.

**Austin**: Great. Give me a roll.

**Jack**: Uh, okay.

**Austin** [*crosstalk*]: You're using 'war', so it is — it is — your roll, and whichever is lower will subtract from the other.

**Jack**: Okay.

**Austin**: So—

**Jack**: That is a 5! Nope! Nope!

**Austin**: Minus 5, is a 0. [*Jack laughs*] Oh, boy.

**Jack**: That's a 0.

**Austin**: 'You aren't convincing anyone, not even yourself. Everyone mark disillusionment'.

**Art**: Yikes.

**Keith**: [*whistles*]

**Austin**: Uh, do you want me to mark for everybody?

**Keith**: Yeah, that'd be nice.

**Austin**: Boom, there we go. So what happens?

**Keith**: [*crosstalk*]: Ah, should we move forward 1? Oh, is this all the — okay, round, got it.

**Austin**: This is — this is — yeah, round is down here. I almost just tried to ping. And then resolve tracking and disillusionment tracking is up here. Yikes. Um, what the fuck happened?

**Jack**: The doors at the back of the conference room slam open, and a journalist comes in.  
[Austin: Mm-hm.] And, uh, he just — he just lays into us. In terms of, 'why? What, okay? Why



weren't you prepared? What does that mean? Why weren't you — oh, it picked up the wrong signals? I thought we would be — it picked up the **wrong signals**?'

**Austin:** "Are you fucking kidding me?" God...

**Jack:** 'This is the war! You can't just say, oh we thought it was a — another.' He doesn't even dismantle us with clever —A: He — this is not — I don't need to make these arguments. He should be arguing with either the spokeswoman or our generals, but because I made that big ridiculous propaganda spiel—

**Austin:** Yeah.

**Jack:** —not only is he targeting me, but I feel it.

**Austin:** Yeah.

**Jack:** And he doesn't use any clever —it's not like, a gotcha moment. It's just very much like, 'alright, fine. Tell me why you failed.'

**Austin:** Right. And you don't have answers.

**Jack:** Or I do, and it's just, 'we weren't good enough in that moment.'

**Austin:** Yeah. I lose — I get a point of disillusionment for this because, I see — not because I see you fail, but because it feels like the —'how — we were out there! How could you rake us over the coals? We were the ones being shot at!'

**Jack:** Right.

**Austin:** I saw Smack Talk do his best. And it's frustrating. Any one — any reasons — anyone else want to ID why they felt disillusioned because of this?

**Keith:** Yeah, I mean, I — I think it's like, um — I think I count on my brother to be — to, like, be the reason I should — why I keep participating.

**Austin:** Right. Yeah.

**Keith:** And then it's like,

**Keith (as David):** Oh, sometimes Smack is an idiot.

**Austin:** Yeah. Memphis, any reason?

**Art (as Memphis):** Memphis Longhand prides himself on teamwork, and seeing this go badly is bad for Memphis Longhand, who doesn't — who doesn't like seeing the team do poorly.

**Austin:** Fair. Alright. Memphis Longhand, can you give me a scene? What do you wanna do?

**Art:** I would like to Fraternise with Smack Talk.

**Austin:** Cool. Where are you — where are you at?

**Art:** Um, I think this is like, not long after the press conference. And Memphis is gonna like — try to like — give like a little, like — maybe like, in the barracks or something. And it's — it's just like, an attempt at like a pep talk.

**Austin:** Okay.

**Art:** Like, y'know, you gotta shake it off. You gotta—

**Austin:** Yeah, what's — what's Memphis say? What's the — what's the — also, is it bright? Is it a big, bright, um... hangar? Is it that what you said, the hangar?

**Art:** I said barracks, but hangar might be better.

**Austin:** You said barracks. Yeah, okay. Sorry. You said barracks and I was like, 'alright, mechs. What's a mech barracks? Okay, it's a bunch of mechs standing around.' That's not the same thing as a barracks. That is a hangar. You can be in the barracks. It can be wherever you want.

**Art:** And I think they look like, like shiny and futuristic.

**Austin:** Yeah. Do we get the, like—

**Art:** Because—

**Austin:** Go ahead.

**Art:** Because I'm — I'm choosing to just be wrong about how the future will treat soldiers differently than the present or the past. And—

**Austin:** Yeah, fair. I mean, there's — there's part of this where it's like, are we treated like — we aren't on the ground, right? There are definitely people below us who have to do literal infantry work still.

**Jack:** Yeah.

**Austin:** And I bet they are treated more like shit than we are. We are flying around with brands on our chests, and I bet the brands want us to be positive about that. In a way that is shitty almost, y'know?

**Art:** Absolutely. I mean, I'm here to make sure the Metropolitans are getting good PR out of this war. *[Austin and Jack laugh]*

**Austin:** Great. Uh, so what do you tell — what do you tell Smack?

**Art (as Memphis):** Hey Smack, let Memphis Longhand talk to you for a second.

**Jack (as Smack):** Yeah, okay. *[Austin and Keith laugh]*

**Art (as Memphis):** That was rough out there. I'm sorry that you went through that.

**Jack (as Smack):** Well, y'know—

**Art (as Memphis):** Agh! Memphis Longhand is sorry you went through that.

**Art:** This is so hard!

**Jack (as Smack):** Why do you say that? Why do you keep doing that? *[Austin laughs]*

**Art:** Oh no, I think that didn't happen. That was just me.

**Jack:** Okay.

**Austin:** No, but — but you calling yourself Memphis Longhand does — does happen, I think that's what he was asking.

**Art:** Oh, yeah. Uh-huh.

**Art (as Memphis):** Oh, um. Y'know, I'm just— I—

**Art:** Aghh! Mmm! *[Austin, Jack, and Keith laugh]*

**Keith:** Hold on, hold on. Can this be in character?

**Austin:** Please!

**Keith:** Can this be a new thing that you're doing? And, you just haven't got it *[laughs]*

**Jack (as Smack):** What are you doing? Why do you keep doing that, in the third person? It's not working.

**Art (as Memphis):** Memphis Longhand—

**Jack** (as **Smack**): [*crosstalk*] Oh, yeah, okay. [*Keith laughs*]

**Art** (as **Memphis**): —wants to put positivity out into the galaxy.

**Jack** (as **Smack**): Uh-huh.

**Art** (as **Memphis**): And Memphis Longhand thinks that Memphis Longhand can do that best by being an idea more than an individual.

**Austin**: Mmm. Huh.

**Jack** (as **Smack**): Huh.

**Art** (as **Memphis**): And I think that that's... mmm! [*Austin laughs*] Memphis Longhand thinks [*Keith cackles*] that that's something you could really — you could also start thinking about yourself like an idea. 'Cause ideas are easy to communicate. Memphis Longhand is easy to communicate. I... [*growls*] — Memphis Longhand is the best at what Memphis Longhand does. [*Keith laughs*] Be the best at what Smack Talk does.

**Jack** (as **Smack**): What makes you think I wanna communicate?

**Art** (as **Memphis**): You — you're doing press conferences.

**Jack** (as **Smack**): I — I didn't pick that.

**Austin**: I think this is the roll.

**Jack** (as **Smack**): I wanted to be out there.

**Austin**: I think we're at the roll. Uh, this is Fraternise — uses the relevant bond, I believe. Yes. You got a 1 over here. So, 1 minus 5 is a 4. Which is a success.

**Art**: It's a full success.

**Keith**: Really convincing.

**Austin**: Yeah! Uh, on a full success. 'Your relationship has gotten much more charged. Shift your bonds with each other one point in either direction right now and mark resolve.'

**Art**: Well, I nailed that, so I'm gonna go up to a 6.

**Jack**: And I also shift?

**Austin**: You shift one point in either direction, yep.

**Jack:** Oh, okay. I — y’know, that talk actually... I think I just sort of was kind of cool, honestly. He’s like a celebrity. He’s an asshole, but — but — *[laughs]*

**Keith:** But — but at least — at least he told you that you’re good at something.

**Austin:** It’s true.

**Jack:** Yeah!

**Art (as Memphis):** Memphis Longhand is confident and the world tells you that makes Memphis Longhand an asshole because the world is not ready for people like Memphis Longhand.

**Austin:** Mmm.

**Jack:** And, uh, do I also get resolve? Or is it just Art?

**Austin:** Every – yeah, both of you get resolve.

**Jack:** Aw, amazing.

**Austin:** Alright.

**Jack:** Yeah, and — and so, I’m just like, *[sighs]*

**Jack (as Smack):** Okay, that whole bit about him talking about an idea, that’s bullshit. But the bit where he said I was at good at what I did? I liked that bit.

**Austin:** Alright. Um...

**Art:** Wait, you didn’t actually change your number.

**Jack:** I did. I changed it. Oh, no, I didn’t.

**Austin:** You didn’t.

**Jack:** Okay.

**Austin:** There we go. Okay. Uh... David.

**Keith:** Yeah.

**Austin:** What are you doing?

**Keith:** *[sighs]* I guess I’ll work on this piece of shit mech. *[Austin laughs]*

**Austin:** So you are in the hangar, just working on the damn thing.

**Keith:** Yeah, I'm in the hangar.

**Austin:** Um, what are you — what's that look like? Are you alone?

**Keith (as David):** I don't know, the arms move slow. The whole thing is slow.

**Austin (as Lunar):** You got — you gotta get these orbs. These orbs—

**Austin:** That's not her voice. Where'd her voice go?

**Austin (as Lunar):** You gotta get these orbs.

**Keith:** Southern. Lower.

**Austin:** Yeah, she's southern. She's a little lower. She's a little lower.

**Keith:** Yeah.

**Austin (as Lunar):** Um, listen, David.

**Keith (as David):** Orbs?

**Austin (as Lunar):** You — look — look at Rose-of-Sharon. Look over here.

**Keith (as David):** Okay.

**Austin (as Lunar)** Look at Rose-of-Sharon. What's Rose-of-Sharon's -

**Keith (as David):** Are you doing that — are you doing Memphis's thing?

**Austin (as Lunar):** I'm not — no, Rose-of-Sharon's the name of my mech. I'm Lunar.

**Keith (as David):** Is that true?

**Austin (as Lunar):** Yes. My name is Lunar Leson. We have been co-pilots — not co-pilots, we've been wing-people together. Rose-of-Sharon has big shoulder orbs.

**Keith (as David):** I'm sorry, I guess I just got them backwards.

**Austin (as Lunar):** Let me help. I can try to get the quality of the orb—

**Keith (as David):** [*crosstalk*] Okay, what do you mean 'orbs'?

**Austin (as Lunar):** —into the shoulder. That'll make them move faster for you.

**Keith** (as **David**): What do you mean, 'orb'?

**Austin** (as **Lunar**): Look at my—

**Keith** (as **David**): Mine has wires.

**Austin** (as **Lunar**): Okay, but if you put them in an orb shape, hm?

**Keith** (as **David**): Okay.

**Austin** (as **Lunar**): And we could see if that might make them a little faster for you... Orb 'em up.

**[2:15:00]**

**Keith** (as **David**): I — but I could do that, or I — there's — look at the cockpit real quick.

**Austin** (as **Lunar**): Okay.

**Austin**: Climb up, climb, climb, climb, climb. *[laughs]*

**Keith** (as **David**): It's a pla — it's a plastic bench in there.

**Austin** (as **Lunar**): Well, that's no good either.

**Keith** (as **David**): Maybe I should fix that.

**Austin** (as **Lunar**): You know what else you could use in here? Is a good—

**Austin** (as **Lunar**) and **Keith** (as **David**): *[simultaneously]* orb.

**Austin** (as **Lunar**): Uh-huh.

**Keith** (as **David**): I heard about them. When — when did you become about the orbs?

**Austin** (as **Lunar**): It wasn't really me. It was more of a HIGHbiscus — HIGHbiscus provided the — provided Rose-of-Sharon. Rose-of-Sharon came with some orbs, and I just thought they — they do a good job of letting me move my arms around real good, and inside you sit in a big little orb, and you see all around you in that orb. You're not — on a bench, you can't swivel! You can't do a swivel.

**Keith** (as **David**): Can't swivel. I can't do anything.

**Austin** (as **Lunar**): *[crosstalk]* Let's start with the bench.

**Keith** (as **David**): Start with the bench, yeah. I could also do, um — see these boosters? See the boosters?

**Austin** (as **Lunar**): Mm-hm.

**Keith** (as **David**): There's two jets.

**Austin** (as **Lunar**): Yeah.

**Keith** (as **David**): But I can't have them both on at the same time.

**Austin** (as **Lunar**): Why?

**Keith** (as **David**): I don't know! It came like that.

**Austin** (as **Lunar**): Alright, well let's just dig in. [*Jack laughs*] Y'know what, I'm gonna go get the toolbox.

**Keith** (as **David**): I'm just trying to feel it out. I'm just trying to feel it out.

**Austin** (as **Lunar**): I feel you. Yeah.

**Keith** (as **David**): Y'know?

**Austin** (as **Lunar**): Let's do it.

**Austin**: Let's — alright, roll your mech.

**Keith** (as **David**): Okay. I'll roll — onto its side, or?

**Austin**: [*confused noise*] What?

**Keith** (as **David**): Roll it onto its side?

**Austin** (as **Lunar**): Yeah, roll it onto its side so we can get in better. [*laughs*]

**Keith** (as **David**): Okay.

**Austin**: Y'know what I'm gonna do? I'm gonna roll the dice. People can see me rolling the dice, which means if I'm lying they'll yell at me.

**Keith**: Okay. Alright.

**Austin**: And I'll just tell you what I roll. This is a 4. What is your mech score?

**Keith**: One, I think.



**Jack:** I think you maybe—

**Austin:** Alright! Okay, so it's a 3.

**Jack:** Wait.

**Austin:** Wait, what is your mech score?

**Keith:** I'm — I lost my page. I have a lot of tabs open right now.

**Austin:** Oh, it's a — it's a 2.

**Keith:** My mech is a 2. So it's a 2.

**Austin:** So a 4 minus a 2 is grim success. You learn something new about your mech. Shift your mech one point in either direction now.

**Keith:** Okay, Okay. There's — I found something.

**Austin:** What'd you find?

**Keith:** There's a governor on the — on the, um — on the power supply.

**Austin:** Well, who elected him?

**Keith:** I think self-appointed.

**Austin:** Oh, boy.

**Keith:** It's — it's — I — I took it off, and it just made the whole everything move not so slow.

**Austin:** That's a step in the right direction. Does that bring your mech score up to a 3?

**Keith:** Yeah, that brings my mech score up to a 3.

**Austin:** God damn. Not bad. Uh, alright, so that should go there.

**Jack:** Wait, why is that grim?

**Austin:** Um, 'cause you found something new. Y'know? You learned something new about it — it's a mixed success here I think, Jack.

**Jack:** Okay.

**Austin:** 0-1 is 'something goes wrong.'

**Keith:** Yeah.

**Austin:** Um. Uh, because, y'know, it's — it's just changing your — I mean, honestly, because that 3 is gonna actually make it harder to get certain scores, in some ways.

**Keith:** Yeah. Mmm-hm.

## **[2:17:46] – Round Two**

**Austin:** So we'll see how that goes. Do you wanna start another round? I know Jack, it is getting very late for you.

**Jack:** I can do one more round—

**Austin:** Okay.

**Jack:** —and then I will probably have to because I'll, um—

**Austin:** Because you'll be—

**Jack:** I'll sleep.

**Austin:** You'll turn into a — yeah — a pumpkin, because it's super late where you are.

**Jack:** Yeah, that happens to me really often.

**Austin:** Yeah, totally. Fair. I am going to — oh wait, is there anything that we do at the end of a round, let me just double check. 'Every round' - we did that. 'After you finish a scene' — yeah, we did that. Alright, I'm gonna start by trying to develop a special skill. Um, I am going to train my skill. 'When you roll on honing your unique ability, roll +skill.' So here's the thing I'm actually gonna do is. My skill right now is just kind of being like, a work — a workmanlike, like — effort, right? Just like, just get it done. Just buckle down. Y'know, pull yourself up by your bootstraps, y'know? Keep digging. And what I'm gonna do is try to learn how to combine that with looking at a radar screen and understanding — like, just constantly — I'm gonna work on like, workflows for being in my mech and actually updating and understanding what the state of battle is. So that even if I'm not a great pilot, maybe I can get to a place where I can, like, run the right routines enough that I can know if maybe the things that are coming at us are actually enemies and we should pay attention [*Jack laughs*] instead of getting shot a bunch. So, I'm gonna roll skill.

**Jack:** Rather than just being like, 'ah, probably fine.'

**Austin:** Exactly. Alright, I'm gonna roll. Uh, I'm gonna go quick on this, because this doesn't need to be a whole scene. We don't need to see me plugging things in, and like, hitting buttons and all that. Um, though I will note again one of the rules of this season is, uh — y'know, last season it was 'no touchscreens'; this — this season it's 'there will be touchscreens, but if you

can touch a screen, the only thing it can do is one thing.’ So if it’s a map that you can touch — like, this is a radar screen that has a touchscreen — it’s only a radar screen. I can’t hit a button and turn that into a targeting computer, or into a news feed. It’s just a — it’s just a touchscreen. It means that if I need — if I want to look a targeting computer, I have to look at a different thing inside of my mech. It’s a bunch of different things.

**Keith:** Oh. Wait, so it’s like, um - all touchscreens are like, uh — like McDonald’s Happy Meal video games?

**Austin:** Totally.

**Keith:** Like Game & Watch?

**Jack:** Yes.

**Austin:** And there might be screens that have multiple things, but those have big, bulky buttons that go click-clock, click-clock, as you click them and clock them. Uh, I’m gonna roll this dice for this scene. That is a 4. My skill is 2, so I rolled a 2, which again a grim success. You’ve been fighting so hard and it’s — ‘you’ve been fighting so long, it’s hard to train at all. Add disillusionment.’ Yikes. Um, woah, that two is on its side! *[laughs]* That’s not the way that was supposed to go.

**Art:** It’s also in resolve instead of disillusionment.

**Austin:** Oh, you’re right. Thanks. Boop, there we go. And that is another 2 for me. Um, or wait, did someone just roll this again? Yes. People are rolling this dice.

**Keith:** No. No, when you — when you write in another box, it rolls it.

**Austin:** Oh, does it just change? It does. *[laughs]* Wow, weird. Okay. Good. Um, that explains a lot too. So yeah, I think I’m just getting frustrated. I can’t — as I’m trying to teach myself this new trick, one I’m not. Two, I’m just like — keep reliving having fucked up. And it’s such an easy thing to get — to get right. Just pay attention. Just know — know the difference between Courage and Courageous. And we just didn’t, and I just didn’t, and I let people down, so I get a little more disillusioned. Jack.

**Jack:** *[sighs]*

**Art:** Oh.

**Austin:** Oh, Riley’s apparently saying, ‘don’t forget to shift stats.’ You’re right, there was a thing we have to do in-between. There was a thing that we need to do in-between. ‘After everyone’s framed a scene and rolled a move, the round is over. Everyone decides which of their

relationships has been changed over the course of the round, and can shift up two of their stats up to two points in either direction.' So, wow. That's—

**Jack:** Hmm.

**Keith:** That's a lot.

**Austin:** That's a lot.

**Jack:** Wow.

**Keith:** Yeah.

**Austin:** Is it to two in either direction by two total, or each one by two? It has to be two points total, right? 'Cause otherwise you could swing two fours to a six.

**Keith:** Yeah, I think it's one and one or two for one.

**Austin:** That's my guess.

**Keith:** I think it's that.

**Austin:** Um, I'm gonna move my war up to 4, and my Memphis up to 6. There we go. Um, Lunar's a little more committed and is fully committed to the team. Riley says yes.

**Jack:** I'm gonna move my skill up to 4, because what, um, Memphis said kind of struck a chord, and I've been practicing.

**Austin:** Punching. You've been practicing punching?

**Keith:** Accord. That's a good — that's a good Divine.

**Jack:** I've been — oh, it is. I've been practicing punching in my mech.

**Austin:** Gotcha.

**Jack:** That's called hitting.

**Austin:** That is called hitting.

**Keith:** Um...

**Austin:** Other shifts here?

**Keith:** I've got mine. I'm shifting — I'm shifting my mech down to 1. *[Austin laughs]* When I removed the governor, it made everything a little faster, *[Jack laughs]* but it blew out all the light-up displays, and I have to do everything from memory. Everything that glows is gone.

**Austin:** *[crosstalk]* God, that's good. Great. Memphis?

**Art:** I'm — uh, I moved war to 3. I felt a little bit of — y'know, getting closer to Smack—

**Austin:** Yeah, yeah.

**Art** —has increased my enthusiasm a little bit. And I moved my skill, which is fame, up to 5, to reflect that, um, the — y'know this — our operation didn't do that well, but there's no such thing as bad publicity.

**Austin:** Good call. Alright. My stuff would have gone the same, 'cause I didn't touch skill. Next is Jack.

**Jack:** I think it's time we make a strike.

**Austin:** Okay, what are we doing?

**Jack:** So, when our Divines came through the gate—

**Austin:** Yeah.

**Jack:** —they pretty much wiped those Hallows out that were there.

**Austin:** Yes.

**Jack:** Um, it was the end of Courageous, but also it was the end of those Hallow units, who were just like, 'oh, shit.'

**Austin:** Uh-huh.

**Jack:** 'Ten Divines have arrived.' Um, but almost immediately we needed to redeploy those Divines elsewhere as part of the pincer manoeuvre and, *[Austin: Mm-hm]* uh, that gave the Principality an opening.

**Austin:** Mmm.

**Jack:** So the Principality brought in a carrier. Like a — a huge, um, sort of uh, like a forward base almost—

**Austin:** Yeah.

**Jack:** —that they basically deployed... um, what was that Gundam we were watching where the Gundams just like, land on the ship and walk around on it?

**Austin:** That was the most recent episode of — or movie of — Thunder — Thunder... bolt? Thunderbolt, Gundam Thunderbolt.

**Jack:** And it's incredible, 'cause this thing is so distinctly a spaceship, but the Gundams just are like—

**Austin:** Oh, yeah. Walking on it.

**Jack:** 'I'm fine!'

**Austin:** Just hanging out on the side! Sniping from it. Yeah. It's Bandit Flower, yeah.

**Jack:** So this is — so this is what it is. It's a huge mobile gun platform. The whole purpose of which is, 'we're gonna — we're gonna put it there, and we're gonna shoot anybody who tries to come through this terrain.'

**Austin:** Mm-hm.

**Jack:** Um, and I'm gonna try and take it down. And I'm gonna try and take it down with Memphis. I think everybody's here, but I think, uh, I'm mostly trying this with Memphis.

**Austin:** Sure. Uh, I think maybe it's like, Lunar and David are like doing, like, keeping the rear open so that we can retreat, or something, but y'all are going in. Y'all are actually pushing into the centre.

**Jack:** Yeah.

**Austin:** Oh, I will roll. I keep forgetting I have to do that. Alright, ready? What is your war skill? Or, is this war or is this mech?

**Jack:** Uh, it's — it's, uh—

**Austin:** It's war. Oh, it's any, it's any. Attack the Enemy's whichever one you think is most appropriate.

**Jack:** So this is war, because I'm furious.

**Austin:** Okay.

**Jack:** I'm just like, I'm— *[sighs]* I'm like, 'well, a very obvious target has been presented to me.'

**Keith:** *[crosstalk]* 'I'm so mad'.

**Austin:** Alright, rolling. That is a 3.

**Keith:** Grim.

**Jack:** Okay.

**Austin:** Grim success.

**Jack:** Okay.

**Austin:** Uh, you don't win but you don't lose either. Mark one resolve or disillusionment, whichever fits narratively.

**Jack:** So this is, uh, a point of resolve. Because — oh, I know what — oh, wow, that X—

**Austin:** I know! I'll fix it. I'll fix it, I'll fix it.

**Jack:** Long X!

**Austin:** Uh-huh. [*Keith laughs*]

**Keith:** Long X!

**Jack:** Long X is here. So, here's what happened. Um, it became rapidly clear that we weren't gonna destroy this thing.

**Austin:** Yeah.

**Jack:** So, I landed on it and I fought my way into it, and I killed the pilot.

**Austin:** Oooh.

**Keith:** Oooh.

**Austin:** But it didn't crash 'cause it's in space. It's not like a—

**Jack:** It's in space. Like, we didn't beat this thing, but I think it's like, this was done out of fury, and it was done out of jealousy. Um, and so I think that the resolve that Smack Talk got from it was just taking a potshot at a person inside the thing—

**Austin:** Yeah.

**Jack:** —and going like, 'I got you.'

**Austin:** Yeah. Like it. Memphis. What do you do?

**Art:** Looking at this... hmmm. Alright, I think — I think Memphis is gonna take a shot at being a figurehead.

**Austin:** Okay. [*Jack and Keith laugh*]

**Jack:** Good luck mate.

**Art:** Mm-hm. Um, and I think this is just doing an out-and-out commercial for the war.

**Austin:** [*laughs*] Oh my god.

**Art:** Like, 'war, obey your thirst,' that kind of thing. 'Obey your thirst for war.' Not that.

**Austin:** Not that?

**Jack:** The thing is though, because it's OriCon, it's — or it's like, whatever we're calling this—

**Austin:** Yeah.

**Jack:** It's also gotta be wrapped up in just like, corporate branding as well, right?

**Austin:** Oh, yeah.

**Jack:** It's not just, 'war, slake your thirst.' It's like, 'have you considered war?'

**Austin:** God. Is it like — I mean, you know how sometimes you get those, uh, ads — you know how you often get those ads, especially Super Bowl ads — that are really like, 'Budweiser loves Martin Luther King Jr' [*Jack laughs*] 'Ford Trucks. Equality.' Or you get the ones where it's multiple things combined. 'Budweiser and Ford Trucks sponsor the marines.' Right? Like, 'we all love the troops here.' Um, and, is it like —

**Keith:** 'Proudly serving your thirst.'

**Austin:** Yeah. [*laughs*] Exactly. [*through laughter*] 'Since — since 1776,' right? [*Jack and Keith laugh*] Like, that is the bullshit you get. And like, I think like, maybe this is like — is it an advertisement for, like, new OriCon? Like, 'years ago, we worked together independently.' And it's like, the same shit that we saw forever ago of this gross appropriation of kind of collectivist iconography, um, by these kind of megacorporations, and they're just gonna do it again!

**Art:** Yeah. Um, okay. Let's — let's — I wanna start painting a word picture here. We open on like, [*Jack laughs*] and this is all like, simulated of course.

**Austin:** Of course.

**Art:** But we open on, like, a rolling field of grain, with like a simple dirt path.



**Austin:** [*sighs*]

**Jack:** [*crosstalk*] A banjo plays.

**Art:** A giant, um— to— it's a — it's a cart pulled by mechanised, giant Clydesdales.

**Jack:** Oh my god.

**Austin:** Love it. Love it.

**Art:** And Memphis, in the Queenside Castle, is driving this—

**Austin:** Oh my god.

**Art:** —this wagon.

**Austin:** Oh my god.

**Art:** And, um, of course, all of the sports mechs have external video screens so you can like, see the person inside—

**Austin:** Right. Of course.

**[2:30:00]**

**Art:** —as they're, like, playing, 'cause you gotta get the emotion of the — of the game. [*Austin sighs*] And it's like, Memphis like, notices the camera, and is like,

**Art (as Memphis):** Oh, hello. Memphis Longhand here. Y'know, OriCon has come a long way together, and now we need to go just a little further.

**Art:** And then like, the music swells. And like an announcer comes in to like actually tell you what to do. Like, buy war bonds or stop using metals.

**Austin:** Right. I think I know — I have the name for you. For what it is.

**Art:** Oh.

**Austin:** It's the Orion Combine. Like, a sports combine, which is why they got you.

**Art:** Yeah.

**Jack:** Wait, OriCom?

**Austin:** OriCom. Yeah.

**Art:** OriCom.

**Austin:** Yup. The 'N' just finishes drawing an 'M'. *[Austin and Jack laugh]* And slides over just a little bit. Give me a — or I guess I'll roll your war score. That is a 2. *[laughs]* Your war score is a 3. So it's a failure.

**Art:** Mmmm.

**Austin:** Fuck!

**Art:** Everyone mark disillusionment. *[laughs]*

**Austin:** Well—

**Jack:** It just immediately is followed by like, 'have you considered a new toothbrush?'

**Austin:** God. Right! Well like, this is it for me is like, 'oh, is this — is this as big of an ideal — is this it? Is this really the best we can dream up? Is "we're all more corporations"? Like, you could have imagined anything, and what we've imagined is a bigger corporation.' I do think you did well though.

**Art:** Sure.

**Austin (as Lunar):** You did a great job. You just — you did everything you could with what they gave you. I just wish they would've given you more.

**Art (as Memphis):** Yeah, Memphis Longhand just reads the script they give Memphis Longhand.

**Austin (as Lunar):** You're a team player, I know.

**Art (as Memphis):** Yeah. Gotta — gotta start with the writers.

**Austin (as Lunar):** Goddamn.

**Austin:** Um, alright. David Talk. *[pause]* How you living?

**Keith:** I am living okay. I'm having a hard time. I guess that I will—

**Jack:** In the worst mech ever made.

**Austin:** Yeah, but your skill is so good.

**Keith:** Yeah, but my skill is so good, right? Let's, uh... Let's Attack the Enemy.

**Austin:** Okay. What's your attack?

**Keith:** Um, I can pick any skill, right? So I think that I'm gonna — I think that I'm going to use mech.

**Austin:** Okay. What is—

**Keith:** I'm trying to — I'm trying to figure something out with this thing.

**Austin:** So is it just like a regular skirmish? Like, what's the play? What's the — what is this — this attack?

**Keith:** Yeah, I think that there's — so I think that there's — I think that there's like – there's, y'know, there's blips of radar activity, and I'm like I want to improve — I don't, I want — I miss having a mech that I like. I want to figure out something. I want, like — you can have a shitty old car that you love. I've had those cars, I know that I can — I can do it.

**Austin:** Right. Right.

**Keith:** I've gotta figure something out with this mech. And so I volunteer. I'm like, okay, I'm going. It's gonna — the fight's gonna happen anyway, I might as well try to [*sighs*] figure out how to use this thing.

**Austin:** So is this a solo operation?

**Keith:** Um... yeah! Solo. Yes, solo.

**Austin:** Alright. I'm gonna roll for you. You said using your mech, right?

**Keith:** Thank you. Yeah, using my mech.

**Austin:** That's a 5! So that means it's a 4, which means it's a success. 'You've managed some kind of victory. Everyone mark a resolve.'

**Keith:** Nice.

**Austin:** What's the — what's the resolve?

**Keith:** I think it's, um...

**Austin:** [*quietly*] Have I fucked that up? Wait. No.

**Keith:** I think it's — I think it's like, y'know. At some level like a bad — a bad – like a bad hammer is still a hammer.

**Austin:** Yeah.

**Keith:** Like, it's — it doesn't, like — as long as you're careful, you can get the nail into the board, like it's not — if it's not broken, it just sucks, it still works. And — and it, y'know — it wasn't — if it was a big deal skirmish I would've brought someone and it just worked out, and, um — but no one was there to see how not really big of a deal it was. So I come back, *[laughs]* and everything's fine, and y'know, people are excited—

**Austin:** Right. Yeah.

**Keith:** —and I'm excited that I got something done with this piece of shit.

**Austin:** *[laughs]* Yeah, everyone's excited. Totally.

**Keith:** Yeah.

**Austin:** Alright, that is another round, which means we all get to change our stats once. I'm gonna drop my war to 2. Even with that success, I just — I think that commercial really — really didn't work for me. In such a way that I was like, I really wanted to sold on this fucking thing. And I realised I care about my friends; I don't care about this war. Um—

**Jack:** I'm gonna boost my mech to 3.

**Austin:** Okay.

**Jack:** Um, because, uh, I was buoyed by having launched that assault, and also buoyed by seeing my brother just come back and be like 'yeah, I did it'.

**Austin:** I did the thing. *[crosstalk]* I did it.

**Jack:** 'My mech's a piece of shit but I'm fine.' Um, so that — that kind of made me a little more comfortable in my own cockpit.

**Austin:** Hell yeah. Art and Keith, Memphis and David.

**Keith:** I um... I'm gonna bring — I'm gonna bring my mech back up to 2.

**Austin:** Okay. You've figured it out.

**Keith:** And I think I'm gonna bring my war to 2.

**Austin:** Okay.

**Keith:** I think like, there's — I mean we're fighting —we're in the Conglomerate, and we're in Conglomerate territory, and I'm out... on the — in the field? Is it a field? I'm at — I'm in space.

**Austin:** You're in space.

**Keith:** And I've got maps, and it's just like, there is so much space. [*Austin laughs*] Why do they have to be in this space?

**Austin:** Yeah.

**Keith:** What do they need — they need more solar systems? It's crazy! [*Jack laughs*] So I think that I'm like — I got a little bit mad — just like, by looking at a map and being like, 'what's the fucking point of them doing this'?

**Austin:** [*laughs*] Love it.

**Art:** I'm gonna move war up to 4. Just like, buying into that hype.

**Austin:** Okay.

**Jack:** [*laughs*] You're—

**Keith:** [*doing an Art / Memphis impression*] 'Well I was gone for the commercial. I wasn't around, so.'

**Austin:** Right. It was during the—

**Art:** And I'm bring mech down to 5. When do I get to practice when I'm doing these commercials?

**Austin:** Right. You're getting more disconnected. You're right. You're sitting in that cockpit during that commercial, but that's not the same thing as piloting. Right?

**Art:** No.

**Austin:** Damn. Um—

**Art:** Yeah. It's a shame.

**Austin:** Uh — oh fuck, what was it — you succeeded, right? You got a 4? Is that right? You succeeded, so I'm gonna write a 4, and just assume that that was right. Alright, um. So Jack, it is way too late at this point for us to continue with you, and I feel like it's just late for all of us. Um, it's not giving us a great like, stopping point here.

**Jack:** No.

**Austin:** But I think that we should probably wrap regardless.

**Jack:** I don't know how successfully I can continue to play.

**Austin:** No. I don't want — not thoughts from you. You should go to bed. [*Austin laughs*]

**Jack:** Oh. *[laughs]*

**Austin:** I'm saying thoughts to other people? Should we—

**Art:** But if we're gonna — yeah, if we're gonna — just gonna stop, you can just — we can all do outros.

**Austin:** Right.

**Art:** We can come back to this. I mean, um, end now, but I could do this again soon.

**Austin:** Same.

**Jack:** Yeah, I like these characters.

**Austin:** Me too!

**Keith:** Yeah, same, yeah — I think that we could — I think that we should stop and then just pick it back up.

**Austin:** Okay.

**Keith:** Yeah.

**Austin:** Um, should we see — can we end on a radar blip? Can we end on a, um, a... Here's what I'm gonna end on. Can I — let me just do one last shot with me here, which is I am going to do a Work with My Mech skill, which is I'm gonna be out late one night, uh, and trying to scan to see if there's any enemies coming. Space is so big, right? I'm gonna roll this dice for Work with My Mech, with my mech skill being 4. That's a 5. So that's a failure.

**Jack:** Wow.

**Austin:** Great, 5 minus 4 is a 1, great. Um, 'Something went wrong and your mech isn't responding the way it should. Don't shift your mech until you do this move again and succeed.' All of my, um, — I'm gonna make a note of that. All of my scanning stuff overloads and breaks. Or it like starts to flash—

*[Music begins]*

**Austin:** —and I see Courage appear on my screen, and then like, it goes like bbbbrroooooomm — pew! And it just pops, and like, there are sparks all across my mech's scanner, and I'm like calling it. I'm like, 'you gotta turn off your scanners right away! Courage is coming.'

*[Music plays out to end.]*