

PARTIZAN 17: BITTER AIR - THREECARD

Transcribed by Rain (@ariskofrain/rain#6887)

[MUSIC: *TANAGER. PERFECT. TOUCHPAPER.*]

AUSTIN (as Lucia Whitestar): For those who somehow do not know, Fort Icebreaker is not a fort, so much as what might be called the main line of resistance separating us from Apostolos across a five hundred mile stretch of this cursed moon. It prowls the tundra armed with innumerable weapons, and it houses over ten thousand of Apostolos' most skilled soldiers. You will assault the central fortress at Juniper, where you should face, all said, lighter resistance than what would normally be there. At this point, you must take hold of Juniper and resist any incoming forces, including a potentially weakened Fort Icebreaker.

At that point, you will — under your command, as you have so nobly, Ms. Kesh, *volunteered* for this difficult service — prevent the fort from travelling further southeast, because it is at point Pine that I will be leading House Whitestar to victory.

AUSTIN: On a whim, you go further, uh, north in the river, instead of further south of the river, and you find, like, an underground tunnel, cutting off from the river, that leads to an underground tunnel system. This seems like it's a smugglers' route.

ART: I know a hidden route when I see one.

AUSTIN: (overlapping) You know a hidden route when you see one, you've been through hidden routes before, and this is one of them.

AUSTIN (as Crysanth Kesh): It seems that you're fishing for something, dear, and I wish you would simply order from the menu.

JACK (as Clementine Kesh): Fine. Lucia Whitestar plans to lead the charge across point Pine. House Whitestar plans to break the Apostolisian line and establish the forward base, while House Kesh is relegated to holding off Fort Icebreaker - a noble cause, I am sure...

AUSTIN, as Crysanth Kesh, sighs.

JACK (as Clementine Kesh): ...and one I am certain you've signed off on. Mother, I am simply asking that if you would like your daughter to come back as a martyr, that is something that I- I will entirely agree to, Lord knows, I've been trying hard enough already. But if you would like her to come back a hero, I would ask that you offer the scion of your line a little more than, "listen to Lucia Whitestar".

AUSTIN (as Crysanth Kesh): (sighing) Daughter, you are so caught up with being the prima ballerina, that you fail to recognise that we own the ballet.

AUSTIN (as Gur Sevraq): I do find myself... feeling a degree of responsibility, and protectiveness, given our arrangement. This is the Divine, Future. I need to know if you would become Future's Hallowed, with all it entails.

[MUSIC ends.]

AUSTIN: Alright, you got a 5, so that's a mixed success on a risky action - um, what's the actual, what's it, paint me the picture here, Millie's setting this bomb - are you setting it under the bridge, are you setting it, like, on the side...?

SYLVIA: Yeah, I'm definitely picturing it as being under, like, I think maybe she even like, swims back part of the way?

AUSTIN: Oh, okay!

SYLVIA: Like, this - like, cause this is right along... actually, you know what I think she does, is, if we're cool with this, is... um... no. Cause I think crossing the river would be, that's wider than I actually realise.

AUSTIN: Mhm.

SYLVIA: Uh, yeah, she's going to set it underneath the bridge, kinda here, on the sort-of corner there.

AUSTIN: Yeah.

SYLVIA: Just on some supports.

AUSTIN: Um, so, as you... um... okay. Here's what it is, the consequence is actually very easy here. Which is, as soon as this explosive goes off, the, everyone starts yelling, everyone starts making noise, um, and I'm going to, uh, advance both of these clocks by 1. The "word gets out" clock goes up, as immediately people begin to yell to send word that they're under attack. Um, but the... the specific reason that this goes up, the "word gets out" thing is not just that they're under attack, it's that this is some sort of trick. It's because, like, why the fuck would the- would a bridge blow up? And someone here is smart enough to understand what the fuck is going on a little bit. The second clock is a mystery clock, um, and it advances as someone begins to suspect, uh, someone else begins to suspect this is where the action is.

Alright, the rest of you, as Millie is blowing up this, this thing- also, you could resist those, Millie, either one of them? Um...

SYLVIA: Oh, uh...

AUSTIN: My guess is with 5 stress, you may not do that, but...

SYLVIA: Oh, yeah, no, I... no. No, I'm not, I'm good.

AUSTIN: I would say you would resist those with... I actually don't know how, maybe Insight, maybe you make it look like the bridge is crumbled or, or Prowess or something, you know what I mean? But... that seems tough to me.

SYLVIA: (overlapping) I dunno, I don't want to risk it right now anyway,

JACK (also overlapping): (matter-of-factly) Bridge accident.

AUSTIN: Yeah, but also that's the point, is to draw people away, so.

SYLVIA: Yeah.

AUSTIN: Alright, uh, the rest of you! What is up, what is the plan? This is now run to -

JACK: (overlapping) Austin, this...

AUSIN: Uh huh?

JACK: This is an artillery tower, right?

AUSTIN: Which one? Oh! That is, yeah.

JACK: (overlapping) I'm pinging it.

AUSTIN: Okay, oh, also, I can reveal more things because of where Millie is now. Millie, you, uh...

JACK: (overlapping) Oh great, I was hoping for this!

AUSTIN: ...as you're setting up these bombs, you notice a few things. One is just another artillery cannon, one in this kind of big courtyard area, which is, again, tied to the way this thing kind-of intakes the large Fort Icebreaker. You also see two, um, hollows of a model that we've never seen before. These are close-range defensive mechs that kind-of hold the line. They are called... (AUSTIN hums) ...they are called Kosmos units, they are made by the Zenith-Apostolos Project, so they're Columnar designs. They have, like, big bulky rounded armor plating, with reverse-jointed legs. Um, I think that they kind of - when I think about them moving around, I think about them moving the way General Grievous does in Star Wars, this kind-of like... um, not the, like (AUSTIN makes rapid "duh" sounds with his mouth), not like the rapid runaround General Grievous, the, like, uh...

ART: The bulky...

AUSTIN: ...the awkward gait, the bulky - like, the body moves almost separately from the head. The head kind of stands still as the body undulates up and down, and... you know

what I mean? Like, there's a degree of like, each part- each limb doesn't necessarily feel like it's connected to a central core in the same way that it should? Um, and they have long, kind-of head glaives in their right hands, which are like, um, almost like spears with a really long blade at the end, like, a really- to the degree that they could choke up on where they're holding the staff, and it's almost like a sword, or they could release down lower and have, like, a big sweeping spear. Um, they have these thick limbs, and then they have this kind-of like, round shield - they have like a, a shield on their left arms already, the right arm is where they're holding these glaives, but they also have this, like, round shield, um, looking thing on their backs, and as soon as the, as soon as the bomb goes off, you see those flicker on with a similar sort of shield unit as the one that we saw forever ago on the Panther, that kind-of like glimmering effect, as if it would stop small arms fire, and maybe even other sorts of ranged attacks? Um, you don't know if it's a heat field or an energy field, or what, but that is, that is... they're very clearly meant to, like, get things up close. These are the final line of defence, in a sense, for this base, except they are now the first line of defence as you're attacking from inside instead of outside. Um, and I think that they look in dismay as the bridge goes down, because that means that they would have to try to cross the icy river to get over to you, so good going.

Are you giving, Millie, the rest of the crew improved position or increased effect?

SYLVIA: This feels like improved position to me?

AUSTIN: I think that that's fair. Um, so that would be, y'all are now in a controlled position, for crossing over to, to where your stuff is. (pause) So, what do you doin'? Are you just making a run for it, are you...

KEITH: Um, sneaky run! Sneaky ru- you know a sneaky running?

AUSTIN: I know a sneaky run, yeah.

JACK: Like a low, kind of...

AUSTIN (overlapping, laughing): Like a low, 26-person, sneaky run.

SYLVIA: Like Naruto does!

AUSTIN: Like Nar-right, like a ninja run, I see...

JACK: But sneakily.

KEITH: Like, our arms trailing behind our back like Sonic The Hedgehog.

AUSTIN: (overlapping) Yes, sneaky, yeah, uh-huh, yes, like that's, yeah, uh-huh?

Um, this again feels like it's a group...

JACK: I mean, are all 26 of us trying to do this?

ART: (overlapping) Group action?

AUSTIN: That's a good question.

JACK: Or is it just those of us that have mechs in storage?

AUSTIN: In which case it would only be -

JACK: (overlapping) Like, are we...?

AUSTIN: - six of you.

JACK: Yeah, which is smaller. That's quite a bit smaller.

AUSTIN: (overlapping) Or, no, 5 of you, only 5 of you. Cause A.O. Rooke doesn't, and then, the... the, um, yeah, A.O. Rooke doesn't, and then the other 20 soldiers don't, right? So.

SYLVIA: Uh...

JACK: Does A.O. have a mech?

AUSTIN: No. A.O. Rooke is not a pilot.

SYLVIA: Sovereign Immunity wouldn't either, right?

AUSTIN: Sovereign has a mech.

SYLVIA: Oh!

AUSTIN: Oh, yeah.

ART: (overlapping) And it's here, in box one.

AUSTIN: (overlapping) We just haven't seen it yet.

SYLVIA: (excitedly) Oh!!

AUSTIN: Yeah, it's the one in box one, it's the one that literally builds walls.

JACK laughs.

SYLVIA: I forgot... I forgot about that.

AUSTIN: Yeah, we just have never seen it before, this, y'know, defensive mission might not be a bad place to see it, but... that's up to Sovereign.

JACK: (overlapping) Do we want to send... our infantry detachment to go and... do something.

KEITH: I was gonna suggest the same thing, so I agree. (pause)

ART: Do you have, like, an idea, or just like firing guns wildly into the air or something?

JACK: I would, I wo- I was considering maybe trying to capture one of the emplacements - the only one that's on our side is this artillery tower way in the north.

AUSTIN: Yeah.

JACK: Uh, as far as we know. And, I feel like trying to get them across the river immediately after Millie blew the bridge up... it's kind of a wasted move?

AUSTIN: Yeah - I will also say, there are soldiers all through this whole area. Like I said, there are a couple hundred soldiers probably in this area, all said, and they're spread out right now. They are not a group of twenty-something infantry ready to fight together as a big group unit? Um, but, it's up to you to command where they go. You are their commanding officer, after all.

JACK: I feel like, as a group of players, we should determine what our plan might be once we get into our mechs. Because, speaking for myself, I don't really have one right now. Um, I would like to get into my mech, and I would like to try and hold the fort. Um...

AUSTIN (overlapping, distant): Oh my fucking god.

KEITH: Okay, I've got a- I know what we do.

JACK: (makes pained noises) ...let's, let's, let's spitball some ideas. Keith.

KEITH: Okay, here's my idea. As...

JACK: This is a flashback, by the way. A non-stress-paying flashback.

AUSTIN: (overlapping) Uh-huh... uh-huh.

KEITH: I would like to keep... I would like to keep Clem in character saying "I have no idea what to do once we get in our mechs".

JACK: (laughing) No! That's...

AUSTIN: Clem would never!

JACK: (still laughing) No, I think, no, Clem is, like, tryna do her job well here.

KEITH: Okay!

JACK: It's probably not going to go well, but.

KEITH: So. I feel like this is in my wheelhouse. As a pirate.

AUSTIN: Mhm?

KEITH: As a break-and-enter sort-of guy. If we send the infantry up to take that tower, have them create another source of attention, by firing on the, uh, defensive mechs, the Kosmos we can then focus on taking them out, and taking out that second tower. Uh, while their attention is diverted between the explosion of the bridge, the now, as far as they know, friendly-firing artillery tower, and six mechs coming at them.

AUSTIN: So you're saying, yes, send the infantry troops to take up the north-east artillery cannon.

KEITH: Yeah, yeah, yeah.

AUSTIN: Okay.

JACK: And then basically stage an all-out assault once we're...

KEITH: Yep.

AUSTIN: Alright, so here's, I think two things happening here, uhm. One is that I need a command roll from Clem, uh, to command A.O. Rooke and the toughs. Um, that's, that's a- to go do this other, to do this one thing. The second thing -

JACK: Hell yeah.

AUSTIN: - it does sound like there's a group action which, maybe, Leap, it sounds like you're doing. Uh, to go, sneak everyone else to the mech place. The, like, mech crates. Is that fair? Are those, are there- that is what it seems like the current spread of actions is.

KEITH: (overlapping) That's fair.

JACK: Yeah, yeah, yeah. And then that's kind of the end of act one of our choices, where once we have, in theory, cleared the really big stuff, we can start trying to lock it down.

AUSTIN: Correct, this - that seems like it's your, your, your first push on the board, your first, like, your opening gambit.

KEITH: (overlapping) Yeah, if, if everything goes well here, we've neutralised the bridge, we've neutralised two artillery towers, and we've started to work on neutralising the defensive mechs.

AUSTIN: That sounds right. As a reminder, there are also long-range mechs up on the to- up on the wall, um. As of now, Millie, as you see them, I think maybe one of them has turned back around in, and the other one is now, like, completely scanning the horizon, cause what they currently probably expect is an additional outside assault force, right? Oh, maybe, did that bridge get hit by artillery? Or what happened there, y'know, so, um, but they are still on the board, so just making sure that's clear. Um, those, those...

JACK: Okay...

KEITH: Maybe that's where, maybe that's where the infantry fire when they get to the artillery towers...

AUSTIN: ...when they take over the artillery, yeah. We'll see, we'll see what happens to begin with, and we can decide what they hit.

JACK: Yeah, okay-

AUSTIN: Um, the, and also, let me start another clock for taking this place over, which is a big important thing, right? Um... boom!

JACK: Can't help but notice that the two bad clocks you have there, Austin, are much smaller than the base takeover clock.

AUSTIN: (overlapping) They are much small- you know, they only get to advance when you fail a roll. Or when you take a collateral die.

JACK: That's true.

AUSTIN: And you could, you could do this base takeover real quick, depending on how these rolls go. Um, alright! So.

JACK: Okay! I would like to roll Command.

AUSTIN: Yes!

JACK: To get A.O. Rooke, uh... yeah?

KEITH: How does being sick change this roll for you?

JACK: I have a minus 1d -

AUSTIN: You do.

JACK: -on rolls that affect the- me being ill would involve?

AUSTIN: ...which includes this.

JACK: And that absolutely includes this. So I'm basically going to take a one dice penalty.

KEITH: Does comm- does that inhibit your ability to command?

AUSTIN: *Absolutely!!!*

KEITH: Okay!

JACK: Yeah, totally! Clem... Clem has a head- like, Clem, you know when you're like very feverish, or you are, like, deeply uncomfortable when you're recovering from a bout of illness? Clem is, like, fighting this stuff, presumably because she has painkillers and things, but like, she's basically trying to work through a migraine.

KEITH: Yeah, which is, saying that she has painkillers, not- it's not, doesn't... doesn't give, doesn't inspire confidence. It does take away from... (laughs) It says on the bottle "do not operate heavy machinery".

SYLVIA & AUSTIN laugh.

AUSTIN: And here we go!

JACK: Also real quick, uh... I have an outfit for Clem.

AUSTIN: Yes, *please*, thank you.

JACK: A fun challenge is that I've been trying to find runway outfits for all of Clem's situations, including sneaking into a military base.

AUSTIN: Mhm.

JACK: Um, so, I think Clem here is from Brunello Cucinelli Fall 2020.

AUSTIN: Uh huh!

JACK: Gonna paste a picture of it in the... chat...

AUSTIN: Below this...

JACK: (overlapping) Right here with the...

AUSTIN & JACK IN UNISON: ...picture of General Grievous.

AUSTIN: Yeah, uh-huh.

KEITH: That is a gif, if you want to see hi- him, moving around.

AUSTIN: I clicked through, and it's not doing a movement for me!

JACK: It's not loading...

KEITH: (overlapping) It's not doing? It's not? Oh, that's weird.

AUSTIN: But I love this outfit!

ART: That's so shiny!

AUSTIN: It's very shiny for a stealth war...

JACK: (overlapping) Yeah, the version - Clem's version, I think, is slightly less shiny, what we're looking at here is the kind-of like, jumpsuit-skirt combo in a dark fabric with a white turtleneck underneath, and then a, like a long sleeved white turtleneck, and then, what here is an iridescent shiny, like, leather jacket over the top, I think is probably just, like, a navy, or dark green leather jacket worn over the top.

AUSTIN: Question - huge hoop earrings, yes/no?

JACK: *Absolutely!* Yes, huge hoop earrings.

AUSTIN: (overlapping) Perfect, great, perfect, perfect, perfect.

SYLVIA: I'd be disappointed if the answer was no.

AUSTIN: Me too. Alright, let's keep moving, because we took a big break.

JACK: Let's do it.

ART: It's like a mutiny territory.

AUSTIN: Thank you. (chuckles) That's a good gif, thank you, um.

JACK: Okay!

ART: Mutiny Territory is a distant relative of season 2 character Territory Jazz.

AUSTIN: Of — uh-huh.

JACK: Yeah yeah yeah. So, I'm gonna roll, uh, I would have, uh, 2d6.

AUSTIN: You would have 2, you're down to 1.

JACK: That's going to drop down to 1.

AUSTIN: Yes. I will say that...

[JACK sighs]

AUSTIN: ...the good news is that you're a leader which means that if your Command, if you command a cohort who takes enough damage to "break", when they suffer a level 3 harm, they would continue to fight for you, because you're a good leader!

JACK: Yeah.

AUSTIN: (laughs) I'm gonna send these people to die.

JACK: Does anybody want to help me!

ART: Sure!

AUSTIN: How do you do it?

JACK: Hell yeah!

ART: It's two - it's stress times bond?

AUSTIN: It's stress, it's just-- yes. It's stress equal bond. Equal the amount of beliefs, in this case 2. But that means you get to give 2 bonuses when you do this. So, they can't be the same bonus, which is a thing I messed up before, but you can give Jack plus 1d, you can give Jack plus effect, or Clem plus effect, plus position. You could help them ignore level 3 harm or level 3 damage. Not level 2 harm or level 2 damage. Well, you're doing that in-effect by giving the plus 1d, y'know.

ART: Hopefully they will not be in a position to ignore that-- have to ignore damage.

AUSTIN: Exactly.

KEITH: It's plus 1d, and effect, right? Everyone thinks that's right?

AUSTIN & JACK: Yeah.

AUSTIN: So, risky/great, in this instance, is what it would become. Right?

JACK: Okay, so now I am rolling 2 dice.

AUSTIN: 2d6, risky/great. You're not pushing yourself, I'm guessing.

JACK: Okay... no, I'm gonna turn to the master of additional dice, Keith.

KEITH: Hi.

JACK: Other than a collateral, which I'm unwilling to do, and pushing myself, is there any-- is there anything else out of your fun playbook?

AUSTIN: (overlapping) I can give you a collateral that's not about ticking a clock, if you want!

JACK: I still don't trust you! What's your collateral?

AUSTIN: I get to hurt, uh, the toughs unit. I get to make them, I give them a level 1 harm. Which would reduce-- actually, they should be cleared also. I think that that would reduce their effect going forward after this.

JACK: No. No, I feel like that's not a fair trade. Um...

AUSTIN: That's a fair trade. It's just not a...

JACK: Okay, I'll roll 2d6, it's not the end of the world.

AUSTIN: Alright, 2d6. (pause) Hey!

[18:49]

AUSTIN: That's 6!

ART: Hey!

KEITH: (overlapping) A 6! Look at that!

AUSTIN: Look at you! So that's the first- we'll narrate that as we get there. A.O. Rooke, begins to lead, is like,

0AUSTIN (as A.O. Rooke): Alright, let's go. Game time.

AUSTIN: ...and begins to lead, and almost immediately you begin to hear gunfire. A.O. Rooke definitely has, I guess we-

JACK: Does he flex like his icon before he goes?

AUSTIN: Oh, absolutely, I think that there's like - yeah, absolutely. Uh, but actually, I think really, it's more like a, like, like a che- you know what it is? A.O. Rooke: Big Sports Fan.

Huge sports fan. Hits his chest, kisses his two fingers, puts them up to the divine, the way that his all-time favourite athlete Memphis Longhand did.

JACK: Mmmm.

ART laughs.

AUSTIN: That kinda, classic Memphis Longhand sign. And he says.

AUSTIN (as A.O. Rooke): Let's get it.

AUSTIN: And they go! And, I think we've seen A.O. Rooke as, like, a - is a tough, is a tough boy, is part of the tough boys' gang, but also is a great, like, marksman, and so like definitely just has like a long, a long arm, like a rifle that is like a semi-automatic rifle. Everyone else probably has, like, an assault rifle, but he's very much the, has, y'know-- ten shots to everyone else's thirty, but makes every shot count? Um, not a sniper, but like that sort of mid-range...

ART: A precision rifle.

AUSTIN: Exactly, yes, and a--

(simultaneously)

ART: An XCR.

KEITH: A scout rifle.

AUSTIN: A DMR.

AUSTIN: A scout rifle, yes. (laughs) Yes, exactly, we - which other video games can we say we've played by relation?

KEITH: I didn't see it until right now until right now...

ART (simultaneously): Oh, I've played them all, I've played all the good ones.

KEITH: ...but I think a Partizan-Overwatch reskin would be a fantastic-- if anyone has however much it costs to make an Overwatch in there, sitting around...

AUSTIN: We could do that, yeah. We could make it happen. Alright! So you hear, you hear A.O. Rooke going off, leading the squad, and, and we'll come back to those results, obviously it was a 6, but I wanna see, I wanna color it all together, so. Leap, it sounds like you are now making this sneaky roll.

KEITH: Yeah, this is-- I'm leading a group action, which I don't know that I've ever done!

AUSTIN: In anything ever, right?

KEITH: Ever. Yeah.

AUSTIN: Um, so, when you lead a group action, when you direct, is when you (reads) direct a group of pilots to overcome an obstacle together - describe how your character leads the effort. Every pilot that is involved rolls using the same action, and the group uses the single best result for everyone. If the action rolled is a pilot action, the pilot leading the group takes 1 stress for each participant that failed, that rolled a 1-3 as their best result. If the action they rolled is a vehicle action-- (stops reading) which it isn't, so don't worry about that. (Austin hums a "buh buh buh buh".) Uhhh, yeah, you're good, I think that's the rest of it, if you're leading cohorts--

KEITH: (overlapping) Okay, so, I get to roll the best Prowl roll, but have to take stress for everyone who's not as good at Prowl.

AUSTIN: No, *everyone* gets to roll Prowl, you just take--

KEITH: Has to.

AUSTIN: ...yes, everyone rolls Prowl, together, it's just that you take the stress if anyone fails. You take 1 stress if anyone fails, but they don't fail, they succeed, if someone else succeeds, do you know what I mean? So like--

KEITH: Yeah, and I think 1 stress per failure?

AUSTIN: Per failure, correct. Correct.

KEITH: Right.

AUSTIN: This is controlled, I should have mentioned A.O. Rooke's thing was also controlled, because of Millie's setup action. Millie, you are not rolling in this? You'll have to make a different thing--

SYLVIA: (overlapping) I didn't think so, yeah.

AUSTIN: ...because you were off doing this, that was the whole point of this, you're not being lead here, so, I'm gonna need Leap, Sovereign Immunity and Clem to roll... it sounds like Prowl to me?

KEITH: I think it's gotta be Prowl.

AUSTIN: That's what's happening!

KEITH: Which is fine, I'm good at that.

ART: (overlapping) I don't have that, so it's 2d, take the lower?

AUSTIN: 2d, take the lower, correct. You could push yourself.

ART: Right.

JACK: I also don't have that...

ART: (overlapping) Oh my god.

JACK: So that's gonna be 2d, take the lower.

AUSTIN: (overlapping) Oh, buddy. Uh huh. (pause)

That's a- that's a 2 and a 3 from Keith! (pause)

ART: I'm gonna push myself! I think.

AUSTIN: We should all- yeah, uh-huh, go ahead.

SYLVIA laughs.

AUSTIN: So that's 2 dice from you, controlled/standard. (pause)

JACK: Is pushing myself...?

KEITH: Uh, if Art is pushing, then he should only roll one die.

AUSTIN: Correct, sorry, you're right, cause Art does not have-- hey, that's a 5!

ART (simultaneously): 5.

JACK: Mm!

AUSTIN: Uh-huh.

JACK: How much does it cost to push?

AUSTIN: 2 stress.

JACK: 2 stress? Mm.

ART: You could also take a collateral die, or both.

AUSTIN: We should have all agreed on this first, because now you know that Art has succeeded, but. Regardless.

JACK: Oh!

ART: Well, not *succeeded* succeeded.

AUSTIN: True, has only-- you're right, you're right, it's a mixed success. Did you--

JACK: I rolled 2 5s. I did not--

AUSTIN: (overlapping) Oh, you rolled 2 5s, yeah!

JACK: Yeah, so that's- my score is 5.

KEITH: Okay, so I only take the one stress from me failing.

AUSTIN: (overlapping) You only, you only take one stress, yeah, totally, but there is a-- go ahead.

KEITH: Can I... is that-- it's not resistable...?

AUSTIN: Yeah it is, of course it is. Yeah yeah yeah.

KEITH: But you take stress to resist... stress.

AUSTIN: (overlapping) But you're-- sorry, the stress isn't resistable, what's resistible is this consequence.

KEITH: But there's no consequence-- oh, oh sorry.

AUSTIN: (overlapping) Yes there is, cause it's still a 5.

KEITH: (overlapping) The partial--

AUSTIN: The partial success on a controlled consequence. This is just, this is a simple one, you move to a risky position - whatever benefit you had, being in a controlled position has disappeared as you get into your giant mechs. Um, uh...

KEITH: That's fine, I mean, I, I work best in desperate positions, so.

AUSTIN: Yeah, you're in risky now.

KEITH: Although, maybe it's worth resisting to put, uhm, to keep everyone in a controlled position, and then I can do whatever I need to, to get...

AUSTIN: Uh, it's up to you, I mean, what's your dice, what's your stress at currently?

KEITH: Right now, it's just at, it's at 2.

AUSTIN: Oh, then, yeah maybe. Up to you.

KEITH: So.

AUSTIN: It's only at 2.

KEITH: So I get to, so I would take 2 more to resist...?

AUSTIN: No, no, no, no. To resist, is roll 6 and then subtract-- sorry, you roll, in this case Prowess, which is 2, and then you take 6 minus whatever your highest roll is.

KEITH: Uh, yeah! I'll do that!

AUSTIN: Okay, give me a--

KEITH: My Prowess is...

AUSTIN: 2, so.

KEITH: 2.

AUSTIN: So, yeah, go ahead and roll 2 dice. (pause) Ooh. Okay. You take 4 stress.

KEITH whistles.

AUSTIN: Very stressful, trying to keep these fools from being seen - but also, I mean, what this means is, you do this without raising any suspicion.

KEITH: Yeah.

AUSTIN: You're still in a controlled position. Tell me what it looks like when all of your mechs get, made available, get, uh, y'know... uh, revealed.

KEITH: I wonder what it-- what, is this just an empty room now?

AUSTIN: No, this is a, you're outside. This is like, these six big crates have been--

KEITH: (overlapping) Oh, it's like in a corridor?

AUSTIN: It's in like a...

KEITH: Or like a courtyard?

AUSTIN: A courtyard.

SYLVIA: Like a loading dock?

AUSTIN: Like a loading dock, like an open air loading dock, yes, yes.

KEITH: Got it.

AUSTIN: Uhm, so yeah, there are these six mechs that appear, that get, y'know, you crowbar open these big crates, and one after another, here they are. Art, can you describe your mech? Cause we've never seen it before on screen.

ART: Yeah, uhm. It is as alluded previously, a construction equipment piece? Yeah, it, like, can-- it's for like farm construction, from the rebellion. Uhm. It's like the mech that puts up retaining walls and stuff, and it, it has equipment related to that. It, uhm, it hovers? It has like a--

AUSTIN: It's like a big hover base, like a tank base but it hovers, I'm guessing?

ART: (overlapping) Yeah, like a, yeah, um. I think one of the armored cores had this.

AUSTIN: Yes, I'm pretty sure that's true, I believe it in my heart.

ART: Maybe all the armored cores had this--

AUSTIN: I believe it in my heart, it's true.

ART: ...had hover legs. And so, whatever those were, that's right. Uhm, I remember the big-- they had really high weight capacities, but they couldn't jump.

AUSTIN: Right.

ART: They could only boost.

AUSTIN: Here, I will -- I just looked up the fuckin' art that Conor sent, it's still sick, so I'm gonna post it in our chat, anyway, even though I said I wasn't gonna. Uhm, yeah, so like, hover, hover base. Still has a torso, still has arms...

ART: Yeah, yeah.

AUSTIN: Has these, like, retaining wall shields that it can place in the ground-- like it literally is the thing that you said you were gonna ship, where it can like, it carries these big retaining walls, that it can just like, spike into the ground in order to set up barriers, and, basically to set up a-- quickly build, y'know, a structure, if there's a storm coming in and you need to protect your incoming, or y'know, protect your crops from an incoming storm or whatever, y'know?

ART: Yeah, but it's, like, very much not a combat built thing in that way?

AUSTIN: Right.

ART: I mean, I think the trait I took, or the-- that most exemplifies--

AUSTIN: The quirks.

ART: The quirk I took that most exemplifies that is "exposed cockpit", cause it's like, it's a tractor, it's not a tank, y'know?

AUSTIN: Yeah, yeah, totally.

ART: Y'know, you're just, sitting up, I mean, you're not actually sitting up there like a tractor, there is a cockpit because, uhm, I'm respecting what mechs are.

AUSTIN: But like, a bulldozer doesn't have a true cockpit in the mech sense, right? Like, a bulldozer is the same thing, or any sort of--

ART: Yeah, like a bulldozer, or the, whatever the thing is at the end of *Aliens*, uhm.

AUSTIN: Yes, the loader, the power loader armour.

ART: It's bigger than that, but y'know. But like, that kind of, like...

AUSTIN: (overlapping) Yes, yeah, definitely-- it's still a medium mech. Or is it a heavy mech? It's a medium.

ART: Yeah.

AUSTIN: This is the first time we're seeing it, if you want it to be heavy, now would be the time to say that, but...

KEITH: Whatever cockpit it has, is, it's not built to go to war in.

AUSTIN: Correct.

ART: Right, it's sort of like, it's been sort of like rigged to be a little more war-like?

AUSTIN: Right. Cause of being hol-- because you used it partially to fight a war that time.

KEITH: Right, so like, it maybe, it's an exposed cockpit but maybe it's like, you know, it just has like, tape over it, you know? Just like so you, just so the snipers can't shoot you in the head right away.

AUSTIN: (laughing) The tape is really gonna be good, a good defence from that. Um, oh, the other thing is, it has this icon, right? Or doesn't have the icon, which is the sick bit.

ART: It doesn't have the icon, you know, the, uh, a Sovereign Immunity has a badge to put on their equipment, so that they're not targeted? And, of course, Sovereign Immunity used

that during the rebellion to much success, until it stopped being successful. And, uh, the mech ended up being like, charred? Like, the surface burnt, and then they removed the symbol, and so it's there in negative space?

AUSTIN: And is that the Shepherd's Crook?

ART: And it's like, yeah, that still counts. Yeah.

AUSTIN: Which is the name of the order.

ART: Like, they, that still counts, you're still, you're still...

AUSTIN: (overlapping) A Sovereign Immunity.

ART: ...that does it, that-- people see it, but like, it does not work as well.

AUSTIN: Mm, yeah, unfortunate. I'm gonna drop these extra Rooks on the board too. Or, not Rooks, why did I say Rooks-- Troops. Y'know, I'm just gonna leave them as these chess rooks, because the Rook was the Troop equivalent in *COUNTER/Weight*. Uh...

KEITH: Was it cause you were gonna-- cause of A.O. Rooke?

AUSTIN: It was a hundred percent not that, it was a *hundred percent* not that, which is so funny. I just was like, "oh, yeah, Rook, like the basic model!" which is a *COUNTER/Weight* basic model, not a Partizan one. Uhm. There we go, okay, it's fine, I'll use these.

KEITH: It's like if you saw a picture of the army, like the US army, and said, like, nice phalanx.

AUSTIN (laughing): That is exactly like that, yeah. Aw, sick phalanx.

SYLVIA laughs.

AUSTIN: So, with those rolls, you get a, you get your shit-- alright, Millie is not there yet, Millie is still off to the side, at the bridge. Here's the thing, I think the thing I love about you resisting down, back down to controlled - cause as a reminded, we rolled, you got a 5, the consequence was that you were gonna go to risky, you resisted that, and now you're still in controlled - I think A.O. Rooke's team, with that 6, just *aces* it. Just, like, (mimicking assault rifle fire) *blap, blap, blap*, drops a bunch of people, is like, is a, a very well trained armed military group, uhm, being lead by 5 prisoners and A.O. Rooke, uh...

KEITH laughs.

AUSTIN: ...who storm this artillery unit, and they immediately, with 3 successes, take out the, um, both of the, uh, the-- or with a great success, take out both of the sniper units, up on the wall? Those units were, by the way, they did have a name, now they are dead, so whatever.

But those were, uh, Adamant Arms and Artifices' Shrewdnesses? The Shrewdness referencing the collective noun for a group of gorillas. They are Troops that were retrofitted for long range combat, with long range missiles, and short range chest vulcans for anti-infantry, they were not gonna be good in this fight anyway, because you're probably within their range? Or, actually, you, y'all right now in this moment, I think maybe what we get the shot of is, they drop the first one, the second one, who had already turned round, sees that you're pulling the tarps off of your mechs and beginning to get in, and starts to get the lock-on to you, cause you're just far enough away from the one in the north west, that one could have got you - and then A.O. Rooke, like, you know, says, like...

AUSTIN (as A.O. Rooke): Load another one in!

AUSTIN: ...and they load in another artillery shell, and he spins this artillery cannon around - artillery cannons are not meant for direct fire, but whatever, got a great success - and blasts the shit out of this second, this second Shrewdness, and both of those are down. And then finally, with the third tick of this clock, knocks out the other artillery cannon, um, unless you say you don't want that to happen.

JACK: Holy shit.

AUSTIN: In which case, it doesn't happen, but you tell me.

JACK: Uh, do we want to try and commandeer that cannon, or shall we split the difference and just...

SYLVIA: No, that's sick as hell.

AUSTIN: Okay.

KEITH: Yeah, split the- yeah, I think, uh...

AUSTIN: You're sure? Okay.

JACK: It stays, or it goes.

ART: Fuck it up.

AUSTIN: It stays or it goes.

JACK: Fuck it up?

AUSTIN & KEITH: Fuck it up.

AUSTIN: Fuck it up, fuck it up. Okay.

SYLVIA: If it's gone, they can't take it back.

AUSTIN: They can't take it back! This is true!

JACK (laughing): Yeah, exactly.

AUSTIN: And because of all that, what you now have is the, uh, two Kosmos units beginning to march towards A.O. Rooke, and uh, trying to...

KEITH: And not us.

AUSTIN: ...and not you, and so they just don't see you. They just, a hundred percent, don't see you.

KEITH: This went exactly as planned!

AUSTIN: This is, it's all going-- (AUSTIN makes a chef's kiss noise) *Mmwah!* You love to see it, don't you? Uhm, and none of the bad clocks have ticked! Uhm. So.

JACK: Holy shit.

KEITH: This is- it's good to be back in the saddle, the breaking-and-entering...

AUSTIN: This is it, yeah, this is, this is that real shit.

KEITH: This is the shit.

AUSTIN: And it's literally, do you say that?

KEITH: This is why I'm a pirate.

AUSTIN: Do you say all of that as you're getting into your cockpit?

KEITH (as Exeter Leap): Yeah, this is great! I'm loving this.

AUSTIN: Uh, Millie, can I get a Prowl roll for you, or do you just- how do you get over to where your shit is here?

SYLVIA: Oh, I don't think I'm trying to be sneaky, I think I have an assault rifle and...

AUSTIN: Hell. Yes. Give me that roll. That, to me, sounds like. uh, a Struggle roll, then, right?

KEITH: It...

AUSTIN: You're fightin' your way there, basically?

SYLVIA: Yeah.

AUSTIN: Alright, I think, it's still controlled/standard.

SYLVIA: Okay, let me just mark... uh... I guess. Yeah, I'll mark off a rifle here.

AUSTIN: Okay, yeah, cause you--

SYLVIA: Part of me is like, what if I had a big revolver? That would be cool.

AUSTIN: Uh, do you-- wait wait wait, do you have, does, uhm...

SYLVIA: I don't ha- oh, I have a fine machine pistol, actually.

AUSTIN: You do have a fine ma--

KEITH: You have your coffin sniper, right?

AUSTIN: That is what I was gonna say, do you have, uh, RUNT with you, and can RUNT -

SYLVIA: Yeah!

AUSTIN: - doesn't RUNT carry 2 load of gear for you?

SYLVIA: It does, but I don't wanna, I-- it does carry 2 load of gear for me, but anything that, like, I would want right now, like the sniper rifle from there--

AUSTIN: (overlapping) Yeah, that makes sense.

SYLVIA: ...is a bit too big. And I have this fine machine pistol, so.

AUSTIN: Got you. Is it like--

SYLVIA: (overlapping) ...I think I'm going to roll with that.

AUSTIN: Can I propose a TEC-9? Which--

SYLVIA: Yeah!

AUSTIN: ...looks like this. Uh, with like an extended clip...

SYLVIA: Yeah, yeah, yeah.

AUSTIN: Uh, like a long, like-- a long barrel that has, like, those holes in the sides? I don't know what they do.

SYLVIA: I was definitely thinking that type of barrel, at the very least. Uhm...

AUSTIN: Yeah, uhm.

SYLVIA: Yeah, so, okay. Um, that's controlled...?

AUSTIN: I love Millie on her *Atomic Blonde* shit.

SYLVIA (laughing): I do too. Uh, controlled/standard?

AUSTIN: Controlled/standard, yeah.

SYLVIA: Okay.

AUSTIN: So what is it, 2d6 for you?

SYLVIA: Yeah. That's a 5.

AUSTIN: Hey! It's a 5. 5's not too bad.

SYLVIA: Yeah!

AUSTIN: Again, this is it: you've-- you're going to go up to risky here, unless you resist. Uhm, I'm guessing you're not gonna resist with 5 stress.

SYLVIA: I'm not gonna resist, that's fine.

AUSTIN: Okay, finally, you know-- you were, tell me what it looks like, you take the pen, as you fight your way to your mech.

SYLVIA: Like, I think it's just, uhm, it's very like, uh, standard military, like, procedure, what she does. Like, it's just, like, she kind of starts, I think the first shot is, people haven't noticed her yet, and she just takes somebody out when they she is on their side.

AUSTIN: Oh my god, I love it!

SYLVIA: And then it's like, she's going behind cover and she's like, not moving until she's for sure someone's gone down, and then she's going forward.

AUSTIN: Love it.

SYLVIA: Very methodical with it all.

AUSTIN: Great, okay, so. Everybo-- your whole crew is here, everyone is in position. We're not quite to act 2, the, like, lockdown yet, but what do you do? There are these two Kosmos units across the river from you. Uh, and at this point, I think one of them sees you, and

begins to, not necessarily peel off to come fight you, but has like turned to see you across the river. Uhm, and uh, is trying to decide what to do, as they are not necessarily outfitted for ranged combat.

JACK: There's 4 of us.

AUSTIN: There's more than that, there are 6 of you.

JACK: Uh, in mechs.

AUSTIN: There are 6 of you in mechs, cause there's also the two Troop units.

JACK: Oh, because of the two Troop units!

AUSTIN: Yeah.

JACK: Okay, I don't have a particular plan, other than - I would, I just want us to, just, focus fire on these two, you know, there are-- there are other problems in this base right now, but right now we spectacularly outnumber these two primarily defensive units?

AUSTIN: Mmmhm.

JACK: And, I think we should destroy them.

AUSTIN: Leap, do you have a counter to that, or is that good?

KEITH: So, yeah, I had, uhm. Sorry, Clem, you said we should take care of these last two big threats?

AUSTIN: Just, blast them from across the fuckin' river.

JACK: (overlapping) Flatten them.

KEITH: So my, my, my idea was, I wasn't not-- across the river, my whole, one of my mech's big things is, like, shooting myself *at* something?

JACK: Mhm? (laughs)

KEITH: And so, I was just going-- while these two Kosmos are like, still not really getting what's happening? Just, just, like...

AUSTIN: Yeah, I think, this is a-- I think for the sake of, I think that like, the thing you're describing can happen along with Clem's plan, of "let's just fucking flatten these things". It's just like...

KEITH: Yeah.

AUSTIN: ...let's all do the thing our mech does at this moment? Which would be another Command roll, actually. Uhm, uh, Clem.

JACK: Sure.

AUSTIN: If that's what it sounds like to me, and in fact you take incre- you have increased effect, which makes this controlled/great? Uhm, because you have Leader again, which is when you lead a group action, you have increased effect.

JACK: Okay. Does anybody... oh, this is a group action, so everyone is roll...

AUSTIN: Everyone would be rolling Battle here, yes, not Command.

JACK: Okay, okay.

AUSTIN: Not Command, Battle. It would be command if it were a cohort, but-- uhm, I guess, you know what? You could roll Command to command the Troop units to fire, and everyone else could roll Battle to shoot them- to actually do attacking themselves.

JACK: Oh, are we allowed to do a group action with different rolls?

AUSTIN: Only because you would be, you wouldn't be firing, you would be using Command to command the Troop units to fire, basically. You know what I mean?

JACK: Okay, yeah, that sounds good. Okay. Uh. I have increased effect...

AUSTIN: Uh, again, I'm just, I'm saying what looks like the thing you're saying, I'm trying to translate your idea to mechanics, but I wanna make sure everyone else is good with that too.

JACK: Um. I'm gonna roll Command. I have minus 1d effect, sorry- minus 1d, so that's just down to a 1d6.

AUSTIN: Yeah, don't-- no-one should roll yet, everyone should roll together so that we know what... what rolls look like in terms of pushes and stuff, so. You--

JACK: I'm gonna push myself.

AUSTIN: Okay, so it goes up to 2d. Controlled...

SYLVIA: What stat are we rolling for this?

AUSTIN: Battle or Bombard? I think Battle because you're so close, Bombard seems like a *real* fuckin' reach? Uhm, I could hear Destroy, uhm. But I think it's, uhhh, I could hear Destroy, because of the-- specifically because it's a controlled position, and because it's like, I'm just rolling through them, like I am just smashing through here in a way that would be, in

a regular roll, it would lift your risk in a serious way, but in this great outnumbering thing, I think you're probably safe to do Destroy.

SYLVIA: Okay. I'm probably going to do Battle, then.

AUSTIN: Okay. Sovereign Immunity? What are you doing?

ART: I'll be rolling Battle.

AUSTIN: What's battle for you look like?

ART: Uhm...

AUSTIN: Like, what is your-- what are you using?

ART: Umm. I mean, we established that one of the things it does is like, drive in these walls with spikes, I, like, was calling on the early manifestations of the comic book character Steel?

AUSTIN: Sure.

ART: Who had like, who like, shot railroad spikes, and I was just like, let's just scale that up really big, like, giant spikes.

KEITH laughs.

ART: Shoots giant spikes.

AUSTIN: Okay, shoots giant spikes, that to me sounds like...

ART: From like a wrist area.

AUSTIN: That sounds to me like a, either a signature weapon or tool, or even just a machine gun to me? Do you know what I mean?

ART: Yeah, machine gun is probably right - signature weapon, I probably wanna save for something, like...

AUSTIN: (overlapping) Fancier than... yeah.

ART: I mean, the signature weapon might still be the giant scythe.

AUSTIN: The scythe, right? Yeah. Yeah.

ART: Yeah.

AUSTIN: Go ahead and do machine gun. Uhm. And then Leap, it sounds like you're going to launch yourself over there.

KEITH: Yeah, I was considering doing this as a different action, as the only person who's not firing from a distance.

AUSTIN: Right, which again, suggested Destroy might work here, Battle is the thing you want for fighting up close? But I think the launch that you're talking about works.

KEITH: Is Destroy, yeah.

AUSTIN: And traditionally, group action is supposed to be, everyone rolls the same action? But I think that this is still a group action, in the sense that everyone is committing to the same end. And I'm fine with house ruling it, because it's cool, and it is what you're all doing, right?

KEITH: Right, okay.

AUSTIN: So, everyone decide, how many-- or, who's pushing.

SYLVIA: I am not.

JACK: I am, I've taken the stress on that already.

AUSTIN: Uhm, alright! Give me some dice rolls. Controlled/great! If you hit this, this is... if you hit a 6, then this is a win.

JACK: Well.

AUSTIN laughs.

ART: 5.

AUSTIN: Uh huh. Millie?

SYLVIA: Uhhhh... three.

AUSTIN: Ohhhhh, buddy. 5 is not bad, especially on a controlled. Uhm, uh. Or wait, no, was it-

ART: Controlled/great.

AUSTIN: How did it get back to controlled? Why was it back to controlled, wasn't it risky a second ago?

KEITH: It never left controlled.

ART (simultaneously): Resisted, the position was resisted.

AUSTIN: Oh, you resisted it, yes, yes yes yes, okay, yeah, correct, correct, correct. Uh, yeah, so this is a success. Uhm, uh.

KEITH: Everyone go?

AUSTIN: Yeah, everyone went, Art went first, yeah yeah yeah. You just fuckin' flatten them. You just, y'know, Leap...

JACK: Can we flatten them-- can they come towards us over the ice, and we fight them...?

AUSTIN: Yes. You tell me, yes, keep...

JACK: (overlapping) Their like, mechs crashing through the ice...

AUSTIN: Tell me what it looks like, Jack, paint me this beautiful picture.

[41:49]

JACK: So like, one of them, like-- one of them starts clambering down the thing, and is hit by a bunch of artillery fire. The other one follows as the first one, just like, crumples, one leg into the ice, like, water starts rushing in. Leap, do you, like... are you firing yourself at one of these mechs?

KEITH: Yeah, I sort-of, like, anchor on the ground, and then explode at them, like, uhm, you know in *Dragon Ball*, original *Dragon Ball*, Goku would just like, headbutt something?

JACK: Leaping?

KEITH: Like, jump at something, and...

AUSTIN, SYLVIA & JACK: Yeah!

KEITH: ...bash it with his skull? It's sort of like that.

JACK: God. Incredible.

AUSTIN: Amazing.

JACK: Sovereign is firing nails at these people.

AUSTIN: Amazing. Yeah, and they're getting pinned-- or is firing nails at the ice to make it, like...

JACK: Yeah!

AUSTIN: ...to shatter the ice below their feet? They're already very heavy mechs, and now suddenly they are falling into the ice and, you know, Leap hits one of them, knocks the fuckin' head off. They have like the big, whole-- I'll show the art that I'm kind-of drawing these on, because the art is sick. Uhm, and, and it's very strongly, just-- not necessarily fully lifted, cause these don't have reverse limbs, but, other than that, they're very similar.

ART: Digigrade.

AUSTIN: Digiti- yeah, Digigrade, is that what it is?

ART: Yeah.

AUSTIN: So these... fuckin'... rule. This is an artstation from someone named dofresh, d-o-f-r-e-s-h. There's three of them, and they, it looks sick in each one of them, and it's like, a less...

JACK: (overlapping) Oh my god, these poor mechs.

AUSTIN: ...a slightly less fancy version of these. The first p-- the pieces are called, respectively, *The Owl*, *Sent By The Gods* and *Attrition*. And again, it's dofresh, d-o-f-r-e-s-h. Uhm...

KEITH: What is this horrible mouth moon...?

AUSTIN: I know, isn't that horrible mouth moon great! I love it.

JACK laughs.

SYLVIA: I love it.

AUSTIN: That's a Columnar mech for sure. Uhm, Uh. And yeah, just like, beautiful, incredible, neo-classical mech. So good. Anyway, they're dead now, you've killed these people. Or, you know, one of them probably ejects, one of them ejects into the water. I dunno that they make it out. But, between all this, you've taken out their armor, you've taken out many of the members of their infantry side, their operations side. You've seized one of their artillery cannons, and, have kind-of, I mean, you tell me, what does it look like as you put this place into lockdown?

ART: Um...

AUSTIN: Are you like spreading out? Are you like, "nobody moves, nobody gets hurt", like, what is the...? Because you filled the base takeover clock.

ART: Yeah. I have a su-- I have an idea, I have a little idea. (pause)

AUSTIN: What is it?

ART: Could we... could we get some of the infantry in, like, this base's mechs, to have them stand and like, oh, well we got rid of the other artillery but like, you guys can just sit in here with these big guns.

AUSTIN: Oh, there aren't-- you've killed them. There are no more mechs here, you've gotten them, that's it.

ART: There's not, like, a hangar with a couple extra mechs?

AUSTIN: No, they all, they went...

ART: (overlapping) No? Oh, okay.

AUSTIN: ...to go reinforce Fort Icebreaker.

ART: Oh, okay.

AUSTIN: That's the thing, yeah.

JACK: Is it like a combination of nobody-moves-nobody-gets-hurt and also just like, sporadic running gun battles? In like, streets, and out in peripheries, as the toughs are, like...

AUSTIN: Yeah, clearing up? Yeah, definitely. Uhh...

JACK: Uhm.

ART: We could disable the comms?

AUSTIN: Totally.

JACK: Yeah, I was gonna say, is there some kind of...

ART: (overlapping) We're still controlled.

JACK: ...control tower or bridge?

AUSTIN: Yeah, there's a, there's, um. In fact, I think that there's probably a literal semaphore tower - not a Strand Semaphore, uh, special communications Columnar tower, which is a thing that we've talked about before. There's literally a big tower that does, long distance communication by, like, moving its arms around, it does automated semaphore, and you've probably taken that out.

JACK: (in disbelief) Oh my *god*! Are those things *real*?!

AUSTIN: Oh, yeah, that's like a, historical, real thing, semaphore towers?

JACK: Just a-- a tower that swings its arms around??

AUSTIN: They're an optical telegraph, is what they're called, yes.

JACK: That's so good!

AUSTIN: They're really fucking funny to look at, it's great.

JACK (laughing): Do they look exactly like a massive person trying to do semaphore?

AUSTIN: Uh huh!

JACK: But-

AUSTIN: Um, there's a great video everyone should go watch...

JACK: (overlapping) Oh, that's amazing! (laughs)

AUSTIN: ...called "How The First Ever Telecom Scam Worked", and the answer-- I'm just gonna spoil this a little bit, but if you flip to minute, 1:15, you can see it moving. And, the gist of this is, is that only nobles are allowed to use this thing - or are they? What if you could sneak some extra words in there? And deliver messages very quickly for a price. It's so fucking good.

JACK: *Wow!*

AUSTIN: It's a great video, it's like 6 minutes long, people should go watch it.

ART: I love-- it's just like a windmill, it's like, it's a windmill that spells out letters.

AUSTIN: A hundred percent. But it doesn't spell out just letters, because it actually has more than just letters, it spells out words in different-- like, certain things just mean different words, do you know what I mean? It's like a code, as much as it's just the alphabet. Um, so. Anyway.

JACK: I have a gem of a plan. I would like to get to the tower before even discussing its viability.

AUSTIN: Uh huh.

JACK: Um, but yeah, do we just get shots of, like, the mechs parking up outside the semaphore tower?

AUSTIN: Yeah, totally, it's this middle thing here, it's this like, tall, it's this green thing right there. So yeah, I'm just gonna move things around here, um, and get y'all there - y'all have control over these characters, or you should, you should be able to move these around as you want to.

JACK: Oh, hell yeah.

AUSTIN: I'm going to keep Rooke, A.O. Rooke on the...

JACK: Yeah.

AUSTIN: Artillery cannon. But beyond that, uh, what is your plan?

JACK: I-- do you remember when Hitchcock tried to negotiate with Thackeray and he just cut his throat, because, you, Austin, were just like, "look, you can't do this, this is not going to work".

AUSTIN: Yeah, yes.

JACK: Is there a world in which we could... commandeer Fort Icebreaker.

AUSTIN: *The* Fort Icebreaker.

JACK: *The* moving fort. Or would the scale of that task be so monumental that it would be better...

AUSTIN: What does commandeering it look like? Do you mean, like... what do-- what's the, that's step 5. What's step 3, for instance?

JACK: Okay, step 3 is that we somehow send a signal saying we were attacked by Kesh, everything is fine.

AUSTIN: And then you just hang. And you let--

JACK: (overlapping) Well, then we prep for Fort Icebreaker to arrive.

AUSTIN: Except that it wouldn't arrive, because you would have sent "it's fine". You would have-- you would have done the opposite thing than the mission said to do.

JACK: We could say, retur-- essentially, we say everything's fine, and then we concoct a reason for them to return.

AUSTIN: Later. After you, you've taken this position. I mean this is the irony of this whole plan, right, is like, you did it. You broke Fort Icebreaker. You're through.

ART: The irony is that we were supposed to get caught, so that--

AUSTIN: Right, Whitestar was supposed to be-- was effectively going to use your distraction to pull people towards you, and instead, right now, as it plays, as it stands, you-- if they had been behind you, waiting for you to take just this one part of the base, they could have rolled in easily and crushed it and--

JACK: Directly behind us.

AUSTIN: Directly behind you, you would have led the army. Proving your point, one hundred percent that, like, you could have done it. Like, yes, you needed to faint, yes, you needed *the* Fort Icebreaker to be far away, but in the time it took, you've like, aced it completely and you haven't even fuckin' activated whatever Gur Sevraq gave you, so like.

ART: And they've got it on film.

AUSTIN: And they've got it on film!!

JACK: Yeah, and this is what I'm saying, is it's like, do we want to-- you know, the line is... what is the famous line from the film about the man who makes bad bets?

AUSTIN: This is how I win?

JACK: "Do you want to win a million dollars, or do you want to win thirty million dollars," or something? What's the line?

ART: Are you thinking about the line in *The Social Network*, "you know what's cooler than a million dollars? a billion dollars"?

AUSTIN: "A billion dollars". Or are you thinking of, "do you want to win by ten points, or do you want to win by thirty points?"

JACK: I think that might-- I think I might be conflating the two in my head?

AUSTIN: (overlapping) One point, yes. Yes. He says to a character, he's explaining that, like, when you've been, when you have been shat on--

JACK: (overlapping) That's so good, it's such a good...

AUSTIN: ... you don't try to win by a point, you try to win by thirty points to prove that you're in charge. Basically. Uhm.

JACK: I'm also just thinking about, like, Clem is, is, is wildly obsessed--

AUSTIN: (overlapping) I love it! No, it's so fucking good!

JACK: ...with the scale of her plan? And I just, I just wanted, as, as players us to talk about the viability of what it was that we were doing, and whether or not you would just lock that option off from us straight away.

AUSTIN: (overlapping) I'm not locking that, hell no.

JACK: Okay.

AUSTIN: What I'll say is basically, you have a number of flares, right, this is how you're going to communicate. The key-- the thing was like, you're gonna send up the white flair that signals house Whitestar to do their assault, because at that point, what it would have-- what you are basically saying is "hey, we have Fort Icebreaker either coming in, or we've pulled the people away from your side of this fight towards us, they're gonna pinch in on us, and that means that your wall is going to be weaker, and you can take it." Uhm, you could also send a different flare, that is like, "we got beat", or, "hey, come reinforce us", um, or something else, and, and deny giving them the flare that they're waiting for, and you could tell me what that flare is, I dunno what it is. Um, and yes--

JACK: Mmm, and at the same time, we can presumably communicate with, with *the* Fort Icebreaker using the semaphore tower, right?

AUSTIN: Icebreaker Prime, let's say, you could communicate with and say, "there was a brief attack, it's under control". I will note, "word gets out" is at 3 of 4. Uhm, and...

JACK: Can we make clocks go down?

AUSTIN: Totally can. And in fact, I will give you an opportunity to do that, as you're, uh, getting in-- you're like, opening the door to the semaphore tower? And you hear footsteps on the iron, the, like, cast iron sta-- like, spiral staircase that goes upwards, uh, as you open the door, and above you, there is, climbing the staircase and then looking down and kind-of sighing, is a kind-of stocky, uhm, bearded Apostolisian who we saw on the SBBR side of the game, in the very very very first game, uhm, their name is Tes'ili Serikos, they are the leader of a group called The Red Fennecs, which is a group of recon, uhm, folks, for Apostolos, and also secretly is a criminal smuggling operation. They're a Tier 1 group like you, uhm. Transport specialist, and black-marketeer Tes'ili Serikos, uh, can get anything anywhere for a price, and they look down at you, and say,

AUSTIN (as Tes'ili Serikos): Oh, shit. Uhm... Uh. I don't have a weapon on me. This doesn't have to be a thing.

JACK (as Clementine Kesh): Get back up in the tower.

JACK: and we just, like, follow up the stairs.

AUSTIN: Yeah, uh...

JACK: I guess, weapons trained.

AUSTIN (as Tes'ili Serikos): Now, listen. Now, listen. I'm not a... ah. I'm not a person who has a lot of, uh, I'm not looking to sacrifice myself for the greater good of the nation, so to speak.

JACK (as Clementine Kesh): Good. Who are you? What's your name?

AUSTIN (as Tes'ili Serikos): Ah, uh...

JACK (as Clementine Kesh): Do you know how to operate the semaphore tower?

AUSTIN: Begins to just reach into a pocket, uhhh...

JACK: Uh! Uhm!

AUSTIN: Quickly, is fumbling, and then produces a card. Uh, that has, like, a little red fennec fox, like, big ears, just like a silhouette of one. Uh, and--

ART: Is this a business card?

AUSTIN: It's a business card.

ART: Is this like a, is this, just like, a paper card?

AUSTIN: Yeah. Like, cardboard card.

ART: Right. Nice stock?

JACK: (overlapping) I hand it to Leap.

AUSTIN (as Tes'ili Serikos): Tes'ili Serikos... I'm a, I'm a bit of a-- I get things done. Y'know, I make sure that people have what they need. I serve Partizan, and... y'know. Uhm, I could probably help you out. What I need...

JACK (as Clementine Kesh): Why are you here?

AUSTIN (as Tes'ili Serikos): (laughs) That is a long story, my friend. Uh, they moved me here for bullshit reasons.

JACK laughs.

AUSTIN (as Tes'ili Serikos): Uh, and I would be very happy to leave, if we made an arrangement, along with my goods.

KEITH (as Exeter Leap): What are the goods?

ART (as Sovereign Immunity): What's the arrangement?

AUSTIN (as Tes'ili Serikos): Uh, a little bit of this, a little bit of that. Uhm, well, it strikes me that I... I am a well, I'm a well read person, I make sure to stay up on politics, on... current events, and I recognise you. You are a Princess.

JACK: Clementine just, like, tapping her foot, looking anxiously out of the windows of the top of the semaphore tower, nodding.

AUSTIN (as Tes'ili Serikos): And my guess is, a princess goes to a lot of parties.

JACK (as Clementine Kesh): What are you talking about? Get to the point.

AUSTIN (as Tes'ili Serikos): Well, I move in the finer things - cigars, uh, fine liquor.

KEITH (as Exeter Leap): Rings.

AUSTIN (as Tes'ili Serikos): Rings! Yeah, rings, for instance; jewellery of all sorts. And I... also some of the less fine things. Just, I-- a lot of steaks, sometimes. Cheap beer. Porno mags. The stuff--

JACK (as Clementine Kesh): Why are you telling us this?

AUSTIN (as Tes'ili Serikos): Cause I understand an opportunity when I see one. And if--

SYLVIA (as Ver'million Blue):: You wanna sell porno mags to the princess of Kesh?

AUSTIN (as Tes'ili Serikos): I would like the princess of Kesh--

KEITH (as Exeter Leap): What a story.

AUSTIN (as Tes'ili Serikos): ...to lead me to more people to sell porno mags to.

JACK (as Clementine Kesh): What's in it for us?

AUSTIN (as Tes'ili Serikos): I leave...

KEITH (as Exeter Leap): Sounds like porno mags.

AUSTIN (as Tes'ili Serikos): And cigars! And jewellery! And a number of other things, I-- again, I give people what they're looking for, what they need. And, uh. In this case, what I need is to get my stuff out of here. Uhm, so you let me go, with my stuff, I'll teach you how this machine here works. Also. You're in Kesh, I would love, uh, just a place to duck for a little while. Keep my head low.

KEITH (as Exeter Leap): What's a headlow?

JACK: I just glance at the rest of... (laughs).

SYLVIA: (distant) Fuck off!

AUSTIN (as Tes'ili Serikos): Headlow... it's jargon, you don't worry about it.

AUSTIN: I guess, hmm, hmm. Hm! Give me a, give me a, give me a, a fortune roll. Give me a 2d6.

KEITH: Is this to find out what a headlow is?

AUSTIN: No, no! If, if Tes'ili Serikos has heard of you.

KEITH: Alright, h-- how do I roll fortune?

AUSTIN: Just 2d6, just a flat 2d6.

KEITH: (overlapping) A fortune roll, there we go.

AUSTIN: Eh! Yeah! I think that they go,

AUSTIN (as Tes'ili Serikos): Eyy, you're the, uh, you're the, uh, pirate. You're the pirate.

JACK: Jesus Christ.

AUSTIN (as Tes'ili Serikos): You're the, pfft.

KEITH (as Exeter Leap): You got it, you'll get there, come on!

AUSTIN (as Tes'ili Serikos): uuuUUH, Leap! Exeter Leap!

KEITH (as Exeter Leap): Yes! Yep.

AUSTIN (as Tes'ili Serikos): You got arrested!

KEITH (as Exeter Leap): Yeah.

AUSTIN (as Tes'ili Serikos): What are you doing with a princess?

KEITH (as Exeter Leap): It's good to meet a fan.

AUSTIN (as Tes'ili Serikos): You've run stuff to me before! I bought stuff--

KEITH (as Exeter Leap): Oh yeah!

AUSTIN (as Tes'ili Serikos): Tes'ili Serikos, we've met!

KEITH (as Exeter Leap): Yeah, the-- with the, fox card!

AUSTIN (as Tes'ili Serikos): With, th- yeah, the fo- the Red Fennec, it's a family business.

SYLVIA (as Ver'million Blue): Man, Leap, we keep running into your friends on missions.

KEITH (as Exeter Leap): Well, I get around.

JACK (as Clementine Kesh): (irately) *We do.*

AUSTIN (as Tes'ili Serikos): Alright, well, we can work out a discount then. This is all coming up Tes'ili here. You can call me Tess, you can call me Lee, just don't call me your enemy, that's how it goes. Uhm. Haha! So are we talking business?

[57:27]

VARIOUS MEMBERS laugh.

JACK: Did this NPC talk a lot in the first episode?

AUSTIN: Only a little bit.

JACK: So this is where--

AUSTIN: Valence was like, "no, I will not accept your corrupt deal".

KEITH laughs.

JACK (as Clementine Kesh): I'm listening.

AUSTIN: And then the thing that happened here - this is for the meta story - Serikos was figured out by Apostolos as being a no good fuck-off, and so they were reassigned to the frontline, where they would suffer presumably and die in war and instead...

JACK: Ohh, incredible.

AUSTIN: ...because they still have their underground smuggling ring they just moved it here

JACK: They just ran it out of...

JACK & AUSTIN simultaneously: Fort Icebreaker!

AUSTIN: ...and now they're going to get another chance. Maybe!

KEITH: This is a stand-up guy, we can trust this guy.

AUSTIN: Listen, Tes'ili has... Tes'ili's been around. Tes'ili knows the smell of money, and (Austin sniffs) smells good up here.

SYLVIA: (exhaustedly) God.

JACK (as Clementine Kesh): Tes'ili.

AUSTIN (as Tes'ili Serikos): Yeah.

JACK (as Clementine Kesh): I assume that you are as skilled in making sure people don't talk about things, as they do.

AUSTIN (as Tes'ili Serikos): That's correct. I have business--

JACK (as Clementine Kesh): I need...

AUSTIN (as Tes'ili Serikos): Listen.

AUSTIN: And I think that they... they go to reach out and put an arm on your shoulder, and they think better of it, then put an arm on Leap's shoulder, but keep eye contact with you. They go,

AUSTIN (as Tes'ili Serikos): Listen. I know I turn it on sometimes but I'm... I'm a serious broker.

KEITH (as Exeter Leap): You're discreet.

AUSTIN (as Tes'ili Serikos): I'm discreet. This isn't a... I like to have fun but, what I really like to do is operate my business. Get people the things they need, and a war means more people need more things, and it also means that it's harder to get things to people. Now. Maybe this set up I've had with Apostolos has run its course. Maybe I go independent. To do that, I'm going to need, uh, a little bit of an investment. We can talk about details later, but, I'm happy to get out your way... if you promise me that investment.

JACK (as Clementine Kesh): What is the scale of the investment?

AUSTIN (as Tes'ili Serikos): It's, its flexible. It's a flex-vestment.

ART: Oh, we're getting shook down...!

JACK: Yeah, I mean, I think, this is the thing. I'm going to turn to S.I.--

JACK (as Clementine Kesh): I don't trust them.

ART (as Sovereign Immunity): I mean. it's... it's not a bad call but, are you prepared to kill them?

AUSTIN (as Tes'ili Serikos): Woof! *Kill* them??

JACK (as Clementine Kesh): What? No.

ART (as Sovereign Immunity): Well then, make a deal.

AUSTIN (as Tes'ili Serikos): I would say, I could start with...

ART (as Sovereign Immunity): I wasn't suggesting killing you, I was using it for rhetorical effect.

AUSTIN (as Tes'ili Serikos): I appreciate it, I would say, let's say, if we-- if you could abstract these things, a single personnel point would... be a fine way to start.

JACK (as Clementine Kesh): (laughing) If you could abstract them...

AUSTIN (as Tes'ili Serikos): If you could conceptualise...

JACK (as Clementine Kesh): If you *could* conceptualise...

AUSTIN (as Tes'ili Serikos): If you could be with me here, if you could conceptualise the needs of running an operation like mine, an introductory investment would be a single point of what I would call personnel.

ART (as Sovereign Immunity): And what do we get as a return on this investment?

AUSTIN (as Tes'ili Serikos): What type of message do you want to send with this big machine?

AUSTIN: Also...

ART (as Sovereign Immunity): Those are not-- those are-- those aren't equal in scale.

AUSTIN (as Tes'ili Serikos): Also, I mean, you're right. What I, I'm about to do for you is gonna change your whole lives. What you're gonna do for me is gonna change the next month. Um. What... what you're opening yourself up to is opportunity in the

future to work with me - I can get things across the planet. I have an entire network, not just through Apostolos, but through everybody.

JACK (as Clementine Kesh): We're basically signing up to a war profiteer's patreon.

AUSTIN (as Tes'ili Serikos): War profiteer is strong. War pro-- patreon, no. It might be crowdfunding, but, no-one else takes a cut, it's just you and me.

JACK: (laughing): Oh, sure, okay, yeah (!)

ART: (also laughing): There's no credit card fees here!

AUSTIN (as Tes'ili Serikos): (overlapping) Peer to peer, business to business to business. Yeah.

SYLVIA (as Ver'million Blue): We're a hard no on killing them...?

JACK (as Clementine Kesh): We're a hard no on killing them. Um. Listen. No-one can know about our arrangement, you understand?

AUSTIN (as Tes'ili Serikos): Of course.

JACK (as Clementine Kesh): And no-one can know what happened here.

AUSTIN (as Tes'ili Serikos): What happened here? Nothing's happened here. What's happened here is, you've done an incredible job of seizing this territory. You've, uh... frankly, you've found the underground access point of some sort of terrible smuggler and used that in a brilliant manoeuvre and--

JACK and ART laugh.

AUSTIN: I mean this is the thing, right?

JACK: We could--

AUSTIN: Art in the chat says, "no-one but the documentary crew". They're downstairs, right? They're downstairs getting b-roll of mechs standing around, right? And, and your infantry groups lining people up and arresting them and locking them in the brig or whatever.

KEITH: I mean, they're also-- they're, like, are they, were they ever here to do anything but, like, a hagiography?

AUSTIN: Right, totally, exactly, well...

JACK: Yeah.

KEITH: Like, this is like, Kesh state, this is like Kesh media.

AUSTIN: It is Kesh media, it is Kesh propaganda, yeah, totally. Um. So yeah. So yeah, I think that that is that is their offer. They'll take that one personnel point. They'll become a contact for you, basically, this is the person, when you want to do an Acquire Asset, hey. Hey, you know who to call.

JACK: A hundred percent.

AUSTIN: Yeah.

JACK: Also, this is someone the Apostolisians hate, and that's always great to have...

AUSTIN: Yes.

JACK: ...on our side.

AUSTIN: Will hate-- will hate them even more now that they've betrayed Apostolos.

JACK: Yes. Okay. (sighing) So.

AUSTIN: This is an agreement? Cause I'll clear the "word gets out" clock.

JACK: Is there something massive you're not telling us here, Austin? Is there, like, a big... bit we're missing?

AUSTIN: There is this mystery clock.

SYLVIA: I mean, there's a mystery...

JACK: No, I mean, regarding the taking--

AUSTIN: (overlapping) No, I love it! I love this plan. This was never my plan, uhm. Uh. (laughs) Keith...

JACK: I didn't know if you were just leading us into a trap, which isn't really...

AUSTIN: No!

JACK: ...the way you do it.

AUSTIN: It's not, no. There is a mystery clock, that mystery clock is about another threat, but it's not about this idea, this idea is perfect, and actually lines up really well with my mystery clock, which is going to, by the way, just continue to tick as time continues? Because it represents someone growing nearer, and what the clock represented was, that, that person, that group growing nearer while you were in that fight? So in a sense, the mystery clock is

gone now, you're in free time until, until things pop off again. But I need you to tell me what the plan is at this point. Tes'ili is willing to send whatever messages you want, and shows you the command console, shows you how the message system works, like, there's no betrayal here. My hands are clean. I love this idea, and we can talk about what you want to do.

JACK: (overlapping) Okay, let's actually--

JACK (as Clementine Kesh): Comrades. I have decided that the mission has changed.

SYLVIA (as Ver'million Blue): Oh, that's fun! What is it?

ART: Strong Dark Vader vibes.

JACK (as Clementine Kesh): Instead of capturing the Fort Icebreaker emplacement in which we find ourselves, I have decided that we shall capture Fort Icebreaker itself.

SYLVIA (as Ver'million Blue): (laughs)

JACK (as Clementine Kesh): ...Millie?

SYLVIA (as Ver'million Blue): No! It's-- it's just, you sound serious about that. (pause) Oh, you are--

JACK (as Clementine Kesh): I am.

SYLVIA (as Ver'million Blue): You're serious about-- okay, shit. This is--

JACK (as Clementine Kesh): Fort Icebreaker *will* fall to Kesh. Now. The fine details of the plan, I require your help on.

SYLVIA: (distant) Oh my *god*!!!

JACK: Okay, speaking out of character, I feel like we kind of have two questions to answer. The first is, what message do we send to Icebreaker Prime, to kind-of get it into position where we could move to take it? The second question is, what message do we send to Whitestar?

AUSTIN: Yeah.

JACK: With the other flare.

ART: I-- I feel like we really, if we're using official communication channels, that we need to strike a deal with a weirdo smuggler to, to get working, it might-- we might be able to just send a message that says like, "urgent - we need Icebreaker to come here, immediately".

JACK: I don't want them to roll in armed for battle though? Like, my kinda like, the dream situation is that Icebreaker arrives, docks with the, the emplacement, and then we move to take it somehow. Like, my fear would be they'd roll in, sirens blaring, battle stations.

SYLVIA: Can it be, like, a thing where it's like, uhm, the-- I remember the plan earlier being like, tell them that there's an attack, but that we-- it was held off.

JACK: Yeah.

SYLVIA: We could, like, twist that into, like, "we need additional personnel"?

AUSTIN: That's a hundred percent where my mind was, I love it, Millie, perfect.

SYLVIA: For like, repairs and stuff? And, like, use that as sort-of a smokescreen to get them to come back.

AUSTIN: And you could do it where it's like... I know that I'm supposed to be on the other side of the table here. but.

SYLVIA and JACK laugh.

AUSTIN: If I need to bring A.O. Rooke into this room so that I get a voice to contribute to the great idea Millie just had.

JACK: Well, I mean, do we just call A.O. Rooke? Is this the other thing, where it's like--

AUSTIN: Yeah, totally, Rooke left some of his people in the--

JACK: I like the idea.

AUSTIN: ...with the cannon or whatever. Like, it's-- you've filled that clock, this is not changing. The base takeover: the base has been taken over.

KEITH (as Exeter Leap): Sorry, Millie, could you say your idea again?

SYLVIA (as Millie): Me?

KEITH (as Exeter Leap): Yeah.

SYLVIA (as Millie): My plan was basically, we tell them that there was an attack, but it was successfully defended, but since damages were sustained, we need, like, personnel to come back to help repair everything.

KEITH (as Exeter Leap): Yeah.

SYLVIA (as Millie): So instead of coming back ready for, like, warfare, they're coming back ready for, like, menial labour and more civilian stuff.

AUSTIN (as A.O. Rooke): And...!

KEITH (as Exeter Leap): We could probably get, um, Lee to gi-- to like, tell us what, like, how would we say this in a way that, like, this is what the protocol would be.

AUSTIN (as A.O. Rooke): Totally - well, I think the other half of this idea is, let them fight Chasmata. They'll win that fight-- Chasmata hasn't gotten the retreat sign yet, right? So, Chasmata is still engaged, and is hurting the fortress. They will lose that fight, but if we wanted to, we could let them fight until Fortress Icebreaker is down to nothin', then call for-- Fort Icebreaker here...

KEITH (as Exeter Leap): This is in *Halo*, when you let the Flood and the Elite...

AUSTIN (as A.O. Rooke): Yeah, except in this case, the Flood or the Elite are technically on our side, and we're kind-of throwing them to the dogs, but. You know what, fuck 'em.

KEITH (as Exeter Leap): So it's like *Halo 3*, then.

AUSTIN (as A.O. Rooke): Yeah.

KEITH (as Exeter Leap): With the Flood and the Elite.

AUSTIN (as A.O. Rooke): Yeah, yeah yeah. It's like that.

JACK (as Clementine Kesh): Um. So this leads to-- okay. That's interesting. If we draw that out for slightly longer, I don't necessarily know that I want Fort Icebreaker to flatten Chasmata's units up in the north?

AUSTIN (as A.O. Rooke): We have to time it right.

JACK (as Clementine Kesh): Yeah, exactly. But, I feel like, just off-the-bat, we could definitely make it so that Icebreaker just kills them all, and then comes down here, but like, we want them to kind-of both exhaust each other, right?

AUSTIN (as A.O. Rooke): What if we send a message that says "we need a little more time" to Chasmata, to wait to pull back - we don't-- I'm not saying we tell 'em to commit, that we lost or somethin', but, that they, that they could just-- if they could just give us another two hours.

SYLVIA (as Ver'million Blue): I... my only flaw with that, is that they are going to see footage of all of this happening much faster than we told them.

AUSTIN (as A.O. Rooke): This is true...

SYLVIA (as Ver'million Blue): Though, I guess if we've, if we've taken Fort Icebreaker, it won't matter!

AUSTIN: God.

JACK laughs.

JACK (as Clementine Kesh): And Whitestar.

AUSTIN (as A.O. Rooke): And Whitestar.

JACK (as Clementine Kesh): Now, I would be prepared to grant Lucia the privilege of breaking the southern line, if the prize that we took home for ourselves was Icebreaker Prime. She can have her... moment in the sun.

AUSTIN (as A.O. Rooke): So then we call her back here and have her help us take in Icebre-- what do we do with her? Do we just let her attack now, like...?

JACK (as Clementine Kesh): She can storm through the lower ranks. Look. I might... Sovereign. I don't know whether or not... I don't know whether or not we would be claiming Icebreaker Prime for the Stel, or for us.

ART (as Sovereign Immunity): Well, I mean, you definitely need to know that before we do it.

KEITH laughs.

JACK (as Clementine Kesh): And speaking metaphorically, I want Icebreaker.

ART (as Sovereign Immunity): Great...! For... for you?

JACK (as Clementine Kesh): Yes.

AUSTIN (as A.O. Rooke): No, for *us*! For us.

JACK (as Clementine Kesh): Well, no, for us.

AUSTIN (as A.O. Rooke): The Rapid Evening.

JACK (as Clementine Kesh): Sorry, A.O., you're absolutely right. For The Rapid Evening.

ART (as Sovereign Immunity): For The Rapid Evening, yeah.

KEITH (as Exeter Leap): This sounds like extra work!

AUSTIN (as A.O. Rooke): Naw, it sounds like treason, and I'm kind-of into it.

ART (as Sovereign Immunity): It does-- it is treason, yeah. Uhm. It's definitely treason.

AUSTIN (as A.O. Rooke): It is treasonous.

ART (as Sovereign Immunity): The problem is the, the Stel's army is already here.

KEITH (as Exeter Leap): It's, sorry, I do need to say, It is technically-- it's sedition.

AUSTIN (as A.O. Rooke): What's the difference?

KEITH (as Exeter Leap): Treason is helping an enemy - we would be helping ourselves.

AUSTIN (as A.O. Rooke): Yeah, okay.

KEITH (as Exeter Leap): Well, sorry - Clem would be helping herself.

AUSTIN (as A.O. Rooke): Leap. We gotta be in it right now. I get it. Like, I'mma bounce eventually. But.

AUSTIN: And like, does a little shrug.

AUSTIN (as A.O. Rooke): Like, don't you want to be able to add to your resumé that you broke Fort Icebreaker and then stole it? Feared across the seven galaxies, or whatever the fuck your title is.

KEITH (as Exeter Leap): But then what happens? Then what do I do? Do I go... to a locked room again?

JACK (as Clementine Kesh): On Fort Icebreaker? No.

AUSTIN (as A.O. Rooke): You giving, like... real, real shit?

JACK (as Clementine Kesh): I think if we've made it that far.

AUSTIN (as A.O. Rooke): (quietly) *Boy....* (regular volume) This is it. Naw, naw. This is it. This is it! Clementine Kesh is gonna be the next queen of, of Kesh, or whatever,

and... I know that comes with a cheque, but also, that comes with mobility. I don't wanna be--

KEITH (as Exeter Leap): Do you get to be the-- do you get to be the queen by... a major act of sedition?

JACK: And I just look at Sovereign Immunity.

AUSTIN laughs.

ART (as Sovereign Immunity): Often, yes. Uh huh. I mean, it's the, what-- it's the old "if you owe the bank a hundred thousand dollars, the bank owns you, and if you owe the bank a hundred million dollars, you own the bank"?

AUSTIN (as A.O. Rooke): Yeah.

ART (as Sovereign Immunity): It's like that but with military assets.

KEITH (as Exeter Leap): I don't-- I don't understand what I would be...

ART (as Sovereign Immunity): A lord. That's how every lord who ever was got made one. By being the criminal with the right person at the end.

KEITH (as Exeter Leap): You're pitching me, that I could be a chump like Calister Drive.

JACK (as Clementine Kesh): No.

ART (as Sovereign Immunity): You can be any kind of chump you want.

JACK (as Clementine Kesh): (overlapping) You've far more talent than Calister Drive.

JACK: Two different responses. (laughing)

AUSTIN: (laughing) Uh huh.

SYLVIA (as Ver'million Blue): I will say, I think at the very least, they're pitching no more prison cell. Which, that's working for me right about now.

KEITH (as Exeter Leap): Yeah, but I was about to break out anyway! I don't give a shit about that!

JACK (as Clementine Kesh): (pauses) You were about to *what*.

KEITH: Out of character, Clem!

JACK: Oh.

AUSTIN, JACK and KEITH laugh.

KEITH: No, I'll say that out loud! I don't care, what do the-- you know.

KEITH (as Exeter Leap): The whole point of me breaking out is that you can't stop me, yeah. I was about to break out. I will *still* be about to break out if we go back.

ART (as Sovereign Immunity): I mean, but like, what if you could be Sir Francis Drake?

KEITH (as Exeter Leap): Who?

ART: Yeah, that doesn't work.

JACK: (laughs) Sailed around the world!

ART: That's like me knowing the bravest caveman.

AUSTIN & KEITH laugh.

AUSTIN: "What if you could be Ugg?"

ART: "You could be Ugg, the guy who invented hitting someone with a rock!"

AUSTIN laughs.

JACK: (laughing) This is really difficult!

ART: Before that, rocks were just for putting places.

AUSTIN (as A.O. Rooke): I'm thinkin' bigger. This war is going to end. And, when it ends, I gotta get somethin' else. When it ends, I don't wanna be... the dude who got caught by Kesh and then died in a prison. I wanna be someone who made the world look different than it was.

KEITH (as Exeter Leap): What happens to Gur Sevraq?

AUSTIN (as A.O. Rooke): You know he'd come through.

JACK (as Clementine Kesh): I'm sure Gur Sevraq would be delighted to realise that we had a gigantic walking fortress.

AUSTIN (as A.O. Rooke): What if we had the fortress? You know what I'm saying? Like, we're not the only... I've talked to other people in the prison, and... there are

people on this planet who wanna see things different. Oxblood Clan, one. There's some witches out in Columnar territory, two. We know about Gur Sevraq's crew, three. Tes'ili Serikos-- everybody needs porno mags.

KEITH (as Exeter Leap): I guess I can't speak for everybody, but I really feel-- I really thought, I was like, "well, we don't" - no offence, Clem - "we don't like Clem, or trust Clem"! (pause) ... no offense.

ART (as Sovereign Immunity): This is how you make someone tru-- this is how you learn to trust someone. By making them need you.

KEITH (as Exeter Leap): What are you-- wait, what is that? Wha-- say that again?

ART (as Sovereign Immunity): No! It didn't make any sense!

AUSTIN, JACK, KEITH laugh.

ART (as Sovereign Immunity): (holding back laughter) And I won't tell it to you again! Whatever you-- whatever you think I said, that's what it was.

AUSTIN (as A.O. Rooke): That makes sense, shit...

KEITH (as Exeter Leap): (mockingly) Ha ha. Ha, haha, Ha ha.

EVERYONE laughs.

AUSTIN: *Ohhh...* Everyone should catch up on Live At The Table immediately.

Millie, I'd love for you to weigh in on this.

SYLVIA: So, my... really, my only, like, concern here is getting out alive, and I don't know if taking Fort Icebreaker is the way to do that? But... (sighs) there is this other thing going on where I feel like if I do this, it will be easier for me to get out? Cause I'm not an escape artist like Leap, I need to, like-- I either need to be very loud or I need to, like, have, like, a connection that will, like, get me out of there, that's why I sent that letter to Crysanth earlier.

AUSTIN: Yeah.

SYLVIA: In the downtime episode. And so my thinking here is like, well, fuck it, if I help install a new power, then, it's not going to really matter what fuckin' police record I have with the old one.

AUSTIN: Yeah, that's true.

JACK: Mm.

AUSTIN: Yeah.

KEITH (as Exeter Leap): Why...? (pauses)

AUSTIN (as A.O. Rooke): Leap! What do you want? You want, like, a ship? Cause...

KEITH (as Exeter Leap): No! I don't, I don't wanna do... I don't want to *give* this to someone else. Why would we take Fort Icebreaker for Clem when... we could take it for us, and fuck Clem. No offence, Clem.

SYLVIA (as Ver'million Blue): That's fair.

AUSTIN (as A.O. Rooke): But again, what if we're giving it to... us. Clem, you have put yourself out there in a way I did not expect you to. I'm not... I'm not, uh, taking that away from you. I thought, I thought you would be like a lead-from-behind type chick. I saw you on the Prophet's Path, I saw you today. You do alright. But, I've never had a *crew* before. You know what I mean? Like I've been a solo operator that worked with people before, but we work together well. And what if Clem - no offence Clem - what if Clem was more of, like, a...

KEITH (as Exeter Leap): Prisoner.

AUSTIN (as A.O. Rooke): (snorts) What if Clem was...

SYLVIA (as Ver'million Blue): Now...

AUSTIN (as A.O. Rooke): ...more of a, like a support officer. And we, as a unit, started making decisions together. With Gur Sevraq...

JACK (as Clementine Kesh): Well, hold on.

AUSTIN (as A.O. Rooke): With everyone.

SYLVIA (as Ver'million Blue): I can get behind that a lot more than the rest of this shit.

JACK (as Clementine Kesh): Hold on.

AUSTIN: (holding back a laugh) Hold on. Now wait.

JACK (as Clementine Kesh): Now, hang on just a second; what do you mean by *support role*?

SYLVIA laughs.

AUSTIN: I think we get A.O. Rooke...

ART (as Sovereign Immunity): Figurehead, I think is the word.

AUSTIN: ...A.O. Rooke, like, makes eyes with Millie, and Leap, as if like, "alright, now, let's play this right". You know what I mean?

SYLVIA: Yeah, yeah.

AUSTIN (as A.O. Rooke): Like, like, like... you told me, "go get that gun", right? Now, the truth is, I wanted to go get that gun anyway, but you had good ideas about it, and I was like, "yeah okay, let's do it". And then I did it.

SYLVIA (as Ver'million Blue): Like, logistics.

AUSTIN (as A.O. Rooke): Like logistics! Like, big picture. Like, there are people in Kesh I do not want to talk to. Period. Period, period.

ART (as Sovereign Immunity): Media role.

AUSTIN (as A.O. Rooke): More than media role. Naw, nananananaw. Naw. No. Nooo. Figurehead is the wrong word.

KEITH (as Exeter Leap): Prisoner. (pause) No offence.

JACK (as Clementine Kesh): I'm feeling less confident.

SYLVIA laughs.

KEITH (as Exeter Leap): Here's what I've-- what you're not considering, Rooke. We are proof that it is possible to make someone do something that they don't want to do because you're their prisoner.

SYLVIA (as Ver'million Blue): You got me there.

KEITH (as Exeter Leap): Whatever value Clem has to us as group, we can get, regardless of whether she thinks she's still in charge.

ART (as Sovereign Immunity): Unacceptable. It's not what I need.

SYLVIA (as Ver'million Blue): Okay! What do you need?

ART (as Sovereign Immunity): I need... I need Clementine Kesh.

KEITH (as Exeter Leap): Two prisoners!

AUSTIN (as A.O. Rooke): We can't do it without S.I.

KEITH (as Exeter Leap): We don't have to do it without him!

AUSTIN (as A.O. Rooke): Naw, he needs...

KEITH (as Exeter Leap): We are prisoners! They took this place with our help.

AUSTIN (as A.O. Rooke): We lose S.I., we're gonna lose the prison. We lose the prison, we don't have an army. We don't have an army, we don't have any power.

SYLVIA (as Ver'million Blue): Yeah, he's kinda got a point there.

KEITH (as Exeter Leap): Kesh would be dead without the help of me and Millie, the prisoners.

AUSTIN (as A.O. Rooke): And me!

JACK (as Clementine Kesh): Bullshit.

AUSTIN (as A.O. Rooke): You--

SYLVIA (as Ver'million Blue): Bullshit?!

AUSTIN (as A.O. Rooke): Clem, you *know* I came for you last time. You saw us ride down that mountain.

JACK (as Clementine Kesh): Oh, I was the Kesh when he said Kesh?

KEITH (as Exeter Leap): Yeah, yeah.

AUSTIN (as A.O. Rooke): Yeah, you. That was-- yeah.

ART (as Sovereign Immunity): Yeah, it's really confusing to use that as the, yeah.

JACK (as Clementine Kesh): (overlapping) Oh, I thought you were speaking about the Stel.

KEITH (as Exeter Leap): Sorry.

SYLVIA (as Ver'million Blue): Okay, that is fair.

ART (as Sovereign Immunity): It is tricky within this particular context.

KEITH (as Exeter Leap): Clem.

AUSTIN (as A.O. Rooke): Clem would be dead.

KEITH (as Exeter Leap): Millie, remember on that mission? The first time that Clem almost died? And we were about to run, and Sovereign Immunity said, “no, don’t run, you can get what you need by staying” and we continued to be prisoners, and continued to help. (pause) I don’t see why we can’t do the same thing now. But with the roles reversed.

ART (as Sovereign Immunity): Because it doesn’t work for me.

KEITH (as Exeter Leap): Sorry, it didn’t work for me being a prisoner in the first place!

ART (as Sovereign Immunity): You can’t do it without me.

SYLVIA (as Ver’million Blue): You need to, like, explain what you’re looking for here, then. Instead of just telling us this doesn’t work for you.

ART (as Sovereign Immunity): I’m looking for the power. I’m looking for- I’m looking to be with the queen of Kesh. I need Clementine to wield sovereign power, if you’ll forgive the... double entendre.

KEITH (as Exeter Leap): Why her? No offence.

ART (as Sovereign Immunity): Because she’s the- cause she’s the one that I’m with. Do you have another Kesh heir?

AUSTIN (as A.O. Rooke): Hold up, it’s not--

SYLVIA (as Ver’million Blue): I mean, she’s sixth, so like, there’s probably at least five.

AUSTIN (as A.O. Rooke): It’s not just that.

ART (as Sovereign Immunity): It’s not Crysanth, so.

AUSTIN (as A.O. Rooke): Listen, listen, listen. I don’t know a lot of nobles, but I met some. Most of them would not be in this room to begin with. No offense, Kesh.

JACK (as Clementine Kesh): Thank you.

AUSTIN (as A.O. Rooke): Clem. Whatever.

JACK (as Clementine Kesh): None taken.

AUSTIN (as A.O. Rooke): Most of them would have done what Whitestar is doing, and sent... a thousand people to die in front of ‘em. I... think that Clementine Kesh is

marked by the misfortune of her birth. But, maybe there's hope. Gur Sevraq sees something--

KEITH (as Exeter Leap): You mean, cause of her bad mom.

AUSTIN (as A.O. Rooke): Her bad mom, being sixth in line to a throne, etcetera, etcetera. My mom opened doors for me, my mom worked for the Scrivener's Guild, she got me my first job. She connected me to the crew I was with when I got caught.

KEITH (as Exeter Leap): Technically, all of that is still true about Clem, but I see your point.

AUSTIN (as A.O. Rooke): My point is, it's not that I don't think anyone should get somethin' from their mom, but, like, Clem's mom is especially... a lot.

JACK (as Clementine Kesh): If we could all stop talking about my mum, please.

KEITH (as Exeter Leap): Ugh, she's a lot.

AUSTIN (as A.O. Rooke): My point is, Clem... I don't trust you. But.

JACK (as Clementine Kesh): Good.

AUSTIN (as A.O. Rooke): See, this is why I don't trust-- this is why I don't trust her!

KEITH (as Exeter Leap): Mhm. It's a weird thing to say.

AUSTIN (as A.O. Rooke): It is, especially in this charged situation. But, what I will say is... I think you're gonna fight for the thing you want. And, I think as you do that, I think you're going to find success, and I would like that success to be good for us, and not just for you, and I think the closest way I can control that, frankly, is by being involved. With the option to leave when I want.

JACK (as Clementine Kesh): We do not need to decide this now. All you need to know is that we are going to take Fort Icebreaker, and aboard its decks, and beyond, you are going to be free. Everything else can follow.

AUSTIN: A.O. nods. I've ticked a clock, I've ticked the mystery clock, and I need to paint you a picture as you're standing in this tower, looking out across the, uh, the moon.

[1:24:47]

There's a hill to the south. And, coming down that hill is a fog. Um, and it's not like any fog you've ever seen, 'cause it shimmers, and it takes you a second but soon, it is beginning to reach through the farmland, and approach the walls, and kind-of, like, softly crash against the walls of the fortress, and it's going to, it's going to climb, and raise until it comes in. This

is, this is the densest Perennial Wave you've ever seen. You have time to send this message, but you need to send it very quickly - and I'll note, the mystery clock has not filled, that was just it ticking one.

JACK (as Clementine Kesh): Tes'ili.

AUSTIN (as Tes'ili Serikos): Send a message?

JACK (as Clementine Kesh): Instruct Icebreaker Prime to return to Fort Icebreaker.

AUSTIN (as Tes'ili Serikos): To return to Juniper?

JACK (as Clementine Kesh): Oh, yes, to return to point Juniper. In...

JACK: --and I look at the crew--

JACK (as Clementie Kesh): ...an hour?

AUSTIN (as A.O. Rooke): That gives us time.

JACK (as Clementine Kesh): Tell them to prep to resupply point Juniper, and take on additional crewmembers.

AUSTIN: And they send that message. Um. Alright. What do you do for this hour?

JACK (as Clementine Kesh): Oh my *god*... okay. Wha- how do we spring this trap? What--

AUSTIN: Well, sorry, it's more than an hour, right? Because it's, it will leave in an hour, you'll have time, you'll have even further time, right?

JACK: Yeah, we probably have, we have a couple of hours, right? Fort Icebreaker docks with... it's like a big central shaft, right?

AUSTIN: It can either come over land towards you, or underground. Um. Whichever one you want would have been said.

KEITH: How does it come up through the ground?

JACK: Massive tunnels.

AUSTIN: Huge, massive, massive, massive tunnels.

JACK: HUUUGE tunnels.

AUSTIN: That you'll have to see if it does it that way. It's cool, I have a cool-- it's cool. I mean, I guess Tes'ili would tell you. It raises the floor, the ground is the roof. The ground you're on, all of these buildings, is the roof of Fort Icebreaker.

KEITH: Okay, so...

JACK: Wow!!!

AUSTIN: It literally just, you would literally go into any of these buildings, and they would all, like, open another staircase down into the Fort.

SYLVIA: Oh, that sounds like what we want.

JACK: Yeah, that's the dream, right?

AUSTIN: Okay. Yeah. Totally. So yeah, that is--

JACK: It also probably help against Kesh's scouts, because they won't see Fort Icebreaker coming.

AUSTIN: (laughing) Totally, that is a hundred percent true. Um. What do you do with sending messages to Whitestar and to--

JACK: That is a great question.

AUSTIN: Uh huh?

JACK: I think we signal Chasmata to, um, we say-- it's like a message of encouragement from Clementine Kesh, right? It's like, uh, "we're out on the front lines together, you're fighting really hard, I need you to fight for a little longer". Um, it's like a video message, it's like a grainy-- it's like "help us, Obi Wan Kenobi, you're our only hope!"

AUSTIN: Right, right.

JACK: But it's Clem saying... like, selling these people up the river. Um.... Whitestar is more difficult.

AUSTIN: Mmhm.

JACK: And I think I would like to talk to S.I. about that. Like, privately.

JACK (as Clementine Kesh): Thank you for your support back there.

ART (as Sovereign Immunity): Of course.

JACK (as Clementine Kesh): I don't know what to say to these people when they start having ideas like that.

ART (as Sovereign Immunity): They're dangerous, never forget it.

JACK (as Clementine Kesh): And like I understand where they're coming from! But I'm not, like, signing... I'm not, like, signing Kesh away, you know?

ART (as Sovereign Immunity): No, nor should you.

JACK (as Clementine Kesh): But we're not going to. We're going to take Fort Icebreaker. And there's going to be, like--

JACK: I keep thinking of it in my head as Mother Base? To the point--

AUSTIN: I know.

JACK: Where I nearly said "it's Mother Base".

AUSTIN: (overlapping) That's so-- god.

JACK: It's like, Clem wants Mother Base, right?

AUSTIN: Yeah yeah yeah, that is what it is, yeah. I get it.

JACK: Like a moving fortress.

JACK (as Clementine Kesh): Lucia. I'm worried about Lucia. Because... (sighs) Leap was right. What we're doing here is, is... is treason and I'm prepared to cross that bridge.

KEITH (as Exeter Leap): (distantly yelling) Sedition!

JACK (as Clementine Kesh): Stop listening! ...I'm prepared to cross that bridge when we come to it. I just... I need your advice, I need your advice on when... when we cross that bridge? Do we walk Fort Icebreaker back into Cruciat? And if so, we need to be careful about the message we're sending Whitestar. When do we pull the trigger?

ART (as Sovereign Immunity): It's-- It's hard to say exactly. We need to-- we need to know what does... what is the Icebreaker that we are going to have? And how convincingly can we get everyone else to back off? But this could accelerate very quickly.

JACK (as Clementine Kesh): I don't know if I'm ready for that.

ART (as Sovereign Immunity): I don't know that you are either.

JACK (as Clementine Kesh): Oh, I was hoping that you wouldn't say that.

ART (as Sovereign Immunity): That's not what you need right now. It's not what I think you need right now.

JACK (as Clementine Kesh): Okay, we have to stay focused. Fort Icebreaker is the prize.

ART (as Sovereign Immunity): Mmhm.

JACK (as Clementine Kesh): Whitestar.

ART (as Sovereign Immunity): Whitestar's--

JACK (as Clementine Kesh): Do we tell them to just continue into Apostolos?

ART (as Sovereign Immunity): Maybe. It's-- It's very difficult to fight a two-front war. We, of course, will also be doing that, Apostolos will not take this. I would also not be super cool with us just being like, "hey, we took this, we're going to use it against the people you don't like for a little bit, and then we're going to be the people you don't like".

AUSTIN laughs.

ART (as Sovereign Immunity): That is we- we are going to need distance and space and time. And anything that gives us even a little bit of that is going to be very helpful.

JACK (as Clementine Kesh): Perhaps this is where the prophet comes in.

ART (as Sovereign Immunity): I certainly think getting Gur Sevraq into Icebreaker is crucial.

JACK (as Clementine Kesh): But the message for Whitestar. It's, it's... is it that the mission was successful, press on towards...

JACK: What's the Apostolisian capital?

AUSTIN: The Barranca Loop is kinda the big, big thing-- they're here to take up, they're here-- I mean, there's two things here, one is; the mission has not necessarily been successful because you haven't pulled people away from their side of this yet? Though, they probably have enough forces to just take that side, as soon-- as long as Fort Icebreaker doesn't get there, do you know what I mean?

JACK: Which it's not going to, I mean...

AUSTIN: Right, because theoretically, you will have captured it by then.

JACK: The worst case scenario...

AUSTIN: Aaah.

JACK: ...is that it does, it flattens us, and then...

AUSTIN: Right, and then rolls through. Maybe this situation--

ART: Could we engineer their defeat?

AUSTIN: Yeah, that. Yeah, tota-- Yeah. You could send...

JACK (as Clementine Kesh): I'm sorry?

ART (as Sovereign Immunity): Could we-- could we engineer their defeat?

AUSTIN moans.

ART (as Sovereign Immunity): What if they lost? What if they were, just crushed?

JACK (as Clementine Kesh): How would we do that? I'm not even sure if I-- how would we do that?

ART (as Sovereign Immunity): We're inside! They think we're them! We just sound the alarm, move all troops to there. Send...

JACK (as Clementine Kesh): We route troops to Lucia Whitestar's line?

ART (as Sovereign Immunity): Just rout the army.

JACK (as Clementine Kesh): The Apostolisian army?

ART (as Sovereign Immunity): No, no...

AUSTIN: I mean, yes, right? That is what you mean.

ART: Oh, yes, but.

JACK: Oh, sorry, did you mean "rout"? Americans say "rout" and "route" the same way. I was confused.

AUSTIN: Oh.

ART: Oh.

ART: (pronouncing both ways) Reroute, reroute. Not, route as in, like...

KEITH: (overlapping) R-o-u-t.

JACK: Oh, okay,

AUSTIN: Like, yeah. Send em to the woods.

JACK: We destr-- (laughs) we destroy, yeah.

JACK (as Clementine Kesh): We destroy Whitestar's army by rerouting the Apostolisians?

KEITH (as Exeter Leap): And then we can rout them.

AUSTIN (as A.O. Rooke): And then we can rout the Apostolisians.

JACK: I think just, like, this wave of weakness visibly washes over Clem, of just like, exhaustion and the scale of the, of the sedition that is...

AUSTIN: Your-- the Panther, interior...

KEITH (as Exeter Leap): Actually this one would be treason because you're helping,

JACK: God.

KEITH (as Exeter Leap): You'd be helping Apostolos destroy your allies.

AUSTIN: Yes. Uh, the, the interior of the Panther glows gold, just so, and you have the clearest vision of you taking the throne. And it's stabilises you.

JACK: And that's all it takes.

AUSTIN: Yeah.

JACK: Yeah, yeah.

AUSTIN: Um, you know what it is? It's not taking the throne, it's you calling to order people in the room that we saw, the war room? And the sphynx painting is there, except her face is your face now.

JACK & SYLVIA laugh.

JACK: Just like the most, like, atavistic of...

AUSTIN: (overlapping) Yeah, yeah, yep. You have a crown on. Y'know. "Alright generals."

JACK: If Chrysanth...

AUSTIN: "What are we doing?" That type of...

JACK: But I'm a sphynx.

AUSTIN: Yes.

JACK: (laughing) Yes.

JACK (as Clementine Kesh): If Chrysanth catches us, she will kill us. There will be no second chances.

KEITH (as Exeter Leap): Yeah, we have to, we have to nail this one.

JACK (as Clementine Kesh): She is *not* going to catch us. (sighs) Reroute the troops, give Whitestar something to worry about. Let's prepare for Icebreaker's arrival.

KEITH: Do I get one of these conversations?

AUSTIN: With who?

KEITH: Millie.

AUSTIN: Sure!

SYLVIA: Yeah, sure.

SYLVIA (as Ver'million Blue): Yeah, so if they fuck us over, I'm killing both of them, just so you know.

KEITH (as Exeter Leap): I mean, you saw the two of them, together, right?

SYLVIA (as Ver'million Blue): Yeah, no. I'm not-- I don't trust them for a fucking second.

KEITH (as Exeter Leap): Sovereign Immunity wants to put Clementine in charge. I don't want-- the whole point is to not have someone in charge.

SYLVIA (as Ver'million Blue): Yeah. I know. Like...

KEITH (as Exeter Leap): The best case scenario is, we're just giving ourselves the same boss in a new context.

SYLVIA (as Ver'million Blue): I mean the best case scenario is we are giving ourselves a new boss in a new context for about two seconds before we get rid of them. Wink, wink.

KEITH (as Exeter Leap): Right-- well. Get rid of them... prisoner...

SYLVIA (as Ver'million Blue): I mean, like, if...

KEITH (as Exeter Leap): They got us as prisoners to do everything that they wanted!

SYLVIA (as Ver'million Blue): Yeah... yeah.

KEITH (as Exeter Leap): Clem deserves to be a prisoner! To be made to do our dirty work. Or just our regular work, I dunno what our work is going to be. Probably stealing stuff.

SYLVIA (as Ver'million Blue): Well maybe... I mean, maybe we just go with the plan and then... mutiny?

KEITH (as Exeter Leap): Is... is A.O. Rooke going to be in?

SYLVIA (as Ver'million Blue): I mean, like, we can bring him in to this.

KEITH (as Exeter Leap): I wouldn't hate that, but he seems content to be a rich pawn.

SYLVIA (as Ver'million Blue): Yeah... Who knows, we might all die here anyway, so, it might not even matter.

KEITH (as Exeter Leap): I'm not dying anywhere.

SYLVIA (as Ver'million Blue): (laughs) I love your attitude, Leap. (pause) I dunno, like I said, like, my leaning here is just, like, take these people as far as will help me, and then, ditch 'em, however I need to. They've clearly had the same attitude towards us, right?

KEITH (as Exeter Leap): Right. I mean, visibly, that's what we're doing here.

SYLVIA (as Ver'million Blue): Yeah, so.

KEITH (as Exeter Leap): So fuck 'em.

SYLVIA (as Ver'million Blue): Fuck 'em.

KEITH (as Exeter Leap): And if Sovereign Immunity would rather be dead on Clem's side than alive on our side, then fuck him too.

SYLVIA (as Ver'million Blue): Yeah.

AUSTIN: The fog rolls in all the way. I'm advancing the mystery clock to 4. You've sent the messages, I'm guessing, Clem?

JACK: Mhm.

AUSTIN: Here's the thing I'm going to tell you.

JACK: Have we sent-- oh, have we sent any message to Whitestar other than, the, the implicit one by sending the troops? Have we just said, "missing ongoing, keep fighting"?

AUSTIN: Well you've-- you mean to Chasmata, or to...?

JACK: No, like, have we-- have we corresponded with the Whitestar folks in any respect? I'm trying to think of just like--

AUSTIN: (overlapping) That's why I was as-- it sounded like you were saying "just go ahead and do the attack" to them.

JACK: Yeah, yeah, yeah. Basically, like, I just want them in a holding pattern until the army we've just stolen rolls through.

AUSTIN: Right, well, you will have stolen that army, is what you're saying, You will have-- you're waiting until you steal this army, the new army, before you do anything with them, right? That's the plan.

JACK: Uhhh....

AUSTIN: Is for them to basically wait until you've seized.

JACK: Or do we just send Apostolisian troops through...

AUSTIN: Now.

JACK: Using the, yeah.

AUSTIN: Right.

JACK: What were you suggesting, Art?

ART: Oh, I dunno. This is all...

AUSTIN: There's a world where you send Apostolisian troops through the underground, and they just have a way harder fight than they thought they did and lose, right?

ART: Yeah, that, that was the thing I was advocating for.

AUSTIN: (overlapping) Meanwhile, you come out somehow with Fort Icebreaker in a way that no-one knows other than you. "Well, yeah, Fort Icebreaker showed up, and then we took it."

JACK: Yeah, yeah.

ART: Because no-one else was helping.

AUSTIN: Right, well, exactly, right? Well, and also, because all...

ART: Is what we'll say.

AUSTIN: Right. Right, right right. Is that message, "hey, we need to resupply, we've sent everyone here. Send everybody to where Whitestar is, and then leave Fort Icebreaker here so that we can re-up on our side, just in case there's a counter attack", and then...

JACK: I mean, I don't know if they would just leave Fort Icebreaker bare.

AUSTIN: No, no, no. They wouldn't-- you would take it at that point.

JACK: They must--

AUSTIN: But everyone else would have--

JACK: No, but (laughing)

AUSTIN: ...already--

JACK: All their security wouldn't leave, right?

AUSTIN: No, no, no. That would be a fight.

JACK: They wouldn't empty Fort Icebreaker.

AUSTIN: Well, I'm actually going to tell you this. Here's a thing I wanna-- there is... the plan for capturing Fort Icebreaker is so choice to me. I think that is not the fight you have here. I think that you've been-- you've maneuvered so clearly to me, that, like, yeah. You're going-- they're going to bring Fort Icebreaker in in resupply mode, and not defensive mode. They will, especially with Whitestar attacking in the south-east, especially with their forces weakened from the fight against Chasmata to the north-west. It's a pushover. You got it. Like, that part of it's *good*. What's not good, is what's coming over the hills to the south.

JACK laughs.

KEITH: You're saying that there's, they're, like..

AUSTIN: I'm not gonna make you roll for capturing Fort Icebreaker, I think the plan is sick.

KEITH laughs.

AUSTIN: I, like, I think--

KEITH: Well, fictionally, there's a, there's like, you know. Everyone knows Fort Icebreaker is the strongest, most impenetrable thing, right?

JACK: Yeah, I was wondering about this. Why haven't they done this before??

KEITH: (overlapping) At some point, it's like, having guards there is perfunctory.

AUSTIN: Right, it's not what it's *for*. It's not, it's not meant to be... no-one's taken Fort Icebreaker before cause it's Fort Icebreaker. It shoots you before you get anywhere near it. You know what I mean? Like, there isn't-- there, it's part of a big military base, it's like, there's-- those other methods of infiltration haven't been available, no-one's done the thing you've done. This is like that bit in Hitman, where Diana goes like, "huh."

JACK: (laughing) Disguises...

AUSTIN: "Oh, putting on a disguise, 47? I've never seen anyone do that before." and she means it? This is, like, literally, you are doing the plan, this is a novel plan for you, for this world. Um. And so, that isn't the thing for me.

[1:40:34]

[MUSIC: *RADIOSTATIC. HIATUS. REDSKY.*]

The question is whether or not you can still be in control of Juniper when it gets here. Because, passing through the fog, like ghosts, I mean, like, the undead, in a real way, is The Black Century.

The Black Century is, and I think maybe, you-- you have probably heard this, you know this, this is not, this is like one of those things that gets whispered about, and it's creepy.

KEITH: When you're saying we've heard this, you're not saying us, the players--

AUSTIN: No, the players have not heard this, this is new to you.

The Divine, Motion, which is what Gur Sevraq warned you about in the last, in the downtime... is a Divine dedicated to ensuring that things keep going. That Apostolos gets where it needs to, takes what it needs to, and that those that are loyal to their nation do not stop fighting. It's called The Black Century because it is composed of one hundred soldiers, spread between infantry, armored and support roles. They're also called that because you serve for one hundred years, and the Divine Motion ensures that you live through that century, no matter what befalls you. This goes also for its elect, Hyacinth, who is in their final years of service.

Over this hill, through the fog, come these mechs, these hallows, that look as if they are undead. The joints are loose, the way that they move is sickly in some instances. Unpredictable. There are three kind-of types. There are two of those Kosmos units we saw before, except instead of having, like, shielded faces, their faces are all scarred up from previous battles. All of them are filled with holes that should stop them from working, and yet, they move. There are three of these things called Cackles, which are four-legged, hyena-style mechs, which howl in the fog. And moving above all that are these four flying units, that look like a blend between a bearded vulture and a harrier jet. Their march towards you is syncopated. It is empty of affect. There is no presentation of bloodlust, there is none of that famous Apostolisian courage. It is just shuffling through the silent wind. And then, up through the grey fog, something shoots. The sky is this, like, static, the Perennial Wave and the overcast day. And then there's this, just, trail of smoke that carries a black flare into the sky above you, and it, it brightens, but darkens at the same time? And for just a moment, the horizon around you stretches forever, and everything - the battlefield, Juniper itself, the hills - it loses colour and inverts, and in that moment, framed on the hills to the south in white and black is something strange, barely contained by its mechanical body. It's almost, almost writhing. And in the miles behind that, the seeming endless distance behind it, more bodies seem to move yet. If this is anything, it is a spear head. Motion is here.

[MUSIC ends.]

Uh, it did not fall for the feint. The naval feint, nor the, um... nor the spread rumors that there was a Whitestar attack from the Prophet's Path. And just to be clear, in terms of how long they've travelled here, I mean, maybe they've gotten some help with a little bit of, uh, a little bit of naval distance here? But, this is thirteen hundred miles of what has effectively been a march. It hasn't-- they couldn't have stopped to refuel to make that journey. Um, the thing is, they don't need to, because that's what the Divine Motion does, it keeps things moving when they shouldn't. Um, these are, like, as close to like zombie mechs as you can imagine, and they are on your doorstep. Um, if you can stop them, if you can drive them away, if you can figure out a way to halt Motion in place, then, then Fort Icebreaker will be yours, because your play will be successful. That is-- those are the stakes here.

KEITH: I have a couple questions.

AUSTIN: Sure.

KEITH: Do we know what Motion wants?

AUSTIN: This is all up in-- Motion is a loyal-- eh. You know. Motion has been--

KEITH: Motion was Columnar, not Apostolisian.

AUSTIN: (overlapping) No, no no no. Future is Columnar, and Future is who you have the hallows of.

KEITH: Right.

AUSTIN: Gur Sevraq stole Future from Columnar.

KEITH: Right.

AUSTIN: And speaking of that, I'm going to give you the move now, because being in the presence of this other Divine activates what that is. I'm gonna add it here to your-- as a veteran move on the Rapid Evening sheet, because it's all of you when you're in your mechs, this is when you're-- when you're in your mechs, specifically. Or truly, when using your vehicle, but, it's called **Future's Hallowed**, which is what you are. It's also called Beginner's Luck, because it's from the patreon-only Rookie playbook, it's a modified version of that. In your vehicle, or I guess when using your vehicle, (reading) when you get a 4+ result on a roll, you can remove the highest die to refresh your Spark - this can turn a success into failure, or crit into a normal success, if two 6s are on the successful dice. Spend your Spark to change a failed roll into a partial success. So.

JACK: (laughing) At any point?

AUSTIN: At any point that you have Spark, you can spend your Spark, and then you can regenerate your Spark by reducing one of your highest die to a 1, basically, right? Remo-- Or, remove the highest die from your roll, basically. So, if you get a success, let's say you roll a 6 and a 5, you could get rid of that 6 and take the partial success, and it'll recharge your Spark. For those of you who already have Spark abilities, this is the same resource, this gives you a way to recharge that Spark in play. Which is neat, I think. Um, and this is, like, a glimpse at what Future can do? Because Future is a Divine. And so, yeah, this is, this is a tool you have in this fight, that we'll see how that fuckin' goes. Um, I think this is the first fight against a Divine we've had this season? So. We'll see.

JACK: Sixteen or whatever episodes in?

AUSTIN: Yeah, mmhm. Mmhm!

KEITH: How many, how many are there?

AUSTIN: There's a hundred. Between the things. Right now what you see is four, five, six, seven, eight, nine mechs. Uh, there's a hundred people in The Black Century, which is why, again, they're called The Black Century.

KEITH: But only nine of them are mechs.

AUSTIN: Only nine of them that you see are mechs.

KEITH: Okay.

AUSTIN: Only nine of them in the fog are mechs. You could leave, also.

JACK: (distant) Oh, boy.

AUSTIN: We could end-- we could say...

JACK: (overlapping) Yeah, yeah, yeah.

AUSTIN: That's it! It's over! Retreat.

JACK: Whitestar just moves in, everyone goes home.

AUSTIN: (overlapping) Everyone goes home.

JACK: It's fine.

AUSTIN: And there was this brief, brief moment where you imagined another world, but.

JACK: Um. Two-- two, two quick questions.

AUSTIN: Yeah.

JACK: Both of which are largely ephemera. Uh, if you kill a, a... um, excerpt? What are they called?

AUSTIN: Uh, elect.

JACK: Elect. Um, does the Divine die?

AUSTIN: No!

JACK: It just-- it just keeps rolling until it finds another elect,

AUSTIN: It would, like-- there's a process, it depends on the, depends on the Divine. Some, some--

JACK: But it's not like, uh, it's not like, zombies, shooting the zombies' brains, and that's the end of the zombie.

AUSTIN: I, uh... for some Divines, it is. I bet if you killed Gur Sevraq, Future would roll on the ground, and until someone else picked up Future...

JACK: Yeah.

AUSTIN: ...it wouldn't do anything.

KEITH: Motion doesn't seem like it would be that easy to stop.

JACK: No. Thing two - they all live for a hundred years.

AUSTIN: Yeah.

JACK: At the end of the hundred years, do they all die simultaneously, and then new ones show up?

AUSTIN: I think it's been a rolling number--

JACK: (overlapping) Or is it like a rolling process--

AUSTIN: ...I think it's probably been-- although, I dunno, maybe, maybe it hasn't been. Maybe it's been - I dunno if The Black Century was arrived at organically, or from the jump, I bet it was organically.

JACK: Built up.

AUSTIN: I bet it was, like, over time, this began-- this, y'know, especially as the war against The Branched became more and more severe, this is what Motion did. Um.

JACK: (distant) Jesus. Okay, wow. (closer) We toyed with the idea of, of basically diverting Apostolisian troops from the signal tower, down towards Lucia Whitestar, basically like, dispatching our enemies' army against ourselves. I guess what I want to ask right off the bat is whether or not that is something we still want to do. Um. And I think that-- that speaks to broader questions about what our kind-of plan is? Um, but...

AUSTIN: And also who you are as people.

KEITH: I'm under the impression that we had already done this.

AUSTIN: You had done-- you had definitely done the first part, which is, left Icebreaker Prime to fight Chasmata for longer, giving you time to kind-of dig in.

JACK: Yeah, we said, "keep going!"

AUSTIN: And then called it back to say, “hey, we need a limited resupply, don’t worry about security, we got it under control here!” and while that’s happening is when Motion attacked, which we’ll get to Motion at the end of this, for sure, but.

JACK: Yeah.

AUSTIN: But, I wanted to pause for a second.

JACK: I really... I really, I’m, I’m not pushing under the carpet the idea that we made moves to, to reposition Apostolisian troops towards Whitestar, I guess I’m just, I’m... I’m wondering whether or not it makes sense to send troops to, uh, Whitestar. Enemy troops towards Whitestar. Cause if we are going to claim Icebreaker, if we’re going to try and claim Icebreaker for Kesh, at least temporarily - which, again, I’m not sure whether or not we’re going to do - do we want to have weakened Kesh’s front line? Like, does that benefit us?

AUSTIN: This is a you... this is truly a you question. In real ways, because I don’t-- I think maybe it sounds like Sovereign Immunity cares about this sort of play, or that part of this play, maybe? But I don’t know that Millie and, and uh, Leap, neccessarily give a fuck about what happens to the front line of Kesh.

JACK: I suppose it is... I suppose what we do there is dependent on what we want to do with Icebreaker if we successfully get it? Because, if we want this to be the moment where we pull the trigger and steal Icebreaker actively, then, it might make sense to divert Apostolisian troops, but if we don’t, and if we want to hold off on that for the time being, I don’t know if that’s necessarily the right idea. I feel, it’s-- I feel like I’m dealing with a big hypothetical here, in terms of, like, what we’re going to do.

AUSTIN: That’s true, but I-- the thing that I need is actually not, what you-- is not to, actually solve that question, or answer that question, but whether or not, and I know this is like circular in some way, but whether or not you would have pulled the trigger on that plan before Motion shows up. Do you know what I mean?

JACK: Oh, yeah.

AUSTIN: It’s a tough, it’s a tough-- it is a tough question to answer without knowing what the bigger picture plan is, but... putting aside the idea of the plan, because who knows how this goes? You could all die!

JACK: Right, yeah, we could like--

AUSTIN: You could all lose this fight!

JACK: (overlapping) Icebreaker might arrive and just flatten us!

AUSTIN: This is not an easy thing in front of you. Well, I’ve already given you the fact that, when Icebreaker arrives, assuming--

JACK: (overlapping) Oh, Icebreaker isn't worried.

AUSTIN: Right, or rather, that-- yeah, that taking-- that you've, and you've got a great plan here that I love and that I want to reward, assuming that you make it there in one piece. The thing that's way tougher is, you're about to fight... you're about to fight a Divine, right? Like, there's no questions around this. A Divine is here. That's very scary, and that is-- that's nothing anyone on the show has done this season yet, there's been some hallows, here and there, but there's never been a Divine that you've had to, like, square up against, and what that might mean. Um, and so there is, like, a question from me on that side, which means that to some degree, the bigger question, like, "what happens to Icebreaker Prime? blah, blah blah", is not secondary? But is, like... (sighs) I just, yeah, I just, I need to know whether or not those other reinforcements are... are, could come your way, or if you've diverted them so that they cannot come your way, you know what I mean? Um, that is, to me, like, the play, as it were. Um.

JACK: Which is more interesting to other people as, like, shared storytellers, here?

ART: I'm, I'm beginning to see that it's, like, unlikely that, that it's, that it- it's a Sovereign Immunity idea that I'm beginning to think is impossible to effectively sell. Because, like, Sovereign Immunity comes to the idea of like, "You know what you could do? Destroy your own army." Like, are you there yet?

AUSTIN: Right.

JACK: (laughing) Right.

AUSTIN: Forget about the "are you there yet?" - if you're worried that it's not realistic enough, or that it's not likely enough, we should toss that out the window, because we're not playing a simulation game. This is the way in which it's different than Crusader Kings, is that, we get to roll dice and see what happens. (laughs) And then we get to interpret those in a way that is melodramatic, and high, high action. And so, that part of--

ART: Right, but Sovereign Immunity wants to destroy Kesh, and is giving advice towards that end, and... but--

SYLVIA: There is a way to spin that, though. Like, I... just, my take on it is, like, if house Whitestar isn't taken care of, they're gonna also have a claim towards, like, what we're doing today.

JACK: Yeah, I was wondering about that.

SYLVIA: (overlapping) Like, they were part of this big operation, and, like, they're the ones who can be like, "you didn't go with the plan", or whatever - if they're... if they're dead, there's no-one to, y'know...! Like, question it!

JACK: It's a kinda two-birds-with-one-stone situation, on some level.

AUSTIN: Really, that is, the thing that's interesting to me about this is not, would it work, or wouldn't it work, it's would you pull the trigger if you knew it would work? Would you send these people to die? Including your political rival. Including people who-- but also, people who could become your army, if you took over Kesh, but also people who could come searching for you if you tried to escape, Leap and Millie. Um, and also, people who'd come to fight you if you, if you tried to like, y'know, do a coup, Clem and Sovereign Immunity. Like, there's definitely a-- to me, that's what makes this conversation. That is the beating heart of this, not the chess movement, because it's fake. Because none of this, none of this makes any sense anyway (laughing) in terms of real, historical military strategy.

JACK: (laughing) Sure.

AUSTIN: Um, and so for me, I wanna dive-- I wanna use... it's theatre, it's--

ART: It's the future, Austin.

AUSTIN: Um, it's-- yeah.

ART: We're ahead of, we're ahead of the history.

AUSTIN: But this is opera, right? And in that way, it's about character, characters making bold actions, or failing to make bold actions, and being rewarded, rewarded or punished based on... the way things end up shaking out. So I wanna focus in on the, the kind of moral character here, more than anything, if that makes sense.

JACK: I think in that case, through that lens, Clem would absolutely pull that trigger. Um.

AUSTIN: Okay.

JACK: I think, I think--

AUSTIN: Um, then what--

JACK: Oh, sorry, go on.

AUSTIN: No, I was gonna say-- what does that look like, is that a, is that like a, you send the go ahead flare up so that Whitestar starts to attack, even if the situation is not going to actually-- you send that up, and then you also send the reinforcement signal through the, kind-of, semaphore flag situation that we talked about last time to the other bases?

JACK: I think so? But I think I probably try and time it such that Whitestar can't claim "they incorrectly said that it was all clear". I want it to look like it's all clear...

AUSTIN: (overlapping) Yes, yes yes, I got you.

JACK: ...right up until it isn't.

AUSTIN: Um, and I think that's, that's what happens. On that side, that is going to happen that way, I'm not making you roll for it, it's interesting for, for that play to just unfold in that whole way, um. And that brings us back to the big question, which is - what do you do against Motion? As a reminder, I think most of you were up in this tower, as people, outside of your machines and all that. Up in this, like, watchtower in the middle of the, it's not just a watchtower, it's the semaphore tower, it's the tower that sends messages to the other parts of the extended Fort Icebreaker line, and in that, or from that high altitude, you see this kind-of fog rolling in, that you know - and this is happening for hours - that you know is the Perennial Wave getting closer and closer, and as a reminder, the Perennial Wave is a thing that makes everything function weird, or not everything, but most, most high-tech devices, when it's really dense, when, when-- as we say, the tide is high, um, it means that communications are harder to, to send out, it means that, like, the distances, you know, on your scanners are wrong, it means that some-- your guns jam in some cases, it means, things that should just work, fail to work. Um, and especially really high tech things. Except, it seems, Divines, for some reason, Divines are not affected by the Perennial Wave, as far as you know, or have been able to see first person. Um, on top of that, soon after that, the valley kind-of fills with this fog, this nano-machine fog. Um, machines start walking through the - that fog, start appearing in the mist. And those are the machines, those are the kind-of lead vanguard of The Black Century, which is a group of one-hundred soldiers, some of whom are inside of mechs, hallows that have been blessed by the Divine Motion, um, and they are the Divine Motion's, like, personal army. They are called The Black Century, partially because there's a hundred of them, but also because they live, the pilots and the soldiers and the support staff, all live for a century, they give their lives to Motion for a century, and in exchange, Motion keeps them moving.

[1:59:31]

Um, and that is where we left off, uh... (laughs) um, with this, this Divine staring down point Juniper. Um, and a number of machines appearing, coming down through the fog.

SYLVIA: With this fog, would I be able to look through my scope, just to get-- I want to immediately just get a look at the mechs that these guys are piloting.

AUSTIN: Totally, a hundred percent-- or, at least, you're able to, like, catch a few glimpses, because there's a blend here. You know what, give me a gather information roll.

SYLVIA: Okay.

AUSTIN: Which means that it's not-- it's a fortune roll, it's not an action roll, and it sounds like you're using Survey, uh, or Scan, either... either one. Depending on if you're using...

SYLVIA: I think I'm just using Survey, so this would just be one dice?

AUSTIN: Yeah, you have those, like, cool binoculars or whatever, right?

SYLVIA: Yeah, yeah.

AUSTIN: So what is your, what is your survey?

SYLVIA: 1. So, it's just the one die.

AUSTIN: Okay, yeah, 1d6. You could push yourself if you wanted to, but, y'know.

SYLVIA: Not on this.

AUSTIN: (laughs) But you're already at 5 stress, so.

SYLVIA: There you go-- oh! I got a 6!

AUSTIN: Hey! That's a 6, look at you! Okay, with a 6, you get extra information. So. Um, your initial scan reveals, and here's like, the limited information. Limited information is two front melee units, backed up by three additional smaller melee units, and then in the sky, four flying units.

The standard amount of information, is I can tell you about what those mechs are. The two front ones are the Kosmos units, similar to the ones you took out inside of this base, those are the ones that have, like, the kind-of greek styling, the ones that I linked you to last week, very much influenced by, um, the artist (Austin hums) dofresh? d-o-f-r-e-s-h on artstation, has a series, and one of those is called "Sent By The Gods", that's a good touchstone for it. Very much involv-- looks like that, you know; big glaives, rounded shields, but, like, reverse jointed legs, and very thick limbs. Medium in scale, the same scale as, I think, all of your, all of your hollows, or I guess now they're hallows. They're the same basic scale as those. Then, there are also, the second type are these kind-of jackal-looking things, the hyenas on the map, and those are... (Austin hums) Cackles? Those are Adamant Arms and Artifice Cackles. They are four-legged, mobile hyena mechs, and they have rockets attached to, like, their sides. And big cannons on their backs. And also very sharp claws. Those are light mechs, those are pretty quick, and those are able to, like-- they're like, able, you can just tell by the way they move, to like, just take off in an instant. And here, like, they are just like, prowling around in a, in a kind-of like, sick predatory way, do you know what I mean? They have that kind-of like, low, dangling stance? As if, they're looking at, they're looking at, um, prey that's already been wounded, (laughing) which is not the case with y'all necessarily! Though, I guess actually, looking at your actual sheets, I know Clem is still, Clem, you still have a level 2 harm, right?

JACK: Mhm!

AUSTIN: And then, I don't remember if anybody else still has any issues, but I think, I think maybe y'all are all good.

ART: I'm all good, yeah.

AUSTIN: I don't think anyone even spent quirks or anything last time, right? So, I think you're good. Um. But Clem is certainly in-- injured.

And then, and then in the sky, kind-of circling in the distance, looking for moments to move closer, are the-- these Wakes, the AdArm Wakes which are primarily flight units? Um, they kind-of stay up most of the time, and you know from your training, um, that what they... (laughs) what they tend to do, is lift foes into the air and drop them, and they do that either by dive-bombing and lifting things, or sending out - especially with, uh, smaller armor units, stuff like that - literally launching their talons, that have like, magnetised claws? Down onto things, and then lifting them up into the air, like a grappling hook almost. Um, uh, and that's primarily what they do. Um, so that's what you get on a standard, those are like the, those are the vanguard.

JACK: Jesus.

AUSTIN: And then, with your great effects, I will reveal something else on the screen, which was not going to be revealed at this moment, but good job doing that investment-- or that, uh, that...

SYLVIA: Survey?

AUSTIN: Survey, yeah. The final thing is in the back. It is a large, uh, mech that's sort-of like the Kosmos, in fact, I would say it looks like someone has beefed up the Kosmos? But not necessarily made it slower, it's like someone clicked and dragged to make it bigger, but also made sure to attach extra jets and extra, like, mobility thrusters on it. Um, on its back, there are these two big, um, kind-of vernier thrusters - I really like the idea of the, um, the-- the thrusters that are on the back of the Wing Zero from Gundam Wing, not the angel wings, but there's these kind-of like, ovoid-almost shapes on the Wing Zero's back that I really like for these. It is called the Pneuma, (spelling) p-n-e-u-m-a. It is made by the Zenith Fund, the Columnar folks, and is literally them taking the, um, the basic model of the Kosmos and then building, like, (laughing) a boss version of it? It has the same basic shapes as, as the Kosmos, but it's left-- a couple things are different. One is, it still has that big heat glaive, but underneath the, the glaive part is a - and again this is stuff that you know from your training in Apostolos, right? You've probably piloted a Kosmos before, in training...

SYLVIA: Yeah, probably.

AUSTIN: ...and would have piloted a Pneuma at some point, um, but you, maybe you didn't stay in long enough to do that. The right-- that, that glaive underneath the heat glaive part, underneath the heat blade part, there is, like, a pump-action rocket launcher? That does like a direct rocket launcher shot?

JACK: ...the fuck?!

AUSTIN: And then, uh, on its head, it has like has some vulca--

ART: (overlapping) It's a shotgun that's so big you could put rockets in it.

AUSTIN: That you just shoot rockets out of it, yeah, exactly. Uhm, and then, the actual thing that you know to worry about here, especially given that Motion is involved, is, that its left arm stops at a certain point and becomes a kind-of loose tangle of really big industrial electric coil, that kind of pulses with energy, and you can see it in the fog, uh, in the far distance once you start looking for it. It's as if you're looking at lightning, like a heat lightning storm in the fog. And, and you know if that thing touches you, it's bad, and it can kind-of like, shoot those out and extend those coils almost like a net, or like a, like tentacles that it can throw out at its foes. This is, your guess, the lead unit, here. This is the, the unit that is in charge, and probably where the elect of Motion is. You know that the elect of Motion is named Hyacinth. So, um, so there's your survey.

SYLVIA: Okay.

AUSTIN: Light work.

JACK: Okay. Shall we consider hiding?

AUSTIN: (overlapping) I'm guessing you're, you're... (laughing)

SYLVIA: Okay! Yeah! Sure, that's-- I have a feeling that's not gonna work?

ART: Motion's going to be really good at searching.

JACK: It seems like it's also gonna be very good at killing!

SYLVIA: It's going to be better at killing, if it gets in these walls, and there's nowhere for us to go.

JACK: That's-- yeah.

SYLVIA: So we should try and stop it before that happens. Is my suggestion.

JACK: Uhh, Austin, real quick - how many times have we fought Divines? Generally, in the history of the show?

AUSTIN: In the show? Single digits.

JACK: It's got to be a small number.

AUSTIN: (overlapping) Probably.

JACK: Has it ever gone really well for us outside of finale situations?

AUSTIN: Pffffff... you know, bud... (laughing) I'm having a hard time thinking-- ah, yes! Yes it has! I can think of times in Counter/WEIGHT where y'all won fights, and it was, and it was sad that you won those fights in some instances.

ART: Jack... with the right attitude, any episode can be a finale.

JACK and AUSTIN laugh.

AUSTIN: And here lies the Rapid Evening!

JACK: Mhm! Hmm...

JACK and KEITH laugh.

JACK: Sylvia in the chat.

SYLVIA: I was saying, I have a really good KDA against divine beings, just not in any of our sci-fi shows.

AUSTIN: Uh huh, yeah. It's true.

JACK: You wanna see how you can do in a, in a sci-fi show, Sylvi?

SYLVIA: I do, actually!!

AUSTIN: Yeah, here we go!

SYLVIA: I'm going to my mech, I don't know about you guys, but I'm going to my mech.

KEITH: I'm comin'.

JACK: Does this-- wow. Is this just, like, do you just peel off and start heading to the mechs without, like, waiting?

SYLVIA: Yeah!

KEITH: (overlapping) Oh yeah!

SYLVIA: I think it's one of those things where Millie's immediately, like, "if you guys aren't gonna take this seriously, we're all going to die, so I'm going to take this seriously right away."

ART: Yeah, I think this is a running situation, this is like... (laughs)

JACK and AUSTIN laugh.

JACK: Sprinting down the tower, 'cause we're like at the top of this signal tower.

AUSTIN: Yeah, mmhm. Uh, as a reminder, what you have. You have a pair of AdArm Troops that were assigned to you by Kesh. You have a-- A.O. Rooke and the toughs have taken over one artillery cannon, so you do have a little bit of extra, a lil extra firepower here.

JACK: Oh, phew (!)

AUSTIN: Yeah, one artillery cannon against a Divine, let's, let's see how it goes. Um, uh, and then--

KEITH: Well there's all those extra, all those ads.

AUSTIN: What?

JACK: The Divine has ads.

ART: The Divine has ads.

AUSTIN: Oh, yes, yeah, true, the Divine does have ads, it's tr-- it's true. Well, the, you'll see what the Divine is, we'll get there. Um. So, uh, I'm trying to think if there's anything else here. Do you have any other questions as these things, like... march is too strong, right? There's an inevitability in how they move, especially the two Kosmos units up front, they-- they do not move the way you might think a zombie does, they move, um, like, they move like a patrol officer or something, right? Like, or like a, guard at a-- they move as if they've already taken over the place, and they're kind-of like doing that thing where they're, like, taking slow pacing steps and scanning the horizon? Um, it's clear that they-- it's clear that they know that they're here to kill you, but it's not necessarily like, they're like, "alright, pumping myself up, get ready to be in a fight", y'know? That's just not where they are, let's say, emotion.

KEITH: This is a thing-- The Black Century explicitly worked for the Apostolisians.

AUSTIN: This is an Apostolisian Divine and its units, yeah yeah yeah.

KEITH: Right, this isn't like--

AUSTIN: This is like an elite, yes.

KEITH: This isn't like, a problem, like, we're not facing something that is like, like, wholly-- like the Apostolisians would also be scared...

AUSTIN: No, the Apostolisians-- there are Apostolisians here who have, like, maybe they have a view of this somehow, right? Maybe they've, maybe they're civilians who went into hide-- to like, "yesss, The Black Century has shown up!" Now, are they also kind-of scared of The Black Century?

KEITH: Sure.

AUSTIN: Yes.

KEITH: Yeah.

AUSTIN: Uh, but they're, it's-- y'know. They're theirs, they're The Black Century. So. They're motion's.

KEITH: Yeah, um.

JACK: Awful. Horrible.

AUSTIN: Motion uses she/her pronouns, uhm, and Hyacinth uses they/them, just so we know.

JACK: Okay! Austin! Could you let me know what, uhh, it's-- Leader says (reading) when you command a cohort in combat, they continue to fight when they would otherwise break, brackets, they're not taken out when they take level 3 harm (stops)... What would happen if I used that move and a cohort did suffer level 3 harm?

AUSTIN: They would continue to fight through level 3 harm. Traditionally, the way it would work is that, if you-- if they get broken, you would need to spend stress to make them do stuff. Someone would. The same way that if you had a level 3 harm, you would have to spend stress to act. Um, because of that move, they would be able to act as if they only had level 2 harm, which reduces your dice by 1, basically. Does that make sense?

JACK: Yeah. Totally.

AUSTIN: Really, just like, you get to keep playing-- you get to keep using them. Right now, I believe that they're fine. Both the cohort, the Rooke cohort and, uh, the RUNT that, y'know, Millie's robot pal, the hunter mech is also, is also completely fine, both of them have no damage.

JACK: But I could buff them from the start, and that would prep them in the event that they took level 3 damage, right?

AUSTIN: No, no, no. This is just-- that's just a passive. That move that you have is just a, if they take level 3 harm, they're not taken out, you don't have to do that move.

JACK: Oh, I'm kind-of passively commanding that cohort just cause they're here with us, now?

AUSTIN: Um, ye-- when you, when you would-- in other words, you would, in the future, if you said "hey, fire that gun again!", you would be able to do it, even if they had suffered a level 3 harm.

JACK: Sure, okay, that makes sense, thank you.

AUSTIN: (overlapping) Does that make sense? Yeah, yeah yeah. Mmhm.

So, I know Mil-- people are running to their machines. What else is happening here? Because if you don't start taking moves, I'm gonna start taking moves.

KEITH: I'm going to... Leap is going to get into a... sort-of like a flanking position? Um, I think--

AUSTIN: Mmm. Where at on the map would you like to go?

KEITH: So, they're down here...

AUSTIN: Yeah, they're kind-of - for people listening, the-- I just kind-of extended the map to the south - imagine this is, like, some low hills that they're coming down? Um, they're kind-of at the south. below point Juniper's fortress, there's a river, and I'll extend that river out on the map, just so that we remember that it's there. Um, that kind-of runs southwest out of the, out of the camp? Um. But, beyond that, it is, um, it is, it is, yeah. They're that direction.

KEITH: So there's this gate to the southeast, here.

AUSTIN: Yes.

KEITH: That, I feel like, gives me a shot at them, uh, that is, you know--

AUSTIN: Mm, mmhm!

KEITH: ...that is distracting from the main, sort-of, uh... wall here? And then also gives me a retreatable position back through the gate, if I need to go back through the gate.

AUSTIN: Totally, there's like, a little cover there, for sure.

KEITH: Right.

AUSTIN: And you can kind-of get all the way inside.

KEITH: Yeah.

AUSTIN: Sure.

KEITH: Um, but still-- but still pretty easily have line-of-sight, I think.

AUSTIN: Yeah, totally.

KEITH: Okay, great.

AUSTIN: Yeah, I've played Frozen Synapse, this is an extremely Frozen Synapse position for you to have taken, I love it.

KEITH: Yeah!

AUSTIN: More so than XCOM to me for some reason?

KEITH: (overlapping) Frozen Synapse is great!

AUSTIN: Great game.

KEITH: I should play more 2.

AUSTIN: You should play more 2, 2 is good. Uhm.

ART: So.

AUSTIN: Alright, so that's what Leap is doing, Leap is taking up kind-of a defensive position here.

ART: So you're telling us we can make moves in our mechs now?

AUSTIN: What? Yes, yes, yes.

ART: We have successfully...

AUSTIN: You're-- you're in control of the situation currently. You're, you're-- you have the camera. You tell me what you're doing.

ART: (overlapping) I would like to try to barricade the, the main entrance.

AUSTIN: Which one are you calling the-- so that is already barri-- partially barricaded because uh, remember that's how you got in, was through the northern one, I guess, yeah, if you want to reinforce it, I'm totally down with that. What's that look like?

ART: (overlapping) Yeah, I'm, I'm gonna try to-- well, we, we came in with the construction supplies, right? So I assumed there was some...

AUSTIN: Yes!

ART: ...supplies, you know, supposed to look like construction stuff, so I assume there is just, shit in there, right?

AUSTIN: Yeah, we literally came in with a bunch of extra, like, modular concrete walls that is literally what your mech is able to put down? So you're, (laughing) you're stacked with exactly the right supplies for this.

ART: Yeah, this worked out, I would like to take those supplies, and use them to just, make sure nothing's coming in this-- this way.

AUSTIN: This specific way, alright, um...

ART: That's the widest road, you know?

AUSTIN: (overlapping) I think that that is, not even... yeah, it's a river, as a reminder.

ART: Right, but it's the, it's the...

AUSTIN: But it's still a...

ART: It's the easiest, biggest-- where this is...

AUSTIN: Give me...

ART: ...this is small, and this is big. You know. (as if explaining to a child) Small... Big...

AUSTIN: Oh, ohhh (!) Okay!

SYLVIA laughs.

AUSTIN: You give me... I think that this is a Manipulate, because you are (reading) deftly moving things with your vehicle - you might remove a primed warhead from a missile, you might pick up a baby in a carriage, you could reattach a damaged arm, but Engineer might be better. (stops reading) I think this is still like, you're basically reinforcing this entry point, um, so give me a-- this is not a, um, this is also a fortune roll.

ART: Okay.

AUSTIN: I'm basically going to give you a line of defence on that place based on how good this roll is. So. 1d6, currently, you can expend a quirk if you want to, to get a bonus.

ART: Uhm...

AUSTIN: Either increased, um, right now it is standard effect? And you could spend a quirk to increase the effect on a success, or to, um, get an extra die.

ART: You know, I think I'm gonna need these things.

AUSTIN: Okay, yeah, that's fair. Then just give me the 1d6.

ART: I think it might get worse from here.

AUSTIN: Yeah. (pause) Hey! Look at you with the 6! Hell yeah! So here's what I'm gonna give that--

ART: We can never die!

AUSTIN: ...Yeah, yeah yeah. I'm just gonna, I'm gonna block that off. Like, all the way. I think they-- they would need to, I would need to make it a real point of, of, like, effort for them to break through this, so I'm just gonna like, take a black line here and just block this off, with these big concrete barriers you have set up. Nice work.

JACK: Does the water start, like, backing up and flooding these streets around here?

AUSTIN: Oh, it must. That's really good, yeah, definitely. Definitely does, right? Um, uh, and, you know, it's running into some sort of grate system, some sort of run-off system, but it, it's not meant for the river to be stopped like this, necessarily. It'll hold for the length of this battle, at the very least.

Alright, so that's what's S.I. has done. Clem, Millie?

SYLVIA: So I want to get into position somewhere to fire from, like, a safe range right now? Obviously, I don't, I don't think Millie is super hopeful with the Perennial Wave coming in, but she has to give it a shot first?

AUSTIN: Totally.

SYLVIA: Um.

AUSTIN: Do you have an idea for where that is here?

SYLVIA: Well, so, I'm trying to-- the problem with this is, like, elevation is kind-of tough to tell.

AUSTIN: Yeah, the walls are high, uh, and then I'd say that some of the buildings are as tall as the walls, um, you could tell me which-- when I say some of them, you tell me which ones are some of them.

SYLVIA: I was thinking actually maybe something near where S.I.'s sort-of barricade is. Because....

AUSTIN: Okay, so pretty close, actually.

SYLVIA: Yeah, like, uhm...

AUSTIN: Close to them, I mean. In terms of...

SYLVIA: Yeah, yeah. I definitely want to be close to them, because if I can't - if my long-ranged stuff doesn't work, I need to be able to do something. Um.

AUSTIN: Right, right.

SYLVIA: Effective. Yeah.

AUSTIN: That makes sense.

SYLVIA: So like, maybe around here-ish.

AUSTIN: Alright, sounds good, do you want to drag yourself there? I think you can.

SYLVIA: Yeah, and um...

AUSTIN: And...

SYLVIA: I am happy to start firing. (laughs)

AUSTIN: Yeah! I, I-- lemme just, like, toss it up in the air for Clem, is there a, do you give like, a hold-your-fire, or an all-fire, like, order?

JACK: Um...

AUSTIN: Do you-- do people just roll out without your command? What's up?

JACK: I think once I see that the, the river has been blockaded...

AUSTIN: Mhm.

JACK: Um... I think I'm gonna -- was A.O. in the command tower with us? Or was he, like skyping in from the--

AUSTIN: He was, he was, we had him there.

JACK: Okay, so I'm gonna--

AUSTIN: But, given how fast everyone has been able to move, like, I'm, I'm willing to give y'all the benefit here.

JACK: Yeah. Do we have other artillery emplacements in the city that we haven't found or taken over yet?

AUSTIN: No. This is the last one, uh, and you have these two troop units, and that is it.

JACK: Um, what kind of range does this artillery have?

AUSTIN: Uh, beyond this map.

JACK: Oh my god, okay, so it's a classic heavy artillery tower.

AUSTIN: (overlapping) It's an artillery cannon, yeah yeah yeah.

JACK: It can hit something that a human can't see.

AUSTIN: It is part of-- it is part of Fort Icebreaker in the sense that...

JACK: (overlapping) Oh, sure, it's on the Kesh side.

AUSTIN: A lot of what Fort Icebreaker... well, part of what it does is, part of the reason that the fort is a fort, is that a lot of the walls are artillery walls, or surveillance walls, or mines, y'know, minefields. It's a lot of, like, soft wall, not that an artillery barrage is a soft thing, but it's not, like, a physical barrier, it's the force necessary to keep people from passing through certain spaces? And this is a part of, of that, part of the wall, so to speak, here. Um, so yeah, that thing can hit anything, and in fact, the one thing it can't hit is stuff very close to it.

JACK: Sure.

AUSTIN: Y'know, it can-- especially given its position that's like, for people at home, it's sort-of in the middle of a triangle of buildings, like, there's like a little quad inside of this kind-of, uh, triangle, is that an isosceles triangle? I always forget what my triangles are. No, isosceles is the other one, this is a, uhm...

JACK: A right-angle triangle?

AUSTIN: A right... isn't there another word for that?

JACK: Archimedes triangle.

AUSTIN: No, I guess not. There it is, there it is.

ART: Just, right triangle, isn't it?

AUSTIN: Yeah.

ART: A right triangle can be an isosceles triangle, isosceles just means two of the sides are the same.

AUSTIN: Right. Uh, correct.

JACK: It is, I guess.

AUSTIN: I was thinking of the Pythagorean triangle, but that is, a specific subtype of right triangle, anyway...

JACK: In any case, uh, A.O. probably couldn't hit something here, but we know he can hit something here.

AUSTIN: Absol-- yeah, absolutely. And this is harder than this.

JACK: Yeah, sure.

AUSTIN: The further out they are on this map, the easier it is to hit with an artillery cannon.

JACK: Okay, I think, I think Clem sees the-- Leap, Millie, and S.I. start heading off, and dispatches A.O. to the artillery tower, and then, climbs into her mech and calls for the Troop units to come with her and starts kind-of coming across this bridge towards the wall.

AUSTIN: The bridge is destroyed, I should have knocked that out, apologies.

JACK: Okay, well, we can jump over the river, I guess.

AUSTIN: You can jump over it, yeah. Uh huh.

JACK: Uhm. Uhhh, and gives the order to fire at will.

AUSTIN: Okay, so then, Millie, let's, let's start with your opening barrage. Millie and Leap are both doing this, actually, I wonder if this is a group action, uhm.

SYLVIA: Could it be, like, a set-up?

AUSTIN: It could also be a set-up, it depends on how y'all want to do it. Uhm...

SYLVIA: What were you specifically trying to do, uh, Keith? With Leap?

KEITH: I am trying to, uh, flank them, to hit them-- to hit them without them even looking at me, because they're focused on the three other mechs firing at them from your position.

SYLVIA: Okay, so I think if I'm just firing at them to take their attention, that would...

AUSTIN: Then it sounds like a setup for Leap to me?

KEITH: (overlapping) Sounds like a setup for a flank.

AUSTIN: Yeah, totally. Um, so, that would be a setup action, which means, (reads) you are weakening an obstacle, or empowering an ally. With a success, with any squadmates that follow through have improved position or increased effect. (stops reading) You, for this, uh, because you have the kind-of advantage of surprise, this fight hasn't started yet, are currently in standard, standard, uh... I don't know that the degree quite matters, so just do... sorry, you're in risky/standard, altogether, and I will now reveal that there is a 8-step clock called The Black Century.

KEITH: So there's-- if there's, sorry, but if we, um, if the setup works, then I would be risky/great?

AUSTIN: It depends, do you -- yeah, do you want extra effect, or better, um, position.

KEITH: Effect.

AUSTIN: Then, yes, correct.

SYLVIA: This would be bombard?

AUSTIN: Uhm... this would be...

KEITH: Likely would be... Battle-- it would be Destroy.

AUSTIN: I think, I think that-- no, not Destroy, this is Battle.

SYLVIA: I don't-- okay, so I have one...

AUSTIN: Again, like, I know we've gone back-and-forth on this a few times, but, Destr-- you can use Destroy for specifically, for like-- specifically I'm opening up to carpet bomb something, but this is-- this isn't...

KEITH: (overlapping) Yeah, no, I was confused by b-- by which one Battle was, I was like, oh, Battle's melee robots, but it's not.

AUSTIN: It's-- Battle is, being in a melee in the sense that, like, anything you've ever done in Call of Duty is Battle, right? Except for, except for specifically when you're in that one sniping level where you are shooting super, super, super far, those are Bombard, that's Bombard.

KEITH: Or, killstreaks, are Destroy or Bombard.

AUSTIN: Almost all Bombard. Um, except for-- you know, the ones that you don't fire, the ones that you say, like, "do a bombing run", that maybe is Destroy, but ones when you are specifically doing a bombing run, that's Bombard, because that is firing beyond human sight.

SYLVIA: I rolled another 6.

AUSTIN: Regardless, regardless, Millie is killing it and gets another 6.

KEITH: Damn.

AUSTIN: What's this look like? You tell me what this looks like on your side, here.

SYLVIA: I think what Millie does is, it's-- it's, like, I'm not using any of my quirks or anything here, it's just very standard, like, she immediately, once her mech's up there, it's, like, in cannon mode, and just-- I think she probably starts firing at the, uhm, the two lead units, with the shields, um, I think even, like, intentionally hitting the shield a couple of times, just to get their attention, before, like, actually trying to hit them?

AUSTIN: Nice, um.

SYLVIA: Yeah.

AUSTIN: Alright! Leap, do you want to follow up on this? What's this look like for you?

KEITH: I do, yes, so. I wanna be clear, my goal here is to not yet even be noticed.

AUSTIN: Okay.

KEITH: I don't want them-- to have them take stock of, "oh there's two directions here". Uhm.

AUSTIN: Yep, I gotcha.

KEITH: I have a way to do that, if a success here can't do that by itself.

AUSTIN: Uhm, wait, say that again? Say that last bit that you just said again?

KEITH: I have a way to do that, with a move, if, like...

AUSTIN: Even if you fail, you're saying.

KEITH: Right, well I guess I'm saying, if, like-- you could tell me there's no way to fire big guns at people...

AUSTIN: Without being noticed...

KEITH: ... without being noticed.

AUSTIN: No, I gotchu. no no no no no. Let's, let's do the roll, I think you've-- specifically with the setup maneuver here, even though you chose effect and not position, I think that's still, like totally fine.

KEITH: Yeah.

AUSTIN: So risky, risky/great.

KEITH: I also, I do have, (reading) if you're outnumbered or drastically overmatched by a foe, take plus 1d to resistance rolls (stops reading), is that in effect right now?

AUSTIN: Yes, but you haven't had-- there's nothing to resist yet, so you don't take any extra die, but yes.

KEITH: (overlapping) No, I know, I just wanna make sure that this counts as... yeah.

AUSTIN: Absolutely! Absolutely!!! They are-- they are, this is, Motion is a risk for *real* real.

KEITH: Oh yeah, just gettin', just gettin' it on the board.

AUSTIN: Motion is not a-- yeah, I gotcha, I gotcha.

KEITH: Alright, so, I'm, uh, rolling... what is it, 2... it's 2d6 for, uhm, for I'm using Destroy.

AUSTIN: Uh, wait wait wait, don't roll anything yet, then, because if you're using Destroy here, Destroy is going to be risky/standard, not risky/great.

KEITH: Even though...?

AUSTIN: Bombard is-- you would be risky/limited without it. That is, like, literally, unaimed, you're just firing in the air, that is not going to work against an elite military unit, it's going to be limited, even with the buff, the... because they--

KEITH: Okay, can I...?

AUSTIN: Just as a reminder, they are a Tier 3 unit, they are a Divine unit, it's one thing, again, to use Destroy to try to blow up buildings, it's a different thing to try to use it against a group of enemies.

KEITH: Okay.

AUSTIN: What you-- that is what I'm trying to underscore, that is Bombard, a hundred percent.

KEITH: Okay, is it... um, is it possible to maintain effect by putting myself in a better-slash-riskier position?

AUSTIN: Yeah, you can go down to desperate/risky for sure. I think at that point--

KEITH: Or desperate/great, you mean.

AUSTIN: Desperate/great, yes, sorry. Desperate/great, yes.

KEITH: Yeah, alright, let's do it.

AUSTIN: Or, no-- desperate/standard. Desperate/standard, yeah.

KEITH: Desperate/standard...

AUSTIN: If you're going to use Destroy, absolutely, because it would have been risky/lim-- it would be risky/limited to use Destroy, with the buff from Millie setting it up, because what Millie is doing is keeping them, in a unit enough to where you can just fire into the air, any sort of aiming moves you from Destroy into Bombard.

KEITH: Okay.

AUSTIN: You could also use Battle, but Battle would also be riskier, because Battle is very much, "I'm pointing-- here I am, I'm pointing a gun at you."

KEITH: I'll do, I'll do-- I'll put myself into a worse position, get an extra die from my move that does that, and maintain the standard effect.

AUSTIN: Okay, so then, Destroy is, is going to give you a desperate/standard, yes. Which is how many dice? Three dice, then?

KEITH: Yeah. (pause) 6!

AUSTIN: Hey, there's a 6! Nice work, alright! So...

KEITH: Unbelievable. And a 1 and a 2, though.

AUSTIN: Here's what I'm-- I'm gonna do two things, here, one is, one is, you tell me what that looks like.

KEITH: Um.

AUSTIN: And then... let's start there.

KEITH: I think it's, y'know, the worse positioning, I think that I'm like moving further away from the safety of that gate than I wanted to, and then it's like, you've got a, hunkered down, and maybe even look away for a second while you set up the shot, like, to get the cannons in the right position?

AUSTIN: Yeah. And then you're unloading with heavy cannon fire, basically.

KEITH: Yeah.

AUSTIN: Mmm. So. Here's the situation. There are two clocks on the table that have not been touched yet. One is The Black Century, which is the unit of, of, like, the kind-of vanguard surrounding Motion and Hyacinth in the Pneuma. The Pneuma, (spelling) p-n-e-u-m-a, uh, is the big, is like, the large mech we talked about. That is a 6-step clock, and The Black Century is an 8-step clock. You tell me, uh, where you want to put your two ticks. Where's this hit? Does this hit Pneuma, does this hit The Black Century, do you split it up?

KEITH: This is... Pneuma Pneuma.

AUSTIN: Great. Great. Sounds good. Uh... So, uh, these shells slam into the side of, of Hyacinth's mech, which is, which presumably is also where Motion is, uh, if you're not necessarily a Divine scientist, you'd go like, "oh yeah, that's probably where Motion is, that's clearly the leader mech", um, I'll lift that up to 2. As those hit, it's as if, travelling through the dust of the, um, of the Perennial Wave, there's been a connection made with you.

[MUSIC: *TANAGER. PERFECT. TOUCHPAPER.*]

And you can see the face of the pilot of the, of the Pneuma, the elect of Motion, Hyacinth, in your head. They are in their final years of service, um, they look gaunt and tired. Um, their cheeks are recessed, their eyes are recessed. What was once kind-of wavy, vivid auburn hair is now a kind-of sickly crinkly copper. Their scales, cause they're Apostolisian, have kind-of grown pale, and even distended a little bit? Their eyes themselves still have a certain glint to them? And when they speak to you, they say...

AUSTIN (as Hyacinth): You move as quickly as she does. She has taken notice of you.