

[Twilight Mirage 04: Birds of Prey](#)

Transcriber: Katie (katiemomo) to 0:17:30; Cole completed

[00:00:00]

[Cassette recording click]

Austin as Satellite: Report 87.

[First tone of opening music]

Austin as Satellite: You ever think about time, Primary? About how fast things can change? The Divine Fleet started nearly thirty thousand years ago, can you imagine? Thirty thousand years. Real years, not like where we're from. All those lives, back to back to back; connected by a taut string of continuity. From the first who studied under Kamala Cadence, to those who walk the seraphic shores of Seance today. All of them. Countless beings who never breathe the same air, but who each equally belongs to the same thing -- to that fleet.

[Opening music picks up]

Austin as Satellite: And then, less than a millennia ago, a handful of those people left, and today their descendents... Quire hangs right in the middle of the Twilight Mirage, but most of the people on the planet, they don't even know what a Divine is. Not really. But does that mean that they aren't part of that continuity? A few hundred years... and then that line is just... snapped? I don't know, Primary. It's just... you think you know where you're from. You know who raised you. You remember your teachers. I can't forget my first deployment. But there's a larger story. We're all connected to things we don't know, that we could never know.

[Music swells, then retreats]

Austin as Satellite: But in my mind, those things count too. Whether we want them to or not.

[Music ends]

[00:02:23]

Art: Yeah, maybe it's like, it's, you know, something that looks... you said it looks like a shadow and everyone left, and the- the shadow moved, and it's like, "Oh that wasn't..."

Austin [over Art]: "--That wasn't a shadow."

Art: ...That wasn't a shadow, that's- that's a... that's a lion, that's a...

Austin: Yeah, what's the- so you chase it because you think it's, like, inspiration or wha-? What do you chase it for? You just are curious?

Art [over **Austin**]: I chase it because I think it's- because like yeah! 'Cause I wanna see, I wanna see who... who did this, this must be a sign.

Austin: Yeah.

Art: We're looking for s- we're looking for a way through. If there's a marking here, it might be pointing toward something-

Austin: Yeah. So I think this is happening at sunset. And the sun is like... You know, the shadows are all very long, and it takes you down a few side... like, alleys in this canyon, right? Like little, where little cracks of little rivulets had broken through. And eventually you see the shadow on the wall, and there are these like, two humanoid figures, and one of them has a ball, and it's like dribbling a ball, and then it drops the ball, and the shadow like, fades down into the shadow on the ground, and then both figures turn and look at you. And they're not- there's no face, there's no body, there's just shadows on the wall. They look like- they look like the shadows... of people who've been killed by a nuclear explosion, right? You know what I'm talking about, when like-?

Art: I- I do, yeah... that's chilling...

Austin [over **Art**]: But they're moving. And for the briefest moment... it looks like the ground itself like, begins to push out of the side of the canyon wall at you.

Art: Ohhh.

Austin: And then it... the sun drops just beyond the canyon, and there's not enough light for shadow to be cast anymore, and it like, recedes.

Art: So th- So it's... it's... I'm-

Austin [over **Art**]: So now it's just dark.

Art: Now it's just dark... I think I wanna... I- I hate that I keep reaching for a pop culture thing instead of like... but I wanna like, Abbott and Costello Meets Frankenstein outta here.

Austin [laughing]: Let's paint that picture! Give me a better-

A [over **Austin**]: It's like- It's the like- I mean 'cause it's not Abbott and Costello, it's just Costello; Costello is the one freaking out, Abbott is the one who's not seeing the thing, I can't be both

Abbott and Costello, that's ridiculous. But it's like, a big elaborate, like [cartoon-y freakout noises]-

[Group laughing]

Art: And then like, turning around and like- like- like- ugly running- Like the running that-

Austin [laughing, over **Art**]: Uh-huh.

Art: The running where the arms are windmilling.

Austin: Right. Perfect.

Art: And like running back, and everyone's at the- everyone's back at the maglev. And it's like not being able to articulate what you just saw, that's like- [unintelligible gasping words].

[**Austin** laughing]

Art: And like acting it out, like- bouncing the ball, turning around, covering my face.

Austin: Right. **Dre** in the chat says "fuckin' Scooby gang off to a great start here."

[**Art** laughing]

Austin: Perfect. Yeah, everyone's back at the fire. Or at the maglev at camp. And that's what everyone else returns to see is... that.

Art: Like, pointing and gesturing and not- not being able to get his shit together.

Keith: Do you stutter the word "ghost"?

Art: Yeah, yeah, probably, or like-

Keith [over **Art**]: Or whatever you think it is?

Art: Yeah... You know...

Art as Grand Magnificent: Sh-sh-sha-shad-sh-shadows!

Dre: I think Even puts his hand on Grand Mag's shoulder and is like-

Dre as Even: [hesitant] Okay... Like, j-just breathe... You can just breathe...

Art as Grand Magnificent: [deep gulping breaths]

Dre as Even: [over Grand Mag] You can tell the story in a minute, just breathe first. There you go.

Art as Grand Magnificent: [calming breaths]

Dre as Even: Okay. Do you wanna- do you wanna try that again? What'd you find?

Art as Grand Magnificent: Okay. There- there was a- there was a- I went down that way... And there were people made of shadow, and they don't have faces, and then it was all shadow, and- and I got scared, and I ran back this way. And combined with the werewolves you saw in that cave-

[Austin laughing]

Dre as Even: I did-

Art as Grand Magnificent: I think we gotta keep going-

Dre as Even: [over Grand Mag] [heavy sigh]

Art as Grand Magnificent: -just, whatever the fastest way forward- yeah, you said- you said there were lichen-thropes in the-

Dre as Even: [over Grand] Uhh...

Art as Grand Magnificent: --lycanthropes in the... in the cave-

DRE [over **Art**]: Even looks through, like, a compartment on his armor and pulls out a thing of a lichen and says-

Dre as Even: I said lichen. I- I said lichen. Like the plant?

Austin: Those are the smallest werewolves I've ever seen.

[Group laughing]

Art as Grand Magnificent: So what do these- what do they turn into-

[Art breaks, laughing]

[Dre sighs]

[Austin laughs]

Dre as Even: I did find a city though. I don't- it looked empty.

Keith as Gig: [simultaneously as **Art**] Hmm, empty city.

Art as Grand Magnificent: [simultaneously as **Keith**] I mean maybe they were- maybe they were- it happens were killed by shadow monsters!

Sylvia as Echo: Maybe they are the shadow things. Like, it's not that far from where Even went right?

Keith as Gig: Yeah, maybe the shadows live in the cave.

Sylvia as Echo: Yeah.

Dre as Even: What did... what did you two find?

Keith as Gig: I found... a... campfire in the distance with some people, but also a safe path around it. [Amused] And then I also found Echo.

Sylvia as Echo: Yeah, I found... rocks.

[**Austin** snorts]

Sylvia as Echo: That's- that's it.

Dre as Even: [confused] Good...

Austin [amused]: Good.

Dre as Even: [confused: Good work? Good work.

Austin [over **Dre**]: There was a big rock.

Sylvia as Echo: Oh, also Gig has a weird eye.

Dre as Even: Oh.

Keith: I pop it out again.

[Group sounds of disgust]

Dre as Even: Okay- You don't- Okay.

Keith: I make it do a spin. A spin move.

Dre as Even: [uncomfortable] Uhhh... were there-

Sylvia as Echo: [over Even, angry] I- I'm going to kick that thing if you do that again.

Keith [amused]: And then I go-

Keith as Gig: Wait, check this out.

Keith: And then I have it fly back into my socket without actually- [unintelligible]

[Louder group sounds of disgust]

Keith: [unintelligible] -squeeze itself in.

Austin [simultaneously]: -fuckin.

DRE [simultaneously]: [Sighs] Okay.

Austin: Content warning: Body horror. Fuck.

Keith as Gig: [indignant] You know they sell these in the store? It's not crazy.

Austin: We just don't live in that world yet.

Sylvia: You have a drone in your face.

[Dre laughs]

Dre as Even: Did you make contact with the people at the campfire? Like, did they seem okay?

Keith as Gig: Umm, no they- they uhh, they didn't do anything weird, but I didn't love it. I didn't love that they were there.

Dre as Even: [unsure] Okay... So maybe we go through the cave to avoid them?

Keith as Gig: No, there was safe- I found a safe path around them.

Dre as Even: Yeah but-

Keith as Gig: [over Even] And better like a couple people at a campfire than a city full of shadow people, right?

Dre as Even: Well we don't- I mean they didn't try to hurt Grand Magnificent. They- Maybe they're scared of us?

Keith as Gig: [over Even] Well only because he ran away like a baby.

Dre as Even: Well... That's harsh.

Art as Grand Magnificent: [over Even] Well, they did a very scary tableau.

[Austin laughs]

Keith as Gig: [chuckling] Yes, yes, they did terrify him!

Art as Grand Magnificent: Well I mean, I guess if they're shadow people and they live here, and they've never seen a non-shadow person before, they might not know that what they did is out of literally every horror movie. And I guess I have to be willing to accept that that's possible.

Keith as Gig: [over Grand] That they don't have horror movies, so they don't know that what they're doing is scary?

Sylvia as Echo: [over Gig] We- we can see if they-

Art as Grand Magnificent: [over Echo] Well if that's what they look like, maybe their horror movies have something else in them. Some sorta... flashlight monster...

Keith as Gig: Maybe have their own movies, where people reacting all scared to them is their horror. Think about that.

Art as Grand Magnificent: Hmm...

Keith as Gig: Let's go above. Let's not go in the caves.

Dre as Even: What do you think Echo?

Sylvia as Echo: [Heavy sigh] So, there's two ways to look at this.

Keith as Gig: One is above the caves and one is through the caves.

Sylvia as Echo: [low, angry] I'm going... to throw you...

[Keith/Gig laughs]

Sylvia as Echo: [sigh] So... Gig saw people, and he saw a route around them, but we have no idea they're staying in the same position. So we need to take that into consideration. Meanwhile, Mag, who has been sitting in the sun all day-

[Austin laughs]

Sylvia as Echo: -and heat stroke is a very real thing, saw some shadows move and there's an empty city- or town? City? Well, there's an empty place below us here. We

also need to take into consideration that we need solar power for the maglev, 'cause I'm not carrying that thing. So... it's more just like, what do you guys wanna risk here?

Art as Grand Magnificent: Um.

Sylvia as Echo: Because I think I can handle anybody that's hanging out on a mountain, but also if, like, Mag's not comfortable- If you wanna get to the bottom of this shadow thing, we might wanna go there. I dunno.

Keith as Gig: I- Oh, the other thing to say is, I found where we should put this thing. Like I could see it from the top.

Dre as Even: Oh. Okay.

Sylvia as Echo: Okay, that's important. That then. We can double back if we need to, if we wanna check out this town, 'cause it sounds neat.

Dre as Even: Yeah, um-

Sylvia as Echo: [over Even] But if we can get this thing in place, then come back-

Dre as Even: [over Echo] Right. That is-

Sylvia as Echo: [over Even] -to get to the bottom of whatever goin' on.

Dre as Even: That's what we're supposed to do...

Dre: Austin, I do wanna try- like, I wanna see if putting this lichen that emits light close to the solar panels on this maglev, if that light interacts with it in any sort of way?

Austin: Oh! Umm... No, no.

Dre: Okay.

Austin: I don't think so, like, there's no immediate weird sci-fi response to it. No.

Dre: Mm-kay.

Art as Grand Magnificent: We could go back to- to where I saw those... t-those... If I'm going to be completely honest, I don't want this to be a thing, but... [Grand Mag sighs] Those were probably children.

Dre as Even: If-

Sylvia as Echo: [over Even, amused] Wait, they were kids?

Art as Grand Magnificent: I mean, they were small. And they were playing with a ball?

Sylvia as Echo: [amused] And you, like- you did that whole [makes cartoon-y freakout noises] thing?

[**Austin** laughs]

Art as Grand Magnificent: I mean- but they-

Sylvia [over **Art**]: Echo mimics the arms when they do that noise.

Art as Grand Magnificent: They weren't- they didn't have faces. The eyes are the window to the soul, you know?

Sylvia as Echo: [spluttering] I- I don't wanna talk about eyes anymore.

Dre as Even: Yeah, I think we go over. It seems to be the fastest, most direct route; we don't have to worry about solar power, and...

Sylvia as Echo: I do say we should checkout where he saw them, just because if we're going up and they could be following us...? We should be prepared for that.

Keith as Gig: I'd like to just get going.

Austin: It is the- it is like nighttime now, it's probably like 10pm, so.

Sylvia: Oh well, then we should wait till daylight for sure then.

Dre: It's sleepy-time.

Keith: I would like to just go to bed.

Austin: When Al and Myriad call in, how much of this information do you tell them? Is it just basically, "oh, we're going up over the plateau"? Or do y'all give them, "there were shadow people, there's a city underground," etc.

Keith [simultaneously as **Sylvia**]: Yeah, give 'em a lil-

Sylvia [simultaneously as **Keith**]: That's up to them, 'cause Echo doesn't talk to those two.

[**Austin** chuckles]

Dre: If Even's on that call, Even gives them everything.

Austin: Okay, we don't have to do that whole talk.

ART [Over **Austin**]: Yeah, I don't think there's a reason to hide that information.

Austin: Okay, cool. Yeah okay, so then let's just jump ahead to the next day, and we're just on the- we're up all the way to the little side, like a ledge that Gig found with his floating eye. And you have the maglev on it. It is wide enough for the maglev and no wider. Like, it is [Austin laughs] as tight of a pathway as could be, but you think it's gonna be fine. You just have to go straight and then around this edge here or there, but like, it's basically... you can probably be okay. All it would take is a single moment for- of this path to be broken, for this all to be fucked, but you think you're gonna be okay. Is anyone doing anything- like, how do you pass the time as you walk this long...? That's probably like another day or two walk on this ledge before you get to the other side.

Dre: Hmm...

Art: I think Grand Magnificent is like, quietly- to himself, but probably also to whoever's like just next to him and shimmying along this little ledge or whatever- I guess it's not a ledge if it's wide enough to fit the maglev, we're walking comfortably- but like, he's kinda like doing the elevator pitch for the TV show about the werewolf-monster-robot that terrorizes the city. [huffs a laugh]

[**Austin** chuckles]

Art: It's like- "Look out The Sky Reflected in Mirrors! It's... Lychanthro-bot and he's coming!"

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

Sylvia: I really want that to be Echo getting pitched this, who's just like-

Sylvia as **Echo**: Uh-huh. Mm-hmm.

Austin [over **Sylvia**]: Uh-huh.

Sylvia: Like, not even listening.

Dre: Oh God.

Art as **Grand Magnificent**: And our hero is-

Dre: Echo can't even watch TV can they? 'Cause it's probably all tied up in the fuckin' Vale bullshit.

Sylvia: Eh. Probably some stuff...

Austin [over **Sylvia**]: Watch on regular screens- yeah.

Sylvia: Yeah.

Austin: But you could get one, yeah.

Keith: Yeah.

Art as Grand Magnificent: But you should be in it! You see? Like... You should be the one... You're- you're basically the opposite of a giant werewolf robot that destroys cities! You- you should be the star of this

Sylvia as Echo: What's the opposite of a werewolf?

Keith as Gig: You're a little non-robot that builds cities.

Sylvia as Echo: I'm gonna- I'm gonna pass...on that one...

[00:15:00]

Art as Grand Magnificent: I mean don't - don't say no right now. We're gonna- I mean- in however long-

Keith as Gig: [Over Grand Mag] There's not even a script!

Art as Grand Magnificent: Yeah, you haven't even read the script. I got some people you should talk to when we get back...

Keith as Gig: [simultaneously as Even] Yeah.

Dre as Even: [simultaneously as Gig] Yeah.

Art as Grand Magnificent: I mean I don't-

Keith as Gig: Wait til there's 10 pages of the teleplay.

Art as Grand Magnificent: And /I can't write it, so you're gonna be waiting for a long time, I don't know how to write.

Austin: It's in the middle of this conversation that you hear, like, what sounds like a bird of prey, like... shrieking, but it's slightly more mechanical than that. And then you hear another one, and then another one. And then nothing. Ah, that's coming from the center of the plateau that you're edging around.

Sylvia: Echo like immediately - and this is like, a sign usually when they're training, like, "oh this is- Echo's about to- Echo's getting ready to fight."

Austin: Uh-huh.

Sylvia: They tie their hair back into just like, a messy ponytail.

Austin: Mm-hmm.

Sylvia: And they're taking off their jacket again, and putting it on the maglev just to be ready.

Austin [over **Sylvia**]: Okay.

Sylvia: And also moving forward to like the front of the group.

Austin: Sure. Um, you're still probably a day out from the northern edge of this plateau, and you're on guard, but nothing comes at you. But I'd say probably four hours later, you hear the same calls up in the sky. From where you're at, you can't get a shot- like, eyes on where they are because the actual canyon wall- like, the plateau wall kinda prevents you from getting an angle on it. You could try to move to a better position to see it, but from here you can't see what's making that noise.

Art as Grand Magnificent: Ugh, if only we had an industrial fabricator.

[**Austin** laughs]

Dre as Even: Or somebody that can climb really well, or somebody that can literally pull an eye out of their head.

[**Austin** laughs over **Sylvia**]

Sylvia as Echo: Yeah, I was gonna- I'm gonna climb up and try and see if I find anything.

Austin: Okay. Go ahead and tell me how you do that and what you're feelin' when you're doing it.

Sylvia: Uh... I think this is a very, like, professional- Like... But there's a weird feeling with this where Echo's like, both kind of excited to mix it up with something, and also just like... "Okay, this is my job, I've gotta make sure I do this..."

Austin: Sure.

Sylvia: So I'm not sure if that falls under powerful or peaceful? But I think it's one of those two 'cause...

Austin [over **Sylvia**]: Yeah. It's totally up to you. As long as you're comfortable with it, I'm fine with either of those, I could see the case either way.

Sylvia: Okay, I think I'll go with powerful then.

Austin [over **Sylvia**]: Okay.

Sylvia: 'Cause usually when it comes to this sort of thing, that's Echo's main vibe.

[00:17:30]

[Transcriber Cole begins]

Austin: Yeah, let's go for it.

Sylvia: And I'm assuming this is for parkour again or...?

Austin: Yeah, totally.

Sylvia: Ok. That's an eight.

Austin: There you go. So, at least not a failure this time.

Sylvia: So... um, so on a seven to nine, I choose two. The ones are 'escape an enemy and avoid all harm, leave no trail or trace, navigate to an advantageous spot, or change, reorganize or manipulate the environment to their detriment.' Um... I think 'navigate to an advantageous spot' is kind of the obvious one.

Austin: Yep. That's like the one you're going for, for sure.

Sylvia: Um, and I think I'll do 'leave no trail or trace.'

Austin: Yeah, I think that's the right call.

Sylvia: Yeah.

Austin: Alright, so you're able- So- so Echo- what's this look like? Like, you just like... start leap- like, vaulting up the side of this thing?

Sylvia: So, I think... what Echo does, and this is probably something they were told like, not to do in training-

Austin: Uh huh.

Sylvia: -is they... like, hop and basically like, use the maglev as a thing to jump off of.

Austin: Oh, you [were] definitely told not to do that.

Sylvia: Yeah. [Dre laughs] And they just basically like, practically like, leap up um... They like, grab a handhold of something and then are able to just pull themselves up.

Austin: Gotcha. Cool. Um, so you see that there are three or four... It's hard to tell for sure. Uh, up like... big metal flying things up in the air. You can see the glint of steel or of metal on them in the- in the hot sun. But you also see this kind of like, blue-orange-yellow like... It takes you a second to see it because it's- it's daytime right now, but you note that there is this like, blue-orange-yellow light coming from them, as well. Um, like almost like a jet of flame or something. And they are like, doing passes up and down the- the uh, plateau, and they would totally see you if you were up on top. They're also like, based on their pattern, you can tell that they are like, also going east a little bit, and they're scouting for something coming from the east. Not on the plateau, but off the plateau. And you're able to kind of keep an eye on them from the edge of this plateau where your like- where your friends are down- er your- your- maybe not your friends. I don't know. The rest of the group is down that ledge.

Sylvia: Coworkers.

Austin: Yes, your coworkers are down on the ledge safely.

Sylvia: Yeah.

Austin: And you're able to kind of keep an eye on this group. On top of that like, three or four kind of big, metal wing things in the sky, there are also a group of- and you're kind of close enough to see this now- um, of [sighs] other people with like, a big rolling truck that is parked. Uh, and they have like, a bunch of other military-style equipment up on this plateau. And they're facing northwards.

Sylvia: Also, they're-... they're like, fully armed?

Austin: Oh yeah. I'd say that there are probably like, two dozen people, all said.

Sylvia: So, are they... So, when you say facing northward and they're making passes east, none of... are any of those gonna cross our path?

Austin: The ones going north will absolutely-

Sylvia: Ok.

Austin: -cross the path that you will get to. But like, you might be able to time it right so that you can get across to something. Like, you don't know. You haven't seen what's to the north yet, right?

Sylvia: Mhm.

Austin: So, there might be cover for you when you get to the north. You just don't know it yet.

Sylvia: Ok. So, I think Echo like, kinda hops back down also, landing on the maglev for a sec before they-

Austin: Uh huh.

Sylvia: -hit the ground because like, if they just drop- did that sheer drop, it would really hurt.

Austin: Yeah.

Sylvia: Um... and kind of just informs everybody like, I don't think they were able to get a clear count on the group of like, people? But they like, let them know how many like, birds there are.

[crosstalking]

Austin: Yeah, I mean I- I think it's-

Sylvia: Cause like- they're hanging from a ledge so...

Austin: You're able to say there's over twenty.

Sylvia: Ok.

Austin: There's over twenty people on the ground, for sure.

Sylvia (as Echo): So, my basic plan for-

Sylvia: This is Echo talking- I was like,

Sylvia (as Echo): So, basically what we should do is one, take this very slowly and two, be ready just in case. Um, because these people look... very dangerous. I can take point cause I can... like, no offense... I'm like, a foot shorter than most of you guys. [Dre laughs] Not a foot, but like I'm shorter than most of you guys. I can hide behind things better. So, I- I'll go- I can scout ahead a little bit and see if there's cover to stay behind, and um, that way we can hopefully not get shot at. That sound good?

Keith (as Gig): I personally would love to not be shot at, yeah.

Austin: Ok.

Art: Grand Magnificent gulps and like, takes their- their¹ pocket knife out of their...

Sylvia (as Echo): Don't worry. There are no shadow people.

Art: ...backpack.

¹ Grand has previously been referred to with he/him.

Austin: Jeez. Dragged. [Dre and Sylvia laugh] Um...

Art: Yikes.

Austin: So, I think you're able to like, given that information, you're able to move safely to the edge of the plateau over the next day. And I want to say it's probably around sunset of the following day when you make it to the edge and looking north, you see- I mean, now at this point, you kind of pass another plateau off to your- to your left- like, to your west, and you're able to see the light that um, Gig saw way off to the distance, to the west. And then you're also able to see there is a... you know, in this sunset light, a little- there's like, a road that goes from the west to the east that is... I- I imagine it's not like... the fanciest road in the world. Like, it's not a highway, but it's maintained. It's- it's... um, it's enough to call like, an active road. And off about... five miles away to the north, there is a little dirt path that comes from that main road out into the- into the desert to the north. And there is what looks like... there's like, a long building with a tower and then another little building next to it. Gig, you might want to- you might think that that might be the church that you heard about on the- on the wind, basically.

Sylvia: So, can I tell what over- it is like... So, this is the area that those guys were trying to scout or-?

Austin: Yeah. Yeah, and I'll let you just know-

Sylvia: Ok.

Austin: Like, you're able to hop up and see that like, every few hours they send up those- those winged things. And at night, you can see the like- it's- it's like, a bright blue-ish, green-ish, yellow-turquoise... like, there's differentiation in the color- like, plasma on the wings basically. Like a bright fire. And then those come down, and then they go up in cycles, basically. So, if you time it just right, you'll be able to get somewhere without being seen. Doing it at- If you do it at night, I'll give you advantage on the roll.

Sylvia: Ok.

Austin: But also then you're moving at night which has its own problems.

Keith: Hm.

Sylvia: Alright, I think I just... to not have me say it all in character, Echo kind of relays everything there.

Austin: Yep, perfect.

Sylvia (as Echo): Um, and so [exhales] I think we want to try doing this at night, definitely, but uh, if things go bad, I'm... I can try and distract them and pull them away from your group.

Sylvia: And that's to Even who Echo has basically nominated as like, [Dre laughs] leader of stuff.

Sylvia (as Echo): But hopefully it doesn't come to that. We just need to- I think really be careful about those bird things.

Dre (as Even): Ye.. yeah. I'm with you. I think night's the right call. And seriously, don't... don't sacrifice yourself.

Sylvia (as Echo): Oh, no. Like, I'd kick their asses and get away real easy. Don't worry about it.

Dre (as Even): Ok. [Austin laughs] Fair.

Austin: Great. Good. So, are you going at night? Are you going during the day?

Sylvia: I think night, for sure.

Austin: Ok. Who is leading this?

Dre: Oh man.

Austin: And where are you going? Are you going to those buildings? Are you going somewhere else?

Sylvia: Um...

Austin: Gig, did you talk about the church to other people?

Keith: Yeah, yeah. I mentioned the church.

Austin: Ok.

Dre: Then yeah-

Keith (as Gig): I think we should go to the church. They're amenable hosts.

Dre (as Even): I think like, scouting the church is probably a good idea.

Austin: Bringing-

Sylvia (as Echo): At the very least it's somewhere to cover or hide if...

Dre (as Even): Yep.

Sylvia (as Echo): Like, this is a big group.

Austin: Mhm.

Sylvia (as Echo): We need to really be considerate of what could happen with them.

Dre (as Even): Yeah, a building give us a chance to make choke points and stuff like that, if we have to.

Austin: Um, when you say... uh... scouting, do you mean with the like, bringing the node with you, or do mean just by yourselves?

Keith: Um, heading towards the church, would that be heading in the same direction as the spot that I was like, 'oh, that'll be a good spot'?

Austin: Yeah. Yeah, that is the spot. Yes. Totally.

Keith: Ok, well then yeah. Let's totally bring the- the thing with us.

Dre: Yeah.

Austin: Cool. Ok. So, whoever is leading is gonna have to make a Risk roll and tell me how you're doin' it. Like, what's the... How do you stay in cover? Like, what's the...?

Keith: Well, I-

Austin: Tell me what your PlayerUnknown's Battlegrounds strategy is [**Dre laughs**] for getting across this- this map.

Keith: Um, I got a little eye.

Austin: You do have a little eye.

Keith: I got a little eye guy.

Dre: Oh man.

Austin: Do you like, leave the eye up in the sky like, on lookout basically?

Keith: Yeah. Yeah.

Austin: Cool.

Keith: Basically yeah.

Austin: Um, alright. So, give me a Risk. [reading] 'When you're aware of an act to avoid imminent danger, say how you do it and roll. On ten plus, you do it as your describe, and the danger doesn't come to bear. On a seven to nine, in the doing of it, there's a cost, complication or choice introduced by the MC,' which is me.

Keith: Yes.

Austin: So, tell me how you're feelin' and- and do it.

Keith: [deep inhale] Um... I think that I'm feeling uh... That's tough. It might- it might be a little scared. I might be feeling a little scared.

Austin: Ok. Yeah, that's fair. Go ahead and roll scared.

Keith: You know, it's nighttime.

Austin: Yeah.

Keith: I feel like we've really hammered home like, that these people are dangerous, and they're looking for something.

Austin: Yeah. That's fair.

Art: Also, who knows what- what I saw earlier.

Austin: Yes.

Keith: Right.

Austin: Right, the shadow- the shadow creatures. Ooo, spooky.

Keith: I got a nine there.

Austin: Ok, uh, I think-

Keith: Is- is there an opportunity for like, an aid or something?

Austin: There totally is.

Keith: Or is that not-

Austin: There totally is opportunity for an aid. Does anyone want to- want to aid?

Keith: Help.

Sylvia: Uh.

Dre: How does um- I mean, does that work similarly to other Powered By the Apocalypse stuff?

Austin: Yeah, you just- you just straight up roll, but then you roll with a- with an emotion. With a state instead of rolling with like, a bond or anything. And if you get a seven to nine, you also expose yourself to danger, so...

Dre: Um... Yeah, I'll help. And I think it's- I think like, this is like... I think maybe the aid is like, before this happened. Like, Even like, gave Gig like, basically like a pep talk, and like-

Austin: Ok.

Dre: -kind of like, ran over like, basic like... 'Ok, like, you want to make sure that you're watching like, your quadrants like, and rotate like, every like, couple of minutes.' And like... blah-blah-blah. Military talk. Blah-blah-blah. Um, and I think that feeling is powerful. I think that is like, that is- this is like, Even in his element. Like, he's like, 'Ok, like, this is the part of the mission that I'm brought here for.'

Austin: Right.

Dre: To like, make sure that these civilians like, make it through.

Austin: Ok, give me a-

Dre: Do I still-

Austin: -Help or Hinder.

Dre: Do I get the state bonus from that or do I just roll a 2d6 and mark the emotion?

Austin: Oh wait! You know what? One second. Sorry.

Dre: Are you good?

Austin: **Keith**, you should roll one more d6.

Keith: One more d6? How come?

Austin: Because you have advantage. When you advantage in the system, you roll an extra d6.

Sylvia: Oooh.

Keith: Ok, just roll a d6 by itself right now?

Austin: Yep, and then we'll add that. And it'll be whatever your highest is. You roll 3d6 and take the highest. And disadvantage is the opposite. You roll 3d6 and take the lowest. Ok, doesn't- Oh!

[crosstalking]

Dre: Uh, that makes it ten.

Austin: It does actually. That three is higher.

Keith: No, no. it does. Yeah, so it's a ten.

Austin: So, it's a ten. Yep. You totally do it. My bad.

Keith: Ok. Excellent, so-

Austin: Sorry for making you do that whole talk there- [light laugh]

Dre: It's fine.

Austin: -uh, Dre.

Keith: Yeah. [Dre laughs] You can still have done that.

Dre: Yeah.

Austin: Yeah, you could still have given that pep talk. [Dre continues laughing]

Keith: Yeah.

Austin: And then yeah, so you're able to... I think the cover of night saves you, right? There's this moment where one of the- one of the- They're called um- I'm calling them glint wings, flies overhead and is like, just close enough to where if it was daytime, definitely would see you, but you're able to be like, 'stop, stop, stop, stop, stop.' And everyone stops, and then like, it flies overhead and passes on without seeing you. And the dark like, kept you safe.

Keith: Great.

Austin: And then you're able to get closer to the church, and as you near it, you hear... the first sound that you hear is a tambourine. And then like, a chorus. Like a- like a- Not like a choir. Like a background vocals, and then like, a kind of nice like, guitar riff. And then it's just like a love song. It's basically like a Motown song is playing from inside.

Art: [intrigued] Oh.

Keith: Um, now I have a question about my class.

Austin: Sure.

Keith: So, we've got Curiosity of Millions-

Austin: Mhm.

Keith: -and when I have hit, you know, the things that I need to hit, I can start broadcasting.

Austin: Yes.

Keith: Is-

Austin: I think you're recording all the time though, right?

Keith: Yeah. I think that's- I think that that's true. And then I can- I piece together what I want the broadcast-

Austin: Yeah.

Keith: - to have been slash to be going forward.

Austin: Yes, totally.

Keith: Ok.

Austin: So, yeah. If you're like- if looking- if you're like, ready to like, face a camera and do a monologue right now, you should do it right this second. You know what I mean? Like-

[0:30:00]

Keith: Yeah, no. Not yet. I just want to be prepared for it.

Austin: Mhm. Mhm.

Keith: Yeah.

Austin: Uh...

Keith: That's what- Oh, by the way, that's what the eye is- is for. It's for getting a shot of me.

Austin: Right.

Art: Oh, so you're always on camera with like...

Austin: Missing an eye.

Keith: I- So... Ri- well so, I can- I can have a first person view, but then I can also have the- the camera to set up shots.

Austin: You have Imagination, which is you're able to place anything you can imagine-

Keith: Yeah, that's true.

Austin: -as an overlay on your stream. Do you have like a cyber eye? Like, a fake eye- [laughs] in your eyehole... when you... take a photo of your-? [**Art** laughs lightly] Like, when you're- [light laugh] Do you know what I mean?

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

Austin: It's not just-

Keith: Yeah. Yeah.

Austin: I mean if it's just your eye socket, then I guess- you know what? It's the future. People have gotten used to just seeing eye sockets, I guess.

Art: Sure, but he also described it as like, it just flies in there. [**Austin** groans uncomfortably] So, it's not like a normal like, person who doesn't have an eye. [**Dre** laughs] It's like, literally just a hole- like, a head hole.

Keith: So, I think- Ok, there's a few levels to this, like visually.

Austin: Uh huh.

Keith: I think that a lot of the times, I'm just like, taking it out with my hand and putting it back in with my hand. But I imagine that in really dramatic moments, there's this like- like, almost Persona 3 look of like, the eye flying out of my head, and me sort of... like fly- like, me sort of being like, knocked backwards a little bit-

Austin: Uh huh.

Keith: -from the force of the- of the eye coming out of my head, and I'm like, 'Ugh. Ah. My eye.' And it doesn't hurt, but it's just very dramatic.

Austin: And you just yell, 'Persona!' and then- [Austin and **Keith** laugh] Right. Got it.

Keith: Um, yeah.

Austin: God.

Keith: So, but- Yeah, I don't- I don't think that the image that I want to be projecting to my fans is like-

Austin: Right.

Keith: -empty eye socket.

Austin: Yes.

Keith: So, I- I can just like, think- I can just think up- 'Hey, there's an eye there still.'

Austin: And it'll go on cause you have Imagination.

Keith: It'll just go on.

Austin: The move, Imagination.

Keith: Right, yeah. So, I can-

Austin: Yeah. [Sylvia laughs]

Keith: Yeah, so in addition to like, being able to set up flashbacks and- and headlines-

[crosstalking]

Austin: And chyrons. And right, yeah, all that stuff.

Keith: -and chyrons. I can-

Austin: You also can give yourself...

Keith: I can also just be like- I can like, overlay like an image of a dragon on the horizon or-

Art: I love that one of Gig's powers is like, master of OBS. [Austin and Keith laugh]

Austin: That's really good.

Keith: Yeah.... Yeah.

Austin: So, here's what I'll say really briefly. So that we're clear on this. You need a lead, which you have. You need a source, and then you need facts. So, the facts are gonna be just like, 'Oh, here it is. We're setting up this- this- actually doing this. We're expanding the Mirage.' I think the source in this case, would either be infor- like, documents, information or just talking to people nearby. Like, you're- you're again, like I almost think of this as being a television show. Like a- like a... again, an episode of Parts Unknown or something. Like, 'Well, here are the people around the place that were gonna loo- that were going to set up the node.'

Keith: Yeah.

Austin: Or like, 'oh, I'm gonna do a story on the- the theoretical divine that's here somewhere.' Like, 'Oh, we're- I'm gonna talk to sources who've told me about it.' And you like, have- have them on, and you do like, a little interview segment or whatever. So, think about-

Keith: Yeah.

Austin: -filling those out. Once you have the source and the facts you can- you can broadcast.

Keith: Right.

Austin: Cool. Um, so do you all go into this church? You show up? Like, what's the...? [silence]
Talk me through that-

Keith: Yeah.

Austin: Talk me through the arrival.

Keith: I uh...

Art: I don't know who should be in charge here. [light laugh]

Austin: Me either.

Keith: I feel like the church was- was my lead. [pauses] Um, so I think that I probably feel the most comfortable going up to- Like, for everyone else, all that I said was like, 'hey, let's go to the church.'

Austin: Right.

Keith: And like, 'what's- what- what church?' And I was like, 'There's a church, eventually.' Um... so, I think since everyone else is fl- sort of flying blind on the church, I think that maybe I should go first.

Austin: Yeah, ok. Cool. [Austin and **Keith** laugh] Grand Magnificent says, 'We're about to buy twenty robots.' [**Dre** laughs] Which for new listeners is a reference to a previous game of this... of Friends at the Table. Alright.

Sylvia: Gig comes back with just twenty new eyes.

Austin: [laughs] Haha! [groans uncomfortably] [**Keith** laughs hard; **Dre** laughs] Ok.

Art: Twenty new eyes and a power drill.

Austin: God, alright.

Sylvia: [uncomfortably] Oh.

Austin: As you get closer, the music is playing louder and louder. And you can tell the music is coming from the part that is like- So, there is a church with a tower. Like, a church- like a bell tower, basically. And then there is like, an adjoining smaller... like, building that's- that's just off

to the side. Like, it's not physically attached, but it's very close by. There's a little garden here, and you can see that further to the... I have to look it up. I have to look at a thing really quick. One second. I think it's further to the north, it gets... Um, I guess kind of like, at this point, kind of all around you there's like, a mix of desert and greenery. Do you know what I mean? But way to the west, it gets super desert-y. So, you go in first? Where- where are you going? Do you go to the little house or do you go to the big church?

Keith: Um... where are they sort of in relation to... like, what's first? Where's the music coming from?

Austin: Thee music's coming from the church. They're both- you know, they're both a two minute walk away.

Keith: They're next to each other? They're- Yeah.

Austin: They're right next to each other. Like, they're both- it's your choice.

Keith: Uh, let's go to the big church.

Austin: Ok. Um, so you walk in through the big- there's these big, wooden front doors, right? And there's language on the church that you don't recognize is the first thing I'll note.

Keith: Mhm.

Austin: Like, including- there's like an image of what you think is a planet like, above the church door. Like, it's like inscribed into the side of the- like, into the wall above the doors. Um, and then there's just big, wooden doors. And there's like- there definitely is writing all around it that like, you just do not understand at all. But you do understand the music- like, the lyrics, the vocals that are being sung on the- on the radio or whatever is playing. Which you know that it's a radio cause you open the door, and it has kind of like- you can hear that there's a speaker sound, and it's also like, not the best quality speaker sound.

Keith: Oh, this is not live music.

Austin: It is not- You didn't know from a distance, but you get close-

Keith: Right.

Austin: -and you're like, 'ok, this is not live music.' And there is a- [light laugh] You like, open this front door, and then you notice there's a huge back door that you could not see from this angle that was just like, a garage door rolled up all the way.

Keith: Yeah.

Austin: And there is like, a- like a giant dune buggy being held aloft by a- like, big pneumatic system. And there is just like, a giant dude. Like, a- like seven feet tall and like, three feet wide.

[exhales] He has on like, overalls, and um... Wait, coveralls or overalls? Overalls. Uh, and has like, greyish skin. I think he's just like, looking up underneath this buggy and is like... like, singing along to this Motown track and like, working on this dune buggy.

Keith: So, like doom buggy?

Austin: Dune- oh, yep. Doom buggy.

Keith: Doom.

Austin: You got it.

Keith: Doom.

Austin: Yeah, it's called a doom buggy.

Keith: Got it.

Austin: You got it. Doom buggy. Um... I'm trying to think of what this Motown song is.

Art: Yeah, cause there's like, happy Motown songs.

Austin: This is-

Art: There's sad Motown songs. There's honestly, kind of om- like, if he's in there singing like, um... you know, 'Grapevine' or somethin', that's a little creepy.

Austin: No, it's not Grapevine.

Art: -whereas if he's in there like-

Keith: The... I'll say this. The like, famous- the famous tambourinist for Motown was **Jack** Ashford, so it's probably one of his songs.

Austin: There are- Ok, here's a secret about Motown songs. [light laugh]

Keith: Yeah?

Austin: They all have a tambourine.

Keith: Well, he- That- Yeah, but he was the guy.

Art: They all have like, two or three tambourines, right? It's- Was he doing like, two or three tambourine tracks?

Austin: Oh, wow. Was he?

[crosstalking]

Art: Plus they have... I don't know, but was he like-

Keith: Yeah, yeah. So, Motown all had like-

Art: -going into recording twice?

Keith: Probably. Yea, no. They probably had-

Art: Huh.

Keith: They probably had a couple people, but he was like... He was like a uh...

Art: He was lead tambourinist.

Keith: -a revolutionary tambourinist.

Austin: So, I don't want- This is like, bad because it's-

Keith: [interjecting] 'Can't Hurry Love' by the Supremes. How about that?

Austin: Well, so the one that I want it to be is like- I think it sounds like, 'Reach Out (I'll Be There)' by the Four Tops, which fans of Friends of the Table will know- like, deep fans of Friends at the Table will know that it's on the season three spotify playlist I made, but I like this image of this big, grey like, mechanic singing about like, reach out and I'll be there. That's what I want, actually. So.

Art: Yeah, that's pretty great.

Austin: Um, he has like, a deep voice. [Austin lowers his voice] He's down here. And he's singing uh- And I'm not gonna sing in this voice cause I don't know these lyrics well enough, but... [regular voice] And he's tryin' to hit like- he's trying to hit parts of the song he shouldn't be hitting. [singing] 'Reach out~' and it's like, 'No. You don't have it. You don't have the range. You don't have the range, bud.' [light laugh]

Keith: Aw, he's havin' fun.

Austin: He's havin' a lot of fun. Um, and that's what you see. What do you- what do you do?

Keith: I try... I mean, we're all- Are we all in here? Or is just me for now? [silence]

Austin: Y'all tell me.

Sylvia: I think I'd come in.

[crosstalking]

Keith: Ok, yeah. So, it's at least some of us.

Art: I think like...

Dre: Wait, we're not even knocking?

Art: Grand Magnificent's like, peeking in the door. **[Dre laughs]**

Keith: Yeah, no. That's what it's gonna be. I open the door. We're there. He's singing. And then while we're in, I'm gonna like, you know, try knocking on the door. See if it works. Cause it's loud in there.

Austin: Yeah.

Keith: Maybe he can't even hear.

Austin: You knock once, and he doesn't hear you at all. Um, then you knock again, and he like,

Austin (as Singing Man): [grunting confused] Uh- ah... uh- ohh... who? Come on in!

Keith (as Gig): Hey!

Austin (as Singing Man): Hey! You gotta- you gotta come around the other side, if you have a vehicle!

Keith (as Gig): Oh, um... it's kind of a vehicle! It's not like... We don't need it fixed or anything!

Austin (as Singing Man): Who are you with? [pauses]

Austin: Uh, also, wait! He's turning and facing you. He's a big cat man. Uh- [laughs] he's got whiskers and a big white belly. And like, it- but it's not... It's smooth. Like, it's not furry. He has just like, grey... Maybe it's a big shark man- you know what I mean? Like, he doesn't have... [laughs]

Sylvia: Like, a sphinx cat.

Austin: Maybe he's like a sphinx cat. Yeah. That's actually pretty- That's pretty much right. Um... [laughs] in chat-

Keith: Or opossum. He could be a possum man.

Austin: No, he has- he has like... Yeah, maybe he is a possum man.

Keith: It's not like a rat tail?

Austin: Wait, let me see. What's an opossum look like? I haven't looked at an opossum in a minute. [typing]

Keith: It looks like a big rat.

Austin: No, he's fatter than- like, he's bigger than that. Do you know what I mean? No, he doesn't look like a rat. He doesn't have a rat face. He has kind of a flat face. Um...

Art: What is you Google image search 'fat opossum'?

Austin: Fa- [laughs] He's just a big dude. **[Keith laughs hard]** Oh!! **[Keith continues laughing hard; someone claps]**

Keith: There's a couple of choice fat opossum pics.

Art: Oh, did this work out? I- I didn't do it before I said it. I just-

Austin: I don't think he's opossum. I don't think he's opossum. Also, be careful. There's some gross shit in here.

Keith: Maybe he's a naked mole rat?

Austin: Ohh, maybe he's a naked mole rat. [typing] No. No. [laughs] No. **[Dre laughs]** He's super not.

Sylvia: No, like mole rats are gnarly as hell.

Austin: That's gross. Who made that?

Keith: You can find sort of a cute one of these. Sort of.

Art: What about just like, a mole?

Austin: Yeah, maybe he's a- No, I'm looking at a mole. Moles are...

Sylvia: What about a vole?

Keith: Moles are hecka furry.

Austin: What else um...

Keith: Well, yeah. He's a vole. **[Dre laughs]**

Austin: What's a vole look like? A vole's like a little mouse, right?

Dre: Yeah.

Austin: Oh, like I want to say he's smooth. Like, what's a smooth... like, mammal? [light laugh]
Just type, smooth mammal. [**Art** laughs]

Dre: A platypus? Is that what you're looking for?

Sylvia: Smooth mammals are uh... my next character.

Austin: Maybe it's an otter.

Keith: Dolphins are smooth mammals.

Austin: Oh! He's an otterrrr!!! [everyone 'aww's acceptance] He's an otter.

Keith: Oh, he's an otter.

Austin: He is like, an otter. He's Primo and-

Keith: That's- We got there. That's the best- that's the best one of these.

Austin: He's def-

Art: [interjecting] Oh, I guess otters have feet.

Austin: [incredulous] Excuse me?

Art: I said, I guess [laughing] otters have feet.

Austin: Art.... Art... [**Sylvia** laughs silently]

Art: Are you sure that- that no one ever confused an otter and a seal before?

Austin: Art!

Art: Cause that's definitely what's happening to me right now.

Austin: Wait. Art... [**Sylvia** breathes laughter] I'm not an expert. You know that seals also have feet.

Keith: No, seals just have flippers.

Art: Yeah, seals' feet are...

Austin: [high-pitched, incredulous] Those are- those are feet!

Keith: They use them are feet, but they're just flippers.

Austin: I don't mean a bear. I don't mean a bear. He is like a big otter man. Which I guess is like a bear.

Dre: There's a... **[Sylvia exhales a small laugh]** Yep. Nevermind.

Art: Yeah. You're being-

Dre: There's a subtext you're missing here. **[laughing]**

Austin: Ah! There is a subtext. There is a subtext. Sorry. No, he's defo a bear. He's defo a bear. **[Dre still laughing hard]**

Keith: Ok.

Art: He's- he's a-

Austin: Sorry, I didn't want him to be-

Keith: He's a bear-otter man.

Art: He's a bear-otter?

Austin: He's a bear-otter, absolutely.

Keith: He is an otter man who is a bear.

Dre: There we go. Yeah.

Art: Like, seals have like a-

Austin: Yes.

Art: Like aren't seals closer to dolphins in terms of lower body? What's- I'm... Hold on. I'm just gonna- Why am I asking-

Austin: No.

Art: -when I'm literally sitting on a- on the whole of human knowledge? Yeah, that- that's not really legs.

Austin: No.

Keith: Yeah, no. Seals do not have legs. They have flippers that they wobble around on.

Austin: Anyway, he's a big otter man who is also defo a bear. [Sylvia laughs]

Keith: Sea lions have...

Austin: Uh, and that's what you see when you- when you look at him. And he's just like, wearing these overalls and doing work. He's got these oily-ass hands.

Keith (as Gig): So, yeah. We don't- we're not- We don't have like a vehicle you need to fix. We just came here.

Austin (as Singing Otter Man): Who are you with?

Keith (as Gig): I'm with- It's me. It's Echo. It's Even. And-

Austin: You notice him like- He like, grips the wrench a little tighter.

Austin (as Singing Otter Man): Hey now- Hey.

Keith (as Gig): Oh.

Austin (as Singing Otter Man): You don't need help. We- uh-

Keith (as Gig): Hey, no. Hey.

Austin (as Singing Otter Man): What do you uh... what are you lookin' for if you're not lookin' for help? What's the...?

Keith (as Gig): We're just- we're just passin' through. We're just on our way to... find a... you know, open spot of land to settle down on.

Austin (as Singing Otter Man): You with the Crown? You with...

Keith (as Gig): No, we're from-

Austin (as Singing Otter Man): -the Mandate? What's...?

Keith (as Gig): We're from not on the planet. We're from outside of the planet. Off of it.

Austin (as Singing Otter Man): Y'all visitors.

Dre (as Even): Gig, yeah. Just say we're from the Fleet.

Keith (as Gig): Yeah. Unaffiliated. We are unaff- We're unaffiliated. We- Sorry.

Austin (as Singing Otter Man): [overlapped] You know anything...

Keith (as **Gig**): [interjecting] We're unaffiliated planet-wise. We are affiliated space-wise. We live on a ship- on Fleet ships.

Austin (as **Singing Otter Man**): Got anything to prove that with- for me?

Keith (as **Gig**): I can do this.

Keith: And I take out my eye. And it flies around.

Austin: He like, shakes his head.

Austin (as **Singing Otter Man**): Yeah, like I haven't seen someone take their eye out before.

Keith (as **Gig**): Oh, thank god. Cause they still think it's weird on the spaceship.

Dre (as **Even**): Um...

Austin (as **Singing Otter Man**): They think it's weird? It's not that weird.

Keith (as **Gig**): They think it's weird on the space- [light laugh to laughing] It creeps everybody out, and it's like, you can buy this at a store! It's like-

Austin (as **Singing Otter Man**): I- I unders- I have three.

Keith (as **Gig**): That's such a relief to hear. Hey, guys! Do we have anything to prove that we're from a ship?

Sylvia: Can we just radio back?

Austin: Nnnnot until you-

Sylvia: Nah, I guess that wouldn't work.

Austin: -get the node up anymore. Yeah.

Sylvia: Yeah.

Austin: That's the thing is you have to set up a node.

Dre: Right.

Austin: Or like another-

Dre: I mean we could show him the node.

Austin: You- Uh, yeah. Sure.

Keith: Oh! Wait, hold on. Do I have like- I probably have like, an ID card.

Austin: Sure. [light laugh] Um, I- you're gonna-

Keith (as Gig): See here. It says Gumption's Gambit.

Austin: Give me- give me a Sway.

Keith: A Sway?

Austin: Yeah. [reading] 'When you want an NPC to do something-'

Keith: Ok.

Austin: '-you want, and their motivations don't line up with yours, roll.' Again, take advantage because they are... this- this place is like, a place that is- What was the word I used before?

Keith: Um...

Austin: About the church?

Keith: Am...You called it 'amen....'

Austin: Ah.

[simultaneously]

Keith: Amenable?

Dre: Accommodating?

Austin: Accom- Not, a- amenable is what I said, yes. Yeah, take advantage again. So, 3d6 plus a state.

Keith: Ok. Slash... [typing] plus...

Austin: And then make sure you mark whatever the state- the state is.

Keith: Um, yeah. Oh, I didn't- I didn't mark sad earlier. It's- or scared earlier.

[0:45:00]

Austin: Scared. Yeah, yeah, yeah.

Keith: Scared. So, I'm probably... I'm probably still joyful. I- I- Yeah, I'm joyful.

Austin: Ok, so you're being like, kind of pleasant about this whole thing. Ok. Cool.

Keith: Yeah, yeah.

Austin: Go ahead and- and do it. 3d6.

Keith: I'm excited for having- meeting the first person that we've met.

Austin: Yeah. 3d6 plus two.

Keith: Roll 3d6 plus two.

Dre: Woof.

Austin: Five. Ten. Yeah.

Keith: Fourteen minus two. So, twelve.

Austin: Wait, where are you seeing minus two? Oh, yeah, yeah, yeah. Twelve.

Keith: So, it's-

Austin: So, that's still great. Yeah.

Keith: Five plus five plus two plus two.

Austin: Totally.

Keith: Yeah.

Austin: So, 'when you get a- when you get a ten or above, they do it, and they choose one. Sorry, you choose one.' Um, you can owe them some serious cred, you owe them- your own faith is in question with them, you're gonna give them something now instead of later, you need to do them a favor first, or you need to give a piece of yourself to them: body or heart.

Art: Oh, he's gonna take your eye. [**Keith** laughs]

Austin: No, you can- You decide. You decide.

Keith: I decide.

Austin: Yes.

Keith: Um... what... what do you think it means giving him a piece of my heart?

Austin: I think that that depends. On the other side of the game so far, we have had situations where that was like... We've had that where that's just faith. Where it's like, you've given them faith, which I guess is actually your own-

Keith: Right.

Austin: -your own faith is in question now.

Keith: Yeah.

Austin: A promise. We have one that hasn't happened yet, so I don't want to spoil what it is. But someone basically was like, 'Hey... like, I need you to assure me of this thing that you're going to do for me.' Which is like, not a favor. It was something more like, 'Hey, I need you to... assure that you'll be here for me.' If you can come up with a fun way to- to give your body or heart to this- to this otter man...

Keith: Yeah.

Austin: Like, I have an idea in my head, but...

Keith: Oh, yeah. So, here's- here's my pitch is... I'm.... I'm on the beat. I've got- I have my own sort of 'guy who's filming stuff and has a story in mind' instincts here.

Austin: Yeah.

Keith: I... have- I trust this church as a place that is safe for us to be.

Austin: Mhm.

Keith: I will give this otter man-bear a piece of my heart in terms of 'Hey, I trust you, and if you need something from me, I'll help. I will do it in return for us, you know, hangin' out.'

Austin: Um... [sighs] I think he needs something more than just like, a promise of a future good- Like, he's not in need right now. Do you know what I mean?

Keith: Ok.

Austin: So like, just like, 'Oh, I'll help you out in the future' isn't enough because he doesn't know that he needs anything yet.

Art: Especially because the other- one of the other options is they need something now instead of later which like-

Austin: Yeah.

Art: -which means you probably can't just be like, 'how 'bout later?' [light laugh]

Austin: Yeah. Especially cause there's not a thing he's looking for later or now. Right? Like, he's like- There just isn't- that isn't a thing he needs from you. Um...

Keith: What was- what was your thing that you said you had in mind.

Austin: Well, one of two things is like... you could start interviewing him, in which case it's like-

Keith: Yeah.

Austin: -you're paying attention to his life, right? Like, part of the thing that we talked about with this Blogger-

Keith: Oh ok.

Austin: -before was like, people just- There are people in the world who, when you leave a conversation with them, you leave going like, 'Man, what a good person that is.'

Keith: Yeah.

Austin: And a big part of that is just like, I'm being thoughtful and asking questions about your life, and like, 'tell me about yourself.' Like, that sort of thing. The other is you could start singing this song, but then I realized you don't know the lyrics to this song, unfortunately. This is a song from this culture. Not your-

Keith: A different planet-

Austin: Yeah, a different-

Keith: Yeah.

Austin: -different planet you have never been to before. Um, but I think-

Keith: I could sing the music parts.

Austin: [laughs] You could just intuit where the next little bit of music is coming from? [**Sylvia** laughs]

Keith: Well, I can like- I can like, harm- I know- I can be like, 'Oh, I can-' I- I can intuit the rhythm.

Austin: Mhm.

Keith: I can har- I can at least harmonize with it. I can improvise some music.

Austin: I want to- Yeah, I kind of want y'all to- I kind of want you to sing with this- with this- I kind of want everybody else to walk into you two singing together is kind of what I want to see. And this place is amenable, and you got a fourteen, so like, I'm not here to take that shit away from you. So-

Keith: Yeah.

Austin: [light laugh] Yeah, so I think-

Keith: And then I can also interview this guy, which I- you know-

Austin: Right, exactly. I think you- What we get is just like, the door closes, and then we open, and it's just Gig and Surge, which is the name of this big otter man, singing some Motown track together with mostly Gg doing- [**Keith** begins whistling something like "The Tra La La Song" and snapping his fingers] Yeah, the harmony parts basically. Uh- [light laugh as Keith continues for a bit]

Austin (as **Surge**): Damn good voice on you.

Keith (as **Gig**): [laughs] Hahaha.

Austin (as **Surge**): Come on in everybody. I'm Surge. Nice to meet you. This is- this is my wife and- and uh- Or this is my-

Austin: What would he say? Not wife. I don't think that they're married...

Keith (as **Gig**): That's a dune buggy.

Austin: That's a- [everybody laughs hard] Uh.

Austin (as **Surge**): This is my girl and her ma's place, but I just kind of fix things up here or there. Y'all wanna uh... come on inside and have some tea?

Dre (as **Even**): Yeah.

Keith (as **Gig**): I would love some tea.

Dre (as **Even**): Can we uh... can we pull our... our thing into your garage to keep it off the road?

Austin (as **Surge**): The hell is that? Never seen anything like that.

Austin: And like, he like, walks over and like, gets close with his- with his big, otter face.

Dre (as **Even**): Uh, it's a- it's a node. It'll- it'll let us bring the Mesh down here planetside.

Austin (as **Surge**): The Me- what? [exhales] Y'all leave it in here- Before you do anything, y'all gonna have to clear it by Janey.

Keith (as **Gig**): Ok. Who's- which one's Janey?

Art (as **Grand Magnificent**): Is that your- is that your girl?

Austin (as **Surge**): Yeah.

Keith (as **Gig**): Is that your car?

Austin (as **Surge**): Who- That's not my car. [**Keith** laughs] My car is- is the dune buggy, and don't you forget it. I've been working on this thing here for years. Anyway, come on in.

Keith (as **Gig**): Do you fix other people's stuff or just like, your own stuff?

Austin (as **Surge**): I fix other people's stuff. I fix my own stuff. I fix stuff we find out in the rocks.

Keith (as **Gig**): Are there like, people nearby that come over? Is this like, a business?

Austin (as **Surge**): Yeah, this is a.... This is a line. It goes, you know, from uh... [exhales] from the sculpture out to the garden.

Keith (as **Gig**): I don't know those two places, but they sound lovely.

Austin (as **Surge**): Eh... you know. Depends on what view you got. Anyway, come with me.

Austin: And uh, he leads you over to that little small house. And before he even gets in, there's like, an older woman who has like- She's tattooed head to toe. She is like... She's also white. She has like, dark skin though. Like, she has like tanned, white skin. Uh, with dyed black hair that is kind of like, very cur- like, wavy. And she's like, incredibly thin. Like, she's just- she's like, an old woman, but her arms and her face are completely tattooed with-

Keith: [interjecting] Is she also an otter?

Austin: No, she's- she's a human. Um, and she is like, already has the door open and is like,

Austin (as **Older Woman**): Found yourself some new friends, huh, Surge?

Austin: And he's like,

Austin (as **Surge**): [grunts] Mm. You know. Not supposed to turn- You're supposed to be hospitable. That's how you get through in this life.

Austin: And she's like,

Austin (as **Older Woman**): [sighs] One of these days, you're gonna get us into trouble. Janey! Your damn... otter found some people! [**Keith** laughs]

Austin: [sighs] He like-

Dre (as **Even**): That's kinda- kinda harsh.

Art (as **Grand Magnificent**): Yeah, what?

Austin: And he's like,

Austin (as **Surge**): Don't worry. Don't worry. Don't worry about it. She's old. Different times, you know?

Austin: And uh, heads inside. And um... there is a person- So, inside- so this building is low. It's also kind of a tannish color. Or like, a creamish- like, creamish-peachish color, I guess. I'm kind of imagining the kind of southwestern architecture Like, a southwestern Catholic church, basically. Do you know what I mean? Like, very uh... Mexcian style, Spanish architecture with red tiles up top. And inside this building is like, wooden floor, um... where the wood is maybe not as like, nice and poli- like, it's not like, nice polished slats. It's like, big, wide wooden slats with like, throw- throw rugs basically here or there. Um, some candles. And in here, they're also playing a similar sort of like, throwback Motown music that's like- It's probably just on a slower song though just for the like, scene transition. And thee- there is a person in a tattoo chair who is getting- uh, who is like, face down- It's almost like a- it's almost like a massage chair because like, their face is poking through the hole. It's just like- it's like a- a human dude.

And the- there is a woman who is tattooing this guy on his back. And she's like, a little chubby. Rosy cheeks. Um, with ro- like, a raspberry streak in blonde hair. Freckled face, looking very focused. She has an apron on. And has like, a huge floating tattoo kit basically. And her- She also has like, full sleeves. I guess like, she has on like, a tan t-shirt basically. And you can just like, the- her arms are covered, but her face isn't. And her tattoos are just like, really interesting geometrical patterns. Her mother's are not. Her mother's are just like, stuff. She's got fuckin' she's got like, a name- she has like, six different names on there. She's got like, a- a picture of a city. She has an eagle. She probably has like, an eagle fighting a... a tiger. Like, the back of Echo's jacket. [**Austin** and **Sylvia** laugh lightly] Like- [**Art** and **Dre** laugh]

Art: It was very popular for a while.

Austin: Uh huh. [laughs] Um... and the- Surge, who is the big otter guy, is like,

Austin (as Surge): Let her- let her finish. Come in the room. I'll make you some tea.

Austin: And he like, walks you into a kitchen. Like a- like a dinette, basically and begins to brew you some- some tea.

Austin (as Surge): So, you're-

Keith (as Gig): [interjecting] What kind of tea you got?

Austin (as Surge): Uh, it's... Succulent mixed with some- some acai berries.

Keith (as Gig): Ooo. Super food.

Austin (as Surge): That's right. That's what they say. It's a super food. [laughs]

Austin: And he pours himself like a- like a stein of it. Like, he has like a big ol'- He's big. He- he big. And like, he sits on what is definitely just the like- a cockpit chair to a giant truck, basically. And pours out the tea for all of you, and he just puts his stein down and starts letting it steep. He doesn't like, drink it for a little while. And there is like, even something built on the- like, the table he's putting in on has like, an internal heater that keeps it warm so that it can steep really long. He doesn't explain this to you. This is just what he's doing.

Austin (as Surge): So, off- off world. I don't... I know there's an off world. I know the history. I didn't expect to see anybody from off world.

Keith (as Gig): Until recently we didn't really expect to be on world.

Austin (as Surge): Yeah. That's... What are you here- what are you here doin'?

Keith (as Gig): Um...

Dre (as Even): We're tryin' to reconnect everybody.

Austin (as Surge): Reconnect everybody?

Dre (as Even): Yeah.

Austin (as Surge): What's your plan to do that? People don't want to be connected.

Keith (as Gig): Well...

Austin (as Surge): Way I see it.

Keith (as Gig): Our um... Some of our ships are dead...

Austin (as Surge): [quietly] Ships are dead.

Keith (as **Gig**): And so some people... thought maybe... we could find somewhere else to sorta... move to.

Austin (as **Surge**): You're not looking for just a mechanic to fix those ships up? What's the...?

Keith (as **Gig**): No, they.. like, died.

Dre (as **Even**): Well, the-

Austin (as **Surge**): I could- Listen. I've heard that before.

Dre (as **Even**): Ships didn't die.

Austin (as **Surge**): I could-

Keith (as **Gig**): Well, a lot of the ships died. I mean the- the divines died, died. The ships broke.

Austin (as **Surge**): The divines died? What?

Art (as **Grand Magnificent**): The ships are flying.

Austin (as **Surge**): Is this code language?

Keith (as **Gig**): And some of the divines were ships.

Austin (as **Surge**): This might be a weird situation where I don't understand some key terminology. I'm tryin' to keep up.

Keith (as **Gig**): Ok.

Austin (as **Surge**): I understand you come from a faraway place. You don't just mean boats. You mean spaceships, right? I'm not-

Dre (as **Even**): Yeah.

Keith (as **Gig**): Spaceships.

Austin (as **Surge**): Yeah, ok.

Keith (as **Gig**): There's... We feel like, we might be in danger in the spaceships, and so some people thought, 'Hey, we should check out some of the planets.'

Austin (as **Surge**): Ok.

Keith (as Gig): See if-

Austin (as Surge): That part...

Keith (as Gig): -maybe we can build homes on the planet.

Austin (as Surge): Perfect sense. Why don't you just build new ships or go back to your home planet or- or whatever?

Art (as Grand Magnificent): I don't think any of us have home planets anymore. I-

Dre (as Even): Yeah, no. It's the ship.

Art (as Grand Magnificent): I think my...

Austin (as Surge): [quietly] Huh.

Art (as Grand Magnificent): I think my great-great-great grandfather's the last one who touched soil.

Austin (as Surge): Well, welcome. Welcome to- to Quire. [exhales] Listen, this is all above my paygrade, frankly.

Keith (as Gig): Real quick. Do you know stuff about some shadows?

Austin (as Surge): Shadows?

Keith (as Gig): Yeah, we saw some shad- or one of us saw some shadows that were scar- scared him.

Austin (as Surge): Oh, there's stuff on... out in those- those canyon hills. I stay away.

Dre (as Even): Do you know about the city? Like, the abandoned city that's in the caves?

Austin (as Surge): Um, might of heard this and that. I- I'm not a... I'm not a scholar, and I'm not an explorer. I'm a- I'm a mechanic. I know what I do. I do it pretty damn well. And uh-

Keith (as Gig): I- I've got one more sort of general question like that. Similar to- sort of maybe closer to home. You seen those people that send up those weird birds? What's that about?

Sylvia (as Echo): Yeah, I was gonna- I was gonna mention that.

Austin (as Surge): Aw, shit. [sighs] I'll be right back.

Austin: And like-

Sylvia: Mmm?

Austin: -he stands up.

Austin (as Surge): The tea should be ready now.

Austin: And he like... goes into the other room, and you hear him go like,

Austin (as Surge): [whispering] Jane- Janey, there's a... they said they saw... Yeah, ok. Five more- Ok.

Austin: And he comes back in. And is like,

Austin (as Surge): Give her five more minutes. She'll be done. [heavy sigh] Fwooooo. That's bad news.

Keith (as Gig): How come?

Austin (as Surge): Vultures. It sounds like they're waitin' to attack somethin'. Plenty of scrap when we're done, I just hope it's not... someone innocent.

Dre (as Even): Wait, who- who are they?

Austin (as Surge): I just- You know, raiders and mercenaries and... scavengers. Mandati, maybe.

Keith (as Gig): Who's Mandati?

Austin (as Surge): Mandati. Uh... they're the- [sighs] I guess the Crown calls them the Savage Mandate. They're uh... a group of people.

Keith (as Gig): Wow! That sounds scary.

Dre (as Even): Um... who's the Crown?

Art (as Grand Magnificent): Crown? Yeah.

Austin (as Surge): [sighs] This is a lot. Y'all don't know-

Dre (as Even): [interjecting] So, yeah. No, yeah. [overlapped] Listen.

Keith (as Gig): We've never heard of any of this.

Austin (as Surge): You didn't like, send like, scouts ahead of time?

[crosstalking]

Dre (as **Even**): We are the scouts.

Keith (as **Gig**): We're the scouts ahead of time.

Austin (as **Surge**): Ohhh.

Art (as **Grand Magnificent**): Yeah, we're the scouts. The next people will know all of this.

Austin (as **Surge**): Ok.

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

Art (as **Grand Magnificent**): I guess unless something horrible happens to us. Then they'll know nothing.

Austin (as **Surge**): Alright. So...

Austin: I think I'm just gonna move you over to this place now. One second. Boom. I've just moved the party over to a big map. So, it's a- it is a- [light laugh] It is a map with uh... I know this number, twelve hundred fifty black hexagon tiles, cause I placed them all. Um... [light laugh]

[1:00:00]

Art: Oh my lord!

Austin: Yeah.

Keith: Wow. You really did do that, huh?

Austin: Uh huh. I- Because well, when we tried it before, I had not done that. I had just kind of placed... like, big, black blocks, and then I realized that what I need to do is start removing the black blocks, one by one, which is the only way for this to make any sense. So... at this point, you still don't have the whole map, right? You haven't updated this node which means you don't have anything, but what he says is, um... He says,

Austin (as **Surge**): Ok. the Crown is- Well, the Crown is uh... Alright, over to the west, there's the Crown of Glass. It's a- [inhales] kingdom of uh- [exhales] I don't... artists and whatnot. [sighs] Janey and her ma come from there. Um... they're kind of a big deal. They... they have all this technology, and they got a bunch of different cities all over the damn place. Then [exhales] there's the Mandati, who kind of go wherever they damn-well please, if I'm being fully honest. And they kinda run the whole southern half of the continent. As scrapers. Raiders. A collection of folk more than a single society.

Though I do hear they got a big ol' garage out east. [pause] Way down south, there's the Rogue Wave. Five hundred captains. All vaguely aligned to some notion of... you know, uh... co-independence. Which sounds like some bullshit, if you ask me... Little bit of this. Little bit of that. And then I'm from- I'm from the Skein, out east. Bunch of folk like me. Figuring out what we are. You know, one... one biological organism at a time. That's-

Dre (as Even): [interjecting] So...

Austin (as Surge): -pretty much what we got.

Dre (as Even): So, does like, everybody in the Skein look different?

Austin (as Surge): Yeah. Not everybody, but you know. A lot of people do. [whispering] You should see the guy who runs the damn thing. He's like, a big... lizard man.

Sylvia (as Echo): Alright, so this is all... rea- like, sincerely very interesting. But um, here's an important thing I need to ask is are we at risk of being attacked by those guys we saw?

[crosstalking]

Austin (as Surge): Not as long as you stay right here.

Sylvia (as Echo): Like, could they be on their way here?

Austin (as Surge): You stay right here? They probably won't come at us.

Sylvia (as Echo): Ok.

Keith (as Gig): Why is that?

Austin (as Surge): We don't have much to take. We're little- we're small fries. Whatever they're waiting for- a group- a group... If they got them birds, then that's about somethin' bigger.

Art (as Grand Magnificent): I mean is it possible that someone- someone already saw us? That we are what they're out looking for?

Austin (as Surge): You brought that node thing inside, right?

Keith (as Gig): Yeah.

Austin (as Surge): I think we're ok. I think.

Sylvia (as Echo): What else is nearby? Like, what could they be waiting for, if you have any idea at all?

Austin (as Surge): It could be a shipment. It could be a shipment... with regard to the Crown. It could be... uh- [exhales] I'm not sure what- what time of year is it?

Austin: And he starts like, going through months in his head. Uh, and I think it's around then that Jane comes in. Um, who is the tattoo artist, and she's like- She just goes right over to the sink and begins to wash her hands. Um, I think it's like a pump sink. She has to like, pump some water, and then it starts flowin'- flowin' again.

Austin (as Janey): So, from off world, huh?

Keith (as Gig): Yeah, we're from like, a bunch of different spaceships.

Art (as Grand Magnificent): Yeah.

Austin (as Janey): Spaceships? Br- Huh. Let me see those.

Austin: And she like, goes over to you, Grand, because you have tattoos, right?

Art: I have one big tattoo.

Austin: Where is it?

Art: On my- it's on my right arm.

Austin: Uh huh.

Art: And it's a- it's a collection of historical and- and some fictional mechs fighting each other. There's no Mesh right now, so it's not super cool. It's just regular cool.

Austin: But it's just like... like, mechs from- like, it's old divines and stuff?

Art: It's some old divines. It's um... it's- it's some- it's some you know... it's probably some- like, a rook or something.

Austin: Right.

Art: It's got uh- it's probably got some mechs from the intervening...

Austin: Right, the ones that like-

Austin: ... time. Like, it's probably- it's probably like, biased towards recent.

Austin: Sure.

Art: It also has at least one- it has one Gundam and one uh... one Power Ranger's Megazord, but um-

Austin: [light laugh] Good. Good.

Art: -we're- I'm still in the process of selecting those. [light laugh]

Austin: Good. Perfect. Um, so I think uh, she's like,

Austin (as Janey): That's pretty damn good work. Who'd you get this done by?

Art (as Grand Magnificent): Oh! Um... you know... the... [exhales]

Art: I'm- I'm tryin' to think of a name. Um, the-

Keith: I had assumed you did it.

Art: No, I can't... Oh, it's better if I did it. It's better if I built a mech that let me tattoo my own arm.

Austin: [amused] It is better.

Art: Alright, that's the answer. [Art and **Austin** laugh]

Art (as Grand Magnificent): I built a- I built a robot that I control with both hands that could- could do the work on my own arm. It- it had a- I mean I don't want to- I can't freehand like this or anything. I don't want you to think that. It- it had a lot of stabilization built in.

Austin (as Janey): And you used both hands to put one on your arm.

Art (as Grand Magnificent): Yeah. I'm-

Austin (as Janey): That's pretty impressive.

Art (as Grand Magnificent): Uh huh- I- I'm... I'm.. yeah, I'm pretty good at what I do.

Austin: She like, shakes her head.

Austin (as Janey): The lines are wrong, but it- it's alright. [long silence]

Art (as Grand Magnificent): [quietly overlapped] I mean I think-

Austin (as Janey): So, you're from off planet.

Keith (as Gig): Yeah.

Art (as Grand Magnificent): Yeah, from- from the Divine Fleet.

Austin (as Janey): The Divine Fleet. Those are old words.

Austin: Um, uh, I think Surge kind of like, scratches the back of his head and like,

Austin (as Janey): They're old words, Surge. Don't worry about it. [sighs] So, y'all need food?

Sylvia (as Echo): Yes.

Dre (as Even): Yeah, we don't need it, but-

Sylvia (as Echo): Very much.

Dre (as Even): -we wouldn't turn it down either.

Austin (as Janey): Surge... get these poor folks somethin'. I'm gonna talk to them.

Sylvia (as Echo): [sighs] Finally.

Austin: [laughs lightly] And Surge starts cooking up some-

Keith (as Gig): I didn't realize you're so hungry.

Sylvia (as Echo): We've been eating like, trail mix and like, rations for the past couple of days. I'd like actual food.

Keith (as Gig): You don't like these little M&M things?

Art (as Grand Magnificent): It's been- it's been rustic and fun. [**Dre** laughs]

Sylvia (as Echo): I want dinner.

Austin (as Janey): Surge gotcha covered. Any dietary concerns?

Sylvia (as Echo): Eh.

Austin (as Janey): Anyone not eat cactus fruit or whatever?

Keith (as Gig): I can't eat anything that's still alive.

Austin (as Janey): That should be fine.

Keith (as Gig): Ok.

Austin (as **Janey**): Alright, now.

Art (as **Grand Magnificent**): I- I don't prefer... saffron...

Austin (as **Janey**): But?

Art (as **Grand Magnificent**): [Art and **Dre** laugh] That's just how- that's just how I'm saying that sentence. [**Keith** laughs]

Austin (as **Janey**): Ok. That's fantastic. [sighs] So, what do you know?

Art: [laughing] Oh wait! I mean I also would rather not eat butt, [laughing again] if that's what you were asking.

Austin: [laughs] That's not what I was asking! [**Dre** laughs hard]

Sylvia: I mean.... [**Keith** laughs]

Art: Ok. Just- just checking.

Sylvia: The future. Be a bit more progressive. [Everyone laughs]

Austin: [laughing] Uhhh. Uhhh. [laughs again] I can't believe it took until one thousand years after Mirage for them to add an ass eating emoji. Um- [Austin, **Sylvia**, and **Keith** laugh]

Sylvia: It's got that fuckin' Emoji soundtrack to it. [**Dre** laughs]

Austin: Oh my god. I hate everything. [laughs]

Keith: [singing] Bahm. Ba-da-dahm. Da-da-dahm. Dahm-dahm.

Art: That's how people remember Paul McCartney in the future. [**Austin** laughs] 'Oh, from that turtle that eats butt.' [**Dre** and **Sylvia** laugh hard]

Keith: Duo and lovin' it.

Austin: [laughing] Uhh.

Sylvia: [Sylvia and **Dre** wind down laughing] Fwoof.

Austin (as **Janey**): So, what is it you folks need? Because it... [exhales] I'm all for welcomin' people. I'm all for being hospitable, but... [exhales] Off world sounds like trouble.

Keith (as **Gig**): It is trouble. That's why we are tryin' to... you know... leave it.

Austin (as Janey): I appreciate the honesty.

Sylvia (as Echo): So, what they're trying to do is basically install the same uh... Mesh that they have on the Fleet down here. Uh, because they- **[Austin/Janey sighs]** that's- I don't know.

Austin (as Janey): [laughs] You don't seem convinced.

Sylvia (as Echo): I... don't.... [sighs] I can't use it. And I don't really see why it's a necessity, if I'm being honest.

Austin (as Janey): Hm. I mean... some of the Crown cities have things like that. Some of the Crown cities, they are somethin' else. [exhales]

Art (as Grand Magnificent): We're probably not like them.

Austin (as Janey): Why do you say that?

Art (as Grand Magnificent): I just... probability. We're probably not like...

Austin (as Janey): I don't know.

Art (as Grand Magnificent): -any-

Austin (as Janey): I've run into folks like you out in those cities. People who build things so that they can make art. I-

Art (as Grand Magnificent): No, I- I don't- I- The things I build are... are art.

Austin (as Janey): Ok.

Keith (as Gig): Well, you did build the robot that then did the art on your arm.

Art (as Grand Magnificent): But the- it was a very- You should have seen that robot. **[Austin laughs]**

Keith (as Gig): Oh, it was beau- it was better than the tattoo I bet.

Austin: [laughs] She laughs.

Austin (as Janey): I'm just gonna say it one time, and... [exhales] you're gettin' yourselves in... up to your heads. Uh. [sighs]

Keith (as Gig): In what? In opportunity?

Austin (as Janey): Oh buddy... It's... it's a big world here, and there's still a lot of space.

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

Austin (as **Janey**): But there's a lot-

Keith (as **Gig**): That's great news.

Austin (as **Janey**): [sighs] But there's a lot of people who like things the way they are or who want them to be... more one way than another way.

Keith (as **Gig**): Uh huh.

Austin (as **Janey**): And there is gonna be a lot of opportunity, and you're the opportunity. For them.

Keith (as **Gig**): Huh. That's not a great... thing to hear. There is- I mean we did hear that there's a whole section of this continent called the Savage Mandate. That doesn't sound ideal.

Austin (as **Janey**): [exasperated] Oh, don't call them that. [quietly] They're not savage. It's some-

Keith (as **Gig**): That's what we- We just learned that word.

Austin (as **Janey**): I... Well-

Dre (as **Even**): Wait.

Austin (as **Janey**): [exasperated] Surge.

Austin: And [sighs] he's like,

Austin (as **Surge**): Well, that's what the Crown calls-

Keith (as **Gig**): [overlapped] He did- Hold on, to be fair to Surge-

Austin (as **Surge**): -that's what the Crown says.

Keith (as **Gig**): To be fair, he did offer that as a secondary name.

Austin (as **Janey**): Ok, just don't use that word around here. It's-

Keith (as **Gig**): Ok. How come?

Austin (as **Janey**): Cause it's bullshit. There's just people what have cars and airships, and sometimes they live inside a weird machine wreck or whatever. But they're not- they're not savage.

Keith (as **Gig**): Ok. But they are... Mandati?

Austin (as **Janey**): They call themselves Mandati. I call them Mandati. No problem.

Keith (as **Gig**): Ok.

Austin (as **Janey**): Anyway-

Keith (as **Gig**): I mean I bought the whole Savage Mandate thing just cause they're- they looked like they were lookin' to... you know.

Austin (as **Janey**): You can't judge a book by it's cover. If there's some people near here who happen to be part of the Mandate who are... lookin' for a fight, that doesn't mean all the Mandati are out for a fight.

Keith (as **Gig**): So, it's not like, one big gang?

Austin (as **Janey**): Ain't nothin' like one big gang out here.

Keith (as **Gig**): Ok.

Austin (as **Janey**): The Crown is the closest. The closest thing.

Keith (as **Gig**): Ok.

Austin (as **Janey**): An even that's got factions and subfactions and allegiances and... bullshit.

Keith (as **Gig**): Microfactions?

Austin (as **Janey**): Microfactions.

Art (as **Grand Magnificent**): Suballegiances?

Austin (as **Janey**): Sub- suballegiances. All the different words you're sayin'.

[Cassette recording click as Jack de Quidt's "[The Twilight Mirage](#)" begins playing]

Keith (as **Gig**): Macrofactions.

Austin (as **Janey**): That's just the big one, yeah. That's... Oh shit!

Austin: She says like,

Austin (as **Janey**): That's the Crown! It's-

[First tone of opening music]

Keith (as **Gig**): The Crown's the macrofaction?

Austin (as **Janey**): [sighs] She's coming back. She's on her way back. She's on her way back.

Austin: And she just like, stands up and leaves the kitchen. Um, and heads like, into the big main room. Like, grabs like, a cloak from the wall.

Austin (as **Janey**): The Doyenne is coming back from the garden. That's what's happening. That's what those... Oh, shit.

Sylvia (as **Echo**): Who?

Austin (as **Janey**): Uh... the Crown herself.

Sylvia (as **Echo**): You-

Austin (as **Janey**): Don't... it's around the same time every year. She goes out to the garden. She passes right by here. She's gonna be here in....

Austin: And then like, that's when you hear the explosion from outside.

[Music picks up and continues to end]

[1:14:17]