

Bonus Episode: Romeo + Juliet (+BIG ANNOUNCEMENTS!!!)

Transcriber: robotchangeling

Ali: Hello, everyone. I am gonna make sure that this is under a minute, because what follows this is a 45 minute announcement from me and Art and then a three hours and 45 minute *[laughs quietly]* episode of *Romeo + Juliet*, us talking about it, yada yada yada. The reason I'm here, though, is because if you are listening to this on March 4 or on March 5, there is a community of Friends at the Table fans over at twitter.com/rollplusbond or twitch.tv/rollplusbond. This weekend, they are doing a 72 hour livestream of different tabletop games, raising money for Trans Lifeline. We wanted to shout them out. This is a time sensitive shoutout. So if you're free this weekend, if you want to watch some fun games being played by some cool people for a good cause, twitch.tv/rollplusbond, [@rollplusbond](https://twitter.com/rollplusbond). Bond like the, you know, the thing in games. It's a cute name. You get it. Okay, bye! *[laughs]*

Announcements

Austin: Hello, and welcome to another thing that isn't quite an episode of Friends at the Table, though there will be an episode following this little introduction and announcement. Joining me for that first thing, this announcement: Ali Acampora.

Ali: Hi!

Austin: And Art Martinez-Tebbel.

Art: Hi.

Austin: I'm Austin Walker. As always, you can support the show by going to friendsatthetable.cash, which is going to be one of the topics we talk about today, as we have finally decided what to do with our Patreon rework that we've been talking about on and off for minimum two years. Minimum.

Art: Mm-hmm.

Austin: I think we were ready to do it back before COVID. Like, the pot was boiling. And then COVID happened, which, if you thought it was scary to try to change a Patreon before COVID, uh...

Art: Yeah.

Austin: During COVID was not the time. Do not fuck with the bag. But before we get to that, we also have an announcement, and that announcement is that PALISADE will begin next Thursday. Or I guess this Thursday, this coming Thursday.

Ali: This Thursday.

Austin: March 9.

Art: March 9.

Austin: At 8:00 p.m., Eastern Standard Time. Eastern Standard Time? Are we standard time right now?

Art: I think we're standard time right now. I don't feel like we did "spring ahead" yet.

Austin: I don't think we've sprung ahead. We have not yet sprung ahead.

Ali: No.

Austin: And I know you're thinking, "Why is there a time there?" Because normally we go like, "Oh yeah, it'll be out this Thursday," and by Thursday, what we mean is like sometime between 11:00 p.m. Eastern and, uh, noon the next day. *[Ali and Art laugh]*

Ali: It's Thursday somewhere.

Austin: It's Thursday somewhere, baby!

Art: Yeah, usually "Thursday, and don't bother us" is the release time of the episode.

Austin: Yeah, exactly. *[laughs]*

Art: Don't call us. We'll call you.

Austin: Thursday when I finish extemporizing something into a microphone and calling it an intro. But we actually have a time, because we will be debuting PALISADE live on Twitch. Twitch.tv/friends_table, question mark?

Art: I think it's Twitch friendsatthetable. I think it's friendsatthetable, one word.

Austin: It is. It's friendsatthetable, one word. It is. We will be debuting it to a live audience, hopefully including you. It will also be going into the feed at that point.

Ali: Mm-hmm.

Austin: Or...it'll be at that point, presumably? Is that...

Art: Well, no, we should put it in the feed when it finishes, so people don't start like...

Austin: Spoiling things in the chat?

Art: Putting spoilers in the chat.

Austin: But what if that's just an opportunity to remove terrible people from our lives?

Ali: Mm.

Austin: Like a little bait, like a little snare like a mouse trap.

Art: I think people would rather not be “Snape kills Dumbledore”ed.

Austin: Sure.

Art: If you’ll forgive the reference.

Austin: *[chuckles]* Yeah.

Ali: But I want someone who's like leaving work at like 8:30 to be like, “Oh shit.” You know what I mean?

Art: Well, but that's like...for that person, the episode came out at 10:30.

Austin: Yeah, but then all their friends are already—

Art: Spoilers, I guess, for how long the episode is.

Austin: Uh huh. *[chuckles]*

Ali: Yeah.

Austin: We should just drop it in the feed at 8 and trust our fans not to spoil things.

Art: All right. If you spoil something in the chat, I will ban you forever.

Austin: From my life.

Ali: Uh huh.

Art: Yeah, you're banned.

Austin: Yeah.

Art: I'll block you. You're out.

Austin: You're out. I will never see a word you say again. Or if you try to get past me in that way, I'll just...you know, more bad things will happen to you. *[Ali laughs]*

Art: Yeah. And this isn't gonna be fun. Don't like do it because we're saying this.

Austin: No. Yeah, yeah, yeah, yeah, yeah, yeah.

Art: You will not...this is not the attention you think you'll get.

Austin: You will wonder for the rest of your life. For the rest of your life, you will wonder, "Is this bad thing happening to me because of that thing I did to Friends at the Table?"

Art: Yeah.

Austin: You will be consumed by a sort of paranoia.

Ali: Do we want to say this into a microphone in a live recording? *[laughs]*

Austin: Yeah. Yeah, that's how serious it is, Ali. *[Ali laughs]*

Art: Well, you're the one who gets to decide if this goes in.

Ali: We're cursing people?

Austin: Hexing.

Ali: Hexing. Okay.

Austin: Uh huh.

Art: Or engaging in a conspiracy. Your choice.

Ali: All right.

Austin: Your choice. Or be a good person and just don't spoil things for people.

Ali: Mm-hmm.

Austin: Don't jump ahead. Don't do the thing where you listen at 3x speed and then come in the chat and be like, "Ooh, this next part's good." *[Ali laughs]*

Art: Yeah. What if you were just cool?

Austin: Just be cool. 8:00 p.m., [twitch.tv/friendsatthetable](https://www.twitch.tv/friendsatthetable). *[Ali laughs]*

Art: Be somebody or be somebody's fool.

Austin: That will be when you get to see the new cover art by aurahack, by Erica. You'll hear the new music by Jack. You'll meet all the characters for the season, et cetera.

Ali: Mm-hmm.

Austin: So get ready for that. Is there any PALISADE stuff that we need to promo here? You'll see the new map by Annie, which is incredible.

Ali: You'll like it. It's good.

Austin: You'll like it. It's a good episode.

Art: Yeah.

Austin: All right, Patreon talk.

Art: Yeah. I don't really know how to start this, but like, we have wanted to rework the Patreon, as Austin said, for many years now.

Austin: And I said as much in an update recently in the main feed. So like, some of that groundwork has been laid, [Art: "Yeah"] assuming that you listened to that episode.

Art: Assuming you listen to all of the Austin talking episodes.

Austin: Right, yeah, mm-hmm.

Art: Which you should.

Austin: Yeah, there's important information in there, like: hey, I think we're gonna rework the Patreon coming soon, because...we have a bunch of reasons, I guess.

Art: Yeah. The main reason is that the Patreon was designed with ideas about what the workflow would look like that were made by people who had no idea what it would be like.

Austin: Also people at different points in their life, at a different kind of—

Art: Uh huh, young people with energy.

Austin: [laughs] People who only had one other job instead of two other jobs, or three other jobs, depending on how you count. People who also were in a different Patreon ecosystem, where the expectations were—

Art: Mm-hmm.

Austin: It's a lot like early Kickstarter, where you're like, "Just add more on there! We'll figure it out!"

Art: Yeah, which produced some of the grossest board games you've ever seen.

Austin: Uh huh.

Art: Massive things spilling out of every seam. *[Ali laughs]*

Austin: Yeah, mm-hmm. And in our case, led to tiers that people didn't really care about, but they liked to support us at that tier level, and so they just stayed there and then just like didn't get character sheet updates, because also, we all assumed things like, "Hey, it's gonna be easy to export stuff from Roll20." It was not. It was never easy. *[Ali laughs]* I was stitching together JPEGs of websites, and no one cared. No one wanted that. That wasn't a thing people actually wanted. So we went back to the drawing board, and we said, "What is it that people really want?"

Art: Mm-hmm.

Austin: And I think the best thing to do is just go tier by tier. What are the tiers we will be offering? We're not going to turn the key on this until next Thursday, until Thursday at 8:00 p.m. Is that right, Art? But all this is being announced now.

Art: Yeah, so if you want to be in a tier that doesn't make any sense, you still have time.

Austin: *[laughs]* Right.

Art: That's what you meant, right? *[Ali laughs]*

Austin: I guess! The \$1 tier for our Patreon, friendsatthetable.cash, is staying the same.

Art: Yeah. Staying the same. Best deal in radio.

Ali: Mm-hmm.

Austin: Is this true to say, Ali, that like the Clapcast is the shoulders that hold up the rest of Friends at the Table?

Ali: I think so. I mean, it's great stuff to listen to, *[laughs quietly]* and we have a good time doing it. I mean, obviously, with the Twitch streams and stuff more...

Austin: Right.

Ali: There's banter afloat.

Austin: Mm-hmm. Mm-hmm.

Ali: But I think that sort of the like, here's my 20 minute MP3 of a little bit of outtakes, a little bit of current events, a little bit of jokes...

Austin: Yeah. I love it.

Ali: It's a great deal. Yeah.

Austin: Yeah. I listen to those, because there's some times when I'm not on a thing, and I'm like, "I just want to hear my friends goofing around," and I really— *[Ali laughs]*

Art: Yeah. You know what the weirdest thing, though, is?

Austin: What's that?

Art: Sometimes I listen to a Clapcast, and I'm surprised that I'm on it.

Ali: Mm.

Austin: That happens to me for everything.

Art: Like, people are talking about something.

Austin: Yeah.

Art: And then it's like, "Oh, this is pretty—" and then I start talking.

Austin: *[laughs]* Do you agree with the things you say, or do you surprise yourself and have bad takes?

Art: I think I'm usually pretty on the ball.

Austin: All right, that's good.

Ali: Mm.

Austin: I agree with that, Art, about you.

Art: Yeah. *[Ali and Art laugh]*

Austin: \$5. Let's see if this sounds familiar to you: Bluff City.

Art: Whoa, that does sound familiar to me!

Ali: Mm-hmm. I love Bluff City.

Art: We're doing an infomercial now, right?

Austin: We're doing an infomercial. *[all laugh]* Yeah. Has this ever happened to you? You put on your headphones and nothing comes out? Well, now, you can hear something. It's called Bluff City! Bluff City is the best thing we make, I think. Bluff City season one is like maybe the best full season of anything we've ever made. I love Bluff City season two. It's just also taken us four years to make it, and it's coming to a close shortly. *[Ali laughs]* We are in the middle of releasing *Gravity Rip*, our penultimate game for Bluff City season two. We have one more game to record. We have scheduled that. We're getting ready to record that. And in the future, we'll make Bluff City season three, and you'll get access to that from this tier. And you'll note that I was kind of indefinite, because I said "in the future." And I know you're thinking, "But Austin, why would I subscribe to this tier if Bluff City season three is an indeterminate time in the future?" And that's because this tier also gives you access to whatever the other produced secret season of Friends at the Table ongoing show thing is, and the next one of those will be *Realis*.

Ali: Buh buh buh!

Austin: After we finish up—

Art: Oh, it's not a secret at all anymore.

Austin: Well, it's a secret to the people listening to this.

Ali: Buh buh buh!

Austin: If they're on the bus, the other people on that bus don't know. Thank you, Ali. *[Ali laughs]*

Art: Oh, don't tell them.

Austin: Don't tell them.

Art: Because they will think you're weird.

Austin: *[laughs]* "Uh, excuse me, ma'am. Do you know about *Realis*?" *[Ali and Art laugh]* It makes it sound like a pharmaceutical, unfortunately.

Art: Yeah.

Austin: We're going to have this tier, this \$5 tier, be the place where a show with production and music and season style prep goes. So, that will continue to be like Bluff City in the future. It will be Bluff City season three, which I already know what game we're planning for that. I guess a little bit of a spoiler, because I said it that way.

Art: Yeah.

Austin: I said, "what game we're playing for that," and not "what games we're playing for that." Interesting.

Art: Well, yeah.

Austin: But leave it in. You know, that's a fun tease. But before that and after Bluff City season two wraps up with our next game, we're going to be doing a *Realis* campaign. For people who don't remember, we debuted or teased *Realis* at the end of the National Network of Abortion Funds stream last July. It is a tabletop game that I've been working on for the last couple of years. It's in playtesting state at this point. Shoutouts to the people who actually have been playtesting it and giving great feedback. This will be, you know, we'll be playing an unfinished version of it, because, for instance, the current draft of it has no GMing advice in it yet because of how I have a limited amount of time GMing it and have a lot of different opinions on what I should write in that, and getting to playtest that with Friends at the Table folks is gonna help me write that section.

Art: Yeah, and, I mean, luckily, you don't need that section for you to run it for us.

Austin: Right. I need to run it so I can write that section. I think I'll be okay. Yeah, I wrote the game. I have good ideas about how it should run. What I need is to figure out if those are good ideas and then how to write those down, and so...yeah, so that'll be coming in 2023, throughout 2023, after we wrap up *Gravity Rip* and the next final Bluff City season two game. So, that is \$5. \$15?

Art: And honestly, what a value.

Austin: Oh, yeah. And, to be clear, I guess I should say that \$5 tier will continue to give you access to everything that's ever been in the \$5 tier, right? So that includes ongoing, you know, past episodes of Drawing Maps and Tips at the Table, past episodes of Live at the Table MP3s. It will continue to include Live at the Table MP3s, which I make a note of, because the \$15 tier has kind of two things going on. One is it will support Live at the Table and our ongoing Twitch, you know...

Art: Experiment.

Austin: Yeah, our ongoing Twitch experiment. And your name will be broadcast alongside— how do we even want to explain this? How do we even want to...I guess the first thing to say is—

Art: Well, I guess, first thing's first.

Austin: Yeah.

Art: Live at the Table is changing.

Austin: Yes.

Art: Live at the Table is going from something behind the Patreon wall [*Austin: "A secret"*] to something that we're doing for free.

Austin: Right. Because we have always had this feeling of like, one, Live at the Tables are very fun to do. They're some of our silliest things and also sometimes some of our most meaningful. I think about something like our games of, um...what is the one I'm thinking of? *Fall of Magic* were Lives. But also the ones where we were asshole wizards is a Live, right?

Art: Yeah. Very meaningful, that one.

Austin: Exactly. And so, we wanted to— we've always been like, those are really fun. It would be cool if more people had access to them, especially because we show off lots of cool games.

Art: Yeah.

Austin: Ali, are you back with pizza? I think Ali left to go get pizza. Hi, Ali, in the edit.

Art: All right.

Austin: So, I know Ali, for instance, does care a lot about making sure that independent developers and, you know, small press games get the attention that they can get with our platform, and that's better if Live at the Table is free.

Art: You know, we've seen game developers like join the Patreon to hear us playing their game, and that feels bad, but it's hard to like...it's hard to give that out.

[0:15:04]

Austin: Right.

Art: And so just just taking— yeah, and then it makes it harder for them to share it.

Austin: Right.

Art: So, taking that off of the Patreon and putting it on Twitch is, I think, better for the game community, better for our community.

Austin: Yep.

Art: Better all over. But we need...that's why we need like the support of our \$15 patrons to like make this work.

Austin: Right, exactly. If that goes away, that becomes a little harder to do, because right now, that's being supported by patrons to keep it closed up, because it's a little bonus that they get. And at this point, we're saying like, "Hey, wouldn't it be great if you supported this and also other people got to see it." To signal that, on certain Twitch streams, we will have a live feed—at the bottom, presumably, of the screen—of our \$15 and above patrons who have supported it. If you've seen something like the Nextlander patron, you know, like shoutout crawl thing on there, they do like a patrons' choice stream or something like that. It'll seem similar to that. It'll be a string of names at the bottom of the screen going by. We'll have a system set up so that you can submit the name you want to be displayed. And so, that'll come on certain Twitch streams. I guess we should announce including one of the types of those, huh? Because on top of—

Art: Yeah, I think we should...again, this is the weird thing. We're gonna announce a new Friends at the Table show right now. "Show" in quotes, I guess.

Austin: It's a show in quotes, but, you know, it's actually an old Friends at the Table show, right?

Art: Right, an old friend in a new way.

Austin: Oh, that's kind of nice. We're gonna re-air all of Bluff City weekly, on Friends at the Table on on Twitch, to a live audience, so that people can experience for the first time or revisit their classic friends, like Rupert the asshole bird. *[Ali laughs quietly]*

Art: Mm-hmm.

Austin: And other such Bluff City classics.

Art: And one of the side effects is that we can then put the VOD of that on YouTube.

Austin: Right.

Art: And the fact that like Bluff City season one is free but very hard to access is going to go away.

Austin: Exactly, because right now that's like, it's free on Patreon, but you can't get a Patreon...no one wants to listen to MP3s on patreon.com, and you can't get an RSS feed for us

unless you're at least a \$1 subscriber. So like, Bluff City is kind of hard to listen to, even though season one is free, and so this will end up with, you know, versions of it on YouTube, which is exciting. There's another \$15 bonus? Is that what I'm looking at? Is that correct?

Art: That's correct.

Austin: Another one?

Art: I can't believe how much we're giving to the \$15 patrons. *[Ali laughs quietly]* It's, uh...maybe we should...?

Austin: No, it's here on the—

Art: I mean, only if you hear it. If we decide to take some of this out and put it on another tier, maybe we should.

Austin: *[laughs]* No, I like it here. Ali, do you want to talk about what this other thing is?

Ali: Yeah. So, also for our \$15 patrons, to not get rid of some of the like fun behind-the-scenes stuff, some of the like conversations we would get into on like Tips at the Table, some of the fun like Pusher stuff that we would do. This is really like, everybody who supported us at the Pusher tier, thank you for being like good beta testers for us just like figuring out podcasts that are fun to do, *[Austin and Art laugh]* because this is sort of gonna be like a behind-the-scenes, once a month conversation with a selection of us, sort of about what the show has been about.

Austin: Mm. Can you give an example?

Ali: So like, say, for instance, you were listening to PALISADE, and then the like episode where Motion was introduced—

Austin: You mean PARTIZAN. You mean PARTIZAN.

Ali: I fucking mean PARTIZAN. I'm too... *[laughs]*

Austin: I was like, "Wait a second, Motion's not in PALISADE." People are gonna be like, "Oh my god, spoilers!" and it's not.

Ali: Spoilers!

Austin: Motion is not in PALISADE.

Ali: I'm the one with the hex on me now.

Austin: Oh my god.

Ali: *[laughs]* So, if you were listening to PARTIZAN, and Motion was introduced, and there was that cool song, I would have had like Jack and Sylvi to sit down and talk to me about like creating Motion and creating that song. During Sangfielle, there would have been some choice the Art and Keith episodes, I think.

Austin: Sure.

Ali: Or like Chine and probably Keith in that case, talking about like the Gates of Sapodilla

Austin: Right, right.

Art: Mm-hmm.

Ali: Or things of that nature. So—

Austin: It's a little bit like Drawing Maps, but a little more focused, I would say.

Ali: Yeah. The way that I've been thinking of it is like a developer's blog.

Austin: Mm-hmm.

Ali: And just like an audio version of that, because like the best thing that we do is just talk into a microphone with each other, so like, a way for us just to do that and like satisfy some of people's like needs in terms of like— well, not needs, but like desires or expectations that we've set up *[Austin: "Mm-hmm"]* previously with our Patreon, in terms of like, we'll let you look behind the curtain a little bit. This is our way of doing that, that I'm excited to do.

Austin: Right. Yeah, I'm really excited for you to run this too, Ali. You're a good host for things, and it's fun to talk to you about stuff, so.

Ali: Yeah.

Art: Mm-hmm.

Austin: You know, another good example for this, the one that you suggested was, you know, I talked a little bit about the...over on the Patreon, the PALISADE like mixtape that I made, the playlist that I made for it, and it would have been cool to have like you and Dre who also have made playlists for yourselves, for your characters for this season, to come on and talk about those. That would have been a really good little episode, even though the season itself hasn't kicked off fully yet.

Ali: Yeah.

Austin: Or...go ahead.

Ali: That, if we do an episode of this for March, will likely be what the first episode is. *[laughs]*

Austin: That makes perfect sense to me. Yeah. This could also be about stuff like, we did a good Live at the Table game, or, hey, we've been doing really successful streams of Wild Hearts or whatever, and Keith and Sylvi want to talk about that game a little bit, right? So it could be a lot of different things.

Ali: Mm-hmm.

Austin: I'd like to keep it towards the main show, but every once in a while, it'd be fine for it to breach out, you know, to something a little bit broader. \$25: it's postcards.

Art: Yeah.

Austin: The postcards are coming. There's a lot of them.

Ali: Mm-hmm.

Austin: Ali, how many sets are complete and how many are in production?

Ali: Several.

Austin: Or pre-production, I guess.

Ali: *[laughs]* So, right now, if you're like, "I've been hearing about the postcards. I haven't signed up. I'm really excited for PALISADE. I want to get like PALISADE 01's postcard," you can still do that right now, because cards for March are charged on April 1.

Austin: Mm-hmm.

Ali: So if you sign up right now, you can go do that. But if you have been supporting this tier for a little while, and you've been like, "Hey, what's going on there?"

Austin: Mm-hmm.

Ali: I sent out three emails for the three different sets that are coming out, which covers about a year and a half of postcards, which will be the completion of our Sangfielle set, like an anniversary set that we did of some divines of the Friends at the Table universes as like a six year anniversary type thing.

Austin: Both literally like Divine Cycle Divines, but then also like some Hieron gods and some other stuff, right?

Ali: Yeah, it's deities—

Austin: You don't have to spoil anything.

Ali: *[laughs]* But it's from Sangfielle, the Divine Cycle, and Hieron.

Austin: Right, sure.

Ali: We kind of— there's a mix there. And then, for the final set, we're also doing a run of *Realis* postcards, which is kind of a look into some of the locations in that game.

Austin: Mm-hmm. Really, really great. Do we want to say artists on any of these things at this point, or do we want to leave it as a surprise?

Ali: Oh, sure. Yeah, so the Sangfielle postcards were Chris Kindred, Jen Doyle, and Annie Johnston-Glick as a pinch-hitter for that because of some artist issues. And then the deities cards are by Conner Fawcett.

Austin: Shoutouts.

Ali: Shoutouts.

Austin: Is this the first time we've done a— no, Conner also worked on PARTIZAN cards, right?

Ali: And will be working on the PALISADE cards.

Austin: Right, yes.

Ali: And—

Art: Look at all the information you get listening to this.

Austin: Mm-hmm. *[Ali laughs]*

Art: It's unbelievable.

Austin: Remember, it's secret.

Art: Yeah. Don't tell the person on the bus.

Ali: And the *Realis* cards were done by Sam Beck.

Austin: Yes. Sam Beck, who I've wanted to work with for a long time. Super excited to get to

work with Sam. They're incredible. I recently showed one of the cards to the folks who've been playtesting *Realis*, and the response was basically a full chat of people going "Yo!" *[Art laughs]* so that was very exciting. I'm very excited for people see some of that. That also has like a little short fiction story on the back by me. Very excited for people to see that in the lead up to *Realis* starting later this year. And then, yeah, more PALISADE. PALISADE cards, once again by Conner and Si. So, those will be coming this year, correct?

Ali: Extremely excited for those, yeah.

Austin: Same. So, that's \$25. \$50.

Ali: Oh.

Austin: Oh, yeah? Mm-hmm?

Ali: I just want to say: at \$25, the PALISADE cards are going to be resuming being monthly.

Austin: Gotcha.

Ali: March's card is going to be sent out at the end of March. It's gonna be a special edition of the PALISADE cover. Spoilers for that. Thank you, Erica.

Austin: Oh, yes.

Art: Mm-hmm.

Ali: And then, yeah, so if you want to start the PALISADE cards in earnest, sign up.

Austin: You've got a little bit of time.

Ali: Yeah, and if it's April, and you're like, "Hey, where's my postcard? I didn't get an email," like, email us, because... *[laughs quietly]*

Austin: They should be coming. Yeah.

Ali: You should get an email in the second to last week of April.

Austin: Mm-hmm. All right, that's 25. Dollars. Words.

Art: Yeah.

Austin: Words are hard. \$50. In the same way that we want to shout out the people who support us via Twitch stream stuff, this \$50 tier is going to become a sort of like credits shout out in the main show's episode text, episode notes section. So, under where the current credits are

for every episode of us, of the show, where our names are, there will now also be: “Thank you to the following folks who've supported us at this tier on Patreon.” It'll be just a quick shoutout there. We know that most of the people who give us the \$50 on Patreon are being very generous with their time and their money. Mostly their money, in this case. They're not like doing work for us. I don't know why I said time. They're not digging ditches for us. *[Ali laughs]* I guess, in a way, people say time is money.

Ali: Mm, mm-hmm.

Austin: So they are being generous with their time, in a sense.

Art: Well, yeah. By definition, money is also time.

Austin: Right, that's how that works. And so, thank you for that. And to thank you for that, we're gonna put your name in every episode going forward, during the time at which you are an ongoing patron. You know, if you have been enjoying the Pusher stuff that you get, you still are gonna get that. It's just also \$15 people and above are all going to get that. And so, please, you know, if you have it in your hearts to continue supporting us at that level, please do. If you don't, if your budget gets tighter, we totally understand on that front, you know. I think a lot of this comes from a place of us being like, we trust our patrons are supporting us at the tier that they can and feel comfortable supporting us at, and some of that will change as these tiers change. We understand that. But also, we think that sometimes people will give you money if you say, “Yeah, we'll take money at this level,” but, you know, here's the little bit of extra incentive to do that, right? So that's going to be that. And then the \$100 tier—again, oh my God, thank you so much—that tier's staying the same. *[Ali laughs]* Which, Ali, what's the breakdown on that? Is it for the...you tell me.

Ali: Yeah, so, when you support us at that tier for six months, you get a book with a bookplate signed by all of us in it, and then if you continue at that tier, you get another book every year.

Austin: Right. And that has the bookplates that are signed by every member of the cast.

Ali: Mm-hmm. Which is very difficult. *[laughs]*

Austin: But we just finished a cycle. We just finished a circle on this like last week, so.

Art: Yeah.

Ali: Yeah, so we're good now.

Austin: We are good to go on that.

Ali: Uh huh. *[laughs quietly]*

Austin: And then, finally, stretch goals. And then I'll go over all this one more time, just for clarity, but stretch goals. We are emptying the current selection and starting fresh on stretch goals, because the world has changed. I would still love to do a live show at a location at some point in the future. We are not tying it to a numerical amount of money anymore, because to do that is to invite disaster.

Art: Yeah.

Austin: We will do it when it's time to do it. Right, Art?

Art: Yeah, and I think we can say that y'all have earned it, and when it is reasonable to do so, we will make every effort to do one. You know?

Austin: We like doing them. They're a blast.

Art: Yeah.

Austin: They're fun. It's great to meet people. It's great to do a show live.

Art: If you think we owe you this, I promise you, we still want to do one.

Austin: Yes. Instead—and I think, Ali, you kind of thought about this—we have kind of a new way of thinking about these stretch goals that takes into account one of the core reasons we're doing this rework, which is we don't want to overpromise—the way like, again, old Kickstarters used to—and then find ourselves so underwater with work that we don't get the core stuff done to the quality or time that we want to or in the amount of time that we want to, right?

Ali: Yeah. I mean, for like an exciting milestone that we had, which was like, “We'll do a new show, and it's called Random Article, and we have the pitch for that.” And like, that was a good idea, but we already had like eight things that we had to do once a month, and like...

Austin: Every month, yeah.

Ali: You know, hitting that tier was not going to make a ninth thing any easier, as much as we like wanted to have that as an incentive, and we sort of like, in the back of our minds, wanted to do that thing. So, I think that the way that this is structured now has kind of like a pressure pull, because we can say like: here's a special event thing that we're going to do.

Austin: Mm-hmm.

Ali: It's going to be six episodes or so, but it's going to be this like cool new show that we all want to...that we're like excited to do and hope people are excited to listen to.

[0:29:49]

Austin: So like, limited run shows that have a start date and an end date. You can compare this almost to— I really love the the folks over at Ranged Touch, who did this similar stretch goal to do Homestuck Made This World. That show is done, right? They did Homestuck Made This World. That show is done. They're gonna continue doing some like bonus stuff for the next little bit, but it's done, right? There's no more episodes of Homestuck Made This World coming. It's run the course. They've done the show on that thing. So, similarly, I think these new stretch goal tiers—I think only one of which we're debuting like, you know, with a specific, today—are going to be about these kinds of limited run shows that are about a topic, and once it's done, the next one, the next limited run show would take its place if we hit the next goal. The first one is a show on the anime *Hunter x Hunter*, a show that I think a bunch of us have watched now that I think is really good. I think Keith was the first internal *Hunter x Hunter* advocate.

Ali: Mm-hmm.

Austin: But I know Keith's watched it. Sylvi's watched it. Dre has watched it. I've watched it. I don't know who's on the show necessarily, but it's some combination of us, of that grouping of people. I don't know if we—

Ali: You guys have been so excited to do this. *[laughs]*

Austin: It's so good. It's such a good show, Ali.

Ali: I'm like, if we hit this stretch goal, I'm gonna start reading it.

Austin: You should.

Ali: So when we hit it, I can join you as the manga elitist.

Austin: Oh, that'd be so good. Please be the manga elitist in my life. *[Ali laughs]* I'm begging you. That's the dream. Yeah, so, *Hunter x Hunter* is the \$30,000 tier. It's a stretch goal.

Art: It's a show we're calling Media Club Plus.

Austin: Right. Media Club Plus. You've heard of— so, this used to be Pusher Media Club, which again, was a \$50 tier. Now, it is a...I don't...is this a free tier? Who gets this?

Art: It's going to be on the Patreon feed.

Austin: Okay.

Art: Maybe it'll be \$5. Maybe it'll be \$1.

Austin: Okay.

Art: Who knows?

Ali: Well, it would be the way that we do Bluff now.

Austin: Right.

Ali: Which is it would be in the Patreon feed for free, and then we would probably throw VODs onto the YouTube.

Austin: Sure.

Art: Yeah.

Ali: So people without RSS feeds could still access the MP3 in a way that's like, not the same as listening to a podcast, but has less...

Austin: But you can still queue it up. You can still put it in a playlist.

Ali: Yeah.

Austin: You can still do all that. I think that makes sense.

Ali: Yeah.

Austin: You know, it should also, you know, maybe a subtext to a lot of this is: we hate that so much of our fun and good stuff has been locked up behind Patreon and have felt shackled to the fear that, if we make more of it free, some of us won't be able to make rent anymore. You know?

Art: Yeah.

Austin: It is very scary to make the sorts of changes we're talking about here, but also, we have a lot of faith in y'all, that you support us and love the work that we do, and you've communicated that to us in so many ways over the years. And maybe, you know, the reality of that love hits the reality of reality and material rent money concerns on your side, and you have to shift for a month or leave altogether, and that is— we'd get it. We totally get it. But I think making these changes to be more sustainable for us and to better hit the things that we've promised more reliably and to make more of our stuff available to more people is kind of fundamentally a thing we've needed to do for a long time, and I'm really glad we're finally, you know, doing it.

Art: Yeah. But in a very real way here, we're...to reference a classic Friends at the Table moment, we are leaving our guard open.

Austin: Mm. I thought you were gonna say we're getting off the boat.

Ali: *[laughs]* Yeah.

Art: No, we're leaving our guard open, and do you choose to strike?

Austin: *[laughs]* Do you choose. Uh huh.

Art: You know?

Austin: Yeah.

Art: If everyone decides to just bail...

Austin: Is that a classic Friends at the Table moment? Or is that perhaps a preview of things to come? Who could say?

Art: Who could say? I mean, it did happen.

Austin: I mean, yeah, it did happen.

Art: It is in the past.

Austin: Or is it in the future also?

Art: Hmm.

Austin: Hmm. \$1: Clapcast. \$5: produced show, currently Bluff City, then *Realis*. Bluff City season three will also go here. Other stuff could go here, including—and I left this out at the time, but in retrospect—things like the, uh...what is the Jane Austen inspired game that we played last year? Ali?

Ali: *Good Society*.

Austin: *Good Society*, right? Which like has music, required production work.

Ali: Mm-hmm. There's a—

Austin: Things like that. *Fall of Magic* similarly has music. Yep?

Ali: I just want to...for the Nievelmarch stans out there.

Austin: Yes.

Ali: You're gonna be wanting to support at this tier, because there is a little brew on the stove.
[laughs quietly]

Austin: Ooh. Exciting.

Art: Oh.

Ali: So, yeah, it's preheated.

Austin: Love that. So, yeah, things like that will also go on that tier, right? So you can imagine that there might be a month where we don't have time to get the Bluff crew together or whatever that subset of people is for *Realis* and instead we put a one shot in there that traditionally would have been a Live at the Table, but there are some Live at the Table games that really do benefit from prerecording, production stuff. You can think about *Lancer*. You can think about *Good Society*. I want to say maybe there was one other thing that was similarly a prerecorded thing. So, that'll go there. So, that's \$1: Clapcast. \$5: produced shows and also Live at the Table MP3s. \$15: the developer blog conversation with Ali. We need a name for that. Plus your name on our rebroadcast of Bluff City and any future rebroadcast shows and maybe some other Twitch streams. We're still trying to figure out what that will look like with our various layouts, but definitely—

Art: Our Live at the Tables too.

Austin: Will also have those? Yes, okay. I wasn't sure 100%. So, our Live at the Tables and our rebroadcasts will have the name kind of crawl at the bottom, saying, "Shoutouts to our \$15 patrons. This is supported by you." So, that is kind of the Live at the Table support tier, even though Live at the Table will be streamed on Twitch for free. So. \$25: physical objects, postcards, et cetera. \$50: name in the episode descriptions as a thank you for supporting the core show. \$100: bookplates. Boom.

Art: Boom.

Austin: Boom! Tough Actin' Tinactin.

Ali: We did it.

Art: Yeah.

Austin: Uh huh.

Art: Well, we have one more thing that's not the Patreon. We have another thing we have to say here.

Austin: Checking the Discord. Da da da da da...

Art: All right, I'll start, and you just come in whenever.

Austin: Yeah.

Art: We are doing more stuff on Twitch. We're gonna do this episode premier on Twitch.

Austin: Oh, yeah. Sure.

Art: We're gonna do more Lives. We're gonna do the rebroadcast. We're going to stream more games. We, as a unit, are having fun streaming games on Twitch with y'all.

Austin: I'm having fun watching, because I've been busy during most of the streaming and have been able to just check in and been like, "Oh, this is very funny. This is very good. I love this." I am excited to join y'all on some future streams, now that some of my travel is behind me.

Art: Yeah, and that's going to be great too.

Austin: Also, we kind of, as a unit, used to stream games together all the time, and it's been fun to get that going again.

Art: Yeah, I think the marathon last—

Austin: Yeah.

Art: The charity marathon last year really like sparked this in us, you know?

Austin: Mm-hmm, mm-hmm. So wait, what's the thing we have to say, Art?

Art: Well, you may have noticed that we recently qualified for Twitch Affiliate status.

Austin: Hmm.

Art: And as a part of that, we can take Twitch subscribers, and we want to tell you that if you have \$5 a month to give us, you should give it to the Patreon.

Austin: *[laughs quietly]* Yes. Even if that just means going from 5 to 10 or from 10 to 15 or whatever; from 25 to 30, even though that doesn't give you anything more. That \$5 is better spent on the Patreon.

Art: Yeah. Twitch takes half of it, and it's awful.

Austin: And gives it to Amazon.

Art: And gives it to Amazon. When you give us \$5— you know the old, “If you drive alone, you drive with Hitler.”

Austin: Excuse me?!

Art: If you give money to Twitch, you're giving it to Jeff Bezos.

Austin: Oh, sure, like a gas rationing type thing.

Art: Yeah.

Austin: Yeah, yeah, yeah.

Art: Yeah.

Ali: Ohh.

Austin: I see. So like, carpool because it hurts the Nazis.

Ali: Mm, mm-hmm, mm-hmm.

Art: Right.

Austin: Yeah. Yeah, yeah, yeah. I see.

Art: Yeah, I'm surprised I'm the only one here who's seen that. It's very striking, because it's like a guy driving with Hitler's ghost. *[Ali laughs]*

Austin: Well, if we'd killed Hitler earlier, I feel like we wouldn't have had certain problems, if he was a ghost.

Art: Well, here's the thing. It turns out Hitler can make ghosts of himself while he's still alive.

Austin: Oh my God! *[laughter]*

Ali: Wow.

Art: Yeah, I think that's part of why that war went on so long. *[Ali laughs]* I'm not a historian. This is not a history show.

Austin: Yeah, I see it. I get it.

Art: Anyway.

Austin: Uh huh?

Art: If you have \$5 to give us, please give it to us on Patreon and not on Twitch, but if you have Twitch Prime...

Austin: Right.

Art: Which you get by having Amazon Prime, and I know I just said don't give money to Amazon, *[Austin laughs quietly]* but a lot of people have Amazon Prime. A lot of stuff is on Amazon. It's horrible, but it's true.

Austin: Uh huh.

Art: And if you have Amazon Prime, you get a free sub on Twitch every month.

Austin: A free subscription, not a free hoagie.

Art: A free subscription, yeah. And we would love to have that.

Austin: They don't have the Wawa sponsorship quite yet. *[Ali laughs]* Yeah, sorry for talking over the important point you're actually making. We'll take your Twitch Prime sub. That sounds great.

Art: Yeah, we'd love to have your Twitch Prime subs. We're gonna throw up a couple of emotes. We're not gonna go emote crazy, because, again, we don't want you to want them.

Ali: Mm-hmm. *[Austin and Ali laugh]*

Art: We want you to want them a little.

Austin: But we don't want you to want them so much that you give Jeff Bezos money.

Art: Right.

Austin: He has money.

Art: He's got all the money.

Austin: Yeah.

Art: And I'm gonna lightly threaten you here.

Austin: *[taken aback]* Okay.

Art: If the percentage of paid subs gets too high, I'm going to turn this car right around. We're going to turn it all off. You're gonna lose everything.

Austin: The one with Hitler's ghost in it?! *[Ali laughs]*

Art: Hitler's ghost is gonna take all the emotes from you.

Austin: Oh my God! I didn't think there'd be so much Hitler content when we started this. *[Ali laughs]* Did you hear about the Spotify Hitler channel?

Art: Well, if you'd all just seen this poster before, none of this would be happening.

Austin: Uh huh. Uh, cool.

Ali: Yeah, does that about cover it? *[laughs]*

Art: Well, unless you want to go over like the prisoner's dilemma of like, well, you *could* subscribe, but...

Austin: No. Don't.

Art: As long as no one else does it.

Austin: No. No one should subscribe with real money, if you can help it.

Art: Yeah.

Austin: I really appreciate the kindness, but we have that place to do it, and it is the Patreon.

Art: Mm-hmm.

Austin: And to reiterate something we used to say a lot, it's like, if you can only go give us five bucks a month on Patreon for one month a year, but you feel like compelled to do that, but then also feel like, "Oh, but I don't want to give it for one month and then have to cancel on it." I don't care. Do that. Go do that. Go listen to Bluff City season two.

Art: Yeah. Subscribe once a year, download all the stuff, and leave.

Austin: I'd prefer, if you have it in your budget to continue, you know, supporting us, that'd be great. But if you don't, you don't. And if all you can do is, you know, "Hey, here's the 20 bucks a year I have to give to people who make stuff I like," rad. Happy to be part of that 20 bucks spend, you know? Fit us in where you can fit us in. It does allow us to do this. I mean, we said this earlier, the thing of like...there's a point at which— or I guess we kind of gestured at it. Getting an extra, you know, \$3,000 a month or whatever doesn't make it possible for us to do

another ninth thing every month and keep up with, you know, more and more shows. That is fundamentally true, but it's only true because we already hit that tier once to where we were able to do, for instance, Bluff City and now *Realis* as a thing, because we can have people work on stuff with more time, right? Ali, you produce the show. You're able to do that to the quality level that you can because of the support people give us. Keith and Sylvi have begun doing more social stuff. If you've been seeing videos promoting our stuff on Twitter or TikTok or elsewhere, that's because Sylvi and Keith are supported by you, the patrons, who give us money that then we give extra to Keith and Sylvi to do that, right? Our taxes are gonna probably get filed on time. *[laughs quietly]* That's because you give us money that we give to Art to give to accountants to make sure that the IRS doesn't kill us, right?

Art: Yeah, I mean, it's not...in case the IRS is listening, I don't like take the money out and then give it to the accountants. *[Austin laughs]* It's all in like a very professional way where they invoice us and we send them that.

Austin: Well, that's— you know what I mean! I'm speaking figuratively. *[Art laughs]* I'm speaking about payment processes. Anyway, these are all things that we're able to do because of that support, but there is a sort of diminishing return, right? Like, outside of us— unless you can give us enough money to build a time machine, we cannot cut the time any slimmer than it's already been cut, you know? So, there is a drop off, but what you've given us helps a ton already, and we just want to make sure that we do right by what that support is, and we want to make sure that we're able to like give people what they deserve and commit to what we say we're going to give. So, that's what we just said. I guess I should say, again, Live at the Table will probably not be a monthly thing necessarily. It'll be a rotating thing, along with other stuff. I'd love to do some Random Articles live this year, but again, instead of overpromising and saying...I mean, I guess we'll say Live at the Table six a year, right? We'll do half a year, for sure.

Art: Six a year Live at the Table is our goal.

Austin: Yeah. And I'd love to do more than that, but I don't want to promise more than that and then break that promise, you know? So. So, yeah, that's the announcement.

Art: Here we are with a 45 minute announcement on top of the three, almost four hour episode you're about to listen to.

Ali: Mm-hmm!

Austin: Hmm. It's a good episode.

Art: It's a great episode.

Austin: You know what's good?

Art: But maybe go get a water or change buses or whatever you're doing. I don't know. *[Ali*

laughs]

Austin: Yeah, yeah, yeah. Yeah. And you can tell the person on the bus about the really good *Romeo + Juliet* spoilercast you're about to listen to.

Ali: Mm-hmm.

Austin: You can say, "Would you like to share this moment with me?" and then take your headphones out and just play it on the phone. No, don't do that. Don't do that. That's very annoying.

Ali: Well...

Austin: Well?

Ali: It worked out for them. *[laughs quietly]*

Austin: Okay, wait, did it?

Ali: Well... *[Austin laughs]* If you could be with the person that you're supposed to be in love with *[Austin: "Uh huh"]* for 16 hours, versus not...

Austin: *[laughs]* But then? But then what?

Ali: Well... *[laughs quietly]*

Austin: I guess the option is—

Art: Okay. If the Patreon gets to \$3 million a month, *[Ali laughs]* we'll make our own *Romeo and Juliet*.

Ali: Ooh.

Austin: Yeah. Yeah, I promise that.

Art: Yeah.

Austin: That's easy to promise.

Art: Three million.

Austin: Three million a month.

Art: See you there.

Austin: We have to collect at least once. *[Ali laughs]* You can't–

Art: Yeah, it has to all clear once.

Austin: Yeah, yeah, yeah.

Art: We need...and maybe twice, if we're honest. *[laughs]*

Austin: No, because you didn't say like, is it filmed or is it a live stage show? *[laughs]*

Ali: Mm.

Austin: Or is it an audio production?

Art: Sure, yeah.

Austin: I think we could do three mill. I think we could– yeah, I think we could figure it out.

Ali: I mean, I think we're...listen to Friends at the Table PALISADE dot com, and you'll get some...

Austin: Mm-hmm.

Ali: *[laughs]* That's not not us.

Austin: Already.

Ali: There'll be some shades in there.

Austin: Yeah.

Art: And if you have \$3 million and want to produce our version of *Romeo and Juliet*, give me a call.

Austin: Hey, if you have \$3 million and–

Art: Same number, same hood.

Austin: *[laughs]* If you \$3 million and also a connection to like a, you know, movie production company or an animation studio, you know, give us a call, just generally. We got ideas.

Art: Yeah. Doesn't even have to be *Romeo and Juliet*. *[Ali laughs]*

Austin: Yeah. Did you know we have a bunch of stories that we think are pretty good and would be good across other media?

Ali: Mm-hmm.

Austin: So, you know, let's chop it up.

Ali: Thank you to everybody who donated during the National Network of Abortion Funds livestream for making this *Romeo + Juliet* podcast happen.

Austin: Which you've enjoyed so far. *[laughter]*

Ali: And go listen to it now.

Austin: Bye! Bye!

Ali: Now. We're finished. *[Ali and Austin laugh]*

Art: Bye! Here comes that Media Club theme song.

Austin: That's not— no!

Ali: There isn't one!

Austin: No! No!

Art: What? Hold on, here it comes.

Austin: There's not one!

Art: *[singing]* Doot doo doo doo doo! We're listening to stuff! *[stops singing]* Wait, we're watching stuff? I don't know. Get out of here.

Romeo + Juliet
[0:46:35]

Art: Do we have a— is there like a thing for this?

Austin: No. *[Ali laughs quietly]*

Art: There's not like a...

Austin: No.

Art: Critical movie watching?

Austin: No, we don't do that. *[Sylvia laughs]*

Art: Oh. All right.

Ali: Sometimes I say, "Welcome to Patreon book club," and then everybody gets mad at me for saying book. That's our intro.

Austin: So try that. So try that. *[Ali laughs]*

Sylvia: Do we get mad?

Art: Hi, welcome to Patreon Club.

Jack: Oh.

Sylvia: Mm...

Art: No, it doesn't sound good either.

Austin: That doesn't sound good.

Ali: Mm.

Austin: Are we just in it? Is this— have we already started?

Sylvia: I hope not. *[Sylvia and Ali laugh]*

Art: Hi, and welcome to our charity livestream reward of a Media Club about Baz Luhrmann's *William Shakespeare's Romeo + Juliet*.

Austin: 1996.

Jack: 1996 edition.

Art: 1996 edition, not the 10 year anniversary edition, which came out in 1997. Or, 2007.

Austin: Wha— *[laughs]*

Ali: Wait.

Sylvia: Uh huh?

Austin: Wait, is there a 10 year anniversary edition?

Art: Yes.

Austin: Is anything different?

Art: I mean, it's the 10 year anniversary release?

Austin: Oh, okay.

Ali: Oh, like a special DVD.

Art: Yeah. I know there was a— because they also like rerecorded— Baz Luhrmann also did a new version of “The Sunscreen Song”, and that says, “Ladies and gentlemen of the class of 2007.”

Austin: Ah.

Art: Fascinatingly, that song actually isn't in this movie and wouldn't be made for two more years.

Ali: Mm.

Jack: Huh.

Austin: Very weird. Sure.

Art: Anyway, I'm Art Martinez-Tebbel. I'm joined today by...I don't have a list of names. Uh, Austin. Austin Walker.

Austin: Hi, I'm Austin Walker. You can find me on Twitter at [@austin_walker](https://twitter.com/austin_walker) and cohost at [austin](https://twitter.com/austin).

Art: Ali.

Ali: Hi, I am Ali. You can find me over Twitter over at [@ali_west](https://twitter.com/ali_west), cohost [cartoonmeat](https://twitter.com/cartoonmeat).

Art: Still love that. Jack?

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

Art: And Sylvi.

Sylvia: Hi, I'm Sylvi. You can find me across all platforms as sylvibullet. Keep it simple, baby.

Art: So, this was something that I—

Austin: Wait, wait, wait, wait, wait.

Art: Yeah.

Jack: Wait, wait, wait.

Austin: [Friendsatthetable.cash](https://www.friendsatthetable.cash) is where you can support what we do.

Art: Oh, [friendsatthetable.cash](https://www.friendsatthetable.cash) is where you can support us as a show.

Austin: Yes.

Art: And yeah.

Austin: Also, what else is going on? What else can we say here in the intro to this? Uh, Twitch?

Art: We're doing a lot of stuff on Twitch right now. You can check out anything on twitch dot...net? What's twitch dot?

Sylvia: TV.

Austin: Twitch.tv.

Art: Twitch.tv? *[Ali laughs]*

Sylvia: Are you okay?

Austin: Art, do you want to do this later?

Art: It's very cold here.

Austin: Oh my— *[laughs]*

Ali: In California? *[laughs]*

Jack: It's so fucking cold. Something has gone wrong. Look, Art. Art, I am holding your hand through the microphone. Something bad has happened in the city of Los Angeles, and nobody knows what to do. There is a blizzard, like an actual—

Art: We're having a blizzard.

Austin: It's 51 degrees in LA?! *[laughter]*

Jack: There's a blizzard.

Austin: What the fuck are you talking about? *[laughter]*

Ali: I'm actively mad. *[laughs]*

Jack: Art, I'm holding your hand.

Art: But we've had four inches of rain today, and there was snow on the Hollywood sign.

Sylvia: *[sarcastic]* Oh no!

Ali: That's fun! We haven't had any snow here, by the way, so I'm like pissed off about it.

Austin: We've had no snow. Zero snow.

Sylvia: I wish I had no snow. I have a lot of snow, and I don't like walking in it.

Austin: I'll take some of your snow. Send some.

Ali: Yeah!

Sylvia: Please come take my snow!

Austin: I would love to.

Ali: Come on.

Austin: [Twitch.tv/friendsatthetable](https://www.twitch.tv/friendsatthetable).

Jack: Yeah, I want to be clear. We can dispute whether it's actually rainy or cold in Los Angeles, *[Ali laughs quietly]* but I gotta tell you that the vibes right now in the City of Angels are rancid. Please continue.

Art: Yeah, absolutely.

Austin: Yeah, uh huh. I think that's from this movie we watched. I think that that's what... *[Jack laughs quietly]*

Ali: Mm-hmm.

Austin: Romeo says that towards the beginning. He's like, "Uh oh."

Art: In fair Los Angeles, where the vibes are rancid. *[Ali laughs]*

Austin: Uh huh.

Art: Is where we set our tale.

Austin: Yeah.

Jack: This movie is a lot. Where do we want to begin?

Sylvia: Oh, this movie is so much.

Ali: That it's good?

Sylvia: It's great.

Ali: It begins like perfectly.

Austin: I watched the beginning of this. I watched the first like four minutes of this movie like five times in a row.

Ali: It's so good.

Art: Wait, it must be more than— do you mean through the gas station scene? Or do you just mean the—

Jack: Oh, God.

Austin: I don't. I don't. I mean the—

Ali: The two repeated verses, right?

Austin: The two repeated verses, yes.

Ali: Like, the newscaster and then the like, here's— we're setting this scene. We're doing—

Austin: The trailer? The best trailer for a film ever?

Ali: Yes! *[laughs]*

Art: Yeah, the movie starts with a trailer for the movie?

Austin: With all the best shots in it, and then you get to the shots, and they're still bangers?

Ali: Uh huh.

Art: Yeah. Mm-hmm.

Jack: God. All right. Let's...

Austin: I paused at that moment. So, I've seen— okay, where we should start is where we all watched this.

Jack: Yes.

Austin: What's our history?

Jack: Yeah, so...

Art: Yeah, Jack, you should go first. You have the most recent history.

Jack: Yeah. Art introduced— you know, we on Friends at the Table have talked about this movie for as long as we have been making— longer than we have been making Friends at the Table.

Austin: Has to be, right?

Jack: As a group of friends, whenever this movie has come up in conversation, we have gone, “Yes,” in one way or another. So we were very excited to come to this and do this kind of recording, and Art said in our chat...you made a sort of a like trilateral poll, Art, which was like: “How do you feel about this movie? Have you seen this movie? How do you feel about Baz Luhrmann?” *[laughter]* And then you used these three criteria to assemble this crew, which I think is a fascinating poll, and I can answer the three of those really quickly. I had not seen this movie before 12:00 this morning, or this afternoon.

Art: Wow, you're really coming in hot.

Jack: I was very excited to see the movie, because people I love love it. That's always a good reason to watch a movie. And I do not like Baz Luhrmann. *[Austin laughs]*

Art: Okay.

Jack: And that's my history with this picture.

Art: Yeah.

Austin: Have you seen other Baz Luhrmann films?

Jack: Oh, yeah, under duress.

Austin: Yeah, yeah, yeah. Okay.

Jack: Not that people have been— not that people have *made* me watch Baz Luhrmann movies. People are kind to me when it comes to watching movies. I have said to myself, *[unenthused]* “Well, I’m going to fucking watch *Moulin Rouge*, I suppose.” Or I’m going to watch *The Great Gatsby*. I haven’t seen *Elvis*. But yeah, I’ve seen enough of Baz Luhrmann’s movies to know that I do not care for them.

Art: Mm-hmm. *[Jack laughs]*

Austin: Art, what’s your history with this?

Art: Um...I do—

Austin: I say that, because I bet we have similar histories, but I guess I’m not sure.

Art: I did not see this theatrically.

Austin: Oh, okay, then we do not.

Art: Because you did.

Austin: Yeah. Yeah, yeah, yeah.

Art: Because I was, I just think, a little young. I would have been about 12 when this came out, and I think I saw it when I was like 13 or 14, which I think is like...it must have been 13. I think I saw it in the aftermath of the *Titanic*...

Austin: Sure.

Ali: Oh, sure.

Austin: Right.

Art: Leonardo DiCaprio explosion.

Jack: Movies probably in—

Austin: Whereas I saw this movie as an 11-year-old, and it made me like...this is when the birth of my adulthood started, you know? *[Ali laughs]*

Art: Sure.

Austin: This was it.

Art: It's a very sexy movie.

Austin: Yeah. And then, did you watch it after that? Was that a thing that like, you...was it part of your childhood after seeing it? When did you first see it?

Art: I must have seen it when I was, yeah, 12 or 13, either the next year or the year after.

Austin: But like, did you rent it? Did you see it in school?

Art: I believe that my parents owned it on LaserDisc. *[Sylvia laughs]*

Austin: Okay. That sounds like a your parents thing to me.

Art: Well, I went— my preschool was owned by Claire Danes's mom, so my mom has felt very, like, protective of Claire Danes.

Ali: Mm? *[laughs]*

Sylvia: Oh my God.

Art: Yeah, I had a big crush on Claire Danes when I was two and she was like seven.

Austin: When you were two! Well, that beats mine. Because I was 11, and I had just come out of the theater to see *Romeo + Juliet*, and I was like, "I'm gonna marry that girl." *[Ali laughs]*

Art: Yeah. In a lot of ways, I discovered her, I think it's fair to say.

Austin: Oh, okay. *[laughter]*

Ali: Okay.

Sylvia: Jesus Christ.

Austin: Unbelievable.

Art: Yeah, I mean, so like, you know, my parents watched all of *My So-Called Life* when that was airing, you know?

Austin: Right, sure.

Art: They've always been interested in her career, and so I think we had the LaserDisc, and then, the next year, when I was ready to watch this, it was there for me.

Austin: Mm-hmm. Did anybody have my experience, which was I saw it in theaters and then—really the second part's the most important—I probably saw it five times before I left high school, right?

Art: Yeah, that's about right.

Austin: That like, from middle school, from the ages of 11 when I saw it in theaters to going to college, at least...I may have seen it two or three times in one year, you know, from different substitute teachers. Do you know what I mean?

Art: Mm-hmm.

Austin: It became such a part of a sort of English curriculum, like, cheat code to get kids to pay attention, for reasons that I think are really interesting that go beyond just the props and staging and all of that and to like, seeing Shakespeare acted means it's intelligible for people who don't—it doesn't live on the page, you know? So.

Art: Yeah.

Austin: So yeah, that was me, and I just— I loved it the whole time. Like, when I was 13, I went to Australia. My parents like spent a lot of money to let me go on like a student exchange thing. They like saved up all year. We like sold candy bars. Like, we did a bunch of fundraising so I could go on this thing that's very much like a...it's not a scam, but it's kind of a scam. In retrospect, my parents got scammed, but I got to go to Australia, and the two albums I had with me were this movie's soundtrack [*Ali: "Let's fucking go"*] and Wyclef Jean's *The Carnival*. [*laughter*] So, that shaped a lot in my brain.

Ali: Yeah, I guess I feel like my experience is kind of similar. I was definitely too young when this movie came out to have seen it in theaters, but I feel like I had to have been aware of like the pop culture Zeitgeist around it?

Austin: Mm-hmm.

Ali: Because, in my head—and this occurred to me while I was watching it—in my head, when they meet at the aquarium, "Lovefool" is playing.

Austin: Mm.

Art: Mm.

Ali: But I think that's just because the video for that song has clips of this movie in it.

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

Ali: *[laughs]* And so I was just like watching MTV as a seven year old or whatever and was like, "This is neat." *[laughter]*

Austin: Uh huh.

Ali: *[laughs]* I definitely watched it at some point in high school but like didn't return to it, but like, you know, you see a screencap of this movie, and you're like, "Yeah, that movie fucking ruled."

Austin: Mm-hmm.

Art: Mm-hmm.

Ali: The vibes are there. Also, while I have the microphone and while we're talking about the soundtrack, I just want to say very quickly that for my...I've been listening to "Talk Show Host" a lot lately, *[Austin: "Uh huh"]* because it is on my PALISADE player character's playlist for this season.

Austin: *[knowingly]* Yeah, uh huh.

Ali: *[laughs]* And to hear the strum the moment Romeo is introduced...

Austin: On the fucking beach.

Ali: It's soooo good, and I was soooo validated. *[laughs]*

Austin: There are things...growing old means making a choice, and the choice is either giving up things you thought were cool when you were younger because they were trendy, and now the trend has changed and maybe you've changed with it, or because you look back on it and you feel kind of foolish for liking the thing that you liked when you were young; or clinging to it desperately and insisting that it's still cool years after things have moved on. And I do my best to be more of the former than the latter, but you will have to kill me to make me not think Romeo on the stage on the beach as "Talk Show Host" begins to play isn't the coolest thing ever made. *[Art chuckles]* It's only gotten cooler now that I understand that he's like a little baby piece of shit also.

Sylvia: Uh huh.

Austin: Like, there's a second layer, that he's like deep in his feelings in a corny way, that makes the entire thing even better, for me personally.

Ali: Mm-hmm.

Sylvia: Mm-hmm.

Austin: He just like me, for real real. Like... *[laughter]*

Sylvia: I feel like I have a very passive...I had like a very passive relationship with this movie, which is I saw it in like ninth grade or eighth grade or something. I was like 13 or 14. Didn't really absorb that much of it other than like, "This is pretty, I guess," but like, I had other shit on my mind. And then I watched it last night, and holy shit. *[Austin laughs]* I should have paid more attention in school.

Austin: Damn. *[Sylvia and Art laugh]*

Sylvia: My relationship to Baz is mostly like, I kind of have an appreciation for what he does, but I wouldn't call myself a fan.

Austin: Yeah, I'm with you. I have like a...yeah, I think this is the only one of his films I like.

Ali: Mm-hmm.

Austin: Like, really like.

Sylvia: Yeah. No, absolutely. There's like something about his sort of like...I don't know if maximalism is the right word, but it's the one that springs to mind when I watch his stuff, that I do, like...

Austin: Mm. Mm-hmm.

Sylvia: There's part of me that I'm like, yeah, no, I can see how this gets your neurons firing, but a lot of the time, it doesn't work. But here, it's perfect. It is like...I don't know it. I feel like Shakespeare lends itself to being heightened this much, right?

[1:00:01]

Austin: Mm-hmm. I mean, that's the thing. So, to get back to where I was saying before, I watched the first four minutes—less than that, it's like three minutes of this—like four or five times in a row, which I did the last time I watched this movie too, which was like less than a year ago, probably. Eh, it was a little over a year ago, I watched this. And I paused it on like viewing three to just go read an interview with Baz Luhrmann, and in that interview, which is not on the internet anymore— I mean, I guess it's— I found an archive.org link out to it. It is from...where is this place? What is this? This is cygnus.net or something like that. In this interview, the interviewer was trying to be like, you know, "What made you interested in doing like a punk rock version of this?" which it's not. That's not what it is anyway. But his pushback is like: "That's not what's happening here. Like, I want to dispel the idea that this is like a new take on

Shakespeare. What we've set out to do is think: what would Shakespeare do if he was working as a director in Hollywood in the 1990s and had his priorities? Which were pop sensibilities, right? Which were like lowbrow in many places, engaged with popular culture of the time, engaged with technique that was popular that hit high and low audiences." And that like immediately made so many things clear to me that I'd never really worked through for things like the use of fast motion in this movie and like cartoon sound effects and entire moments that are just music videos. So much of it is clarified when I think about it as like, someone sat down and said, "What would Shakespeare do if he was in Hollywood?" And the answer is like, advertisements, you know, movie...sorry, music videos, and then bringing those sensibilities to film, using kind of like all of the— big operatic scores during cinematic moments, *[laughs quietly]* and then popular love songs during love scenes.

Art: Mm-hmm.

Austin: And that, like, oh, okay. I don't know how I dodged that exact quote for so long, but it was very, very revealing. And then I finally let myself watch the rest of the movie, but that opening four minutes is just...I don't know.

Jack: Yeah, I want to—

Austin: Opening on the TV is so good. It's the...

Ali: It's so good.

Austin: It reminds me so much of, Art, you know the David Simon quote about *The Wire* not being in HD originally, *[Art: "Mm-hmm"]* and him saying like...correct me if I'm wrong, but it's something like he wanted it to look like real life, and real life looks like the evening news, which is like what people— and the evening news is not in HD.

Art: Yeah.

Austin: I love this like slow zoom— not that this is— this came out pre-HD, obviously, right? in terms of home TVs.

Art: Yeah.

Austin: But it's such a fun way to start.

Art: But the movies were. The movies have always been in, quote, unquote, HD.

Austin: Right. Yes. So, starting on this does still do something to that effect.

Art: Mm-hmm.

Jack: Yeah, I want to just like, as an avowed Baz disliker, I want to get ahead of the rest of the podcast and say: I think this movie fucking rules. *[laughter]* I messaged Austin, I think, yeah, as Romeo was being introduced.

Austin: Yep.

Jack: And I think what I said was, “Oh, this might be the best movie ever made.” *[laughter]*

Austin: It’s up there!

Jack: And I had such a great experience. It always feels like such a gift is being given to me by the universe when I encounter work by a creator whose work I don’t tend to care for.

Art: Mm.

Jack: Because it is like a moment where, mm, like the magic eye picture aligns for me, and I can go, “Oh, wait, wait! Oh, this is what it’s like!” And, like, it makes me want to go and see other Baz Luhrmann movies and try and look at them through this kind of pinhole of: how does this movie work? And ultimately, I think that this movie...I can confidently say that this movie is probably better than some of his other movies or whatever we’re taking “better” to mean here, but I think this movie’s fucking incredible. I had such a good time watching it, and I can’t wait to talk about it. But I think that, as someone who’s new to it and kind of new to what this movie is, it is worth saying for listeners who might not be familiar with this and who might not have seen it in English class, that this movie is almost exactly two hours long. It is a stylized rendition of William Shakespeare’s *Romeo and Juliet* set in a town that might be Los Angeles but might also be somewhere in Australia but might also be somewhere in Italy. It’s not terribly clear where this movie thinks it’s set other than Verona. And it uses almost exclusively the original text of the play, which I was not expecting and is worth mentioning off the bat.

Austin: Mm-hmm. It’s so important that they did that and did not try to like rewrite it for 90s lingo, you know?

Jack: Well I don’t...I’ve seen *Moulin Rouge*, and I’ve seen, you know, *The Great Gatsby*, and I think that something that sets those movies—or rather, sets this movie apart from those movies—is that the words that are being spoken by incredibly talented actors were written by Shakespeare. *[Ali laughs]*

Austin: Mm-hmm.

Jack: Like, Romeo— and I would love to, later in the podcast, talk about like *Romeo and Juliet* as a piece generally and how the adaptive process works on it as a text, but like, the play’s a banger. It’s great, and it’s really great watching these actors just go for it. We’ve talked about the news at the beginning, as two separate voices—one directly after the other, not overlapping—read the opening monologue from *Romeo and Juliet*. And I was sort of like, “Oh,

okay, they're reading the opening monologue, and now we're going to go to modern day speech or whatever."

Austin: Mm-hmm.

Jack: But then the Capulet and Montague boys rival gangs are introduced, and the text just continues, and I was like, "All right, yes! Here we go!" *[Ali and Art laugh]*

Austin: Again, and at that point, it goes from like the newscaster giving the opening thing, to, I believe it's the actor who plays Father Laurence giving it in his like much more...you know, his grand, you know, narrator voice, and we're getting like title cards.

Jack: It's in attract mode.

Austin: Right, yes. And all of the main characters are getting their little...not just like a chyron, but like an onscreen big blast of, you know, who they are, what their role is. You know, Benvolio is Romeo's cousin. Mercutio is Romeo's best friend. And we're getting all of these incredible—

Jack: Tybalt, king of cats.

Austin: King of cats, of course.

Jack: Prince of cats.

Austin: Prince of cats, prince of cats, yeah. And we're getting all these shots of far Verona, which is like, the worldbuilding in this is so good. The magazines, the newspapers.

Art: Mm-hmm.

Austin: Like you said, Jack, it's an invented place. Again, in this interview that I'd read, he basically said as much. Like, well, we couldn't set it anywhere in the real world, so we invented this other place. It was mostly shot in Mexico, but—you know, with some pre production in other places, and stuff like that—but like we wanted to evoke Miami. We wanted to invoke South America and Central America. We want to invoke LA and Italy and all this other stuff, but it's explicitly a mythical— it's meant to be a mythical space, you know?

Art: Mm.

Austin: But still like the real world. One of my favorite details is we get someone in an astronaut costume later, *[Jack: "It's so good"]* and I so badly want the patch. There's a patch with an American flag, but instead of the stars, there's some sort of symbol. I'm desperate to see a close up of what that symbol is. I want to know what some prop master made to like communicate this alternate United States, so badly.

Art: The thing you're leaving out of the second narration is also that there's like a whole fucking choir singing.

Austin: Yes. Yes, yes.

Art: Which I think is also significant to the presentation. *[laughs]*

Austin: Yeah, absolutely. Well, and it's like—

Art: It's so over the top.

Austin: It's like the opening credits of the best TV show I've ever seen, and I want that TV—

Ali: Mm-hmm.

Austin: I want Baz Luhrmann's *Romeo + Juliet* to be airing. I want it to be in a rivalry with *Succession*. *[Art laughs]* Like, I want people to have...I want people to feel about this what they feel about like *Game of Thrones* at its height, you know? Make that show.

Art: Mm-hmm.

Jack: The thing that I just keep coming back to about this movie is how, uh...what I'm about to say is not good criticism. I think I want to dig into further what I mean by this, but the movie feels like it has so much life in it constantly. It is a movie in which all people want to do is drive cars, shout, be hot, have sex with each other, look at plants and have interesting thoughts about plants, fly helicopters around. Everybody in this movie is alive in a way that is just bubbling off the screen. And it's so fun that you talked about you want this show to be against *Succession*, which I think is a show that is about restraint and is about watching people try and hold themselves in very specific ways and how that bubbles through.

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

Jack: And this is a movie in which people are just like fucking flinging themselves around the screen at all times.

Austin: *[laughs]* Yes.

Jack: And the colors are popping, and...

Austin: I mean, the first scene is: I can't hold myself back from like insulting you at the gas station where we're gonna have a fucking duel.

Jack: *[laughs quietly]* "Do you bite my thumb at me, sir?"

Austin: Right! Right! *[Ali and Art laugh]*

Sylvia: Shoutout to the fucking Montague boys.

Ali: Shoutouts.

Austin: I need you to know that I came home from the theater as an 11-year-old, and I opened up— maybe this— hmm. I don't know if the years add up here, but I know, at some point, I watched this movie, and I opened up AOL Instant Messenger, and I said, “I need another category for my closest friends, and I'm going to name that category, ‘The Boys The Boys.’” *[laughter]*

Sylvia: Let's go!

Austin: So. And I had that through— Art, you were in that. When you were still on AIM, you were in that subcategory, a decade later. *[Ali laughs]*

Art: And that would've been...yeah, that would have been almost a decade later, yeah.

Austin: At least through— like, when I was, you know, IMing you on AIM about the World Cup in the year 2000-whatever-that-was, you were there in that category. So, you know? That's life.

Ali: Mm-hmm.

Art: Yeah. No, I think we could do an entire full length podcast that just talks about the gas station scene. *[Austin and Ali laugh]*

Jack: Let's do it. All right. You know? I'll write a new score for this subpodcast that we've just decided to make where we talk about a two hour long movie over 20 episodes. *[laughter]*

Austin: Yeah, one scene at a time?

Sylvia: I would do it. I would do it.

Austin: I would do it. Don't dare me.

Jack: Oh my god. I have so much—

Austin: We'd interview the fucked up pink-haired boy who's like so scared in this whole scene. *[laughs]*

Sylvia: I love him.

Jack: The fucked up— oh!

Sylvia: The performances from these guys are great.

Art: Is that Jamie Kennedy?

Austin: Is it?

Sylvia: They're such perfect dickheads. *[claps]* They're such perfect dickheads! I adore it.

Art: Yeah, Sampson is Jamie Kennedy.

Austin: It's Jamie Kennedy!

Art: Yeah.

Austin: Fuck!

Sylvia: I don't know who that is.

Art: Who I don't think is gonna do this podcast, but... *[laughs quietly]*

Austin: Jamie Kennedy is a comedian, who you might— I guess you wouldn't know *The Jamie Kennedy Experiment*, huh?

Sylvia: Oh, he's Randy from *Scream*. Okay. Yeah. *[Austin and Ali laugh]*

Austin: Yeah, okay. Now we're good.

Art: He's Randy from *Scream*.

Austin: Randy from *Scream*. That's fine, yeah.

Sylvia: Yeah. Okay, no, I see it now.

Austin: You see it. Mm-hmm.

Sylvia: Absolutely. Okay. Yeah. He does a good job.

Ali: Mm-hmm.

Sylvia: I don't know. I like it. They're good schmucks.

Austin: They're such good schmucks.

Jack: Everybody...Tybalt also has one scared boy. Did you notice this? In the scene at the beach, when Tybalt comes to be like, "I need to find Romeo and kill him. Where is he?"

Austin: Yeah, yeah, yeah.

Jack: And then it all goes down. One of Tybalt's goons is like...I'm putting it in the scheduling chat, for some reason, because that's where we're talking about this. *[Austin laughs]*

Sylvia: Eh.

Jack: Look at this frightened boy alongside Tybalt. It's just uploading. But I like that they've each got one wimp.

Austin: Oh, yeah. *[laughter]*

Art: Oh, yeah.

Ali: Oh, yeah.

Austin: I mean, like, you're born into it, right? Like, what are you gonna do? You gotta back up Tybalt. You gonna not back up Tybalt? You're not gonna be—

Art: He's the prince of cats!

Austin: He's the prince of cats. *[Ali laughs]*

Sylvia: God, he really is. Ah, fucking...I love his fucking sideburns so much.

Austin: Oh my God. His sideburns are unbelievable.

Sylvia: When he shows up with his cunt shoes *[Austin and Jack laugh]* and is just like ready to go, I...fuck.

Jack: He's got two guns, Sylvi.

Sylvia: I lost my fucking mind.

Austin: Sorry, say that again, Jack?

Jack: He's got two guns!

Austin: He's got two guns. He sure does.

Jack: Everybody else—

Art: And he's got a ceramic Virgin Mary on the handle.

Austin: Yeah. Here's, yeah, a screenshot I took.

Sylvia: God.

Austin: I have this ready to go. It's of the gun on the ground, and it's like, you're one of two types of people. Either this is the hardest thing you've ever seen in your life *[Ali laughs]* or you're not my friend, like...*[laughs]*

Jack: It says "Rapier."

Austin: It says "Rapier 9mm" on it. And I get it. This is what I mean.

Art: Oh, I guess she's not crying.

Austin: I'm going to hold onto this for the rest of my life. *[clapping emphatically]* This is the hardest thing I've ever seen.*[Ali laughs quietly]*

Sylvia: Yeah. I need it.

Austin: *[claps]* I need it.

Jack: I would love to talk real quickly about the guns with "swords" on it.

Austin: Yes.

Jack: We're going to come back to it several times, but I feel like it's worth saying at the beginning.

Austin: Yes.

Jack: Every gun in this movie, with one exception, has a sword name written on it.

Austin: Mm-hmm.

Jack: There are daggers. There are rapiers. There's one that just says "sword." *[Austin and Ali laugh]*

Austin: And they say—!

Ali: Excuse me. I think it says "Sword 9mm Series S."

Jack: Oh, yes. Sorry, Ali.

Austin: Also, they say, “Put up your sword,” and things like that.

Jack: Well, there’s a great moment where...

Austin: They only time they say “gun,” it says “gun” in the original.

Jack: Yep. It’s wild. Papa Montague or Papa Capulet—I don’t remember which one—at one point says, “Fetch me my longsword,” and the camera whip pans to a long gun. *[Austin laughs]*

Sylvia: To a shotgun.

Jack: Oh, yes.

Austin: Yes.

Jack: A shotgun with the word “longsword” written on it. *[Jack and Ali laugh]*

Austin: Also, he says, “Fetch me my longsword, ho.” *[Sylvia laughs]*

Jack: Oh, does he?

Austin: And I know he means “ho”...

Art: Uh huh. Uh huh.

Austin: I know he means it in the Shakespearean sense.

Sylvia: Yeah, but...

Austin: But when you're in the back of a limo...

Jack: Right, but the movie doesn’t.

Austin: No, no, he doesn’t.

Jack: This is why the movie is working, right?

Austin: Yes. Yes.

Jack: Is like, the reason that this movie is so magical is that the text says that.

Austin: The text says it!

Art: Yeah.

Jack: And then the screen, the visual image says that, and then we get a whole new...

Austin: *[laughs quietly]* Yes.

Jack: We've got a new meaning. At the end of the movie, the notable gun in the final scene does not have a weapon written on it.

Austin: Mm, interesting.

Jack: And I have to imagine that this is because Baz Luhrmann and the production designers knew that the guns with swords written on them was silly and that was great, *[Austin: "Right"]* but in this moment, we don't want to see Juliet shooting herself and go, "Oh her gun says, like..." *[Jack and Ali laugh quietly]*

[1:15:09]

Austin: "Stiletto" on it.

Jack: "Stiletto" on it or something.

Sylvia: I don't know. Mm, speak for yourself, actually.

Austin: Yeah, I picked the right one. See, they should have had me in the room. *[Ali and Art laugh]*

Sylvia: Yeah.

Austin: I would have gotten this right.

Jack: *[laughs]* But yeah, the sword guns are great. How do we want to talk about this movie? What is the— do we want to talk about characters? Do we want to talk about broad plot stuff and kind of go through it...not quite scene by scene but chronologically?

Art: It's hard, because this movie is a fire hose.

Austin: Okay, wait, wait, wait, wait. I have a solution to this.

Jack: Of everything!

Austin: Okay.

Jack: I want to talk about the music at some point.

Austin: Yeah, that's fair. That's fair. You know, it's a play by Shakespeare. There are five acts. *[Jack laughs]* We just talk about acts, right? We talk about what happens in each act.

Jack: Okay. How does the Act One begin and end, Austin?

Austin: Ooh, you want me to tell you how it ends? Okay. Act One begins with a melee between the Montagues and the Capulets. I mean, maybe people don't know. In fair Verona where we lay our scene, there are the Capulets and the Montagues who here have been rendered as rival business and/or crime families, and it's very clear that while the heads of house do hate each other, it is the youth who like have this unabided violent rage towards one another and are constantly looking for ways to insult each other in a way that would justify some degree of, you know...

Jack: Do you bite your thumb at me, Austin? *[Ali laughs quietly]*

Austin: No, but I do bite my thumb, sir.

Jack: Do you bite your thumb, sir? *[laughs quietly]*

Austin: I bite my thumb, but I do not bite my thumb at YOU, sir. Et cetera. *[Jack laughs]* And until like, finally, it boils over. And so the beginning of this is a gunfight between sort of some secondary characters tied to the various houses that ends in death or at least one of the Montagues being shot and a big explosion and the police showing up.

Art: Well, secondary characters and Tybalt.

Austin: Yeah, Tybalt's a main character, but he's not...you know. Yes, secondary characters and Tybalt. And Benvolio's important too.

Sylvia: I think Benvolio's there too.

Austin: Benvolio's important too, but it's still...you get what I'm saying, right? It's not Romeo and Juliet.

Sylvia: Can I say—

Austin: It's not— yeah, go ahead.

Sylvia: I just want to say a quick thing about Benvolio. He looks like Gronk. Okay, we can keep going.

Austin: He does look like Gronk!

Jack: Oh, he does look like Gronk. *[Ali laughs]*

Austin: He does look like Gronk.

Jack: I spent the whole movie going, “Who does that guy look like?”

Austin: It’s Gronk.

Jack: It’s fucking Gronk.

Sylvia: It is Gronk.

Austin: And the prince basically— or, not the— what’s the actual name of this character in the original? Because it’s not...

Jack: The prince. Prince somebody or another.

Austin: It’s prince somebody.

Jack: He’s an actual prince, yeah.

Austin: Here, he’s Captain Prince. He’s Police Captain Prince.

Jack: It’s so stupid. I love it.

Art: Prince Escalus.

Austin: Right, right. Yes. Comes in on a helicopter, breaks it up, and says, “Listen, no more of this shit. No more fighting in the streets of fair Verona where we lay our scene.”

Jack: No more brawling.

Austin: Right. And then by the end— you want the end of that? The end of it is a lovelorn Romeo meets Juliet and falls in love with her at a party at her house and realizes, “Oh my god, I’ve fallen for the enemy’s daughter.” Right?

Jack: All right.

Austin: That’s how that ends.

Jack: I think this is a place to start.

Austin: And in between that, there’s lots of other stuff, like Romeo being sad on the beach.

Ali: Mm-hmm.

Sylvia: Oh my God.

Austin: As "Talk Show Host" plays.

Ali: Mm-hmm.

Austin: Also, like Paul Rudd showing up.

Sylvia: Yeah.

Ali: Paul Rudd!

Jack: Paul Rudd!

Art: Before we— Paul Rudd in a movie where I don't think he looks like Paul Rudd.

Ali: Really?

Sylvia: Really?

Art: I had to like look up, well, when was *Clueless*? When was this? He moves his mouth in a way that I don't think he ever moved his mouth. I think he saw this movie and was like, "I can't open my mouth that much. I have to stop." [*Austin laughs*] Because like, when he's like enthusiastically gesticulating with his face, it's like he doesn't look like himself. It's very strange.

Austin: You know, he's trying to be the most annoying person on the planet, though, right?

Sylvia: Yeah.

Ali: Yeah.

Art: Yeah.

Austin: So maybe it's good acting.

Sylvia: There's a real shitheel element to his performance.

Ali: Yeah.

Sylvia: Like, from the moment he shows up talking to Juliet's dad with his weird fucking shit-eating grin.

Austin: Oh, he sucks so much.

Ali: *[chuckles]* I think he's like perfect to be cast in this film, and like, even more so with the reputation of him looking the same all the time.

Sylvia: Mm-hmm.

Austin: Mm-hmm.

Ali: Because he's so just clearly, like, a friendly face that you don't like.

Austin: Yep.

Art: Mm-hmm.

Jack: Yeah, totally.

Ali: He's just a guy.

Austin: Yeah.

Art: Yeah.

Austin: Well, and I think there's something about him being this like other type of leading man figure that he could have been, except that the world didn't want someone like him as the leading man anymore, and they extremely wanted 1996 Leonardo DiCaprio, right?

Sylvia: Who doesn't? *[Art laughs]*

Austin: I mean, Tyler said it, you know?

Jack: All right, this is...

Austin: '95 Leo.

Art: Just, before we get too far past it, and I know we've talked about the gas station scene probably as much as necessary...

Jack: No, let's go back. This is episode one, gas station scene.

Sylvia: No, we can talk about it again.

Jack: Yeah.

Sylvia: Yeah, hour long episode on the gas station.

Jack: Let's start from the beginning. So, there's two voiceovers. *[laughter]*

Art: John Leguizamo's reading of "Peace, I hate the word, *[Austin: "Ugh!"]* as I hate hell, all Montagues, and thee," is so—

Jack: Okay.

Art: His decision that he was just going to growl every line was maybe the best in cinematic history. *[Austin and Ali laugh]*

Sylvia: Well, he's a kitty cat. He's an angry little kitty cat.

Art: He's the prince of cats!

Austin: He's the prince of cats. He growls more than he purrs.

Jack: Yeah, John Leguizamo is playing Tybalt.

Sylvia: John Leguizamo is a catboy in this film.

Jack: He is.

Ali: Yeah.

Austin: Yeah, but also a Catholic. He's like a Catholic catboy.

Sylvia: Yeah.

Jack: A catolic.

Sylvia: Yeah, that's what cat is short for.

Austin: Right, it's for Catholic. *[laughter]*

Art: This movie is so Catholic.

Jack: Yes, yes, yes.

Austin: Yeah, is there any wonder that I loved it as a kid?

Jack: This movie just...

Sylvia: Yeah, same! Like, the reason it's resonating so much with me watching this is like, oh, this has all the aesthetic shit I like about [Austin: "*High Catholicism*"] the shit I had to deal with as a child. [Jack chuckles]

Austin: Yep. Also, also, another detail about this gas station scene, the L'amour like Coca Cola stand-in. All the signage is so good, [Art: "*Mm-hmm*"] but specifically this red like Coca Cola thing that just says "love" in French is perfect.

Jack: Almost all the signage, almost all the ephemeral text in the movie is references to other Shakespeare stuff.

Austin: Yes, yes.

Art: Mm-hmm.

Jack: Which I would usually find...I feel the same way about it, right? It is so clangingly unsubtle [Austin: "*Mm-hmm*"] that it borders on like distaste, but that's how this movie functions, baby.

Austin: It just works.

Jack: And it turns out great every— like, we've got a guy saying...there's like a stand. Okay, so, firstly, there's a sycamore grove which is sort of like a party beach, a Venice Beach type area with like a broken down theater.

Austin: Yes.

Jack: Which lets them do a lot of like, you know, obviously this used to be a play or this was written as a play, so we can get a lot of fun staging stuff with people on an actual broken stage or whatever.

Austin: Mm-hmm.

Jack: But there's a place there called Rosencrantz's, which is like from Rosencrantz and Guildenstern in *Hamlet*. There are *Tempest* references all over the place.

Austin: Yep.

Art: Mm-hmm.

Austin: There's a Lear reference at one point. They're all there, all the hits are here.

Jack: It really is like—

Austin: Obviously, Juliet's parents go to the party as Antony and Cleopatra, right?

Jack: Antony and Cleopatra.

Austin: Or he goes...or is it Caesar and Cleopatra? I forget who the father is. Probably Caesar, actually.

Jack: I have to imagine it's...well, if she's Cleopatra...

Austin: But he has the laurel on, which is interesting, right?

Jack: Oh, yeah, that's true.

Austin: So.

Art: And it's important to note that the parents are way overcast.

Austin: Oh my god! Yes. *[Art laughs]* Brian Dennehy as Romeo's father.

Sylvia: As Ted Montague?

Austin: As Ted Montague! *[Ali laughs]*

Art: Yeah. As Ted Montague. Paul Sorvino as Fulgencio Capulet. *[Austin laughs]*

Sylvia: God! Fucking incredible. Like...

Austin: It's great.

Ali: I love the Montague father, especially because like, he's a character that only exists in a car that he drives around in. *[Jack laughs]*

Austin: Yes!

Jack: He really does!

Ali: *[laughs]* He is just going to sit in there and be menacing and be about his business.

Austin: Mm-hmm.

Ali: And like, that's all I need to know about that character. I understand the vibes.

Sylvia: He's sort of a car centaur. *[Austin laughs]*

Art: But like, if you've grown up in in those kind of– like, if you grew up in an Italian neighborhood in the late '80s, early '90s, you knew these people. *[Austin laughs]* Guys who were just kind of in their cars?

Austin: In their cars? Yeah.

Art: Those were there. Those existed.

Austin: Uh huh. Yeah. Which is like, we should...there is a sort of racial element to this, right? It's not *West Side Story*, but it's it's pretty clear that the Montagues are white, and the Capulets are...ethnic, right? Vaguely? *[Jack sighs]*

Sylvia: *[laughs]* Yeah. I was gonna say, like...you can't really specify with them.

Austin: No, no.

Sylvia: There's a lot.

Art: Right.

Jack: I think one way into talking about this as Juliet's nurse, *[Austin: "Yes"]* who is played by Miriam Margolyes, who is a British Australian actor. She's a white woman, *[Austin: "Mm"]* and she is playing a role who...you sort of aimed for an ethnicity and stopped short at "ethnic," Austin, right?

Austin: *[laughs quietly]* Yes. That's exactly what it is.

Jack: Which is like, right, it is not terribly clear whether these characters are Spanish or Italian or Puerto Rican, or...

Austin: Right.

Jack: You know. And I don't think that Miriam Margolyes playing Juliet's nurse with a thick accent and heavy makeup knows either. And the movie kind of goes splashing around in this kind of racial caricature, in a way that...

Austin: Mm-hmm. Well, like...I almost feel like someone gave her the direction: Oh, you're from Verona from before it was colonized. You know, you're Veronan. That's what you are. What's Veronan? Well, it's a melange, right? It's a melange of a bunch of different stuff. Don't worry about it so much. Not that she's indigenous, right? But like, she's not white, but she's also not explicitly, you know, Latin. She has no definite Italian vibe. Like, she is...and this is the type of thing that has existed inside of the style of fiction forever, right? She's like from the periphery.

Jack: Hell, it exists in Shakespeare.

Austin: That's the thing, right? Yeah, exactly.

Jack: Like, the—

Art: But finding out that this actor is white, I'm like, I don't know that she should have taken this part. *[strained laughter]*

Austin: She shouldn't have, no! Or not played it this way, probably.

Sylvia: Yeah.

Art: Yeah. You can't be like, "Hulietta!" all the time. *[Austin laughs]*

Jack: It's wild, 'cause I spent— much like Gronk, I was like, "Wow, that woman looks a lot like Miriam Margolyes." And then I went, "Oh no."

Sylvia: Yeah.

Austin: And then you went, "Oh no! She was born in Oxford."

Jack: *[laughs quietly]* Yeah, yeah. But yeah, it is a whole thing, especially set against—

Austin: Okay, wait, wait. Okay, here's a— I need to raise this. She did grow up in a Jewish family.

Sylvia: Mm?

Art: Mm, that's not how...

Sylvia: That's, no.

Art: That's not how any of my Jewish relatives pronounce their J's.

Austin: No, that's not? Okay, making sure. It's not "Yew-ish"? *[laughter]* Okay, just checking.

Jack: Oh, man. All right.

Art: I mean, there are Jews everywhere. There are Jews who talk like that.

Austin: There are Jews everywhere.

Art: You know, we're everywhere.

Austin: You know what? Yeah.

Art: But...

Austin: But no.

Jack: I would not say that this was a Jewish character.

Austin: No.

Jack: So, we go and meet Romeo, who is played by Leonardo DiCaprio.

Austin: Mm-hmm.

Jack: And he is on a beach. The sun is setting behind him. He is in silhouette.

Austin: No.

Jack: No?

Austin: The sun is rising behind him.

Art: Yeah.

Austin: He's been up all night.

Jack: Oh, the sun is— he's been up all night.

Austin: While his—

Jack: And what's he been up all night doing? Writing the words of the greatest English poet in a little notebook. *[quiet laughter]*

Austin: But they're bad words. It's a bad love poem. He's in a fake sort of love. He's in love with the idea of love.

Jack: A woman called Rosaline.

Austin: He's in love with a woman named Rosaline, who I guess we learn is chaste. I don't know if she's about to take her vows, I don't know if she's just not into Romeo, but the vibes are off, and he is sad about it.

Jack: There is a extremely deliberate pan, slightly later in the movie, from Romeo talking about Rosaline to a statue of the Virgin Mary.

Austin: Mm-hmm.

Jack: I think in conversation with the father, to the point where I was like, hey, is Rosaline a metaphor? But I think that just her as like a chaste woman where there's some sort of something in the way of that love.

Austin: Mm-hmm.

Jack: That that love is not the same sort of all encompassing love that he's about to encounter.

Austin: Mm-hmm. And so much of this movie and this story is about Romeo's boys being like, "Bro, you got– you are not being yourself. You have to get over this girl. She is not worth this."

Ali: Uh huh.

Art: *[laughs]* Yeah. Jamie Kennedy's like, "You have to..." *[Austin laughs]* That's not really true. It's really not what his character is about, but...

Jack: Gronk. Gronk says that a lot, actually.

Art: Yeah, Gronk says it.

Austin: Uh huh.

Sylvia: Yeah.

Art: Well, Gronk and Mercutio.

Jack: And Mercutio.

Art: Who we have not discussed yet.

Sylvia: Have we not?

Austin: But I think Mercutio maybe has alternate motives also, but we'll get there.

Sylvia: Oh, yeah, uh huh? Yeah.

Jack: Well, let's get there now.

Austin: Okay.

Jack: Episode Two: Mercutio. Mercutio arrives at the beach latterly, after some other business.

Austin: Mm-hmm.

Jack: With—

Ali: Wait, I'm sorry. I'm sorry.

Austin: Wait, wait.

Ali: I just have to interrupt really quickly, because, before we move past the boys trying to...

Jack: The lads. Austin's AIM group.

Austin: The lads. Yeah.

Ali: Yeah, the lads trying to cheer Romeo up. I have to like call out one of my...'cause like, we have to call out the best line reads in this movie.

Austin: Please.

Jack: And there are so many. *[laughs quietly]*

Ali: I'm so mad that I didn't write the whole exchange, but basically, one of them is like, "We're gonna go to a party tonight. Like, just chill. It's fine." And Romeo is like, "Well, I'll go to your party," and then he says, "To rejoice in splendor of my own," and then they have like a secret handshake, because he's agreed to go to the party.

Austin: Uh huh.

Ali: And I was just like: yes.

Austin: That's cousins.

Ali: This is how Shakespeare wanted this.

Austin: Yeah, it is!

Jack: It is.

Sylvia: Dudes rock.

Austin: It literally is.

Ali: *[laughs]* This is what Shakespeare saw when he fucking cooked this.

Art: Yeah.

Austin: *[laughs]* He felt it coming.

Jack: In London, in Stratford.

Austin: Yes. *[Ali laughs]*

Jack: Yeah. I want to like briefly— before we talk about what Mercutio is like, I want to talk about what Mercutio was doing in this scene, which is Mercutio shows up with invitations to a Capulet party.

Austin: Mm-hmm.

Jack: We do not know where they have got these from, but they've got "Mercutio and crew."

Austin: Well, it's important to note Mercutio...

Art: It's addressed to Mercutio. It's "Mercutio and his friends," I think is the name on the...

Austin: Right, because Mercutio is not a Montague, importantly.

Jack: Oh, right. I'd forgotten this.

Austin: Mercutio is related to Captain Prince, is related to— they are kin. I mean, so is Paris in the play, which is very funny, because it's the two Black characters and Paul Rudd.

Jack: Paul Rudd. *[laughter]*

Austin: And they're all technically related, but the house of— they're all house of Escalus, right? It's Prince Escalus, Count Paris, and Mercutio, and they're a third party, right? And so Mercutio is boys with Romeo, but he's not at war with the Capulets, and so he gets invited. He's, you know, a member in good standing of society, and so he's going to sneak them in, because he likes them, because they hang out, because he clearly has beef with Tybalt and also has eyes only for Romeo. *[laughs quietly]*

[1:30:18]

Jack: Here's what—

Austin: How does Mercutio show up? It feels like you're building to something, Jack.

Jack: Well, I knew that...here's what I knew about Mercutio in this movie. I've always liked Mercutio in the play. Great character.

Austin: Mm-hmm. Mm-hmm.

Jack: Has that whole great bit about Queen Mab.

Austin: Which is here, which is great.

Jack: Dies in a cool way.

Austin: Yeah, uh huh.

Jack: I also knew that people who like this movie love Mercutio.

Austin: Mm-hmm.

Jack: And I was like, oh, exciting.

Austin: And always have, is an important note about this, I think.

Jack: I like Harold Perrineau. I think he's a great actor. I am so excited. Mercutio shows up in a car, and the first thing we see of him are a pair of silver sequined heels as he gets out of the car.

Sylvia: Ugh! *[claps appreciatively]*

Jack: And we pan up to see a silver sequined like short tight skirt *[Austin: "Mm-hmm"]* and a silver sequined bra and a platinum blonde or bright bright white curly wig on top of his hair. And Mercutio fucking rules. *[laughs quietly]*

Austin: And "Young Hearts Run Free" is playing, and he's putting on lipstick.

Jack: This is not what I thought this— he is dancing. He's putting on lipstick.

Sylvia: It's so fucking good.

Austin: And there's no doubt that he's the coolest person on the screen at any point.

Ali: Mm-hmm.

Art: No, yeah.

Austin: Right? Like, I think it's so important that I watched this movie in classrooms with other young Black men, and we were all like, "Mercutio is the coolest dude in this movie." Like, 100%! Do you know what it is to be—

Jack: He's the first Black character that has showed up.

Austin: Do you know how powerful you have to be— to be 13 years old, and a guy like pulls his skirt up to show his ass to like tease his friend?

Jack: To reveal, uh...

Austin: Right.

Jack: He pulls out Romeo's invitation from his crotch.

Austin: From his crotch!

Sylvia: Yeah. Impeccable tuck work.

Austin: And then for all those boys to be like, "That's the dude. That's the homie." *[Ali laughs]* Like, you have to be next level charismatic and good to pull that off in a moment of just absolute homophobia, and the doors it opens are huge.

Sylvia: This is such a gay performance. *[laughter]*

Jack: It is such a gay—!

Ali: Mm-hmm.

Austin: It's such a gay performance.

Sylvia: I adore it. It's so good. It is...just everything that Mercutio does from like his introduction to the party here is like some of my favorite shit.

Austin: Mm-hmm.

Sylvia: The Queen Mab like speech we mentioned is so much fun.

Jack: Oh! It's amazing.

Austin: It's so fun. And it's so...you know, the first time I watched it, I was like, "I don't know what he's saying, but it's, you know, it's great. He's very powerful." Now that I understand, like, the Queen Mab speech is basically like: stop dreaming and take what's in front of you, like stop giving yourself over to these stupid ideals and these terrible ideas.

Jack: It's deeply melancholy.

Austin: It's so melancholy. It's like— and he's saying it to Romeo, who is staying up all night writing bad love poems, right? And it's like, you have no idea. Like, Mercutio feels it in his heart. He knows what it's like to have that stuff. He's moved past the feeling of the empty dream and to like, I'm going to spend time with the people I want to be spending time with. And I think that that ends up speaking towards some of his frustrations with Romeo as things progress. And he wants so badly for Romeo to just be happy. It's heartbreaking. Anyway, you should, you know, prick love for pricking and beat love down. That's all.

Ali: Mm-hmm.

Art: Mm-hmm.

Jack: You get some great Baz Luhrmann stylization with the pill that he offers Romeo, which Romeo ends up taking.

Austin: Yes.

Jack: It's just a beautiful...it's one of those shots that ends up looking so simple but must have just been a nightmare to set up, [*Austin: "Mm-hmm"*] where we see him have this little silver pillbox, and he reaches inside and takes the pill out stuck to his index finger, and the camera like crash zooms onto this tiny pill so it fills up the frame. Cutting in and out of a moment like that is really tricky to keep the sense of momentum and to be able to move from the massive scale of Perrineau's performance as Mercutio to being able to get focus on, you know, like a pill with a heart and an arrow through it filling up the whole frame.

Austin: Also, you know, there are techniques like this all the way through that could come across as gimmicky or as like cheesy, and they almost never do, and I think a lot of that— a lot of that is just the filmmaking, but a lot of it's the performances that like, if the actors fell apart around some of these camera moves...again, things like the fast motion or sometimes they'll do like a stutter zoom in where it's like three or four still images getting progressively closer in, and then like, someone has to say a line over that or after that, and if that line is bad, all of that just falls apart, and it never falls apart, so shoutouts.

Sylvia: It's like everyone is just like completely committed to the bit in every way.

Austin: Yeah.

Jack: Everyone.

Art: Mm-hmm.

Sylvia: That like, it...I think that's one of the reasons why the performances *[Austin: "Mm-hmm"]* don't like get fucked up by the weird— or like, extreme filmmaking, I guess, techniques is more the word I'm looking for there?

Austin: Yeah. Yeah.

Sylvia: Yeah.

Austin: And here's another piece of evidence in my Mercutio and Romeo Were Fucking case. When Mercutio is all the— which, by the way, I'm making this case. *[laughter]*

Sylvia: Oh, yeah.

Austin: When Mercutio is like in the heart of his Queen Mab speech and like looks out into the distance, we get a shot of Romeo and and Mercutio like side by side from the back, and Leo, Romeo goes to like calm him down, and he goes to touch the small of his back and then like has a second thought and moves up to the shoulder instead, and Mercutio like jumps back and gasps, and that's the like, "There is she!" shout delivery. It's like, mm, they have a history. He used to touch him in the back, for sure.

Sylvia: Hell yeah he did. *[laughter]*

Jack: This speaks to what I think we were all just talking about, right? about the way that you were mentioning, Sylvi, that these more maximalist camera moves or these more extreme camera moves are anchored in the performances. There are so many moments of just extremely well played nuanced detail, I think specifically with Claire Danes *[Austin: "Mm-hmm"]* and with Leonardo DiCaprio, of finding these little quiet moments that they can—like going to touch Mercutio in the small of his back—that helps anchor the more like outré stuff.

Austin: Mm-hmm. I mean, we're gonna get to the fish tank momentarily, and like...

Jack: Oh, yeah.

Austin: Boy.

Jack: Before we talk about the party, I have to ask: if you were attending the Capulets' party.

Austin: Yes. Yes. Great question. *[Ali chuckles]*

Jack: What would each of you wear?

Art: Oh no.

Austin: *[sighs]* This is impossible.

Jack: We can take as much time to think. We're not live.

Austin: I can't believe we're not even doing a real episode and you're getting give us 30 minutes on costumes. Unbelievable. *[Ali laughs]*

Jack: It's a Baz Luhrmann movie, Austin. *[laughs quietly]*

Austin: *[sighs]* Baz Luhrmann should make a COUNTER/Weight movie.

Ali: Yeah.

Jack: I would sign with Baz Luhrmann way faster than I would sign with other people, and I don't like Baz Luhrmann. *[laughs]*

Austin: Yeah, uh huh. Don't say that. We're gonna not—

Art: I would too, and I haven't even seen *Elvis*. *[Austin laughs]*

Sylvia: I have. Don't do it.

Austin: Oh, Tybalt's devil costume is so good!

Art: Yeah, and—

Austin: Can you imagine how— ugh.

Jack: The skeletons, his skeletons.

Austin: You're in like the Catholics— you're in the Vatican. You're in crime Vatican, and you're wearing the devil costume. *[laughs]* Unbelievable.

Sylvia: Oh, yeah. My outfit would be slutty St. Sebastian. *[Austin and Ali laugh]*

Jack: Oh, slutty St. Sebastian!

Austin: That's great.

Jack: Holy shit.

Austin: I'm shocked that's not in here. I bet if we went frame by frame, we would find...you actually, at this party somehow.

Sylvia: Yeah.

Austin: From the future.

Sylvia: God. The dream.

Jack: I would go as someone underwater, so I'd have all my hair pinned up around me like it was floating.

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

Jack: And I'd, you know, wear these like very light clothes that would also be pinned in such a way that it would look like I was kind of— much like how we see Juliet for the first time, [*Austin: "Yeah, yeah, yeah"*] with her head presumably in a bath or something.

Sylvia: Ophelia.

Jack: Yeah. Yeah!

Austin: Right, yeah, doing an Ophelia, yeah.

Jack: Oh shit. I would just go as Ophelia, yeah.

Austin: That's great.

Jack: With all the flowers and everything, but drowned. I feel like showing up to this party as a dead version of yourself in a performance of *Romeo and Juliet*, [*Austin: "Mm-hmm"*] even though you don't know you're there, is like...that's the right kind of costume you should be wearing.

Austin: God, this is really hard.

Art: This is basically impossible.

Ali: I would go as a dove.

Austin: Ohh.

Jack: Ooh.

Sylvia: Hell yeah.

Art: Wow.

Austin: That's good. I think, like—

Jack: How is that distinct from Juliet's costume? I mean, I think Juliet is an angel.

Austin: Juliet's an angel.

Ali: Yeah.

Jack: But there's kind of dove stuff going on there. Bigger wings?

Art: Juliet's hair as an angel is so perfect. I don't know why I haven't seen this 100 times.

Austin: Mm-hmm. *[Ali laughs]*

Art: The like, making your hair into the halo is like...

Austin: Just do that. It's solved.

Art: Again, I don't understand why I haven't seen it 100 times.

Austin: Mm-hmm.

Art: It feels like it's...it's so right there, and no one does it. My answer is Iago but not the Shakespeare Iago, the... *[Sylvia laughs]*

Jack: The bird? *[laughs]*

Art: The *Aladdin* Iago.

Austin: The bird. The bird. You would be the bird.

Art: Iago the bird.

Ali: Ohh.

Jack: Played by Gilbert Gottfried?

Art: Not like super birdy.

Austin: Right, right, right.

Art: You know, abstract like the costumes of this party generally were.

Austin: I would go as some sort—

Ali: But a lot of them are simple. Like, Cleopatra isn't a reach, and astronaut was not like a reach.

Austin: No, astronaut was...

Sylvia: The astronaut costume is so fucking funny.

Austin: It's so good, though.

Ali: *[laughs]* It's so funny.

Austin: It's so funny. Also, that means, in this universe, they've been to space, which is so funny to me. *[Ali laughs]* It's so good.

Art: That's where I'd put the sequel.

Austin: Oh!

Ali: Oh, sure.

Austin: Yeah, uh huh. Agreed. Let me tell you, Art: agreed. *[Ali laughs]*

Art: I don't know who's in that movie, but...

Austin: Uh huh.

Jack: DiCaprio and Claire Danes and John Leguizamo and... *[laughs]*

Austin: Yeah, yeah, yeah. It's just them.

Ali: Well, no, because what Shakespeare play would you put in space?

Austin: Oh.

Jack: Oh.

Ali: Because that's what the sequel would be.

Jack: Wait, yeah. Let me think.

Austin: Right.

Art: Oh.

Jack: *The Tempest* is too obvious.

Ali: It would be Baz Luhrmann's William Shakespeare's 2.

Austin: Yeah.

Sylvia: *The Tempest* is the new Gundam show.

Austin: *The Tempest* is the new— like, quite literally. *[Ali laughs]*

Sylvia: Yeah.

Austin: I'd put Lear in space, because I've already seen Lear as a samurai movie, and it worked, and so I bet it would work as like a space, you know, opera in a similar way.

Ali: Mm.

Jack: I would put *Macbeth* in space on some like blighted moon.

Art: Mm-hmm. That's a good one.

Austin: You know, actually, you don't know this yet, but I did— on my name list for PALISADE are the daughters from *King Lear* already, so... *[Ali laughs]*

Jack: Regan and Goneril and the third one.

Austin: Yeah, uh...Cordelia, yeah.

Jack: Cordelia.

Austin: Uh huh. I would be some sort of building. I haven't figured out what type of building yet.

Ali: Wow.

Jack: Ooh, like a rook from chess.

Austin: No, no, no, no. No, no, no, no. Like the Empire State Building.

Jack: Oh, the Chrysler Building, yeah. *[laughs]*

Austin: Or the Chrysler Building or...but as a person. I haven't figured it out yet. I'll get there.

Jack: I think that's everybody, right?

Austin: Uh huh.

Jack: Dove, building, slutty St. Sebastian, person drowned, lagoon.

Sylvia: Which, you could just say St. Sebastian, you really look at the paintings. *[Ali laughs]*

Austin: Yeah, just regular St. Sebastian.

Jack: Yeah, true. God, could you imagine being the one painter in medieval times who painted chaste St. Sebastian, and everyone was like, "Boo! Terrible!" *[Austin laughs]*

Sylvia: You know what? I can't imagine being that person. *[Austin and Jack laugh]*

Austin: So, the party is jumping. If you thought—

Jack: Mercutio is lip syncing.

Austin: Yeah. Yes. If you thought Mercutio was fabulous before...

Sylvia: Fucking incredible.

Austin: Comes out with a cape now? With line dancers?

Jack: A full routine.

Sylvia: Yeah, I called Tybalt cunt earlier, but this is really... *[laughter]* This is like, oh, I was fucking clapping.

Austin: Uh huh.

Jack: It's great!

Sylvia: I lost my shit.

Austin: Also, there's a great title card as they go. It's like, "The party begins," comma, "at Capulet mansion."

Jack: Yeah, we never see this title card again in the movie.

Austin: It's great. It's so good.

Jack: It's really weird. It's like they...this happens a couple of times in the movie, and I don't begrudge it at all. It's like they make a genre move and then forgot they made it.

Austin: *[laughs quietly]* Yep!

Jack: *[laughs]* And then just keep going.

Art: Which is not how things like title cards work.

Austin: No.

Ali: Yeah, well, I was wondering, like, how much of that is like playbook adaption? I spent a lot of this movie thinking like, "I should read *Romeo and Juliet* again." *[laughs]* But like, when they use the like opening stuff in the opening scene, it's like, oh, you would get a playbill that has the characters listed on it.

Austin: Right, right, right.

Ali: That's how you see, like with Shakespeare.

Jack: Oh, yeah.

Ali: So that's why it's interesting that they do it that way. So I was wondering, like, if there's like...if this is the Act Two, if this is like post intermission. If you were seeing Shakespeare in a play, would somebody announce that? Would there be like a...was that in the billing in some way?

Austin: Right, right. I'm curious.

Ali: And that's why it's like not used again.

Austin: Elsewhere, yeah.

Ali: Yeah.

Art: This is Act One, scene five, so this isn't after intermission.

Ali: So, no. *[laughs]*

Austin: So, no. The answer is no.

Jack: I'm gonna look it up. I want to see how this scene begins.

Austin: Well, one thing that's worth saying is there is not a lot of direction. There's not a lot of like stage direction in the Shakespeare, and that actually is used to great effect when you're putting something on, because there's a lot of room for flexibility. Which is like, we're about to get to it, but like, *Romeo and Juliet* kiss a fucking ton in the beginning of Act Two, and that's not

in the script. Them kissing each other is not in the script, but you can insert those in a way that fundamentally works with the dialogue without taking anything away. There's like moments when it's clear that a kiss has happened, like, for instance, "Give me my sin again," the fucking best line I've ever heard in my life after you kiss someone.

Ali: Uh huh. *[laughs quietly]*

Sylvia: Yeah. Uh huh.

Art: Uh huh.

Jack: We gotta talk about that scene, the palmers' kiss scene.

Austin: We'll get there, but there's a lot of that stuff from— you know, whenever there's a fight, it's just like, "They fight," and then a line, and then, "Someone falls," and so there's lots of room for kind of a flexible interpretation that, depending on how you're staging it and everything else that goes into it, you can change. And I say that because like I do want to give credit to certain parts of this adaptation, like the fish tank scene, while...which song is it that plays during this? I can't turn it up, because I'm doing the backup.

Jack: It's so good.

Austin: Is this "Kissing You", or is that later?

Jack: No, that's later.

Austin: What song is this?

Jack: I specifically remember it's later, because they were kissing, and the song said, "Kissing you."

Austin: "Kissing You," yeah.

Jack: And I thought to myself, "They are."

Ali: Mm-hmm.

Austin: Who wants to talk about the first time that they see each other?

Sylvia: This scene is fucking yuri. This scene is girls love. *[Ali laughs]*

Austin: Uh huh? Uh huh.

Sylvia: This scene is yuri manga. They got the aquarium and everything. *[Austin laughs quietly]* Holy fuck. I love the framing on this. I love that it looks like Romeo is also falling in love with himself sometimes because of the mirror.

Austin: Oh yeah.

Jack: Oh, yeah!

Austin: They're both looking at each other because of the reflection.

Sylvia: Yeah.

Austin: Also, she's...she's being a little pervert is what she's doing. She's looking—

[1:45:03]

Jack: Peeping into the gents'?

Austin: She's peeping into the bathroom, through the fish tank. He catches her doing this. Her eye is lined up not like, "I'm looking at the fish." She's trying to see what's going on in that room.

Sylvia: I don't begrudge her.

Austin: And happens to see the cutest boy ever born. And the way that their glances like dance back and forth, the way that they lean forward as if to like kiss each other through the glass, but they obviously cannot.

Jack: It's so good.

Sylvia: It's so fucking good!

Austin: His nose against the glass.

Sylvia: The fucking— the yearning!

Jack: Yeah.

Sylvia: I'm gesturing at it. It's... *[Jack and Ali laugh]* It's a really good scene.

Jack: There is an unbelievable camera move, where we go through the aquarium?

Art: Through the fish tank, yeah.

Austin: Through the fish tank. Are you kidding me?

Jack: You know, we turn so we're seeing Leo side on, and the camera just, *[Austin sighs]* you know, moves through the fish tank, through to Juliet on the other side. It is amazing.

Art: And then the reflections reverse.

Austin: Yeah, yeah.

Ali: Mm-hmm.

Art: You know, we see Romeo seeing Juliet and Romeo, and then we see Juliet seeing Romeo and Juliet. It's killer.

Austin: It's— yeah.

Jack: It is such an interesting adaptive moment, because if I was adapting *Romeo and Juliet*, something I would spend so much time thinking about is: what does it look like when Romeo and Juliet, the most famous fated lovers in the English language, meet for the first time? How do we depict that on screen?

Austin: Mm-hmm.

Jack: And having this happen on two sides of a fish tank filled with tropical fish, in bathrooms?

Austin: Mm-hmm.

Jack: Is...it is wonderful. Because they could have just caught each other's eye on the stairs, and we get a great look on the stairs later.

Austin: Which is what I've seen a million times.

Ali: Mm-hmm.

Austin: It's how they do that, right?

Jack: Yeah, yeah, absolutely. But it just pulls so much to work with from the scene, just by...well, and also, maybe it's worth saying at this point: Romeo and Juliet, uh, it's not going to end well for them.

Sylvia: *[feigning shock]* What?

Jack: And...

Austin: I mean, this is a classic movie of like, the rare feeling of like, “I know how this ends, but maybe this time when I watch it, it’ll go different.”

Ali: Mm-hmm.

Art: Uh huh.

Jack: Austin, I have seen so many versions of *Romeo and Juliet*, and I knew it was going to happen, and I found myself being like, “I don’t— I would like it not to.”

Austin: I would like it not to! *[Ali laughs]*

Jack: And that happens every time.

Sylvia: I would really like it not to.

Jack: I never get to the end of *Romeo and Juliet*, and I’m like...

Austin: Go to Mantua! *[Jack laughs]* Simply flee to Mantua with your boy!

Jack: Simply wait one second! She’s stirring on the—

Austin: One second! She’s still waking up! Agh!

Jack: We’re getting ahead of ourselves. Anyway. It’s worth, I think—

Sylvia: If someone was there to throw the rock at him to hit with that stick, he would have gotten his message. *[laughter]*

Jack: And that horse in the background who doesn’t move. I think it’s worth saying, as Romeo and Juliet meet, that everything in the text of this play is telling us that this relationship is doomed from the off.

Austin: Yeah. Oh, wait. We skipped it, but when he...at the end of the Queen Mab speech with Mercutio, Romeo sees a vision of himself entering the tomb!

Jack: Of himself.

Sylvia: Yeah.

Jack: This is not an adaptation and it’s not a text in the first place that is like: Romeo and Juliet are perfect for each other, despite their differences, and it ends in tragedy.

Austin: No.

Jack: The text has always been: There is something wrong happening here in the world. There is something wrong in the stars.

Sylvia: Juliet, I mean, is played is very like ready to die in a lot of this.

Austin: *[sighs]* Yeah.

Jack: Yes. Yes, there's that incredible scene—

Sylvia: The moment you see her, she is like seeing what it's like to drown.

Austin: Right. Right.

Jack: Yeah. Yeah.

Austin: And again, it opens with a newscaster telling you that the two kids died and from their death, you know, peace can come.

Sylvia: Oh, yeah.

Austin: So it's like, we know this, but right after that— again, when Romeo sees that image of himself, even after being talked into going with his friends, he's like, “I don't know. It feels like I'm about to meet my own destiny, and like not in a good way.

Jack: Something bad is gonna happen.

Austin: Something bad is coming.

Jack: And then, there is something physically between them as they meet.

Austin: That is, of course, the classic maneuver, right? This is...how many movies have done the there's a thing between the people and it indicates that there's a separation here? It works!

Jack: I think it's something to do in *Romeo and Juliet*, right? In the same way that, you know, we often see this staging with someone looking at someone else through stairs, eyes meeting across a party.

Austin: Mm-hmm.

Jack: You know, plate glass and fish and water between the two lovers.

Austin: Mm-hmm.

Jack: I think it's just good "something's fucked up here" staging.

Sylvia: There's a lot of really good water imagery in this movie in general.

Austin: Sure. God.

Jack: There is so much. I was trying to wrap my head around that. I'm curious to try and talk through what is going on there.

Austin: I can't tell you what's going on there, but I can tell you a fucked up thing. Do you want to hear a fucked up thing?

Sylvia: Always.

Jack: Yeah.

Austin: Let me see if I can— here it is. Let's see. Oh, fuck, did I lose this again? I keep— I have the archive of this interview, but something happens whenever I like click on it, and it...or any time I go back to it, it just changes the URL, and it makes it impossible for me to actually read the interview, so I'm just going to tell you it from memory.

Jack: Okay.

Austin: They built this whole set in the middle of the desert. Okay, so, in general, they built all this stuff. They went to Mexico, like into the desert, and built all of these stages, all of these different locations. And that means that things like the big stage, all of Mantua, but also, but also, the pool. I found this archived interview again, thankfully. The interviewer says, "Your sets. Do you ever think this is too much, this is overwhelming?" and Baz Luhrmann says, "Do you mean too much in its effectiveness in the storytelling or just incredibly decadent?" And the interviewer says, "No, just in sheer extravagance," and Baz Luhrmann says, "Let me give you extravagance. The pool, the entire outdoor pool, is a set, interior built. It was made from concrete, and it was filled with water. The day we walked off set, in a frenzy to go up to Verona Beach, they had drained it the day before, and now there were guys with jackhammers just tearing it to pieces. It was a million dollar pool. It's a weird little world, filmmaking, and you do weird little things. One of these things I hate is waste, and I was not able to avoid the kind of waste I would like to avoid. Everything you see on that beach is built. There is not a palm tree or a telegraph pole on that beach that wasn't put there by us. It was a desert. The illusion of film is fascinating and difficult but tricky. We were able to do things in Mexico that you couldn't do anywhere else in the world. We had this one chopper, that big white one, but it seems like a flotilla of choppers. You can tell the electronic ones—" which, he uses the phrase "electronic" to mean computer...

Jack: Oh, computer generated?

Austin: Like, CGI, yeah, yeah.

Jack: That's really cool.

Austin: "You can tell the electronic ones. We're not trying to hide that too much. The military guy in the chopper and the silhouette early on, sitting and pointing a gun, that's me and Don McAlpine. *[Sylvia laughs]* We're just in a bell chopper, this camera chopper, and he's up there with a camera, handholding. I'm just strapped in. And we've got all the stunt guys dressed up and flying through Mexico City—I mean, in the middle of Mexico City—and they're just hanging out the chopper. I'm just pointing out the kind of bizarreness in what needs to happen to get a scene is always extraordinary." And then, again, to finish this last little bit. "I'll give you an example of the surrealness of it. Flying, looking for Mantua. We're flying over the desert. We're up in a chopper. We see tiny little sheds, so we fly down, and we land, and the wind blows everything. The villagers live in cardboard boxes. Our Mexican interpreter says, 'Look, we want to make a film, and we're going to build some things here, but we'll leave everything for you, and we're going to pay you all this money.' They're over the moon. So we came back. We built the entirety of Mantua. Everything you see in Mantua, all those shacks, the cars, everything, like a town. And they bring all the cars, and they're all employed, and they're all great. Then we shoot this, and we're always desperately behind, so all the trucks leave the next morning. We get the final shot, we leave, and as we're leaving, they're all waving. And there's a town left behind where their little shacks were, and it's their little town now. I mean, there's a surrealness about that. There's a big sign now that says 'Mantua.'"

Jack: Hmm.

Austin: What the fuck is filmmaking? *[Ali laughs]*

Jack: Wow. This is some big AMCA moments where *[Austin: "Uh huh"]* you pull up interviews with...who's the guy?

Austin: Uh, Dave Filoni?

Jack: Who just says something fucking wild.

Austin: Uh huh.

Jack: *[laughs]* All of you go, "I beg your pardon?"

Austin: I beg your pardon? You helicoptered over some people who you claim lived in cardboard boxes, my man? Are you sure about that? Anyway.

Jack: And then we built them a town, and there's a sign saying "Mantua"? The kind of literalization of a fictional place, outputting a fictional place in the world.

Austin: Uh huh.

Jack: Separate from any kind of external infrastructure or separate from any kind of conditions by which people come to live in a place. Just arriving and saying, "We're making a film that has a town in it. We're building a town."

Austin: Mm-hmm.

Jack: "Goodbye. I hope you enjoy your town." It's wild. Imagine if they'd done that with Charlie and the Chocolate Factory, and they'd been like, "Would you like a chocolate factory?" *[laughter]*

Austin: God.

Sylvia: That's actually how the town of Hershey, Pennsylvania was founded.

Austin: Anyway, yeah, my point being that all of these places have that degree of...I think the thing, to me, that was like so interesting is when this interviewer says, "Don't you think it's all a little bit excessive?" what he means is, "Isn't it a little too lush? Aren't there too many colors?"

Jack: Yeah. Yeah.

Austin: And in fact, the way in which it's excessive is, "We built this and tore it apart." *[laughs quietly]*

Jack: Yeah. As we move through the party, Romeo and Juliet have met. We get one of my favorite scenes in the movie, which is a long or an extended scene of watching Juliet dance with Paul Rudd, Paris.

Austin: *[sighs]* It's so funny!

Jack: And it is worth saying that Claire Danes is fucking killing it in this movie. She is incredible.

Austin: Oh, Art's friend, Claire Danes? *[Ali and Art laugh]*

Jack: Art's friend. Art, your friend Claire Danes is amazing.

Art: Yeah.

Jack: And she...I feel like sometimes with DiCaprio and Danes, they haven't quite got their mouths around the Shakespeare. You know, they haven't got their mouths around Shakespeare.

Art: Mm-hmm.

Austin: Too busy putting their mouths around each other's mouths.

Jack: Yeah. Or Mercutio.

Austin: Uh huh. *[laughs]*

Jack: But it's like... *[laughs quietly]* But they are able to emote so incredibly, such as this moment *[Austin: "Mm-hmm"]* when Juliet is having to dance with Paris, and something about the way Paris is dancing is just fucking stupid, and Juliet can't hide how stupid she's finding this. She has this great moment where she laughs and then tries to suppress the laugh, and you're like, "Okay, fine," but then she does it like three or four more times.

Austin: Uh huh!

Jack: There's something so dumb about this guy's dancing that Juliet can't help like openly laughing at it. It is so great.

Austin: And just constant—

Sylvia: It's really dumb dancing.

Austin: It's really dumb dancing.

Art: And it must have been like a choreographed— like, someone must have had to like go in and teach Paul, "Okay, here's how to dance in the dumbest way anyone's ever seen."

Austin: Maybe.

Sylvia: I don't know. I feel like he had that in him.

Austin: Don't you think, if you had Paul Rudd, you'd be like, "I want you to— don't tell— just say we're gonna do a dancing scene, and I want you to be like, the silliest goofiest dude you could be and get her to laugh."

Jack: Yeah, and I'd just be like, "Keep rolling."

Austin: Yeah, uh huh. *[laughs quietly]*

Jack: I want to catch her.

Austin: The way he kisses her hand.

Art: I don't know, because that was a young— maybe that's what you do with modern Paul Rudd, but that was like...

Austin: He had done...

Art: Oh, Paul Rudd was older than I thought he was in this movie.

Austin: Yeah.

Art: Okay, never mind.

Ali: Yeah, did *Wet Hot American Summer* come out yet?

Austin: This has to be post *Wet Hot American Summer*, right?

Ali: Because yeah, this is the guy...

Austin: No, it did not. This is pre *Wet Hot American Summer*.

Ali: Huh.

Art: But he is 27 in this movie.

Austin: Right, right.

Ali: Sure.

Austin: He's too old for her! *[Ali laughs]*

Jack: Yeah.

Sylvia: Get away from her! Get a real job! *[Austin laughs]*

Jack: Paul, become the Ant-Man. *[Austin sighs]* No. No, don't become the Ant-Man. Skip that.

Sylvia: I said real job, Jack.

Jack: There's a moment when she is told that he is a Montague, and there's a really great shot that Luhrmann repeats a couple of times in the movie, which is really striking, given...what did the interviewer call it? Do you think that the sets are too...what was the word he used?

Austin: Extravagant, I want to say.

Jack: Extravagant. I feel like Luhrmann just fills the frame constantly. But when she learns that he's a Montague, we just get this like close up on her face against a red background. There's almost nothing else in the shot. She's just watching Romeo. And I think it is a real moment of

confidence in your lead in this situation, *[Austin: "Mm-hmm"]* in a party full of people, to just be like, "We need Claire Danes to sell this emotion, and we are confident that she will."

Austin: And she does.

Art: Well, it's confidence in your lead, but it's also a movie, so they could have been there for two days, right?

Austin: You're right, yeah. *[Ali laughs]*

Art: They could have just been like, "Nope, that's not it. Let's run it again."

Austin: Mm-hmm.

Jack: "One more time!" Yeah, yeah, exactly. Kissing in the elevator.

Austin: Kissing in the elevator.

Jack: It's so good.

Art: Oh, the elevator scene kills.

Ali: *[whispering]* It's so good.

Jack: Oh, we should talk about the hands and palms and lips, which is an all time great "I want to kiss" sequence. *[laughs quietly]*

Austin: But I'm not allowed.

Jack: Well, it's great. It's like these two characters who want to kiss but can't and so sort of start with like...they sort of launder a kiss through chastity.

Austin: Uh huh.

Jack: As like Shakespeare starts by talking about like character's hands and kissing hands and saints kissing hands and saints kissing lips and where is holiness located. Is it in the hand or the lip of the saint? And, you know, like, "Oh, so maybe if we kiss, it's actually chaste."

Austin: Uh huh.

Jack: And then they end up just kissing. They're just like, "All right, fuck it." But it's such a good way to work up to the kiss and then with the punchline of like, "Oh, let me taste the sin again." What's the line? It's...

Austin: Uh, she complains— she doesn't complain. She playfully complains that he has put sin on her lips, and he says—

Art: "Then have my lips the sin that they have took."

Ali: Mm-hmm.

Art: And then Romeo says, "Sin from my lips, oh trespass sweetly urged. Give me my sin again."

Jack: Amazing.

Austin: And then I wrote, "This nigga spittin'." *[laughter]* So.

Jack: It's also like...this is just straight up old fashioned foreshadowing of Juliet trying to kiss the poison off Romeo's lips at the end.

Austin: Yes! Yes, yes, exactly. Yes.

Jack: Like, this is a mirrored moment, in the same way that meeting on either side of the aquarium is great staging of a moment that you've seen 100 times done really well.

Austin: Mm-hmm.

Jack: I think that kissing in the elevator is a similarly good thing of like, we're alone in a party.

Austin: And before it closes?

Jack: It's wonderful.

Ali: Mm-hmm.

Austin: Like, they get in the elevator, and Romeo's like, "All right, we're in the elevator. We made it. Now it's the kiss zone." *[Jack laughs]*

Art: Yeah, as they're being like chased sort of up the stairs *[Austin: "Uh huh"]* by Paris and Lady Capulet and Nurse to a lesser extent.

Austin: Mm-hmm.

Ali: Yeah, they specifically...and it's like, the staging of the scene from the start, before they start talking about palms and stuff, is already fantastic; because it's Juliet like sort of standing near shitty Paul Rudd on like the other side of a column, and Romeo like approaches her and

starts making this like *[laughs quietly]* move on her essentially, as they're moving through the party.

[2:00:17]

Jack: It's so good.

Ali: But the elevator dings at the like height of the desire, I guess.

Austin: Mm-hmm.

Ali: And they go into the elevator, and then they kiss, and then they come out of the elevator again and go back into it to make out more.

Austin: Mm-hmm!

Jack: It's so good, yeah!

Ali: And it's so good. *[laughs]* Sometimes, you know, you just have to play the hits.

Austin: Yes.

Ali: And Baz was like, "Yeah, five seconds ago, that was a hit."

Jack: Let's do it again.

Austin: It's *Romeo and Juliet*. Now is the moment, you know what I mean? *[Ali laughs]*

Art: Mm-hmm.

Sylvia: Yeah.

Austin: It's THE love at first sight story, you know?

Ali: Mm-hmm.

Jack: Yes. Yes.

Art: Yeah, what's that—?

Austin: It's THE "we shouldn't kiss, but we have to" story

Jack: Yeah.

Art: There was that like really garbage tweet from some time ago that's like, you know, "This is how many lines of dialogue there are between Romeo and Juliet [*Austin: "Oh my God"*] before they decide they're in love," and it's like...

Jack: Did you read the—

Art: You're doing the worst narrative analysis I've ever seen. [*Ali laughs*]

Austin: That's the play.

Sylvia: [*sarcastic*] Damn, someone on Twitter was wrong? [*Austin laughs*]

Art: I'm as shocked as you are. [*Austin laughs*]

Jack: Kissing in the elevator. Oh, yeah, and then we have Juliet realizing...

Austin: Who it is. Being told who it is. And also, there's a B plot during all of this, right? which is...maybe it's just after all this, which is Tybalt catches that the fucking Montague boys have come here and wants to start shit, and, you know, uh, Ted Capulet—

Jack: Beyond wants to start shit.

Austin: What's Capulet's...?

Jack: Tybalt is like, "Death begins."

Art: It's Fulgencio Capulet.

Austin: Sorry, of course. Fulgencio Capulet says, "No, no. Not in my house. I won't broker any mutiny here."

Jack: He hits him, doesn't he?

Austin: Yeah.

Sylvia: While blackout.

Austin: Which is, in some ways, the thing that sets Tybalt off long term, right?

Jack: Oh. Oh, yeah.

Austin: I mean, Tybalt's already set off.

Jack: No, it's a whole thing.

Austin: But this is the whole thing. I wasn't allowed to get my...what's the phrase that they always use? Like, to get what I deserve from you at the party, and now I'm going to chase you down and get it, right? Like, I'm gonna get my...not justice, but there's a—

Jack: Satisfaction.

Austin: Satisfaction. Thank you. Yes. Of course it's satisfaction, because they play with this quite a bit.

Jack: *[laughs]* Boy howdy.

Ali: I do like...and this is grade 10 shit, but I remember like, when I read *Romeo and Juliet* like for school the first time, I remember walking away from it feeling really like, you know, the meat of the story is that like the adults in their lives were really irresponsible, and like the father's meddling and the nurse's meddling with all of this like exacerbates this experience in a worse way. But like, I think that the way this movie sort of like umbrellas the parents, and like you understand their relationship through all of this genre stuff that the movie doesn't have to spend a lot of time with, but then also being like, we're not going to be the people actively fighting this stuff.

Jack: Yeah.

Ali: And every time there is an engagement, we're going to be the ones who are like sort of putting you in a timeout or making you sit in the backseat of the car and get glared at *[Austin: "Uh huh"]* is like a very efficient spin on like the text in that sort of way.

Austin: Yeah, definitely.

Jack: Mercutio's back.

Austin: Well, this is the end of the act, right? is they leave. They begin to leave.

Jack: Yep. Mercutio's shirtless now.

Art: Yeah.

Jack: I want to highlight that. He looks incredible.

Austin: Yeah, shirt disappeared. Where'd it go? Who could say.

Jack: Where'd it go? He's holding, I think, a corset? No, he's holding his bandoliers, right.

Austin: *[laughs]* Right. They go to the gun checkout counter. *[Ali laughs]*

Jack: Oh, it's such a good detail.

Art: Mm-hmm.

Jack: I was watching this, and I was like, *[singing]* I want to play this Hitman level.

Austin: Oh my God. *[Ali laughs]* Please!

Jack: It's kind of the Isle of Sgàil, but I want—

Art: Well, now we should have had Janine on. Is it too late? *[laughter]*

Austin: Yeah, Janine needs to come on right now.

Jack: *[joking]* I know that you're able to cleanly pitch levels, and that's really all it takes.

Austin: *[laughs]* It's all very straightforward, I'm sure.

Art: It doesn't matter who owns this intellectual property. *[Jack laughs]*

Austin: Don't worry. It's *Romeo and Juliet*.

Jack: But the gun checkout is set up in like a tent. It's not even like a building.

Austin: *[sighs]* Oh, it's so funny.

Jack: And, oh, Mercutio...no, Romeo immediately sets off the metal detector by trying to go back in and see Juliet.

Austin: Right, we didn't mention—

Jack: And Mercutio has to grab him and be like...

Art: No, Mercutio comes to— Mercutio gets the guns and then *[Austin: "Oh"]* goes to grab Romeo through the metal detector.

Austin: Oh, it's so funny.

Art: I have it playing in the background right now.

Austin: I see. And we didn't mention that Leo's outfit, Romeo's outfit is like a knight, and all he has on is like the pauldrons and the vambraces.

Ali: Mm-hmm.

Sylvia: It's so fucking good.

Austin: It's so good. It's perfect.

Jack: It's so good. It's Zendaya at the Met Gala as Joan of Arc.

Austin: You could wear this— I was gonna say. You could you could wear this to the Met Gala any year and be the best dressed person. It's so good.

Sylvia: I want to wear it right now.

Austin: You could pull it off. I believe in you.

Jack: Yeah, yeah, yeah.

Sylvia: Thank you. I think so too.

Austin: And so that is the end of Act One, is them leaving the party. The beginning of Act Two, to keep the same format as before, is hey, Romeo cannot go home. Romeo has to go see Juliet immediately.

Jack: Immediately, he can't go home.

Austin: Yes.

Jack: This blew my mind. I had forgotten that this is how this was structured.

Austin: There's no distance. There's no "Oh, I spent a night, and all I could do was think about Juliet." No. "We're leaving." "No, I'm not. I'm staying here. I'm gonna go talk to her." This, of course—

Art: Yeah, he's in the car with his drunk boys for five seconds, *[Ali laughs]* and he's like, "Nah, I can't do this."

Austin: They don't get past the gate. They don't get past the security at the front gate.

Jack: It is absolutely—

Art: I'm not sure the car is moving before he leaves.

Austin: And then the scene—

Jack: It's been—

Austin: Go ahead.

Jack: Oh, I was just gonna say like this and the elevator and everything is just being, you know, 17 or 18 at a party that you don't want to leave [*Austin: "Mm-hmm"*] because the person that you have instantly fallen in love with is at the party.

Austin: Yes. I mean, that's the energy—

Jack: Being like, "Time to go." "No."

Austin: "No, I won't." The party energy...just to really— we already talked about individual parts of this, but the energy of like looking across the crowded room and making eyes at someone, not like "I want to fuck you" eyes, but the sort of like deep emotional connection at what a goofy thing is happening eyes. It's top tier captured here.

Jack: Yeah. A hundred percent.

Austin: Like, that feeling of "you and I are the only two people who are on the same wavelength in this goofy-ass space" is so important to romance, and it's here in full effect. And when you have that moment with someone who you have a crush on, you do only want to spend time with them, and so I don't blame him for beginning this act by getting out of the car and climbing back into Capulet Manor or whatever. And then this act ends with them getting married, so that is the space of Act Two.

Art: Uh huh. I want to say—just because, again, I have this just up as we're talking—that we get another shot of Tybalt's sequined red devil costume.

Austin: God.

Art: But he's taken the horns out, I guess because he's pissed. But it's still a just impeccable look. I don't know why red sequined vests didn't didn't catch on, but...

Austin: Because not everybody can pull it off the way that he can, you know?

Art: Yeah.

Jack: Now, we enter the swimming pool period of our lives, where we're going to be talking about a swimming pool for the next chunk of time. [*Austin laughs*]

Sylvia: We sure do. I want to live in the swimming pool portion of my life.

Austin: Uh huh.

Jack: This swimming pool gives me powerful energy to see this swimming— this whole scene is fucking great. *[laughs quietly]* We get Romeo and Juliet declaring their love for each other, except it involves what I can only describe as: lots of business with a swimming pool.

Austin: Mm-hmm.

Art: Yeah, I was a little preoccupied watching this, thinking that like, this must have been a nightmare to shoot. It comes out so well, but they must have been in this pool for a week.
[Austin and Ali laugh]

Sylvia: Yeah.

Art: Because they had to get all these angles and all these like...not like, you know, stunt is too strong a word, but like...

Austin: No, I get what you mean.

Art: There's a lot of physicality, and there's a lot of dialogue that they have to get from every angle. Like, these kids must have been in that swimming pool for a week.

Sylvia: There's a lot of like underwater shots too.

Austin: Yeah.

Art: Mm-hmm.

Austin: And is this— okay, in the types of staging I'm most familiar with with this, I think of this as a scene where, mostly, Romeo talks to Juliet as she's up on the balcony.

Jack: Yeah. This is the balcony scene.

Austin: This is the balcony scene.

Ali: Mm-hmm.

Art: Yeah, this is the balcony scene.

Austin: And the thing that this movie does immediately is pull her off the balcony. She comes down.

Ali: It's so smart.

Austin: She leaves the balcony, because she actually doesn't have privacy on the balcony. Her nurse is up there. Her mom can get her up there. But if she goes by down by the pool—which, by the way, is being watched by security cameras *[laughs quietly]*—she can do her “Wherefore art thou Romeo?” speech in the privacy of the pool, in the glow of the pool, as he is literally right behind her. And does something very mean that I don't think is in the original, which is surprise her from behind, tossing her indirectly into the pool. *[Austin and Ali laugh]*

Art: No, that's— I don't believe that's in the original play.

Austin: That's not in the original. Shakespeare didn't write that one in?

Ali: Mm...he was thinking about it.

Austin: The surprise is there, but...

Sylvia: It was in an early draft.

Austin: Yeah, yeah, yeah. *[laughs quietly]* What else? What's going on with this pool scene? What stands out in this pool scene?

Art: I mean, I think...one, I mean, this is where the most famous dialogue in this play is, right?

Austin: Mm-hmm.

Art: This is the, you know...

Austin: “A rose by any other name.”

Art: Yeah, “What light through yonder window breaks?”

Austin: Right, right.

Art: And I like that they don't...I mean, obviously this is an important sequence in the movie, but they don't like pause for these lines in a way that I think a worse version version of this would do.

Jack: Mm. Mm-hmm.

Austin: Sure.

Sylvia: No, that's...I love how this scene just kind of always feels like it's moving.

Austin: Mm-hmm.

Art: Mm-hmm.

Sylvia: Because of the like— first, because of the security guard threat, when she's like, “Oh my God, you're here. We have to move behind this pillar,” or whatever. To like when he's just like talking to her and sort of like chasing after her or like kissing her neck while she's giving dialogue and shit. It's just like, it's a very just like...I don't know, it's like a very living scene. I don't know if that makes sense.

Jack: So much movement.

Sylvia: But it is very just like, everything's going on.

Austin: Yeah.

Ali: Yeah, it almost feels like, because these lines are so iconic, the idea of them just standing there talking to each other would be like the worst version of this movie, right? Like, because they do a lot of good stuff with line reads in other situations, but like, for this especially, and I think like having him climb up to the balcony and then immediately sort of have to come down from it is a good way to sort of like flip the expectation there too and like get them so much closer together and have it be this sort of living scene, where while they're talking about their emotions, they like also can't keep from each other. Whereas like, if it was just the thing of like, you know, the camera goes up towards her to the window and him down below and like him trying to climb up closer would not have the same like magnetism that like a stage show wouldn't be able to have, I guess.

Austin: It's worth saying too that like, again, this is like scene three of them making out, basically, *[Ali laughs quietly]* and it's a different moment in filmmaking. It really truly is. Like, this is the year *Bound* comes out also. Sorry, this is the— it was up against *Bound* for Best Kiss from the MTV Movie Awards. Neither of them won, would you believe it?

Sylvia: What won?

Austin: *Independence Day*. *[Art laughs]*

Sylvia: Come on!

Jack: Wait, what?

Austin: Yeah, uh huh, when Will Smith kissed Vivica A. Fox.

Sylvia: *[sarcastic]* Yeah, the famous kiss scene in *Independence Day* that everyone remembers.

Austin: Yeah, uh huh.

Art: I don't even know who...

Jack: He kisses the alien.

Art: It must be Will Smith and...

Austin: It's Will Smith and Vivica A. Fox. Yeah, uh huh.

Art: Yeah.

Ali: Oh, after he wins, I guess?

Austin: After he wins, yeah.

Art: After he wins the alien war.

Austin: He wins the alien war. But, you know, when you look at this list of things in the '90s, the...if I'm like looking at this list of Best Kiss winners and and nominees, it does include things like Bram Stoker's *Dracula*; like *Species*, the incredibly horny sci-fi film that came out the year before; *Desperado*. I mean, there's also a lot of goofy shit in here, obviously, right? Like *Dumb and Dumber* won in '95. I don't know what's going on there. But there is a degree of like...you know, *Reality Bites* is in here. The world of making out on film still existed in popular cinema, and the energy that is here kind of sets the stage for everything that's to come for the rest of the '90s inside of like teen romance stories. Like, I don't think you get to *Cruel Intentions* without this, you know?

Ali: Mm.

Art: Sure.

Jack: Right.

Art: To say nothing of the fact that there were then just like a run of worse, teen-focused Shakespeare adaptations.

Austin: Right. What are you counting as the worst ones from this era? The '90s...

Art: Well, I mean worse, and I don't mean that they're bad.

Austin: Yeah, yeah, yeah.

Art: But like, *10 Things I Hate About You* doesn't exist if this movie doesn't come out.

Austin: Right. Sure. Sure.

Art: And of course, it's not...it doesn't have the Shakespeare dialogue. And then, I think it's, again, Julia Stiles in *O*, right?

Austin: It is. In *O*, yeah, I think that that's right.

Art: Which is...

Austin: I'm pretty sure.

Jack: This is not— oh, I see. I was briefly confused that you thought Julia Stiles was in this movie, but you mean in *10 Things I Hate About You*.

Austin: In *10 Things I Hate About You* and in *O*.

Art: And in *O*.

Austin: I think that that's right. I'm wondering now if it's not and if we're wrong. We might be wrong.

Art: No, she's in...yeah, she's in...yeah.

Austin: She is. And she's in the 2000 *Hamlet* as Ophelia!

Art: Wow.

Austin: Julia, what are you doing?

Jack: Julia Stiles is great.

Art: What a run.

Austin: Yeah.

Art: What a weird run.

Austin: And if you told me that *Save the Last Dance* was a Shakespeare adaptation, I'd be like, "Yeah, sure, of course." [Austin and Art laugh] So.

Jack: Anything else on the pool? We want to talk about the pool?

Austin: I think the energy coming out of it is so good because it feels inevitable. It is important in a movie like this or in a story like this, where characters are making bad decisions that they

feel in their hearts— and both of them throughout the movie have moments when they're like, "I feel something like ill fated by the stars is about to happen in my life. Anyway, what's this pretty girl have to say to me?" *[Jack chuckles]* Like, that is where they're at.

Sylvia: So relatable.

Austin: But that's the thing, right? It's like, you have to bring the audience in on: why would people who sense in their guts that something bad is going to happen continue forward on this? And the answer is: because like, how could you not continue forward? This is the best thing that's ever happened to me. No one and nothing has ever felt this good to me. So.

[2:15:08]

Jack: If there are consequences, it will be worth it, you know?

Austin: Right, exactly, exactly. Or this will be the thing that shields me from consequence. Right?

Jack: Yeah, totally.

Austin: So, the place that they end up, it's worth saying, is they go back and forth. They flirt back and forth on whether or not there is...what should you swear your love to the other person on, back and forth. How do you communicate what you feel for the other person? Romeo does make a sort of late game play for some action, *[laughs quietly]* where he's like, "Can I get a little satisfaction before I go?" and she's like, "Satisfaction?" and then he's like, "Uh, you know, can you tell me that *you love me*?"

Jack: *[laughs quietly]* This moment's really well played.

Austin: And she's like, "That was obviously already stated that I love you. Like, you didn't even need to ask." And that eventually turns into him saying, basically proposing to her or saying, "I think I want to propose to you," and her being like, "Well, if you're serious, send me word tomorrow." And then they say goodbye eight times. They like refuse to say goodbye to one another.

Jack: It's so cute.

Austin: It's very cute. And that sets up another important supporting character right away after this, as Romeo has to go find somebody.

Jack: Yeah. This scene ends with another one of these just like put the metaphor, make the subtext text shots, *[Austin: "Mm-hmm"]* that we see a couple of times in the movie. I think it's a really nice shot of Juliet like kneeling down with her head peeking out through the columns of her balcony, *[Austin: "Mm-hmm"]* looking down at Leo, and it is just absolutely like, "Oh, this is a

woman behind bars,” where it's like, yep, metaphor is pretty clear, Baz, but it looks good. Does the trick. *[Ali laughs]*

Austin: And Leo goes to Father Laurence, who has a rooftop greenhouse.

Ali: Mm?

Sylvia: It's so good.

Austin: And a “what if you could be Catholic and part of the Yakuza” tattoo *[Ali laughs]* of a cross on his back.

Jack: He's played by—

Art: He's not sure that that's forbidden by either.

Austin: I guess it's probably not forbidden. *[laughs]* I mean, I guess you're right. Do you want to know what Baz Luhrmann says the backstory for their version of Father Laurence is?

Sylvia: Yeah, absolutely.

Ali: Yeah.

Sylvia: Austin, more than anything.

Jack: He's a gangster, right? He's like a...

Austin: No, you're wrong. This is incorrect.

Jack: Shit. Wow, okay.

Austin: But tell me what you— tell me why I would ask this. What is the vibes on this character? Someone set up Father Laurence.

Sylvia: I feel like he's doing drugs with the choir boys, is the vibe I immediately get.

Ali: Yeah, yep.

Sylvia: He's like distilling something from a plant and talking about like...yeah.

Jack: He's giving the whole like—

Austin: His speech is like— yeah.

Jack: I could be your angel or your devil. I'm a plant.

Austin: *[laughs quietly]* Yes.

Jack: It's like, what if a plant could be an angel or a devil?

Austin: I think he's supposed to be— I think he's doing like advanced science class with the boys.

Jack: I mean...

Austin: But also, he's going to use whatever—

Jack: That's probably what the text says.

Ali: This is his grow room.

Austin: It is his grow room. So, quote, "Our scenario was that he went off to Vietnam and he was into drugs."

Jack: What?!

Austin: "He was tussling with his own personal dilemmas. Maybe he had a wife and child or whatever, but he went back to the church, and really, he's a good person. He really wants good to be done and really believes in the ideas of Christ and God, but he's not this guy in a white caftan who says, 'I have a wonderful idea. Let's marry, and all this will be hunky dory.' So we're showing him to be a complex man. You know, he's a drinker. I quite like the idea—it's an old fashioned idea—that Spencer Tracy always played priests but secretly was a drunk, which doesn't say he's bad. I think priests are flawed and a lot more human. If you reveal it, you're therefore truthful. You're saying, 'I'm a human being. I'm not a deity.' I have a slight problem with the deity version of priesthood, as I'm certain churches do." I actually think churches quite like the deity version of priests.

Jack: That's the bit that they're into, I think.

Sylvia: Mm-hmm.

Austin: I don't think that they're into priest has a big cross tattoo on his back and wears Hawaiian shirts, *[Ali laughs]* and, you know, makes meth in the greenhouse or whatever is popping off here.

Sylvia: They should be, though.

Ali: Yeah.

Sylvia: Again, just like a suggestion to the Catholic Church: get on this wave. *[Austin laughs]*

Ali: Mm-hmm.

Jack: So, Father Laurence is played by Pete—

Art: More weird schemes. *[Austin and Jack laugh]*

Jack: He's played by Pete Postlethwaite.

Sylvia: You know, in a way other than the schemes you've got going on right now.

Austin: Yeah.

Sylvia: Weird.

Jack: The evil, yeah, deeply unpleasant.

Austin: Uh huh.

Sylvia: Yeah. Go to the weird end of the spectrum.

Jack: So, he's played—

Art: Don't want to get married? What if you faked everything? *[Austin laughs]*

Sylvia: Again, Catholicism, used to that.

Austin: *[laughs darkly]* So, wait, who are you saying this was played by, Jack?

Jack: So, Father Laurence is played by Pete Postlethwaite, who is a legendary English character actor. I think it's actually really cool. I want to double check the cast, because— oh, I just went on Wikipedia and tried to search “cast,” in the search bar.

Austin: Of course. Uh huh. Oh. Did that work?

Jack: It told me about how people can heal broken bones.

Austin: Ah.

Jack: So, Pete Postlethwaite plays Father Laurence, and then M. Emmet Walsh, who is a another fantastic American character actor, plays the apothecary. M. Emmett Walsh has done a lot of work with the Coen Brothers. Pete Postlethwaite has played a bunch of roles. He was in

The Usual Suspects. He was in *Alien 3*. He did a really cool movie about a brass band in England called Local— no, I can't remember what it's called. *Brassed Off*, I think. He's a really great guy.

Sylvia: He's one of those actors where like, you see him, and you're like, "Oh, it's that guy."

Jack: Yeah, 100%.

Art: Yeah.

Sylvia: Like, it's that guy from that thing.

Austin: Yeah, yeah, yeah.

Sylvia: He's like the definition of like a familiar face you can't put a name to in a lot of movies, at least to me.

Jack: Yeah.

Austin: Mm-hmm.

Jack: He gets a really fantastic onscreen costume change. He's shirtless when we meet him, and then he puts on a Hawaiian— he's wearing a vest. He's wearing like a singlet, and then he puts on an extremely cool Hawaiian shirt.

Austin: No, you were right. He starts with nothing. He starts shirtless and his sunglasses hanging from like a rope around his neck.

Art: Mm-hmm.

Austin: Then he puts on the vest, I think.

Jack: Then he puts on a white singlet.

Austin: Yeah.

Jack: Then he puts on a blue Hawaiian shirt. Then he puts on a black priest's cassock. This is so great.

Austin: It's so good.

Jack: We don't know that this guy's a priest when we meet him, other than like, "Oh, Romeo's gone to meet a priest," is the inference of the previous thing.

Austin: Right, right.

Jack: But we don't know if this is this guy. The only moment we know he's a priest is when we see this cool tattooed guy put on his priest's cassock and then the white thing on top. It's great. And he says, "Wait a second. This might actually be good, actually. *[Austin sighs]* What if this ends the war?" And this is very sad, because even as he's saying it, he's thinking, "Uh, I don't know about this." But we get the sense that he's going ahead with it despite his worst feelings, because he's like, "Well, this might be the way out."

Austin: Mm-hmm. Can I point out— go ahead. Go ahead, Art.

Art: Well, and also, at this point, they're having this exchange while a Black youth choir sings "When Doves Cry" by Prince. *[Austin laughs]*

Jack: Oh, this kid vocalist.

Austin: Unbelievable.

Sylvia: The choir is so good.

Austin: Unbelievable.

Ali: *[laughs quietly]* It's so good.

Austin: Did anybody else pick up on the incredible Jesus mural who has Tybalt's sideburns?

Jack: No.

Sylvia: What?

Ali: No?

Austin: I'm gonna post it, one second. It's one of my favorite things in this sequence, as they're walking down the stairs. It's like fucking Keanu Reeves Jesus. *[Ali laughs]*

Sylvia: Oh my fucking God. They yassified Jesus. *[Ali laughs]*

Austin: They literally did. It's so good. It's incredible.

Jack: That's great. That's really good.

Austin: And so, yeah, like that's...the priest's plan is... *[sighs]* You know, I guess, aim for the moon or whatever, right?

Jack: Shoot for the moon.

Austin: Shoot for the moon.

Jack: Even if you miss, you will land among the stars, resulting in the death of two young people. *[laughs]*

Austin: Yeah. Yeah, yeah, yeah. That's what they mean when they say star-crossed lovers, right? is you aim for the moon and... *[laughs quietly]*

Jack: Mm.

Sylvia: I mean, he did— it does kinda end up to lead to the war ending.

Austin: I mean, yes, right? Which is like, the truly fucked up thing about this story is that it's a happy ending for these families, in the worst possible way, in that the war ends. I mean, it's not a happy ending. They've lost their kids. I get it; I know. But peace is brought because these two children were sacrificed on the altar of their parents not being able to put their shit aside *[Jack: "Yeah"]* and like get out of the fucking car. Get out of the car, you know?

Jack: It's good storytelling.

Austin: It is. I also love Romeo helping him dress in this, by the way, like trying to help him put the robes on and get him ready for mass or whatever. It's great. And it—

Art: And then the montage that takes this scene to the next scene is killer.

Austin: Mm-hmm.

Jack: How does this go?

Austin: Art?

Art: Uh, hold on. I'll just...so, we get...I'm behind. Where is this?

Austin: It's a lot of the signage that you were talking about before, Jack.

Art: Yeah, it's a lot of signage. It's a lot of just like people in cars. There's like a table of people with frozen margaritas.

Jack: It's great.

Austin: It's like, this is the town we're in, right? It's the Prospero sign. It's the Merchant of Verona—

Art: The Merchant of Verona Beach.

Austin: Yeah, exactly. It's all the people hanging out at the like Venice Beach equivalent.

Art: People smoking.

Austin: Yeah, lots of people smoking. Someone being propositioned, people on the phone, people at the— you know, it's all that stuff happening.

Jack: Really good stuff.

Art: Yeah.

Austin: Mm-hmm.

Art: Jamie Kennedy's in it for some reason.

Austin: *[laughs quietly]* He continues to be in it for some reason. One more note here on the Catholic stuff. I'm not gonna promise this is my last Catholic stuff note, but one of the other questions—

Art: Nor should you.

Austin: One of the other questions that comes up in this interview is like, "On the visuals, you have a great number of Catholic statues and images."

Jack: Hmm.

Austin: And Baz Luhrmann says, "We shot in Mexico, and Mexico is very, very, very Catholic, with Catholic iconography everywhere. There's a giant statue in the middle of the city. That is Mexico City with Jesus's statue put in the middle of the city. That's an electronic addition. All the iconography was about the fact of the plot point that when you marry, it is in the eyes of God. Families cannot pull the couple apart. So the slightly on-the-edge priest says, 'But actually, if you do get married, the families can't do anything about it, so it's a way of forcing them to stop running around killing each other.' It's a key plot point in the play. It's very weak dramatically, so you have to have the audience believe that no one questions religion, no one questions the existence of God or the power of Jesus Christ. So when Juliet says, 'No, if thy love be honorable, thy purpose marriage,' Romeo could not say, 'Look, you don't have to get married to have sex.' There's no argument about the fact that they existed in a religious context, in terms of their thinking and beliefs, so it turned out like an Italian or Mexican or South American location. I mean, when you're in Mexico, religion is absolutely wrapped up with politics."

Jack: *[sarcastic]* Unlike in America.

Austin: Unlike in America. *[Ali laughs]* Yeah, I am not gonna cut things from his quotes to make him seem smarter than he is. *[laughs]*

Jack: Oh, no, the—

Austin: But I had never thought of the idea of like, oh, right. Marriage is like— mm, marriage is a sacrament, right? Like, I mean, it literally is in the Catholic Church, literally is a sacrament. But it has a sort of ritualistic magical power that is, you know, represented by God's eyes being over everything in the staging of the city, right, in the way that we constantly get the statues of Jesus and Mary watching everybody. I had never really thought about the way in which that is what made the marriage powerful as a potential tool was they couldn't make them divorce. Marriage is more powerful than family, you know? And that's an interesting thing that I just had never thought about in this story.

Jack: Right.

Austin: Because at first, when I read Baz Luhrmann say, "It's very weak dramatically," I was like, "What the fuck are you talking about it's weak dramatically?" But it is, because in real life, if you had a kid who married your rival's kid, you would be like, "No, you're getting divorced." Not you, but you know, if you were an evil crimelord—

Sylvia: No, I would do that. *[laughter]*

Austin: Okay, yeah, uh huh. But that's the thing, right? And like, but that's not even on the table. It's impossible to imagine them being told to get divorced and them listening.

Jack: Yeah.

Austin: They could hide behind the church in that way, right? It's a real marriage.

Jack: And it works as well with the whole, you know...like Ali said, I think this is like...did you call it 10th grade stuff, Ali?

Ali: Yes. *[laughs]*

Jack: Of like, Romeo and Juliet as representative of their families, you know?

Austin: Right.

Jack: And of them being united is actually talking about a broader familial move, but in context of how he's talking about the marriage as a powerful ritual state, it's almost as though what the war is looking for, in order to end, is a lock strong enough that it can't be pulled apart.

Austin: Right. Yeah, yeah.

Jack: And in that way, Romeo and Juliet function as representatives of their families in another way, right? Where it's like, oh, they are the lock and the key that can fit together in a way

[Austin: "Mm-hmm"] that can't be blown apart, and that's how we're going to get the peace.

[laughs] At the cost of their own lives.

Austin: Also, it's 10th grade stuff because it's 10th grade stuff. Not that you can't, and people certainly do and are right to study at like graduate and post graduate levels. Obviously, there's lots of space inside of the study of Shakespeare. Shoutouts to Michael Lutz, friend of the show. But like, there's a reason why...I mean, there's lots of reasons why we study Shakespeare in high school that are not good reasons why we do that. But it is a thing that you can study in 10th grade and get something out of, if it's taught well and if you happen to have had decent, you know, teaching up until then about how to interpret things like this and if you're lucky enough to see a production especially. And so I don't...you know, Shakespeare is writing stuff that could be understood by a wide range of people or could be enjoyed by a wide range of people, and so I don't mind this leaning into some of the 10th grade stuff, you know?

Jack: Oh, yeah. To be clear, I didn't say 10th grade to disparage 10th grade thinking or anything like that.

Austin: No, no, no. I know.

Jack: I meant it in the sense of I don't want people listening to think, "Wow, Jack really thinks they've hit on something new here," when, you know? *[Austin and Jack laugh]*

Austin: Yes, yes. Speaking of 10th grade things, these two boys act like the most high school dudes.

Jack: Oh, it's great. I love that they're playing.

Austin: Benvolio and Mercutio, play fighting.

Jack: They play fight with their guns.

Austin: They make fun of Tybalt, who is a duelist, we learn.

Art: Mm-hmm.

Austin: Something here that I did not actually understand is that the "prince of cats" thing is like a reference to another work that was contemporary to the time.

[2:30:07]

Jack: Oh, I was going to ask about that.

Austin: Yeah, there was a story called *Reynard the Fox*, which is a literary cycle of medieval allegorical Dutch, English, French, and German fables. And the prince of cats is apparently from that, and his name is Tybalt, right? So it's like, it would be like calling someone Tybalt. It's like, if we knew someone named Tybalt, we would make fun of them. We wouldn't, but we could make fun of them *[Ali laughs]* for being like Tybalt in *Romeo and Juliet*, you know what I mean?

Jack: Right.

Austin: If you knew someone named Romeo, and you were like, "Ugh, he's always whining. He's always like so, you know, in his own feelings about someone or another, and he writes the worst poetry in the world, and like it's such a pain in the ass to get him to come out and do anything." That's what they're doing but for Tybalt, right?

Jack: Mercutio calls him *Rome-ay-oh* several times in this scene, which is, again, the coolest shit from Mercutio.

Austin: Uh huh. *[Ali and Art laugh]* Also, Mercutio looks so hot here with the white open shirt and the crucifix.

Sylvia: Yeah.

Jack: It is— oh my god.

Art: Mm-hmm.

Jack: See, this is the...I think I'd seen a still of Mercutio in this outfit before.

Austin: Mm-hmm.

Jack: So I was just so delighted when Mercutio showed up in, you know, his sequined bra and skirt. And then to have this as his second look? I was like, wow, Mercutio.

Austin: Mm-hmm.

Jack: He's wearing like black dress shoes as well, simple black pants.

Art: Yeah, it's the real like, was this movie financed with a big check from whoever makes crucifix necklaces? *[laughter]* Because they're—

Austin: It was the pope, actually, he said.

Jack: Ohh.

Art: Wow.

Austin: The pope does it, yeah, yeah, yeah. Again, from– this is a short one, so I won't go too long here. “The visual style helped liberate the language and break down the barriers?” asks the person, asks the interviewer, to which Baz Luhrmann says, “It actually isn't visual style. Even on the Elizabethan stage, they were their day clothes. When it came to doing the balcony scene, they would find a usual device to free and clarify story and language,” and basically is like, ‘Um, these aren't costumes. This is just what people wear, just like how Shakespeare did it.’

Ali: Mm-hmm.

Sylvia: True. *[Art chuckles]*

Austin: And, you know, Baz Luhrmann must know some more fashionable people than me, because I was... *[Ali laughs]* 1996, I lived on the beach. You know what I mean?

Ali: Well, you saw some people around with the Romeo silk shirt. I know that.

Austin: Oh, I mean, after this, I definitely did. After this? *[Ali laughs]*

Art: Mm-hmm.

Sylvia: I have a friend with the Romeo silk shirt.

Austin: Shit. God, Romeo's silk shirt with like the big like religious heart on it is just...

Jack: Oh, the heart?

Ali: It's so good.

Jack: Yeah, this is my favorite– one of my favorite shirts in the movie.

Austin: It's so good.

Jack: I was about to say it's my favorite, but then I realized this is a movie of fucking incredible shirts, *[Austin: “Mm-hmm”]* and I don't want to write checks that I can't cash.

Austin: Mm-hmm. *[laughs quietly]*

Jack: Mercutio's shirt here is also fantastic. But, I mean, speaking to what he was talking about, about people just wearing their normal clothes, I think it's telling that the next time we see Juliet, she's just wearing like a white t-shirt, hanging out in her room.

Austin: Yes. Yes. Totally. And then this continues my theory of Mercutio and Romeo as exes or closeted lovers or...because Romeo shows up. I mean, they go— so, Benvolio and Mercutio kind of go back and forth and talk shit about Tybalt for a little while, and then like, oh, look, Romeo finally showed up. Like, where has he been all night? I bet he was chasing Rosaline around. And then he shows up, and he's clearly in a good mood because of how he's made plans to marry Juliet.

Jack: He's in a great mood.

Austin: And he's keeping secrets, because Juliet's nurse shows up, and Romeo goes over to talk to her, and the sort of betrayal in Mercutio's eyes as it's clear that Romeo is keeping something from him, the moment that he shoots his gun in the air to get Romeo's attention.

Art: Mm-hmm.

Austin: To be like: are you coming to dinner? What's going on? You know? Like, you're not responding to our calls. You're not playing along. You're in a good mood, and you're still not playing along. Like, what is...he does a little headshake. "Will you come to your father's?" and Romeo kind of pushes him off and like goes to talk to the nurse about what's coming, and there's so many little head tilts and eye twitches that are just supreme throughout this sequence. They're so good. I did not appreciate it in previous viewings.

Ali: Uh huh. *[laughs quietly]*

Austin: And they make the plan, right? They make the plan.

Art: Yeah.

Austin: And then we get a very fun scene of Juliet and the nurse, and the nurse being very playful about the news.

Jack: Oh, it's really sweet. She will not— she wants a back massage first. She will not... *[Austin laughs]*

Art: Mm-hmm.

Austin: And then it happens.

Ali: She's figured out some ideas, you know?

Austin: Yeah.

Art: Yeah, sort of like rapid fire setup scenes to close Act Two.

Austin: Yeah, and then they get married.

Jack: Oh.

Austin: I want to shout out Leo's tie in this scene.

Jack: It's great.

Austin: I know it's like not as flashy as much of the rest of the fashion in this movie, but he just has a really good tie on in this suit.

Ali: Oh, well, like how understated both of the outfits are.

Austin: Mm-hmm.

Ali: Like, Claire Danes is wearing this dress that's like almost a buttoned vest.

Austin: *[laughs quietly]* Yes.

Ali: And it's like...you know, because there's so many ways to play this, and especially when we we meet her in angel wings and like a little white dress.

Jack: Yeah.

Austin: Mm-hmm.

Ali: Like, to have her in a cut that's like almost professional, like almost masculine, instead of doing *[Austin: "Mm-hmm"]* the big like wavy thing is like so smart. They look so cute.

Art: Mm-hmm.

Austin: They look like babies in this, too.

Jack: They really do.

Ali: Yeah.

Art: They do.

Jack: And that's gotta be deliberate, right?

Austin: Yeah, yeah.

Jack: Just make the moment feel...and it's worth saying, Friar Laurence has— as he is marrying them, he has a moment where he's like...I would love to know, you know, what inflected this actor's performance here, because it's such a cool beat where, with the ring in his hands and the book in his hands, he says, "This is probably going to break bad." *[Austin laughs]* He says like, "This could end really violently." It's specifically, like, unpleasant violent imagery, which he sort of wraps up by saying, "So make sure it doesn't. Good luck."

Austin: Mm-hmm.

Art: Absolutely.

Jack: It's a great moment, where when we saw him agreeing to the marriage, he was like, "This will bring peace," and now, standing there in his priest's regalia, ready to perform the rite, he goes, "Ah, alternatively..." Really cool stuff.

Austin: Mm-hmm. This is one of the places where they play with the staging a little bit. You know, this is supposed to be happening, in the original script, in his cell, right? in his monk's cell, not in the middle of the church with a choir. And I think that like...I think that it speaks to the previous statement I read or the previous quote I read about it happening in front of God, about the power of religion and the church. This is a safe place to do this.

Art: Mm-hmm.

Austin: Like, Luhrmann's vision of this is this is a sanctuary where even this thing that should be done under the cloak of night can actually happen out in the open, and no one can stop it, because it's holy, you know? And I think that that does work for me here. And we're onto Act Three, I guess.

Art: To pull back for just a second, I just want to...we didn't spend a lot of time on the scene of Nurse and Juliet in Nurse's...apartment, I guess?

Austin: Mm-hmm.

Art: And I just want to point out that this is like a domestic servant's apartment, and it looks like it's out of a Versace catalog. *[laughter]* Like, the over-the-top decoration in this apartment.

Austin: Ah.

Art: This like floral print chair. Like, it's impeccable.

Austin: Mm-hmm.

Art: They do a little to like dress it down, but it's very...it's a very nice apartment.

Austin: Yeah. Yeah. We skipped something about the Benvolio and Mercutio talk shit about Tybalt stuff, and that is Tybalt has sent a letter. Tybalt sent a letter to Romeo's house, asking for satisfaction, asking for a duel, effectively. And Romeo hasn't been home.

Jack: Huh.

Austin: Romeo has been, you know, flirting with Juliet at that point and making plans to get married and hasn't slept and will continue to not go home, because he has to get secret married. And that means that Tybalt feels like Romeo has done him a second dishonor, because now he hasn't even replied to, you know, the threat of violence. And so we're back to...what is the...? Sycamore Grove? Is that what the name of the beach area is?

Jack: Yeah.

Austin: Which, again, it's the same trick as calling the swords "daggers" and "swords,"—sorry, calling the guns "daggers" and "swords,"—to call this beach Sycamore Grove because there's an old theater that says Sycamore Grove on it, but it works for me. *[Ali laughs]*

Art: Mm-hmm.

Jack: Yeah. There's a third one of these later that I think we should wait to get to, but it's the silliest one of them all.

Austin: Yes, 100%. I think I know the one you're talking about. They talk more shit, and then Tybalt shows up, and the energy of what happens is wild.

Art: Mm-hmm.

Jack: The way this scene...I was really—in the same way that I was surprised earlier by how quickly Romeo was just like, "I am not leaving the party. I'm going right back in."

Austin: Uh huh.

Jack: The way this scene builds and keeps going—

Austin: Oh, I guess, sorry, I should do the thing. Act Three begins with a fight breaking out between Mercutio and Tybalt with Romeo trying to prevent that from—I mean, it goes bad, and Mercutio is wounded fatally. And it—

Art: Well, Tybalt wants to fight Romeo.

Austin: Yeah. Yes.

Art: Romeo won't fight Tybalt, because they are now family.

Austin: Because they are now family, yes.

Art: Tybalt does not know this, and for some reason Romeo won't just say it, because that's his tragic flaw, I guess, is poor communication.

Austin: Yeah, uh huh. He's like, "Please wait. Please wait. Please wait. You'll learn." And...

Art: Yeah.

Austin: Just say the word.

Art: But like, you could tell him right now.

Austin: Uh huh.

Art: But again, yelling at characters in tragedies to derail themselves is not productive.

Austin: Uh huh. No.

Art: And Mercutio steps in, in his place, and Romeo still tries to break up the fight, and that...

Austin: And then he gets stabbed underneath him.

Art: And Tybalt kills Mercutio, yeah.

Austin: Yes. And then it ends with Romeo being exiled, and that is the space of our act.

Art: Well, and Mercutio like runs down Romeo as he's—

Austin: Well, and we can talk about the scene. I was just trying to give the...

Art: Oh, sure, yeah.

Austin: I'm giving the act structure that we've been doing.

Art: Great.

Austin: Yeah, we should talk about every scene in this act.

Art: Yeah. I was gonna say, this is pretty quick for Act Three Scene One, perhaps the most important scene in the movie. *[laughs]*

Austin: No, no. No, I was giving the whole— yes, because I think we should slowly get through the very beginning of this scene even, which is Benvolio being like, “Yo, we should get out of here.” *[Jack laughs]*

Art: Yeah.

Austin: The Capulets are abroad, and not in the way that it means they're not here. In the way that it means they're here.

Jack: No, in the way that witches are abroad. *[Ali laughs]*

Austin: Right.

Jack: That is to say: about.

Austin: *[laughs quietly]* Yes.

Jack: And then, sure enough, here he comes. What is his outfit in this scene? I'm trying to see. He's wearing a black shirt. I'm talking about Tybalt.

Austin: Yeah, yeah, yeah.

Jack: He's wearing a black shirt. Oh, he's wearing just like a...they're almost like bulletproof vests that Tybalt and his crew are wearing here.

Austin: Mm.

Jack: It's really really, really cool. Oh, there's a really scary moment when Tybalt's second takes his pistol from him and empties every round but one.

Austin: Oh! Yeah.

Art: Mm-hmm.

Jack: Another great moment of them—and, you know, people staging Shakespeare generally—just pulling good stuff out of the lack of stage directions.

Austin: Mm.

Jack: None of this is in the text, but it just plays really beautifully.

Austin: Yeah, it's not like, “The second prepares the weapon for the duel,” or whatever.

Jack: Nope. Silently.

Austin: And yeah, the other...the little boy who is with Tybalt and the other dude, who somebody pointed out earlier, is so young.

Jack: Yeah, that was me. The frightened boy.

Austin: The frightened little boy is such a child. Like, man, don't get involved in this. This is gonna go bad.

Ali: Yeah.

Art: Yeah.

Austin: And, you know, Mercutio opens up and starts out with the standard sort of back and fourth, insults and dancing and very playful.

Jack: Oh, he calls him a rat catcher, which is really lovely thing to call the king of cats.

Austin: He calls him a rat– well, and there's lots of like innuendo back and forth, right? “Can you really take some without giving?” Stuff like that. And then finally, Tybalt says, “Thou consortest with Romeo?” And let me tell you... *[Art laughs]*

Ali: Mm-hmm. This is evidence.

Art: Hits different in this adaptation.

Jack: Austin, are you clicking your PowerPoint slide? *[Ali laughs]*

Austin: Yeah, clicking my PowerPoint slide forward. This is the thing that pushes him over the edge, and we see a side of Mercutio we have not yet seen, good-natured Mercutio. I mean, that's not true. It's serious Mercutio, who we saw at the end of the Queen Mab speech, right? It's cynical.

Jack: And firing the gun into the air to say, “Are you coming to dinner?”

Austin: Yes. Yes. Yes.

Art: Mm-hmm.

Austin: *[laughs]* Normal thing to do! And we–

Jack: I mean, Mercutio is on one through– look, I love Mercutio.

Austin: Yeah.

Jack: Mercutio's great. He is going through some stuff in this movie. *[laughs quietly]*

Ali: Mm-hmm.

Austin: Yeah.

Art: Mm-hmm.

Austin: And like, I don't know how to read this outside of saying what happens in this scene is Tybalt calls Mercutio a slur *[laughs quietly]* and Mercutio flips. And how do we want to unpack that, you know?

Art: Uh huh.

Austin: When Mercutio's performance is...you know, I mean, I said this before. What did I say before we started? That this...was it this and something else? It was this and *The Matrix*.

Art: Mm-hmm.

Austin: Stole everything that like the queer community and gay clubs had innovated in the '90s and made it straight. *[Jack chuckles]* I mean, this is maybe as close as the movie gets to saying Mercutio is gay, and his response to it is like, "No, I'm not, and I'm going to fight you over it," and I want to know what people feel about the way that this unfolds and how it fits in with the earlier stuff. Because it's a very angry response.

Art: It's a very angry response, and again, to put context in it that isn't in the original play, of course, is that he says, "What dost thou make us, minstrels?"

Austin: Right, yes.

Art: And of course, it's very different for a Black person to ask, *[Austin: "Yes"]* "What dost thou make us, minstrels?" than it is for, you know...you know, Mercutio was usually white.

Austin: Yeah. Italian, presumably.

Art: Right.

Austin: Not that there aren't Black Italians at this period, right? So. But this is not...

Art: No, no, it's not...but that's not the character.

Austin: This is not one of Shakespeare's Black or, quote, unquote, "Moorish" characters, right?

Art: Right. Yeah, if Mercutio had been Black before, it was coincidentally and not...

Austin: Right.

Art: It's not Othello.

[2:45:00]

Austin: Right.

Jack: Right.

Art: You know?

Jack: We— oh, go ahead.

Art: No, no. Go, go, go.

Jack: We have seen, in every encounter with Tybalt— you know, even when there's the threat of Tybalt and the Capulets showing up, that the Montague boys are looking for any reason to start a fight. And I think that, you know, what you're drilling down into is why this moment is so fascinating, Austin, is that it's like, how much of Mercutio's reaction in this moment is realizing: I have actually been stung, rather than I am performing being stung in order to escalate. This is not like thumb biting. You know, when he says, "Oh, no, no, I'm not gay," I don't think that necessarily we should read that as something that he is...Mercutio is not thinking through his response as he speaks, right? *[laughs quietly]* He's thinking...

Art: No, but he's ready to go.

Jack: Yeah. Yeah.

Ali: Mm-hmm.

Austin: So, there's a... *[sighs]*

Art: And then Benvolio tries to talk him out of it.

Austin: Mm-hmm.

Art: And then we get, you know, the great line, the "Men's eyes are made to look, and let them gaze. I will not budge for no man's pleasure," is...you know, I think it's silly to be like, "Oh, good dialogue here," *[Austin and Ali laugh]* because like, I think people are pretty sold on Shakespeare, but like, that line kills. And then, you know, and then Romeo shows up.

Jack: Yeah.

Austin: He just shouldn't have shown up. It would have been fine. Mercutio could have taken him.

Art: I'm not sure that Mercutio wouldn't have killed Tybalt.

Austin: Oh yeah, that would've happened, but that's fine. That would have been fine. It's fine. Don't worry about it.

Jack: Better than what happens. I was sad.

Art: It's not fine when it happens.

Austin: No, but it's better than— I agree with Jack. I think it would have been better than what actually happens.

Jack: I found another really great screencap of scared boy gets his own full shot, and he looks extra scared. What is he reacting to in this shot? Oh, he's reacting to Tybalt kicking the shit out of Romeo, which is what happens. So, Romeo is like, "I won't shoot," and Tybalt says, "Okay, fine. I'm just gonna kick the shit out of you." There's a great moment where Romeo offers his gun to Tybalt.

Austin: Ah!

Jack: And it's...I think this is just like, this is so much control from DiCaprio in his performance here, to be able to walk the line of like, how much of this is him wanting to shoot? How much of this is him gesturing with the gun aggressively? How much of this is him offering it? It's a really good subtle moment from Leo.

Austin: *[sighs]* And the way Tybalt just kicks the shit out of him.

Jack: Yeah, we get handheld cameras.

Art: Yeah.

Austin: Yeah. Yeah, yeah, yeah.

Art: He's immediately bleeding. *[Austin laughs]*

Sylvia: He sure is.

Art: It's immediately blood from the mouth.

Austin: It is like a wrestling match that only has like nine minutes to happen, but you have to communicate that it was a real rough one. *[laughter]*

Art: Mm-hmm.

Austin: Someone blades very quickly. Mercutio is furious.

Jack: They're fighting on the stage.

Austin: Yeah, they're fighting in front of the stage, and then in the stage, and then on the stage, and then under the stage, and...

Ali: And it works the whole time.

Austin: It works the whole time.

Ali: You never not love that this is happening.

Austin: Uh huh.

Sylvia: Mm-hmm!

Austin: Mm-hmm.

Ali: The screen is saying, "Do you get it?" and you scream on your couch, "I get it, and I love this!" *[quiet laughter]*

Jack: Yes. Yes.

Austin: And again, the thing that I love about this is Mercutio's perspective is not...the thing he says is not, "Stop beating up my boy," right? He says...what's the exact line? "Calm, dishonorable, vile, submission." Right?

Jack: Ah, Mercutio's great.

Austin: Why are you letting him do this to you?

Jack: Yeah.

Austin: Why would you let yourself...and like, even just call out and ask help, right? You're letting him beat the shit out of you, embarrass you. Don't you have any respect for yourself? And, ooh. This is like a foundational heartbreak moment for me, *[Jack: "Yeah"]* along with Jesus and Judas in *Jesus Christ Superstar*. Right? This, what's about to happen here, Mercutio's death. Mercutio taking out his dagger and dropping it in the sand, and you see—

Jack: And burying itself perfectly.

Austin: Which, by the way, it has a see-through clip. *[laughs quietly]* You can see the bullets in the handle, or the handle is see-through. It's so good. Perfect prop design. I want one. Anyway, yeah, it's what you said earlier, Art, right?

Jack: Well, him saying...right, rather than saying, "Stop beating up Romeo," rather than saying, "Romeo, you know, why are you doing...why aren't you acting?" is consistent with the way we're reading the end of the Queen Mab speech as well, right?

Austin: Right. Yep.

Jack: Which is that like, something that Mercutio feels very deeply is that Romeo is not engaged with the world or with himself *[Austin: "Right"]* in what he believes to be the right way.

Austin: You're living in a dream world.

Jack: Or the most fullest way, you know?

Art: Mm-hmm.

Austin: Mm-hmm.

Jack: Wherever being alive is, Mercutio feels like he has got there. And in this scene, we get the double pain for Mercutio of not only does Tybalt fully question that...

Austin: Right.

Jack: Of like, have you actually reached the kind of living that you think you have reached, and is that right?

Austin: Mm-hmm.

Jack: And then, he sees his best friend—you know, his former lover—demonstrate in the most humiliating way that he has not. He's not there.

Austin: Mm-hmm.

Jack: It's very sad.

Austin: Yeah. He's living in a different world still. And if this can't bring Romeo back to the grounded Romeo I know and love...

Jack: He's lost him.

Austin: He's gone. You know? You've given up on life. You've given up on this, because your head is in the clouds, basically. And it's Tybalt! This isn't just some random guy. This is the dude from your family's, like, number one true enemy, right?

Jack: Yeah.

Austin: This is a dude who says, "Peace, I hate the word." *[Austin and Jack laugh quietly]*

Ali: Mm-hmm.

Austin: Right? Like...

Art: Mm-hmm.

Austin: So yeah, it's heartbreaking. He goes out. He drops his dagger-slash-gun and picks up a stick.

Jack: Hits him with a stick in a really cool way.

Austin: Hits him with a stick.

Art: Yeah.

Jack: He spins round.

Austin: Mm-hmm.

Jack: He does a spin.

Austin: Pushes him into some glass.

Jack: Knocks Tybalt onto a mirror, yeah.

Austin: Oh, that's what it is. It's a mirror, right.

Jack: Again, Baz with the... *[Austin sighs]* Yep. The mirror.

Austin: Yeah, uh huh.

Jack: And then, you know, there's a scuffle, and Tybalt gets stabbed. And like Art says—

Austin: Or, Mercutio gets stabbed.

Jack: Oh, sorry, Mercutio.

Art: Yeah.

Jack: Like Art says, I think people are pretty agreed that Shakespeare knew how to write a line. *[Austin laughs]* This death, just in the text...I mean, Harold Perrineau is killing it, but what Mercutio says as he dies is amazing, because he begins with just, "Yeah, it's a scratch. I've not been wounded."

Austin: Mm-hmm.

Jack: But then he repeats the line over and over, as though he's trying to convince himself

Austin: With a pose, with his hand up in the air, like striking the hardest pose he could possibly strike. Gorgeous. On the stage, right? Spent some of his last energy to climb back on the stage to be perfectly framed.

Jack: What a way to go, though, you know? And then he makes a joke. He says, you know, "Come and see me tomorrow, and I'll be a very grave man indeed." Which is all time great haunted mansion style pun.

Austin: Uh huh. *[laughs quietly]* Yeah. I mean, there's lines in here that I just— like, you know, that's the one that I knew, when I was 11 and saw this, I was like, "Ask for me tomorrow, and I'll be a grave man," is a killer, but the one right before that where Romeo comes up and is like, "Courage, man. The hurt cannot be much," and his response is just, "'Twill serve," is like, damn. *[Ali laughs]*

Jack: Oh, it's so good. It's so good.

Austin: Yeah, uh huh. It's enough to kill me.

Jack: Shakespeare writes characters, specifically heroic characters, dying like this very often, right? Where they're like, you know, it might not be a particularly big way to go, but it's gonna do the trick for me.

Austin: Mm-hmm. And the slow reveal, the hand coming off the wound, as you see it and look at it and Mercutio has brought himself to look at how bad it is. Agh!

Jack: Now, we have to get a PG-13 rating though, *[Austin laughs]* so it is not very bad.

Austin: No, but he sells it, you know?

Jack: 'Twill serve.

Austin: It will serve. They've made worms of him.

Jack: They've made worms of him! What a great line. And then he says, "A plague on both your houses," which is so sad. So sad!

Austin: Which echoes, and also we get an electronic sky, to use the Baz Luhrmann terms.

Jack: I love this electronic sky. The lighting transition is beautiful. A storm immediately, immediately rolls in.

Austin: This is a real storm, right? The wind at least is real, right? They must have picked a place that gets windy.

Art: They faked all of that.

Austin: All that wind? It's a lot of wind.

Art: They got big fans.

Jack: They don't have to blow wind over the entire thing. They only need to blow wind on the things that are gonna move.

Austin: Yes they do! There's the wide shot as Mercutio runs away, and there's all the trees in the background for like—

Jack: Just mount a fan on each tree. Not on, I mean pointed at. *[Ali and Jack laugh]*

Austin: I guess so.

Jack: I love this shot.

Art: Yeah, you can't just like not shoot your movie if the wind isn't up that day.

Austin: Yeah, I guess not.

Jack: Oh, have you seen that great clip of Scorsese shooting *The Departed* and being told that the sun is going to move by the time he wants a shot? Or, rather, someone tells him that the sun's gonna move, and Scorsese's like, "People keep coming up to me and asking me what I'm going to do about the sun. I can't do anything about the sun." We get a really nice— oh, we get a shot of the—

Austin: Wait. Wait. A hurricane actually struck the set, destroying much of the production.

Jack: Oh, it *Apocalypse Now*-ed it.

Art: Oh.

Austin: Taking the crew by surprise. In this unfortunate event, Luhrmann saw an opportunity to get wide shots of the storm's destruction.

Jack: Oh, yeah. Fantastic.

Austin: Uh huh.

Jack: We get the pineapple man.

Austin: Yep.

Jack: Anybody got thoughts about pineapple man?

Austin: I mean, what's to say about pineapple man? I hope the business is okay, you know?

Jack: We see Tybalt with his shirt open, revealing that he has a tattoo on his chest just like Leo's silk shirt.

Austin: Mm-hmm.

Jack: Mercutio dies.

Austin: And Tybalt looking around and realizing, uh oh, like, I've angered God, right? There's a real like, we are playing with forces bigger than us in a way that I didn't know we were doing, you know? This storm hitting is like the end of an act of like a JRPG, you know what I mean?

Ali: Mm-hmm.

Jack: It rules.

Austin: And we get what is maybe one of my new favorite parts of this that I'd never really appreciated before. As Mercutio lays dying on the sand, or eventually does die, after Tybalt and his boys bounce, after Mercutio says, you know, "Why the devil did you come between us? I was hurt under your arm," Romeo gets up and like runs to the car in the background.

Jack: Yeah.

Austin: And the wind is hitting, and all of the Montague boys are just gathered around looking at Mercutio's corpse in the sand. And the shot doesn't move, right? Like, Romeo walks, you know, 50 yards away to get into the car, like slow walks into a run, and Benvolio tries to come

and stop him, and we don't follow them. We stay with Mercutio's body in the foreground and the other two boys, Jamie Kennedy and the other one in the middle, and you can see Benvolio trying to get Romeo to get out of the car, trying to pull him away. He gets pushed away twice, and Romeo pulls offscreen. And we stay on that shot for like 20 seconds, which, for a movie that is constantly cutting, that is willing to constantly move the camera around in these big dramatic ways, these big dynamic ways, is just a great way of selling the gravity of this moment.

Jack: Yeah. Yeah, really, really good. And that scene ends with a shot of the empty stage that then fades into Juliet sitting on her bed such that Juliet is placed directly in the middle of the open stage with the water coming through it.

Austin: Mm-hmm. Mm!

Jack: This is filmmaking. God.

Austin: This is filmmaking, baby.

Jack: Yeah, I want to grab this fade, because it is wild. I didn't notice that they were doing it.

Austin: And she just gets to go here, right? She's just so in love. It's so sad!

Jack: Yeah. Yeah.

Austin: She has bought a mansion of love but has not yet enjoyed it.

Ali: Mm-hmm.

Austin: If you know what I mean.

Jack: TFW you buy a mansion of love. *[Sylvia laughs]*

Austin: But not possessed it, yeah, uh huh.

Jack: She says something like...then she says she has been sold? What's her line?

Ali: Oh, it's a really good one.

Jack: I have been sold but not enjoyed? or sold but not used? It's, again, just like an extremely explicit line.

Austin: Yeah, she's horny, right? She's like, we got married. Yeah, "Though I am sold and not yet enjoyed." Like, we're married, but we didn't get to have our honeymoon. Like, where is my boy? I'm sure it's gonna be fine.

Jack: Romeo. "Where is my boy Romeo?" she says from the balcony. *[Ali laughs]* That's the famous line.

Austin: Right. Well, and then we cut immediately to Romeo screaming at the dashboard of a car. Ugh! And a thing that I love about this sequence is we don't see a lot of Verona at night outside of the....at this point, outside of the Capulet party and the beach.

Jack: Yeah.

Austin: We don't see like the city at night until this moment, with like cars going around and shit. And we get a car accident. We get– I mean.

Jack: Oh, we get a really wildly shot car accident.

Austin: Romeo like pit maneuvers this car. Yeah.

Jack: Yeah, this is...it's weird. I like a lot of the choreography in this movie, the fight choreography and the blocking, and I found this car accident extremely difficult to parse visually.

Austin: Mm-hmm.

Jack: But I don't think I needed to. I think it's pretty straightforward. Romeo hits Tybalt somehow, and Tybalt's car flips. We get a great slowmo inside the car of Tybalt rolling.

Austin: Mm-hmm.

Jack: But it is definitely like...it is sudden, and it is unclear how exactly it's happened or who's going to walk away from it.

Austin: Mm-hmm. And we get a tearful Romeo holding the gun to his own head, holding Tybalt's gun to his own head.

Jack: Yeah, why does he do that? What's he saying?

Austin: He's saying "Either I or you must go," right?

Jack: Oh, yeah.

Austin: Mercutio won't go to heaven alone, right? We can't let Mercutio's soul transit from this plane by itself.

Jack: He says, "Mercutio's soul is just above us," which is so great. The idea that the soul has to be, you know, trapped, taken up there.

Austin: Mm-hmm. It hasn't gone yet, yeah.

Jack: This is also a nice—

Austin: I will say, here is a place where we talked earlier about how, during the balcony scene, they did not spend a lot of time on like big lines. They let those lines move past. And both in this scene and the previous scene, that is not the case. "A plague on both your houses," is repeated like five times, and here—

[3:00:06]

Jack: And it's sadder with each time, Austin.

Austin: And it's— I mean, and again, I think this is the like, "and if Shakespeare were alive today, that's how he would do it," because that is how it's done now when you're trying to signal big dramatic emotional shit. "Either thou or I or both must go with him," over and over again.

Jack: I mean, to be—

Austin: When you have Leo in 1996, you make him say that eight times, tears just absolutely rolling down his face, otherwise you've wasted the entire thing.

Sylvia: And they did not waste that.

Austin: Yep.

Jack: This is also how it was done back then, right?

Austin: Right, right, right.

Jack: You know, actors famous for soliloquies would regularly perform the soliloquy and then do it again.

Austin: Uh huh, right.

Jack: Because the audience was so wild for it. You know, that's absolutely consistent.

Austin: Say that shit again! Do that one line!

Jack: Yeah, whoo! Do it again!

Austin: Yeah.

Jack: Oh, “it is east...” say, “Wooo!” *[applauds]* I like this image of Mercutio up in heaven, as Juliet has a great line in the previous scene where she's talking about how in love she is, where she says, “When I die, I want that Romeo be cut up into little shapes like stars, *[Austin: “Ugh!”]* so he can make the vault of heaven.” Such a beautiful line, and then to have this imagery *[Austin: “Ugh”]* of like being up in heaven, the version of that that Leo is thinking about is: Mercutio’s soul is right above our heads, because you killed him.

Austin: Mm-hmm.

Jack: Those two images back to back is fucking great.

Austin: *[sighs]* Anyway, he's Fortune's fool, he says, looking up at a statue of Jesus.

Jack: Well, he shoots Tybalt, killing him instantly.

Austin: I mean, yeah. Right, right, right, yeah.

Jack: In a pool, falls backwards into a pool.

Austin: Well, I mean, the thing that I love the most and have always loved the most about it is, again, Tybalt has the gun to Romeo's head. Romeo's charging at him, saying the bit that we've been talking about, about Mercutio's soul, and putting the gun to his own head, and it's the classic thing of like, Romeo goes Joker mode, and it freaks Tybalt out, *[Ali and Art laugh]* and Tybalt like stumbles backwards and drops the gun and begins to run up the stairs away from him, and Romeo is able to grab the gun from the curbside and shoot him as he flees, in the back.

Jack: No, really?

Austin: Yeah, he's running away.

Jack: Tybalt lands in the water face up.

Austin: Yeah, that's because of the way staging works, but he's running up those stairs, looking back over his shoulder when Romeo pulls the trigger.

Jack: And then Romeo says, “I am Fortune's fool,” a line that Leo delivers so well that I couldn't tell what he said and had to turn subtitles on and watch it again. *[Austin and Ali laugh]* But sometimes you just need the feeling, right?

Austin: Yeah, yeah, yeah.

Jack: You need the intensity of it, that...

Austin: You gotta yell.

Art: And this is a tricky moment for this movie, because at this point, the two most dynamic characters are gone.

Austin: Right. The two—

Art: We go into the rest of Act Three and then Act Four and Five.

Austin: This is Act Three. Yeah, the rest of it. Yeah, yeah.

Art: This is the beginning of Act Three, yeah.

Austin: This is the middle...this is Act Three, scene...because in the play, in the play— oh, maybe you're right. Did Tybalt die in one? Jesus.

Art: Yeah, yeah.

Austin: Damn. Yeah, you're right. Yeah. So yeah, we have the rest of the entire act after this. What was your— can you say more about like losing those dynamic characters? And you mean Mercutio and Tybalt by that, presumably.

Art: Mercutio and Tybalt, I don't think I'm alone in saying that when they're on the screen, they take the screen.

Austin: Yeah.

Art: You are focused on them when they're on screen, and then here we go, and we get rid of both of them.

Austin: Mm-hmm.

Art: I read some analysis of the play in preparation for this, and they talk about how this is to like...Shakespeare did this, because up until now, the play is kind of like a light romantic comedy, almost?

Austin: Mm-hmm.

Art: And this is supposed to, like, get the audience into the mode of like, no, no, this is gonna be very serious.

Austin: Mm.

Art: And it works.

Austin: Mm-hmm.

Art: This is a serious sequence we just had.

Austin: Mm-hmm.

Art: I mean, it's a little different, because the rest of the movie was a little serious, you know?

Austin: Right, right.

Art: The movie didn't quite get that it was supposed to be light.

Austin: Right. I mean, it's still goofy in the early bits.

Ali: Yeah, there's like a tonal shift between the like first fight that we see, especially when Tybalt's like...the first time we see him fire a gun, and he's like arched his back a little bit and has both hands over his head [*Austin: "Uh huh, uh huh"*] is like a different style of fighting and like moving through this space.

Austin: There's literally cartoon sounds in that first fight, in the gas station fight.

Ali: Yeah.

Austin: Like literally, truly, like, you know, *Looney Tunes* sound effects are playing. [*laughter*]

Ali: Mm-hmm.

Jack: Yeah. Drake type beat, sort of. [*Austin, Sylvia, and Ali laugh*]

Ali: Yeah, and that's not what's happening here in these later fights [*Austin: "Mm-hmm"*] that feel really charged and emotional and...

Jack: Oh, it's horrible.

Austin: Mm-hmm.

Ali: Yeah.

Jack: Benvolio shows up.

Austin: I love this stuff. Yeah, I love this stuff. Go ahead, Jack.

Jack: There's two really lovely moments here, and I think Gronk really sells this line, *[Austin laughs]* when he says...it's a really scary line. He says, don't— "Leo, what are you doing? Don't look amazed," or "Don't don't stand there amazed."

Austin: Oh, that's not Gronk. That's not Gronk. That's, um...

Jack: Is that Balthasar?

Austin: The guy who says, "Don't be amazed," is Balthasar. Yeah, yeah, yeah, little Balthasar.

Jack: Right. Well, so, Gronk shows up and immediately narcs, which is deeply sad.

Austin: He's trying to— it is sad. The thing he's trying to do is be like, "We didn't start it," right?

Jack: Yes, yes.

Austin: Prince is like, "Who started this fight? Who began the fray?" And Gronk is like, "Romeo, he cries aloud, 'Hold, friends.' Tybalt hit the life of stout Mercutio. Tybalt, here slain, Romeo's hand did slay."

Jack: Yeah.

Austin: Like, Romeo tried to stop it. Tybalt killed Mercutio. Romeo killed Tybalt. And Lady Capulet is like, "That's not true. That didn't— that's—"

Jack: She tries to attack him.

Austin: Yeah, "Benvolio's a liar."

Jack: It's great.

Austin: Has to be held back.

Jack: And then up comes Balthasar and says, "Quit it. Don't give into amazement." *[laughs quietly]*

Austin: Mm-hmm. Yes. *[laughs quietly]*

Jack: It's great. Leo's really messed up in this scene. He's wearing his wedding shirt.

Austin: *[sighs]* Rough day.

Jack: Lady Capulet is crying on Tybalt's body. People are taking photographs. Really sad.

Austin: Mm-hmm.

Jack: This rain. The rain effects in this movie are incredible.

Austin: I love how dry...Ted? Is it Ted Montague? Is that real? Is that right?

Jack: *[laughs quietly]* No!

Sylvia: It is Ted Montague. *[Ali laughs]* That is the dad's real name.

Austin: Ted Montague, completely dry in this rainstorm, because he has like three people holding umbrellas for him.

Jack: That's great.

Austin: It's so good. And he goes over to the prince, and he's like, "Now, listen, didn't Romeo just kind of do what the law was gonna do? If it's true that Tybalt killed Mercutio, who was Romeo's friend, his fault in killing Tybalt only did what the law ought to have done, right? Only concludes the law's work."

Jack: Now...

Austin: And the prince is like, "Ahahaha...shut the fuck up." *[Ali laughs]*

Jack: Yeah. He says, "Don't get smart with me."

Austin: Yeah.

Jack: Like, in a matter of speaking, but unfortunately, that is not how it works. And he banishes him. He says, "He is banished!" and then he says it through a megaphone.

Austin: Excuse me. He says, "He is banishéd."

Jack: "He is banishéd!" *[laughs]* It's great. Really, really good. Really good stuff. I love the movie logic of a character shouting through a bullhorn means that they are heard by everybody.

Austin: *[laughs]* Including Romeo, sitting without a shirt on near a window as the lightning strikes, and he's like, "Banishment?"

Jack: Tell me it's— oh, I love that. *[laughs quietly]* That is actually...the reason he says, "Banishment," is cleared up there, is it's revealed that Pete Postlethwaite— presumably, we've gotten a cut in time.

Austin: Yes, yes. It's later that night.

Jack: And Pete Postlethwaite is like, "Oh, I heard from Prince that you've been banished." But I do love coming off the megaphone to him being like, *[Austin: "Yes"]* "Wow, distantly, I think I heard someone saying I'd been banished, banished." *[laughter]* The priest here is a real one.

Austin: Maybe it was on the news. It was probably on the news.

Jack: The priest here is a real one.

Austin: Yeah, uh huh.

Jack: He's just like absolutely loyal to Romeo and Juliet. I think he's like, "I have gotten in too deep, *[Austin: "Yep"]* and I had better stick by the people who need my help as best as I can, even though this is probably fucked from the start."

Austin: Mm-hmm.

Jack: Gives him Juliet's ring.

Austin: Ugh, the ring. The ring is good.

Jack: The ring says "I love thee," in the inside, I think? It says something very simple.

Austin: Mm-hmm. I think it's something like that. And doesn't it say "R+J"?

Art: Yeah.

Ali: Mm-hmm.

Austin: Or does it say R heart-

Jack: It does say "R+J."

Austin: It does say "R+J."

Jack: It's great.

Austin: Like the name of the movie.

Jack: Like the name of the movie.

Art: That's the name of the movie.

Austin: Look, that's Chappie. That's R+J. *[laughter]*

Art: That's R+J.

Ali: I read a thing earlier today that the cast and crew of the movie all got one of those rings.

Austin: Fuck!

Jack: Oh, god, that's so cute. I want one!

Sylvia: Holy shit.

Austin: I want one.

Ali: I think people make dupes on Etsy, if any of you—

Jack: I don't want a dupe, Ali. *[Ali laughs]*

Austin: I want one.

Sylvia: I might want the dupe.

Ali: Well, you live in Los Angeles. Go to one of those prop stores.

Art: Yeah, start trawling Hollywood thrift stores, yeah.

Ali: Yeah.

Austin: Yeah.

Jack: Wow.

Art: You might be too late. They might be sort of just like out of inventory.

Austin: Yeah.

Jack: I fucking hope not.

Austin: I did see one of the guns on auction, at one point.

Ali: Ooh.

Jack: Was it one of the cool ones?

Sylvia: How much?

Austin: Yeah, yeah, yeah.

Jack: I wouldn't want a prop gun in my house either, I don't think, but they're cool guns.

Austin: They're very cool guns.

Jack: And then, I really like that the doctor is like— the doctor. The priest is like, "You need to get out of here," but he understands that Romeo is going to go and see Juliet before he goes, and he makes no pretense of hiding that. He says, "Go to Juliet," and I think a much less interesting version of this character would specifically say, "You must avoid seeing Juliet," and then we get a character beat as Romeo ignored him or whatever. But to have this character be like, "Go to Juliet. Say goodbye," is, you know, gives this much more nuance or much more warmth.

Austin: But look, don't stay until the morning watch or whatever. Get the fuck out of there, because if you don't, you won't be able to get to Mantua in time to not get killed, basically. But also, he knows— I mean, part of the subtext of this is like, he knows that they have not consummated their marriage. He knows they have not had a night together yet since the marriage.

Jack: Right.

Austin: Right? So.

Jack: Does he? Or is he just guessing? He must do. He's pretty in on the whole...

Austin: He's in on it. He knows.

Jack: All the ins and outs of the schemes. Yeah.

Austin: Also, the nurse came by, right? So, I'm sure that there was like a...you know.

Ali: Oh, yeah, yeah.

Austin: "Hey, we're in trouble, and Juliet's really broken up about this [*Jack: "Mm"*] and is praying to her collection of angels."

Jack: Yeah, great set design. Oh, worth shouting out. Baz Luhrmann's production— he's married to his production designer.

Austin: Oh.

Jack: They got married in '97, I believe.

Austin: This is one of the things that people had to look up about Baz Luhrmann was: who's he married to? *[Jack laughs]*

Sylvia: Yeah, and then I did the "He's white?" scene from Elvis, but I said, "He's straight?"
[Austin, Jack, and Ali laugh]

Austin: It's, you know...

Jack: His wife is Catherine Martin.

Art: I also had a "He's white?" scene with Baz Luhrmann today.

Austin: Was it also about him being straight, or was it about him being something else? Okay.

Art: It was about him being white.

Austin: What? Wait, what?

Jack: What?

Art: I was like convinced he was gonna—

Austin: Baz Luhrmann?

Art: You can never quite tell.

Jack: Have you seen the movies he makes?

Art: Well, but there's so much...again, to use a weird...the Capulets are so ethnic, *[Austin: "Uh huh"]* that I thought surely he had to be drawing from something.

Austin: You thought maybe Italian or...yeah, no.

Jack: Uh, a history of Australian British racism? *[Austin laughs]*

Art: I was trying to give him the benefit of the doubt. *[Art and Ali laugh]*

Jack: That's very kind of you to give to Baz Luhrmann, a man who has done almost nothing to earn it.

Austin: And whose name isn't even Baz. He's named after— that's a nickname.

Jack: What's his name?

Austin: From a puppet character.

Sylvia: It makes me mad.

Austin: Any guesses?

Jack: What's his actual name?

Austin: What's your guess?

Jack: Or, the name he was born with? Oh, I looked it up. *[Austin laughs]*

Sylvia: Yeah, I already know.

Austin: His name is Mark Anthony Luhrmann.

Jack: Motherfucker's called Mark Antony.

Austin: Yeah, uh huh.

Jack: But yeah, his wife—

Austin: Do you want to know what he got his name from?

Jack: What did he get his name from?

Austin: This puppet. Basil Brush.

Sylvia: *[dismayed]* Basil Brush?

Austin: Yeah.

Jack: Oh no. Oh, fuck that.

Ali: What?

Sylvia: Oh my God.

Austin: Wait, do y'all know Basil Brush?

Sylvia: I do know Basil Brush, yeah.

Jack: Yes, Basil Brush is a deeply... *[Austin laughs]* So, you know how like musical comedy in Britain was like—

Austin: Just, the way you said Basil Brush together, synced up. The only thing it reminds me of is when I used to go on The Great Gundam Project. We used to guess Pokémon names, and then we would learn them. *[Sylvia and Jack laugh]* We would say, “Wigglytuff?!” But like, as if you’d heard it before.

Jack: No, no. I know—

Austin: So, what is Basil...who is this?

Jack: Okay, so, Basil Brush. You know how like a lot of English comedy came out of the music hall circuit, which was like wacky jokes and cabaret about like...songs with like, “My old man’s a dustman. He wears a dustman’s hat.” *[Austin sputters]* “I’m Henry VIII, I am, I am. Henry VIII, I am. I’ve been married seven times before.” “I love washing windows.” Really just not great stuff.

Austin: So like, if vaudeville was like not funny.

Jack: Was like...was not funny and was like on a rainy island. *[Austin laughs]* And out of this, came— like, that began to get parlayed into television. You know, in the early days of British television.

Austin: Sure.

Jack: And a character that rose up in that was a puppet fox by the name of Basil Brush, who was sort of playing a musical character that went on to become like a TV comedy bit. So he would tell bad jokes and then give his catchphrase, which was laughing nasally and saying, “Ha ha ha, boom, boom,” and that was Basil Brush’s whole shtick. He—you know, in the way that Britain loves clinging onto this kind of shit—continues to show up for years and years and years. And so I encounter him in like...you know, there was a 2000s relaunch with *The Basil Brush Show*.

Sylvia: Yeah, that’s how I know him.

Austin: Huh.

Jack: He was a Peter Firmin puppet. Peter Firmin has actually made some really great English puppets. He made Ivor the Engine and Bagpuss and the Clangers, which are toy cats, sort of a proto *Toy Story* cat, and a bunch of weird creatures that live on the moon. But Basil Brush was not his best work.

[3:15:00]

Austin: I got another bad Baz Luhrmann quote, but this one’s really— it’s a bad quote from *The Guardian*, actually. So, I’m gonna read it.

Jack: *[sarcastic]* Oh, what, they make those?

Austin: Yeah, yeah, yeah. Did you know that? “Where did the Baz come from?” Quote, “I had this curly hair, this big ‘fro, and at the school, there were all these boys in their uniforms who used to beat the shit out of me. They call me Basil Brush, and the name stuck. At some point, I changed it by deed poll.” Then back to *The Guardian*, “So he reclaimed the insult, in other words, just as gay people did with the word queer?” question mark?

Ali: Hmm. *[Jack laughs]*

Austin: And he says, “I didn’t think about it at the time, but that’s exactly what happened. I’m Baz, and you’ll be hearing from me.” The end of the interview.

Art: Well, that’s not all true, because what he changed his name to was Bazmark.

Austin: *[laughs]* One word! That’s the name of his production company, Bazmark, and his name?

Art: Yeah. Combining Baz the nickname with Mark, his birth name. *[Austin sighs]*

Jack: This is characteristic of *The Guardian*. Also...

Austin: Yeah?

Jack: This is completely unrelated. I just have to— oh, *The Guardian* is fucked up with queer people.

Austin: No, no, no. That was— oh, I know. I know.

Jack: Oh, yeah, yeah, yeah.

Austin: Yeah.

Jack: I just minimized all my windows to look at my desktop, and I have one of those desktop backgrounds that changes every day. I had not seen it today, and I’m just pasting—in the scheduling chat again—what is on my desktop. It’s just uploading. Just seems worth sharing.

Sylvia: Basil Brush?!

Austin: I clicked through, and I saw Basil Brush. *[laughs]* Aw, what a good bird. That’s a good bird.

Art: Oh.

Ali: Oh, yeah.

Jack: A very beautiful, colorful duck.

Sylvia: Yeah.

Austin: Mm-hmm.

Jack: Um, where are we? They go—

Austin: I think, to say something directly here, one of the things that is...Baz Luhrmann trades in camp, and so much of the camp and style he trades in is derived from queer cultural spaces.

Sylvia: Oh, so much.

Austin: He has said as much, that there is, quote, “a whole gay sensibility to the work I do.” And it's all over the place. *[laughs quietly]*

Sylvia: You don't fucking say?

Jack: This is interesting, right? Because it's like...I wasn't kidding when I said like, “Oh, have you seen his work?” because I think, in a lot of ways, his work looks like a straight person interpreting gay culture.

(??? 3:17:15): Yes.

Jack: His movies are often deeply straight movies.

Austin: Right. I'm now reading from this interview, and, you know, he is married to a woman, but this quote says, “There is a whole gay sensibility to the work I do. You can see it in the films and the evolution of the work, and that is something that should be there both for CM,” who I believe is his wife, “and me. As I said before, I see all sexual possibilities. We are married, and we are real couple, but we've never denied *[Sylvia: “Okay”]* ourselves any of the possibilities in life.”

Jack: Oh. Yeah, okay.

Sylvia: Okay.

Jack: I'll take that back.

Sylvia: Yeah.

Austin: “I won’t speak for her, but I think if you delve into her history, let me put it this way: she has seen all the possibilities in life too.” *[laughter]*

Sylvia: Uh huh. Uh huh.

Austin: This interview– this is from *The Evening Standard*. This sucks. It sucks that he's being asked to talk about this, but it's a great answer. Someone says– they ask, “Is it a monogamous union now?”

Jack: Oh my God.

Austin: And he says, “The contract is deeply personal. All those things that take place between couples are very real and alive for us. We marvel at how great all of that is. And at the same time, there is a total embracing of...” and the person says, “I think he’s going to say possibilities again, but instead he says, ‘There is a set of rules,’” which is a great answer. *[Ali laughs]*

Jack: Wow.

Sylvia: Huh.

Austin: Get fucked, everybody else. Uh huh.

Jack: Okay.

Austin: So, okay.

Jack: I can take this back. You know.

Austin: We’re back on board. Yeah, uh huh.

Sylvia: Yeah. Now I'm just like, imagine fucking getting a “Hey, we saw you across the bar and really like your vibe,” from fucking Baz Luhrmann. *[Ali laughs]*

Austin: A hundred percent the vibe. A hundred percent. Uh huh. Uh huh! You know it.

Jack: Oh my God.

Austin: You know that that– yeah, uh huh.

Sylvia: It's happened.

Austin: Anyway.

Jack: You know that you're about to have— the next few months of your life are about to be deeply weird, as soon as that interaction begins.

Austin: *[laughs]* Uh huh. I mean, that is also— I mean, there is an interview that I read months ago and had forgotten about until I decided I should double check it. There is a Harold Perrineau interview from 2020 with *Vulture* in which they do— he does get into the queer reading of *Romeo + Juliet* and basically says as much, that he was like surprised when he showed up and like had a dress to put on, and how Baz basically pitched like the love and the gender bending and the deep passion between these two characters. It doesn't necessarily have to be a sexual thing, but sexuality is a thing that young men are always talking about, and Mercutio is full of great passions. Go read this interview. I mean, it's great to just—

Jack: That sounds really interesting.

Austin: This interview is “Harold Perrineau Answers Every Question We Have About *Romeo + Juliet*,” so it's a— I remember reading this a year ago and thought it was very good. It does have the worst question you could ever ask an actor, that makes me feel like this is the first time you've ever asked this or interviewed an actor, which is, “Was it a struggle to memorize all that dialogue?”

Ali: Mm... *[laughter]*

Austin: And the answer, of course, is great. It's “I didn't struggle to memorize, but I struggled to make it sound natural.”

Jack: Yeah, I've seen—

Austin: “I achieved it some times and not other times.” Great answer.

Jack: Let's move on. Romeo goes to Juliet's house, and they fuck.

Austin: Uh huh. Yeah.

Art: Mm-hmm.

Jack: This is when the soundtrack says, “Kissing you,” and...

Austin: Oh, “Kissing you, ohh.”

Ali: Mm-hmm.

Jack: And I thought: that is, yep, they are kissing.

Austin: It's beautiful.

Art: Although we've skipped the...Fulgencio promises his daughter to Paul Rudd.

Jack: Oh. That's important, yes.

Austin: Ugh.

Jack: We should hit that bit. That's sad. Paul Rudd is great in this movie.

Austin: Wait, wait, wait. That doesn't...I thought it was after the...

Jack: No, that happens.

Austin: Ohh.

Art: No, he— the two of them do it—

Austin: Oh, right. Yes, yes, yes.

Art: And then he comes, and then she finds out, [*Austin: "Yeah"*] and then they have that really intense scene. It's like they hired fucking Paul Sorvino for that scene.

Austin: Yeah, they definitely did. I feel like that's the case.

Jack: That scene's great.

Art: I mean, he's good in all, but that's his scene.

Austin: Yeah. But they do fuck, Romeo and Juliet, and it's good. They are deeply in love. But also, again, especially after this scene, they look so young.

Jack: [*simultaneously*] Something is wrong. Yeah.

Austin: They look— yeah, that too. But Leo under the sheet, looking down into the camera...

Jack: Really cute staging.

Austin: Is a baby.

Ali: Mm.

Austin: I'm not saying don't get married young. But.

Jack: You're saying that it is central to this movie's universe that these people's youth is foregrounded.

Austin: Yes. And that like...

Art: Yeah.

Austin: They don't have— I mean, this is the other hand of the power of religion in this—that it, you know, outclasses the power of societal rivalry and bonds and all the other stuff—is it is also because of religion that they couldn't just have this, right? It is also because of the authority of the Church that the only way for them to have slept together here is to have first wed each other as children, right? And that's also just part of like the way marriage between the powerful in this setting works, obviously. She is being promised to someone she has zero interest in. But this couldn't just be that they're young lovers; they have to be young spouses, and that adds a degree of...it's important that they look as young as they do, because they've leapt headfirst into this, because it's their only option to spend time together like this, right?

Art: Right. And I mean, you could say you're not saying don't get married young. *[Austin laughs]* I'm gonna say that if you are gonna get married young, don't get married in the first 24 hours you know each other. *[Ali laughs]*

Austin: That's fair. That's fair.

Art: Which is 100% what happened here, right?

Austin: Yes.

Art: They got married within 24 hours.

Austin: Yeah, yeah.

Sylvia: Once again, adding to my yuri theory. They are U-Hauling, straight away.

Austin: They are. It's true! *[laughter]* And I guess, here's the thing. She's gonna get married off to Paris anyway, so she's stuck getting married young no matter what, you know?

Art: Yeah.

Jack: Yeah.

Art: Yeah, I guess I'm also going to say: don't exist in feudal Italy. *[Ali laughs]*

Austin: Right. Correct.

Sylvia: Way ahead of you. *[Austin laughs quietly]*

Jack: Yeah. She says goodbye to Romeo. It's very, very sad. We get the shot of her with her head through the bars again.

Austin: Agh.

Jack: She says, "When will I see you again?" and Romeo says, you know, "You'll see me again. We're gonna be fine." And Juliet looks up, *[Austin: "Ugh"]* and now we go into...this scene is genuinely upsetting.

Austin: It's so upsetting.

Jack: Everybody in this scene is acting their ass off.

Austin: Especially after all the stuff in the blankets and the sheets of like, "Oh, that's not the sun. That's a meteor. That's not the real sun." Like, being so joyous and flirty and in love and corny in the best possible way with someone.

Ali: And this is why Shakespeare had some points and was dropping some bars. *[Austin laughs]* The fucking like... "The meteor is gonna come and kill all of us, *[Austin: "Yes!"]* so you should stay here under this blanket with me," is like, yep. *[laughs]*

Jack: It's great writing. It's just great.

Austin: That's called bars!

Art: You heard it here first. Shakespeare dropping some bombs.

Austin: Yeah. Uh huh, yeah.

Ali: Truly.

Austin: Can I get— Ali, could you drop the Funk Flex bombs right now, please? *[laughter]* *[Austin imitates bomb sound effect]* Exclusive! Can we do the thing—? I wish this movie had done the thing Funk Flex does where you get through it and then it goes *[imitates rewind sound]* and it rewinds and just plays the like four bar intro again. *[Ali laughs]*

Art: Mm.

Austin: I mean, it literally does do that at the start of the movie! It does!

Jack: Yeah.

Ali: Uh huh.

Art: Yeah, you do get the first four bars two-slash-three times, if you count text on screen.

Austin: *[laughs]* It's so good! Ugh.

Jack: The physicality of this scene.

Austin: And again! Sorry, I just need to— really quick. Everybody...again, I, hmm. Eleven, twelve, thirteen, through eighteen, saw this movie so many times in classrooms. This shit hits. *[laughter]*

Art: Yeah.

Austin: Teenagers are like, "Oh, now I understand my place in society. I have to find someone who looks at me like this."

Jack: Yeah. Yeah.

Art: Yeah.

Austin: And whether that's good or bad, that's up to you.

Art: I don't know if it's still getting played in schools. I feel like some... *[Austin laughs quietly]* I feel like, you know, we're in an era where maybe this is a little too out there for some parents, but I hope it is.

Austin: I went to Catholic school. They were showing this. *[Ali and Jack laugh]*

Art: Yeah, but I don't know that people understood subtext in 1997.

Austin: They're fucking! *[Jack laughs]*

Art: Well, I meant the gay parts.

Austin: Oh, no, they didn't understand that part. No. No, that part they didn't get. I did.

Jack: Oh, no, but they were angry about something.

Austin: Yes, yeah, they knew there was something. Yeah, uh huh. *[Sylvia laughs]* Well, Mercutio dies, so it's okay. You know?

Jack: Mm. Mm. God, can we just take a— RIP to Mercutio. I know we talked about that.

Art: What part of the Bible is that in?

Jack: Uh...Acts.

Austin: Listen, they'll...yeah, Acts, yeah. Paul has some words. *[quietly]* That motherfucker.

Jack: Her dad throws her and his wife around.

Austin: *[sighs]* It sucks.

Jack: And basically says, "You are my property." And then, God, her mother's tone in this.

Austin: No, he doesn't even say that. It's worse than that. He gives her an ultimatum.

Jack: Oh, yeah.

Austin: And it's: all right, you know, "If you be my property, then you marry my friend. If not, then you will be out on the streets, begging and stealing and dying."

Jack: He says, "Hang, steal." You know, he's like, "I don't give a shit."

Austin: Yeah. "And be you not, hang, beg, starve, die in the streets." So like, the option isn't even...it's not even, "You're my property." It's "Either you're my property, or you're going to die in the streets, and I don't care, because I only care about my property."

Jack: Yep.

Austin: Sucks.

Art: Yeah.

Jack: And then her mother turns, and this is...

Austin: Ugh.

Jack: This is what I meant about the show making genre moves. This is the same woman who was in the overcranked getting ready for the party scene earlier.

Austin: Doing a weird southern accent?

Art: Yeah.

Jack: Doing a weird southern accent.

Art: Oh, we skipped that whole scene, and it's great.

Jack: Her accent drifts.

Art: If you're here, two hours and 44 minutes into a podcast about a two hour movie, *[Ali laughs]* and you're not sold on watching this movie...

Jack: I don't really know.

Art: I really— there's stuff we skipped, and you should go and watch it.

Ali: We didn't talk about that too. We have to talk about how she's edited in that scene.

Jack: It's so weird.

Ali: Where like, she goes like...she drops frames sometimes?

Austin: This is what I'm saying, yeah!

Ali: It's like so... *[laughs]*

Austin: And Shakespeare would do that if he could! *[Ali and Art laugh]*

Ali: It's so fucking good.

Austin: Shakespeare would still be using filters on Instagram.

Ali: Yeah.

Jack: But her performance here is...

Austin: Okay, how do we read this line and this— there's this line that she says, which is...Juliet looks up to her for some recourse, for some support, and she says, "Talk not to me, for I'll not speak a word. Do as thou wilt, for I have done with thee."

Jack: Oh, but the way the actress reads it is...

Austin: I mean, yeah, I'm not...yeah, uh huh.

Jack: Yeah. On the page, there's a few ways that you could interpret that.

Austin: Mm-hmm.

Jack: "Do as thou wilt," is very like, oh, she's saying, "Look, Juliet, you know, it's time for you to be your own person. You've got this. Go for it, Juliet."

Austin: Right, right.

Jack: But the way the actress reads it is—

Austin: "Do as thou wilt!" That's not it.

Jack: I am done with this whole fucking thing, and it turns out that part of that is that I am done with my daughter.

Austin: Mm.

Jack: It's heartbreaking, and this actress nails it. I love that it's the same performer as the woman in the Cleopatra, taking her pills.

Austin: It's so good. It's miserable. It's...

Jack: Well, she has—

Austin: There's a real like Hollywood spouse vibe from her, right?

Jack: Yeah, yeah, yeah.

Art: Mm-hmm.

Austin: Where it's like, she loves the parties. She loves to dress up. She loves the rich friends. She does not want to be a mom. She does not— this is— when we did— what was the last game that we did in the Road to PALISADE?

Ali: Oh, um...

Austin: *Upstairs and Downstairs?*

Ali: Yeah.

Austin: This is the mom who comes home halfway through that game.

Jack: *[laughs]* Having been on an adventure or something?

Austin: Yeah, and who has like no interest in anyone in the family, actually. Yeah, uh huh.

Jack: Yeah. She has this just...

Art: Yeah, there's a Norma Desmond from *Sunset Boulevard* vibe to this.

Austin: Mm, yeah, yeah, yeah. Sure.

Jack: Oh, totally. She gently touches her face, where she's been struck in the earlier scene [Austin sighs] as she delivers these lines, where it's just like, you know, she is...we talked about it set against *Succession* earlier, and *Succession* being a show where people are constantly thinking [Austin: "Right"] about how they are performing being restrained or how they are working through an internal emotion. And I think this is absolutely that moment, where, you know, she's talking about Juliet, but she's also talking about a bunch of other stuff that this whole fiasco has brought to a head. And then the nurse runs Juliet a bath, more of this water imagery again. We saw Leo disappearing into water when he says goodbye to Juliet too, a very strange shot.

Austin: Right.

Jack: I don't know what that's supposed to be. It's not representative of Leo actually diving into a pool.

[3:30:00]

Austin: Yeah. I guess it's not that, huh?

Jack: Yeah.

Austin: That's just...

Art: Isn't it? It's just the pool outside her window?

Jack: But he doesn't drop. He doesn't fall.

Art: Hold on. Let me go back.

Austin: We're all just watching this movie now.

Jack: It's 1:22. Really interesting. [Ali laughs quietly]

Austin: Yeah, yeah, yeah.

Art: Yeah, sure he does, right?

Austin: They kiss a bunch.

Art: She's looking down off the balcony. The pool's there.

Jack: We don't see him— oh, I suppose.

Austin: Yeah. But we don't see him...

Jack: Here's what's interesting to me. We don't see him fall. We just cut to a shot of him underwater.

Austin: Right. He's just in the water, yeah. Yeah, yeah, yeah. That's interesting.

Art: Yeah.

Jack: And then the nurse kneeling by the bath, running the bath, as Juliet's crying. And then we get [Austin: "Oh"] these shots of the Virgin, and...

Austin: Also, well, the incredible...as she's looking down on him in the pool, she hits with the...let me get the exact line here. "Oh God, I have an ill-divining soul. Methinks I see thee, now thou art below, as one dead in the bottom of a tomb."

Jack: Ah, it's great!

Austin: "Either my eyesight fails or thou look'st pale." Ugh! Ugh!

Jack: It's so good. "I have an ill-divining soul"? Come on.

Austin: "I have an ill-divining soul," and he says, "Adieu," back.

Jack: Shit, should we do a fucking Shakespeare podcast? [Ali and Art laugh]

Austin: You know, I feel like...it's a classic thing to be like, as a teenager, you hate Shakespeare, because you are forced to read Shakespeare and often in ways that do not engage with the text in interesting ways. And again, I said this at the beginning. I think there's lots of good critique for the place that Shakespeare has in the English curriculum in this country and worldwide and like what Shakespeare is a stand-in for. There's also, of course, great work from, you know, scholars of color and queer scholars and scholars who are not from the anglophonic world about Shakespeare at this point, so like, you can have an engaged and critical relationship with Shakespeare, and I wish that that had been available and actually like what the curricula looked like when I was a kid, and not just, "All right, everybody. Read *Macbeth* this weekend."

Jack: Right. Yep.

Art: Mm-hmm.

Austin: So.

Art: Well, reading *Macbeth* is a waste of everyone's time.

Austin: Well, this is— yes, totally.

Art: You know?

Austin: God, I still haven't seen the *Macbeth* from...

Jack: No, me either. I'm really excited to see that.

Austin: Is it Joel or is it Ethan? Who directed that? I forget. Coen.

Jack: One of the Coens.

Austin: It's only one of them, right?

Jack: Yep.

Austin: It's only one of them, right?

Jack: Yep.

Austin: It is Joel, I think. So, yes. Anyway.

Art: But it's one of those things where like, you need to see it performed, and there just isn't the bandwidth to like show that to kids, you know?

Austin: Well, that's why this movie is so important.

Art: Yeah.

Austin: Because...like, when I say it hits, I of course mean that the love scene hit when I was a 15-year-old, but I also mean that like having someone say, "I have an ill-divining soul," on the page, it's very easy to be like, "I don't know what that means," but looking down over the balcony at her lover drifting away, heading towards a fated disaster, you get it. There's so many lines here where you're like, oh, the acting makes the text legible to me, even though it's not, in either rhythm or content, the sort of language I use in my daily life, you know?

Jack: Yeah.

Art: Mm-hmm.

Austin: Anyway, we should get through the rest of Act, uh, Three. *[laughs quietly]*

Jack: There's not much movie left, actually.

Austin: I guess this is the end of Act Three.

Jack: Yeah.

Austin: Yeah.

Art: We're almost there.

Jack: Juliet shows up. This is a great Juliet outfit.

Art: Yeah, this is where they start cutting.

Jack: For her marriage to Paul Rudd.

Austin: Mm-hmm.

Jack: Or rather, she goes to church. She looks like Madeline from the book *Madeline*. She looks like she's a little French schoolgirl.

Sylvia: Oh, this is my favorite outfit in the movie.

Austin: It's such a good. It's such a good outfit.

Ali: Yeah.

Sylvia: I love it.

Austin: It's so, so, so good.

Jack: The hairstyling in the whole movie— you know, Art mentioned her halo earlier, but all of Julia's— Julia's. *[laughs]* Juliet's hair is incredible in this movie.

Austin: Yeah.

Jack: Everybody's hair is fantastic, actually. I'm thinking about like Tybalt's sideburns. I would love to know who was on...

Austin: And as Art said, this is where they begin cutting, right? That's what you're saying, Art?

Art: Yeah, this is where we start to like yada yada the rest of the play a little bit.

Austin: Yeah. Juliet never, for instance, prays to Tybalt's ghost, which is a thing that happens in the play. Right? *[Ali laughs quietly]*

Jack: I mean, sick. She should have done.

Austin: She should have.

Art: But we do give the amazing scene in like the *[Jack: "Oh"]* back room of the church or whatever—

Jack: She goes to shoot herself?

Art: Where Juliet has the gun.

Ali: Oh, it's so good.

Sylvia: Oh my God!

Austin: Iconic.

Ali: Okay, wait, I do have to...

Austin: Uh huh.

Ali: Before we get to the back of the scene, I have to get when we enter the church *[Austin laughs]* and Paul Rudd Paris is having like the most rancid conversation with the priest.

Austin: It's unbelievable.

Jack: What's he saying?

Ali: Just like, "Well, I'm getting married later this week. She's really depressed, but we're gonna get married, so she'll be happy about it."

Jack: Oh, yeah!

Art: Uh huh. *[laughter]*

Austin: And like, let's forget about even the stuff with Romeo that he doesn't know about. Her cousin was just gunned down in the streets.

Ali: Uh huh.

Art: Yeah.

Jack: That's so fucking funny.

Austin: Her cousin basically was like a sibling, because, you know, you see Tybalt dancing with her mother. You see Tybalt around the house. Like, Tybalt is effectively part of the household, you know?

Art: Yeah, and he's the prince of cats.

Austin: And the prince of cats! *[Ali laughs]* You're not gonna cry when the prince of cats dies?

Art: That's the disrespect you have for the prince of cats?

Austin: Ugh.

Ali: Outrageous.

Art: All the cats, and he's their prince. *[Ali laughs]*

Jack: There's a nine lives line.

Austin: Oh, which we skipped! We skipped the nine lives! Yeah, I was thinking the nine lives diss from Mercutio. Ugh, so good. Anyway.

Ali: Wait, which?

Jack: Oh, in the fight.

Austin: Oh, when...yeah. In the fight, Tybalt asks him, you know, "What is it that you want?" and Mercutio like, "Just one of your lives," or something like that, which is extremely sick. *[Ali laughs]*

Jack: One of your nine lives, yeah.

Austin: "Good king of cats, nothing but one of your nine lives." So good.

Ali: *[laughs]* Bangers.

Austin: Mm-hmm.

Ali: And so, this scene is...I wanted to call it out especially, because this is the moment that like, oh, Shakespeare wrote this for Paul Rudd. *[all laugh]* The conversation goes, Juliet is like, "I

have to make confession, so can you kind of go or whatever,” and Paul Rudd says, “God shield I should disturb devotion.” *[Austin and Ali laugh]* And it’s like so cute, and he’s such a weiner!

Austin: He’s so bad.

Ali: He gives her like a really awkward kiss, and the vibes are off.

Jack: He does give her an awkward—

Austin: Well, and like, it’s playing in the same space, right? It’s returning to the saints and pilgrims conversation before, and it’s the rancid version of it, because he’s like, “Till then, adieu, and keep this holy kiss,” and she is standing completely still as it happens.

Sylvia: It’s the flirting versus harassment meme. *[Austin laughs]*

Jack: Yeah. *[Jack and Art laugh]*

Austin: And then she literally runs away, the second he’s walked past her, towards his back room.

Jack: Juliet knows, in this moment, that she is 45 seconds away from putting a gun to her head.

Austin: Yeah.

Jack: It’s amazing.

Art: Uh huh. Yeah, she absolutely knows what the next scene of the play is. *[Austin and Ali laugh]*

Austin: Yes.

Jack: Yeah. Yeah, yeah, yeah.

Austin: And as you pointed out earlier, Jack, this gun does not have a name on it. If it didn’t say dagger, it probably wouldn’t have hit.

Sylvia: Eh, again, I don’t know. *[Austin laughs quietly]*

Jack: Oh, I’m also thinking of the other gun, the final gun.

Austin: Oh, right, right, right.

Jack: So yeah, there’s two guns without a name on.

Austin: The Final Gun.

Art: But the gun does have gold trim.

Austin: It does. It's still a cool gun. I mean, like, the prop department...

Jack: It's a little sort of...yeah. God, it's great. And Claire Danes is great in this movie.

Austin: Yeah.

Jack: She acts this scene. Both her and Pete Postlethwaite are amazing.

Sylvia: This scene's...God.

Jack: I feel like the image of—

Austin: “I do spy a kind of hope,” is such a good, like, *[Jack laughs, “Yeah”]* “Okay. Okay, let's slow down. We'll talk through it.”

Austin: Yeah.

Jack: The way he takes the gun from her. Yeah.

Art: Yeah, by like slowly creeping it away.

Austin: Yeah.

Jack: Yeah. Everything where characters are handing things to people or taking things from people in this movie is really thoughtfully shot. You know, this idea of like actors passing physical objects between each other is something that is given a lot of attention by the camera.

Austin: Mm.

Jack: I feel like this image of Claire Danes in a beret with this glove with a little bow on it with a gun to her head is like...if this is on the moodboard, you're like, “All right, this is the Shakespeare we're making. To work, everybody!” *[Ali laughs]*

Austin: Uh huh. Yep, yep. And he delivers the pitch.

Jack: He has a plan.

Austin: He sets up the heist, right?

Art: Mm-hmm.

Austin: Like, "All right, I've got this drug. You know I be making drugs up in the greenhouse. [Jack gasps] And it'll make you look dead as hell." And we get an image of her—

Jack: And we get a Francis Ford Coppola style *Dracula*, Bram Stoker's *Dracula* style...

Austin: [laughs quietly] It is. It is.

Jack: What does he call it? Electronic effect? [laughs quietly] What does Baz call it?

Austin: An electronic effect.

Art: Mm-hmm.

Austin: Including like the incredible Catholic clock, which I promise you one of my grandmothers had when I was growing up, like Jesus in the middle of the clock as it ticks away. The images of what her funeral would be.

Art: Which are just correct. These are just, again, shots from later in the film.

Austin: From the movie. Yeah.

Jack: Yeah. Really interesting move, but I like it.

Austin: Yeah. Him just set against this backdrop is really fun. And his plan is a classic: take this drug that will make you seem like you're dead.

Jack: Mm-hmm.

Austin: But you won't actually be dead.

Jack: Sweet. You'll actually wake up.

Austin: You'll only be dead for— how long— uh, quick question. How long will she be dead for, everybody?

Jack: Is it 24 hours?

Art: 24 hours.

Austin: I don't believe that that's...I thought it was something else. Maybe I'm wrong.

Sylvia: I thought it was longer. I thought it was like two days, but...

Art: I think it's one day.

Jack: I think it is 24 hours.

Ali: It's supposed to be that night, right?

Jack: Oh.

Austin: I mean, I'll—

Ali: He goes and fetches her?

Austin: Yeah, yeah. It is. Sorry, it is, but he says it in a particular way, and what he says is, "Four and twenty hours." *[laughter]*

Sylvia: "Four and twenty hours," yeah.

Art: Oh. Four and twenty hours, baked into a pie.

Jack: Baked in a pie. Yeah, exactly.

Austin: Uh huh.

Jack: I really love the line where he says, "You'll wake as though you've been in a pleasant sleep." Now...

Austin: Uh huh.

Jack: That may be true with this drug, but based on what I understand about human anesthesia and things like that, you never wake as though you've been in a pleasant sleep. You wake up going, "Ack! I feel awful!" *[Ali laughs]*

Austin: Mm-hmm.

Jack: But he's pretty stoked about it, and it looks really cool. It's a little blue vial.

Austin: It's a little blue vial, yeah. And it's like, "Hey, just take this the second you wake up, as you hear, you know, Paris coming up the stairs, basically. You'll get knocked out. I'll send word to Romeo out in Mantua." Which, again, remember they built this whole set. We talked about this before. Someone want to describe what Mantua's vibes are?

Sylvia: Like a trailer park, but like with the—

Jack: In Australia.

Art: Like a trailer park from a *Fallout* game.

Austin: Yeah.

Sylvia: Yeah. Also has the *Breaking Bad* “we’re in Mexico” filter on it. *[Austin laughs]*

Ali: Mm-hmm.

Austin: Please, that’s Southern Italy. *[Ali laughs]* But yes, it literally does. Art, is this the other name that you were thinking of earlier, talking about?

Jack: Oh, it was me, and yeah. They decide to— *[laughs]* it’s so fucking stupid. They decide to extrapolate out the term “posthaste” to mean quickly to be an actual company called Post Haste.

Sylvia: Oh, I love it. *[Ali laughs]*

Jack: Complete with like a livery and trucks of people in outfits and everything.

Sylvia: It’s so good.

Jack: I mean, it’s great. It is the silliest version of these.

Austin: The thing of them trying to deliver the package, the letter, but he’s playing fucking baseball? Not even—

Jack: Well, no, he’s playing hit—

Austin: He’s hitting a rock.

Art: He’s hitting a rock with a stick.

Austin: *[laughs]* Yeah. Ain’t much to do out in Mantua, I guess, you know? And they can’t— it’s like they can’t give it to him because it has like the delivery confirmation on it, so they need a signature.

Art: The signature confirmation.

Austin: *[laughs]* Yes. It’s so funny.

Jack: My favorite sad version of this happening in literature is in an otherwise bad book by Thomas Hardy called *Tess of the d’Urbervilles* in which someone needs to send *[Austin: “Mm”]* a

plot critical letter and posts it under a door, and it goes under the rug on the other side of the door.

Austin: Ugh.

Jack: Which I've always thought is like really great staging for writing in 1850 or whatever.

Austin: Yeah.

Jack: Like, how does a letter get lost? Oh, it gets poked under the rug, and nobody ever sees it.

Austin: I should just say, really quick: I traditionally hate this shit.

Jack: Oh, I can't stand it.

Austin: I hate when the letter doesn't arrive. I hate when the person doesn't say the thing that they obviously would say to save the day.

Jack: Thinks they've being betrayed.

Austin: Yeah, all that shit. Hate it. You know what? It works. *[laughter]*

Ali: When it works, it works.

Austin: When it works, it works.

Ali: Well, especially because the way that this movie frames the mistake is that the father thinks that he has all of this stuff in hand. Like, he's in the position to *[Austin: "Yeah"]* orchestrate this death, because he's the one who's collecting the body and knows where Romeo is and the only one who can get in touch with him. But like, the fatal flaw that happens is the little baby that y'all keep talking about in that one fight *[Jack chuckles]* sees her funeral and is like, "Yo, I gotta go tell my boy about this right away."

Austin: Oh, that's a different— that's the—

Art: That's a different baby.

Ali: Is it?

Austin: That's a different baby.

Ali: Okay.

Sylvia: Yeah.

Jack: That is Balthasar.

Art: Yeah, that's the baby who was standing next to Romeo at the wedding.

Jack: This is a Montague baby.

Austin: Balthasar is... *[typing]* Right.

Art: Montague baby. Baby Montague.

Ali: Oh, sure.

Austin: Why is— does anybody— why is Balthasar allowed to know this shit?

Art: I'm not sure.

Austin: Oh, he's Romeo servant. He's Romeo's manservant in the play.

Art: Mm.

Austin: So, I guess that makes sense. He's like his, you know, squire or whatever, his maid.

Ali: Oh, sure, sure, sure.

Art: The mistake that Father Laurence makes...

Jack: Yes?

Art: And again, I do understand that this is a tragedy. *[Art and Ali laugh]* Is not playing defense properly.

Austin: Yeah. Yeah.

Art: He finds out that Romeo doesn't know, and instead of doing what I think a sensible person would do and staying with Juliet...

Ali: Mm-hmm.

Art: He goes and tries to find Romeo, and that's not...if you know where someone wants to be, just stay there.

Austin: Mm-hmm.

Jack: Yep.

Art: You don't have to know what they did all day. Just be at the end.

Austin: And the threat, the thing that could break bad is that she could wake up alone and no one's there and she's confused.

Art: Right.

Austin: But if he's there, he could say, "All right, something went wrong. Romeo didn't get the message. Come with me. I'll secret you away until he can get here."

Art: "We're gonna figure this out."

Austin: Right. Exactly.

Jack: Yep. Totally. Bring the past message along.

Austin: And he's a priest. He could do that. He could go in there and be like, "I'm praying over her body. It's such a— I'm praying so deeply, I need to be alone in here." You know, he could get away with that.

Jack: And then Agent 47 sits up from the coffin. *[laughter]*

Sylvia: I mean, he is bald.

Jack: Yeah.

Austin: He is bald. He could, yeah, uh huh.

Jack: God, Pete Postlethwaite Agent 47.

Austin: Would be great.

Jack: Does 47 have an American accent? He does, doesn't he?

Austin: Eh, it's fine.

Jack: Even though he's from Romania. It's worth reminding ourselves, as we move into this poison plot and the Mantua Post Haste people: they put people on the moon, or at least they've been to space in this world.

[3:45:12]

Austin: Right. They can't call him, though, on the phone. We've seen phones.

Jack: Have we?

Austin: Yeah, we see Benvolio on a phone at one point, because I remember looking to see if there was any branding on it. There was not.

Jack: Which I say less to be like CinemaSins, "He should have called him on the phone," and more that there's a really interesting mode that this thing is working in.

Austin: Yes.

Jack: Where people have been to space, and you can wear an astronaut costume, and apothecaries are talking about poisons to pretend to be dead for a funeral.

Austin: Do you know what this reminded me of a lot, Jack?

Jack: Hmm.

Austin: Is *Disco Elysium*.

Jack: Ooh! Yeah.

Austin: Like, this is an AU world. This is a world where some things happened differently, but we—

Jack: The Pale is out there.

Austin: Right. We still got to a modernity. I don't know that it's our modernity, right? I mean, Jesus seems to have happened, or at least Catholicism, right? *[Austin and Jack laugh]* But like, he's in exile in a place that does not necessarily feel like it might have phones. You know?

Jack: Yeah.

Austin: They have postal delivery services and cars and trucks, but they— and they've been to space like you said, but also, there seem to be places truly outside of culture and society.

Jack: Yeah, I would totally— like, if it were—

Austin: Not outside of culture, but outside of, quote, unquote, "civilization."

Jack: If I were Baz being asked this in an intrusive interview with *The Guardian*, right before I took my microphone off and walked out, I'd say something like, "Oh, the phones only work in Verona. You can only call Verona numbers."

Austin: *[chuckles]* Right.

Jack: Or, you know.

Austin: I mean, that's what Romeo basically says. Right? When he gets exiled and is like complaining about being exiled, which we kind of went over that, he's basically like, Verona is the world, right? I don't–

Jack: Yeah.

Austin: He says, “There is no world without Verona walls but purgatory, torture, hell itself.”

Jack: I mean, I think he's talking about Juliet, but...mostly that, but...

Austin: I mean, yes, but also...

Jack: All right, so...

Austin: That is the bit where Father Laurence also does that great shit. He's like, “Dude, you could be dead. Think about all the things that went well.”

Jack: *[laughs]* Yes.

Austin: You got married to the daughter of your enemy. Your friend died trying to save you instead of you dying. She could be dead. All this other shit could be bad. All said, you got out of this one kind of scot free, and they didn't even kill you! They didn't even arrest you. You're gonna get banished. We can fix this, you know? Banish– sorry. Apologies. Banishéd.

Jack: Banishéd.

Austin: Assemblage, not meeting.

Jack: Leo resolves to go back, and he has a sort of Imperator Furiosa scene on his knees in the desert, *[Austin laughs, “Yeah”]* with a horse in the background that is clearly a model. It doesn't move at any point.

Austin: Maybe it's just very still. What's wrong with that?

Sylvia: The horse is also in mourning. *[Austin laughs]*

Jack: Ohoho! Right, sorry.

Austin: Oh, that horse moves, Jack! You're wrong!

Jack: The horse moves?

Austin: The horse moves.

Jack: This was just a still horse?

Austin: It's at 1:35.

Art: It's an actor.

Austin: Thank you. 1:35:17 ish? 18? 19? 19. It bends over. Then it picks his head back up. That's a living horse.

Jack: Oh my God. That was just a still horse. Galileo. Was it Galileo who said, "And yet it moves"? *[laughs quietly]* But about a horse?

Austin: I have no idea. Is that about a horse? No idea. Anyway, the rest of this movie.

Jack: Oh, it was the Earth revolving around the sun.

Austin: Mm.

Jack: "I don't believe that it does," the church said, and Galileo said, "And yet it moves." You know, like whether or not you believe.

Austin: Right, sure. Sure.

Jack: It's actually going to be moving.

Art: And then they killed that guy, so.

Austin: Speaking of killing people.

Jack: I think they exiled him. They didn't kill Galileo, did they?

Art: Didn't—

Jack: I think they exiled him.

Sylvia: I thought he got stuck in a tower or something.

Jack: Yeah, I think they stuck him in a tower. Let's see. Galileo.

Austin: Death. Yeah, they stuck him...

Sylvia: I wasn't fucking joking!

Austin: Let's see...

Jack: They stuck him in the tower, but they let people come and visit him.

Austin: Yeah.

Jack: He was sentenced in three parts.

Sylvia: Human exhibit at the Bluff City Zoo.

Jack: *[laughs]* He was found vehemently suspect of heresy, though he was never formally charged with heresy.

Austin: Hmm.

Jack: Then he was sentenced to formal imprisonment under house arrest.

Austin: House arrest. Sure.

Jack: And then they banned the dialogue and all his future works.

Austin: But he kept writing too, so.

Jack: Yeah, he was allowed to write, but you know. Wow. Poor guy. He was right, though.
[laughs quietly]

Austin: Yeah. Anyway, Romeo goes back.

Jack: Yeah. Gets scary.

Austin: Speaking of Furiosa, gets into a fucked up car, *[laughs]* and they drive away with huge dust clouds behind them. Which is great. Beautiful.

Jack: We get a shot of Pete Postlethwaite, who goes, "Oh no, wait, hang on. Wait. I might have misjudged this." *[laughs quietly]*

Austin: Uh huh.

Jack: "Maybe my plan wasn't so great." He checks his watch.

Austin: He is so sweaty in this shot.

Jack: Well, he's like hungover or something.

Austin: Yeah, yeah.

Jack: Like, the impression that I get is that like...yeah, really, really cool.

Austin: And we get this— I wish they could have stunt cast Joan Cusack as the woman at Post Haste, the one...

Jack: Oh, yeah, it is. *[Austin laughs]* It's got a real, um...what's her name? Martin Blank's assistant.

Austin: In *Grosse Pointe Blank*? I forget what her character's name is. We should watch *Grosse Pointe Blank* for this.

Jack: I bet she's got a great name. I think I've been pitching watching *Grosse Pointe Blank* for this since we started doing them.

Austin: *[sighs]* It's another one. It's another one that's like this, in my opinion.

Jack: In how good it is?

Austin: Marcella. Her name is Marcella. Yeah, how good and how influential for my aesthetics and tastes. Anyway. They can't get a messenger there, oh no! This whole section has the energy of the— maybe not all the way to the Tybalt car chase sequence, but certainly the Mercutio running across the market to fight Tybalt thing.

Jack: Yeah.

Austin: Just like nonstop, shaky cam.

Art: Mm-hmm.

Austin: Romeo pounding on the door of the alchemist, asking for poison.

Jack: Resolved to die.

Art: Intercut with like the heavy police mobilization.

Austin: Yeah.

Ali: Yeah. Oh, the priest at the like very busy FedEx.

Austin: It's so funny. If you haven't been in a FedEx that's busy like that, you don't know what the vibe is.

Ali: Uh huh.

Austin: It's so bad. It's so bad. It's like DMV at closing hours vibes, like it's...

Ali: Yeah.

Austin: And again, all this stuff around like the dark alleys of Verona as helicopters with spotlights swing by. *[sighs]*

Jack: And then Romeo gets into a police standoff at the doors of the church. This is all very dramatic.

Austin: Yeah. He leaves Balthasar. Balthasar? Is that his name? Is that what I said his name was before?

Jack: Yep.

Austin: Is like, "Go live a good life."

Jack: It's sad.

Austin: "But I gotta go make some mistakes."

Jack: And he makes them very rapidly.

Austin: And he does.

Jack: He takes a hostage.

Austin: He shoots...

Jack: Shoots at the helicopter.

Austin: At the helicopter. Yeah.

Art: Shoots just wild.

Austin: Don't do this.

Jack: This has only worked in one context, and it's in the *Just Cause* video games.

Austin: *[laughs]* Maybe he's a big fan. Do you think there's video games in this world? Do you think...

Jack: Uh, there's one.

Austin: Okay. The video game.

Jack: It's like the Magnavox Odyssey.

Austin: Yeah, yeah, yeah.

Jack: Just putting different overlays over the television. Ah, this staging is so good in the church. So, we see him looking through the door of the church at the police stand...what's it called? The police standoff outside. And then he turns, and we see what he is seeing through the other door of the church's lobby, and it's just like blue haze and candles.

Austin: Mm-hmm.

Jack: Which is revealed to be this remarkable image of a church with neon light crosses and plants *[Austin: "Oh"]* everywhere and candles everywhere. It is...oh, yeah, I mentioned that Baz Luhrmann is married to his production designer. I want to shout her out specifically.

Austin: Mm-hmm.

Jack: This woman's name is...because, you know, she's worked on all his movies, and she is presumably at least partially responsible for the Baz Luhrmann style. Her name is Catherine Martin. She's a costume designer, production designer, and set designer. And yeah, the feature films she's worked on are exclusively with Baz Luhrmann. Her first picture with him was *Strictly Ballroom*, and her most recent was *Elvis*.

Austin: Right.

Jack: And she is very good at this image that we are looking at, at this point in the movie.

Austin: It's gorgeous. It's the whole thing. Again, this is like, if this doesn't hit for you, then the movie's not gonna hit for you, you know?

Jack: Yeah.

Austin: If neon crosses, you know, *[Ali: "Yeah"]* aren't gonna do it for you, that's fine. I'm not— I can't—

Sylvia: I need some of those for my room. *[Ali laughs]*

Jack: Yeah.

Art: Something that I think I'm noticing for the first time in this viewing is that most of these candles are fake?

Austin: Yeah. They're electric candles.

Jack: On the wide shot?

Art: That most of the candles are electric, and then only the ones at the...altar? Is altar the right word?

Jack: Yeah.

Austin: Yeah.

Art: At the body are real.

Jack: So then we get this more close up shot of Juliet sort of lying in state, and this seems so dangerous to shoot, because Claire Danes is lying on this plinth, wearing presumably silks or something, and she has this sort of...uh, what's this fabric called that you can see through? Semi-transparent fabric? Like netting or gauze around her, and she is surrounded by easily 500 lit candles.

Austin: It's unbelievable.

Jack: This must've been one of the things where they just got her in position, lit as many candles as they could, and got the shot quickly.

Austin: Somebody help my family with our budget. *[Jack and Ali laugh]*

Art: Well, one of the things I know about movie production is that if they cut, they have to extinguish all the candles.

Austin: Oh my God.

Jack: Good, I suppose.

Austin: Yeah, right.

Art: Because if you let them burn, the continuity will be off.

Ali: Ohh.

Austin: Ah.

Art: The candles will be just different lengths, because like, you can't count on it being two takes. It might be 10 takes.

Austin: Right.

Art: So, when they call, "Cut!" someone has to extinguish all the candles, and before they can call, "Action!" again, someone has to light all the candles again, in what must be the worst job in the movie. *[laughter]*

Jack: I reckon you've got a long candle lighter, a very long one.

Austin: I reckon you have one that has 17 little flames. *[Jack laughs]*

Ali: Oh, yeah, yeah, yeah.

Austin: And you go, pshh, chuh-chuh-chuh. Yeah, uh huh.

Ali: You got the Slumbous edition. *[laughter]*

Austin: Yeah, exactly.

Art: Teeny little flamethrower.

Jack: God.

Austin: Oh, this sucks. What if this time— I'm watching it. What if, this time, she wakes up a little earlier?

Ali: Her hand moves around, yeah.

Art: She wakes up in time.

Austin: Yeah, yeah, yeah.

Jack: It's so sad! It was sad when I watched it earlier.

Austin: And he goes, "Oh my God, you're still alive!" and then they run away together.

Jack: Well, no, Austin, he does say, "Oh my God, you're still alive." Well, we'll get there.

Austin: Okay, but I'm saying this time he says it before he drinks the poison. *[Ali laughs]*

Jack: Okay. Yeah, yeah, yeah.

Sylvia: Yeah.

Austin: He says it right now. He says, "Dear Juliet," and she goes, "Oh, I'm awake."

Jack: "Who, me?"

Austin: And then he says, "Why art thou so fair?" and she says, "No, you, silly," and then they run away together. The end.

Sylvia: God.

Austin: Right?

Jack: And then he calls out through the door, "It's okay, we're fine!" And Prince is like, "Okay, it's fine." *[Austin and Jack laugh]*

Austin: Sorry about shooting at the helicopter! Did you know we got—

Jack: Shooting at a helicopter is not a crime, actually.

Austin: Oh, okay, okay, okay.

Art: Oh.

Austin: It's a first amendment right. Not a second amendment right, a first amendment.

Jack: No, weirdly.

Austin: It's free speech.

Jack: Worth saying that they're doing this thing again where Leo looks like a baby in this shot.

Austin: Mm-hmm.

Jack: I have a very sadly Leo that I'm about to post in the scheduling chat, but he just looks 12.

Austin: He puts the ring on her finger, and she rouses. *[sighs]*

Jack: Is that in the screenplay? In the screenplay. In the original text? That she rouses?

Austin: I don't think so.

Art: No, there's no—

Austin: There's no direction here, right?

Art: Yeah, the directions aren't...

Jack: There is sometimes direction, but I guess not here.

Austin: No, I mean in this sequence. Yeah. The only— ha. The only stage direction in this scene is something that isn't in this at all, which is Romeo kills Paris, which should have been in this movie. *[Ali laughs]*

Sylvia: Oh my God.

Austin: Yeah, uh huh? Because Paris is here.

Ali: Director's cut.

Austin: Paris is in the tomb, and Paris is like, "I do defy thy conjurations and apprehend thee for a felon here!"

Jack: Great Paul Rudd impression.

Austin: And Romeo says, "Wilt thou provoke me—" Yeah. *[Austin and Ali laugh]* And Romeo says, "Wilt thou provoke me? Then have at thee, boy." They fight. Page says, "Oh Lord, they fight. I will go call the watch." Exit. Then Paris says, "Oh, I am slain!" and then the stage direction is "Falls."

Jack: Oh, they do this all the time in Shakespeare. It's great. I love it when they say that they've died.

Austin: And then Paris says, "If thou be merciful, open the tomb. Lay me with Juliet," and then the next stage direction immediately after is, "Dies." *[Jack laughs]*

Art: Dies.

Austin: It's so good. But he does. He lays Paris in the tomb. He does bring Paris in.

Jack: Oh. That's cool.

Austin: And then does his whole big soliloquy here and then drinks the poison.

Jack: He puts the gun down.

Austin: And there's a— did you notice that there is a...I don't know if anybody else noticed this. There is a move of a line. Here he says, "O true apothecary, thy drugs are quick. Thus with a kiss I die," and "Thus with a kiss I die," is here.

Jack: Yes.

Austin: But did anyone notice where "Thy drugs are quick," has moved in this film?

Jack: Oh.

Sylvia: Oh, yeah! He says it at the party, right?

Austin: Who's he say it to?

Jack: Mercutio.

Austin: Whose drugs are quick? Mercutio's.

Ali: Wow.

Jack: Mercutio's drugs are quick.

Austin: Mercutio's drugs are quick!

Jack: There's a kind of equivalence there that I don't think holds up thematically, but it's fine.

Austin: No. Yes. *[Jack chuckles]*

Art: Well, and the reason in the text here that he does bury Paris in Juliet's tomb is because he's Mercutio's kinsman.

Austin: Right. Right. Right.

Jack: Oh. Right.

Austin: So, again, he does it for Mercutio.

Art: He does it for Mercutio. He doesn't do it for Paris.

Austin: Yeah, "Mercutio's kinsman, noble County Paris."

Jack: Yeah.

Austin: "What said my man, when my betossed soul did not attend him as we rode?" Yeah.

Jack: He puts the gun down on a special gun pillow.

Austin: Oh! It's so rough.

Jack: Each of these pillows monogrammed "JC," which is great. That stands for Jesus Christ, because they're very devout in the movie.

Austin: Wait. Wait. Wait. *[Sylvia laughs]*

Jack: But there's something about this staging.

Austin: That stands for JC Denton, actually, the hero of the Deus Ex series.

Jack: Oh.

Sylvia: I was gonna say they got them from JC Penney.

Austin: Okay. *[laughter]*

Jack: There's something about the staginess of this, of the extravagance that is talked about *[Austin: "Yeah"]* in Luhrmann and Catherine Martin's production design, of just like the fact that this gun is on its own pillow monogrammed with Juliet's initials, by Juliet's left hand.

[4:00:04]

Austin: Mm-hmm.

Jack: Just, you know, it sets up the visual of what is about to happen so clangingly obviously and at the same time so pleasingly.

Austin: Mm-hmm.

Jack: I think it's just good Baz Luhrmannesque production design.

Art: Oh, and her...

Jack: The way she...her finger moves, and...

Austin: Mm-hmm.

Art: Her finger moves, and he misses it. Her eyes open, and he misses it. Her eyelids flutter before they open, when he's right there. She can't move her hand fast enough. It's...

Art: Torture.

Jack: So, let's just say what happens here.

Art: It's torture.

Jack: Romeo says farewell to Juliet, intending to kill himself, and raises the...puts the ring on her finger and raises the draught, which is in a tiny— it looks like a perfume sample bottle. Unlike the cool blue vial, it's a yellow liquid in a—

Austin: It literally is. Yeah, I mean, I need you to understand that as a— I'm in seventh grade, I'm watching this movie, and I'm like, perfume like sample bottles are the coolest thing that exist in the world.

Ali: Mm-hmm. *[laughs]*

Jack: I mean, they do look pretty cool. *[Art chuckles]*

Art: Ridiculous thing to feel after this movie, but absolutely felt it.

Jack: And then he raises it to his lips, and Juliet wakes and is shocked to see Romeo there, doesn't know that he's poised himself, but in that motion, knocks the thing away. And for a moment, we're like, "Was she in time?" and then Romeo immediately starts dying. And dies, says farewell to Juliet. Oh, this is such a sad moment. When she— this is, again, Claire Danes doing so well. When she wakes, the love in her eyes *[Austin: "Aagh!"]* as she sees that Romeo is there is so well played.

Austin: Aaaagh! I'm dying! *[pained laugh]*

Jack: And to bring that out in the...

Austin: Aagh.

Jack: Choosing that shot, right? Can we just get a close up on Juliet being excited to see Romeo? Oh, it's so sad.

Austin: And her face twists, and she realizes it's poison. Ugh.

Jack: And then, she immediately is like, "All right, I'm gonna die too."

Austin: Uh huh.

Jack: And she tries kissing Romeo to get the poison off his lips. Again, here we are. "Give me the sin. I'll take the sin back."

Austin: Mm-hmm.

Jack: But there's no poison. Romeo says, "Thus, with a kiss, I die." Banger line. Well done, Will. Wide shot of Juliet sobbing, the candles around her. Oh, Claire Danes's crying in this scene is great. She has like one little burst of sobs, *[Austin: "Mm-hmm"]* and then does the rest of it silently, is really...

Austin: Mm-hmm.

Jack: I've never been in a situation where I am going to take my own life, having seen my lover die, but I have been in situations where I'm crying and it turns out that what the crying looks like is two seconds of audible tears, and then, you know.

Austin: Yeah. I love that she— the ring is on her finger, but it still has the beaded necklace looped around it.

Jack: Oh, it's great!

Art: The chain, yeah.

Jack: It's almost as if there's a chain with, you know, chained to obligations.

Austin: Yep. *[Ali laughs quietly]*

Jack: And, you know, like the marriage is cursed, Baz. But again, it works.

Austin: Mm-hmm.

Jack: It looks great.

Art: If you're looking for a contemporary Claire Danes crying project, there's an episode of *Fleishman Is in Trouble*.

Jack: Yeah.

Art: Where she does some great...just some great quiet acting in this way.

Austin: Mm-hmm.

Art: It's interesting to see the like 25 year gap.

Jack: Yeah.

Art: Is that right? 25 years? Yeah, wow.

Jack: Is she good in that show?

Art: She's very good in that show. That show is deeply weird.

Jack: Weird interesting or just weird?

Art: I had a fine time.

Jack: Well, fair enough. *[Jack and Sylvia laugh]*

Art: How do you feel about whatshisname? The guy?

Jack: I don't know who the guy is.

Art: He was, uh...he was *The Social Network*. He played Mark Zuckerberg.

Jack: Jesse Eisenberg.

Austin: Oh, Jesse Eisenberg?

Art: Jesse Eisenberg.

Jack: I think Jessie Eisenberg is fine. Of those two, I prefer Michael Cera.

Austin: Really? Interesting. Okay.

Art: Mm. It would have been worse than— this in particular would have been worse with Michael Cera. *[Ali laughs]*

Jack: And yeah, Juliet's gun here—well, it's Romeo's gun—has “P13.45” written on it.

Austin: Which is just a gun. That's just a gun. This is just a type of gun. This is a Para model P13.45.

Jack: And this has to be deliberate.

Austin: The switch off, yeah.

Jack: You know, this production design team does not make that mistake.

Austin: Yeah.

Jack: We see Juliet—

Austin: And it does say something on the other side, but the real gun also says whatever it says on the other side. My guess is—

Jack: Does it say “rapier”? *[laughs]*

Austin: It does not. *[laughs quietly]* I'm trying to get a very clear picture of the other side of this gun in real life, as we speak, but every photo is too bad for me to actually read what it properly says. Oh, it says “Para-Ordnance” on it, which is just the name of the company.

Jack: Oh.

Austin: And that's like, yeah, it's like the real world has slipped in here, right? We are out of the realm of daggers.

Jack: Yep.

Austin: And into the realm of Para-Ordnance.

Jack: And then, you know, I don't want to dwell on what happens next. It's performed very well. It is, in a very Baz Luhrmannesque way, much pathos and tension is drawn out from it as to the outcome, but Juliet takes her own life with Romeo's gun, and then we just get, you know, wide shot of them together, now both actually dead, on the altar. Or on the table, I don't think you'd put them on an altar. I don't know. *[Austin sighs]* And then we get a sad montage. They cut through them kissing under the water, them playing under the sheets.

Ali: Oh, the montage of their relationship in this moment is...

Austin: Mm-hmm.

Ali: It's so sad, and it's so well done.

Austin: Mm-hmm.

Ali: And it's like perfectly...because like, if you would gotten any...if any of those scenes went 20 seconds longer and you had gotten like dialog or something, I think it would have lost a lot of stuff.

Austin: Mm-hmm.

Ali: Or like, if you included more stuff, but how quickly those images go [*Jack: "Yeah"*] and how like it shows the fullness of their relationship, which is approximately six hours combined.
[*laughs quietly*]

Austin: Yeah.

Jack: Yes, that's really...

Ali: But like is still this like beautiful precious thing.

Austin: Mm-hmm.

Ali: It's so well done.

Jack: It gives big *Before Sunrise*, the Linklater movie with Ethan Hawke, which is another—

Austin: Mm.

Jack: I was about to call this movie a romantic comedy. I don't think either *Before Sunrise* or this are romantic comedies.

Austin: [*laughs*] No, I don't think those— yeah.

Jack: Movies about being young and being in love.

Austin: Yes. Yes.

Jack: And I hadn't thought of it in that way, Ali, of just like, there isn't much. They didn't spend much time together, so we see this like distilled version of it. And *Before Sunrise* is set over the course of one night, two people falling in love over the course of one night in Paris and then having to get on separate trains when the morning comes, when sunrise comes. And you do get that same sense of like this intensity and richness of experience that is nevertheless actually quite slight. Really cool. Then we cut through white to the shroud on the gurney.

Austin: Mm.

Jack: We fade through white. St. Catherine's hospital.

Ali: Oh, that's right, yeah.

Austin: Mm-hmm.

Ali: The like genre changes again, [*Austin: "Yeah"*] because it's raining and because the parents are in focus, and it's like this gritty crime drama of...

Jack: Yeah.

Austin: Yeah, it's the blue filter [*Art: "Mm-hmm"*] for New York crime drama, yeah.

Ali: [*laughs*] Yes.

Jack: Of like a Nolan movie or a Tony Gilroy thing or...

Austin: Yeah, totally. Totally.

Jack: Michael Mann, yeah.

Austin: And the parents getting out of the car. Ugh.

Jack: And then Paris— Paris. Prince.

Austin: Prince, yeah.

Jack: Says...he has a line about shame. This is shameful. I mean, he says it better, right? He sums it up, but he says, "You should all be ashamed"?

Austin: He says, "You should all be ashamed."

Jack: What does he say? [*laughs*]

Austin: Uh...I don't know. No one does.

Art: Yeah, it's not in...this has changed enough from the— I've been just reading them out of the play.

Austin: Yeah, yeah, yeah.

Jack: I am now loading up the subtitles so I can see what this actor says.

Austin: Yeah, I can't turn on the volume. Yeah.

Jack: He says, "See—"

Austin: "See what a scourge is laid upon your hate, that heavens find means to kill your joys with love. And I, for winking at your discords, too have lost a brace of kinsmen."

Jack: Great line.

Austin: Which actually means Paris is dead there. A brace is two, right? “All are punished.”

Jack: No, it could mean that some of the police officers were killed.

Austin: Oh, right. Sure, sure, sure. Kinsmen? I guess so.

Art: Well, maybe Paris was in one of the helicopters. *[Ali laughs]*

Austin: Yeah. Yeah.

Jack: Romeo’s single bullet.

Art: We don't specifically see that he's somewhere else.

Austin: Yeah.

Sylvia: Oh, he did a *Wanted*, and he curved the bullet into the helicopter.

Austin: He curved the bullet. Yeah, yeah, yeah. And like Mercutio before, repeats “All are punished.” Not that Mercutio— Mercutio said, “A plague on both your houses,” but here, the repeat has happened again, which it does not in the original script, so.

Ali: “That heaven finds means to kill your joys with love.”

Austin: Yeah, uh huh.

Ali: Banger.

Austin: Banger. Banger.

Jack: This is what the news reader says.

Sylvia: Yeah. Let him cook. *[Ali laughs]*

Austin: Let him fucking cook.

Jack: It's great. It's great. *[Austin sighs]*

Sylvia: Good-ass movie.

Ali: Uh huh.

Austin: And like, the way he takes it on himself too.

Art: Yeah.

Austin: The thing of like...you know, to unfold that a little bit, the idea that like, “Do you understand y'all fucked up so bad that God made your kids fall in love in such a way that they would die over it? And also fuck me, because I guess I was out here laughing it up. *[Ali laughs]* I was out here laughing it up at y'all being so stupid, and now my kin are dead too? You know...”
[Jack laughs]

Ali: We're all in this.

Austin: Mm-hmm. Mm-hmm.

Jack: Oh my God. Fucking miserable.

Austin: “Go hence to have...” Yeah, uh huh. *[Ali laughs]*

Jack: Yeah, and...

Austin: And then they take the final line away from him and give it to the chorus, who in our case, is the newscaster, right?

Jack: Mm-hmm.

Austin: Because in the original, it's the prince who speaks last, and here, it's not him. It goes back to the...

Ali: Oh, yeah.

Austin: It cuts— we start getting like the grainy TV scanline filter on the widescreen shot, and then it cuts back to the TV zooming away slowly. It's good. Banger.

Jack: Yeah. I wasn't sure how they were going to do this.

Ali: Great movie.

Jack: It's so good. The TV, you know, we zoom away from the TV, and then the TV turns to static, and I was like, this is...you've set yourself up with an interesting problem here, Baz, because I'm not sure how we cut away from this TV just floating in the void, but the answer is just a slow fade through black, and the TV is consigned to the abyss.

Austin: Yeah. And again, I can't oversell how good it is to have the Shakespeare line delivered in the TV cadence of, *[imitating]* “A glooming peace this morning with it brings. The sun, for sorrow, will not show its head.” *[Jack laughs quietly]* Like, that style of like, we're cutting— you know, “And also today...” is so funny.

Jack: Yeah. Yeah, just great. Really, really, really, really, really, really good. Thank you for—

Austin: I do kind of feel the same way though, Jack, which is like, I don't— I've seen other Baz Luhrmann stuff. Nothing is anywhere near as high as this for me. It sort of reminds me of like Tarsem Singh and *The Fall*, which I think is like head and shoulders above the rest of Tarsem Singh's output.

Jack: Mm-hmm.

Austin: Which isn't— you know, you're allowed to have a banger that's that high.

Jack: If I could make something as good as *The Fall* or as this movie...

Austin: Oh, right. Yeah.

Jack: And then make like— not even— I mean, they're not great movies. And then just make movies for the rest of my life...

Austin: Yeah.

Jack: I would be so delighted. Although, [*Austin: "Mm-hmm"*] knowing what it's like to make things, I imagine Baz Luhrmann probably watches this movie and goes, [*pained*] "Ohhh! God."

Austin: Right. Right, no, totally, totally. Well, my guess is, you know, for five years, went, "Oh my god." Well, probably for a year went, "Hahahahaha, I have a fucking career now."

Jack: "I made it!" [*laughter*] Yes.

Sylvia: He did the Keith laugh? [*laughter*]

Austin: It was! [*laughs*]

Art: [*imitating Keith's soundboard*] Hahahahaha.

Austin: That's it. We've been around Keith so long that we can make any sound Keith makes, but that's it.

Jack: That is absolutely not true. Don't bespurch— "bespurch." Don't bespurch the good name of Keith making sounds.

Austin: [*laughs*] The king of sounds, Keith Carberry.

Jack: Oh, Sylvi, have you gotten Keith to make the sounds of the creatures in— what's that game called? Hunt? Wild Hunt?

Sylvia: *Wild Hearts?*

Jack: *Wild Hearts?*

Austin: Oh, that's a good idea.

Sylvia: Next time we stream it, I should.

Jack: Yeah. Yeah.

Austin: That's a good idea. I had another real thing to say. Oh, the other final thing I wanted to say about...from that interview that I keep coming back to, is there's such a funny like...not obsession but a return again and again and again to the movie *Jingle All the Way* in this interview.

Jack: What the fuck?

Austin: *[laughs]* No, that's not— that's a surprise to you, that that would happen? So, the...my intuition—

Jack: The Arnold Schwarzenegger movie?

Austin: Yeah. So, again, this is— so, I'm going to read from this interview. I'll just do a quick search for “Jingle.” Here we go. You remember I did that whole thing about how it was shot in Mexico and blah blah blah, and they're doing all this stuff? The original question here was, “How do you make a film like *Romeo + Juliet*, especially with the backing of a major Hollywood studio?” and Baz Luhrmann says a billion things and then eventually goes, “So, to answer the question,” like the original question, “it's very hard to convince them,” meaning Hollywood. “Once I had convinced them, they were fantastic, but kind of like, ‘Look, you know, he does these weird things, and they seem to work. This one won't, of course, but let's let him make this, and then when it turkeys, he'll be ready to do *Jingle All the Way*. He'll be begging us to let him do Arnie's next picture.’ Hollywood—” This is him now, again. This is him as him and not him as a fake Hollywood producer. “Hollywood. People have many wrong ideas about Hollywood. Firstly, it's much worse than the player, much more bizarre. In fact, it's a community in the desert made up of people from all over the world, the best people from all over the world. Now, what normally happens with the internationals—and most players in Hollywood are internationals—is that they're all hired to work their producer and pick up American teams. One of my non-negotiables is I work with my team. We work together. We are a team. We are an environment. Since the success of *Romeo + Juliet*, I now have an unprecedented deal where working with my team is actually ensconced in the deal.” So that is a thing that happened after this, right? is this did well enough that then he got to keep working with his people. But then, later in this same interview,

he wraps back around to them talking– basically saying like, “Well, how do you do a Shakespeare thing? It’s like, how much preparation do you do?” And this is where he gets into like, ‘I wanted to do Shakespeare makes a film. How would Shakespeare make a film? Blah, blah, blah, blah, blah.’ And then he goes, “We are noted for doing a ludicrous amount of preparation, and we’re noted for ridiculous kind of research, but that is what we like to do. The act of making must make your life rich. It’s got to be interesting and fulfilling and educational and take you on a journey. They’re the choices we make. The only sacrifice you have to make is fiscally. To have been very, very wealthy would have been very easy after *Strictly Ballroom*,” which was his first film that made a lot more money than it cost. “I’m not poor, but the kind of wealth I know others have is not ours, because we choose to do the Bard in a funky manner. That’s more interesting than doing *Jingle All the Way*.”

[4:15:39]

Sylvia: Damn!

Austin: “But also, we’re not for hire. We never have been. Freedom is worth something.”
[laughs quietly] The idea– someone must have pitched him on doing *Jingle All the Way*, and he was like, “Absolutely not. Fuck off.”

Jack: What year is this interview?

Austin: This interview is December 1996, and there’s a postscript– yes?

Jack: He is talking very big talk for...

Austin: Uh huh.

Jack: I mean, I know that this movie did well, but like, he is going for...

Austin: Mm-hmm.

Jack: So, all of his movies after *Romeo + Juliet*, starting with *Romeo + Juliet* are produced by 20th Century Fox until *Australia* and then Warner Brothers pictures until *Great Gatsby*. This man is like working in Hollywood and has been for most of his career.

Austin: Yeah.

Jack: So it is amazing to me that in ‘96, after his first, you know, turning a movie around...

Austin: Mm-hmm.

Jack: He is able to go out there swinging at specifically Hollywood production. It’s wild! How does he do that? [Ali laughs]

Austin: Yeah. That's Baz, baby!

Jack: Who's his producer?

Art: And a movie— I'm checking *Jingle All the Way*. *Jingle All the Way* made a bunch of money.

Austin: Oh, I bet it did.

Art: It's not like it was...

Austin: I bet it did. I liked it.

Art: And was very funny. Justice for *Jingle All the Way*.

Austin: You know what? It didn't—

Art: Phil Hartman is very good in it.

Austin: It didn't make as much money as *Romeo + Juliet*, in terms of profit. *Romeo + Juliet*...

Art: No, it didn't have fucking Leonardo DiCaprio in it. I mean...

Austin: Hey, now. It has Sinbad, okay?

Art: Say would you will about 1996 Leonardo DiCaprio, but he can open a picture.

Austin: He can open a picture.

Jack: *[laughs]* God. Weird, weird. *[Sylvia sighs]*

Austin: Uh huh.

Jack: What's that about? I have no idea. I'm just, why—

Austin: Sarah Michelle Gellar turned down the role for Juliet.

Jack: Huh.

Ali: Oh, wow.

Austin: That would have been a much, much different...

Sylvia: I'm glad.

Austin: Yeah. *[Sylvia laughs]*

Ali: Yeah.

Austin: And, of course...

Art: Well, in the Wikipedia, they have that Natalie Portman was cast.

Austin: Uh huh.

Art: But she was 14, and that it looked too...

Ali: Mm...

Jack: That would've been a different movie in another way.

Sylvia: That would have been real rough.

Austin: I want to be clear. That would not have *looked* too, that would have *been* too.

Sylvia: Yep.

Art: Right. Right, because they probably were still gonna do...

Austin: Yeah, right? Presumably.

Art: All the scenes.

Austin: Jesus. Anyway. Yeah?

Jack: She's a great actress.

Austin: Great.

Jack: I would have loved to have seen Natalie Portman do that role in however many more years than they were originally planning to do it.

Austin: Yeah, uh huh. Mm-hmm. Oh, we didn't— okay, last thing here. The soundtrack.

Jack: Okay.

Ali: Mm-hmm.

Austin: I know we've talked about like, oh, individual songs here and there, but taken as—

Art: Oh. One last thing, get ready for 45 more minutes. *[Austin and Ali laugh]*

Jack: I have to go have dinner in a bit, so.

Austin: The soundtrack. Yeah, uh huh, it's 11:00 here, so.

Jack: Two big things off the top. The soundtrack is divided into two sections and was subsequently released in two sections. The first is an album of needle drops, you know.

Austin: Mm-hmm.

Jack: Which we can...I imagine we're going to spend most of our time talking about, because they're fucking incredible.

Austin: Mm-hmm.

Jack: And the other is a non-diegetic soundtrack composed by three people.

Austin: Well, no, no, no, because there is diegetic stuff in that one also.

Jack: Oh, that's true. There is some diegetic stuff.

Austin: That is where "Young Hearts Run Free," where "When Doves Cry," and I want to say maybe those are the—

Jack: Oh, I suppose. I'm making—

Austin: Any of the in...anytime someone is singing is diegetic, and that is on the second album.

Jack: Yes. Yes. I'm also making a broader distinction of like music without lyrics, more traditional film soundtrack writing.

Austin: Yes. I understand.

Jack: And this gets really interesting, because the soundtrack was written by three people, which is a lot of people to have primary composition credits on a movie. You know, anytime you see a composer working on a big movie, they have a team with them, and those people aren't usually credited in the Music By or the Composing section. But the fact that these three people are named suggests that essentially there were three lead composers working—Nellee Hooper, Marius de Vries, and Craig Armstrong—and you can tell, in this movie. There is some really interesting differentiation between a sort of like fairly rudimentary 90s electric piano part that plays every so often, *[Austin: "Mm-hmm"]* when we just need some some branching music. And

then, like you said, Austin, there's this like orchestral string stuff that plays sometimes that is really interesting. I was really...I really loved the way it sounded, and it had this sort of like Vaughan Williams style pastoral vibe of like, oh, this is traditional music for love scenes but also music for doomed love, you know, the sense that there's some melancholy swelling in the music alongside. But it was notable for me to listen to and be like, even among the orchestral or the non-lyriced music of this movie, I'm like, this doesn't fit together as well as this piece does. And then looking it up and being like, "Oh, three composers worked on this, and it's very likely that what I'm hearing is just a completely different writer," was really interesting.

Austin: Mm-hmm. Absolutely. And, you know, the first of these, *Volume 1*, which is the needle drops, I think is like an image of music, of a certain subsection of like alternative, you know, rock and pop from this period that also just helps set a sort of musical space in the culture.

Jack: Yeah.

Austin: This is what cool music sounds like for like five years, you know? You know, if you haven't watched this movie, it is...you don't go more than three scenes without some song that is like the coolest song you've heard since the last song they played.

Jack: It feels effortless.

Austin: Yeah.

Ali: It feels effortless, and it's also like, it happens so often that I don't want to say that it feels restrained, but like...they don't spend a lot of time with those songs, so it feels like just this sort of like noise hits while an emotion is happening.

Art: Mm.

Jack: Mm.

Austin: Mm-hmm.

Ali: And then you sort of move onto the next scene, because this movie is pretty quick, all said. The example of like the strongest song that I have associated with this movie is "Lovefool" by the Cardigans.

Austin: Yeah.

Ali: And that plays like approximately two lines, when the nurse is talking to Romeo to be—

Austin: Mm-hmm.

Ali: When they're like confirming the engagement or whatever. Like, that is the moment that you play "Lovefool" in, right?

Austin: Yeah.

Ali: Like, that is so much better than the moment that they meet, but it really is only like 15 seconds of that song.

Austin: Counter that with the "When Doves Cry" drop, which is just...

Jack: It's so good.

Austin: The kid singing that is so good, and that goes on for quite some time, and that has a lot of space, because it's an original comp— it's not an original composition. It's an original performance for the album.

Ali: Mm-hmm.

Austin: Or for the movie, rather. One complaint here is, of course, Radiohead's "Talk Show Host" does appear on one of these albums. Radiohead's "Exit Music (To a Film)" does not.

Ali: *[quietly]* Yeah.

Austin: And what are you doing? What are you doing? *[Ali and Jack laugh]*

Art: Mm.

Ali: I think there was some weirdness with that. I looked this up before we started recording, where—

Austin: "For a Film." I said "To a Film." I meant "For a Film." It's fine.

Ali: Yeah. Baz had approached Radiohead to make a song for this movie, and they were gonna use "Exit Music," I think in place of when they use "Talk Show Host," but they didn't finish it.

Austin: Ohh, interesting.

Ali: Because like, Baz had given Thom Yorke like two scenes from the film or whatever, *[Austin: "Mm, mm-hmm"]* and he like became so attached to this idea about writing a song about *Romeo and Juliet* that I think they just like took longer than they meant to.

Austin: *[laughs quietly]* York said, quote, "When we saw the scene in which Claire Danes holds the Colt .45 against her head, we started working on the song immediately." *[Ali laughs]*

Jack: This is what I mean about being like, “Oh, that's the movie we're making?”

Sylvia: Yeah, man.

Jack: You know? It's like...

Austin: Yeah, uh huh. Uh huh.

Jack: They had the same reaction we did of like, “Oh, yeah. All right, let's make that picture.”

Austin: Oh my God. This then becomes *OK Computer*.

Jack: Oh, that's wild.

Austin: “Soon afterwards, the band wrote and recorded ‘Exit Music (For a Film)’; the track plays over the film’s end credits, but was excluded from the soundtrack’s album at the band's request. The song helped shape the direction for the rest of the album. York said, quote, ‘It was the first performance we'd ever recorded where every note of it made my head spin—something I was proud of, something I could turn up really, really loud and not wince at any moment.’”

Jack: Wow. Oh my god. I just...imagine having that feeling about music you've written. *[Austin and Ali laugh]*

Austin: Imagine you're Claire Danes, and you're like, “Yeah, I fucking killed that.” *[Ali laughs]*

Jack: Also, we've talked about—

Austin: That scene just changed music.

Jack: We've talked about Claire Danes holding the gun to her own head, but I think we should also give special mention to Claire Danes *[Austin laughs, “Yes”]* briefly threatening to shoot Pete Postlethwaite.

Ali: Yeah.

Austin: It's so good.

Sylvia: It's great. It's amazing.

Austin: It's so good.

Jack: I want to find—

Sylvia: I posted about holding a Catholic priest at gunpoint in a cute little outfit. *[Ali laughs]*

Austin: Mm-hmm.

Jack: Yeah, yeah, yeah.

Sylvia: And it's just like, ideal.

Jack: It's so great.

Austin: *[laughs quietly]* Wait, I got one more. I got one more here. "Initially York wanted to work lines from the play into the song, but the final draft of the lyrics became a broad summary of the narrative. He said, 'I saw the Zeffirelli version when I was 13, and I cried my eyes out, because I couldn't understand why, the morning after they shagged, they didn't just run away. *[Sylvia laughs]* It's a song for two people who should run away before all the bad stuff starts.'" You know what? Fucking true.

Ali: Yeah, sounds good.

Art: Yeah. *[Austin laughs]*

Jack: Man.

Austin: *Romeo + Juliet!*

Jack: *Romeo + Juliet.*

Austin: It's a banger!

Ali: Uh huh. Ten out of ten.

Sylvia: Five stars.

Jack: Oh, it's great.

Art: Yeah, I'm so glad we finally got to do this.

Jack: Art, thank you so much for organizing it.

Austin: It's fantastic. Yeah, uh huh.

Ali: Oh, before we're done with the episode, I just want to say: I take those drugs that get me high for four and twenty hours. *[Ali, Austin, and Jack laugh]* I've been thinking about that for the last hour and a half.

Sylvia: Let's fucking go. *[Ali laughs]*

Austin: It's so funny.

Sylvia: Bars.

Jack: We have been Friends at the Table, and we will continue to be.

Austin: Do we have anything we want to reiterate? Yeah, we will continue to be. That's true.

Jack: You can go to [friendsatthetable.cash](https://www.patreon.com/friendsatthetable) to support us on Patreon. Correct me if I'm wrong, there's more of—

Austin: Oh, wait, I got one more quote.

Jack: Oh, yeah?

Austin: Oh, there's more of what? There's more of what?

Jack: If you liked what we have done today...I don't know what we've done, but I do know that it's 3 hours and 44 minutes long. *[Ali laughs]*

Sylvia: Oh my gosh.

Austin: Is that it? We can keep going.

Jack: Then you can go to Patreon and hear more of this, right?

Sylvia: You can.

Austin: This is the end of this.

Jack: Not more of *Romeo + Juliet*, but us talking about movies and things. Is that something that's available to people on Patreon, if you support us?

Ali: Mm-hmm.

Austin: Yeah, but it's such a high tier that I don't feel good about suggest— you know what? Yes, there's a tier at which you can hear us talk about a bunch of different movies over the years.

Art: Well, and a bunch of this went on the free feed—

Austin: Oh, is that true?

Ali: I think a lot of them did, yeah.

Art: Because of the charity stream, right?

Austin: Oh!

Jack: Oh! Great news.

Austin: Okay, then yeah. Go support us on Patreon, [friendsatthetable.cash](https://www.patreon.com/friendsatthetable).

Jack: Now freed from having to support us on Patreon extremely highly, *[Sylvia laughs]* feel free to support us on Patreon at any amount you would like. *[Ali laughs]*

Austin: Yeah.

Art: At whatever you're comfortable with.

Sylvia: But like, if you want to do it extremely highly, we're not— I'm not complaining.

Austin: I think you should. We put a lot of good work into our show.

Sylvia: Yeah.

Austin: And it means a lot though that you do support it the way that y'all do and also that you came out and supported us during the charity stream that this is, you know, one of the outputs from that. So, always appreciated.

Ali: Yeah, thank you to everybody for making this possible by donating to the National Network of Abortion Funds.

Austin: Here's one.

Art: And thanks for your patience as we've slowly crawled through these rewards.

Ali: Uh huh.

Art: It's a lot of extra podcasts, and it's been a weird year.

Austin: It is, and we've been bad at making the podcast over the last year. It has been a long one, I think, but I think we're— the engine is coming back online in a way. I want to really thank also—in this moment that we're just talking—everybody who's like come out to the Twitch streams and also everybody on the team who's done some fun Twitch streams in the last couple of weeks. We don't talk about it a lot, but we all started this because we streamed video games together, and it's fun to get some of that energy back. Even though it's still not like the main

thing we do or what we are, it's been fun to kind of get some of that back going. We talked about Sylvi and Keith planning *Wild Hearts*. We have a *Wilderness* game that maybe will be wrapped up by— oh, it definitely won't, because I'll be out of the state for a little bit, but soon it'll be wrapped up. We've had Dre's Mech Mondays. Jack, you and Janine just played some *Roadwarden*, the day before we recorded this. So, that has been really fun.

[Twitch.tv/friendsatthetable](https://www.twitch.tv/friendsatthetable). Quote: "With such box office, you'd almost be subject to a deity principle now, wouldn't you?" And Baz Luhrmann says, "More the alchemy principle, I think."

Sylvia: So true, Baz.

Austin: "What we've done in our two sorties is that we've turned lead to gold. To understand means gold, so therefore we must understand something about the audience that they—Hollywood—don't. Frankly, no one knows anything, and those that do what we do are only paid because they have a better instinct than others. *[Sylvia laughs]* They don't know. I don't really know. I know what I'd like to see out there, and we have the audacity and the guts and I suppose the sort of energy to sustain the fight to get it done. So what's that left me with? Well, I was certainly offered higher cash deals, much more wealthy deals by other studios, but with Fox, they embraced the notion that I wanted to work with Australia and that I work with a large team in an idiosyncratic way which we think works. The truth is it's not about the film. I don't think we're filmmakers or directors or whatever. We tell stories. So what we have purchased or won is the ability to think something up and do it."

[Radiohead's "Exit Music (For a Film)" plays]