

[LIVE AT THE TABLE: FEBRUARY 2019 \(PART 1\)](#)

Transcriber: @loftyinclination#0019

AUSTIN: Welcome to live at the table, an actual play live stream, I guess, focused on critical world building, smart characterisation, and fun interactions between good friends; I am your host Austin Walker and joining me today, Art Martinez-Tebbel.

ART: Hey. You can find me on twitter @atebbel, I think One Song Only is more likely to restart than ever now, and if you really want to like- if you're into it and you want to nudge it along, tweet at Ali and tell her that Otis is the uncrowned champ, [surprised cough from Austin] of One Song Only.

AUSTIN: Wow, okay.

ART: Maybe we'll light that fire again.

AUSTIN: Sylvia¹ Clare.

SYLVIA: Hi. I'm Sylvia, you can find me on twitter @captaintrash, and you can listen to my show Emojidrome on Google Play and iTunes.

AUSTIN: Ooh, Google Play first. You got that Google Play money, they- you're just saying Google Play first.

SYLVIA: We're- we- we're up there, I've said that, I- oh, I didn't say- yeah, I guess that just kinda, you know. Tim hasn't been lining my pockets as much recently, so I'm giving it to Google. Tim Cook.

AUSTIN: Tim Cook, right.

ART: At the end of this I have to, I have another platf- I have another plug.

AUSTIN: Wait, you go ahead and do that plug now, 'cause someone said that anyone can see this Patreon link, so I gotta see if I did the thing wrong.

ART: Okay, um; we're- I think we're contractually obligated to tell people that they can find Friends at the Table on Pandora.

AUSTIN: Not... That's not true, it's only when we do ads.

ART: Oh, okay

AUSTIN (over Art): Oh no, you're right, I think maybe you're right. Did that start?

¹ The name in the audio recording is no longer in use, hence the audio/transcript discrepancy.

ART: I thought we agreed, that they-

JANINE (over Art): What?

ART: that that was happening.

AUSTIN: That did, that did go out to everybody, didn't it- wait, did it go out to everybody?

DRE: Wait.

SYLVIA: What?

AUSTIN: Did that Pandora-

DRE: What?

AUSTIN: Okay, there's two things happening here; [Laughter from Dre] one is the Pandora thing-

JANINE (over Austin): 'Kay

AUSTIN: That other people on this call *apparently* don't know about. Two is- no this seems like- no, this seems right. People are saying- I think, I think that this post is right. You want to explain the Pandora thing Art?

ART: Yeah; Pandora's doing podcasts now; we're one of them. I think we agreed to plug it on every episode which we have done zero times.

AUSTIN: We haven't plugged other listening services.

ART: Is that what it is, do we have to just include it with our other listening services? Alright

AUSTIN: Yes, that was... I'm pretty sure, I could check out business chat to see if this came up. Uhh, I'll do a search here in channel "business stuff", and I'll search for "iTunes", for that will be one of us being like, "hey, we can- only have to do it when we say iTunes". Right?

ART: Yeah I don't know.

AUSTIN: Great. Anyway we're on Pandora now. [laugh] That's something. Right?

ART: Yeah, it's, it's exclusive.

AUSTIN: That's true.

ART: And very not-lucrative.

AUSTIN: Right no, we're not being paid to be on Pandora. As far as I know.

ART: Yeah don't tell Austin I'm pocket all the Pandora cash.

AUSTIN: God damnit. [Laughter from Sylvia] Urm, alright, we're going to keep moving. Andrew Lee Swan is here with me.

DRE: Hey; yeah, you can find me on twitter @swandre3000, and, you know I was going to make a joke but no, no, nope, not-

AUSTIN: What? You don't- what you going to like a Kingdom Hearts joke?

DRE: No, just, you know, think of other companies that have been in the news lately for things involving people supposedly embezzling money and...

AUSTIN: There's a lot of those, so...

DRE: Yeah. Yeah.

ART: What a nonspecific enough... [Laughter from Austin]

JANINE: Yeah.

DRE: Gearbox.

AUSTIN: Gear- okay. Yep, got it.

JANINE: Sure, the thing they've been in the news for most is [laughter from Austin] embezzling money.

DRE (laughing slightly): Well, that's where this whole thing started, right?

AUSTIN: It started there, it's certainly started there. Alright. Also that was the voice of Janine Hawkins.

JANINE: Hey, I'm Janine, I'm @bleatingheart on twitter.

AUSTIN: Okay. Welcome, here, as always, thank you for supporting us at friendsatthetable.cash. I'm going to stop looking at the chat to try to find -- my- our personal internal chat -- to try to figure out information about our Pandora deal. And so, we're just gonna keep on moving. Also, I think we're good with this, with the, Luke- sorry, someone- Luke in the chat said that we posted the Patreon link in a way that everyone can see it, but no, that is not the case, so we are, we are safe. And if that was a bit, don't do that bit again, because it sends me into a scramble before I have to run a game for three hours, so.

JANINE: Put the link in the purse.

AUSTIN: Fuck off. [Laughter from Janine and Austin] Alright, so, we started the road to season six, in the last Live At The Table, and we did that at the absolute periphery of the Divine Principality. For those of you who haven't listened to that, one, go listen to that, it's a really fun game. Janine was there, Dre was there. And, we were kind of interested in starting off looking at season six, which is going to be a game about war and empire and politics and giant robots, and therefore a bunch of other things, by looking at those who were harmed by the expansive empire first.

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AUSTIN: We really wanted to show the terrible power and reach of what the Divine Principality was becoming, and the ways in which, whenever empire expands, people are harmed by it; they wipe entire cultures away, as they stretch their bones.

AUSTIN: Today, we are turning inwards. Not only towards the centre of the galaxy, but also towards the heart of the Divine Principality. One of the biggest questions that has come up as we've begun The Road to Season Six but even as we finished up the last season in our sci-fi series was, how did it come to this? How did this group that was once so, so core to protecting the Milky Way from the most malicious and dangerous organisations and creatures, join with a long persecuted- persecuted group that spent much of its time pursuing a policy of non-interventionism, only to become a tyrannical regime? I am, obviously speaking about specific things here, but I am not using proper nouns because I don't want to give too much away for people who have specifically not listened to past, um, seasons, though I suspect that just the name "Divine Principality" might give some things away.

AUSTIN: So I'll say that again right now, Road to Season Six certainly is something that is touching on stuff from COUNTER/Weight and Twilight Mirage, but it will not include- it shouldn't include specific spoilers about specific outcomes for player characters or primary antagonists or things like that. So, going back to this, this question of "how did it get here?", you know a lot of Season Six is going to be up in the air until it begins, but- because that's what these games are for, to some degree it's going to be, you know, a mech game for us to try out a new cool system, and then it'll be a world-building game for us to be like, "hey, how did this thing happen?"; that's what we did with Dialect. But there are some things I do know for sure, and that'll help us understand what we- what the kind of stakes of the game today are. And these things are true whether or not the setting, the game, the actual Season Six takes place, you know, if we start it in seven days, or in seven months, and we run another seven Road to Season Six games, like, the following things I'm about to say are true about Season Six.

AUSTIN: Some time, question mark question mark question mark [laughter] after the end of Twilight Mirage, a, a man named Aram Nideo, would pen, what would, many years after his death, become a foundational document of religious and political philosophy for an empire called the Divine Principality. It was called The Many Stars Thesis. It is a work that argues for the creation of a decentralised, federated empire, in place of, what had previously been two

largely centralised bodies of governments. Those being, and again, we're in spoiler territory, feel free to eject, get ready to roll out if you don't want to hear any more, and this is my last like, warning on some of the big picture stuff -- previous been The Principality of Kesh, and the old Divine Free States, and the Divine Fleet prior to that.

AUSTIN: Sapient life, Nideo argued, in a kind of metaphorical way, would only have emerged across the galaxy by way of the propagation of various sorts of star systems; no two exactly alike, yet each connected to each other; each necessary as a potential ground for new life. And, these stars hung in constellations, none of which were made of one star alone. Yet, some stars, and only some stars, led to life, and others did not. And across every constellation, some stars shone more brightly than others. This is a reactionary thesis, it's sometimes called the Nideo Argument, and it is either an extension or a perversion of the old faith to which Nideo and the Divine Free States once belonged. It became a cornerstone of the new Divine Principality, and of a thing called Asterism; the faith which would eventually tie everyone there together. It effectively argues for a sort of- you know, a touchstone for us has, again and again, been the Holy Roman Empire. It is an empire, in the sense of, a group of people who have spread of a great deal of space, a hierarchical group, but it is not an empire in the way, we may think of an empire with a single emperor who gives very specific orders to, to every limb of the state. It is an empire composed of micro-kingdoms, of, of small duchies, of internal skirmishes and rivals, and that is sort of the case that Nideo made about having many stars. You know, it is easy enough to hand wave it from there in some ways; the Rapid Evening was already a militaristic, interventionist, you know- it had militar-militaristic, interventionist policy at its heart,

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AUSTIN: and the Divine Free States were a theocratic government, and those things already carry a lot of threats, of totalitarianism in their bones. But, I kind of, you know, we know that those groups were persecuted and also pursued justice, and so one of the things that I wanted to do today was give space for the question of like, well, "who tried to stand up and stop this?" Because we know that people do stand up to stop things, and they may fail; maybe they don't have the resources necessary; maybe they, you know, can't get popular support; maybe the power is simply too powerful for them to overturn. But we know they tried. So, if last game started at the periphery, today it starts at the centre.

AUSTIN: And, here's the other thing I know about what composes the Divine Principality. When we start Season Six, the Divine Principality will be composed of what I'm still calling Houses -- I kind of like Stel, as like, short for Stellar, like, Stel Nideo, Stel Kesh, instead of House Nideo, House Kesh. But I'm not confirming that yet. There would be five of those major houses. I kind of know what four of those are, I have no idea what the fifth is, and we'll see what the state of those four I think are, are? And each of those houses has countless minor houses. Little kings and queens or, or, I probably- probably wouldn't use king and queen, it's very important in the Principality, the only- the only kind of, total sovereign, is the people. It's why you have a prince and not a king and not an emperor; the people are king. Fucking, JO [Jerk Off] motion.

AUSTIN: The, House Kesh, is the original house, the first house, and at the time that we are playing today there is at least one other house, House Nideo, as, in terms of being a major house. There are also countless minor houses, and one of those minor houses is a house called House Brightline. Art, if you check your character sheet, you'll see that you're a character named Briar Brightline. Today we are going to be looking at a specific moment where House Brightline, and a group associated with them, had a chance to intervene, and reduce the total amount of harm that the Divine Principality could do to the galaxy. I don't know if you win or lose yet, I haven't designed a thing where- this is not Halo Reach, where like, yeah you're going to lose. You might win, and it will change Season Six.

ART: Jesus fucking Halo Reach spoilers over here.

AUSTIN: That's the premise of the game. [Laughter from Sylvia]

ART: Well I didn't know that and now it's ruined.

AUSTIN: [Laugh] So, I mean I guess I'll set it up... Let me finish saying one more thing and then we'll set it up in fiction instead of in this kind of broad sense. This game that we're playing today is a game by, I mean I just said your name was Briar, Briar uh, uh, Brightline. Briar is a shout out to the author of this actual game, Briar Sovereign, who made, who made a game called Armour Astir: Advent, or just Armour Astir, which is, inspired by Escaflowne, inspired by Gundam. And it has like, a fantastical element to it, like, [questioningly] three of you have magic stats? Three of you ha- your classes are Arcanist, Witch, and- Imposter doesn't *explicitly* say, that you're magic, but it explicitly says that the ways in which you are not magic is the thing that kind of sets you apart.

And so, I want to imagine today's game almost as being a fairy tale, or a fable, that's told in the time of Season Six, about this game. The core facts will be true -- if you win or lose, if, certain things happen with Divines or with NPCs, those things will be true -- but the reasons you have things called Raypistol's and Hand-Crossbows, and that some of you have a thing on your sheet that says "your magic is like BLANK", those things are, are- or maybe I'm wrong. Maybe I'm wrong and we'll revisit this at the end of the game, and things were more like this back then. You know, maybe there's a question mark to some of this. But, but, what I will say is for people listening, I suspect that by the time we get to Season Six, most people won't have Raypistols, or their magic will not be like "the roaring elements".

AUSTIN: Any questions at this point? Before we dig a little bit deeper in? [silence for a moment] Alright, so. Here is you, here is the mission, and we'll say it, and then we'll go over your characters and we'll kind of set a framing scene. And maybe we actually see all of your characters as you are, heading towards your mission, because that will be, it's a fun way to kind of have everyone describe themselves. And, and me describe them because some of them- because I've just made these characters, these are not- these are like pre-gens for you all, this is not a situation where you all built these characters, but you obviously have a lot of agency going forwards, to, tell me what they look and feel like.

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AUSTIN: You are all on the *Ivory Prince*, the Constellation-class carrier Hellebore, which is a top of the line carrier. It is the flagship of a group called Horizon. Which is, sort of a freedom fighting group, that is, try- at this point, it hasn't kind of made its big debut, I would say if you ask one of the many many many inhabitants across, across Divinity, across the reaches of Divinity, they wouldn't know who Horizon is. But like, the woke folks do, you know, maybe there's someone on each world or on each backwater saloon, who's like- who would recognise a symbol of, of Horizon, which is literally a diamond, the top half of which is white, the bottom half of which is black. Very simple symbol, one of those really good ones that you could just quickly sketch out somewhere, you know. And, uh, you have kind of not quite become a galactic power on your own yet, and maybe you never will, because it's not, it's not even like- you know, what can one small noble house do in the face of an entire empire. But maybe you can help people, maybe you can stop things from going too bad.

[Character Introduction]

AUSTIN: And I think first, the first person we see on this ship is, is someone on the bridge which is Briar Brightline. Do you want to read your, the top of your class page, Art?

ART: Yeah, [quietly] or, yes. The first word is behind the like, unmovable Roll20...

AUSTIN: Oh, weird. You can zoom, maybe? Like, zoom out, or in, I- I don't know where, I don't know where the-

ART [cutting out]: I- got it. "Even the best of teams need guidance. Overlooking [sorties from] the Carrier's helm, the Captain commands the crew and ensures those in the field get the help they need."

AUSTIN: So I've written down a look here but feel free, and this is for everybody to decide that's- that they want other things on these lists. I've written no- you look "noble", you wear an "officer's coat", and you lead with "tested experience". Does that sound okay to you Art?

ART: Yeah, it sounds, it sound pretty good. "Immaculate uniform" is the other that jumps out to me-

AUSTIN (over Art): Also good.

ART: But "officer's coat" is more important. [Positive noise from Austin] Just- just know that it's pretty, it's pretty well put together.

AUSTIN: [Positive noise] I've selected a "Raypistol" for you- I think it might, everybody might have a Raypistol except for Dre? Is that true?

DRE (over Austin): Yes it is.

AUSTIN (over Dre): No, urm,

JANINE (over Austin): No

AUSTIN: Janine also does not have, have a Raypistol.

JANINE: Yeah.

AUSTIN: I felt like Raypistols should be for like, the super, serious, like- The Divine Principality people is actually what it is. That like, kind of was like, the people from the Principality should have this shit. It's a fun way to like, indicate difference. You have, a carrier, the carrier is called the Constellation-class carrier Hellebore, and it has some stats that we don't need to go over right now, particularly, but know that, one of the special things that it can do, a couple of special things it can do; one is, it has a really powerful main gun. It can hurt really big things, it's maybe the only thing on the table right now that could, for instance, damage a Divine. It has special sensors that can detect when constructs, mechs, ships, other divines, etcetera, are nearby, or are approaching. And then you, as the character, have a bunch of abilities. Obviously you have a bunch of regular ass moves, that are very PBTA [Powered By the Apocalypse] moves; you know, "Weather the Storm", you can read sort of being like, something like, "act under pressure", "act under fire". "Read the room" is like a bunch of other rooms to, read, the room. Etcetera. Do you want to tell me your stats and then we'll look at your moves really quick?

ART: Yeah, I have a 0 in Defy-

AUSTIN (laughing): Uh huh.

ART: A +1 in Sense, a -1 in Clash, a +1 in Talk, and a +2 in Know.

AUSTIN: Great. You have the moves- so I've levelled everybody up once, here. Captains begin with three moves, or four moves- maybe I've levelled everybody up once except for I've levelled Brightline up twice because you're the captain, goddamnit, you have experience- and also you don't have a mech, so it's kind of like I wanted to give you some abilities to do some shit here. [Art's wife Jess yelling in the background] I hear some yelling, is everything alright?

ART: Yeah, Jess is trying to get Mabel to go for a walk.

AUSTIN: Great, good. I- you know what, perfect. You have the "Coordinator" ability, which- [Mabel barking] Hi Mabel

ART (over Austin): There she goes. [Giggles from Austin, Dre and Sylvia]

JESS (faintly): Sorry Austin

AUSTIN: No problem Jess. Hi Jess. Tell Jess hi, what are you doing? [Snigger from Dre]

ART (leaning away from the microphone): Austin says hi.

JESS (faintly): Hi Austin.

AUSTIN: Hi Jess. Thank you.

ART: We can do this back and forth-

AUSTIN: Yeah, just keep going.

JESS (faintly): Hi everybody.

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DRE: Hey, tell, tell, tell her I say hi.

ART (away from the microphone): Dre says hi.

JESS (faintly): Hi Dre. [Laughter from Austin and Sylvia]

DRE: Perfect.

AUSTIN (laughing): Uh, I dropped my glasses, they're gone. [Laughter from Dre, Sylvia makes a concerned noise] Well, I guess we can't do this game, because I can't see anything. Alright, one second, here they are, okay. Jeez. Okay, so you have "Coordinator", which says "when you roll a 10[+] help or hinder and choose to help", you get "a +2 instead of a +1," and "when you roll a 6 or below when rolling +Crew, mark experience-" that's great. You have "In Command", which says that "you are the Carrier's captain, and naturally have command of its crew. While at the helm of the Carrier, you may order the crew to;" do a bunch of stuff, and when you do, instead of using the stat that you normally have, you use Crew, so like if you want to shoot stuff, etcetera etcetera etcetera. And also a note here is, and this will become clearer as the game's damage system becomes clearer, the- your kind of HP is the crew's HP. The, if the crew is upset, if the crew is, you know paranoid, or the crew is, uh, has low moral, those are things that- or if the crew is injured, those kind of, effectively, are dangers to you, and dangers are bad. Once you're, once your danger- once there's a lot of dangers on your plate, that is how you become defenseless, and when you're defenseless, things can really hurt you.

You also have Tactical Genius, that says, "when you're supervising allies from afar during a Sortie" -- in other words during a mission -- you can level- ah, "lever your tactical know-how into better positioning." You "take three hold at the start of" this game, and then throughout the game you can spend it 1-for-1 to; "remove a risk from an ally"; to "give an ally +1 forward, describing how you advise or support them"; or to "have an ally appear somehow in a place they are needed." "I love it when a plan comes together."

You also have “Surprise Requisition”, which is the other half of [laughing] “I love it when a plan comes together”²; “When you reveal a piece of equipment or [laugh from Art] ammunition you’ve had-” ah, a mech “-stocked with, just as the pilot needs it, roll +Value. On a +10, choose one for free. One a 7-9, you had to requisition that gear personally -- pay two supply,” you start with five, “or advance a Faction’s Gravity clock as they do you a favour.” We don’t have clocks for factions here, but you can tell me, we can kind of decide where you got it from, and that’s a thing I’ll take note of as we move into Season Six eventually. And that is like, hey, you- you know, a weapon that was destroyed, they get back, or they get a, they get a replacement for, or a weapon gets a tag that lets it do damage for more- do better damage. Which I’ll explain as we get into stuff. Or, “A Field Familiar flies in to support them” -- I don’t know what a Field Familiar is, I think it’s like a robot, but like a dragon, or fairy, you know? Anyway.

ART: Great.

AUSTIN: Good stuff.

ART: Let’s not look that up.

AUSTIN: [Laugh] And “Fire Support”, which is that you can use- when you, when you fire to blow stuff up, you can use “Know” instead of “Crew”, so- I mean, I guess this doesn’t actually matter for you, I could take that move away and that way you wouldn’t have an extra level, because your Know and your Crew are actually the same level, so, whatever. Which is two.

ART: Alright, this is my favourite, COUNTER/Weight reboot yet.

AUSTIN: Yeah, it’s- isn’t it great? [laugh] I love this, uh, I love this Cass clone. We have some “Gravity”, which is like Bonds, and we’ll get there, I’ll explain the, the Bonds, when we get there. Urm, Sylvia. You’re playing the “Arcanist”, can you read the top thing, and go over some of your sheet?

SYLVIA: Yeah, so, the “Arcanists” are; “Disciplined students of arcane magic, who practice their talents for years before graduating to the cockpit of an Astir”. Then... Austin, you haven’t told me how to pronounce the first name of my character.

AUSTIN (over Sylvia): I think it’s Cerise [Sir-eeze]. Is that right?

SYLVIA: Cerise? That’s what I thought, but I wanted to make sure.

AUSTIN (over Sylvia): People know the colour Cerise? Is that how you pronounce that?

JANINE: I would say Sir-eeze for the colour and [in French accent] Suh-reze for the, for the French fruit. So depending on which, way you’re going.

² “I love it when a plan comes together” is a move from The Sprawl, which Art took for Cass in COUNTER/Weight

SYLVIA: So Sir-eeese then

AUSTIN [laughing]: Okay.

SYLVIA: Cause I'm not- I can't do the French- I'm- look, it's a reason I got bad grades in the class, [sad noise from Austin] it's cause I'm very bad at [sad noise from Janine] using the correct pronunciation. [Noise of agreement from Austin]

JANINE: Core French is a boondoggle, that's fine.

AUSTIN: You want to go through your look, or your stats?

SYLVIA: Yeah. My look is "wily", I am wearing "dress uniform", and my magic is like the "roaring elements", which all sound great to me.

AUSTIN: Hell yeah.

SYLVIA: My stats are Defy, +1; Sense, 0; Clash, +1; Talk, -1; Know, +2; and Channel, +2.

AUSTIN: You'll note, you also have a thing that says "when you launch your Astir, you say:", and I love that blank; I don't know. I don't know what you say, you'll have to tell me what Cerise says. Also I need pronouns for all of these characters, I left all of these characters without pronouns so that you could decide those for yourselves. So let me know once you, once you know on each one of them.

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AUSTIN: Do you want to go over moves, do you want me to go over moves? So I can summarise with what's...?

SYLVIA: [contemplative noise] If you want to just summar- summarize them, because I like, I've looked over what I have but I don't know if I'm going to do a good job explaining it. [Laugh]

AUSTIN: So, I'll start with some easy ones. You have a thing called "Tactical Illusions", which lets- oh, you also have Channel, Channel +2, did you say that one?

SYLVIA: Yeah I did, I did say that-

[AUSTIN and SYLVIA overlapping]

AUSTIN: Okay

SYLVIA: did I say Channel +2, I thought I did.

AUSTIN: I don't- I may have missed it. So, you have, "Tactical Illusions", which lets you use Channel to create illusions, and, distract enemies -- that one's pretty simple, right. You have "Consult Literature," which is literally "a store of books and scrolls on various subjects that you can consult for information." I'm going to say that, you can not only- they're not only books and scrolls here, they're like, they're- you know, things you can pull up in front of you. Maybe they're like, holographic books and scrolls, or like, not even holographic but like, magical projections; maybe the Divine that you serve will, will project that for you, in front of you, in some format.

The- here's a thing I should note really quick, there's [a lot/not]- you know how in Twilight Mirage, the rule was "no touchscreens"? The rule that I have for Season Six is "yeah, you can have a touchscreen, but it can only be, a touchscreen for one thing." Like, you can't have a touch- there's no iPads, there's no like "oh, this iPad- this screen can do, can be a map or it can be a calculator." You have a touchscreen that is a map? I hope you need a map, because that's the one thing it does. If you need to change the, where your engine, you know the power is going, you better go to the, the terminal that controls that specific thing. So, very like, 70's sci-fi vibes, very like, running to the engine room, running to the turrets; you know, that sort of stuff. Just, starting to throw out some aesthetic touchstones for what that season will look like, eventually.

You have "Prepare Rituals", which lets you pick three- two rituals? Three rituals that you will have prepared. Kind of, do this at the top of the game in this case, in the top of the Sortie. And your list of rituals are here, in the bottom right, do you see them here, this is where you repair rituals.

SYLVIA: Uhh, yeah.

AUSTIN: So you should take a look at this when I'm done talking, and figure out which ones you want to try to prepare, and we'll roll that when it's time to play.

SYLVIA: Great.

AUSTIN: You have "Plans," which is again, this is just like one that this class comes with, which is "Arcanists are educated in the art of war," and basically you can say at the top of the game "hey, I have, a plan." And if the plan succeeds you mark experience, but if the plan is interfered with, you take a Risk. And, I will now say that Risks and Perils are basically- I guess Dangers- you see at the top where it says "Risk Peril Risk Peril Risk Peril"?

SYLVIA: Yeah

AUSTIN: Dangers of which you can have a total of three, are your HP, in a sense. If you have a Risk or a Peril, that's one Danger. Risks are things you can address pretty quickly; Risks are things like "angry"- think about like Technoir here, or even, ah, what else did this? Something else did something similar, that we've played recently. I forget what, and it's gonna... [annoyed noise] I forget what. Perils are things like, "my mech's leg is blown off", right, or "out of, you know, out of ammo" or "weapon destroyed", or, you know, like, truly

damaged in a fight, or- or, emotionally pushed to a place where like, “devastated” or, you know- not just, not just, “sad” but “depressed”, not just “out of sorts” but “disheartened.” So, as you get those, things get worse and worse, and when those fill up, then, then you’re defenseless; and this is the same way that enemies work. You have to make enemies defenseless for you to actually do real lasting permanent damage. Which is really interesting.

And those are your moves. Other thing that you have is, a, an Astir, is a, a mech, that I’ve actually just called Aster, A-S-T-E-R, but not after, not like star, like the plant, like the flower. I think an aster is a flower, is that right?

SYLVIA: Yeah, yeah it is.

AUSTIN: It’s this like purple, star flower, right? Yeah.

SYLVIA: Yeah.

AUSTIN: And I guess I should now tell you who, what you are. So you see I’ve written “Perennial Hallow ‘Aster’”. Perennial is a Divine, it is the Divine associated with House Brightline. Perennial is a... [quiet laugh] Imagine a nervous system. Like a, like a human nervous system. But imagine that instead of being made of like, organic human stuff, it was made of Russian Sage. Which if you haven’t seen, is this kind of purple and green plant that has these kind of long stalks of, kind of, again, lavender looking flowers. And it is gigantic, and it floats alongside the, the ship, with you all.

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AUSTIN: And, it has Blessed your mech, and that is why it is a Hallow. There are also other types of mechs, and we’ll get to those in a little bit. And those are called Hollows, versus Hallows. Love, I love words. So much. And so you are not a Divine, you’re not like a Divine, um, pilot; you’re not a Candidate, you’re not an Excerpt, you’re this third thing, that I don’t necessarily have a name for quite yet. And I don’t know that this is even going to last into Season Six. But in this moment, it’s dope and we’re using it. [Laugh] So you have a mech that is really flexible, and it does one thing really well, which is, it has five Mana, do you see the five here? Whatever you see in parentheses, that’s the actual number. The mana is spent on a mech to do something called, Subsystems, which you can find in like the bottom right of these moves. And that’s like, spend mana to basically, to get- to dodge damage. Spend it to instantly read something from the room because, the Divine that you’re connected to will actually answer it for you. Or, “disperse away excess energy, removing the risk (overheating)”- risk, the overheating risk.

AUSTIN: Yeah, people on the chat who’ve listened to *this week’s* Waypoints, that came out last night, heard me literally mishear something else, “Genlock”, a mech show that Rooster Teeth is starting; it’s mechs are called “Holons”, but the first time I heard it I thought they said Hollows, and I said “I’ve got to use that”, and today, I am using that. [Laugh from Austin and Sylvia] Watch me have no chill.

ART: Got it thought.

AUSTIN: Yep, yeah, got it. No one else can steal it now. Where would you be on a ship like the Helebore, like the Ivory, the Ivory Prince? Is that what I said it was called? Yes, the Ivory Prince. Where do you think- as- so, you- in my mind, you're kind of like- you'll note that you have the title Low Consul of the Centre; you're kind of like a low-tier magistrate, who, is technically... You know, you're part of the Divine Principality, but like, I think like Brightline, you know that this is breaking bad, and you want to stop it. Where would, where would Cerise hang out?

SYLVIA: Um... I think- I like the idea of her -- and I'm going to go with feminine pronouns for her, she/her pronouns specifically [confirming noise from Austin] -- I like the idea of her having a study of some sort-

AUSTIN (over Sylvia): Oh, that's good

SYLVIA: -like, where she's getting, may- or actually- yeah yeah, study, where she's doing like, either consulting with, like, her materials and the literature and stuff, or just, where she does her rituals; things like that.

AUSTIN: Awesome. Whoops, I did not mean to cover her name. Awesome. Cool. So yeah, I guess we get a, we get a shot of her with her, with her dress uniform on. We'll talk about what the fashion looks like in a bit. But, start thinking about what that really- what does "dress uniform" mean, what does "officer's coat", etcetera? But yes, really quick, both Brightline and Cerise are both humans, they're both humans, they're both citizens of the Divine Principality, which gives them a great deal of privilege in a place where identity is very carefully monitored and organised. We'll get more of that in the future; I won't get too deep into it here. But I will say, in general, Season Six is going to be a season that is interested in the ways in which power works on people. And so, it is by nature, going to be a season that I think- and this particular game isn't going to get into that? So like, I'm not gonna say like, "hey, heads up, get read for some dark questions about the ways in which totalitarianism works on, on, you know, marginalised bodies", or something. That's probably not this game tonight. But, Season Six will be something where, to treat something like the empire with the threat that it carries, means to think through some of that stuff. So, keep that in mind.

AUSTIN: Ah, Janine; you're playing "The Witch".

JANINE: I am.

AUSTIN: What is a Witch?

JANINE: "Witches seize power through pacts with powerful creatures, knowingly or otherwise. The power fuels and binds [sic] a Astir as well as any other, but it sources can be demanding and mischievous."

AUSTIN: Which is super exciting, and it's like- this whole, this whole sheet was just like "ah, I wish I had this during Twilight Mirage." What is your name and your look? And your stats?

JANINE: My name is Teasel Mode. My look is "mysterious". I wear "occult robes" -- you better bet that I have a very clear idea of those [laugh from Austin] when we get to that-

AUSTIN (over Janine): Good

JANINE: I know *exactly* what I'm wearing. And, your magic is like- you have "roiling chaos", I would really prefer "withering curses" personally.

AUSTIN: All for you- You know what, I was really torn between both, I was really- truly, those were the two that I was, that I was torn between. You feel free to, to-

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JANINE: "Roiling chaos-" there's, there's like a... In- "Roiling Chaos" feels more, violent in a generic way-

AUSTIN: Sure

JANINE: And I would like violent in an unsettling way.

AUSTIN: I gotcha. Boom, look at this. Boom, "Withering Curses", gotcha. Gonna make that less big. There we go, withering curses.

JANINE: There you go.

AUSTIN: Alright. And you have a dagger.

JANINE: I do

AUSTIN: Unlike the people who have Rayguns. You have-

JANINE: You can do cool stuff with a dagger, I've played Guild Wars 2.

AUSTIN: You've played Adaire. [Laugh]

JANINE: That's true also.

AUSTIN (laughing): Witches have really cool moves; the ones that you have, start with "Receive Boons", which says that every day, at "dawn, you receive boons from your patron." And you roll on a table to figure out what those are. I've done that already, you can see it over here on the side, one and four, boom.

JANINE: Wait, what side, what side?

AUSTIN: In the chat, I've already rolled for it,

JANINE: Oh, okay

AUSTIN: That one and a four.

JANINE: Okay

AUSTIN (laughing): Art in the chat; fuck off. [Giggle from Dre] Art says "I hope we get to meet Teasel's brother, Sicko Mode³".

JANINE: Mmhmm, I was waiting for that, I knew it was going to happen.

AUSTIN: It's good. That's good.

JANINE: I'm glad we got it out of the way early.

AUSTIN (laughing): God. What's the-

JANINE (over Austin): Do you-

AUSTIN: Sorry, I'm blanking on a joke... How's it go, it goes like "hey, this is your cousin, Marvin? Marvin Berry?" yeah- "Hey this [laughing], your cousin, Sicko, Sicko Mode?" Oh it's other way, it would be "Teasel Mode". Yeah, anyway. "Well listen to this."⁴ You have boons already, the boons that you have are "Scouring Boon," which lets you use your channel skill, which is a +3 right now -- and I'll say what- what- why it is "right now" in a little bit -- instead of using the, the- what the skill you normally would use -- Clash, I believe -- to do damage, to like, to do physical harm inside of your mech. And you have "Shielding Boon," which lets you use Channel instead of Glance, to "Weather the Storm," to basically, you know, get shot at, get shot at, get punched at, etcetera- I said shot at twice.

JANINE (laughing slightly): You good?

AUSTIN: But- so basically, you can use your magic in more defensive and offensive ways, from inside of a mech. You also have, like I said, a Patron, and your Patron has Influence on you. Your Patron is starting Peren- and your Patron is Perennial, with two Influence. They can- she can, Perennial is she/her also, can "help or hinder you", as if they, as if she'd rolled a plus 10, a 10+. She can "Attempt to force you to do something; and you may weather the storm to resist" her. Or, she can choose to "re-roll your Boons for the day." The game is not kidding when it says that "it's [magic's] sources can be demanding and mischievous."

AUSTIN: You also have "Occult Lore", which means you can roll Channel to "dispel uncertainties," instead of using +Know- I think your Know is pretty good anyway -- yeah it is

³ Art is referencing the rapper, [Sicko Mode](#)

⁴ Austin is referencing Back to the Future

-- but right now your Channel is better. So, that's, that's good. And then you have "Share the Burden," which lets you "cool off" with +Core or +Channel- or, when you do that, you can just succeed, and if you do, you give your Patron +1 Influence. You're basically, asking Perennial to help you "Cool Off". Cool Off is a really cool move, [annoyed noise at wordplay], that lets you, that lets you, kind of, erase a Risk; a Risk, again, being a kind of low, lower stakes danger than a Peril. So you can't be like, "hey, Perennial, fix my mech leg" instantly. But, if your mech is overheating, or if you are pinned down, or something, you can, you can have Perennial address that by using the Cool Off move. And you're, you'd be using, was it Channel or, what was the other one, Channel or... Core, instead of using, Defy or Core. So again, you can use your magic instead of using your -1 Defy.

AUSTIN: The only other thing I'm going to say here on your character that we know right now- or, or, one is you have a mech also. [Confirming noise from Janine] Your mech is called "The Day's Eye," which is -- I didn't know this until last night -- where the word daisy comes from. Daisy-

ART: Huh

AUSTIN: originally, in Middle English, was "day's eye." Because of the way they move during the day, towards the sun. And it is the most flexible of mechs, it has a big sniper rifle, and it has blast damage, which means if you are shooting things that are tinier than you, you don't need to shoot at them one by one. Which is very nice.

JANINE: Oh yeah.

AUSTIN: The other thing is, and you'll have to decide this when we start the game proper, you get +1 to one of your mech's traits. Your traits are Thrust, so like, how fast it goes; Glance, which is its defences; and Core, which is like, it's ability to, kind of, again, de-stress, which you kind of already have with "Share the Burden," so maybe not that one.

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AUSTIN: You also just get +1 to everything that's already there, that's what those like, in parentheses are, basically. And then, you have some empty slots, I think everybody has a couple of empty slots, which means hey, if you find some cool stuff while playing, you can add cool stuff. You also have 3 Mana, which again is what's used to use that specific mech move Subsystems. And yeah, the last thing that I wanted to say is, your relationship with Perennial is Weird. It is not, you are not like, again, her Candidate or her Excerpt. But maybe- you might be closer to that in some ways than Cerise is. There is a close and, teasing, relationship; Perennial is not this like, you know, stoic Divine, as one of the ones we've seen before. Perennial is mischievous, and, is a liar, and is a tease, and... There's a degree to which you have a different type of relationship than anyone else who could be in the Divine Principality; one, because you're not from the Divine Principality, you live within it's, within its borders, but you're not a human, you're not a citizen of the Divine Principality. You- and two, you are not a part of, your connection is not tied to a school that teaches you how to become a night of Perennial, right? You're not from those same power structures, so

you end up having this more casual, or more informal- casual's the wrong word, but informal relationship, than Cerise has. And we'll talk about what that means for your relationship too, in a second.

AUSTIN: I'm trying to think if there's any other important things there. Oh, there is one; you're not a human.

JANINE: Yeah. You kind of danced around that a little bit.

AUSTIN: Yeah. You're a Hypha, which is the species that we came up with during our Dialect game. Which are big, deer people? Basically? Is that the, is that fair?

JANINE: Mostly yeah, like a, mostly like deer head, [agreement from Austin] probably also deer legs?

AUSTIN: Yeah probably.

JANINE: I don't- well, we'll get to that with the costuming probably; I have ideas.

AUSTIN (over Janine): Okay, sounds good. Finally; Dre.

DRE: Hey.

AUSTIN: You are playing the Imposter.

DRE: Yeah. "Those that sidestep magical talent with the gift of augmentation rarely earn the respect their arcanist colleagues do, but make no mistake: they are more than capable."

AUSTIN: Exactly, yes. This is a, this, this is sort of a cyborg, like a magic cyborg class-

DRE: Yeah

AUSTIN: And I will say up top that there's a way to play this class that- and should be played this way- that is like, interested in disability, right? Like, cyborgs are, kind of character who, whether or not the tech wants to describe them this way, are dealing with questions of bodies and dealing with questions of disability, in the same way that mechs are, as far as I'm concerned, right. I said this on a Waypoint episode this week, but you cannot tell a mech story, in my mind, that doesn't have to do with bodies. Whether that is about idealised bodies, whether that is about bodies, and the relationship between bodies and technology, or about the extension of sense, or the trauma caused when bodies come into contact with each other, or the joy caused when bodies come into contact with each other, or all of those things messed together. Mechs are big bodies, even big weird spider mechs are bodies, right, like, that is what they are.

AUSTIN: And so, I think there is a world in which if this was a character which we were playing for a full season, I would make sure that that was very very key to the top. And I think

that it's still something here, but I, but I- part of the thing that I want to underscore here is, the idea of disability as being- or rather not disability but prosthetics as being a thing that are positive for people who use prosthetics, right, and so, Vessel's Gold, is using prosthetics to access parts of the world that were not available to you. Because you are named Vessel's Gold, which means you are not from the Divine Principality. You are from a place that we know is the New Earth Hegemony? Or, what was left of it. And, you are not welcome at those schools. And so you found other ways to pursue what you could. There is, there is- again, like, I think that it's just like a thing that I don't want to get too heavy into here, because a three or four hour live game is not a space to do it extremely well, but I do think that's part of who your character is, right? And, it's something that I think is, kind of in the book, or in the playbook that, whether or not, again, whether or not the playbook wants to be about that, it's here.

AUSTIN: Again, your character's name is Vessel's , Vessel's Gold. Do you want to describe them, based on their look things, and then also their stat line.

DRE: Yeah. So Vessel's Gold uses they/them pronouns-

AUSTIN: Awesome

DRE: They look cold. They're all about that pilot's jumpsuit.

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AUSTIN: Okay.

DRE: And their magic is like... I think I might change this from "smoke and industry" to "neon beams," actually.

AUSTIN (over Dre): Hell yeah. That works for me.

DRE (over Austin): Because "neon beams" are sick.

AUSTIN: Neon beams *are* sick

DRE: So my moves are "Arcane Augments-"

AUSTIN: Oh lets go over your stat line really quick first.

DRE: Oh yeah sure yeah.

AUSTIN: No worries

DRE (without pauses) Defy +1 Sense +1 Clash +2 Talk 0 Know -1 Channel +1.

AUSTIN: So the lowest Channel here. I should note really quick, going to back Janine; Teasel's +3, is because your... Because Perennial has influence on you; "as long as your Patron has [at least] 1 Influence, your Channel [trait] is set to +3". [Agreement from Janine] So, as long as you maintain that Influence, as long as you take that risk, you'll- your Channel might be the highest on the board, so. Sorry, continue, Dre.

DRE: No, you're good. So the moves I have are "Acrance Arguments," so that allows me to control my Astir using artificial magical limbs.

(Austin and Dre crosstalking)

DRE: So yeah, they allow me to Astir

AUSTIN: So they allow-

DRE: But otherwise function just like the arms and legs they replace.

AUSTIN: Yep

DRE: "Being bonded to magic this way often leads to it 'leaking' into the body, causing their power to wax and wane with their emotions"

AUSTIN: I suspect we won't get into that tonight

DRE: Yeah

AUSTIN: We don't need to lean into that because it's like, that's a lot of characterisational work that comes from

DRE: Right

AUSTIN: Being comfortable with your character, you know.

DRE: Yeah, totally

AUSTIN: But, I think this game has a cool setting, so.

DRE: Yeah. And the mechanical outcome of that, in addition to, you know, being able to pilot the Astir

AUSTIN: Yes

DRE: Is that my Channel is increased by +1 for each Danger I have.

AUSTIN: Right.

DRE: Up to a max of +3.

AUSTIN: Which means that the more dangerous you get, the better it goes for you, in a sense. [Agreement from Dre] Yep.

DRE: "Perfect Sync" means that I "can attune to an Astir effortlessly," and I "don't need to weave magic in order to do so," and my attunement "cannot be severed by any means other than physically removing [me] from," the, from the mech.

AUSTIN: Yeah; you know, everybody else has this like, thing going on where there's like, magic involved in this kind of, you know, literal magical consciousness way; you're a cyborg, you know.

DRE: Yep. "Let Loose," whenever I "gain a Peril while inside an Astir, take a +1 ongoing to Clash."

AUSTIN: So Clash is the, the stat that is most used for doing damage, and attacking things. And again, a Peril is a dangerous danger, like a really dangerous danger. That just means that as things get worse, you get better.

DRE: This last one is interesting [agreement from Austin]; "Face to Face; when you leave your Astir in the hopes another will do" so, to do the same- "to meet you ace to face, roll Talk-" my Talk is not good

AUSTIN: [disagreeing noise] It's zero, it's not *bad*, it's just not good, yeah.

DRE: Yeah, yeah.

AUSTIN: But hey listen, maybe you'll be very dangerous, and if you're- things are very- if things are rough-

DRE: That's true.

AUSTIN: You know, maybe you'll- you get some Peril's- oh no, that's only for Clash. Nope. [Laugh]

DRE: Ah no it's fine. But you know, as my hero once said, let's get dangerous.

AUSTIN: Is that, is that, Vessel's Gold, is that Gold's hero, Darkwing Duck?

DRE: Yeah okay good, Darkwing Duck

AUSTIN: The person who sings Darkwing- the person who sings Darkwing Duck's theme? Oh no, does he say that in the song, I guess he does. And also in the show.

DRE: Yeah

AUSTIN: It's like literally *is*, is his thing.

DRE: Yeah

AUSTIN: Great, perfect.

DRE: Yeah, I really love Face to Face, 'cause it's, "oh, oh, do you mean the thing that happens in anime that no one should fucking do?"

AUSTIN: Just, every fucking- like, everything that goes wrong in Zeta Gundam

DRE: Yeah, 100%

AUSTIN: Or like, every Gundam

DRE: Every

AUSTIN: Every Gundam. I'm listening to the Abnormal Mapping's great Gundam project, and it is so good. I'm like, moving through Zeta now, and it's making me want to rewatch Zeta. I'm doing it so I can watch Double Zeta, to encourage me to watch Double Zeta for the first time, I've never gotten through it, and I'm finally-

DRE: Hey

AUSTIN: finally moving through it.

DRE: Double Zeta's rough, but it gets so good.

AUSTIN: I'm at like, episode 13, so I think I'm over the roughest patch.

DRE: Yeah, yeah

AUSTIN: It's rough up front, it's so rough.

DRE: It's real bad, it's real bad.

AUSTIN: Can I get pronouns for the rest of the characters, I don't think I got them for, ah Teasel you added, and Brightline. Art.

ART: Brightline'll use he/him

AUSTIN: Okay. Boop, boop. There we go. Alright. Last thing, before we, maybe take a five minute break, and then, actually kick off... Actually not the last thing, because I need to know where Teasel is on the ship, Teasel, what's your downtime area like. Where would, where would I find you to talk to you between Mass Effect missions?

JANINE: So, I... I genuinely think that, Teasel kind of just stands in halls. I don't-

AUSTIN: Great. Good.

JANINE: picture her like, having a specific space necessarily. I think she just like, finds a spot in a low traffic hall, that probably changes very frequently [agreement from Austin], and just kind of like, I don't know if she even- she either just like sort of stands there, or if she's reading or something maybe faces the wall.

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AUSTIN: Perfect. I was just thinking how rad would it be if... rad slash terrible, if the next Bioware game that has a ship like that, or kind of a ho- an HQ, had a character that did that, where you're like

JANINE (over Austin): I mean that's-

AUSTIN: "Where the *fuck* is Teasel?"

JANINE: So the thing- that's absolutely what I was thinking of, just like: if, she was a character in a Bioware game, the example you put forth, I- I want her to be the character where everyone goes on Reddit and they're like "Yeah I think Teasel is bugged?" [Laughter from Austin] "cause she's always like doing this, or she's over here," or like, "I don't know if she's supposed to-" and it's kind of like the reverse situation of Krem where, Krem in the tavern, it is a bug where Krem will sit on the back of his chair instead of sitting on the chair properly [agreement from Austin], and then in the DLC they added a line to acknowledge it. I want it to be a situation where it's like "no, that's- you know, Teasel is supposed to do that," but it definitely feels like she's extremely broken

AUSTIN (over Janine): So good

JANINE: And no one's really sure what to make of it.

AUSTIN: That's so good. Yeah, I love it, I love it. Art, I'm changing a stat, because, the real Briar, @weregazelle on twitter and in the chat just reached out to say that these sheets are out of date, and I've changed this from +Value to +Gear, the surprise requisition move.

ART: Oh I saw that in the chat [Art cuts out, says "and was"] just going to remember, but yeah good change.

AUSTIN: Phew. Nice. Gold, how about you, where do you hang out in the ship? Oh, we didn't talk about your most important fucking thing, I feel like an asshole.

DRE: Nah.

AUSTIN: You have a cool mech [laugh]

DRE: Yeah, listen, I don't- Austin do you know that I have an obsession with like Dragoon, like, class characters?

AUSTIN: I don't, but this- straight up, I read this fucking, mech, and I was like, this is the most Dre shit I've ever, ever ever read.

DRE: Yeah, yeah, so this is good. My mech is the High Price and it's a Lance-Minor Three, which means it is armed with a long, armour piercing lance, and it excels at charging down a foe from distance.

AUSTIN: Uh huh.

DRE: So yeah, just, just-

AUSTIN (over Dre): It's, it's stuff is cool because it, you need- and maybe Briar in the chat, you can, you can set this up for me, but like, you need to brace it, which means that fictionally speaking, you need to like- you cannot just like, swing around with this thing, right. You need to really set up your attacks.

DRE: Yeah

AUSTIN: But, it is Reach, which means it can hit things of its same class from further away, so anything- any other melee, you know, weapon, you'll have reach on it so you'll have a benefit to that. It has Bane, which means it can hit things and do damage to things bigger than it, at a higher Tier than it. And then, also, between... I think it's, I think it's Decisive, the Decisive trait, and then the Momentum Coil you have, make it so that when it is time for you to really fucking knock something out, it's *very* good to do that. Decisive makes it a little harder for you to just do regular damage, to like, basically add dangers to an enemy, but when it's time- when they're endangered up, or when it's smaller than you, and you don't need to, to make them defenseless to do real damage, you can just knock them the fuck out. To the degree that I'm a little afraid that you could just walk through at least one of these encounters, no big deal; we'll see.

DRE: Oh no

AUSTIN: Yeah, we will- Play to Find Out What Happens, right? I should read those, also, before, before we finish. Where is, where is Gold at on the ship?

DRE: The mess hall.

AUSTIN: Great, love it.

DRE: Life's short. Eat a burger.

AUSTIN: Love it. So is that, is that what they're always eating, is like greasy fucking burgers?

DRE: I, I think they enjoy a lot of different stuff.

AUSTIN: Okay. I, for the record, very much built this character in line with characters like Canderous Ordo, and, uh, Rex, and like, absolutely the sort of like, "oh yeah, this is a mercenary-ass-mercenary character, who, is here to do a good job." And I guess the note on that is, that's part of what your relationship is with everybody. This has a system called Gravity, and I've kind of filled in things mid-campaign, so to speak, no one's just starting with the lowest Gravity, which is kind of the lowest Bond level, with other characters. You have, +2 Gravity with Teasel -- and these go both ways, and because of that I think Teasel, you ended up with two +2's. Which is interesting given that you're like, the most outsidery person, maybe. [Agreement from Janine] Maybe it goes, it just goes like that sometimes.

AUSTIN: The +2 that you have with Teasel is because both of you are outsiders to the Principality, and that you can both kind of see through a lot of, a lot of their bullshit. You have, Gold, you have +1 gravity with Cerise, because of the Hallow versus Hollow, divide. I've written here "Call a machine a Hollow all you want, I'll prove you don't need a fancy school to beat ass." Shout out to Gold for being pro-public schools. [Giggle from Dre] And you have +1 Gravity with Brightline, because even though he's a noble, he pays right.

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AUSTIN: And, Horizon's heart is in the right place, you understand that, that the kind of freedom fighting group that he runs is not a, it's not a sham, at the very least. You know, maybe there's some issues with the fact that it's still run by a noble, but, in a world of nobles, you know. In medieval Europe, it was very hard to find someone who wasn't a noble, who could do, anything, at the state level, you know.

AUSTIN: Teasel, you have +2 with Cerise because, even though your relationship with Perennial is different, the, the two of you have the same closeness, or have a, both have a closeness with Perennial the no one else has, and so, there's a co-respect there, even though there might be differences in the way you relate or worship or whatever it is you do. Brightline does not trust your relationship with Perennial, because you come from outside of the system, and he, again, might have big noble ideas, but he is also from inside of the empire, and that means that, that, there are certain hurdles he may not be able to easily clear, yet, and this is one of them. So, even though you have a +1 with him, that, that +1-Gravity doesn't mean you have a good relationship, it means you have an intense relationship, you have a type of relationship. And so that, that increases, and you can spend it in ways, and I can get to that in a little bit, but the thing that's important to know is, there's a little bit of like a, "mmm" [negative] between the two of you.

JANINE: It's +1 Rival not +1 Friendship

AUSTIN: That is like exactly right, that is like, exactly right. Yes. [Chuckle from Austin and Janine] And +2 with Gold, as already described, as outsiders. Duh-duh-duh, Cerise, you have the, the +2, sorry the +1 with Gold and the +2 with Perennial, as already established, you also have a +1 with Brightline, and that is because the two of you like, know that the other is, like- you're, you're good ones inside of the system. You have enough shared language and history, because you're both members of the, of the Principality, and the old Princi- [cough], sorry, the old Principality- neither of you are old enough to remember the Divine days, but your Houses do. You know, you both have a house on Kesh somewhere, on the planet Kesh, forever away, there is somewhere where there is a manor, devoted to you, you know. And so- or your family, or some distant part of your family. And so, that means something, especially because you're both dedicated to returning Kesh to greatness.

AUSTIN: So. I think those are the big things here. Gravity, for the record, is used, not to Help or Hinder, which is actually whatever trait is most appropriate, but, where is it... Briar, where did it go? Is it just in the quick start, did I not pull it into here? Exchange blows- oh, you know what, it's at the top of the quick start. I might take a screenshot and throw it in here really quick. [Sounds of typing] Gravity. [Windows command unsuccessful noise] Oop, right, you can't search this document. I can search this one though. Gravity. So.

AUSTIN: Here we go; "when you start a new-" no duh-duh-duh, that's wrong, that's not when you start a new one. [Pause] [Sigh] Here we go; "whenever you make a move, involving the other party of a clock, you *may* add the clock's value, instead of the normal trait. If you do, advance the clock." So I should actually be drawing little, like, Blades style clocks here, to advance these. Like, they're eight step clocks, ala a Blades in the Dark or a Forged in the Dark game. But I'm not going to do that for this oneshot, because it's one more thing for us to track. Maybe someone in the chat can yell at us if someone has actually rolled Gravity *eight times* for one person [laugh], though if that's happened, I've- I'm worried about how long this one shot is going.

AUSTIN: And so yeah, you can basically say like, "hey, if I am trying- if I *am* trying to help or hinder someone, I could use Gravity." Or if you're trying to use, you know, let's say, Briar, if you are trying to use Surprise Requisition, to help someone, you could use Gravity instead of, rolling Gear, because you're, the, the s- whatever the thing is. I think that that's true. Briar again, yell at me if that's not true. So yeah, that's a pretty useful thing.

AUSTIN: Alright, any questions at this point? As we float towards the centre of the galaxy? In the chat, Briar, the, the author of this game says "I apologise for how many things there are, I still have a lot of streamlining to do!" No worries, like, there is something really cool about this, and I'm really excited about playing a bunch of games that are not quite finished yet. We have, in the past, benefited so much from developers and designers, game designers, letting us use beta versions of their games. The Sprawl started as a beta when we were playing it, and so did Scum and Villainy --

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AUSTIN: Scum and Villainy was a little further on than The Spawl -- and so, I feel like, very good about being able to like, highlight some cool mech games. I- I also- there's the Sad Mech Jam, going on right now, on Itch; there's both a tabletop and a digital game jam, and we have to do something with those at some point, one hundred percent [chuckle from Dre], we have to, there's a law, I've made it the law. Alright, any other questions before we take a quick break?

AUSTIN: Hi, we're- I'm back, Art's back, that means we're back. But not really, we're not actually back. You see it gave all of you green as your colour today?

ART: No

AUSTIN: Various greens, at the bottom, and like [cough from someone]

ART: That's weird

AUSTIN: Right? It gave me purple. Spring in Hieron colours right here.

ART: Oof.

AUSTIN: You should listen to [that episode](#) that came out yesterday, it was really good-today? What day is it? Whatever the day is.

ART: It's today because yesterday I checked our iTunes ranking and I was like panicking 'cause we weren't up there, and then today we're 20 and it's like, okay, we're back. [Bag crinkling]

AUSTIN: Yeah, that's how it works. It's all bullshit, it really truly is.

ART: I was just- and like, are we, are we On-on?

AUSTIN: Ah yeah, we are On-on, but you can say it.

ART: So I can't say why.

JANINE: Oh

AUSTIN: Do you want me to break?

JANINE: I wish I'd-

ART: No, you know, you know. *You* know.

AUSTIN: Wait, what do I know?

DRE: I want to know. [Austin laughs]

SYLVIA: Hi I'm back.

AUSTIN: I want to pause, I'm going to-

ART (over Austin): I'm gonna type it.

AUSTIN: I'm going to take it- I'm going to take us off the air so you can say the thing, and it'll be funny. Ready?

AUSTIN: Yeah, that makes sense Art- yeah, we're also back now.

ART: Okay.

AUSTIN: I can do that again though [Laugh from Janine] if other people want to like, eat a chip, or something.

JANINE: Yeah. I was, putting candy in my mouth right when you were like "we're back" [Laugh from Austin and Dre]

SYLVIA: Same

AUSTIN: Okay, we're going to go away again so we can all eat, some candy. I hope that's-

JANINE (with her mouth full): Just do some ASMR [Agreement from Austin]. Breaktime ASMR.

AUSTIN: Well don't do it, because people don't like when you eat in their ears. I've learned that. Or-

(Janine and Dre crosstalking)

JANINE: Some people don't.

DRE: Some people do.

AUSTIN: Right, well, this is the thing. Some people really do like it, [agreement from Janine] and some people really don't like it, and by default, I want to, you know, respect the people who really don't like it-

JANINE (over Austin): That's fair

AUSTIN (over Janine): So I'm gonna, I'm gonna go, I'm gonna take us away again so we can eat some chips and candy. Bye chat. Enjoy your own chips and candy.

AUSTIN: Whoop, we're back, we ate all the candy, it's all gone.

JANINE: Pineapple will fuck your tongue up too, is the thing, as much as sour candy, and pineapple's better for you.

ART: And I was going to say "no one said the phrase 'fuck your tongue up'" but [Laugh from Janine and Sylvia] Here we are.

AUSTIN: Uh, boy. [Bag crinkling] I'm gonna, I'm gonna crinkle this bag as I put it away. Sorry, sorry, apologising. Alright. Alright. We are really and truly back now. [Snigger from Dre and Art] Oh real quick; [Clap]. Alright, that's just for me for when I cut this later. [Laugh] [Sigh] So. How- when do we want to jump in here? I think we want to jump right- kind of into it. Does that sound right? I don't-

JANINE: We're still going to talk about fashion, right?

AUSTIN (sincerely): A hundred percent. You know-

JANINE (over Austin): Okay

[Game Begins]

AUSTIN (over Janine): you can begin- Well- yea- Everyone is in the war room. Everyone is looking at the one map, that is a holographic map, it's a table that pres- that like, does like the cool like, 3d, kind of- it's almost like a, a- imagine like a, a vectrex, mechtrex, or old school vector graphics with the like, super super bright light, like you're playing Star Wars the arcade game. The original Star Wars arcade game, just super bright, except this has colours and stuff. And so, so you know like a big floating diamond represents your ship, and you can see, that you are nearing, a, a facility.

AUSTIN: You are at the centre of the galaxy, you are nearing the centre of the galaxy- and I don't mean the dead centre of the galaxy, you know. Like, the dead centre of the galaxy is, is, whelp, don't look at some of those maps- I think they're fine, I think none of the maps I just showed are bad. None of the- there's no spoilers in there. So I don't mean like this- the very centre corner like- or not corner, but like, circle of the map, but this kind of like, outer glow area. The Earth is orbiting this whole long thing, you know? I that it's, it's, it's on this very specific orbit that they figured out to- and also, if you didn't listen to Twilight- to Twilight Mirage, and you're like "why the *fuck* is the Earth at the centre of the galaxy?" go listen to Twilight Mirage; the answers will surprise you. [Laugh]

ART: We'll see you back here in eighty hours [Austin laughs], I think it is.

AUSTIN: That's accurate. And so it is, it is orbiting this, and then, it is also- so I think you can kind of see the Earth from the window, so to speak, and it's off in the distance. But what kind of takes up the bulk of your view is this, long... You know, the name of your group's Horizon, but there's almost-

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AUSTIN: A horizon out in space because of this thing, that is this long metallic space station that goes around, it look like the bulk, or all, of the centre of the a galaxy. You lose sight of it, right, it goes as far as you can possibly see. It is a, I kind of imagine it as a being a horizontal long, like shelf, think of it almost like literally a shelf, like, you put a single shelf into you're-onto your wall. You know, you hammer it in there, you screw it into the side of the wall. There is the long horizontal part, right, then there is a little bit under it, and a little bit above it, that's the back of the shelf. So not just the shelf, but the shelf with a backing thing; do you know what I'm talking about? Except imagine that, is made of metal, and it's gigantic. It's, as big as a continent, up and down- bigger. And, and then there's kind of this big shield almost in front of it, made of some material, that protects the, the internal part of it from a, from, from the light of the centre of the galaxy. It is constructed in some way that prevents it from falling in.

AUSTIN: And the thing that's weird is, we've previously described this place as being a Dyson Sphere. But you don't see a sphere here. Until you look on your readings, and what's revealed is, there is an infinite number -- by which I mean such a large number that it's impossible to count -- of nanomachine orbiting above and below in a sphere, around the entirety of the galactic centre. And those are syphoning some sort of power from it. You don't know if it's from the massive amounts of black hole in the middle, from the light from all of the star-stuff that has been absorbed therein; you don't fucking know. You're not scientists, you're magicians. And this may as well be magic.

AUSTIN: And so, what you know is, if, the- if the Divine Principality gets control of this thing: well. They will have a lot more power. And, Briar Brightline, you are leading a mission to either destroy, deactivate, take over, disable, this device. And you've identified a place by which you can do that. There is a, there are automated defences, so it will be very difficult for you to approach from above and below. But, those defences are for ship scale things, not for things smaller than ships. And so you can drop off a team of mechs, who can get in closer, who can disable the defences, and who can, effectively, get close enough to a main computer system- or maybe it's actually more, I don't think it's a computer system, I think it's a mechanical, like power station, that will, either let you jack into it and take control, if you can theoretically hold on to it and defend it, or where you can plant charges that will bring this entire thing down, to be absorbed into the centre of the galaxy.

AUSTIN: I'm going to draw like a very simple version of this. By which I- when I say simple, I don't even mean a sketch of the thing. I mean a kind of a sketch of the mission, if that makes sense? So, I'm going to draw this long corridor. And imagine this as though you're looking down at a map. And while I'm drawing, I would love to know what you all look like, around this space map, as this is all being shown. Janine, can you tell me what, what your character is wearing?

[Character Descriptions]

JANINE: Yes. So. The quickest way to, to get a baseline is I'm basing this look, on [laugh] an Italian Ad for stockings from 1955 [laugh]

AUSTIN: You know what, great. [laugh from Janine] Good.

JANINE: It is, and ad for- I don't know Italian, I'm not going to pronounce any of these things. Well, I also tried to look up the context for this ad, and was not able to find like, what is the company, what is the product [agreement from Austin], it just says "mille aghi, franceshi," and it's like for these blue thigh high stockings that have these sort of, stripes along the foot and toes and the ladies feet look kind of like hooves, and I was like [interested noise from Austin] "man that's a cool look"

AUSTIN: Can you [link it](#)?

JANINE: I can link it. [sound of typing] I'll link the tweet that brought it to my attention, it was a Pulp Librarian tweet, going through like, the history of like, stocking ads. And... So, she's wearing like these sort of sheer blue stockings, like very bright blue, and there are these triangular black and white, I guess like chevron kind of things, along the toes? And she's also wearing sort of a dark, very simple dress. So I think, in terms of Teasel's robes, I'd like to go with something-

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JANINE: That is like a very fitted, dark grey to black, but most -- probably more dark grey -- woolen kind of dress, that's very heavy. Heavier than I think it, it would be if I was just using this outfit from this whole [laugh] fucking stocking ad. Very full skirts, kind of a high low thing, where it's like quite short in the front but probably, at the ground in the back. Very like, loose and drapey. Would probably look amazing if she spun. But she probably doesn't spin.

AUSTIN: [chuckle] Never?

JANINE: And then on- no, I don't think she's a spinner.

AUSTIN: Gotcha.

JANINE: And then, on top of that she's got a, gold kind of, I forget the specific term I want, it's like collar or mantel or yoke kind of necklace, it's like... It goes up until, under the jaw, but it also covers like the neck to shoulder area in like a full kind of... Yoke might be the word I want. But it's like a big thick gold neck piece that is probably like, requires hinges and stuff to, to be fitted on there. And also, because Teasel is Hypha, Teasel, you know, has a deer head.

AUSTIN: Yup.

JANINE: And antlers. But her real, her real antlers are like little nubs. And then over, over like attached to those nubs, Teasel has, I think the best way to describe it would be like, you know when you go to a shitty gift shop, and they have all those like, etched glass plaques and cubes and stuff, and you put it on an LED light base and the light shines through it. And

it's like, the light catches on the etchings? [Agreement from Austin] Her horns are like that. She has that over the little nubs.

AUSTIN: It's extremely extra, I'm already here for it. [Janine laughs] People asking, wouldn't the centre of the universe be a black hole? One, yes, and we're handwaving a little bit, like I said it's a supermassive black hole. And things do orbit black holes. You would need to speed them up to prevent them from falling into the black hole, and that is certainly what happened to the Earth for a long time. Will it eventually fall into that black hole now? Probably. And when I say now, I guess this is kind of part of it, and maybe this is a thing I should note for your character really quick, and then you should describe them, Gold.

AUSTIN: The bulk of people left Earth. Again, without spoiling specific things in Twilight Mirage. Most people, are gone. But most when you have billions and billions and billions of lives, still leaves millions. And, you are the descendants, the descendants of those who were not allowed to leave, or who couldn't afford to, because everything has a cost, even, even you know a free handout, requires you to walk to the hand. And not everybody can do that. And so you are the descendants of the subaltern of Earth. You are those who were left behind. Which made you prize picking for the Divine Principalities expansion. I don't know what Earth looks like here, at this point. But with all of its infrastructure, and its leadership gone, I think over time it probably, became a different place, a more fractured place than it may have been at the time of Twilight Mirage.

AUSTIN: So, you know. That is, that is- those are the people you come from, and part of why you feel the way you do about the Principality. What do you look like? Besides the looks at the top, like, what's the, what am I imagining when I, when I see them, when I see Vessel's Gold?

DRE: Alright. I don't have all of the detail sketched out, but I've got the really important ones.

AUSTIN: Good.

DRE: The biggest thing you gotta know about Vessel's Gold, is they have a very very sick bomber jacket.

AUSTIN: Love it

DRE: And I- very like, classic like- big fuzzy collar. And on the back, there is a stitched in design that says, "Up Close and Personal." And I can't decide if I want a, like, pinup lady, or a pinup beefcake dude, like holding the lance that my mech has, and like [notification noise] winking and blowing a kiss.

AUSTIN (laughing): Good question Sylvia in the chat; "Why not both?"

DRE (over Austin): Yeah why not both!

SYLVIA (over Dre): Yeah, why not both.

DRE (over Sylvia): Hell yeah, both.

AUSTIN (over Dre): Why not both?

DRE (over Austin): Yeah, no, totally both. Yep. Maybe, maybe, one is like, winking and blowing a kiss, and the other one's like, doing finger guns.

AUSTIN: Perfect, good.

DRE: Yep.

AUSTIN: That's the most important thing.

DRE: Yeah- well, obviously.

AUSTIN: Okay

DRE: Yeah. I think... What I- I was kind of like, trying to figure out like what their, you know, what their, like, augmented limbs would look like.

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AUSTIN: Yeah

DRE: I keep kinda going back to Automail, like from like Fullmetal Alchemist.

AUSTIN: Sure, yeah yeah yeah, I like that.

DRE: But I think they, to go with the neon magic, I think they have, like, the equivalent of tattoos, but they're in like, you know, very bright neon lights.

AUSTIN: Awesome. And it is- is it limbs that have been replaced with, with your augmentations? [Conflicted, disagreement noise from Dre] Is it something else? Is it like just the chest, is it face, is it... It's not hair, I'm not letting you do this again.

DRE (laughing): Yeah no, [laughs] listen...

AUSTIN: I made this character, this shit's on me.

DRE: Yeah yeah yeah yeah yeah. I don't know, maybe, maybe it's just arms.

AUSTIN: Okay. Cool. Let's go with you, Cerise.

SYLVIA: Alright. So, I'm thinking like, with the dress uniform, just going -- I'm just going to start with the style here -- with the dress uniform I've always kind of preferred when we go with like, naval looks for that kind of thing.

AUSTIN: Sure.

SYLVIA: So I think like, it's a nice jacket with a lot of buttons and stuff. She's probably wearing like a matching like, skirt. But it's- the main rea- thing with the dress uniform is that it is like, pristine, in contrast to her like, hair, which is always very messy, and her glasses, which are kinda- like her glasses are fine; they're oversized, but like... I want to go with the bookish thing, because I'm, you know, it's me. [laugh] And I think she's always got like a, she's got like, um... They're not medals for service, but they're medals she's- they're commendations that she got while she was training to be, a, ah... Arcanist -- I don't know- I guess we don't have the actual, title for what they are, but like, I think it's more... It's like-

AUSTIN (over Sylvia): Yeah. Yeah, I know what you mean though, it's the name of the class. So, close enough.

SYLVIA (over Austin): Yeah. Yeah yeah yeah. She's got- and it's specifically what- the one that she's, that is always very polished is something that signifies, like, Perennial, or whatever, even if it's just like a little like, si- sigil, or whatever. And then also one of her family's House, as well.

AUSTIN: Awesome. Cool. We've got to figure out what those sigils are, because, because they're- sigils are dope. This is the thing I'm talking about when I said- in the last game, I talked about how like everyone's going to end up with a favourite House of this, shitty evil empire; they are, because, Sigils are Cool. Because, empires control aesthetics, and make them cool. And, it is important for us to keep the camera on people who are not part of the empire, or who are put down on it. But also, I am interested in what that sigil is, so let's think about that. Urm, Brightline, what do you look like?

ART: Alright, thank you for letting me go last; I've used all of this time to look up, different naval uniforms so that I can really, combine them appropriately here. First things first-

AUSTIN (sighing): Yeah.

ART: I think neckties have gone away.

AUSTIN: Just in general?

ART (over Austin): I think- Yeah I think-

AUSTIN (over Art): We're out of them?

ART: The neck- the necktie is out.

AUSTIN: Okay.

ART: So I don't want like the shirt and tie look, it's it's, I guess it's like a more futuristic Star Wars-ey neck, or Star Trek-ey neck.

AUSTIN: Sure.

ART: And like, the kind of like, the kind of like, shirt look. But then I need the extremely extra, coat, the, the admiral's coat, esque thing. I'm going, I think Soviet with this

AUSTIN: Sure.

ART: Pure brilliant white.

AUSTIN: Okay

ART: With gold buttons. And I want it to do that thing where it like, swoops down, where it like, at the waist, it starts to go back? Like-

AUSTIN: Like, like- is it starched?

ART: Noo. It's like... why does... why does Google never work how I want it to.

AUSTIN: You know, we are all asking that question every day. [laugh]

ART (quietly): Well that's a really long link. Uh, it doesn't even preview? Come on.

AUSTIN (laughing softly): Did you put it somewhere, where'd you put it? [Okay, I see](#). Okay, I see what you're saying, that's a good look.

ART: Yeah, uh huh-

AUSTIN: But all white? But all white.

ART: All white, gold buttons, and I want the like, the more pronounced shoulder.

AUSTIN: More than this?

ART: But like the...

AUSTIN (over Art): [Disbelieving] More pronounced than this?

ART: More pronounced than this.

AUSTIN: Do you want these *gigantic* medals? [quiet laughter]

ART: I want a, I want a couple gi- not that many gigantic medals. That's too many.

AUSTIN: Okay. It's doable. Okay, cool.

ART: But then like, see like, hold on. This is, [quietly] this is what I'm looking for. In terms of shoulders.

AUSTIN (over Art): We've got more coming.

1:20:00

AUSTIN: Okay, we've got shoulders coming. [Oh that's a lot of shoulders.](#)

ART: Yeah. The fringe is important to me. [Dre cackles]

AUSTIN: Can I- one second, I'm getting a call- I'm getting a call I have to take, I'm gonna pause this really quick. You keep, *you* keep talking, I'm going to mute myself.

ART: Is this real or is this a bit?

AUSTIN: Not a bit.

DRE (over Austin): I think that's real.

ART: Okay

JANINE (over Art): This is real.

ART: So you know, like a fancy captain's hat, but futuristic-y. [Laugh from Dre] Maybe the brim like glows. I don't know.

DRE: Sure, yeah.

JANINE: Yeah.

DRE: When in doubt, make it glow. Does it change colours?

ART: Absolutely it does.

DRE: Is your hat by Razer? Is what I'm asking.

ART: I think it's more like a mood hat.

DRE (choke laughing): God

JANINE: What?

DRE: Uh huh, yeah.

ART: You know like a mood ring? [Agreement from Dre, understanding from Janine] Like, what if that was a hat? It could tell, from-

SYLVIA (laughing): You know [Dre and Sylvia giggle] I feel like that's not a great thing, for like a military commander to have. [Janine laughs] A thing that sorta signifies when your moods may be off. [Laugh]

ART: I think it's great that way the [laugh from Sylvia], the subordinates on the ship know, what, what's kind of happening. Like, "oh, I don't need to take this that seriously." You know, "they're really anxious today."

DRE (over Art): "Aw shit. He's got an orange hat"

JANINE (over Art): Or like when you're like, telling-

ART (over Janine): Yeah or like...

JANINE: -them that "everything is okay. Just do your job," but your hat is like, panic coloured. [laugh from Janine and Dre]

ART: Yeah, uh huh.

SYLVIA: So, we've got Tom Brady Big-Shoulders, and a multicoloured hat, for this guy's outfit; I'm really into it.

ART: Uh huh, yeah.

SYLVIA: I'm going to put the, [Tom Brady Big-Shoulders in the chat for people](#).

ART: I mean the mood hat doesn't have to have every mood. You know?

JANINE: Does it just have like mood categories, like, like "Intense", or "Looow"

DRE: [laughs] God.

JANINE: Like, is it like a, is it like a mood int- is it like a mood intensity thing in general? So it's like "oh, you can't tell if he's like really happy or really angry," 'cause it's just like, reading the really [inaudible] part of that.

ART: Yeah, I guess- cause isn't that how real mood rings, work? Like, a mood ring is really just, tracking-

JANINE: No.

ART: The temperature of your finger.

JANINE: Sure, yeah, that's a completely [laughing] different- real mood rings have no connection whatsoever to your mood. They're just like "are you hot now? Are you cold now?"

ART: Alright, so I think this is like the same thing. I think this also doesn't work. [Laughter from Sylvia] But like, people think it works, and so it kind of does [agreement from Janine, disagreement from Dre, agreement from Janine again]

DRE: People.

ART: If your brim turns orange and you know that you're, you're heating up, you're gonna heat up.

JANINE: Did Briar like, distribute- did the people who work with Briar get like a, like a hat colour key?

ART: No, I think everyone just knows this; this is just like a thing you know.

JANINE: Oh, okay.

ART: Like, you know that red means stop and green means go, you just know. [Agreement from Janine]

DRE: You don't- Wait, you don't just know-

JANINE (over Dre): That's--I mean that's socialised.

DRE (over Janine): Yeah, you learn that. [laughter from Dre and Sylvia]

ART: [Disagreement] But you like remember-

JANINE (over Art): That's like, most people--

DRE: It's not genetic!

ART: But do you remember learning it?

JANINE: What does blue mean on a mood ring? Does- do any of us know what blue means on a mood ring? [Considering noise from Dre] Don't look it up, just say it.

ART: Calm?

DRE (over Art): Da bo dee, da bo daa, is what it mean, on a mood ring.

JANINE (laughing): Okay

DRE: No, okay.

ART: "Don't look it up," I don't know where to look up

SYLVIA: I mean, I bet calm?

JANINE: I bet you could just [typing noises] "what does blue mean on a mood ring?"

DRE (over Janine): I thought blue would mean like "sad," right? 'Cause you're feeling blue.

JANINE: Light blue- "blue on a mood ring means that the wearer is calm and neutral; in a state of relaxation, your body will be at a normal temperature, given that the room is not overly hot or cold." [Laughter]

DRE: What's, what's the sad colour? In a mood ring.

SYLVIA: Oh, purple, apparently.

JANINE: No, this says, not purple- this says that purple is, "very happy, love, passion, romance."

SYLVIA: Oh. [Agreement from Dre]

JANINE: There's actually no sad on the chart that I'm looking at here-

DRE (over Janine): There's stressed.

JANINE (over Dre): The closest thing is- yeah

ART (over Janine): Can't be sad with a mood ring. That's just, that's just science.

DRE: Yeah, you know what? Nailed it.

JANINE: That's true.

DRE: Got it.

SYLVIA: The one I'm having has- the one I'm looking at has "pleased, relaxed, subdued, unhappy, aggressive and excited." And unhappy's purple on this one.

JANINE: The one I'm looking at has nervous listed for three separate colours; black, grey, and amber.

SYLVIA: Okay.

JANINE: They all have nervous in them. [laughing]

ART (over Janine): Big Mood, big mood ring. [Laughter from Dre, Janine and Sylvia]

DRE: [sigh] Can you still get a mood ring? I haven't seen a mood ring on sale.

JANINE (over Dre): Almost certainly. When I was little I had a mood ring, but the mood part was- it was a mood ring but, it was also a dimetrodon ring. Like the, the thing on the front was a dimetrodon, and the inside of the dimetrodon was coloured with mood stuff.

(Art and Austin overlapping)

AUSTIN: What's a dimetrodon?

ART: And I think I speak for everyone here when I say we all know what dimetrodon means, [Austin laughs] you don't need to explain it.

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JANINE: A dimetrodon is like the- you would know one if you saw one, it's like a pre-dinosaur. It has a-

AUSTIN: That's what the judge said, the judge said you'd know a dimetrodon if you saw one. DE-MET-RA-DON.

JANINE: It's the one with the big fin on the back. It has a big tall fin on its back, it's like a lizard.

AUSTIN: Oh, a *dimetrodon*.

JANINE: Yeah, yeah.

AUSTIN: Gotcha. Of course. Good.

JANINE: I wore that and a sailor moon mood ring and that was my look.

AUSTIN: Sylvia, thank you for this picture of Briar's shoulder pads. [Sylvia and Art laugh]

SYLVIA: Yeah, no problem.

AUSTIN: Very good. Very good. Alright, I am back- Ali I hope that this is fine, I had to mute- that was like one of those calls where I straight up had to mute, the, my audacity file even, because of NDAs, and things like that. So, you know. I hope I bought it back up to the right level, it's looks right to me-ee. I almost said "bye", and like, [Sylvia, Janine and Austin laughing] 'cause it felt like I was committing a crime. Alright. Everyone's described, in ways

that I don't need to hear because it's not that big of a deal. I hope, I hope I didn't miss anything too important. Cause now I've realised that I, didn't hear any of that stuff, so if anything *really important* was said, I just have to not know.

ART: Look, there's going to be a lot of talk about hat colour, and you just don't need to worry about it.

AUSTIN (concerned): Okay.

JANINE: He has a mood hat.

AUSTIN (incredulous): You have a mood hat?!

ART (over Austin): Mood hat. [Dre laughs]

AUSTIN: Jesus Christ. Already, some good, some good posts, some good [fanart here from Bee](#), in the chat. Teasel, already looking great. Alright, we should play this game.

[Mission Details]

AUSTIN: The mission is in front of you. You have to get through, a number of zones, to get to the place. You can't get past- you can't just get right there because there's- I guess I should add this to the map, you scroll down all the way you'll see what I'm talking about. There are, anti-ship guns down here. Anti-ship, canons. So you cannot just like, zip there. And those cannons like, they- they cover everything up until the security forces. So, you have to get at least to them in order to let the ship kind of close in; and the ship has to get there, in order to, get to the power terminal. And what I'll say is, on the other side of that power terminal, is nothing. Like, there's like a gap in this big ring around the galaxy, and that means that like, the- all of the light would hit this ship and would eradicate it. So like, you have to- you have to keep it- it's like built right up against the line of when it gets too hot to fly, and so you're able to fly kind of behind the station and the heat shields that protect the station. But if you got- if you went past the power terminal, it would just, dev- it would just destroy your ship. So you have to be very careful here also.

AUSTIN: Jesse M. says "wait, how far past, uh, setup actually is this?" Talked about characters, we've set up the, the kind of mission, we've described what they're wearing. The three important parts of setup are complete. [laugh] We can, we can begin playing the game now.

ART: We're basically done.

AUSTIN: Yeah, we're basically done; and then they fight some stuff, I guess. There are mechs. We could describe what the mechs do, that's probably gonna be fun, and then we're done. Does anybody want to do anything while you're still on board the ship? And I know actually, Captain, uh, Captain Brightline, you will probably stay on the ship and continue to assist from afar, and I really need you to lean into your best captaining, while that all

happens, because, really just got to paint a picture of, of the crew going through shit, all the way out here, as as...

ART: I'm drinking rum with my foot on a barrel right now.

AUSTIN: Why do you have a barrel in your room?

ART: In case I need to be a Ca- [Art cuts out].

AUSTIN: So, Art? You cut off. Which is good, because instead of saying Captain, you said Cat. [Janine laughs, Austin laughs] So yeah-

ART: No that's what I said, "in case I need to be a cat. Man" [Laughter from Sylvia]

AUSTIN: There are cat people in the setting, we can't just- alright. So what are you doing, what are you doing at this point where you're kind of, you're- the ship is kind of here, at the landing zone, safe from whatever is on this next, kind of tier of the station, that is- there are going to be parts when you're like, inside a station, and there are going to be parts when you're just outside on top of the station; the station is built for that sort of thing, so. Briar is not a catboy, the- I'm not saying the Divine Principality doesn't have any catboys in high positions, but like, more catboy prison guards is very much, a meme, that would be, that would be accurate for this world. You know, if, if you are a marginalised- if you are not a human, you are a marginalised population, inside of the Divine Principality. Maybe that changes over time-

ART (over Austin): Learn to code, catboys

AUSTIN: "Learn to code, catboys", yeah, uh huh.

DRE: Jesus.

AUSTIN: Absolutely. There's no coding in this setting, eventually- we'll get there. This is a little more medieval, even though it's also space ships. It's weird. I guess there's some coding, probably. Anyway...

JANINE: Wait, how did the touchscreens work if not...

AUSTIN: Magic? I don't fucking know, this is a fable, we've been through this.

JANINE: Okay, alright.

AUSTIN (over Janine): Things get weird. [Sylvia laughs, Austin and Dre laugh] But like, why would there- why would-

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AUSTIN: Maybe everyone's just a bad coder, and that's why you can't have multiple things on a single touch screen? The, the, the thing to note though really is that like, yes, you will find people who manage to push through, and who get their Divine Principality citizenship even though they are a Talonite or a catboy. Or, or a Hypha, or Apostolisian. But those- they will have a higher, a higher hill to climb, and even once they are citizens, they will not have, all of the informal benefits of being part of a majority population. They will not be privileged in the same ways- which does not mean that we should not also condemn them in the cases of where they are themselves going on to oppress other people. But it is complicated.

AUSTIN: So. What are you doing on this ship, as you hover above the landing zone? Is anyone investigating anything, using any scanners, prepping their mechs? Like, what's popping?

ART: Yeah we should use some scanners.

AUSTIN: Yeah! What's that look like, on the screen? Do you have- Briar, do you have someone you turn to to be like, "can we scan the area ahead?" Like, what does that look like?

ART: Yeah, I think- I, I just don't have, I just don't have a name for them which, which is rough- I don't have a, I don't have a document of names for this setting.

AUSTIN: I can get you a name really quick. Your, um, is it like intelligence officer maybe?

ART: Yeah.

AUSTIN: Is named... Duh duh duh, I'm going to move some stuff around here... Rosarium Rennari.

ART: Great.

AUSTIN: So Rennari, Lieutenant Rennari.

ART (as Briar): Lieutenant Rennari, I need a, I need a mock up of what's coming up here.

AUSTIN (laughing): That's you cap- that's the way you talk? Okay.

ART: Yeah, I think officers are, on, on a bridge level thing, I think it's pretty for- I think it's pretty informal.

AUSTIN: Huh, okay. I'm good with it.

ART: Like, formality I think is for people who are like, several ranks- This is someone I work with every day, what am I going to be an asshole all the time?

AUSTIN: All the- all the- yeah, you know what, that makes, that makes perfect sense to me.

JANINE: Hang on. Can I- Art, can I petition you to say what colour your character's hat is at the beginning of every scene? Or at some point.

AUSTIN: God bless you, Janine.

ART: Yeah, I think we're at, I think we're at like a lime green right now.

JANINE: Oaky, thank you, thank you.

AUSTIN (laughing): Okay, I think this is a, Dispel Uncertainties, more than a Read the Room. Maybe it's a Read the Room. You, you look at these. Read the Room says "when you Read the Room to get insight on your situation roll +Sense; on a 10+ hold three, on a 7-9 hold one," and then you ask questions like "who has the upper hand here? What does x really feel?" But those are about people mostly; those are about things you already know about.

ART: Yeah, Dispel- Dispel seems right.

AUSTIN: Yeah, okay. "When you Dispel Uncertainties by clarifying something unknown or answering a question, roll +Know." I do feel like this is more of a +Sense though. Or, do you have something that makes this a +Crew? We could also just house rule it to be a +Crew, you know? Uh, wait-

ART: I am "Asking a Crew Member"

AUSTIN: You are literally asking a crew member- "Read the Room +Crew to assess the battlefield." I'm gonna say you can do +Crew for this, even though it is not Reading the Room, and it is Dispelling Uncertainties. So go ahead and, and do that. +Crew, so-

ART: Same-

AUSTIN: 2d6+2. Yeah.

ART: It's the same, same number plus.

AUSTIN: That's an eleven; look at you. Rosarium Rennari, who is a, I don't know what the ranks are here, but the equivalent of like a, of a- what's higher than a- like a lieutenant-smaller than a- what's lower than a lieutenant, but higher than like a- I guess like sergeant? Is sergeant that? But sergeant feels so- are there naval sergeants? What's the naval equivalent of a sergeant?

JANINE: I have a friend who's going to be very mad at me for not knowing any answers for you right now.

AUSTIN: Okay

ART: Ok-ay, naval ranks, lowest to highest.

AUSTIN: Thank you. There is sergeant.

ART: There's seaman recruit, seaman apprentice, seaman... petty officer third class. second class. first class, chief petty officer, senior chief petty officer, master chief petty officer, fleet commander.

AUSTIN: Wait, it feels like you jumped from, chief petty officer to fleet commander!

ART: Uh, fleet slash commander, master chief petty officer.

AUSTIN: I see.

ART: Master chief's petty officer of the navy. Chief-

AUSTIN: What's above an ensign? We got an ensign yet?

ART: Lieutenant. Lieutenant junior grade, lieutenant, lieutenant commander-

AUSTIN (over Art): So it does go ensign to lieutenant junior grade, okay. Maybe it's lieutenant junior grade then, or maybe it's ensign. It's- she's an ensign,

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AUSTIN: Rosarium, Rosarium Rennari is an ensign, so she says

AUSTIN (as Rosarium Rennari): Yes, captain, right away.

AUSTIN: And hits a button, and there's like a "woom, woom, woom" sound, as the scanner begins to, to happen. And I think we get two, no we get three added symbols on the hover, holo-map, inside of where I've written security forces. And then I think, do you, do you ask a question, or does it just, I'll "tell you something directly useful or knowledgeable." So, we get three symbols show up here. Two of them are... pretty small- oop, let me fill this in as red, also. Three of them are- two of them are pretty small, and then one of them's a little bigger. Rennari says

AUSTIN (as Rosarium Rennari): Three constructs ahead, captain. It looks like, yes, I think it's fair to say we have, one Astir class mech, and then two Con-cons.

AUSTIN: And you all of course know that a Con-con is a construction mech, it is a Converted Constructor, a con-con. Which is a- I guess she also wouldn't say Astir, that is the name of the mechs in this system; she would say,

AUSTIN (as Rosarium Rennari): And a tier three Hollow.

AUSTIN: So it is two kind of like construction mechs, which are smaller than, than military mechs, and then one tier three mech, which is about equal to what yours are. And then she says,

AUSTIN (as Rosarium Rennari): I'm also sensing, two more in storage nearby, two more con-cons, each at the end of the next section.

AUSTIN: Trying to think if there's anything else that would be revealed from this. [Thinking noises] Simon Sweetman says "what's a Hollow versus a Hallow"? They are both just names for mechs; Hollows, H-O-L-L-OW, are mechs that have not been blessed by the Divine; Hallows have been. Which puts the mech of, of Teasel in a weird place. It's why I don't have a Hallow or Hollow written anywhere because it certainly has been blessed, but Teasel is not a member of the Divine Principality. So the Principality would probably classify it as a Hollow, instead of a Hallow. But, we know better, and we know that these categories are fucking bullshit. But they're cool to say. What else, is there anything else you would know from this? I think that that's it. In my mind, I thought there was something else I wanted to give you, but now I can't remember it. If I do, I'll remember it by Rennari figuring it out in the middle of a future action, to be like "Oh, captain, one more thing." [Laughing] So yes, so yeah-

ART: So, these scanners take a long time, right? They have to construct everything in hologram, it takes a little bit.

AUSTIN (over Art): Exactly, exactly. Oh, there is one more thing. So she goes

AUSTIN (as Rosarium Rennari): Oh, wait, it's a- I think there are local Hounds.

AUSTIN: Which are like mercenaries. You know that already Captain, because you're an expert at this. I think, Gold, are you here? Or are you somewhere else? Dre?

DRE: Oh god, sorry!

AUSTIN: No worries

DRE: I was actually somewhere else in my house really quick-

AUSTIN (over Dre): Wow

DRE (over Austin): 'cause my dog was making a weird noise. [Laughter]

AUSTIN: No worries. Are you in the, are you in the map room, in the kind of war room?

DRE: No

AUSTIN: Okay

DRE: I am in the... I mean do we have like a mech bay hanger thing?

AUSTIN: Yeah, yeah, of course, totally totally.

DRE: I'm doing upside-down crunches hanging out the cockpit of my, my mech.

AUSTIN: Perfect. Perfect. Well then you hear, you hear Rennari speak through your comms. And she says, she says that, this group of, of, officer- that this group of, of mechs that's here in this first kind of zone, is a group of local Hounds. They have like, their IFF, their like, friend or foe, thing, is recorded to a... is broadcasting a, the name of a local mercenary unit. And the name of that unit is... the- it's Barter's System, that's the name of the mercenary unit.

DRE: Like, like, B-A-R-T-E-R

AUSTIN (over Dre): B-A-R-T-E-R, yeah yeah yeah. And, you know that the- 'cause you're a Hound; you're another mercenary. You recognise Barter System. You know Barter. Barter is the, is a mononym, but it's, he is a, he's a rival mech pilot. He's gotten some contracts you wanted before. He's not like a piece of shit, but he's kinda grimey, you know what I mean?

DRE: Okay

AUSTIN: And you know that he, he has- he always has something in his back pocket, but he's reticent to use it. He's always like- he always has a backup plan.

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AUSTIN: But, one of the mistakes he makes is that he under commits his forces. So if you could hit him quick, before he can activate his backup stuff, then, he's- then he's toast, you know?

DRE (contemplative): Okay. Yeah.

AUSTIN: Anyone else doing anything in this, in this pre-stage? I guess we need to figure out your rituals, really quick.

SYLVIA: Yeah.

AUSTIN: Ah, Cerise.

SYLVIA: Yeah, so. Should I do- should I prepare the rituals first and then-?

AUSTIN: Yeah, prepare the rituals first, yeah. So, roll +Know.

SYLVIA (faintly): Okay.

AUSTIN: Which, your know is what, two? So it's 2d6+2.

SYLVIA: That's a fourteen. That's a perfect roll.

AUSTIN: Jesus Christ, that's a perfect roll. Six plus six plus two. So yeah, you choose up to three rituals; they expire at dawn.

SYLVIA: Okay. Should we talk about how I'm, what the ritual looks like?

AUSTIN (over Sylvia): Yeah, what's this look like? Yeah.

SYLVIA: So... I don't know. I can't remember if we described what Perennial is like before the break, but-

AUSTIN: We described what, what she looked like, as being-

SYLVIA: What she looked like- okay, cool-

AUSTIN (over Sylvia): Yeah yeah yeah.

SYLVIA (over Austin): Cause I've been thinking about that since you told me, and I saw the "Roaring Elements" thing. I really liked the idea of it being, a lot of like, si... like those similar Russian Sage looking plants.

AUSTIN: Yeah.

SYLVIA: Like she keeps part of, Perennial even, maybe, and it's a lot of like... I've always liked the, like, ritual circles thing [agreement from Austin] like in- like Fullmetal Alchemist style, I guess-

AUSTIN (over Sylvia): Yeah, absolutely.

SYLVIA (over Austin): Is the immediate style I jump to there.

AUSTIN: Yeah.

SYLVIA: So I think it's a lot of like, laying that out, and then her in the middle with these pieces of Perennial surrounding her, and then just like, rushing wind that sort of comes out of nowhere from beneath her.

AUSTIN: Hell yeah.

SYLVIA: And all this other stuff- it's basically just like, pure elemental looking force around her, mostly wind and plants, I think?

AUSTIN: Cool.

SYLVIA: Yeah

AUSTIN: Yeah that makes sense. Do you speak to Perennial when this happens? Do you hear Perennial?

SYLVIA: I think there's a connection there. I don't know if it's speaking in the way that we'd think of it.

AUSTIN: Yeah.

SYLVIA: Like I don't think it's a verbal thing in any way, but there's definitely this sort of mental connection. I've been playing a lot of Kingdom Hearts.

AUSTIN: Gotcha.

SYLVIA: So there's a lot of unspoken non-verbal communications in my head.

AUSTIN: Absolutely.

SYLVIA: But I genuinely think that it is a little cooler that it's more of like this presence that you feel, but don't directly interact with when you've got a Hollow mech.

AUSTIN: Totally. Well then, what I will say is, there's a degree to which... I think maybe becoming, becoming -- this might be a situation where I'm gonna start using the term for the mech also for the pilot -- Becoming Hallowed, becoming, you know, one of Perennial's Hallowed, is... was a weird thing for Cerise because Cerise heard from other mech pilots and other, other Hallowed that they had this very, like, what's the phrase I'm looking for, not stoic really, but a very solemn relationship with their Divine. You do with Perennial, I think you do on your side, but sometimes it's like... You know, you know in Sorcerer's Apprentice- oh my god, we're both in Kingdom Hearts mode, fuck. [Laughter from Sylvia]

DRE: Hell yeah.

AUSTIN: You know how in Fantasia's Sorcerer's Apprentice, where like, animated objects have a sort of mischievous quality to them? There's a degree of that in this-

SYLVIA: Okay.

AUSTIN: Where like, when the elements start coming, they're, they're teasing, right? Like, a gust of wind will hit for a brief moment, but you'll really have to burn that sage right, or redraw the chalk circle. There's a lot of like, you've really got to convince Perennial to come out, and it's not because you're doing a bad job, it's because Perennial likes to see people consistently put in effort and rewards it eventually, but like there's a degree to which you know you're being played. Whereas all of the rest of the Divine, all of the other Halloweds that you went to school with, are like, you know,

AUSTIN (as Hallowed): My first experience, you know, connecting to the Divine was, was immaculate. You know, the lights went off all at once,

AUSTIN: Whereas at least once, Perennial has blown out all of the candles in your room except for one, which forces you to stand up and relight all of the candles. So. Extre-

SYLVIA: Not going to give up; I'm going to get through.

AUSTIN: Yeah, totally.

SYLVIA (over Austin): Cerise is going to get through.

AUSTIN: Well, you crushed it, right? You got fourteen?

SYLVIA: Yeah.

AUSTIN: So like, you did perfect, and in this moment, and maybe this says something about where Perennial is at, you get all the rituals you want, and you don't have to repeat anything, and the wind blows just so. So what do you choose? hat are your three rituals?

SYLVIA: So, the first one I'm going to take, for sure, is the Ritual of Channelling, which is "when you make a move while piloting your Hallow, you are attuned to, you can roll +Channel instead of the usual trait."

AUSTIN: Yeah.

SYLVIA: And on a seven to nine, it'll begin to burn out, giving me the risk of overheating.

AUSTIN: Perfect.

SYLVIA: The other one I really liked was the Ritual of Contingency, where I have to specify-

AUSTIN (over Sylvia): Yes.

SYLVIA: Three specific situations. I have one, I know for sure, and I'm still kind of piecing together the other two, but I'll have them before we go into-

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AUSTIN: Combat or whatever-

SYLVIA: Battle.

[Sylvia and Austin overlapping]

AUSTIN: What is the first one?

SYLVIA: The first one *for sure* is, the- I want, the, the Aster to be ready to retreat in close combat, because it's not-

AUSTIN: Cool.

SYLVIA: A close combat mech.

AUSTIN: Yep.

SYLVIA: Like the weapons it has is ranged. So I want-

AUSTIN: Yeah.

SYLVIA: Just a contingency plan as escape.

AUSTIN: Cool.

SYLVIA: And then... I think the last one I'm gonna take is the Ritual of Mending, which is, "you may at any time end this ritual-"

AUSTIN: Sick

SYLVIA: "In order to repair any damaged modules, weapons, or limbs on your Astir."

AUSTIN: Love it. Cool. So that is, yeah, okay, yep, I've marked them. We're good. So yeah, just think up the next two situations for Contingency. Rad, does anyone else have a pre, thing, a pregame thing, a pre-roll? I already forget- other than the boons from you, Teasel? I don't think so. [Pause] Okay. Anyone else doing anything before we, we, before the mechs launch? I'm trying to think if the crew has any questions or anything here. I don't think so- I think, you know I think, Teasel, I think that Perennial kind of does begin to speak to you, as- I think you can probably sense whenever the ritual happens. And whenever the ritual finishes, Perennial kind of slips into your mind. What's conversation with Perennial like on your side? Does, is this, is this words in your head? Is this communication though something else?

JANINE: Um... Hmmm. I think it's, okay. I think it's words in my head, but like, not in the Signet sense. Like, with Signet it was, it was that long distance conversation, was kind of this like, words in your head to the point of like, you were almost speaking out loud to reply, but it's [agreement from Austin] like very head- in the front of your head. And very like, I think what we would think of in a like traditional sort of spiritual way. I think with Teasel though, it's in her head, but in the way that something is in your head when it is vibrating through the bone.

AUSTIN: Yeah.

JANINE: Like, if you, if you like, put a chopstick or a wooden spoon or a fork or whatever-like something between your teeth and then flick the end of it, [understanding noise from Austin] the sound of it that sort of goes through the bone of your head, I think that's what it is.

DRE: Urgh.

AUSTIN: What's it like to feel a sort of like, as soon- so as soon as the ritual ends like, I think Perennial effectively sighs, and you, you can feel that happening through the back of your neck and down your spine, your long, deerlike spine. And then, and then the like- you can feel her steeling herself, which again is not a thing you get that often. And, I think, maybe this is one of the moments where... there's a, there's a move called Whims, in which, in which the, your, your patron can give you a minor goal, and you can get a reward for it.

AUSTIN: I haven't given you that move because based on the fact that we're just doing this as a onceshot, that isn't really gonna, it doesn't work really? Basically [agreement from Janine] you would get to choose something different in the next time you play, or you'd be able to choose your, yours Boons instead of rolling them. Which is a cool fucking move, by the way, but because we're not going to play these characters again I didn't want to actually give you that.

AUSTIN: But. There's the first bit of a request being made, and I don't think that she makes it clear, but it's something around a sort of like, as she leaves your bones, and as she says like, or as she's about to retreat away, the way she normally does, I think part of her stays there. And so there's just this low hum, there, with you. And, she basically says,

AUSTIN (as Perennial): Bring me with you today.

AUSTIN: And that's kind of vibrating through you, in this moment.

[Mech launch and descriptions]

AUSTIN: So I think that's all of our characters, in their pregame. Brightline, do you, do you hit the button or make the call to be ready to launch?

ART: Yeah, I love the idea that there's just a button.

AUSTIN: What is the button?

ART: I mean, I want it to just be, like, a big blue button that says "Launch."

AUSTIN: Do you, do you hit that button once and it like, primes it, and then you hit it again to actually do the launch? Or do you just hit it once to like, "alright it's time to get going"? Or like- do you know what I mean, like people aren't in their mechs yet. You don't just hit it and then three empty mechs launch out into space right? [Dre giggles]

ART: Okay, first things first, it's a mood button.

AUSTIN: [sigh] What's that me-... [laughter from Janine] Okay, yeah, of course it's a mood button.

JANINE: Is it a mood button before you hit it or after you hit it or while you hit it?

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ART: After.

JANINE: Okay.

ART: And only for a little bit, it goes back to room temperature.

JANINE: It has like a finger mark on it cause like the body-heat.

ART: Yeah, uh huh. Well it's, it's a full palm button, it's a- [agreement from Janine]. And I think there's like a little, one of those little things, you can like lift up the little plastic thing and there's like a little switch.

AUSTIN: Okay

ART: And *that's* the prelaunch switch.

AUSTIN: Gotcha. Gotcha. So then like, do the lights change to match whatever your mood hat is? Or is there a specific-

ART (over Austin): No, I think it's generic-

AUSTIN (laughing): Okay.

ART: Just like an orange light.

AUSTIN (laughing): That would be confusing I guess if it was different lights each time.

ART: Yeah, the, the, the "get to your mech, we're about to launch" lights have to be the same each time.

AUSTIN: Fair. You know what? Fair. Alright.

ART: What if you're not even looking at me?

AUSTIN: Good point. Which is so hard to do, to be honest, to not look at you. So, I mean, maybe it would work out?

ART: Yeah, do you have any idea how much space my shoulders take up? [Austin and Dre laugh]

AUSTIN: So. Orange lights hit everybody. You move to your mechs. Everyone's getting ready. You stop doing your upside down sit-ups, Gold. Who launches first? And also, actually, here's the other thing. There are some other thing- I just remembered, there are like two other things. One is, I guess, uh, Cerise, you can start coming with plans as specific things enter the fray, but remember you have this move about making plans that can, that can, give you XP. But I guess again that doesn't really matter, but. Remember that you should be a planner.

SYLVIA: Okay.

AUSTIN: Two is, what is the opening, what is the, the opening plan here? Because, one of the things that we have not talked about is this game does also have an engagement roll, just like Blades. And someone has to make that roll. The options for it are... let me find it... Ah, "Lead a Sortie," is, "when you lead a group into a sortie, decide who planned the mission and roll. You roll +Gravity if a faction is helping you. You roll +Know if you made the plan. You roll +Crew if someone, if someone else aboard made the plan, or you +Defy if you're heading into danger blind." So who is, who is actually the leader here? Is it Brightline, or is it one of the mech pilots? Like, de facto.

ART: I think it's de facto Brightline, but I don't think it is this time.

AUSTIN: Interesting. Why?

ART: 'Cause, because I don't feel like it was. [Dre Laughs]

AUSTIN: Oh. [Dre Laughs] Okay. Who is it this time?

DRE: Uh, I mean I guess it, it could be Gold? 'Cause if they know Barter...

AUSTIN: Yeah. Do they say something about a plan? Like, do they have a plan?

DRE: Yeah, well I mean if, if they know that like, the thing about Barter is that like, they have lots of good backup plans-

AUSTIN (over Dre): Yeah.

DRE: But they are hesitant to ever use them, then they'd probably devise a plan around just going in like really hard and really fast.

AUSTIN: Right. [laughing] Thomas Whitney in the chat says "I thought you were saying that you roll +NO," N-O, "If you made the plan, like an extra mean way of saying plus 0" [Dre laughs]. No, don't worry, what we just figured out is, in fact, that ah, that Vessel's Gold is gonna roll, and Gold has- they have a negative one in Know; they don't have a zero Know.

DRE: Hell yeah, perfect.

AUSTIN: Kickin' it off. Love it. I'm trying to make sure there's nothing else before we go in. I don't know why I'm so nervous; I'm very nervous about all of this. Oh, there's one thing I should also note is, Cerise, I upped your Gravity with Brightline to two because those should be the same going both directions.

SYLVIA: Okay.

AUSTIN: So I fixed that during one of the, one of the many breaks we took. One of the breaks I took.

DRE: Alright, and what is, what is our, what is our primary objective?

AUSTIN: Your primary objective is to -- If you scroll down, you'll see this power terminal? -- [confirmation from Dre] It's to get close enough to deactivate the anti-ship cannons and lead the Ivory Prince to the power terminal where you will be able to disable, destroy or take over this station. And all of the near infinite power therein.

DRE: Gotcha.

AUSTIN: The initial priority though is to get past whatever security forces are here in the kind of far end of this section of the space station.

DRE: Got it.

AUSTIN: So, give me a roll Know- or, hmm, a Know Roll. [laughter] 2d6-1.

DRE: I'll roll the you know that I know [sad/annoyed/disappointed noise from Austin], what Gold knows.

AUSTIN: Yep.

DRE: And they know about an eights worth.

AUSTIN: That's not bad. On a seven to nine, the crew stumbles, misses something important, or is unprepared for what they need. And so, here's what happens. Okay, first of all, I need the image of each of your ships launching and what do you say. Let's start with you Gold, since you are launching first.

1:55:00

DRE: Sure. I think Gold is very straightforward, just says like "Connect solid--"

DRE (as Gold): Connection Solid, Punchin' Out.

AUSTIN: Love it; "Connection Solid, Punchin' Out" is great. And, you mech, which has a cool big lance, like a neon lance?

DRE: Oh, I totally drag the lance behind me, and it kicks up sparks in the most badass way possible. [Austin lets out a happy sigh]

AUSTIN: Thank you Dre so much. [Agreement from Dre] Who's next? Cerise or Teasel?

SYLVIA: I have mine.

AUSTIN: Okay.

SYLVIA: Also, before we go, should I run by my contingency plans really- run them by you?

AUSTIN (over Sylvia): Yes, please.

SYLVIA: So the other two I had- cause I was trying to think of, one, bad situations-

AUSTIN (over Sylvia): Yes.

SYLVIA (over Austin): That we could possibly get into, and po- and moves that I could actually apply it to. So I was thinking the other could be... a bonus towards help- like, rescuing another teammate.

AUSTIN (over Sylvia): Sure.

SYLVIA (over Austin): Like, a nobody left behind sort of contingency plan? [Agreement from Austin] And then the other one I had was- I don't have like a catchy name or anything for it, but just like, being able to shake a tail that's trying to get- when we're trying to get out of there.

AUSTIN: Okay, so es-

SYLVIA: So if someone's trying to come back with us, basically.

AUSTIN: Let's say just escape in general. Escape-

SYLVIA: Okay, okay.

AUSTIN: I want to go as broad as possible for you here, like-

SYLVIA: Then I'll leave- okay.

AUSTIN: Is that okay? Or do you want- Okay

SYLVIA: Yeah, yeah, for sure. I just need a third now. [quiet laugh]

AUSTIN: Oh, cause that's retreat.

SYLVIA: I had escape already.

AUSTIN: Right right right, I see what you're saying. Well no. 'cause that one's escape from close combat, I'm thinking-

SYLVIA: Yeah.

AUSTIN: Escape, escape as in, get the- like, get the fuck out.

SYLVIA: Like- Okay. Like a tactical retreat as opposed-

AUSTIN: A tactical retreat.

SYLVIA: To just- Okay.

AUSTIN: Yeah like a retreat from the battleground, you know. 'Cause Shake A Tail means more that, I guess, right? Or, do you really want like...

SYLVIA: No, I think, I think we're on the same page.

AUSTIN: Okay.

SYLVIA: I basically just want to make sure that when we're getting out of there-

AUSTIN: Yeah.

SYLVIA: It's like, smoother. Yeah.

AUSTIN: Gotcha, cool.

SYLVIA: And then-

AUSTIN: I want to make sure, to be clear, I- it's not that I don't want you to be able to do it when you have a tail, it's that I want it to be broad enough so that if, in case you-

SYLVIA: Oh yeah.

AUSTIN: -don't have a tail, you'll get this plus two forward on something.

SYLVIA: Thank you. No I, I, I got you. And then I think, for when the Aster launches, what Cerise says is,

SYLVIA (as Cerise): The Hollowed Aster, In Bloom.

SYLVIA: -and then it takes off. [Awed noise from Austin]

AUSTIN: [Makes chef's kiss noise] Love it. So much. Teasel, it sounds like you're last.

JANINE: Yeah. So, I think, I think my phrase, well my, [conflicted noise] I want to say- Okay. Okay. So, I don't have the best mech ideas. The mech idea I do have is that the sniper... I have like a, like a sniper rifle thing, right? That's what this is?

AUSTIN (over Janine): Yeah, totally, yes, yeah yeah yeah.

JANINE: So I think that-

AUSTIN: Or it's whatever you want it to be. The thing that it is is "Blast, Decisive, Messy, Reloading."

JANINE (over Austin): Yeah yeah.

AUSTIN: But-

JANINE: Yeah.

AUSTIN: Yeah.

JANINE: I think this thing, is- it isn't carried at first, I think the thing it is is it's like, it looks like it is built into the back.

AUSTIN: Cool.

JANINE: I'm imagining it as a very un-gunlike gun. I think it is just kind of, um... Like a, long, rectangular sort of flat thing.

AUSTIN: Sure.

JANINE: I think basically it embeds as the mech's spine.

AUSTIN: Cool.

JANINE: Like, it looks like the thing's spine, but there are- you know those paper chains you can make, not the ones with loops, but the ones with flat rectangular bits that zigzag? Like you can make them out of Starbursts wrappers or whatever?

AUSTIN: Yeah yeah yeah, yes.

JANINE: I imagine it has four of those kind of flying off of it, so it kind of, initially at launch, those are streaming back; they're very long.

AUSTIN: Cool.

JANINE: They're probably not actually paper but they look like that. And then when the gun is sort of taken out, it is like, you know, you're reaching behind, but instead of taking something out of a holster or whatever, you're taking it out of your back, you're taking your spine off. And the paper chains sort of come with it and kind of stream off of the gun and kind of like spiral around?

AUSTIN: Yep. Good, I'm glad you've gotten body horror in already. [Janine laughs] Mechs are about bodies, 2019. [Agreement from Janine] Also, I see you've put an extra point into thrust.

JANINE: Yes, I decided that was reasonable for a sniper.

AUSTIN: I'm here, I'm here for it.

JANINE: And I think the thing that Teasel says is,

JANINE (as Teasel): Day's Eye, Branching.

AUSTIN: Love it. Uh, this is the best. This is a gift to me- I've had a long weird week. I've had a long weird day; this is the best. [Dre giggling in the background] Another question here is colours, like, what- just really, like, people are gonna read these descriptions that are on screen and figure out their own breakdowns but like, colours, "Is it smooth? Is it round? Is it blocky?" for each of these mechs. Anyone who has an idea can go first here.

JANINE: I think the Day's Eye is very, is very sleek. I mean like I said the sniper rifle is very sort of ah, um- weirdly I'm picturing the gun as being kind of like a, a stapler refill. Or something to that effect, of like, long and-

2:00:00

JANINE: Just, box-like, when you put two stapler refills together to like, store them, and it's just a long rectangle of like, weird metal stuff. And I think the, the, mech in general is a very similar like, very highly machined, very sleek, not full of like, chunky extra bits and like tubes and whatever. [agreement from Austin] It is just like a very, sleek and precise looking machine. I think it is mostly also sort of a bl- like a, like silver-ish, but like a blue-ish silver.

AUSTIN: Awesome.

JANINE: So like in the light, it kind of shifts a bit.

AUSTIN: Is one- okay, I just need to know if any of these are going to be mood mechs, and just, start thinking. Dre, Sylvia?

DRE: I'm googling right now.

ART: There's nothing out there for "mood mech;" we're inventing this right now.

AUSTIN (laughing): There has to be; that's bullshit. "Mood ring, but a mech." This is just mood rings.

SYLVIA: I have the- I have this idea where the Aster's like, very segmented.

AUSTIN: Okay.

SYLVIA: Because it's supposed to, it's supposed to like channel energy through it.

AUSTIN: Yeah.

SYLVIA: And I had this kind of look where each part of it kinda looks like it could come off, but then there's this smaller thing underneath the armour that glows a little,

AUSTIN: Sure.

SYLVIA: And that's kind of what's channeling the energy of Perennial as well.

AUSTIN: That makes sense. I should note, you have five Mana, and ev- the closest to you has three, on the Day's Eye, and the High Price only has one. So like, five is- what makes the Advent Class mech so good is that it can use the subsystem ability a lot. And so, take advantage of that throughout this sortie.

SYLVIA: And I just colour scheme wise.

AUSTIN: Yes.

SYLVIA: Very quickly.

AUSTIN: No, please.

SYLVIA: I think that the energy underneath tends to look very like, a lilac-y colour

AUSTIN: Cool.

SYLVIA: Is what I had in mind, like a light pastel purple, and then the rest of it, again, I'm really going with the plant motif; I do have this like, very bark colour in my mind, like a, like a light brown. Not for like a- not like a very deep one, but it's, it's like when you- it's like someone whittled away at a stick, basically.

AUSTIN: Right.

SYLVIA: That colour, the- that under the bark I guess is what I meant.

AUSTIN: Yeah, I gotcha. I got it. That sounds like a cool combo. How's the, how's the googling going, Gold?

DRE: It's good, I was trying to remember the name of this- have you played Xenosaga- or Xenogears?

AUSTIN: Years ago, and I never beat it.

DRE: Okay.

AUSTIN: It's a big, it's a big, uh, gamer sin.

DRE: [snorts] I don't, I think that's too far, but okay. [Sylvia laughs] I love that game, but I don't know if gamer sin- anyway.

AUSTIN: Welcome to my new YouTube channel, Gamer Sins.

DRE: Gamer sins. So, I'm thinking of something- there's this, there's this Gear -- because that's what they call their mechs in Xenogears -- called the El-Stier. I just linked it in there. It is like, very- it has very big long chunky legs, and like-

AUSTIN (over Dre): Oh wooow.

DRE (over Austin): Not much of a body.

AUSTIN: What is this thing fucking called? What's this called?

DRE: The El-Stier?

AUSTIN: Spell it?

DRE: S-T-I-E-R? Sty-er, maybe? I'm not sure.

AUSTIN: S-T-I- wait, S-T-I, E-R?

DRE: There's not very many good pictures of it on the internet.

AUSTIN: I see, yeah. So there's- [this](#) is the one you linked me, and then the [ones I'm seeing](#) are like, they have colour to them, but they're big. That's a big, those are big chunky legs.

DRE: Yeah. And I imagine that's just like, that's where all the jets are.

AUSTIN: Gotcha, that makes sense.

DRE (over Austin): Cause like if you're charging in with this big fuck off lance.

AUSTIN: Yeah, you gotta have them-

DRE (over Austin): You gotta have big strong legs.

AUSTIN: Yeah, totally, love it. Gaming Sins by the way is a real thing, and it's terrible. Sorry.

DRE: Urgh, that sounds terrible. [Agreement from Austin] As far as colours, I think like a lot of like, brushed copper, steel...

AUSTIN: Very metallic, like, unpainted metallic. [Agreement from Dre] Or if painted, but just painted the, the metallic colour.

DRE: There's probably a lot of like, like lots of of like wear and tear, like scratches and like... yeah.

AUSTIN: Alright

DRE: Thanks Sylvia.

SYLVIA: No problem.

[Austin and Sylvia crosstalking]

AUSTIN: Oh nice, that's, that's good.

SYLVIA: I just put some concept art in the chat. Yeah.

AUSTIN: Wow it's like a little more mechanical, that's kind of neat. [Agreement from Dre] I like it a lot. I should, I should find time to play JRPGs again in my life, who the fuck has it?

DRE: Good luck, dude.

SYLVIA: Yeah.

[Engagement Roll]

AUSTIN: Yeah. So, you rolled an eight on your engagement, uh, I almost said ring. [Dre laughs] Your engagement roll. And, here's what I think happens, is like... You know, *you know*, that what Barter does is hold back on, on, forces. Barter has decided not to do that. Which, again, should be a signal. Which means that one, maybe Barter already knew who

was coming. Two, maybe Barter's taking this a little more seriously than, than they normally do.

2:05:00

AUSTIN: Than he normally does. But, instead of being unprepared, or only using half of what he has, he in fact, as you guys come, come kind of skidding down or launching down and landing on this, this platform, he has already deployed his two backup Con-cons. So he has a total of five mechs out there. He is in the big one that is the same scale as you. He has a Tier-3 Hollow, and then he has four Tier-2 Con-cons. Now, the thing to know about tiers is, and this is one of the mechanical things, and in this case it helps you quite a bit; "Just like the things wielding them, weapons and other pieces of equipment have a tier, too. Usually the same as their wielder, since they're made for them." Not always though. "Weapons designed-" so for instance the carrier ship has a Tier-5 cannon, but also has Tier-3 weapons, I'm pretty sure.

AUSTIN: The, duh-duh-duh-duh-duh- maybe I'm wrong about that. "Tier-5 is the realm of vessels and vehicles on a grander scale than any single construct; ships, trains and any other interesting creations that often carry or deploy constructs or Astirs into battle. The player's carrier is Tier-5. Immense creatures like Krakens or Great Big Dragons can be considered Tier-5. Higher tier constructs and creatures often have much more robust defenses, so equipment of one tier isn't effective on things of the tier above, unless that piece of equipment has the Bane tag," B-A-N-E. "Anything that's more than one tier above is still out of reach, unless it has the Ruin tag instead." Brightline, some of this should be ringing bells 'cause you have abilities to give things Bane or Ruin. "In play, this typically means that "Exchange Harm" or "Strike Decisively," two moves for attacking, can't be triggered if your weapon is a lower tier than your target, unless you have some cunning idea to overcome that distance.

AUSTIN: "Working in the other direction is a little different. When using a weapon to physically harm something of a lower tier than it, you can use the Strike Decisively move, without them being defenseless." Which means- so traditionally you use Exchange Harm to kind of make the enemies- to put the enemy in danger, to give them Risks or Perils. And then once you've gone through their HP, kind of, once you've given them enough Risks or Perils, then you can use Strike Decisively to strike decisively and end that conflict, to end that fight. But, when you're fighting something with a lower tier, you don't need to- you don't need to, ever, Exchange Harm with them; you can just immediately Strike Decisively, with the note, that you take a -1 per tier, to reflect the difficulty in hitting a smaller target. If the weapon has the Blast or Cleave tags, you can ignore that minus, "beware the dangers of trying to paint details when using such a large brush."

AUSTIN: If this is all a bit much at first, the important thing to remember is if you want to hurt something up one step tougher than you, you need Bane. If you want to hurt something more than one- more than one step tougher, you need Ruin. In this case, you have one thing that's equally as tough as you, the, the, mech that, the Hollow that Barter is piloting, and then you have four Con-cons, which are one step lower than you. I'm gonna add y'all to this

map just so we have like a little bit of a little tiny map. What were your key colours again? Gold for, for, Gold, and bronze I guess, right?

DRE: Yeah.

AUSTIN: I'm going to make you guys circles -- whoop, that's just a ring. I'm going to make you circles. Boom, there we go. So there's one. Is there any way to make this an actual circle? No? No? Okay. that's fine. I'm gonna make, there's a lilac in there, right?

SYLVIA: Yeah.

AUSTIN: That's a square; that's not what you are. [Laugh] And then, what was the prime-blue, blu- like a light blue, like a chrome-y blue, like a...?

JANINE: Yeah.

AUSTIN: There we go. Alright. So, Gold as soon as you land, like fire starts coming in from the north and the south of you, these two red rectangles here, which are Con-cons. They are- but that, but their incoming fire is immediately like, bouncing off of your, your- I guess it's not bouncing off. I guess it's- actually, you know what it is? It's, the initial fire is not small arms fire; it is not something that would bounce off of you. There -- as soon as you land, a huge magical ballista bolt flies over your, cockpit, like right past your cockpit. You stop just in time with this eight to where it is not the worst possible thing. You didn't get hit here; you're not- you don't have to roll to, to dodge it because it's still basically a success. But, the, the thing you, you do know now is even these small ones have some sort of ballista that if they can reload and fire, can do real damage to you. So, the three of you have landed. What do you do as these four construction mechs and this one real-ass military mech are all around you?

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AUSTIN: Who does something first? Who takes the first, the first action here?

JANINE: I feel like it's a practical thing to do to try and snipe one of the little construction ones.

AUSTIN: Totally. In fact, I think- I'm going to check a thing really quick cause I think the way blast works... Buh-buh-buh...

JANINE: Yeah, there's a bit of a...

AUSTIN: Yeah, it's a blast, right? [agreement from Janine] So, it hits everything close to the target. So, do you want to go for maybe the...? You tell me where you're going for.

[Janine and Austin crosstalking]

JANINE: I'm trying to find the...

AUSTIN: For the people at home, there's like a, there's a northern enemy, a southern enemy, and kind of a trio in front of the crew, in front of the main crew, of two small ones and a big one.

JANINE: You know my gamer instincts tell me to shoot for the middle on that trio.

AUSTIN: That's, you know what? This is, thank you. Is that, is that a thing for, for, for Teasel? Is she a gamer? [Janine Dre and Austin laugh]

JANINE (conflicted): Man... [Austin laughs]

SYLVIA (over Janine): I mean you were trying to make her unsettling earlier. [Art laughs]

JANINE: That's such a- That's a heavy question.

DRE: Ah, fucking got-em.

AUSTIN: God. [Disgusted/tired noise from Janine]

SYLVIA: Sorry.

ART: Teasel says, "nerf this."

AUSTIN: Oh my god. [Dre groan-giggles]

JANINE: Yikes.

AUSTIN: Yikes. Alright, well, if you're aiming for one of them it sounds like you can do strike decisively because they are defenseless to you in comparison.

JANINE: Cool.

AUSTIN: What do you use to roll? do, do you have the thing that lets you roll, Clash...?

JANINE: I have a thing for-

AUSTIN (over Janine): Or Channel?

JANINE (over Austin): For Strike Decisively, I get to roll Channel, right?

AUSTIN: I think you have that thing.

JANINE: Cause that's one of my Boons?

AUSTIN: That is one of your Boons. I'll double check.

JANINE: Although, should I use that... is, is this- are the Boons a thing where it's like [haltingly] I should use these, or I should not?

AUSTIN: You should use them.

JANINE (over Austin): Or I should wait?

AUSTIN: You don't, you don't, you don't use them up.

JANINE: Okay.

AUSTIN: These are your Boons-

JANINE (over Austin): And there's no like cost or anything?

AUSTIN (over Janine): Indefinitely. The cost is that there's an extra risk in doing it, which is, if you -- or there could be a risk -- if you get a seven to nine, your mech will begin to burnout giving you the *Risk*, overheating. [Understanding from Janine] Which is a Risk, which is, that's a thing you could address through other maneuvers, but, in other words, you-

JANINE: Yeah.

AUSTIN: Yeah. Also as a note, Tier-3 things, people like you have three HP basically. You can take three dangers before you're quote-unquote defenseless. And then, that still doesn't mean you're done, that means that, if you fail, it's bad for you, right? If, you- the enemy in the main mech, Barter, has three danger levels also. But the Con-cons only have two. But also, it sounds like you're just going to try and take them out directly, you know. But Tier-2 enemies have two dangers instead of having three.

JANINE: Okay.

AUSTIN: So, Teasel, gamer, gamer in chief, go ahead and give me your 2d6 plus Channel to Strike Decisively.

JANINE: It's plus three this time right, too?

AUSTIN: Yes, totally.

JANINE: For the Channel? Okay.

AUSTIN: Yep.

JANINE: Uhh... Oh right, we don't have- okay. That's an, that's a five; that's a bad.

AUSTIN (over Janine): You got the *worst possible* roll.

JANINE: Wow.

AUSTIN: Oh my god. We're rolling off on one. And you're too far off to even get a help to get there; a single person's help couldn't do it. I'm looking to see if there's any other way to address this. Briar in the chat says "oof," but Briar the game design- I'm just going to start saying Weregazelle because I named Captain Briar after, after them, but now that's confusing. Weregazelle, is there anything, is there anything that she can do here based on what we got going on? I don't think there is. [Hurt noise- "urhwee"]

ART: I would, I would just take Captain Brightline if you're looking for a...

AUSTIN: There we go, Captain Brightline, that will be you, thank you. So I think, I think this is gonna go bad. Yeah, Weregazelle says "not from a five, I don't think."

JANINE: Yeah...

AUSTIN: I think the, you take this shot and the, the- I mean I can tell you exactly what happens, which is you take the shot, and you expect it to hit and slam into them, but it hits this like, almost like a particle field, like... As it almost hits them, it explodes, and there's smoke. And then the smoke disperses, and behind it, there's a glowing green particle field that you can see kind of wavering and then shutting down. As if, as if you hit their, they have some sort of like, armour ge- like shield generator. And it seems to have overpowered their shield generators, so it's not like you got nothing here. However, the front one, the front of these two Con-cons ducks. And the one behind it has already lined up this shot with its kind of sniper rifle equivalent, which is just a giant ballista. And it balances it on the front Con-cons shoulder and pulls the trigger. And that fires back at you. And I think it's gonna hit you; I think you get the, do you get a, duh-duh-duh...

2:15:00

AUSTIN: I don't think- so you definitely don't Bite The Dust. I think this is going to give you a Danger. So do you see where it says Risk? Mark one of those Risks, and then, I'll read from the book on how Risks work. So... One second. [Windows error noise] I can't search this document. I keep trying to search the quick-start document, and that document does not actually let you search it. I mean you know what? We can just use the Risk- I know exactly what it is. It's like, I think they're getting to fire back, and so that will be a thing you have to dodge, but the Risk that you take is, Overheating. So, mark one of your Risks, and then write above it "Overheating."

JANINE: [disagreement] Ah, isn't- don't I only Overheat if I get 7-9?

AUSTIN: I can make a move as hard as I want, so, so. Yeah.

JANINE: Okay, so, just also- okay, I didn't know if you were making that move because it was in the thing or just-

AUSTIN: No, no no, I mean I could give you a different Risk, but what I'm going to do now instead is say they're shooting at you. And so I'm going to ask, what do you do or what does anybody else do here as the shot starts to come in? [Long pause, noise of Sylvia and Dre considering] So again it's like, y'all have landed, shots are coming in from the north and the south, and then, and then- I keep wanting to say Teal, and that is not- that is not- Teasel fires this explosive sniper round, which misses- which hits a shield of theirs, and then the smoke reveals that they have a ballista setup also, and that's now incoming. And also, Teasel, your mech is heating up. I didn't mean to quote D'va again. I'm sorry.

SYLVIA: I have an idea.

AUSTIN: Yep, go ahead.

SYLVIA: I want to use my tactical illusions.

AUSTIN: Ooh, what's that do?

SYLVIA: When you distract your foes with magic, roll +Channel. On a ten plus, choose two, on a seven to nine, choose one, but illusions also distract an unintended audience.

AUSTIN: Sure.

SYLVIA: And then, I- they can last until I stop sustaining them. They can affect anyone that can perceive them, rather than a single person. Or I can create illusions that can be heard and smelled rather than just seen.

AUSTIN (laughing): Okay.

SYLVIA: What I'm trying to do, because, you know, the system says describe what you're trying to do first, what I'm trying to do is create doubles, or things that like, from afar, look like doubles.

AUSTIN: Totally.

SYLVIA: So it throws off the ballista's aiming.

AUSTIN: Cool.

SYLVIA: So, this is a plus 2, and I got a twelve!

AUSTIN (over Sylvia): That's a twelve!

DRE (disbelieving): Jesus.

SYLVIA: I've rolled a six and a six and a five and a five.

AUSTIN: Okay, well that means you're good for like, a couple more turns, and then it's going to go bad, if this trend continues.

SYLVIA: So, the two I'm going to choose are, "your illusions can affect anyone that can- ah, affect anyone that can perceive them, rather than a single person," and then I'm going to take "they last until I stop sustaining them."

AUSTIN: Awesome, cool. So, there are doubles of you out here now, and then yeah, the ballista that was going to slam into, into Teasel's, into the Day's Eye, in fact slides past and hits- and like goes through the duplicate. And I'm going to say that the illusion are mirrored. So like, if you're at the northern end, it's at the southern end, you know? So those are kind of like matching you as you move across this, this- You know, in my mind I'm not going to lie, I'm very much thinking about the fight against Sovereign at the end of Mass Effect 1. Where it's just like the outside of a space station that has just like, weird boxes on it for some reason. You know, chest high cover is just spread around, and there's just like, big weird boxy units on the side that you could hide behind or take cover behind. Which I could add here, but, you know? Do your, do the, the imaginary thinking stuff. Imagining, is that what that's called?

SYLVIA [laughing]: I think so.

AUSTIN: Okay, do that. [Sylvia still laughing softly in the background.] Ah, cool; Gold, what are you up to at this point?

DRE: What is the biggest slowest target?

AUSTIN: The biggest *slowest* target is definitely Barter's mech specifically.

DRE: Perfect. I want to slam my lance into that fool.

AUSTIN: Okay. Give me a, with the regular attack one, that I'm already forgetting the name of. Exchange Blows.

DRE: So that's rolling De-fy?

AUSTIN (over Dre): Yeah, "when you charge at your foe with your blade, engage someone in debate, or try to provoke them." -- I love that the fight move is also the debate move.

DRE: Yeah.

AUSTIN: As Gold charges in with the fucking lance, "Debate me!" [Dre laughs] -- "Or otherwise act against someone able to defend themselves, you are attempting to exchange

blows. When you do, advance a gravity clock if you have one-" I think that means with them, which in this case you don't.

DRE: Right.

AUSTIN: And then "roll +Clash or +Talk, whichever is more appropriate. On a ten plus, either your opponent takes a Risk, or you take a Risk and your opponent replaces a Risk with a peril. On a seven to nine, you both- you and your target are both forced to take a Risk." So 2d6 +Clash, unless you have some move which changes what that is.

DRE: Yeah, I'm going to double check, just to make sure.

AUSTIN: Yeah.

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DRE: No, I don't think so.

AUSTIN: Cool.

DRE: Not yet, I have to have other stuff for things to happen

AUSTIN: Cool. Yeah yeah yeah. Alright, 2d6 plus Clash.

DRE: Oh, I guess I have, plus one to Exchange Harm.

AUSTIN: Yes, you do.

DRE: When I charge into melee from afar.

AUSTIN: That's- nice catch, so, plus three. Good catch.

DRE: "My Lance is sick, Change My Mind." 11.

AUSTIN (laughing): No one is gonna change, change your mind with an eleven. So, that means, you get to add a, "Either your opponent- either your opponent takes a Risk, or, you take a Risk and your opponent replaces a Risk with a Perril-" they don't have any Risk yet, he doesn't have a Risk yet at all, so you can go ahead and give him a Risk. What is the first Risk you give him?

DRE: Okay. Is there like a list of these I should be looking at?

AUSTIN: Not really, but like- you know, ah, maybe there is. Let me just, let me just double check. So, duh duh duh, Dangers. "When twenty foot long swords and magic guns are involved, injuries tend to be the severe kind. Thankfully, characters in Armour Astir are plenty capable of defending themselves up to a point. Should enough problems and distractions

arise, you may find yourself defenseless. The dangers that make it harder to defend yourself come in two kinds. Risks are temporary things that can be resolved during a Sortie, like, having the low ground during a fight, being on fire, or being distracted. And Perils are more permanent issues that must be solved during downtime, like, serious injuries to you or your Astir, being heartbroken, being exhausted. Characters can be affected by a certain amount of both before they are defenceless. Players, Rivals and Elite Foes are defenseless at three dangers,” blah blah blah blah blah. “When a move or other effect says you take a Risk or are put in Peril-” also that’s a note really quick, that, that, Briar, the game designer didn’t explicitly just give me, but that’s a thing worth, worth saying; it is not that this character is, a Tier-3 one that gives them three dangers, it’s that they are an Elite. And they have, but they have rookie- or they have veterans with them. In fact, I think two of these are rookies and two of them are veterans, but whatever it doesn’t matter.

AUSTIN: “When a move or another effect says you take a Risk or are put in Peril, it means you are being given one of those dangers. Sometimes it will be specific examples, so, ‘take a Risk (Outnumbered),’ means you add ‘Risk (Outnumbered)’ to your character sheet. If there are no brackets, it means that you can choose what the Risk or Peril is. Generally, if it’s being inflicted on a player, it’s that player’s decision, and if it’s being inflicted on a non-player character, it’s up to the GM. You are, of course, free to discuss with the table in either case.”

DRE: So do you have any ideas about like what Barter’s Astir looks like...?

AUSTIN: Yeah, so I think, I think Barter’s Astir here, or Barter’s, I guess, Hollow if we’re using the terms that we kind of tried to set up before-

DRE: Right, yeah.

AUSTIN: Are- is a... Basing it on what the weapons are here. It is like the most stock. It is big bulky shoulders, like big, like, blocky shoulders, with a rounded head, and a big blocky torso, and then rounded legs. It is sort of like a comic book solider, you know? Like, [giggle from Dre] it’s as if there were a GI-Jane named, GI-Joe named Robot, you know?

DRE: Gotcha.

AUSTIN: And I think it’s like, straight up has like, splitter camo, like old school naval splitter camo.

DRE: Oh yeah.

AUSTIN: On its legs and arms, if it were wearing, like a shirt and pants. And it’s like, you know, silver and white style, sil- splitter camo. And, and, Barter’s mech also has- also I was wrong, Barter is- Barter is a veteran, Barter only has two dangers, you only need to put two dangers on him to knock him out.

DRE: Okay.

AUSTIN: Or to get him opened up for Strike Decisively. And the other ones *are* all just one. I was looking at the wrong part of my notes. And then as a weapon, Barter just has the kind of like, basically the assault rifle equivalent, a Force Repeater, which is ranged and magic; nothing special, but like, totally a- if you picked it up in a game of PUBG, you would be happy to be like “oh good, I got this thing. This is fine.” Or Fortnite [cough], excuse me, or Fortnite. There is a rumour going around, I think we’ve been blessed by the mech gods, by the way. There is a Titanfall battle royale rumour that broke [agreement from Dre] in the middle of us recording. So.

DRE: Yep.

AUSTIN: Uh huh.

DRE: And my girlfriend also texted me to say “hey, the local movie theatre’s advertising their one night showing of Gundam MT.”

AUSTIN: Yep.

DRE: So, lots of good mech.

AUSTIN (over Dre): I was- that is why I have started watching Double Zeta, by the way, because I’m trying catch up on that.

DRE (laughing): Nice.

AUSTIN: Anyway. So, what do you do here? What’s the d- what is the, the Danger you’re giving the, the Risk you’re giving to Barter?

DRE: Yeah, so I think, I don’t directly hit Barter.

AUSTIN: Okay.

DRE: But, I’m coming in like so hot and so fast -- Did we establish, is Barter he, they?

AUSTIN: Barter’s he, he/him. Yeah.

DRE: Okay -- he has to like, dodge very erratically out of the way.

AUSTIN: Okay.

DRE: And he gets separated from the majority of his forces.

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AUSTIN: Oh that’s good; I like that. So like, Risk: Separated?

DRE: Yeah

AUSTIN: Love it. Cool. So I'm going to slide Barter back, and I'm going to slide you kind of back here, also, as if you've like, done a pass, you know? Awesome. [Thinking noises] Teasel or, or, Cerise? What you up to?

JANINE: Okay- can we- can I ask, what does magic look like?

AUSTIN: You tell me.

JANINE: In this?

AUSTIN: What does magic look like here? 'Cause again, the framing for me really is, this is a story being told, some amount of time in the future, maybe a parent to a child, maybe this is whispered in the halls of House Brightline, maybe it's, it's turned into a, a, a comic book somewhere else in the world, you know what I mean? Like, what does it look like?

JANINE: Okay, um. [Laugh] Uhh, so I have an idea for a thing I want to, but I just don't know how feasible, or like, how- I don't know if it, if it fits.

AUSTIN: Teasel-ble. [Pause, Dre snickers]

JANINE (confused): What?

AUSTIN: Teasel... ble.

ART: Wow, woah. [DRE booing]

SYLVIA: Swing and a miss.

AUSTIN: Okay. Sometimes you gotta take swings.

SYLVIA: Oh no, for sure.

ART (over Sylvia): You know we only need six people to remove Austin from this company. [All laugh, Sylvia continues laughing]

JANINE: Uhh, anyway the thing I wanted to do was to mess with someone's blood.

AUSTIN: [sigh, Dre laughing in the background] Heads up for body horror for whatever is about to happen. Is this a situation where it's like-

JANINE (over Austin): I'm just-

AUSTIN: Yeah, go ahead.

JANINE: Yeah, that's why I'm asking what's feasible here, is our magic like, electricity, or, you know...

AUSTIN (over Janine): What did you pick- you picked:

JANINE: Withering Curses.

AUSTIN: Withering Curses! So.

JANINE: Yeah.

AUSTIN: So, is that what happens... [pause] I don't want to say "paint me a picture" because it's not one I would approve.

JANINE: That's good 'cause I was actually going to use a paint metaphor.

AUSTIN (quietly): Good, well good. What, what are you trying to do? What is your intention?

JANINE: Tooo hurt Barter.

AUSTIN: Okay. By using magic?

JANINE: Yes.

AUSTIN: Okay. So, the thing that I want to say is Barter is still in that mech. Which means...

JANINE: See this is what I was asking about.

AUSTIN: Yeah yeah, so this is what I'm going- this is what I'm going to work out. You are, you are channeling magic through your mech. Now, what this means is your sniper rifle is shooting magic. Right?

JANINE: That's fine; I had that worked in.

AUSTIN: Okay, well then I think you're probably fine. What's, what, what are you doing?

JANINE: Hang on does the sniper rifle have, does the sniper rifle have to actually shoot it like a bullet, or is it just being used in the process?

AUSTIN: I think it has to shoot it like a bullet, because it does- range matters. It's messy; it has blast. So like, maybe it's-

JANINE: Okay, I can still work with that. I just wanted to know.

AUSTIN: Yeah, I think so, too.

JANINE: Okay, so, the thing that I want to do with this magic and, and Barter's blood. [laugh]

AUSTIN: Yeah.

JANINE: So, uh, a thing I've been doing a lot lately is putting two water colours in pans, and when you do that it's really frustrating because you'll put the paint- you'll put the paint in the pan, and it'll be really smooth and nice, but then once it dries out it cracks and gets all like chunky?

AUSTIN (over Janine): I love that- I love that you're going from-

ART (over Austin): Oh, I'm going to hate this.

AUSTIN: From camp counselor to body horror and back, with, just, expert ease.

JANINE: [laugh] We've met. [Agreement from Austin, laughter from Dre] So basically I want to do like that. But to Barter's blood.

AUSTIN: But, and like-

JANINE (over Austin): Like a little bit, probably. Not, you know.

AUSTIN (over Janine): But that's like, a, a magic bullet, or a magical burst comes out of this gun, and that is actually what happens, if it hits.

JANINE: Yeah- I imagine also the, the way that it is shot would be, the front end of the sniper rifle is, like, jammed into or set upon the ground-

AUSTIN: Yeah sure, so-

JANINE (over Austin): And like the paper streamer-y things do some streamer-y stuff, but then you tilt the gun forward kind of like a mortar and shoot the magic out of that.

AUSTIN: So here's what I will say is if you stop right now and shoot from here, you will be hit by one of the other small Con-cons. Your gun has the Reloading tag, which means like [understanding from Janine], hey, it takes a second to do like- but that's fine, so what I need you to do, if you want to do this is, is do a Weather the Storm to set, to set up this shot, basically. And you can use that with [JANINE: Okay] Glance, and be like "hey, I'm just, my armour's gonna take this incoming hit." You can use it with Thrust and try to move to a position where you can take that shot. You could...

JANINE: I also have a, one of my Boons is for Weather the Storm.

AUSTIN: Yeah totally, so maybe do that. What's that look like?

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JANINE: So is this- oh hang on, I need to read Weather the Storm.

AUSTIN: Yeah.

JANINE: I'm having such a hard time zooming in and out on this thing.

AUSTIN: I know, this is not ideal, I know.

JANINE: The character sheets are on a- are a different size than the move sheets.

AUSTIN: I know.

JANINE: So if I'm zoomed in for one, it's too big to read the other.

AUSTIN: I was- I can make the other one smaller; there's just a lot of whitespace then-

JANINE: It's o- it's not worth doing it right now.

AUSTIN: You know.

JANINE: "Defy to dodge-" oh but this, my move is only for Glance.

AUSTIN: No, that's fine though.

JANINE: I think.

AUSTIN: No no no, I think it's just when the- what's it say specifically?

JANINE: I think it says specifically glance.

AUSTIN: That would also be fine though because what you'd be doing then is like, channelling a shield or something to, to prevent an incoming... Yeah, I think that would totally work.

JANINE: Alright. We'll say it's channeling a shield then, especially with all of the streamer-y stuff. That would look really cool.

AUSTIN: Yeah. It would.

JANINE: If it's like, streamers and also like an energy following them.

AUSTIN: Yeah.

JANINE: To like, loop around, like a fucking, aerodynamics test, kinda looking thing.

AUSTIN: Totally.

JANINE: Okay, I'm happy with that then. What do I roll...?

AUSTIN: So yeah, go ahead and give me a...

JANINE: I'm rolling that horrible roll I did before.

AUSTIN: Yeah, so Channel: 2d6 plus 3, which is a great roll, to be able to roll.

JANINE: Yeah. [sigh]

AUSTIN: It's about as good a roll as you can get. There you go; that's a ten.

JANINE (over Austin): Alright that's a ten; that's a ten.

AUSTIN: So yeah, so, we get the other two Con-cons, you like slam down the sniper rifle thing, you're right it's resting on the ground or something, like not on the ground, but you know, on a bipod or whatever. And, the, they shoot in their ballista, and it just bounces off of this, this shield you've, you've summoned. Thomas Whitney says "wait, she's not only a gamer, but a streamer." Fuck off. [Janine laughs] Now, now you can give me the attack roll, the... again, apologies for me not remembering all this stuff off the top of my head- Exchange Blows. Though actually this is like one of those things where it's like... Let me look at, let me look at tags really quick.

JANINE (over Austin): There is like a magic thing specifically.

AUSTIN: I mean Strike Decisively is, would again be a Channel for you because you have that Boon. But the thing that I'm- sorry, Exchange Blows would be that. The thing that I'm not sure with is whether or not the fact- I don't know if... No, I think he's still, I think he still has defences. Like, he still understands what's happening here; he's distracted -- or he's... whatever the thing was I wrote down before. What was the, the first thing that I wrote down? Dre, what did you do again? You did... Separated. You Separated him. [Agreement from Dre] But he still has some defence, which to me means he should still be, you should still be Exchanging Blows... Though if you're out of range...

JANINE: Is it not Weave Magic?

AUSTIN: No, Weave- weave-

JANINE: Like, what's Weave Magic for then?

AUSTIN: Weave Magic is for doing something taxing that doesn't fall under one of these other things, right? [Understanding from Janine] It's sort of like, you remember in Masks, there was like, Use Powers? [Confirmation from Janine] Where it's like, yeah well, if it

doesn't- if it, if it falls under the attack one, you're using your powers to do an attack, you're gonna roll that one. And regardless you can roll Channel because of your Boon. The thing that I want to check on is whether or not -- and Weregazelle in the chat you can, you can answer this for me, this is very useful -- does the fact that Teasel has a sniper rifle and is at sniper distance mean that Barter is defenseless? Because he's at, he's out of range. Or is his knowledge that he could be being shot give him some level of defence? My guess is it gives him some level of defence, even if it wouldn't be easy for him to strike back. That's what I- that's my guess.

JANINE: But is he expecting bullets or blood-pain?

AUSTIN: It doesn't matter, right? Like, it does matter in the fiction.

JANINE: Okay.

AUSTIN: But, he's not defens- you know. God. "They can defend, they just wouldn't be able to return fire easily against Teasel," awesome. So yeah, go ahead and give me a, a Exchange blows; so 2d6 plus three for your Channel.

JANINE: That's an eight.

AUSTIN: That's an eight. That's respectable. And I want to make sure that there's no other pluses here. You don't get any, you don't have any of that cool Gold shit where you just randomly get a plus whenever. Cool. So, at an eight- I mean this is the thing that's kind of nice here is even though you are, uh... Oh actually, I guess this, we do know where this comes from, this is getting interesting visually. You're going to have to tell me what Overheating- what more Overheating looks like. Like, you're fucking, just glowing, I guess. Right?

JANINE: Oh yeah.

AUSTIN: Because one of the, the Scouring Boons was...

JANINE: Seven to nine.

AUSTIN: Seven to nine, giving you the Risk Overheating. So I think that happens again. But yes, this bullet hits. And, the, I think he, at this point drops down to, he is now defenseless. I don't want to paint this on the screen extremely well.

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AUSTIN: But- or extremely like, with a lot of precision and with a lot of resolution. But, you see the bullet hit; you see his mech do something- what's the Risk you're giving him? [Considering noise from Janine] Is it like disabled? Is it like, ah, it's not- is it bleeding? Is it...

JANINE: It would be like the opposite- it would be like clotting. Right? Like it's the opposite of bleeding.

AUSTIN: I'm going to write it down and never say it again. [Laughter from Janine] So, and then, and that means that he's still trying to move the mech around, but he's defenseless at this point. Which means if somebody else successfully hits the, the... Strike Decisively, that will end this fight against Barter. Barter will, will be knocked out of the fight. You know, that is how that goes. But yeah, I think it's just like "pop," and then you see the mech just stop for a moment, and then maybe it's even in just like, it's in like auto-defence mode? You know when in... Titanfall, you leave your titan, and the titan is like, following you around and stuff, but it's not as good as if you were piloting it? It's that, basically. And so, I think it just turns and is like, you know, moving to reconnect with the rest of the unit, but is not necessarily gonna do the best job of defending Barter.

ART: I'd like to make a move at this point.

AUSTIN: Sounds good; what are you going to do?

ART: I would like to use a Tactical Genius to remove one Risk for an ally 'cause it looks like the heat situation is getting pretty bad over there.

AUSTIN: What's this look like?

ART: I'm not sure because I don't want to be like-

JANINE: Do you have a water gun?

ART (jokingly as Brightline): "Hey Teasel have you thought about not being so hot?"

AUSTIN: One, that's a, that's a, you're flirting. [Janine laughs] The thing you're describing is flirting. [Austin and Sylvia laugh]

JANINE: The answer's no.

AUSTIN (laughing): And poorly.

ART: Because I don't want to be like, "I know this thing about your mech not being so hot that you don't know." Because that's-

AUSTIN (over Art): Is it like- is it like... Yeah, are you shooting water? Are you, is there like a cooling stream? Are you... are you hacking into something nearby to send like a blast of cool air?

JANINE: Oh, what if there's like-

AUSTIN (over Janine): Into space?

JANINE: -like vents? 'Cause you mentioned the, the end of the Mass Effect one, where you're sort of on the, at the thing- What if Teasel's just like, happens to be standing on a cold air vent that's not operating?

AUSTIN: Yeah, I love it, honestly.

ART: Sure, yeah.

AUSTIN: What's that look like, and also what colour is your hat? [Dre and Sylvia laugh]

(Art, Janine and Austin crosstalking)

ART: I think it's a light purple.

JANINE: It's so good.

AUSTIN: We're so good. fFcking- we're good at this; this is the best. [Dre and Sylvia laugh]

ART: The hat is a light purple, which I think offsets well with like the red hue the room has taken.

AUSTIN: Great.

JANINE: I just want to say for any fan-artists who might be wanting to draw Art's character; you can get liquid crystal display paint [interested noise from Austin] that you can put on things, and then when you rub it it changes colours. You can also probably get mood paint, but the liquid crystal paint's probably pretty cheap, comparatively.

AUSTIN (whispering, over Janine): Wow. Hell yeah.

JANINE: And then you rub it, and it'll change colours like when you push on an LCD screen.

AUSTIN: Love it. Alright, remove one of your overheated Risks here.

JANINE: Nice.

AUSTIN: Great.

ART: Yeah, we use the, we use the ship to like, hit something with...

AUSTIN: Yeah, do you just like fire something to open it- like, what- what do you do here?

ART: Yeah, I think it is. It's like a, it's like a pinpoint shot to open the cooling vent.

AUSTIN: Totally. You have these Tier-3 turrets which are like, that's not enough to hurt a, a mech, like a good- well, I guess it would be actually. But, you do it successfully, you spent the hold, I'm not going to make you roll for it. What do you say to your, to one of your subordinates to make this happen?

ART: [pause] Hold on, I'm trying to figure out the level of formality here.

AUSTIN: Yeah.

ART: [pause] Do you have a rank?

AUSTIN: N- this is a Lieutenant. For sure. This is Lieutenant Garantine.

ART: Oh no, I meant Teasel.

AUSTIN: Oh, Teasel, sorry. I thought you meant your weapon's person.

JANINE: If Teasel was ever given a rank, I don't think she remembers it.

AUSTIN: Yeah, Teasel's not- Teasel's here as like a, an independent contractor. We don't- I don't know what the, what the- like a freelancer, to use the medieval term actually.

ART: Sure. Well there must be like a, a word for that...

AUSTIN: Yeah. Like a, like an official visitor, like an official... [pause, Austin and Janine snort]

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AUSTIN: Here's my favourite thing about all of this, is, lord, you should know, that the Brightline, Rennari and Garantine families are going to continue to pop up throughout the course of this. [To himself] Brightlines... weapons officer.

JANINE: Yeah, I don't, I don't know for-

AUSTIN: I don't think you need this rank,

JANINE: From, rank

AUSTIN (over Janine): don't get caught up on this rank.

ART: Alright, how about,

ART (as Brightline): Conscript Officer Mode.

(Austin and Janine crosstalking)

AUSTIN: Love it.

JANINE: That works.

ART (as Brightline): Um, just... hold still for a minute. [Austin and Janine laugh quietly]

JANINE: I don't- [laugh] okay, so I don't think Teasel actually replies. I think you get the like, "beep" of like, incoming reply, but then it's like "boop," like, channel closed.

AUSTIN (laughing): Good.

JANINE: Like that's her, that's the thing she's doing that's like "yeah." You know, and just flick the switch.

ART (over Janine): Well we have really good sensors, so we can tell, you're not moving.

AUSTIN: Good.

ART: Also, suits too hot.

AUSTIN: Yeah.

ART: Urm, yeah and ah, what, what did you say the weapon's officer was?

AUSTIN: Lieutenant Agile Garantine.

ART (as Brightline): Alright, Lieutenant Garantine, can you open that vent?

AUSTIN (as Garantine): Uh, ye- Roger.

AUSTIN: Is like, "brmhph."

JANINE (jokingly as Garantine): I Garantine it!

ART: Oh my god. [Dre laughing, Sylvia groaning] Oh my god.

AUSTIN: Bye.

ART: I wish I wasn't sitting down so that I could go and sit down. I need to get lower than this. [Janine laughs]

AUSTIN: And you hear like "brmm, burr" [mechanical foley], and the, one of the guns on the front of ship turns and like "phuh" [gun firing foley], "phew" [explosion], and then the vent opens and just like a rush of air, you know, emerges. I think we get like the holographic, you

know you saw it on the holo, the holo map. Like you traced this vent path, and, and you could see like the blue air, and it rushes out and hits, and hits the Day's Eye and cools you down a little bit. So you can remove one of those risks.

JANINE: Nice.

AUSTIN: I don't know why we're so punny today. Alright, lets go to Cerise, who we haven't seen in a second.

SYLVIA: Alright, so. Let me just look at what's on the table left, for us to deal with.

AUSTIN: Yeah. So, so, what we know is that, Barter was defenseless, and then there are four still active small mechs, Con-cons. But, I don't know, you know. You tell me what happens. There are lots of ways to win a fight.

SYLVIA: Yeah, I- I'm just trying to figure out the numbers specifically. So it's just a couple of can- uh, con-

AUSTIN: It's four Con-cons. Yeah.

SYLVIA: Four Con-cons, okay. Alright, I think I'm gonna open fire on these two down the middle here.

AUSTIN: Okay.

SYLVIA: And because I did the Ritual of Channeling, I can roll Channel for my open fire.

AUSTIN: Sounds good.

SYLVIA: Or whatever it's called. I don't remember- I don't know why I said open fire; that's not what the move's called.

AUSTIN: It's not-

SYLVIA: That's what I'm doing,

AUSTIN: It's not what it's called.

SYLVIA: But whatever.

AUSTIN: You can do it with, yeah, is that for- It's just anything that you do, you use with Channeling?

SYLVIA: Yeah, it's, yeah. But if I get a 7-9, I overheat.

AUSTIN: You overheat, yeah. So yeah, go ahead and give me a, a strike decisively here.

SYLVIA: Okay. [Pause] A nine.

AUSTIN: Alright, so, the- you are able to- “7-9, you succeed as above, but choose one.” So on a ten plus, you would have “stike true, non-player characters are killed, incapacitated, or otherwise removed as a threat, as according to the fiction. Player characters and rivals should bite the dust.” That’s a specific move. “On a seven to nine, you succeed as above, but choose one; you over reach or take a vulnerable position to deal the blow, take a Risk; or you waste ammo or words, either losing the use of a weapon until you can rearm, or losing the weight of some bargaining chip or piece of leverage.” Not that one ‘cause you’re not talking.

SYLVIA: I think I’m going to take the second, with the ammo, because I’m already taking a Risk from the overheating-

AUSTIN: Oh, right, right right right.

SYLVIA: -from the Ritual of Channelling.

AUSTIN: Good call.

SYLVIA: So I don’t want to take two.

AUSTIN: You don’t want to take two; fair.

SYLVIA (over Austin): And- but yeah.

AUSTIN (over Sylvia): So then yeah, take, take that, and then, and then yeah, what I’ll say is... what is the weapon you have? You have a Rayrifle?

SYLVIA: Yeah, yeah.

AUSTIN: It does say limited, so yeah, that’s- that’s- You line up the shot, and you take it, and it’s just like- in fact, I’m going to kind of retcon to- for this to be the last action of the previous little- remember the initial exchange, where it’s like...? You know what? I don’t have to do that. I think it’s just that they find you again, and they’re aiming to shoot at you, and they pull the trigger, and it’s revealed that they shot at another illusion again. And now, it’s back- and it’s like, “oh shit,” and they turn, and it’s you, and they pull the trigger again. And this time- or they go to pull the trigger again, but they have not reloaded yet, and you fi- pull up your shot and pull the trigger, and the beam just like-

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AUSTIN: Goes right into the ballista of one of these, four Con-cons, and it explodes. Nice work. I’ll get rid of this one. Boom. I’m going to put you over here, and I’m going to put you just like here. Okay. Alright.

SYLVIA: A risk...

AUSTIN: Let's go to Gold. And yeah, add your Risk up top.

DRE: Alright. [Pause] I'm almost wondering if it's worth just like... Just blowing past Barter and just going on.

AUSTIN: And leaving them behind you?

DRE: Yeah.

AUSTIN: Huh, that's interesting. In front of you, for people who can't see the screen, is a, is a, the next stage. It says "vertical mass servers," so it's like, it is the computer servers that operate this section of the big super, super, super big, like massively big space station that circles the centre of the galaxy. And it also says "strange readings."

DRE: Hmm. [Pause] I guess, I guess... No. Gold's, Gold- Gold is cold, but they're not brash and reckless, so...

AUSTIN: Right, they're not- yeah, exactly.

DRE: And they get paid to do a job.

AUSTIN: It's easy to imagine that, it's a mi- it's easy to imagine that because we're, we're leaning into like, cool mercenary but [agreement from Dre] you're exactly right, yeah.

DRE: Yeah, they get paid to do a job, and that probably doesn't include leaving the other like, three people on the ground behind you to go do goofy shit.

AUSTIN: Totally.

DRE: So, yeah I guess let's, let's take out- I wanna take out Barter in a way that like is not, like, lethal.

AUSTIN: Okay.

DRE: 'Cause like you said, they're- like, Barter's like a fellow mercenary, and even though he's like kinda grimey, he's not like an awful dude?

AUSTIN: Right. Here's a question.

DRE: And I- Yeah.

AUSTIN: Are you- do you want to take him out with words? I know your, your talk is a zero, which isn't great, but.

DRE: My talk is bad.

AUSTIN: Your talk is bad. The reason I bring this up is, you need to re- you need to rebrace your lance.

DRE: Oh that's true, yeah.

AUSTIN: So you're actually in a position where like you don't have- I guess you could just roll in, he's defenseless, so he- you could just roll with just a fist and do the damn thing at this point. Which is also rad, but... I mean, tell me what type of person Gold is. Is Gold- Gold sees that he's defenseless He's-

DRE: Yeah.

AUSTIN: The blood bullet hit, and you know what that means. You know? You've, you've, you know, rolled with Teasel long enough to know, that is the sort of thing that sets somebody up for a coup-de-gras. And so it's like, do you go for that, or do you try something else?

DRE: No, I think, I think I do, I think this would be a good time for a Face to Face. Because I think they've probably worked on jobs before, and even though they are rivals and they're competitive, it's more of like a, shittalking competition.

AUSTIN: Right.

DRE: Than like an actual like, "fuck-you get-mine" kind of competition.

AUSTIN: Right- I will say that you don't need to Face to Face to talk to him.

DRE: Okay.

AUSTIN: You could just go up and grab the mech's arm, and it will do the sort of like- you've seen Gundam; when mechs touch each other they can talk.

DRE: Yeah.

AUSTIN: Mechs in the same, like, communication- on the same team can talk to each other as long as they're like, near the same, near like the same ship, or like, their communications aren't breached. But enemy mechs, you can just go up to it. And this is a rule of this game, this is not just me bringing in some Gundam ship [Dre giggles]. There's- shit. There's specifically a rule that says like, yeah if you're touching his mech you can talk to him.

DRE: Okay.

AUSTIN: But, but yeah.

DRE: Then yeah, I think I, I just, roll up on him and I'm like,

DRE (as Gold): How you doing there big guy?

AUSTIN (as Barter) [groans]

DRE (as Gold): Okay, that sounds rough.

AUSTIN (as Barter): [Groans] Gold?

DRE (as Barter, over Austin): Alright listen. Yeah hey, hey, listen. This, listen, this is pretty much done, right? We don't gotta keep doing this.

AUSTIN: All the Con-cons stop to watch this happen, and they're trying to figure out what's going on, and they hear their bosses voice. And they like, we definitely get a shot of these two, two Con-cons -- the two from across, like, the hall. Like, there's the one to the north and the one to the south. One of them is holding a giant wrench, and the other one is holding like a giant plasma screwdriver -- Don't ask. [Dre giggles] And they kind of like shrug at hearing their boss being all fucked up. Give me a Strike Decisively with Talk, 2d6 plus zero, right?

DRE: Uhh, yes.

AUSTIN: Real quick, is there any way to give you a bonus on that?

DRE: That's what I'm looking for.

AUSTIN: People could help.

DRE: I guess- I'm not, I'm not "charging into melee from afar;" that's for sure.

AUSTIN: No, that is not what this is. Con-cons are manned, yeah. Con-cons are manned.

DRE: Yeah, I don't think I have anything.

AUSTIN (over Dre): They're just smaller construction mechs, basically. Con-cons is also, I think- yeah, they are called... Are they golems in this system? I forget what they're actually called, but, but I am calling them Con-cons.

ART (over Austin): I can just give you a plus one forward by using on of- a Tactical Genius. But, if-

AUSTIN: Phew, that feels like a-

ART: It just feels early to be down two Tactical Geniuses.

DRE: Yeah.

AUSTIN: Totally, totally.

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AUSTIN: Someone could just do a help roll. Who- someone with a good Gravity with, with them. I don't know what that looks like?

JANINE: I could?

AUSTIN: Yeah, what's-

JANINE: I also could guess what that looks like.

DRE: Yeah, what other fucked up magic shit are you going to do to this poor man.

JANINE: I was gonna, I was gonna ease off the f- I was gonna like, when, when you're talking, like maybe lessen the blood pain thing that's happening.

AUSTIN: Oooh. Okay

JANINE: To be like "hey, we didn't-"

DRE (over Janine), laughing: So he's like actually able to speak and be lucid?

AUSTIN: Yeah.

JANINE: Yeah.

AUSTIN: Love it.

JANINE: So he can speak, is lucid and also knows like "oh, this isn't, this can stop; yes, this can-"

AUSTIN: Totally.

DRE: This fucking-

AUSTIN: Go ahead and give me the Help/Hinder roll, Teasel. 2d6 plus two.

JANINE: [Typing noises] Plus two.

AUSTIN: Eleven, nice.

JANINE: Nice.

AUSTIN: Which is great for you because it means, one, Gold gets a plus one on their roll, but also, you will not become entangled in the consequences if they fail.

DRE: Ayyy.

AUSTIN: So, 2d6 plus one for you Gold.

DRE: Ah that's a six.

JANINE: Okay.

AUSTIN (under his breath): Fuck. God damn it.

DRE: Hey, you know what, we had to, we had to roll one sometime.

AUSTIN: You gotta, gotta roll those ones sometimes. I'm just double checking again to make sure there's nothing else that is gonna be bad here. No, okay, so I know what happens. Guh, boy, this is a good solution for this issue. The, the mech that, that Barter is in turns and takes your other hand. And you're like, "alright, we're going to have a real talk." It's like when someone grabs both of your arms at the, at the wrists, as if like, "oh wow, we're really close." And Barter is like,

AUSTIN (as Barter): Gold. I can't stop fighting. He'd never let me stop fighting you for this.

AUSTIN: And then you hear like a slow engine beginning to charge up. [Engine charge up foley] Bwooom. And he says like,

AUSTIN (as Barter): We all gotta take care of ours. Get out of here guys.

AUSTIN: And the Con-cons jetpack up and away. And he is preparing to self destruct.

DRE: Oh that seems bad.

AUSTIN: What do you do?

JANINE (over Austin): I kind of thought that was going to lead to a robot supplex, I'm not going to lie. [Austin laughs]

AUSTIN: No, but he's like holding tight to your, your mech, to the, to the High Price, and is going to self destruct, which is going to- When a mech like this self destructs, this entire area is going to take some fucking hits.

DRE: Yeah. I have an idea of what I want to do, but if anybody else wants to, do something about this.

SYLVIA: Uh, I do get a plus two forward to escaping, right now. [Dre laughs]

AUSTIN: You do.

SYLVIA: So, I could probably help. A little. If I want to use my Ritual of Contingency. I'm just trying to think of what that would be, like, in fiction.

AUSTIN: I mean that would even be... rescue someone else could even be it.

SYLVIA: Oh true- I mean either way it uses up the ritual.

AUSTIN: Yeah, true, fair fair fair. Wait, doesn't it use- it does- does it use all of them? Or does-

SYLVIA: It expires after I use it one time.

AUSTIN (over Sylvia): Oh, oh oh, okay, I didn't realise- I thought you had all of them. Gotcha gotcha gotcha.

SYLVIA (laughing): I did, too. I just reread it and was like "Oh, okay".

AUSTIN (over Sylvia): Damn, damn. That's a shame. Okay.

SYLVIA: That's fine.

AUSTIN: It's still nice. Yeah.

SYLVIA: Yeah.

JANINE: Also, if I'm not entangled in the consequences, does that mean the distance I'm at is a safe distance?

AUSTIN: It means you can get to a safe distance without needing to roll.

JANINE: Okay. Alright.

AUSTIN: Because this whole zone is fucked, basically.

SYLVIA: Okay. I have an idea... using also this ritual to help me pull it off. I think I'm going to like- so, we've mentioned vents and stuff all around here, right?

AUSTIN: Yeah.

SYLVIA: Can I like, body check this mech inside something? Where it can blow up?

AUSTIN: Yeah, uh huh. [Dre and Janine giggle]

SYLVIA: I think I'm just going to do that.

AUSTIN: Give me a- this is, this is a- definitely a Strike Decisively.

SYLVIA: Okay.

AUSTIN: Strike Decisively, plus, are you channeling to do it?

SYLVIA: I- mmm, let me look at my...

AUSTIN: Plus two Channel- what's your-

SYLVIA (over Austin): I have a plus, I have plus one to Clash, and I'm getting a plus two forward on this.

AUSTIN: Yeah, so that's probably good enough; plus three.

SYLVIA: But also, I get- then I get a plus four, and if I succeed then I don't overheat.

AUSTIN: True.

SYLVIA: If I do the channeling.

AUSTIN: True.

SYLVIA: I'm going to make the bad decision, and I'm going to channel it, too.

AUSTIN: Alright. 2d6 plus four, that's a great roll. You gotta, you're gonna be fine; it's going to be fine.

SYLVIA: Austin.

AUSTIN: That's an eleven.

SYLVIA: Okay, I got an eleven. With a one.

AUSTIN: Phew, it's wild that you got a plus four, and you still only got an eleven 'cause you rolled a six and a one. Yeah, awesome, you- what's this look like?

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SYLVIA: I think it's like- *oh*, I have an idea. So, the, the illusions are still up. I think it's the Aster comes through one of the illusions. Like, it breaks through it.

AUSTIN (over Sylvia): Oh it's so good.

SYLVIA: And again, like, pushes it off, like cause then, he couldn't see me coming that way.

AUSTIN: Right, right.

SYLVIA: And after I do that, I'm also going to dispel the illusions.

AUSTIN: Right, of course.

SYLVIA: Yeah.

AUSTIN: That just looks cool; that's just like a cool-

SYLVIA: Exactly.

AUSTIN: So then, yeah. You slam into, into it at the side. He goes into the same vent that the cool air was coming through, and then like clunk-clank-clunk, you hear it go tumbling down. And then, it does explode, but deep in the heart of this thing. And so the whole station begins to shake. It's not destroyed; it's a huge station. But, it is- this particular section has taken some damage at this point. So. Everyone can breathe a sigh of relief.

AUSTIN: I think Risks clear at this point. I'll double check, but like, you could, you could at this point, safely, like, cool off. Like the fiction around it is such that, it's not a Peril; it's not going to stick. So you can clear your risks, I think. If anyone like overheating risks, or similar types of things. Awesome. I'm going to move you up to the door, so to speak, of this next zone. Are y'all good to go a little bit longer?

DRE: Yeah.

SYLVIA: Yeah.

AUSTIN: Cool. [confirmation from Janine] Alright.