

## **PALISADE 33: Seize the Chance Pt. 4**

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## **Opening Narration**

**Austin:** PALISADE is a show about empire, revolution, settler colonialism, politics, religion, war, and the many consequences thereof. For a full list of content warnings, please check the episode description.

## **Recap**

Dre (as **Figure**): Folks, can we worry about the big laser beam instead of each other?

[music intro - "[Nothing is Stationary](#)" by Jack de Quidt begins]

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**Austin:** Other people are interested in this brain, and they're gonna keep coming.

[**Dre** hums]

**Ali:** [chuckles] Alright.

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**Austin:** This is not a good train. This train is an old train that hasn't been kept up. It might get to where it's supposed to go to, but it's not gonna get much further than that, and there's a chance it might just not make it there.

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**Austin:** Baseline C isn't City City, but it's not not City City.

**Keith:** Where the cookies they track could cost you way more than you bargained for.

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Austin (as **Resonance**): Delegate, are you where you're supposed to be right now?

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**Austin:** I think this is a Peril, Tracked. The Divine Resonance drone says to you,

Austin (as **Resonance**): That's A-okay by me. Stay where you are!

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**Austin:** Do you have, like, binoculars?

**Keith:** I do, yeah, yeah, yeah.

**Austin:** You see, at the Motion power station, a APC, right? Like a sort of personnel carrier, something like that, [**Keith:** Yeah.] opening its back doors, and some prototype units getting out.

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**Austin:** Cori and Thisbe are on that car. Figure, you're inside of it. Elle has just shown up on the opposite side, and maybe has moved over towards where you are, Cori. And then the Kestrel has shown up as well, this kind of hawk Iconoclast flying on the other side of the train.

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**Austin:** I think it's Cori—

**Janine:** It might be Cori.

**Austin:** —who said “I think the Nautilus is the problem.”

**Sylvi:** Yeah, I did say that.

**Janine:** When a thing falls, it does get closer to you.

**Austin:** It does.

[**Ali** laughs]

**Dre:** It's true.

**Austin:** Yeah.

**Janine:** This is true.

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**Austin:** Elle immediately chimes in and says,

Austin (as **Elle**): Oh, you're still growing into your wings.

Sylvi (as **Cori**): [shouting] I'll make you eat those words!

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**Austin**: So again, I just want to paint this picture. You charge in. What are you hitting it with? The scythe—the sickles, right?

**Sylvi**: The scythes, yeah. I'm still using the sickles, yeah.

**Austin**: You're cutting into its thing. You're both—it slaps you. You're both falling. It's—it can't right itself, and it can't relaunch itself with the plasma blast in this moment. And Elle has landed on the top of the front compartment, and the rope comes down for you to grab onto, and Figure, you've climbed out of the second thing, and the Hatchets are moving in towards both you and Figure, Thisbe, because you've been using the magic and that's great, but the Hatchets are like, "oh, this is an opportunity for us to try to get you." And in that moment, all of the sound drops out.

[music intro ends]

**Dre**: Oh, good.

## **A-Plot: Mission Resumes**

[2:55]

**Austin**: Except for these kind of super loud stomps. And then a sort of deep cavernous roar, almost like an echoing roar. And everyone is caught up in dust. And for a moment, you can't see anything at all, as a sort of whirlwind of dust covers the entire kind of battlefield. And the train is still going super fast. And the dust is getting caught up in the speed of the train. And everyone's—you know, you're going hundreds of miles an hour at this moment, right? And then the dust coalesces into a large, large figure. This is the Affliction, Dust.

My note here is "what if a mummy could be a mech, shawled and wrapped and deteriorating?" It is gigantic. It is the size of—I mean, we know now the Afflictions are

Divines, right? Or were Divines. You know, if we think about Divines as being a social category, they were Divines once, and they are Afflictions now. And it is of that type of Divine that is larger than a skyscraper. And it is stomping through the Diadem, running through the Diadem. And it has removed all sound from the area here. And this kind of dust or fog has descended over the train.

There is, you know, the fighting is continuing, right? You can see that the Hatchets are still just like, spinning their chains. But you can't hear the chain slapping against the bits of the train anymore. You know, Elle is trying to cut in—cut through the armor of the front of the train, but can't quite make any, you know, headway yet. The Kestrel is trying to shoot at the arrival of this giant Affliction. And there's like—I mean, remember, the Kestrel had these artillery cannons that would just fire over and over again. And that was like—it was terrifying to hear how long an artillery barrage went from them. And they're firing now, and you can see that they're firing, but you don't hear a thing. You just hear the steps of this gigantic Affliction stomping through the Diadem. What do you do?

**Dre:** Really—

**Austin:** I'm gonna advance this clock. It's five now. It's at five.

**Dre:** Yeah, really quick, Austin, I wanted to ask, I'm not necessarily sure I want to get back on the top of the train.

**Austin:** [chuckles] Uh-huh?

**Dre:** Because I was gonna—well, not—even before you said all this.

**Austin:** [laughs] Yeah.

[Ali, and Sylvi laugh]

**Dre:** Because I was gonna ask, is the train, like, big enough that I could move in my mech inside of the train car?

**Austin:** There are parts where it gets harder to do that, right? You landed in the big warehouse one, the big—the one that's like, hey, this is just a bunch of rations, basically.

**Dre:** Mhm.

**Austin:** I think that there is probably a good chance that either one or three are going to be less open than that. But, I don't know, maybe you could make your way through it. You know? It might be like, a little more busting through walls, and—you know?

**Dre:** Oh, yes. I'm thinking totally bull in a china shop.

**Austin:** Yeah, yeah. Hell yeah.

**Dre:** Just like, I don't care about any of the rest of this train.

**Austin:** Yep.

**Dre:** I just need what's—I need the brain.

**Austin:** That you could do. And to me, that's a dice roll.

**Dre:** Okay. Yeah, let's do it.

**Austin:** You want to do that?

**Dre:** Yeah, sure.

**Austin:** Alright. And again, this is silent, right? Because Dust has erased sound here. And just as a reminder, Dust used to go by—the other names are for the Dust. This was the Divine Reflection. Then the New Earth Hegemony called it Pride's Mirror. Then the early settlers of the Principality, I believe, called it The Looking Glass, and now it is simply Dust. Give me—this is like, Weather the Storm, right? Weather the Storm...

**Dre:** Yeah, sure.

**Austin:** Uh, Clash? No, probably Defy. You're not fighting anything. You're not clashing.

**Dre:** Yeah, yeah.

**Austin:** You are just running—you're toughing it out. You're strong-arming—you're literally strong-arming your way through. That is what it says.

[**Dre** chuckles]

**Austin:** So give me 3d6 plus Defy, which is zero? Your Defy is zero?

**Dre:** Zero, yeah.

**Austin:** Oh, okay. Give me 3d6 plus zero.

**Dre:** Uh... Oh, that's a 7.

**Austin:** 7. That's a 7. Whew. I thought it was a—I thought it was not a 7 for a second.

**Dre:** Oh, question.

**Austin:** Yes.

**Dre:** Um, since I'm moving towards the brain, do I get to take another advantage from my Read the Room?

**Austin:** Yeah, you totally do. So go ahead and roll one more die.

**Dre:** Okay.

**Austin:** I hope it's not the one that kills you.

**Dre:** Eh, that's—you'd have a long way to go.

**Sylvi:** Uh-huh.

[**Ali** chuckles]

**Austin:** Alright, it's just 1. No. That's a 1. That's fine.

**Dre:** [laughing] That's the opposite.

**Austin:** It's the opposite. It's the opposite. Alright, so, on a 7 to 9 on a Weather the Storm: "You succeed, but at some cost: it'll keep you occupied longer than you thought, the Director will ask you to make a difficult choice, or you'll burn a point of Spotlight as you take dramatic action." As you are running through this, it's taking longer than it should—than you thought it would for two reasons. The first is, simply, there is more stuff to crash through.

**Dre:** Sure.

**Austin:** And it's—and the dust is getting in here. And it's actually, like, a little disorienting. And the second reason is there are—it seems like there are figures trying to pull you down, reaching around the feet of your mech, tiny people made of the dust, trying to pull you down. And you're kicking through them. You know? It's not—you're able to move through them.

[**Dre** hums]

**Austin:** But they are emanations, they are the minions of the Affliction Dust. And you are moving through them, but they are holding you back. So you have not gotten there yet, and you will get there in the next narrative beat, you know?

**Dre:** Okay.

## **Thisbe**

[9:07]

**Austin:** I'm gonna come back to Thisbe, because Thisbe, you're surrounded by these two Hatchets now. And you've done your magic trick, but I want to stay on this.

**Janine:** Mhm.

**Austin:** Because this is a little scary, IMO.

**Janine:** Yeah. Um... hm.



**Austin:** And again, there are just like—do I have a... I need more, like, cool effects tokens to drop, like, some explosions all over the place. Oh, I do have some. That's fun. These are goofy. These are not—these are not in, you know, style with the rest of what we're doing. But the Kestrel, which has these cannons, is just letting loose. And the entire battlefield, again, is just getting pelted with stuff.

**Keith:** This is helping my immersion.

**Austin:** Thank you. I'm glad. This is what tabletop games are. You add a bunch of little explosion tokens.

**Keith:** Yep. [chuckles] It's like I'm really there.

**Austin:** Mhm.

**Keith:** Even though I'm in Baseline.

**Austin:** Even though you're in Baseline C, yeah.

**Janine:** Uh... Can I just get a quick Hatchet description again?

**Austin:** Yes, they are like knights, but their armor is made of the sort of tooth-like enamel from—

**Janine:** [cross] Enamel? Yeah.

**Austin:** —the Divine Felicity. They have an axe, they each have an axe, a hatchet that has a chain. And that chain is—it comes out of the bottom of the haft of the hatchet, and they're spinning it like the kusarigama, the kind of sickle and chain weapons that ninjas use in pop cultural depictions of ninjas.

[Ali chuckles]

**Janine:** Mhm. And they're also one thing above me.

**Austin:** They are one thing above you, but they're only Extras, which means they only need one Risk to be Defenseless, yes.

**Janine:** Right. Okay.

**Austin:** So they're above you in one way, but also kind of not in another way.

**Janine:** Alright. Uh... sick. Cool. Okay.

**Austin:** Mhm.

**Janine:** Um... I th—okay. I think what I would like to do is the, like... just getting in their grill kind of thing.

**Austin:** Sure.

**Janine:** Um...

**Austin:** I will note you don't have those arm weapons anymore.

**Janine:** I know.

**Austin:** Okay.

**Janine:** I g—oh, well, what does Drain do as a weapon thing?

**Austin:** That's—it's bad. It takes—it costs you more power.

**Janine:** Right.

**Dre:** Yeah.

**Austin:** It—yeah, it takes power from your big power pool, basically.

**Janine:** Okay. Uh... Yeah, I think I—okay. Um, I think I want to bull rush and then like, try and do that thing where Thisbe jumps on a guy and like, [**Austin:** Sure.] tries to get in the works, you know?

**Austin:** Right, yeah. Uh-huh. That's gonna be what it needs to be. Alright. I think that—

**Janine:** Yeah, you want to get out of the range of those—like, the chains swinging around, like, you want to get in close for that kind of thing.

**Austin:** A hundred percent. And—

**Janine:** You don't wanna be...

**Austin:** It's gonna take Thisbe to get in there and do some damage, I think, at this point.

**Janine:** Yeah.

**Austin:** Or you're gonna need some distance to try to mortar them. So...

**Janine:** Yeah.

**Austin:** I think this is a Weather the Storm in order to close the distance.

**Janine:** Fantastic. I love that.

**Austin:** Why do you love that?

**Janine:** 'Cause I get to roll that with Channel.

**Austin:** Ah. So is this—is this—are you piloting magically, in this sense? What's it look like to be using Channel for Weather the Storm in this—to close this distance?

**Janine:** Yeah, I think the way that I've characterized it before is just that there is, like, a really intense connection between Thisbe and Mow.

**Austin:** Mhm.

**Janine:** And this is the sort of thing that like, really deepens it.

**Austin:** Right, sure. Like a “moving as one” type situation.

**Janine:** It's just like a—yeah, yeah, like, very high synchronization between them.

**Austin:** Love this. Alright. So that is a 2d6 plus 3.

**Janine:** 11.

**Austin:** That is an 11. Okay, so you're gonna go after—do you wanna go after Caydor or Caspin? I forgot what they're named.

**Janine:** Um... I think I would like to—well, this is arbitrary. I'm gonna go after Caydor.

**Austin:** It is. Alright. Charge at Caydor—

**Janine:** Because the icon is facing it. [chuckles]

**Austin:** Right, uh-huh. Hop off of Mow, land on the mech. You're on it.

**Janine:** Uh-huh.

**Austin:** And now what is the play?

**Janine:** Um, so I have Sparking Touch.

**Austin:** You do.

**Janine:** I have—I have melee Bane.

**Austin:** Uh-huh.

**Janine:** I truly—it's weird, I want to like, go at this thing's fucking neck. Like...

**Austin:** Yeah. Uh-huh.

**Janine:** You know, I'm always looking for the—for a joint or something with Thisbe's stuff. I think it's truly just like, whatever you can reach into and rip at, or whatever you can reach into and electrocute is good.

**Austin:** Mhm.

[Ali snickers]

**Janine:** That's a good target.

**Austin:** Yeah. Uh-huh.

**Janine:** Or like, if they're knights, you know, like, the slit in a knight's helmet?

**Austin:** In a helmet, uh-huh.

[Ali hums]

**Austin:** I think you got to get in—like, so, a thing worth saying here is, Thisbe is—is Thisbe Tier One as a person? I believe that that's true.

**Janine:** Probably.

**Austin:** You are Tier One as a person. So they're Tier Four.

**Janine:** Mhm.

**Austin:** Bane, generally, the way this—the way that the math works on this is, Bane lets you hit one tier above you without it being at disadvantage.

[Janine hums]

**Austin:** Which means you can hit two tiers above you at disadvantage, but you can't just hit it tier three above you.

**Janine:** Right.

**Austin:** What you can do is get to a place that is weak enough that it's like it's a weak point, so you can kind of swing on it.

**Janine:** Okay.

**Austin:** I'll also say one other positive thing, which is you are Arcane.

**Janine:** Yeah.

**Austin:** Thisbe is Arcane.

**Janine:** Yeah.

**Austin:** So you do have—this is like, all that shit coming together all at once, right? You have Confidence against Divine things, [**Janine:** Mhm.] even though—I think you need to make another Weather the Storm for yourself to climb to a weak point where you can even attempt to do this Titanfall ass “hit the weak point”. You know what I mean?

**Janine:** Uh-huh.

**Austin:** Because right now, it’s just—the armor is too strong for you.

**Janine:** Yeah.

**Austin:** Tier Four stuff? Thisbe has hit a wall, you know?

**Janine:** Mhm.

**Austin:** Again, unless I’m forgetting something, but I don’t think I am. I think, in this game, Thisbe does not have the “act as a small...”

**Janine:** Okay, counter offer.

**Austin:** Uh-huh.

**Janine:** This is—[chuckles] this is just an image that I think is fun, [**Austin:** Uh-huh.] is if Mow strangles the knight robot [**Austin:** Mhm.] while Thisbe punches in its eye hole.

**Austin:** I still think that that’s a—the thing that’s—it would be—that would not give you Confidence because it’s Mow acting with Mundane. So, that will be just 2d6 plus Clash.

**Janine:** Would the actual strike be with Confidence?

**Austin:** No, because then you’re just striking the person, right? Inside, who is a human, who’s Mundane.

**Janine:** Oh, are they in the head?

**Austin:** No, I guess not. I guess not. I was imagining that as being a person's face.

**Janine:** I was just going for it because I imagined it was gonna be, like, a weaker armored area sort of a...

**Austin:** Yeah, there's like, camera stuff in there, sure. Yeah, uh-huh.

**Janine:** And I'm doing an electrical thing that might, like, fry the—you know?

**Austin:** [cross] Yeah, I guess I would give you—yeah. I think that it's—I think that it's—the thing that's tough here is there's two different things happening, and the—you attack with Arcane, [**Janine:** Mhm.] Mow attacks with Mundane, [**Janine:** Mhm.] and Mow has better tier than you, but you have better approach. We can't roll both of those together as a single thing without there being a move that lets you combine that in some special way. Do you know what I mean?

**Janine:** Mhm.

**Austin:** So it's either Mow is choking this thing, or you are trying to get in there.

**Janine:** I thought we were doing this as two moves.

**Austin:** Yes. Yes. Then—yeah, then we can do that. Yeah, a hundred percent. So go ahead and do the Weather the Storm to try to get to that weak point. That makes sense to me.

**Janine:** Am I—okay, but—okay, but what am I... [chuckles]

**Austin:** That is you doing it. If it's you trying to get to the weak point, then it's you doing Weather the Storm with Defy.

**Janine:** Well, I was trying to do a way where Mow is the one that's Weathering the Storm, because Mow is the one that's holding it by the neck.

**Austin:** But at that point, the thing that's—the thing is that like, if Thisbe is—Thisbe has to get to the place, right?

**Janine:** I mean, Thisbe's riding Mow. On his back?

**Austin:** You—I thought you jumped off of—I thought you jumped off of Mow onto this thing already.

**Janine:** No, I was like, describing the, like, rush in and—I was describing, like, the whole arc of what I wanted to do.

**Austin:** Okay. I see. Okay.

**Janine:** It was like, you rush in with Mow and then you hop onto the thing, and, you know.

**Austin:** Uh-huh.

**Janine:** I don't think we've gotten to the hot part yet.

**Austin:** I thought we'd already gotten to the hot part. I was moving faster. Alright, so, then yes, you've closed the distance. If you want to do a Weather the Storm to try to hold it in place—I think that that has to actually be a—that has to be an Exchange Blows. If you're trying to restrain it, that's Exchange Blows.

**Janine:** Okay.

**Austin:** Right? Already. Like, I think that that—I don't think that getting to restrain—'cause if you wanted to hold it in place, that's restraining it. Restraining it is a descriptor that you would add from Exchange Blows. And so, now we're back all the way to you're close enough in that it's not a—we're close enough in that you can attack it with Mow more safely, but it's not gonna be the—what do you call it—approach advantage that we wanted before.

**Janine:** So is the—[exhales] okay, so—

**Austin:** Uh-huh.

[Dre chuckles]



**Janine:** Is the thing that we're actually coming to here that is maybe a better way to do this is, I am with Mow trying to add a Risk or Danger onto this thing, and then if I get a finishing—a chance to like, finish it off, then I would be doing it with Thisbe or something?

**Austin:** That sounds—maybe.

**Janine:** Is that what we're actually describing here?

**Austin:** The thing that it sounded like you were doing before was, "I'm gonna get close—I'm gonna drive in, and then jump off of it onto it," which is what that previous roll was in my mind. Now, that was just getting close to it?

**Janine:** To me, that previous roll was drive in.

**Austin:** I would have just let you—that would have just been a Strike D—I need a—that has to be the—that would have just been an Exchange Blows if the next step was "Mow tries to restrain it." You know what I mean? It's fine. At this point, the thing that it sounds like you're doing is trying to attack it with Mow and give it Restrained.

**Janine:** Yeah.

**Austin:** Right? So let's just go there and we'll see what happens from there.

**Janine:** Okay.

**Austin:** Because that will be a 2d6 plus Clash, which is zero, right?

**Janine:** 2.

**Austin:** Or is it 2? Your Clash is 2.

**Janine:** Excuse me? [chuckles]

**Austin:** I was looking at the wrong—I was looking at—I was looking at Eclectic. I was looking at Eclectic's sheet. So yeah, plus—2d6 plus 2, but this is—sorry, 3d6. This is disadvantage because you're a tier below them.

**Janine:** Right. Okay.

**Austin:** So 3d6, take... oh, boy.

**Janine:** Eugh.

**Austin:** Take lowest.

**Janine:** Cool. That's a 5.

**Austin:** That is no good. That is a 5. Does anyone want to Help or Hinder? Which would just get rid of that 1, basically. Cori, I think that you are pre—you are indisposed right now.

**Sylvi:** I'm—yeah, I'm like, too—I'm like, on the other side of the train at this point.

**Janine:** Yeah.

**Sylvi:** Or like, the other side of what we've got here.

**Keith:** So there's no way to fail this unless you roll a 1. This is a...

**Austin:** There wouldn't be a fail at all. This is—this is—because this is already disadvantage, Keith, it would get rid of the 1. Right?

**Keith:** Oh, okay.

**Austin:** It would go up to a neutral roll instead of a disadvantage roll, and so it would be the 4 and the 2.

**Keith:** So it's automatic.

**Austin:** Yes.

**Keith:** It's just someone needs to be over there to do it.

**Austin:** Which you can just do, right? Can't you just do that, Keith?

**Keith:** I'm not there.

**Austin:** You have B-Plot, which says...

**Dre:** Yeah, you have B-Plot.

**Austin:** Oh, no, I'm sorry, that—you could give Confidence, is what you could have given.

**Keith:** Oh, I kind of—I sort of always thought that I could only use—those were when I was actually acting. But yeah, I would love—

**Austin:** It is the opposite. It is literally the opposite thing.

**Keith:** Okay.

**Austin:** It is when you are not there that you get to use B-Plot.

**Keith:** Oh. Well then, I would love to do that.

**Austin:** So if that's the case, the 1 is actually a 6. Mark that you've used a B-Plot Hold [Keith: Done.] and raise that—so it's 6 plus 2 is 8, plus 2 is 10. So that is a success.

**Janine:** Okay.

**Austin:** So, let's give it Restrained, which makes it Defenseless.

**Keith:** Yeah, my main other B-Plot actions were like, when we were doing the stellar combustor, and it was me mostly giving Confidence to Ali.

**Austin:** That's because you were both in the B-Plot, yes.

**Keith:** Right, yeah, yeah, yeah, so—

**Austin:** And is really not how those moves were meant to be used.

**Ali:** Mhm. [chuckles]

**Austin:** That was me letting you kind of bend the rules a little bit. You know? Alright, so—

**Keith:** I took that as the default. I never understood it to not be the default.

**Austin:** Uh-huh.

[Sylvi laughs]

**Austin:** It's in the book, which—it's in the book. Worth reading it. Mow has strangled Caydor's Hatchet. It is Restrained, which would let you try to jump across at this point. I think it being restrained in the fiction sets you up to try to get in there and do some sort of electric attack to Strike Decisively.

**Janine:** Cool. I would love to do that.

**Austin:** Alright. Give me a Strike Decisively, which is plus Clash. And this is, again, there is still the—

**Janine:** Disadvantage?

**Austin:** Disadvantage, but Confidence. So 3d6, but 1s count as 6s.

**Janine:** [chuckling] Okay. Well, that's good news that 1s count as 6s.

**Austin:** [cross] And it's a good—yeah. 6 plus 2 plus 2 is 4. Nope. I'm very sick. 6 plus 2 plus 2 is 10. 2 plus 2 is 4, but 4 plus 6 is 10. So that is a success. "Strike Decisive: You strike true. Director characters are killed, forced to retreat, or otherwise removed as a threat per the fiction." I think that there is a slot on the back of Caydor's Hatchet that opens up, and a little tooth-shaped ejection pod launches out, and Caydor disappears into the dust. Again, all of this happens in silence.

**Cori**

[23:00]

**Austin:** Cori, you're back on your feet. Well, you're back on your wings.

**Sylvi:** I'm back on my wings.

**Austin:** What are you doing?

**Sylvi:** Um... Elle is still trying to get in this fourth [**Austin:** Oh, yeah.] train car, right?

**Austin:** Yep. That's exactly what she's doing. She has kind of cut the hole at this point, but has not, like, pulled the armor up off.

**Sylvi:** Is her mech also Divine?

**Austin:** Her mech is... let's see here. Yes, it is.

**Sylvi:** Okay. Okay. Okay.

**Austin:** Mhm.

**Sylvi:** I have things I want to do here.

**Austin:** Mhm.

**Sylvi:** So one of the new things, the other new part that I have, aside from being able to fly for this mech, is Chromatic Focus, which is "swap to any other approach for a single scene."

**Austin:** Ooh, love this.

**Sylvi:** So I'm gonna swap my approach to Arcane.

**Austin:** Okay.

**Sylvi:** Could I get a refresher on, like, Arcane... what, the, like—

**Austin:** Yes.

**Sylvi:** —our definition of arcane again?

**Austin:** Arcane for us is technology that just kind of uses the kind of Kalmeria as its kind of primary source. That is our, like...

**Sylvi:** Okay.

**Austin:** Like, Mundane stuff has been made in Kalmeria forges, you know, it's been processed, but it's still fundamentally just metal, right? Divine stuff might still leverage Kalmeria as a medium in some special way, but it's—but it's fundamentally Divine. Profane is Perennial stuff for us, or Perennial, you know, descended technologies. And Elemental is what we've been using for Branched, generally speaking. So Arcane is like, it's that pure, you know, blue Kalmeria.

**Sylvi:** Okay, I think that that makes it very easy to describe how this looks, [**Austin:** Mhm.] which is the lights on this big skeleton mech are blue now. But also, you can kind of see it looks like—you know when you can see, like, dust particles in a sunbeam or whatever?

**Austin:** Yeah, totally.

**Sylvi:** It kind of looks like little blue motes of light are being, like, pulled into the Paramerion as it sort of siphons Kalmeria particles in the air to power its weapons now.

**Austin:** Sure. Yeah. Okay.

**Sylvi:** And I'm also going to be using the other weapon that I haven't used yet. Just getting everything out here, which is the Seraphic Array, which is a Ranged weapon. Ruin, Drain 2, Messy, and Mounted.

**Austin:** Messy, that's good.

**Sylvi:** Yeah. It's also strong—

**Austin:** What is it?

**Sylvi:** —which is why I’m using it. So, what this is: I have—so, when I first described the Paramerion, I mentioned that it has, like, metal feathers on its wings. And what this does is it fires those as projectiles.

[**Austin** hums]

**Sylvi:** [stammers] Like, I’m not gonna be able to really escape the Witch from Mercury comparison regardless—

**Austin:** Sure, yeah.

**Sylvi:** So I’ll just, like, bring it—like, say it out loud. They do kind of move like how the, uh... like, less intelligent versions of the GUND-BITs in that series.

**Austin:** Yeah. Mhm.

**Sylvi:** More like, “oh, this thing gets fired.” Like—

**Austin:** Is it—

**Sylvi:** If it was a video game, it would just like, fire in a direction.

**Austin:** Right. You know who does this, of course, is the X-Men character Angel, or Archangel, can shoot, like, bits of the metal wings that he has in a similar way.

**Sylvi:** Yeah.

**Austin:** So yeah, they’re not—they’re not bits. They’re not like, moving—

**Sylvi:** No. They’re not like guide—they’re guided, but not intelligent. You know what I mean?

**Austin:** Yep, I gotcha. Yeah.

**Sylvi:** Like, yeah.

**Austin:** Yeah, totally. Cool.

**Sylvi:** Um... okay. Yeah.

**Austin:** Firing angel feathers at your rival. What's better than this?

**Sylvi:** Yeah, what's better than this?

[Ali chuckles]

**Sylvi:** This is Defy or Clash?

**Austin:** Clash. This is Exchange Blows if ever there has been Exchange Blows. You fly back up, and begin firing down on Elle. Mhm.

**Sylvi:** I rolled an 8.

**Austin:** You rolled an 8, which of course means that you both take a Risk.

**Sylvi:** [cross] We both take a Risk.

**Austin:** Exactly. There is a—oh, Elle is so good because they just get to be every anime trope I ever need them to be.

[Sylvi laughs]

**Austin:** Because you hit them a bunch of times, and the—something's revealed to you. That's not Elle. Elle's behind you. Nothing personal, kid. And—

**Ali:** What?

**Sylvi:** Motherfucker!

**Austin:** Because they have an ability called Sanguine Self: "You may use subsystems to be in another place at the same time."

**Sylvi:** Oh, no.

**Austin:** That is a projection of blood in the shape of Elle's Cataphract that you see there, emerging from the dust behind you and stabbing you in the back with the



broadsword, with the crimson claymore, is the real Cataphract. But what's the Risk you're trying to—or I guess I decide Risks, you decide Risks. So yeah, you get kind of stabbed in the back, or maybe you're able to pull away at the last second since it's only a Risk and not a Peril, but.

**Sylvi:** It's more of, like, a...

**Austin:** A glancing blow, yeah. Maybe it's a downward slash at you, not a—**[Sylvi:** Yeah.] not a backstab. That would be too brutal.

**Sylvi:** Um... Is she taking a—

**Keith:** The real damage comes from the embarrassment of getting shadow clone jutsu'd.

**Austin:** Uh-huh.

**Sylvi:** Yeah, just gonna write Owned as a risk. With a P.

**Austin:** [laughs] Yeah, Owned. Uh-huh.

**Sylvi:** Um...

**Austin:** Yeah, what is the—what type of damage are you giving to her from this? I guess it's actually—I think I'm gonna give her the risk Revealed, right? Because the thing that's actually happened here is that her second form has been—the fact that she is not who you thought—where you thought she was.

**Sylvi:** Yeah.

**Austin:** Is what has risked her, you know?

**Sylvi:** I'm gonna go ahead and put Sliced as my risk.

**Austin:** Yeah, that's fun. Love that, love to get sliced.

**Sylvi:** Yeah. Yeah, big, like, big scar going down the armor on this mech now. Yeah.

**Austin:** Mhm. The Affliction Dust is swiping at the Kestrel, which sways to the north side of the train. And its left arm, the—not the Divine, the Affliction Dust’s left arm, just destroys the entire back left train car. Train car one is just gone as it swipes at the Iconoclast Kestrel.

**Dre:** Shit. Sure.

## Figure

[29:54]

**Austin:** And Figure, you inside of this train, remember, oh no, this thing is not going to—to go well, you know?

**Dre:** Mhm.

**Austin:** This train is not built for this. Who’s up? Figure, do you want to try to finish your charge ahead?

**Dre:** Yeah, sure.

**Austin:** What does that look like? You get through the—to the front of—you get to the front of number three here, and there is an armored door between you and the actual front of the train.

**Dre:** Sure.

**Austin:** Obviously, that’s the part that is most well-defended.

**Dre:** Is four also, like, where the engine is?

**Austin:** Uh, yeah. Well, the engine—I imagine it actually runs on energy provided by its rail system, right? But yes, effectively, it is the engine car, yes.

**Dre:** Okay. Because I’m thinking about even before I even get in there, do I want to just detach it from the rest of the train?

**Austin:** Interesting. I mean—

**Dre:** Both in terms of like, that's us ditching the Hatchets.

**Austin:** Yes.

**Dre:** But also, would then it be able to go faster, and maybe get us away from this awful Dust thing?

**Austin:** Maybe. You would have to be on it, though. Right?

**Dre:** Yeah, yeah, yeah, for sure.

**Austin:** And Thisbe isn't on it right now. Thisbe's two—would be two cars back from it.

**Dre:** Yeah, but we still have—I mean, the Blue Channel could pick up Thisbe, right?

**Ali:** Mhm.

**Austin:** Totally.

**Dre:** Okay. I mean, I will—I will radio out to Blue Channel and Thisbe, saying:

Dre (as **Figure**): I'm gonna decouple the train. The brain is at the front car. I'm gonna decouple the train, just so that we can have less variables to deal with while we're trying to recover this.

Ali (as **Brnine**): Have you—

**Ali:** *Kshh*, on the radio.

Ali (as **Brnine**): Have you, uh, secured the brain yet?

[**Sylvi** laughs]

Dre (as **Figure**): No, it's in the last car. I'm hoping that by decoupling the train, the front car will also go faster so we can get it clear of the rest of the combat.

Ali (as **Brnine**): Great. But—okay. Yeah. Um, but what if you zoom ahead and then you can't get it?

Dre (as **Figure**): I—I just gotta kick in a door.

Ali (as **Brnine**): Okay, full speed ahead.

**Austin**: Um, alright. That sounds—this sounds like a Defy Danger to me, or a Weather the Storm to break through this thing.

**Dre**: Yeah, sure.

**Austin**: Again, strong-arming your way through.

**Dre**: Yeah, yeah, yeah. Um...

**Austin**: So 3d6 plus 2.

**Dre**: Sorry, what am I—am I rolling Clash?

**Austin**: Yeah.

**Dre**: Okay.

**Austin**: Uh, no, this is Defy, right?

**Dre**: Oh.

**Austin**: It's actually not 2, right?

**Dre**: Yeah.

**Austin**: Yeah, sorry. This is Defy.

**Dre**: Yeah, Clash is 2.

**Austin**: 3d6 plus zero. I keep looking at the wrong sheets tonight.

[**Dre** chuckles]

**Austin:** Sorry, this is not kicking down the door. This is separating the—which are you doing first? You're separating the...

**Dre:** Yeah, I am separating the train. So basically—

**Austin:** Alright, and you're gonna stay on train four.

**Dre:** I'm gonna, like, jump onto train four and then try to, like, separate it.

**Austin:** Separate it from train four's, like, exterior. Yep. Okay.

**Dre:** Yeah.

**Austin:** So this is separating them. Give me the roll. 3d6 plus zero.

**Dre:** Okay.

**Austin:** Take highest.

**Dre:** Okay, right.

**Austin:** This is—what is your—you're Perennial, right? You're—I mean, obviously, you're Profane. Yes.

**Dre:** Yeah.

**Austin:** That's kind of the whole thing with the playbook change.

**Dre:** Mhm.

**Austin:** Alright.

**Dre:** Uh, I don't want to use my last Read the Room Hold here yet, so yeah, I'll just roll it.

**Austin:** Right. You still have that Hold, right?

**Dre:** Mhm. I still have 1 Hold.

**Austin:** Okay.

**Dre:** That's a 5, baby.

**Austin:** That's a 5, my friend.

**Dre:** Hey, guess what?

**Austin:** What's this look like?

**Dre:** Well—

**Austin:** What's the thing that you're—what's the moment that you're having trouble with?

**Dre:** [hums] Um...

**Austin:** 'Cause I know what happens, but...

**Dre:** Sure. You know what else happens?

**Austin:** What?

**Dre:** You know what happens now that I've failed a roll?

**Austin:** Oh! [claps]

[**Dre** laughs]

**Austin:** The boy's back!

**Keith:** Oh, I thought that's what we were all thinking.

**Austin:** The boy's back.

**Dre:** The boy's back. The boy's back in town.

**Ali:** Oh.

**Austin:** The boy's back in town. Uh-huh.

[**Sylvi** hums the melody of *The Boys Are Back in Town* by Thin Lizzy]

**Austin:** I think, you know, through the silence, 'cause there has been silence again, the only—this is the first time we've heard sound in this fight. I guess, actually, this is the thing. You couldn't have called Brnine, 'cause the sound is removed.

**Dre:** Oh, good call, yeah.

**Austin:** Right? There is no sound. You can't check in with anybody. You have to just do the thing that you believe you need to do, [**Dre:** Yeah.] because Dust has erased sound here. So yeah, you're calling in, and you're like, "can I send a message?" Like, no, it's not, your—no sound is coming through.

**Dre:** God, yeah. So then I also don't know that Cori is fighting in the fourth car already.

**Austin:** Or that—yes, correct. On top of, on top of, or next to, right?

**Dre:** Yeah. Yeah, yeah, yeah.

**Austin:** So yeah, you just hop across, and then breaking through the silence, Gur Sevraq says,

Austin (as **Gur Sevraq**): Oh no.

**Austin:** And Dust's arm collides with the train, and the whole thing goes spiraling into the depths of the Diadem. And into the depths of dust itself. Huge crash, deep into what you will learn are the catacombs below.

## **A-Plot: In the Depths of Dust**

### **Figure**

[35:15]

**Austin:** Figure.

**Dre:** Yeah. What's up?

**Austin:** You wake up to the sound of a klaxon ringing, like an alarm. And when you look around, you see yourself in a bedroom. It's spacious, but is kind of empty. Boxes with some of your things are clearly piled up near one of the closets. It's a spaceship. It feels familiar to you in your body, but maybe not your head. And you can see, you know, your flight suit is kind of like, laid out, or maybe hung up, near the door. And a voice comes over the loudspeaker and says,

Austin (as **Voice**): Commander Figure, you're needed in the launch bay.

**Austin:** What do you do?

**Dre:** Uh, hey, is there a mirror in here?

**Austin:** Sure.

**Dre:** Hey, what do I look like?

**Austin:** You look like yourself. A little more battle-scarred than you do now, or than we last saw you. You know, there's some extra rocks taken out of your body, some extra hunks ripped away, but they've been filled in with more of Perennial's Russian sage. You know, you have the—your body is stronger now than you recall it being. And your flight uniform is not what you—is not what you wear on the Blue Channel. It is a sort of—it is a commander's uniform. It has rank and insignia on it. It does still have the big emblem of Millennium Break on it. But it's clearly—it is clearly an officer's, you know, uniform. Not an officer who, like, commands from the—from the bridge of a ship, but, you know. You are in—this is the—Char's counterattack Amuro flight suit. You know what I mean? Like, you are—it is that flight suit, not a, you know, "rough and tumble renegade on the Blue Channel doing the best that you can" flight suit.

**Dre:** [hums] Okay.



**Austin:** Your name again comes through the speakers. “Figure, you’re—”

Austin (as **Voice**): Commander Figure, you’re needed in the launch bay.

**Dre:** Do I recognize this voice?

**Austin:** Familiar sounding, can’t quite place it.

**Dre:** Boy, I hate that.

**Austin:** Maybe someone—maybe someone, you know, definitely someone who—you have the experience of feeling like you’ve heard this person call you to battle before. Probably someone who you last heard—the last time you can clearly remember them would have been, like, Operation Shackled Sun, the big finale of PARTIZAN, where everybody was there, basically, and you had kind of all nascent Millennium Break. But you’re, again, in your body, you have the, like, “oh, yeah.” You know? “It’s so-and-so calling me to the bridge, or calling me to the landing bay.”

**Dre:** Okay. Um, boy, this—this isn’t real. But...

[**Sylvi** laughs]

**Dre:** Sure, I step out of the room, and I make my way to the landing bay. Am I on the Blue Channel?

**Austin:** You’re not on the Blue Channel. You’re on a much bigger ship. And you’re having the sort of inverse relationship to, like, you know how in a dream you know where you’re going, sometimes, even though you couldn’t possibly know where you’re going? It’s that, right? This is a very dreamlike moment. I think that’s—

**Dre:** I never have that dream. I always have the opposite.

**Austin:** [hums] Okay. Do you know how the—

**Dre:** I mean, I can imagine it, though.

**Austin:** It's like the inverse of losing time, then. It's like you've found time you didn't know you had.

[**Dre** laughs]

**Austin:** You have found body—like, bodily memory that you didn't know you had.

**Dre:** [sighs] What is that like?

**Austin:** You know?

**Dre:** Yeah, okay. Is there a sign anywhere that like, tells me where to go?

**Austin:** Yeah, totally.

**Dre:** Okay, sure. Yeah.

**Austin:** Absolutely. And as you move through, you see young members of Millennium Break stopping to, like—they're not giving you a salute, because that's not very Millennium Break, but they're like, standing in respect to you. You know? Head up. One of them says, "go get 'em." You know? "Go get 'em, Commander." And like, moves on past you to go to wherever they're going. And one of them, as you pass, it's very clear there's a little fear in them.

[**Dre** hums]

**Austin:** You're intimidating. And they kind of meekly step back to let you go by.

Dre (as **Figure**): Oh. Hey, is everything okay?

Austin (as **Millennium Break Youth**): Yes, Commander.

Dre (as **Figure**): Oh...

**Austin:** And steps away. And then hurries down the hallway. Figure, I want you to loosen all of your Hooks.

**Dre:** Ah...

**Austin:** You don't have to get rid of them or anything, but they're all loose right now.

**Dre:** Just let it—just let it all go, baby.

**Austin:** Mhm. [chuckles] Mhm.

## **Thisbe**

[40:00]

**Austin:** Thisbe, it is a sunny day. In fact, it is blazing out. There's not a cloud in the sky. The world is golden and beige from fields of wheat that stretch on over, you know, kind of low rolling hills in every direction for miles and miles until they hit these kind of blue mountains. The landscape is dotted with small silos and granaries. And not too far away is a kind of central farm. You recognize this place. This is Collier, the planet that both you and the old Sovereign Immunity that we all knew and loved had some shared—had some shared, overlapping history on. A farming world that was off the register, removed from the register when Sovereign Immunity, the Farmer, did the rebellion there. And a world you once lived on a long time ago, and you're here now, surrounded by people who are trying to collect the harvest in tractors. I think the first thing you notice about yourself is that you have a paint job unlike the one you normally do. [chuckles] And quite like the one that Mow has right now, the kind of like, ice cream shop, friendly, you know, neighborhoodly, paint job.

And, again, there's a sort of immediate knowledge of where you're needed. You've already done the work of, in your mind, breaking down this whole field that stretches on forever into the proper, like, harvest sectors. And Mow should be just about done getting repairs. So if you wanted to go get Mow and harvest that way, that would be one way you could go about things. But you also just know that people—it's so hot outside for everybody except for you. You don't feel the heat like that. And it's so easy to be helpful when everyone else has this little extra layer of discomfort that you don't have. What do you do?

**Janine:** Um... I do think that like, there is a moment of, at least a moment of like, repulsion at the paint job.

**Austin:** [hums] Mhm.

**Janine:** In a way that is like, immediately probably very disorienting, [**Austin:** Yeah.] because Thisbe is surrounded by stuff that she knows and understands. And there is that innate, like, “I can proceed without even really having to think. I can just like, do—I just know.”

**Austin:** Mhm.

**Janine:** But it’s mixed with the fact that like, realizing she has this paint job and like, “wait, I didn’t choose this. I had—” like, “I don’t remember this happening. I don’t remember being given this or opting for this. This is just a thing that is on me that is—that I don’t think—that I don’t, like, connect to.” Or—you know what I mean?

**Austin:** Yeah.

**Janine:** Like, there is a sense of detachment from her own body [**Austin:** Yeah.] in that moment that I think is wildly confusing. And so I think instead of going straight to work, I think Thisbe is kind of assessing the people around her.

**Austin:** Totally. I want you to do the same thing that Figure just did, which is go ahead and loosen all of your Hooks. You recognize a handful of people as people you’ve seen in photographs of the farming base that was set up on Collier by Millennium Break. I don’t think Milli is here, although I believe Milli may have been here for some time. But there are other people who kind of helped set up this farming operation that became the agricultural backbone of Millennium Break. But, you know, they are free for us to name as we need. But they’re not—there’s no sudden cameo from someone here that we haven’t seen, you know?

[**Sylvi** chuckles]

**Austin:** I mean, you know, maybe there are some people who were truly background-ish characters in PARTIZAN, you know, people—some of the—some of the people who lived underground in the—not Columnar, what is the—the Equiaxed kind of underground city under the Columnar city. You know, folks like that may be appearing here, and are, you know, working in the field, but then lots of other, you know, human and Apostolosian members of Millennium Break just trying to figure out how to get this harvest done. And one of them, I think, maybe waves over to you and is like, you know,

Austin (as **Farmhand**): Hey, Thisbe, do you have any ideas of where we should begin today?

**Janine:** Um... I think, like, seeing people that she recognizes, even if it's not like people she's super close to, probably, like, is easing for her. I think—so I think she can kind of sort of snap into the moment again and says, like, um...

Janine (as **Thisbe**): You should focus on priming the machinery. Do as much as can be done in the garages, and work on the fields closest to those garages, and I'll work on the ones that are farther afield.

**Austin:** Big thumbs up and says,

Austin (as **Farmhand**): Sounds good to me. I'll let everyone know.

**Austin:** And begins to head off and do just that.

## **Cori**

[46:14]

**Austin:** Cori, you wake up inside of your machine.

**Sylvi:** Oh, okay.

**Austin:** As if you had been—had the wind taken out of you, or perhaps worse, you had been briefly knocked unconscious.

**Sylvi:** Mhm.

**Austin:** Not a fun place to be, admittedly. But you are in a familiar place, which is inside of the Paramerion.

**Sylvi:** Okay.

**Austin:** And let me tell you, the battle rages. You are as close to the heart of it all as you've ever been. Hundreds, maybe thousands of ships do war in space above Palisade. The Twilight Mirage laps at the two fleets. It seems like it's grown since you last saw it, extended outwards, is now covering Palisade, has welcomed Palisade into the false nebula. And you are not too far from the center of the Millennium Break and kind of gathered Cause fleet, which seems to have been supplemented by ships from some of the other Stels. There's like, Stel Orion ships here on your side. And ships from the Apostolosians and from the Columnar here too, all sided with you, against a kind of huge, you know, truly final boss fleet [**Sylvi:** Mhm.] of the Bilateral Intercession. The head of it—the head of which is the capital ship of Cynosure Whitestar-Kesh, the now only living Princept in the galaxy. And it's all right there in front of you. And your heads-up display blinks with a message: "Return to your defensive position." What do you do?

**Sylvi:** What—there's no—is there an opening for me at all to go...

**Austin:** Like, to go do some heroic shit?

**Sylvi:** Yeah.

**Austin:** You know, it is certainly possible for you to do that.

**Sylvi:** Yeah.

**Austin:** But that is not what you're being ordered to do.

**Sylvi:** Does the message say who is giving the command at all?

**Austin:** It is coming from central Millennium Break command.

**Sylvi:** Okay.

**Austin:** There's no, like, direct...

**Sylvi:** Yeah.

**Austin:** Yeah.

**Sylvi:** Everybody else will return to their defensive positions.

[**Austin** hums]

**Sylvi:** And it'll be fine.

**Austin:** Mhm. You charge ahead.

**Sylvi:** Yeah. Yeah.

**Austin:** You feel your—your machine rock for a second as a hand touches your shoulder, allowing that kind of private mech-to-mech communication.

**Sylvi:** Mhm.

**Austin:** And it is, of course, Elle.

[**Sylvi** scoffs]

**Austin:** And Elle says,

Austin (as **Elle**): Oh, I guess it's up to us then, huh?

[**Sylvi** laughs]

Sylvi (as **Cori**): Yeah, I guess so.

**Austin:** Loosen all of your Tenets.

**Sylvi:** One of them's already loose.

**Austin:** Yeah, “you are a shield; leave none undefended where you still stand” was already loose, huh?

**Sylvi:** Yeah, it sure is.

**Austin:** Mhm.

[Sylvi laughs]

## **Brnine**

[49:26]

**Austin:** Brnine, they are gone in the fuckin’ mist, man. They are down there. The dust has covered it all up. And it—it hasn’t settled, right? The Affliction has vanished, right? It seems to have shrunk back down into the depth of the Diadem. But the dust from the Affliction Dust hovers throughout this whole section, you know, miles and miles of the Diadem, you know, in every direction, you know, north, south, east, west, and down, just like a sea of dust that you’ve lost them into. And again, the Kestrel, which was this giant, bird Iconoclast Carrier, I think has tried to escape the dust, pulled up out of it, and is circling you at a threatening distance, but not quite sure what to do, because its goal was to retrieve the train brain, not to engage with you, and you don’t know what’s going on inside the head of that thing. Or the heads of that thing? You’re not sure what that thing is. It’s dripping an inky oil as it flies all around you, but—it has you in its sights, but hasn’t started attacking or anything.

**Ali:** Sure, yeah. Um, I feel like the last thing—oh, boy. [chuckles]

**Austin:** Mhm.

**Ali:** The last thing that I was aware that I was doing was I sent out, like, a hook for Cori...

**Austin:** Yep. Mhm.



**Ali:** And then Elle showed up [**Austin:** Mhm.] and stabbed her?

**Austin:** Mhm.

**Ali:** And now [laughing] she's underneath all of that dust?

**Austin:** The dust, the Affliction Dust showed up and smashed everything. And the whole—

**Ali:** Right, no, no, no, yeah. I—yeah.

**Austin:** And everything went flying down into there, so, just making sure that's...

**Ali:** This is a lead-in to say—

**Austin:** Oh, yes.

**Ali:** Is there—yeah, is there a way that I could, like, sort of try to trace Cori's location to try to, like, pull them out? Or like...

**Austin:** Zero in on where she is?

**Ali:** Use, like, an electric blower to [laughing] get all of this dust out of here or something?

**Austin:** Mhm.

**Sylvi:** Oh, yeah, yeah, yeah.

**Austin:** It sounds to me—

**Sylvi:** Activate big spin mode, turn into a fan.

**Ali:** Uh-huh.

**Austin:** Yeah. Uh-huh. It sounds to me like you are Dispelling Uncertainties or Reading the Room. You're trying to figure out, trying to—

**Ali:** That does sound like what I'm doing.

**Austin:** You're trying to either get insight on your situation or clarify the unknown.

**Ali:** Roll plus Know.

**Austin:** Plus Know would be that. You could also roll plus Crew. You could also roll—and a thing that we don't ever do, but is worth saying really quick, is you can roll plus Gravity with anyone that you have—anytime you're doing something that involves someone with you have Gravity.

**Ali:** Oh, so I could technically do it myself, but then roll a plus 2 because it's targeting...

**Austin:** Cori, because you're trying to find Cori, yes.

**Ali:** Sure. Okay.

**Austin:** But of course, Crew is plus 3, so that might be better, but.

**Ali:** Right, yeah, yeah.

**Austin:** But yes.

**Ali:** But I—the only Holds that I have left right now are my Confidence Holds.

**Austin:** Mhm.

**Ali:** And I feel like if I'm using—if I—if me, I'm using—[chuckles]

**Austin:** If you're doing it, yeah. *You* know.

**Ali:** If I'm—yeah, if I'm using the Blue Channel's systems to do it, I can get the Asepsis Confidence [**Austin:** Ah.] and then have it plus 2.

**Austin:** I see. Uh-huh.

**Ali:** So roll 2d6 plus 2, but 1s are 6s?

**Austin:** But 1s are 6s. That's correct, because it's Confidence.

**Ali:** Okay.

**Austin:** Hey, that 1's a 6.

**Ali:** [laughing] That 1 is a 6.

**Austin:** 6, 7, 8, 9, 10. That's a success.

**Ali:** Whew! [laughs]

**Austin:** Listen, rolling with Confidence is pretty damn good. So yeah, you're using like, a—you're using the sensors of the ship, plus the fact that you had a pretty good position on where Cori was seconds ago, [**Ali:** Mhm.] plus Asepsis's ability to track people and et cetera, presumably.

**Ali:** Mhm.

**Austin:** And this was Dispel Uncertainties, right?

**Ali:** Yes. Yes.

**Austin:** Yeah, so: "On a 10 plus, the Director will tell you something directly useful that you know about the situation or subject at hand." Yeah. It takes some like, you know, we get the classic thing of like, this—the images on the screen, and it's just the dust, but then you like, you know, activate some, like, clarifying layer. You're like, "alright, now cancel out all the dust," [laughs] you know? "Now give me thermal."

[**Ali** and **Sylvi** laugh]

**Austin:** Right? That style.

**Dre:** My god, it's Jason Bourne.

**Ali:** Uh-huh. Yeah.

[**Sylvi** and **Ali** laugh]

**Austin:** [laughing] Yeah, exactly. And what you see—this is very far away. This is, again, like, this is at the bottom of the Diadem, which is, you know, it would take you a couple of minutes of careful piloting to even get close to down there.

**Ali:** Mhm.

**Austin:** And then, for reasons that will become clear, you will realize you'll have to get out of the ship at a certain point to keep following people.

**Ali:** I bet.

**Austin:** At the bottom of the Diadem, there are, you know, in all of this dust, in the wreckage of the train cars, a couple of dozen figures. People, not Figure.

[**Ali** and **Dre** laugh]

**Keith:** That happens a lot and I—

**Dre:** Every time, man.

**Keith:** —hear the wrong one every time, yeah.

**Austin:** Yeah, I know, it's tough. And it's dozens of people. And their dust doppelgangers, walking next to one another.

**Keith:** Dustelgangers. Doppeldusters.

**Austin:** Mhm.

**Sylvi:** I like doppelduster more.

**Dre:** Yeah.

**Ali:** [laughing] What?

**Austin:** And they are carrying the train brain.

[Ali gasps]

**Austin:** Like a coffin, right? Like, each one has a little hand on it. And they're moving it towards a—calling it a tunnel is wrong. I mean, it is a tunnel, so it's not wrong, but it's not a natural tunnel. And it's not one that was made by—it seems like, careful, you know, construction equipment. There is a hole punched into the side, slash, like, corner of some hallway that is big enough for this big train brain, which is, you know, the size of like, a U-Haul truck or something, like a small—or like, a small U-Haul van, you know? And it is—it is being carried into that hole into the depths of the Diadem. Among the people walking, but not carrying, just behind them, like in a procession, are your friends. Also down there, Elle Evensong, similarly walking next to what looks like a dust doppelganger. A dustelganger. What did we end up going with? Dust—

**Sylvi:** Doppelduster?

**Keith:** Doppelduster.

**Austin:** Doppelduster.

**Sylvi:** Yeah.

**Ali:** Mhm.

**Austin:** Next to one of their—next to their doppelduster. And some of the soldiers that were still left alive from Stel Nideo, similarly, walking with their doppeldusters, heads down. There's something ritualistic here.

**Ali:** Can I say a thing without everybody getting mad at me? [laughs]

**Sylvi:** Oh my God, Ali.

**Dre:** Um... hm.

**Austin:** Wait. Now wait a second.

**Sylvi:** I'm confused, but yeah.

**Austin:** [cross] When people say that normally, do you know what the connotation is?

**Ali:** [laughing] No, I—

**Dre:** Yeah. Are you just like, practicing for, like, Thanksgiving next week with your problematic family, or like, what's happening?

**Austin:** Yeah, what's—

**Janine:** I bet—I bet—

**Sylvi:** I feel like I should have said that in my scene.

**Janine:** None of us are gonna get mad.

[Ali laughs]

**Austin:** Yes. Uh-huh.

**Janine:** I suspect, if this is—

**Austin:** Uh-huh.

**Keith:** I'm gonna get mad. I'm gonna get for real mad against Ali.

[Ali laughs]

**Janine:** If this is what I think it is, I don't think anyone's going to get mad.

**Austin:** What's up?

**Ali:** I feel like...

**Austin:** Mhm.

**Ali:** Everything that you just said is pretty bad and scary.

[Sylvi chuckles]

**Ali:** But I think my best bet is to go into the dust.

**Austin:** Yeah, I think that's what everyone hopes you're gonna do, because you're going to have to go fucking save them.

**Ali:** Okay. [laughs]

[**Janine** laughs]

**Dre:** Yeah, help me.

**Austin:** Right?

**Ali:** Okay. Okay. Well...

**Sylvi:** I'm furious.

**Keith:** I'm pissed off!

[**Ali** laughs]

**Austin:** [feigned distress] Oh no!

**Dre:** You know, put on your little dust filtration mask first, probably.

**Austin:** Mhm.

**Ali:** Oh, sure, yeah.

**Austin:** So yeah, are you piloting the Blue Channel down into the dust?

**Ali:** I believe so, yeah. Yeah.

**Austin:** Yeah? Okay.

**Ali:** Is there a way that I could do it without these other two losers following me?

[**Sylvi** laughs]

**Austin:** There's only one other loser, thank you.

**Ali:** Okay. Can I—

**Austin:** The Flash Nautilus also got knocked down there, I don't think it's—I think it's free. It's free now, you know?

**Ali:** Okay.

**Austin:** It's escaped from—I'm gonna move it away. It's over here now.

**Ali:** There's no—there's no dustelganger of the—

**Austin:** Of the Blue Channel?

**Ali:** No, of the Flash Nautilus.

**Austin:** No, there is not. There is not. Yeah.

**Ali:** Okay.

**Janine:** Is there a doppelduster of Mow?

**Austin:** There's no doppeldusters of—no, there is not a doppelduster of Mow. Mow is just crashed next to the train, yeah.

**Janine:** Aw.

**Dre:** Aw.

**Ali:** Can I see—wait.

**Austin:** Would there be a doppelduster of Mow? I really got to know more about Mow.

**Janine:** This is the thing I'm asking is like, what's the line between Thisbe and Mow for there to be...



**Austin:** It's the line between—it's the line you've always insisted exists, right? That Mow is not a playable character, as far as I know. Unless that's changed about Mow.

**Janine:** No. Mow's like a smart car.

**Austin:** Unless Mow...

**Janine:** Not a smart car, but like, a car with a fancy computer? I don't know.

**Austin:** Well, there's the difference, right? Mow is not slowly exploring desires to have magic and control over his life, right? Mow is not sapient.

**Janine:** No.

**Austin:** As far as I know.

**Janine:** Really good classical pianist, but no.

**Austin:** Oh, interesting. Sure.

**Janine:** That was comedy. Anyway. Carry on.

**Austin:** Yeah.

[Ali laughs]

**Sylvi:** No, it's true. There's just not a lot of pianos that size.

**Janine:** Yeah.

**Keith:** Yeah. Mow's actually a really good jazz pianist.

[Janine chuckles]

**Austin:** Yeah.

**Ali:** Wow. Um, okay, regardless, I feel like just as a safety procedure, [Austin: Mhm.] just for clarity's sake, I'm gonna activate my stealth and go into the dust.

**Austin:** Mhm. Alright.

**Ali:** And this bird can just be confused up there.

**Austin:** Bird's confused.

[**Ali** chuckles]

**Dre:** "Squawk?"

**Austin:** It does a big, like, hawk shriek, you know? And you lose it. You lose sight of it. Because you're in the dust.

**Keith:** Like a red-tailed hawk?

**Austin:** Yeah, like a red-tailed hawk.

**Keith:** Sick.

**Austin:** Can you make that sound?

**Keith:** [shrill squawk]

**Sylvi:** Woah.

**Ali:** Ooh.

**Dre:** Nailed it.

**Keith:** Yeah.

**Austin:** Nailed it. Yeah. And you're able to go down into the Diadem. The scale difference here is like—there's three different scales at play here. There's the scale of like, the Blue Channel and this giant train, which is like, very big, but they're tiny compared to the Diadem. But the place that the people, the individual people have gone, is smaller still. And so you're able to land, like, nearby. And, you know, I'll just give

you a little bit of a sketch here, which is like, the Diadem—and this part of it is like parts of it we've seen before, has just like, eternal shopping mall vibes, you know?

**Ali:** Yeah.

**Austin:** It is an arcology that people are supposedly supposed to live in, that was like, designed by the guy who like, made Tilt the arcade next to the fountain in your local mall, you know?

**Ali:** I'm in my element.

**Austin:** You're in your element.

[Ali chuckles]

**Austin:** However, this part of it has clearly been picked over for, like, raw materials in a—an unfocused way. I say unfocused because it's like... it's clear that some things, you know, there's a—there is a clothing store where a bunch of metal racks have been taken, right? And then the one right after it, none of them have been taken, you know? But the nearby metal bench has clearly been, like, ripped from the ground and dragged away, you know? And you know that because there's another one next to it, and you can see the drag marks. And it's like, why didn't y'all just keep taking the metal clothing racks? Those are probably easier to move than this metal bench. So it's kind of like, not thoughtless, but there's no strategy to how the resources were taken here. And so it looks like a mall that has been, like, you know, torn apart by, you know, super strong toddlers or animals or something, you know? Like, it's been chaotically deconstructed down here. And you can see that that stuff heads generally into the hole that you saw everyone carry the train brain into. They are long gone from you now, at this point.

I'm curious who you're—who's going with you. I'm curious if you're getting out of the ship yourself. I'm curious if you're going with Midnite, if Hunting's coming with—like, what do you—what's the play?

**Ali:** Um, yeah, I—so I'm like, am I, like, landing the Blue Channel on the ground?

**Austin:** That's my—that's what it—I guess. Up to you. You tell me.

**Ali:** Okay. But I—

**Austin:** You can be hovering while you saw all the stuff I just described. You can tell me where you're putting it down, you know?

**Ali:** Right. Right, right, right.

**Austin:** Oh, I should note—I just realized I didn't mention some of the people that were definitely with the procession before. The people that we saw in the faction, the past faction turn, who were a Delegate, a Talonite, and some other—like a Twilight Mirage, like a Qui Err person, I believe. Or maybe just like, a deeply mixed Twilight Mirage person. We're also in the mix of those people, you would have seen them and been like, "oh yeah, those are the people—Gucci told me this crew went missing." That crew is among the doppeldusters that you saw.

**Ali:** Mhm.

**Austin:** So I just wanted to clarify that.

**Ali:** And no time in this descent did I, like, see anyone's mech?

**Austin:** I think Mow is down here crashed next to the train, yeah.

**Ali:** Okay. Okay.

**Austin:** Yeah. And so is—so would be the Paramerion. So would be the—all three of them are down here. Pilots have ejected.

**Ali:** Um, I am going to send Midnite and Hunting out in little, like, astro man suits.  
[chuckles] To—

**Austin:** Oh, sure. Yeah, they got like the gas mask—not a gas mask, but they have like the full helmet on situation?

**Ali:** Mhm.

**Austin:** Yeah. Okay.

**Ali:** Yeah, I think it's like a square window.

**Austin:** Are they broadcasting, like, video feedback to you?

**Ali:** I—well, no, I think I want the two of them to go recover everybody's mechs [**Austin:** Ah, okay.] and put them back onto the ship.

**Austin:** Mhm. Sure.

**Ali:** Palisade is gonna stay on the ship and watch it.

**Austin:** Mhm. Yep.

**Ali:** [chuckles] And I am gonna have a third flight suit, [**Austin:** Mhm.] which I said at the beginning of the season I own.

**Austin:** You did.

**Ali:** Um... [chuckles] To—

**Austin:** No one was questioning you.

**Ali:** Uh-huh. You know, I'm just...

**Dre:** We're mad, but we're not questioning you.

[**Sylvi** laughs]

**Ali:** [laughing] I'm just saying facts. I'm just saying facts. I think with a little suitcase and a little tool belt situation.

**Austin:** What's in the suitcase?

**Ali:** No, did I say suitcase? I meant flashlight. That's very weird.

**Austin:** Okay.

**Ali:** [chuckles] Flashlight and a tool belt.

**Austin:** Yeah. Uh-huh. Suitcase is very funny, though.

**Ali:** I know. [laughs]

**Austin:** Brnine goes to work, everybody.

**Ali:** [laughing] What was I talking about?

**Austin:** Are you bringing any Asepsis drones from your room?

**Ali:** Probably the one.

**Austin:** Okay.

**Ali:** Maybe I have one of it—no, this is weird. I was gonna say maybe one of them is what I'm using as a flashlight, and I don't think that's the situation. I think that it's—I think that my tool—

**Keith:** How many are there?

**Austin:** Great question, Keith.

**Ali:** Like eight, I guess. [laughs]

**Keith:** Awesome.

**Austin:** Great.

**Dre:** Hm.

**Austin:** When you go in to pick one up, you notice something.

**Ali:** Mhm.

**Austin:** I told you before that the Divine Integrity, which you have in your little Asepsis tank, right?

**Ali:** Mhm.

**Austin:** I told you it turned into a scepter, right?

**Ali:** Mhm, mhm.

**Austin:** Um, yeah, a hand is forming around the scepter.

**Dre:** Hm.

**Sylvi:** Um...

**Austin:** A person's hand is gripping it, made of some sort of like, unknown material.

**Ali:** Sure.

**Austin:** It's like a—almost like a black marble. It stops at like, the elbow, but it's clearly grown pretty quickly.

**Ali:** Alright.

**Sylvi:** This is like, noticeably different from what Integrity is made out of?

**Austin:** Yeah, dude. Yeah, there is not the—oh, what Integrity is made out of. Yes.

**Sylvi:** Yeah, that's what I mean.

**Austin:** I thought you meant notably different than where it was before, yes.

[**Ali** chuckles]

**Sylvi:** It's late, but it's not that late, Austin.

**Austin:** You're right. You're right. Yes. It is not what Integrity is made out of.

**Sylvi:** Okay.

**Ali:** Ah...

**Austin:** The closest thing that it seems like it was—the last thing that we saw that was made out of something that looked like this was the Divine Commitment.

**Ali:** Oh, sure. I'll deal with that later.

[**Sylvi** and **Keith** laugh]

**Austin:** I'm gonna put a clock on the screen.

**Keith:** This is a side thing.

**Sylvi:** That's my captain. That's my fucking captain!

**Austin:** Uh-huh.

[**Ali** laughs]

**Keith:** This is homework.

**Dre:** She has priorities, man.

**Ali:** I think I got like, a side quest little marker set up when I walked into my room.

**Austin:** Uh-huh. And you've—

**Ali:** I unlocked the side quest, and I'm like—

**Keith:** Yep.

**Austin:** "I'll get it later."

**Ali:** "I have to go." [chuckles]

**Austin:** Uh-huh.

**Ali:** I have to deal with the main story right now. My crew is missing.

**Dre:** Yeah.



**Austin:** Yeah, mhm.

[**Sylvi** laughs]

**Austin:** Okay. You'll note I have a bunch of clocks up here.

**Ali:** Mhm.

**Sylvi:** Sure.

**Austin:** Figure, Thisbe, Cori and then "Integrity hand"? So.

[**Ali** laughs]

**Austin:** Why did it disappear? It stopped saying "Integrity hand". What happened? Let me bring it back.

**Ali:** It says Integrity hand for me.

**Keith:** Yeah.

**Austin:** Oh, it does? Okay.

**Ali:** Yeah.

**Austin:** It doesn't for me. What is happening? That's so wild. I hate Roll20 sometimes.

**Keith:** Finally, the players are in charge.

**Austin:** Yeah, you can see it. I can't see it. There it goes. I refreshed, it's all fine now. Okay.

**Ali:** Oh, the flashlight is obviously through my scanner.

**Dre:** Oh, yeah.

**Austin:** Oh, it's like up near your eye. You got one of those—yeah, yeah, yeah.

**Ali:** Duh. Yeah, okay.

**Austin:** It's not the thing in, like, a video game where it just sort of emanates from your chest as if you had a pocket flashlight, but then you turn it off and you clearly don't have a pocket flashlight? I think Alan Wake does that in Alan Wake. It annoyed me at the time.

**Ali:** James had that flashlight. I don't know what you're talking about. I don't know what you're talking about.

**Austin:** Yeah, James has the flashlight. You're right, you're right, you're right.

**Ali:** [chuckling] I don't know enough about that.

**Sylvi:** [cross] I've seen a flashlight in his hand.

**Austin:** Yeah, yeah, yeah.

**Dre:** Yeah, you've got to like, recharge it and put batteries in it.

**Austin:** You do have to recharge it. That's actually a whole thing, isn't it? Yeah.

**Ali:** Yeah.

**Sylvi:** Yeah.

**Austin:** That's fair.

**Ali:** Um, I think my tool belt is Chewbacca style. [laughs]

**Sylvi:** Nice. Nice. Yeah.

**Dre:** Fuck yeah, dude.

**Ali:** Like cross-body with all those little...

**Keith:** [cross] Like a bandolier? You get a bandolier?

**Sylvi:** No, like Chewbacca style, Keith.

[Ali laughs]

**Austin:** I don't know what the fuck a bandolier is. We're talking about Chewbacca style.

**Keith:** Sorry, yeah, you have a—you have a Chewbacca style.

**Janine:** Fur, it's just like a fur belt?

**Austin:** Keep up.

**Keith:** Sorry, yeah.

**Janine:** Gross.

**Dre:** Man, I miss the 2000s. I loved that song.

[Ali and **Austin** laugh]

**Austin:** You'd just be up in the club. People out there Chewbacca style at the club.

**Dre:** They just dance, yeah, it's great.

[Sylvi and **Ali** laugh]

**Austin:** Yeah. The camera's off, but I just hit the Chewbacca style at my desk.

[**Dre** laughs]

**Keith:** I don't have a lot of opportunities to unveil this. Can I do my Chewbacca?

**Austin:** Yeah, yeah, yeah. Give me your Chewbacca.

**Sylvi:** Oh, yeah.

**Ali:** Please.

**Keith:** [imitates Chewbacca, a guttural trill]

**Austin:** Oh, wow. Yeah.

**Dre:** That's pretty good.

**Austin:** Yeah.

**Ali:** Wow.

**Keith:** That's pretty good, right?

**Sylvi:** Chewbacca style!

[**Dre** laughs]

**Keith:** Chewbacca style. [imitates Chewbacca]

**Austin:** Remember all those Bud Light commercials where Chewbacca style was like, the whole thing? Wild.

**Dre:** Uh-huh.

**Austin:** The 2000s. People don't remember.

[**Sylvi** laughs]

**Keith:** Here's the trick. People at home, you can do this. You can do a Chewbacca. Here's how you do it. You have to, like, roll your R's while yawning. That's the key to it.

**Dre:** Sure, that makes sense.

**Sylvi:** I'm not gonna try it now. I'll do it later.

**Keith:** No, everyone try it now.

[**Ali** and **Sylvi** laugh]

**Austin:** Alright.

**Sylvi:** Okay.

[**Dre** chuckles]

## **A-Plot: In the Depths of Dust (Pt. 2)**

### **Figure**

[1:08:17]

**Austin:** Hey Figure, you've made it to the—

**Dre:** Oh, sick.

**Austin:** The front of the flight deck. Your mech that you now have piloted for, of course, you know, years, is here.

**Dre:** Yeah.

**Austin:** The Broken Spoke. How do you mark how many victories you have on the Broken Spoke?

**Dre:** Oh, boy. Um...

**Austin:** Not kills, necessarily.

**Dre:** Yeah.

**Austin:** I think that might be a little grim, but.

**Dre:** Sure. I mean, I was gonna say, I think real—like, real Figure wouldn't. In this dream world, um...

**Austin:** Maybe you didn't, then. Maybe someone else does it.

**Dre:** Okay, yeah.

**Austin:** Maybe it's like your engineer adds a mark to your shield gun. You know?

**Dre:** Sure.

**Austin:** For every successful, like, Sortie, you know? Not—again, not per kill, but like, you know, each one of those. And it's like a symbol. What would the symbol be? Maybe just the Millennium Break symbol, maybe it's—

**Dre:** Yeah, yeah. I like that.

**Austin:** You know? And let me tell you, it's dozens. You've been at it.

**Dre:** It's—you know how when you do like, the five on the tally mark, it's like you do the four and then the cross through, right?

**Austin:** Yep. Oh, that's fun.

**Dre:** The Millennium Break symbol, but like, made out of tally marks.

**Austin:** Yeah, that's sick. Like 1, 2, 3, 4, 5. Yeah, I love it. That's fantastic. And there's a bunch of them on there. So you, clearly, this is late in your career, so to speak.

[**Dre** hums]

**Austin:** And, you know, you are being—we're getting a walk and talk with someone I've never met before, who seems to know you, who is explaining the mission. It's another Bilat supply base. You've dealt with these before.

**Dre:** Sure.

**Austin:** They are—they're well-defended, but like, they are—as long as you're quick, it tends to be a pushover. They can't get reinforcements in quick enough. But if you take a long time, reinforcements from a sector or two away will show up, and then you'll have a problem, you know?

**Dre:** Hey, really quick, what is the date?

**Austin:** It is about five years from when we're currently playing, which is, I believe we're in 1429?

**Dre:** Okay.

**Austin:** No, maybe 1424. I need to double-check my own damn math. This is what happens when you don't introduce a whole season with "the year is blank, blank of the perfect millennium."

**Dre:** Right, yeah, yeah, yeah.

**Austin:** You know? This is—you fuck up. I guess PARTIZAN 64—is that the last episode? No, PARTIZAN's—how many PARTIZAN episodes were there? We couldn't have gone—we didn't go to 60. That's Twilight Mirage numbers right there. 47. Alright, 45 is what I wanted. Twilight Mirage—I was right. 1424 was the end of PARTIZAN, 1429—so 1429, 1430, somewhere in there [**Dre:** Okay.] is where we are in the real PALISADE season. Let's call this 1435.

**Dre:** Sure. Okay.

**Austin:** So 10 years after—a little over 10 years after we first met Figure last season, last—PARTIZAN, you know, during PARTIZAN.

**Dre:** Okay.

Dre (as **Figure**): All this sounds great. I need to go check in on the command deck really quick before I launch for the sortie.

Austin (as **Millennium Break Member**): Alright, but be quick. Like I said, if they get any sort of sniff that we're coming after them, they're gonna get reinforcements, and this whole thing changes.

Dre (as **Figure**): Oh, they'll never get a sniff of me.

Austin (as **Millennium Break Member**): Love to hear it, commander.

[**Keith** laughs]

**Austin:** And you head to the command deck. What are you looking for on the command deck?

**Dre:** Who's here?

**Austin:** Who are you looking for?

**Dre:** Um...

**Austin:** Are you asking about anybody?

**Dre:** I'm looking—I'm looking for Brnine—

**Austin:** Brnine is not here.

**Dre:** I'm looking for Thisbe—

**Austin:** Thisbe is not here.

**Dre:** I'm looking for Cori...

**Austin:** Cori...

**Dre:** I'm looking for Eclectic.

**Austin:** There's, um...

**Dre:** Can I tell you the last person that I'm looking for, which is also the most important person I'm looking for?

**Austin:** Oh, sure.

**Dre:** I'm looking for Clementine Kesh.

**Austin:** No, not here.

**Dre:** Okay. Alright, good.

**Austin:** Cori... There are people on the command deck wearing, on their lapels, little angel wing pins.

**Keith:** [close to the microphone] Why?



[Ali chuckles]

**Austin:** You know immediately it's because Cori died.

**Dre:** Yeah, yeah, yeah.

**Sylvi:** God...

**Austin:** And people are grieving her.

**Dre:** Um, is there...

**Austin:** And you remember in that moment, too, that Brnine died three years ago, and Thisbe died trying to save them.

[Dre groans]

**Austin:** And you lost Jesset. Jesset might not be dead, but Jesset's MIA. You know, um...

**Dre:** What about Gucci?

**Austin:** Gucci got a promotion and then was assassinated.

**Sylvi:** Fuck.

**Ali:** [laughing] Let's go.

**Dre:** Well, I was gonna say "of fucking course," but then that's—now I feel rude saying that after the last part.

**Austin:** Yeah. Yeah. You, um... You're it. You're the last one of the people you started with. You didn't throw your life away defending something good, you got to keep living. They all died, though. You never rolled that third six, I guess.

**Dre:** Um... Where is the ship? Is there like, a galaxy map?

**Austin:** You know, you are in the depths of Kesh space. You've kind of fought them back pretty severely. Yeah, I can pull up a fucking galaxy map. We got one of those on here? We must. Did we never pull the galaxy map onto this map? Maybe we didn't. Maybe—

**Keith:** It'd be wild if during this dream thing, this is when Figure rolls three 6s. [laughs]

[Dre laughs]

**Keith:** And dies in a—

**Austin:** I'm gonna say something out loud. Yeah. That's possible.

**Dre:** Yeah.

**Keith:** Dies in a dream.

**Dre:** Sure.

**Austin:** Yep. Mhm. I think I'm gonna advance this Figure clock as you continue to try to figure out stuff here. You're in—you're deep inside of Stel Kesh space. You have basically pinned them between you on Millennium Break's kind of front on the—what I guess I would call the galactic south, and the Branched up on the galactic—I guess it's actually kind of east to west. I'm gonna just drop this image into our actual Discord chat. But you are at, like—you see where like, Lenaphon 4 is? There's like a line in—the orange part is Kesh. So the kind of north side of the Perennial "I" is Kesh. And where Lenaphon 4 is, about halfway down, halfway between where Partizan is and where Counterweight is, Millennium Break owns all that.

**Dre:** Huh.

**Austin:** They own half of what was Kesh territory. And you're slowly pushing them deeper and deeper towards Counterweight, where the Branched are just chewing them up. So things are going well.

**Dre:** Yeah, you know, the future where Millennium Break also becomes an empire. It's going well.

**Austin:** No, they're not.

**Dre:** Okay.

**Austin:** It's going well. It is—generally, this is—there's—you have a military front, but the area before that, like to the west of that is, you know, basically a large collection of self organized kind of subdivisions of space that have kind of a—there's a—you know, there's some infighting back there. Some people have different ideas about how things should be run. But Millennium Break stays above it, and focuses fundamentally on preventing the Divine Principality from growing again. And there are whole parts of—you know, don't ask about what's going on in Stel Orion space. Stel Orion's another beast that thankfully is being held at bay because of their own internal conflicts. But you've kind of elbowed out room for people to figure out what comes next. And despite, you know, some attempts probably internally to turn that into a new empire, that hasn't happened. What has happened is that everyone you've known and loved is dead.

## **Thisbe**

[1:16:16]

**Austin:** Um, how's the farm work going?

**Janine:** Um... that's a good question. I think it's going... okay?

**Austin:** Mhm.

**Janine:** But I think Thisbe probably realizes, like, "oh, X amount of time has passed. I used to be able to do, like—I used to be able to clear, like, a whole field in this time, but I'm like—I'm like three quarters of the way through."

**Austin:** Yeah. You get a message that is—it arrives in an almost—I don't want to say psychically, but you know, the way that you can send psychic messages.

**Janine:** Yeah.

**Austin:** And it comes in from another Thisbe unit, or another of the units. Thisbe doesn't—isn't the name of your unit type. We know this, right? Thisbe is—is “this being”, we've gone over that, but it's the same type of farming unit that you are. What do similar models call each other? Not operant.

**Janine:** Um... hm.

**Austin:** Are you a peer unit? Are you a... Like, what's that relationship like?

**Janine:** That's a good question. I have not had to think about that before. Um... I think... [exhales] It's weird, because like, I need a title that feels like it's not a title.

**Austin:** Yeah. Mhm.

**Janine:** “Peers” feels too formal.

**Austin:** Yeah.

**Janine:** I feel like the term they would use is something that like, distinguishes them, but also makes it sound like they're all kind of the same? The same thing?

**Austin:** Right, right. Would it focus on being sort of like an implementer, an instrument or a—like, not to say “tool”, but you know, some sort of, like...

**Janine:** I wonder if it would be something more like “partition”. Yeah.

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

**Sylvi:** Ooh.

**Austin:** Yeah, I like that a lot. Yeah, yeah, yeah.

Austin (as **Partition Unit**): Does the partition unit need assistance? I've already wrapped my zone up.

Janine (as **Thisbe**): No. I'll be done shortly.

Austin (as **Partition Unit**): This is good to hear.

**Austin**: And you find yourself aware of an entire network of other beings like you, who have transformed this world. It is not, you know—this is not the limit of what you've built here. You, free from needing to jump-kick statues and tell mechs to stop in place using your magic, have found, retrieved, repaired other beings like you, and have begun to transform this planet into a place where you can do a type of work you haven't done in a long time, largely on your own terms. What would that look like? What are the details of that that I have no idea about? What does farm utopia Thisbe—what's her life like?

**Janine**: It's interesting, because I think the answer to that has changed compared to what it was—what it would have been last season.

**Austin**: [hums] Yeah.

**Janine**: So I wonder if I should air more—should be like, very current, should be like, right now, what would it look like.

**Austin**: Yeah, exactly that.

**Janine**: Okay. In that case, I think it is maybe like an oversight kind of role. Rather than being like, one in the field, it's like people are coming to her to a degree to be like, "can you sign off on this?" Or "is this the correct way to do things?" Like a—not the top of the food chain, but a minor authority.

**Austin**: Mhm. Right. Then I think we get that almost as a reveal, that the Thisbe that we thought we were looking at that has the ice cream paint shop, or paint job, is not you at all. And the camera sort of moves to reveal that you in your classic mode, with the proper, you know, crack in your—is it—is that in your head that you have that crack?

**Janine**: Yeah.

**Austin:** Is that right? Is there—and the paint job is just your regular paint job, and you are in a sort of central location, you know, and you see that message between those two partition units. And yeah, it is, you know, what are you growing? What type of food is—what type of grain is this?

**Janine:** Does it have to be grain?

**Austin:** No, it can be whatever you want.

**Janine:** I feel like it would be something—[chuckles] this is gonna sound like a joke, and I don't mean it to be a joke. I think it'd be something like hemp. Right? Like something that like, has a lot of utility. [chuckles]

**Austin:** Mhm, mhm, mhm.

**Dre:** [laughs] Hell yeah, bro.

**Janine:** [laughing] And I know that I just said that Thisbe's running a weed farm, but...

**Austin:** Uh-huh.

**Janine:** It could, you know, jute? I don't know.

**Austin:** Let's go!

[Dre laughs]

**Austin:** Uh-huh. Uh-huh.

**Sylvi:** "I roll with Thisbe" has a whole different meaning now. Oh, it's "I ride."

[group laughter]

**Austin:** [groans] Oh, god.

**Janine:** Ideally—

**Austin:** Operant Broun—

**Dre:** Can I make just a request to the community?

**Austin:** Uh-huh.

**Dre:** Someone draw Mow smoking a huge blunt, please, thank you.

**Austin:** Oh, absolutely.

[**Sylvi** laughs]

**Janine:** It just—it, like—

**Ali:** Wow.

**Keith:** Look, they just don't want you to know how much good stuff hemp can do.

**Janine:** That's true.

**Dre:** Yeah, yeah, yeah.

**Janine:** Ideally it would be a thing that's—

**Austin:** "Operant Sunset, would you like me to roll that for you? You seem to be having trouble."

[**Sylvi** laughs]

**Janine:** Wow.

[**Ali** laughs]

**Sylvi:** Real.

**Janine:** Ideally, though, it would be something that's sort of—you can use it to make material goods, but also you could eat.

**Austin:** Sure. Yes.

**Janine:** I guess rice, you kind of can—you can use rice to make like, paper and stuff. But I don't know. Something—

**Austin:** Sure.

**Janine:** Something in that vein of, like, something that's making sturdy fabric, but also could help, like... yeah.

**Austin:** Love that. Oh, are we in—are we getting a Thisbe in outfit? Are we getting sarong Thisbe again? Has—

**Janine:** No, it's work. This is work time.

**Austin:** Still work, still work. Okay. Okay.

**Janine:** You'll ruin your sarong.

**Austin:** Cool. Okay.

**Dre:** That's true.

**Austin:** Listen, I didn't know if you—because you're not out in the fields, if you were like, able to wear something cool. You know?

**Janine:** Yeah, just 'cause she's a supervisor now, she's going she's going full fucking slacker boss. I see.

**Austin:** [chuckles] Uh-huh. That's right.

**Keith:** Some people have work sarongs.

**Austin:** This is true. Exactly.

**Janine:** Fuckin' landlord Thisbe mode.

**Dre:** Aw.

**Austin:** Sad.



## Cori

[1:22:42]

**Austin:** Cori.

**Sylvi:** Yeah.

**Austin:** This is going incredible. And all you had to do was fight back to back with Elle Evensong.

**Sylvi:** Wow, we just make a great team. Isn't that crazy?

**Dre:** Mhm.

Austin (as **Elle**): If you say so.

**Austin:** She says to you, in the middle of killing someone with a giant claymore, right? Cutting someone top to bottom. And as you're getting closer to the flagship of the enemy force, she says,

Austin (as **Elle**): Alright, don't you think it's time to maybe go back and defend our rear flank?

Sylvi (as **Cori**): We're almost there. Like...

Austin (as **Elle**): Exactly. We don't want anyone sneaking up on us, do we, Cori?

Sylvi (as **Cori**): But you're watching my back. So...

Austin (as **Elle**): You're watching mine.

**Austin:** And she just jets ahead in front of you towards the the flagship of the Princt.

**Sylvi:** [sighs] Yeah, that makes sense. Uh, I have a question.

**Austin:** Yeah.

**Sylvi:** When is this taking place? And is this, like, what is my preconception of—like, conception of time and place here?

**Austin:** It is the year 1430 of the Perfect Millennium. It is today.

**Sylvi:** Okay.

**Austin:** It is in the near future. It is—

**Sylvi:** Okay.

**Austin:** The Princept has come here to squash Millennium Break once and for all. You've gained allies somehow from across parts of the now thrown into chaos—in your dream, at least—[**Sylvi:** Mhm.] Pact of Free States.

**Sylvi:** Okay.

**Austin:** You've gained allies from people here on Palisade that you didn't have before. But again, and again, and again, you are the rookie, you are the second place hero, you are following someone else's lead, you are being told to "watch our back", you are being told to be a shield, you are being told that someone else gets to be the sword.

**Sylvi:** Man...

**Austin:** And there's a real—there's a real sense of treating you with kid gloves. "Cori's been through a lot," you overhear people say in the halls. And when you do something right, the way they talk about you, they say, like—they emphasize their surprise. You know?

**Sylvi:** Yeah, that's changing today. I'm boosting past Elle.

**Austin:** Okay. And going after the flagship.

**Sylvi:** Yeah.

**Austin:** You know, there is a huge stream of fire coming in at you as you do this. And [chuckles] there is, of course, also the sound of being locked on to from a group of

missile boats that have broken off from the main fleet and come around on your rear. The people that you should have taken care of have now locked on to you and Elle. And Elle sends over a comm that is like,

Austin (as **Elle**): This is why I asked you to have our backs, Cori.

**Austin**: Give me a Weather the Storm.

**Sylvi**: Okay. That is Defy, right?

**Austin**: That is Defy. What's your Defy again?

**Sylvi**: Plus 2?

**Austin**: Yeah, give it to me.

**Sylvi**: It's an 8.

**Austin**: That is an 8. The—you manage to dodge this, but you feel the explosions of the missiles, you know, in the—in space around you, rock your mech. And as you do, this reality becomes a little more real for you. I'm going to advance your clock an additional one [**Sylvi**: Oh, man.] on top of the one that this scene is already going to do. Yeah.

**Sylvi**: Cool.

**Austin**: Mhm.

**Sylvi**: I'm—I make great decisions.

**Austin**: You're doing good. Cori is, you know.

**Sylvi**: I mean, I'm playing the character.

[**Ali** chuckles]

**Austin**: You're playing the character. A hundred percent. A hundred percent. Uh, let's swing back over to Brnine really quick.

## Brnine

[1:26:48]

**Austin:** Brnine?

**Ali:** Hi.

**Austin:** Hi. Welcome to the dust mall.

**Ali:** Uh-huh.

**Austin:** Flashlight in hand.

**Ali:** Yeah.

**Austin:** Flashlight not on hand.

**Ali:** No, yeah. Not in hand. Hands free.

**Austin:** Not on hand. Flashlight on scanner.

**Sylvi:** Flashlight on eye.

**Austin:** Flashlight on eye.

**Ali:** Uh-huh.

**Austin:** Yeah, uh-huh.

**Ali:** Scanning also, you know. [laughs]

**Austin:** Yeah, sure. Scanning, doing a lot of scanning.

**Ali:** Uh-huh.

**Austin:** And, you know, you get to the big hole in the side of the wall. Have you gone through it?

**Ali:** Um, yes, but I have a question.

**Austin:** Yes.

**Ali:** What happens if I try to communicate with people?

**Austin:** In which way?

**Ali:** Like, if I'm—if—

**Austin:** Sending a comm back?

**Ali:** Yeah.

**Austin:** It is working. Which is different than it was before. The dust previously, or the Affliction Dust, was blocking communication, you may recall. Yeah.

**Ali:** Right.

**Austin:** This is not that, for some r—I mean, the—I said Divine—the Affliction Dust is not here, there is just the dust from the Affliction here, if that makes sense. You know?

**Ali:** Mhm. Yeah, yeah, yeah.

**Austin:** The being itself has moved ahead.

**Ali:** This is like an after effect.

**Austin:** Yeah, exactly.

**Ali:** Okay.

**Austin:** Yeah.

**Ali:** But no responses on any of that stuff.

**Austin:** Oh, you mean your friends? Your—

**Ali:** Yeah.

**Austin:** Um, hey, everybody else, go ahead and give me a Defy.

**Dre:** Ooh.

**Ali:** Ooh.

**Sylvi:** Oh, boy.

**Austin:** Actually, you know what, no, Brnine—mm, no, this is you. You all have to—should get to make this roll. So give me a Weather the Storm.

**Sylvi:** 11!

**Austin:** There you go.

**Dre:** Remind me again of what it means to roll with disadvantage?

**Austin:** Oh, you roll 3d6 and we take lowest.

**Sylvi:** Great. Everyone loves when Figure rolls more die.

**Dre:** Mhm.

**Austin:** 7 from Figure.

**Janine:** I'm doing this without Mow, right?

**Ali:** Wonderful. Love this.

**Austin:** Mhm. No Mow.

[**Ali** and **Dre** laugh]

**Austin:** Does Mow give you—oh right, Mow would give you—would let you do other stuff, yeah, yeah, yeah.

**Janine:** [cross] Yeah, he lets me roll Weather with Channel, yeah.

**Austin:** Channel, right?

**Janine:** Versus my nothing.

**Austin:** Yeah, no, no Mow involvement here. Yeah. So flat 2d6. Hey, 10.

**Ali:** Aw.

**Austin:** Both Figure and—sorry, both Thisbe and Cori can go ahead and—or, I guess I'll do it because it's easy for me to do, reduce that clock that's been ticking up from three to two in Cori's case, and from two to one in Thisbe's case. Figure, you had a partial success, which, you know, fundamentally is still a success of some sort. And I think the thing here is like, you don't reduce the clock, you don't get the full success. But what you do, what you are able to do is, you know, let your signal be something that Brnine can lock onto, you're able to be locked onto by Brnine. And so, Brnine, you're gonna take advantage on trying to track them in the next time you roll to move through this fucked up tunnel.

**Ali:** Cool. Track Figure or everybody?

**Austin:** The—well, Figure. If Figure is with the group, then everybody, right? So that's how that works.

**Ali:** But yeah, I'm moving through the break in the wall.

**Austin:** Yeah. The break in the wall is, again, it seems like it's been dug out, not with, like, not with tools built for digging a good tunnel, but kind of smashed apart with whatever could be found, sledgehammers and shovels. And, you know, big, sharp, you know, I had mentioned before, you know, dressing or clothing racks, you know, people have clearly used weapons to shoot this tunnel open. And eventually it opens into a place that's just as roughly hewn, but is bigger, a larger tunnel that then begins to split into different sub-tunnels.

And it takes you a second to realize this, but like, there are just bodies throughout these tunnels, carefully wrapped, and in some cases laid just on the side of the wall. In other cases, lowered into an open tomb, an open, like, pit. Sometimes, in places that seem like they've gotten the most attention, holes have been carved into the walls for people's

bodies to be placed. These are people who died during the process that we're seeing Figure, Thisbe, and Cori go through, gave themselves fully over to their doppelgängers. And their bodies just left here, were left here. This is the Catacomb of Dust that you walk through.

**Ali:** Cool. Cool.

**Austin:** Mhm. What are you doing?

**Ali:** Um... Yeah, Brnine, um, I don't think has ever experienced anything like this in their lives.

**Austin:** No, this is fucked up. I mean, you—yeah, right, you didn't go into the Chimera's Lantern, right? So.

**Ali:** I didn't.

**Austin:** Yeah, mhm.

**Ali:** And I also don't know that like, "catacombs" is a [**Austin:** Mm-mm.] you know, a Principality...

**Dre:** Not Brnine's vibe? [chuckles]

**Ali:** [laughs] Well, it's just like, I think of catacombs, and I'm like, ooh, crazy. Italy, France.

[**Sylvi** laughs]

**Ali:** I don't know that that's for Brnine, right?

**Austin:** You don't think Brnine's been on Wikipedia?

**Ali:** Maybe they're like, "oh, Kesh does this?" Like, I don't know...

**Austin:** Right, right. Yeah. Yeah, yeah, yeah.



**Ali:** There's been ritual killings and honorings in this way. But like, I—

**Austin:** Yeah. Mhm.

**Ali:** It just feels so far removed from what they would have ever experienced, and I want to call attention to it. [laughs]

**Austin:** Yeah, totally. Definitely seems much more like something that a being from a different era would do.

**Ali:** Weird, yeah. Uh-huh.

**Austin:** Like the Affliction Dust from the Divine Fleet.

**Ali:** Yeah, yeah, yeah. Okay, well, now that that's out of the way, I... [chuckles] What does one do?

**Austin:** I don't know.

**Ali:** Have—is there any track that the doppelduster, dusterdoppels left?

**Austin:** You can look for one.

**Ali:** I would love to. Is that a Read the Room?

**Austin:** This is a Read the Room. Yeah, for sure.

**Ali:** Okay. I also have another comms question.

**Austin:** Sure.

**Ali:** Which I guess will—I'm gonna roll Read the Room, and then I'm gonna—maybe we'll roll that into...

**Austin:** Yeah, sure.

**Ali:** And that is plus... Sense?

**Austin:** Plus Sense.

**Ali:** How's my Sense doing?

**Austin:** With 3d6, because you're taking advantage on the finding Figure's signal before.

**Ali:** Oh, okay, cool.

**Austin:** So 3d6 plus—or, yeah, 3d6 plus 1.

**Ali:** Plus 1.

**Austin:** Or, wait, that's wrong. Is that what your—what's your Sense? Yeah, it is plus 1. Okay.

**Ali:** Plus 1. Do I want... an Asepsis bonus here? I only have one more left. I'm gonna wait.

**Austin:** Mhm.

**Ali:** I'm gonna wait. 3d6 plus 1.

**Austin:** Take highest. Hey, that's 11. 5 plus 5 plus 1 is 11. Other roll was a 3. Don't need that. So yeah, absolutely. You get three questions to ask from the list.

**Ali:** Okay, cool. The thing I was gonna ask about the comms is I was curious about what happens if I just try to go through active radio signals.

**Austin:** [hums] Mhm. Like, to see if anyone else is talking down here?

**Ali:** Uh-huh.

**Austin:** There are some—I mean, the first thing you find is just a constantly running, like, radio channel that is just like, the—effectively, the like, holiday deals channel [Ali laughs] for this part of the Diadem. And it's like, you know, “half off on cardigans!” And “make sure to go to the butcher for 20% off lamb meat this week for the holiday.” Right?

**Ali:** Mhm.

**Austin:** And so there's that. But no, there's no one else broadcasting down here. Maybe there's a number station, there's probably some sort of weird number station you can pick up. But there's not like a—no one else is like, “help me!”

[**Sylvi** laughs]

**Ali:** Right. And then there's no one else who's like, “we're engaged. Tracking...”

**Keith:** Maybe you should check where—

**Sylvi:** No one's drinking a milkshake and then suddenly screaming help.

[**Ali** laughs]

**Austin:** Right, uh-huh.

**Keith:** You should check on wherever they're selling that lamb meat. If there's a sale on lamb meat, [**Austin:** Uh-huh.] surely someone's gonna be there taking advantage.

**Austin:** For sure. Definitely.

**Ali:** Um...

**Austin:** I guess, actually, a question here just for characterization purposes, is like, when you called Thisbe, Figure, and Cori, what did you say to them in that moment? To try to be like, [sheepish, deeper affect] “hey, you guys okay?” Like, what'd you say?

[**Sylvi** and **Ali** laugh]

**Janine:** Why'd you do that voice?

**Ali:** Great Brnine impression.

**Sylvi:** That is a really good Brnine voice!

**Austin:** It was a good Brnine impression. That was the heart of Brnine.

[scattered group laughter continues]

**Keith:** “You seen these doppelduster dusterdoppels?”

**Janine:** I can hear the hands in the pockets, you know?

**Austin:** Uh-huh. Yeah.

**Sylvi:** Is Brnine just that Kevin James picture all the time?

[group laughter]

**Ali:** You know...

**Austin:** You know?

**Dre:** Alright, fanart request number two.

**Ali:** There's a spiritual overlap. The very—the very casual shrug. The “I'm the guy you like” face.

**Austin:** Yeah, yeah, yeah. Mhm.

[**Sylvi** laughs]

**Austin:** [laughing] Is that what that look is?

**Sylvi:** [laughing] Yeah, absolutely.

**Austin:** I guess it kind of is, yeah.

**Ali:** Just a kind “you know me” smile.

**Austin:** Yeah.

**Ali:** Um, anyway, to the disappointment of the table, I do think that it is a slightly more professional...

Ali (as **Brnine**): Come in? Hello, come in?

**Ali:** That is maybe getting more stressed as time goes on, or maybe less. Well, probably more stressed. I don't know about this body situation.

**Austin:** Yeah.

**Ali:** I'm not loving it. How are—how is my crew at risk or in peril?

**Austin:** Oh.

**Ali:** Or I guess, no, that's like a game thing. I would be able to know all of those things.

**Austin:** Well, yeah, you can just look at their sheets.

**Ali:** Can we use the—can we speak in—

**Austin:** But I will tell you.

**Ali:** Yeah. Abstractly about this? Yes.

**Austin:** I mean, well, I can help both ways, right?

**Ali:** Okay.

**Austin:** Which is like, um...

**Dre:** I might be dust.

**Austin:** You're—yeah. When these clocks fill, everyone here is gonna take a Danger. Is gonna take a Peril.

**Ali:** Okay.

**Austin:** And I don't know how Brnine knows this. I guess, Brnine, you know, you're looking at these bodies. You're—in the video game version of this, you are absolutely just finding audio recordings. You know, we're getting the audio logs. Right?

**Ali:** Oh, okay. I was gonna suggest something creepier, but less dorky. Which is—

**Austin:** [scoffs] Wow. Fucking owned.

[group laughter]

**Sylvi:** Okay.

**Austin:** Please, though.

**Dre:** Hey, I was gonna suggest something that doesn't suck ass?

**Ali:** [laughing] Which is, like—getting—[laughs]

**Keith:** And is boring?

**Austin:** And is boring and played? Oh, sorry. I'm not as washed as you, so I had a good idea?

**Sylvi:** Do you mind if I bring some heat instead of whatever the fuck you were just doing?

[Ali continues laughing]

**Keith:** I'm looking for something to help me take my hands out of my pockets.

**Austin:** I'm sorry, who let you cook? 'Cause I got the recipes over here.

**Ali:** [laughing] I was just about to say "who let me cook". Anyway...

[group laughter settles]

**Ali:** Like, can I be looking at how long these bodies have been here?

**Austin:** Yeah, sure.

**Ali:** Is that more of a—okay, yeah.

**Austin:** Yeah, I mean, but that's not gonna answer the second part, so.

**Ali:** [laughing] Okay.

**Austin:** ‘Cause like, some of them have been here for ever, you know? Some of them are mummified bodies, are like, the only reason they exist at all anymore is because weather doesn’t exist down here. There is no wind to blow them away.

**Ali:** Sure.

**Austin:** And some of them are from a couple of weeks ago. You know? Some of them have—some of them are Principality soldiers, and the Principality only got here last year. You know? So, it is a wide range of people. This far up, it’s mostly old bodies. But the—there are a handful of people who are newer than that here. And yeah, you know, without clarity, it’s not—you know, without any sort of further investigation, it’s hard to know exactly what’s happening to your crew. The images of the Affliction Dust that you saw before are very creepy. You read the reports that Gucci sent you that said that like, a bunch of weird doppeldusters showed up and everyone got scared, but you weren’t sure what was going on internally. You know, maybe that report suggested that some of them were like, confronting some sort of psychic interior demons. You know what I mean? But it’s not clear what the actual experiential, you know, thing that was going on was for those people. And so, yeah, you don’t really know. You know?

**Ali:** Oh, right. Okay, yeah. This is what I’m—I’m doing the, like, “this is just like what Gucci said.”

**Austin:** Yeah, exactly.

**Ali:** And it’s cutting back to the—

**Austin:** The faction game people.

**Ali:** —a new UI of the Gucci, the report that was sent over. [laughs]

**Austin:** Yeah. That’s right. Exactly. Yes. Yes. Mechanically, what’s happening is these clocks are advancing, and if these clocks hit four, everyone will take a Danger. Will take a Peril. And if they’re at max Perils, they will have to Bite the Dust.

**Ali:** Mhm.

**Austin:** So that means, Cori, you better not get to four.

**Sylvi:** Yeah. Well, we'll see!

[Ali laughs]

**Austin:** Thisbe is—Thisbe, you're far off, 'cause you still have...

**Keith:** And, just a quick reminder, what is filling up these clocks?

**Austin:** That is the thing that Brnine couldn't possibly know.

**Keith:** Okay.

**Austin:** But like, clearly, fictionally, being pulled into whatever this... dream is.

**Keith:** Alright. So it's like, Cori choosing to race ahead and stuff like that that's...

**Austin:** It's just happening, Keith.

**Keith:** It's just happening. Okay.

**Austin:** And that's an important distinction. Cori didn't get a bonus one because she rushed ahead, she got a bonus one because she failed a roll.

**Keith:** Sure.

**Sylvi:** You know that episode of The X-Files where they're in like, the goop that, like—

**Keith:** Yeah, I do. The mushroom goo? Yeah.

[Ali hums]

**Sylvi:** I think it's a mushroom goo? Yeah. It's like that, I think, where it's like the mental effects—

**Keith:** Oh yeah, you're definitely in the mushroom goo.



**Sylvi:** Well, tell me about it. The mental effects are like, not necessarily tied to what physically is happening in the body though, [**Austin:** Right.] it's just like, a side effect of being controlled in this way.

**Austin:** Yeah. And there is something happening here vaguely that, you know, you can kind of piece together as players, which is like, your Tenets have been—or not your Tenets, your Tenets for Cori, but your Hooks have been loosened and you're being kind of presented with potential worlds, right? You're being asked to—you're being prompted to consider what you believe in in this moment through a hypothetical situation, right? But.

**Keith:** Why do the doppelusters care?

**Austin:** Well, Dust, we've talked about on the faction game, used to be a Divine, used to be, like all the Afflictions, was once a Divine. This was the Divine Reflection, and the Divine Reflection would allow you to engage with a doppelganger of yourself who you could ask questions to, and go through a strange sort of, again, very Twilight Mirage-ian self-therapy, guide yourself in meditation and in inquiry, and challenge yourself, say things that you needed to hear but you couldn't bring yourself to say, or say things that you wanted to say or were too afraid to say to someone other than yourself. That was 5,000 years ago, and things have not been great for the Divine Reflection, who is now the Affliction Dust, and who's had that purpose kind of turned inwards cynically, and is now building an endless catacomb in the depths, and is forcing everyone to just kind of like, fence-sit, kind of, you know.

These dreams you're having don't seem to have opinions, necessarily, about what we—what you want. I mean, they have opinions about what you're—you know, we should just keep it in the fiction, right? But like, I will tell you, Cori, if you had stayed behind, it would have also gone bad for you. Right?

**Sylvi:** Mhm.

**Keith:** It's Kreia.

**Austin:** It's Kreia. Yeah. Always—always is. Always was.

**Ali:** [laughs] I—okay. That's interesting. 'Cause I—

**Austin:** But Brnine doesn't know that.

**Ali:** Yeah.

**Austin:** Brnine knows your people are missing, and these bodies have been here for fucking ever, some of them—and some of them are new.

**Ali:** Okay. Yeah. I—well, that is interesting, because the third thing that I wanted to ask was, how does Dust really feel?

**Austin:** Yeah.

**Ali:** But they're... They aren't in this scene.

**Austin:** They're here. They're just not doing the thing that they do. They're leading this procession, right?

**Ali:** Okay.

**Austin:** So they are—when we're seeing images of your friends walking with their eyes closed behind this dark procession [**Ali:** Okay.] in the depths of this catacomb—which, by the way, is dark, you know?

**Ali:** Okay.

**Austin:** You know, maybe far enough in, we're getting some sort of like ancient emergency lighting or something. No, we're not, because this is just tunnels, right? No one has lights down here. You know, your light, your flashlight, is bouncing around down here until it barely lights up this group of people who are ignoring the intrusion of this light. And the lead figure in front of the train brain is the Divine Dust. And actually, this is the moment that we get another little reveal. The thing that you didn't see from above is, you know what else has a doppelduster? The train brain. There's a second train brain.

**Ali:** Oh.

**Austin:** The train brain also has a dust form that is also being carried physically. Yeah. And so at that point, you know, we know one of the things Dust wants here is that brain. What's going on with that brain?

**Dre:** Man. Me every day I go into work.

**Austin:** Damn, true.

[**Sylvi**, **Dre**, and **Keith** laugh]

## **B-Plot: Eclectic's Investigation**

[1:43:43]

**Austin:** Let's hop over to Eclectic. It's been a minute.

**Keith:** Hi.

**Austin:** Hi. You're trying to get out of this city, right? Where did we last—where did we leave you?

**Keith:** Okay, so, we got a couple things.

**Austin:** Yeah.

**Keith:** So number one, here's—as far as I know, what's actually happening is I'm on the roof being tracked [**Austin:** Mhm.] by a crew of—

**Austin:** Oh right, yeah, you are Defenseless.

**Keith:** I'm Defe—okay, so this is the other thing.

**Austin:** Yeah.

[**Ali** snickers]

**Keith:** New character, you know, I'm forgetting stuff.

**Austin:** Yeah.

**Keith:** Not necessarily insisting that we go back and change things, but—

**Austin:** [cross] Let's not go back. I would keep that in hand for the future, but you did not...

**Keith:** But I do have this ward here that says that once per Sortie—

**Austin:** [cross] Yeah, I'm not gonna let you go back to a previous episode and undo a thing.

[Sylvi laughs]

**Keith:** Not even this Risk here, Affected?

**Austin:** No.

**Keith:** Alright.

**Austin:** A lucky charm wouldn't have prevented that. A lucky charm might have prevented Tracked, but you did not use it. You had it. It was a week ago.

**Keith:** Okay, well, let's hope that I get—

**Austin:** And you did not message me in the preceding week while I was prepping.

**Keith:** Well, that's only because I didn't look at my character sheet.

**Austin:** Ah, I see.

[Ali laughs]

**Sylvi:** Ah.

[Dre hums]

**Austin:** Mhm.

**Keith:** So that's where we are. We're on the roof.

**Austin:** Yeah.

**Keith:** And I have, you know, I basically have advantage on any possible thing I could do to get out of here, [**Austin:** Right.] because of the four Read the Room questions that I asked right before we ended.

**Austin:** Right. Here's what I would let you do. If you want, you can move—you can—because the nice thing about this is, ward does not reduce a Peril to nothing. It removes a Peril down to a Risk.

**Keith:** No, it—right. It removes things down one stage.

**Austin:** So you would still be, at this point, Defenseless and being chased. Right?

**Keith:** Right. Yeah.

**Austin:** So let's—hm. But the thing is, it's simply true—

**Keith:** The thing that Tracked would do, changing it from a Peril to a Risk, is it would give a second slot to change the Risk back to a Peril.

**Austin:** No, that—

**Keith:** Instead of one more slot.

**Austin:** Now, the thing is, Tracked is right for what happened in that scene. We'd have to redo that scene because being—once you are identified by the Divine Resonance, you are tracked inside of this place.

**Keith:** Yeah.

**Austin:** It is a Per—it is a Peril in such a way that's like, it's not about—to emphasize it again from from last time, you don't have to be seen to be tracked. The whole thing is a

tracker. You know? Once you've been identified as a target of interest, you know, as a person of interest, the city is tracking you directly, which is why it's a Peril and not a Risk.

**Keith:** Mhm.

**Austin:** And I don't want to redo that scene, you know, a week later, that is—that is an important thing you've learned about what it is to be in these places. And it came from that failure, so. I think we gotta let it roll.

**Keith:** Well, I still got it anyway, so.

**Austin:** Right. That's what I'm saying, right?

**Keith:** The—

**Austin:** What you could try to do is Cool Off to lose Affected.

**Keith:** Right. But I'd have to get out of here first.

**Austin:** You have to—well, this is what—Cool Off is about trying to—

**Keith:** Disengage?

**Austin:** This is the risk you take. Is about trying to disengage, right?

**Keith:** Right.

**Austin:** It is about trying to find that moment. And the risk is there's a chance things can go really bad, right? And sort of the risk reward is, "do I try to get out of here to a place that's safer so that I can just naturally cool off? Or do I try to cool off in the, you know, in the middle of the bad situation?" You know?

**Keith:** I thought that Cool Off was only an Astir thing.

**Austin:** Nope.

**Keith:** Oh, okay.

**Austin:** “When you attempt to vent heat from an Astir, to calm yourself from spiraling emotions, or to otherwise take a few minutes to fix something about your or someone else’s situation, you’re trying to Cool Off. When you do so, declare a Risk you want to get rid of, and roll whatever trait seems most appropriate.”

**Keith:** Oh, okay.

**Austin:** “On a 10 plus, you or they erase a Risk or untick Overheating from an Astir. On a 7 to 9, as above, but your moment of safety is interrupted.”

**Keith:** I see. So the little quick card, which is the one that I see the most often, has an ambiguous phrasing, which is “on a 10 plus, you erase a Risk or untick Overheating from an Astir.”

**Austin:** That’s the same in the—

**Keith:** Which is the—it’s the conjunction of “erase a Risk or untick Overheating from an Astir”, like, tying Risk to—

**Austin:** Right. “Or” an Astir. Yeah, I gotcha. I gotcha. Yep.

**Keith:** Yeah. Right, yeah, exactly. Um... Okay, well, uh, yeah, I mean, I like that. Take a moment of safety...

**Austin:** So where do you go to get rid of this Affected? What do you do? How do you try to—how do you try to, like, get your head back in the game?

**Keith:** You know, I—it’s so weird that I would be like, still thinking about, um, what’s their fucking name?

**Austin:** Connadine.

**Keith:** Connadine.

**Austin:** Mhm.

**Keith:** Like, that's so weird.

**Austin:** You know, it's been two minutes or something in Eclectic time.

**Keith:** But if it—but I'm—Eclec—I'm feeling like—okay.

**Austin:** Uh-huh.

**Keith:** I had this weird interaction. I got sort of ambushed by this robot.

**Austin:** Mhm.

**Keith:** You know, I tried something that should have worked to get me out of it. It didn't work. And I think I'm thinking, like, "ah, 'cause I fucked up that first thing. That's the thing. That's the thing that is the problem. All the other things that went wrong..."

**Austin:** Everything else spirals off from that, sure.

**Keith:** Right. And so, I think it's like, retracing decisions to be like, which—where were these moments where, if I had done something differently, I could have—I could have gotten away with it, or put myself in a place where I wasn't gonna get caught, or—you know.

**Austin:** Sorry, the way that Eclectic calms down is by hyperfixating on ways that you fucked up?

[**Janine** laughs]

**Keith:** Yes.

**Austin:** Okay.

[**Ali** snickers]

**Austin:** It's good to have a character sketch.

**Dre:** Man.



**Keith:** You know, I don't—[laughs]

**Dre:** Every day I go into work.

[**Austin** and **Sylvi** laugh]

**Keith:** It's—okay.

**Austin:** We all cope in the ways we gotta cope.

[**Dre** laughs]

**Keith:** I'm thinking—I'm thinking, if there's this feeling—so I don't love, uh—I don't mind flying, but I hate taking off and landing.

[**Austin** hums]

**Keith:** And it's not that big of a deal, but I do find that the thing that helps more than anything is just like, this sort of constant brain cycle of, like, imagining, "oh, we're on liftoff." Like, I'm just imagining we're 100, 300, 500 feet in the air. The wings just fall off and we—

**Janine:** What?

**Keith:** The whole plane just plummets to the ground and crashes.

**Sylvi:** This is how you calm down?

[**Ali** laughs]

**Keith:** Yeah. This is how I calm down when I'm flying. [laughs]

**Dre:** Hm.

**Austin:** This works?

**Sylvi:** And it just works?

**Keith:** It really helps me.

**Austin:** So this is what Eclectic is doing?

**Keith:** Yes.

**Austin:** “What if they caught me and tore me limb from limb?” Like, what is the—

[Sylvi laughs]

**Keith:** No, it’s more like—it’s more like, “oh, I should have said this. I shouldn’t have—I should have gone through the back door. I shouldn’t even have tried to bargain with the guy.”

**Austin:** Is Eclectic Opposition George Costanza?

[Ali laughs]

**Keith:** No. I mean...

**Austin:** [chuckling] More of a Larry David.

**Keith:** More of a Larry David. A little bit of a Kramer, maybe.

**Austin:** Okay. You’re jumping from rooftop to rooftop going like, “why the fuck didn’t I do da-da-da-da-da-da-da?”

**Keith:** Yeah.

**Austin:** And that’s giving you focus. Yeah, I’m here for it.

**Keith:** Yeah.

**Austin:** This feels like Defy to me. So 2d6 plus 2?

**Keith:** Yeah. Yeah. It’s—do I have advantage on this for—

**Austin:** No, you’re not—

**Keith:** No?

**Austin:** This is not attempting to hide in plain sight or sabotage enemy infrastructure. This is trying to—

**Keith:** And it's not acting on any of my questions from the last time on...

**Austin:** No, this is you just trying to get yourself back to your...

**Keith:** Okay.

**Austin:** 2 plus 2 plus 2.

**Keith:** I should have done something that I had advantage on.

**Austin:** You should have done something you had advantage on. This is how they get you.

**Keith:** I was—well, that's what—I did lead into that—

**Austin:** I know.

**Keith:** —and then we got into this cool off thing.

**Austin:** Yeah, well, I'm gonna need you to Bite the Dust.

[Ali gasps]

**Sylvi:** Oh, jeez.

**Keith:** Well, what's my—where, what's—

**Austin:** The—where are you? You're jumping from rooftop to rooftop.

**Keith:** Yeah.

**Austin:** And then a thing that you didn't know was true about this place becomes true about this place.

**Keith:** Okay.

**Austin:** The building just sinks into the ground.

**Keith:** Okay.

**Austin:** Like, the entire building is retracted downwards below the earth while you're, like, in the middle of the roof before you can get to the next one. Give me a Bite the Dust, which is again, plus Defy.

**Dre:** Do you—do you want to use your lucky charm here?

**Austin:** That is not what that does.

**Dre:** Okay.

**Austin:** A lucky charm reduces a Risk to nothing or a Peril to a Risk.

**Dre:** Oh, that's right. Yeah, yeah, yeah, yeah.

**Austin:** Yeah.

**Keith:** Um... Bum-bum-bum-bum-bum. What is the Bite the Dust roll?

**Austin:** It is plus Defy.

**Keith:** Okay.

**Dre:** You can't die. You haven't even taught Cori how to smoke yet.

**Sylvi:** Yeah. We have to go back to do smoking lessons, Eclectic.

**Austin:** We do.

[Ali laughs]

**Sylvi:** Remember our promise to do smoking lessons.

**Ali:** She doesn't even know how to do the circle.

**Austin:** Mhm.

**Ali:** The smoke ring.

**Sylvi:** If you die, I'll never learn.

[Dre laughs]

**Ali:** I'll teach you.

[Sylvi chuckles]

**Keith:** 10.

**Austin:** There's a 10. "On a 10 plus, they miss, hesitate, or you are saved by sheer luck. You rally and clear a Risk if you have one." Go ahead and get rid of Affected. What happens? How do you escape as this entire building is pulled beneath the safety of a kind of shield? Like a metal shield?

**Keith:** I mean, well, sort of in an almost perfect way, the thing that happens is exactly what I was doing out there to begin with, which is like, I'm catastrophizing and going through, like—and sort of like, micro-analyzing all the different things that are happening, [Austin: Mhm.] and then the building falls out from under me.

**Austin:** Uh-huh. Literally, yeah.

**Keith:** And—but I'm just like perfectly in the mode to be reacting to these micro-decisions. And just—there's just like, a split second where I'm already thinking about all of these different decisions that I've got to make. And I'm just—I just, like, am able to grab onto like a—not a ledge, like, a fire escape that's nearby.

**Austin:** From like across the way. You make the jump just before it completely falls under the ground. Yeah. This one is gonna start lowering down, too. You are in a city that is becoming flatter so that it's easier to chase you in it. What do you do? Make sure you clear that Risk, by the way.

**Keith:** Yeah.

**Austin:** Which is Affected.

**Keith:** Okay. There we go. [exhales] Um... Can I... Can I look at—can I notice any sort of a pattern in how things are closing?

**Austin:** It's the things around you.

**Keith:** Obviously it's the things that are near me...

**Austin:** [cross] It is the things near you. Yeah. This is—you are—they know where you are. Right?

**Keith:** Right, yeah.

**Austin:** And so they are—what they're doing is opening up corridors to get to you quicker, and attempting to kind of close you off from ways out.

**Keith:** And I think you said last time they don't—they don't need a visual on me at all. I don't need—

**Austin:** Not—no. The city is—the city knows where you are.

**Keith:** Okay.

**Austin:** You're inside of a Divine, effectively.

**Keith:** Yeah.

**Austin:** It just doesn't have a cockpit, you know? It just doesn't have a body in the traditional way. The city is the Divine.

**Keith:** Yeah.

**Austin:** And you, yeah, you gotta get the fuck out of here.

**Keith:** Sure. Um... Let's—yeah, I don't know—like, I'm at the point where, you know, hiding in plain sight isn't gonna do me anything.

**Austin:** Yeah.

**Keith:** It feels like. Um...

**Austin:** You do still have the advantage on rolls acting on your previous, you know, attempt to get, you know, your—your whatever it was, Read the Room.

**Keith:** Yeah. I don't remember what the—I mean, I mostly was asking questions about the guys that were chasing me that I don't really think are as relevant anymore. And I'm worried about doing something like trying to steal a car and it's like, in order to steal this car, you need to—

**Austin:** Sign up with, uh—yeah, uh-huh.

**Keith:** —have your—yeah, you need to have your little—your proximity tag [**Austin:** Yep.] subscription thing, whatever. I guess you could hotwire—you can't stop someone from hotwiring a car.

**Austin:** You can try. But yeah, you'll have to roll for it, right?

**Keith:** Right.

**Austin:** And if you fail, a good way for that to fail is, they have some sort of proprietary way to stop you from doing it, you know? But you could try. Certainly could try.

**Keith:** Yeah.

**Austin:** You could try to carjack someone, make them drive for you. You could just run for it. You could get a bike—

**Keith:** Here's—

**Austin:** No, those bikes are definitely on the same fucking system as everything else.

**Keith:** Here's something. Maybe I can look for someone that was deployed to the same sort of security contractor that I was and convince that person to drive me out.

**Austin:** [hums] You're looking for someone who you can—are you gonna like, talk them into it? Or are you trying to like—

**Keith:** Uh... Yeah, I'm gonna try to—I'm trying to be—I feel like I have a better chance with someone who's like, [**Austin:** Yeah.] you know, I know how to talk to these people. I was a mole in the police.

**Austin:** Right, yeah. The Lock and Cross security forces are absolutely the private police of this city. So yeah, you can totally find some—I mean, at this point, you know, you're—you are being broadcast to someone who—there is an APB out for your arrest, you know?

**Keith:** Right.

**Austin:** So it is—I'm not gonna say you can't talk to somebody about it, but you're talking to someone who might be looking for you. Are you trying to find someone who's like, especially gullible looking? Like what is your... again, this—

**Keith:** Well, they're cops.

[**Sylvi** laughs]

**Austin:** Yeah, well, yeah, absolutely. But the, you know, when they're at the “the buildings are being pulled into the underground safety bunker” [**Keith:** Yeah.] part of this maneuver, it's a little tough.

**Keith:** Yeah. Here's the problem. Here's what I'm—I don't have anything. I'm level one. I have nothing. I have no anything.

**Austin:** Uh-huh.

**Keith:** So yeah, I do this. There's no other—it's either this or run, and that's, doesn't seem—that seems boring.



**Austin:** Okay. So you're flagging down a cop? Is it like a cop in a car? Like a cop car? You're gonna flag down a cop car?

**Keith:** Yeah, yeah, yeah. I flash my old official badge.

**Austin:** Your old official badge. You do have an old official badge. They slam on the brakes and hop out the car. This is a, you know, 22 year old, you know, patrol officer. She has purple hair, up in a kind of official looking, like, updo, and her hand immediately goes to hover over her gun, as she like, slams on the brakes and hops out and calls into the always on microphone in the car that we have a, you know, a code—a code blueberry.

Austin (as **Patrol Officer**): You almost—you almost got hit by my—you almost—you almost crashed into my car!

**Keith:** Do I know what a code blueberry is?

**Austin:** Yeah, it's like a—it's like a civilian with intent to harm the police.

**Keith:** After I flashed the badge? Come on.

**Austin:** Squints at the badge.

Austin (as **Patrol Officer**): I couldn't see the—you didn't present the badge in a—in the proper way.

Keith (as **Eclectic**): [stammers]

Austin (as **Patrol Officer**): That could be a stolen badge. What's your name? Name and identification.

**Austin:** Give me a—this is a—I think this is a Clash or, sorry, it's a Talk, but a Exchange Blows. You're trying to convince this person.

**Keith:** I'm so—I'm—I have a lot of luck with Clash—or, with Talk Exchange Blows.

**Austin:** Uh-huh. What is the lie you're trying to convince this person of, and give me the roll.

**Keith:** It's, uh—this is like—this is like a movie, like a spy movie, “there's no time to explain” sort of thing. This is like a “for no reason, you have to trust me.” Because, based on, you know, maybe one thing about me, moment of, like, [**Austin:** Right.] as long as I can convince you that that it's not too dangerous to play along for a minute...

**Austin:** Right.

**Keith:** At least we can maybe get in the car.

**Austin:** You're doing the Mission Impossible magic trick. You're doing the Jason Bourne eye lock “you have to trust me” moment, right. Yeah, uh-huh.

**Keith:** Yeah.

**Austin:** I don't know if that's from Jason Bourne or not, but, you know. Classic spy shit.

**Keith:** Um, do I have—I don't have any bonuses on this, do I?

**Austin:** I don't—I mean, this is—this is hiding in plain sight. Right?

**Keith:** This is hiding in plain sight, yeah. Yeah.

**Austin:** Yeah. Take advantage.

**Keith:** Gain advantage. Okay.

**Austin:** This is disguise and subterfuge.

**Keith:** This is. I figured out how to hide in plain sight.

**Austin:** 2d6 plus—

**Keith:** 3d6 plus 1.

**Austin:** 3d6 plus 1, take highest. 4, 5, 6, 7, 8.

**Keith:** Oh my god.

**Austin:** That's an 8. Which—

**Keith:** No, that's not—it is—oh, no, it is. It is an 8. Okay, okay, okay.

**Austin:** [cross] Yeah, take highest. 4 plus 3 plus 1. That's 8, yeah. Mhm.

**Keith:** I'm dragging things around again.

**Austin:** Yep. I saw that. I saw that you're dragging these numbers around. Alright.

**Keith:** Okay.

**Austin:** On an 8, you both take a Risk.

**Keith:** Okay.

**Austin:** I think that she takes the Risk Confused. I think that's fair. She says,

Austin (as **Patrol Officer**): Uh... alright. What do you—what do you need?

**Austin:** And you should take a Risk about being slowed down in some way, I think.

**Keith:** Yeah.

**Austin:** That like, oh my god, you don't have the time for this.

**Keith:** Yeah.

**Austin:** Which pushes you back up to three risks. You tell me what the actual Risk is.

**Sylvi:** I know we've brought up the lucky charm a lot.

**Austin:** Ah, uh-huh.

**Sylvi:** Is there anything it could do here?

**Austin:** Yes. You could use your ward, Keith.

**Keith:** What—now, I haven't—we haven't said what the ward is yet.

**Austin:** What is—I mean, what is the lucky charm?

**Keith:** Um... [exhales] I don't know. I'm—I have a lot of—I have a lot of ideas on what would be important to—

**Austin:** To Eclectic, yeah.

**Keith:** —Eclectic, but I don't have a lot of ideas on what would be important to Eclectic and also would be a meaningful thing to use now.

**Austin:** Let's—no, don't worry about the second part. Just give me the first part. It's a lucky charm.

**Keith:** Okay.

**Austin:** What's meaningful to Eclectic? What do you have on you? What's the—what's your lucky rabbit's foot, what's your, you know?

**Keith:** It is a—

**Austin:** Or baseball card. Whatever the thing is that you're like, this is...

**Keith:** It's a—it's a first edition Alise Breka novella.

[Sylvi laughs]

**Austin:** You always keep it on you?

**Keith:** Yeah.

**Austin:** Is it in your backpack, is it in a briefcase, like, what's it—

**Keith:** It's in an inside coat pocket.

**Austin:** When you lift your—

**Keith:** But it's a poncho pocket.

**Austin:** Right. When you lift your arms up to like, "hey, I'm good, I'm good," it falls out of your pocket. And she goes,

Austin (as **Patrol Officer**): Is that a first edition?

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

**Austin:** And instantly, you don't take the Risk because she trusts you, you know, deeply. Because another Alise Breka fan, obviously, has to be on the up and up.

**Keith:** Right.

Keith (as **Eclectic**): Well, I'm in this—I'm in this one.

Austin (as **Patrol Officer**): You're in—

**Ali:** Is she Millennium Break?

**Sylvi:** No, she's a cop.

**Austin:** No, she's a cop.

**Ali:** Okay.

**Austin:** Cops like shit that you would expect them not to like all the time.

**Sylvi:** No, I—yeah.

**Ali:** Okay. No, yeah, yeah, yeah. Okay, yeah.

**Austin:** Also, we've talked about this, like, Alise Breka sometimes has like a Hunger Games vibe where it's like [**Ali:** Sure.] the fascists like this, too, they just think it's the liberals are the bad guys. You know what I mean?

**Sylvi:** Yeah.

**Keith:** Mhm. Yeah.

**Austin:** You still have to Strike Decisively, though.

**Keith:** I do.

**Austin:** So you've reeled her in.

**Keith:** That's my Strike Decisively, the "I'm in this one."

**Austin:** Give me a Talk.

**Keith:** Yeah.

**Austin:** Strike Decisively. What is your Talk? Your Talk is only—

**Keith:** It's plus 1, but I have the advantage.

**Austin:** Plus 1, yeah, but you do have the advantage. Yeah. Uh-huh. And note that you used that word.

**Keith:** Yeah. Oh, beautiful.

**Austin:** 5, 5, 5. Yeah, that's an 11. Two 5s plus 1 is an 11. She says,

Austin (as **Patrol Officer**): Well, pick it up and get in.

**Austin:** Alright. So yeah, you get in the car. And we cut back over to Figure.

## **A-Plot: In the Depths of Dust (Pt. 3)**

### **Figure**

[2:05:27]

**Dre:** Oh, hey.

**Austin:** Hi. Have you launched yet? Let's say you've—

**Dre:** No.

**Austin:** Oh, you have not launched. Okay.

**Dre:** No, I want to look something up.

**Austin:** Okay. What do you want to look up?

**Dre:** When did Cori die?

**Austin:** Only a couple weeks ago.

**Dre:** Okay.

**Austin:** Yeah, this is—this is the, like, everyone is literally in mourning about Cori.

**Keith:** Right. This is why they only have Cori pins on and not pins of all of your friends.

**Austin:** Right. Cori died saving your life, Figure.

**Dre:** [hums] [sighs] Okay.

**Austin:** Their—her last words were “you’re too important.”

**Dre:** Jesus.

**Sylvi:** Damn. Nailed it.

**Janine:** Is Figure wearing one of the pins?

**Austin:** I don’t know. Figure, are you wearing one of the pins?

**Dre:** Sure. Yeah, probably.

**Austin:** Yeah, I think—the thing I was gonna say is like, there wouldn’t be one naturally on your flight suit, because it would destroy the integrity of your flight suit.

**Dre:** Sure. Yeah.

**Austin:** Right? But maybe there's like, a magnet version of it that you can clip on there somehow. You know? That's fine.

**Dre:** I have, back in Figure's room in this universe, I have Brnine's Chewbacca belt, and it's covered in memorial pins of everybody who died.

**Austin:** Mhm.

**Sylvi:** Oh my god.

**Ali:** You have a girl scout sash?

**Sylvi:** You—damn.

**Dre:** Wow.

**Sylvi:** Damn! Get their ass!

**Ali:** Is that what you're describing? [laughs]

**Sylvi:** Yeah!

**Janine:** No, what they're describing is a Disney lanyard.

[**Dre** and **Keith** laugh]

**Austin:** Oh, a Disney lanyard. Yeah.

**Ali:** Okay.

**Dre:** Yeah, yeah, yeah.

**Janine:** Uh-huh.

**Sylvi:** I do like the idea of getting merit badges for your dead friends.

**Austin:** Uh-huh.

**Janine:** Collect 'em all.



**Dre:** It's a memorial. Obviously.

**Ali:** Sorry.

**Dre:** Hey, can I—is Gur here with me?

**Austin:** Oh, great question. How do you try to—I mean, in the real world, the answer is yes, right?

**Dre:** Yeah. I mean, before, it's always just been in my head.

**Austin:** Yeah, no. He's here.

**Dre:** Okay.

**Austin:** Yeah. I think, at you having that thought, comes into being, you know? Turn the corner and he's there, walking—ready for you to pick up this walk and talk.

**Dre:** Oh, he's like physically here.

**Austin:** Yeah. Well—

**Dre:** That rules.

**Austin:** He's always physically there for you.

**Dre:** Yeah, okay.

**Austin:** When he shows up, it's physical. I mean, it's visible, you know?

**Dre:** Sure. Yeah.

**Austin:** They are a being in that way. It is not just a voice in your head.

**Dre:** Yeah, yeah. [exhales] Okay, um...

Austin (as **Gur Sevraq**): This is false.

Dre (as **Figure**): Yeah. I know.

Austin (as **Gur Sevraq**): But—

Dre (as **Figure**): How do we break out of it?

Austin (as **Gur Sevraq**): Not all false things are...

Dre (as **Figure**): [sighing] Okay.

[**Sylvi** and **Keith** laugh]

Austin (as **Gur Sevraq**): ...impossible. And many of them have happened before.

**Dre**: Alright, fuck it. I'm gonna break it.

**Austin**: How are you gonna do that?

**Dre**: I would like to use my move Abyssal Summons.

**Austin**: [hums] When you Weave Magic, you're capable of disrupting that which anchors us in place and time, with the one we saw you use to get Brnine?

**Dre**: Mhm. Yeah.

**Austin**: Uh-huh.

**Dre**: I want to pull Cori into this universe.

**Austin**: Okay.

**Sylvi**: Oh!

**Austin**: This is—so you can—you do have a bond with Cori, right?

**Dre**: Mhm.

**Austin**: Yep, you do. So you can do it. This is a Weave Magic roll. Your Channel is plus 3.

**Janine**: Surely this won't mess her up, showing her a universe in which she has died.

**Dre:** It's not real. It's fine.

**Janine:** It'll go great.

[**Dre** chuckles]

**Dre:** Ooh, baby!

**Sylvi:** Woah!

**Austin:** That's 6, so it's highest.

**Sylvi:** Oh no, a 6 is in there.

**Austin:** Take highest. It's still high as hell.

**Dre:** No, I take lowest. I'm on disadvantage.

**Austin:** Oh, you take lowest. You're on disadvantage. You're on *dis*advantage.

**Dre:** Yeah.

**Sylvi:** It's still a 12.

**Austin:** It's still 5, 6, 7, 8, 9, 10, 11.

**Dre:** Yeah, but I have to do the thing.

**Austin:** Oh my god, it's a 6. Oh my fucking god.

**Dre:** Yeah.

**Ali:** Just the one.

**Keith:** Well, and then there's another thing that happens, too, which is that Gur disappears.

**Dre:** Yeah, Gur pops away.

**Austin:** Yeah, because if you roll with a 6—but if the 6 is a 6, it pops, right?

**Dre:** Gur comes up and is like, rambling about like, “not all falsities are true, and not all truths are false...” [laughs]

**Austin:** Well, I’ll let you know—well, one second, because you’re gonna have to sit with this in a second. Go ahead and give me the 6.

**Dre:** Okay. We’re good.

**Austin:** Alright. Only another 5.

**Dre:** It’s 5. Yeah, yeah, yeah.

**Austin:** Uh-huh.

**Ali:** Well, it just still would have been two 6s, right?

**Austin:** No, the 6s continue to pop. Don’t they? Isn’t that what we wrote down?

**Ali:** Oh, on a natural 6 it’s another 6, okay.

**Keith:** [cross] Yeah, every time you roll a 6, you get to roll another die, and if it’s a 6, then you roll another die.

**Austin:** Yeah. Uh-huh.

**Dre:** Yeah.

**Ali:** Okay, okay, okay.

**Dre:** It does add on. So this is technically a 16.

**Austin:** That’s incredibly high.

[Dre laughs]

**Austin:** So yes, Gur is going to disappear.

**Ali:** Thanks, Gur.

[**Sylvi** laughs]

**Austin:** The last thing that he says to you is,

Austin (as **Gur Sevraq**): This is a thing that has already happened. She has seen it.

[**Dre** hums]

**Austin:** And gone.

**Dre:** Man. You gotta lead with that part, Gur.

[**Ali** scoffs]

**Austin:** And Cori, you're here now.

**Sylvi:** In what state do I show up?

**Austin:** You come—you're—the Paramerion comes crashing into the landing bay, on fire.

**Sylvi:** Uh... Shit.

**Dre:** I'm gonna take off running to the landing bay. I assume, like, alarms are going off.

**Austin:** Alarms are going off. People are running past you. "It's impossible! Didn't we recover a body? Yeah, we recovered a body."

**Janine:** Hell yeah. We love the multiverse.

**Austin:** Uh-huh.

[**Ali** laughs]

**Austin:** Figure, I'm advancing your and Cori's clocks.

**Dre:** Aw, but I broke it.

**Austin:** You didn't break it. You made it sturdier. You put two people's minds together to make it more stable.

**Dre:** Ah...

[**Ali** hums]

**Dre:** Fuck. Alright.

**Austin:** Cori?

**Sylvi:** Well, what is the—does it make it more stable for me? 'Cause this feels very confusing now.

**Austin:** You are surrounded by people who have never been happier to see you. "Oh my god, you're alive." Someone sees you and starts crying. They're, like, helping you—

**Sylvi:** Oh no. Oh no.

**Austin:** They're like, you know, putting out the fires on the Paramerion. You know, medics are running over.

Austin (as **Crew Member**): Cori, is that you?

Sylvi (as **Cori**): Y—yeah? Who else would it be?

**Austin:** Figure, that's Cori.

**Dre:** Yeah. [exhales]

Sylvi (as **Cori**): What's with the pins? Those are cute.

Dre (as **Figure**): Please make space. Make space. Make space for the lieutenant, please. Please make space.

**Austin:** Everyone shrinks away from you, Commander Figure.

**Dre:** Um...

**Austin:** Cori, you instantly feel this, actually, here in this version of the universe.

**Sylvi:** Okay.

**Austin:** Figure is, you know, you remember the good old days with Figure, you know, five, eight years ago when Figure was like, just getting control over their lives after they left Clem behind. And in the time since, they became a fucking monster of the battlefield. They did everything and anything that they could to secure victory for Millennium Break. They put themselves in harm's way over and over and over again. And just kept getting lucky. Kept surviving. Seemed to be blessed. The two of you went on countless missions together. You know, you've saved each other's lives a dozen, dozen times.

**Sylvi:** Uh...

**Austin:** And also this, "ahh, what's going on?" Right?

**Sylvi:** Yeah. Definitely still—

**Austin:** Because you don't know anybody on this landing—in this landing bay.

**Sylvi:** —"ahh, what's going on?" But I think seeing Figure is enough of a relief to like—I'm gonna hug Figure, like, I just crashed onto the ship, [Dre: Mhm.] I'm super confused, I don't know anybody here. I'm like, oh, thank fucking god.

**Keith:** And Cori, you were teleported here from being, like, in your mech with Elle fighting, right?

**Sylvi:** Yeah. I mean, I don't know if that's the memory that I have now, or if it's been rewritten, but like, the way I'm playing it is like...

**Austin:** It feels like you've woken up from a dream, Cori.

**Sylvi:** Oh my—[sighs]

**Keith:** It is the—it is the mushroom goo.

**Sylvi:** Yeah, it is.

[Ali laughs]

**Austin:** I have not seen this episode, but I believe you.

**Sylvi:** It's a good episode.

**Austin:** Uh-huh.

**Sylvi:** It's a later one, I think.

**Keith:** It is a later one, yeah. It's like, what if Waking Life was an X-Files episode?

**Austin:** Oh, damn. Wild.

**Keith:** Yeah.

**Dre:** Okay. Alright.

Dre (as **Figure**): Man, why is everybody so scared of me? I'll figure that out later.

Sylvi (as **Cori**): How long has it been that I've been mi—was everyone—do you know why everyone's staring? It's a bit much.

Dre (as **Figure**): Yeah. Um... Listen, just come with me. We need to go to the briefing room and I'll explain everything as best I can.

**Sylvi:** I salute, because technically, you're a commander. And then I'm like,

Sylvi (as **Cori**): Yeah, sure.

**Austin:** Thisbe—

**Sylvi:** Like, we're homies, but you're still a commander, you know, gotta sure respect.

**Austin:** Right. Yeah. Uh-huh.



**Dre:** Sure, sure, sure, sure.

**Austin:** Uh-huh.

**Dre:** I'm glad your dad raised you right.

**Sylvi:** [scoffs] No, he didn't.

[**Dre** laughs]

**Sylvi:** No, he didn't.

**Ali:** Who says that?

**Austin:** Sinking into the ground.

**Ali:** Who says that out loud?

**Sylvi:** I don't know.

## **Thisbe**

[2:14:26]

**Austin:** Thisbe. Has it started to hit you at all that this seems less than—I mean, you know, Brnine called out to you at some point, which seems to have shaken you to some degree, you're down to only one on this clock. Has Thisbe caught onto this at all at this point?

**Janine:** Is Brnine alive in my world?

**Austin:** Yeah, totally.

**Janine:** Where are they?

**Austin:** I don't know.

**Janine:** What do I know about that?

**Austin:** I think you—the Palisade stuff wrapped up, you know, and you were able to get moved here to do this instead of fighting on the front line. You left on good terms, but they were kind of final terms. Do you know—not final terms. That sounds darker than I mean. But it's like, you know, they kind of slipped into that mode of like, “oh, if you're ever in town, I'd love to see you.” But you're not [**Janine:** Right.] DMing every day. You know?

**Janine:** Yeah.

**Ali:** Like we are now.

**Janine:** Of course.

**Austin:** Right. Exactly. Yeah.

[**Ali** and **Keith** laugh]

**Dre:** True, yeah, yeah, yeah.

**Ali:** “Thisbe, did you perform your tasks today?” That's our DMs.

**Austin:** Wow.

**Janine:** [chuckles] Great.

**Austin:** It's not even “Thisbe, good job performing your tasks”?

**Ali:** [laughs] I'm kidding! I'm kidding.

**Sylvi:** Thisbe, did you do your dailies?

[**Austin**, **Ali**, and **Janine** laugh]

**Keith:** I bet the word count difference between the two of them is wild.

[**Dre** laughs]

**Austin:** Oh, unbelievable. That's the actual thing.

**Sylvi:** It's those texts between—

**Austin:** Yes! Yes, a hundred percent!

**Sylvi:** What's her name, Elizabeth Holmes? And her boyfriend.

[**Ali** gasps]

**Janine:** Oh my god.

**Keith:** Oh, I missed this. I didn't see that.

**Janine:** "You are my tiger forever, something..."

**Ali:** Oh, no.

**Keith:** This is the Theranos criminal?

**Austin:** Yeah, yeah, Theranos, yeah, yeah, yeah. Uh-huh. I have to find them.

**Ali:** Anyway, Thisbe.

**Sylvi:** Yeah.

**Austin:** Sorry, I like, can't find the full one. And it's so important.

[**Dre** laughs]

**Sylvi:** I found—I found it. I found it. "Text messages between Elizabeth Holmes and Sunny Balwani today at the Theranos trial. Holmes: You are the breeze in the desert for me. My water and ocean, meant to be only together, tiger. Balwani: Okay."

[**Austin**, **Keith**, and **Dre** laugh]

**Dre:** Yeah, sure.

**Austin:** It's so bad.

**Janine:** God. Um, so, I don't know. Does—and Thisbe has memories of the time?

**Austin:** Yeah.

**Janine:** Yeah.

**Austin:** Yeah, they're fuzzy, right? But memories are fuzzy sometimes. This is the thing. For me, memories are fuzzy sometimes. I don't know if that's true for Thisbe.

**Janine:** Yeah, I don't know if robot memory—

**Austin:** You tell me, yeah.

**Janine:** I feel like—so that's the thing is like, originally I was like, well, if not for the paint job, I don't know that she would question this. But if the memories are fuzzy, then if she catches herself trying to focus in on them, and like, not being able to, that's like a data corruption thing.

**Austin:** Right, sure.

**Janine:** That's like a "oh, I gotta go get that checked out." You know?

**Austin:** And the thing is, the dream will correct for that. Right?

**Janine:** Mhm.

**Austin:** It'll be like, oh, yeah, right. The data was corrupt. And then like, as you begin to focus in on memories, you will be able to get the detail you need. The thing that's different is like, the degree of focus necessary. And maybe she would pick up on that, you know? That like, they're generating live. The proc-gen model is running. You know, you're not recovering new data, you're getting new data added.

**Janine:** Yeah, it's not like a microfiche. It's like a—

**Austin:** It's like Dwarf Fortress is running.

**Janine:** —2002 shooter. Okay, yeah.

**Austin:** You know? Uh-huh. It's like a 2—

**Janine:** I was thinking like, texture pop-in.

**Austin:** Oh, I see what you're saying. Yeah, sure. Like that. Yeah, yeah, yeah. That's fun, too. For sure. It is like that. So yeah, maybe you've started to put that together. Do you react in any way? Like, we saw Figure do the teleport magic. Is Thisbe pushing against this in any way? Alternatively, this place seems alright.

**Janine:** Yeah, that's the thing is that like, I don't know that there's much here for Thisbe to seek to poke holes in.

**Austin:** Yeah. Totally.

**Janine:** Other than the thing that Thisbe is pretty good at poking holes in, which is herself.

**Austin:** Right.

**Janine:** So I think the thing here is like, if she notices that the memory stuff is different or weird. Her first thought is like, "I should get that looked at." Like, "maybe I need new RAM."

**Austin:** Right.

**Janine:** You know, it's—I think her first thought is always like "if something is off, is it something that is wrong with me? That's the thing I need to eliminate."

**Austin:** This goes, like—this goes to some place, like, pretty sad in some ways.

**Janine:** Yes, of course.

**Austin:** Which is that like, the dream will account for this, right? But in some ways, additionally sad, maybe, which is like—

**Janine:** Oh.

**Austin:** You can go and get your RAM checked, and because this is what you're putting in, it will put out, like, "oh, yeah, you're—something was wrong with your RAM. Let's fix

that.” And then if it still happens, and Thisbe’s thought is still “something must be wrong with me,” the dream will agree something must be wrong, you keep corrupting your RAM. Something must be fundamentally wrong with you as a machine. You keep breaking. And that’s... you know, this system is designed to let you do that until it takes you over, basically. Right? Or until someone saves you. So, I’m gonna advance that clock, because it sounds like Thisbe is in it in this way, at least for another beat. I’m just gonna advance it to two, two out of four.

**Janine:** Yeah. I was gonna say, I don’t know that she would constantly be like, “well, it’s all me.”

**Austin:** It’s all me over and over again.

**Janine:** Like, eventually, I think there is a break point, but for right now, yeah.

**Austin:** Yes. I think this first step of it is like, oh, I have to update my RAM again. And it’s like, oh, the RAM—maybe something’s wrong with the slot instead of the RAM. You know? Classic broken computer problem where you’re like, is the power source going?

**Janine:** I really regret picking RAM because of what Thisbe is. [chuckles]

[Ali chuckles]

**Austin:** Oh, sure.

**Sylvi:** Aw.

**Janine:** Because now it’s just a really prolonged gag. I’m sorry.

**Dre:** Ohh.

**Austin:** I didn’t think of it—even once, I didn’t think of it, so.

**Janine:** I’ve been sitting here looking at her icon the whole time, just like, ah, I fucked up.

[Ali laughs]

**Austin:** No, that's fine. Her CPU, her hard drive, her SSD, you know? Whatever it is.

**Janine:** Yeah. Her hooves.

**Austin:** Oh, her hooves. Exactly.

**Ali:** Aw.

## **Brnine**

[2:20:37]

**Austin:** Brnine.

**Ali:** Hi.

**Austin:** How are the catacombs treating you?

**Ali:** Um, not well, not very inviting. The arcade's closed.

**Austin:** Arcade is closed. You're deep in the catacombs beyond any—you can't even hear the DDR machine anymore.

**Ali:** That's—yeah, that's crazy.

**Dre:** Awful.

[**Sylvi** laughs]

**Ali:** What am I doing? What do I have to do?

**Austin:** You're tracking these people down, is what you were doing last we saw you.

**Ali:** Yeah, that's sort of where we left off on the last time. Did I roll for that? No, I did a—I did a Read the Room.

**Austin:** You did a Read the Room. And then you did... did you not follow up on that Read the Room? Maybe you didn't.

**Ali:** I asked the questions.

**Austin:** You asked the questions, yeah.

**Ali:** I have not rolled with any advantage.

**Austin:** Okay. Yeah. Well, there you go.

**Ali:** Yeah, so—‘cause, yeah, without like, footsteps or whatever, without a response from anybody, I could obviously, like, try to—I could try to do the thing of just following someone’s, like, mechanical signal, if that’s something that exists...

**Austin:** Yeah, remember, because you got that—that was part of the thing for Figure, was you got like a beep—

**Ali:** Right, right, right, yeah, yeah, yeah.

**Austin:** You got like a classic, like, you know, distance tracker or whatever, you know? You’ve keyed in on their signal. But it’s also the classic thing of like, you know how many feet you are away, or how many, like—you know that it’s, you’re getting closer, but it’s closer as the crow flies. And so like, these twisting catacomb tunnels, like you don’t know, do I turn left here? Do I go forward and make the next left? Is this left gonna be a dead end? You know, that’s where you still have to make a roll here, which I think is probably just Weather the Storm.

**Ali:** Yeah, I was gonna say something out loud that I don’t want to say out loud because it’s very scary. But because I’m not having like a—like a horrible dream.

**Austin:** Yeah.

**Ali:** Can I do the thing of like, trying to find—like, the Google Maps way is like, “oh, how do I walk through these catacombs?”

**Austin:** Uh-huh.



**Ali:** But like, physically math, how do I find the closest place from A to B? And does it involve going through one of these body holes?

**Austin:** Oh my god.

**Ali:** Like, are there other tunnels? [laughs]

**Austin:** There are other tunnels, you never have to go through a body hole to get—well, I shouldn't say never.

**Ali:** [laughing] Okay. You know?

**Austin:** That's so creepy. No, I think they're like—they're almost just like, smaller cavities in the side of the wall to hold a body. They didn't dig all the way through to stack them.

**Ali:** Sure. Well, maybe there's the one, you know?

**Keith:** But could you dig all the way through?

**Austin:** Or did they do it once? I talked about them being kind of like, random earlier, right? Not being—

**Ali:** Right, this is what I'm—I'm jiggling every door at the Silent Hill puzzle.

**Austin:** Uh-huh, at the Silent Hill puzzle. Yeah. Uh-huh.

**Ali:** And one of them is gonna be the the body with a tunnel behind it.

**Austin:** Brnine surrounded by bodies—

**Keith:** That lock door sound haunts me.

**Austin:** —and is like, “oh, a hole.”

[Ali laughs]

**Dre:** It was made for me.

**Austin:** “Oh.” Yeah. I just mean the classic Silent Hill thing of protagonist doesn’t seem to realize that they’re in the most terrifying part of the world.

**Ali:** Uh-huh.

**Austin:** You know? “Oh.”

**Ali:** “There was a hole here. It’s gone now.”

**Austin:** “It’s gone now.” Yeah, exactly. “Oh, a blackboard with writing on it.” Oh, yeah? Is that the thing in the room that you’re that you’re focusing on? Okay.

**Sylvi:** The writing’s in blood, but...

**Austin:** Yeah, exactly. Exactly.

[Ali laughs]

**Austin:** “I don’t recognize that name.” Blood writing.

**Ali:** Does this still count as a—this is a Weather the Storm still, right?

**Austin:** I think so. And I think that it’s probably with Sense? You’re trying to sense your way through this space, you know? Take advantage from the previous roll.

**Ali:** Okay, but if this is the—okay, I have advantage from the previous roll. Okay, so I’m not blowing my Confidence here. Advantage is... 3d6?

**Austin:** 3d6 take highest, yep. 3d6 plus 1.

**Ali:** Take highest. And then that’s a plus 1. That is a plus 1.

**Austin:** 6, 7, 8, 9. A 1 is a 1 and we throw that out.

**Keith:** Hey, can I—can I use one of my things for you to get you at a 10? Do you need that? Is that important?

**Ali:** If you’d like, I would love to.

**Austin:** You could give advantage part two, you could get another die. Because remember, that's how that works. That—B-Plot gives you advantage, right?

**Ali:** Or give another player Confidence on their next move and complicate things for yourself.

**Austin:** Oh, is it Confidence? Right. It would complicate things for you, Keith.

**Ali:** [chuckles] Okay.

**Keith:** If—but only if.

**Austin:** What do you mean “only if”?

**Keith:** Oh, no, it would. It definitely would. Right, it does. Yeah, yeah, yeah.

**Austin:** Yeah.

**Keith:** I take it back.

**Austin:** Okay.

**Ali:** Wow! [laughs]

**Keith:** I can't—I cannot afford to have things complicated right now.

**Dre:** Listen, things are going bad over there.

**Ali:** No, things are complicated, I understand. [chuckles]

**Austin:** Uh-huh. Mhm.

**Keith:** I forgot that that's how—I forgot that it wasn't tied to how well you do, yeah.

**Austin:** [cross] Success—failure, yeah, no.

**Keith:** Yeah. Like all the other ones are, yeah.

**Austin:** [cross] This is give another player Confidence, but complicate things for yourself.

**Ali:** You don't want to help and hinder me telepathically because we have—[laughs]

**Austin:** You don't have that—what are you talking about?

**Keith:** I made a friend. I'm in a car trying to leave this city. I gotta go.

[Ali and Sylvi laugh]

**Austin:** Uh-huh. Eclectic has called up his mom from the mall and was like, "we got—I wanna—I'm not having fun anymore."

**Sylvi:** "Leap, can you pick me up?"

**Austin:** "Leap, please pick me up."

**Ali:** I do love the idea of Eclectic, like, driving in this car with this weird cop, and being like, "let me call Brnine real quick." [laughs]

**Austin:** Uh-huh. God.

[Keith laughs]

**Austin:** "I'm just gonna check in with someone."

**Keith:** Hey, you're my, like, main point of contact.

**Ali:** I am.

**Austin:** It's true. It's true. Alright. Well, a 9 on Weather the Storm here is: "You succeed, but at some cost: it'll keep you occupied longer than you thought—"

**Ali:** You don't say.

**Austin:** "—the Director will ask you to make a difficult choice, or you'll burn a point of Spotlight as you take dramatic action."

**Ali:** Oh.

**Austin:** You're gonna burn another point of Spotlight? Is that what you're about to do?

**Ali:** No, but that would be fun to do. I want to do it all the time now. [laughs]

**Austin:** It's so funny. You're just like, I love spending Spotlight to get a full success.

**Keith:** I can't believe that.

**Austin:** It's very funny. Oh, you know what you actually could have done, though, here?

**Ali:** What?

**Austin:** This is actually—you could have gotten a full success here, because you could have rolled a Gravity Clock to find someone instead of instead of rolling just Sense.

**Ali:** Oh...

**Keith:** Speaking of Spotlight, I get—I get a Spotlight, right? Do I get one? Two?

**Dre:** Yeah, how much did you fail?

**Austin:** From failing? Yes, make sure you're marking—yeah, please.

**Keith:** How many times did I fail today? Once or twice? What is this—what was this roll? This was—that was a 7. Okay, so just once.

**Austin:** And 7's not even a fail, yeah.

**Ali:** I'm fine with this being a mixed success because it's such a group thing.

**Austin:** Okay.

**Ali:** Like, I'm tracking the procession.

**Austin:** You're—yeah. Okay. You're not tracking specifically Cori or Thisbe...

**Ali:** I'm not looking for Cori.

**Austin:** Right. Yep.

**Ali:** You know what I mean? And I think that that's honest to be...

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

**Ali:** Who I—yeah.

**Austin:** I appreciate that. Yeah, so then, so then—yeah, I mean, I think that the—you have found one of these holes that goes all the way through, and through it, you can see the procession moving. And so you slide that body out of the way, question mark?

**Ali:** Yeah... yes.

**Austin:** And belly, you know, crawl your way through the hole, deeper into the catacombs.

**Ali:** Gross.

**Austin:** And as you do, you pass a point where sound disappears. You can hear yourself crawling, hear yourself crawling, hear yourself crawling, and then you stop being able to hear yourself crawling.

**Ali:** Hate that. Don't love that.

**Austin:** Mhm. And so you're going to have disadvantage on any attempt to, like, communicate—I mean, not just communicate. You can't communicate vocally at this point, right? But your—your next action in here is going to be at disadvantage, you know, to try to wake up your friends or whatever. You know? That's the consequence.

**Ali:** Here we are.

**Austin:** And it feels as if your presence is what activated that sound dampening, you know?

**Ali:** Oh, like a—like a response.

**Austin:** Yes. Yeah, like, oh no, like, you've crossed the line, and so the defenses have come on, so to speak.

**Ali:** Yeah. Dust's ears are folded backwards.

**Austin:** Are perked up. Yeah, exactly. Yeah, it's that way. The, like, the dust all over the ground has begun to like, lift from the ground by a few centimeters. It's not a lot, but it's creepy.

**Ali:** I don't love it.

**Austin:** What do you do?

**Ali:** What do I do? But I'm still moving through this thing. I'm not there yet.

**Austin:** You're as close as you need to be for your next roll.

**Ali:** I'm as close as I need to be for my next roll.

**Austin:** You know, we can—you've made—you know where they are, you're following them, you make it through the hole, you can be waiting in the hole and looking down at them, you can be looking up at them from—you tell me where the hole is, and where you are in relation to them, how far ahead they are. You can cut them off at the pass, you know.

**Ali:** Sure. Yeah, yeah. Um... Cutting them off seems good. I—yeah, my first question is like, if I can be within interaction space, I would like to see what happens when I try to... I think maybe cutting them off and just standing in front of the procession is the way to go.

**Austin:** Oh, interesting.

**Ali:** I think that like, Brnine is Brnine.

**Austin:** Yeah.

**Ali:** And killed the president, but is still a goofy loser. [chuckles]

**Austin:** Mhm.

**Ali:** And I think that they are doing the thing of like, “hey! Hey, everybody!” But like, in the—nothing.

**Austin:** [cross] No sound. You do that with—but you just—yeah, there’s just no sound coming out.

**Ali:** Yeah. But like, feeling the vibration in their throat, right?

**Austin:** Yeah, yeah, yeah, yeah. Yeah, a hundred percent.

**Ali:** Yeah, that’s too bad. But, yeah.

**Austin:** They just begin—

**Keith:** I can’t believe you just fully did a Muppet character just then. That was like—

[**Austin** and **Ali** laugh]

**Austin:** Muppet Brnine. Muppet Palisade, who’s the one human? Have we already done this gag? I feel like we did.

**Ali:** Thisbe.

**Keith:** No, I don’t think so.

**Austin:** It’s Thisbe.

**Sylvi:** It is Thisbe.

**Keith:** [laughing] It is Thisbe.

**Austin:** Oh, but a Thisbe Muppet would fucking rule, is the thing.

**Dre:** Yeah, it would.

**Janine:** It’d be one of those big ones that you have to have, like—



**Austin:** It'd be a big one. Yeah.

**Janine:** —your arm doing the work, like a Big Bird style.

**Ali:** Yeah.

**Austin:** Yeah, yeah, yeah big bird style.

**Ali:** Okay, Muppet Palisade, human gorilla for Mow. No, real gorilla. [laughs]

[**Janine** laughs]

**Austin:** Human gorilla?

**Keith:** [laughing] Human gorilla?

**Sylvi:** It's a guy in a suit.

**Austin:** Yeah, human gorilla for Mow.

[group laughter settles]

**Ali:** Is that an Exchange Blows?

**Austin:** I think it's a—

**Ali:** Is that a—

**Austin:** I think this is just—at this point, it is just a Defy, a Defy Danger, a Weather the Storm.

**Ali:** A Defy Danger, Weather the Storm.

**Austin:** Just a Weather the Storm. With Defy.

**Ali:** Yeah.

**Austin:** Or with—what do you do? I mean, you're not talking. You're just being defiant. You're just being—you're putting yourself in front of the train, right?

**Ali:** Uh-huh. I'm jumping up and down. I'm waving my arms.

**Austin:** Yeah, mhm. Yeah.

**Ali:** I can't describe this as a way that I'm being confident. I'm describing it in confident actions, so I'm just gonna—this is a 2d6 plus 1?

**Austin:** I guess, yeah. I said you would take advantage, but like, but—no, I said you would take disadvantage, is what I said.

**Ali:** [laughing] Okay.

**Austin:** Is what I said. So it's 3d6 plus 1, take lowest.

**Ali:** Oh, take the lowest. Great. This is good for me.

**Austin:** Yeah. Uh-huh. Mhm.

**Ali:** I said all of those words out loud and I stand by them. Um...

**Austin:** 1, 2, 1. So that's a 4.

**Ali:** Mhm. That's a 4.

**Austin:** That's a 4. You really should have done that with Confidence. The Confidence would have really banged here.

**Ali:** I'm describing it in confident action.

**Austin:** Yeah, I guess so. Um, that's a hard fail. That's a 4. Thisbe, you were asking where Brnine is. Brnine's coming to visit.

**Ali:** Oh, shut up.

**Janine:** Oh. Fun.

**Austin:** Brnine just landed, actually, at the landing pad outside.

[music outro - "[Nothing is Stationary](#)" by Jack de Quidt]