

[PALISADE 07: Canvas of Dreams Pt. 2](#)

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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.

Austin: Initiate Operation Midnight Lapidary.

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

Austin: Your target is moving from — across the Bontive Valley, overnight. Bontive Valley, kind of the breadbasket of Bilateral Intercession here on the planet, uh, the Bontive Valley was literally blessed by the sacrifice of a divine, and moving from the northern end of it near Carhaix, across and down, down it towards the Kesh city of Carleon-Upon-Whisk, is someone named, Codename Gem. Uh, your job is to make sure that she does not get to Carleon-Upon-Whisk. You have some time, you know she's coming this way, you know that, that it will be the next train coming out of Eversin. Cori, you're free to start making your way over there, but again, it'll take a beat or two before you manage to make it there in time. Figure, do you care if people, if civilians get hurt here?

Dre: Uh, abstractly, yes.

Ali: [chuckles] How abstract?

Sylvi: Yeah, wait.

Ali: [laughing]

Dre: I mean, do we even know that there's like a conductor in this train? Is it just a robot?

Austin: Just a robot, Jesus Christ.

Janine: Uh... [laughing]

Austin: And then Thisbe, same question.

Janine: Yeah. Abstractly, yes.

Everyone: [laughing]

Austin: As this happens, the, the second train, the, the front train car, as it splits like that, it sends an automatic signal, because you've done true, real damage to the train, and when you've done that, the alert goes up by one, you know, we get like, the, the visualization of like a beam of light, shoots backwards up the tracks as if sending a message, to say, "uh-oh, there's been a problem with the train." They don't know what the problem is, they don't know that there's been an attack necessarily, but —

Janine: Yeah, train problem.

Austin: A train problem.

Janine: Someone pulled the emergency stop, it's fine.

Austin: Mm-hm. Exactly.

Austin: Apologies, it's just —

Keith: Oh, it's fine.

Austin: It's just as the texts said. It's, it's a pleasure to meet you. Who are you with?

Austin: You have made yourself a friend, bud. You are not going to lose this person, all night.

Ali: [giggling]

Austin: There is no getting away from —

Keith: Wow.

Ali: None?

Austin: None, none. And they do just introduce themselves as Em.

Keith: Em.

Austin: Uh, E-M, they say. Not a great, not a great spy name, frankly.

Keith: No.

Austin: But, that's what they go by. And that's about, again, you get the sense that maybe something else is going on here.

[MUSIC - "[Nothing is Stationary](#)" ends]

Austin: Brnine, how's your, how's your evening been?

Ali: I think it's going okay. I think I'm mingling. Uh, I think that I would like to, uh, spend a hold to spend some time to frame a downtime scene.

Austin: Oh, interesting. Okay.

Ali: Uh...

Austin: So that's one of your three hold here. You have two more to go.

Ali: Uh-huh. Uh-huh.

Austin: Mm-hm. What's your downtime scene that you're framing?

Ali: Uh, I don't, I don't know how this works, uh, vis-a-vis tokens, obviously —

Austin: You do not have any tokens.

Ali: Okay, fair.

Austin: So what you're picking will give you the primary thing that each downtime scene can offer, and that is it. Uh, I, we, there was just a conversation about this in the Armour Astir Discord —

Ali: Okay, sure.

Austin: Uh, and the key thing is, you, you lose your, it explicitly says you lose your tokens at the end of the previous downtime scene, and you only get them at the beginning — or, at the end of the previous downtime segment, so —

Ali: Right right right, yeah, yeah, yeah, okay, yeah, yeah, yeah, yeah.

Austin: But yeah, but yeah. So you can still do any of these things, if that makes sense.

Ali: Well, yeah, but the, [laughing], the, the reason I ask is because I want to do a hallway slash listening post.

Austin: Mmm.

Ali: Uh, with, uh, Griesel Sunset, Cori's dad —

Sylvi: Let's go!

Ali: Who apparently is here.

Austin: Yep.

Ali: And is like, militaristic, question mark? [chuckling] Which I thought why, that's why it would be interesting to like, overhear something that he's, he's, uh, —

Austin: Yeah, so this is the lead player overhears something —

Ali: Hearing, he's talking about. Uh... —

Austin: They may start or advance a long-term project to learn more, or take advantage during the next sortie, acting on what they learned. Do you want to start a long-term project on investigating what the Cult of Devotion is up to?

Ali: [laughing]

Austin: Because it sounds like you, you stumble into doing that.

Ali: That's, the reason I was asking about tokens is because I really wanted to get to barge in on whoever was overheard, causing trouble for someone involved, but we can just —

Sylvi: Oh my god.

Ali: We can just play to find out what happens.

Austin: We can just play to find out what happens.

Ali: We don't need currency for that. [chuckling]

Austin: Yeah, no, that can just be the thing. I'm adding, uh, "what's up with the cult, with the devotees?" I've started that clock, I've advanced it by one. All right. Uh... what's —

Ali: Yeah, I guess, while the like, camera is on me, and while we're talking about the Cult of Devotion, I'm going to go over my gravity clocks, which is —

Austin: Please.

Ali: I have one with, with Thisbe, which is, "Thisbe doesn't think I'm significant," and I have one with Coriolis, that is, "I should support Cori while she settles in."

Sylvi: Aw!

Ali: [chuckles]

Austin: I have an important question about Griesel, Cori.

Sylvi: Yeah.

Austin: Is he just Diesel? Is he — [gasping]

Ali: [squeals]

Austin: Is he just Kevin [laughing] Nash?

Sylvi: Oh my god, I mean, that's not how I was picturing him.

Dre: Oh, I thought you meant like, ripped Diesel.

Austin: I mean, but, but like, current, not Diesel, current Kevin Nash, short-haired Kevin Nash.

Sylvi: Current? Oh my god.

Ali: [chuckling]

Sylvi: I think that's a little too DILFy, I don't know.

Austin: Magic Mike Kevin Nash.

Ali: [chuckling]

Austin: [laughing] Okay.

Sylvi: Like, I'm being straight-up.

Austin: I appreciate it. So then, what's, what's his deal?

Sylvi: Uh... I mean, like, aesthetically, or just in general?

Austin: Aesthetically, what's his life aesthetic?

Sylvi: Damn.

Austin: You know what I mean?

Sylvi: Yeah, yeah, yeah, I do.

Austin: If he were a Branched, what would he be?

Sylvi: Oh, he'd be like a, like, and I'm saying this derogatorily, a modern apartment. Like —

Austin: Aw...

Sylvi: Like, you know what I mean when I talk about that? Like —

Keith: You're, you're talking about Millennial gray?

Sylvi: Yes, yes.

Dre: Ugh.

Austin: Are you talking about like, goes on the gaming forum and is like, "check out my setup, everybody. I took my photos of my, like, here's my like, TV and my PS5," and it's just like, completely characterless spaces?

Sylvi: Yeah, it's sort of like, uh, you can't tell if, it it's someone's home, or if it's a corporate office, when you first walk in.

Austin: Mm-hm. Gotcha.

Sylvi: Uh, like for a tech startup.

Austin: Yeah, okay.

Keith: You know what's bugging me right now?

Sylvi: Mm-hm?

Keith: Is my extremely boring cabinets that I can do nothing about in my kitchen.

Austin: I'm sorry.

Keith: It's the worst, most bland cabinets of all time.

Austin: And you're renting, presumably, so it's not like you can —

Keith: Yeah, I'm rent, yeah, yeah, I can't, yeah, so it's not my — even if I owned the house, I can't get new cabinets, are you kidding me?

Dre: You could paint them, though.

Sylvi: You've got cabinets?

Keith: Oh my god. I just Googled, "boring cabinets," and this is literally what my kitchen looks like.

Austin: [guffawing]

Sylvi: Damn!

Keith: It's like the fourth thing. This is almost exactly my kitchen.

Austin: Can you post your cabinets, please?

Keith: But a, but a better fridge.

Sylvi: Oh, I have these type of boring cabinets.

Dre: Mmm, yeah, yeah, I know these cabinets.

Austin: Oh yeah, I know these. I used to have these, these suck. These are boring.

Keith: Yeah. Yeah.

Austin: Hate these.

Keith: And I have darker, fake marble countertops. But, yeah, this is almost exactly my kitchen.

Sylvi: Ha-ha!

Janine: You just get some, get some, uh, contact paper.

Keith: Hey, they've got Jerry Seinfeld — good call, Janine.

Dre: Oh, that's a kettle there.

Sylvi: You, what? What?

Janine: Yeah. Everyone does this.

Dre: Contact paper.

Sylvi: No, no, the Jerry Seinfeld kettle. That's what I was confused about.

Ali: [laughing]

Janine:[laughing]

Keith: Yeah, Jerry Seinfeld's kettle.

Austin: Uh...

Sylvi: Okay, uh, mmm, okay.

Austin: Brnine, you overhear Griesel talking with Decario. As a reminder, Decario, again, is kind of high-up in the cult. Uh, and, uh, I think you hear Griesel say,

Austin (as Griesel): So we're going to start recruiting locally, right? New people? So it doesn't all fall on, you know...

Austin: And Decario's like,

Austin (as Decario): Of course. We have our — you know we have our best people out there spreading the word. Your daughter's doing a great job.

Austin: And Griesel's like nodding, like, “yeah. Yeah, yeah, yeah.” And, and he says, “and it'll be like,” Griesel says,

Austin (as Griesel): It'll be like, uh, dispersed? The effect will be dispersed.

Austin: And Decario says,

Austin (as Decario): Exactly. Once we, once we start recruiting locals, there'll be more followers for, for Devotion to draw on. Their love.

Austin: And Griesel's like,

Austin (as Griesel): Their love. Yeah, yeah.

Austin: It's no — the vibes are off. Vibes are off!

Ali: [laughing]

0:09:29.2 The vibes are off! This is awful. Uh...

Austin: The, the picture you get very much is like, you know, they want to spread the word of Devotion here, in order to recruit more soldiers, in order to better, question mark question mark question mark, you know, dilute the cost of working with Devotion or something?

Ali: Yeah, sure sounds that way.

Dre: Sure.

Ali: Uh...

Sylvi: Normal.

Ali: Normal, yeah. Seems fine.

Sylvi: So normal.

Dre: The Doctor Bronner's of Divines.

Ali: [giggling] Because he's clearly —

Sylvi: Doctor Brniner's.

Austin: [cackling]

Ali: That's so funny. Because like, I think... [chuckles] ugh... Brnine has been like, a shady enough person for the majority of their life that like...

Austin: Mmm.

Ali: I think that they know not to... they're not interrupting this, as much as I like, might want them to.

Austin: Ah, sure.

Ali: [wheezes] I, I don't think they're actually interrupting this. I think instead what we get is, we, we get the like, the, the camera nervousness of like, over the shoulder, behind Brnine, like, walking towards this conversation, and instead, Brnine like, reaches for the picture of Cori that they were about to, to like introduce themselves and hand over to Griesel, and then like, look down at it, and then put it back into like their pocket, and like, [wheezes] look at their glass and go refill, like, go, like, hunt down a waiter or whatever. Like taking a sharp left instead of —

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

Ali: Instead of dealing with whatever the fuck is going on over there. [wheezes]
[chuckling]

Austin: Mm-hm. The, the, you know, we go right from that to the interior of Cori's cockpit as, Cori —

Sylvi: Mm-hm.

Austin: You are going to arrive on the edge of this map, uh, I'll drop you down here, where are you, let's see here, uh... let me make sure this goes where it should, boom! There you are. A1. Uh, I need to give this to you...

Sylvi: Aw.

Austin: Da-da-da-da... boom. All right, you should be able to control that token now.

Sylvi: Yep.

Austin: Uh, what's, what's it look like inside of the Chariot cockpit?

Sylvi: Oh, uh... that's a great... here's where my brain went immediately. And I don't know, like —

Austin: First thought, best thought.

Sylvi: We're going to just like, put, piece this together — you know the like, sort of clear purple plastic Gameboy Ad — Gameboy Color?

Ali: Mm-hm. Yeah.

Austin: Oh, yeah. Oh yeah.

Keith: Oh! Big time.

Sylvi: For some reason there's like, that, and like —

Ali: [chuckling]

Keith: [laughing]

Sylvi: That sort of, like, like, material — the material almost looks like that. Like, but, I think more solid, obviously. Uh, there's a lot of —It's like a mix between —

Austin: This is the interior of the cockpit, has that style of like —

Sylvi: Yeah, this is the interior.

Austin: Not 90s, but like, cool,

Sylvi: Sort of like —

Austin: Cool, cool tech for teens aesthetic? From the 2000s?

Sylvi: Yeah, it would get lumped into the like Y2K aesthetics now, uh...

Austin: Yes, yes. Totally.

Sylvi: Uh, and playing on that, I think there's also like, a lot of like, I'm thinking of the Nebuchadnezzar from the, the Matrix, —

Austin: Oh, sure.

Sylvi: That has a lot of the like wire, visible wiring and stuff.

Austin: Sure.

Sylvi: And like, this is just like, covering that, uh, in a lot of ways. Uh, and then I think there's like, a display screen that she sees the battlefield from.

Austin: Well, the battlefield you see in front of you is thus. [chuckles] Uh, the Figure in Bismuth inside of The Devil's Two Front Teeth, I believe is chasing down this train, from north to south. Figure, is that correct? Last we saw it. Uh, Mow and Thisbe have derailed — not derailed, it's still on the rails, but have separated the rear four cars of the train from the front two. Uh, uh, I'm going to pull these, these bonus train pieces away, just for clarity's sake, make them like a different color, maybe.

0:14:01.8 Uh, and, uh, the trains are firing on them, generally. They're in, they're mid-combat, you know, the fighting is happening. And when you arrive, you see the, uh, the top, like the, the roof of the rear car begin to open, as, uh, uh, a new threat, uh, starts to emerge from it. And that new threat is a new mech. Uh... this —

Sylvi: It's a big ol' hand — oh, it's Master Hand!

Austin: Master Hand is here, everybody. Uh, no, this is the Hauberk, is I believe the right one here? No, I'm sorry, this is the Vambrace. This a new, a new, uh, mech for, for y'all. You have not seen this yet. This is the Vambrace. It is a, uh, it's the kind of workhorse of the Kesh, uh, military. Last time we saw a cool Kesh mech Altar that like, was dancing around and doing all sorts of bullshit. That is not this one. This is, uh, it has four arms, uh, and each of those arms is holding a different melee weapon. So it stands up and like, one of the arms is holding, uh, a flail, another arm is holding, another hand is holding a shield. And then the other two hands are holding a giant honed greatsword. And then, and then also, uh, on its, like, uh, uh, shoulders, uh, there are like missile launchers attached, as, not — you know, those missiles are not super powerful missiles, necessarily. They're almost more like, uh, uh, a backup or a way to keep distance, or a way to like, shoot a bunch while they can, so that they can get closer. Uh...

Sylvi: Yeah, if you got the slots, might as well use them. It's like Armored Core.

Austin: That's exactly right. Yes. I've dropped the description of the Vambrace in here. Uh, so, yeah. It's mostly, it's mostly a, a, defensive — uh, or an up-close melee mech, that, that can be kind of hard to get a hit in on, given all of its flailing, four-armed power. Uh, and, and this is being piloted by the bodyguard of the, the kind of bureaucrat that we saw get on board. This is not, presumably, the guard of Gem, who you know is also presumably on board. They have not, they have not suited up yet. Just this, this new, uh, guard has. So, what do you do, Cori, as you arrive on the scene?

Sylvi: Uh... okay, so, I'm feeling a little bit like I'm walking in, stuff's on fire already.

Austin: [chuckling] Uh-huh.

Sylvi: I think I gotta go for the, the Vambrace, though. Like, it makes, if it looks like the other two are in the act of trying to stop the train, I should be trying to stop the things that are trying to stop them from doing that.

Austin: Right. That makes sense. So what's that look like?

Sylvi: Oh, I think... hm, let me look at my mech real quick. You know, I got a weapon I didn't use yet. So I could, I could... bust that out.

Austin: Mmm.

Sylvi: Uh...

Austin: I'm excited to hear about it, what is it?

Sylvi: My rune blade.

Austin: Tell me about your rune blade.

Sylvi: It is, uh, I mean, just to give the tags quickly, melee — ruin, decisive, fragile, and drain 2. So it's, you know, powerful, but puts a strain on my mech.

Austin: Oh, it is a sorry, ruin blade.

Sylvi: Ruin blade.

Austin: RUIN, not rune blade, which is what I was hearing.

Sylvi: Yeah, yeah, yeah. Yeah, yeah.

Austin: Sure. What's it look like. What's the, what's the, is it a physical weapon, is it a beam weapon, is it —

Sylvi: It's, uh, so it is a physical weapon. It's that same sort of material, except it's, uh, you know like an executioner's sword, with the three —

Austin: I do.

Sylvi: The three like, holes in the, the end, that like, whistle if you don't swing it straight?

Austin: Mm-hm.

Sylvi: It's one of those.

Austin: Perfect.

Sylvi: Uh, and it doesn't look super sharp, but, uh, uh, through Devotion all things are possible, et cetera, et cetera.

Dre: Mm-hm.

Austin: So you are charging across this, the fields of this, uh, like, above the fields of this farm —

Sylvi: Mm-hm.

Austin: Past these trees, and just going full speed into this Vambrace?

Sylvi: Yeah, I feel like there's, there's like a long, like, it, I'm basically like, I dug like, kind of a ditch with my sword by dragging it across the ground, because it's heavy. Uh...

Austin: Perfect.

Sylvi: Yeah.

Austin: Uh, this thing is mundane, you are Divine. Those two things don't interact. And so, there's no advantage — there's no, uh, uh, approach difference there, in terms of confidence or desperation. Uh, so, yeah. This just sounds like a traditional, regular ol', exchange blows, to me.

Sylvi: Okay. I'm just checking my tags —

Austin: So you're using clash, unless you have something special that lets you use something else with —

Sylvi: No, uh, if it's exchange blows, I have —

Austin: Oh, you do.

Sylvi: I believe I have, what's it called? Uh, input channel, yeah.

Austin: Mm-hm.

Sylvi: Uh, I get to make that move with plus channel, which is plus-3.

Austin: All right. So give me 2D6 plus 3. Okay.

0:19:34.9

Sylvi: Oops, I did slash 2D6 plus 3 instead of slash roll.

Austin: That's how they get you.

Sylvi: Been doing this for 10 years, now?

Austin: Oh, that's a 12.

Sylvi: That's a 12, baby.

Austin: That's a 12. Let's go. All right —

Sylvi: Give me one of them arms. Give me one of them arms, boy!

Austin: Okay, well — [chuckles] At a, at a, at a 10 or above —

Dre: [chuckling]

Austin: You get to either —

Keith: Take an arm. Oh.

Austin: Take a — I mean, you get to either take a risk, or put your opponent in peril. Uh, sorry, you either get to — sorry, take a — you either get to give them a risk, for free, you know, for having succeeded.

Sylvi: Mm-hm.

Austin: Or, you take a risk, but put them in peril. And remember, perils are things that they cannot fix during the sortie. Like —

Sylvi: I'm going to take a risk.

Austin: All right.

Sylvi: I'm going to take a risk and take an arm.

Austin: What is the risk you're taking?

Sylvi: Uh... off-balance.

Austin: Mmm, I like that. That's good.

Sylvi: Because I don't think I'm used to using this sword quite yet.

Austin: Mm-hm.

Sylvi: It's a lot heavier, like, it's — this one doesn't have the two-handed tag, but in my head, it like... because the other, like, two-hander tag, is a one, is like a one-handed weapon and a shield, this is a two-handed weapon to me.

Austin: Right.

Sylvi: It's like, she's just not used to the weight of it all.

Austin: So, just as you're — tell me what the action looks like. You're, you're coming at it with this executioner's sword, it's firing at you with these rockets to try to keep you at, at range. You manage to get in past them. What's the like, the big blow you're looking to land?

0:21:04.8

Sylvi: Uh, I'm just looking for like, one — like, the way I'm thinking of this is, you go in for one clean hit with the sword, you don't — you're not going in there to like break a guard and then capitalize on that. So it is, I think that like, part of it being off-balance is I — [chuckling] let me look at the map again really quick, I'm on my sheet. I think like, we might tumble into some of these trees behind us afterwards.

Austin: Yeah.

Sylvi: Like, its arm goes flying up in the air, like, we were both just sent like tumbling —

Austin: You —

Sylvi: I'm off, like — like I almost do like a full like cartwheel, because... I [chuckling] my step is off. Yeah.

Austin: You are certain you delivered a blow that would have removed at least one of its arms.

Sylvi: Yeah.

Austin: Uh, uh, only to find that you, in fact, only caught the shield. Uh, it has ward, one ward, which reduces an incoming peril down to a risk.

Sylvi: This — [sighs]

Austin: So you in fact only risk it. You don't peril it. Uh, now you know this about Vambraces, that this is a thing that they can do once per —

Sylvi: Jerk.

Austin: Once per battle. So, you are off-balance, uh, but, but so, so are they. You're, they are also off-balance, they have that as a risk. Figure, uh, the train has come to a stop. You've, you've, you kind of have the, the state of things here. Uh, uh, what are you, what are you up to, now?

Dre: Hm...

Austin: I guess, actually, just to follow up on something, Thisbe, did you end up getting off of Mow, and are you now going into the train? Does Figure see that happening? Or are you already — when Figure shows up, are you no longer on top of Mow? [chuckling]

Janine: I don't know, that seems like a whole other roll. [chuckling] That seems —

Austin: I know, I — well, you can get off of Mow. I'm, I'm curious if — in that moment, you decided, “okay, I'm going to go try to kidnap this person,” or not.

Janine: Uh, uh, yeah, if I successfully stopped the train car, then I think that would be the next step, is —

Austin: Okay.

Janine: Try and find this person, to detain them.

Austin: All right. Let's resolve that as, Figure, you arrive and see that Thisbe is not there. That way we can know what's happening inside, —

Dre: Sure.

Austin: And then you can intercede. Uh, yeah, Thisbe, this is definitely, are you just like, looking around to see if you can find the person who matches this description?

Janine: Yeah.

Austin: Okay. Uh, that sounds like a roll to me. That sounds like, uh, that sounds like read the room, probably? Let's see... da-da-da-da. Yeah, what is, that, that is the one. When you're trying to figure out which side of a battle is in favor of, whether or not you're holding — whether or not a holding is defensible, or otherwise trying to get insight into your situation, you're trying to read the room. This is another sense roll.

Janine: Okay. Uh... oh, we have a hold for this sortie, don't we?

Austin: You do have a hold for this sortie, from our —

0:24:02.0 For people listening, we had to stop in the middle of a previous recording, because of a power outages, so if we're like forgetting some key things from the last time, that is why. Uh, yes. Everybody had one hold coming into this, uh, as part of the engagement roll, or, or, let's not call it that, let's call it something else. It's called lead a sortie, that's what it's called.

Janine: Uh...

Austin: Uh, and actually here's a thing I'm going to give, uh, really quick to Figure as you're figuring this out. Uh, Figure, as you approach, you know, coming, you know, following down the, the train line, you notice that that, that, what is now the second to last, uh, train car, your scanners pick up, that it is filled with, uh, resources that could be used to refuel and repair a lot of, it's like, incredibly dense fuel, basically, right?

Dre: Okay.

Austin: Like fuel rods or whatever. That is your opportunity which y'all earned, to, uh, secure an outcome from a faction. If you could get that, the stuff there, you could use that to kind of, uh, help a faction deliver on, on — and specifically, you would be helping, uh, Gray Pond use that stuff to help repair and fix up some of the other factions that have recently taken some losses.

Dre: Okay.

Austin: So that's kind of like a bonus objective for you there. I will, I will mark it on the map.

Dre: Is that also what's in this last one, or are we just — oh, no.

Austin: No. The last, the first thing that was in the last one was that first mech, uh, —

Dre: Oh, yeah, yeah, yeah.

Austin: Presumably, there may be more in there, too.

Dre: Okay. Uh...

Austin: So yeah, just letting you know that that's a thing that you, that you picked up on, as Thisbe, are you going to use that hold?

Janine: Would that, would I mark that as plus-1 on top of this other plus-1? Or how does it, how would I mark hold?

Austin: Yeah, this is, you would just roll another plus-1, yep, exactly right.

Janine: Okay. Okay.

Austin: Uh, you could also use that hold, as a reminder, for like —

Janine: Wait, hold — roll another die? Or roll with another plus-1?

Austin: No, roll plus-1, with another plus-1, or plus-1 hold.

Janine: Okay. Okay. Gotcha.

Austin: But you could also spend that hold, if you wanted to, instead, I mean, this is the thing that's weird about it actually, right? Uh, sorry —

Janine: Yeah?

Austin: You know what? It's not plus hold, or it's not plus forward, it is, it's plus hold. So what that would actually give you is, you could spend that hold on this role as a bonus question, for instance, uh, after you rolled it. So it's not a bonus on the roll, it's —

Janine: Oh.

Austin: It's a bonus hold you could spend as if you had it from a move. Do you know what I mean?

Janine: Mm-hm.

Austin: All players hold one. You may spend your hold on the next sortie as if it were a hold gained through one of your basic or playback moves, so, yes.

Keith: Which is better.

Austin: Uh, uh, you know, it's more, it's more effect, but it's less bonus on the roll itself, right?

Keith: Right. It's —

Janine: Mm-hm.

Keith: There's a very slim possibility that it could end up being worse, but I think it's probably better. Like, it'll end up being more.

Janine: Well, we'll, we'll find out, won't we?

Austin: [chuckling] We will find out, yeah. So this is 2D6 plus — look at that.

Janine: They're an 11.

Austin: They're an 11. So, yeah, on a 10 plus hold-3, uh, you can spend that hold one-for-one to ask the questions that are on that page, uh, I believe they're all on this page, also yes. Who has the upper hand here? What is being overlooked or obscured? Where do my hooks pull me here? Uh, how does X really feel? What is X's approach? What, uh, how is X at risk or in peril? And where can I find X?

0:27:40.9

Janine: Uh...

Austin: And again, you have a bonus hold, so if you wanted to, you could ask [chuckles] four of these.

Janine: I might actually, I might sit on it then, I might not use it.

Austin: That makes sense, that makes sense.

Janine: Uh, okay. The first obvious one — where can I find Gem?

Austin: Gem is moving towards the rear of the, uh, the train cars. Uh, you know, you enter the, the one that she begins on, which is this front one, and as you do, she is like slipping past people who are yelling. Most people are trying to get off the train. People are yelling at seeing you enter the train. [chuckles] Uh, you're very big. Uh, Thisbe big also. So people are like, some of them are just shrinking away from you and letting you walk past. Uh, uh, and you see her, uh, kind of push past some people, uh, look back at you, uh, and then try to make her way into the next train car. So, you have found her. There she is.

Janine: Okay, uh...

Austin: As a reminder, you will roll with advantage when you act on these answers, throughout this sequence.

Janine: Yes. Uh, who has the upper hand here?

Austin: Uh... they do. [chuckles] Because the next thing she moves past as she enters into another room is a small squad of guards in this, the room that has the big turret icon. Uh, I'd say there's like four of them. And that does give —

Keith: Small squad is when it's a small gang, but cops.

Austin: Uh, that is — Keith, literally in this book —

Keith: [laughing]

Austin: It says, “when actors are attacking large numbers, they fight as a squad.” And then in parentheses, “AKA a small gang.” [chuckling] So, yes, quite literally.

Janine:[chuckles]

Austin: Uh, you would be at disadvantage acting against them alone, unless you had some way of overturning that, for instance, right?

Janine:Like a cannon?

Austin: Like, uh, you know, that cannon is hidden — yeah, I think that, the, the hidden trait on that cannon would surprise them such [chuckling] that it would, that it would even out that disadvantage. But once you use it, you would not have that anymore. It's not an area of effect cannon. So —

Janine:Yeah.

Austin: Important distinction there. But yes, like, like a cannon. So that's two.

Janine:Uh, and —

Austin: I, I, I will also say, I will also say, because I try my best to be fair about this stuff: she fundamentally has the upper hand. She fundamentally, not only because she has people defending her, uh, but because she has secrets, and secrets are very powerful things.

Janine:Mm-hm. uh... what is being overlooked or obscured here?

Austin: Uh... when she makes eye contact with you... you have all sorts of sensors going, right?

Janine:Yeah.

Austin: Uh, she does not have the warmth of a human body. Uh, you can feel something... your first impression is like liquid glass. And then she disappears from view. Uh... so here, in this moment, that is what is being overlooked.

Janine:Mmm. I see.

Austin: Mm-hm. You going to use that cannon on those guards? [typing noises]

Janine: Uh...

Austin: Or should we pop up to —

Janine: May as well, right?

Austin: Okay, yeah.

Janine: I don't, I don't know if, I don't know if, is like, uh, that would be another roll, that's —

Austin: That would be another roll, uh-huh.

Janine: Uh... I'm fine doing it, I just don't know how we want to space stuff out. Planning to shoot them.

Austin: I'm happy to go back to, to Figure at this point, also, but, yeah.

Dre: I'm also happy if you want to just keep this scene rolling for yourself. I know what I'm going to do next —

Janine: Well, I don't want to get murdered by a bunch of guys after, is the [laughing] is the other problem.

Dre: Mmm, sure.

Austin: Uh-huh. Yeah, let's pull the trigger on this, and see what the result is, and then we can come to Figure, as we see Figure through the windows, looking, looking down on this happening, you know? So again, this would be exchange blows, and they are definitely capable of defending themselves here. Uh, uh, and you'll be making this with clash.

Janine: Uh, yeah. And also, just to say it out loud, this is the quintessence cannon 1, it's ranged slash ruin, hidden, and limited.

Austin: Mm-hm. And limited says you, you get one shot with it, I believe. Or it might be that it run, it can run out during play, is I believe what actually limited says.

Janine: Yeah.

Austin: Right, it's not, it's not a single shot, it's not one use, which is a different tag. But...

Janine: I think also like, fictionally —

Austin: It does say, it — go ahead.

Janine:I was going to say, fictionally, I've, I've talked about her aerial stuff as being like, I think I talk about it as being like, little things, like propulsion things strapped to her legs.

Austin: Mm-hm. Mm-hm.

Janine:I imagine this as being like, a... sort of backpack that's like, form-fitted and styled to kind of just look like her torso.

Austin: Uh-huh. [chuckling]

Janine:But it like has joints that kind of pop open —

Sylvi: [chuckling]

Janine:And then little, little cannon pops out, over her shoulder.

Austin: Perfect, great. All right, let's see this roll. And 2D6 plus-2.

Janine:That's a 10.

Austin: That is a 10. Again, like Cori just did, you can give them a risk, or you can give them a peril, but take a risk yourself. Up to you.

Keith: Good rolls today.

Austin: Good rolls today. Y'all are killing it.

Janine:Uh...

Keith: Including yesterday — two days ago's version of today.

Austin: Right, yes. 100 percent. [chuckles]

Janine:I'll take a risk and give them a peril.

Austin: Okay. What peril are you giving them?

Keith: Are you sure?

Janine:The peril I'm giving them... uh, so, because it's not, that's not like... I'm trying to think of like, what's something that would affect a group, even though that's not an, that's not a weapon that, that does a group effect, it's a, it's a more targeted weapon. And I think it's

something maybe kind of like flashbanged, where it's like, their sight and hearing is kind of messed with.

Austin: Sure.

Janine: They're disoriented in some way.

Austin: Disoriented is, is pretty good. Yeah, yeah, yeah. I'll mark it. All right. Uh, and you... uh, I think that, you know, nevertheless, uh, uh, they are, are, they kind of charge ahead, uh, into your cannon, into that cannon fire, and I mean, one of them is definitely just hit and knocked down. Uh, the other ones are swinging wildly. Uh, they're basically swinging little, like, uh, they're, they're like batons, but the, the very end of the baton is, like, supernaturally heavy. Uh, they've been, they've been alchemically treated in such a way that they hit like a mace, even though they look like a baton. So it's as if there's a big, heavy hammer head on the end of it, you know? So they are still swinging at you, and I think that they're, they're, they're, it's, you know, they're missing you mostly, but you're a big target, which actually makes you fairly easy to hit, also.

Janine: Yeah, yeah.

Austin: Uh, so go and take a risk according to that, uh, probably not dented, because it's not permanent, but, you know, something, something towards that effect, right?

Janine: Yeah.

Austin: Figure —

Janine: I think I've already used scuffed.

Austin: Are you currently scuffed, or you're, you were scuffed last time?

Janine: No, I just feel like I used it in the past, so it's not fun.

Austin: Yeah, yeah, that's fair. Uh, I could imagine you being, uh, like, battered, or —

Janine: Oh, I wonder if it's like, mmm, I need something that's kind of like, not herded, but the fact that they're swinging and the space is small kind of like —

Austin: Sure.

Janine: Makes her extra cautious about her movements.

Austin: Mm-hm.

Janine: Cowed is also not right. Because it's not like, there's no, it's not, there's no fear, it's just like —

Dre: Like, cornered?

Austin: Yeah, I think that's probably.

Janine: Yeah, maybe cornered.

Austin: Cornered is kind of fine. It also kind of separate, it also kind of helps —

Janine: Or boxed in.

Austin: Boxed in works too, either of those is fine.

Janine: Literally. [chuckles] Boxcarred in.

Austin: Like, that is literally what's happening. Yeah. Figure, you see all this happening through the windows below. Uh, people are streaming out of these cars. And you see, you know, the same thing, I'll let that previous, I'll let Thisbe's success follow here, that you see Gem move into that second train car, uh, which, which she has now been boxed out of. What do you do?

Dre: So that would be like, this train car?

Austin: You got it, the, the turret on that side.

Dre: Okay. Yeah. Uh... and, what's, what sort of shape is, Cori, you're doing okay right now?

Sylvi: Yeah, I'm fine. I'm just a little off-balance.

Austin: Tumbling around in the, in the bushes, fighting, fighting a guy, you know.

Sylvi: I'm, uh, I'm frolicking in the forest, yeah.

Dre: Sure. Uh-huh. [chuckling] That's what I tried to do earlier, it didn't go great. Honestly, I feel like... Thisbe kind of has this right now?

Austin: I mean, Thisbe is 1v3 inside of the train car, the front train car, so —

Janine: Austin did say I would explicitly be acting with disadvantage, but sure.

Austin: That's true.

Dre: Mmm. I, but I just believe in you that hard.

Austin: [chuckling]

Dre: Uh...

Austin: Are you saying that so that you can free yourself up to go get Gem, is that what you're saying?

Dre: Either that, or to go help Cori with this mech.

Austin: Gotcha.

Dre: And/or to... so, so here's my thought. Uh... I was going to attack the... this enemy mech, the Vambrace, as well as that last car, using my explosive chains, because they have area.

Austin: Ooh, sure. I love that, that's a great, that's a great idea.

Dre: Okay.

Austin: Uh, yeah. Go ahead and strike — or, not strike decisively, uh, exchange blows again.

Dre: Yeah.

Austin: Again using clash. Again, I don't think this is speed, to me.

Keith: Mmm.

Dre: Yeah, I mean, the only way I could argue for speed is that I'm basically like, I'm just like, shooting out of nowhere to try and blindside this Vambrace.

Austin: Like, is it a melee, is it a melee attack, or is it a —

Dre: It's melee. Yeah.

Austin: Oh, then yeah. Yeah. Yeah, yeah, yeah. Sweet.

Dre: Yeah.

Austin: What is this weapon? They're bombs, but what are they, what are they?

Dre: Yeah, so, uh, the tags are melee, area —

Austin: Uh-huh, uh-huh.

Dre: Vorpals.

Austin: Oh, that's a good tag.

Dre: Uh, dangerous, and drain.

Austin: Uh-oh. Okay.

Dre: Uh, so basically, these are chains that like, come out of The Devil's Two Front Teeth, like by the shoulders, and then like kind of snake down and around its arms. Uh, and through combat, basically like I am just like, spinning these and growing like them on my arms, and as they like make contact with and wrap around other enemies, they explode and detonate.

Austin: Right, love it. All right, yeah, give me that roll. And yeah, I'll, I'll say that that counts as speed.

Dre: Okay.

Austin: To me, the thing you have just described, using your like Ghost Rider chain whip explosions, charging ahead, full speed ahead, is definitely speed-based.

Dre: Okay.

Austin: So, roll with advantage, 3D6, take highest.

0:39:11.2 Uh, 5 plus 8 is —

Dre: 10.

Austin: Yep, 10. That is a, a hit. Again, as before, do you want to give a peril, or do you want to give, uh, uh, a peril and take a risk, or give a risk?

Dre: Uh, I'm going to give a risk, and then I'm going to use my vorpals tag —

Austin: Mmm.

Dre: Which allows me once per scene to upgrade a risk to a peril.

Austin: So what is the peril you're giving — I mean, I'm going to tell you, this is, this is — on the train itself, this is an incredibly-done maneuver, is the thing I'm going to tell you, just in terms of raw, the, the plus you're about to get on this is incredible, because you're not just giving a peril to the Vambrace, you're not just giving a peril to the train, which is its last danger, now it is, it is defenseless, and now someone could strike decisively against this train, which, I mean, it's not going anywhere at this point, but it is theoretically still a combatant —

Dre: [chuckling]

Austin: It does still have guns and stuff, right?

Dre: Yeah.

Austin: And theoretically it could, they could try to spin it around and get it out of here, right?

Dre: Mm-hm.

Austin: But, you're also preemptively giving a peril to these two other mechs that were just about to get up and reveal themselves. Uh, there are two — months ago someone asked what the, the like AK47 of our setting was going to be this year. Last time it was the Adamant Arms and Artifice Troop unit. You may recall, Si Sweetman did some great art of the Troop, uh, uh, for our postcard series. This year, it is the Bouquet. Adamant Arms and Artifice has a new model, everybody. It is an updated version of their famous, uh, Troop.

Ali: Oh!

Austin: Uh, this year, all of this, instead of being named for collective nouns for, for animals, AdArm mechs are all named for just collective nouns of non-animal things like the Bouquet, or like the Jury, like a jury of your peers [chuckles], et cetera. The Jury is the next higher level up, so we're not going to talk about that today. Today we're going to talk about the Bouquet. It's sort of like the old Troop. It's still, it's a boxy mech, it has this one big LCD eye on its head. But the head can turn now. It used to not be able to turn. It used to have to turn its whole torso to look around.

0:41:28.6 Uh, it has real hands now. It used to only have these kind of like claw grips, now it has these like, more humanoid, you know, fine detail work hands, instead of the, the, the more like construction hands that it used to have. And, uh, it has a gun that doesn't need any ammunition, because it just uses Perennial Wave that condenses into bullets, as they need to fire them, in their gun.

Dre: Hm.

Austin: Now, I know what you're thinking. The only thing that could do anything like that before was the Divine Motion, who was killed, who was dispersed through the ether. That is true, uh, the Bouquet has a thing called the Motion Engine at its heart, uh, that was derived from salvaged parts of the Divine Motion. Uh, it, it has the, the specific thing that it's famous for being able to do is, once per sortie, it can change its approach, uh, uh, to a different one.

Keith: This is old, this is old, uh, pre-pro coming back.

Austin: Uh-huh!

Keith: This is pre-Partizan.

Austin: What do you mean?

Keith: Like, this is right after Twilight Mirage ended, we were talking about the, the Gumption tech that was going to be seeded throughout the Divine Principality —

Austin: Oh yeah.

Keith: Into a bunch of stuff, in a way that sucks.

Austin: Divines can't really die anymore, right?

Keith: Right.

Dre: Mm-hm.

Austin: Uh, Motion is more dead than any Divine has maybe been in a long fucking time, because of how she was spread throughout the galaxy [chuckling], uh, but in some ways, you might call that a dub, you know? [chuckling] Uh, that means she's everywhere —

Dre: Mmm.

Austin: And maybe you could build an engine that helps turn her into bullets that you fire, along with Perennial Wave. So anyway, there's two of them. And you have fucked them up, too, Dre.

Dre: Yeah.

Austin: So you can put a peril on the train, the Vambrace, and these two Bouquet units. Uh, who, by the way, are not particularly strong. Uh, in terms of their, their status as main character, side character, extra. They're both side characters. So they're both halfway to being done already, at this point.

Dre: Yeah.

Austin: So...

Dre: Uh, this is also reminding me, I think there was a part about the Devil's Two Front Teeth that I didn't talk about during the first episode.

Austin: Sure.

Dre: Which was the awful noise that the Devil's Two Front Teeth makes when it's like, activated and in battle.

Austin: Tell me about the noise.

Dre: Uh, I have a YouTube video in my sheet that is a link to — the name of the video is, "Wind howling through the World Trade Center Buildings during Hurricane Sandy."

Austin: Great.

Dre: And it is just that awful —

Keith: I love that one.

Austin: [chuckling]

Dre: Haunting, terrible, like wailing noise.

Austin: I am not going to listen to this, because it'll go on the backup recording, and I don't want to blow anyone's ears out.

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

Austin: But I will later, for sure.

Dre: Uh, but it's, I mean like, because I talked about how it has just all these potholes and stuff in it —

Austin: Yeah.

Dre: And so it's just like, it's, it is the raw... uh, energy. Just like, seeping out through the frame, making this awful noise.

Austin: Incredible, love it. All right. What do you give the train, and these two Bouquets, and this Vambrace.

Dre: Gosh. Uh, I feel like it's a lot easier for me to think of risks, because that's mostly what we've seen as far.

Austin: Mm-hm.

Dre: Uh...

Austin: Some example perils are things like, uh, you know, uh, impaled, uh, broken limbs, uh, uh, you know, uh, destroyed armor, is a simple one.

Keith: Perforated.

Austin: Perforated is a classic, isn't it.

Dre: Yeah, uh, I think like, burnt. I was going to say on fire.

Austin: Go further, because on fire, you can put out on fire.

Dre: Sure. Scorched.

Keith: Yeah. Mm-hm.

Austin: Scorched. Let's go with scorched.

Dre: Melting.

Austin: Yeah, perfect. Uh... incredible. All right. Uh... and previously the Vambrace had also been, did I say off-balance before, to match yours, I believe, Cori, right?

Sylvi: Uh, yeah.

Austin: All right. Uh, and Cori, let's, let's wrap back around to you really quick before we, we maybe —

Sylvi: Mm-hm?

Austin: Head back to a party. Vambrace is, exploded in front of you, uh, but it steps through the fire, you know, in a, in a very dramatic way. It, it is, in fact, melting. It is damaged badly. Uh, but its pilot seems like, it seems like they want to, to finish you before they, they finish, they get finished themselves.

Sylvi: Am I able to strike decisively yet?

Austin: You are not yet, no.

Sylvi: No —

Austin: Wait, sorry sorry sorry, is that true? No, that is not true. Yeah, you are not able. You are not able to strike decisively.

Sylvi: No worries.

Austin: No is the answer. Not quite yet.

Sylvi: Uh... well, shit. I guess I'll take another [unintelligible]

Keith: Uh, sorry, I'm pretty sure here that everyone dies in one hit?

Austin: [chuckling]

Keith: What is all this —

Austin: No, that's, you're not, you're not there.

Sylvi: [chuckling] Uh... yeah, I'll exchange blows again, then, I think.

Austin: All right.

Sylvi: I think it's like... I'm thinking a lot about Escaflowne right now, as a usually am.

Austin: Big time.

Dre: Yeah!

Ali: Mm-hm.

Sylvi: Like, there's a lot of the —

Austin: Cloak in the wind —

Sylvi: Yeah, no, big Guymelef energy here. Like, getting, like using the sword to get, to like, prop her mech back up, type shit, you know?

Austin: Mm-hm. Silhouetted against the explosions of, of, I almost said Valence, wow, of Figure's explosions.

Ali: Damn...

Sylvi: Yeah. And then just like —

Austin: Uh, all right.

Sylvi: The second she's on her feet, she swings, and I roll a 9.

Austin: And you roll a 9, which is a mixed success. You could overheat, you could choose to overheat, uh, in order to reroll that, if you wanted.

Sylvi: I could do that. [sighs]

Austin: You have to take what that second roll is, though.

Sylvi: Yeah, no, I'm going to, I'm going to stick with this, I think.

Austin: Okay.

Sylvi: I'm just going to take this roll. I think, she goes for like a big, overhead swing, so like, it leaves her open, uh... let me look at what the 7 to 9...

Austin: It's a mix you both, you just give and receive risks.

Sylvi: Oh, okay, cool.

Austin: Yeah, and I think this is a, you absolutely, uh, uh, you disarm, you give them disarmed.

Sylvi: Yeah!

Austin: Uh, uh, as you, as your blade strikes theirs away. You, it's like, literally all three of their, of their weapons. Their shield, which has already been broken a bit, uh, you knock away, their flail, you tie up and toss. And their big claymore, you manage to like, do one of those good, like disarming motions, you know what I mean? Like, the little swoop-swoop, and then toss it aside.

Sylvi: Mm-hm.

Austin: Uh, but, at that point, they literally just grab you and headbutt you in the, the kind of head sensor. So take some sort of risk associated with getting like, headbutted in your cameras and radar, and whatever your like, physiological connection is —

Sylvi: I receive the risk, “bonked.”

Austin: You got bonked. You got the risk, “bonked in the head.”

Ali: [snorting]

Sylvi: I'm not writing bonked, I'm not doing that. I'm writing dazed.

Austin: I am writing disarmed, though. The Vambrace is officially, uh, defenseless, uh, and can be uh, hit with a, with a strike decisively. Uh...

Sylvi: Can I do that real quick, or do we gotta move some more?

Austin: Yeah, I mean, tell me what that looks like as you're being bear hugged by it?

Sylvi: Uh, oh, wow. I'm being bear hugged by it, what can I do, then?

Austin: Great question.

Dre: Break all the arms.

Sylvi: That's such a good idea.

Dre: Thank you.

Sylvi: Dre, that's such a good idea.

Dre: I'm here to help.

Austin: You're just going to flex on, you're just going to flex on 'em.

Sylvi: Uh, yeah, flex on 'em slash like, cut my way out.

Austin: Sure.

Sylvi: I'm just looking at, uh, the tag decisive again really quick to understand how this works, because that is, I think it —

Austin: So decisive says —

Sylvi: Once per scene, uh, I may reroll a failed strike decisively when using this weapon.

Austin: Exactly, yes. So, let's do that strike decisively. As a reminder, you are worse at strike decisively than you are at exchange blows.

Sylvi: I am. Uh, that's fine.

Austin: You got a real clash here. Uh-huh. Plus-1.

Keith: What is the tag that's like, the one where you can reroll, but it's slightly different? Never mind, don't worry about me.

Sylvi: When you take three risks, you take a peril?

Austin: When you take three risks, you become defenseless, and can be —

Sylvi: Okay.

Austin: From that point forward, I can start asking you to bite the dust.

Sylvi: All right. I won't use my mech move yet, then.

Dre: Boo. Boo. Boo.

Austin: Okay.

Keith: Defensive is like decisive, but for exchange — uh, blows.

Austin: That is correct.

Keith: That's what I was —

Sylvi: Okay, so this is clash?

Austin: Mm-hm. 2D6 plus, what are you, one in clash?

Sylvi: Plus-1. Yeah, that's a 7.

Austin: Ooh, all right, that's a 7. So, this is our first, uh, I think mixed success on a strike decisively. On a 10-plus, you strike true. Director characters are killed, forced to retreat, or otherwise removed as a threat for the fiction. Player characters will bite the dust. On a 7 to 9, you succeed as above, but choose one: you overreach or underestimate, take a risk. You

waste ammo or words, losing use of a weapon until you can rearm, or losing the weight of some bargaining chip or piece of leverage, or, you strike carelessly, causing collateral damage beyond your expectations.

Sylvi: I thought of this, and then realized my sword has, uh, a fragile tag, so actually —

Austin: That's perfect.

Sylvi: I know exactly what's going to happen, is, I like, try and cut through the arms, I think it doesn't work, and then I like — [chuckling] I stab it and break my sword off in the mech.

Austin: Ugh, incredible. Yeah, so you manage to break through the arms, and then that final blow, it, like you come back up with just the hilt in your hands, you know?

Sylvi: Yeah.

Keith: Does re-arm mean that weapon is gone for the duration of sortie, or — okay.

Austin: It sure does. Or, or, specifically, fragile. You know, I think in another situation, maybe you could get, you could get a reload, and get some ammo back or something like that.

Keith: Because a risk, you can deal with in a, in a turn.

Austin: Totally. Though, remember, that risk would make her, uh, uh, defenseless, which is a [unintelligible]

Sylvi: Yeah, I can't take any —

Keith: Right, I'm just, I'm just saying comparing, you know, you know —

Austin: Fragile is easily broken, either by shoddy design or frail materials. It's broken, in this case.

Keith: Yeah. Yeah.

Austin: Now, if we could get back to the Blue Channel, and you had a few minutes to get a replacement, you know what I mean? Like, maybe. But out here in the field —

Keith: Right.

Austin: Yeah, you're not getting another ruin blade. You know?

Keith: But for a, for, like a future time when this happens, you know, say I've got a gun that isn't fragile, is a weapon that needs to be rearmed, could that be dealt with the way that a risk could be dealt with? Or is it always going to be, like, well if you could take a risk, you should take a risk, this is what happens if you can't take a risk, is you would lose the, the weapon?

Austin: You, I would say, in a case like that, as always, we defer to the fiction, which is, all right. If you needed to rearm 5 minutes ago, because you ran out of ammo, where are you getting the ammo now? Now, if you have an answer to that —

Keith: Right.

Austin: Then that totally makes sense. Uh, you know, again, if the Blue Channel was here, Broun — ugh, Broun — Brnine has moves explicitly about re-arming people, for instance. The ship can do that, you know? Uh, uh, but I wouldn't say that, in every case, it's better, or it's viable to rearm in the field, if you can't do it, you know what I mean? Like, I wouldn't magically —

Keith: Right, yeah.

Austin: Make there be a reload station, just because you rolled cool off. You have to do it to do it, and so you would have to tell me how you're re-arming. It's possible, do you know what I mean? Like, it's not, there are times when it would totally, totally work, especially with weapons that are not as rare as this, you know?

Keith: Mm-hm.

Austin: If you were in a Bouquet, if you were in Bouquet number 2 here, and you had to rearm, and Bouquet number 1 had already been destroyed, I might say, “oh, you can get the ammo you need from Bouquet 1 if you roll, if you roll cool off, you know?”

Keith: Right. Right.

Austin: So — can we get a check-in on this party? Can we step, step away and return to the party for just a little bit more, before we wrap up?

Keith: Uh, yeah. I, I want to try and find Brnine.

Ali: Okay.

Austin: That's, that's, that's a fantastic, I, I love that for you.

Ali: [laughing]

Austin: Uh, I'm going to need you to roll to try to find Brnine.

Ali: Whoa, why?

Keith: Okay.

Austin: Don't worry about it so much.

Ali: What?

Austin: [chuckling]

Keith: [laughing]

Dre: Why you always asking questions?

Keith: Worry about it, but not so much.

Ali: [laughing]

Keith: Uh, what do, what do I, what do you want me to roll for this? And, do any of my B-plot moves help me here?

Austin: I mean, totally, right? Yeah, you could, I mean, technically, uh, you could, uh, you couldn't deny Brnine from appearing during the sortie, that would be very weird.

Ali: [chuckling]

Austin: Uh, no, I don't think any of your B-plot moves do this here, uh, though I do think that you could, you could, you could give another player confidence on their next move by complicating things for yourself. Though I would count this, I would count, needed to try to find Brnine while this guy talks your ear off at the party a complication.

0:55:24.7

Keith: So you're saying I could, I could, choose to not find Brnine —

Austin: No, I would let you still make the roll. I think making the roll is itself a complication. I'm saying, I think what I'm suggesting, maybe I am triggering give another player confidence on the next move —

Keith: Okay, yeah, I'll do that.

Austin: If you're, happy to that. So —

Keith: Good, yeah, I'm glad that we —

Austin: Whoever rolls next on combat side, you'll get a plus, you'll get, you'll get confidence, an incredibly powerful thing that makes 1s into 6s, uh, on your next roll. Uh, I'm going to put that in the chat. Confidence — I guess, are you giving it to a particular player?

Keith: Uh... no, I think, I think, I think they can figure out who is in the best position to make that move.

Austin: Okay. Cool. Uh, I think, Phrygian, this is, again, either... I think this is read the room again.

Keith: Yeah. I have a good, I have good... uh... I have a good pitch for, uh, okay. Hold on.

Austin: Mm-hm?

Keith: What would you, what would, to you, count as a defy in a, in a conversation, in a —

Austin: Oh, this is not about the conversation at this point. Uh, but I think —

Keith: Oh, it's not?

Austin: No, this is about trying to find Brnine, right? You're looking for Brnine?

Keith: Oh, I thought that I had to ditch this conversation.

Austin: No, no, no, no. No, this is about trying to find Brnine.

Keith: Okay. Uh, so, sorry, what am I, what am I rolling here?

Austin: I think this is sense, this is, you're like —

Keith: Sense?

Austin: Yeah, mm-hm.

Keith: Okay. Makes sense.

Austin: You've wandered around this castle for the last 2 hours or something, 90 minutes.

Ali: What am I doing?

Keith: Being like, where —

Austin: Uh, you were going to try to find —

Keith: I don't know.

Ali: Where am I?

Austin: A drink, weren't you? You were just trying to go get a drink, you were trying to —

Keith: I went, last I know, I went to the wine cellar, I had a lambic, I had a, I had, I had this, this person following me around. I, somehow I lost the roll20, I don't know how that happened.

Sylvi: [laughing]

Dre: Mmm. [unintelligible] What?

Keith: I'll click around all these tabs — no, it's not here, I'm just reopening it. Okay, sense.

Austin: Ooh. Hate to see a 5.

Keith: Hey, I have a hold — no, that's not going to help.

Austin: Uh, you can still — [chuckling] no, I mean, you still did the move. I'm still going to make a move as hard as I want. But you rolled the move. You could spend that hold [chuckling] on a read the room.

0:57:53.0 You know, you could still ask one of those questions.

Dre: That's fair.

Keith: That's true, I could still ask one of those questions.

Austin: In fact, also, to be clear — on a failure, you may ask one of the above questions immediately, but the answer creates a problem or puts you in danger.

Keith: So I would have, I have two questions.

Austin: If you would like to. You can also continue to hold that hold. The bonus hold.

Keith: You know, what are we, what am I going to do?

Austin: Mm-hm.

Ali: [snorting]

Keith: Use, use it or lose it.

Austin: I gotcha.

Keith: Uh... all right. Do you want to, do you want to, do you want to make your move in between my two questions?

Austin: Uh, no, because on the failure, I'm going to — the, the move I'm going to make is, the answer creates a problem or puts you in danger, right? So —

Keith: Okay, oh, okay, got it.

Austin: This is prewritten sort of thing, you know?

Keith: Uh, but do you want that question to be the second question that I ask, or the first one?

Austin: Either.

Keith: Okay.

Austin: I'll find the right moment.

Keith: All right. Uh... what is being overlooked or obscured here?

Austin (as "Em"): And so that is the last of the ramparts. And I think that's the whole castle. I'm pretty — I don't —

Austin: Looking out over the ramparts, squinting at something that looks like a theater, maybe.

Austin (as "Em"): I don't know what that is.

Austin: Says the guest you have found yourself burdened with.

Keith: Phrygian barely looks — this was, I, I wanted small talk, and this was long talk, this was —

Ali: [giggling]

Austin: [chuckling] Big talk, yeah, uh-huh.

Keith: Phrygian was like, "I'm going to go to a party, I'm going to talk to some people —"

Austin: [laughing] Ugh.

Keith: "I'm going to have a normal time."

Austin: Amazing.

Keith: Looking, excitedly looking forward to having a normal time, and the first person that I talk to is absolutely draining me.

Austin: Mm-hm.

Sylvi: Uh-huh.

Keith: I have no desire to figure out what this thing is.

Austin: [chuckles] Perfect. What's your second question?

Keith: Uh... so, it's that room is what's being overlooked or obscured?

Austin: It's a building, it's a theater —

Keith: It's a building —

Austin: It's an entire theater on the, the end of the, the, this kind of section of the, it's not the end of the island, right, but it's like, uh, it's the end of the kind of castle grounds. It's as if a building is there that shouldn't be there.

Keith: Uh, okay. Where can I find Brnine?

Austin: Brnine? Can I talk about where you went looking for that drink?

Ali: Sure, I just, I thought this was like, uh, [chuckling] a servers walking around situation.

Austin: You know, they kept being out, and someone was like, "okay, well you have to go over here to get it, and then you have to go over here." And then someone's like, "oh, yeah, yeah, yeah, I heard they actually had the best hot toddies just outside." Uh, and the next thing you know, you are on a walkway, and there is something ethereal and otherworldly about the air. Uh, it has that sense of like, you know, uh, you see footage of people who are near storms, and their hair gets all frizzy because of like, the ionic energy in the air? It's like

that. You can smell the electronic, like the electron charge in the air. Uh, and there's a sort of long, stone walkway towards a, uh, theater. Uh, and, you see there are people gathered there. There, there are, there seem to be people inside, and there are people singing. Uh, and I don't know, you heard there were hot toddies this way.

1:01:24.9 Now, I can't make you cross this bridge, you know. You could, and maybe Brnine would, walk away from this. [chuckles] Uh, uh, but this is a strange thing, uh, in front of you.

Ali: Well, I was going to say —

Austin: Mm-hm.

Ali: That I'm looking for Jesset. So if you want to make me roll for that —

Austin: Oh, sure. No, I'm —

Ali: And assign some consequences —

Austin: [laughing] Uh, I think that, that, that — looking for Jesset's just a good idea — I think you've seen Jesset, you know that Jesset is upstairs. The, the way this thing works is like, it almost has to be, you have to get — you know what? I'll make you defy danger. How's that?

Ali: [laughing] Thank you. Thank you.

Austin: I'll make you defy danger. There's something magnetic to this, uh, uh, that's pulling you in this direction, uh, but I'm, I'm not going to just make it happen. But I will make you roll dice.

Ali: Okay, cool. Okay, cool.

Austin: Uh, I think, I think that this would be a great defy. This is a great, I'm summoning my will —

Ali: Sure. [laughing]

Austin: To defy this thing that's in front of me —

Ali: Okay, yeah.

Austin: Because it's pulling on you in that way. What's your defy score?

Ali: A plus-1.

Austin: Okay. 2D6 plus-1.

Ali: 2D6 plus-1.

1:02:47.0

Austin: Oh, that's a 10.

Ali: [giggling] It is a 10.

Austin: Look at this. Beautiful. Look at this. It's beautiful. The crowd —

Keith: The dice need you to see Jessup —

Ali: [giggling]

Austin: Yeah, uh, — Jesset, please.

Keith: Jesset.

Austin: Uh, yes, please thank you. Uh, the, the sound of the people singing, uh, inside of this theater at, at the edge of this, uh, castle, uh, is otherworldly in such a way that it, that it brings you back to your senses. [chuckles] Uh, it's like, just a little too much, uh, and you don't know what's going on in there. You don't know if that's some weird Cult of Devotion shit, you don't if that, you don't know what it is.

Ali: Can —

Austin: But you're going to go back and find Jesset. Can — yes?

Ali: Am I — okay... Brnine is a character in this universe who has had a very particular experience.

Austin: Mmm.

Ali: And in Partizan, there was something that was like, The True Divine?

Austin: There was.

Ali: Am I getting any vibes? Am I getting any deja vu situation?

Austin: Oh... it's... okay. This is, I'm going to say this out loud,

Ali: [laughing]

Austin: And you're going to like, yell at me.

Ali: Okay.

Austin: But it smells like Valence here.

Ali: Shut the fuck up. What are you talking about?

Dre: Let's go!

Sylvi: Oh my god.

Ali: What does that mean? I have to go find Jesset.

Sylvi: Oh, you know it smells like Valence in there.

Austin: [cackling]

Ali: I have to go find Jesset right now, is what I have to do.

Austin: You sure? Because there's a figure on the stage inside.

Ali: [wheezing]

Austin: You're not curious?

Dre: Does the, does the figure softly go, "awoo?"

Austin: It doesn't go, "awoo," I mean —

Ali: [laughing]

Keith: What does Valence smell like?

Ali: [wheezes]

Sylvi: Yeah, Brnine?

Ali: [cackling]

Austin: [laughing]

Ali: We're not going to make Dre answer that? I've got to answer that?

Austin: Uh, ask questions, ask, ask, ask questions and use answers, that's what I was always taught.

Dre: I don't know. Listen. If you ask me what I smell like, I don't know. I'm used to my own smell, right?

Ali: [gasping] Sure.

Austin: The shared fiction of your world is something you work on together with your players, so involve them in fleshing it out. Ask them questions.

Ali: [gasping]

Austin: About their characters and the places and concepts related to them.

Ali: [snorts]

Janine: Suddenly a bunch of people start chanting, "who's a good boy?"

Austin: [laughing]

Ali: [cracking up] Ugh... my god. Great. Uh, I, uh, what does Valence smell like? What does — I want to say like —

Dre: We were in a bathhouse together, you know what Valence smells like.

Ali: Yeah... I was going to [laughing] — I was going to say like, repair oil, because they had the famous surgery scene —

Austin: Oh, right, sure.

Dre: Mm-hm.

Ali: But. The famed surgery scene —

Austin: Famed. Uh-huh.

Dre: You know what Valence smells like?

Ali: [chuckling]

Dre: I know what it is.

Austin: Mm-hm?

Dre: What's the, what's the name of the Coke? Starlight Coke.

Austin: Starlight Coke. Wow, very sweet smell.

Sylvi: Okay.

Ali: Wow.

Dre: Because that's, because that's, because that's supposed to taste like space, right?
And Valence is gas from space, so.

Austin: Yeah, mm-hm. Right. Yep. I do think, in my mind, it is a sort of like gaseous, like, ionic, you know — smell.

Janine: Dentist gas.

Austin: What? What?

Janine: [chuckling] Dentist gas.

Austin: Dentist gas.

Dre: [chuckling]

Ali: Mmm...

Austin: Brnine? As clear a choice as possible here for your character. What are your hooks?
Your hooks aren't really related to this — well?

Ali: [chuckling] No...

Austin: No.

Ali: Can I text Jesset?

Austin: Sure. What are —

Ali: I don't want to not do this, but I also want the emotional support of [laughing] having Jesset in the scene.

Austin: Uh-huh. Uh-huh. What do you send to Jesset?

Ali: Uh... oh, I don't have a phone that has a camera. [laughing] Those don't exist in this world.

Austin: You, no — because remember, there's — we have touchscreens that can do two things now, so you could theoretically have —

Keith: You could just have it not be a touchscreen.

Austin: Right, you could have an old Nokia phone with buttons, and also an old phone, an old camera phone, you know?

Ali: Oh, that's fine, yeah, yeah, yeah, yeah, because, because, Brnine has a pocket computer.

Austin: Right.

Ali: Uh... little Pokedex situation.

Austin: Uh-huh.

Ali: Is the Poke — I'm, I'm, I'm not getting into this.

Austin: Is the Pokedex a computer? Of course the Pokedex is a computer.

Sylvi: [laughing] God.

Ali: No, I — is it —

Keith: No, the Pokedex is a little guy.

Ali: No, is it, does it have a touchscreen, is what I was going to ask. But I don't have to —

Sylvi: [unintelligible]

Austin: It doesn't have to — no, it has buttons. They should make that for real.

Ali: Uh...

Keith: They should make a Pokedex for real, and they should make it make me feel like I feel when I watch Pokemon.

Austin: Yeah.

Sylvi: Bored?

Austin: Damn!

Ali: [laughing]

Austin: You do this weeks after Ash —

Keith: What a horrible thing to say.

Austin: Finally got retire? Goddamn.

Sylvi: I'm not 12, Austin.

Austin: Hoo!

Sylvi: I thought it was a funny joke, and then I took it too far.

Austin: No, you're good.

Dre: [laughing]

Austin: I love it.

Janine: You just gotta roll into like, what's your hot Digimon take? Like, what's your, is Digimon cool?

Sylvi: Oh, that it's better than Pokemon.

Janine: Yeah, yeah, yeah.

Austin: Yeah, sure, yeah. We're all on the same —

Keith: Well, everyone knows Digimon is better than Pokemon —

Ali: We're a Yu-Gi-Oh podcast, right?

Austin: We're a Yu-Gi-Oh podcast? Wait a second.

Keith: Pokemon just feels better.

Austin: I didn't agree to this.

Ali: [laughing] Sorry, we're clearly a — well, are we a Digimon podcast?

Austin: I think we're more Digimon than Pokemon.

Keith: We're — of course we're more —

Ali: Yeah.

Keith: Digimon than Pokemon.

Dre: Oh, yeah.

Keith: Yeah, easily.

Austin: But I don't know how Yu-Gi-Oh. Yu-Gi-Oh's hot right now.

Janine: I think we're Metabots.

Sylvi: I think we're Metabots!

Keith: Oh yeah, I think we're Metabots.

Austin: Yeah, we're a little Metabots.

Sylvi: Yeah!!!!!!

Keith: I don't, I don't think I know what Metabots —

Ali: [chuckles]

Janine: The little chip that goes in their head. Oh, I wanted one of those so bad.

Austin: Can we get back to what Valence smells like, please?

Sylvi: Yeah, sorry —

Ali: [laughing]

Everyone: [chattering agreement]

Ali: Wait wait wait wait. [laughing]

Janine: Valence is a big Metabot.

Ali: I text —

Keith: Oh, these look like Beetleborg Megamen.

Ali: I text Jesset.

Sylvi: [wheezing]

Austin: What are you saying?

Ali: A picture of the bridge.

Austin: Uh-huh?

Ali: And the text reads, "come through, weird stuff." Come through, you know...

Austin: Period.

Keith: Who are you texting?

Ali: Jesset City.

Austin: You're not calling him Weird Stuff, right?

Ali: No, it's —

Austin: Okay.

Keith: Hey, Weird Stuff.

Ali: [laughing]

Dre: [laughing]

Ali: Come through —

Austin: Uh-huh?

Sylvi: Hey, Weird Stuff.

Ali: Period. Weird stuff. And then like an emoji, the emoji of the like, eeeee face, like the —

Keith: Who?

Ali: Like the showing your fea — the like, yikes.

Austin: Did you say showing your feet? What?

Sylvi: The showing your feet face, yeah, yeah, yeah, yeah.

Austin: What? What?

Sylvi: Yeah, yeah, yeah.

Ali: The yikes emoji, wait, wait, wait, sorry, sorry sorry sorry.

Janine: Teeth? Showing your teeth?

Ali: No, — yeah, showing your teeth.

Janine: Okay...

Sylvi: I think Ali was going to say, "showing your fear."

Austin: I — [laughing] I... This one?

Ali: That one. You see it?

Austin: Yeah, I see it. I thought you said, "feet."

Keith: Grimace.

Austin: I thought you said, showing your feet emoji.

Ali: Okay.

Janine: I'm so sure Ali said, "feet."

Sylvi: The emoji of the face you make when you think someone says, "the showing your feet emoji."

Ali: [laughing]

Austin: That's what it is!

Sylvi: So like, we got there in the end.

Austin: Ugh. Oh...

Janine: He has the best grip.

Ali: It's the grimacing emoji, on Discord.

Austin: I deadass was going to end this episode like, 30 minutes ago. What was, why didn't I? Now we're here.

Ali: [laughing]

Austin: Come through, weird stuff, feet. Yeah, exactly. Exactly.

Ali: [laughing]

Keith: [laughing]

Austin: Thank you Dre. Uh...

Sylvi: Brnine's in Violet Cove showing feet...

Ali: [laughing]

Austin: Uh... I think you just get, "question mark." And then, "BRT," like, be right there, uh, but doesn't know where you are, necessarily. But, you know, he's on his way.

Ali: I, I send back the running man emoji with the [chuckling] smoke behind it.

Dre: [laughing]

Ali: And then like, probably give like a, through the archway.

Keith: And, you know, not the Phrygian would know that they don't get this text, but, how does Phrygian not get this text?

Austin: You, and, I mean — yeah.

Janine: Does Phrygian have feet?

Ali: Valence and Jesset were friends.

Austin: [guffawing]

Keith: I'm on the crew!

Austin: How long do you wait for Jesset?

Ali: Like 5 minutes?

Austin: All right. Jesset's on his way —

Ali: [laughing]

Austin: But he's not here in 5 minutes.

Ali: Up until the point where it seems like — there's a crowd of people outside of the thingy. When it seems like the audience is going inside, because like the show is starting —

Austin: Oh, they're going inside, yeah. Uh-huh.

Ali: Motherfucker. Okay, I'm going inside, then.

Austin: Yeah. Uh...

Ali: [chuckling]

Austin: And we get the shot of Jesset, like, looking down at you, as you begin to walk away, like, through a window as he's like, trying to to rush down to meet up with you, but is like, stuck in a big castle, and it's like, where the fuck — you sent me a picture of, like — I went around this whole place and was like, “where's this bridge?” And that bridge isn't real, that's not a real bridge, that bridge doesn't exist for real. You're walking on a fake mystery bridge, how am I supposed to find you? That's what's happening in the background in his life right now. All the monks here are like, “I don't know... that's not here.”

Ali: [chuckling]

Austin: Is that — that's here? That's here? That's not here. And eventually, Jesset runs into Phrygian, and Em, the clear, secret triple agent, and is like, “have either of you seen this?” And Em is like, “oh, yeah, yeah, yeah. I just saw, I just saw it from the roof, actually, it's over that way.” And finally gives Jesset the right directions, and by that point, you have found your way inside of, uh, one of the Afflictions.

Ali: Oh!

Austin: Mmm.

Ali: That's too bad.

Austin: Uh-huh.

Keith: That's the boss of the minions.

Ali: This is, this is a minion? Or an Affliction?

Austin: Oh, ho-ho-ho. This is an Affliction.

Ali: Oh, that's too bad.

Keith: The boss of the minions.

Ali: Am I becoming a minion tonight? Is that what's about to happen?

Austin: You're going to become — you're — yes.

Ali: [wheezes]

Sylvi: That's what you're —

Keith: [emulating Despicable Me minion] Banana...

Austin: The —

Ali: [laughing]

Austin: Yesterday's Reprise, AKA the Ghastly Chorus, AKA the Affliction Refrain, appears as an abandoned theater, which shows up as if from nowhere, at the edge of town. Upon the stage, it is known that there is a spectral projection of someone that no one knows, or seems not to. And it's at this point that you begin to realize that the people gathered outside who have all gone inside, are ghosts. They are spectral in nature themselves. You can see through them. Uh, they have a sort of phosphorescent light to them, uh, uh, but also are translucent. And they are singing along in a sort of call and response, as a call and response chorus, with the figure up on the stage. Uh, if this thing has minions, it is these, these ghosts, which, even have an almost — it's like, they're like flickering at, at points. Uh, uh, the — your, your, uh, you go to look at your phone, and it's beginning to rust, as their song echoes in the, in the room.

1:13:30.2 Uh, their song can like, wear down machinery. Uh, and there is a figure onstage, in front of a microphone, made of —

Ali: [wheezes]

Austin: Caged gas. Not unlike your old friend, Valence. Uh, but, uh, not a, not a, not a wolf this time. Uh, sort of like a, almost like a dress form, almost like a mannequin-style humanoid body. Uh, and they tilt their head, as you move down the aisle, uh, uh, making, not eye contact, but a sort of perceptive exchange with you. Uh, what do you do?

Ali: Ugh... I feel like if you're in it, you're in it, you know?

Austin: Mm-hm.

Ali: I mean...

Keith: That makes sense.

Austin: Yeah, sure.

Ali: [giggling] Like, I can make a roll to resist. But I walked in here.

Austin: Uh-huh. Yeah. Uh-huh. You could leave. I'm not going to stop you from leaving, at this point. You went in.

Ali: Sure.

Austin: You know?

Ali: Okay, let's just say for fun... [wheezes]

Austin: Mm-hm?

Dre: Mm-hm.

Ali: If I like, made eye contact or whatever...

Austin: Mm-hm?

Ali: What's going on here?

Austin: Uh... it gestures you forward. They gesture you forward.

Ali: Oh, sure. Yeah, sure.

Austin: And say — and like, but like softly, you know? And like, uh, and, uh, my phone beeps at me. And, they gesture you forward, and I think, uh, kind of put up their other hand, as if to calm the people singing, uh, these digital ghosts, these like holographic ghosts, who, uh, get quieter and quieter, and, you know, the, the air loses some of that tense electrical charge. Uh, and your phone stops rusting. [chuckles] Uh, and your, your — you feel a little bit more at ease, or at least, things in — the air is less tense, right? Uh, uh, and, uh, it waits for you, to see if you'll step forward.

Ali: How forward are we talking here?

Keith: [laughing]

Austin: Uh, I think if you get to like, the fifth row, you know, I think they will finally speak to you.

Ali: Okay.

Austin: Uh, sort of like, if there had been a microphone set up for a Q&A session, you know what I mean? Like that close up.

Ali: [chuckling] Sure, sure.

Austin: You know, if you had a comment and not a question, you know?

Ali: I think Brnine is like, glancing around, I think they sort of do like a party nod to the, the [laughing] the ghosts, I guess, even though that's like, ridiculous. They're just trying their best.

Austin: Ah, I mean, a thing worth saying here is, if you're, if you're looking at them for real, you note that they are... it's, it's not the same, I want to be clear it's not the same. But, there's like, if you walked into a, a, you know, a theater, and everyone there was dressed like pilgrims, or like samurai, or like, you know, or like, tradespeople from the 1200s in Iran — these are people who are not dressed like you. Uh, and, and when I say like that, I don't, I mean that in the — oh, these people aren't from my time and place. I don't mean literally they are dressed like samurai. Uh, uh, in fact, the thing that they are dressed closest to that the camera and that the viewer would recognize is people from the Divine Fleet, and the Twilight Mirage. If these are ghosts, it is, they are ghosts from another era. And I think the figure, uh, who seems, themselves, to be a sort of spectral, emanation, in the shape of a Nobel, the species for which you knew Valence was from, says —

Austin (as Refrain): Welcome to the theater. Are you looking for anything? You seem lost.

Ali (as Brnine): Uh, no, I, uh, [clears throat] I, uh... I was just curious, so I, uh, thought I'd stop by.

Austin (as Refrain): Are you hoping to join us in a more permanent way?

Ali (as Brnine): Oh, I'm — I, I have commitments.

Austin: They nod. Uh, almost relieved that you wouldn't commit to this.

Austin (as Refrain): That's good. My name is Lattice. What's yours?

Ali (as Brnine): Uh, I'm Calvin Brnine. Pleasure to meet you.

Austin (as Lattice): A pleasure. Not many speak with Us.

Ali (as Brnine): Oh, yeah? You're not, uh, meeting people at the big party outside?

Austin (as Lattice): We come to share our knowledge, and our gifts, and find ourselves rejected.

Ali (as Brnine): Eee.

Keith: [laughing]

Dre: Oh, whoa, yikes, woo, I'm tugging my collar, whoa, whoa, whoa, whoa.

Austin: [laughing]

Ali: [giggling] Uh... yeah. Uh... like, nervously glancing over shoulder again, not sure what they've gotten into.

Austin: Mm-hm.

Ali (as Brnine): Rejected by, uh, by who? With the big brass? Or, uh...

Austin (as Lattice): Rejected by the people who run this world. Rejected by the people who ruined it. Rejected by the people who decided they were better than paradise.

Ali (as Brnine): Yeah, well...

Austin (as Lattice): I apologize. It's easy to find myself getting angry. And We had only the best intentions.

Ali (as Brnine): Uh, no, yeah, I mean, you know... it's, uh, you know, I've been there. I haven't been there, but, you know, we all find ourselves, uh, uh... underfoot, I suppose, [chuckling] in our own ways. [laughing]

Austin: [laughing]

Ali: I know, I'm sorry. I didn't know what else to say. [laughing]

Austin: Uh-huh!

Keith: We all find ourselves what in our own way?

Austin: Underfoot. Underfoot in our own ways.

Keith: [laughing]

Ali: [laughing] I didn't — [wheezes]

Sylvi: You know.

Keith: By the way, have you seen this emoji? [laughing]

Ali: [laughing] I hate everyone.

Sylvi: [laughing]

Ali: I didn't say foot. I said it this time because it was relevant.

Sylvi: Uh-huh. Uh-huh.

Austin: Unlike last time, when I'm glad you're admitting you said it now, thank you.

Ali: *I didn't!*

Sylvi: [chuckling]

Austin: Oh my god, Janine, absolutely, I'm not reading that one out loud.

Dre: [chuckling]

Sylvi: What, you're not going to read, "Come through, I'm underfoot." With the little squiggly mouth?

Austin: [laughing]

Keith: [laughing]

Ali: [cackling]

Sylvi: You're not going to read that, Austin? What's wrong?

Austin: Well, I'm glad someone did. Uh... sometimes you have to make a dare.

Sylvi: That's why you guys keep me around.

Austin: Yeah, uh-huh.

Ali: [chuckling]

Austin (as Lattice): We refuse to be. No more.

Ali (as Brnine): Yeah, I mean, that's the, the — for the Cause. Right?

Austin (as Lattice): The Cause?

Austin: And a calming. There's, there's like a, the —

Ali: [chuckling]

Austin: Whatever attitude this speaker has, kind of shifts the entire energy of the room, and even like the colors of the ghosts shift. And so, you know, it's a very on-its-nose thing, but like, when angry, you know, bright warm colors, oranges and reds, and, and now that you said the Cause, cooler colors, uh, uh, you know, begin to spread through the, the group.

Austin (as Lattice): Does someone take up arms again, against the perpetrators?

Ali (as Brnine): Uh... yeah. Buh, yeah.

Austin (as Lattice): Will more die in a futile fight?

Ali (as Brnine): Oh, well, I mean... people are dying. Uh... I mean, they would anyway, is what I'm trying to say is, is, you know, sometimes you've gotta, uh... Weird you don't know about that.

Austin (as Lattice): Like I said, very few people accept our invitation.

Ali (as Brnine): Mmm. Mm-hm.

Austin (as Lattice): You seem familiar with our form.

Ali (as Brnine): Oh, yeah! I mean, yeah! I've, I've, you know. I'm, I'm well-traveled. Uh...

Austin (as Lattice): I am... —

Austin: Dropping the “we,” here.

Austin (as Lattice): Unique. How... how could you know someone like me?

Ali (as Brnine): Me? Oh, I, uh... you know, you know, you know a guy. You, you work with people, and, uh... yeah. Yeah, I, uh, you know, old friends. Uh...

Austin (as Lattice): You knew a Nobel?

Ali (as Brnine): Is that what you —

Ali: Would I know that, would I have, is that term familiar to me?

Austin: Valence definitely said the Nobel, right?

Ali: Okay. Okay.

Dre: Yeah. Yeah. Yeah.

Ali (as Brnine): Uh, yes, yes, yeah. I can say that I do. Where, where have you been this whole time? Not that you, I mean, just, I, you know, you've been —

Austin: [laughs]

Ali: [wheezes]

Ali (as Brnine): You came to Palisade?

Austin (as Lattice): We came together, we came as an — an archive, in the final days. We feared — the Fleet was being destroyed, and we saw ourselves, we pushed our minds into steel, so that something would be left behind. Uh, a snapshot, uh, a, a recording, some, some mention of what regular days would be like. We are, we are living memory, we are, we are, we are the Refrain. We are what happened once and will again. We left the Fleet. I left the Fleet. I was alone in the Fleet. I left the Nobel. We were conquerers. I left the Nobel. I did not wish to be a conquerer. I fled as far as I could. I came here, to the Fleet, and found the Fleet would be conquered too. I fled. I came with... Palisade. Palisade and Antiquity, and the others, I came here, and... we were crushed. In time, we were crushed. We were crushed, and we won't be again. We won't be. Are you sure you won't join us? We could use new perspectives.

Ali (as Brnine): Let me... run something by you. Which is... uh, I, I mean, you're not — [struggles]

Ali: [wheezes] Okay. Brnine isn't this bad at enlisting someone to Millennium Break, but is also speaking to like —

Austin: I mean —

Ali: A ghost monster.

Austin: Yeah, uh-huh.

Ali: [chuckling]

Austin: I, I mean, I, you know, yeah. Like, to, to translate a little bit here, whatever this thing is, uh, is claiming to have been part of the original group that came to Palisade. Uh...

Ali: Mm-hm. And I think, I think Brnine is like, half-remembering Partial Palisade's story here.

Austin: Mm-hm. Mm-hm.

Ali: And like, fitting puzzle pieces together, but it, can't see the picture of the cat yet, you know? Just like, meaningless, like —

Austin: Uh-huh.

Ali: There's a bridge here, but there's no understanding.

Austin: Right.

Ali: Uh...

Austin: You would love to make an Affliction be on the side of Millennium Break and the Cause. You understand that this Affliction is opposed to the Bilateral Intercession, and the Divine Principality, and presumably conquest of all sorts. And yet, also, how the fuck do you talk to a — have you ever talked to a ghost before?

Ali: [chuckling] Right.

Austin: Like, yeah.

Ali: And like, I, I, yeah. I don't even know that Brnine's mind is like, "Affliction," so far as like —

Austin: Right, right.

Ali: You know, I'm in a haunted house, and I've met someone who I think should be part of Millennium Break, and like, what does that — how does that change your... uh, you know, ability to interact, or for Brnine, it is making them seriously awkward. But, I, I think they do try to do the thing of like —

Ali (as Brnine): I, I, I, I said I have commitments, but we have, uh, ideals that are aligned. And, and goals that are aligned. Uh, so, uh...

Ali: Like, glancing at their phone. [chuckling]

Austin: I think that you are... I believe that you're trying to exchange blows with talk!

Ali: [laughing] Am I? Is that what I'm doing?

Keith: That's allowed. That's in there.

Austin: Yeah, it's in here.

Ali: Am I doing that?

Austin: I think so.

Ali: All right.

Austin: Maybe you're not trying to provoke somebody, but you are trying to, I mean... you are, but in the sense of like, bring them on board, you know?

Ali: Where are the, where are the moves?

Keith: Yeah.

Ali: Moves and rules.

Austin: They're under moves and rules. Yeah. Uh-huh.

Keith: This is, I think it's definitely exchange blows.

1:28:29.5

Austin: But I don't think that they're defenseless to you, because of how they're an Affliction, you know? I mean, I guess you could be...

Ali: This isn't a dispel uncertainties?

Austin: No, because that's your own uncertainties.

Ali: Oh, oh, sure sure sure sure, yeah, yeah, yeah.

Austin: Which, like, you could also be doing that, that's fine. But you're not going to convince them. And I don't think that they're defenseless. I mean, this is one of those things that I still have to work out in my own head about, what's defenseless mean, inside of a realm of a character being convinced of something, do you know what I mean?

Ali: Right. Then this wouldn't be like a weather the storm, then?

Austin: I think that, it's a weather the storm for you to be like, not compelled to do stuff. Uh, but you're not —

Ali: Okay, yeah, okay, then let me just roll plus talk.

Austin: I mean, if your goal is — yeah, roll plus talk. I mean, that's what it is, and I think that it's, you're trying to open up the possibility space of bringing them on board.

Ali: Yeah.

Austin: To me, that is trying to give them adjectives, effectively, that, that make them curious, for instance.

Ali: Okay, yeah, yeah, yeah.

Austin: So, go ahead and — what is your talk?

Ali: Uh, it is zero.

Austin: Oh, it's zero. Okay. Do you have anything that's going to be a benefit here? No.

Ali: Uh...

Austin: No, you don't believe you do.

Ali: I do not. I do not, at this moment.

Austin: 2D6 plus zero.

Ali: Okay. Yeah, sorry.

Austin: No, let's do it. Aw...

Ali: Awwww!

Austin: You love to see it!

Ali: That's not fair.

Austin: You love to see a 3. You love to see it.

Ali: I just, I wanted to have —

Keith: That could barely be worse.

Ali: I wanted to enlist the monster.

Austin: I, you know, and I think —

Keith: Uh, I have a question.

Austin: Yep. Sure.

Keith: Is this the last... is this the... could Ali be rolling with confidence right now?

Austin: This is, no, because you have given, you're talking about using —

Keith: It has to be the other side.

Austin: I'll, I'll — what does the move say? It says — you know? It doesn't, it doesn't — it says give another player confidence on their next move.

Keith: It doesn't say. Give another player confidence.

Austin: It doesn't say, on the sortie side of things, right?

Keith: No, it doesn't.

Austin: It just says, give another player. And you did not declare who it was.

Keith: Yeah.

Austin: And that would turn it from a 1 to a 6. If it was confidence.

Ali: From a 1 to a 6? Wait, how.

Austin: Yeah, confidence — confidence —

Keith: Yes, confidence — yeah.

Austin: Says treat 1s as 6s.

Ali: [gasps] [whispering] Can I have the confidence? [laughing]

Keith: Yeah, do it.

Dre: Do it!

Ali: [laughing]

Sylvi: If there's one word I can think of to describe Calvin Brnine, it's confidence.

Dre: Especially this whole scene —

Austin: [cracking up]

Dre: And the way that you handled it.

Sylvi: Uh-huh.

Austin: It's confidence? Yeah, it's confidence.

Dre: Yeah, it's confidence, baby.

Austin: All right. Uh... I, I think that you have given this, this Affliction the risk, “curious.” But you're also taking a risk.

Ali: Please, hit me with it.

1:31:20.7

Austin: Uh, I mean you have to tell me. You're the risk — risks are given by the individual who receives them.

Ali: Sure.

Austin: Uh, but I would imagine, in my mind, there is something, I don't, I don't know. Do you want to emphasize the creepiness, do you want to emphasize the weird Valence memories, do you want to emphasize the...

Ali: [chuckling]

Austin: What do you, what is the emotional place you have been pushed into?

Ali: I think I'm just going to say vulnerable.

Austin: Vulnerable makes sense.

Ali: And that covers a lot of ground. Yeah.

Austin: Mm-hm. Uh... and they say back to you —

Austin (as Lattice): Why should we join you, when you could join us? We sense your confusion. We sense your belief. We will... we have lasted for so long. Our reach is further than your Cause is. Our... stability greater. And your perspective would mean the world to us. So, why should we join you, instead of the reverse?

1:32:41.3

Ali (as Brnine): Well, I'm a we. Well, I, you would be joining a we. Instead of just, you know, having me. Uh. Which is, you know, there's a difference there in my mind. Uh, but, uh, uh. You know, loyalty counts for something, doesn't it?

Ali: [giggling]

Austin: I think, very directly, it asks you *the* question, right? Which is —

Austin (as Lattice): We have seen so many come to this place with conquest in their mind, with cruelty in their hearts. The New Earth Hegemony, the Advent Group, the Rapid Evening, the Divine Free States. The most heartbreaking of them all, as we saw our old home turned against us. Why will your group succeed against these? Against conquest itself? When so many others who fought against it failed? How will your group save this world, when we couldn't?

1:34:21.9

Austin: And this, I'm truly pulling on your hook here.

Ali: [giggling]

Austin: You will prove that Millennium Break can change lives, Calvin Brnine.

Ali: I will. I will do my best... [whispers] What the fuck is... [snorts]

Austin: So what is the case to be made for Millennium Break? What makes y'all different than everyone else who fucked up in the past?

Ali: Uh...okay, I'm going to... [laughing] I'm going to talk through this abstractly.

Austin: Yes, please.

Ali: And if it gets to an in-character moment, then we can get there. But I am tired. So I think that — [laughing]

Austin: I thought we'd be done a while ago, so, yeah, uh-huh.

Ali: Uh...

Austin: And I think we're going to make one more roll from this, and we will call it there, so...

Ali: Sure, sure sure sure. Uh, but I do think that the, the case that Brnine wants to make is that... Millennium Break is one that fights from a wounded position.

Austin: Mm-hm.

Ali: And I think that there's a way to spin wounded into... not like, gallant or whatever, right, but like... mmm... I, I think it's the thing of like... the, the — there's like, there's like a way to meet in the middle in terms of the caution of like, we've seen these things repeat over and over and over again. And I think that Brnine, personally, can speak from the level in terms of like, I've lived in war my entire life.

Austin: Mm-hm.

Ali: And, uh, the like perspective that you have of like, being able to speak to a time of peace is like, not even a privilege that the people that I fight with do.

Austin: Right.

Ali: Uh, so I think that Brnine tries to like, meet in the middle of this like, same sort of like, like death by a thousand strikes, or whatever. But, by like [laughing] I don't know, but, but like, trying to flatten the argument in terms of like... [giggling] We're not going to fuck up because like, we, we know — we've been fucked up at, you know? [cackling]

Austin: Oh, okay. Right. No, I get the, I get the heart of this, right, which is like — you are not an outside thing being conquered, you are a thing from inside that has faced — you've, you've grown out of this thing already, which is already something bigger than, than many

other attempts at this. So... I think this is the moment to roll strike decisively and see how this goes.

Ali: Okay, perfect.

Austin: Uh, no more confidence. You've spent your confidence.

Ali: Okay.

Austin: No more advantages, unless you have moves, which I don't think you do, about this. Uh... I think it's talk, and it's a plus-0, it's just going to be, it's going to come down to this 2D6.

Ali: It's just going to be another roll 2D6.

Austin: It straight-up is.

Ali: [clears throat] Enter.

Austin: Ugh...

Ali: That is, that is a, that is a double snake eyes.

Austin: That is a four. That is a four.

Dre: Is that —

Austin: And it says —

Janine: Double snakes.

Austin: Double snakes, it says double snakes.

Ali: Uh-huh. [snorts]

Keith: Mmm.

Sylvi: Mm-hm.

Austin: I think the, the figure on the stage, uh, Lattice, was, was their name, [sighs] and says —

Austin (as Lattice): Calvin Brnine, it was a pleasure to meet you.

Austin: And then in an instant, they're all gone. And the doors open, and Jesset comes in, and Phrygian, if you want to be here, along with your double agent [chuckles] hanger-on, you can also be here, in this empty theater, which will vanish by the morning.

Ali: I think Brnine just —

Austin (as Jesset): Yeah, this is —

Ali: Go ahead.

Keith: Honest.

Ali: [laughing] I think Brnine looks at Jesset and just says —

Ali (as Brnine): I fucked up.

Austin (as Jesset): [slowly] It's a good theater.

Austin: Says Jesset.

Austin (as Jesset): What'd you fuck up?

Ali (as Brnine): There was a... There was a person here, and, and I was talking to them, and I thought that... I just didn't say it right, I guess...

Austin: He sort of squints at you. The monk who has hung along here is like,

Austin (as "Em"): This place isn't supposed to be here, by the way. This isn't, this isn't, this isn't supposed to be here. On the castle grounds. I know the castle grounds, and this isn't supposed to be here. So. Just as a detail. To add.

Austin: And I think Jesset looks at you, Phrygian, with the most sympathetic look anyone has ever given another person —

Ali: [chuckling]

Austin: In the like, "I cannot believe you've put up with this, this whole time."

Keith: [chuckling] Uh, yeah, I also can't.

Austin (as Jesset): Anyway, Brnine, I'm sure it's fine, around it'll — there's always another opportunity. I got you a drink.

Austin: Holding up a, I guess a glass of this lambic.

Austin (as Jesset): We should get back to the party, I think Mourning is going to speak soon.

Ali (as Brnine): Yeah, chill, yeah. Uh, thanks.

Austin: And it's not long after you leave that this place does vanish, to appear somewhere else on Palisade.

Ali: Can I start a gravity clock or something? I kind of like — [giggling]

Austin: Oh yeah, I think that that's, yeah. You want to declare a rival? No, yeah, you can use your last gravity clock for —

Ali: Aw...

Austin: For, for Refrain, the Affliction Refrain. Or Lattice, the —

Ali: Oh, boy.

Austin: The ghost of a Nobel who came to the Twilight Mirage in its — or, not to the Twilight Mirage, to the Divine Fleet before the Twilight Mirage, and then left it, with Palisade.

Ali: Oh, sure sure sure sure. Okay, yeah, yeah, yeah.

Austin: Mm-hm. But I think probably —

Ali: Those are two separate things? Was Lattice a minion, or no?

Austin: I, it's, they're not. Lattice is inside of Affliction, inside of the Affliction —

Ali: Okay.

Austin: And is like, able to separate themselves, sort of, kind of. Uh, I mean, this is about as close as we're, we're getting to like, the truth of what this Affliction is, uh, which is like, tied to this initial group of, of people who came to Palisade, uh, and was, I mean, my literal note here is, "built early into the attacks on the Fleet as a sort of living, now undead archive, a collection of limited-consciousness synthetic copies of people, who donated themselves to the project, meant as a snapshot of the small things about the Divine Fleet's most utopian era." The speaker, who you, who you, who's up on the, the stage, changes, uh, every time

the theater emerges. And it's always someone the visitor could never have known. And it was just, one of those lucks of the draw —

Ali: [snorts]

Austin: You walked in when it was the one Nobel, who happened to find their way to the Divine Fleet, 6,000 years ago, or whatever, you know? Uh, so, there you go.

[MUSIC - "[Nothing is Stationary](#)" plays]