

PARTIZAN 47: Operation Shackled Sun: Act 3: The Stories Told About the Things We Do

Transcriber: carrie z

[timestamp 00:00:01]

[Recap]

Austin: When that shot goes in that clears the hangar, it's as if something or someone inside says, "It is time to start this." And...

[**Music:** Jack de Quidt's "[PRIORITY. FLASHOVER. PRIORITY.](#)" begins playing]

...the pink and blue clouds all around you shift in color as the Portcullis gate begins to open. And the clouds become dark maroons and reds, bright magma-colored orange - the planet begins to heat up as energy begins to pour in. Operation Shackled Sun is beginning. And you are the people closest to stopping it.

The guards, who've now come into the room, begin to raise their guns, and then drop them as they see Mow stand up.

Jack (as **Guard**): There's a gorilla in this trash room!

Austin: Yeah. Uh-huh. And it's bigger than all of us put together.

Keith (as **Phrygian**): I take it you've all surrendered.

Austin: You hear that same violin sound, except it keeps growing until it's a roar. That is the screech of the Divine Imperium as it launches from the Curtain fleet to the north.

Jack (as **Kalar**): Take these down. Impecunious. Fracas. Hubris. Apostate.

Ali (as **Broun**): [overlapping] Wait. Wait. Wait!

Jack (as **Kalar**): Foolproof. Flamboyant. Incise. Broun, are you getting this?

Ali (as **Broun**): What are you saying?

Austin: There is a group of people standing in front of security monitors seeing you come through the halls and seeing you cut through this person. Logos Kantel sees this, and someone leans over and whispers, and says,

Austin (as **Pact Official**): Do you see, my Prophet. These people who want to kill you are coming. We need to hurry, quickly.

Austin: Everything begins to shudder, as above the planet of Girandole, a single figure begins to glow, caught in the beam between the Lattice and Girandole and the Portcullis down below in it. And that figure is the body of Motion, inside of the Demiurgos. And it has now been completely charged with that energy. And more importantly, as that water begins to rumble, Motion speaks through the systems in this room to you three, Sovereign Immunity and Millie and Broun, and says,

Austin (as **Motion**): It would have been nice to use the Prophet. But we can use me instead.

[**Music** ends.]

Austin: Welcome to Friends at the Table, an actual play podcast focused on critical worldbuilding, smart characterization, and fun interaction between good friends. I am your host Austin Walker, and today we are finishing our season of PARTIZAN. Season 6 of Friends at the Table comes to a conclusion today. Uh, we are continuing to play “War in the Year 1424 of the Perfect Millennium”, a hack of the “War in the Year 3000” by Ben Roswell, with additional inspiration from “Follow” and “Fiasco”. Also, just one more shoutout to Austin Ramsay for “Beam Saber”, a game that completely kicked ass and got us here. So, could not have done it without that game. I think we meshed really well with it. Um, uh, joining me today! Arthur Martinez-Tebbel.

Art: Hey! You can find me on Twitter @ atebbel. And you know what, I think I’m going to skip the Fangamer plug this week.

Austin: Mm. All that stuff is... [sigh] I guess it’s closer to hitting people’s homes today than it is when you last heard us. That’s just time.

Art: Yeah, the hoodie problem should be over by now, and the Aria shirts are closer than ever before.

Austin: Yeah. You know. Out of our control, in this case.

Art: Yeah.

Austin: Alicia Acampora.

Ali: Hi! You can find me over @ ali_west on Twitter. Um, and I would announce a second thing, but it - I don’t - it hasn’t been named yet! [Laughs] So...

Austin: No, but it’s out. People should go to our Twitters and find a link.

Ali: Yeah, there’s a Star Wars podcast out there, somewhere, in the future. Enjoy it.

Austin: It's out by now. By the time you're hearing this.

Dre: [crosstalk] Oh yeah...

Ali: [crosstalk] Yeah.

Keith: [crosstalk, incredulous] There's a - there's a Star Wars podcast?

Ali: [sighs]

Austin: [crosstalk] Yes. We - go ahead.

Ali: So me, and Austin Walker, and Natalie Watson, and Rob Zacny are doing a Clone Wars rewatch podcast.

Keith: Clone Wars. Okay.

Ali: Uh, yeah. We started with The Phantom Menace, cause you know, you gotta start [nasally] 'from the beginning'. Uh, but yeah, that's out there!

Austin: [crosstalk] But not the actual - not the - not the movie beginning. Just the beginning of clones.

Ali: [laughs] Yes.

Austin: You gotta get - you gotta - I think some of us have not seen those movies in a long time, or at all, and so it was best to start there.

Ali: Yeah.

Austin: So that's out there. We're down to two names, but we don't know which one we're picking, so, you know, we'll see. Uh, anyway! Also joining us, Sylvia Clare.

Sylvi: Hi, I'm Sylvi. You can find me on Twitter @ sylvisurfer, or listen to my other podcast Emojidrome wherever you listen to your podcasts.

Austin: Andrew Lee Swan.

Dre: Hi, you can find me on Twitter @ swandre3000.

Austin: Uh, and, Janine Hawkins.

Janine: Hey, you can find me on Twitter @ bleatingheart.

Austin: And Keith Carberry.

Keith: Hi, my name's Keith Carberry. You can find me on Twitter @ keithjcarberry, and you can find the Let's Plays that I do at youtube.com/runbutton,

Austin: It sounded like you had another thing. It sounded like you were like, "dot runbutton, comma," but no.

Keith: No. I mean, you can go - you can go to our Patreon, contentburger.biz, and watch Shenmue there. You should do that.

Austin: You should do that.

Ali: Yeah.

Austin: It's very good. Um, I think that's everybody. Uh, I'm looking, I'm only looking at -

Jack: [crosstalk] I'm, I'm - I'm Jack -

Dre: Oh, Jack.

Austin: Oh. Jack, you're not logged in either! [Everyone laughs] Sorry. I'm looking at the bottom of Roll20 and neither you nor Keith is here, so it threw me off.

Jack: [crosstalk] Oh! Oh, at the bottom of Roll20!

Dre: Damn.

Sylvi: [laughing, muffled] Oh my god.

Austin: Yes. Apologies.

Jack: [mock-hurt] Austin, we've known each other for 15 years. [Ali laughs]

Austin: I thought I had already said your name. Hi, Jack. Jack's here.

Ali: [incredulous] Fifteen.

Austin: 15 years is also not true at all. [Everyone laughs]

Janine: [laughing] What?

Jack: I know, it's just -

Austin: Close enough.

Jack: Um, you can find me on twitter @ notquitereal and buy any of the music featured on the show, and on any future shows, at notquitereal.bandcamp.com

Austin: Wait, *any* future shows?!

Janine: [laughs] Masked Singer?

Keith: [crosstalk] Get ready. Masked Dancer music, notquitereal.bandcamp.com.

Janine: Masked Driver?!

Austin: [laughing] Masked Dancer, Masked Driver!

Jack: [crosstalk] Who's driving?

Austin: If you want to hear us talk about the Masked Driver, or - sorry, "The Masked Singer" [Keith laughs], or the spinoff we've created, "Who's Driving, A Masked Singer Spinoff Show", uh, you should also subscribe to us on Patreon, at friendsatthetable.cash, where for one dollar you can hear all of the pre-show banter that we do as we catch up with each other before recording episodes. And that's for a buck. There's also a ton of other stuff, including other campaigns, uh, one-shots, live games, um, notes, uh, behind the scenes stuff, uh, and there are a bunch of different tiers you can check out, friendsatthetable.cash, or search for Friends at the Table on Patreon. Um, by the time this goes up, we'll be mostly caught up with our, you know, many of our things. We'll still be back, probably, Drawing Maps, but that'll be ramping back up, as we are about to begin a new season, my guess is. So, some, some room for that. Um, what else? Anything else, any other announcement type things? Uh, we will probably take off next week, and then the week after that will be a post-mortem episode.

Ali: Hello. Post-Mortem update from the future. The PARTIZAN Post-Mortem is going to be live-streamed on our YouTube channel on Saturday, January 30, at 4 PM Eastern Time. You can send your questions, if you have questions, to tipsatthetable@gmail.com. And if you're sending a question, please, please, please, put "PARTIZAN Post-Mortem" or "PZN PM" in the title. Again, that's going to be [slowly] January 30, 4 PM, Eastern Time. That's a Saturday. You shouldn't be busy. You can come tune in and come hang out. But if you are busy, and if you don't make the stream, it's going to be in the feed the following thursday, so you'll be able to hear it, and it'll be all good there.

Um, yeah, come, come hang out with us! Say farewell to PARTIZAN with us. The link to the stream will probably be on our Twitter, and that is friends_table, so look out for that there. And we'll probably make a Patreon post about it, just so it, like, goes to people's emails. But yeah, if

you're not backing us on Patreon, but if you wanna tune in, keep an eye on twitter.com/friends_table, on [slowly] Saturday, January 30, at 4 PM Eastern Time.

[timestamp 00:08:49]

Austin: So. [deep inhale] Partizan. Where are we?

Art: Act 3, baby!

Janine: Dinner party. D- dinner.

Austin: Oh yeah, it says here, "Dinner Party", so that must be where we are.

Ali: [crosstalk] Yaaay!

Janine: [crosstalk] Dinner partyyy!

Sylvi: Ugh, finally.

Ali: Bring in the rolls, wink wink.

Jack: [exasperated] God - damn it -

Sylvi: [exasperated] Oh, god.

Jack: Didn't Motion - didn't -

Austin: Yeah, Motion showed up.

Jack: Didn't the Divine Motion just become a god?

Austin: Well...

Jack: Or...

Austin: Became infused - became a conduit for?

Jack: Yeah.

Austin: Is, like, is... standing in a beam of energy. Is pulling a beam of energy out through this gate, uh, which is like, you know, has been stabilized, but is now still coursing with the energy of Autonomy Itself. And it's running through her, and her mech, the Demiurge, and also the pilot, Laurel. Um, and then also still going into the Lattice, which is that diamond shape on the right-hand side of the screen. Um, where, honestly, it is a - it is probably, like, powering that shit

up more. That said, we did note that there are kind of the Pact - the normal Pact folks have started to kind of like try to get out of dodge, because it seems like this is going bust, and this is more of Motion - not going rogue, but, like, sticking with the plan longer than she was supposed to. Kind of getting desperate. But people who are desperate can do a lot of damage. As this, kind of, mech glowing with energy - to the point that, like, I don't even know that it's fair to - like, what does a mech that can control the Perennial Wave, form things out of the Perennial Wave, and now is charged with a seemingly endless amount of power - what is that capable of doing?

I should also note, at least two members of GLORY have not been accounted for, or have gotten away. One is Apotesa, who, uh, Sylvi, Millie did not pull the trigger on, right? Um, uh, I believe that's what happened, right?

Sylvi: Yeah.

Austin: You ended up sneaking into that door and getting away. But also Kleos, who is like the martial artsy, like, smarmy one who fought Cas'alea in the Auspice episode, also has not come up here. They've both, I think, probably, gotten out of dodge. Maybe they'll come up again, this episode, or in a season. You know, or, you know, next - in Season 8, maybe they'll be back. But at least two members of GLORY have fucking cut and run at this point. [chuckles]

So, yeah. What else - what else is going on? I feel like we left half of the team on the Reflecting Pool. The other half was still down on the Portcullis. But we can come in wherever we want. Um, there was a big fight. There were big fights everywhere. Um, other details. Am I missing any important fiction details before we talk numbers? [pause]

Um, I feel like, in general, the way that this battle has gone is that, like, now that the Pact is thinning out, what we're getting is some more direct fight between the Curtain and the Reflecting Pool slash Millennium Break group. And that is not gonna go great in the long run. But Motion showing up has kind of - my guess is we could have told a little mini-story about how the Curtain was about to fall on the Reflecting Pool in a real way, and then Motion drew a big fucking target on her back. But also, she's just able to like, sweep her hand and a huge beam of energy stretches out across the sky and cuts through a bunch of Curtain ships. You know? It's - that is the shit that is happening here. We are truly in "End of Eva" style, scale is broken, style mech shit at this point.

Um, if there's no other fiction stuff, we should talk numbers, just to get the stakes clear. The stakes and the rules clear, I guess.

In the first act, y'all totaled 9 Cool. In the second act, you totaled 11 Doubt. The third act is different in two big ways. Um, the first is that unlike previous acts, the outcome of Act 3 is not left up to a loose overall interpretation. Instead, players are required to succeed at more rolls than they fail. More than half of the rolls need to be successes in order to secure final victory - in this case, defeating Motion, ending the threat of Operation Shackled Sun, and scattering the Pact away from - or these Pact forces away from Partizan at the very least. Um, if the number of

successful rolls is tied with the number of failures, there's a thing, but we have an odd number of players, so that just won't happen. So we just won't worry about the - what happens in a tie situation here.

Second, the outcome of Act 3 can double previously earned Cool or Doubt points. Actually, Cool and Doubt points, depending on the outcome. After completing the final scene, players will then tally up their previous points, like in previous acts, and then once you've tallied them, and spun stuff, and you're set, then, some stuff happens. If you're successful, if you get more wins than losses in this act, then whatever your final tallied direction is - so if you end with Cool, for instance - then all previous act totals that match that type get doubled. So, for instance, if you got - if you won with Cool, here, that means that that previous round, that previous act that had 9 Cool, would now have 18 Cool. Um, and in fact, I think that the way this is written - let me just double-check, buh-buh-buh-buh-buh - If characters succeed in Act 3, double *all* act point totals, including this one. So that act would also double. So for example, per the writeup I have here, if players scored 6 Doubt in Act 1, and 21 Cool in Act 2, and then succeeded in Act 3 with 5 Doubt, that 6 Doubt in Act 1 would become 12, that Act 3 5 Doubt would become 10, and they would get 22 Doubt, which would make it - you would have more Doubt than Cool at the end there. At that point, you're still in that middle zone, so it doesn't quite matter, but - but you could see how there could be some big swings here.

The reason that this happens is that victory has a certain way of amplifying certain aspects of a story. When heroes win the day in a powerfully Cool manner, the path they took there doesn't matter as much. When iconoclastic insurgents, on the other hand, get one over on the establishment and throw the status quo into Doubt, it doesn't matter how heroic they looked on the way there. What matters is at the end of the day, the big win was a Doubt win.

Um, it's possible that there is a tie in Act 3, and we end up with 0 points, at which point we'll talk through what we want to do per the rules. You could decide to spin a previous roll that hadn't been spun, you could decide that it makes sense to push Cool instead of pushing Doubt, you could decide to leave it up to a final roll, but whatever that mechanism is, we would have to decide as a group that that mechanism sits well with us before we move forward.

So all that is if we win. If we win Act 3. If you lose Act 3, if more than half - if half or more - I guess it's more than half - if more than half of the turns are failures, then you double both previous act point totals. You don't double Act 3, just the previous ones. So in our case, that'd mean lifting - doubling both the 9 Cool and the 11 Doubt to 18 Cool and 22 Doubt. Uh

What that all means at the end of the day - and the reason for that, I guess, fictionally, is that everyone wants to be, or play Monday morning quarterback. If something goes wrong, all that old shit gets looked at under a microscope. All your little successes and failures get over-emphasized in a way that kind of diminishes, maybe, how close you even were to succeeding. And so, so that means that all those past things really matter.

Uh, and I'll note again: like, I think this is an act where - winning is not hard where you can roll 3 dice and even one success counts as a success, right? What ends up being the thing here though, is, if you want to start gaming these numbers, maybe you end up rolling Doubt instead of Cool even though you're better at Cool, or vice versa. There's a lot on the table in terms of how you can direct the future of Millennium Break here, and so it might be the case that you take less fortunate rolls, or that you take - or you refuse to take a hedge where in previous rounds you would have. Because it's not just about winning, it's about the outcome of your total thing. Your - of what Millennium Break would be.

Art: Um, can I have a clarification here?

Austin: Yes, absolutely.

Art: Just for the record. We're continuing that it's completely forbidden for us to discuss what we want out of the end, until it's over, right?

Ali: [crosstalk] No.

Austin: [crosstalk] No. That has never been a rule. Ever.

Art: It's - I think it's right here. [Everyone laughs] If you say what you want...

Austin: No.

Art: ...out of this game...

Austin: Nope.

Art: ...you're off the podcast. [Accidentally pronounces "off" somewhat like "Alf"]

Austin: It does - I did write that, which is weird, since I -

Janine: You're Alf the podcast.

Austin: You're Alf. You're Alf, comma, The Podcast.

Art: You're Alf, the Podcast.

Austin: Alf, colon, The Podcast. Which won a Hugo this year, did you know that? They made an exception for podcasts.

Art: [crosstalk] For Alf: The Podcast?

Sylvi: [crosstalk] Well, it was a fancast, so...

Dre: [crosstalk] An Alfcast.

Austin: [crosstalk] For us. Yeah, it was a fancast. You're right.

Art: Oh, my God.

Austin: Give us a Hugo. That's my - that's my claim.

Jack: Hugo. If you're listening. [Austin laughs]

Ali: We'd like one.

Austin: Come through. Um, here is where we're at. I did some math. I think this math is right. Keith checked my math, at a certain point, correctly. If you win Act 3 - if you're successful in 4 of the 7 turns - and you get 4 or more Doubt, you will get the "Burn Thrones" outcome. Which is: Millennium Break becomes - leans into its insurgency routes, it becomes an increasingly underground organization. It's not looking for public acclaim, it's not looking for power in a traditional sense where it can engage with the other, um, kind of institutions of legitimate power - quote-unquote "legitimate power", "legitimized power", maybe - like the Stels and like the Curtain and the Pact. It will not be instigating - it will not be initiating any trade deals [chuckles] with anybody, outside of the sort of loose, informal trade deals that maybe a pirate republic might agree to. Um, they are - you are underground, you are working with criminal enterprises, you are working with other groups that are, you know, willing to do a great deal of violence with very little oversight. You are really, really, like taking it to the fucking Principality with a determined desire to destroy it. To burn it down.

If you end up with over 7 Cool - 7 or over Cool - which is, not that many - that's not that off the fucking table - you end up with "Build Tables". In which: Millennium Break ends up being a sort of power inside of the power. You end up being another organization inside of the current stable of organizations that can sway things inside of the world of the Principality. They are like a trade guild, or a corporation, or the Pact, or the Curtain. You know, maybe one day they grow big enough, they get their own Stel name. Uh, and that - that gives you access to a lot of things you wouldn't have otherwise. You *are* able to commit to trade deals. You *are* able to get meetings with the powerful governors of distant planets and pressure them in ways that don't have to just do with being able to blockade or bomb them. Your blockades are considered legitimate in some cases. [Chuckles] And you do not gain the ire of quote-unquote "Principality peacekeeping forces" or whatever. There is a degree to which you have authority in a traditional sense, and can wield that authority.

If you don't get - if you get, you know, 3 Doubt, or up to 6 Cool, you would end up with the "Leap", uh, one. Which is: You go off. You leave. You create your own new sovereign nation of Millennium Break. Probably ends up with a different name than Millennium Break, because that's not a good name for a country. We'll figure that out later. [Laughs] Uh, and you end up

with - with all the powers and problems of being your own sovereign nation. Ranging from a need to, you know, provide directly for your people in terms of infrastructure and basic needs, to the ability to ensure that the ways in which those things are provided are equitable instead of needing to engage with an ancient, labyrinthine, and, you know, oppressive regime's entire system of governance. So, you know, there are real benefits from that. But it also means a lot more responsibility and a lot more accountability for the people who are in power. And, I'll note: failing, weirdly, would really, really, make it easy to get that middle ground. A failure here - if you fail 4 of these 7 turns - you need 16 Doubt or 24 Cool in order to get enough of a point differential to lean into "Burn Thrones" or "Build Tables".

Um, so. That's a lot of math, but really what it comes down to is, it's really close. It's way closer even than it was in some of my, demo private, like, demo games, my roll simulations, you know? If it goes well and you get 4 more Doubt, we're goin' Doubt. If it goes well and you get 7 more Cool, we're goin' Cool. So, now is the time to do what Art said, maybe, and think about what your characters, and what you as authors, are interested in. Uh, if you want to have that talk openly, we can. If you want to just talk about it in terms of in-character stuff, we can. I'm - there are no rules around what you do or do not want to talk about. Or can or cannot talk about.

Jack: Yikes.

Ali: Uhhh. Yeah, last week, I... spoke my intentions, and then I spun one of my rolls to get us closer to the - or to get us more into Doubt, so that we could have an easier time staying in the middle. So, now it's on all of y'all. [Laughs.]

Austin: So Broun is very much in "we should be our own country" territory.

Ali: I, eugh, sure. I - the - I think that the thing I -

Austin: Or, "we should get out of the Principality"

Ali: Yeah. I think the thing I ended up saying is that, like, Broun has, in their investment in Millennium Break, has wanted to see something different from what they've experienced in their life. And that's why... they swing for the fences!

Austin: Uh-huh. Did Sovereign Immunity - Art, did you have a thing you wanted to talk through, or did you want to sit on it?

Art: Oh, I don't even know - I just - I don't even know that I have a - I'm willing to let the dice go where they may. [Ali laughs]

Austin: [slightly worried] Okay!

Keith: Yeah, the last that I heard, Art's opinion was "are there any good endings?" [Ali laughs]

Austin: Uh-huh. Yeah. And I said "Sure."

Art: That's not what I said. I asked what the good ending was.

Keith: Oh, well.

Jack: And then Austin said "Sure."

Austin: Uh-huh.

Ali: That's something for your heart to decide.

Art: I want to know what gets me the most blue points. [Everyone laughs]

Jack: Do we get a slideshow of all the -

Austin: Yeah.

Jack: - of all the NPCs that we've met.

Austin: [crosstalk] It sounds like no one else wants to--

Jack: [crosstalk] Ohh, this is gonna be weird. [Ali laughs]

Austin: Mm-hm. [Jack groans] I'll note one last thing, which is what I told y'all, I think after the last session. Which is: given all this stuff, given that the future of Milenium Break is up for grabs, but also given, like, what the stakes of this moment are. I kind of said it's probably worth spending time thinking about the breadth of scenes available to you here. Because there's a version of this that is just that Mourningbride fight from the Kingdom game. Where it's like, we go around in a circle, and everyone says a sick way that they got a hit in. [Laughs] And I'm down with that. We could do that. Uh, but it could also be other scenes of things happening while this fight occurs, you know?

We talk about framing a lot in this show. Um, but if you think about the climactic fights in, uh, a lot of our touchstones, whether that is in anime, or action films, or in, you know, fiction in general - there are often shots of people doing things that are not just beating up the bad guy in the big final fight. Um, there are conversations happening, people are helping each other, people are, you know, reflecting on what has happened. All of these things are available to you, as long as you can kind of conceive of them as a roll of some sort, right? But, but, this is not - I am not necessarily - I don't want to just present to you, "and then Motion flexes and then what do you do? And then Motion is gonna hit you and what do you do?" If you want that sort of thing, I will prime that based on what you set - how you frame your scene, right? So, if, if the Figure in Bismuth is like "Well, I'm gonna get in my sick robot and go back out there and put my shield down and just charge into her," then we can, you know - then yes, my thing there is going to be

“She’s going to throw the weight of a god at you,” you know? But, if your situation is “I’m going to help people get onto some, you know, escape pods,” I’m - I might, like, have Motion there be a threat in the background, but if you’re like “No, I think the focus here should be, ‘Can I help people in this moment,’” that will be the focus of the roll and the sequence, you know?

So yeah! That’s me. I think the framing is there. Uh, if people have stuff, I guess now is the time to let me know who wants to go first.

[timestamp 00:26:34]

Keith: I’ll say for me one of the things is, like... the group that - the Act 1 group is on... the, uh... the Reflecting Pool.

Austin: Mm-hm. You’ve had time, you can be wherever you want to be.

Keith: Okay.

Sylvi: Um, I was gonna just ask for, like, context, a little bit - where Motion is, on our, like, map that we’ve got?

Austin: I would say, like, to the - like, here?

Sylvi: Okay.

Austin: You know, this is so silly cause it’s not 3D, you know what I mean?

Sylvi: For sure.

Austin: But basically where the Pact fleet has been this whole time, right?

Sylvi: Okay.

Austin: To the left of where it says “The Bitten Bullet,” you know?

Sylvi: All right. And then, so there’re - and then the True Divine’s, like - there’s like a beam of that coming from the -

Austin: [drawing] There’s like a beam of light... whoa, that’s a square. That’s not what I want. There’s like a beam of light, going like that, right? Does that show up?

Sylvi: Mm-hm.

Jack: Yeah.

Dre: Yep.

Austin: And so that's, that's - and then, Motion, is presumably at the part where it says "The Bitten Bullet".

Dre: [crosstalk] Thought I had a good -

Jack: [crosstalk] Um -

Austin: Go ahead, you can talk.

Jack: I have, like, a logistics question, that might be the result of a misunderstanding. Why can we not, in theory, just use the Curtain's kill code on Motion? Does it not work on...

Austin: You already - uh, you could try and you could see what happens.

Jack: [Laughs] Okay.

Austin: Mm-hm.

Jack: Okay. Right. Is there a reason why our characters would not try that immediately?

Austin: No. In fact, maybe we could come in on that, right? Maybe the thing here is maybe you could attempt to do that at this moment. Uh, maybe that's a great framing, right? Is that, like, we come in on you just trying it again, right. And... you know. The difference between Space, who was opening a door for the True Divine, and Motion, who is kind of, um, energizing herself with it, is: one, she was fast enough to - with that power, is fast enough to put together what happened and counter it, and then two, just, there is just no killing something that is connected to a source of eternal, perfect power.

Jack: [crosstalk, laughing] A power this great.

Austin: Especially when Motion is already that thing, specifically. Motion is already the unbreaking engine, right?

Jack: Yeah.

Austin: There is a, there is a mapping here that gives her a great deal of strength, that would - in some ways, it's like she's removed herself from the limits of just being a Divine in this, in this motion. Or in this moment, rather. In this motion, Motion.

Jack: Yeah, it's kind of like [laughs] - it's kind of like the moment when you try and turn the power off on the, uh... on the evil computer, and the power turns off and the computer just goes "Yes?"

Austin: Uh-huh. Mm-hm.

Jack: What are you supposed to do now? [Austin laughs]. Okay. Good to know... How many civilians are aboard the Reflecting Pool?

Austin: A lot, right?

Jack: We still - have we managed to get any... out?

Austin: To where? There isn't a place that's safe.

Keith: *This* is the place that's safe.

Austin: This is the - safer than Partizan.

Jack: Where are the Pact evacuating to? Out through the...

Austin: Uh, they are leaving out - further away in the system, right? Um, so yeah, the Reflecting Pool -

Jack: [crosstalk] Oh, they're just flying blind, basically.

Austin: Yeah, they're just like "We gotta get away from this slowly growing planet that's going to consume - that's going to turn into a big ball of light and consume all of Partizan." Um... you know? Um, the way that the Lattice works is that as - you know, maybe this is a thing that the Figure in Bismuth and Kalar would have seen, like, you know, a holographic display of - is that as the planet grows, it will, like, spread out, and almost be like a netting, that - it doesn't actually touch the new star that is being built out of the Autonomy Itself, but it would like spread across its entire length and kind of like *cage it in*. It's almost like - what are those things that like, you can scrunch them down real small, and then you can like pull them out, and they're kind of like mechanical -

Jack: Oh, the little ball things?

Austin: Yeah yeah yeah yeah yeah. You know exactly what I mean. Yeah, the little ball things.

Keith: The 90s toy.

Austin: The 90s toy.

Jack: The 90s... toy. [laughs]

Austin: [typing] 90s... physics... toy. Ball? [Keith laughs] No, I can't - that didn't work... oh wait, yeah! Is it a Hoberman Sphere?

Keith: I guess so. I can't imagine that you...

Austin: [crosstalk] It's a Hoberman Sphere.

Janine: [crosstalk] Are you sure you're not thinking of a memory foam cupcake?

Austin: [laughing] I am not thinking of a memory foam cupcake. A memory... foam cupcake. It is a Hoberman Sphere. It is totally -

Keith: [crosstalk] Yeah, yeah. This is totally what I was thinking of.

Sylvi: [crosstalk] Oh, right.

Jack: [crosstalk] These things rule.

Austin: Yeah. These things rule. And it's like that. Sort of. Like, that's the - that's how it would, like - it starts really small, but then it - it would grow until it kind of spreads around the entire new True Divine star that will grow until it's like, you know - theoretically, until it's as big as this whole system. Who the fuck knows?

Keith: This came up when you searched "90s physics toy"?

Austin: I searched "90s physics toy ball". Yeah.

Keith: Okay.

Austin: There was a video. "Boy in Hoberman Sphere Megaball. Incredible Science." [Dre and Keith laugh]

Jack: So, the - so I'm just - I'm just trying to get straight in my head what potential escape routes look like. The main Portcullis gate, like the system Portcullis gate is shut?

[timestamp 00:32:02]

Austin: It's - no, it's - well, yeah, it's shut and - it's shut and this - actually, it's probably open right now, because this was the week, this is the moment at which it would open. Uh, but you can't get there right now. It's a week away, by ship travel, you know? And...

Jack: Ohhh, okay. Sure.

Austin: [crosstalk] But you can start heading that way.

Jack: And the only other open gate has God pouring of it, so...

Austin: [laughing] Correct. Yes.

Jack: Evacuating out of there is not on the cut.

Austin: Yeah.

Jack: [resigned] Okay!

Austin: And this - you know, the Reflecting Pool is safer than Partizan. Partizan doesn't have engines, you know?

Jack: Mm-hm. You can't unrun God. Well, maybe you can. Pact is trying.

Austin: Mm-hm.

Jack: Um...

Austin: Dre, you were starting to say something earlier.

Dre: I was? Uh... [Austin and Sylvi laugh]

Keith: Yeah, you totally were. We all loved what you were about to say. [Ali and Dre laugh.]

Dre: No, I'm trying to figure out now - and maybe this is just a question for the table - cause I don't want Figure's thing here to be "I get in my mech and I go punch this thing"...

Austin: Mm-hm.

Dre: ...because his kind of goal for this is to figure out, um... you know, his loyalty to the Witch in Glass.

Austin: Mm-hm.

Dre: And I don't think getting in the mech to go punch the big robot really does that, per se? Um... but I'm also not sure... what it looks like to have those loyalties more directly put into question.

Austin: [thinking] Yeah.

Jack: Oh, like what the catalyst would be to...

Dre: Yeah. I mean, I think the, the conversation with Kalar and even further back with like Sovereign Immunity, got the ball rolling. Um, you know, in kind of having their eyes kind of opened to some of the other terrible stuff that Clementine Kesh has done?

Austin: Yeah. Well, is this - go ahead.

Dre: Go ahead. You go.

Austin: I was gonna say - is this - is this her *telling* you to go do that? Ordering you to go kill that thing. In that way that ends up feeling manipulative. Which is like:

Austin (as **Clem**): I can tell that you want to help people. The best way you can do that is by being my right hand.

Austin: Which is why - is there like something in being sent to your death that would make you rethink it? Or do we need something even more...

Dre: Uh... yeah.

Austin: The thing that's tough is like - the selfish thing for here actually ends up - what in classic Clem tradition - she can hide behind the fact that she can say that she's just trying to do the right thing for other people, here. Because if she leaves - if she and the Reflecting Pool leave, you know, flee, that is actually also saving all the civilians on the Reflecting Pool. So it's not even like she can say "Well, I'm getting out of here, fuck everybody else," because she can very easily argue that she was just doing that for the civilians. Otherwise I would give you that.

Dre: Right.

Austin: Otherwise I think she would just, you know, tuck tail and run for you. Uh, but yeah. Maybe the opposite here, right? It's - it's Clem ordering you to go do this, uh, and ordering her forces to try to take the Lattice, right? That this power could do so much for us! You know? It's that version of Clem. It's the Clem who wanted to take Fort Icebreaker, and who was willing to send people to their deaths across the front line, in order to do that, uh, for personal gain. Um, so it's not retreating. It's - it's, you know, launching more fighters at this thing that is... a nightmare to fight against.

Dre: Mm.

Austin: We can also wrap back around if someone else has like a thing they're more settled on here.

Dre: I do - yeah, I do like that, and I think that like works, and I guess I'm just trying to put together - is the scene, then, that conversation with Clementine? Or is that scene a

conversation with - where Figure goes to someone else and basically says “I don’t know what to do with my misgivings right now.” Like, does that look like going to SI, or Kalar, or...

Austin: [crosstalk] We can have either of those scenes. The thing - the thing is that I - I don’t - I think that the former has a better chance of ending in a roll.

Dre: Yeah. Fair.

Austin: But I also don’t know what that roll is quite yet. Because you’re allowed to just say no to her. That’s not a roll. You know?

Dre: Yeah, yeah yeah.

Austin: Um, for me what’s more interesting is - what do you do instead, if you say no?

Dre: Mm.

Austin: Um, so if you want to think about that. That could be a direction.

Dre: Yeah.

Janine: Just - also just an idea is like - there is totally the idea of the - you know, the general or the senior official who gives the ruler some sort of like battle plan, and the ruler, who is naive, or has their own agenda, refuses and says “no, do this instead,” and then there’s the conflict of like, “But I think my idea’s better.”

Austin: Yeah. Totally. Totally.

Janine: Which definitely ends in a roll. But that’s just a thought.

Austin: Yeah, definitely. Because then you’re trying to convince her to change what the battle plan is, right? That’s interesting. You know, is this about the difference between capturing the Lattice and destroying it? Right? Which is like, we can’t fight Motion right now, but we can destroy this thing, you know what I mean?

Dre: [crosstalk, intrigued] Oh. Yeah. No, I think that’s good. Yeah.

Austin: So yeah, do you want to do the Clem conversation, then?

Dre: ...Yeah. Yes.

[timestamp 00:37:11]

Austin: Okay! Yeah, I think this is a good way to set the table, too, in terms of what the rest of the scenes look like. Um... so, if I'm remembering right, and Jack, correct me if I'm wrong: Her throne room is in - would she be in her throne room, or is there some sort of back - eh, no, she'd stay in her throne room. [laughs] Not gonna give up this fucking throne. [Dre laughs] She's in her throne room, which has these big windows, looking out onto the conflict. The throne itself is in the middle. The chair itself is in the middle of the room. And there is the circle of poppies, each in a little vase, uh, surrounding her. Do not knock over any of those poppies. [Laughs] Or be very careful. And... uh, you know, I think is probably attending to a few small things. You know, there are people coming with other, you know, things, like, should we move this to that? Should we, you know, prepare to retreat in this direction? You know. The people on this deck have been hurt. And she's doing her best to actually just delegate all of that stuff to Emaline and to... the man who - did we ever get a name for that other man? The man with the notepad, and all the numbers?

Jack: Oh god, like the little short guy with the notepad and the tall, thin woman who stands next to him?

Austin: Yeah, uh-huh. I don't think we did.

Jack: Yeah. They're like Coen Brothers characters.

Austin: [amused] Yeah, uh-huh.

Jack: So they'd have a Coen Brothers name. Let me just find... in my notes app... [Austin laughs, stutters] Um...

Keith: So it's either Joel or Ethan. It's not... [Everyone laughs]

Jack: Oh, my God. I don't - I don't know the woman's name - uh, but the man is called [slowly] Ernst Sweemy. Mr. Sweemy.

Austin: Mr. Sweemy. And it's - so yeah, when you come in, Clem is just... exhausted. Talking to Mr. Sweemy. [laughs]

Austin (as **Clem**): [exasperated] Ernst, I've told you. The brass is fine. You save the woodwinds for after.

Austin (as **Mr. Sweemy**): [Incomprehensible series of gruff grumpy noises.]

Austin: And then walks away. And then you come in. [Sylvi and Art laugh loudly.]

Dre (as **Figure in Bismuth**): [confused] Are... you planning a concert?

Austin (as **Clem**): *I'm* not. But... the people need entertainment. And... [sighs] I told Mr. Sweemy that... what we have is fine.

Dre (as **Figure in Bismuth**): Well, um... [A dog starts barking in the background of the recording.] I... wanted to discuss... the proposed... operation. [The dog continues barking.]

Austin (as **Clem**): [sardonically] Yes, I'm surprised to see you here in my throne room and not out leading our forces. The Lattice will not capture itself, Bismuth. [The dog continues barking.]

Dre: Sorry. Dog.

Jack (as **Clem**): And *why* did you bring your *dog*?

[Everyone laughs]

Austin: [laughing] Emaline Eccles's dog in the background. The hyena thing. The strange canine.

Jack: [crosstalk] God, Emaline Eccles's truly horrible dog. Oh, but that - when that dog barks, it sounds more like someone coughing.

Austin: [Makes guttural dog noises.] Yeah. Much different.

Art: [Makes noises like a dog with a hacking cough]

Austin: Yeah. The hacking - it's a hacking bark. [Dre laughs.]

Dre: Um...

Dre (as **Figure in Bismuth**): [calmly] I come seeking... clarification, I suppose.

Austin (as **Clem**): Well, I'm always available to... give you any illumination that you need for what we need to do for the Reflecting Pool.

Dre (as **Figure in Bismuth**): What do we hope to accomplish with possession of the Lattice?

Austin (as **Clem**): [authoritatively] Well, according to the research done by Ms. Eccles, uh... the Lattice is not simply a device built for the consumption of the being called Autonomy Itself, but could be used on any great power source. Ironically, it could be the source of autonomy for our little community. Any star could be turned into a fuel source. We would no longer be... leashed to the Principality. We could fly throughout the stars,

and spread Perennial's word... and one day, even reach her. Adding the Lattice to our fleet would make *us* autonomous too.

Dre (as **Figure in Bismuth**): I worry of the cost of capturing as opposed to destroying it.

Austin (as **Clem**): You worry about a cost today, but seem not to care about a cost tomorrow. When we are driven from Partizan, and pushed out into the black, far from any resources - when people hunger, when our fuel runs low, what will the cost be then, Figure?

Dre (as **Figure in Bismuth**): I worry how many will be... left to even answer that question.

Austin (as **Clem**): There are always more *people*. The Principality churns them out. Steps on them. Crushes them. And we are there to pick them up. No one here flies against that *beast* because I've... demanded it of them. Look at it! They can tell that it is... a monster, by the way it moves. You are at your best when you are my hammer, Bismuth. I do not need you to be my scribe. Or my calculator. Or my abacus.

Austin: A better reference.

Austin (as **Clem**): Let me worry about costs. You worry about... achieving outcomes.

Dre (as **Figure in Bismuth**): I... shall.

Austin: There's no roll there? You don't wanna push back here?

Dre: Oh, I'm going to.

Austin: Okay.

Dre: Just not... there.

Austin: Okay.

Dre: Um... because I think, what... I think what he does is... because I have a - I have both a good remote control device, and I also have a remote detonation device.

Austin: Mmm.

Dre: And I - I think in Bismuth's mind, there is a lot safer damage to be done by detonating the Will of the Witch rather than sending dozens or hundreds of people to die to try and capture this thing.

Austin: Mmm. So you're sending it, then, at the Lattice directly.

Dre: Yes.

Austin: Okay. Um... what's this look like? What's the roll?

Dre: [sighs, thinking]

Austin: I think - I think what you are describing is Doubt, right?

Dre: No, I - I do too. Um... I wonder... I think, like, the visual of the roll is also what he does to ground other pilots?

Austin: Mm.

Dre: And I don't know if that looks like - on the way out, the Will of the Witch uses its big hammer to basically, like, slam shut the doors on the hangars.

Austin: To close the hangar? Yeah, that's fun.

Dre: But yeah. I think this is Doubt.

Austin: All right. One die, one die immediately, and then another one for using your mech, which you're doing. And then a third if you get help. I don't know what that looks like, but I'm open to it.

[timestamp 00:44:53]

Dre: I also am not sure what that looks like.

Austin: I mean, you still have to get to the Lattice, right?

Ali: Yeah, I'd be willing to help. Um...

Austin: How are you helpin'?

Ali: I don't know! [laughs] Is this just - is this just transportation, at this point? Um... would you need a spaceship to get over there?

Austin: It -

Dre: I might need a spaceship to leave the Looking Glass. [laughs]

Ali: Oh sure, yeah.

Austin: You mean, afterwards, you mean.

Dre: Yeah.

Austin: Yeah. I don't think that helps this, but yes. Fair.

Ali: [crosstalk] Peace of mind is an extra die... [laughs]

Dre: Well, and maybe - you know, maybe it's - you're taking me on the ship to keep me in range of the remote control device.

Ali: [crosstalk] Oh, sure sure sure, yeah.

Austin: There we go, I like that a lot. It's that you've got to stay kind of close to it, because the remote control does not have, like, great, you know, control over long distances, and it falls off. So, yeah. You're like - you know, at this point - also, we should just make sure that means the Blue Channel has left the Portcullis behind. You've flown back out into space. You've burst back out through the clouds in this moment. Broun and co? SI, and everybody else?

Ali: Um... yeah. I don't - you know, I don't know what - what's worth stickin' around there for. [laughs]

Austin: [crosstalk] Fair. So maybe is it - go ahead.

Ali: Yeah, no I was just going to say - we like, secured the safety of the - the gate, right? That was the last thing Broun did, like turning back on the blasters - the - whatever.

Austin: [crosstalk] Yes. Yeah. Thrusters, yeah.

Ali: And, uh. Yeah I don't know, just like in thinking of what I would be doing... I think like taking a swing at Motion is - is, you know, an impulse I would like.

Austin: Yeah! Also, dropping off - I almost imagine, is this a thing where like the Figure walks into the hangar while you're landing, and getting Sovereign Immunity to some doctors? Because of being shot?

Ali: Oh, sure.

Austin: I don't know if people remember that Sovereign Immunity was hurt real bad, but that happened also.

Ali: Uh-huh.

Austin: All right, so 3d6, Figure. Uh, what do you need? What's your score -

Dre: I want to get lower. I'm a 3, so I have to get a 1 or 2, or a 3 I guess, to hedge, but...

Austin: [crosstalk] Have to get a 1 or a 2. Uh-huh.

Dre: Okay!

Austin: There's a success. There's a 2.

Dre: One success.

Austin: One success, one failure. Um, and an 11. That's a high score. So that's - that's something. 11 Doubt... spinnable. Um, so. What is your success question, and what is your fail question?

Dre: Umm... I guess my success question is: What effect did my action have on those who watched it?

Austin: Um... hm. Anyone have any thoughts on this?

Keith: Are we presuming that by "watched it" we mean someone that noticed from start to finish what exactly Figure was doing?

Austin: Yeah, I think there's clarity in what happened here, yeah. I think the thing we said last time was "reinforcing your narrative with the viewers" - the "how did this reinforce your narrative" - is about ideology, and "What effect did this have on those who watched it" is about emotional response. And I think that there is like a mix - I think that for - my suggestion is, for those of - for the people who cheered when your mech got debuted, they're kind of sad about seeing this. [Dre chuckles] Because they're seeing a cool thing get destroyed without being used in the way that they hoped it would be. Um...

Keith: This is like - it's like if - if Chekhov's Gun gets tossed in the trash in the second act. [laughs]

Austin: Exactly. Yeah.

Keith: Except, I guess it is the third act, technically, right now.

Austin: Yeah, uh-huh. And it's being used! It's blowing up.

Art: [crosstalk] A sad "wow".

Austin: Yeah. [bored nasal voice] “Wow, cool robot. Wowww.” [Sylvi laughs] The... I think that there is another audience, and I think that audience is specifically soldiers - are like, “Fuckin’ right! Yeah, fuck that! Try to hold the Lattice? Absolutely not! That’s a mistake, and good on the Figure for doing this shit.” So, you know, a mix. A mix here.

Jack: Is there like a bit of a flipside to that, which is the armchair scientists, who are like [gruff voice] “Oh, we could have used that. That could have been - you know, I’m sure that Clementine was onto something there.”

Austin: [crosstalk] Oh, of course. Right. Well, she was! She’s not wrong about the fact that she could have used it to create a fuel source.

Jack: [crosstalk] Yes, but it’s like - 400 people are gonna die, trying to hold it.

Austin: Uh-huh! Yeah.

Jack: If - if we survive at all!

Austin: [crosstalk] If we survive at all. Totally.

Jack: You know, there’s a very good chance that everything here gets obliterated.

Austin: Totally.

Ali: [deviously] Counterpoint. Are there pieces left?

Jack: Ooh.

Austin: Well, let’s talk about it blowing up first, right? [Ali giggles] What is your - what is the question that we wanna ask from this ask list? From this fail list? Hm.

Ali: Can I have some? That’s my question. [laughter]

Austin: [crosstalk] Can Broun have some. Uh-huh. Let’s not ask you first.

Jack: [laughing] Broun, are *you* the soldier who was like “This would’ve been a good weapon”?

Austin: [laughing] Yeah, probably, right? [serious] I mean, maybe that’s just the “How’d you lose control of the narrative” one here, right? Which is like, it’s very easy to run those numbers the next day, if there is a next day, and be like, “Well, now that this thing is gone, we have to keep, like, dealing with the Principality. Now we have to keep doing - we have to keep living around Principality territory, we have to keep - we have to - you know, we don’t get to have autonomy, because the Figure in Bismuth broke ranks, took unilateral action. We did not vote to have the

Figure in Bismuth do this. This was not - the Figure in Bismuth was not representing some group of people who said "go do this for us". The Figure in Bismuth did this by himself. And... I think that's part of the lost narrative here. Um, you know, the Figure in Bismuth had that conversation with Clementine. The whole of the Reflecting Pool didn't. The whole of the Reflecting Pool, who, you know, Jesset City once suggested would come to see Clementine as a bit of a savior to them, now gets to look at you and say, "Well why the fuck did you do that?" Um, you know. When there's 400,000 people on the ship, you're right, losing 400 sucks, but it - it means that even if you count those 400, plus the families of those 400, they're a serious minority compared to the people who... wouldn't even bat an eyelash to trade them for power.

Dre: Yeah.

Austin: Especially because these are all people who... one way or another, grew up in the Principality, you know?

Dre: Mm-hm.

Austin: Um. [lighter tone] Anyway, that's a success. The Lattice begins to explode... I don't think - Broun, I do think there are pieces left, for sure, but it is not a, uh - You know, this is a piece of extremely high-end Pact technology, that took a great deal of time to build, and a great deal of resources. And now that is, you know, tossed against the wall, so to speak. But, hey. 11 Doubt. Who's up.

[timestamp 00:51:35]

Jack: Um... I'm at a real crossroads, because it's like - part of me wants to go and try and mess it up. That's something that Kalar is good at.

Austin: Oh, yeah, Giantkiller shit.

Jack: He has identified the target - like, this is the biggest, you know - this is the giantest giant that we have discovered so far.

Austin: Oh, yeah.

Jack: And what is more representative of the metaphorical giant than a being that is going to destroy, like, everything.

Austin: Yeah.

Jack: Um, so on the one hand, it's time to just - just, like, go and try and mess it up, as much as I can. On the other hand, I could see Kalar taking a pretty desperate action to try and get as many people to something approaching a safe distance.

Austin: Mm-hm

Jack: Like, who the fuck knows what that is. But we know it's probably not here. Um... and they both speak to different kinds of being protective, which is where I am a little stuck, right?

Austin: [crosstalk] Yeah. Right.

Jack: Cause one is, well, sometimes you've got to go out there and hit the monster as hard as you can, and sometimes it's like, well, maybe we're not going to be able to actually do this. So I'm gonna try and take as... a sort of mitigating an action as I can.

Austin: Yeah. And I wonder if - if it's worth saying too, that with the Lattice exploding, that energy is now building up inside of Motion, who is like releasing it in these increasingly big blasts. You know, I actually think, maybe, that one's dead. This ship, this - you know, one capital ship for the Pact is completely cut through with this like huge wave of light and energy from Motion. A bunch of these Curtain ships are just *gone*, right? I suspect actually a bunch of the Millennium Break and - and Reflecting Pool fighters have been killed by this thing. So like - there is a real threat. The thing I can't do is undersell the degree to which... Motion... is hurting people. Currently. Which - which I think justifies either of the actions you've just suggested, you know?

Jack: ...Yeah. I'm also thinking about, you know, what you and Dre were saying, in terms of like... a turn for the Figure - sorry, like a face turn, or a - a realization for the Figure - is something that will take longer than one turn of this game, if that makes sense?

Austin: Yeah. Yeah.

Jack: And I am wary of sending Kalar in to fight, uh, Motion, and have that be like one turn.

Austin: Mm-hm.

Art: Is this just a timing thing, though? Is it just that Kalar needs to go...

Austin: Later.

Art: ...later in the cycle?

Austin: Yeah, probably. If you do want to swing at - be someone who swings, then yes. I mean, the thing that's interesting here is - we are now one step closer to winning this thing. But we don't necessarily know what winning looks like.

Jack: Yeah.

Austin: Does winning look like “Hey, a lot of people lived and we got out,” you know? Because - or! The Curtain sweeps in and kills Motion and takes the credit for it. You know. There is not necessarily - winning does not mean you’ve gotten your 4 wins and therefore you get to be the victors in the sense that, you, yeah.

Jack: [crosstalk] Beat Motion, and everybody... yeah.

Austin: Because the fiction does still help shape what that outcome looks like, and means. You know? In the way that, like, now we know that you don’t get the Lattice. Or that, not you, but Clem, doesn’t get the Lattice.

Jack: Right.

Ali: I have a question.

Austin: Mm-hm?

Ali: Which is - with the Lattice destroyed, what’s going on with Motion’s, like, connection to the True Divine?

Austin: Still running. That’s why I’m saying - it runs through her, and it’s like, if she needs to output it somewhere. Which is why she’s like releasing huge, incredibly huge shots of energy, that are just like...

Ali: [crosstalk] Ohhh. Sure sure sure.

Austin: It’s almost as if she’s a mirror reflecting that light right now. She’s one of the only Divines capable of doing this, because again, she’s been, for instance, already leveraging the Breath of the True Divine for - the Breath of the Exemplar - for generations, now, right? So we know that she already has this as a skill. Uh... this is a lot, even for her, but - I would not say, like, [naive anime protagonist voice] “All we have to do is wait for it to overpower her.” Like, we don’t know that that’s actually the case. It might be the case instead that in ten minutes, she gets this under control. And like, you know, almost like - someone trying to break a stallion, like gets control of it and is like, “all right, I’ve tamed this thing now.” If anyone could do it, it is her.

Ali: And they - hm...

Austin: I don’t know! You tell me.

Jack: Could we close the gate?

Austin: Yeah, you tell me!

Ali: [considering] Augh. Hmmm. Hmmm!

Austin: The thing that's hard is you are not near the gate any more.

Ali: Right.

Jack: Does the gate still exist, or has it just been totally obliterated by, uh...

Austin: I don't know - do we - do we still have eyes on it? Who's there?

Jack: [crosstalk] Probably it's in...

Sylvi: I -

Austin: Uh-huh.

Sylvi: I was actually thinking of saying - I had some questions just about this, like, beam of light thing, and how it's powering Motion.

Austin: Mm-hm.

Sylvi: Um, it's only giving that effect because Motion has the parts of the True Divine, right? Or... do we not know that for sure?

Austin: Not neces- we don't know that for sure.

Sylvi: [crosstalk] Okay, and...

Austin: Remember, she - she... She was using the Breath of the True Divine in the Barranca at the launch loop for as long as the launch loop has existed, so.

Sylvi: Okay.

Austin: And that was before anyone was hunting down the pieces of the True Divine. So we know that she's capable of energy manipulation at some level even before that. We also know that because of the way that she was able to repair her - the Black Century.

Sylvi: Mm-hm.

Austin: Send the Black Century out to die over and over again. You know, like. This is her wheelhouse, in a real way.

Sylvi: [crosstalk] Okay. And then - the, another...

Austin: But it certainly helped. For what it's worth. It certainly helps that she has the power of - that she has parts of the Exemplar. She's using them.

Sylvi: My other question was just like - have any, like, ships gone through that like - is it destructive to other people? Do we know that for sure, or anything, or is that also up in the air still?

Austin: [considers] Uh.... I think probably still up in the air.

Sylvi: Okay.

Austin: We haven't seen it.

Sylvi: Cause... so my two ideas were either, like, siphoning some of that? Like, so it's weaker and also so that my mech's way stronger. But also, like, using that power to like destroy the gate or close the gate.

Austin: And like, push it back, in on...

Sylvi: Yeah.

Austin: Yeah yeah. What's that look like, if you wanna do something like that.

Sylvi: Umm...

Austin: In this scenario, is Millie still back on the gate?

Sylvi: Yeah, yeah. I think Millie's still back there.

Austin: [crosstalk] Did not come back with Broun? Yeah.

Sylvi: Well, once this thing starts happening, it's like - someone needs to fuckin' figure it out! And, I guess - I think, like - there's a - it's easy to handle the conversation between like Broun and the rest, and Milie and SI, being like "You guys go on the Blue Channel and I'll keep an eye on this." Right?

Austin: [crosstalk] Yes. Totally.

Sylvi: I think... yeah. So I think what this is, is like... I'm gonna be like diving in front of it.

Austin: Yeah. Uh-huh.

Sylvi: And just trying to like close it with my mech's big claws.

Austin: [impressed but trepidatious] Uh-huh... As it blasts you? Yeah...

Sylvi: Yeah. As it just, like, completely engulfs this mech.

Austin: Mm-hm! Do you send any messages out before doing this ridiculous thing that seems very dangerous?

Sylvi: Uh... I think it's just something like,

Sylvi (as **Millie**): Hey, I'm just gonna try and unplug Motion real quick.

Sylvi: Like, it seems - just very casual about it.

Austin: [laughing] Mm-hm.

Sylvi: Mostly, like - I don't wanna distract everyone else right now. They've got enough to worry about.

Austin: [sighs] Yeah. That - okay. One die for, for any roll. Another die for using your mech. Is anyone helping here? [laughs] Somehow?

Keith: It seems like people did not get a chance to help. I don't wanna prejudge...

Austin: [worried] Naw...

Sylvi: Yeah....

Keith: I - I'll also say, not, you know - since we instituted the rule that you don't get kicked off the podcast for metagaming...

Austin: Uh-huh.

Art: It wasn't metagaming. It was expressing a desire for closure.

Austin: Not a rule. Still not a rule.

Keith: Okay. Um... the, uh...

Art: I've read the operating agreement.

Austin: [exasperated] Oh, my god.

Keith: This might be one of the cases where it's better to maybe fail and take the hedge.

Austin: This should not - no. Millie should not fail - oh, and take the hedge! I see what you're saying. Yeah, yeah.

Keith: Sorry, not fail. But I mean, like - roll a hedge, and, uh... switch to Doubt instead of Cool.

Austin: [crosstalk] Switch to Doubt instead of Cool, because this sounds like a fucking cool thing, to me.

Keith: This sounds very cool, yeah. Extremely cool.

[timestamp 01:00:11]

Sylvi: [sighs]

Austin: I guess. I really - I'm afraid of a failure here.

Sylvi: Yeah, me too! I said that thing, about being casual about it, and then I immediately regretted it. Um... but that's fine. It's in character. It's good.

Austin: Uh-huh.

Jack: And there's no - it would be, it would be... like, moral support is not... is not dice-worthy here, right? Like, there's no -

Austin: I don't think so. That doesn't help you close the-

Jack: No. No, it would feel like a...

Sylvi: [crosstalk] Okay. I actually think -

Jack: I mean, the support of your friends helps,

Austin: It does.

Jack: But not... not... here. [laughs]

Sylvi: [cheerily] I've figured out how this can go if it goes bad, so now I'm fine with rolling the dice.

Austin: So now you're happy with it? Okay. Well, I'm thinking -

Sylvi: I've thought of a thing that I think could be cool.

Austin: Okay...

Sylvi: But not good.

Art: [crosstalk] SI is the person geographically most capable of helping, if we can come up with just... any way you *can* be helped.

Austin: Aren't you... dying on the ground?

Art: Tch. I thought I was dying inside.

Keith: [crosstalk] What's the difference?

Austin: [crosstalk] I thought you were dying in the Reflecting Pool, though, is what I mean. We talked about Broun dropping off schematics, but...

Art: [crosstalk] Oh, is that - is that what we meant by "drop off"?

Austin: I - that is what I meant.

Ali: [crosstalk] Yeah.

Art: But if you don't want that have happened, I'm fine with that. If you instead...

Austin: I mean, it doesn't really matter where I'm dying, I don't think.

Art: [breathes in] Okay, well that's only if you commit to dying! [laughs] I was trying to get you in front of some medical personnel!

Art: Um... Yeah. I dunno.

Austin: [laughing] Hm. My god. Is that - cause then what we're retroactively saying is - did SI say "No, I'm gonna stay back here with Millie"?

Art: Maybe! I mean, this character's not making it to next season, so... what does it matter!

Austin: Uh-huh... How would you help if you were there with Millie, then.

Art: Yeah, I don't know.

Austin: [annoyed] Oh, my god.

Art: That's I think the, the...

Sylvi: I'm - like - there's probably some sort of like mechanical thing that you could do in the room. Like there's like a blast door that needs to be activated if things go really fuckin' bad, or, like...

Austin: Yeah.

Sylvi: Something to minimize the collateral damage.

Jack: [crosstalk] But is it a -

Austin: [crosstalk] Okay, real quick -

Jack: Would it work against *God*?

Austin: Yeah. This is the question. Um... I - that's... yeah. Existential.

Art: It's a very religious blast door. [Austin and Jack laugh]

Austin: It said its prayers. Um... my other thought here is, my other worry here is, is there a world in which, Sovereign Immunity, this roll goes real bad, and we don't know how you get another roll this turn - uh, this act. Um... but no. I think, I think - I don't know. If you come up with a way...

Art: I have faith.

Austin: [worried] That's -

Art: In my friend Sylvi.

Austin: [slightly relieved] Good. [Sylvi laughs]

Art: And the dice.

Austin: Yeah.

Art: That she's going to roll. I'm not -

Sylvi: Okay!

Austin: Is this like a, okay, I need someone - I need you to stay here in this room and hit this override switch, so that for a split second, the automatic, you know, controls turn to manual, and in that moment I can start to close this gate from this one side, or whatever. Is that what you're basically suggesting, Sylvi?

Sylvi: Yeah, like... that - that could work. Like, disengaging like a, like, locking thing that keeps it, like, automatically open, and instead moves to like, you can move it manually? Yeah.

Austin: Yeah. So you're like, pulling down a blast shield across this huge gate. This huge thing.

Sylvi: Yeah. Pretty much.

Austin: [worried] Okay. Okay. That sounds like 3d6, then.

Sylvi: Okay. [sighs]

Austin: [crosstalk] Sovereign Immunity -

Sylvi: [crosstalk] Did we decide this was - this was cool, right?

Austin: Oh, this is cool. I don't - I have a hard time imagining anything cooler than...

Sylvi: Yeah.

Austin: ...a mech trying to stand in front of the power of a god, pulling the blast door shut to cut it off from their rival. You know?

Sylvi: Okay. [rubs hands] I'm gonna hit enter on this.

Austin: Uh-huh. What do you need? Oh.

Sylvi: I - I have a 3.

Austin: Okay! So you've hedged. Do you want to hedge and immediately take 13 Doubt for a success, and if so, what's that look like?

Sylvi: [thinking] Ohh.

Austin: Or, do you want to reroll... as another Cool... uh, but not - but not - but we don't know.

Sylvi: Wait, so...

Austin: You could take 13 with a win that's a Doubt, and I don't know what that outcome looks like. I don't know what this is instead. What is it? Like, what's the successful but not cool version of this?

Sylvi: [pause] I... yeah. I'm struggling with that. Like I think, like, there could be something about, like, having the totality of, like - or, the organic parts of Millie's mech revealed, and seeing like what that thing actually is, and knowing, like... what she's been fighting with.

Austin: [crosstalk] Yeah, but I think the core thing is... what do you...

Sylvi: [crosstalk] But I don't think it works enough.

Austin: The thing that I would need is some way to cut this off from Motion, close the gate or whatever it is, that isn't just "I've stepped into the light, and I'm Goku-ing my way through it, and my mech's muscles are all ripped, and I'm pulling this thing shut". You need that follow up - you need some other final verb there, right?

Sylvi: [crosstalk] Yeah. Right, yeah.

Austin: Um...

Sylvi: Do I accidentally break something? But like -

Austin: Do you step through the gate?

Sylvi: That would be good.

Austin: [crosstalk] And then we get our, like -

Sylvi: But then, wouldn't that take me out of the rest of this?

Austin: I mean, only until you come back through the gate.

Sylvi: Okay.

Austin: Um... I don't know. This is a suggestion, right? Is like -

Sylvi: I kind of dig that.

Austin: Do you feel pulled, do you feel compelled by whatever is on the other side of the gate, do you feel - do you slip in? Is there - as you step in front of the beam, you feel that there's actually also this like - at the edges of the - the beam is moving forward in the middle, but on the outside of it, it's actually pulling in. It's actually like, you know, vacuuming in.

Sylvi: Yeah.

Austin: And as you go in, it's like "poof" and then it shuts off.

Sylvi: Okay. Yeah, I really like that.

Austin: And then we get a dope animation budget to do some like weird psychedelic shit as you are within the embrace of the True Divine? Like, I don't know. I'm just throwing stuff out there.

Sylvi: No, I love that.

Austin: You see a bunch of swans? Like, I don't know what - Fantasia starts playing?

Sylvi: It's like, um... fuckin'... I actually like had a saved thing for whenever we needed to do weird psychedelic shit. So hold on, lemme link this. Cause I've got an idea for the visual.

Austin: [crosstalk] Okay. Perfect. Good.

Sylvi: Just like - a bunch of weird...

Austin: Oh, hell yeah.

Sylvi: I think it's called like a Mandelbrot set? Um.. it's just like a - just go to randommandelbot, on Twitter. It's just these weird like, patterns and I can kind of -

Austin: Like, fractal patterns, right?

Sylvi: Yeah, and like -

Austin: And this one is red and black! Which is the color of the liquid inside of the... the gate, right?

Sylvi: Mm-hm! So, I'm - I'm into this.

Austin: What is this experience? When Millie tells this story about what she saw, or when whatever this is is seen - maybe, Sovereign Immunity, if you're still in that control room, that has the small pool version of this portal, you can like literally see the same shapes, and see Millie inside. Um... What is this experience? I mean, more importantly, if you take this Doubt, this is three successes. So, you know, we can talk about this in terms of... of terms of what this experience gives you, in terms of the questions that are available?

Sylvi: Yeah. Um... I think more than anything, it's like... I had this kind of a - there's this idea in my mind that it both, like - this energy charged the like - I think I have it written on my sheet - yeah. I have it written on my sheet right now as "Intrusive Systems". But like it basically - it boosted that weird mental link, and then also there's this other external one that's happening.

Austin: From the True Divine.

Sylvi: From the True Divine.

Austin: Right, right.

Sylvi: And so, I think Millie's - it's this weird experience where, like, her presence and existence feels like it's split across all these things.

Austin: All of the - yeah. All of these different - you mean like visually, all of these things we're looking at, basically?

Sylvi: Yeah. Like, about the beam, her mech, the like... the gate itself.

Austin: [crosstalk] Right, I see.

Sylvi: And then also, it's just surging with this like...

Austin: Can she - here's a thing. We've talked a lot about like Motion being inside of her head before. Do we get this shot of - not a shot of, but do you get the experience of being inside Motion's head for a moment?

Sylvi: Yeah, I think like -

Austin: And just feeling this churn?

Sylvi: Well, it has the Eyes of the Exemplar, right?

Austin: It has a number of those. It has some of the Blood in it, it has the Breath in it. It has a bunch of them, you know?

Sylvi: I think, like, it - Millie can kind of feel those things. Right? Like, able to kind of get some sight through those eyes. Kind of feels like... whatever the Breath of the Divine sort of feels like. There's a connection with that while she's directly inside of this stuff.

Austin: Dre, as the person who like most directly has written about and thought about the True Divine with a character this season, is there anything - is there any experience of the True Divine that you want to emphasize, as being like - comes through this sort of direct approach, this direct kind of embodiment.

Dre: [sighs] Um... yeah. I mean... Something probably like... much more kind and caring than has been able to be seen so far.

Austin: Mm-hm. Yeah, so it's like an immediate sense of concern for you, and for your wellbeing, that like washes over you. In a way that's like very much the opposite of Motion, and the way that Motion has mocked you. Very much the opposite of what we've seen from, you know, so many people this season, who are looking to instrumentalize you, looking to like turn you into a weapon for them. It's just this, like, deep, encompassing love. This sense that you

could stay here, in this embrace, and never have to leave, and never have to fight anyone, and never have to - it's just this unconditional love for you, as you've done this.

Sylvi: [quietly] Okay.

Austin: Um... you have to ask three questions. Or answer three questions, if you have answers.

Sylvi: Yeah. Um... [thinks] Wow. Okay. Big thing to ask questions about, huh!

Austin: Uh-huh.

Sylvi: Um... God. [laughs] "What effect did your action have on those who watched it?"

Austin: We talked about the emotion. The emotional angle of that question, before. And I think it's like overwhelming to watch.

Sylvi: Okay.

Austin: You know. I bet it's kind of boring for the - again, for the people who wanted you to, like, do sick mecha shit.

Sylvi: Mm-hm.

Austin: But I think that there's a degree to which this is like, the scene in the show where the psychedelic music hits, and everything melts away, and there is like, you know. In the version of this that we get to make for Netflix, we really throw our animation budget at wild psychedelic visuals to overwhelm the senses. And I think that there's like - you know, you - this story is one of those stories that's like "there is more to the world than us." I don't know what the name of that thing is, I don't know if the True Divine is really a god, or blah blah blah blah blah, but like "We are small, but we are connected, and the world is big", and - you know, it's like that style of, you know... humanist sublime. Where there is something about... whether it is theological or not, your smallness, but also your connectedness, are drawn in a very positive light to the people who are moved by this. And again, for those who are like "this is some weird psychedelic shit, she's off - she's out of her mind", you know. "She must have knocked her head inside of that mech." You know? But yeah.

Art: Hey, when we get that Netflix budget, let's make sure that we don't make this look like the end of "2001: A Space Odyssey".

Austin: Okay. Yeah, we'll figure somethin' out.

Art: Yeah.

Sylvi: Ummm.... Oh, I just had the question I wanted to ask, and now I forgot, god damn it. Umm... right! Uh, "what new information or tool was revealed to you?" I don't have like a full answer for this, but I figured a mind meld with Motion would probably help a little bit.

Austin: Yeah, I kind of like that. I kind of like - a thing that I've been thinking about is like, is this a moment where you do just like blend into - you've talked about your machine as being organic before, but like, is there a blending into everything where your consciousness gets diffused through the things that you've touched, including Motion, including the beam, including everything. Right?

Sylvi: Yeah.

Austin: It's like part of you got uploaded into Motion. Right?

Sylvi: [crosstalk] Yeah, I mean like,

Austin: [crosstalk] Is that a - is that a "Being John Malkovich", you're seeing through her eyes? Or is that - is there more of a -

Sylvi: I think it's like -

Austin: - a Greed in "Fullmetal Alchemist"...

Sylvi: [excited] Oh man!

Austin: You're in there.

Sylvi: Tough. You've given me two very good options. I think -

Austin: Uh-huh. This is cinema to me. "Fullmetal Alchemist" and "Being John Malkovich".

Sylvi: Yeah! Basically the same thing.

Austin: "Fullmetal Malkovich." [Keith, Dre, Sylvi laugh]

Sylvi: God. Um... I think it's probably more like the first one. The first option. Cause I did kind of like get into that a little bit already, with like being able to see through the Exemplar's Eyes and stuff. I don't think - I think it is more like I'm just in there, and not like a separate entity confronting Motion's like id or whatever. Whatever Greed does.

Austin: [crosstalk] Yeah. Uh-huh. Um... okay! That's a success, and I think - Oh, you still have one more. You have one more question.

Sylvi: I have one more question. Um, gosh. There's - three is a big number, sometimes!

Austin: It is.

Sylvi: Um... Have I said "who did you get the upper hand with?" I don't think I did. I'm gonna ask that one.

Austin: I don't think you did. But I think it's Motion, right?

Sylvi: Yeah.

Austin: Yeah. I think it's Motion. I think that that makes sense here.

Sylvi: Okay, cool.

Austin: And so yeah! So that beam disappears. Uh, the beam, like, you know, shuts off. Motion is still incredibly super-charged with energy. Still a huge threat. Motion is still a threat. But, but the connection seems to have been shut down. Who is up?

[timestamp 01:14:37]

Jack: Is it worth having a conversation now we are two in, about our totals? Cause right now...

Austin: You've got a lot of Doubt.

Jack: It's just a straight - it's just Doubt.

Austin: Yep.

Jack: Um, which looks like -

Austin: You in fact, now, cannot spin these rolls. It - I mean, it doesn't matter, cause there's six more, or, whatever, five more rolls coming - but you have... Even if you re-rolled these to 3 and 3 somehow [laughs] which would not happen, but if you did, that would still be enough points to put you into the Doubt category, right now. Because that'd be 6 Doubt, you know? Um, you have a lot of Doubt, is what I'm saying.

Jack: And -

Keith: Jack, is what you're asking: do we like fold out? Is that the - are you like, "should we keep going Doubt, or should we try and steer this towards... the middle thing"?

Jack: I think - yeah. I mean... [sighs] I think Kalar is gonna push for, um, for "Leap". I think - I think Kalar is aiming for... Kalar doesn't fucking know what tabletop games are!

Austin: Mm-mm.

Keith: Right.

Jack: I mean, maybe he does. You know.

Austin: Yeah, yeah.

Keith: Phrygian does!

Austin: [crosstalk] But, but - does something wash over his mind - [chuckles] Yeah, Phrygian does. Phrygian was one briefly. [Jack and Keith laugh]

Kalar, does the thought - looking out there - you know, wash over Kalar that like, you know, you see the Curtain ships coming in, does Kalar go: If they fucking win this thing, they are going to get the credit, people are going to herald the Curtain as being the heroes in the situation, all of the lives that have been lost on our side are gonna be meaningless in the story of this, in telling people what Millennium Break did today. Um, cause that's the sort of thought that, in character, I think could occur to someone like Kalar. You know?

Jack: Yeah. I mean, I think that also... yeah. It's -

Austin: [crosstalk] Or, it could be more organic, and just be like - we gotta go fuckin' smack Motion around a little bit. Motion seems weak right now. Et cetera.

Jack: But what I am asking as a player, is: Is going and smacking Motion around... how best am I going to be able to push towards that outcome? In terms of what sort of scenes I want to frame. Um... And, and part of that is still up in the air right now, right? Because we don't know - we don't know how the Act 1 and Act 2 totals are gonna be affected yet.

Austin: We're very close to a win. We would need... we only need two more successes for this to be a win.

Jack: Right, but -

Austin: [crosstalk] But we still, then, wouldn't 100 percent know, based on - until we know what the final score is, here. You're right.

Jack: Yeah.

Janine: I have an idea.

Jack: [crosstalk] Is it more - oh, go on.

Janine: Oh, sorry, no, I was just gonna say - I have like a turn idea. I didn't know - I don't know, Jack, if you're working through what you wanna do, or if you want more time.

Jack: I - I think I just wanna ask, like - in terms of a strategically advantageous play, to push towards a desired outcome, we don't yet have enough information as to whether or not it'd be better to frame Cool or Doubt scenes, right?

Austin: You do know that. Based just on having 24 Doubt points already, in this round, means you need some Cool for sure. Cause it's gonna be so easy for you to get -

Jack: Oh, I see! Right, to win with an extremely high Doubt total.

Austin: Correct. Yes. Yeah.

Keith: Which we have.

Austin: Which you have.

Keith: Right, we only needed 4, and we have - what did you say, 20 something?

Austin: 24 so far.

Keith: [amused] Yeah, yeah.

Austin: And that will naturally come back down as we do these next rolls - probably.

Keith: [crosstalk, quietly] Probably.

Austin: If we end up getting some Cool in here, you know? Um, but - we are crushing the Doubt right now. [laughs]

Jack: I love to crush doubt! [noises of agreement from Austin and Janine]

Austin: Rather, I should say, we are crushing it with Doubt.

Jack: I hate to crush it with doubt. [Austin laughs] Um, what were you - what were you going to say, Janine?

Janine: Um... I was gonna - I wanna do - I wanna shoot. And do stuff. [laughs]

Austin: [crosstalk] Alright, Thisbe is out here for fuckin'... doin' some cool shit.

Janine: [crosstalk] It's my - I wanna - yeah. What's - so, what's the weapon situation on the Blue Channel? If any?

Ali: Uh, we have, um, like - a blaster sort of situation? Like a railgun?

Keith: Like a gunner pod?

Ali: [crosstalk] Yeah.

Austin: [crosstalk] No. It was not a pod, remember? It was not the Millennium Falcon pods, right? But it is turrets of some sort, right?

Ali: It's - yeah. It's that type of gun, but without the cool spinny chair.

Keith: Okay. Then what's the point? [Ali and Keith laugh]

Janine: Okay, then, without the cool spinny chair, that actually fits in really nicely to what I wanted to do.

Austin: Uh-huh?

Janine: Would it - would it be plausible to say, maybe there's like a backup one of those guns that's like loose in the cargo area, or something? Or like... something...

Austin: [crosstalk] Easy to imagine that Sabeeha hit one of them, and you pulled one out, and you - yeah.

Ali: [crosstalk] I always pack an extra... yeah.

Austin: [crosstalk] Totally, yeah. We can justify this.

Janine: Yeah. You gotta - you gotta keep a spare.

Austin: Uh-huh.

Janine: So the thing that I wanna do, is I wanna have Thisbe pick up the big, big gun - pick up *big* gun - and basically...

Austin: [crosstalk] Pick up big gun. As Thisbe. Not with Mow, just with Thisbe.

Janine: I mean, I guess it depends on how big the guns are. But in the version of this I really like in my head, it's Thisbe.

Austin: Let's do that version. Okay.

Janine: Um... but, I like - the version I have in my head is: Pick up big gun, and then do the thing where it's like going outside of the ship, scaling the side of the ship, anchoring sort of magnetically by foot on the ship and becoming the rotating turret -

Jack: [impressed] Yo!

Janine: - just so when we need to reposition around, we don't lose our opportunity to shoot. So we can just keep shooting. That's the thing I wanna do.

Austin: Love it. Good. That's Cool to me. Also, that is the definition - that is just the regular definition of a tank. There's no metaphor here.

Janine: Yes.

Austin: So your military role definitely triggers here.

Janine: Mm-hm!

Austin: So that's 2, and then, my guess is, Broun is again piloting, so that seems like a help.

Ali: Yeah.

Austin: Okay. Onboard the Blue Channel, just as far as we know right now, is also the Figure in Bismuth, so that is the crew in that ship, as of this moment. Um, that sounds like 3d6. 3d6 Cool.

Janine: Okay.

Austin: What is your score?

Janine: Three, right?

Austin: Yeah. So that's three successes. That's 14 Cool. No hedging. No hedging necessary.

Janine: [crosstalk] Hell yeah. Gettin' it done.

[timestamp 01:21:03]

Austin: [making a note] Uh... 14 Cool... Spinnable... Win. All right, you're gonna pick three questions. What's this look like, and what are your questions?

Janine: Ummm. [enthusiastically] So I think - I've never - I don't think I've ever defined Thisbe as having magnetic feet. It is just a thing that feels convenient in this moment for her to have a way to anchor to the ship, but I guess it could also just be a tether, or like,

Austin: I mean, the outside of the ship could also magnetize in this scenario, which is interesting.

Janine: That's true. There could also just be, like, handles, like you know, the outside of spaceships often just have like, here are handles and ladders and stuff like that.

Austin: Yeah. Mm-hm.

Janine: So I could imagine even just some sort of like, loop thing that Thisbe just like hooks her leg into at the knee. It'd have to be big enough, it wouldn't really be a person-sized handle at that point, it'd be more like a - like a thing you would use to tether a large hose to the side of it or whatever, but, you know. Gets the job done.

Austin: Mm-hm.

Janine: And I think it is - it is Thisbe just kind of like... taking a stance that really mirrors the stance of a person firing a normal-sized weapon, like a missile launcher or something like that.

Austin: Right.

Janine: But it is just the very large robot, using this like detached... ship's... gun...

Austin: Yeah.

Keith: Sweet.

Austin: Extremely sweet.

Janine: ...to just rotate around, and like, you know, Thisbe doesn't need to breathe! Thisbe can also like - her movement is mechanically dominated, and not dominated by like how far you can twist before your tendons hurt and stuff.

Austin: [crosstalk] Is there like - is there like a - right. Right.

Janine: Um, so, she can kind of - she can probably just kinda go for it, you know?

Austin: Are - is it like connected to a power source with a long cable, so that you're like tethering, you know what I mean? Because it has to have some sort of, you know. Yeah.

Janine: [crosstalk] Oh, probably. I wonder - I wonder if that's part of what her leg is looped into. Like, maybe there's a like - a channel of cords, with like exterior outlets for like, to plug in - you know, like normally meant for like repairing tools, or like...

Austin: [crosstalk] Yeah! Totally.

Janine: You know, like a tool you would plug in to repair the side of the ship, or whatever, but it's just like, "well, I'll just - I brought an adapter." [Austin and Ali laugh.] Like, "I'll just plug this in, and -"

Austin: Perfect.

Ali: Well, last episode, Millie's mech also like, attached... like a foot grip to the - to the armor, right? [several people laugh]

Austin: Yeah. Something like that.

Janine: We've done stuff. It's a - it's a very adaptable ship.

Sylvi: There's a big ol' dent, you know? Make good use of it!

Austin: So uh - so what are your three questions? Any you want.

Janine: Um, hmmmmmmm. Uh.. let's see. Oh shit. Um... [confidently] I think a good one in this moment is probably "In what ways did you look awesome, competent, or flashy?"

Austin: [laughing] Uh huh.

Janine: Just because we did specifically just bring up the idea of like, what if people start thinking of the Curtain did this? Like, the Curtain is the one who's -

Austin: Right. And here it is very clear.

Janine: Yeah.. Here it's very clear. That is - this is not - [laughs] again, this is a robot Olympian!

Austin: Uh huh. [Everyone laughs]

Janine: Not to keep bringing that up or anything, but I just - I do think in terms of public perception it's quite relevant! So I think it's a thing of - of, yeah, it's - you can't - it's really hard to paper over that. [pause] Mmmmm... I'm open to suggestions here, cause I - a lot of these I feel like I would just be giving the same answer as that.

Austin: Mm-hm. It is a pretty straightforward action, for what it's worth, you know?

[timestamp 01:24:40]

Janine: That's true, yeah. Like there's a lot of them that's just like, "Who did you get the upper hand with", "How did they underestimate you?"

Austin: Yeah.

Janine: Like, again, it's probably really easy to forget, even though there are a lot of - a lot of like robotic people and stuff involved in this, it's probably really easy to forget that like... there are machines with agendas participating in this, who can do things.

Austin: Yeah. Can I give you - can I give you a "What did you see coming that the cameras didn't?"

Janine: Yes.

Austin: Um, as you're like lining up these shots to take at Motion, Motion is like, teleporting around, you know, using the Perennial Wave, still super-charged with the True Divine's power. There's a moment when you're shooting one of them, and from the corner of your eye you see Motion, also over to the left, at the same time. And what you realize is, it's not just that Motion is teleporting between places. It's that Motion is duplicating herself, and then dematerializing. The new materialization is not actually synced up, which means you know that Motion can create, like, clones of herself. [Janine makes a worried noise.] You know what I mean? Classic, like, fuckin' - you know, Revenge of Shinobi shadow-copy type shit. Um, uh, I guess Naruto does it, that's the more modern answer for people...

Janine: [laughs] I was gonna say Naruto.

Keith: Mm-hm.

Sylvi: Hell yeah.

Austin: ...than a Sega Genesis game. Um, and so you pick up on that very quickly and can kind of call that in before she gets the drop on *you* and starts doing that. The Curtain did not pick that up, you know? Um, so...

Janine: [crosstalk] It's an awful thing.

Austin: I think the other half there is, it's clear that Motion is still learning how to use this power that she's taken in. The gas tank is not emptying. It's - it's still so much more that she is figuring out what to do with this new power she has. Um, so that one's fun! Uh... any third ones? Anyone else wanna ask one here from the list, if Janine doesn't have one? [pause] Um, I'm curious how you think, um... I'm curious how you think someone like Motion might have underestimated *you*.

Janine: Uh, probably in the way most people do, right? Which is that like, Thisbe... Thisbe is in, you know - Thisbe is a labor robot.

Austin: Mm-hm.

Janine: Like, Thisbe is - people who have any access to any broader amount of knowledge than like most of the player characters and most of the characters and the factions, like, people who can see things at system levels, with access to that information, probably know what she is better than we have traditionally, like on this show.

Austin: Mm-hm. Yeah. Totally.

Janine: So like, you're not expecting - you're not going to expect the like, glorified dowsing rod slash tractor to pick up a ship's gun and then hang off the side of a spaceship!

Austin: [laughs] Right. Right.

Janine: And just shoot at you! It's -

Austin: Like, we should note: all season you have had the purpose-built tag "Labor".

Janine: Yes.

Austin: That's like what you do. Your purpose is Labor. You could have - there's a move that gives you a second purpose. And those other purposes include "Acquire", "Guard", and "Ruin", uh, all of which feel like things that'd be like, "Oh yeah, that's like what a war robot would do." And you never took that.

Janine: No.

Austin: We never revealed that you were secretly part of - that you were secretly always a soldier robot. You were part of a colonization effort, absolutely. Your body was, I don't know that your mind was the same mind, we don't know. But the - you never were like, "Ah, and secretly I'm also a Terminator," or "I've learned to be a soldier."

Janine: No.

Austin: You've always stayed stuck on, "I am fundamentally a labor robot, who also does this other stuff."

Janine: Well, I mean - yeah. The stuff that I took was specifically, um, stuff that is like, regarding hardness and effectiveness, which are useful in fighting situations. Very useful [laughs], they have been very useful in fighting situations, but they're also all things that like - yeah, you want your tool to be made out of metal and not plastic. You want, you know -

Austin: Mm-hm.

Janine: You want it to have different modes instead of just one. And like, it's all stuff that is useful but is also very specifically related to utility. It's all very much, um... yeah. So, I think, like, it's very easy to be completely confused about *why* this thing is happening? Um, yeah.

[timestamp 01:29:11]

Austin: Yeah. I like it. So. [sighs] That is three rounds down. And three successes. Which means the next success guarantees the win. Which is interesting because it changes the color of those last few scenes, right?

Art: Because it just becomes about math?

Austin: Or it becomes an opportunity to show your character doing something that you think they would be doing, right? Um, in controlling the narrative math-wise, but also a showcase for who is doing what, you know? What Millennium Break is, in this moment.

Jack: I think I'm gonna try and attack Motion.

Austin: Uh-huh. Now is the time? Now Kalar is like "Aha, this is my chance"?

Keith: Is there a secondary target that I'm just not thinking of? Like, is Motion, like, the thing? Like, if you're wanna attack something, you might as well attack -

Austin: [crosstalk] The Curtain is also here. The Curtain is also here, which is to say, we've seen Imperium the Divine fighting against Valor - the Valor from the Pact.

Keith: Okay. Yeah.

Austin: I think that that particular fight has moved offscreen. I think also we saw Cas'alear get involved in that fight. Which also means probably A.O. Rooke got involved in that fight, cause that means that the Swordbreakers were all out there. Um, so that's fun. Um, uh, but yeah. I think that's it just, it's a - again, I wrote down "the fray" earlier, and it's just like, that's what it is. It's a - it's a - huge mess of people fighting. Though in *this* moment, I think that it's... even more confused, and uh, messy, because Motion is just like such a wild, and powerful, and seemingly detached from her own interests, her own previous interests, you know, villain, in this moment. Willing to hurt even Pact people if they're in her way.

[timestamp 01:30:54]

Jack: I'm - I'm having second thoughts. [Keith and Ali laugh]

Austin: [with sarcastic surprise] Why?

Jack: I'm not very cool. It's a very Cool action, but Kalar is more Doubt than Cool.

Austin: By one!

Jack: By one, but you know!

Austin: Yeah.

Keith: Out of four.

Jack: I don't want Millennium Break to blow a 3-1 series lead! [Sylvi laughs]

Austin: That's what actually happened - what actually happened here is that Dre in the chat says "Remember when Millennium Break blew a 3-1 series lead."

Jack: [crosstalk] Well, and then I thought about the metagame, right?

Austin: [crosstalk] That's not - it's a 3-0 series lead, currently, actually. It's not a 3-1 series lead yet!

Dre: That's true, that's true.

Austin: Kalar, you could be the one. [Jack and Ali laugh]

Jack: Okay, okay. Like, real talk, cards on the table. There is a game of chicken being played here, right? Which is: I don't know where other people at the table want the resting point of this game to be. But I know where / want it to be. And...

Art: [sternly] And you're not allowed to tell us. Remember.

Austin: That's *not true*!! [Everyone laughs]

Keith: [crosstalk] Or you'll get kicked off the show.

Jack: [crosstalk] I have told you as well, is the other thing, right?

Austin: [crosstalk] I'm begging everyone! Communication at the table is *good*! [laughter continues]

Jack: Like, this is part of why I'm saying this, right? Is that like - there is a weird sub-game that happens now, which is that: if I act - if Kalar goes out there as the Giantkiller, and fights Motion with Cool, and is successful, that - that makes a statement about our final totals that people who move later in the running can use as information to decide what they want to do, right?

Austin: Mm-hm.

Jack: And we don't know what the people who have left - who are left want to do, as far as I can recall.

[timestamp 01:32:39]

Austin: That's correct. I mean, I will say, we've been breaking a core rule of this game to begin with, which is that you're supposed to go in turn order based on who's to your left, or something, you know? But we run a looser table than that. Uh...

Jack: We're in space. We're in tangible space.

Austin: Exactly.

Keith: Yep. There is no left in space.

Austin: Right, exactly.

Jack: Space left!

Austin: Space... yeah, exactly. "The player to your right becomes active," is what's supposed to happen here.

Jack: Right.

Austin: We have not done that. But, uh, but that is the rule to prevent the thing that you're talking about, or to - to remove the thing we're talking about from player... player... choice.

Jack: [crosstalk] Yeah! I don't think that this is like a - necessarily a negative...

Austin: [crosstalk] Totally! But you're right to say that there is that.

Jack: But in terms of my decision making - the thing that is giving me pause is not knowing [laughs] what other people might be wanting to do with the potential outcome of an action at this stage.

Austin: Yep.

Jack: Narratively, I think that Kalar going out as the Giantkiller to fight Motion now makes the most sense, as a piece of storytelling, but -

Austin: I think we have to lead with that, then.

Jack: Yeah. Yeah, I'm just - you've put in this document "this kind of play is good, and should be discussed,"...

Austin: It is, yeah!

Jack: ...so it would be remiss of me not to like, bring it up. I'm just wary about it, you know?

Austin: So what I would say is: refusing to act here is also acting in the fiction.

Jack: Yes.

Austin: That would - I think at that point we would have to read Kalar as...

Jack: Why isn't he doing anything?

Austin: Why isn't he doing anything right now? And we can fictionalize why that is the case. Is that because there is a moment of doubt here? Is he busy thinking about his family offworld? Is he - is he concerned with the negative outcome of if he gets involved here? Is he afraid for his life? Like, I think there's interesting things here. Is he playing a game of chicken with the rest of the world to see when he can best swoop in and be a hero? You know?

Jack: I think all of these things are, you know, like, [laughs] the meme would be Kalar doing anything, with each of those things written as the subtitle, right? It's like, Kalar loading a weapon is Kalar wondering if he's playing a game of chicken with people already. Cause he's - he's not a... And that wasn't a bird pun, by the way. [Sylvi and Art laugh loudly]

Austin: Yeah, I know. I knew what you meant. I knew we'd get there. [several people laugh] I knew - we got - when you first said "a game of chicken" like 6 minutes ago, I was shocked no one laughed at it. So...

Jack: But I just wanna - I just don't want it to be a pun, you know? I'm pro-pun, but... and I think Kalar is sick of bird puns...

Keith: [crosstalk] I think the world is too anti-pun. The pun is the root of like 90 percent of jokes.

Jack: [earnestly] Yeah, puns are great.

Austin: [skeptically] Mm-hm.

Jack: [laughing] Austin.

Art: What now, rate his claim?

Jack: I think - I think the, uh, back hatch of the Bitten Bullet opens.

Austin: Wait, the Bitten Bullet, or the Blue Channel?

Jack: Oh, sorry. Of the, uh, Blue Channel.

Austin: Yeah. [quietly, moving something on the map] We can - we can move this now. Cause this is gone. Um, but yeah.

Jack: Goodbye. Leaving out of right. And, uh, I think Kalar is in an EVA suit. And I'm think I'm gonna try and do Giantkiller moves. There and then.

Austin: Uh-huh. What's that look like? Because Motion is not huge. An interesting thing about this, right, is we've seen - I mean, it's a big fuckin' mech, the Demiurge, in terms of traditional-sized mech Hollows and Hallows that we've seen. But it's not Rigor. It's not - it's not Divine-sized. You know, like, Imperium is bigger than it. Valor is probably about the same size that it is. It's like - you know, it's huge, it's 80 feet tall or something like that. I could actually look up how tall it is, but I - you know, whatever. You know what I mean. But it's not, um, a mile tall, or something.

Jack: No. And in that sense, I think that there are definitely visual echoes of Kalar on the mechs in, um, Obelle?

Austin: Mm-hm.

Jack: In terms of that sort of aerobatic, trying to use your own momentum and their momentum to anticipate where to move. Um, trying to take like guerilla motions here, to like slice at a limb or anticipate where something's going to be. But I think because he's in space, and because Motion is such a powerful adversary, there is something bizarre and dreamlike and meticulous about it? Like, I'm thinking a lot of like Hardspace: Shipbreaker, which is a game about dismantling ships in zero-gravity.

Austin: Yeah! Totally.

Jack: And - that is a game that is fundamentally about destroying things, and there are lots of like explosive decompression, and things go screaming past your head -

Austin: [crosstalk] Yeah. Broun simulator 2020, by the way.

Jack: [crosstalk] Yeah, absolutely.

Austin: Broun, you know, breaking down the Lattice after this game is exactly Hardship - what is it called? Ship - Hardspace: Shipbreaker.

Jack: [crosstalk, precisely] Hardspace: Shipbreaker.

Keith: [crosstalk, precisely] Hardspace: Shipbreaker.

Austin: Yeah.

[timestamp 01:37:12]

Jack: Um... there is something queasy about it. Like, uh, Kalar's motions on this weird scale seem slow and deliberate, as we know that they're also like attached to an energy chain that is moving extremely quickly, attached to the end of Motion. Yeah, like, lots of closeups of Kalar's face turning in his helmet to look at a thing.

Austin: How did you get there? Is this also - is the Blue Channel the most famous ship in the galaxy after this fight? [Ali laughs] Did Broun also drive you there and drop you off, or did you ride another mech here, or what did you do?

Jack: I came in the Blue Channel as part of this Thisbe - I'm picturing this as like similar to the Thisbe assault, right?

Austin: Okay. Yeah. Are you hooked to the Blue Channel with something, or are you free-floating? Like, do you have a tether connected - like a long tether so that you can tether yourself back, or are you... just out there in space?

Jack: This is a Cool roll so I'm just out there.

Austin: Fuck.

Jack: No, that's not true. [Austin laughs] I am tethered to Motion. And I am - I have a grav tether. So like, I can tether to things.

Austin: I see. Yes, I gotcha.

Jack: But I don't think I'm attached to the Blue Channel. Because I think - you know, if Motion accelerates or the Blue Channel accelerates, Kalar could get like ripped in half? Um...

Austin: Yes. Fair. Yes, that would be bad. Let's see how the roll goes though, you know. [Jack laughs nervously] So that's 1d6 from doing this thing... um, you're a Giantkiller, that's another d6, that's 2d6. Um, is anyone helping? Is this - do we roll this into Thisbe's attack as part of being help? I think that that's -

Jack: [crosstalk] I wonder if this is Thisbe's... yeah.

Austin: [crosstalk] Yeah, I think that that makes sense to me. That feels like that's distracting, or it's like - it's a combined effort here.

Jack: Or like - Thisbe launches covering fire, or Kalar maneuvers a bit of Motion into an area where Thisbe can just open up on it.

Austin: Yeah, that makes sense to me. I like that.

Jack: [crosstalk] Okay, so I am rolling Cool.

Austin: [crosstalk] 3d6 Cool. You have a 4, so you are looking for a 5 or a 6.

Jack: On one of these dice...

Austin: Uh-huh.

Jack: Okay. [quietly] Good luck, everybody.

Austin: [gasps loudly] Kalar is the one. Kalar rolled 3 2 1. You are now 3 and 1. Full - full failure here.

Jack: [mimicking Austin's shaky pronunciation of "full"] Fool failure.

Austin: Yeah. [Dre whistles] And that's a - that's 6 locked Cool points. Cannot spin those Cool points.

Jack: [crosstalk] [quietly] Jesus Christ. [Dre groans]

Keith: [crosstalk] Pretty low. That's about - that's about as good as you can get for failing a roll in terms of tallies for Cool.

Art: [crosstalk] [quietly] Why didn't you have a different number?

Austin: What'd you say - what'd you say Art, quietly, also?

Art: Why didn't you have a different score? [Everyone laughs]

Austin: I don't know!

Jack: Oh, you mean why didn't my dice go differently?

Keith: Yeah!

Art: No, no, my question is why didn't you pick a different number before we started playing?
[laughter continues]

Keith: Oh.

Austin: Why didn't you pick a 3 instead of a - yeah, uh-huh.

Art: [with mock aggression] Yeah, why didn't you pick 3?

Austin: Oof, two fail questions, huh? What happens, Jack? What happens, Kalar? [pause]
Does the table have any questions they really want to ask, or answer?

Keith: I think one of these is screaming out, and it's "what complications or collateral did your actions cause?"

Jack: Mm-hm.

Austin: Oh yeah.

Jack: Yeah.

Austin: Does anyone have any good -

Art: I've already posed my question: "Why didn't you pick a different number?" [Everyone laughs]

Austin: Does anyone have a fun answer for collateral or complication here?

Jack: I mean, the answer is I thought we were going to be playing a very slightly different game. [laughs] I thought there would be more Doubt - more potential for conversational Doubt.

Austin: That's not the question I'm asking. That's a fake question that Art asked. [Dre laughs]

Art: It's a real question.

Austin: Yeah. Also, listen. You said you expected more Doubt? Doubt is winning right now. There's been plenty of opportunity for Doubt.

Keith: It's a different kind of Doubt.

Austin: Uh-huh.

Jack: Okay, uh... throwing things out. Kalar accidentally destroys a spaceship. Um... Collateral or complication. Um...

Austin: Is this about drawing Motion's ire in a direction that has immediate cost? Like moving further from the Curtain to closer to the Reflecting Pool. Being annoyed by your presence such

that she immediately hits the Blue Channel and the Blue Channel goes and crashes into the remnants of the Lattice. Is it, um... you know, there's a lot of ways in which you fucking up here - do you lose your tether and in fact begin free-floating through space alone? Not to do that to a second one of your characters this season, but. Do you get Sabeeha'd? Um, do you... is there an immediate response to this that, like, causes some sort of shockwave. Are you - I don't know. I don't know. [pause]

[timestamp 01:42:17]

Jack: Yeah. I mean, I think that I - I like the idea of losing a tether. That is, as far as I'm concerned, the most frightening thing that happens in space. I don't know if it is -

Austin: [crosstalk] Oh yeah. And we have to go big here because you're not gonna get like three more rolls or whatever. So I think it has to be like: you are now free-floating through space. It cannot be: oh, I'm down one tether. You know what I mean?

Jack: Yeah, no. Um... Does the - would - is that collateral, though? That's not collateral.

Austin: No, but that's complication, I think. Uh, I think we can go collateral, harder. Um, yeah. I think for me it's more interesting if both you and the Blue Channel are now free-floating through space. Um, because that does lean more toward collateral, right?

Jack: Oh, god. It's the Perennial Wave, right? What if -

Austin: [intrigued] Mmm. That's good.

Jack: What if it's just - the engines shut down.

Austin: Yeah.

Jack: Like, the ship is - the ship is functioning in the sense that it is moving. Newton's laws are still working. And so is Kalar. But like, none of Kalar's tethers can connect to anything.

Austin: Yeah. Yeah. Here's the coolest version of this, right? From Motion's perspective is - you know, you zip in with a tether, uh, you go to work with your - what's the weapon you use again? It's some sort of cool...

Jack: It's a blade.

Austin: Blade, yeah. An anti-Divine blade, or anti-Hallow blade.

Jack: Big fuckin' sword.

Austin: Yeah. And as you dip your blade through, you get the like - it's as if you're not even cutting so much as she is unforming that part of her - like - the leg of the mech. You know? It's just disappearing as if to make room for your blade. And then closes in around it, and your blade gets stuck, inside of the leg. You can't like, move it anymore. And then the whole of her body disappears. All of the Demiurge vanishes and there is this shockwave of the Perennial Wave that gets echoed out. And I think it has to be bigger. I think it's like - you know. There's a huge radius in which Curtain ships, Pact Ships, Millennium Break and Reflecting Pool ships all just stop in the air. They all just like [makes sound of machinery powering down] buuuuh. And then we get the reveal of: the like seven different Motions appear. The ones that Thisbe had seen coming a moment ago. And they're, like, spread throughout the fleets. Just going to fucking town, as all of these ships are shut down. Um, and it's because you landed a hit that she's like "All right. Time to get real." [Ali laughs]

Jack: Ali, is that okay? Shutting down your ship?

Ali: I - sure! Why not?

Keith: Yeah, no biggie! [Sylvi and Ali laugh]

Austin: Love to be floating through space! Perennial Wave high.

[timestamp 01:44:55]

Janine: I - you know I have a move? Next?

Austin: Yeah, you do have a move. That's true. You do. Um, so that's one of your fail questions. What's the other fail question?

Jack: True. Great. I have to do another one!

Austin: Uh-huh.

Jack: Um... so, this has got -

Austin: [crosstalk] Also, I would - I'm guessing you're like -

Keith: [crosstalk] You don't get three, you only get two?

Austin: You only get two on a fail. It's two failure questions, yes.

Keith: Okay.

Dre: That's kind.

Austin: Over on the left hand side of the screen, here. Yeah. Um... the, I would say, I suspect your like EVA suit, your basic, like, breathing apparatus is like hardened to the Wave, cause it's very simple. It's just pumping oxygen, it's not high-end spaceship shit, you know?

Jack: Yeah. It's some real, like, Outer Wilds bullshit.

Austin: Yes. Yes, exactly. [Laughs] But -

Keith: Yeah, like knowing that the Wave is a thing, they wouldn't tie your breathing to...

Austin: High-end, easily Wave-able stuff.

Keith: Yeah.

Jack: Uh, this might have come up in other episodes: What do the EVA suits on Partizan look like? I don't think I've seen any of them.

Austin: I think there's a range. We haven't seen any, yeah. I suspect they're different for who you work with, you know? Uh, my guess is you probably have a Company of the Spade one, right? Partially because that's the group that you're closest to, that has -

Jack: What's their livery?

Austin: Um... it's a - I think that it's literally, like, a shield with a cool shovel on it, right?

Jack: Sick.

Austin: And probably grays and blues? Um, I think it's probably big and bulky. We're talking about Stel Orion style styling here, so, you know, very functional to the point that it wants to show you that it's functional. Functional past function and into fashion. Um, uh, and...

Jack: Oh!

Austin: What did - yes, good. Great. This is just a big fuckin' helmet.

Ali: [Giggling] Yeah.

Austin: What's this from? What Star Wars thing is this from?

Ali: This is a background character in The Phantom Menace. [Keith laughs loudly]

Austin: [crosstalk] Ah, good.

Jack: [crosstalk] Yeah, so the -

Dre: [crosstalk] God. Beautiful movie.

Janine: [crosstalk] That's not the year I would have guessed.

Jack: Is it like - is there a, um - it almost has vibes of a Hazmat suit, as much as it does an EVA suit.

Austin: Yeah!

Jack: Where, like, you know Hazmat suits have these really, um... I'm trying to find a picture...

Dre: Like the big, tall, hood?

Janine: Cylindrical?

Jack: Yeah, like, this is an image from Dark, where they wear Hazmat suits. And like, you see how much room there is inside that... hood?

Austin: Yeah. Yeah, there's like a lot of space in there. I like that.

[timestamp 01:47:11]

Jack: [crosstalk] And there's something so awful about that.

Keith: [crosstalk] These are - I mean, this one is a little slicker. Um, but it reminds me of like old-school diving bells?

Austin: Yeah. Yeah yeah yeah yeah.

Keith: Hm.

Jack: This combination of Ali's and then mine and then... Keith's diving bell vibe I think is pretty close, yeah.

Austin: Yeah, that's also right. I think for - for the factions involved, for sure.

Jack: Um, and I've probably got - an hour of oxygen? 40 minutes of oxygen?

Austin: Sure.

Jack: [sighs] This - I feel like we should have a question about a media failure. About, uh - a depiction, right?

Austin: Yeah.

Jack: If the first is about, like, a practical, in-the-moment failure...

Austin: Yeah.

Jack: Is it, um...

Austin: Is it just, like -

Jack: Is this just "how did you lose control of the narrative?"

Austin: Yeah. Is this just like, the shot of when this happens is that the - the Blue Channel is the closest thing to Motion when it happens?

Jack: Oh, right! There's a culpability.

Austin: Yeah. Um.... and that's just like a famous image, right? Someone snaps this shot from a Curtain ship or whatever, and it becomes, you know - not, like on posters, necessarily, but -

Jack: [crosstalk] Like, these idiots did this.

Austin: Yeah. "These idiots did this. Did you lose someone in the battle above Partizan? Well."

Jack: And - and it becomes an argument for a kind of conservative prudence as well, right?

Austin: Yeah.

Jack: Where it's like, um... like, the propaganda of it is like "careless actions in the name of misplaced heroism result in..."

Austin: Yeah. "In death", right? I mean, this is the whole - this is the Curtain, right? The Curtain, from the jump, is like, you know, the most reactionary faction. The faction that is the most about "there's a reason why we have traditions. There's a reason why we have laws and the status quo is the status quo. It's tried and tested. The empire has lasted for five thousand years. That's longer than most. And there's a reason for that, and we have to protect that." Um, and this is the example. This is a great example of that, which is like: "We were winning that fight! We were winning it through traditional tactics. We were winning it and keeping it our people safe. And then Millennium Break, these idiots! Thought they could be -"

Jack: "These upstarts."

Austin: Yes. "These upstarts who did the thing they *always* do. They try to be heroes, they try to win fights quickly. They try to make change happen overnight. And what they did is..." and

then it's, you know. Motion jamming a sword into giant capital ships and ripping them apart with the power of a god. So, that's cool. Anyway, you're 3 and 1 now, as predicted by Dre. [Dre, Jack, and Ali laugh, someone groans]. Remember when Millennium Break blew a 3 and 1 series lead? Who's up? Who do we got left? We got Phrygian, we got Broun, uh... we got SI. We got... is that it? Who am I missing? It feels like I'm missing someone.

Sylvi: No, I think that's it.

Austin: [crosstalk] That's it. That's right.

Ali: [crosstalk] That's just the three of us, right? Yeah.

Keith: Well... I have a pitch, I guess, for something that's not, like - I guess I don't know if this is what I want to do, so maybe I'll just say what it is, and we can see.

Austin: Mm-hm?

Keith: Um, but I was thinking, cause we haven't done anything with the Curtain yet. And, like... definitely Motion is the scariest thing here, um, and the Pact has the potential for being the most significant enemy that we have. But I also sort of feel like really Curtain is the most direct threat to... I mean, it was not so long ago that the Pact was like "you should be one of us!"

Austin: Mm-hm. Correct.

Keith: The Curtain would not ever extend such a thing.

Austin: [crosstalk] Would never do that. Yes.

Keith: Um, so I might enter the fray.

Austin: Okay!

Keith: The Curtain fray.

Austin: Yeah yeah yeah. And in fact, you, as a Branched, are the only other thing besides Motion moving, right? In this moment.

Keith: Yeah, I think so.

Austin: Because the Wave does not affect - as far as we've seen, the Wave does not shut down - does not seem to shut down the Branched.

Keith: No. Which is - I - correct me if I'm wrong - part of the motivating factor of the Principality war on the Branched.

Austin: Seems to be. Yeah. One of them.

Keith: Yeah. One of them.

Austin: Um... so yeah, what do you do? Is this -

Keith: I mean, the other motivating factor is "What are we gonna do, *not* have a war"?

Austin: [laughs] We really would love to have a war with people we could vilify. Yeah. Uh-huh.

Keith: Um, so... I think that I'm going to - it's a fray. And space is big.

Austin: Mm-hm. Space is big.

Keith: And so, I think what I'm gonna try to do is just, like, try and hang back and just like methodically take out... like, targets in the Curtain fleet.

Austin: Which has been hit by this EMP of the Wave, right? So they're sitting ducks, in a real way.

Keith: Right. Yeah.

Austin: Okay. What's that - also, wait, what do you - do you have your new war form? Do you have your new -

Keith: I do. I absolutely do.

Austin: What is it?

Keith: Um, so... it is... let me get my - let me get my finale sheet so I can read what I put. Okay. So, um... for "style", I have "Phrygian".

Austin: Uh-huh. True. [Keith and Dre laugh]

Keith: Uh, my quirks, my positive quirks, I have "inorganic layers" and "out of focus". My negative quirk is "slack cables".

Austin: Okay.

Keith: And... it's sort of like - I mean, it's sort of like a loosened version of my last one, which had, like, one of its quirks was that it had extremely tense cables, and that it sort of snapped. And this one doesn't snap. It sort of, like... wobbles, almost? Not wobbles, it -

Austin: [crosstalk] Yeah. It's like a construction bridge - sorry, not a construction bridge - what do you call - a suspension bridge. But looser? It's sort of like, [imitates the pulsating sound of slack cables swaying].

Keith: [crosstalk] Right. It's a body that is no longer filled with kinetic energy.

Austin: Interesting.

Keith: Or, sorry, potential energy.

Austin: Right, I see. It's slack, in a way, but like - wavering - not wavering, but like - wobbling, like you said. Wobbling.

Keith: Yeah, yeah. Um, I guess it's sort of like, um... like, if you imagine like a wire that you pull taut versus one that's like, you pluck it and you can see - you know how you see a guitar string like wobbling back and forth? It's like that. Versus one where it's like pulled so it cannot do that any more.

Austin: Yeah, yeah. Totally. Yeah. Does it make similar sounds? I'm thinking about like a bass guitar. Like all the way - not detuned, but just like the - I guess, yes, detuned. Like, all of the pegs unwound, so that the strings are all slack? And it makes this kind of like -

Keith: [crosstalk] Yeah. You can hear - you can hear it. The thing that I had in my head was that you can hear, like, buzzing against the frets, cause they're too close to the...

Austin: Yeah, gotcha. Cool cool cool. What is the name of this form?

[timestamp 01:54:16]

Keith: Um, its - its name is: [strums a wobbly chord on a guitar - a G chord with an Ab somewhere in there].

Austin: Good. Thank you. Good. [Jack laughs] Can you - do you want to translate, or do you just wanna leave it like that?

Art: Take that, wiki editors!

Keith: Oh, I can translate it, sorry. Let me pronounce it slightly differently. [Strums the guitar again - the same chord revoiced an octave up.]

Austin: [mock exasperation] Oh, okay. Thank you.

Keith: Uh, you - I do have -

Austin: [laughing] Janine said “Bwaangg bwing.” Is that what - is it called the “Bwaangg bwing”?

Keith: It’s - yeah, yeah, yeah, sorry.

Janine: With two “g”s. The two “g”s are important for the resonance of it.

Sylvi: [crosstalk] [laughing] The Bwaangg bwingg...

Austin: [crosstalk] Okay. I see. [imitating a resonant string] Bwaaangggg. Bwingggg.

Keith: Its, uh - its name is, uh, G/Ab [G over A-flat], or you can call them Gab.

Austin: Gab. Love it.

Keith: Yeah.

Austin: Uh-huh. G/Ab is very good. Um... all right! Is this Doubt or Cool? I can hear arguments either way on this one, really.

Keith: I was thinking that it was Doubt.

Austin: Because?

Keith: Because, they’re like - I’m like, blowing up ships that are just kind of sitting there.

Austin: Yeah, dude.

Keith: They can’t move - it’s very unsporting.

Austin: It’s very unsporting.

Keith: If you were to look at this war and boil it down to who was being the most sporting in this moment, it would *not* be Phrygian.

Austin: No! You’re shooting - yeah, you’re shooting the enemy while they cannot shoot back.

Keith: [crosstalk] And I don’t think that it’s a productive way to look at a conflict like this, but... it would be if you’re trying to decide if something’s Cool or not.

Austin: And it would be if you are a - if you are a public of an empire who intrinsically likes the empire, and is looking for an excuse for why that empire lost in a fight, for instance.

Keith: Right.

Austin: "They're no fair! They're not sporting, they're not noble, they're terrorists."

Keith: Right.

Austin: "They shot us in the back. We had a - we had a more important foe to fight, blah blah blah blah blah. Look, they were even working with Motion at one point!" All that stuff is like so easy to imagine being conditioned in that way, right? Yeah.

Keith: Mm-hm.

Austin: So yeah, that sounds like Doubt to me. So that's one. You are using your war form, so that's two. I don't - can anyone help here? Let's think. If so, tell me how.

Dre: Hmm.

Austin: That's a tough one.

Keith: It is a tough one.

Austin: But I'm always open.

Jack: I think I am out of commission.

Austin: Yeah, little bit. [Dre laughs]

Keith: I agree.

Ali: Yeah, I think I'm extremely busy right now, so.

Austin: [crosstalk] Yeah, this would fall on -

Art: [crosstalk] That is the area I was looking to act in, but I don't know how to...

Austin: Aren't you back on the Portcullis, though?

Keith: [crosstalk] Um - the thing that -

Art: Well, I mean - how - what's our relation to time right now?

Keith: Yeah.

Austin: How - very - I mean - I feel like no time has passed, right?

Keith: Well, I mean, like - I think it's sort of the Jack thing of them having, like, retroactively been on the ship with Thisbe. Sort of like a -

Austin: But we already had - sorry - we already had SI working alongside Millie. Moments ago.

Keith: Oh, okay. That's fair.

Austin: You know what I mean? Which is far away. I think that's a - it's hard for me to imagine - eh, we can do it, it just needs to really be convincing as to why... how SI, who is dying, went from "I'm manually overriding this shit while I'm dying" to "I'm now in a ship we haven't seen yet, Millennium Falcon-ing my way into the conflict". Which - if you can give me something dope, I'm down with it. But that's the framing we need, do you know what I mean? Like - I guess we do know that there were some Company of the Spade ships down there. Maybe that was far enough away that it wasn't hit by the Perennial Wave. Maybe what we need to do is like slow down time a little bit in terms of the post-Perennial Wave, like, event. In which, maybe Motion is like out here doing this for more than just - maybe it hasn't been 15 seconds, maybe it's been 15 minutes. You know? But... space is big. So, I - we have to adjust based on what we've seen, is all I'm saying.

Art: No, I guess I just thought time was a little more fungible right now.

Austin: In my mind, this has all happened so fast, but that's just because it seems like not much has happened, you know? Um, but that's just because there's only been four -

Art: [crosstalk] Sure, I guess I meant: space is big *and* space is slow.

Austin: Yeah, again - Art, if you can come up with like a really interesting way for what the journey there looks like, from Millie disappearing to you getting on a ship, showing up here, where that ship came from - like all that shit - then I think we're good, you know?

Art: No, I think I'm gonna hold.

Austin: Okay.

Art: I don't think I - yeah.

Keith: That's fun, I can roll two. I'm extremely brave.

Austin: [apprehensively] 2d6.

Keith: God, this is only the, like, third, like, two-dice roll in the whole game.

Austin: Yeah, we've done very few twos. We've done very, very, very few twos.

Keith: Okay. So I feel like the game is owed a lower dice roll.

Austin: [crosstalk] We've done one. This is the second 2d6 in this whole game.

Keith: I think there was one -

Austin: That's it. Broun did it.

Keith: Oh wow, really?

Austin: Yeah. Mm-hm.

Keith: Yeah. Okay.

Austin: We almost did another one but I think we figured out a way for a 3.

Keith: All right, so I'm a 4, so I need to roll under a 4.

Austin: That is correct.

Keith: Yeah, I can do that.

Austin: Plenty of room to work with.

Keith: Plenty of room.

Austin: That's a hedge. 3 and a 4.

Keith: That's a 3. That's a hedge. But I'm gonna keep it. So I have to re-roll, though.

Austin: Okay - so when - so you say you're gonna keep it, you mean, you're not gonna switch to Doubt - sorry, you're not going to switch to Cool, you are going to re-roll it, and see if you get to keep your Doubt points.

Keith: Right, yeah. I think I will.

Austin: Or get a win with Doubt. Yeah.

Keith: Yeah. I'm gonna get a win with Doubt.

Austin: [apprehensively] 2d6. Roll low. [pause] Hoo!

Art: Hey!

Austin: That's two successes!

Keith: That's a success.

Austin: Full success! Uh, and - low success, because it's only two dice, but 5 more Doubt points. Um, and that's spinnable, because it's - because you succeeded. And that's a win! That's your win. This is your win. This is the fourth success.

[timestamp 02:00:08]

Keith: We win.

Austin: So what's this look like? What are the two success questions you're asking here? Yeah.

Keith: Um, hmm. I have one - I don't wanna overstep with my win here. But it is **the** win.

Austin: Mm-hm. [Dre laughs]

Keith: Um... okay. Maybe I'll switch it. Okay, I was thinking "Who did you get the upper hand with?", but maybe instead I will do -

Austin: [crosstalk] Motion, right? Okay.

Keith: No, this is not Motion. This is the Curtain.

Austin: The Curtain, I know, but I'm saying: is there a world in which this also gives you that?

Keith: Oh, maybe. But I was going to say "How did you take control of the narrative?"

Austin: Mm-hm.

Keith: And... I think that like - if you look at the - if you're someone on Partizan, or maybe other worlds that have heard of what's happening on Partizan, um - they have news.

Austin: Mm-hm. [Dre laughs]

Keith: It's hard - I think it's like - it's hard to imagine - the Curtain's known, now, right? They had their big come-out moment, right?

Austin: They had their big reveal, the Pact is known, yes. The Pact is the most well-known sort of reformist-slash-revolutionary organization, the Curtain is the biggest, uh, kind of reactionary back-to-tradition, you know, subgroup, for sure.

Keith: So I think that, at least in the context of this battle, like - you've got the skirmish between Millennium Break and the Pact, and then you've got, like - I mean, look at how much of the map is this big mass of Curtain stuff.

Austin: Mm-hm.

Keith: And I think it's the moment where things seem to be like - oh, all of a sudden, the Curtain is like *losing*? Which is not a thing that I think maybe people even considered would happen.

Austin: Mm-hm. Yeah.

Keith: Where it's like - you've got the Pact and the Millennium Break fighting and also trying to not be killed by the Curtain, and now the Curtain is dying.

Austin: Is losing a fight that they should have won.

Keith: Right.

Austin: Yeah, I like that. I like that a lot. Um... the thing I was gonna suggest, in terms of how you also end up getting the upper hand on Motion here, is two things. One is like - what does the weapon you're using look like, here? As you're doing these potshots.

[timestamp 02:02:26]

Keith: I think, uh... So we've got presumably a bunch of targets moving in a straight line? Whatever - whatever direction they were moving in when the Wave hit?

Austin: [crosstalk] Yeah, sure. Right. Yes.

Keith: And so, I think it's gotta be some sort of fast projectile.

Austin: Okay.

Keith: Or some sort of, like, uh - I mean, I would even argue, like - something where the thing hits quick. Because everything is moving, and nothing's stopping.

Austin: Right, right.

Keith: Like, you can't wait for someone to halt...

Austin: To take a shot. Right.

Keith: To take a shot.

Austin: Though, of course, they're also moving at the same speed that they're all - it's probably very easy to line up and predict a shot that will hit.

Keith: Right, yeah.

Austin: It's not easy, but you know, it's possible. Cause they can't swerve. They can't dodge.

Keith: Right. It's not a tough shot cause they're moving in one direct line, but it's also not just like "boom, headshot, done."

Austin: Right, right.

Keith: Um, so yeah. I'm thinking, like, some sort of ballistic, like -

Austin: Okay. Are you like launching parts of the coil of yourself very quickly? Is there like a slingshot action style thing? Is there -

Keith: [laughs] Like, it cuts off - like something cuts off a little slice of cable and shoots it?

Austin: Yeah. Yeah.

Keith: Yeah, I like that.

Austin: Some sort of weaponized cable self. Um, the thing that I was gonna suggest is: the, um - the.... As you're doing this, you're blowing up these ships, in a way that again does not look particularly heroic. Uh, one: some of those explosions could take out some of the Motion clones that have spread out.

Keith: Mm.

Austin: But two. A thing that's true about Armour Astir, which we're not playing yet, but we will in a season, when we come back to this world, is that there is a magic wheel. There's like a rock-paper-scissors wheel in which it's like: Mundane weapons beat Arcane defenses, Arcane weapons beat Divine defenses, Divine weapons beat Profane, duh-duh-duh-duh-duh. And we can map that, and I have mapped that, to our world. And in that, Branched stuff beats Divine stuff.

Keith: Sick.

Austin: And that's part of why the Branched are winning this fight, in some ways. Um, and it's imaginable to me that like one of these coil shots hits Motion in such a way that it doesn't hurt the part of her that has been charged with the Divine - the True Divine - but does hit the part of her that is just a Divine. In such a way that like, the energy starts leaking out. Right?

Keith: Yeah.

Austin: And in that way, it's just a matter of time before she's just one more mech.

Keith: She's dual-type, but I'm still Super Effective.

Austin: But you're still Super Effective. You're still Super Effective, right! Um, and she's gonna lose that other type now. Like, it's almost like you've hit the fuel line. You've wounded - she can only contain the True Divine because she is a Divine who has been built for this purpose, and you've hit her in such a way that you've done extra damage to the thing that lets her contain and use the True Divine. Um, and so we start to get that like leakage of energy, right? Instead of glowing with it, she begins to like - she begins to just seem like a mundane machine again. You know, gray and chrome. And the cuts that your coils make against her begin to cause cracks in her where the light begins to leak out. You know?

Keith: Mm-hm.

Austin: Uh, so that is four successes. We've gotten there. Everything left, which is to say Sovereign Immunity and Broun, is up to - this is the - this is the real like "how does this story end?" "What's it look like for people outside?" Et cetera. And also, and also - you know, at this moment, everyone is still rushing to get their ships back online. To, you know, reboot everything, change all the circuits, et cetera, so that all these ships are going to come back online momentarily. This moment of peace will roll over. So there is still that part. There is still that threat. You know?

Ali: Yeah.

Art: And now that we know we're succeeding, what's the score?

Austin: Do you want me to do a total breakdown of where we're at?

Art: Well, cause we have to double everything, right?

Austin: Once we - once we - uh, only once you know if you're succeeding in... which thing you're succeeding in, right? Yes, but yes.

Art: [crosstalk] Right, but our first two numbers are -

Austin: Yes. Uh, not both of them. Only one of them. Only the one that this act matches will double.

Art: Oh, so we don't know.

Austin: We will not know.

Art: [crosstalk] And what's our current score in this act?

Austin: That's what I'm gonna figure out.

Keith: [crosstalk] Right. Although, leaning pretty heavily towards Cool. We're something like net 25? I mean Doubt, sorry, net 25 Doubt?

Austin: [crosstalk] No, it's very close. It's - it's - oh, yeah, uh... yes, cause there's another 5 Doubt, right?

Dre: [crosstalk] For just this act? Or...

Austin: [crosstalk] Yeah, cause 11 Doubt plus 13 Doubt is 24, plus 5 Doubt is... what? Uhh...

Keith: 29?

Austin: 29. And then 14 Cool plus 6 Cool is 20.

Keith: Oh, I forgot about the 14.

Austin: So it's a big - yeah, it's a big one.

Ali: So we're 6 Doubt? Uh, 9 Doubt?

Austin: 9 Doubt, right now. Yeah.

Ali: Um, well. [laughs] I - I know what I would like to do, and I would like to do the extremely Cool action of trying to hotwire my ship back on and maybe save Kalar?

Austin: Okay, sure! [Ali laughs] So, who is -

Keith: *Definitely* hotwire the ship. [Ali laughs louder]

Austin: Uh-huh.

Keith: *Maybe* save Kalar.

Austin: That is 1d6 from your, uh - it's just a roll - 1d6 for Mechanic, is 2d6, and then... either Thisbe or the Figure in Bismuth can help you repair shit. Both of them, presumably, are doing it, right?

Ali: Oh, we still have the Figure on the Blue Channel.

Austin: Yep.

Ali: Perfect.

[timestamp 02:08:00]

Keith: My, uh - just so that we're clear, I rolled - knowing that we had a lot of Doubt, I rolled Doubt. I want more Doubt.

Austin: [crosstalk] Yeah, I figured that, from Keith.

Ali: [crosstalk] Sure. Okay, there we go. [giggles]

Austin: I figured when I wrote this - despite the one being called "Leap", it's not about Exeter Leap so much as "We will leap", the final rule of the - the second-to-last rule of the manifesto, the last rule of course is "Look sick as shit" - um, which is really Cool, actually, I should have named the Cool one "Look sick as shit", uh... but yeah, you know what I mean. [laughter]

Keith: Yeah. Phrygian I don't think has - really cares between "Leap" or "Burn". I think "Burn" is cooler and would be more fun for Armour Astir.

Austin: Yes. Uh-huh.

Art: Well, and after Austin wouldn't tell me what the good ending was -

Austin: [exasperated] Oh my God.

Art: - I've decided I'm pretty ending-agnostic. I really don't have - I'm gonna pick my roll based on what I think it is.

Austin: [crosstalk] Okay. Yes. That's the right - that's - I like this. Okay!

Jack: [crosstalk] I. Want. Leap. Well, Kalar wants "Leap". I'm fine. [Dre laughs]

Austin: Broun. 3d6.

Ali: Yeah, okay, let's just do it. I've said what I wanna do.

Austin: Totally. You're looking for a higher-than-your-current, which is a 4, so you're looking for a 5 or a 6.

Ali: Okay! Uh... la la la...

Austin: And your score is a 4. Hey, that's a hedge.

Art: [crosstalk] There's a success.

Austin: That's a hedge, because also rolled a 4.

Art: Oh, it's a hedge!

Ali: Yeah.

Austin: Do you want to hedge, switch over to Doubt instead, don't know what that looks like, we'll figure it out, keep the success? Or re-roll?

Keith: [crosstalk] *I* know what it would look like.

Austin: What's your suggestion for what it looks like?

Keith: Um, well - I think the key was when Ali said that she was gonna definitely hotwire the thing and then maybe save Kalar. I think there - like - that definitely seems Cool, unless someone says "how come the thing you definitely weren't gonna do is save your friend?"

Ali: [condescendingly] Oh, cause I need to turn my ship on before I can help somebody.

Keith: I mean, we can do whatever we want! You can figure out some way to save Kalar!

Ali: [crosstalk] I can't move it! Like, I -

Art: I mean - you like look at the camera and say: "Maybe I'll save Kalar!" That doesn't happen!
[several people laugh]

Dre: Just make Jim Halpert face.

Ali: Yeah. No - I mean... have to be in a ship that is currently *on*. [several people laugh]

Keith: You can do - you can do a space walk!

Ali: [incredulously] Into space?

Keith: You can do a, uh, Interstellar, is that the one where...

Austin: A lot of them do space walks out there. A lot of space movies do space walks.

Ali: I don't know that I have a "not turning on the Blue Channel but going into space to help Kalar" action?

Jack: Cause it's like - where do we go then?

Ali: Yeah. That's why it's a one and then two part plan. Um, no offense, Kalar.

Jack: No, totally understandable. I think Kalar is in - is in his space suit giving you the thumbs-up.

Ali: Appreciate it.

Austin: So yeah -

Ali: God, what am I gonna do?

Austin: Yeah. Mm-hm. What are you gonna do?

Ali: Um... hm. Um... [quietly] I - I think I might hedge. I'm so afraid of rolling again and failing.

Austin: Yeah.

Ali: I deeply fear it.

Keith: And that - that would be - yeah. That would be a 10.

Austin: That'd be a lot of Cool points, yeah. Or Doubt points, rather. If you hedge.

Keith: Yeah. The problem is that we like Doubt so we keep calling it Cool.

Austin: I do, yeah. [Ali laughs] Um, what's the Doubt look like, then.

Ali: Yeah, how does this look like a Doubt? Um...

Keith: Uh - what I was saying before was to not change what you're doing but just reframe it as Doubt because you're prioritizing doing the ship over helping Kalar. That was what I meant from before.

Ali: Sure.

Keith: But I'm sure there's a better thing to do.

Austin: There's a way to do that where - yeah. Where you really focus on Broun being like upset, or angry - like, angry, or tested, testy, you know, short with people during this. We kind of touched that when you were descending into the clouds. Um, but we don't - we haven't necessarily come back around on that. But there could be something else, I don't know. I don't know what the Doubt hedge here looks like.

Ali: Yeah, um... Yeah. It just seems like such a reasonable and then also heroic action that it seems weird to recast it.

Austin: Mm-hm.

Dre: I mean, does it look like someone else on the ship having to do this for Broun?

Austin: I mean - or does it look like - I mean, the thing here is like, can it also look like... not... The thing that we've seen before is like, circumstances change to trigger someone's hedging, right? So is this like something gets in the way? Or, you have to deal with X first in a way that makes you look unheroic, uncool? You have to flee before you swoop back in. You know what I mean? Whatever it is, right? Where, you know. Imperium shows up. Imperium sets down in front between you and Kalar just as you get the ship rolling, and instead of trying to push through and save Kalar in this moment, you say "We'll be back for you, I promise." And you leave Kalar still in space, alone, for another - until the sequence ends. Do you know what I mean? Then what we've gotten in terms of Doubt is that you didn't do - you did the thing that like, kept you alive in this moment, and potentially left Kalar out to die.

Ali: Sure.

Austin: Or just to - just out to float, which is scary, you know?

Ali: Which is horrible, yeah. And very dangerous, yeah.

Austin: Yeah.

Ali: Um, I think that that works. Um... yeah. The only other idea I've maybe had was to invoke Asepsis here.

Austin: Oh! That's it! That's the Doubt. [Ali laughs] Yeah.

Keith: Say it again, Ali?

Ali: Um, to use Asepsis! The Divine that I like stole.

Keith: Oh, yeah.

Austin: Yeah!

Ali: [crosstalk] Trying to bring control.

Keith: [crosstalk] That can never be anything but Doubt. [Ali laughs]

Austin: Correct. Correct. Do you have to use Asepsis to get to Kalar? Does a Motion appear between you and Kalar, and you're like "Well I been waitin' to use this!"

Ali: Yeah, I was thinking, um, buhh... like using -

Austin: Cause you know what'd open up those holes that were already open, which is a thing that we actually literally did with Asepsis in Auspice? You literally did this same thing of like, there's already some wounds here, can I open them up more with Asepsis?

Ali: Right, right right right. Yeah. And Asepsis isn't like a repair thing, right, it's like a cleansing thing. So, it wouldn't be -

Austin: Yeah. And "cleanse" is a euphemism for destruction, and purity, and all of the like gross - you know. It's not good, yes.

Keith: Yeah.

Ali: Yeah yeah yeah. Um...

Austin: I love this.

Ali: Sure.

Austin: For - good for multiple reasons. [Dre and Ali laugh loudly] This is "let me break things" Austin speaking.

Ali: Sure, yeah yeah yeah. I mean, I've had it in that big fish tank all this time.

Austin: Mm-hm.

Ali: Might as well deploy it.

Keith: You're keeping it in a fish tank?

Ali: Yeah, it's in a - [laughs]

Keith: Doesn't seem safe enough.

Ali: Broun has an office with two desks in it. And also, there's [laughs] there's just like an aquarium aquarium thing, but then it's like inside of like a safety lock. Like, Hazmat aquarium. Inside - it's a double-walled situation.

Austin: Yeah.

Jack: Fishteen Minutes, danger edition. [Ali laughs]

Austin: God.

Ali: Um... yeah. I guess, yeah, yeah! Is it - hmm - Broun, um... [clicking noises in the background] That's Asepsis, my radiator, sorry.

Austin: Uh-huh.

Ali: But, like - the T-shirt cannon again, but, you know, firing it off into space?

Austin: Yeah, sure! I like it.

Jack: [laughs] The Blue Channel moving very slightly with the kickback from the T-shirt cannon. [Ali and Austin laugh] It's too big for that, but, you know.

[timestamp 02:15:47]

Austin: Um... do you have three questions to ask? On a success.

Ali: Oh, questions.

Austin: Mm-hm.

Ali: My God. Um... What do I get to do here? I get to do two -

Austin: Anything, cause it's three successes.

Ali: Oh!

Austin: Oh wait, no, it's only two successes. It's only two successes, right?

Keith: [crosstalk] Is it not three, cause it's all dice?

Art: [crosstalk] No, a hedge turns everything to a success.

Austin: [crosstalk] Oh, a hedge turns it all to a success, yeah. So it's three successes, yeah.

Ali: Oh!

Austin: Full success.

Ali: Um, "how did my actions escalate the situation?" [laughs]

Austin: I have an answer for you.

Ali: Do you?

Austin: I do.

Ali: Wow.

Austin: Can we ask - can we answer that one last? Cause it's the last thing that happens.

Ali: Sure. [laughs] Um... oh my God, I have another shoot-myself-in-the-foot question that I'm not gonna ask.

Austin: [intrigued] Oh?

Ali: Um, "In what ways did you leave yourself vulnerable?" Which is a funny question to ask when you invoke the power of a Divine.

Austin: Uh-huh.

Ali: Um...

Austin: Are you actually asking that one?

Ali: I think I am.

Austin: Oh. Okay! Um... I mean...

Ali: [laughing] What other choice do I have?

Austin: This is a crime. You did a high crime of deploying a - I think this is like, this wins the day, right, in some ways. But also is like, Broun, you've done a - I think this is a long-term vulnerability, not a short-term vulnerability.

Ali: Yeah. This is a felony on camera, right?

Keith: [crosstalk] This is also -

Austin: [crosstalk] Yeah. Yeah. You are wanted across every - across Pact and Curtain space now, you know?

Keith: No one in the Millennium Break likes this either.

Austin: No! No one likes this!

Keith: This is not - this is not, like - this is - we're terrorists, and we're like "This sucks." [Sylvi and Ali laugh]

Austin: Clementine Kesh is like, "Huh. I wish I would've thought of that." You know? That's the one person, is Clem.

Ali: Well, here's the thing about using Divines as weapons. If we're not gonna do it, you first.

Austin: [laughing] Kalar, we'll be right there. I know you hate using Divines as weapons, but first, I need to deploy a Divine as a weapon to save you. [Art and Ali laugh] Doubt!

Jack: This is just like - yeah. What are you doing?

Austin: Kalar leaning forward like Cole Phelps from L.A. Noire. "Doubt!" [Everyone laughs]

Jack: Time to deploy a divine. For immediate violent gain, right?

Austin: Yeah, uh-huh.

Ali: [crosstalk] It's a war!

Jack: [crosstalk] Like - this doesn't help solve the immediate problem, right?

Austin: I mean, no, it does. Because the thing that's about to happen happens. Which is - I'll answer this one now. You still have one more question, but, you know, fuck it.

[timestamp 02:18:16]

[Music: Jack de Quidt's "[MOONSTONE. OREBODY. GHOSTNOTE.](#)" begins playing. Shimmering, insistent synthesizer chords over heavy bass.]

Austin: Asepsis begins to open up those holes that are glowing now, you know, those kind of incisions from Phrygian and, uh, Bwaangg Bwingg's coil launcher. Sorry, G/Ab's coil launcher. [laughs] And, uh, you know. That light begins to pour out of not just this one in front of you, but the others. It's like every - as Asepsis - I think Asepsis crawls inside these little like mechanical - you know, again, I always think of the Mousers from Teenage Mutant Ninja Turtles as Asepsis.

[Music: Drums enter, along with a metallic whisper, shimmering like the synthesizer chords.]

These little robot guys go into the holes in the Demiurge, and appear on the other clone bodies of Motion, and just go to fuckin' work. The - those wounds get bigger. Light begins to pour out and diffuse through the sky. Through space.

[Music: The drums drop out and a high pitched pinging enters and becomes a gently keening screech, as a new tune emerges on the keyboards, both more melodic and more distorted.]

Like, there is - all of that power that was contained here begins to spread throughout the space that you're in. It's **very** bright at first. But then it gets more and more diffuse, and increasingly - you know, at a microscopic level - on top of there being the Perennial Wave everywhere, there is also this new force which begins to spread and duplicate that - I think long term it gets a different name - it gets a name.

[Music: The screech disappears, and the keyboards fade to an eerie, gentle pulse.]

It gets a name that has nothing to do with the True Divine, because it's not - because people don't believe in the True Divine, right? People believe Motion did something here. So I bet some people call it the Motion Particle. But I think it also becomes known as Girandolia.

[Music: The distorted melodic theme emerges again, along with sparse, slow drums.]

This sort of like, strange force in the galaxy that scientists and engineers begin to pull on. And they're finding it a little easier to work with than Perennial Wave. For good reason, which is - it's just kind of loose here. The Perennial Wave at the end of the day still seems to be caught up with the arbitrary whims of Perennial. But the True Divine is not controlling this stuff. And this Girandolia, this Motion Particle, is a big part of what moves us from Beam Saber to Armour Astir. This is where a lot of what we would think of as like the magic in Armour Astir ends up being grounded in.

[Music: Lower synthesizers growl out a grimy, driving repeated motif, getting bigger.]

Either directly through use of this stuff, or through the sort of like advances that this thing allows you to pursue. Um, it allows new technologies and techniques to come into use that then change the way Divine power works, that change the way the Branched are able to operate. Um, it all - it all filters out.

And - and it becomes sort of like the Perennial Wave, in that there are nights where you look up at the sky and it has this kind of soft, golden glow to it.

[Music: The grimy motif ends and the gentle keyboard pulsations and sparse drums return, but now more complex, and soon joined by the distorted melodic line and the keening.]

Um, because the Girandolia has kind of blown in. But it's everywhere soon enough, as it begins to filter out of these bodies, and from - I think even from the gate. The gate is closed, but that pool that SI is standing near, the kind of control center - that pool is still open, and it's almost like the red and black that was there turns this kind of golden-white color. The same color as this kind of energy thing that it was. Um, and it - it begins to almost like steam up through the clouds.

I don't have a third color for Girandole here. But imagine that it also becomes kind of golden-hued and white as this energy begins to diffuse through it all.

[Music: Everything fades out, shimmering.]

Keith: But it doesn't have the same effect as the Perennial Wave.

Austin: It has different - it doesn't shut things down, correct. It does not, like, "oh no, this shuts things down" - it's almost like a new medium by which you can start playing - it's like, you know, this is what extends - this is what makes it go from "here is a wakeboard that won't fall over" to whatever the next step of that style, that type of, you know. Sci-fi to the point of almost magic starts to happen.

Keith: Yeah. Okay.

Austin: It becomes instrumental in what comes next. Um, you still have a third question, though, Ali.

Ali: Yeah. Actually, I think that I was going to take "What new information or tool is revealed to you?"

Austin: Ah, I see.

Ali: And then just have that roll into what you just said.

Austin: What I just said, basically.

Ali: Yeah.

Austin: Yeah. Do you, like - your readings pick this up almost immediately, right?

Ali: Mm-hm.

Austin: Maybe you even had your Asepsis drones programmed with probe information, and it's like, this is an incredible amount of energy that has been captured here and that has spread throughout the galaxy that now we can draw on in interesting ways.

Ali: Can I hang out of the ship with a big jar...

Austin: And just start collecting some of it? [Ali laughs] Fuckin' vulture, I swear. When Ibex said "It's a vulture", he was talking about you. [Ali laughs diabolically] Um, do we want a total before we go into your move, Sovereign Immunity?

Art: Sure. I mean, anything that gives me a delay in havin' to figure out what my move is gonna be is helpful for me right now.

Austin: 39 Doubt... minus... cause this next one is definitely gonna be Cool, it's gonna be lower - 20 Cool, is 19 Doubt. So 19 Doubt total, right now.

Art: So that's helpful. I can't do anything. It is what it is.

Austin: [crosstalk] That's not true, necessarily. But... well, it depends - people can spin.

Art: I was looking for... a dramatic way to die? And I didn't get one. Because everyone succeeded at everything.

Austin: Did you want one? I have one for you, maybe. Which is: what if Millie gets spat out here from the pool that you're standing next to?

Art: I was wondering. That was my - that was the dangling thing I was looking at, was like, wait, Millie didn't come out.

Austin: Yeah. I have to get her home. I have to get her into a ship. And carrying someone in the shape that you're in will push your body to its limits. Also, Millie, what was it like being in Motion when Motion died?

Sylvi: [sighs] Weird. Like -

Austin: I guess Motion died. Did Motion die? What is it - I don't know if Motion died, or if Motion is also diffused through the galaxy in the Motion Particle. You tell me, you were there. Yeah.

Sylvi: I think that it's like - I think that's one of those things where it's like - Motion's presence like basically disappeared from within that, like, life-stream, for lack of a better word, that Millie was in. And like, I think, like - I don't think there's a concrete way she can answer whether or not it's dead, but it is like, not connected to this right now. Or like, if it is, it's so small -

Austin: [crosstalk] Yeah. Do you feel Cas'alear? Or, not Cas'alear, sorry - Cassander, and Laurel - AKA Laurel - inside of this life-stream energy field as all this happens? This person who, like, was the ideal poster child of the GLORY program?

Sylvi: Oh. Yeah. I think that there's, like, probably a bit of a link there. During - I don't think - I feel like I can be ambiguous with Motion surviving, I don't think I can be ambiguous with Cassander surviving this.

Austin: Yeah, no. Um, what is the impression you get of them as they die?

Sylvi: [sighs] I feel like... and, stop me if I'm wrong on my read of Cassander here, but they're more thinking about just like, how much stuff they had left to accomplish with Motion.

Austin: Yeah.

Sylvi: Um, and it's more a feeling of disappointment than sadness when they realize it's sort of coming to an end.

Austin: Yeah... Do they say anything to you as you're floating in this pool of thought and will and energy? Are they - do they just look disappointed? Do they - is there - is there a grudgingness here? Like, is there a grudging respect here, or is it just...hate? Is there -

Sylvi: I think there's a bit. I think there's like - if they were, like - if communication was as simple as just people in a room, this would just be like, a disappointed little laugh. A like,

Sylvi (as **Laurel**): Oh, *you* beat me? Okay. *You guys* won? Great.

Austin: Great. Yeah. So then, yeah. I think, you know. The light fades from - from this Cassander-Millie staredown in the energy sphere in the Matrix in the Assassin's Creed 2. [Sylvi laughs] Empty space. And - and then when light fades back down, what we see is Millie coughing up bits of the True Divine, I guess, at this pool which is now draining. Um, uh - you know, as it kind of, um - what's the word I'm looking for - evaporates into the world around. Millie is there, unconscious, at your feet, Sovereign Immunity, inside of the kind of command center of the Portcullis. Um, also wounded, from all of this. Has absorbed too much energy. I don't know where the Stray Dog is. I think the Stray Dog was just absorbed into it all, you know?

Sylvi: Yeah.

Austin: Rip. Um, and - and there she is. At your feet.

Art: All right. How am I gonna get - like, literally... how do I get Millie...

Austin: Out.

Art: Out.

Austin: You're big.

Art: But like, is there a -

Austin: [crosstalk] Not that Millie is, like, tiny, but - I think - there's probably *a* ship still in one of these hangars somewhere, right?

Art: Like the end of Alien. But, uh, Sovereign Immunity is Sigourney Weaver, and Millie is Jonesy.

Austin: Yeah, uh-huh. [Austin and Sylvi laugh] Yes. Uh-huh.

Art: But there's not an alien. Probably.

Austin: Well, we'll see what the roll looks like, right? I don't know.

Art: Yeah.

Austin: Yeah. Maybe I was wrong about where, um, Apothosa is.

Jack: Or -

Austin: What were you going to say?

Jack: Like, is there something else on the other end of the gate?

Austin: Or no, I just mean - in the Portcullis still, somewhere. Hunting here, you know?

Jack: Oh, I see.

Art: And it's a Xenomorph. We've been bought by Fox. Surprise, everyone. [Austin laughs]

Jack: Also - weirdly Deadpool is here now. [Austin and Art laugh]

Keith: He's staring at the camera saying, "Me again? Really?"

Sylvi: Oh my God.

Austin: [groaning] All right...

Art: It's too bad that Fox doesn't exist any more.

Keith: Does Fox not exist?

Art: No, it's Disney now.

Austin: Disney bought Fox.

Keith: Oh. Great.

Austin: 20th-Century Pictures exists. For now.

Art: 20th-Century Pictures.

Austin: Yeah.

Art: I guess Fox still exists, just isn't the Fox that I'm referring to.

Austin: Correct. We did not get bought by Rupert Murdoch's media empire.

Art: Yeah. News Corp did not buy us.

Keith: [incredulous] They didn't like this?

Austin: Mm-mm. Weird, I know.

Art: We're gonna be on after Hannity. That's, uh - [Several people laugh]

Austin: God... So, what do you do? Haul her up around your - you know, over your shoulder, and start dragging yourself -

Art: Yeah, I think a fireman's carry has to be it. I think that's -

Austin: Yeah.

Art: That's supposed to be the most efficient way to carry a person, and I'm going for efficiency here. I think it's just like, you know. There's little like alert warnings going off, and just like - I don't wanna go too heavy onto the - the - we used alert warnings so masterfully in the midseason, I don't wanna, like, hit that too hard, but like - there's probably little - yeah.

Austin: Yeah. I'm with you.

Art: And just like, getting down the corridor, and then around the corner, and then down the next corridor, and just like getting - getting to the thing, like, hitting whatever autopilot setting there is, and then just like collapsing at the...

Austin: Is this Cool or Doubt?

Art: I think it's Cool.

Austin: I think it's Cool too.

Art: Which is a shame, cause I'm not good at it.

Austin: Yeah. Well, we'll see how the roll goes, right?

[timestamp 02:30:10]

Art: Yeah.

Jack: Join the fucking club.

Art: I would like to contend that this is very Michael Jordan on the Wizards. I think...

Austin: Putting the team on his back. Yeah. Uh-huh.

Art: Yeah.

Austin: Sure. Um, all right. 2d6. Is anyone helping here? I don't know what that looks like, I don't know if Millie, you come to at a certain point, I don't know if it's -

Jack: [crosstalk] Is there anybody here?

Austin: Millie is the only one here, I think, who's a character. PC.

Sylvi: Yeah. Like, I could wake up and do something, but, like, I don't know what yet.

Austin: It's weird, cause it's almost like - it's easier to imagine this if Art rolls it and then hedges, I can imagine a world in which Millie is - do you see what I mean? We can switch around to Doubt, and duh-duh-duh. It's things we can play with. But it's hard when you're like, no, the stakes are Millie's hurt really bad, right?

Art: I mean - it's really easy to shift it to Doubt, just by like changing the sort of like focus on this.

Austin: Yeah.

Art: Um - I'm really prepared to hedge this. I'm not prepared to succeed. [laughs]

Austin: Well, you got 2d6 right now. You're looking for a 5 or a 6. [pause] There's a 6, but also a 4, so you could hedge, for 10 more Doubt.

Art: It doesn't matter, right?

Austin: It does. It still - all these spinnables could spin in a way that gets you back down under that threshold. It's just gonna be hard. It's gonna be very hard.

Art: I can't - I can't try it again.

Austin: You can't?

Art: I don't think I can hit it.

Keith: I - but you are prepared to fail, you said.

Austin: You did say that.

Art: Well, I'm only prepared to fail if - if Millie's gonna be okay.

Austin: Do you want that bet? Or, do you want that agreement? That's like, the fail here is you don't make it, but Millie does?

Art: Yeah.

Austin: And then you can keep the Cool, you know?

Art: All right.

Austin: SI drops down to a knee and then fuckin' pushes himself back up?

Art: All right, I'm gonna roll it again.

Sylvi: Oh boy.

Art: 2d6. Oh my God. I can't - I got a 6... [clicks] All right. So that's just a fail.

Austin: That's just a fail. That's just a 2, 3.

Art: This is a 2, 3.

[timestamp 02:32:28]

[Music: Jack de Quidt's "[WEATHEREYE. BRIDEWELL. DOWNRIVER.](#)" begins playing. A slow, wavering pulse.]

Austin: Not, not - not spinnable.

Art: [sighs] Well, I'll save the most obvious question for last. Um...

[Music: A melody comes in on the synthesizer - the hopeful motif first heard during the formation of Millennium Break in episode 28 (in BOREA. BELLWETHER. INDIGOBIRD.) - now a sad, dignified march.]

Austin: Yeah.

Art: What did the camera see coming that I didn't?

Austin: What's the most tragic thing here, right? It's like - if you just waited 30 more seconds, instead of pushing yourself, you know, the Company of the Spade lands. And it's too late, right?

[Music: The PARTIZAN title theme is heard softly as the march continues, now joined by the echo of heavy bass and a mournful synthesizer wail.]

Art: Oh, what I don't see is the rescue ship?

Austin: The rescue ship. You don't see the rescue ship coming, right.

Art: [crosstalk] Ah, that's great. You're -

Austin: You fall to your knees. [Janine groans] The camera pulls out of the hangar and Agon Ortlights swoops in, you know, and is like,

Austin (as **Agon Ortlights**): Holy shit!

Austin: You know? Like, Millie is down. Like, leans down over you and it's too late for you, but, yeah.

Art: Yeah, which - which segues well into the good second question. What did it cost that you didn't expect it to? And it's his life, right?

[Music: Everything fades but the bass - playing a variant of the dignified march - and a shifting, vague synthesizer progression.]

Austin: It's his life, yeah. [pause] No final words between the two? They've been through a lot, Millie and SI.

Sylvi: Yeah.

Austin: One of my favorite duos ever since the dance party. Ever since funeral prom.

Art: Yeah... let's get a good - I mean, I don't - are they both conscious at the same moment?

[Music: Marching drums enter as the synthesizers cohere into a bittersweet melody.]

Sylvi: I mean, like - is it, Millie starts coming to right when SI starts fading?

Austin: Yeah.

Art: Yeah, it's:

Art (as **Sovereign Immunity**): [exhausted] Almost there. We're almost... there.

Sylvi: [pause] It just, like, switches. Where she's like:

Sylvi (as **Millie**): [worried] Hey. Hey, we're almost - we're almost there, right?

Austin: [mournfully] Oh.

[Music: The mournful wail enters again, now more drawn-out, as the drum march and the melody continue and begin to quieten.]

Sylvi: Right? Doesn't really know what's going on, but just starts like repeating the stuff that he was saying.

Art: Yeah.

Sylvi: And looking around for the help.

Art: Yeah. Like, the step where like, it doesn't really go anywhere, and then the step where he falls to a knee.

Austin: Yeah.

Art: And then the rush of the airlock.

Austin: Yeah. Uh-huh.

[Music: The wail fades, and then the last chord of the synthesizer melody fades out for a long time.]

Austin: ...All right. Well, that's 5 Cool points. [pause, then Sylvi and Keith laugh]

Art: I did it...!

Sylvi: Put that on his gravestone. [Ali and Art laugh]

Art: Here Lies The Farmer. 5 Cool Points.

Austin: [laughs] Um, all right. I'm totalling where we're at currently. 11 Doubt plus 13 Doubt is 24 Doubt. Plus 5 more Doubt, plus 10 more Doubt - 39 Doubt. Uh, Cool. Saying them all just for the sake of it. 14 Cool, plus 6 Cool is 20 Cool. Plus 5 is 25 Cool. That means pre-spin, we are at 14 Doubt. 39 Doubt minus 25 Cool is 14 Doubt. Um, that means that we are at - because this is

a success, right now, as it stands, the Act I revised total remains 9 Cool. The Act 2 revised total doubles - because this will have been, at this moment at least, a Doubt win - becomes 22 Doubt. And that 14 Doubt doubles also, which makes this just - yeah. It's really rough unless you cut that Doubt down a lot. Um, because -

Keith: Well, it's rough if you - if what you don't want is "Burn Tables".

Austin: Yes. If what you want is "Leap" and not "Burn Tables", then - then, you really gotta look at trying to get some lower numbers on these Doubts and some higher numbers on the Cool. But that's not gonna happen, because the 5 Cool is locked. The 6 Cool is locked. The 14 Cool is spinnable but you don't wanna risk losing that 14. [Ali laughs] That 14 is already one of the highest numbers possible.

Janine: Mm-hm.

Austin: [pause] So, what that means, then, is - do people who have high Doubt scores currently - do they want to try to respin them to lower them, or do they want to lock where they're at? Kalar is locked, SI is locked. Appropriately for SI. [pause] God, they're also - this all really -

Jack: [crosstalk] Ahh, locked in space and death.

Austin: This also really incredibly a - adjusts the way that we spun that incredible Broun spin last time, of SI putting his hand on Broun's shoulder. Because now we know when they try to spin that one, it's also in the context of SI dying.

Ali: [laughs] Well, the way that got spun is like, Broun even being willing to talk about that moment.

Austin: Yeah. Totally.

Ali: Um, I... I feel like I wanna spin my 10 Doubt in the opposite way. Which is, like, you know, Broun is not gonna be open and honest about the [hushed voice] felony that they committed on camera...

Austin: [crosstalk] Sure. So do you wanna give it a shot? Do you wanna try 3d6 and see if some of this -

Ali: [crosstalk] Maybe. Yeah, redirecting some of the conversation about that -

Ali (as **Broun**): [mumbling] No no no, I saved Kalar! I didn't - what? You know! Motion burst into light! And I was just there. Ahh, don't worry about it!

Austin: [laughs] It's not called the Broun Particle, it's called the Motion Particle, right?

Ali: Yeah, yeah.

Jack: “Gee. How ‘bout all these new particles, huh? Weird!”

Keith: Does this work when you and Kalar are telling this story together? [Ali laughs]

Austin: We’ll find out. Let’s roll those 3d6.

Ali: Oh, we’re gonna find out. Yeah. 3d6 is what I’m rolling?

Austin: Yeah, and hope for it to be lower than it was.

Keith: [crosstalk] What if it increases? Have fun with that, B.

Austin: I would love it. I think if it increases it becomes called the Broun Particle. I really do. [Ali laughs loudly]

Dre: Love it.

Jack: Because they made it.

Austin: Yeah!

Ali: Right...

Austin: It’s a 12. It went up. [Everyone laughs loudly]

Ali: Motherfucker. Fuck!

Art: The Motion Particle, brought to you by Broun.

Austin: By Broun. Uh-huh. Girandolia, AKA the Motion Particle, AKA Broun Energy. I don’t know.

Ali: [groans]

Austin: Broun Energy - bad. No, we’re not calling it that.

Sylvi: Yeah, I was gonna say. We need to... [Dre laughs]

Ali: Yeah, Broun Energy is not it.

Sylvi: Broun Particle is already pushin’ it, honestly.

Austin: Yeah, it really was.

Ali: Yeah... We can make it the Kal'mera Particle and then Broun immediately changes their name.

Austin: Uh-huh. Yes. I love that. The Kal'mera Particle.

Jack: Kalmeria.

Austin: Kalmeria, yeah. Uh-huh.

Ali: [laughing] Oh, good for Broun.

Austin: That's - that's -

Ali: "Hey, don't ask any questions about any substance. Columnar had it too. I didn't do that." "Wait a minute, we saw it come from your famous ship that saved multiple people. Didn't you have -"

Keith: [crosstalk] Yeah. It was on video.

Ali: "Didn't you have a repurposed T-shirt cannon? I've seen T-shirt cannons. I got one of the Millennium Break T-shirts, at the olympics. Where you first used that."

Keith: [crosstalk] "Besides, we know that you did it that other time that you fought Motion."

Ali: [crosstalk] Oh, that's right.

Sylvi: [crosstalk] Just quote-tweeting Broun with a picture that says "this u?" [Ali and Keith and others laugh]

Austin: Uh, this is very much - this is very much "My 'I didn't fire Asepsis at a Divine' T-shirt has people asking a lot of questions already answered by my shirt." [multiple people laugh]

Jack: [crosstalk] Creating a new particle... Didn't I do this in the first round, too? Try and roll down and rolled up again?

Austin: That sounds right. Yeah. Uh-huh, that exactly happened. You tried to roll, uh - you tried to reroll 10 Cool and you rolled 13 instead. Which now, you know, maybe that should've been higher.

Jack: Uh-huh. Well, now we know what this mechanic does.

Austin: Yes. Well, you know. We still got 4 more potential spins here. I'm guessing the 5 Doubt Phrygian - I mean, I don't know. Maybe Phrygian wants to double up on this, but -

Keith: Uh, no. Cause I only had two dice, so 5 is pretty much even.

Dre: That's pretty good, yeah.

Keith: Yeah.

Austin: [crosstalk] Oh, that's all right. It's low, but it's not - it's not -

Keith: Yeah. It is not statistically, like, probable that I'll...

Austin: All right. All right, well, I'm locking it. So that means Thisbe's high Cool, Millie's 13 Doubt, and Figure's 11 Doubt.

Dre: Hmmm. I think I'll spin mine.

[timestamp 02:40:29]

Austin: All right. 3d6. 11's right down the middle, so it could go either way. [pause] Hey, that's 8. So it's a little bit less. What's that look like?

Dre: Okay. [sighs] I don't know what the action looks like, but I think internally it probably looks like, uh, Figure being like "Oh shit, did I do the right thing?"

Austin: Right. How do I make this seem more... whatever.

Dre: Yeah.

Keith: So the decrease in Doubt is you being openly regretful.

Dre: Yeah.

Keith: Or at least questioning, like, it's - you know, it's harder to be - it's harder to blame you for something that would cause Doubt if you're like "Man, I'm not sure about this one."

Austin: Yeah. Um, so that reduces it by 3, which drops us back down to 39. Um, I think that math's right, I'll double-check on the math when we're done. Millie.

Sylvi: Yeah... I'm thinking. Um... I guess when, like - I'm wondering if, like - I'm wondering if like I just shouldn't spin this, like from a character thing.

Austin: Sure.

Sylvi: Like I don't know if Millie's gonna wanna talk about this... with anyone, really. Unless they're very close. So... I think I'm gonna just leave mine.

Austin: Yeah. I like it. All right. And then Thisbe. Do you think Thisbe would spin the - would talk about this in a way - would attempt to talk about this in a way that changes the way stepping out onto a spaceship holding a giant turret looks?

Janine: I just don't think it's wise to spin it.

Austin: Okay. So, locked. All right, final math time. Starting fresh. 8 Doubt, plus 13 Doubt, plus 5 Doubt, plus 12 Doubt is 38 Doubt. Is that right? Gonna double-check that.

Keith: Yeah.

Austin: 8 plus 13 plus... what did I say, 5, is that right? 5, yep, plus 12 is actually 38, sorry, I did actually write that down wrong before. Then, Cool is... 14 plus 6 plus 5. 25. 38 minus 25 is 13 Doubt. The previous Act II total does remain. Uh, 22, Act I, 22 Doubt in Act II, uh, 9 Cool in Act I, Act III, you know, um... final total is 13 Doubt. Oh, but that doubles. That doubles also. [Keith laughs] So that's 26 Doubt. That's it. Yeah. That number... is 48 Doubt minus 9 Cool is 39 Doubt total.

Keith: Okay. So we get super "Burn Thrones".

Austin: You get double - [laughs] well, no, you didn't double - you didn't get 40. Maybe if you'd gotten 40 we would push over. But no, you're right, it's very...

If you have a high Doubt, then you "Burn Thrones". You know, in the future. I don't know if that is a few years, or a few months, or a year: Millennium Break becomes infamous across the Principality. Not as reformers, or even radical revolutionaries, but as a group of terrorists. The average citizens of the Principality, such as they are, might disagree about who should sit on the throne, or about whether the Curtain or the Pact has a better vision for the future. But they agree that *you*, Millennium Break, are the enemy. But by leaning into this outsider status, you grow anyway. Recruiting outsiders, outlaws, and other folks who slip through the cracks. You are a hard group to wrangle, but the whole point is to be free, isn't it.

Go around the table and briefly describe one scene of your character relating to this new situation and reputation which they've earned for themselves and Millennium Break. It doesn't say this here, but if you've lost - if your character was lost during this, talk about how they are remembered in light of this new reputation and situation.

What's this look like? For everyone. I think broadly, this is like - you know, living in lots of off-world asteroid stations and, you know, having cells on various planets. Um, but not being a big unified governmental structure, right? Um... stuff like that, I think, is the way to think about

this, right? Independent cells across worlds both controlled by the Curtain, by the Pact, not controlled by either and just directly controlled by whatever local cell government there is. Et cetera. Who has an idea for a short, you know, vignette? Or, not even a vignette, right? Just like a scene. A shot.

[timestamp 02:45:25]

Ali: I have mine, which I think is pretty easy. Which is that, like - Broun is literally a fugitive on the run now.

Austin: Yeah.

Ali: Um, I think that their like - their hope and their earnest dream of like, meeting up with Ryrira and...

Austin: Uh, Avar.

Ali: Avar, yeah yeah yeah. Um, I don't think that they can ever go there. Because that would just create a -

Janine: Why not? They're also terrorists, aren't they?

Austin: They're also Millennium Break.

Janine: They're also seen as terrorists.

Austin: Yeah, that was - remember, that was securing Millennium Break's future. They are also that.

Ali: I know, but like, you don't wanna make it hot. [Ali, Sylvi, Dre laugh] You don't want the FBI - you don't want the FBI to like follow you to this one base where they can just be like "We're not Millennium Break, we're just hanging out!"

Austin: Oh, but they're Millennium Break. I don't think they get to duck that. That - you spent those drive clock points. That's Millennium Break. [Ali laughs] In fact, they probably are the people who find - who found, rather, the biggest Millennium Break base, right?

Ali: Sure.

Austin: I do think you still get that as a win. I think you do still get that off-the-world - what was the name of the planet? Collier. The place that Thisbe and the Farmer had a connection to. That still gets to be a Millennium Break HQ off the grid.

Ali: Sure, yeah yeah yeah. Um... Yeah. I just think it's dicey for Broun now. Um, I think that they do change their name. We'll talk about that in Season Two.

Austin: Mm-hm.

Ali: But yeah, it's a lot of like - you know, there's one thing of being like [baby voice] "Oh, I'm gonna be in space, and I'm gonna be on my own, and it's gonna be so fun!" And then it's like "Oh, I can't stay places for longer than a week. Cause I'm a wanted felon."

Austin: Yeah.

Ali: And I think that's difficult.

Austin: Yeah. Lots of bouncing around. Not so much the dropping roots.

Ali: Yeah.

Austin: Who else?

[timestamp 02:47:16]

Jack: Yeah, I think I'd like to - I think I'd like to write to my husband. Um, and I think I would like to send this on as secure as channel as I can.

Austin: Yeah.

Jack: And part of the way that I do this is that I delay its sending to a date within a date range that I don't know. [Austin makes a noise of approval.] So, like, I don't actually know when it's gonna leave. It's not like it's gonna leave - this isn't like a... Interstellar situation where it actually goes out 26 years from now or whatever, like, it'll go in the next 6 months or whatever. But I don't know - I don't know the means by which it will travel, and I don't know when it will travel, but I've spent money to ensure that it - that it will, and it will do so, um, securely.

Austin: Mm-hm.

Jack: And I think I'm writing to my husband rather than our children. And I just say:

Jack (as **Kalar**): This is the last message I am going to be able to send you for a long time. Things have gotten much more dangerous than I thought, and I no longer have the stability of remaining on the moon. I am still alive, and I'm going to try and stay alive for as long as possible. I am going to continue to work hard to make a space where we will be able to live together, and I am going to take as my inspiration the hope that somewhere you are enjoying a fraction of that life now. I just hope that it is something we

can enjoy together one day. [pause] Tell the kids to... be kind to one another. Work hard, and make a space for me to come back to. Lots of love, Kalar.

Austin: Who else has a scene?

Keith: I have a scene.

Austin: Mm-hm?

Keith: Um... so, we had the - we got the "Burn Thrones" ending. I think that that's totally amenable to Phrygian, who is, you know, sort of fighting this as a proxy war in the war on the Branched, and I think decided, or decides, that, you know... any time spent politicking with the Divine Principality anyway is time where you're not doing the important work part. So I think I sort of become like a mission co-ord - like, I pick out targets for, you know. Like, for attacks. Like I do - I become an offensive coordinator for, um...

Austin: [laughing] That's - for a college football team.

Dre: For the Arizona Cardinals.

Austin: Yeah, for the Arizona Cardinals. [Laughs]

Keith: Is that a thing? Is that a football thing?

Austin: Yes. An offensive coordinator is a - yes, yes.

Keith: What do you call it when it's in a war? A general?

Austin: Probably. I don't know. [laughter]

Dre: Strategist?

Keith: What do you call it when you're a terrorist? Um...

Art: The quarterback. [Dre and Austin laugh]

Keith: Yeah, I become the quarterback.

Jack: Um, like a terrorist officer?

Keith: Yeah. Um... so I think I lean - I think Phrygian leans into the new - the new normal of being a slowly expanding hot war... against...

Austin: It's not even a war, right? Because it's not even a - it is a war, but it's not a war in the traditional sense. Because you're not... you are -

Keith: But what is, these days, am I right?

Austin: Yeah, right. No, totally, absolutely. Yes. Yes. [Art laughs] Totally.

Keith: Phrygian is not meeting other commanders in a tent for lunch before a battle.

Austin: Right.

Art: Phrygian just goes to battle hungry.

Keith: Yeah.

Austin: Who else?

Keith: [crosstalk] That's my new war form, is being hungry.

Austin: Mmmm. [Dre laughs]

Art: That also sounds like it's a football thing. You should really watch a lot of football before the next season. [Keith laughs]

Austin: Who else?

Art: I think I have one. And I think it's just like, sort of like a media montage?

Austin: Mmm.

Art: Um, of like, you know, all the Space Obamas saying that like,

Art (as **Political Commentator**): If you're gonna build a movement, you can't have founders like Sovereign Immunity. You know, that's not how you connect to people.

Austin: Yeah.

Art (as **Political Commentator**): That's a - that's a - that's someone with decades of being a violent terrorist. You can't associate with people like him and have people respect your movement. What are you thinking?

Austin: [sadly] Yeah.

Art (as **Political Commentator**): That's unacceptable.

Art: And just like: that, in 7 or 8 different voices, over and over again, against like a, you know, a montage of little kids throwing away their Millennium Break patches. [Keith laughs]

Austin: Right.

Austin (as **Political Commentator**): Frankly, we're lucky that no one has seen him since that day. Think of the harm he could have caused.

Austin: You know? Et cetera.

Art: Yeah... This is gonna be great in the movie, and it doesn't work so well in the podcast. [Sylvi laughs] Seven versions of this are -

Austin: [crosstalk] What about - okay, well here's my question. Let's frame it internally. What is the internal shape that the story of Sovereign Immunity takes, for people inside of Millennium Break? What do they think of the Farmer?

Art: I don't know. It's tricky because like... he was only medium well-liked!

Austin: Yeah.

Art: Medium or less. But once someone, like, dies for the cause, it's hard to be like "well, I never liked that guy."

Keith: Yeah. Um... but on the other hand, you know. To give Sovereign Immunity some credit, did die right at the precipice of sort of, you know, you can definitely spin this as a way of like: wow, his life-long thing was accomplished, you know, seconds after he died. Like, just barely - just didn't make it there.

Art: And you know, that's better than a lot of people get.

Austin: Yeah. [pause] Who are we left with. Thisbe, Millie.

[timestamp 02:53:47]

Sylvi: I have an idea.

Austin: Mm-hm?

Sylvi: Um, so I think like after the fight above Partizan stuff, Millie's probably gonna have to be like, under some medical care for a while. Cause, we just don't know what being inside a god will do to you. Um, but I think that like while that's happening, one night she just kind of vanishes. Like, she's just gone. Like her - some of her stuff is gone. She's obviously gone. I

think maybe she like stole some, like, a vehicle to get out of there, probably. You know, classic Millie stuff. Um... but, I think the like main thing that actually happens here that's like related to Millennium Break is like, a month or two later, give or take, like, just some like - some guys, just *people* will just start showing up, to different cells, and being like:

Sylvi (as **New Recruit**): Yeah, I don't know. I ran into this lady that said I'd be a good fit? And said I should go here.

Sylvi: Um, and it's just sorta like this thing, where it's like, oh yeah. If you are a Millennium Break sympathizer, sometimes someone will just randomly show up. Cause she's [hushed voice] on the run from the cops all the time. Don't tell anyone. [normal voice] But she'll just randomly show up, and be like,

Sylvi (as **Millie**): Yeah, you can probably - you can go here. You seem like you're - you seem angry.

Austin: [crosstalk] So almost like - yeah. Do you want to like, direct that anger towards the people who are hurting you to begin with, actually. Yeah.

Sylvi: Yeah. It's like, a lot of just like, oh great. Millie's found a fuckin' - a bunch of baby Millies, and she's sent them back now. [Dre laughs]

Austin: How does Millie feel about that?

Sylvi: I think it's one of those things where she's like - it's a mix of like:

Sylvi (as **Millie**): If you stay out here on your own doing this, you're going to get killed. And there's no guarantee that you're not if you go join Millennium Break, but at least you might have some people that have your back.

Austin: Yeah.

Sylvi: Um, you know. The type that might carry you out of a weird gate. Away from a weird gate, before they die. That type of people.

Austin: Yeah. Um... I had another detail that I wanted to note, but now I've lost it again. That's fine.

Sylvi: Oh, I have a thing.

Austin: Oh, please.

Sylvi: There is sort of like a colloquial nickname for, like, people who just randomly show up like this, and it's, of course, stray dogs.

Austin: Oh, yes, good. I love it, that's very good.

Janine: Aww.

Jack: Yesss.

Austin: Um, okay. Mm-hm. Bismuth or Thisbe?

Dre: I've got mine.

Austin: Mm-hm?

Dre: I think very quickly after this, the Figure also disappears. Um, and I think the camera finds them, I don't know, several months later. I don't know how much of a time jump -

Austin: I think it's at least a year, at least, between now and next season or so.

Dre: Okay. The longer the better.

Austin: I think we could go as far as five years and I'd feel comfortable with it. But it's - that's a thing we'll determine off-season.

Dre: Yeah. [Austin makes noises of agreement throughout the following] Um, and I think the camera finds them just on - in a very secluded place. Um, I'm imagining them inside of a cave, basically. And they have become much less recognizably human. Much more overtaken by the crystals, becoming much more kind of hulking and hunched. And I think as the camera kind of pans past them, um, there are just a lot of like rocks and boulders that are on the ground that have become tinted with that same kind of bismuth color. And it's like there's - like, one probably starts like shaking or rolling, and starts to lift off the ground, and then it's just like, hard cut to black.

Austin: Truly don't know what the gifts of Perennial can do.

Dre: Yeah, you know. Who's to say?

Austin: Who's to say? Um... Thisbe.

[timestamp 02:57:59]

Janine: Um... so this is like... I don't have - I have sort of like the opposite but also... I don't think there's like a good strong last shot of Thisbe. I think Thisbe disappears, but Thisbe disappears in the opposite way. Which is that Thisbe has to disappear internally, right?

Austin: Mm-hm.

Janine: I have played the “she’s an Olympic robot” card so many times that like, yeah, sure, Broun, if we need to get some bread at the store they can like, pull their hood up and just like go to the market and kind of like blend in and whatever. Thisbe cannot. At all. So Thisbe -

Austin: Olympian robot, right.

Janine: Yeah. Thisbe functionally has to disappear inside of Millennium Break as a thing. So inside of the ships, inside of, you know.

Austin: Mm-hm. The asteroid bases, the underground places, yeah.

Janine: Yeah. And I think -

Art: Sounds like a country song. [Austin and Janine laugh]

Janine: I don’t think there’s like a clean shot of that. Because I think it’s just - it is just like, you know, someone has to explain this to her, probably. Or, yeah. I don’t know. It’s - I can imagine that first errand run where she’s used to like, “well, I’ll carry this stuff, probably.”

Austin: Right.

Janine: But then they have to be like, “yeah, no, you... how about you stay here.”

Austin: Yeah. It’s too dangerous to bring you here.

Janine: Yeah.

Austin: This is a - you know, the Curtain has eyes all over this place. We can’t. Yeah.

Janine: And I think that’s, you know. Maybe initially that just feels like the thing of like, the Curtain has eyes all over *this* place. The next place maybe will be different. But it’s not.

Austin: Right, right.

Janine: If anything, it probably - you know, as the story grows, it just gets more intense. Like, those first few times probably just feel like, well, this area’s a little hot. But then as the story changes and the perception changes...

Austin: Does she miss it?

Janine: Umm...

Austin: And also, why not go - here's a question. Why... We know that there are these places that are fully off the grid, at this point. Because Millennium Break is going to use them as like, HQs, to the best of their ability. Doesn't go to Collier. Doesn't go to where Jesset and - or not Jesset, but -

Janine: [crosstalk] I don't think we get to answer that yet.

Austin: Okay.

Janine: I don't think - because the thing - I can't answer that yet. Because the thing is that, I don't know, if Thisbe goes there, if she ever leaves again.

Austin: Sure.

Janine: I also don't know what she finds there, because we haven't covered any of that. So I can't say - I absolutely cannot say that she would - that she would do that. I can only kind of look in the short term of like, until it becomes viable to get there, what does her life look like?

Austin: And it means being on the run in this way, where -

Janine: Yeah.

Austin: Do you stay with - are you still working with Broun? Or... I will say that this - that people are more adrift than I imagined they would be. In my mind I really did think that this would be a like, all right, we gotta fuckin' hunker down. And I think it's interesting - this is not me saying we should retcon this - I think it's interesting that everyone's default response to this was to kind of go to the wind, and not be in smaller - like, people are in groups, still, just not the group together, you know? Um, so specifically, I think this one relationship that has existed throughout the entire season is the Broun-Thisbe one. And I'm curious: are you working with Broun still? Or is it just - are they someone that just, you occasionally, you know - you know, cross paths with? Like, "oh yeah, Broun happens to be in the same system. We'll come through." Or are you both just to the wind in a broader sense?

Janine: I think - Thisbe would hang around whoever she thinks has the highest chance of getting her where she wants to go.

Austin: Then that - is that still Broun? Really my question is, when we wrap this, are Broun and Thisbe still on a ship together? Separate from Millie who is bouncing around, separate from Phrygian who is an offensive coordinator [Keith laughs], separate from Bismuth who is in a cave, you know, doing whatever is happening with those rocks. Separate from Kalar - I mean, Kalar, we also don't know where Kalar is, except to say, safe and bouncing places.

Jack: Yeah. Or - well. Trying to fight the war, right?

Austin: Yeah. When I say bouncing places, what I really mean is like, bouncing between hot zones where operations are being fought, right. Where like, oh yeah, we're gonna try to blow up this, you know - we're going to try to intercept this food shipment. We're gonna try to -

Jack: [crosstalk] Could I have a conversation with the defensive coordinator?

Austin: [laughs] Yes. We are going to attack this arms manufactory, you know? We're gonna - hey, this planet has this strategic resource that if we had it, we could do some damage with it.

Jack: Like a really cool space bridge that is 45 miles long needs to get put into the ocean.

Austin: Yes. Exactly. Hey, can you drop this bridge so that their reinforcements can't come when we're trying to assassinate this Curtain leader. You know, or whatever it is, right? Um, and yeah.

Jack: Also I miss my kids.

Austin: And also I miss my kids a lot. Yeah. You're - you know, whatever. Um, but yeah. I think it's probably worth saying whether or not that's happening as... Is there still a SBBR, at the end of this? It's really both a Thisbe question and more broadly, cause it sounds like Phrygian is off doing their own thing, it sounds like Kalar is off - sorry, it sounds like Bismuth is off doing their own thing.

Keith: [crosstalk] Um, I was - my impression was that Phrygian was not off. Specifically not off.

Austin: Oh. Okay.

Keith: I'm like, in the thing, doing war stuff. I'm doing what we were... you know. But just not, I guess, you know. Maybe going on missions, but also like coordinating attacks.

Austin: Sorry, when I said "off", I meant like, off from the ship. [Keith makes noises of agreement throughout the following] And like, at a Millennium Break base somewhere. Looking at war tables, being like "oh yeah. Do this." Not, um, hoodie up, ducking between shadows, et cetera, but like at a - I'm imagining a lot of the, uh... If anyone's seen The Expanse, a lot of the like spacer, the um...

Jack: Belter.

Austin: The Belter, yeah yeah yeah. Like, built into...

Jack: Ted... what's his name? Ted. The Belter leader.

Austin: Uh... [typing] Is it Ted? I don't think it - is it Ted? Ted Jefferies?

Jack: The Butcher. The Butcher.

Austin: The uh... what is the Butcher? What's the - oh oh oh. Yeah yeah yeah yeah. God, what is the actor's name. He's so fuckin' good.

Jack: [typing] The Expanse, Butcher of...

Austin: Fred Johnson. Fred Johnson.

Jack: [amused] Fred Johnson. That's a kind of Ted.

Austin: That's like a Ted. Frederick down to Ted. Who is played by Chad Coleman, who was Cutty in The Wire, for Art. Um... Cutty from the Cut... very good. Yeah yeah yeah. That sort of stuff, right. Like, old asteroid hangars, and shit like that. It's easy to imagine that that's where like, the sort of Millennium Break war table would be, where someone like Phrygian is. Looking over it, going like "ah, this is what we should do."

Jack: Yeah. Uh, but I think that like - Kalar is, if anything, more decentralized than that, where like - the thing he's doing is what he was sent to do in Millennium Break, right? Which is like - you're from one cell that has been called into another cell to do a job. Um, and I mean, unfortunately for Kalar I suppose, there was one massive job on Partizan and then it kind of ended. But now I think he is just back to like, fly out at 5 o'clock in the morning, get off the thing, disappear into the airport concourse. 6 hours later, like a tower explodes.

Austin: Right. Right. And you're doin' like, two of those a month, because of how long it takes to get anywhere. But like, you can track Kalar that way.

Jack: Yeah. Yeah.

Austin: But there is not a - there is not an individual - the Blue Channel is not a cell that you are operating out of at this point. Outside of an occasional cross-over op, or whatever. Yeah.

Jack: [crosstalk] It's tough, right, because like... yeah. Like, this comes to bigger questions, about like, well, what does Millennium Break organization...

Austin: Totally. Look like, yeah.

Jack: ...look like. And like, is there a central sort of like, Icebreaker Prime style unit?

Austin: [crosstalk] It is, and it's on Collier. I mean, this is - I think it is on Collier because of what you earned with those 4 points. Those 4 Drive Clock points in the escape mission.

Jack: Right, yeah.

Austin: Um, Thisbe and Broun and, um, Millie earned that by spending their points. You know, I can't take that away from you. There was a future for Millennium Break. It was tied to that specific achievement, you know? Um, so I think that's one of the places. But yes, but yes. Um... so then, yeah. It sounds, then, like, yeah. Everyone is kind of in various - in and out of various configurations as time progresses, then. And then Thisbe, again, it's like lots of you inside places. How does that sit with Thisbe? Does Thisbe miss being out in the world in that way? I think we talked about it a little bit, but, to wrap back around to that.

[timestamp: 03:07:02]

Janine: Yeah. I think it must suck, right? Like... [sighs] It, um... she's a farming robot. Like, primarily farming and surveying. She, you know, has experience doing indoor hydroponic stuff, and we've seen that, but like, I think she still - even if she's never been - we've never seen her out working a field - I think, probably in a way she didn't acknowledge in a way until it was an option - misses being outside as a thing.

Austin: Yeah.

Janine: Like, she is built to be outside. That's like, what she's used to, even on a level beyond her memory. You know?

Austin: There's almost a Branched mirror here, right? Which is like: the form that she wants to take is a laboring robot. A farmer, someone who goes out and does physical things every day. And instead, the only time you get to go outside is when you're being sent to blow things up. Right?

Janine: Yes.

Austin: That's like, that's not the me I wanna fuckin' be. Listen. They got farms on the Reflecting Pool. Clementine will always let you come be a farmer if you want.

Janine: [scoffs]

Austin: Um, so yeah. I think that that's it. I haven't left anyone off?

Ali: Did we answer whether Broun and Thisbe still hang out?

Austin: We didn't. I don't know that there was an answer there. I would like to hear one. [Ali laughs] I know that's asking for a hard answer on something, but I would like to know that.

Ali: Sure.

Austin: Because I think the audience would like to know, in their heads. Is that... is that... And I would like to know as a GM, like, when we come back in in a couple of years. Or a year, or whatever it is. Like...

Janine: I don't think there's an alternative that Thisbe would be readily aware of.

Austin: Okay.

Ali: Right. And I think that Broun would be - yeah.

Janine: [crosstalk] You know? I...

Austin: [crosstalk] I mean, the alternative there is something like, being on a - full time at a Millennium Break base, offloading stolen contraband. Like, Exeter Leap shows up with, you know, stolen materials, and Thisbe's whole life is unloading trucks.

Janine: Yeah.

Austin: You know? So there are alternatives, but -

Keith (as **Leap**): [jaunty] Anyone need any stolen materials?

Janine: If it's a question of being stationary or being mobile, even if you have to be enclosed either way, she's gonna pick mobile.

Austin: Yeah.

Ali: Yeah. I mean, I feel like it makes sense. I think that Broun would be willing to like, you know, protect Thisbe in that way. In the like, "I'll run to the store," or whatever. [laughs] Now that we've established that. But also like, with them both needing to be sort of on the run in a big way, it makes sense that it would be together. Cause Broun's moving around so much anyway.

Austin: Yeah.

Ali: Um, I think it weakens the promise of like, "Oh, I'll bring you where you wanna go." Because that just becomes so much more complicated. But it's not off of the table.

Austin: Yeah.

Janine: You know what definitely happened?

Ali: Mm?

Janine: Thisbe tooksies-backsies that gift that she... [Ali laughs]

Austin: Oh, sure.

Janine: The plant robot? She wants - that's - she's gotta keep busy, you know?

Austin: Yeah!

Ali: [crosstalk] Oh, yeah, I mean, that's just like -

Janine: [crosstalk] If she's hanging out with Broun, she absolutely is - was just like, [surreptitiously mumbles] "Well, I'll just... I'll just [indistinct humming]."

Austin: [crosstalk] God, also, it's cool to think about the Blue Channel increasingly overtaken by plants. [Ali laughs] It's extremely fun to me.

Janine: Just little floating house plants, all over the place.

Austin: Yeah, totally.

Ali: Yeah.

[timestamp: 3:10:20]

Austin: Um, I guess a couple of other things before we leave Partizan behind for now. You know, I think in the aftermath of this, Partizan itself comes pretty firmly under control of the Curtain. You know, Millennium Break is driven out of Cruciat. Um, you know, there's probably a handful of small autonomous cells skirting the corners across the planet, bloodying noses and stuff, still. But, you know, you've basically left Partizan as a base. The Pact had already kind of divested their military from the planet and into orbit, ahead of Shackled Sun. And so now they have fled.

And the Witch in Glass has done the same. The Reflecting Pool now kind of chases behind the kind of shadow cast by the tall wake of war. Um, and I think that she goes back to kind of picking over battlefields, and picking up new resources and recruits from, you know, stations left to die after they've come under, you know, fighting.

And because of all of that, all of those absences, the Curtain really is just able to descend across Partizan with just... ease. I think that the Peaceful Princept retakes the Winter Palace. Or, he doesn't, but his troops do. Or, you know, Curtain troops do. And they parade him around, not just in Cruciat, but probably on kind of state-funded parades, and tours of all of the major cities on the planet, where he is flanked by Kesh-Nidean "peacekeepers", quote-unquote. And you know, I think that those Peacekeepers stay behind to occupy Apostolos and Columnar cities, because they are seen as being caught up with the Pact at this point.

Speaking of Apostolos, it is also worth saying that in the background of all this, the war against the Branched has continued. And in fact, it's grown more difficult in the past year. Like, while all of our kind of main action was going on, here on Partizan, that war has picked up. There is a good reason why Dahlia, the Apokine, Glorious Princept, had their attention so focused on the war with the Branched that the kind of split in their empire went below notice.

There had been a change in the way that one regiment of the Branched were fighting. In the past, the Branched fought to hold territory. That territory included planets like Kesh and Apostolos, but it was territory within the remit of the Golden Branch. And now, this one regiment is moving differently. It fights more chaotically, more aggressively. It has terrified even the Princept's most hardened troops and generals. And it's begun to claim moons and planets that go beyond the borders of the Golden Branch, that old crossroad. And no one knows - no one in the Principality, anyway - why they do this. Whether they're working alone, and why they're doing it now.

If Dahlia was going to halt this new Branched invasion, and reunify the Principality, it would mean leveraging everything they had. Moving with absolute commitment and integrity. Only then could they bring everything - the Branched, the Curtain, the Pact, and yes, their sibling's pet revolutionaries - to heel.

With such a threat in the air, is it any wonder that the Pact does its best to quickly distance themselves from Motion? This was a rogue operation, they now say. And though they are not the propagandists that Stel Nideo are, the Pact nevertheless spends the near future building its prestige and cementing their relationships with groups like the Organization for the Orion Republic and other small factions eager for change. The sort of groups who were once undecided who to back, but who now find themselves a little too put off by the methods and... reputation... of Millennium Break.

[timestamp 03:14:23]

[Music: Jack de Quidt's "[TANAGER. INDIGOBIRD. REDSHIFT.](#)" begins playing. A sustained high-pitched screech, a distorted melody, a slow mechanical thud.]

And it is worth being really clear about how those methods, and that reputation, will shape Millennium Break going forward. Though you do control some territory, like the new headquarters you've established on the lost farming world of Collier and other shadow planets like it, your ever-growing rebellion finds itself increasingly shut out from traditional affordable sources of the supplies you need. Which pushes you all further toward the precarity of piracy, and smuggling, and illicit patronage. And, with that, the ever-present threats of imperial discovery and internal betrayal, and moral disenchantment, and *death*.

But operating in this new decentralized way has other effects, too.

[Music: Yearning and determined electric piano chords - a harsher echo of the hopeful motif first heard during the formation of Millennium Break in episode 28.]

Driven by your dispersion throughout the galaxy, you find that you have to invest further in reliable, clandestine communications networks. So, the network that once only ran messages throughout Icebreaker Prime has now been expanded to operate across the galaxy, connecting specially heavily-guarded cells to one another, able to send messages not only when the Portcullis system is open. And to do it privately. In the end, it was not only the genius of Si'dra Balos, nor the advances made possible by Kalmeria or the Motion Particle...

[Music: The pinging motif from the Road to Season Six (HOURGLASS. SUNRISE. CRYSTALLINE.)]

...but the knowledge of the Ashen, whose ancestors once plotted courses across space without the help of gates and networks... and on whose knowledge the Strand Semaphore system was built from in the first place.

[Music: Repeated notes, perhaps the sound of a god laughing - the same motif that was first heard when Clementine was sent to meet Gur Sevraq for the first time (in BRIDEWELL. CANDLEFLAME. BARROW.)]

If there is another plus... it is in the simple act of finding one's identity. Yes, some, like Gucci Garantine, find themselves daydreaming about what other choices may have brought them to. About what might have been. But her regret is the exception, now, not the rule.

[Music: The determined chords return, joined by a steady march on the snare drum.]

You might think that would be most obvious in the clear-eyed radicalism of Jesset City, or in the poster-child grin of now-notorious ace pilot A.O. Rooke. But... it's perhaps most felt when Agon Ortlights and the Company of the Spade loudly voice their recommitment to the cause.

[Music: A pause, then a complicated array of motifs, anchored by a slow but inexorable forward momentum and the emergence of a familiar progression.]

Regardless of what the rest of the world says... you all know what you did. How many you saved. You all know the rocky territory you came over to get here. The names of those you lost. And the weight of the mission you all carry in your hearts. You know the lyrics to the songs you sing when you win, and when you lose. The right way to apply tourniquets. To fire a pistol. To plant a seed. To hold prayer, or space, whichever is needed. And so - it doesn't matter what **they** call you now. Because you know in your hearts, that when it is all said and done... they **will** remember you as revolutionaries.

[Music: The sound of a gigantic engine roaring to life, as the PARTIZAN title theme plays once more and its distorted echoes linger.]