

PALISADE 01: Into the World Pt. 1

Transcriber: anachilles#0191

0:00:01.0

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

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

Austin: [narrating] 700 days' slow travel from the nearest Principality outpost, it glittered unwatched like a diamond in a closet — Palisade. A world once home to hope, ruined and turned gravel by those who saw it more as foothold or springboard or open invitation to invasion, Palisade — the gateway to the Twilight Mirage, a birthplace misremembered on purpose, a paradise in the sights of empire. But do not forget Palisade, itself a destination, oh, how could you? Slipping warships into orbit, dropping bombs and boots both onto Palisade, where people don't have time for big questions, on Palisade, where the war isn't on its way, it's already here. On Palisade, where yesterday's ransom runs out tomorrow, on Palisade, where open doors make for open fears. Do not demand emergence unless you're ready for emergency. Do not lift up your hands if you ain't ready for a fight. Don't say you're sorry for that shit you all sound so proud of. Don't raise your voice at us, then say we're not polite. We have held our breath, we have closed our eyes, we have tied ourselves down with rope and wire. We have flown in retrograde, we have swum against the tide, we've tried every last trick to stop the clock's stride. But nothing is stationary. No, nothing is stationary. I said, nothing is stationary. They're moving on us now. Nothing is stationary. History ain't stationary. Not even corpses are stationary. So we've got to start moving now. 1500 days since they first landed on our planet. 1500 days since Kesh started trying to steal our past. 1500 days since their priest called our homes their gardens. 1500 days since that first Frontier telecast. How many days until they know us by name? How many days until we're the ones chasing them? How many days until we're loud in the streets? How many days... how many days?

["Nothing is Stationary" concludes]

0:02:55.3

Austin: Welcome to Friends at the Table, an actual play podcast focused on critical world building, smart characterization, and fun interaction between good friends. I'm your host, Austin Walker, and joining me today, Ali Acampora.

Ali: Hi. You can find me over at [@ali_west](#), and you can find the show over at [@friends_table](#). I'm also at Cohost at [cartoonmeat](#).

Austin: Oh. Where else is the show now?

Sylvi: [laughing]

Keith: [laughing] You are?

Janine: I didn't know that!

Austin: Show is a bunch of places now, right?

Ali: Yeah, the show is, is over at, uh, Cohost at friends_table?

Austin: There's no underscore there.

Keith: Uh, the Cohost is a dash.

Ali: Ooh!

Austin: Yeah, it's a dash, there's no underscore.

Sylvi: Ooh.

Keith: It's [friends-table](#).

Dre: Wow. It's ruining the brand.

Austin: That's why I'm [Austin](#), and not [@austin_walker](#), because there isn't an underscore, and I wasn't going to be Austin-dash-walker, you know?

Janine: Oh, no.

Austin: Yeah. Also joining us, [chuckles] Andrew Lee Swan.

Dre: Hey, you can find me on Twitter at [@swandre3000](#). Are we not talking about the other social media that we're on?

Austin: We can talk about the other social media we're on. What else are we on?

Dre: We're on Tiktok, right?

Austin: We're on Tiktok now.

Dre: At [@friends_table](#).

Ali: Oh...

Austin: That's it, it's @friends_table, is that right?

Keith: Yeah. It's friends_table everywhere except Cohost —

Austin: Except Cohost, where it's friends-dash.

Keith: The rebel website.

Ali: [giggling]

Austin: You know? Yeah, uh-huh. Art Martinez, dash Tebbel.

Art: [from inside a well] That's how you say it. Uh, [chuckles] I am on —

Austin: We call you Dash, as like a nickname, sometimes.

Janine: You can't get the underscore in California.

Art: Oh, wow.

Ali: [snorts]

Keith: Before Cohost, we had to call you Art Martinez-underscore-Tebbel.

Austin: [chuckles]

Dre: Yeah, yeah, yeah.

Art: I'm on Twitter at [@atebbel](#) and on Cohost at [@amtebbel](#).

Austin: Mmm. Nice.

Art: The M is for Martinez-dash...

Keith: Mtebbel.

Austin: [laughs]

Ali: [laughs]

Janine: For Morning-Tebbel?

Keith: [laughing]

Art: Yes.

Janine: Your radio DJ persona?

Keith: Drivetime Tebbel.

Austin: AM-tebbel.

Ali: [laughing]

Art: Yeah, my night Cohost is [@pmtebbel](#). [chuckling]

Austin: Can we get a radio station?

Ali: Yeah!

Keith: Yes.

Austin: Like, can we just stop all this, or maybe bring this onto the radio station?

Dre: Sure.

Keith: Yes, we can do that.

Dre: Can we shoutcast?

Janine: Let's just scrap the whole Tiktok thing, and we'll just do morning radio.

Austin: Yeah, that sounds great. I bet we'd do a good job.

Dre: I do — hey, I have a soundboard.

Keith: AM radio is dying for actual play content.

Austin: And we're the ones to resuscitate it.

Sylvi: Exactly.

Jack: Can we briefly pause and play Pat Benatar songs whenever we want?

Austin: Yes. Absolutely, we have the license to do that.

Jack: Yeah.

Austin: Legally, we can do it.

Jack: Ugh, [chuckles], great.

Sylvi: Pat's a big fan of the show.

Austin: We can have a whole, like, Delilah, love advice, you know, thing at the —

Ali: Mmm.

Austin: I think we could put together a full, you know, 18 hours of content, and then the remaining, whatever, 6 hours is just Pat Benatar.

Janine: We've got to save this for Bluff City.

Dre: I will say that —

Austin: I'm talking about real life, Janine.

Janine: [laughing] No, I know, but like, when we start, we we start hypothesizing about what everyone, what every, every show someone could do —

Austin: Yes, yeah.

Janine: Then it's like, oh, we should just make that episode of Bluff.

Austin: Mm-hm.

Dre: I gotta say, the benefits to playing 4 hours a day of Pat Benatar are obviously huge, but it's worth considering the benefits to not having to deal with ASCAP.

Dre: Just practicality.

Austin: Just generally speaking.

Keith: Just in general, the practicality of cutting that as an expense.

Ali: Well we could do it — we could do it —

Art: Can we just cover them?

Dre: Yes, yes. Yeah.

Ali: Ooh!

Jack: Do two different options.

Austin: Two different, yeah, licenses, right?

Dre: Oh...

Austin: Yeah, yeah, yeah.

Art: Yeah, just, we'll just make 6 hours of Pat Benatar covers —

Austin: And then we're good. All right, we're going to keep on moving here with people. Keith Carberry's here, I don't know if you remember Keith's voice.

Keith: Hi. My name is Keith J Carberry, you can find me on Twitter at [@keithjcarberry](https://twitter.com/keithjcarberry), you can find me on Cohost at [@keithjcarberry](https://cohost.org/keithjcarberry), and you can find the let's plays that I do at [YouTube.com/runbutton](https://www.youtube.com/runbutton).

Austin: Jack de Quidt.

Jack: Hi! Uh, my name's Jack, you can find me on Twitter at [@notquitereal](#), you can find me on Cohost at [@JDQ](#), just three letters.

Austin: Ooh.

Art: Oh!

Jack: And you can buy any of the music featured on the show at [notquitereal.bandcamp.com](#).

Austin: Janine Hawkins.

Janine: Hi. You can find me [@bleatingheart](#) on Twitter, [@bleatingheart](#) on Cohost, [@bleatingheart](#) on YouTube, and [@bleatingheart](#) on Twitch, that's called brand consistency, baby.

Austin: Wow, I love it. That's fantastic.

Sylvi: [giggling]

Dre: There it is.

Austin: And, Sylvi Bullet.

Sylvi: Hey. I'm Sylvi, you can find me at [@Sylvibullet](#) across all platforms, except for Cohost, which I'm just [Sylvi](#) on.

Janine: [chuckles]

Austin: Yeah. Today, we are beginning our campaign of Armour Astir Advent, a high fantasy roleplaying game about rival pilots, soldiers up against the odds, spies and diplomats twisting the world, and striking back against an authority that seeks to control you. It is not, says designer Briar Sovereign, a game of careful preparation or pleasant truces. It is hard to change the world without taking a risk. Our goals today are to portray a world entrenched in conflict, to let the players make a difference, to connect the magic and the mundane, that's what I've added here, and to play to find out what happens. We are using Armour Astir to begin Palisade, our eighth main season. And for the time —

Jack: Holy heck.

Austin: Yeah, it's wild to say that. For the first time in a few years, I am going to say, hey — if this is the first episode you're listening to, stop! Go back!

Keith: [laughing]

Austin: Go listen to Partizan. This is the first time we've done a sequel season since Spring in Hieron, which was 2018/2019, I want to say.

Dre: Woof.

Austin: And, uh, obviously we haven't recorded this season yet. I am confident of a couple of things. I'm confident that it'll be good, players will be great, and that, and that whatever happens this year will be better to listen to if you've already listened to Partizan, which was our sixth season, which used the excellent Beam Saber, and which started back at the end of 2019 and ran through 2020. It, it would probably also benefit you if you've listened to the rest of the Divine Cycle, beginning with COUNTER/Weight and moving into Twilight Mirage. But I suspect even without those, if you've just listened to Partizan and the Road To Palisade, you'll be able to follow this well enough. We'll talk more about what the connections will be to Twilight Mirage, and, and — I mean, the thing is, I don't think I need to do all that, because by the time you got to here, you should have listened to the Road to Palisade. And we've set up what the —

Sylvi: [laughing]

Austin: Stakes are, pretty clear. And this is a sequel season in a true way, the way that Spring was to the rest of, uh, Hieron, the way that Winter was to the previous seasons. So I'm not going to do a ton of, ton of, ton of, ton of setup. Uh, are there any, are there any, am I missing anything at this point worth saying? Uh...

Keith: No, my, my list only says, tell everyone to do their homework —

Austin: Okay, well —

Keith: Which we did. Which we —

Austin: Uh-huh. Yeah, everybody do your homework. Uh... [chuckles] we, uh, we first played Armour Astir back during the Road to Partizan — uh, we used it to connect — uh, The Road to Partizan connected Twilight Mirage to Partizan. And I kind of secretly always had this big turn planned, where we'd move from Beam Saber into Armour Astir. I kind of hoped that it would

come together, then I could start to see the threads of how to bring it together, uh, around, a little before the midway point of Partizan. I think I've said this before on a call, but, every night, this is serious, for 3 years now, when I go to bed, when I turn off my computer, I set it to the cover, I open up the PDF of Armour Astir: Advent, or it's normally already open —

Ali: [wheezes]

Art: [laughing]

Austin: And I set it to that and turn off my screen, so that when I wake up and turn my monitor back on, I see Armour Astir: Advent. That is how long and how seriously I've been like, looking forward to playing this game.

Art: Wow.

Austin: So, I'm pretty hyped on it. I'm going to read our principles, and then we'll talk a little bit about next steps. Our principles — and I always read the goals up top, but there's also principles. The principles are to give conflict weight, to begin and end with the fiction, to fight wars with words, sometimes, to address the characters and not the players, to build something diverse, to ask questions and use the answers. The note that, you cannot pull punches if you do not throw them. [chuckles] To make your moves offscreen, and to keep things magical. Uh, and with that, I can kind of look at the book and see where it begins, and see what it says, uh, also, first of all, I think this is the first time we've been listed as a play testing group inside of a book, which is very fun —

Keith: Oh, oh yeah.

Austin: From our Road to Partizan game. So, shoutouts to Briar for, uh, uh, being, uh, you know, generous with her time, letting us, uh, play with this game three years ago now, and now come wrap back around to version of it that's even better, answering a lot of questions for me, et cetera. Also, shoutouts to the folks who are making playbooks, fan playbooks and stuff for Armour Astir. There's a bunch of really cool ones out there already. We may hear about one later today.

Art: And shoutout to the other play test groups, who almost certainly did more play testing than we did —

Austin: Almost certainly.

Art: And share the same credits that we do.

Austin: [laughing] This is true. You know what? This is absolutely true, because I'm in that Discord, and there are definitely like, entire channels dedicated to some of these other crews listed, uh, because they are playing a lot of the game in some cases. So —

Sylvi: Quality over quantity, baby.

Ali: [laughs]

Sylvi: That's so mean, why did I say that?

Ali: [cackling]

Art: [laughs]

Austin: That's so mean! So mean. I bet their games are great!

Ali: [still laughing]

Sylvi: Yeah, I do too. I'm sorry.

Austin: Unbelievable.

Jack: Instantly mean, and then instantly retracted. You retracted it as fast as you said it.

Sylvi: Yeah.

Keith: Hey, look, you can't pull punches that you never throw.

Ali: [cackling]

Austin: Unbelievable.

Art: So, in a way, Sylvi's the best Armour Astir player there is.

Janine: Can I say, though — okay, hang on. On the subject of being super mean, I —

Austin: [laughing]

Ali: [cackling]

Janine: Ever since —

Keith: Janine's mean *to* everyone.

Janine: No, no, no! No, no, no —

Austin: Feast of Patina's here, everybody.

Janine: When we, when we did the, uh, the city planning game, I feel like I slandered Wasaga. Wasaga Beach, and —

Austin: Oh, god. -L

Sylvi: [laughing]

Art: [laughing]

Janine: Ever since then I felt bad, I've felt so bad.

Austin: Are you apologizing to a Canadian beach?

Janine: Yes. No, I'm apologizing to the, the game, you know, makers who live there and had a whole festival of like, shit.

Austin: Oh, sure.

Janine: Which is really cool, and then I just came on and was like, yeah, if someone took me to Wasaga Beach on my birthday, I'd dump them, too.

Austin: [chuckles]

Sylvi: [laughing]

Janine: Anyway... [chuckles]

Austin: This has been on your conscience in a real way, so —

Dre: Mm-hm.

Janine: Literally — it has. Every other day I think about how bad I feel [laughing] about this.

Austin: [chuckling] When Janine goes to bed, she brings up a picture of Wasaga Beach —

Keith: [chuckling]

Ali: [cackling]

Janine: [laughing]

Austin: Ugh... all right. So, you might be able to tell that Art's voice is coming through a wire and a tin can.

Art: [laughing]

Austin: There it is, see. You heard it.

Janine: Plastic cup, it was a plastic cup, we outlined.

Sylvi: [laughing]

Austin: Sorry, yeah, of course, of course.

Janine: We don't have tin can money!

Sylvi: We don't have tin can money.

Austin: [laughing]

Jack: [laughing]

Keith: You can go to friendsatthetable.cash to make sure that we have tin can money.

Ali: [cackling]

Austin: Yeah, we have a Patreon, there it is, there it is.

Keith: Tin cup —

Austin: Friendsatthetable.cash.

Keith: Tier.

Sylvi: They could do our promo.

Austin: Yeah, exactly, our new tin cup tier. Uh, uh, that is because, we will be saying farewell in a moment, to Art and to Jack, who will be coming back later in the show, because, this year on Friends at the Table, we are going back to there being a ground game and a faction game, for the first time since COUNTER/Weight. And Art and Jack are going to be part of the faction game. Uh, so there's one party, for the first time, also.

Jack: It's very exciting.

Austin: Since COUNTER/Weight. And, I guess we should explain why it's exciting to people who haven't listened to COUNTER/Weight. I know there are people out there who maybe only have listened to Partizan, or Twilight Mirage and Partizan. So, so what is, what is the conflict turn? Uh, I guess at a high-level, Armour Astir is a game, like I said before, about, uh, fantasy mechs and revolution. It is about a conflict between what it calls the Cause and the Authority. The Authority, we know, is the Bilateral Intercession. It's comprised on Palisade of Stels Kesh and Nideo, with some help from Exanceaster March and the Frontier Syndicate, who you might recall from the latter games of the Road to Palisade. Uh, the Cause, on the other hand, does not have a name at all at this point. Uh, but we've done some talking about a lot of the world-building in the last few months, uh, kind of a very long-running session zero through chat and conversations and stuff.

0:15:17.6 And as part of that, we kind of decided that the Cause is an unnamed secret rebellion, comprised of a bunch of smaller factions, including groups from Palisade itself, some support from Millennium Break, the addition of people from Twilight Mirage, who hope to stop the Bilats before they can get to Twilight Mirage. Uh, uh, it is, it is secret because they know that they'll be more effective without the Bilateral Intercession knowing that they're working together. For instance, the Bilats know that Millennium Break is here on Palisade. They know that the, you know, the Cult of Devotion, or whatever we end up kind of finalizing the name of that, that group, that they've come and set up shop, and are trying to, you know, bring the, the Word of Devotion to others here. Uh, they know that there are some home-grown insurrectionists who live in the hills of the Shale Belt. What they don't know is that those groups are like, talking to each other, and are unified and are sharing logistics and information and operational data. Uh, uh, so that is, is what the Cause is. Uh, Keith, Janine, Ali, Sylvi, and Dre, are playing the

characters in one of the factions of this secret revolutionary group. They are the party, they'll be attached to a ship called a carrier. And the bulk of this season will be following them from the ground level. We used to call this the ground game, it kind of feels that way. And we'll start that off this episode, uh, uh, probably not that long from now. I think we should probably wait to get everyone's character details and moves and stuff until they show up in play.

0:16:46.8 Just to keep things moving, so we can get to play in this opening episode. But, Armour Astir is divided between three different phases. And the party is really about two of those three phases. The first phase is the sortie, which is a mission or an adventure that the party goes on. And then there's down time, where you can recover and socialize, and work towards a long-term goal, or a short-term distraction. But, between those two phases, after you finish a sortie but before you get to down time, there is a third phase, and that is the conflict turn, and that is where Jack and Art come in. We will go over how this works in greater detail, once we get to our first conflict turn episode, which should be in a couple of episodes. But the quick version is that, every conflict turn, the Authority, again, the Bilateral Intercession, will work towards one of its, not one of its goals, but some of its goals, right? Each, each division, of which there are three such, of the Authority, will have something it wants to get done. And then the Cause, which has 6 subfactions, will try to stop them. A little preview, that we probably won't go into it too deep this episode, the Cause's sub factions are also sub, have subfactions. They don't have a name, but they're all comprised of both a group from Palisade, and a group from outside of Palisade teaming up.

0:18:11.1 That conflict, between the Authority and the Cause, plays out in scenes that are a lot like what you might recall from Mobile Frame Zero: Firebrands, which we used for both the COUNTER/Weight and the Twilight Mirage finales. If the Authority wins, uh, their scenes, their grasp on Palisade tightens. Their projects advance further, their goal of breaching the Twilight Mirage and controlling the past, present, and future will grow even closer. If the Cause wins, they will slowly peel away the Authority's grip from 9 important pillars that keep them in power. And if they win enough, and if you win enough here on the party side of things, maybe you'll even push the Authority off the planet altogether. So, I guess, before I let y'all go, is there any general stuff you'd like to weigh in on, in terms of setting stuff, or stuff you want the party and the Cause to keep in mind, as we go through this half of the episode?

Jack: I don't — like, Godspeed.

Austin: Godspeed.

Art: Yeah, uh-huh.

Jack: Uh, fight for the, fight for what is good and right. We will be looking out for you 50 percent of the time, and 50 percent of the time, we will be trying to make your lives miserable in ways we haven't worked out yet.

Dre: Mm-hm!

Art: Yeah, and I'll be doing that on a real microphone —

Austin: Right.

Art: And not on a phone in a Starbucks parking lot.

Dre: Awwwww.

Ali: [giggling]

Jack: Why are you in a Starbucks parking lot?

Austin: Is Jess in the car with you? What's going on?

Art: No, Jess had to go get Mabel, and Mabel's dogsitter lives where there's no cell service, so she just dropped me in the parking lot and went to go get the dog.

Austin: Gotcha — wait, are you in a car?

Art: No, I'm just standing here.

Austin: You're just outside.

Ali: [cackling]

Janine: Oh my god. Oh my god.

Jack: Are you holding your phone to your ear?

Austin: Can you take a picture?

Sylvi: God.

Art: No, I'm, I'm — I'm wearing headphones, because I was in the car.

Ali: Mmm.

Jack: Oh...

Austin: Can you — can you take a photo of the most Palisade thing you can find, that isn't a Palisade vehicle?

Janine: Can you go get a cake pop and then eat it?

Ali: Ooh!

Art: Uh, I don't —

Austin: Hey everybody, welcome to Friends at the Table, our new game this season is —

Art: Know...

Ali: [snorts]

Austin: Tell Art things to do in the parking lot of a Starbucks.

Janine: [chuckling]

Dre: Art, can you take a selfie, and that's our new podcast cover art?

Keith: [laughing]

Art: [chuckling]

Keith: It makes sense you're outside, because when you first got on the call, you said, is there any outside noises, and I thought that meant you were driving, and —

Austin: Right, same.

Keith: And you didn't want, like, ambient car driving noises.

Janine: Don't podcast while driving, that's worse.

Art: Oh, no, I was in the car for most of the time we've been talking. I've only been in this parking lot for about 10 minutes.

Keith: Okay. No audio quality change.

Dre: Oh, wow. So you got out of a car mid-conversation?

Art: Yeah, and crossed the street, I got let out on the other side.

Austin: I never would have known. That's wild.

Ali: [giggling] You crossed the street?

Dre: What a professional!

Austin: This is, this is —

Art: Yeah.

Austin: Yeah, this is wild.

Art: Well, because there's a really long drive-through line —

Jack: He's a fucking professional.

Art: Here, that actually goes out of the parking lot and around the corner.

Dre: Wow.

Art: So we couldn't pull into the parking lot to drop me off.

Ali: Oh.

Keith: We should figure out what game that we can play where we're all on our phones walking around doing a...

Ali: [chuckling]

Austin: We — I have this game —

Ali: I have that game.

Austin: Oh my god.

Ali: [cackling]

Austin: One day we will play that game. We have to do that.

Jack: Is that the game [censored bleep]

Austin: Shhhh.

Ali: [laughing]

Keith: Oh, that one, that one. Okay, sure.

Art: Bleep that, bleep that.

Keith: Sure, sure, I know about that one.

Austin: Bleep that, bleep that because they'll arrest us.

Ali: Yes, yes, yes, yes, yes.

Austin: If we do it in an announced format.

Jack: Bleep that.

Ali: Yeah, yeah, yeah. Yeah, yeah, yeah yeah, yeah.

Art: I've posted in dog pound what I think is the best...

Ali: Oh, okay.

Austin: Oh...

Jack: Art has posted a picture of what looks like a Southern Californian parking lot.

Keith: Yeah, big spoiler.

Jack: There's a —

Keith: This is a spoiler for Palisade.

Austin: No, it's — [laughing]

Art: [laughing]

Sylvi: Shut the fuck up.

Austin: People can't see the photo, Keith.

Sylvi: They will.

Austin: There was a car with a gigantic spoiler on the back of it. Like, the thing that attaches to a car, not like, the truth of Darth Vader's, uh, relationship status with other characters in the movie Star Wars.

Jack: [chuckles] Ugh.

Austin: Anyway —

Art: [chuckling] It's a good thing you protected that one, I think there's a lot of —

Austin: Yeah, yeah, I didn't want to —

Keith: [laughing]

Art: Waiting to watch Empire —

Austin: Well, listen — [chuckling] I was on a podcast the other day, and someone forgot that Darth Vader had kids, so —

Jack: Wait, really?

Austin: Yeah, sometimes you do a podcast and you forget things, you know?

Jack: Oh yeah. Oh yeah.

Dre: Yeah, that's fair.

Sylvi: All the time.

Austin: Mm-hm.

Art: It's a very important part of that character.

Austin: Uh, while we're still in this little intro section really quick, because we did, uh, briefly mention the cover art, and using Art's photo as the cover art, we will not be using that, because we actually have new cover art, by [aurahack](#), who is an incredible artist who I've been friends with now for years and years, like 6, 7 years now, since my Giant Bomb days. This is the first time we have gotten a new artist for the cover. Craig had been, has been great, but Craig is very busy, uh, I believe in animation, these days. [laughing]

Jack: Amazing.

Austin: Uh, and we knew years ago that we would be, that we would be, there would be a moment when we said bye to Craig, and Craig moved on to go do other stuff. Craig has not — let's be clear, Craig has always been having other jobs, Craig does not sit around waiting — [chuckles]

Keith: Craig was the resident Friends at the Table artist.

Ali: [laughing]

Keith: We kept him in a Starbucks parking lot, he's been there for eight years.

Dre: [laughing]

Austin: And now we've traded him for Art. Art lives in the parking lot now, so...

Keith: [chuckling]

Austin: It's all fine.

Art: I'm not even in the parking lot, now, I'm in the —

Dre: This housing market, I tell you what.

Ali: [gasps]

Austin: [chuckling] So...

Keith: Is it in the car with the spoiler?

Art: No. Hi, Mabel, Hi!

Janine: Is Mabel there?

Austin: Aw, Mabel's here!

Janine: Yay, Mabel!

Keith: Aw, Mabel.

Austin: Hello, Mabel.

Art: Mabel, everyone says hi.

Janine: She doesn't know what that means, or who. [chuckles] She has no idea.

Jack: She'll never speak.

Austin: Hi, Mabel. Anyway, thank you to Craig Sheldon —

Keith: Aw, she'll never speak.

Austin: Uh,... [chuckles] thank you to Craig Sheldon, for doing the art —

Janine: For years of service.

Austin: For doing the art for the last 7 or 8 years, or whatever. You can follow Craig at [@shoddyrobot](#) on Twitter. You can follow, uh, Erica at [@aurahack](#), it's great art. I'm very excited to have it, so... all right, Jack and Art, thank you so much.

Janine: All right.

Art: Thank you.

Austin: Talk to y'all in a little bit.

Ali: Bye!

Austin: Bye-bye-bye.

Art: Bye!

Ali: Bye!

Jack: Bye.

Austin: All right. So, I think that's it. I think we can probably jump in. I'm trying to think if there's anything else we need to talk about ahead of time. I want to save, again, moves and stats and, even, even world-building stuff, you know, we've had a lot of conversations off-mic that I'd rather just see pop up in play. Uh, I'm trying to think if there's anything else that's important enough that we should talk about it a little bit before we, we jump into it. Uh, there's one thing. Uh, I guess there's magic in this world now, huh? [chuckling]

Keith: Yeah. Yeah.

Austin: Because that's a big change. Uh, there didn't used to be.

Keith: Uh-huh.

Austin: We kind of set it up over the course of the end of Partizan, beginning of the road, or through the Road to Palisade.

Dre: Was that because we knew that we were doing Armour Astir?

Austin: Yes, that is — well, again, I knew from about, I knew from around the Kingdom game. I knew before the Kingdom game. By the end of the Kingdom game, I was pretty sure that we had enough on-ramps to it that one of them would hit, right? So, like, for instance, if you had managed to collect the parts of Autonomy itself, or whatever, that could have been a route to this, right? If, if Motion had succeeded at XYZ, that could have been a route. You know, there was, there was a bunch of stuff. There were enough plates spinning that I was confident one of them that said magic on it would keep spinning and would make it to this season. Uh, and so I started to like, spin those extra hard to make sure they kept going, right? Which is separate from like, character outcomes or anything like that. But I was pretty sure this was the direction. I think more broadly, you know, I've, I've been filling our internal chat with my — it's worth saying, every preseason, every time we're like in preproduction, going into a season, the chat just fills up with me rambling about thoughts I'm having about stuff, and confusion, and not understanding what we're trying to say with the season, or not understanding like a mechanic, like what our take on it is, or whatever. And I big one for me this season has been like, what is magic? What are we saying with magic, what does the sudden emergence of magic mean for us in this universe and

in Palisade? And then also, how do we read the approaches? The, the — Armour Astir has this idea of there being 5 different approaches to magic, and those have kind of a weapon wheel, Fire Emblem style, of like priority, or like rock paper scissors style, of priority or advantage. And like, what is going on there? What are we trying to say about this? And I think the big thing that I eventually got to was this idea that like, magic is a breach in time. It is the moment, it is the classic thing we do a lot of, oh, history felt really locked down, and in this moment it has opened up. What will come next suddenly feels like an open question versus a closed one. And then, it's also obviously a sort of like, technological revolution, industrial revolution thing, where the questions we ask are not, how are everyone's lives bettered by the arrival of a new technology? But instead is like, who does it benefit, who is it used against? How does it keep some power in place? Where does it genuinely shift things? And, using the approach system, how do different factions in this world end up thinking about the world, and what magic could do for them, what this new technology could do for them?

0:27:45.6 And specifically, the thing that like, fictionally has happened is, at the end of Partizan, Motion was trying — Motion had seemingly learned how to use the Perennial Wave, a sort of magical particle, an already, you know, post-scientific particle, that like, decayed things, and like made technologies fail, broke things down, broke down communications and other stuff, interfered other types of radio transmissions and stuff like that. Had learned how to not just like, avoid that, but take control of it and like, build things from it. And then, also was beginning to siphon power from what was, uh, called the True Divine, Autonomy itself, the god that Valence worshipped through a, a — and that Gur Sevraq worshipped, through a gate to a part of the galaxy that had not yet been conquered, and had siphoned that god's power also. And then, uh, Kal'mera Broun ate up Motion with a Divine, [chuckles] Asepsis, and dispersed all of that power, blending it together, synthesizing it together throughout the galaxy. It kind of like, infected the Perennial Wave and spread everywhere, along with it slowly a sort of glow of this new thing that would come to be called Kalmeria, though we don't call it that in the final episode, by the way. We call it the Motion particle, we call it the Broun particle, we call it, uh, we have some other —

Ali: We don't say the Broun —

Dre: [laughing] the Broun particle...

Janine:[laughing]

Keith: [laughing]

Austin: We absolutely do, we absolutely do, and that is why we end up not calling it that, because like, wait a second, that's not... we can't call it that. Uh-huh.

Ali: [laughing]

Austin: Uh...

Janine: Especially when the brown particle, which came from Asepsis, is not, is not...

Keith: [laughing]

Austin: [laughing]

Janine: It gets medical and awkward.

Sylvi: Oh...

Austin: We call it, we call it Girandolia, because Girandole was the planet around which Partizan was a moon. But Kalmeria, I don't think comes up. Maybe it comes up in the, in the, uh, okay, we do. We do eventually say Kalmeria. So, so that's good. I'm glad we get there eventually. But, but, uh, that is the — it turns out that is the, it turns out that is not the... for a long time I thought that was like, one of the approaches in Armour Astir. But instead, I kind of decided, it is the catalyst, it is the special reagent that unlocks a bunch of other things being pushed to superpower status. It's like, it's like the grease that lets the engine move at a higher speed, right? It's the oil that allows for better, more powerful horsepower or whatever, right? So like, what our five approaches are — well, let's get into those when we get to characters. We'll talk through those when we get to characters. I don't have to go through all of that right now. But the big picture thing, really, is that everybody has this different take on magic, and everybody is, is, uh, seeing the world differently, seeing the future differently, through whatever their magical, you know, focus is.

0:30:51.7 Uh, and that's also, then, how magic is stored. That's answering that core question, how is magic stored? How is it moved, how is it — all that. It's like, all the stuff that already existed, except now it's a little bit better because of Kalmeria.

Keith: I love that, like, a big zoom-out like, way that the Divine Quadrilogy works is, a series of, there's no magic and now there's magic and now there's no magic...

Austin: And now there's magic.

Keith: And now there's magic, over the course of a million years.

Austin: Yeah. Yeah. I mean —

Keith: [laughing]

Austin: And that is like, in some ways, that is like the core of the stuff that Gur Sevraq always talks about, right?

Keith: Yeah.

Austin: Which is like, bro, we keep almost getting out of this, and then it keeps coming back to like, people with swords at throats. What is happening? Can we not get out of this? And I think that that, it's, it's fun to, you know, Perennial's whole cyclical thing, everything that's happened will happen again, the eternal return stuff —

Keith: Dates all the way back to Earth Germany.

Austin: [chuckles] It's all the way back to Earth Germany. No one else who was on that episode is on the show, Keith.

Keith: [laughing]

Austin: People keep saying like, will, will, “do you have it?” Become a meme this season, but like —

Keith: Yeah, it's just — yeah.

Austin: It's just you and me on this side, so it's not going to happen.

Keith: Hey, that's 50 percent.

Austin: Yeah, uh-huh, but it's not 50 percent of this recording.

Keith: No, that's true.

Sylvi: We — I listened to that episode, like I know what you're talking about.

Austin: Okay. Sylvi's a real one. Yeah.

Sylvi: Mm-hm.

Austin: Uh-huh.

Ali: Do you have it?

Austin: [laughing] So good!

Ali: [giggling]

Austin: All right. Uh...

Keith: God, I love that panda.

Austin: It brought, it brought one person back to life. I don't think —

Ali: [laughing]

Keith: [laughing]

Austin: It was one person. Okay. Let's take a minute for ourselves to settle in, get a drink, and kick Palisade off in earnest.

0:32:34.2

[MUSIC - "[Palisade Orbital Descent](#)" by Jack de Quidt plays]

Austin: [narrating] Though you have been here, at the bottom of the Diadem, the vast, abandoned megacity that was scraped alongside Palisade's entire equator thousands of years ago, neither your eyes nor your sensors have fully adapted to the depths of the darkness here. Whose light shines brightest, who leads the way forward, and who guards the rear?

Dre: Uh, I, I am the forward. The Figure in Bismuth is forward.

Austin: The Figure in Bismuth. Tell me what we see when, when we describe the Figure in Bismuth, I'm guessing, probably inside of your Altar.

Dre: Yes. Uh, so the Figure, uh, very similar to how they appeared in Partizan. I had, I like almost forgot which one was Partizan, which one was Palisade.

Sylvi: [chuckles]

Dre: Uh, so a like, a very large, imposing figure, uh, made up of like, rocks that are a Bismuth tint, which is that kind of like rainbow tint, very like, large, craggy, hunched over. Uh, they wear a very tight-fitting flight suit that is covered in patches, in medals commemorating their involvement in various battles, since they were created by the Witch in Glass.

Austin: Five years of those battles at this point.

Keith: Mm-hm.

Dre: Yep.

Dre: Uh, their mech is, or their Altar is The Devil's Two Front Teeth, which is a tall, angular mech. Basically, it is almost like a, like, like feral zombie-looking humanoid mech.

Austin: Oh, cool. [chuckles]

Dre: It has, like, chunks of it missing, and the most notable of those is that, in its, uh, in what we would assign as its like, chin, uh, there's a big chunk missing, and there's just two —

Austin: Ah...

Dre: Like, what appears to be two sharp, uh, like fangs, crooked, crooked hanging out of it.

Austin: Incredible. Uh, all right. That leaves, who has the brightest light? And who is guarding the rear?

Sylvi: Uh, I feel like brightest light —

Austin: Mmm.

Sylvi: Kind of might be me.

Austin: And who are you, Sylvi?

Sylvi: Well, I'm Coriolis Sunset, pilot of a Chariot Mark II unit.

Austin: Tell, what is, what is — tell, where do we want to begin with Coriolis?

Sylvi: Gosh, where do we begin? Uh...

Austin: Oh, and I guess we can say, really quick, uh, uh, Figure in Bismuth is the Imposter playbook.

Dre: Yes.

Austin: Tell me what your playbook is also, Coriolis.

Sylvi: Well, I'm the Paradigm, which, I feel like is kind of the reason why I immediately was like, oh yeah, I'm the shiny bright one.

Austin: Right.

Sylvi: Uh, so yeah, Coriolis is a follower of Devotion, and this is a Devotion mech, so this is, uh, I feel like we've got this like, purple silver light sort of coming off of it, while it's, uh, sort of floating in front of the —

Austin: So there's not even like... it's not even like, there are like, there aren't like, lightbulbs. It's irradiating, there's an aura of light around you.

Sylvi: So, it's got, uh, so it's covered in these sort of like, vein-like lights, that give it this, uh, this sort of like, feature. It's also a pretty angular mech. This mech don't got feet, it's just kind of got like pointy bits at the end.

Austin: Yeah. Like a Zone of the Enders Orbital Frame.

Sylvi: Uh, very much so, yeah. Very, very much so.

Dre: This mech don't got feet.

Sylvi: This mech don't got feet. Damn, she's a mech and got no feet?

Ali: [giggling]

Austin: Got no feet.

Sylvi: Uh, yeah. And, uh, inside it is this, uh, tiny girl with pink hair and 3 sets of angel wings, uh, very excited to be out on a real mission.

Austin: She, does — how do they fit, what's the — [chuckles]

Sylvi: Mm-hm?

Austin: How do they fit in the cockpit, what's the wing comfiness situation?

Sylvi: So, they're not that big.

Austin: Okay.

Sylvi: They're, they're, she's got a —

Austin: Also, where do they come from? They come from her back?

Sylvi: No, uh, well, one of them. One pair does.

Austin: Okay.

Sylvi: Uh, the first pair she grew does. She's got another set on sort of like sticking, like kind of like the Hermes wings sticking out of the head type thing.

Austin: Yes, okay.

Sylvi: Uh, and then, uh, she's got another pair, like, one on each arm.

Austin: Oh, interesting, okay. So, so it's 3 pairs of wings, it's 6 wings total?

Sylvi: Yes.

Austin: Gotcha, okay.

Sylvi: Yes, her flight suit kind of matches the purple lighting that the mech has, except it, it doesn't look like a circulatory system, it looks like a nervous system, because I'm on my shit.

Austin: Mmm, mmm. And you said you grew these wings.

Sylvi: I did grow these wings, yeah.

Austin: Good, good. I'm sure that's fine, I'm sure all pilots of Divines in the era of the Altar slowly taking on elements of their Divine, the Divine in question is not a, a bad thing, I bet that's a good thing, actually.

Sylvi: Should be fine.

Austin: Mm-hm. Who is guarding the rear?

Keith: Uh, I think I'm guarding the rear.

Austin: Okay.

Keith: I'm glad, because I don't know that I have a light. I probably could get a light. Speaking of growing things.

Austin: [chuckles] Oh! And you are?

Keith: Uh, I'm Phrygian.

Austin: Tell me, tell me what Phrygian looks like, in this moment.

Keith: Uh...

Austin: And tell me what playbook you're playing.

Keith: Uh, I'm playing the Miscreated playbook.

Austin: Mmm.

Keith: Uh, Phrygian is a Branched character, who, uh, is right now, uh, transformed into their sort of, uh, we're all, we're in our mechs currently, right?

Austin: If you want to be, yeah, totally.

Keith: Uh, so I'm not in a mech, but I am my mech. Uh, walking behind everybody, full of cables, loose cables waving all around, kind of like —

Austin: And when you say cables, do you mean like electrical cables, do you mean like, suspension bridge cables?

Keith: No, yeah, like suspension bridge cables, kind of like tangled into a rat king.

Austin: [chuckles] Who is a person.

Keith: Who is a person, yeah.

Austin: Great. And gigantic, you know, 6 stories high or whatever, you know.

Keith: Right, yeah. Yeah.

Austin: Fantastic. Well, that leaves two other people, who don't have a particular task, uh, uh, here. I mean, actually it leaves more than that, because one of those people is surrounded by other people. But I'm going to say, uh, Thisbe, because you are not carrying a light, because you are not busy looking for, uh, people all around you, and kind of keeping up the guard in that way, your eyes are able to wander. And I want you to describe what you look like, and what your situation is, before I tell you what it is you see.

0:40:03.4

Janine: Yeah, so, Thisbe, uh, is very physically similar to as we've last seen her. She's still sort of a... [chuckles] the size of a car upright. Very clean and high-contrast sort of robot design. Sort of an opalescent glass panel exterior with some visible, dark joint work. Uh, she has sort of the, the face and head of a ram with, uh, watch spring horns, as I always describe them. Uh, she has unguligrade legs, learned that word last —

Austin: Oh...

Dre: Mmm.

Janine: Last time, too. Uh, I think the changes, the main changes, are that the... we saw, in the past, her screens on her hands, and that glass is sort of clouded and etched, now.

Austin: Mm-hm.

Janine: Lots of like, microscratches on her hands. And she also has a, just a simple cloak. Just a simple, uh, gray, I think, cloak.

Austin: And is she, is she piloting something currently?

Janine:[chuckling] She's, so she is in Mow, who also is, is a familiar, returning, you know, guy.

Austin: Mow, is mow, mow is still big?

Janine:Mow big.

Austin: Mow big.

Janine:Mow's still big. Yeah.

Dre: Phew, thank god.

Sylvi: Thank god.

Dre: [laughing]

Janine:Uh, I have on my sheet here, Mow big, and then the little emoji, little heart, the little less than/3. He does have a significant new [chuckling] vibe, though. Uh, he has, he's gotten a bit of a paint job, which is sort of like, sort of the mech equivalent of like an antique milk truck. Like, I don't think there's any specific branding on him.

Dre: [laughing]

Austin: Uh-huh...

Sylvi: Mm-hm!

Janine:Uh, but like, I kind of imagine, maybe it's like, a cream and teal sort of thing.

Austin: Oh, that's so good.

Janine:But, you know, I'm, I'm open to interpretation [chuckling] there.

Ali: [chuckling]

Janine:I haven't committed to a particular milk truck livery.

Austin: [laughing] Oh, I saw them open for Cup, actually.

Janine:But that's kind of the energy.

Sylvi: [laughing]

Keith: [chuckling]

Austin: Yeah, that's, I love — great. Incredible advancement in Mow technology, IMO.

Janine: Oh, and, just to refresh, Mow is like a gorilla mech.

Austin: Yes, right.

Janine: With like a, with like an industrial tool arm.

Austin: It's interesting, because both you and Mow are from a different era in terms of design, and that is kind of what catches your eye. Off in the distance of this place, which, again, to describe what the Diadem is, it is a sort of mega arcology. It's like, what if the largest, lowest canyon you've ever seen has been taken over by a mall, or a high-scale hotel, or a kind of extremely arrogant, you know, architectural project, like the sort of like... hey, what if we built a city that goes across our entire country? Maybe that's a real thing that's happening somewhere in the world right now, who could say?

Keith: [chuckling]

Austin: Now, imagine you did that across the entire world, and you dug it into the body of the world itself, at the equator. That is what the Diadem is. Miles and miles and miles long across — so, again, you're in the very bottom of this place. The sun is out, but the sky is so high above you, and you're so deep in this canyon, that is filled with all of these other, like, buildings at the base level, that it's almost like there's only a single line, like a thin line of this purplish-blue above you. Uh, uh, but in the distance, I mean, given that, what you see is, I don't know, maybe I can't say it's surprising to you necessarily, but certainly, if I was down here, I would not expect to come across what looks like a ruined battlefield, an ancient, the remains of an ancient battlefield, with, uh, uh, ruined mechs that look like suits of armor, crashed aircraft, uh, modular bunkers that have been torn apart. Flags and banners, still, as there's no wind this deep down. Uh, uh, or at least not at this part of the Diadem, there is no wind. And just, again, it's, it's, it's a mile across, just this battlefield, uh, and it's as if you've stepped into the Mall of America and found, you know, an abandoned Mall of America, and then found a revolutionary war battlefield, cannons still rolled out.

0:44:56.6 And you, I wouldn't say you necessarily from this distance recognize the makes and models of any particular things, but there is a sort of resonance, there is a sort of like, you're closer to those machines, in time, than you are to ones built today, right? Uh, uh, and so, in the distance, you do see, uh, your kind of scanners move across the battlefield, and you can't quite pick anything out, but there is a beep that our final player character this season hears from the, uh, the scanners board the Blue Channel. Ali, tell me what, what we see. And who we see.

Ali: Hi, yeah. Uh, this season I'm going to be playing Calvin Broun — uh, fuck!

Everyone: [guffawing]

Dre: Calvin Broun Fuck.

Austin: Calvin Broun Fuck. You know? Uh-huh.

Janine: Hyphenated, or —?

Austin: Yeah. [chuckling]

Sylvi: Of the Maine Broun-fucks?

Austin: Uh-huh.

Ali: [cackling]

Janine: [laughing]

Ali: I'm going to be playing Calvin Brine.

Austin: Oh, Brine. How do you spell Brine, for me?

Ali: It's, uh, Brnine.

Austin: Oh yeah, Brnine, the way we all spell brine.

Ali: Yep. Uh-huh.

Sylvi: Have been for years.

Ali: [laughing]

Dre: The N is silent, come on. Everyone knows this.

Keith: It's which N is silent, that's the question.

Ali: They are an Apostolosean, with a shag haircut, burgundy hair, iridescent skin, no eyebrows, multiple piercings —

Austin: Oh, wait a second, this person sounds like someone I know with a different name.

Ali: That's weird, that is weird. [laughing] I, if you're a fan of the podcast Friends at the Table: Partizan —

Sylvi: [laughing]

Ali: [laughing] You might have heard of —

Keith: Or maybe an enemy of it.

Ali: [laughing]

Austin: Oh, they exist.

Ali: [giggling] You might have known of a character named Kal'mera Broun, who, at the end of that series, got a spaceship called the Blue Channel, and also sort of created an international event in new technology that's now using their old name —

Austin: Oh, Kalmeria, right, Kalmeria.

Ali: Yes... [laughing]

Austin: You don't want that association? That's not an association that Broun was hyped for?

Ali: No, instead of being Steve Jobs, Calvin Brnine is the captain of the Blue Channel, serving Millennium Break.

Austin: Incredible. Well —

Janine: Steve Wozniak.

Austin: Right, you're the Steve Wozniak.

Keith: [laughing]

Austin: God. Do you... you're on the Blue Channel. Is there anybody else on the Blue Channel with you?

Ali: Uh, yeah, I, I, I probably have my crew here, since we're on a mission. The, there are three other [chuckles] people who serve the Blue Channel, aside from the player characters. Uh, there is Midnite Matinee, who is probably also a familiar —

Austin: Ah.

Ali: [laughing] Name for Friends at the Table —

Austin: It's kind of a deep cut, though, right?

Ali: A deep cut. Uh, but she's a bunny girl [laughing]

Austin: I think we had an official — no, she's, she's a bunny girl, but she's like a little more, she's like a little more than like Viera, are bunny. You know what I mean? Like, Viera are just like, hot people with bunny ears.

Ali: Sure.

Sylvi: What's the problem?

Ali: [giggling]

Austin: Nothing. That's great, that's fantastic —

Sylvi: Okay, cool.

Austin: I just don't want to get sued. And so, Midnite Matinee —

Sylvi: [laughing]

Austin: Is like a little more harelike, you know, a little more fur on the face, you know?

Ali: Mm-hm.

Janine: There's going to be so — I'm calling this now, I'm, I'm — there's going to be so much Midnite Matinee/Coriolis Sunset fan art.

Ali: [laughing]

Austin: Oh, you —

Keith: By saying it, you have —

Janine: Angel girl/bunny girl? What?

Keith: You have now done it.

Austin: Mm-hm. Mm-hm.

Sylvi: I'm not complaining.

Austin: Midnite was in season one, in Partizan.

Janine: I'm excited for it, it's going to be great.

Austin: Was in episode 5 of Partizan. And no one really, you know, midnight came and went. Midnite came and made you pay money —

Ali: There was an interaction, we have a history.

Austin: There was an interaction, you have a history.

Ali: And now we're, you know, we work together.

Austin: And now she works with you. Okay.

Ali: Uh-huh.

Austin: Sure, we'll explore that relationship.

Ali: [giggling]

Austin: Who else is with you?

Ali: Uh, I also have, so, Midnite is sort of like our scout. She's probably sitting at like, the co-pilot's seat, like, looking at scanners or whatever. Uh, another crew member is Routine Rennari, uh, who I've described as half Apostolosean, and like if a prince elf was Piccolo?

Austin: [cackling]

Ali: He's, he's a — [laughing]

Janine: That's just Piccolo.

Sylvi: Thank you so much, Ali.

Ali: [laughing] Yeah, he's just Piccolo.

Sylvi: Thank you so much.

Janine: He's just Piccolo.

Ali: Uh, he's a, a former Kesh noble, a capital C, capital T Class Traitor, built like a brick wall, is our heavy, is probably [laughing] watching the rear with, uh, Phrygian?

Austin: Phrygian. Phrygian. Or, no, no, that's not right. Yeah, that's right, Phrygian is in the rear.

Keith: Yeah, I'm in the rear. Yep. What, what was the, what is elf prince Piccolo's name?

Austin: Routine. Routine Rennari. Is that, uh, so is Routine outside, then? Or is Routine watching with also scanners, or is Routine like, hanging out on Phrygian's shoulder? [chuckles]

Ali: [laughing] Maybe it's like a, uh, like a... like an open cargo bay situation?

Austin: Ah, that's fun, sure. That makes sense.

Ali: Yeah.

Austin: Uh, that's two. Who's three?

Ali: Uh, and then three is Hunting, AKA Hunt Tomorrow. Hunting, what's Hunting doing right now? Hunting is probably also in the like, captain's bridge or whatever, uh, on like a different seat of scanners type things.

Austin: Mm-hm.

Ali: Probably like, verifying ammo and things of that nature. Hunting is from Palisade.

Austin: Right. That name makes me think, part of the Concrete, Slate — the Concretists who live on the — not the Concrete Slate — the, uh, the Shale Belt, the Shale Belt, where like, all of the names feel like — I mean, I don't know if this is literally true for Hunting Tomorrow, but it sounds like a lyric or a poem, like excerpt, where their names are like, like that. Is that right?

Ali: Yeah, absolutely. Uh,, the like, the like Millennium Break origin story that I had for Hunting was that he —

Austin: Right.

Ali: Had been working with the like, cave system slash eco thing that we made in that Wagon Wheel game. [chuckling]

Austin: In the Wagon Wheel game, in the Casino in Braunton, Braunton was the casino town —

Ali: Right.

Austin: Where you did like a spaghetti luncheon to talk about [laughing] class unity and revolution, right?

Ali: [laughing] Yeah.

Austin: But you helped them dig out, like, the old mines, the abandoned mine, nearby town, became the headquarters of a secret Millennium Break aligned cell.

Ali: Yeah. So, I think that means we're going to have to talk about the Concretists a little bit here —

Austin: Yeah.

Ali: To describe Hunting.

Austin: Yeah, so, yeah, because, because presumably he is a Concretist, he is from this group of people that we set up during that Wagon Wheel game.

Ali: Yeah, like, born and raised on Palisade.

Austin: Yeah. Uh, what's the short version? I mean, the short version, I imagine, you tell me, what it actually looks like, but my notes on, on them back during Wagon Wheel was that they have a combination of like, the sort of special concrete rock stuff, uh, uh, integrated into their body, and then also have sort of a breathing apparatus, uh, the combination of which allows them to, uh, uh, safely breathe. The long version ties back to something in Twilight Mirage, right, where there was a group of people who were negatively impacted by a kind of infrastructure project that required them to be near a certain type of concrete, or else face respiratory difficulties, basically.

Ali: Yeah, so the way that I, uh, imagine him in terms of like, thinking of those two things. There's, uh, [laughs] Zelgadis Greyswords from the anime Slayers.

Dre: [chuckling]

Austin: Yeah, a classic. A banger.

Ali: A classic. Uh, Hunting is more like olive-skinned, but has that sort of like rock formation on the edges of his jaw —

Austin: Sure.

Ali: And like, along the, uh, the sort of like, bone line of his, his like eyebrow.

Dre: Ooh, that's fun.

Ali: I like, I like the sort of idea of it making it look like he has really thick eyebrows, because thick eyebrows is a good character design.

Austin: Uh-huh. I agree.

Ali: [laughing] And then, I don't really have a face cast for him, but I can say that he has a really fluffy like, blue-gray mullet, like Suga from the BTS video Permission to Dance.

Austin: Okay, sure. [chuckling]

Ali: Yep.

Austin: I love it, great. Does he also have some sort of rebreather thing, because the —

Ali: I think so, yeah.

Austin: Okay.

Ali: The way that I was thinking of it, in terms of like, implants, not so much a prosthetic, but if there was like a little section of your shoulder that you could kind of open up and put like a D battery in.

Austin: Oh, that's interesting.

Ali: Yeah.

Austin: And that would be like, is it, is it a battery, or is it like air? Or what is it?

Ali: I think it's like, like a medication thing —

Austin: Gotcha.

Ali: Of like the concrete dust.

Austin: Oh, sure.

Ali: Uh, to keep it like, in his blood system.

Austin: Yeah, yeah, yeah. This makes sense to me. Yeah.

Ali: Yeah, the sort of like, real-life equivalent I was thinking of is like an insulin pump, but what if it was like a battery.

Austin: Yeah, totally, that makes sense. I mean, the thing, a thing that, just to reiterate something from the Wagon Wheel game, is that the folks in the Shale Belt, uh, uh, they went about kind of addressing this need in a couple of different ways. Partly, it was through things like, I mean, now we know it has this, kind of this pump, this dust pump equivalent, which I really like, through like cybernetics and prosthetics and medical devices, I guess, more the prosthetics, medical devices, partly through, uh, the, whatever Sci-Fi engineering went into the blending themselves directly with the concrete in the way that we described, like you said, his brow line and some of the other parts, where you can see the kind of rocky, stony stuff in him.

And then also, through a kind of a social answer, which was making sure that that concrete was a lot of different places across the concretists settlements in the Shale Belt, and then also like, allied ones, presumably in like the Bonte Valley and some other locations. But, like, the world is big, and a lot of it isn't built like that? And so I imagine the dust pump, you know, is a good way to make sure you have what you need to, to be able to breathe well across the, the planet and not just in these places that have been built with this in mind, you know?

Ali: Yeah, I think, I think that's important for Hunting, in terms of having him be a fun little nerdy tech guy on our squad, but also being like a character who has agency, who is like, yeah, I want to be on like a traveling ship.

Austin: Right, right.

Ali: So like, in my head like two years ago or whatever —

Austin: Right.

Ali: Hunting like, volunteered for that project, and then got the tap to like, hey, do you want to join Millennium Break? And then, is now serving [chuckles] in the Blue Channel with us.

Austin: Fantastic. And that's right, Hunting is he/him, right?

Ali: Mm-hm.

Austin: We did not go over pronouns, because a lot of these are returning characters, but like, can we real quick just hit pronouns from the top?

Sylvi: Uh, yeah. She/her for Cori.

Austin: Uh, Figure?

Dre: Uh, They/he.

Austin: They/he for, for the Figure in Bismuth. Brnine?

Ali: Brine is they/them.

Austin: Okay. Interesting, Calvin, I just realized, does not have the apostrophe that normally Apostolosean names have that represent their idolon like, neopronoun thing.

Ali: Yeah, I, I think, and we spoke about this a little bit privately, but I think that Brnine has been in a place for a while in terms of like, separating their gender identity from their cultural identity.

Austin: Mm-hm.

Ali: And I think, like, keeping a name with Kal in it, is a way of honoring that there's still Apostolosean without having the like, you know, the hangup of like, having to present that way.

Austin: Right, that makes sense. Uh, Thisbe.

Janine: Thisbe is she/her.

Austin: And Phrygian.

Keith: Uh, Phrygian is they/them.

Austin: Okay. And then, again, your crew —

Ali: And then for the crew, Midnite Matinee is she/her, Routine Rennari is he/him, and Hunting Tomorrow is also he/him.

Austin: Oh, also, I guess this is important — you, what is your playbook, and then also Janine, what is Thisbe's playbook?

Ali: I am the Captain.

Janine: And I'm the Incandescent.

Austin: I will say here that everybody's playbooks — uh, all of us are playing Armour Astir by Briar Sovereign, but the Incandescent and the Miscreated, Janine and Keith's playbooks, are from [Strangers in the Night](#): five playbooks for Armour Astir Advent. I will have links to all of these things in the chat. Not in the chat, jeez, there's no chat. In the episode description. Uh, Strangers in the Night is by Yuri Rennel and August Orion. They also have [another really great series of playbooks](#) for the game. Totally worth, uh, going to check those out.

0:58:29.1 So, Midnite looks at you, looks back up at you, Brnine, and is like — I'm guessing it's Brnine, is that right?

Ali: Mm-hm.

Austin: Okay, not Calvin.

Ali: No.

Austin: In terms of the way people refer to you, especially maybe your, your, you know, officers. Uh, and says, uh, someone's moving out there. Is that Matinee? Let me find Matinee again.

Austin (as Matinee): I think something's moving out there. Yeah, we got, we got a —

Austin: And like, kind of enhances an image, and something, you get the great shot of someone moving from the body of one these fallen mechs, these fallen, you know, soldier mechs, and like, their eyes light up in the dark, uh, as they, as they make eye contact with your, the Blue Channel as it slowly hovers towards them. Uh, you know, you're probably still quite a bit away. But there definitely is that sense of like, oh, that's a person there. Uh, the, as the light from, uh, what's the name of your, of your mech, Coriolis?

Sylvi: It's just the Chariot Mark II.

Austin: The Chariot Mark II. As the light from the Chariot Mark II kind of begins to shine out over the battlefield, you catch, you know, in the scanners, that this is a person with four arms, you can't get like, good facial features, but there is something that's like, uh, glistening around their neck, uh, like, uh, scales or some other sort of coverage, maybe, on their body. Uh, and as soon as you kind of make eye contact, they kind of dip, and begin to run away, further away from, from you. Uh, at this point they're quite far away out. You don't know that they're a threat, necessarily, but you've definitely been seen, uh, as you come down this direction. Uh, I, I will, I will tell you what exactly you're doing here, because I think that would help, and maybe part of what you, what kind of primes this, is what you see [chuckles] which is, on a far wall, uh, which just happens down here sometimes, is that like, this is such a big place, again, it's dozens and dozens of miles north to south, and then it's the entire equator of the planet.

1:00:42.7 You'll just be in like a subdivided section of this place, and on one of the walls, you see something that says, "fun," and then underneath that, it says "fun" and then there's a bunch of spaces, and it says, "men," so it says, "fun, fun, men." [chuckles]

Ali: Let's go.

Austin: And that is the direction the person is going. Uh, but Brnine, I think you put together what it is, which is a funicular to the Fundament. You have been sent here today, uh, by Gucci Garantine, who is currently in charge of the collective operations on Palisade that the Blue Channel is part of, along with a number of other units, most of which are comprised of both Millennium Break, Twilight Mirage, and native Palisade. Units. Uh, you have been sent here, to the bottom of the Diadem, to find an access point to something called a Fundament node. You are not really sure what that means. You have not been told what that means. You don't know why Gucci suddenly cares about something called a Fundament node. Uh, you don't even know what you're supposed to do when you find it. You've just been told, call me if you find it in the next 2 or 3 hours. After that, it will be too late.

Keith: Sorry, what is it called? The Fundament of what?

Austin: The Fundament node. And so you're imagining —

Sylvi: Did you say Fundament nerd? Sorry.

Keith: [laughing]

Dre: Got 'em.

Austin: Node. Uh-huh.

Dre: I mean, it sounds important.

Austin: Yeah, it sounds important. Uh, once you find —

Dre: Sounds fundamental, even.

Austin: Once you find a way down to it, you, you believe it's even further down, somehow, here, you're supposed to send a message back up to Gucci, to, to let her know that you have that. Uh, but for now, you have to pass you through this ancient battlefield, which is, I really just want to underscore, kind of creepy. Uh, uh, it really is like walking through a place that was never cleaned up from, again, thousands of years ago. It's like, it's like walking through a Roman battlefield, you know?

Keith: It's like being, in your high school at night.

Austin: Yes, yes.

Keith: But also, it's a battlefield, and like —

Austin: It's a battle —

Keith: And like, there's — yeah, like —

Sylvi: So it's like being in your high school at night.

Keith: [laughing]

Ali: [chuckling]

Austin: And also it's like, again, as you look around the Diadem, uh, I'll even just say outright, it's very much based on mega-city projects like The Line, which are nightmare, uh, ecological disasters waiting to happen, not to mention —

Keith: Uh —

Austin: Uh-huh?

Keith: When you, when you, uh, uh, unsubtly referenced The Line earlier —

Austin: Oh yeah, uh-huh, yeah.

Keith: It made me realize for the first time that The Line is just, uh, the best version of The Ring from Halo that we can create.

Austin: Yeah.

Keith: Now?

Austin: Now. Yeah, yeah, yeah.

Keith: [laughing]

Austin: You know what, that's another way of thinking about it here, is like, this is like a Halo ring has been wrapped around the planet, or like dug into the planet, you know? Like, uh, it is a big trench that has been excavated around the planet, and then filled in with little parks, you know?

[laughing] in case you want to get some like, green, you can just go the park that's on level 72. It's like, someone has dug Coruscant from Star Wars into the planet. And again, it's largely abandoned, as far as you can tell.

Sylvi: I mean, and then I saw someone running towards a Fun Fun Men sign.

Austin: Exactly, so I mean, if there's a Fun Fun Men sign, there's got to be people down here somewhere.

Ali: [giggling]

Sylvi: Yeah. I think that literally what I say like, over comms or whatever, is like —

Sylvi (as Coriolis): Hey, hey, hey, hey guys? Uh, got someone moving towards a Fun Fun Men sign? Uh, is that important?

Austin: How long have you been working with the, with the Blue Channel, Coriolis?

Sylvi: I think I am new to this. I think like, maybe we've done one or two missions with me before. I'm like, kind of a new pilot. Uh, so like —

Austin: You don't have — I'm, I'm, nobody should have gravity clocks with anybody else yet, because in Armour Astir, you kind of give gravity clocks as you play.

Sylvi: Mm-hm.

Austin: But, but everybody should have some Hooks. What are your, what's your — what's your Hooks? Actually, Paradigms don't have Hooks, right? They have something else.

Sylvi: No, I don't.

Austin: Interesting. Okay. What do you have instead?

Sylvi: I have my Tenets.

Austin: Which say?

Sylvi: Should I just read through those?

Austin: Let's read through those.

Sylvi: Okay. These all start with a little you are statement, because I was like, trying to make it sound like something culty. You are a shield. Leave none undefended while you still stand. Is my first one.

Austin: Mm-hm.

Sylvi: You are a sword. Strike down our adversaries with impunity.

Austin: Mmm.

Sylvi: And the final is, You are a beacon. Your first priority is to spread the reach of Devotion, no matter what.

Austin: Great.

Sylvi: No matter the cost.

Austin: Oh, that's better. Yeah, no matter the cost?

Sylvi: That is better.

Austin: Great, fantastic.

Sylvi: Yeah. No matter the cost is much more —

Keith: Impunity, by the way, is very important for striking down.

Sylvi: Yeah. Uh-huh.

Austin: [laughing] Very important. Uh, so yeah. The rest of you, I'm guessing nobody has — actually I don't know for sure. Does anybody have a, a Hook related to, uh, Coriolis, uh, that we should, we should note? I don't believe that we do, because Coriolis is still fairly new.

Dre: I don't, yeah.

Austin: To the crew.

Sylvi: I'm baby.

Austin: You're baby. Uh, well, baby says there's someone moving in the, the battlefield wreckage. What do you do?

Ali: Yeah, I think, uh, in response to that, I can put another important thing on the screen, which is that, [laughing] Calvin Brnine is wearing a, a Dragon Ball Z scouter.

Austin: Oh my god.

Dre: Yeah! Oh yeah! Let's go!

Ali: [laughing] And an antenna on it that looks like like a rabbit ear, not like a TV, like a rabbit. Like an anime girl from the 90s.

Austin: Mm-hm. You're like a Dragon Ball Z OC.

Janine: Post the drawing you made. Post the drawing you made.

Ali: [giggling]

Austin: Oh yeah.

Ali: I, yeah. Austin, you have permission to post this in the show notes or whatever else.

Austin: Thank you, I appreciate it. Yeah, I will. [chuckling] Oh my god, it's so good.

Sylvi: It makes me so happy. It makes me so happy.

Dre: [chuckling]

Ali: [laughing]

Sylvi: It's just like, pure serotonin when I look at this.

Ali: [laughing] What I posted, for the audience at home, is a screen cap of Snake Pillskin from Escape from New York, but instead of an eye patch

Janine: You've got a — [laughing]

Ali: There's a dragon ball Z scouter Photoshopped over it.

Janine: It's not — it's not Pillskin! [laughing]

Austin: It is, it is, it is, it is Pliskin, I think.

Dre: I think it's Pliskin.

Keith: Yeah, it's, it's Pliskin.

Ali: [laughing] Is it Pliskin?

Janine: It is! Pillskin is so gross!

Austin: [laughing]

Keith: [chuckling]

Austin: Why, what's wrong with Pillskin?

Ali: [cackling]

Janine: It's nasty! [laughing]

Ali: Uh, —

Keith: Introducing my character, Snake Pillskin.

Ali: [laughing]

Sylvi: Don't you hate when it takes just like a little too long for you to swallow medication and the pill skin starts melting in your mouth?

Everyone: Eugh...

Dre: But yes, actually, genuinely.

Austin: Yeah, genuinely, yes.

Janine: Yeah.

Austin: So you have a scouter on with a bunny ear.

Ali: I do, yeah.

Austin: You sent me an image of Snake Pliskin with a scouter on and an added little bunny ear that you've drawn on here.

Ali: [chuckling] Yep. Uh...

Sylvi: Can I ask one thing about your bunny ear?

Ali: Please.

Sylvi: Does it articulate at all? Or is it stationary?

Austin: Ooh, great point.

Ali: Oh, I think it's stationary. But it does light up.

Dre: Mmm...

Ali: And that's why I mentioned it here, because I think it lights up as a communicate [laughing] with Coriolis.

Ali (as Brnine): Uh, yeah, I think that's the, the place we need to go into, so I think that you and Figure should try to lock down that, that facility before we enter.

Sylvi: Uh, okay. Her response this is going to be —

Sylvi (as Coriolis): Aye-aye, captain!

Sylvi: And then zooming off towards it.

Ali: [laughing]

Austin: Oh, precious baby.

Dre: Uh, I think Figure's response is just like, two clicks over the comms channel, as just the, like the understood —

Austin: [chuckling]

Dre: Roger, kind of signal.

Ali: Mmm.

Dre: And like, burst off this, at, following Coriolis.

Austin: Can we talk about what your starting Hooks are? Because I feel like that maybe, maybe gives us a little picture of like, where you are as, as a person, you know? I guess I should explain, I should explain that we, Sylvi's are pretty obvious, come from being a Paradigm, the sort of Paladin-like Tenets, that explain kind of like what you believe in and stuff like that. Hooks for a lot of other people are a little bit broader than that, I guess I would say. From the book, it says, Hooks are short phrases that define how your character acts and thinks about the world and the people around them. They might be beliefs about the world and their allies, goals they personally seek to accomplish, or duties they have taken up. Whatever their nature, Hooks are things that color and inform the things your character does. A Hook might pull you on to something new, or another might be something your character struggles to break free of.

1:09:02.2 All players should write three Hooks during character creation, but don't worry about them being perfect. Hooks can be altered during play, based on how deeply you are caught on them. Typically, Hooks can only be altered when you're prompted to do so. This might be by down time scenes, or through moves you have access to, or so on. However, sometimes your Hooks may be deepened or loosened, acting in desperation or confidence, and biting the dust, which is a move, are the primary sources of this. So, so talk to me about your, your three Hooks.

Dre: Yeah, uh, my Hooks are, no matter how far I run, I'm still tethered to the Witch in Glass.

Austin: Mmm.

Dre: Uh, I've lived two lies, I would happily die for the truth.

Austin: Oof.

Dre: Uh, and my last one, if Phrygian were to truly test my loyalties, I'm not sure which way I'd go.

Austin: Oh, so in other words — so, there's a lot happening here.

Dre: Yeah.

Austin: You, I guess, you still report to the Witch in Glass, huh?

Dre: Yes. I am still essentially an agent for the Witch in Glass. Uh...

Austin: Right.

Dre: Like, at this point Figure is questioning that, but, it's much, it's like, it is like a feeling of like, disillusionment and hopelessness rather than you like, sparking any kind of action, or like rebellion or anything like that.

Austin: Right. You cannot, you do not feel you could escape the Witch in Glass —

Dre: No.

Austin: So you're tethered to her.

Dre: Yeah.

Austin: Uh, but it also seems like, maybe you're starting to like, get closer to Phrygian?

Dre: Yeah, I think so. Uh, I don't —

Austin: I think that's about like, how both of you are quite different from the other members of Millennium Break. I guess actually, you're not even necessarily —

Dre: Sure.

Austin: Full-time Millennium Break. I imagine you're almost like on loan, in a way —

Dre: Mm-hm. Yeah.

Austin: From the Witch in Glass, who is not part of Millennium Break. So, but yeah, what's that relationship deal?

Dre: Uh, at least from my end, I think, uh, Figure is just kind of — because Phrygian is someone who is, like, very down for the cause, and so Figure, in a way, like, finds Phrygian inspirational and interesting, uh, like, kind of where Figure is at right now, when I visit Philadelphia, we went to one of the, I think it's called the American Revolution Museum or whatever. And I distinctly remember, there was a like a small group of like 2 or 3 people who had basically asked the museum workers questions about, like, the, the various displays, just so

those same people could then, like, show off to the museum worker how much more they knew, supposedly. [chuckling]

Austin: God... Jesus Christ.

Dre: Uh, and it was very much always like, well, actually, did you know that this, this, and this actually made the American Revolutionaries even more noble and more brave?

Austin: Oh my god.

Dre: And so like, that is where Figure started.

Keith: This Museum to the American Revolution isn't patriotic enough.

Austin: [laughing]

Dre: Uh-huh. Yeah, yeah, uh-huh. Uh, so that, I mean, that's where, before Figure became Figure, back when they were like a, a high school social studies teacher, that's the kind of person they were.

Austin: Right...

Dre: Uh, like, they were very much like a, like, I, I believe in the history that is written by the victors, 100 percent. And also, I'm a victor, and I think at this point, Figure's figured out, okay, well I might be from the same country as the victors, but I am not one of the victors, and actually, they look much more at me as one of the people that's expendable and destroyable, uh, than someone who's part of like, the good story here.

Austin: Right.

Dre: But again, because of that is like, okay, so what the fuck do I do?

Austin: Mm-hm.

Dre: What can I do? And so I think Phrygian, as a person who is, again, more for like the war effort, and probably, like, much further, like, I don't want to say left here, but like, much further like, entrenched in their own, like, philosophy, right? That is, Figure finds them very interesting and inspiring.

Austin: And also someone who's even further outside of the system, right?

Dre: Yeah.

Austin: Like, you died and were brought back by the Witch in Glass and were given a big, you know, mineral head. Uh, [chuckles]

Dre: Another great band that opened up for...

Austin: [chuckles] uh-huh, yeah, yeah, yeah, exactly. Uh, Phrygian is, uh, again, looking at readings here. Wires and cables rippling and snapping together, loosely fitting around an interspersed organic material. So, a lot more, there's a lot, there's a lot of, there's even further —

Keith: And that's my diplomatic mode.

Austin: Right, [laughing] exactly.

Dre: Sure.

Keith: That's the mode I take specifically to not scare people.

Austin: Right, exactly, yes. Uh, all right, so, and —

Keith: Oh, and also I've, correct me if I'm wrong, but being a Branched in the Principality —

Austin: Yeah, I mean, it's —

Keith: That's essentially a crime.

Austin: It's a death sentence, do you know what I mean?

Keith: Yeah, in itself, just being here.

Austin: You are, you are, yes. You are the cultural bogeyman of all time.

Keith: Right.

Austin: You are, everyone — not everyone, right? Because I think you have found a place here on the Blue Channel. In Millennium Break more broadly, but even in Millennium Break, you are a minority among minorities, you know what I mean?

Keith: Yeah.

Austin: You are still the rarest of the rare in terms of Branched being part of this. Maybe there are more now than there were five years ago, but we're not talking about a...

Keith: Yeah.

Austin: An overwhelming number of people like you, here, you know? I would kind of defer to you as to how many more Branched are part of Millennium Break these days, but that's...

Keith: That's a, you know, a lot can happen in 5 years, I guess. But I think that even getting people from that part of space into the Principality is like, extremely difficult —

Austin: Yeah.

Keith: Like, we were sent as a small team, to research something very important.

Austin: Right.

Keith: Originally, and I feel like if they could have sent more people, they would have.

Austin: [chuckles] Yeah, if the Branched could have like, put people behind enemy lines to win the war, that would have happened, right?

Keith: Right. Yeah.

Austin: So yeah, this makes sense. All right, well, Figure and Coriolis, as you move forward across the battlefield, what are you, what are you looking out for? Describe to me what this, what following Brnine's orders looks like?

Sylvi: Uh... I think that like, when I land, I'm immediately like, on guard, because I'm like, this is a mission, I've got to take this super seriously. I don't know if I've pulled out my mech's weapon yet, at all, but it's definitely like, it's definitely one of those things where I'm ready to deploy it at a moment's notice.

Austin: Mm-hm.

Dre: Mmm.

Sylvi: I think also because I got there first, I'm probably waiting for — it was Figure that got ordered to come with, right?

Austin: Correct, yeah.

Dre: Yeah.

Sylvi: Yeah.

Austin: Uh, but, for this now forward-moving group, are you... what is the, are you investigating anything? Are you just heading right towards where it says Fun Fun Men? What's your posture?

Sylvi: Uh, contrary to my usual behavior in life, I am heading straight for the Fun Fun Men.

Austin: [chuckling]

Sylvi: I mean, it is the last place I saw this guy. And I'm not like, I'm not necessarily like a subtle mech in a way, so I can't really go up and be like, sneaky about like —

Austin: Sure.

Sylvi: Looking around.

Dre: Mmm.

Sylvi: My mech's literally glowing, it has a big 'ol cape on it. Like...

Austin: Mmm. Figure, how about you? What's your, what's your posture in this moment, comparatively?

Dre: Yeah, uh, well I have one of my Altar's features is a chameleon cloak, which allows me to become invisible?

Austin: Mmm.

Dre: So I think I, I probably activate that, I activate that upon landing.

Austin: Okay.

Dre: Because if we're tailing somebody, I do not want to be seen.

Austin: Yeah, that's interesting. Uh, and you're moving very quick, both of you, because you're in big machines that can move very quickly. Uh, you, you get past the, you get up to the point where you first saw the person moving around on the ground. Uh, and can see that it is a... uh, that they were doing something next to a fallen unit, that feels like, I don't know... you would have to roll some dice to, to, I don't know that either of you just intrinsically know about mechs from 5000 years ago, you know?

Dre: Yeah, sure.

Austin: But you can investigate that if you wanted, or you can keep moving towards the kind of big, the wall that's in front of you, that has like a big, there's kind of like a big door on it, underneath, like a warehouse style, gigantic door, you know? Like a hangar bay door is really what it is, uh, uh, which is where you know the person was running too. Do you, do you stay here to try to investigate what they were doing, or do you just kind of hurry after them as quickly as you can?

Dre: Hm... I hurry after.

Austin: Okay.

Sylvi: Okay, cool, that was also my, my instinct.

Austin: All right. Uh, that means that, you know, as you are, uh, getting closer and closer, you hear and see the big hangar door begin to open, uh, and your microphones, your exterior microphones, can pick up someone going like, "come on, come on, come on, come on!" And seeing that they're not going to open up in time, they kind of turn and look at you, and, uh, and then like, all right, fine. And launch a grappling Hook from their — from where they're standing on the ground, up to the slowly — it's like a cargo door that's like opening from the top and the bottom, you know what I mean? Like, it's like split in half horizontally, it's like, rrrr — and, uh, she connects a grappling Hook up to the like, lowering bottom, you know, door, of this big hangar bay type door that's lowering, and begins to try to climb her way up there. Uh, I — I don't think she's going to make it up there, you know? [chuckling] Before you get there.

Keith: Is this a, is this a person in a mech or —

Dre: This is just a person.

Austin: This is just a person.

Keith: Okay, gotcha.

Dre: Okay.

Austin: Yeah. Uh-huh. Uh, what do you do? By the time you get there, I'd say she's about two-thirds of the way up this hangar, or this hangar bay door, rather.

Dre: Uh... boy. Uh... Coriolis, you probably want to take the lead on this.

Sylvi: Uh, yeah, I'm just trying to figure out what she'd do here. Because this person hasn't shown to be hostile towards us.

Austin: No, no.

Sylvi: We don't know if they're, like —

Austin: Uh, from this distance you can see that they are, uh, you, you, especially, I guess, hoo... none of you are actually like, from here, from here. Uh, who here would, who on the, you know, on the crew, has spent the most time with the kind of various peoples of Palisade at this point? Who's been on Palisade the longest? Did the Blue Channel all come together? And also, I guess Coriolis, did you come with the Blue Channel, or did you get added to the Blue Channel after coming here originally with Devotion?

Sylvi: I think I came, I think I was here with can Devotion folks first.

Austin: Okay. So I can just give this to you since you're right here, which is, you now recognize that the things that looked, that kind of shined in the dark, that were kind of like, uh, glistening, is like a, a sort of moss that's growing up her neck, and like onto her face a little bit, sort of like the way, uh, the Apostolosean scales look sometimes, or going back to Twilight Mirage, the Qui Err scales would look, coming up from like the body towards the neck and the face. But here, it's this kind of light, glistening moss cover, uh, coverage, across, across her skin. Uh, and in fact, she also has the kind of little horns that we would recognize as being from the Qui Err, these

kind of like, nubbins or her head, and in fact, has four arms like some of the ancient Qui Err did. So you know that this is someone who is not... I mean, are there any Qui Err who have joined the Bilateral Intercession? Probably.

Sylvi: Uh, yeah, I was going to ask, like, not to completely generalize them, but —

Austin: Generally speaking, if you're here and are from a Twilight Mirage-descended culture — I mean, that's not true. Because everybody here is from a Twilight Mirage-descended culture, except for the Apostolosean, you know what I mean? And even the Apostoloseans existed in the Twilight Mirage, right? So, it's not as simple as all that, I guess, right? The entire Divine Principality starts with the Twilight Mirage, uh,, but the Qui Err were not a huge part of the exiting Divine Principality, the Divine Fleet, and the Rapid Evening, or the Principality of Kesh that would become the Divine Principality.

1:21:43.5 So, uh, this is a situation where, you would guess, you would guess that this person is not, like, a Principality spy or something, you know?

Sylvi: Uh, I might try talking to them, then.

Austin: What do you say?

Sylvi: Uh —

Sylvi (as Coriolis): Uh, hello, hello, hi. We're just, we're here on a scouting mission, we don't mean any.... uh...

Austin: [chuckling]

Sylvi (as Coriolis): We're not with the Bilats.

Austin: Uh, this sounds like a, this sounds like a move to me. This to me —

Sylvi: Yeah, sure does.

Austin: Sounds like, uh, you are trying to talk your way through something.

Sylvi: Well, thankfully I have a 0 in that.

Austin: Oh, that's so good.

Janine:[laughing]

Dre: Could be worse.

Sylvi: Yeah, no, it's perfect.

Austin: Hey, does anybody have talk in this crew? I'm looking...

Dre: Nope.

Austin: I see a negative one on Figure, I see a 0 on Coriolis, I see a 0 on Brnine, I see a negative 1 on Thisbe, I see a 0 on Phrygian. Okay.

Keith: I had some sick talk, but, but we changed up playbooks.

Austin: You changed playbooks, yeah, that's true.

Keith: I mean, my talk was actually negative 2, but I had a weird thing that I could do.

Austin: [laughing] Okay, well...

Keith: It would have worked out to have been better.

Austin: I see, I see, of course, of course, of course.

Sylvi: Speaking of things that could have worked out better...

Austin: Uh-huh?

Sylvi: I rolled a 6, that's a 1 and a 5.

Austin: Oh, you just rolled the, you just straight-up rolled. Uh...

Sylvi: I assume it was talk. Yeah, that's not correct.

Austin: It, it is talk, well, it's, it's, it's, the thing is, I was going to talk about what it is that you're actually doing here, which is kind of interesting, right? Uh, you could theoretically roll Weather the Storm, which is when you attempt to ignore the witty barbs of ambitious politicians, try and walk across a thin, wet beam as thunder booms overhead, or otherwise try to do something

against significant pressure, you're attempting to Weather the Storm. When you do so, roll — and then you would roll, actually, plus defy, plus know, or plus sense —

Sylvi: Ooh!

Austin: But —

Sylvi: I've got plus-2 on defy!

Austin: Well, but, but —

Dre: [chuckles]

Austin: I don't know that this is Weathering the Storm. I think what this actually is —

Sylvi: Yeah...

Austin: Uh, you are either, you either need to, uh, you know what? This is the moment where we should at least say what the traits are, and I can talk about the thing I'm trying to explain. So, there are at base 5, maybe really 7, traits, which we might call stats. There's defy, which is your ability to resist pressure and to power through adversity, sense, your ability to read people and situations, clash, your prowess in combat at distance or up close, talk, your skill with the spoken and written word, and know, K-N-O-W, your ingenuity and cunning. Then, if you have a mech, you probably also have the channel trait, which represents magical abilities from various sources. Uh, and then, and then there's also the crew skill, the crew trait, uh, uh, that you can roll a number of times per session equal to your crew, unless you are Brnine, in which case you can roll it as many times as you want, I believe. And that is like, hey, if the crew is doing something for you, or helping you do something, you can roll crew to do it instead. If your crew is fighting the invaders off the ship, instead of rolling clash, you can roll crew to do that. Uh, the thing that I was trying to get to here is, this is sort of like a social combat encounter in a way. And in Armour Astir, you... characters have different, NPCs have different ratings. They're either extras, side characters, or main characters.

Sylvi: Okay.

Austin: Extras, against all of them, what you need to do is give it them things called dangers, which is sort of like adjectives from the old Mechnoir and Technoir.

Sylvi: Ooh!

Austin: And when you give them the right amount, they become kind of open to a decisive strike that would end a conflict with them, right? And extra only needs one, needs one danger. A, a, uh, a side character needs two, and a main character needs three. Uh, and the way you give people dangers, and we'll talk about the two types of dangers as they show up, are, you, you use a move called, uh, Exchange Blows, which is, when you Exchange Blows with foes capable of defending themselves, roll plus clash or plus talk, whichever is more appropriate, and advance a gravity clock, if you have one. You don't have a gravity clock with this person. So that doesn't matter so much. So, what was your — your talk is plus nothing, and you rolled a 6?

Sylvi: Plus nothing, I rolled a 6. I also thought of something that, uh, gives you things to play around with —

Austin: Oh, sure, uh-huh.

Sylvi: As a result. I realize that Cori's response would be like, oh, hey, do you need help with that? And kind of reach out with her mech, to like, help —

Austin: [chuckling]

Sylvi: Try and lift this person up. But, you know, that could be misinterpreted.

Austin: Uh-huh. Uh, also really quick, I'm looking at Coriolis', Cori's sheet, and I don't —

Sylvi: Yeah.

Austin: Oh, right, right, right, this is right. You have a move on your, on your, your starting move. Okay, this is correct. Uh...

Sylvi: Yeah.

Austin: Neither of those are actually going to help you here, so...

Sylvi: Mm-hm.

Austin: Uh, okay. Uh, but, so you got a 6. Figure, you could help here. You could aid or interfere, to try to help things, help this go to a 7 instead of a failure at a 6.

Dre: Gotcha.

Austin: Would you like to help?

Dre: Yeah, how do I go about doing that?

Austin: When you Help Or Hinder someone to influence their attempts, to do something, roll. Roll 2D6. Roll plus-1 if you spent meaningful time together before this sortie. Roll plus-1 if they've helped or hindered you previously this sortie, and with plus-1 if they're part of one of your Hooks.

Dre: So, no? No, and no.

Austin: So you've not spent meaningful time together, then, it's worth saying.

Dre: Yeah, I don't think so. Like, we probably have spent time together, but I don't know if it's meaningful.

Austin: But not that much?

Dre: Yeah.

Austin: I gotcha. All right. Well, then, I mean, as always, if you, if you roll and fail, you kind of set yourself up to be part of the... the repercussions of a failure.

Dre: Sure.

Austin: Uh, but, but feel free to roll that 2D6 and see what happens.

Dre: Yeah. We're here to roll dice. Boop. Hell yeah, let's go.

Austin: Oh my god. Ugh. Another 6. Uh...

Sylvi: Dang. No, it's fine, that's the highest — it's six good, right?

Ali: [giggling]

Austin: Yeah, 6 is the highest you can get, it's the highest it goes.

Sylvi: Pretend it's on one dice.

Austin: Uh, unfortunately, that's two failures. Uh, and that means that I get to, as always, make a move in response. And in this case, what happens is this woman sees the both of you, and specifically Cori, sees you beginning to reach out. How are you trying to help, Figure?

Dre: I think I am, I disengage my cloaking device, as like a way of being like, no, look, here, we're friendly, I'm going to show you that I'm here, too.

Sylvi: [cracking up]

Dre: You know, this very friendly-looking robot, that...

Austin: Uh-huh.

Dre: Looks like a skeletal horror nightmare, it's here to help.

Austin: [laughing] As, as that happens, this woman, uh, uh, still holding onto her grappling Hook, you know, that's slowly pulling her up, uh, uh, reaches into her jacket with her one free hand, and just like, tosses a sort of football-sized device into the air. Uh, and then turns her own body back towards the wall, so that she doesn't see when it explodes and blinds the both of you. This is a risk. Risks are short-term things, generally speaking. They, uh, reflect a sort of — you know, let me just again read from the actual book, so I don't, you know, get anything, I don't leave anything important out, I guess is what I would say. When 20-foot long swords and magic guns are involved, injuries tend to be the severe kind. Thankfully, characters in *Armour Astir* are plenty capable of defending themselves, up to a point. Should enough problems, distractions, or dangers arise, you may find yourself defenseless. For players, being defenseless means your usual methods of avoiding harm aren't available to you. Where you might usually Exchange Blows or Weather the Storm to avoid a blow or dodge a real consequence, that's no longer the case. Your guard is down, your armor has a hole, et cetera. When you are defenseless, and something or someone tries to harm you, you must roll Bite the Dust, which is a move about getting knocked out of a scene, not necessarily dying, unless you really want it to be.

1:30:02.8 The dangers that make it harder to defend yourself come in two kinds. Risks are temporary things, that can be resolved during a sortie, like having the low ground during a fight, being on fire, or being distracted. And perils are more permanent issues that must be solved during down time, like serious injuries to you or your Astir, being heartbroken, being exhausted. A danger to you is a danger to your Astir, and vice versa. For all intents and purposes, your Astir, or in our case, your Altar, is an extension of yourself. Characters can be affected by a

certain amount of both before they are defenseless. And we talked about this already, player characters, rival characters, and main characters get, need three dangers, side characters need two, one — and, and extras need one. In this case, both of you have now taken the risk blinded, as this flashbang football grenade has gone off, not just, not just overwhelming your own eyes, but also your sensors, right?

Sylvi: Yeah.

Austin: There's something, actual technological happening here. What's your reaction to this happening?

Sylvi: I think, so, this is also happening over comms, I think everybody just hears Cori going, "hey, what's that?" And then a big [foley] thwoomp.

Ali: [laughing]

Austin: [laughing]

Sylvi: Uh, and, her connection going out. Because, I don't know, you describing it like that made me think that it would put the communications on the fritz for a second. We don't need to roll with that, mechanically.

Austin: Yeah, sure, that makes perfect sense to me.

Sylvi: Yeah.

Austin: Uh, Figure, do you have any response to being flashbanged?

Dre: Ugh, I mean... I don't think so, not immediately.

Austin: [chuckles] Okay.

Dre: I think, I mean, if anything, I would retaliate, right? But I can't see anything in order to retaliate, and I'm not going to just start randomly throwing explosives.

Austin: Probably a good idea.

Keith: Uh, while we're talking numbers and stuff, uh...

Austin: Yes.

Keith: I'm going to say, so that I don't forget later, to, uh, put your spot, tick your spotlight number up, for failing for those rolls.

Austin: Tick your spotlight.

Sylvi: Thank you so much.

Keith: One of the several ways to advance in Armour Astir.

Dre: Oh!

Austin: That's true. Whenever you fail a move, that is, you roll a 6 or below, you may take a point of spotlight. Once you have 6 spotlight, you may spend it at any time to take center stage and immediately gain an advancement.

Sylvi: Oh!

Austin: If you take a move, you may then act with confidence to use it right now, which is very fun.

Sylvi: If you just type in the number on the Google sheets, uh, character sheet that we're using —

Austin: Mm-hm.

Sylvi: It'll just fill it in. That's very cute.

Austin: Ooh. We are using, by the way —

Dre: What do you mean?

Austin: An incredible Armour Astir sheet made by Eda Ales — you can find them at tinyurl.com/aaasheets. Uh, anyway, she gets away. Uh, she, you, you, she climbs up the rest of this hangar, uh, this hangar bay door, slips down the other side, and before it's open enough for you, either of you, to get through the door, uh, uh, you hear the sound of a, of a huge elevator engine, kind of powering on, and beginning to lower. Uh, uh, by the time the door's open enough for you to kind of peek in, and by the time your sight is back enough to where you can make

anything out, you can see that she is already quite a bit down this funicular elevator kind of shaft, this kind of angled elevator shaft, that has like a, a kind of open platform that serves as the elevator, right? It's not literally an elevator that you go in and you, like the doors close, you know what I mean? It's like, uh, it's like one of those things that you get to in a video game, and you have to fight like 30 guys as you go down or up this thing, you know what I'm talking about?

Dre: Mm-hm.

Keith: Yeah, yeah, yeah, yeah.

Ali: Mm-hm.

Austin: Funicular, yeah, one of those. And it, it slips even deeper down, you know, towards the mantle of Palisade. Uh, the rest of you make it up to this place? Or do you hold back? I would imagine everybody rejoins at the doorway? Or does anybody else want to do —

Dre: Yeah.

Austin: Anything as you pass through this, this battlefield?

Janine: I was kind of going to investigate, I was going to do the investigate thing.

Austin: Oh, that makes sense to me.

Janine: [chuckling] That option.

Austin: What's that, what's it look like as you're investigating all this stuff?

Janine: Uh, I think... I think for a normal person... I don't want to say it that way. I think for [chuckling] I think for someone who's in a more vulnerable position than Thisbe typically is, they would probably want to stay in their Altar. But I think she does the thing of like, I mean, she's always outside of Mow. [laughing] I forgot to mention —

Austin: Right, she like, she like climbs on Mow, right?

Janine: She's always got the — yeah, she's got, I described it in the past as like, one of the, uh, side saddles that women would use in the like, 18th and 19th century, where there's specifically like a little horn that you're supposed to hook your leg on. I think there's like, two horns.

Austin: Right.

Janine: Uh, and you sort of hook your leg on it like that to, to keep yourself on, uh, and it's like a thing like that. So she sort of hooks her leg on, and is sort of on his back. I think she hops down from there to sort of inspect, you know, on ground level, what was happening.

Austin: That sounds to me like you are Reading the Room, that, uh, that's the kind of classic Powered by the Apocalypse style, when you Read the Room to get insight into your situation. Uh, roll plus sense. What is your sense?

Janine: Okay. My sense is —

Austin: And also, actually, before you roll, what are your, what are your Hooks? Since you're acting.

Janine: [chuckles weakly]

Austin: Uh-huh.

Janine: Uh, my Hooks, uh, speaking of characters who are in a place...

Austin: Oh, no. Oh, no, I'm looking at them.

Keith: [chuckling]

Janine: My presence is a liability to my operants.

Austin: Eugh. Operants, of course, the Thisbe terminology for people who —

Janine: People who are worthy of, of...

Austin: Right.

Janine: Being in charge of her, essentially. Uh, I must strive at all times to demonstrate my utility.

Austin: Mmm.

Janine: And, fighting is not my purpose, but there's nowhere else for me until the fighting is over.

Austin: Cool, great. Love it.

Janine: Yep. And my sense is 1. [chuckles]

Austin: And your sense is, is plus-1. Okay. So that's 2D6 plus 1. Thisbe, you got a, you got a 1. So you can hold 1 here. Your hold lasts until you leave the current situation. You can ask, uh, who has the upper hand here, what is being overlooked or obscured here. Where do my Hooks pull me here, how does X really feel, what is X's approach, how is X at risk or in peril, and where can I find X?

Janine: Uh... I heard the one I wanted to do, and I forgot it.

Austin: Was it, what is being overlooked or obscured?

Janine: [chuckling] Yeah, yeah, yeah.

Austin: That one makes sense to me. As a note, you will roll with advantage when you act on the answers to what you've asked. Uh, I think you get pulled to the, the, uh, the mech that she was looking at, the machine that she was looking at. Uh, uh, and when you, uh, kind of go over and scan it and give it some quick analysis, I mean, one, you can see that, uh, she was like, there is a sort of, uh, uh, uh, residue from something she was working with, or from her directly, that has already begun to kind of grow a similar type of moss on this machine.

1:37:28.4 Uh, you know if it's like, she was exerting force, again, I don't know what your relationship has been with the folks from her culture and community and species and stuff.

Janine: I was, I was going to say, actually, I was going to focus more on Thisbe's relationship with moss.

Austin: Oh, interesting. What is your relationship with moss?

Janine: Thisbe knows plant stuff, Thisbe likes plant stuff, yeah.

Austin: Know plant stuff. Yeah, sure. Uh, this is, you don't — this is a new type of moss to you. It has grown very rapidly under your analysis. I'm guessing you're doing like a cool robot vision analysis of it, you know what I mean? Uh, and it's going to die off here momentarily, right? It will be here for the next 10 minutes, uh, and then because of the incredible lack of light, it will just die. Uh, it, this is something that is like a short-term residue that comes from whatever the, the, again —

Janine: So it like, maybe wasn't even intentional.

Austin: Exactly. Well, it —

Janine: It's like a footprint.

Austin: It's like a footprint, it's like a footprint, but it's, you'll note that like, most of the other places this woman ran were not covered in this stuff, right? So it seems like, it came from some sort of exertion, uh, not just like, oh, she was sweating, and wherever she sweats, moss grows. But there may have been like a literal, actual, like, ability type thing being used here. In fact, I'm just going to give you this part, which is like, she was digging around in this mech to remove some sort of, uh, neural transmission device, something that connected a pilot to the machine and had like a high data transfer, like, bandwidth, you know? The sort of thing where like, oh, if you wanted to jack someone's brain into a robot, you would use this, this part of like, the cockpit chassis. And that has been pulled out, and it's around that, that the moss has grown, right? Uh, so you don't know if she was using moss powers to like, better remove that, or to download something from it, or what. But that is your, your guess. Actually, you know, I just realized it. Uh, Hunt, on your crew, knows the deal with the moss people, right? Uh, Hunt is from here, Hunt is from the Shale Belt. Hunt probably has, maybe not a cousin, but like, knows someone who's connected to this, to this group of people. Hunt explains to you that the Twill, the thing that they do is like, bring people in, you know? The, the stories that you hear about the Twill, the thing that they do is like, bring people in. Uh, you know, the stories that you hear about the Twill is that they're really optimistic, and really willing to help people out. Uh, I think that they live on sunlight, sunlight and maybe water. They're like plant people, they're like moss people, uh, uh, but also, they like, help other people become moss people. Uh, I think they have connections to cultures from the Twilight Mirage, uh, I think they... I don't know. I don't really know anybody from there, but I'm pretty sure that the woman we saw must've been Twill. So, remember to take advantage, the next time you're acting on the answers to this. [chuckles] Uh, Phrygian and, uh, uh, I keep wanting to say Br-nine. And Brnine. Uh, are you two just heading straight up to the big hangar doors, the funicular doors?

Keith: Uh, yeah.

Austin: The Fun Fun Men doors? All right. Phrygian, hey, what are your, uh, what are your Hooks?

Keith: Yeah, uh, I have three Hooks. My first one is sort of a reciprocal one for Figure, which is nice. Figure is precarious — however they steady themselves, it must be on the side of Millennium Break.

Austin: Mm-hm. I love a two-way Hook, I love that you and Figure have this Hook on going both ways, it's good.

Keith: Yeah, I knew because Dre had told me yesterday that they were going to do one with Phrygian —

Austin: Okay.

Keith: So I was like, boom, I should also do one.

Austin: Yeah.

Dre: Teamwork.

Keith: Uh, success for Millennium Break means a reprieve for my home.

Austin: Interesting.

Keith: Uh, and I am a scientist who is meant to be researching a god, but instead I am fighting a war, which is a worse job.

Austin: [laughing] Okay. Yeah. Okay, yeah, fair enough.

Dre: Mm-hm.

Austin: Absolutely true. Absolutely true. Uh, and while we're here, Brnine, what are your Hooks?

Ali: Uh, yeah. My Hooks are, the crew put their faith in me, so I must prioritize their safety. Uh, my second Hook is, I will prove that Millennium Break can change lives. And my third Hook is a little bit of a borrowed Hook.

Austin: Oh, huh.

Ali: Uh, from something that I've acquired, a tool, a ship upgrade, a caged sentence, et cetera.

Austin: Uh...

Ali: That allows the carrier and its staff to operate far better than usual, but it does have a downside. One of those downsides is that it whispers in my ear. Change one of your Hooks to represent its demands.

Dre: Hm.

Austin: Excuse me?

Ali: [laughing]

Dre: Hmm.

Ali: And that demand is, verify the integrity of anyone you let on the ship.

Keith: What's the, what are the prerequisites of integrity?

Ali: [laughing]

Austin: Yeah, is this, do you like, what, are you doing like a, The Thing scan of somebody, or blood test? Are you doing an interview?

Ali: Well, so...

Sylvi: How much Kurt Russell is in here?

Austin: Yeah, exactly. [laughing]

Ali: Uh, so...

Austin: Do you have a questionnaire that people have to fill out before you let them on board?

Ali: So... the... thing that I have acquired is a Divine by the name of —

Austin: Oh my god.

Ali: Asepsis, you might have [chuckling] might remember this.

Austin: Ugh, you didn't get rid of it!

Ali: From the Partizan finale.

Austin: Ugh...

Ali: [laughing] And, Brnine, you know, just held onto this.

Austin: No...

Ali: They've developed a relationship, one hand washes the other.

Dre: Sure.

Ali: Asepsis adds a lot of benefits —

Keith: And what does Asepsis' hand do while your hand is washing it? [laughs]

Ali: [cracking up] Asepsis, uh, provides a lot of benefits to the Blue Channel, and, uh, in response, in exchange for that —

Austin: Mmm, mm-hm?

Ali: It's, it's, asking a very simple thing, which is just like, you know, you know, if you're going to have people come onto the ship that I'm also on, just make sure that they're on the up and up. [laughing]

Austin: Oh, just make sure they're like, pure enough to come on board. I'm Asepsis.

Ali: Yeah.

Austin: I'm the god of purity.

Ali: Yeah!

Austin: Good.

Janine: I, I have a problem, which is that... during Sangfielle —

Austin: Uh-huh?

Ali: [wheezes laughing]

Janine: With —

Austin: Wait, what happened in that?

Janine: With, uh, with Lyke's little friend — well, the problem is that I was always picturing, uh, oh god, what was their name?

Austin: Which —

Janine: Was that —

Ali, Austin, Keith and Dre: [in near unison] Aterika'Kaal.

Janine: Aterika'Kaal, yeah. I always pictured Aterika'Kaal as a Strabby from Bugsnax.

Austin: Mmm, mm-hm. Which is like a little living strawberry person. Like, like.. Not person.

Janine: Uh, which is a little... yeah, that like walks around. Because a strawberry's kind of like a rose bud, you know.

Austin: Yeah, sure.

Keith: Yeah.

Janine: Uh, but because this situation is so similar, I can only picture Asepsis as a bunch of Strabbys.

Ali: [laughing]

Keith: [chuckling]

Janine: Which is not.

Austin: But they can be like, they can be like a white straw — you know what I mean? Like a [laughing] moldy strawberry.

Janine: No, like a —

Sylvi: Ugh...

Janine: Like a pineberry, one of those strawberries that's white but tastes like pineapple.

Ali: Oh...

Austin: Is that real, is that —

Keith: I mean, I, I have no problem with this —

Janine: What if we eat Asepsis?

Austin: Don't eat Asepsis! [chuckling]

Dre: Yeah, that sounds bad.

Austin: Don't put Asepsis in you —

Janine: It can only be healthy for you!

Austin: Mmm...

Sylvi: It'll clean out your insides.

Ali: Uh...

Janine: Yeah.

Keith: I, I've got no problem with the Strabby's, except for the implicit idea that there's something similar between, uh, uh, Brnine and Lyke.

Austin: Yeah.

Ali: [laughing]

Austin: They're very different.

Keith: These are totally different situations.

Ali: [laughing]

Keith: One of them is, you know, sort of tension and dramatic irony, and one of them is that, Brnine sucks.

Austin: Oh my god.

Ali: Hello, excuse me.

Janine:Wow.

Keith: [laughing]

Janine:Damn.

Austin: Unbelievable. I, for one, always thought of Asepsis as looking kind of like the turrets from Portal, like that sort of like, white porcelain —

Janine:Yeah, that makes more sense than a strawberry.

Austin: Uh-huh. Well, you can kind of do both.

Ali: They're like, skittery little drones.

Austin: They're like skittery little drones —

Ali: Right?

Austin: And, don't you keep them in a terrarium on the ship?

Ali: Uh, so... [laughing]

Janine:Do you have to feed them when you go, when you go to the... uh, shit, I forgot the name of anything from Mass Effect.

Ali: [laughing]

Austin: [laughing]

Dre: The... the Normandy?

Ali: The Citadel.

Dre: That's the Citadel.

Janine:Citadel, that's what I was looking for.

Ali: Well, I didn't take the — I was on the fence, but I didn't take the benefit/crutch of, it is physically taxing and requires upkeep of some time being a burden. So I would have to like, address it every down time.

Austin: Yeah, you like lose a down time move, because you're busy feeding your Divine.

Ali: Uh, but it was so... [stammers defensively while laughing]

Austin: Wow.

Ali: At the end of Partizan...

Austin: What had happened was...

Ali: Broun had had Asepsis in like a little, like an aquarium, a 20-gallon fish tank or whatever —

Austin: Uh-huh?

Ali: Right? But I think that now that Brnine is on their own ship, they have sort of a loft bed situation, and below the loft is like a —

Austin: Unbelievable, you sleep above the Divine... Unbelievable.

Ali: An area for Asepsis. Yeah, like it's when you see — [laughing] like when someone keeps a rabbit not in a cage, but like lays out a little carpet for them.

Austin: Yeah. Yeah. Uh-huh.

Janine: I have a request of you, Ali. There's a game on Steam called Terraria Builder.

Ali: [chuckling]

Janine: And there's a free demo. I don't know if it would do the thing you need it to do. You might have to buy the game. But it's a thing, a thing to consider is, you should get Terraria Builder, and then show us —

Austin: Bill us.

Ali: [cackling]

Keith: Can I say what I always pictured Asepsis as?

Austin: Sure.

Keith: The flood backpack from Super Mario Sunshine.

Dre: Oh...

Sylvi: [laughing]

Ali: Okay. Okay.

Austin: Yeah. FLUDD.

Keith: Yes. Yeah.

Austin: I see what you're saying. Very funny.

Sylvi: That's the voice I'm going to picture now.

Keith: Courtesy of Professor Elvin Gadd, of course.

Austin: Of course, of course.

Dre: Sure.

Sylvi: [laughing]

Austin: The group of you have, uh, — so, first of all, you have found the elevator down to the Fundament. You believe that this will take you to where you need to go. Uh, do you communicate that back to Gucci, Brnine?

Ali: Uh, yeah, definitely. If she's expecting a call from me, I would be calling Gucci right now.

Austin: Yeah. I mean, I think it's probably worth saying really quick that like, this is kind of the way this goes with y'all sometimes, uh, as the guerrilla subtype, you often get sent out to like, as a party you're the guerrilla subtype, you get sent out to like, go sabotage things, and sometimes you're not even told why. And so, I think that happens kind of a lot. And I don't know if it's annoying. It would annoy me, to be told, go to this place and then call me after you get there, without necessarily knowing what you're doing. But, yeah, I think she expects that call. So, you

call her up. I guess you have some sort of like, special secret radio where you can contact HQ on the ship.

Ali: Mm-hm. I have my antenna.

Austin: Oh, you do have our antenna, sure. Of course.

Ali: [chuckling]

Austin: It's functional.

Ali: It's lighting up, yeah.

Austin: Okay, perfect. And I think Gucci's also very like, no real names on calls. And so [chuckling] but it doesn't stop her from just saying the name of your ship, so she just goes —

Austin (as Gucci): Blue Channel, come in.

Ali (as Brnine): Uh, here.

Austin: Actually, you called her, so she wouldn't say Blue Channel, come in, right?

Ali: [laughing] Well, maybe she would like, this is the fucked up thing, right? Because she would see it like on her caller ID, right?

Austin: Oh, you're right. Yeah, uh-huh. And that's super Gucci to me.

Ali: [laughing]

Austin: She goes —

Austin (as Gucci): Report status.

Ali (as Brnine): We have located, uh, well, we haven't found the node yet, right? But we've found the warehouse and we're about to go in.

Austin (as Gucci): All right. Can you confirm that, that the team is undetected at this point?

Ali (as Brnine): [breathes in through teeth] Well, sure. There was a little bit of an issue. We, there, there was somebody entering the warehouse before us.

Austin (as Gucci): Were they Bilats?

Ali (as Brnine): No, no, no, no. Definitely not Bilats. From Palisade. Uh, Hunting said that they were with the Twill?

Austin (as Gucci): The Twill. Uh, one second.

Austin: And you get like a [beeping noises] bee-doo-beep-boo. And you get like paused for a second, you get put on hold.

Ali: [laughing] My antenna is doing one of those like RBG sleep mode, like snore...

Austin: Uh-huh, yeah. Yeah.

Janine:[laughing]

Ali: Effects [laughing]

Austin: Unbelievable. Anyway, she comes back on, and she's like —

Austin (as Gucci): Uh, Blue Channel, confirm Twill?

Ali (as Brnine): Confirmed. I just said this.

Austin (as Gucci): Listen... there's a — it's not all me anymore, okay? We have a whole system, it's not just —

Ali (as Brnine): All right, all right, all right. I'm sorry.

Austin (as Gucci): Confirm Twill.

Ali (as Brnine): Confirmed.

Austin (as Gucci): We have a secondary objective — I know I haven't explained your primary one yet, so let's start there. When you descend to the Fundament node, uh, we are, we're sending over 7 rail lines that need to be switched. It's a simple logistics program. Insert it, run it. To confirm, it will, it will move some resource shipments onto

lines where we, uh, have troops ready to, uh, obtain the resources for our use. Simply load the program into the node, the rail lines will switch over, and we will have access to resources to, to support us for the next month. Confirm?

1:51:21.5

Ali (as Brnine): Confirmed, sounds good.

Austin (as Gucci): Secondary objective — we believe those Twill have been recently moved off of their home in Greenfield. Uh, you are to offer them replacement — we believe your ship will be big enough to carry a number of them to safety. Confirm?

Ali (as Brnine): Uh, yeah. Yeah, confirmed.

Austin (as Gucci): Confirmed. Thanks for your hard work, Blue Channel.

Ali (as Brnine): [cheery] Always a pleasure, ma'am.

Austin (as Gucci): [exhausted] Don't call me ma'am, Blue Channel. Confirm?

Ali (as Brnine): [miffed] Confirm! My bad.

Austin: [laughing] click! Okay. Uh... so, you have to move down this funicular, uh, uh, and I guess in plain English, put in some codes into the Fundament node that will redirect some train lines such that some Bilateral shipments get intercepted and ambushed by, uh, by Cause forces who are already in place. Uh, and then, I guess load some Twill up if they want to leave wherever they are now, and bring them out. I guess we'll see how that goes.

Ali: Yeah, sounds good. I guess like, if we're going down this elevator, Brnine's impulse would be, I think like, it would be like, leave the crew and the Blue Channel at the top of the elevator —

Austin: Yes.

Ali: While we go down.

Austin: Yeah, the Blue Channel will not fit on this elevator, on this funicular —

Ali: Sure.

Austin: It's too big to get through. Uh, you could like, you could just squeeze it into the hangar, but you couldn't angle it such that it goes down the, the...

Ali: I, well, yeah. I think just like, for like, tactical sense, like, having someone watch the door —

Austin: Mm-hm.

Ali: Is going to help us.

Austin: Yeah, that makes sense.

Ali: And leaving our spaceship there with a big sniper on it, in this warehouse.

Austin: So you're going to leave the... your crew will stay with the, with the ship then. Okay.

Ali: I think so, yeah. I think, we can still communicate via comms or whatever, yeah.

Austin: Yeah, yeah, yeah. Yeah. I imagine Routine has now just set up shop at the like, back, like you said before, the back, like the cargo bay of the Blue Channel, with a sniper rifle, and is just looking out for any movement coming from behind, where you came from.

Keith: Uh...

Austin: Mm-hm?

Keith: Real quick, uh, uh, Phrygian is also playing a support class. I don't get a little entourage because I'm not the captain, correct? That's the —

Austin: That's correct, you don't get a — yeah, yeah, yeah. Yes. The captain, the ship gets an entourage, is the actual thing.

Keith: Right. I can add an entourage guy, if I took the move.

Austin: You, you could, as a support, you could have given the ship an even higher crew score, I think.

Keith: Yeah.

Austin: Though actually, it might already be maxed, at this point.

Ali: I... think so.

Keith: Oh, okay.

Austin: At 3. I don't remember if it can go to 4. I would guess it can't.

Keith: Most of this stuff is maxed at 3.

Austin: Yeah, that's my suspicion. Uh...

Ali: I also do just want to say, I'll probably [laughing] edit this, but this is an important thing for Keith. The quarters is like a game thing that everybody can use during the down time, and not a special place to describe your bedroom, which is what I also thought it was. [laughing]

Dre: Mmm.

Keith: Oh, no. Mine isn't describe my bedroom. Mine describes that I become a bedroom —

Ali: Oh, okay. Sure sure sure.

Keith: Set, that people can —

Sylvi: Oh, cool.

Keith: Yes.

Austin: And a modest library.

Ali: And people can enjoy it [laughing]

Keith: And a modest library, yeah.

Janine: Wait, what?

Keith: Anyone is free to enjoy...

Janine: A bedroom that people can what? I need to know.

Keith: Do whatever. There's a breakfast nook —

Austin: [cackling]

Keith: There's a bookshelf. [laughing]

Austin: You can't —

Sylvi: Hell yeah, man.

Ali: [laughing] the Midnight

Sylvi: Hell yeah, man.

Janine: Good.

Ali: Sunset fanfic, inside of Phrygian. [continues laughing]

Janine: Oh god.

Dre: Oh, boy.

Keith: On top of, around, whatever —

Austin: On top of!?

Keith: I mean, I don't know.

Sylvi: Damn.

Keith: Yeah, within —

Dre: Oh yeah. I'm sure who's on top is a very important part of that fanfic, bud.

Sylvi: [laughing]

Austin: No one does it like us, I just want to say.

Everyone: [laughing]

Sylvi: Also, I feel like, I feel like that's easy to figure out.

Austin: Sorry we don't have a tactical map, but... no other show has a character who can become a bedroom you can fuck in. So...

Ali: [wheezes]

Dre: [chuckling]

Austin: That's probably not true. Someone else is probably doing it harder than us, I'll be honest.

Dre: Yeah, that's in Transformers, I'm pretty sure.

Austin: [laughing] God. Transformers, I don't go here.

Keith: Well, let's claim —

Austin: I don't know [unintelligible] Transformers, but Transformers seems truly next-level these days.

Ali: Uh-huh...

Sylvi: I, I have distinct memories of, over a decade ago, my friend, my dear friend Mike finding bad Transformers fan fiction that had this basically happen —

Austin: Shoutouts.

Sylvi: Uh, with R2D2 and Optimus Prime.

Austin: Oh, my fucking god.

Janine:What?

Ali: What...

Austin: They could make it work.

Sylvi: I think so.

Keith: But, but did, did they transform into a bed? Or were they just robots?

Janine:R2D2 can't transform.

Sylvi: No, I don't know how much I should get into, honestly, on the show.

Ali: [laughing]

Sylvi: We're already pushing it.

Austin: Okay. We're going to move on.

Keith: I just meant you could have cereal there, if you wanted, is what I meant.

Austin: In the bedroom?

Keith: There's a breakfast nook!

Dre: Yeah, yeah.

Austin: Oh, there's a breakfast nook. That's nice.

Dre: It's important.

Janine: So this is a studio apartment, you turn into a studio apartment.

Keith: It's a, it's a, yes, it's a studio apartment, yes.

Janine: [chuckling] Okay...

Austin: I, I mean — here's the thing. The Blue Channel did not have a studio apartment in it before. This is serving a social function. Like —

Keith: Yeah.

Austin: You know, sometimes you want to go hang out in the studio apartment. I live in a studio apartment. It's nice to be here, you know?

Keith: Everyone desires to, to take a nap in a weird bed. Right? Like a hotel room, or like, you know, you go to an airbnb or whatever.

Austin: Yeah, yeah, yeah.

Keith: Everyone loves spending a night in a bed that's not their normal bed. I think that's a nearly universal —

Austin: [laughing] That's one of the services we offer here aboard the Blue Channel.

Keith: The Blue Channel has an extra bed, that anyone can use —

Austin: And it can change. You can presumably change the bed from day to day.

Keith: Yeah.

Austin: Because it's you.

Keith: It's like a mood ring.

Austin: Oh, interesting.

Keith: The genres on the bookshelf change.

Austin: That's fun.

Keith: Oh, don't catch me on a nonfiction day.

Ali: [laughing]

Keith: Oh, do not — you do not want to mess with Phrygian when those shelves are stocked with like, biographies. Eugh.

Austin: Bad. Bad mood, I gotcha. Anyway... it is going to be about an hour before this elevator returns. You know that because there is an old digital sign that updates the like, uh, funicular return ETA. And you can just hear it, continuing to slowly go down this huge elevator shaft.

Keith: How — what kind of distance can it do, in an hour?

Austin: Uh, it's moving very slowly.

Keith: Is it that this thing is unbelievably deep? Or is it, yeah, this thing is just slow.

Austin: So it's deep, and it's going at a diagonal. Longitudinally, not just up and down, right?

Keith: So this is like if I took the commuter rail to Boston, from Providence.

Austin: Right. I imagine Palisade is like the size of Mars, which is to say, smaller than Earth, but not — but still a planet, right? Bigger than Partizan was. Though, I am probably on record saying that Partizan is as big as Mars too, right? Who the fuck knows what I've said. Don't hold me to anything. Uh, uh, but, yeah. So it's going to be a little bit. Is anybody — how do you kill time? What do you do to kill time here, as you dungeon delve?

Dre: I mean, do we have to wait for this elevator? Can't we just go into the shaft?

Austin: You totally, you totally could.

Dre: I mean, is it big enough for —

Austin: That seems a little dangerous, but —

Dre: Our mechs to fit into?

Austin: I would say it's big enough for, I would say it's big enough for three mechs to stand like, side by side, and so that means you can totally put —

Keith: So we can go one after the other, yeah.

Austin: One at a time, yeah, wouldn't be a big deal.

Dre: Okay.

Keith: Boom, shaft it. Yep.

Austin: So, how do we want to... I guess to me, this is a defy danger. But also, I guess, Brnine, you're going with them?

Ali: Uh, that's good question. I, uh... I mean, if you think that I could still communicate, and use my, like... in-command moves despite the distance?

Austin: I think it would be tough to use your in-command moves here. Not to like, immediately pull you out of the place where you're the strongest. Uh, uh, the question would be, so, to explain a little bit, Brnine, you are the Captain, and your moves, generally speaking, are about using the ship and the crew, and the stuff that the ship and the crew have, right? Uh, I think you could probably still use tactical genius, which is, when you're supervising allies from afar during a sortie, you can leverage your tactical know-how into better positioning, which you talked about this before. That would have to be, it would have to be fictionally appropriate, right? So you would have to explain something to somebody that would help them remove a risk. You couldn't give them cover fire, for instance, right? Or, maybe you could give them covering fire as they go down the shaft, or help, you know, keep them, you know, wired to the ship as like a, almost like a bungee cord, or like a climbing cable. That you could do during the shaft.

Ali: Yeah.

Austin: But once you get to the bottom of the shaft, anything on the ship is going to be too far away from it, probably.

Ali: Okay, sure. Yeah, it's a, it's a — so, the thing with the Captain is that it's also a support class, so I specifically don't have an Altar. I do think that there might be, there might be some benefit as a character, like either hopping a ride in someone's cockpit, or doing the thing of like, staying behind them, like you said, of like sliding down one of those cables or whatever —

Austin: Mm-hm.

Ali: Like behind the group. Uh, but it would make me super vulnerable. [chuckles] Uh...

Austin: Up to you. And, who knows. Maybe you can get down there and find another way for the ship to come down, that could be a thing that you could prioritize, you know what I mean? Is there a route that you could open up for the ship to get down here differently? But, yeah, I want to follow the fiction here a little bit, which is like, it's not big enough for the ship to go down, you know?

Ali: Yeah, not at all. Yeah, and I just don't think that I would risk that. Uh, I mean I'm a character who rights, who, who wears a flight suit and a captain's jacket.

Austin: Yes, okay.

Ali: So I think that I should put my little goggles on, strap myself up to a big, big, big cable —

Austin: Who's carrying — okay, so you're going to like, ride the cable down.

Ali: I think so, yeah.

Austin: Like a cool video game character. All right.

Ali: Yeah.

Austin: Uh...

Keith: Snake Pliskin, maybe.

Dre: [laughing]

Austin: Snake Pliskin would do this, honestly.

Ali: Hm.

Austin: Uh, how do we do... uh, what's the... what is the... is there a group roll? Yes, there is. Group moves. When everybody is performing the same move, like all Weathering the Storm to get away from a big blast of magic, or if multiple people want to help out with something, since usually only one person can Help Or Hinder a move, you should instead make it a group move. When performing a group move, the person participating with the lowest relevant trait makes the roll, but anybody participating counts as doing so. Thus, any bonuses to rolls they have, like advantage or hold they can spend apply to the group move. A chain is only as strong as its weakest link, but good teamwork can shore up any weakness.

2:02:23.3 Everyone participating in the group move may advance gravity clocks with the other participants if they have one. We have not talked about gravity clocks, but, a gravity clock is, uh, are things that you can have with other people that are a lot more short-term and change and grow. They're like connections or bonds from previous games, than Hooks, right? Hooks are kind of like, here's the big plots I want to follow with my character. Gravity clocks are like, here's my relationship with this person or this group, here's how it's growing and changing. Uh, feel free to start those when it feels like an appropriate time to do it. We can also do that between sessions, and at the end of sessions and everything else. For now, though, I think this is probably Weathering the Storm with defy. Uh, uh, as you try to like, carefully move down this angled elevator shaft, setting up a cable for, for Brnine to kind of ride down, and doing all of this as a group. Who has the lowest defy?

Keith: So, I definitely don't have the lowest defy. I have 2.

Austin: Mmm.

Sylvi: I also have 2.

Dre: I have one.

Ali: I have one.

Dre: Okay.

Janine: I have 0.

Ali: Thisbe!

Austin: Does anybody have a thing they want —

Janine: Yeah, Thisbe, very classically a defiant character.

Ali: [laughing] Well, you, you're impressive. You're out and about, you're fighting people.

Austin: Well —

Janine: That's called clash!

Ali: Oh, sure.

Austin: And it's very-and Thisbe's clash is very good.

Janine: Which is plus-2.

Austin: Uh-huh.

Ali: [laughing]

Janine: So, yeah.

Austin: Uh, Thisbe, you're going to roll this. And I guess this is a time where I should ask you, if — what you're bringing with you from your starting modules? Because your class has a special move called burn bright.

Janine: Right, I... I forgot about that. Uh...

Austin: Burn bright, for people listening, is — a spark in your core has awakened magic within your frame, which, we'll talk more about magic as things continue, giving you the volition to see the world beyond the purpose you were built for — a thing that I think Thisbe's actually kind of struggling with. Uh, pick a core like you would for an Astir, and you've picked the alchemical core, and the arcane approach, and one of the approaches available to it. Uh, you use that approach while fighting on foot. The brilliant charge running through your form can be used to power various tools and modifications. At the start of a sortie, you may install a number of these

modules into your form. So, I think that is... I forget what the number comes from. How many is it? Oh, for each module you've installed, you lower your channel by 1 down to a minimum of 0. You start with 3 channel. So, you would, you could put up to three of these in, but it would drop your channel to 0, right?

Janine: Yeah. Uh... also, do I have to, like, do a special thing to uninstall these after I've picked them?

Austin: No, nope. Every... at the beginning of every sortie, you can switch them up. That's kind of the thing that makes them good, you know?

Janine: Uh... yeah, uh... hm.

Austin: While you're figuring this out, also, if anybody else has a move that might make this easier...

Keith: Uh, I've got something, potentially.

Austin: Yeah?

Keith: Potentially, yeah. So, as, uh, the Miscreated, my starting move is the beast within, which gives me, uh, ascendant upgrades when I'm transformed into big mode.

Austin: Mm-hm.

Keith: Uh, and one of those is, adapted ascendant. Your ascendant is well-adapted to different environments. Your ascendant gains either the aerial or aquatic tags —

Austin: Mmm.

Keith: And I have picked aerial.

Austin: Okay.

Keith: So, uh, Phrygian can fly.

Austin: Interesting. Fun. You, you need to roll to actually power this on though, right? I, you know what? Let's just say you already rolled it at the beginning of this thing. There's no way you wouldn't have been in this mode while we were moving before.

Keith: Yeah, that's sort of what I had figured.

Austin: I'll, I'll just say, let's just assume that you've done that, and you are — let's assume that you had rolled a 10 but have spent one hold by now. So let's just put you at 2 hold.

Keith: Give me 2.

Austin: Yeah, does that make sense?

Keith: Sure. Yep.

Austin: Okay, cool. And I would say that that helps, that, that might help make this a little bit easier. Does anybody else have something that's a thing that might make this easier for the roll, that might improve the roll?

Sylvi: I don't think I have anything.

Dre: Yeah, I don't think I do, either.

Austin: Uh, I guess, between you, Phrygian, being made of cables, and being able to fly, I'm going to say that this gives the entire effort advantage. So —

Keith: Yeah.

Austin: Thisbe, when you roll, you'll roll 3D — you'll roll with advantage. There should be a little button that says roll. Have y'all been using that, or have you just been rolling 2D6?

Janine: I've just been rolling 2D6.

Austin: Well, in this case, roll 3D6. And, uh, we'll take highest, basically. Uh, all right. Thisbe, have you figured out your things, and will they affect this roll in any way?

Janine: Uh, I actually have a... [laughing] uh, oh, wait. That's for, okay. I have to pick a, I realized I have, one of the things I forgot to do with my sheet is that I have input channel, but I have to pick a move that associates with, don't I?

Austin: You do, yes. Yeah.

Janine: That's not just like a — yeah. Which I haven't done yet.

Austin: Yeah, mm-hm.

Janine: Uh, [chuckles] because I don't have that many moves to pick.

Austin: Uh, I would imagine that would actually pick from your basic moves, is what that's for, generally speaking. Because those are the ones you're going to be rolling the most, right? So like, you'd be able to roll, if you wanted to roll, Dispel Uncertainties with channel instead of know, if you wanted to roll, you know, uh, Strike Decisively with channel, you know, that style of thing, you know? You could also, I think, choose one of your other moves, your personal moves, but, uh...

Janine: I don't have any of those, though. Other than the ones where, yeah.

Austin: Yeah, I don't think you have any of those that have, that have rolls involved, you know?

Janine: A roll associated, no, I don't have any [chuckling] roll-associated moves at all right now, other than...

Austin: Mm-hm.

Janine: Yeah. Uh... I need to think about that, then. Uh, I, okay. I think I'll just, I'm actually just going to take this propulsion suite, which gives me aerial, because that sounded good.

Austin: Yeah, that's useful. Yep. Cool. Uh, then go ahead and, uh, roll with advantage, between you and, uh, Phrygian. Not so hard to hopefully get down this place. Miserable. Unbelievable. Unbelievable. Does anybody, can we aid and interfere on a group thing? Let's find out. Uh... group moves. Uh, ba ba ba ba. If multiple people want to help out with something, da-da-da... no, yeah, it's a group move. This is, this is... this is a mark, what was it called? Not show time?

Dre: Spotlight.

Keith: Yeah, spotlight.

Austin: Yeah, mark spotlight.

Keith: 7 isn't a failure, though.

Dre: Oh, do we all mark it?

Austin: Everybody marks it. This is a group move.

Dre: Okay, nice.

Austin: You've all failed. Uh, this isn't a 7, it's a 6, Keith, you take highest, which in this case, is a unfortunate.

Keith: Oh, right, it's — right, oh yeah, of course.

Austin: Uh-huh.

Keith: Well, hold on. So, I do have, I do have, you know, I just want to advocate for ourselves here. We had, uh, rolling with advantage even before...

Austin: You did —

Keith: Janine took the aerial thing.

Austin: I don't think — I don't think —

Keith: You don't think we can also roll with confidence?

Austin: No, confidence is like a very regimented thing in Armour Astir —

Keith: Okay.

Austin: It's not, it's not like, just another bonus the GM gives out. Uh, it tends to be tied to a couple of different things. One is moves. You'll find moves that say, give so and so confidence, or act in confidence when. A big one is the support, uh, B plot move, has the thing where you can give other, other allies confidence. Uh, but the biggest one is probably approaches, uh, as a reminder, Armour Astir has 5 different magic approaches, that the pilots, the channelers can use. And each of those is weak to one thing and strong to another thing. And if it's weak to it, you have to act in desperation, and if it's strong against it, you can act in confidence. So for instance, arcane, uh, stuff, is, you act in confidence using arcane against Divine, right? But arcane acts in desperation against mundane. In our cases, arcane is like Columnar tech, or if you can think about, from Partizan, the Memoria stuff, that the Hypha in the forest used? That's arcane in our setting. Uh, so that stuff's good against Divines. Uh, uh, against Divine-infused magic. Uh, uh, so, to be clear, though, you know, I think the thing you're pointing out is, you do

have these two aerial bonuses, that should give you something. And it does, and the thing that it gives you is a reduction in the harm, right? Like a lot of PBTA games, Armour Astir is a, if you fail a roll, the GM makes a move as hard as they want. And instead of this being the second-tier danger of peril, which is something that you can only really fix during down times, I think this is only a risk, uh, which you can address in the middle of a situation, just by getting rid of it. So, for example, Cori and Figure, you should get rid of your blinded at this point, or whatever you wrote down for them. Because at this point, your sensors have recovered, your eyes are recovered, you're not permanently affected by this, or affected in the long term. And so that's what this is. This is, this is — you're about to take a risk. Because I think, you know, getting down the funicular went pretty good.

2:12:06.8 You had two people who could, who could fly in their mechs, or by themselves, I guess. And, uh, you had — or, you know, hover, or whatever, however you want to read aerial. And then, you and then, you know, you had other, other people who seem to be able to get through the space just fine with their help. But as you move down the elevator shaft, things get darker and darker. The little blue purple line of the sky above faded away entirely a little while ago, and now that dark seems to consume sound itself, as well. I think that's when you realize what exactly you're approaching. You may recall that magic exists in this world, now. We've talked about this a little bit, and we've said the word a few times. In Armour Astir's terminology, Altars, uh, and pilots, channelers each have an approach tied to your source of magical power. For instance, Coriolis, both you and your Chariot Mark II have a Divine approach, as you channel the power of Devotion through yourself and your machine. Figure, you and your Altar do the same thing with the energy of Perennial, which of course is gifted to you by the Witch in Glass. So that's the Profane approach.

2:13:17.0 Sometimes an Altar and a pilot will have different approaches. Like, Thisbe, you currently wield arcane power, but Mow, who is as mundane as they come, is mundane, as approach. And as I was just saying, these approaches exist in a sort of circle of power. Each one is strong against one other approach, and weak against another one. Uh, and that's all great. I love that, that's really good on the page. I think it's really cool in the dice and the effects and stuff. But it doesn't make magic mundane, one of the goals we stated at the beginning. And so I want to give one more detail for how magic and a particular type of magic feels.

[MUSIC - "[On the Approach](#)" by Jack de Quidt begins]

There is something about the way the Principality — the Bilats and the Pact both, built their Altars, how they enchanted their pilots, how they wield this new power of Kalmeria, that marks them, and it makes them impossible, or nearly impossible to hide. Whenever they use this magical power, whenever it's drawn on, whether it's in combat, or moving at really high speeds, or using special abilities... it shifts senses, it emits something into the world, it bends reality. Uh, each approach in a different way. So, for instance, it's not just that sound is, is becoming muted as you get deeper into the earth, or that your comms are being interfered with. Your words are being swallowed by the air as you speak them, and you know that that sort of muffling, that diminishment, is a side effect of Kesh's unique brand of magic. It's an approach called mundane by Armour Astir, but I think of it as like a weaponized absence — alchemical nullification, void magic, that type of thing.

2:15:07.3 Uh, and you know intellectually that the Altars of the Frontier Syndicate, much like Stel Columnar's use arcane magic. But what your sense memory tells you is that, whenever Exanceaster March shows up, or his forces are around, your vision gets strange. You get more floaters in your eyes, or your sight becomes darker, or you get these, like, migraine auras. Things become bright and painful, or you might see sun dogs, those are parhelions, the arcs of light, where there aren't actually. And when Nideo's Altars march into combat, they do so blessed by a Divine aroma, like luxurious incense, or freshly cut wood, or by a stench, like the smell of burning plastic, or rotten food, or a sealine spoiled by an oil spill. Here on Palisade, though, it is rare that you feel any more than one or two of these together at the same time. The Frontier Syndicate and Kesh and Nideo are all allied, but they do operate as distinct divisions of the Bilateral Intercession. And so, when you sense all three of these magical telegraphs at once, across sight and sound and smell, it means that they have, for this moment at least, put their particular goals aside, to work together towards something important. And it's that moment of realization that I need you all to take a risk, however you want to represent it. In this case, you need a little bit more. It's not soon after this wave of senses that hit you, that you can confirm what you feel is true: the wide hangar doors at the bottom of the funicular open, and in front of you is like a living tapestry, it's like a vertical tableau. You're on a hill, looking down on an impossibly green valley, home to a small village, lit with dappled daylight by an impossible arrangement of large mirrors and lenses affixed to the sides of this impossibly tall manmade canyon.

2:17:10.6 And opposite your hill, on the other side of the village, on a different hill, there is a group of 4 Bilateral mechs, the ones that you felt, coming down that hill towards the village, while fighting what I can only describe as... what if a knife was a dragon?

Dre: Mmm!

Sylvi: Hell yeah!

["On the Approach" concludes]

Keith: Sorry, what if a — if a knife was a dragon?

Austin: Yeah, what if a knife were a dragon? What if there was a knife —

Dre: Sure.

Keith: Uh, is it like those...

Ali: Say more...

Austin: Well, you know, it could also be, what if a dragon was a bunch of knives, right?

Keith: Oh, okay. So it's not like one of those extremely dangerous ribbon swords, have you seen those?

Austin: Ribbon swords...

Dre: Oh yeah, those are fucked up.

Keith: They're, the — where the metal is super-thin and razor sharp, and —

Austin: Oh, yeah, yeah, yeah, no.

Keith: Like, can coil, and whip —

Austin: Yeah, yeah, yeah. Now, that, and imagine that's like the wings of dragon. Are you talking about —

Keith: Yeah.

Austin: I'm going to drop this image in here. Are you talking about an urumi?

Keith: Yes, an urumi, yes, yeah.

Austin: One of these? I guess, this is a person holding two of these.

Janine: Oh god.

Ali: [unintelligible]

Austin: Yeah, these are sick.

Sylvi: That's so sick.

Keith: They have versions that are thicker but only one. These are... outrageously dangerous.

Austin: Yeah, I bet! Now imagine it could [chuckling] could fly.

Keith: Sure, yeah. And it didn't have an arm that it could accidentally cut off.

Janine: Do you know the Pokemon Rayquaza?

Austin: I know the name... yes. Oh, yes, sure. Rayquaza, I've looked up Rayquaza.

Keith: Uh, this is the other thing, this is called an ara.

Austin: These are all so scary. Including the Rayquaza. Yeah, sure. 100 percent, Janine. I could imagine this, but sharper, uh, and has more of these... it has, it is both made of the sort of ribbon-like blades that Keith linked.

Janine: Ooh!

Austin: Uh-huh?

Janine: I found, I — this is... oh, shit. Is there a real mega-Rayquaza, or is this a fan mega-Rayquaza?

Austin: There's a mega-Rayquaza?

Keith: There's a mega-Rayquaza, yeah.

Janine: Because mega-Rayquaza is... yeah, this is the thing.

Austin: There it is. I mean, I think there's even more of the ribbons than this. In fact, part of what you're seeing, as this fight begins to kind of move its way towards this village is that, the, some of the Altars that are fighting this thing are having their weapons clank off of it. It's doing these kind of sweeping runs, sometimes it lands and like, lashes out with a tail at them, and, uh, uh, sometimes they're able to climb on top of it. Uh, the... I guess, Brnine, your [chuckling] scouter was able to quickly identify them. You know exactly what these are. Uh, the —

Keith: What's their power level, real quick?

Ali: [giggling]

Austin: Uh, very high. In fact, uh, I mean, you know this, because the power levels in this game work according to tier. [chuckling] Uh, so, the short answer is, there are four enemy mechs, and one is tier 2, and the other three are tier 3, which is the same tier that you are. The slightly longer answer is that the smallest one, the tier 2 one in the rear is called a Gueridon — Frontier Syndicate designs are named after like, surfaces, things you can put other things on. So, the first Altar, uh, is a Frontier design. They have other names similar to that. Uh, and a Gueridon is literally like, what if a side table was a siege tower? Uh, it's an armored infantry carrier. And it has like, four legs, the little swoop up at the bottom, and a sort of bubble dome shield, and the kind of base of it, above the — really tall four legs, is sort of like the top of a castle tower, like a Rook, armored — you know, a Rook chess piece. And it has like portholes that people are firing weapons out of, and the weapons have been enchanted and powered up. Uh, Frontier Syndicate mechs tend to be very focused on like, little extensions off of a core frame.

2:21:13.3 And in this case, it is literally a bunch of little guys. The second type is a Kesh design. Those are called Hauberks, or it's called a Hauberk. Kesh mechs this season are named after various pieces of armor. This one is tier 3, and my notes describe it as, quote, “a lanky armored knight, sort of like the dancer of Boreal Valley from Dark Souls 3, except wielding long, whip-like chains and painted with garish colors, like a tournament knight or mid-century mod.” Quote, “also, it has a thick, motorized unicycle tire instead of legs.” Uh, Kesh designs are sort of meant to be big, vibrant weirdos with particular niches that they fill in extreme, individualized ways. Uh, and finally, and maybe thematically most interesting, are a pair of, uh, big, thick Nideo Altars called Ploughs. Nideo mechs tend to have abilities that buff their allies. That's sort of their mechanical theme. And they're named after like, gardening or agricultural

tools. Uh, because they sort of dress their settler colonial efforts in this twisted version of like, care and ecology politics.

2:22:24.3 Uh, you know, let me just twist the knife a little bit. I think one of the new Gur Sevraq's most famous sermons is about how the galaxy in general, and Palisade specifically, isn't meant to be a jungle, or an overgrown field, it's meant to be a garden, you know? It's well-groomed, it's supposed to be maintained. You're supposed to attend to the world. You're supposed to manage it, and bring the best out of it, with your Divine gifts, or your noble education, or your good morals. Those are the people, that, that, uh, uh, you know, are supposed to make up the Bilateral Intercession's outreach into the world, people who, who can make it a better place to live in.

And so the Plough is kind of emblematic of that. It is a sort of obscene maroon and black and gold statue, kind of, it looks kind of like a Baroque statue of a big, muscular worker. It has a kind of a big halo behind its head, and a stained-glass cockpit in its chest, which, which the glass kind of has like the galaxy on it. There's like a red circle that's like, Partizan in the middle of the galaxy, surrounded by all these panes of colored glass of a bunch of different colors. And it wields both the sort of big, like, arbalest, like a giant crossbow that can shoot these kind of like, harpoons with lines behind them, and it also has a sort of bulldozer-sized like, digging claw, or shovel or scoop. And it can use them both to set up new Nideo installations and bases and, you know, civilian settlements. Lots of, lots of Nideo citizen settlers here on Palisade. We'll talk about that in the faction turn, I suspect. But it can also use its weapons to tear down so-called neglected places, or to fight anybody who tries to stop them. So, it's kind of the poster child of this idea that the soldier and the settler are like, two sides of the same coin.

So, again, high-level — one siege-like, sorry, one table-like siege tower, one garishly-colored lanky unicycle mech, uh, with fucked-up chain whips, two of these soldier-settler Baroque statue guys, and they're all in combat with a tier 4 knife dragon, or like a bladed wyrm or wyvern thing. I don't remember my wyrm/wyvern divide. And they're all hurtling — the combat, the battle is hurtling towards this Twill village at the center of the valley, lit by all these, again, these kind of lenses, and mirrors that are kind of climbing the walls of the various manmade canyons here. And to make all that messier, uh, when you can pull your eyes away, or sensors away from what's happening down below and across the valley on the other hill, you can see to the north, uh, you know, I'm imagining you looking east to west, but then north, across one of the walls of

the Diadem, written in a huge, industrial typeface, like something out of Control, it says
Fundament Node Access.

2:25:16.7 Which is, of course, your target. So, uh, what do you do?

Keith: I mean, I know of... I know one really good way to get those robots to stop advancing on this town. Uh, so, I mean if someone wants to simultaneously try and evacuate this town while I try to kill the robots...

Sylvi: I mean, my first Tenet sure is very clear about this sort of thing for me.

Austin: Mm-hm.

Sylvi: So I think I got to rush in there.

Keith: But your second one, remind me, says something about impunity. [chuckling]

Sylvi: Yeah, but I don't know necessarily if these guys are adversaries of Devotion.

Austin: Right.

Sylvi: I do know there's an innocent village getting attacked.

Keith: You don't if those villages — if that village is, uh, uh, —

Dre: Innocent?

Keith: Well, Devotion, the Devotion thing seems like a big part of what counts as innocent.

Ali: [giggling]

Sylvi: Meh.

Austin: I will note here, you have a move called Tenets. We've already read what those are. Instead of Hooks, you read three Tenets. They represent your deity's will. When you break or lose faith in the Tenet, your deity will ask something of you. Roll plus channel with desperation until you resolve this. Once you have, take an advancement and replace that Tenet with a Hook, representing how your faith has changed or grown. If you refuse to resolve it, in a way that

angers or disappoints the Divine, reduce your channel by one permanently. If your channel reaches 0 in this way, immediately change playbooks and take an additional advancement. Uh...

Dre: Nuts.

Austin: Yeah, mm-hm. Yeah, okay. So, who's doing what?

Sylvi: I am trying to get in between the combatants and the village.

Austin: Okay.

Sylvi: Uh...

Austin: Just, you're just charging in.

Sylvi: Just, pretty much, yeah. Uh...

Austin: Would you say that you are, uh, I guess I'm trying to like, dig in a little bit here. Would you say that you are Weathering the Storm in order to like, protect people? Or are you trying to Exchange a Blow with foes capable of defending themselves? Or are you just trying to, like, hit them — at this point, I would actually say that you could probably hit these, anyone in your group could kind of like, appear in this moment and hurt them, give them risks, without, you know, without needing to roll. You could give every one of these things one risk —

Sylvi: There's like —

Keith: Yeah.

Austin: Because they don't, they don't know you're here yet. You kind of have the drop on them.

Sylvi: We have like, very, there's like, very clearly Bilateral — these are very clearly Bilateral Altars, right?

Austin: The mechs are Bilats. You —

Sylvi: Yeah.

Austin: Uh, do you know about the... [sighs] none of you are from here. You don't know what's up with the knife dragon.

Sylvi: Mm-hm. Yeah. That's the thing. So, I, I —

Austin: How long have you been on the planet, as a group?

Ali: I think for Brnine it has to at least be a couple of months, right?

Austin: Okay.

Ali: Like, half of a year or whatever. But I don't know if people got, like, assigned to the Blue Channel afterwards, you know what I mean?

Austin: Right, right, right.

Keith: Uh, I think I would have been on the Blue Channel the whole time.

Sylvi: Uh, I think I got assigned to it more recently, but I think that there's been like, Devotion people on Palisade for a little while.

Austin: Right, right.

Sylvi: And that's kind of what led to me being part of this.

Austin: Right, you have family here, right?

Sylvi: Yeah.

Austin: That's interesting.

Sylvi: I've got [chuckling] a lot of family.

Austin: [chuckling] that's... okay.

Sylvi: We'll get into it. Later on.

Austin: Then, yeah, I think... I would let someone roll, uh, to know what's up with this dragon. There's, I think to me —

Sylvi: Okay.

Austin: That feels like a... uh, spell uncertainties. When you offer —

Sylvi: Can someone else do that? Because I want to hit a Bilat mech with my mace, really hard. [laughs]

Ali: I have a good know, I have a plus-1 know. And, and I feel like, like, that's... this might be the sort of thing Hunting would talk to me about, right?

Austin: Yeah, I think that's a good source for this, for sure.

Ali: Okay. [giggling]. Or, just like, you know, maybe not specifically from Hunting, but —

Austin: No, I think Hunting's the one who would have been like... uh, by the way, there's dragons here.

Ali: [laughing]

Austin: I think, I think it's more likely that Hunting, Hunting probably has a bunch of things that to Brnine sound like superstitions, right? Uh, uh, you know, Hunting is the person who says shit like, "oh, if you wake up and you see that it's foggy outside, don't go outside before noon." Right?

Ali: Mm-hm.

Austin: And you're like, no, I need milk. We have to go get milk, you know?

Ali: [chuckling]

Austin: Or whatever, right?

Keith: You should have gotten the milk before the fog.

Austin: Right, that's exactly it. Hunting is like, obviously — you're supposed to always have milk inside for nights like — or for mornings like this, exactly. So, yeah, give me a roll. A know roll.

Ali: Yeah, I have a plus-1 know. So what would that roll be?

Austin: 2D6 plus 1.

Ali: 2D6...

Austin: We are back, baby.

Ali: 2D6 plus 1.

Austin: Hey, that's an 8. That's not, that's not a failure.

Dre: Hey!

Austin: Also, remember —

Ali: It's a 6 and a 1.

Dre: And failure.

Austin: Everybody should take spotlight point for that last roll because it was a group roll. Everybody gets that last one, when you were coming down the, are the place —

Ali: Yeah.

Dre: Right, yep.

Austin: Uh, uh, also, tell me, what was, what was the risk you got from hearing and feeling the mechs being nearby from before, what did you end up taking?

Ali: Oh, my risk is anxious.

Austin: Anxious, okay. Love that. Well, you can tell me if this makes you more or less anxious, what we're about to talk about.

Ali: Hm...

Austin: Dispel Uncertainties says, on a 10-plus, the director will tell you something directly useful that you know about the situation or subject at hand. On a 7 to 9, your director will tell you something potentially useful, but it's up to you to discern how. Your director might also you to explain how you know the information or where you learned it. I think you've, you've already given me that, which is great, which is useful for me. Uh, do you see the top of the map, on the corners, where things get increasingly dark and blighted?

Ali: And there's the spooky monsters in those boxes?

Austin: Yeah, yeah, the spooky monsters. And it says the Five Afflictions over there in the top left?

Ali: Oh, sure.

Dre: Mm-hm...

Austin: Yeah, yeah, yeah, yeah, yeah. So, you've heard about the Afflictions. Uh... there are, Palisade's, Palisade's got a monsters problem.

Ali: Mmm.

Austin: Or, I mean, you know, you haven't talked to them. But they don't seem discerning in terms of who they hurt, necessarily, right? You've definitely... have lost units mysteriously to, for instance, the morning fog, after they decide to go out into the fog to go buy milk, instead of staying inside like their smart, uh, what's Hunting's unit, what's Hunting's specialty again? Tech, their Tech officer tells them to. Uh, they all have too many names. Uh, but on a 7 to 9, I guess I'd say, like, you'd get the most recent, popular name that this one uses. Or not this one, because you're not looking at the actual Affliction named Cleave, here.

2:32:10.0 You're looking at one of the like, defenders of Cleave, one of the pawns of Cleave. Uh, uh, you know that whenever you see a knife that is a dragon, or one of these kind of bladed wyvern things, that is one of the, the, uh, the minions of Cleave. Uh, and in fact, you know that it doesn't just cut things. Uh, who — Cori, did you say something as you were charging in here?

Sylvi: Uh, I don't think so... I think I'm just sort of rushing in.

Austin: Okay, how about this —

Sylvi: Or, I might have said, like, "I'm going to take out that one," to like, people on the crew, without specifying which one I meant.

Austin: Perfect. You say, I'm going to take out that one, and what everybody else heard was, "community cooperative discovery restoration!"

Ali: [snorts]

Dre: Good.

Austin: Uh, because one of the things Cleave does, is it befuddles spoken language. Uh, so your comms are fucked right now. I mean like, literally, you can send all the messages you want but —

Sylvi: Great.

Austin: They're coming across very —

Sylvi: Yeah.

Austin: Uh, and that's every — I'm not even going to give you a risk for that, that's just true in this moment, you know? [chuckling] Uh, uh —

Ali: Do we have texting? Do I have a Sidekick?

Austin: Go ahead and try to text, let's see what it says.

Sylvi: Why is Brnine texting me in earth German?

Ali: [laughing]

Austin: [laughing] But you, Brnine, you do know what the situation is here, right? It is a dragon, that is a, a, it is part of, or represents, or is an avatar of, this Affliction, the Affliction Cleave, and it, uh, uh, it fucks up, it is both, you know, very much sharp knife dragon, and also has an aura that befuddles spoken, signed, and written language. It creates confusion, it often disrupts long-distance communication. Uh, in a way that's like, it doesn't, it's not, oh, the radio got fuzzy. It's, snap — the radio line is dead, you know? Uh... so, Cori, let's do your, let's do your attack. It sounds like —

Sylvi: Mm-hm.

Austin: Who are you, what are you swinging at, what are you attacking?

Sylvi: Uh, can I, can I get, there was, there were a couple different models of Bilats.

Austin: There are, there are, yes, so there are three big, there are three big models to deal with here. There's the, again, uh, the Plough, which is the Nidean ones. They have these kind of big,

heavy siege cannons, and then also can put those away and bring out a big heavy like bulldozer unit.

Sylvi: Yeah.

Austin: Uh, uh, they have, there are the Gueridons, which are... uh, there's one Gueridon, which is the Frontier Syndicate kind of infantry, uh, uh. It's actually a hollow, it's actually not an Altar. It's a tier 2 thing, and in our setting, tier 2 things are [chuckling] old mechs. They're just old, they're Partizan-era mechs, basically. And this is still, it still serves its purpose, right? It gets, it's kind of like an, an armored personnel carrier, except it's like a [chuckling] table that walks around.

Sylvi: Yeah. You can still play stuff on your PS3, it's just not as as good as...

Austin: Exactly, that's exactly [chuckling] that's not true, actually, the PS3 has no games, uh, so...

Dre: [laughing]

Sylvi: That's true, my bad, my bad.

Ali: Hey!

Austin: [laughing]

Dre: Are you a PS3? [laughing]

Ali: [giggling]

Keith: [chuckling]

Ali: I have a PS3 in my living room right now. We're very cozy together.

Austin: Aw...

Sylvi: I miss my PS3.

Ali: It has games.

Keith: And the reason you're cozy with it is, is because it's not plugged into the TV because there's no games for it?

Ali: [chuckling] Well, because I, it's backwards compatible and I play Playstation 2 games on it.

Everyone: [cracking up]

Sylvi: Well yeah,

Dre: Sure. I guess if you count that, it has some games.

Austin: Uh, I rest my case, your honor.

Ali: [cackling]

Keith: Ugh...

Austin: PS2 is a great system.

2:35:38.4 The Hauberk is the third type, H-A-U-B-E-R-K, and that is the one with the unicycle wheel, uh, and actually there's only one of those, so [unintelligible] there are four units total. It's one Hauberk, two Ploughs, and one Gueridon.

Sylvi: Okay. Uh, I'm going to flip a coin really quick.

Keith: And what faction do the, do the different table robots belong to?

Austin: I'll, I'll write them all. Frontier, and then the Plough is Nideo, and then the Hauberks are Kesh. But they're all allied, you know? Uh...

Keith: Except that they're fighting.

Austin: No, no, no. They're fighting the dragon —

Keith: Oh, no, these ones are not fighting. They're just all fighting the dragon.

Sylvi: They're attacking —

Austin: Yes, they're all fighting the dragon. It's just rare that you would see... it's rare that you would see all three of them, I'm just giving this to you, I'm not making anybody roll for this. Normally, there's a friendly rivalry, right? If there's something down here that one of the factions wants, you would send your one... your own crew, right?

Keith: Right.

Austin: If, if the Frontier Syndicate was like ah, there's some shit down here for me, they would send down their own people, right? By themselves. Uh, the fact that all three are here means it must be something good, it must be something important.

Keith: Yeah. I had, I had misinterpreted, because the Kesh and Nideo reasons for being down here were slightly different, so I was like, oh, they're fighting to each get this place —

Austin: Got you.

Keith: For themselves. No, they're going to share it.

Austin: Also, to be clear, their general world view is, the Bilateral Intercession should rule, should rule the galaxy [chuckling] right? They generally agree with that.

Keith: Right. God, we freaking love the galaxy over here.

Austin: I'd fucking love to own the galaxy.

Dre: Mm-hm.

Austin: So, yes.

Keith: [unintelligible] just sit around thinking about owning the whole galaxy?

Austin: I feel like it'd be a lot of work, frankly. Uh... okay.

Dre: It would be a lot to keep up with.

Austin: Yes. Cori, who are you swinging on, what's it look like? Tell me what the deal is.

Sylvi: So, I was torn between the Ploughs and the Hauberk, but I think I'm going to with the, with the Ploughs, just because they seem like the most siege-weapon-y of what they've got here.

Austin: They do. Totally.

Sylvi: Uh, so I am going to be using the basic, like, carried weapons that the, uh, the Chariots have are these like morningstar maces and shields. And I'm sort of just boosting in with that.

Austin: Are the Chariots, uh, a unit that like, is Devotion-specific, or is it Twilight Mirage —

Sylvi: Yes.

Austin: Okay, it's specifically Devotion, what has these.

Sylvi: Yeah, these are specifically made with, like, their Divine's abilities and stuff —

Austin: Amazing.

Sylvi: Like, Devotion powers these things.

Austin: Uh, so here's what I'm going to say. I think this is the opening attack. This is announcing your group's presence, in a way, and you're charging in, so you're getting people's attention. People will be on alert after this. But you can just do, you can add a risk to this thing as you want, uh, you know, as established, basically, because it's a surprise attack, after which we'll be in combat, right? You could roll to instead make it a peril, you know, to like really wind up a hit.

Sylvi: Yeah.

Austin: And again, perils are harder to get rid of than risks, is basically like, perils you can't just get rid of in the middle of combat, basically, right? Uh, so you could wind up a real big hit, uh, that way. But, uh, it's up to you.

Sylvi: Uh...

Austin: And again, the sort of like, the thing, the point of the way this combat works is, you want to stack enough risks or perils that then you can get a finishing blow in with Strike decisively.

Sylvi: Yeah. I think I'm going to start with just the risk, I think I'm going to take the sort of surprise attack here. Uh, I was thinking staggered might be the right one for this —

Austin: Ooh, that's fun.

Sylvi: Because it's taking, like — I'm picturing like —

Austin: What's this look like, yeah?

Sylvi: Do these things have, like, heads?

Austin: Yes, totally. Uh, the, the Ploughs definitely do. I would say that the, the Ploughs have a sort of angelic, humanoid, Divine look, right? And not too dissimilar from your Chariots, because you're from the Mirage, and they're from Stel Nideo, which is from the Mirage, originally. Except, very statuesque in design. It has sort of like a silver halo vibe going on behind it. And its chest —

Sylvi: Wow, the two halo mechs.

Austin: Yeah, uh-huh. And its chest has this sort of like, stained glass in front of the cockpit.

Sylvi: Because I'm not, I'm just dealing one risk to this, which of these is, uh, able to take a big hit and not immediately fictionally kill it, the chest or the head?

Austin: Uh, I don't think either of those would, would kill it, instantly.

Sylvi: Okay, cool, then I'm going for it. I'm going to just... smack it in the head.

Austin: Okay.

Sylvi: I think the way this looks is when... so I like, the cape, we talked a little bit about this, you and me, Austin.

Austin: Mm-hm.

Sylvi: Where the cape flies off when I'm in combat. So there's just this big, like, Devotion cape billowing behind me that's like floating in the air.

Austin: Hell yeah. Incredible.

Sylvi: While, like, the exhaust on the back of my mech just like, blasts forward. My mech's got like, these three like, halos that sort of like, three like different sizes inside each other, that sort of are like, rotating more. I also didn't mention that Cori controls her mech with her own halo. That's important.

Austin: That's important.

Sylvi: Uh, and, just like, this like, silvery, purply mace just colliding through... I think [chuckling] I kind of like the idea of smashing this thing's halo, if I'm being real.

Austin: Ooh, that's very fun. Yeah, yeah, yeah. Uh, okay. So you slam and do it, with, with the thing, with — what was the risk you were giving it?

Sylvi: Uh, I was giving it, I think I... staggered was the word I was giving.

Austin: Staggered, okay. It pulls back at you, and, again, you hear over like the near-distance comms, a bunch of other, you know, random words, right? From, from this person, who's all — [chuckling] the first random word it gave me was interference, which is actually correct. So it can't be that one. Give me new — “variable participant! Constitutional!”

2:41:39.7 And is clearly trying to communicate something to its allies, but they can't quite figure out what's going on, either. Phrygian, it sounded like you were queuing up to do something.

Keith: Uh, yeah, yeah. I, uh, well I have a, I have a little stealth move, but I think it's, I think we're, we're one mace strike past stealth.

Austin: Maybe. Talk to me about your stealth move.

Keith: So I have, this is just an, ascendant upgrade that I have. When I'm still, I have optic camo. Your ascendant has access to camouflage, able to blend into its surroundings when standing still.

Austin: I'm happy to say that that lets you not be seen here, right?

Keith: Okay.

Austin: So, at this point, while the rest of the, the rest of the enemies have realized that they're being, like, attacked from, from the, the funicular bay, up on the kind of opposite hill...

Keith: Uh-huh.

Austin: I imagine that you are completely still, and completely, you know, uh, invisible to them still. So if you want to do damage the same way, and then kind of announce yourself by firing a weapon, I think that that's fine.

Keith: Uh, I haven't personally had the opportunity to fail a roll yet, uh...

Austin: Oh, so you'd like to do a roll.

Keith: So I, I would like to make a big swing here.

Austin: Mm-hm.

Keith: And, uh, uh, and introduce, uh, one of my Beast Within hold moves.

Austin: Ah, okay.

Keith: Take a risk to Strike Decisively against someone who's not defenseless.

Austin: Very strong, very powerful.

Keith: Uh, and I want to try to use that, and my long-range weapon, to take out one of the 3 tier mechs, or at least do whatever amount of damage a Strike Decisive hit does.

Austin: So, Strike Decisively says, when you're lining up the perfect shot against an opponent who can't defend themselves, delivering a scathing dismissal of their character, using irrefutable fact, or otherwise engaging someone who is defenseless, you are Striking Decisively. When you do so, roll clash or talk, whichever is more appropriate. [chuckling] I think you are not talking this person into decisive death, I don't think that's what you're doing. I think this is clash.

Keith: Nope, yep.

Austin: On a 10-plus, you strike true. Director characters are killed, forced to retreat, or otherwise removed as a threat for the fiction. Player characters should roll Bite The Dust. On a 7 to 9 you succeed as above, but choose one: either you overreach or underestimate, take a risk.

You waste ammo or words losing a weapon until you can re-arm, or losing the weight of some bargaining chip or piece of leverage, or you strike carelessly, causing collateral damage beyond your expectations. If you're trying to kill someone you're fighting, or otherwise do something serious enough to remove them from the situation at hand, and it's possible to do so, you are trying to Strike Decisively. This doesn't necessarily need to be something that causes actual harm to the target, and in many cases, like when you're using talk, it's likely physical harm might not be involved at all.

2:44:32.4 You can't call someone's shitty ideology out so hard that they die, unless your director says that you can, in which case, hell yeah. Very rare that you can call someone out —

Keith: [laughing]

Sylvi: [laughing]

Austin: So hard that they, they die.

Keith: [chuckling]

Austin: So you want to hit one of the ones that has two... that's still, that is not hit yet, presumably. That's the most —

Keith: Yeah.

Austin: That's the best way you could do this. Okay. So do you want to hit, and now we can talk a little bit about approaches, do you want to hit one of the, the other Plough that hasn't been hit yet, big construction robot plus bazooka robot, or do you want to hit the Hauberk, the unicycle fucked-up lanky knight witch hunter mech with long chain whips? Uh, and I'll, I guess I should say, here is where... what is your approach? Because this didn't come up with Cori, because Cori was a Divine Altar, attacking a Divine Altar.

Keith: So, currently my approach is elemental —

Austin: Okay.

Keith: But that is subject to change, once, I think.

Austin: You can spend hold to do that, basically also, right, for one attack.

Keith: Uh, is that true?

Austin: I believe, yeah, that's one of your, that's one of your Beast Within's.

Keith: Change your approach for one attack, yes, I can do that.

Austin: Which is very Branched to do.

Keith: But also, so I guess I, I guess this could happen more than once, I have an ascendant upgrade. While ascended, you are considered having a different approach. Choose it when you pick this upgrade.

Austin: Mmm.

Keith: So I can permanently swap my approach one time.

Austin: Once you level up, yeah, yeah, yeah I gotcha.

Keith: Yes, yeah.

Austin: Once you pick that upgrade, yeah.

Keith: Right.

Austin: So for now, you're elemental. Elemental is good against mundane, which, I don't —

Keith: Everything is super effective against one.

Austin: Correct.

Keith: And not very effective against another?

Austin: There's a pentagon, there's a sort of a circle of the different approaches. Mundane stuff is good against arcane stuff, arcane stuff is good against Divine stuff, Divine stuff is good against profane stuff. Profane stuff is good against elemental stuff, and elemental stuff is good against mundane stuff. We will get into these as we continue to play, and I'll talk about what they all do, but I don't want to like, bog things down. I've already talked a lot this episode. So, your two targets are either Divine, which is neither good against you, nor are you, nor are you bad against it...

Keith: Mm-hm.

Austin: Or, Arcane, which is the... is that true about the Gueridon? Most of the Frontier stuff is, is... arcane. But let me just double-check it, because it's kind of basic. Yeah, that's arcane. Or, is... uh, what's the third one? Oh, it's Kesh. The Kesh one is actually mundane, uh, I believe, is that correct?

Keith: And it has not been hit, the Plough.

Austin: And it has not been hit. No, no, no. The Hauberk, the Hauberk has not been hit.

Keith: Okay, gotcha. And that's the one with the whips?

Austin: That is the one with the, uh, whips, correct. So —

Keith: Okay, then great. That was going to be, that was my gut instinct anyway.

Austin: That's the target. Okay. So, when you are trying to, uh, attack something that has the approach that's weak to you, you act with confidence. So, this is...

Keith: Huge. Huge.

Austin: Your 1s count as 6s.

Keith: Yeah, that's big.

Austin: So give me your Strike Decisively, roll plus clash. What's your clash?

Keith: Uh, my clash is 1.

Austin: Okay. So roll, roll 2D6 plus 1, but your 1s count as 6s.

Keith: Uh, okay. Uh... do I get anything from still being invisible?

Austin: Uh, because you're trying to Strike Decisively, I don't think so... uh, uh? You're invisible. I'll give you advantage here.

Keith: Nice. So, confidence and advantage —

Austin: Yeah, I think —

Keith: 3D6 —

Austin: Being invisible is a hard thing to say it's not an advantage, you know?

Keith: Yes, it is. It is hard — and I'm at range, I've got a sniper rifle.

Austin: Yeah, yeah.

Keith: As well. I have what is functionally a sniper rifle.

Austin: What are you, what's this look like? What are you, who, what are you shooting?

Keith: Uh, so, this is a weapon called Buccal Outpocket.

Austin: Keith?!

Keith: Uh, yeah?

Austin: What is it?

Keith: So, uh, as we all know, your buccal cavity —

Janine: I heard about that on Tiktok, that's when you get your cheek fat done —

Austin: [laughing]

Sylvi: Yeah, yeah.

Janine: Surgically — yeah.

Keith: Your buccal cavity, that's your mouth area.

Austin: Uh-huh.

Keith: And a buccal outpocket, that's one way to refer to like, a frog's vocal sack —

Dre: Mm-hm.

Keith: Like the bit of a — Austin, I messaged you earlier a picture of Ikalgo from Hunter x Hunter when he was still a sniper —

Austin: Yeah! Uh-huh.

Keith: Uh, and he used his like, head to inflate an air rifle.

Austin: Uh-huh!

Dre: Yeah.

Keith: Uh, so it's like that. So, my shoulder has a big mouth that I breathe —

Austin: [laughing]

Keith: When I'm using the weapon, I take a big breath of air —

Austin: Uh-huh!

Keith: Uh, from my shoulder, and then sort of just shoot it out this gun.

Austin: Is it, so it's just air that's shooting —

Keith: And it shoots a big slug.

Austin: Oh, it is metal, it is, it is a slug.

Keith: Yeah, it shoots like a big — I mean, I don't know what the slug is made out of, I haven't thought — but it is, it does shoot a projectile.

2:49:09.6

Austin: Something, okay. Well, what did you roll here? Let's see.

Keith: I haven't rolled anything.

Austin: Oh, you didn't. That was Sylvi saying —

Keith: Yeah, yeah, sorry, I was looking at my sheet. So let me —

Sylvi: I'm so happy that we got an Ikalgo name drop. I'm so happy.

Keith: [laughing]

Ali: [giggling]

Austin: Ikalgo's a real one.

Keith: Oop, nope, that's a 4. That's 4, that's wrong.

Sylvi: One of my favorite Hunter x Hunter characters.

Austin: Oh my god. Oh, no, that's wrong. You rolled —

Keith: See, actually, it still would have been perfect, it would have been a 12.

Austin: You rolled, you rolled a 3D4 instead of a 3D6. Give me a 3D6.

Keith: Okay.

Ali: Jesus. [chuckling]

Austin: You got a 10.

Keith: 10. 10.

Austin: Very funny. Okay. Hoo!

Keith: So, no repercussion from this. But that, I had, I also had, that, those two 1s would have both been 6s.

Austin: Correct. If you had rolled —

Keith: So. I was perfect either way.

Austin: You were fine either way. Uh, in this case, in that case —

Keith: This is plus-1, so it's 11.

Austin: So, this — what's this look like, Keith? Describe to me, as you just ace this, this unicycle robot —

Keith: Uh, the second I pull the trigger, and the recoil hits the gun, I, the recoil moves my body just enough to where I instantly become visible to anyone that's looking up in that direction, but

it happens at the exact same time as the projectile from the Buccal Outpocket smashes into the frame of this whip mech.

Austin: Love it. Great. Uh...

Keith: Is it out, is it done?

Austin: Yeah, dude!

Keith: It's done, it's just done.

Austin: Strike decisively. It is decisive.

Keith: Strike decisive — yeah. It's a one-hit KO.

Austin: That's a 1, it, it it tumbles — you know, where does it hit the body of, of this mech, of this Altar? Is this a head shot, is this a...

Keith: It's a like, this is a, this is like... like, the most, the like the gear, like the internals, right under the cockpit, like —

Austin: Oh, yeah, yeah, yeah, yep.

Keith: The motion core.

Austin: Yeah, it just, it just absolutely tears through it, and it kind of splits in half, and just like, falls over. And it does the thing of like, it tumbles down the hill towards the little village, and then finally comes to a stop, you know, just outside of it. Uh, and, you know, at this point, especially I think Cori, you know, you see this thing very near to you just get absolutely obliterated. It might be — is this the first time that you've fought with, alongside Phrygian? Have you seen Phrygian do it this before?

Sylvi: Uh, this, I think, this is my first like live combat with this crew.

Austin: With the crew, okay. Well...

Sylvi: I think maybe there's been some training stuff I've seen, or some footage I've seen, but this, this is fucking sick as hell. [laughing]

Austin: [chuckling] Okay. Rest of the crew.

Keith: Oh, I do need one more thing real quick. I have to give myself a risk from having used that move.

Austin: The risk to me feels like it's like, uh, you tell me, because again, risks you should give yourself. You tell me what your risk is.

Keith: Uh, well, it was a big shot, it was a show slot. The weapon has the slow tag, uh.

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

Keith: So I'm going to give myself the risk deflated.

Austin: [laughing] Oh, your poor shoulder-arm-mouth.

Keith: Yeah.

Austin: Yeah, gross, great. I love it.

["Nothing is Stationary" concludes]