

PALISADE 05: I Would Like to Help You

Pt. 2

Transcriber: Iris (@sacredwhim)

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

[RECAP]

AUSTIN: You took on some of the people from that Twill village.

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

AUSTIN: Gucci asked you to bring some of those folks on board. That was kind of a request. And so, first of all, they're on board. Brnine, I believe you left them in the cargo hold?

ALI: Wh—where do you put people in this ship? You keep—[LAUGHS] You keep asking like that's a bad thing.

[AUSTIN LAUGHS]

ALI: And you just—it's just efficiency.

AUSTIN: Uh-huh. Yeah. Okay.

DRE: It's better than like, the brig.

JANINE: You either put people in the cargo hold or you put them in Phrygian, there's nothing in between.

AUSTIN: There's a—this is a group of people. There's probably 30 or 40 people who are in your cargo hold, then. They are—most of them left the shitty ad hoc village that they built at the bottom of the Diadem after being forced there by the Frontier Syndicate.

JANINE: I think Thisbe is in the cargo bay, like, taking care of people. I don't think she thinks of it as like 'I am tending crops,' but I think there is definitely something of like, well—it's a little easier for her to understand what they need.

AUSTIN (as PARTIAL PALISADE): I guess I don't even know that I'm me. Maybe they're tricking me. What do you think? I'm just a regular old robot.

DRE (as FIGURE): No, I don't think they're tricking you.

AUSTIN (as PARTIAL PALISADE): 'Oh, you're a god, you're a Divine,' et cetera. No, probably not.

DRE (as FIGURE): No. I mean, you shouldn't feel guilty that you feel like you can't do something that was asked of you that you didn't even get a choice to be asked for. Does that make sense?

AUSTIN (as PARTIAL PALISADE): I don't feel guilty because they want something I can't give 'em. I feel guilty because my whole life was about trying to give people things, and give myself to things, and I ran out of myself to give.

SYLVI (as CORIOLIS): Thisbe, can you take a picture of me?

AUSTIN: Oh my god.

SYLVI: And then poses in front of the downed mech. [CHUCKLES]

JANINE: Are you just like, handing me your smartphone or whatever?

SYLVI: Yeah, pretty much.

AUSTIN: Oh my god. Thisbe, how do you—

JANINE: Yeah. Thisbe can do that without asking a question, even. Just, 'yes.'

SYLVI: Yeah.

AUSTIN (as GUCCI): Knock out the mercenaries, make sure they don't get there, whatever that means, and you'll have done your job. Get your people out safe. Or, your people will have to get out safe, but you won't be there, because you'll be doing the meeting—

ALI (as BRNINE): Partying, right, yeah, got it.

AUSTIN (as GUCCI): Yeah, mhm.

ALI (as BRNINE): You want me to go to a party instead of robbing a bunch of—that's fine. [IRRITATED SIGH]

AUSTIN (as GUCCI): I—Brnine, you know that if it was up to me, we'd save the partying for later—

[RECAP ENDS]

[MUSIC INTRO ENDS]

AUSTIN: Alright, so we have a Brnine scene and a Figure scene left. And then a bunch of tokens still in the wind.

DRE: Yeah.

SYLVI: Yeah.

AUSTIN: Oh, and we have a Cori religious scene if she wants one.

SYLVI: I'm thinking, and I don't know if it's gonna come up, but we'll see.

AUSTIN: Okay. Oh, so are you telling me that despite being a beacon, and your first priority is to spread the reach of Devotion no matter the cost, you're not using this opportunity to talk to the Twill about Devotion?

[ALI CHUCKLES]

SYLVI: [EXHALES] Man, Cori can feel her blood pulsing now. That's so weird.

AUSTIN: Yeah, so here's a—what's that—what is the relationship you have with Devotion? Like you're not an Elect, right? Like, that relationship, you're not the Elect of Devotion, but—

SYLVI: Yeah, well, Devotion doesn't have elects. It's like a very different system. It's like—

AUSTIN: Talk to me about this.

SYLVI: I think the way—you could make a case that Cori is an Elect, but you would have to also be like, 'yeah, what if Devotion had like, 500 Elects?' Like—

AUSTIN: Right, which, actually, we have had that happen in Twilight Mirage where you were an—first of all, you're from the Twilight Mirage. No one uses the word Elect there for that.

SYLVI: Yeah.

AUSTIN: They use Excerpt, right?

SYLVI: True.

AUSTIN: And Excerpts—I mean, presumably—I mean, again, this is a thing worth saying. Many of the Divines left the Twilight Mirage during the end of Twilight Mirage, when they left with either the Divine Free States, which would become part of the Divine Principality, or left with the Cadent under—sorry, the Waking Cadent and Signet as part of the fleet, that new Divine Fleet—or left with Tender and joined the Argosy, Spliced and the weird virtual world. That's somewhere out there in space, by the way. [CHUCKLES] And speaking of time weirdness, the people there have lived for [CHUCKLING] thousands of more years than the people in regular space! So time is just fucked in this universe, by the way.

So—and then finally, there were the Divines that stayed behind in the Twilight Mirage, and decided to integrate into the Qui Err Coalition and what would become the Qui Err Coalition's government and—which was kind of this—saying government suggests that it's one big thing, when in fact it's a lot more of a coalition of a bunch of different kind of—you know, it was kind of like an anarchist—like a syndicated anarchist commune situation, right? That seemed to be, in brief, what that all looked like. So, Devotion comes out of that space, and was built presumably after the events of Twilight Mirage, because we never ran into Devotion before that, right? Question mark?

SYLVI: It's kinda unclear.

AUSTIN: Okay.

SYLVI: You—it depends—really, genuinely depends on who you ask.

AUSTIN: Okay.

SYLVI: Like, there are people who think that Devotion is literally, like, older than life itself.

AUSTIN: Sure. Uh-huh.

SYLVI: But like, that might not—I don't know if that's the widely accepted one, like, belief yet.

AUSTIN: Yet.

SYLVI: But like—yet.

AUSTIN: Uh-huh. And is the—

SYLVI: There's—

AUSTIN: Is the cult happy with that sort of diversity of beliefs around Devotion?

SYLVI: The—so, we kind of talked about this a little bit. I think that there has been sort of a—you know, we love a schism.

[ALI AND AUSTIN HUM]

SYLVI: We love sort of differences of opinions, and I think that like, part of—I think that there's a faction that was very happy when we started making Devotion into weapons of war, and then there was a group that was super not happy about it. And I think that sort of these differing beliefs of where Devotion came from sort of also follow along those lines—

AUSTIN: Interesting.

SYLVI: Depending on the sort of like, agenda or belief stuff, whichever faction...

AUSTIN: Who—where does Cori fit into that divide?

SYLVI: Well, if—you know. She's—

KEITH: I have a postcard to show you.

SYLVI: I do have a postcard to show you.

AUSTIN: Uh-huh.

SYLVI: Yeah, no, I um—I don't know how much I should get into the situation with her family and stuff here, other than what I've—'cause I've mentioned a little bit to you.

AUSTIN: You've told me stuff, but I—I'm sure the listener—now you have said the word 'Cori has a family' and—

SYLVI: She does, yeah. I think her dad is a big part of the sort of militaristic side of things.

AUSTIN: And his name, by the way?

SYLVI: Oh, his name's Griesel.

KEITH: Griesel. Is Cori a nepo baby?

SYLVI: No.

KEITH: No. So, not that big of a part.

JANINE: Is Cori from the *Deus Ex* universe?

SYLVI: Well, I mean, like—is that a thing?

JANINE: I think so. Isn't that the little dinosaur guys?

SYLVI: I don't play—I've—I never played—

JANINE: Isn't that a greasel?

SYLVI: I don't know.

AUSTIN: Are those called—are those—is that what those are called?

KEITH: I don't know, I have no clue.

DRE: I dunno.

JANINE: *Deus Ex*—

SYLVI: I just was like—

AUSTIN: It literally is called that, yeah. They look—

[KEITH LAUGHS]

SYLVI: Okay.

AUSTIN: Spell 'Griesel' for me?

SYLVI: You want to know how I did this?

AUSTIN: Yeah.

SYLVI: I saw the word 'diesel' and was like, that would be a really gross word if it had a different, like, first consonant. And—

[KEITH LAUGHS]

AUSTIN: So your 'Griesel' is G-R-I-E-S? Like 'diesel' is?

SYLVI: It's 'diesel' with a G-R, yeah.

KEITH: Yeah. That's really funny.

AUSTIN: Diesel with a G-R, got it, got it.

KEITH: It is gross, yeah, Griesel.

AUSTIN: Yeah.

SYLVI: Yeah.

JANINE: I'm putting this in our chat so you can just see it.

KEITH: I'm surprised that it's accidentally the name of something from *Deus Ex* and not accidentally the name of something from *Star Wars*, because it's like, a very *Star Wars*-sounding name. Griesel.

DRE: Yeah.

AUSTIN: It does sound like a *Star Wars* name, yeah.

SYLVI: Where—we have—I've been answering, like, multiple questions and not any of the ones you asked.

AUSTIN: Yeah.

SYLVI: You were asking what it feels like when Devotion is exerting pressure—

AUSTIN: Wait, sorry, wait, wait, wait.

SYLVI: Yeah?

AUSTIN: So was that the only family member we have to worry about, is Griesel?

SYLVI: Oh, no, no, no, no, no, but it's the one I'll mention.

AUSTIN: Okay. Okay.

SYLVI: It's the one who raised her.

AUSTIN: Gotcha. And are you—

KEITH: So you're teasing future family stuff.

AUSTIN: Right. Uh-huh.

SYLVI: Yeah, come on.

AUSTIN: Is—sorry, is Griesel Sunset, [CHUCKLES] like—

[DRE SNICKERS]

AUSTIN: —proud of your work as a soldier?

SYLVI: Um—

AUSTIN: Is he here? Is your family—your family's here on Palisade.

SYLVI: Yeah, I don't think—I don't know—I don't think he's on the Blue Channel, if that's your question.

AUSTIN: I mean, that was not my question.

SYLVI: Okay.

AUSTIN: I assumed we didn't just have a—

SYLVI: My dad?

AUSTIN: —militaristic religion dad on ship without knowing him.

SYLVI: Yeah.

AUSTIN: I'm guessing he's on the Isle of the Broken Key with the rest of the Devotees and the Dim Liturgy.

SYLVI: Yeah, he's like, not quite a big wig, but he's getting there. Do you know—you've watched the most recent season of *Gundam*?

AUSTIN: Yeah. Uh-huh.

SYLVI: There's big—you know, Guel's dad.

AUSTIN: Mhm, mhm, mhm.

SYLVI: There's kind of that vibe going on.

AUSTIN: Sure. Gotcha.

SYLVI: Where it's like, you always can be doing better.

AUSTIN: Yeah. Gotcha.

SYLVI: And, you know.

AUSTIN: To be fair, Guel kind of fucks up all the time in that story, so.

SYLVI: I mean, listen, I'm not—and Cori's perfect, as we've—all can see, so.

AUSTIN: Right, right.

DRE: Established, yeah, yeah, yeah.

SYLVI: Yeah, yeah, yeah.

AUSTIN: You said Guel [PRONOUNCED GHOUL]? It is Guel [PRONOUNCED GHOUL]. It is. It's not Guel [PRONOUNCED JEWEL]. I've always been reading that as a soft G, but it isn't. It's a hard G. It is Guel. Yeah. Alright, cool. Great.

SYLVI: Yeah.

AUSTIN: Anyway, so that's one family member here. Good to know. How does your relationship—what is your relationship with Devotion? Is it all of the stuff around your pulse? Is it a feeling in your blood? Is there a visual comp—what's that look like?

SYLVI: Like, what is it—like, what does it feel like for Cori, like, when it's active?

AUSTIN: Yes. Yeah.

SYLVI: Yeah, I think it is... Because Cori is a pilot of a Chariot, I think it's a little more intense than if someone was just living on one of the like, sort of like, Devotion conclaves or whatever out there.

AUSTIN: Right. Mhm.

[10:03]

SYLVI: So like—I described it as feeling like her blood rushing, and like, very much can feel that—there's like, if it goes on too long, she'll get like, lightheaded, very much inspired by me being iron deficient sometimes. [CHUCKLES]

AUSTIN: Sure.

SYLVI: There's also like, I think—I think if it keeps getting unhappy, the feathers on her wings will bristle.

AUSTIN: Ooh. Alright, well, that's what you feel in this moment.

SYLVI: Yeah.

AUSTIN: Because—because—

SYLVI: Well, shit. Maybe—

AUSTIN: Because, yeah, again, you have a set of—I'm just going to read it again from Tenets. "Instead of Hooks, write three Tenets that represent your deity's will. When you break or lose faith in a Tenet, your deity will ask something of you. Roll +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."

SYLVI: Yeah.

AUSTIN: "If you refuse, or resolve in a way that anchors or disappoints the divine, reduce your Channel by one permanently. If your channel reaches zero in this way, immediately change

playbooks and take an additional advancement.” So. So your—and one of your Tenets, again, is you are a beacon, your first priority—your *first* priority.

SYLVI: My first priority.

AUSTIN: Is to spread the reach—

SYLVI: I sure wrote that.

[ALI CHUCKLES]

AUSTIN: You wrote these. I didn’t write these.

SYLVI: I sure wrote that sentence.

AUSTIN: Right.

DRE: Mhm. You did.

SYLVI: And now I’m like, damn, who’s making me do this? Oh, shit, I am.

AUSTIN: [CHUCKLES] Yeah. “Your first priority is to spread the reach of Devotion, no matter the cost.” So yeah, I feel like it is—and it’s interesting, because we’ve talked about—we’ve done god stuff so many different times and ways on this—

SYLVI: Us?

AUSTIN: Yeah, us here on Friends at the Table. And we’ve gone from direct conversations in Hieron, and Belgard and Signet in some ways—not that that was like a worshipper and their god, but there was certainly a similar playbook there. But Belgard, much less talky than let’s say, the various Sams of Hieron. [CHUCKLES] Did talk on occasion, but much more, I think, affect—affective, affective than, you know, dialogue-driven. We’ve done visions, we’ve done all sorts of stuff. And so I’m curious for you where this fits in with that stuff. Do you—you don’t hear Devotion’s voice ever? It’s all this kind of physical sensation stuff?

SYLVI: No, it’s—I think—I would prefer it if like, Devotion speaking to someone was a big deal. That’s like—

AUSTIN: The way it was with Cheal Pushy in *Orbital*.

SYLVI: Yeah.

AUSTIN: Okay.

SYLVI: Or with 3T, I think.

AUSTIN: Also 3T, yeah. 3T did have a literal scene with convers—with discussion. Yeah, yeah, yeah, you’re right.

SYLVI: Yeah. Yeah, no, because I—part of me is also like, the—one of the things that lets

people sort of be seen as authorities within the cult is like, 'oh, that person spoke to Devotion. Devo—like, they heard its words, as opposed to just feeling its presence.'

AUSTIN: Right. Mhm.

SYLVI: I also think just the vaguer a divine being is, the more fun room there is for misinterpretation.

AUSTIN: Totally.

SYLVI: I mean, even with spoken prophecy and shit, that's always a thing, but, um...

AUSTIN: Cool.

SYLVI: I wanted to be able to make bigger mistakes.

AUSTIN: Well, here we are. And yes, you find your feathers ruffled here a little bit. It's that thing of like—I almost described this like it's happened to me, and it certainly hasn't. But like, one of your pinions gets kind of stuck under the other in a way that you can't shake. You can't like, untangle your feathers one from another for a second. And it's like you can tell—like, you should have been able to do it. It's almost as if someone has pinched them closed, you know?

SYLVI: Yeah.

AUSTIN: And this is happening in the cargo hold. Maybe you're moving through it for something else. Maybe this is on your way back in with whatever you find, your match. You know? Which by the way, again, you're a beacon, right? You're supposed to be the one lighting fires for others. Et cetera.

SYLVI: It's true.

AUSTIN: And so yeah, you feel that, and you feel your pulse slow here, actually. You feel the blood in your body slow as if you're not living up to—

[SYLVI GROANS]

AUSTIN: I mean, you interpret it how you want.

SYLVI: No, no, no, I love it. I love it. It's just, that sounds very uncomfortable. Um... Well, shit, I think the way I'm going to interpret it is I'm going to start talking to these people that we're letting on board about Devotion.

AUSTIN: Is this the first time you've interacted with them?

SYLVI: Um... Well, no, because I tried to help that one person with my mech that one time, remember?

AUSTIN: Yeah, uh-huh, sure. Yeah, that's—uh-huh.

SYLVI: I tried to non-threateningly help someone climb up something with my giant war

machine.

[ALI CHUCKLES]

KEITH: You did at some point—at the very beginning of the encounter, you did try—say you were going to try to evacuate people. I don't think it ever happened, though.

AUSTIN: No, I think instead you killed someone.

[KEITH LAUGHS]

AUSTIN: Instead you killed a soldier, an enemy soldier.

DRE: Eh, you know. Potato, potato.

SYLVI: It's fine, they were attacking the village.

AUSTIN: No, I get you. Totally. I mean, to that degree, you did show—like, I think that generally people are open to this. Fundamentally.

KEITH: Yeah. They all saw it.

AUSTIN: They all saw you show up and, you know, you did kill the person, but you were defending their village. They do interpret it that way. That is fundamentally what happened. And I think that, like, there—some of them are eager to talk to you. I think especially there's a—there's, you know, a few of the younger ones. I think, frankly, Kriminel Kollage specifically is eager to talk to you, because she also didn't shoot at you with a shotgun that time, or the person with her didn't. Because you weren't in that little hallway. You were out fighting the Bilats, which is a thing that she can be like, 'ah, I wish I was there to see it,' you know? 'I wish I was there to see it when you fought them away,' et cetera.

SYLVI: Oh, that's going to be my in. I'm going to start talking about that and then be like, 'and through Devotion, I get the power to defeat them.'

AUSTIN: God.

SYLVI: I said youth pastor shit, and I'm not fucking around. That's what she's doing.

AUSTIN: Is that the pitch you give for who Devotion is?

SYLVI: I don't—no, I don't think—I think the way that Cori tends to describe it is... she does some like, talk words about like, 'everybody understands what like, cause and effect is, right? But like, there's a whole other side to it when you've got something as powerful as this. It's like you just put in—if you are willing to devote yourself and put in the sacrifice to something, that can be the cause that leads to the effect,' and then she'd do something with her magic that like, generates something there. And like, nobody needs to know that it makes her lightheaded to do this.

AUSTIN: That part you leave out. The part where there's a physical cause. Yeah, uh-huh.

SYLVI: Yeah, but it's fucking cool.

AUSTIN: Yeah. Uh-huh.

SYLVI: Yeah.

KEITH: You don't need cause and effect when you can be causin' effect. [LAUGHS]

AUSTIN: God. You—so yeah, so you don't have another character here to advance a Gravity Clock with. You're not clearing a Peril or emotion from anybody unless someone else wants to be here and be part of this.

DRE: Ah.

AUSTIN: But—actually, do you have—right now, you don't—Cori, you don't have any sort of Gravity Clocks with anybody, right?

SYLVI: I don't have any sort of Gravity Clock with anybody, no.

AUSTIN: Do you want to start one with somebody who's here or with something more—

SYLVI: What was the name of the person?

AUSTIN: This is Kriminel Kollage, is the one who—with Ks, with Ks.

SYLVI: Yeah. With Ks, of course. My buddy, K2.

AUSTIN: Uh-huh.

[ALI CHUCKLES]

SYLVI: Yeah, I think like—I think just referring to them by first name is very funny when I say this, just like, 'Kriminel seems receptive to things. I'd love to talk to them.'

[DRE CHUCKLES]

AUSTIN: Perfect.

SYLVI: 'I'd love to see what their idea of Devotion is.'

AUSTIN: Love it. Boom. Setting it up, giving you the +1 in it. Here we go.

SYLVI: Oh, thank you.

AUSTIN: You can go ahead and write that in, though. I just was doing the numbers part.

SYLVI: Okay, okay.

AUSTIN: Love it. Great. Yeah, that's—

SYLVI: Kriminel Collective?

AUSTIN: Kollage. Also with a K.

SYLVI: Kollage.

AUSTIN: Yeah. And I think that she's—you find her interested becau—and I think a big part of it is, eager to make a difference, eager to have power, eager to have power in that way that like, 'ah, if only I could do magic tricks, like summon the power of a god on my side, I could make this—' I mean, she wanted to resurrect a god because she thought it would help win the war and get the Bilats off the planet and get their homes back, right? Is desperately looking for a solution, is desperately looking for some way to get a leg up on these occupiers, whether that's—whatever that is.

SYLVI: Mhm.

AUSTIN: And you have already proven that you can do it through the strength of Devotion. Anybody else here want to get one of the benefits of the Social Space or Private Quarters roll?

DRE: Hmm.

AUSTIN: Which again, is “talk it out and clear someone else’s Peril as above,” again, an emotional or psychological or social Peril, which no one has— “encourage or demoralize someone: they’ll make their first move during the Sortie at advantage or disadvantage; spend time with someone you have Gravity with, advancing that Gravity; or rewrite a Hook, or press someone else to do the same.” You’ll note that Hooks with people actually have another kind of—what do you call it? Sorry, not Hooks with people, Hooks have Loose or Deep as like a subcategory, or as a subversion, and Loose Hooks—Hooks can get tighter or they can get looser, basically, right? They can become things you hold onto even more deeply, or things that you want to—you want them to change. By default, they start kind of neutral, but, when they—I’m gonna find the exact write-up here, just so we’re all on the same page. Here we go.

[20:19]

“Typically, Hooks can only be altered when you are prompted to do so. This might be a downtime scene, moves you have access to, or so on. However, sometimes they can be deepened or loosened. Acting in Desperation or Confidence and Biting the Dust are the primary sources of this.” I believe when you act in Confidence you can deepen it, and when you act in Desperation, you can loosen it. I believe. We’ll check it the next time someone has to roll like that. “Deep Hooks cannot be rewritten, forcibly or otherwise; Loose Hooks, on the other hand, can be rewritten whenever you feel like it. If a Loose Hook is deepened, it returns to normal.” So you could spend a move right now to, for instance—I mean, I don’t know that anybody necessarily wants to do this, but someone could spend a move, or spend a token rather, to press someone to rewrite a Hook—

[ALI CHUCKLES]

AUSTIN: —which would theoretically loosen a Hook on someone. Right? So someone could say, ‘hey, I’m gonna loosen one of Cori’s Tenets,’ for instance, which—

SYLVI: Wow.

DRE: Hmm.

AUSTIN: —I don't know that anyone is at the point where they're doing that yet, but you could.

DRE: Yeah.

AUSTIN: You could.

KEITH: Or you could strengthen it. Ha ha ha.

[ALI GIGGLES] [SYLVI LAUGHS]

DRE: That's true.

AUSTIN: Yeah, I guess it just says press someone to do it, it doesn't say that it has to, you know. But if not, I'm happy to let this roll. We've gotten some good Cori and Devotion stuff here.

KEITH: Mhm.

ALI: I am—I'm willing to spend a token here to encourage Cori.

AUSTIN: Oh, and give her advantage on the first move. Sure.

ALI: Yeah, yeah, yeah.

AUSTIN: What's that encouragement look like?

ALI: I think that it's Brnine kind of overseeing Cori talking with everybody, and completely out of context, and not understanding what's going on. Being like, 'good job, Cori!' [CHUCKLES]

[KEITH LAUGHS]

AUSTIN: 'You really—you're really getting out there. You did a good job this last mission.' But yeah, so I think it's—

SYLVI: Oh my god. Did you actually say 'you did a good job last mission'?

ALI: Yeah, yeah, yeah, well—yeah, I think I'm gonna be like 'hey, Cori—'

KEITH: You smashed a mech.

ALI: [CHUCKLES] Is this like—is this 'putting people on the ship' time or is it like—

AUSTIN: I just like—it sounded like this was like, on the way from place A to place B, Cori is—

ALI: Okay, okay.

AUSTIN: I guess actually, no, it wasn't, it was on the way back in from you getting stuff from the battlefield.

SYLVI: Yeah. The—what I'm picturing this as is like, I'm—I found like, a group of people while others are getting settled still.

AUSTIN: Mhm.

SYLVI: Like, I don't know how many people we're bringing onto the Blue Channel, but like...

AUSTIN: It was a few dozen. It was a few dozen, yeah.

SYLVI: Yeah. So like, things are still going.

ALI: Yeah, I ask, I guess, 'cause—yeah, this would be Brnine sort of like, on the way out to go do that, like, Gucci meeting thing that we spoke of before, like, big messenger bag and then being like—

ALI (as BRNINE): Hey, Cori, just—can I talk to you for a sec?

SYLVI (as CORIOLIS): Yes, Captain, of course! Oh my god.

[AUSTIN LAUGHS]

ALI (as BRNINE): Hi. Hey, it's just 'Brnine' when we're—but either way is fine. I just wanted to say that I know that you're new here, but I'm really happy with the—your performance in the last mission. Wasn't there for that like, knife stuff, but—

[DRE STIFLES LAUGHTER] [ALI CHUCKLES]

ALI (as BRNINE): I looked over some of the readouts afterwards. And, you know, I just want to say, I hope you're settling in good and, you know, thank you for the—for everything you've done so far.

SYLVI: Cori's eyes are somehow like, even bigger than usual.

SYLVI (as CORIOLIS): Thank you so much.

SYLVI: Just like—like, starts nodding a bunch. Like—

SYLVI (as CORIOLIS): I'm not going to let you down. I promise I'm going to keep it up. This is—thank you so—thank you.

ALI (as BRNINE): No, yeah, just keep doing what you do, and you're gonna fit in great here. I'm glad you're on the Blue Channel. Oh, um, one more thing. After our next sortie, we're gonna be having our movie night. I know this is going to be your first time, so you have dibs if you want, but no pressure.

SYLVI (as CORIOLIS): Oh my gosh. Um...

ALI (as BRNINE): You don't have to make the decision now. You don't even have to come. I'm just saying, if you do come—

SYLVI (as CORIOLIS): Yeah, yeah, yeah. Um...

ALI (as BRNINE): —you can choose the movie because it's your—because you're new.

SYLVI (as CORIOLIS): Th—thank you so much. I—

[DRE STIFLES LAUGHTER]

KEITH: It's going to be Devotion *Veggie Tales*.

[ALI LAUGHS]

SYLVI (as CORIOLIS): I won't let you down.

ALI (as BRNINE): Yeah, yeah, yeah. Yeah, yeah, yeah. Okay. Well, I gotta go, but I'll see you—I just wanted to check in with you before I left. But I'll see you in a couple days and, you know, keep doin' it.

SYLVI (as CORIOLIS): [STAMMERING] Yes—Brni—Brnine! Yes, Brnine!

[ALI LAUGHS]

AUSTIN: Alright. This sounds like a Gravity Clock starting to me, personally.

[ALI LAUGHS]

AUSTIN: Remember, you can start one for free. I don't—you know.

ALI: I'd be happy to. I'd be happy to.

AUSTIN: Are you both good with that? Because both people would start one. Okay. This is a Brnine—Cori Gravity Clock. Incredible.

JANINE: I've got a token to spend after this.

AUSTIN: Oh, yeah?

SYLVI: Um...

DRE: Hmm.

AUSTIN: What are you spending your token on, Thisbe?

JANINE: So, I think after this conversation, Thisbe has perhaps had a moment to go print off the photo—

AUSTIN: Mm. Mhm. Oh, good.

JANINE: —that they both went out to take.

DRE: Wait, what photo?

AUSTIN: Of Cori.

JANINE: The photo of Cori.

AUSTIN: Of Cori posing.

DRE: Oh, yeah, yeah, yeah.

AUSTIN: Yeah. Uh-huh.

JANINE: And being helpful, Thisbe goes over to Cori and hands over the photo and says—

JANINE (as THISBE): It is a good photo. You resemble a child at play.

SYLVI (as CORIOLIS): Thank you!

[AUSTIN SCOFFS] [DRE AND KEITH CHUCKLE]

JANINE: And I'm spending this token to loosen "you are a sword; strike down your adversaries with impunity."

[AUSTIN HUMS]

SYLVI: Ooh.

ALI: Ohh.

AUSTIN: Love this. Love it.

SYLVI: Yeah. I feel like the second you say that, Cori is just like, replaying it in her head. Both the killing blow, and then looking at the blood on the ground.

AUSTIN: Uh-huh.

SYLVI: It's like—

SYLVI (as CORIOLIS): [STRAINED] Okay. Thanks, Thisbe.

AUSTIN: Fuck.

JANINE: Thisbe doesn't mean it backhandedly. It's—you know? But—

SYLVI: No, I know.

DRE: That's why it hurts so much.

JANINE: Mhm.

SYLVI: That's why it's—yeah, that—genuinely.

AUSTIN: That's so good.

JANINE (as THISBE): Glad to help.

[ALI CHUCKLES]

SYLVI (as CORIOLIS): Thank you.

SYLVI: This is a good game.

AUSTIN: And then I'm going to spend a token—

JANINE: Nice.

AUSTIN: —on which I still have a bunch. That night, when you go to bed, your pulse picks up. And it gets faster and faster and faster. You can't tell if this is a message about something you did, or if this is a panic attack, or what. You... you know, think over the events of the day. I think it's hard not to think about whether or not you said something wrong during the sermon you were giving. And then all at once, it slows down. Back to normal, there's no—in fact, there's no transition. It doesn't slow down. It's like, [RAPIDLY] *bup, bup, bup, bup, bup, bup, bup, bup, bup*, [STEADILY] *bup... bup... bup... bup... bup...* and you're there, and you're back, and it shakes your confidence in yourself. You wonder if something is interfering with your—I don't know, you tell me—again, I'm not going to tell you what you believe here. But there's this strange thing that happens. It's as if you're having a nightmare, but it's a waking nightmare. So you're losing the bonus that Brnine just gave you.

[ALI GASPS]

AUSTIN: You do not roll with advantage.

SYLVI: That's okay.

AUSTIN: I'm taking that away from you. And as a reminder—I mean, mechanically, what is happening here is you are being—something is interfering, right? With this connection. Who could say what it is, but yeah. Alright. I think we have two more scenes to do.

DRE: Mhm.

AUSTIN: One from Brnine, and one from Figure. And then a Plan and Prepare roll to do at the very end.

DRE: Sure.

AUSTIN: Which currently, you're getting a bonus to. You're getting a +2d6 bonus to that right now, I believe. Who's up?

ALI: I'm happy to go.

AUSTIN: Alright. Let's do it.

ALI: Um... I'm—[CHUCKLES] I'm still torn between—

[DRE LAUGHS]

ALI: —a Fade and a Somewhere Nearby, because like, I don't need the mechanical stuff of Somewhere Nearby, but it's just like, funnier and feels like there's more there.

AUSTIN: Mhm. What's the—what is the—what's the mechanical thing that appeals? I mean, from Fade, you just get the Spotlight, which is always good, I guess, right?

ALI: Okay. Yeah, sure. You know what, I might need the Spotlight, because I don't—I'm not—I don't really be out and about like that.

KEITH: I mean, there's nothing wrong with getting resources, either.

ALI: Right.

AUSTIN: No, no.

KEITH: So like, Somewhere Nearby, worst case scenario, you've got a +2 resource or whatever. That's not bad.

AUSTIN: Right. Mhm.

ALI: But yeah, I'm going to explain what the scene is by setting up a short scene with Thisbe. I think this is—[CHUCKLES] later in this like, week to two weeks of this downtime or whatever.

AUSTIN: Mhm.

ALI: The ship is a little more empty. It's like an early morning. I don't know where I would come across Thisbe in the ship.

JANINE: To be honest, I think she's probably spending most of her time—she spent most of her time in the cargo bay before the people were there.

ALI: Mhm.

AUSTIN: Right.

JANINE: And I think that's just continuing.

ALI: Okay. Cool. I think Brnine's like, carrying a cup of coffee, walking very casually over to Thisbe. And is like—

[30:01]

ALI (as BRNINE): Whew, what a week, huh? How you doing?

JANINE (as THISBE): Fully operational.

ALI (as BRNINE): Great. Great. Glad to hear it. You, uh—you busy today?

JANINE: I think Thisbe looks around and says like—

JANINE (as THISBE): I'm finding many tasks.

ALI (as BRNINE): Mm. Oh, cool. Well, um, yeah, me and, uh—me and Hunting were gonna go off-ship for a little bit. He thinks, well—he thinks there might be like an arcade in one of the shopping centers down there. I think it might just be a night club, but either way, get the sound system going, you know? You want to come?

JANINE (as THISBE): Why?

ALI (as BRNINE): W—

[GROUP LAUGHTER]

AUSTIN: Fuck.

JANINE (as THISBE): What would I do?

ALI (as BRNINE): Well, you know, we're just going to hang out, you know, get a little *untz-untz* goin'.

[AUSTIN, SYLVI, AND ALI LAUGH]

DRE: You doin' another take on that one? A little what-what going?

JANINE: Is Brnine okay?

ALI: [LAUGHING] Turn the radio up.

SYLVI: Oh, I fucking love it!

JANINE: [LAUGHING] This is—

[ALI AND DRE CHUCKLE]

JANINE: Maybe it's been a while since PARTIZAN, but has Brnine ever spoken to Thisbe like this ever?

ALI: [LAUGHS] Maybe not? I think they like, hung—well, they went like, to that shopping arcade once, right? So there's like—

JANINE: Yeah. But I remember that being a little more like—

AUSTIN: Yeah, that time y'all bought—you bought like, a sash. Right? You bought like a cool sarong.

JANINE: Yeah, I just remember that being a little more like 'hey, I'm gonna go. Do you want to come to a place? Okay.' Like, this is a little more—

ALI: Yeah, 'hey, I'm going to a place. You want to come? I'm gonna go check out this ancient arcade.' [CHUCKLES]

JANINE: The tone is so different here, though.

ALI: I know, I've changed, I'm—

AUSTIN: Is this something that Thisbe would—yeah.

ALI: I'm a social butterfly.

[KEITH LAUGHS]

JANINE: I don't think Thisbe knows what to do with this, to be honest. [CHUCKLES]

ALI: [LAUGHS] Just for—I didn't say my Hooks before, or my Gravity Clocks before this.

AUSTIN: Oh, yeah, please. Yeah, wow, we've skipped that. Uh-huh. What are your Hooks?

ALI: Let me real quick just say that my current Gravity Clock with Thisbe is "Thisbe doesn't think I'm significant."

JANINE: Woah.

ALI: [LAUGHS] And my Hooks are "the crew put their faith in me, so I must prioritize their safety," "I will prove that Millennium Break can change lives," and "verify the integrity of everybody you let on your ship."

AUSTIN: Uh-huh. I mean, Thisbe, to be fair, yours was "Brnine is like everyone else."

[ALI CHUCKLES]

JANINE: That doesn't mean insignificant. I think there's insignificant, significant, and super significant, and, like—

ALI: [LAUGHING] Sure.

DRE: Sure.

JANINE: Brnine's not insignificant to Thisbe, they're just not super significant, either.

ALI: Well... [CHUCKLES]

AUSTIN: Uh-huh.

JANINE: It's just, Brnine is a person. Like a person—people, to Thisbe, are of course, valu—worthy of respect and stuff. But it's just—

AUSTIN: People are significant generally, but Thisbe—

JANINE: Brnine's not special.

AUSTIN: Yeah, go ahead, Brnine, change it from signi—say "Thisbe doesn't think I'm special."

[JANINE AND ALI LAUGH]

AUSTIN: I mean, no, you could keep it the way you want, because Brnine is perceiving it that way.

JANINE: Yeah, it's about Brnine's perception, right?

AUSTIN: Right? Yeah.

ALI: Yeah, I like 'significant.'

AUSTIN: Mhm.

JANINE: Yeah. I guess that's the thing is like, if Brnine thought that Thisbe was treating them normally before, when Thisbe was treating them beyond normally, was treating them a little bit preferentially, then Thisbe treating them normally would feel like a step down again.

ALI: Mhm.

AUSTIN: Mhm.

JANINE: So that's—yeah, that—I guess that makes sense.

AUSTIN: Yeah.

JANINE: Yeah, I think—I think Thisbe says, like—

JANINE (as THISBE): If you need me to accompany you, then I will.

ALI (as BRNINE): Well, you said you weren't busy, right?

[JANINE CHUCKLES]

JANINE (as THISBE): I have no strict orders at the moment.

ALI (as BRNINE): Yeah, then come through. I really hope it's an arcade, but I think either way it'll be fun. Maybe there'll be like an old fountain? Have you seen one of those old-timey fountains?

[DRE AND AUSTIN CHUCKLE]

JANINE: I—again, I don't—I don't know that Thisbe has like, the info—like, what is an old-timey fountain?

JANINE (as THISBE): Like a well?

ALI (as BRNINE): Yeah, but like, it shoots water out. Just for people to look at. I don't get it.

JANINE (as THISBE): To look at the water?

ALI (as BRNINE): Yeah. I don't know, they have all sorts of shit down there.

JANINE (as THISBE): What's the water used for?

ALI (as BRNINE): Well—w—I—aesthetics? I'll show—okay, well, then, now we gotta go find a fountain. Now we gotta—get your stuff. I'm gonna go see if anybody else wants to come.

JANINE (as THISBE): Mow? By 'stuff,' do you mean Mow?

ALI (as BRNINE): W—yeah, yeah, yeah, Mow can come.

[GROUP LAUGHTER]

DRE: 'Yeah, sure, you can bring your big gorilla. Yeah.'

JANINE: Thisbe's now like, 'oh, okay, so we might be in a fight. Okay. I understand. I'll bring Mow, I'll bring—'

[ALI CHUCKLES]

AUSTIN: Yeah, what—which of these incandescent maneuvers are you taking?

DRE: Wait, wait, wait.

JANINE: My grappling hook—

DRE: Hold on.

AUSTIN: Yeah.

KEITH: I want to spend a token to be in this, because if you think we're getting into a fight, maybe you go get Figure.

AUSTIN: Oh my god. Sure.

JANINE: I mean, Thisbe—I don't think Thisbe would. I think Thisbe like leaves that to—

DRE: Aw, okay.

AUSTIN: Right.

JANINE: I mean, Figure could see Thisbe gearing up and be like, 'alright, it's go time.' You know?

[ALI LAUGHS]

AUSTIN: Mhm.

DRE: Yeah. I mean listen, I gotta spend this token, or it's gone.

ALI: Brnine meets Hunting at the like, foot of the whatever in like a fucking—just like, chilling in

their weird tech shit. And then everybody shows up with guns.

[KEITH LAUGHS]

ALI: [LAUGHING] And the two of them look at each other like, 'what the fuck is going on?'

AUSTIN: Uh-huh.

JANINE: Yeah, I'm gonna check one of my modules here.

AUSTIN: Yeah.

JANINE: I'm bringing the Quintessence Cannon One Ranged/Ruin Hidden Limited.

AUSTIN: [LAUGHING] Yeah, good.

KEITH: This is Fade, right?

ALI: Yeah, this is Fade.

AUSTIN: This is Fade, is what we decided, yeah. Which lets you—

DRE: Oh, is this a Fade?

AUSTIN: Yeah. Uh-huh, we're fading.

DRE: Oh yeah, sure.

AUSTIN: You know? We're getting faded.

DRE: I would love to spend a token here.

[ALI CHUCKLES]

AUSTIN: Uh-huh. Love to advance a Spotlight and a Gravity Clock, you know?

ALI: Come through.

AUSTIN: God.

ALI: We're looking for an arcade.

KEITH: You know what? I could use another Spotlight. I've got one more token. I know—

DRE: 'Yo, Cori. Cori, you want to go to the arcade?'

KEITH: Phrygian—yeah, Phrygian walks out already in war form.

SYLVI (as CORIOLIS): [SHOUTING FROM A DISTANCE] Go to an arcade?

KEITH: Like, 'okay, I heard—this is the—' I say out loud—

KEITH (as PHRYGIAN): This is the hit and run, right?

[ALI, AUSTIN, AND DRE LAUGH]

ALI (as BRNINE): Uh, what?

KEITH (as PHRYGIAN): This is Gucci's hit and run job?

ALI (as BRNINE): Woah, woah, woah—

[LAUGHTER CONTINUES]

ALI (as BRNINE): We—I—we—I have a call scheduled with Gucci in three days.

AUSTIN (as HUNTING): What are they talking about, Captain?

ALI (as BRNINE): And that's—yep. That's all I have to say.

KEITH (as PHRYGIAN): No, the hit and run job.

ALI (as BRNINE): No. No, we're—we're—we're just going back to the Diadem.

KEITH (as PHRYGIAN): I'm developing a new weapon.

ALI (as BRNINE): Cool.

DRE (as FIGURE): Oh, what kind of weapon are you making?

KEITH (as PHRYGIAN): A version of my caustic breath that won't burn my allies.

ALI (as BRNINE): Mm.

DRE (as FIGURE): Oh!

AUSTIN (as HUNTING): That seems hard to make.

AUSTIN: Says Hunt.

KEITH (as PHRYGIAN): Nope. I should have made it like that to begin with. I wasn't thinking.

AUSTIN: Are you going to the arcade together as a big group? Is this now a group outing? Who are you leaving to take care of the ship?

ALI: Routine can hang out.

AUSTIN: Okay.

ALI: Midnite doesn't want to go. I think she's—she thinks she's cooler than the rest of us.

AUSTIN: Yeah, I think that's actually a hundred percent true about Midnite. Yeah, so Midnite and Routine stay behind.

ALI: A thing that I haven't been able to say out loud yet, but that's important about the crew and the Blue Channel, is that our people have the—where is this? Is it on my sheet? Oh, yeah, I have Marine Infantry and Cloaking Rituals. Marine Infantry basically means that like, the people who are in your crew are like, about it. They'll fight tooth and nail to defend the Carrier.

AUSTIN: [LAUGHS] And then in parentheses, 'bout it.

[ALI, KEITH, AND DRE LAUGH]

ALI: So, I think that like, of the like, core crew of the Blue Channel, they're like, pretty tight-knit, but Midnite is definitely somebody who thinks that she's cooler than us and like—but she keeps going to movie night so she can pick the movie, because she thinks that everything she's going to suggest is going to be better than what anybody else does.

AUSTIN: Oh my god.

ALI: Yeah, that's why I wanted to say—[LAUGHS]

AUSTIN: Midnite's—Midnite's, uh—what is the—

SYLVI: I love her. It's called a Midnite screening.

ALI: Yeah.

AUSTIN: I mean, literally her name is Midnite Matinee, so. [CHUCKLES]

[ALI CHUCKLES]

SYLVI: Yeah.

AUSTIN: Her Letterboxd account is just choice.

ALI: Mhm.

SYLVI: Oh my god.

DRE: Curated.

AUSTIN: Yeah. Uh-huh.

SYLVI: Everybody going to check Midnite's Twitter when the Oscars are going on.

[ALI LAUGHS]

AUSTIN: Uh-huh. Absolutely. Alright, who is—everyone who spends a token gets to advance a Gravity Clock and a Spotlight.

SYLVI: Oh.

AUSTIN: And tell me what that looks like. I just want a snapshot of every person who's going on this trip—

KEITH: Oh—

AUSTIN: —carrying their military gear, but also knowing they're going to the arcade/fountain.

ALI: Yeah, we're like, breaking into like, a mall, essentially.

AUSTIN: Yeah. Uh-huh.

DRE: Oh.

ALI: Because we thought we saw an arcade in there. It could be a night club.

SYLVI: Oh my god, we're going to go crash the mall. Just like Avril Lavigne.

[ALI CHUCKLES]

KEITH: I just want to note real quick, since we did Thine Own Self Be Clock afterwards. We noted—we said already that I didn't have any exchanging blows—

AUSTIN: Ah, right.

KEITH: —but I had done another Fade, so I'm actually at three now instead of two.

AUSTIN: Yes, go ahead and mark that up. Yeah, yeah, yeah, that makes sense. Totally. Cool. So that's the last—so what do these look like?

[40:00]

Give me a snapshot of you in the mall—you know, I think Hunt has like—either you or Hunt, I guess, have like, reactivated the power to this sector, so that the entire—this whole section of the Diadem turns back on. Which means, like, you get whatever the recording of this area would have been. You know, there's like, the fountains turn on, there's voices—there's a voice coming over being like, you know, 'make sure to stock up on holiday goodies!' You know, 'Founder's—Cadent's Day is only three weeks away!' And I'm guessing that you're probably in part of this that you've been in before, right? I mean, you basically said, 'oh, we're going—we saw this thing there.'

ALI: Yeah.

AUSTIN: So I'm going to move your token up to like, this area to the—just to the east of where you—of where we started. Maybe actually over the ocean part of the Diadem so that it's like, you're not on the—you didn't land on the ground near one of these major Principality places, you know? So yeah, I think you're going through there, and there—stores have all lit up, and the arcade games turn on in 'attract' mode, you know, it's—

KEITH: It is an arcade? It's not just a night club?

ALI: Let me roll a 1d2 real quick.

AUSTIN: Yeah, there you go. 1 is arcade, 2 is night club.

KEITH: We put the 'fun' in 'funicular.'

ALI: 1 is arcade.

AUSTIN: Yeah, the 1 is an arcade. So yeah, it says "Tilt". And it's a big arcade.

SYLVI: Oh my god.

AUSTIN: And it is—yeah, you're able to go in and play some games? There's also just like other—like, you know, there's like a pretzel shop that's turned on, but like—there's no food in there. It's been thousands of years. [LAUGHS] Many of these places are just ruined, covered in dust.

KEITH: Phrygian is playing pretzel shop. They don't know that it's not one of the games.

[ALI CHUCKLES]

AUSTIN: You put on a little hat. You put on a little pretzel to your hat.

[KEITH AND ALI CHUCKLE]

DRE: New high score, baby.

AUSTIN: What else is—yeah, so what else—what's your day out look like? Sylvi, yeah—Sylvi, do you want to read what you just said?

SYLVI: There was an arcade bar in Toronto that closed after it burnt down named Tilt. And so I'm just picturing that place.

AUSTIN: Tilt is like a classic arcade name. There are just tons of them across the world.

KEITH: Oh, I've never heard of a Tilt before.

SYLVI: Oh, I bet.

DRE: Oh, yeah.

KEITH: My local arcade was called the Dream Machine.

AUSTIN: That's great.

DRE: Oh, that's good.

KEITH: The arcade that we went to in New Hampshire that was like 45 minutes away was called Pinball Wizard.

[AUSTIN AND DRE HUM]

AUSTIN: So yeah, what is—and just to get back to it really quick, Thisbe—when this becomes clear that it is not a mission, what is Thisbe's feeling around it?

JANINE: Um—I mean, I don't—a mission can be a lot of things, right?

AUSTIN: So yeah, yeah. Sure.

[ALI CHUCKLES]

JANINE: And a lot of missions that they've done, their value has not been—like, I don't want to say, 'oh, she doesn't get that it's not a mission.' I think it's just that like, often they do missions where like, to her, it seems like a waste of fucking time. Or it just seems like—'I don't know why I'm here, but I'm gonna break this thing, because I guess that's what I'm supposed to do.' So I think there's a degree to which like, you know, this—she realizes like, 'oh, this isn't really a combat mission,' but also this area isn't like, guaranteed super safe. Like, there's still the chance of something happening. So she's probably like, functionally keeping watch. But like, I also kind of imagine her like—because you mentioned the pretzel place that's all like, thousands of years old and there's—you know, it's all like that. I was thinking about the like, fast food restaurants in Pompeii, that they dug out.

AUSTIN: Mhm.

JANINE: And with that comes like, all the graffiti from Pompeii—

AUSTIN: Yeah.

JANINE: There's like political graffiti, like 'vote for so-and-so, he will feed your cattle,' and whatever.

[KEITH CHUCKLES]

JANINE: So I'm kind of imagining Thisbe like, half keeping guard and half, like, looking at this like, thousands of years old graffiti and like, maybe occasionally recognizing something that's mentioned.

AUSTIN: I mean, truly, you were built to make places like this, right? Like, not literally the pretzel shop, right? But units of your like, era, would have helped dig the Diadem out, right?

JANINE: Mhm.

AUSTIN: I mean, I suspect a Divine dug out most of the Diadem to begin with, it's such a huge project, right? But once it—once the core base was dug out—you know, I was looking over our old notes for Thisbe recently, and one of the things that came up as a touchstone was the truly unhinged belief from Andrew Yang while he was running for office, of a unit of military builders and destroyers. I don't know if you remember that absolute nonsense.

JANINE: Yeah.

DRE: Oh, yeah, I remember that. Yeah.

SYLVI: Oh, Jesus.

KEITH: I do vaguely remember. What was that about? Builders and destroyers?

AUSTIN: He wanted to like, go around with a military unit to destroy abandoned buildings and build and rebuild—you know, that's—the military should definitely be the—

DRE: It was like his infrastructure shit, right?

KEITH: It's the Andrew Yang-ification of an infrastructure bill.

AUSTIN: That is exactly what it is. Exactly. Like, what if we could tech and military it up, basically? I'm trying to remember the exact phrasing of it. But it was—it was—

DRE: I'm pretty sure it was like, 'builders and destroyers.'

AUSTIN: That sounds right. It really does. I'm not searching my—I can't search my history for Andrew Yang any more than I've already done. It hurts my brain to do.

DRE: Yeah. No, don't.

AUSTIN: [CHUCKLES] I can't believe anyone ever thought that he was serious. Anyway—

DRE: That's opposite of self-care, is what you're describing. [CHUCKLES]

AUSTIN: Exactly. Exactly. Anyway, yeah, the—so yeah, I imagine you have this—first and foremost, this stuff was built by people like—whose bodies were, at least, like yours. Or by machines, again, we have a lot of questions about—or a lot of—there's a lot of space that we've spent on talking about the way that Mow, for instance, is sentient, but does not seem to have the same perspective on the world that you do, or the same degree of like, what we would call sapience. Right? And, you know, beings like Mow definitely helped build this place. Beings like you were probably more—we've talked about you as being more agricultural. So, maybe not this particular project. But yeah, I think you definitely recognize the elements of that sort of thing, right? I don't know that it's political graffiti because—I mean, unless you were literally here on Palisade, which is not a thing we've discussed at all. And if it is something you're interested in, this could be the moment to open that up, right? And begin working down that path, if you do recognize something here.

JANINE: No, I was thinking about like, galactic-level type.

AUSTIN: And that's the thing. This place—

JANINE: Like, 'this moon sucks.'

AUSTIN: This place predates that. Right?

JANINE: Okay.

AUSTIN: This is—and I think maybe that's part of it, is why I'm leaning on like, less graffiti and more like you recognize the USB ports. Right?

JANINE: Mm.

AUSTIN: You recognize the firmware. You're like—it's like seeing a, you know, something boots up, and it's like when one of us sees something from Windows 98, or from—you know what I mean? Or like, the first IOS.

JANINE: Like finding your old Tamagotchi.

AUSTIN: Exactly. You're like, 'ah, yeah. Huh.' Right? Because this is the birthplace of the Divine Principality. And it was beings like you who helped spread it to the stars, who were the servants of that force, of that, you know, conquering army. They would come and conquer places, and then beings like you would work the soil over. And at this point, when the Diadem was built, the Divine Principality was not even the Divine Principality quite yet. It was an alliance between the Divine Free States and the Principality of Kesh. Right? And so it's interesting. You're touching this prehistorical moment, in a sense, for the Divine Principality. Or what they think of it as a prehistorical moment. So—so yeah, I think it's more that sort of recognizing old tech than—unless, again, unless you really, really were early, in which case we can talk about what that would look like, but.

[ALI CHUCKLES]

AUSTIN: Which is possible. We know that you're from an earlier time. You know what I mean? Like, you were dug out of the fucking dirt, so. Who knows?

ALI (as BRNINE): Yo, Thisbe, they have a copy of Dance Dreamer 2. Get in here.

JANINE (as THISBE): I don't know what that is.

[ALI LAUGHS]

AUSTIN: Oh my god.

KEITH: Can I tell you how close you were on this? You were one word off.

ALI: Huh?

AUSTIN: What was it?

KEITH: Legion. Legion of Builders and Destroyers.

AUSTIN: Legion. Unbelievable.

DRE: Jesus. That's even worse.

KEITH: Yeah.

AUSTIN: Thank you.

DRE: I do—I wonder if this is like, maybe the first time where the tension of Brnine and Thisbe is like, this pointed and obvious to Figure.

[ALI CHUCKLES]

DRE: And I think Figure is kind of curious, and they want to ask, I think they're going to ask Thisbe—

DRE (as FIGURE): What's—so what's the deal with you and the Captain?

ALI: [QUIETLY] Oh god.

JANINE (as THISBE): Operant Brnine has—

DRE: Wait, don't you not—out of character, don't you not call them that anymore?

JANINE: No, no, no, I do. Everyone's 'operant.'

DRE: Okay.

[50:02]

JANINE: Except for—I think the Witch wouldn't be. I don't—I think Thisbe pointedly didn't call Clem an operant, if I recall correctly. Um...

JANINE (as THISBE): Operant Brnine—

AUSTIN: They're just not a uniquely privileged operant anymore. That's the difference, right?

JANINE: Yeah, yeah.

AUSTIN: Okay.

JANINE: Operant—I don't want to say 'worked together in the past,' because I don't think that's the right phrasing. Maybe it would be...

JANINE (as THISBE): I have performed for Operant Brnine in the past.

DRE (as FIGURE): I mean, I know—I mean, you were one of the original folks, right? In the old crew? Before it became Millennium Break?

JANINE (as THISBE): Yes.

DRE (as FIGURE): So did something happen or... you just—you seem to treat them differently than you do everyone else? And I want to know, do I need to like, watch my back? Not from you, like from—from Brnine. Like, should I not trust them?

JANINE (as THISBE): I tend to the Twill because they need extra care, and should be shown such. And I, for various reasons, am able to do so and free to do so.

JANINE: I think here, Thisbe thinks like, that Figure's asking like, 'why are you treating the Twill so specially?' Because again, to like, Thisbe, I don't think Thisbe thinks that she's treating Brnine different than she would treat anyone, like Figure, or Cori, or... you know.

ALI: Right, and I guess that's the specific thing, like, Thisbe's treating Brnine like they do everybody else, but Brnine is like, 'hey, Thisbe's back in town!' [CHUCKLES]

AUSTIN: Uh-huh.

JANINE: Yeah.

[KEITH AND DRE LAUGH]

ALI: 'Remember *Saber*?' Like that's—that's where Brnine is at and it's just like—

DRE: 'What a crazy time!'

ALI: [CHUCKLING] It's just like, weird energy.

JANINE: Yeah, the contrast is—yeah.

[GROUP CHUCKLES]

DRE (as FIGURE): Okay. What does that word mean? "Operant"? Like, do you take orders from them?

JANINE (as THISBE): Yes. An operant is someone who is qualified to command.

DRE (as FIGURE): So do you not—do you not get a say?

JANINE (as THISBE): I can evaluate the quality of commands.

DRE (as FIGURE): Okay. So—so you think Brnine is trustworthy? I don't have anything to worry about?

JANINE (as THISBE): Brnine is competent in their work.

DRE (as FIGURE): Okay, so I—

JANINE: Sorry—

JANINE (as THISBE): Operant Brnine is competent in their work.

DRE (as FIGURE): If I needed help with something that didn't just need competence, but needed confidence, is Brnine someone that you would say I should go to first?

JANINE (as THISBE): It perhaps depends on the matter. I do not think Brnine would be—I do not think Operant Brnine would be suited to help one select wardrobe, or—

ALI: Hey.

[JANINE LAUGHS]

KEITH: Burn. Small burn.

JANINE: I didn't mean—I didn't mean it like that.

[ALI, KEITH, AND DRE LAUGH]

JANINE (as THISBE): Or to manage a child for a short period of time. But other tasks Operant Brnine is perfectly suited to assisting with.

KEITH: Not good with clothes, not good with kids.

AUSTIN: Eh.

JANINE: It was more just like, not, you know, not like—I guess Thisbe probably thinks like, not like, superficial tasks, or like, very delicate tasks. Is I think the distinction that she's making here.

DRE (as FIGURE): Yeah. Okay. Um... Alright, I guess I'm going to go play... skee ball? Is that how you pronounce that?

ALI: Are you asking Thisbe or real life? [CHUCKLES]

[JANINE LAUGHS]

DRE: [LAUGHING] Asking Thisbe.

KEITH: In real life, it is skee ball.

JANINE: I thought of a joke, but it's like a joke I didn't want to make, about Thisbe being like, 'I think it's pronounced skibble.' [LAUGHS] But that's—I don't think she would think that, it's just an idea that I had that I thought was funny to me personally.

AUSTIN: Mhm.

DRE: That is funny.

JANINE: She maybe just like, has a long pause between 'skee' and 'ball,' but.

AUSTIN: Right, right.

DRE: Oh, sure. It's an em dash. Yeah, yeah, yeah.

JANINE: Yeah.

JANINE (as THISBE): Enjoy yourself.

AUSTIN: Alright. Any other shots of people here? And also, again, like, you can start a new clock and advance it here if that's a thing you're interested in doing. Just make sure we say that out loud so that we all know that that's happening, you know?

DRE: Yeah. I was gonna try and start a clock with Thisbe, but I don't know—I don't know what it would be. And I don't think there was anything that came out of that conversation that feels clock-worthy.

JANINE: Thisbe's kind of a tough nut to crack, I'm sorry. [CHUCKLES]

DRE: No, that's fair. No.

JANINE: It's hard.

AUSTIN: Mhm. I do think that Thisbe—excuse me, I do think the Thisbe—Brnine one here should be advanced, though.

ALI: Yeah, I had a question with that. When it starts, does it have one tick and then it goes to two now, or did I have zero and then now it's one?

AUSTIN: It—I believe you had zero and now it's—

JANINE: Yeah.

ALI: Okay.

AUSTIN: I believe that you—yeah, if you just declared one earlier, it's zero. But if you'd like, declared one and started it—like right now, the one that if Dre had started one, that would get one tick here and go up to one from zero, I believe. I believe that that's true.

DRE: Oh, okay.

JANINE: Because of the [??? 56:35], right? No?

AUSTIN: [OVERLAPPING] Oh, you know what? Wait, wait, wait, wait, wait. No, no. I'm wrong. When you start a—

DRE: [OVERLAPPING] No, when you start it, it goes up to one. Yeah.

AUSTIN: When you start a—yeah, we read this earlier, didn't we? Yes, which is: "Gravity—" it says explicitly— "when you start a new Gravity Clock, choose a word or short phrase that sums up the relationship and give it a—" oh, no, that's give it a value of +1, not give it a tick, Dre.

DRE: Ohh.

AUSTIN: So its value is +1. And then because you did that scene earlier—

DRE: Well, let me fix this again.

AUSTIN: Because you did that scene earlier, it goes up to one tick.

DRE: Yeah. Okay.

AUSTIN: Yeah. Okay. So, in this case—

ALI: So I created mine with Thisbe last episode and I am now ticking it.

AUSTIN: And now you're ticking it once, correct.

ALI: Okay.

DRE: Gotcha, gotcha, gotcha.

JANINE: But I don't, because I didn't spend a token, right?

AUSTIN: It is the same clock, so it matches.

JANINE: Oh, okay.

ALI: Oh.

JANINE: Interesting.

AUSTIN: So either—whenever either of you advance it, it advances. I believe that that is true. I'll double-check it right now.

DRE: Oh.

JANINE: That makes sense, but—

AUSTIN: Mhm. Let's see.

ALI: Oh, that's fun.

AUSTIN: Ba-ba-ba-ba, positive... Yes, "they are shared between two players, or a player and the Director, and represent the relationship and how these characters see each other. When the clock advances, it advances for everyone involved, they are both sharing the same clock and the same progress."

ALI: That's fun. Okay.

AUSTIN: Mhm. So if you did both spend, that would mean it did go up to two, but if only one of you spent a token, it would only go up by one, you know.

ALI: Mhm.

AUSTIN: So. Any other clocks that are ticking here as part of this? Are you advancing your Own Self Be Clock? Did you already do that? Phrygian?

KEITH: Yes. Yep. I did advance that, yeah.

AUSTIN: Okay.

DRE: Oh no.

AUSTIN: And that one—that's your last one. And then I guess, yeah, Figure and Cori are the only other people—Cori, are you advancing yours?

SYLVI: Um—

DRE: Huh, Cori?

AUSTIN: With Brnine, or with Figure, or—I don't think there is a Figure one yet, but.

DRE: No.

SYLVI: I don't have a Figure one quite yet.

DRE: You want to make one?

SYLVI: We could. Nothing's jumping to mind right this sec—

DRE: Yeah.

SYLVI: Because we didn't really talk. We've just been around each other.

AUSTIN: Mhm.

ALI: Play some—play some foosball. You know, get something going.

AUSTIN: This is a wild arcade.

[ALI CHUCKLES]

DRE: I've seen foosball in an arcade.

KEITH: Yeah, I've seen foosball in an arcade.

AUSTIN: I guess so.

KEITH: Even so, it's, you know, one step away from air hockey, which is an arcade classic.

ALI: Oh, sure.

DRE: Agreed. Agreed.

SYLVI: [IMITATING ARCADE ANNOUNCER] 'Certified arcade classic.'

[AUSTIN AND DRE CHUCKLE]

KEITH: That's the little voice that's saying that near the foosball table. [CHUCKLES]

[AUSTIN AND DRE LAUGH]

KEITH: To convince anyone that might have questions about it.

SYLVI: Playing nonstop.

AUSTIN: 'Certified—certified arcade classic.' [MIMICS EXPLOSION SOUND EFFECT]

SYLVI: Occasionally there's like, gunshot sound effects. It's real weird.

AUSTIN: Yeah, uh-huh. Yeah.

KEITH: [MIMICS GUNSHOT SOUND EFFECT] 'Foosball!'

AUSTIN: Funplex some—yeah, uh-huh.

KEITH: 'Foosball in your face!'

AUSTIN: Funplex sometimes rewinds and starts from the top, uh-huh. Yeah.

DRE: More fire.

AUSTIN: Are we done? Is—are we done with the arcade visit? Or is there—it feels like we may be done with the arcade visit.

SYLVI: I think so.

AUSTIN: Okay.

DRE: Yeah.

ALI: I'm glad everyone came. Thanks everybody. [CHUCKLES]

AUSTIN: Love to have a time out with the crew. Alright, final—

SYLVI: I did really bad at the light gun games, but it's fine.

AUSTIN: You're more of a melee combatant. That makes sense.

SYLVI: Exactly. Yeah. Give me a sword and I'm good.

AUSTIN: Mhm.

KEITH: I thought this was going to be a mission. It's much better than doing bad on a mission.

AUSTIN: Right. Yeah. Uh-huh. That's true. Figure. Last scene, huh?

DRE: Yeah. Yeah.

[1:00:00]

DRE: Um, I—I think, I'm not even going to say I want to, I need to do a Fade.

AUSTIN: Yeah.

DRE: Because I need to set up my—I guess it's not even just a Rival Clock, but it's my—or my Gravity Clock, it's my Rival Clock with the Witch in Glass.

ALI: Let's fucking go.

AUSTIN: I love this. I love to set up a rival with the Witch in Glass, a rivalry.

DRE: Yeah.

AUSTIN: Yeah, that—so, I’m—you know, maybe the last of this, again, I said this earlier, but a big group of the Twill who need to be dropped off need to be dropped off here at the Crown of Glass. Partly because it’s the most territory that an allied group controls. Also, it’s the most territory that an allied group controls that is not the middle of a desert, for these plant people, you know? I think that they probably do well in the swampy environs of the Crown of Glass, what used to be this kind of southeastern continent, towards the southeast of all of Palisade’s big land mass. And I think that there is probably—I mean, Dre, how do you want to frame this scene? Is this—are you going to visit the Witch in Glass?

DRE: Well, I mean—so, one of my Hooks is that I can’t escape the Witch in Glass no matter how far I run. I think that’s how it’s written.

AUSTIN: Mhm. Mhm.

DRE: “No matter how far I run, I’m still tethered to the Witch in Glass.”

AUSTIN: Love it.

DRE: And I mean, in that way, like, I am reliant on the Witch in Glass not just for like, my mech and my equipment, but like, I am a creature of her magic.

AUSTIN: Yeah. I mean, we—

DRE: And I think—go ahead.

AUSTIN: I really thought we released this somewhere, but maybe we only talked about it on an episode when we first began, but, you know, there’s this whole section in the Imposter playbook that explains that like, you are—to play an Imposter, depending on what your arcane augments are—which, again, you have this move, right? That is: “Impostors control their Altars using magical augmentations, like artificial limbs or organs. These augmentations allow a non-magic user to power and control an Altar, but otherwise do not interfere with your life, unless you, the player, decide that they do so. Being bonded to magic in this way often leads to it affecting the body or vice versa. Irreversibly tying their magic to their emotional and physical state, your Channel is increased by one for each danger you have up to +3,” which is sick. And then you also—

KEITH: Doesn’t that mean you could theoretically have a +6 Channel?

AUSTIN: No, up to a max of +3.

KEITH: Oh, that—+3 in addition to the normal max +3.

[DRE LAUGHS]

AUSTIN: That is just the max. The max is +3.

KEITH: Right.

DRE: Max is +3, yeah.

AUSTIN: Exactly. “To play an Imposter is to, depending on what your arcane augments are and why you got them, invite questions about the body; about disability, transhumanism, being transgender, loss of bodily autonomy to the Authority or otherwise, and so on. It might not be the focus of your campaign, or even your character, to tackle this in-depth, but you should be actively thinking about the place of these things and the people affected by them in your world. It’s the playbook most indulged in mecha anime tropes with moves like Face to Face, Resonance, Bull-headed, and Let Loose, all letting themselves to various kinds of hot-blooded actions.” And then there’s this list that says “consider” and there’s this big list of like, where’d you get your augments? What are they made of? How does this relate to disability? And you and I went through all of these when we were making the Figure in Bismuth in *Beam Saber*, because we knew that they would be your character in *Armour Astir* at that point.

DRE: Mhm. Yeah.

AUSTIN: And so we already talked about a lot of this, and what you’re getting at, right, is you’re tethered to the Witch in Glass because she is—you know, it’s funny, they write, “is there a loss of bodily autonomy to the Authority or otherwise?” And for us, it’s “otherwise,” because the Witch in Glass is not the Authority. But neither is she the Cause. [CHUCKLES] And you have lost some bodily autonomy because it is, like you said, her magic, and the magic of Perennial, that lets you continue to live, right?

DRE: Mhm.

AUSTIN: So is this like—how often do you have to go home—not home. How often do you have to go back to the Crown of Glass to get like, whatever this, you know, magical checkup or a rejuvenation of magical energy, like, what is it? What is the actual upkeep of your magical augments, the kind of crystalline formations that keep you alive? What’s that look like?

DRE: Mm. Um, I think it is—it is not like a specific thing. Like, it’s not that I have to go in and like, kneel at the throne—

AUSTIN: Okay.

DRE: Or like, go into a *Batman* Lazarus Pit or something like that.

AUSTIN: Uh-huh.

DRE: What I think it is, I just have to be in the area, but to be close enough to the Witch, I think also means that the Witch is close enough to me that like, Figure has no privacy around anything.

AUSTIN: Mm. Mhm.

DRE: This—this is why Figure gets to go to Millennium Break, is because once Figure comes back, as they are bound to do, the Witch knows, sees, hears everything that Figure knows, has seen, has heard.

AUSTIN: So there is like, a passing of information and knowledge between this.

DRE: That sounds more passive than I am imagining this being.

AUSTIN: Okay.

DRE: It is not pleasant. It is an invasion. It is a taking.

AUSTIN: Okay. Yeah. Yeah. That seems perfectly within the sort of actions that the Witch in Glass would do without a second thought.

DRE: Yeah.

AUSTIN: Is this a—are you knelt in front of her? Are you—what is the visual component of this? Or do we not want to zoom in beyond you going into closed doors?

DRE: Yeah, I think it is—the only visual that I really have thought of, and I don't want to go deeper than that, just because I don't want to do something—

AUSTIN: Mhm.

DRE: —like, shallow without giving it proper thought, is I think it is that Figure spends a lot of time outside of a certain threshold, like, at the palace.

AUSTIN: Interesting.

DRE: And then like, they take one very large sigh, and take a step in. And I think that's like, where—

AUSTIN: Totally.

DRE: —it cuts, because that's the threshold where, like, they know this is where—this is where like, that mental autonomy disappears.

AUSTIN: Mhm. Yeah. Totally. You leave with, then, extra Spotlight on this—not a Spotlight, sorry. Or yeah, it is, right? You do it to get to advance Spotlight here.

DRE: Mhm.

AUSTIN: And you wanted to start a long-term project? Is that right?

DRE: Um—

AUSTIN: Or do you just want to use the Gravity—no, we want to just use the Gravity Clock.

DRE: Yeah. We want to use the Gravity Clock.

AUSTIN: The Witch in Glass Rivalry Clock. That makes sense.

DRE: Mhm.

AUSTIN: So go ahead and advance that by one. What is it—what's it say? I actually—I should read from “Rivals,” because Rivalry Clocks are a little different than regular ones, aren't they?

DRE: Yeah, they are.

AUSTIN: Let's go to “Rivals” really quick here.

DRE: It's on page 132.

AUSTIN: Yes. Okay. “Rivals are recurring characters who appear again and again to challenge specific players who have earned their attention. Mechanically speaking, they are main actors with a Gravity Clock with whoever they're a rival to.” They, meaning the rival, also has a need, which is what the rival's faction demands of them or what they're obligated to do. It's a thing that the rival—in this case, the Witch in Glass has a need, and then also a want, what they want from their counterpart, which helps direct the fiction, but also provides them with leverage. That the Director, me, may use against you, Dre, against the Figure in Bismuth, whenever—whichever player is involved with the rival. So, we need—the Witch in Glass is gonna have a—has a name, the Witch in Glass. She has a need, which in this case is about her loyalty to Perennial or her—she needs to stay in Perennial's good graces, right? She needs to continue to be—to have Perennial's power on her side, right?

DRE: Mhm.

AUSTIN: And then she has a want from you, which I think is, and let's talk this through a little bit, like, to be an effective soldier, or something? To be an effective weapon or an effective tool? What do you think? What do you feel that want is?

DRE: Uh... I think—yeah, it is “to be a useful and obedient tool.”

AUSTIN: Perfect. Yeah, that sounds exactly right to me. Now, when you, the Figure, interfere with this need, which, again, I would go ahead and write down, you know, to sustain—to kind of—what is it really for her? It is—I mean, her need, is her need really about Per—oh, you know what? We have these answers, don't we? Do we—we have—we have laws for this, don't we?

DRE: Oh?

AUSTIN: Did we write those down? Did we ever write down—we must have. ‘The Tower, Witch in Glass.’

DRE: Oh, yeah.

AUSTIN: Yeah, the Tower, Chorus Island. We truly do just have this, which is funny. Ahem. I'd love to open up an old document here. “Laws: there's a reason why I'm alive.” Da-da-da-da-da. I would say, based on my quick interpretation of these laws that she wrote for herself through her interpretation of what Perennial put her through, it is to ensure that the wheel turns. And this is me interpreting “everything that has happened will happen—that has happened before will happen again.” She sees herself as enacting Perennial's cycle. And then her want is to you—you to be an effective and obedient tool, which I like a lot.

Now, any time that you, Figure, interfere with the Witch in Glass's need, stopping her from doing Perennial's bidding effectively, or any time that she indulges in your want—sorry, any time that you indulge in her want by being a useful tool, you—

[1:10:00]

I get to Hold 1. Is that right? Yes, I get to Hold 1 any time you basically do what I want, or get in the way of my need, right? In the Witch's need. Then I can spend that Hold one-for-one to either let you act in Confidence or Desperation. So I can kind of dangle that over you and be like, 'I could spend this Hold to give you a little confidence right now,' or 'if you don't do what I say, I'm going to make you act in desperation.' I can ask a challenging question that must be answered. Or, I can appear somewhere that I am not expected. The 'I' here is Clementine Kesh, the Witch in Glass. It also says that rivals don't need to explicitly be foes that are gunning for a player in an antagonistic way, which I think is true at this point, right? Right now you're being relied on as a useful tool, and so it is not out-and-out antagonistic. It is just deeply abusive and bad.

DRE: Yeah.

AUSTIN: You are a tool. You are being treated as a tool. You are not being treated as an end in and of yourself. I don't think Clementine Kesh has much respect for you, except for the way that you might respect a really nice knife. You know? 'Oh yeah, you're one of my favorites. I love to work with you because you do a good job,' you know?

DRE: Mm.

AUSTIN: So. There's your new rivalry. And I imagine that you would love to get the way that—[CHUCKLES] you would love for that thing to advance and change over time into different directions, huh?

DRE: Yeah. [LAUGHS] Yeah, 'cause I guess like, for the—that's like, mechanically speaking, that's the benefit for the player, is that like, by pushing this Gravity Clock forward and things like that, you can change it.

AUSTIN: I would imagine so, right? 'Cause it is like any other Gravity Clock. It advances, and like other Gravity Clocks, you can change what the terms of it are, right?

DRE: Mhm.

AUSTIN: I mean, in the description, I would note that the stuff that we were just talking about around needing to return to her in order to sustain your magical well-being. Your life, effectively, like, your life force will be drained out of you if you don't do this. Right?

DRE: Yeah.

AUSTIN: That is an absolute—like, you wrote the word "tether" earlier and that is true. Right?

DRE: Mhm.

AUSTIN: And in this case, I think she is, you know, towards that want of hers, about wanting you to be a useful and obedient tool, she makes a request of you during this visit. Like Brnine, the Witch in Glass seems to have gotten a little bit of a heads-up on what this next mission of yours is. And she tells you—does she refer to you as the Figure? Does she say the full name? Does she say “Figure in Bismuth,” does she call you—what does she call you?

DRE: That’s a good question.

KEITH: Figgy.

[DRE CHUCKLES]

AUSTIN: I don’t think it’s Figgy. I don’t think—yeah. No, I don’t think—

DRE: I think it is—I think it is “the Figure in Bismuth,” and only that.

AUSTIN: And only that.

DRE: It’s always the full name.

AUSTIN (as THE WITCH IN GLASS): The Figure in Bismuth, I have one more task for you. On this next sortie, you will be sent to disrupt someone’s travel. I need you to bring them to me. You understand?

DRE (as FIGURE): And if there’s any resistance from Millennium Break?

AUSTIN (as THE WITCH IN GLASS): That’s part of the task, isn’t it? Let me handle with the explanation after it’s done. They don’t know what they have, like always. And I mean that about you, too, of course. I fear they’re under-utilizing you.

DRE (as FIGURE): If you—if this is your wish, it will be done.

AUSTIN: And she gives you a little nod from behind the Russian sage that serves as a mask.

DRE: Right. Okay. I get up and I turn and I walk away.

AUSTIN: Mhm. Alright. Well, you took your Spotlight already, right?

DRE: Mhm.

AUSTIN: And is that your last token? Or do you not—yeah. It was a scene, you didn’t actually have a token, right? Yeah.

DRE: Yeah, I used my two tokens, yeah. Mhm.

AUSTIN: Cori, you have a token left, right? Are you the only other person with tokens?

SYLVI: Yeah, I think so. I’m still not entirely sure, ‘cause I was like, thinking about the way—I’ve been trying to think of how to use these for a long time. [CHUCKLES]

AUSTIN: Uh-huh.

SYLVI: And my brain just keeps going back to the one where it's like, well, you can use it to like, clear stuff, or like, help people out—

AUSTIN: Well, in this case, it is very direct, because it's just the thing from Fade, which is—was this—this was Fade, right, Dre?

DRE: Yeah, that was.

AUSTIN: Yeah. Then all you can do with it is pass time, either gaining a point of Spotlight, and spending time with somebody and advancing a Gravity Clock with them. So this could be you spending time with Brnine off-ship, or spending time with Kriminel Kollage, you know, or starting another clock, if you wanted a third clock here in the Crown of Glass, up to you. Or not doing any of that, yep.

SYLVI: I just thought of a very cute idea of like, something small we don't need to necessarily play out completely, of Cori trying to figure out a movie, and has brought Kriminel Kollage along.

[ALI CHUCKLES]

AUSTIN: Oh, that's great.

DRE: That's very good.

AUSTIN: It's worth saying like, the Crown of Glass is like, again, it's awkward in some ways, because it's not a Millennium Break city, but also it is the only place that you can go to that feels like—especially for you, Cori, where like, you're from the Twilight Mirage, where there are all these different planets to go to and visit and hang out at and, you know, live a life of peace. The Crown of Glass is the only city like that that you can go do that at on this planet. I guess it's like that and New Oath, which is to the north of you a little bit, but it's not a city in the same way. The Crown of Glass is like, the closest thing to neutral territory for you to go hang out at that isn't—that is the scale of one of the big cities of the Twilight Mirage, right? And so like, yeah, you can just go on like, a fun day out with a friend, which is maybe very important for your well-being psychologically compared to people who've been like, living as terrorists for five years? [CHUCKLES]

SYLVI: Yeah.

AUSTIN: I don't know, you tell me.

SYLVI: No, I think that—I think that is, genuinely, like, it's—it is really good for her to get some time with someone around her own age.

AUSTIN: Mhm. Yes. That makes sense to me. Yeah, totally.

SYLVI: Yeah.

AUSTIN: Alright. Then yeah, I love that as a thing. And maybe it's—we could use that as a

moment to have a final little—a little thing here before we roll Plan and Prepare. While you're out shopping for movies and debating what good movies are and getting lemonade and doing whatever else you do on this trip, the forces of General Mourning of the Qui Err Coalition begin to finally arrive. They are like the contents of a broken kaleidoscope. They are ships of mirrored glass and tumbling beads and unencumbered, shifting raw color. They are a fleet, but they are not an armada. For every soldier on board, for every weapon, there is a plumber and a wrench, or a medic and their doctor's bag, or a scholar, or a spiritualist, or an artist, or a cook. And there are probably a few Divines in there, and maybe one such resonates with you, but they are that particular Mirage style of Divine. The ones that are a little less clear and obvious, a little less 'a big soldier that walks around' and a little more 'a machine that moves in a particular way' or 'a being that evokes a certain sort of emotional response,' the sorts of Divines that stayed behind after the nascent Principality left centuries or millennia ago, depending on your perspective. And we will talk more about this, obviously, in the next Sortie, as Brnine at least—and then I guess potentially, Phrygian, because you're technically a support class, right, Phrygian?

KEITH: Yep.

AUSTIN: You have B-Plot.

KEITH: I do.

AUSTIN: So Phrygian, up to you whether you want to do the B-Plot stuff with Brnine next time or not.

[ALI CHUCKLES]

AUSTIN: But at least one of you will be doing the meet and greet as you meet—in fact, again, I will tease the beginning—I will tease who you are getting on board, because what's happening here is the Twilight Mirage is not arriving, and the Qui Err Coalition is not arriving as a new unit on the board. They are integrating with all of the six established factions of the cause. And so, you know, the people who are from like, the DIY Gig Kephart School of Engineering are going to Sinder Karst to join up with Grey Pool and help out—or sorry, Grey Pond. Grey Pool is probably a place in England, right? Grey Pond—

[SYLVI CHUCKLES]

KEITH: Please, Gig declines, gracefully declines the honor of having the school be named after him.

AUSTIN: This is definitely named well after Gig is dead. You don't get to decline it.

KEITH: Okay. Sure.

AUSTIN: Classic Gig maneuver. [CHUCKLES] It's probably not like—it's probably not a literal school, right? The Kephart School is probably a, like—

KEITH: A philosophical oeuvre?

[1:20:00]

AUSTIN: Yeah, exactly. Like, I think of myself as being part of the Kephart School of Engineering of practical—you know?

KEITH: Right.

SYLVI: Oh my god.

AUSTIN: Uh-huh.

KEITH: That's when you're a regular engineer, but with a vlog camera. [LAUGHS]

AUSTIN: [CHUCKLES] Yeah. I mean, maybe that's what it is, is like, it's partly about like—I always want to record the stuff I'm working on, because there's always stuff to learn from whatever the process was, you know?

KEITH: Yeah, yeah.

AUSTIN: Anyway, yeah. So they like—they basically begin to integrate into these various units, and we'll have part—we'll show more of that when we get to the B-Plot of the next Sortie. But yeah, they—it's a weird moment because it is—their fleet does not look like the Millennium Break Fleet. You know what I mean? It does not look like the Bilateral Fleet. It looks more like when Divines do weird shit, or more like the Mirage in general, you know? There's definitely an entire ship made of fabric. You know, there's an entire ship that you think is just a cloud for a little while. And then you're like 'ah, no, that's a spaceship.' And they begin to embed in the various groups trying to help out where they can. The leaders of the Cause here knew this was coming, and have been hoping for backup for quite some time. But again, Devotion got here quicker, because they did it during the *Orbital* game. And time is such that though it has only been, you know, a matter of days or weeks or months inside of the Mirage, it has been longer here outside of the Mirage waiting for them to get here. So yeah, we'll deal more with that next time.

But before we end up here, it's time for Plan and Prepare. "When you review orders for the next Sortie, go over scouting reports and maps, or otherwise attempt to prepare the crew for what comes next, you are trying to Plan and Prepare. Roll 2d6 plus any extra dice earned during downtime scenes, and compare the results to the strength of the division that your next Sortie will target." We are up against a—or you are up against a Sortie, or a division of the Authority, that is Strength 3. "For every result that's above the division Strength—" so every 4, 5 or 6—"you can choose one of the following: during the Sortie, you will have an opportunity to untap a faction of your choice—" as a reminder, there are two tapped factions right now. And "tapped" means that they can't help out during the next conflict turn, they're tapped, they're, you know, exhausted, they've done what they can. "During the Sortie, you will have a risky opportunity to fell a pillar with zero Grip." There are no pillars with zero Grip right now, so that's not a good choice. "During the Sortie, you will have a risky opportunity to secure an outcome from a faction." Again, factions, if you click on "Cause and Factions," you can see what their various outcomes are. They do things like delivering treasure to the fact—or to the Carrier that you can

sell for money and get better gear with. They can do something, quote, “unexpected or strange.” They can give you intel that gives you advantage when you next—when they next lead a Sortie, you can, again, look at the Cause page for those. The Lead a Sortie roll is made with advantage, so you’ll start off in a better position. Or, you can Hold 1, spending that Hold during the Sortie as if it were Hold gained through one of your basic or playbook moves.

KEITH: Ooh.

AUSTIN: A sort of cool, big, universal Hold that you could use for whatever you wanted. And you get one of those each based on how many successes you get on this Plan or Prepare roll.

KEITH: Which we have four dice for.

AUSTIN: So—you have four dice for, yes. And so, again, this is like a *Blades in the Dark* or *Beam Saber* roll. You’re looking for over a 3 here, 4, 5, or 6 is a success. Who’s gonna roll this 4d6? And also, what does planning and preparing look like here? I guess we already saw a little bit of—

KEITH: My roll cut it close earlier, so not me. That’s real.

AUSTIN: Uh-huh. I guess, Brnine, you were already practicing this, right?

[KEITH LAUGHS]

ALI: Oh, sure.

AUSTIN: Your big presentation, right? For like, ‘here’s what the mission is.’

ALI: Yeah, yeah, yeah, yeah.

KEITH: Those extra die are me and Brnine. So maybe Brnine should roll it, then.

AUSTIN: Mhm.

ALI: Okay, yeah. So this is a 4d6?

KEITH: Yeah.

AUSTIN: And—4d6, and we’re looking for 4s, 5s, and 6s.

[PAUSE]

ALI: Oh, okay.

AUSTIN: I think that’s three successes.

KEITH: [OVERLAPPING] Wow, three, holy shit. Very nice.

DRE: Mhm.

AUSTIN: So, yeah. You can take a look at the downtime thing and look at Plan and Prepare,

and see here what you—which of these things you want to take. With three successes, that's—you get a lot of them.

KEITH: I mean, hey, I've got a—I have a, just, toss out one suggestion. We should untap the Violet Cove, whose outcome is “something unexpected and strange happens.”

AUSTIN: Mhm. Well, again, you'll get an opportunity to untap it in the mission.

KEITH: Right. Sure.

AUSTIN: Right? So, yes. I just want to be clear that you're not getting to untap it with this. It's that you will have found some opportunity to do that, which I'll roll into my prep, basically.

KEITH: Yeah, yeah.

JANINE: I think we should all get a Hold. That's my pitch, is we should all get a Hold 1.
[CHUCKLES]

AUSTIN: That's a pretty good one.

DRE: That's pretty good.

KEITH: All four of us get 1 Hold each?

SYLVI: Mm.

AUSTIN: Mhm.

KEITH: That's not bad.

DRE: Yeah, that's good.

SYLVI: Yeah.

AUSTIN: I will also suggest really quick, though, as I'm playing—rooting for the players here. Keith, you might, instead of doing “untap Violet Cove,” you might want “a risky opportunity to secure an outcome from a faction,” because Grey Pond's outcome is “untap any other two factions.” So they—if you got that outcome, they could then untap Violet Cove and Rose River.

JANINE: Oh, that's good.

KEITH: Sorry, where is the risky opp—where is that? Risky opportunity to untap...

AUSTIN: Risky—during the sortie, you'll have a risky opportunity to secure an outcome from a faction, and the outcome for Grey Pond, because they are suppliers, is “replace a seized faction or untap any other two factions.”

KEITH: Yeah, I like that.

AUSTIN: So that might be—you'll get—in other words, you'll be able to get the Grey Pond

outcome even though you didn't get the outcome in the conflict turn. You can just do it.

KEITH: Oh, it's that third one. Okay, I see it.

AUSTIN: It's the third one, yeah, yeah, yeah.

KEITH: Yeah. I do like that. Risky opportunity's fun for me. Untap two factions, that's great.

AUSTIN: Mhm. So I'm gonna mark—I'm gonna mark that one. I'm gonna mark "all players Hold 1," which would—still leaves you with one more.

DRE: Oh.

AUSTIN: Which probably is lead—the next Sortie is made with advantage.

KEITH: Yeah. Beautiful.

JANINE: Yeah, that makes sense.

AUSTIN: Right?

DRE: That seems good.

KEITH: That's also what I was gonna suggest, so.

AUSTIN: Alright. I've marked them all. As a reminder, they are marked here in the downtime screen, a thing that I'm only now looking at, and what we should have set up, because, look, it has like, tokens tracked and stuff all here.

ALI: Ohh. Wow.

AUSTIN: Yeah, yeah, yeah.

JANINE: Well, lessons learned.

KEITH: In the sheet?

ALI: Uh-huh.

AUSTIN: Lessons learned, lessons learned.

KEITH: Yeah.

JANINE: Next time.

AUSTIN: Great. Next time.

ALI: Yeah, I'm looking forward to...

KEITH: I'll have to revisit how the factions and Authority stuff works, and the Grip, and the—

AUSTIN: It—when you listen to the next ep, when you get a chance to listen to the downtime

episode, or the conflict turn episode—

KEITH: Yeah, maybe later tonight.

AUSTIN: —we go over all of that stuff then. But also, reading the book through is useful for it.

KEITH: I just like, read it, and I was like, ‘this’ll make sense eventually,’ and it hasn’t yet. So, maybe I’ll—yeah. I’ll listen to the episode and then I’ll reread it if it doesn’t.

AUSTIN: Yeah. And again, the mission as explained to you officially now, that you’re prepping for, is not that dissimilar from what Gucci told you already.

KEITH: Right.

AUSTIN: Which is, there is a big event happening, a coronation at Carleon-Upon-Wisk, kind of the western bay here, on the western side of the continent, which is the historical home of the Fabreal Duchy, where the Glass barons live, or where their kind of, the heart of their strength is, the heart of their nation. And the—that duchess is going to get coronated there and become the new head of the Fabreal Duchy, and people from all around the planet are going there to celebrate and be part of it.

KEITH: This—the white horse woman?

AUSTIN: Yeah. Uh-huh.

KEITH: That’s so fast. They moved so fast on something that seems so—so thin.

AUSTIN: You know, sometimes they have plans, and sometimes things line up for their plans.

KEITH: Jeez.

AUSTIN: I mean, this is a—to be clear, this is a largely, as far as anyone can tell, figurehead role, right? This is—this is a symbol. This is a symbolic role, because the actual people in charge of Palisade at this point, for the Authority, are the Bilateral Intelligence Service, the Divine Crusade, and the March Institute. Right?

KEITH: Yeah. I get it, we also have a Figure-head. [CHUCKLES]

AUSTIN: [CHUCKLES] Uh-huh.

SYLVI: Oh my god.

[KEITH LAUGHS]

AUSTIN: Boo.

[DRE HUMS]

AUSTIN: Uh-huh. Anyway, your mission is to—one of the people who’s going there, the VIP whose details are not being given to you, are—is moving from the town of Carhaix way to the

north down through the Bontive Valley. And your job will be to interrupt that travel and prevent them from arriving. You are not given more detail. You don't know if this is like—you don't know. You don't—

KEITH: Are there—yeah.

AUSTIN: I'm not going to give you any clues of why you have to get this person not to show up there. They do not give you more information than that at this point.

KEITH: Or why the Witch in Glass would want them to show up there instead of wherever we were gonna take them.

AUSTIN: I mean, the Witch in Glass—first of all, I don't think I don't think Figure told any of y'all that, right?

KEITH: No, no, I mean, we as in us.

AUSTIN: Yeah, yeah, yeah. Yeah, you have no information about the VIP at this point.

KEITH: Yeah.

AUSTIN: You know that they will be lightly guarded with at least a pair of Astirs, or pair of Altars rather, maybe a third. We'll give you more information when it's time to do that roll at the beginning of the next Sortie.

KEITH: Which we will make with advantage.

AUSTIN: Which you will make with advantage.

KEITH: What do you normally roll those with again?

AUSTIN: You'll have to look it up, you know?

KEITH: Okay. Yeah.

AUSTIN: I don't have it in front of me right this second. I have a—here it is. Here it is, here it is. "Lead a Sortie." You will roll that with no crew or Defy, depending on how you're doing it. We'll discuss that at the time.

KEITH: Okay. We have a good crew roll.

[1:30:05]

AUSTIN: Mhm. That's true, though—we'll talk about that later. You'll have to roll it. It'll—you can only roll it a number of times equal to your score in it.

KEITH: Right, and Brnine's supposed to do—yeah.

AUSTIN: Because Brnine will not be there, yes. Because otherwise Brnine can roll it as many times as they want.

DRE: Oh.

AUSTIN: But Brnine is going to be doing a Plan B thing, so. Or a B-Plot thing, rather. Alright. As a final, final image, before you take off and leave from the Crown of Glass, Brnine, someone shows up to join your crew.

ALI: Join my crew?

AUSTIN: One of these Twilight Mirage people has been assigned to you. You have been told you cannot say no to this. Do you remember Torch Units?

KEITH: Hell yeah.

ALI: Vaguely, yeah.

AUSTIN: There's a person at the docking bay, or at the—I guess probably not a docking bay because we're not in space, right, but at the like, landing pad for the Blue Channel, who has a pair of what I can only call, you know, deluxe, extremely expensive luxurious handbags. And then six gigantic black, like, camera cases? You know, like a hard case—you know when I say camera case? Do you know what I mean? Like those big hard production cases.

KEITH: Yeah.

DRE: Mhm.

KEITH: Like a Pelican case.

AUSTIN: Is that what they're called? That might be right.

DRE: Yeah.

AUSTIN: Yeah. Okay, yes. Six of those. Gigantic. Person-sized. Bigger than a person size, for some of them. And she is a Torch Unit, or has the body of a Torch Unit, which was a type of robot from the Twilight Mirage. They were, at the time, were used by the New Earth Hegemony. They look like big robotic people, but they have PAR lights as a head, these big, like—almost like a spotlight for a head. And she is using one of those bodies, and is waiting for—I think maybe she's waiting for entry when you return to the ship, Cori. Cori and—who are you out with again?

SYLVI: I was with Kriminel Kollage.

AUSTIN: With Kriminel Kollage, right. Who, I think Kriminel's probably staying here. So Kriminel has said goodbye to you at this point. And so, Cori, it is just you returning to the ship. And you are met—you see this person. You see her waiting for entry with these six giant cases. What do you do?

SYLVI: And I don't recognize this person at all.

AUSTIN: No. Nor this type of ro—oh, you know this is a Torch ro—a Torch Unit. You know that

this is a type of robot that the New Earth Hegemony used to use, that now that model still gets used from time to time. And there are some Torch Units, like, people, who live across the Twilight Mirage. But you're from the Twilight Mirage. So yeah, you know what this—you know—you don't know this person, necessarily. But you're not that—you're the one person on this crew who would be familiar with this general design.

SYLVI: But she's not being—is it she/her pronouns here?

AUSTIN: She/her, yes.

SYLVI: Yeah. She's not being like, outwardly hostile or anything, right?

AUSTIN: No, she looks like she's waiting for an elevator. She looks like she's like, waiting to be let on board. You know? She's like, waiting for a flight.

SYLVI: Yeah, I guess I'll be like—well, you know, the captain said I did a good job earlier.

AUSTIN: Ah. Uh-huh.

SYLVI: I don't know if anybody...

[ALI CHUCKLES]

DRE: Oh, I heard about that. Yeah, yeah, yeah.

SYLVI: So like, I feel like I'm—I feel like I'm qualified to be like—

SYLVI (as CORIOLIS): Hey, you here on Blue Channel business? What's up?

AUSTIN (as TORCH UNIT): Yeah, that's right. I'm here to be the medic, and whatever else you need. I'm Saffron. Saffron Septet.

AUSTIN: And she does like, a little nod.

AUSTIN (as SAFFRON): You have room for me on board, right?

SYLVI (as CORIOLIS): I mean, for a medic, I'm assuming we do. That seems like something—you know, I thought it was kind of weird when I came on the ship, and we didn't have an actual doctor?

AUSTIN (as SAFFRON): Well, here I am.

AUSTIN: She says. And this is like—the voice is coming from around the light. So it's like—it's almost as if there's a speaker behind what would have traditionally just been the big light bulb of the Torch Unit. And she wants to come on board. And again, at the end of a session, Brnine, I have to ask you—verify the integrity of anyone you let on the ship.

ALI: [LAUGHS] Yeah. Hi. Hey, what's up?

AUSTIN: Are you like, waiting as she comes on board? Like, what does that look like?

ALI: I guess if Cori was the one to sort of bring her on board, it's sort of the thing of like, Brnine is—Brnine is somewhere near the entrance, but like, got caught up with something, right?

AUSTIN: Uh-huh.

ALI: And is like—

ALI (as BRNINE): Oh, hey. Welcome to the Blue Channel.

AUSTIN (as SAFFRON): Nice to meet you, Captain.

ALI (as BRNINE): Yeah, yeah, yeah, Captain, Brnine works. Hey, yeah.

ALI: I mean, or—'Captain or Brnine' is what I meant.

AUSTIN: Not Captain Brnine. You don't want both.

KEITH: Not Captain Brnineworks.

[ALI CHUCKLES]

AUSTIN: [CHUCKLES] Says a room nearby.

KEITH: The ice machine in the refrigerator sort of rattles.

ALI (as BRNINE): Yeah, well, welcome aboard. Great to meet you. Can I—let me show you around. I just—yeah, hi.

AUSTIN (as SAFFRON): Hi, again. Are you good? Are we good? Is everything okay?

ALI (as BRNINE): Yeah, no, no, no—

AUSTIN (as SAFFRON): You were expecting me, right?

ALI (as BRNINE): Yes, yes, yes. Sorry, sorry. It's just been one of those weeks.

[SYLVI LAUGHS]

ALI (as BRNINE): Huh, yeah.

ALI: Okay—

AUSTIN: And you give her a tour? What's the—what do you do here?

ALI: Yeah, I think it's like a pull-aside, right? It's like a, 'let me show you around,' but also like, the onboarding thing of like—it's funny, because when we were talking about it before in terms of like, who knows about Asepsis, like, I don't know that like, everybody who is on here signed like an NDA, right?

AUSTIN: Uh-huh?

ALI: But I think everybody in the crew knows what the score is, and also is sort of like, expected to not talk about it. So I think part of—part of the—part of the integrity check, [CHUCKLING] is like the—the like, ‘hey, let’s go over your paperwork. I’m gonna—I’m gonna disclose this information to you. I don’t know how much Gucci—if you have any questions for me, yadda yadda.’

AUSTIN: So do you tell—you tell her about Asepsis, is what you’re telling me, but in legalese? Like, how are you breaking—what are you…?

ALI (as BRNINE): Right. Well, yeah, we’re really excited to have you on the Blue Channel. This is—you know, we’re kind of—I don’t want to say we’re important, but you know, we’re very dedicated to Millennium Break. And in that way, this ship is particularly upgraded in a way that I think that you should be aware of. And, you know, if you have any questions, um…

AUSTIN: The little like—so again, she—imagine a spotlight that has those like, the four little wings around it, you know what I mean? Like the four little like, lid-wings—they’re not lids, but—

KEITH: They’re shades, they’re like shades.

AUSTIN: They’re kind of—yeah, they’re like shades. They all close at once as if they’re squinting. As if she’s squinting at you. And she says—

AUSTIN (as SAFFRON): What is it?

ALI (as BRNINE): So I assume that you’re familiar with Divines. You’re from the Twilight Mirage, right?

AUSTIN: Her hands are up, like she’s got chills, or is like—

ALI: Ooh.

AUSTIN: Like she can feel, like—I think she just says it.

AUSTIN (as SAFFRON): It’s like a current is running in this room, Captain.

ALI (as BRNINE): Um, well, yes. Um, Asepsis, which is the name of the Divine on board is, um, you know, very present, but not, um… disruptive, is what I would say?

AUSTIN: How can you tell when Asepsis is doing something, Brnine?

ALI: [LAUGHS] Um—

AUSTIN: Like, do you have like, a monitor up on your scout—like what is your—if, let’s say Asepsis was trying to hack into something, would you know that that was happening? Would it be requesting permission to do something? Would it be—like, how locked down is Asep—let’s read the book. Let’s read the—

[ALI CHUCKLES]

AUSTIN: “You acquire something: a tool, a ship, an upgrade, a caged malevolent sentience, et cetera, that allows the Carrier to operate far better than usual, but it has a downside. For each of the below drawbacks you give it, once per Sortie, you may act with confidence. It whispers in your ear; change one of your Hooks to represent its demands,” we’ve done that. And then “it’s fragile and needs protecting; it grants no benefit while damaged or destroyed.” Okay. So, yeah, does it—can you feel—here’s what’s happening. It doesn’t like this new presence. There’s something about this new presence that it doesn’t like, and it’s trying to get rid of the presence. And she is clearly in like, defensive mode.

ALI: So like, in my perception, there’s like a—there’s—

AUSTIN: So, I’m kind of asking you what the perceptive—what is your perception of that happening, if there is one?

ALI: Um, yeah—

AUSTIN: Like, it’s kind of happening quietly. It’s almost like a virus and antivirus are fighting right now. Do you know what I mean?

ALI: Right.

AUSTIN: But it’s happening very—it’s happening—it’s not visible outside of the physical stance that she’s taken.

ALI: Okay, cool. Well, I think if there is like a, something that Brnine can detect, there might be like, feedback on their scouter comms little thing?

AUSTIN: Mhm. Perfect.

ALI: And then also just sort of the sense in terms of like, being around tech enough to be like, there’s a nonverbal conversation happening here, I think.

[1:40:06]

AUSTIN: Uh-huh.

ALI: That like, sort of puts Brnine on edge.

AUSTIN: Right. I mean, literally the most like, tech shit about this is, you hear Asepsis’s like—whatever Asepsis is plugged into, or whatever the interfaces are, the fans are running louder than they should be, you know?

ALI: [CHUCKLES] Mhm.

AUSTIN: It feels like your PS5 is trying to take off. It’s that moment.

[SYLVI LAUGHS]

AUSTIN: And you—you know, you’re able to like, quickly check the diagnostics very quietly. And

you realize Asepsis is responding to the presence of a Torch Unit, which is classified as an enemy, because Asepsis is from a culture that historically was at war with the New Earth Hegemony. And it's, specifically, you can see this trying to force her consciousness out of this body—

[ALI SQUEALS]

AUSTIN: —and into one of the other ones she has, which have been brought on board in the other six camera cases.

DRE: Oh, that's—

AUSTIN: The other six Pelican cases. And she says to you—

AUSTIN (as SAFFRON): Is this a problem?

ALI (as BRNINE): A problem... Well, I, um, I definitely don't want you to be uncomfortable here. And, um, I would say, you know, Divine influence is, um... sometimes unpredictable. So, you know. [STAMMERS] How about this? How about you tell me a little bit about your background, and we can talk about your—some of your goals in terms of working with Millennium Break?

ALI: And I think Brnine is doing—because like, since we've talked about this being nonverbal and like, verifying is such a weird thing, I think that like, Brnine is saying if they can initiate this conversation in a way that like, to calm Asepsis down—

AUSTIN: Uh-huh.

KEITH: You're trying to get—you're trying to get her to, like, verbally say that they're not enemies, basically? Like, give Asepsis clues?

ALI: Yeah, basically, yeah.

AUSTIN: Yeah. And by the way, you're saying, like, the nonverbal part of this relationship with Asepsis is like—again, Asepsis is—we do gods a bunch of different ways. This is a hundred percent not—Asepsis never says words to you. Asepsis never says, 'get this person off board the ship.'

ALI: No.

AUSTIN: Asepsis is a piece of software that runs that you can interpret and that you can get responses from, but those responses are never in natural language.

ALI: No.

JANINE: It's an antivirus pop-up.

AUSTIN: Right. Exactly. Yeah, yeah, yeah.

JANINE: Or like a warning—a little warning thing, and then you're like, well, it doesn't say 'okay,' but you have to actually click 'more info,' and then you can get to 'okay.'

[ALI CHUCKLES]

AUSTIN: Yes. Yes. Exactly. Yeah, yeah, yeah. Then yeah, I think that that's what happens, but it's—you know, I want to underscore, this person does feel unwelcome here. And the next time you see her, she's in a different body. She's moved into one of her other—also, she doesn't—I mean, this just comes out. Saffron Septet is a digital consciousness who can hop between different synthetic bodies and forms. One of the forms that she's brought on board is just a little like, motorcycle that doesn't have room for a person to sit on it. She can just be a motorcycle and just drive around.

SYLVI: Oh my god.

DRE: Oh, man.

AUSTIN: I mean, it's much more aerodynamic to not have to have a fucking seat on there. You know?

DRE: I know, but...

SYLVI: Like, what size motorcycle are we talking here?

AUSTIN: I think it's pretty big. It's like big enough to—

SYLVI: Okay, 'cause I was gonna make a suggestion.

AUSTIN: Oh, please, go ahead. Give me your motorcycle suggestion.

SYLVI: I've linked an image of a Honda Motocompo.

AUSTIN: Let's see here.

JANINE: Wow.

KEITH: Oh my god.

AUSTIN: Oh, yeah. That's it. That's it, that's it, that's it. It's this. This fucking rules.

SYLVI: I do need to shout out my friends in the *Voidheart Symphony* campaign that I'm in, because the Motocompo came up in that and has then lived in my head forever.

AUSTIN: Oh, shoutouts.

KEITH: I love this thing.

AUSTIN: This thing is the coolest thing I've ever seen in my life.

KEITH: This is the coolest—oh my god. Can you even get these?

AUSTIN: And her name is Saffron Septet. That's her name.

SYLVI: I think so, yeah.

DRE: Man, they don't make 'em like this anymore.

KEITH: No.

AUSTIN: So, yeah—

JANINE: And Keith, imagine this, but it's a cell phone.

KEITH: I'm thinking, I love it. I love that. Ditch your smartphone, get a Honda Motocompo.

AUSTIN: Incredible. And yeah, so the next time you see her, she is in a different type of synthetic body than this Torch Unit. I have not finished writing down all six of them. I imagine it is her more surgery-focused one than her 'carrying around her six other bodies' one, which is a big—I should note, this is like, a big Torch Unit. This is one of the larger ones that's like, meant to haul some shit around.

KEITH: Compare it to Yam.

AUSTIN: I think it's bigger than Yam. Shoutouts to Yam. Yam is the homie.

KEITH: Yeah.

AUSTIN: I think there was a—I can't remember what the—there are—I think this is the red unit. The red ones were a little bit larger. And I think this is a red one. Anyway, yeah. So the next time that you see her, she is in like a surgeon's body, which has like five arms, and very delicate hands that can do a lot more, you know, delicate, complex surgery. And she feels fine in that body. It's a body she likes to be in, but it's also clear that like, she is now a little off-put by the fact that the Divine in your ship responded negatively to her, even though now you've convinced Asepsis that she's fine. It doesn't wash off that easily, you know? So. Sorry to, you know, I know Brnine is just like, a fun, fun-loving captain these days.

[ALI LAUGHS]

AUSTIN: But also, this is how it goes.

ALI: Fair. I mean, I think when when Brnine was like, you know, "Divine influence is very unpredictable," you know, 'I'm covering my bases—' [LAUGHS]

AUSTIN: Fuckin' fair enough. Alright.

DRE: An HR ass character.

[ALI LAUGHS]

AUSTIN: Uh-huh.

KEITH: I also love the extremely 'never done this before' vibe of having to explain Asepsis to Saffron.

AUSTIN: Uh-huh.

KEITH: By the way, we should maybe revisit at some point how bought-in the fucking crew here is of not telling anyone about Asepsis, I don't know. [CHUCKLES]

[ALI LAUGHS]

KEITH: Like, 'oh, yeah, I'm down with Asepsis like that.'

AUSTIN: I think that's a fair question that we should save—

ALI: Yeah, everybody can—yeah, you know, think about that on your own time.

KEITH: Yeah. People listening can remember that we're putting a pin in that.

[ALI AND AUSTIN LAUGH]

AUSTIN: The audience will remember that. And also, one last thing, actually, before we wrap. I still have three tokens left. That's a lot of tokens.

DRE: That's a fucked up amount of tokens.

AUSTIN: Yeah, I mean, I start with five. I start with one for every player character and then I can get more during the conflict turn. And I'll let you know, I chose not to get more. I could have taken extras. And instead, I did a different thing. I'm going to spend one of these. I mean, this is—I guess I kind of need to ask permission for this, because I'm kind of retconning something. And maybe y'all can give me the go-ahead on this, because technically, this is a Fade scene, which means—what it says is I can spend a token to do the opposite of the positive thing in a given scene. I can do—I can show the Authority doing a thing to have their own downtime imposing, quote, "the opposite of an option's benefit onto the players were appropriate." And I meant to do this in a previous sequence, during one of the previous ones where there was like, hey, advance a long-term project, or start a new long-term project, one of those. Is it okay if I—can I just say I did this then?

DRE: Sure.

AUSTIN: I just want to add a clock. I'm just going to add a clock over on the Palisade—

ALI: Oh. That's a normal thing you do all the time. [CHUCKLES]

AUSTIN: Yeah. And I'm just gonna put some question marks in it. I'm not going to say what it is yet. Don't worry about it. I'm going to tick it once, it's an eight-step clock. So you know, you have some time.

DRE: Hmm.

AUSTIN: But I'm just going to put this here next to—on the Authority page, there are all these—as a reminder, they currently already have two other clocks, they have Nideo's "take something that isn't theirs" and "harvest the Fundament nodes" from the Frontier Syndicate. And I'm just gonna add here, "question mark, question mark, question mark, question mark," and then I'm gonna write "alert," and then I'm gonna write "question mark, question mark, question mark, question mark," just to be as classic as I could. And that's an eight-step clock.

ALI: Can we like, buy vowels every time there's like a click on it?

DRE: Oh.

AUSTIN: Oh, it's not—I mean, I guess I'll go—you know what? In between sessions—

[ALI LAUGHS]

AUSTIN: In between sessions, I'll go in and actually add the right amount of characters and like, blanks for you to start filling it in. That's very fun.

ALI: Wow. Okay. Yeah, let's do that.

AUSTIN: Okay. I'll do that. I'll do that.

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

[1:50:00]